



New Marlborough 5 Village News

VOL XI
NO 10
February 2011

Clayton • Hartsville • Mill River • New Marlborough • Southfield

SNOW, SNOW, SNOW



photo by Larry Burke

HOMETOWN DEMOCRACY - WHO WILL SERVE?

New Marlborough's brief political season is just around the corner: the annual caucus, always a memorable exercise in civics, is scheduled for March 29. Early February is a good time to think about throwing one's hat in the ring or, for those of us who have no political ambitions, just doing a little public service for the Town.

The openings for elected office this year are:

- One selectman
- Town Clerk
- Moderator
- Tree Warden
- Two members of the Finance Committee
- Two members of the Planning Board
- One member of the Board of Assessors
- One member of the Board of Health

- One cemetery commissioner
- One library trustee

School Committee positions are no longer part of the annual town elections, but occur in November, at the time of state and federal elections.

Anyone who would like his or her name to appear on the caucus ballot will need to submit nomination papers to Town Clerk Kathy Chretien by Tuesday, March 22. Further details can be obtained from Ms. Chretien at Town Hall.

The Conservation Commission needs members, but these are appointed, not elected positions. Anyone wishing to serve on this important commission should express interest by writing to the Board of Selectmen. Currently, only three of a potential seven positions are filled.

reported by Larry Burke



photo by Ed Harvey

NEW BRUSH TRUCK

New Marlborough Brush 6, purchased through a federal grant, is a 2011 Ford whose fire body was built by C.E.T., a Canadian-based company that specializes in the manufacture of pumps and skid tank units. The new Brush 6 replaces a 1983 military surplus vehicle that in 2002 was converted for use as a brush truck. It allows us to respond with 400 gallons of water to some of the most remote locations in town to prevent the spread of a wildland fire that may endanger lives or property. It will also be able to safely transport a crew of at least four firefighters to battle the fire. Brush 6 can also tow the ATV trailer that will allow fire crews to reach even more remote areas.

In New Marlborough the majority of our brush fires are caused by open burning of brush that gets out of control so we must remind the community to burn safely. This means keeping burn piles to a manageable size and having hand tools and a hose available should the fire start to spread. Never leave a fire unattended even for a minute. Have a portable or cell phone available and don't hesitate to call 911 should your fire start to get out of control.

Recently several roadside fires have started from carelessly disposed smoking cigarettes. The easiest fire to fight is the one that never happens. To paraphrase Smokey Bear, "Only you can prevent wildfires."

Putting out wildland fires will certainly be the main mission of Brush 6, but it will also be a strong asset when Fire & Rescue respond to persons who become lost or are injured in remote areas of our community. □

reported by the New Marlborough Fire Company

NEWS FROM THE NEW MARLBOROUGH ANIMAL INSPECTOR

New Marlborough dog owners need to remember that the leash law remains in effect throughout the year. Winter roads can be challenging and drivers should not have to watch for stray dogs in the road. Dogs need to be confined to their owners' property or on a leash at all times. There are fines for dogs that are picked up running loose! The fines start at \$25.

Farm animal owners need to remember to provide the animal inspector with a certificate of health when bringing in animals from out of state. The animal inspector can be reached by phone 229-8407 and will respond as soon as possible to messages left on the answering machine.

Additionally, owners of farm animals, particularly horses, should bear in mind that, with deep snow, animals can sometimes get out onto the road, posing a danger to their own lives and to motorists. □

reported by Prudence Spaulding

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WITH NATURE AS HER TEACHER

For almost thirty years, Pamela Hardcastle, of Southfield and New Marlborough, has been creating unusual and imaginative garden and floral designs throughout the Berkshires and beyond. We recently sat down to talk about her work, her philosophy, and her collaborations with her employees.

Pamela traces her evolution in gardening back to her apprentice-like relationship with the late Margrit Suter of Mill River. There she learned the unglamorous but necessary aspects of gardening such as double-digging and soil preparation. From wise and energetic Mrs. Suter she also learned to use nature as her teacher, and to appreciate nature's inherent structure. Concurrently, she began working with David and me at the Southfield Store (our very first employee!), and realized that she could engage in work outside her home without short-changing her responsibilities to her family and two young sons. Pamela also credits Brad and Leslie Wagstaff with giving her the opportunity to develop her design skills with space, fabric, and color as they renovated and redesigned the Old Inn on the Green, Gedney Farm, and Mepal Manor over the years. In addition, Michele Miller, through her Southfield restaurant, the Boiler Room Café, helped to boost Pamela's fledgling business not only with floral arrangements at the restaurant, but also through Michele's many catering jobs.

Pamela's working philosophy is very practical as well as spiritual; the final product that attracts the attention begins with steps as basic as cleaning the tools and the workshop, and proceeds as a series of incremental steps.



Pamela Hardcastle



She describes her valued employees as those who “get it” – who understand the importance of the initial steps in achieving the desired result. On the spiritual side, she encourages them to start by learning from nature, its proportions and balance, but also to have the courage and persistence to shake things up to discover a new structure. She enjoys the stimulation of working with people with minds of their own. It's not always easy, she admits, but it definitely enhances the creativity of the result. It also allows her to build a project using the varied strengths of each employee, whether those are a design vision or the cleaning up afterwards. This combining of strengths carries over to occasional out-of-area collaborations with former employees.

Finally, Pamela values her interactions with artists in other fields, made possible by the small size of our community. She pointed out that if she were living in a city, her contacts would mostly be with other floral and garden designers. Here, though, she has real contact with visual artists, sculptors, photographers, musicians, dancers, and interior designers, and brings lessons from their work to her own. This cross-fertilization among disciplines is an additional reward of this community.

□

reported by Barbara Lowman

Photos by Sabine Vollmer von Falken

Town Business

Is Your Business

Board of Selectmen



December 20: Animal Inspector Prudence Spaulding came before the Board to ask approval for her to send a copy of the animal registration census, with the name and phone numbers of each registrant, to the 911 Coordinator in Pittsfield to make it easier for owners of animals that stray from their homes/farms to locate the animals. She proposed to give a copy to Police Chief Scott Farrell for the same purpose. The selectmen unanimously agreed to support the request.

In response to a request regarding the status of the tax rate, Selectman Chuck Loring reported that the rate was set at \$8.47 per \$1000 property value and would be due and payable on May 2, 2011. (See box next page)

January 4: Ms. Jennifer Nacht, president of the New Marlborough/Monterey School PTA, reported to the selectmen that the PTA is concerned about the future of the New Marlborough Central and feels that Section 3 of the Revised School District Agreement, approved at the last Special Town Meeting, fails to adequately protect the rights of the citizens of the Town of New Marlborough inasmuch as it allows the five-town Regional School District to close the school if any four of the five member towns so choose. The PTA believes, further, that the selectmen failed to provide New Marlborough voters with information about the amendment that had been proposed by a group of Egremont citizens. Ms. Nacht also maintained that, in accordance with Section 7 of the Revised Agreement, the suggested amendment placed on Egremont's special meeting warrant ~ but voted down ~ should have been placed on the New Marlborough warrant for the Special Meeting held on December 6, 2010.

Ms. Nacht asked the selectmen if they could suggest what legal procedures the PTA could follow to seek redress for their concerns. Administrative Assistant Mike Skorput said that he might have made a mistake ("I may have goofed") by not alerting the Board to the need to place the proposed amendment on the Special Town Meeting warrant. Selectman Loring, however, said that he was aware of the letter from School Superintendent Michael Singleton requesting the action, but that when the proposed amendment was voted down in Egremont he did not feel it was necessary to place that amendment on the New Marlborough warrant. He emphasized that neither he nor any member of the Board had intended to cover up or fail to inform the public in any way, and that the Board had already requested an opinion from Town Counsel Jeremiah Pollard as to what action, if any, the

selectmen should have taken or should take in the future – whether, in short, it had acted legally. Mr. Loring promised to let Ms. Nacht know the answer, and thanked her for coming before the Board.

Former Selectman **Barbara Marchione stated that she, too, thought that there had not been enough public meetings**, to which Mr. Loring replied that the subject had been discussed in several meetings of the Board and had received significant coverage in local media over the preceding nine months of deliberation. Ms. Marchione also wondered what had happened to the proposed new Town of New Marlborough web site. Selectman Loring replied that the new web site was scheduled to be up and running by February 1, 2011.

Highway Superintendent Peter Marks reported that, **in violation of Town laws, some people have been plowing the snow from their driveways onto Town roads.** The Selectmen asked that property owners not complicate the Highway Department's difficult task of keeping our roads passable. Police Chief Scott Farrell will be alerted to the problem, but the Selectmen and Mr. Marks hope the issue can be corrected without need for police action.

January 11: Tim Newman and Debra Herman of the Technology Committee came to report on the current status of the WiredWest consortium of forty-seven towns of Berkshire County that have been developing a program to bring high-speed broadband access to each of the towns of the area. They now need an official structure to proceed. **WiredWest's governance structure – that of a public cooperative made up of member towns – is based on a hundred-year-old act that authorized the formation of municipal lighting plants.** In the 1950s this law was modified to include television development and, subsequently, newer electronic devices. The next step is to provide high-speed internet access for personal use and business growth.

Mr. Newman went on explain that **two separate votes, eight to thirteen months apart, would be required to decide if a town would approve the concept of joining the so-called Municipal Lighting Plant Board** (to fit the old law's terminology). If, in the second vote taken, the town agrees to join the Board, the selectmen would appoint a delegate and an alternate to serve on the Board. To make the project viable, at least twenty to twenty-five of the forty-seven towns would have to approve. The Board would then take approximately a year to put the infrastructure in place. This would include fiber-optic cable either on poles or underground to make service available to each home-site in the Town.

Mr. Newman said that the infrastructure being developed by the state-created Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) would be devoted exclusively to the needs

of municipal organizations, not to those of residents or businesses.

Each town would provide an initial investment of \$1,000, Mr. Newman said, with possible lesser annual charges for the first five or ten years to reach a level of self-sustaining earnings by the leasing of the system to technological delivery companies. At that time all rental proceeds would accrue to the towns - the owners of the company. Each home or business owner could rent services from the tech companies, not only for delivery of email and the internet but also phone and television services plus the newer tech products constantly being developed. It's anticipated that costs would be at least competitive with present such services. Businesses will probably see additional cost benefits. The delivery of the internet via fiber-optic cable would make obsolete the much slower technologies of DSL via telephone wire and satellite via rooftop dish receivers. Mr. Newman and Ms. Herman plan to hold informational meetings to answer any questions the public may have.

Finally, Mr. Newman spoke to the subject of opting-out - that is, leaving the group if desired. **At any time during the period leading up to the final vote (of the two), the town can simply withdraw.** However, after signing up there will probably be a period of several years' commitment to support the program. If a town opts out or does not join at this time it will have to wait two years before re-submitting a request to join.

Owen Hoberman asked whether or not a town that did not join the group could obtain some of the benefits. Mr. Newman replied that, while many policies have yet to be established, Wired West might decide to let non-member towns buy services, but at a higher cost than member towns. The selectmen will make a decision about a Special Town Meeting at which this process can be moved forward. □

reported by Charlie Parton

Notice: On the reverse side of your FY2011 Real Estate Tax Bill is a critically important message about paying the bill on time. If your payment for the first (Preliminary) bill was not made by October 1, 2010 and second (Current) bill by May 2, 2011, interest of 14 percent per annum will be charged, backdated to October 1, for first; and April 1, for second overdue payments. "Payment" means received by the tax collector, not when you mailed the payment.

A recap of past Tax Rates per \$1,000 property value:

FY 2007: 5.68
 FY 2008: 6.46
 FY 2009: 7.27
 FY 2010: 7.67
 FY 2011: 8.47

Conservation Commission: The regularly scheduled monthly meeting was not held due to lack of business.

The Planning Board: There was no quorum for the December 1 meeting, and thus no meeting. The minutes of the December 19 meeting had yet to be approved at the time this issue went to press.

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FOR THE BIRDS



brown creeper photo by Don Beauchamp

A bird in the hand is worth... A bird at our feeder is worth two in the bush, so to speak, because we can see it, we can hear it, we can be inspired to read up on it. Its life and ours are for the moment joined. Not only that, but feeding the birds actually alters the birdscape. Many particular species who didn't used to deign, or dare, to winter with us now turn up quite familiarly. The sighting of a red-bellied woodpecker – not to mention a mocking bird or marlin or rusty black-bird – used to jangle the bird-watcher's metaphorical hot-line. Not any more. Yes, climate change is involved. But the birds must tell one another whom to count on for those yummy black-oil sunflower seed hand-outs.

One of our residents they can count on is Robin Tost of Mill River. She hangs out feeders with sunflower seeds and thistle seeds and also sets up a seed platform. She can always count on seeing cardinals, nuthatches, jays, chickadees, and both hairy and downy wood-peckers. This year brought the tufted titmouse and pine siskins as well as, to her surprise, crows. But most gratifying was to have lured the Carolina wren and the red-breasted nuthatch, both of which used to be rare around here. Not to forget the hoary redpoll and the yellow-breasted sapsucker. (Such names suggest somehow the guest-list at an eccentric dinner party.)

Robin contributes her observations to Project FeederWatch, a program run by the Cornell Ornithology Lab, which since 1987 has enlisted the help of the public in recording patterns of bird activity. From November to early April, for two consecutive days the participant counts how many of each species were seen at the feeder. In this way, over the years patterns of change have been recorded. Thus, it is known for a fact that the red-bellied wood-pecker, the Carolina wren, the tufted titmouse, and the cardinal are all much more common in the north now. It is also known, sadly, that the evening grosbeak, once beautifully common, is now seldom seen, and nobody knows why. (The more observers the better. Call 866-989-2473 or go to www.feederwatch.org to join up.)

Don Beauchamp of Clayton is another keen observer. He sees red-breasted nuthatches, the female yellow-bellied sapsucker (prodigiously fond of suet), and the white-throated sparrow, not to mention the tufted titmouse, juncos, grackles, starlings, chickadees. And bluebirds perched picturesquely on corn stalks in the snowy field. Recently, not only did he spot a brown creeper spiraling its camouflaged way up a tree trunk but he was also able to take its picture.

Not all who would like to be bird feeders can be. Rita Mathews of Southfield had to give up this pleasure because a bear kept snatching her feeders and dragging them back to the forest where it was his pleasure to trash them.



carolina wren, photo by Don Beauchamp

One does not of course have to keep feeders to be a bird watcher, even a bird counter. For nineteen years the Berkshire Wild Life Sanctuaries of the Massachusetts Audubon Society have conducted a Christmas Bird Count, for which on a given day people fan out on foot within a fifteen-mile-diameter circle to do a census. Last year more than 10,000 birds were counted. This year, only 7,000, but then this snowy year the woods were lovely, dark, and deep—and very hard to walk in. □

reported by Mary Richie Smith

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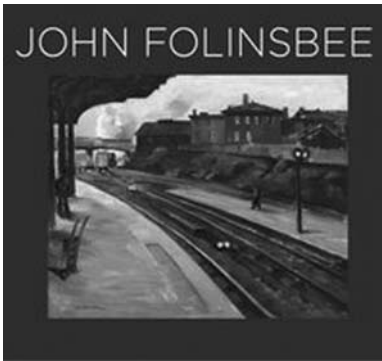
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Neighbors

Katelynn Dawson of Clayton, shown here with her mother, Michelle, and uncle, Jim, received a Top H Award, the highest honor achievable in Berkshire County's 4-H program at a ceremony held in Pittsfield on December 5. (The H stands for four key words in the club's pledge: Head, Heart, Hands, Health.) Among the criteria on which participants were judged are community service, projects undertaken, animal care, and 4-H sponsored events attended, as well as record-keeping.

Katelynn has her hands full, with a pony and horse to look after, as well as ten ducks, two geese, and nine chickens. Last year she donated thirty-seven half-dozen eggs, or 222 eggs, to the Sheffield Food Pantry.

Now a student at Undermountain School, Katelynn is the fourth generation of the Green family to attend New Marlborough Central School. Her great grandparents, the late Harry Green and his widow, Bessie, of Clayton Mill River Road, attended the school, as did their daughter, Ginny Green Dawson, also of Clayton Mill River Road, followed by Ginny's daughter, Michelle Dawson, of Canaan-Southfield Road. And then came Katelynn. □



Nikki Hayes, of Mill River, began her career in New York City galleries, then moved on to Berkshire institutions, including Chesterwood, the Norman Rockwell Museum, and the Edna St. Vincent Millay Colony for the Arts. For the past four years she has been research assistant to the director of the John F. Folinsbee Art Trust, working primarily from home. John Folinsbee (1892-1972) was primarily a landscape painter whose work ranges from American Impressionist to Modernist.

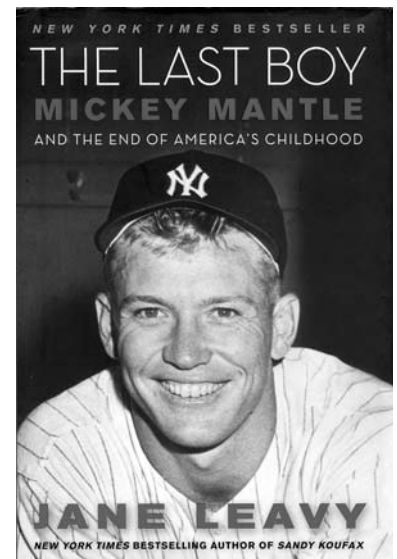
Nikki was recruited by Director Kirsten Jensen when it became obvious that the Folinsbee project was going to be extensive. Over the past several years, she helped to put together a complete on-line listing of all the artist's works and their current location. She also helped to choose paintings and create the catalogue, wall texts, and labels for a major exhibit of Folinsbee's work at the Woodmere Art Museum in Philadelphia. The exhibit, which runs through March 6, 2011, represents a milestone for public awareness of this artist's work - and testimony to Nikki's expertise. □

Elihu Burritt rides again: Our Learned Blacksmith, **Elihu Burritt**, pops up in interesting places. Here he is on page forty-nine of Jane Leavy's current biography, *The Last Boy - Mickey Mantle and the End of America's Childhood* - spotted by Southfield residents **Edgar Koerner** and **David Lowman**. Ms Leavy, dealing with Mickey Mantle's forbears, writes:

"The Mantles of Brierly Hill, a soot-draped coal-mining town in England's West Midlands, fled the 'Black Country' fifty years before the ore played out. **Elihu Burritt** [emphasis added], the American consul to Birmingham, described the landscape, pitted by collieries and ironworks, in 1862 as 'black by day and red by night.'"

As an aside, this is an excellent, multi-layered book, not just another ordinary baseball biography. □

Neighbors is compiled by Barbara Lowman: deeuell@yahoo.com



THE 351 PROJECT: An Experience in Community Service

On Saturday, January 15, my father drove me over to the Lee Outlets at six in the morning to meet the bus that would take me to Boston for the 351 Project. I was one of the 351 eighth-grade students, one from each town across the commonwealth, invited by Governor Deval Patrick to participate in an experience in community service.

After stopping in Springfield at seven to pick up the students from that area, we continued on to Boston, where we met the rest of the kids. We were given breakfast and then sat in a big circle. We heard talks from Governor Patrick and Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray, who praised us for our achievement in being chosen by our teachers and administrators for this opportunity to be trained in the importance of community service.

We were then divided into groups of fifteen and boarded buses to go work for a local non-profit. My group went to Count Down for Kindergarten. This Boston program helps families prepare their children for Kindergarten so that they can be more successful. The organization helps parents through school visits and the registration process and advises them about how to help their children get the skills they need to have a good start in school. Our job was to pack 4,000 backpacks that would be distributed to the children. They contained calendars, picture books, construction paper, crayons, paints, and water colors.

My group had kids from all over the state and it was very diverse. I really enjoyed meeting new people. I was impressed with how smart they were and what they had accomplished. They came from bigger towns than New Marlborough so they had to be really outstanding to be picked for this event. They also seemed to be very well off compared to the kids that I know.

At the end of our work day we went to another non-profit, Cradle to Crayons, where we had a buffet dinner. Governor Patrick spoke to us about how important it was for us to use what we had learned during the day and take it back to our own community. He stressed that community service is very important and that we could be really helpful in getting other students to volunteer to help local organizations.

I learned that community service is an easy and fun thing to do. I came home thinking about what project I can suggest for our area. □

by Cara Ormsbee, as recounted to Jane Burke

The Mailbox



Dear Folks at the NM5VN:

I've just read the December issue, cover to cover, and am so happy to be receiving this paper. From the egg contest to the story of Bruce Miller, from the otter photos to the Town Business and everything in between, including the etymological search for the identification of a handsome True Bug with Leaf Feet, this hour or so I've spent catching up with my neighbors has been *the best*.

Many thanks to all of you.

Bonner McAllester
Monterey

To the Editor:

This is just a note to thank you for telling us in the January issue about the sighting of a rare hoary redpoll at a local birdfeeder. Because of the alert, I looked extra carefully at the common redpolls that have visited my own feeders in recent days. Sure enough, one bird was paler than the others, with minimal streaking along the sides.

With binoculars I patiently watched this bird for almost an hour until I had a good view of his backside and could clearly see the telltale white rump. The hoary redpoll was a lifelister for me, and I was thrilled to see him right in my own backyard. Thank you for the timely bird alert.

Mary Ann McGourty
Norfolk, Conn.



Moose Alert!

Sheila Fitzpatrick spotted a large, long-legged animal along the Canaan Valley Road in mid-December. At the very moment she realized that the animal was neither a deer nor a horse but a moose, it wandered into the woods and out of sight. And no, of **course** she didn't have a camera with her!

A MANHATTAN SIDE JOB

by Rich Tinker

Reading the article in the December 5VN about George Maciunas, the founder of the Flux art movement, reminded me of my experience with George. In 1977 Norene and I lived in Jim and Mimi Miller's cottage on Route 57. I was a young cabinetmaker and money was not overly abundant, so when my friend Tom Christinat of Canaan said he had found some side work and offered me some of it, I readily agreed. Just one thing, though, Tom said. It's in Manhattan. Oh, I said. And it's for John and Yoko. I'm in, I said.

Turns out that George, who was living at the old Willets place, was the guy doing the hiring, through an ad in the paper that Tom had responded to. I lived a quarter-mile from the guy but knew nothing about him or his need for carpenters. Tom and I went by to meet George. It was the '70s, and since the Berkshires (thankfully) seem to lag about a decade behind the urban areas of the country, it was pretty much the '60s here. Mattresses on the floor, funny smelling herbs and incense, and all that. George turned out to be a friendly, disorganized guy wearing an eye patch. It seems he was in need of someone with a van and some carpentry talent to go to the Dakota and do a few small repairs that he agreed to take care of for his friend Yoko. My understanding was that these repairs would satisfy some kind of obligation that he owed.

The Lennons lived, of course, in the famed Dakota building overlooking Central Park. At that time, while there was security at the building, it was nothing like we see today. George apparently was expected, or at least known to the building's security guard, and so we were admitted. John Lennon, who had been pursued by the government on a marijuana charge, had recently won his case in court, so he was free to leave the country for the first time in years and was out of the country traveling. No doubt this was why Yoko had allowed George to do the repairs at that time.

John had his Apple Records office on the first floor and the apartment much higher in the building ~ can't say I remember which floor. The building is entered from a courtyard. A feeling of the interior of the building can be had by viewing the film *Rosemary's Baby*, which was filmed

there. I remember little of the repairs that I did in the Apple Records office, other than repairing a ping-pong table (it was a relaxed office). The apartment had the largest (residential) kitchen I had ever seen, and was no doubt the center of activity in the household. Spacious, modern, and comfortable, with a large *sofa!* Amazing the things these city people think of. The bedroom was unremarkable ~ I remember a large bed and the ubiquitous mirrored ceiling. I had a few repairs to do in Sean Lennon's room, and my sharpest memories are of this room ~ the kid was perhaps two or three years old ~ and there was a stereo in there that made my home rig look pathetic. The room was quite large for a bedroom. It was a long rectangle, and arranged along one long wall there was a child's set of

alphabet blocks. These blocks, however, were upholstered in bright vinyl colors and about thirty inches square, *each*. Each was a storage cube, with the front being a hinged door. I've not seen anything quite like it since.

We hustled through our work while looking over our shoulders for the dreaded New York City union carpenters, who have been rumored to cook and eat out-of-town unlicensed upstarts infringing upon their

turf. And so it was with relief that we brought our tools out, had a last chat with the doorman, and walked out through the arched gateway and across the section of sidewalk that was to become infamous less than three years later. □



Thanks to our Contributors!

Abby Tedesco; James & Deborah Platt;
 Arlyn & Owen Hoberman; Walter Agar;
 Adele & Alex Holman; Jay & Betty Reba;
 Mike & Janet Miller; Michael T. Skrak;
 Margaret E. Phillips; Bette Ann Stalker;
 Ronald & Jean Paro; Bonner McAllester;
 Savage Frieze; Susan & Richard Silver;
 Ned & Ellie MacDowell; Gloria Knapke;
 Edgar & Eileen Koerner; Angie Pell;
 and Julianne & William O'Brien

NEWS FROM THE TOWN CLERK

Sporting and Fishing Licenses

◆ This office sells sporting and fishing licenses as well as Primitive Arms stamps, Waterfowl stamps, and Archery stamps during regular business office hours.

Town Caucus

◆ Please be aware that the annual town caucus will be held March 29. Caucus nomination papers are available at Town Hall.

Dog Licenses

◆ Please be aware that 2010 dog licenses will expire on March 31 and the 2011 dog licenses are available now. Renewal fees are \$7 for spayed/neutered, and \$15 for intact dogs. Kennel licenses are \$30 for one to three dogs, and \$50 for four or more dogs. All dogs that are six months or older and housed in town must be licensed. A current rabies certificate is also required. If you would prefer to mail your payment, please send a self-addressed envelope to: Town Clerk, PO Box 99, Mill River, MA 01244. Checks are payable to the Town of New Marlborough. **Please renew before May 1 to avoid a fine of \$25 per dog.**

Census

◆ It is time again for the annual town census. As required by the state, the annual census is conducted each January and February by the town clerk's office; the form should arrive in your mail by the time you read this article. All households in New Marlborough are encouraged to complete the annual census. It helps the town with state funding, **so please return the completed form within ten days of receiving it. Please note that all New Marlborough addresses carry the zip code of 01244.** This is a function of the software that the state has purchased. The computer only recognizes one zip code for all of New Marlborough, and it has to be the zip code where the state computer is located. **Please note that the clerk cannot remove any voter from the annual census without that voter signing the form (even if it is your child).** Please add all children living in you house for an accurate count; if you do not add your children's names then this census form will be mailed back to you if this office knows you have children. For questions with the census, please call the clerk's office. 229-8278

Burning permits

◆ Burning permits are available at the Mill River Store. Burning is allowed with a permit from January 15 to May 1.

CHECK IT OUT: A NEW ROTATING NON-PROFIT FUNDRAISING SCHEDULE

Unlike many larger communities, New Marlborough does not have a United Way to raise funds through one annual request for multiple non-profit organizations. Instead, each month, from February through June, one of our local organizations sends out an appeal asking that the recipient send a gift so that the organization can continue to provide its services. In the past, each organization has sent a letter in the same month each year.

This year, the five organizations listed below have agreed that they will rotate the month of their requests. The organization that went last, in June, will go first, in February, the following year, with the other four moving up a month. So, yes, each month each home will receive a request for support from the New Marlborough Cultural Council, the New Marlborough Village Association, the New Marlborough Land Trust, the New Marlborough Historical Society, or the 5 Village News.

Generous support from the community has enabled these five organizations to do the work that helps to make New Marlborough such a desirable and culturally rich town. From all of your neighbors who volunteer for and benefit from these organizations our thanks for responding so positively to all of the "asks." □

reported by Louise Yohalem

COLD TURKEY

by Morgan Bulkeley, Sr.

The thermometer rose and stuck at around zero the day after the blizzard. If the wild turkeys could survive it with naked heads and feet and part-feathered legs and necks, we could endure it with hoods and insulated boots.

The old wood road beckoned with white invitation. Any print in the snow would be new now, and around any curve might appear those telltale, palmate tracks as big as a man's hand. Or, more likely, we might not find them at all. These great, shy birds, now beginning the fifth year on the mountain since first introduced, are always a surprise.

A veteran hiker, Justice William O. Douglas, described one of his more memorable moments, which occurred on the lower western slopes of Mount Everett. Half-lost and alone in October dusk, he was rustling his way out to civilization when suddenly this whole roosting flock burst from low trees overhead, reminding him that he was still as deep in wilderness as one could get east of the Mississippi.

The blizzard snow lay only drumstick deep, and on the south-slanted slope no wind had dislodged the last-fallen flakes from the brittle hemlocks. The air had that intense chill that somehow distills a few frost crystals, allowing them to drift lazily downward, glinting like gossamer, the special brilliants of winter's coldest days.

Beneath one hemlock the snow was strewn with the brown flakes of shredded cones where a flock of pine siskins had stormed the tree. Reedy *sherrees* sounded through the clear air where they teetered among the needles of another tree.

Presently we came into a clearing with a thick, squat pine at its center. Under it the snow was trodden out with turkey tracks somewhat snowed upon. Evidently the flock had huddled here during the blizzard. A fox passed through the trampled yard at night, but too late; the birds had gone to roost. We followed the blurred phantom tracks further into the wood where the turkeys had paraded the old wood road, hardly expecting to find them.

They saw us before we saw them, for every head was at alert, necks moving sinuously like so many bronze Indians



peering through the dimness of the hemlock staddle separating us. They were in the full light of the low winter sun. Their heads were pewter blue, and their dark-bronze plumage scintillated with metallic luster. Slowly and soundlessly they stalked off into the woods Indian file. By rough count there were about sixteen, but so magically they moved and blended through the dark brush and tree trunks that it was like counting ghosts. Never did we get the same total.

Leaves, grasses, and snow were stirred up together where they had been scratching the sunny slope through five inches of snow. For what? There seemed no food value there. Perhaps those amazing gizzards capable of grinding whole hickory nuts could work on the biggest shell of all, the frozen earth.

At any rate, the flock had survived and increased, though only one of the original nine banded birds remained after two years. Furthermore, they had produced enough extras to start colonies elsewhere.

We followed the stately birds for a quarter of a mile through the woods without seeming to alarm or hurry them. They flowed like a snake dance along the serpentine bluff high above a brook, always at least fifty yards ahead of us. Their steps often measured off a foot of snow and might or might not be marked by links of toe dragging. Usually a large, bearded gobbler brought up the rear like a lagging sentinel.

As the stately procession began to circle back whence it had come, we parted ways and tramped half-frozen from the snowy woods. It was below zero now as the shadows lengthened. When we were far across the brook, one clarion gobbler split the chilly air like an ax. One blue head was not yet tucked under a wing. □



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NEW MARLBOROUGH/MONTEREY SCHOOL PTA: AN UPDATE

Hard to believe, but the first half of the school year has come and gone. During this time, the NMMPTA has helped to subsidize the Healthy Snack program, funded field trips and programs, and held once-again a very successful Holiday Fair. The Healthy Snack program provides a daily snack for all of the students at New Marlborough Central. The program in its third year has been so successful that it served as the model for starting a program at Undermountain Elementary.

In its mission to provide enrichment for the students, the NMMPTA has provided funding for the RIF program through the New Marlborough library. (The acronym stands for Reading Is Fundamental.) Among other things,

this program gives books free of charge to the students to get kids excited about reading. Other enrichment activities funded by the NMMPTA include field trips. All of the students of New Marlborough Central attended a performance of *Strega Nona* at the Mahaiwe Theater with transportation costs provided by the PTA.

The annual Holiday Fair held on December 4 raised over \$6,000 this year. The Fair holds a silent auction with donated items and services from local merchants and businesses. Money is also raised through the Café run by the teachers, a Christmas tree sale, bake sale, penny auction, and items made by the students, teachers, and parents. An addition to this year's fair was a book sale in which used books in good condition were donated by the families of the Monterey School and New Marlborough Central. Held in the fourth grade room and set up by the fourth graders, the sale made a solid contribution to helping raise money. Also new to the fair this year was Poppa Dogs, run by the Kindergarten teacher, Erna Lampman. She brought her hot-dog cart and sold her all-natural hot dogs, which sold out. All of her proceeds were donated to the NMMPTA. This year Barefoot Books was invited to be a part of the Holiday Fair and set up a table as a vendor, which was a nice addition to the sale items. Barefoot Books are carefully crafted children's books, children's CDs and children's gifts that spark imagination, exploration, and creativity. A portion of their proceeds was donated to the PTA as well.

Upcoming plans for the NMMPTA include a movie night and an afterschool program for the students. Stay tuned, more to come. □

reported by Jennifer Nacht



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Contributions are needed to continue the paper!

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

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

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

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

NM5VN Editorial Team

Jon Swan, issue editor; Marianne Swan layout;
Pam Stebbins, Debra Herman, Jane Burke, Charlie Parton,
David Lowman, Martha Bryan, Joe Poindexter,
Barbara Lowman, Larry Burke, Diane Swartz,
Contributing writers: Janice Boult, Laura Endacott,
Ann Getsinger, Mary Richie Smith, and Tara White.

New Marlborough 5 Village News appears monthly.

The next issue will be dated March 2011
All copy must be submitted no later than February 15.
For advertising, contact: Barbara Lowman,
tel: 229-2369
PO Box 243, Southfield, MA 01259
5villagenews@gmail.com

Town Times:

- * **Board of Selectmen:** Every Monday at 6:30 p.m.
- * **Planning Board:** First and third Wednesday at 7 p.m.
- * **Board of Health:** First Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m.
- * **Conservation Commission:** Last Tuesday at 7 p.m.
- * **Board of Assessors:** June 1 - Aug.31 Monday through Thursday 7a.m. - noon
- * **Fire Department training:** Every Tuesday at 7 p.m. at the Fire Station
- * **Building Inspector:** Monday 5 - 7 p.m. Wednesday 8 - 10 a.m.
- * **First Responders meeting/training:** First and third Wednesday
at 7 p.m. at the Fire Station
- * **Cultural Council:** Second Thursday at 4:15 p.m.
- * **Town Treasurer:** Monday- 9 -12 a.m.
- * **Tax Collector:** Monday - Thursday. 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
- * **Selectmen's Administrative Secretary:** Monday - Friday 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- * **Dog and Animal Control Officer:** John Springstube 232-7038
- * **Town Clerk:** 229-8278 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays; Saturday by appointment
- * **Town Hall:** 229-8116
Emergency calls: Police, Fire, and Medical: 911

Transfer Station hours:

Wednesday: 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.
Saturday: 10 a.m.- 4 p.m.
Sunday: 10 a.m.- 2 p.m.

PERMITS WILL BE DUE ON JULY 1

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