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MAGAZINE



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HAPPY, HAPPY 2014!

I will admit that I am excited about this New Year! I am particularly excited about the potential. We often view the start of a new year as a fresh start, and for some that means a clean slate, a second chance, and a breath of fresh air. Some of us may make a New Year's resolution involving such things as losing weight and getting in shape, to be happier, to be a better person, to work harder, and so on and so forth. New Year's resolutions aren't really my thing, but instead I use this time to reflect on what has happened in the year that we're bidding farewell to, and to examine what I'd like to do and accomplish in the new year.

In early 2013 I started this very magazine. I took a chance – a big one! I had faith in what I was creating and I hoped beyond hope that this community would accept this new publication, but furthermore, I prayed that y'all would like it!! Through the creation of this magazine I met all of my writers, who are truly amazing and talented people. I count my lucky stars to have each and every one of them, not just on board with me in this magazine, but to also know them as the remarkable people that they are.

In this past year I also met and got to know a lot of our advertisers, and I learned about their stories and businesses. Let me tell you something, we have some phenomenal business people in this community! A lot of them also took a leap of faith in starting their businesses, and thank goodness that they did!

I, along with all of our readers, also got to know the stories of a number of local folks who let us share their stories with you through the pages of this magazine. This has included numerous artists, farmers, organizations, realtors, folks that you may see every day, and many more. What remarkable stories there are to be found here!

Looking forward to 2014

Now that I've looked back on this past year, I look to the new... What will happen? Unless you're a fortune teller and can see the future – no one *truly* knows. But with that being said, you can set goals and work towards them. That may be the closest we can get to knowing the future. I have set some goals and challenges for myself, including for this magazine!

I want to thank every one of you for your support in 2013. I wish you a joyous and prosperous 2014. May the new year be full of joy, hope, love, and happiness. Reach for the stars!

- *Thorunn Kristjansdottir*



JANUARY 2014

Millbrook, NY

A snow covered barn on a country road in Millbrook, NY.

Cover photo by
Steven Steele Cawman

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SUE BROWDY, CERAMIC ARTIST

By *Steven Steele Cawman*
arts@mainstreetmag.com

Before spending an afternoon at Sue Browdy's lovely ceramics studio in Hillsdale, New York, my knowledge of the complexity and intricacies of ceramic arts was limited to grade school Mother's Days gifts and seeing Demi Moore and Patrick Swayze at a potter's wheel in the 1990 film *Ghost*. After my visit, I walked away with a greater appreciation for the depth of materials and methodology that go into creating her work. Throughout the process, from selecting the type of clay or the glazes that she makes herself from a shelf full of ingredients that would be at home in chemistry lab, to the multiple firings required to create her pieces, Sue Browdy is absorbed in every step of creation. Her presence can be seen, and felt, in her art. The results are a spectacular labors of love.

A long-time local connection

Sue has been connected to the area for over fifty years. As far back as the 1950's, her family would come to the Lake Taghkanic State Park for vacations and live in a tent all summer. A few years later, Sue worked as an Arts and Crafts counselor at Bronx House Emanuel Camp in Copake, where she met her husband-to-be Joe Browdy, a music counselor there.

Sue attended The High School of Music and Art, which was then located in upper Manhattan, and initially thought she would pursue a career as a Fine Arts painter. During her senior year, she needed to take an additional class and selected a pottery class. This class would change the course of her career.

Marriage, education, and a profession that was a calling

A week after graduating, she married Joe, who had just graduated from Oberlin College. While he went to law school at New York University, Sue began working as an apprentice at the well-known Greenwich House Pottery in New York City's Greenwich Village. In exchange for her work and helping around the studio, she was allowed to take classes and further honed her knowledge of ceramic arts. Sue spent three years as part of the team at Greenwich House. While in the city, she started a twenty-plus year friendship with Mimi Obstler. Obstler wrote the book *Out of the Earth, Into the Fire* an empirical and definitive guide to the history and formulas for glaze making. Examples of Sue's work are featured extensively and showcased prominently throughout the book.

In 1962, Sue and Joe moved to the Upper East Side of Manhattan, where she began working and teaching at the renowned 92nd Street YMCA and started a studio of her own. She continued to work as a potter and raised a growing family. In 1960, Joe's parents bought a parcel of land in Hillsdale. Initially, the whole family occupied an old tenant farm cottage over the summers.

Over the years, Sue and Joe built a small weekend home, and eventually a larger home and a modern studio for Sue. When Joe retired from his law practice in 1997, the family moved to Hillsdale full time.

The hands-on, creative process

Sue is a hands-on craftsman throughout the creative process. She starts by selecting the particular

ceramic material to use. These come in a variety of colors, texture and compositions, all of which impact the look and feel of the final piece. Inspired by the various and colorful sedimentary layers she saw along the cliffs on Martha's Vineyard, Sue layers a variety of clays and rolls them out to create organic undulating curves reminiscent of the colors along the island's bluffs.

Once a piece is created, whether it is one of the flat pieces or one thrown on the potter's wheel, it is covered and dried at a controlled rate. If necessary, pieces are trimmed and continue to dry for several days. Pieces are then fired in the kiln for the initial bisque firing at a "low temperature" of 1,700 degrees Fahrenheit, hardening the clay and removing any remaining water from the piece.

The art of glazing and the science behind the kiln

Once cooled and removed from the kiln, the pieces are ready to be glazed. Sue has worked with a variety of kiln styles, including electric, wood fired, and sawdust fueled, among others. Currently, her studio has a large gas-fueled kiln. Sue uses glazes that she makes herself and likes working with Japanese-style Shino glazes. Shino glaze was developed in Japan at the end of the sixteenth century. These glazes tend to have colors ranging from milky white to orange, and in fact, the name Shino may possibly derive from the Japanese word for white, or shiro.

Sue uses ingredients for the glazes including exotic sounding materials like Nepheline Syenite, Pearl Ash, Spodumene, and Cobalt Oxide. Once glazed, the pieces are returned to the kiln for a second firing. This second firing is labor and time

intensive, as the kiln must be carefully stacked and sealed before it can be lit. If Sue initially lights the kiln at half-past three in the afternoon, it will not reach 2,300 degrees Fahrenheit until half-past five the next morning. It is during this second firing that Sue carefully controls the kiln to get the best results from her glazes. As with all creation, there is an art to the science and a science to the art. Perfect results are not guaranteed.

The gas-fed fire that fuels the kiln requires oxygen to burn. The amount of oxygen supplied to the fuel can be controlled by a series of flues and dampers. When adjusted in just the right way, there is a lack of oxygen in the kiln, and the fuel does not burn completely. The internal atmosphere becomes filled with additional free carbon atoms. The unattached free carbon atoms will aggressively seek out and bond with any oxygen atoms they can find. In fact, these carbon atoms are so oxygen-hungry that they are able to break molecular bonds. The carbon literally robs the clay and glaze materials of their oxygen.

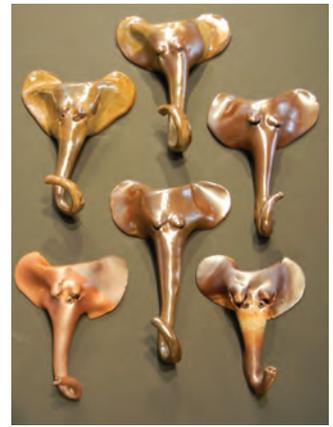
When the carbon reduces the amount of oxygen in the clay and glaze molecules, the colors and textures of the clays and glazes are changed in their appearance and on a molecular level as well. Note the picture of the bottoms of two pieces on the bottom right. They are made from exactly the same clay. The only difference is that the darker one has been through a reduction firing and thus altered at a molecular level. Perfect internal atmospheric conditions are never guaranteed, so the results from one firing to the next will vary.

Sue's rhythm and groove

Sue's work takes on a variety of shapes and forms. She makes planters, hanging pieces, platters, vases and many more. But, as she puts it, it always comes back to function so she frequently finds herself returning to the cup, plate and bowl forms. Often, she works in a series and finds that she gets into a rhythm while working on the wheel and will throw many pieces in one sitting. Some are eventually finished with the glazes that she has made herself. The results are spectacular, with wonderful depth and luster. One of the great joys Sue finds about ceramics is the potential for change and growth that it offers. Clay provides an almost infinite variety of forms of expression and Sue Browdy transforms clay into a thing of beauty. Every piece shows her passion and creativity, and is a piece of her. ●

Sue will have a show of her work in June at the Roeliff Jansen Community Library in Hillsdale, New York. If you are interested in learning more about Sue and her work, or would like to pay a visit to her studio, she can be reached at sbrowdy@fairpoint.net or 518.325.5087.

Are you an artist and interested in being featured in Main Street Magazine? Send a brief bio, artist's statement and a link to your work to arts@mainstreetmag.com.

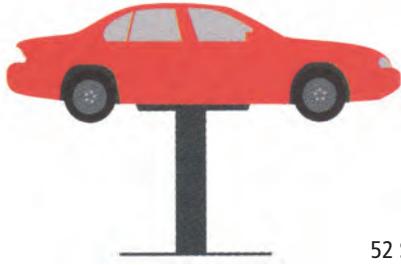


Top: Sue Browdy in her Hillsdale, NY studio. Center image: Tubular wall hangings. Bottom image: Sue layers a variety of clays and rolls them out to create organic undulating curves reminiscent of the colors along Martha's Vineyard's bluffs.

Top: Elephant hanging planters. Second from top: Earthenware bowl. Third from top: Earthenware vases. Second from bottom: A shelf in Sue's studio. Bottom: When the carbon reduces the amount of oxygen in the clay and glaze molecules in the kiln, the colors and textures of the clays and glazes are changed in their appearance and on a molecular level as well – as is evident in the bottoms of these two pieces.

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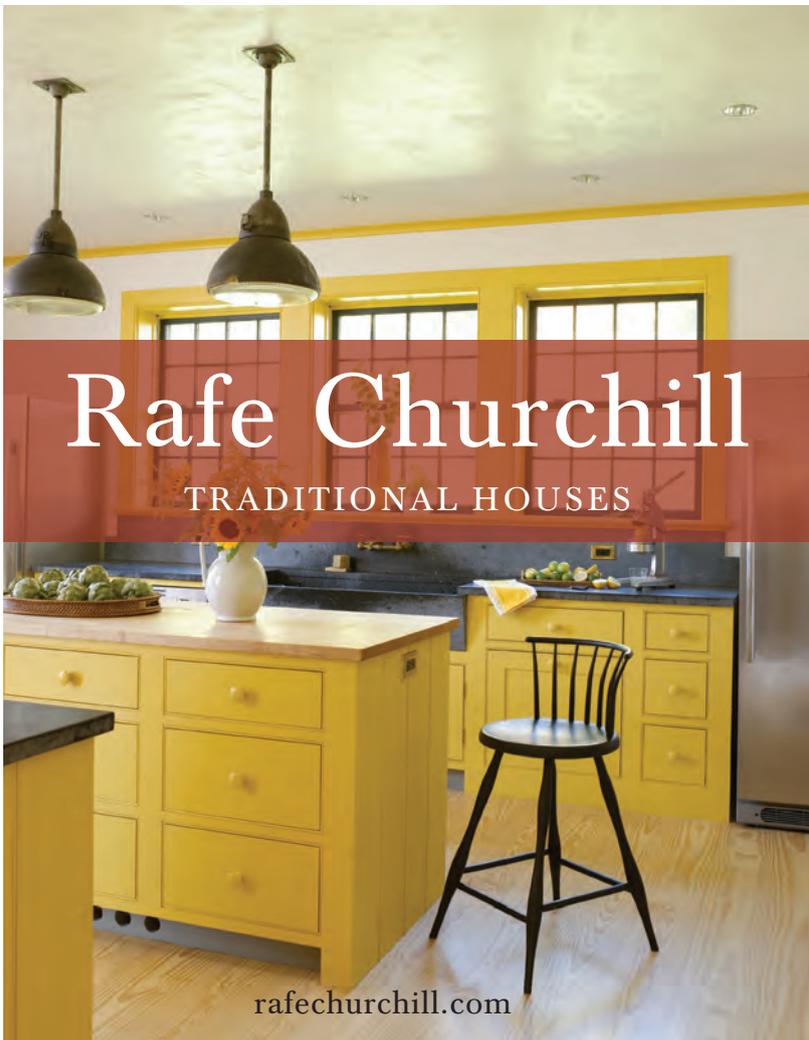
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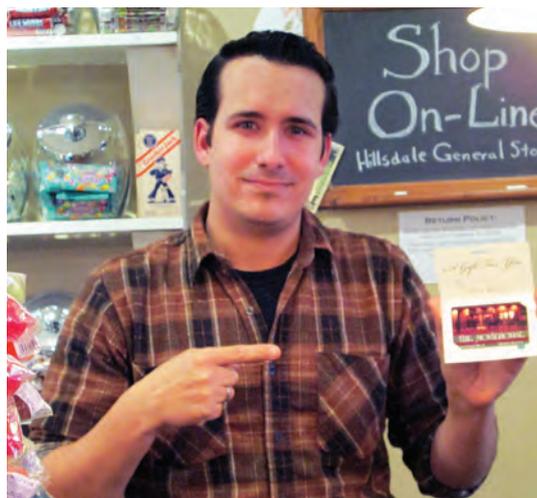


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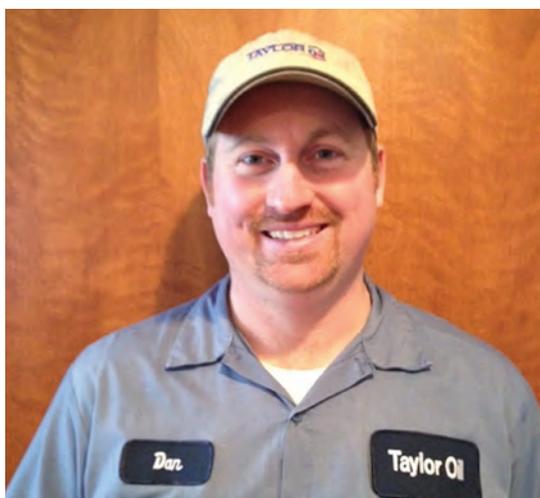
Heather White works hard at Catamount in Hillsdale, NY; six days in the winter, five in the summer. But she also plays hard, too. Since the first week, Heather has been playing the trivia game that we had running on Facebook for five weeks. She finally won in the last week's challenge. Persistence pays off! Heather says the gift card that she won to Irving Farm will be put to good use, as this is the halfway point for her sister and she to meet. She's hoping that Irving Farm will have their delicious Rice Crispy treats, "They are really good!" Heather says working at Catamount is fun, she loves all of the people and has great memories of the mountain, "I grew up skiing here." Heather still enjoys skiing as well as other outdoor activities such as hunting and fishing, as well as hanging out on the farm with her horses. Thanks for playing with us!



You might recognize **Paul Amash Jr.** from being a friendly face in our debut issue. This time we met up with Paul at the Hillsdale General Store to congratulate him on his win. You see, Paul was the first winner in our online Facebook trivia contest that ran for five weeks. His prize: a gift card to The Moviehouse in Millerton. Paul said he is going to make a date night out of it and take his wife out for a good movie, amazing movie theater popcorn, and a large soda. "You can't beat movie theater popcorn. I don't know what they do... I can get candy anywhere, but the popcorn you can only get at the theater. Thank you again to The Moviehouse!" As for his New Year's resolution, besides the common ones like exercising and being more organized, Paul plans to spend more quality time with his wife and one year old daughter, Lucy – being the best father and husband he can be.



Kimberly Downey grew up in Millerton and has passed the Saperstein's mural many times. She recalls driving by the Pine Plains Platter and noticing their mural, too, and was therefore able to answer our trivia question and won a gift card to Brick Block Auto Parts in Millerton. She's going to share her winnings with her husband and let him purchase something. Aww, that's nice! Kim had a great holiday, spending time with her family. As for the New Year, no resolution has been set, but there is still plenty of time. Kim lives and works in Lakeville. She comments on how it's a great town to raise children in and her family is close by, which is an added bonus. Of course she loves her job at Salisbury Bank, where she's worked for almost nine years and is the Assistant Vice President and Trust Officer. Outside of work, Kim loves hanging out with her husband and their two kids.



Daniel Taylor works out of the Millerton office of Taylor Oil Inc., located at 82 Main Street. Daniel primarily focuses on service for the company, making repairs to plumbing, heating, and air conditioning systems. He also installs and services water treatment systems and home monitoring systems that Taylor Oil Inc. represents. Dan relies on his expert service skills to satisfy each and every customer that he works with, after all, he's now been in the family-owned business for 15 years. Providing personal service and creating long-term customer relationships for Taylor Oil Inc. is a goal he prides himself on. Dan and his wife Jessica, who also grew up in this area, along with their two young children, reside right here in Millerton. Well, we'll let you go Dan, because we know that this is your busy time of year – everyone *really* needs their heat working during the cold winter months!



Nicki Russell lived in Sharon, CT for two years and was therefore at an advantage when figuring out the answer to the Sharon Historical Society trivia question. It was just a matter of confirming the address. She won a gift card to the Oakhurst Diner, and Nicki is looking forward to a delicious burger, or perhaps a Sunday brunch with friends. She said her holidays were great and that her brother came to visit for both Thanksgiving and for Christmas. Nicki has never been to the city to watch the ball drop in Times Square and she is looking forward to ringing in the New Year with this crossed off her bucket list. She's also looking forward to seeing her customers in the New Year and helping them with their computer and laser printer needs and repairs. She'll also continue taking her dog, Zorro, to the hospital to do his therapy work in 2014. He looks forward to it, and it's nice for him to have a job, too.



Pamela Marks admitted that she used the internet to help her answer a few of the trivia questions about the Mount Washington House in Hillsdale. Her husband has lived in the area for many years and was therefore able to help her out with some of the answers, too. Pamela plans on sharing her gift card to B.W.'s Eagle Eye with her daughter, and will definitely browse for something for herself, too. Pamela comes from a large family, whom she loves so much. She likes to blog about her family, but in the New Year she hopes to blog about the hidden treasures in our unique tri-state area to help people who are visiting learn about outdoor activities such as Bash Bish Falls and places like Ward's Nursery, with their fun holiday walk. Pamela is excited to discover new places in our area, and make more friends.



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MAINTAINING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE & the new you

By Thorunn Kristjansdottir
info@mainstreetmag.com

Now that the clock has struck midnight, the confetti is cleaned up, and the champagne glasses are put away – it's time to get serious about 2014.

What do most of us inherently do in the weeks preceding December 31st? From devouring every piece of the Thanksgiving turkey and side dish in sight, to feasting on way too many candy canes, hot toddies, and Christmas hams, most of us also make a “resolution” for the new year. In that resolution we promise ourselves that this is a fresh start, a new year, and that in this new year we're going to do x, y and z. And nine times out of ten, that resolution involves working out and getting into better shape! Am I wrong? And I'm sure that the local fitness and exercise establishments are giddy and have been waiting for the clock to strike midnight, for the herd will flock to them in the following days and weeks like moths to a flame.

But what happens when February rolls around, or May, September, or the following December? How well are you sticking to your resolution then? We're all guilty of losing steam and forgetting what it is that we swore we'd do to change our habits and life. So how can this year be different? The answer; it's about a way of life.

Long-term changes

You can't make drastic changes in your life and expect overnight results. We know this, but it doesn't change the fact that we still hope for it to happen! So the first step is to be conscious of this. Secondly, come up with a plan that's feasible and realistic.

This plan may be a combination of changing your eating habits and adding to (or changing up) your exercise routine. Thirdly, be conscious about what it is that you're doing. If you're conscious about the changes that you're making in your life, or the foods that you're putting past your lips, then you think more about it, you plan, and will be more likely to see some of the results that you're seeking.

Speaking from personal experience, to make an impact and truly change your way of life, I found incremental changes to be extremely effective. For example, in the last year or so, my significant other and I have consciously made an effort to change the

way that we eat. It started with small changes, like eliminating the really unhealthy foods (such as fast food, something that was easy for us because we hardly ever ate that type of food). The next step was to make substitutions, for example we started buying whole wheat or multi-grain breads and pizza doughs instead of white flour bread and dough, and we started buying blue corn chips and multi-grain chips instead of the regular “white” chips (regardless of if they were a corn or potato chip). We then also substituted hummus and salsa for the dips that we had been eating. After getting used to these minor changes, once you then go back and taste the white flour bread or pizza dough, or white corn chips, they simply don't taste good! It was an amazing realization.

From there, we began making larger substitutions. We had always been good about eating lots of vegetables and salads, but we took it a step further. We made a point to have a healthy salad before every meal, which also resulted in consuming less of the main course. These conscious changes also made us crave a healthier and leaner dinner, i.e. chicken and rice, or fish and potatoes. This healthier and cleaner dinner also resulted in the elimination of the side of bread or other such unnecessary and sides. Then after a few weeks of this, on the few occasions that we were tired after work and didn't feel like cooking our “usual” dinner, and we'd pick something up that was quick and easy, it just didn't cut it. Our bodies weren't happy with the healthier dinner choice. Sometimes it was so drastic that the following day it felt like we were hung over, resulting solely from the food that we ate the evening before. Once you start listening to your body and get connected with it on a different level, it is amazing what it tells you.

Your cravings and taste buds also change. So now, some 14 or so months after we began substituting multi-grain chips instead of the white flour chips, even the sight of a white flour chip evokes a bad taste in my mouth. There is absolutely no craving for it. And once you become more in-tune with your body like this, it is fairly amusing to test yourself. For example, the other day we picked up

a bag of potato chips (like the real greasy type) that was garlic cheese bread flavor. We each had one chip, and that was it. It tasted greasy and a little bit disgusting, actually. The bag was then thrown right in the garbage.

A body in motion...

Maintaining a healthy and clean diet is only half of the battle, however. As the saying goes “A body in motion, stays in motion.” And this is so true. If you become sedentary, it's harder to get your energy level up, your blood flowing, and to get moving. We need to move, and we need to get our heart pumping!

I've heard snippets and pieces from a number of studies as of late that have examined the effects of sitting for too long and people who work in more sedentary jobs, such as office jobs, where folks sit for most of the day. Some of the research actually compared the effects of sitting too long to the effects of smoking. They also found that sitting for too long can result in such things as obesity and excess body fat around your midline, increased blood pressure, and that it can impact your blood sugar and cholesterol levels. I found that to be extremely scary, whereas I have an office job and sit in front of a computer from 9 to 5, five days a week!

What can be done? Well, it's not about what can be done, but at this point it's more about what *needs* to be done! We need to move. I won't get up on a high horse and preach, because I'm guilty of not doing enough when it comes to exercise. Yes, I eat very well, but that is only half of the equation. And this is a simple equation of $1+1=2$.

As the clock strikes twelve and we bid farewell to 2013 and welcome 2014, I don't know if I'll have a proper resolution. I do know that I'll have a plan for my life and health for the next twelve months. It will involve continuing on my journey of eating clean, and I am most definitely going to work on the motion and movement portion. Right now my equation equals about a 1.3 or so, so I need to work on that last 0.7 part. And I'm conscious of it.

How about you, what will 2014 entail for you? ●

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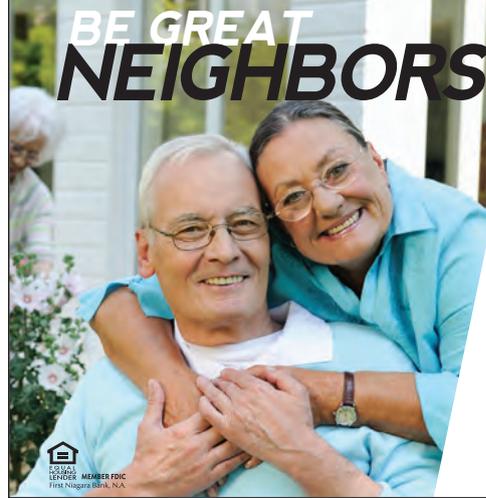
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a highly charged business

ASSOCIATED LIGHTNING ROD IN MILLERTON, NY

By Christine Bates
christine@mainstreetmag.com

In every issue Main Street interviews an area entrepreneur. While most serve local customers, others like Harney & Sons and this month's subject, Associated Lightning Rod Company, sell all over the U.S. and internationally. We talked with "Rob" Cooper, the firm's president, at their offices on Route 22 just outside of the Village of Millerton. Cooper has also supplied our readers with some helpful information about lightning. (See box).

Everybody calls you "Rob." Is that the name you prefer? Does it get confusing with your son Rob who's also in the business?

It was even more confusing when my father was here. His name is Bob. I prefer Rob and my son, who handles our residential business, goes by Robbie.

Do you make lightning rods? How would you describe your business?

We are a contracting business, which specializes in lightning protection. We design and install lightning protection systems. We don't actually make lightning rods. About half of our work is commercial and the other half is residential. We design for new construction, as well as existing buildings, which are harder to do.

I know you're renovating a family home on Indian Lake. Are you installing lightning protection on your own house?

Of course. We are installing copper concealed lightning protection. It's especially important if you are living near water. It's crazy when people say that insurance will cover losses. You can never recover your family photos, antiques, and art.

Do you consider yourself an entrepreneur? When did this business get started?

No, I really think of myself as a businessman. I started my first business in 1981 after I took a three-month motorcycle trip around the country right after high school. I noticed all these muffler shops and started Northeast Muffler when I came back. In 1987 John Heck came along and asked to buy my business. Then I joined my parent's company. My father was very demanding. There was a lot of work and only three people doing installations. I had to learn really quickly.

My father started the business in 1953 after working for a lightning rod company in Poughkeepsie. Back then it was mostly putting lightning rods on barns and churches. He met my mother, Mary, when he was installing a lightning rod in Smithfield. After talking to the young woman, he



Above: Rob Cooper in the meticulous workshop of Associated Lightning Rod in Millerton.

asked the owner of the house if it would be OK if he asked his daughter out on a date. They got married and moved to North East and started their own business.

I started running the business 13 years ago when my father retired, but it wasn't until 2002 that I actually bought the business from my parents.

This is still a family business. How do you divide up responsibilities? How do you all get along?

The Associated Lightning Rod family includes our long term employees like Pam Malarchuk, who is in charge of office operations, including payroll and accounts payable, and Lisa Barruffo, who handles receivables and safety issues. Pat Fontaine is responsible for all of the commercial pricing and blue prints. My wife Tammy is the multi-tasker – everything from uniforms to advertising. Robbie handles residential sales and installations, and our son Alex manages the inventory and the shop.

Our duties are pretty well defined and usually we aren't all here together. I put about 75,000 miles on the road every year visiting clients. We also have two sons who aren't in the business.

How has the business changed over the years?

Continued on next page ...

What you should know about lightning

Lightning kills more people in the United States than hurricanes and tornadoes combined. Florida experiences the most lightning strikes every year but New England has the second highest risk. In 2013 the only fatal lightning strike in New York State occurred nearby at Lake Taghkanic.

One out of 200 homes is struck by lightning every year. Lightning can rip through roofs, explode bricks and ignite fires. In addition to causing structural damage, a single bolt of lightning can damage computers, electronic equipment and appliances.

Most lightning injuries occur in the summer when people are outside. The most common time is in the late afternoon and early evening.

Lightning can enter a home and travel through electrical wires, plumbing, phone lines and metal mesh and rebar in concrete.

- Avoid washers and dryers since they have contact with the plumbing and electrical systems
- Talking on the telephone is the leading cause of lightning injuries inside the home
- Don't wash your hands, do the dishes or take a shower

Always avoid being the tallest object outside during a storm – never stand near tall trees, metal fences or water. Simple shelters do nothing to protect you against lightning. Seek a lightning protected building or a car with a metal roof.

Lightning protection systems offer a safe path for lightning to follow to the ground and away from the building. They do not attract lightning.

Over the last ten years we have become more involved in large, commercial projects. We've grown the business and added employees and equipment. For the industry, the increasing amount and value of electronics in buildings means that surge protection has become critical. And it does seem like there are more violent storms.

Who are your residential customers?

We work on all-size structures, from single story ranches to 40,000 square foot mansions in Greenwich, CT and the Hamptons on Long Island. We are just completing an installation for a Nascar driver in North Carolina. I asked him if there wasn't somebody closer that could do the job, but he said, "I've heard you're the best." For high profile people we have to sign confidentiality agreements before we start the job so I can't mention names.

How long does it take to complete a residence? How many jobs are you working on at once?

It might take a crew a couple of days to complete a residential installation. Currently we have about 100 projects at various stages that we're working on.

What about non-residential clients?

We are working on St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York right now as part of the restoration, and have done over a 100 buildings in the city including the GM Building and the Plaza Hotel. Upstate we are grounding the locks on the Barge Canal – I had to hire divers to help complete the job. Almost all of our commercial business is done on a competitive bid basis. I guess we win about 50% of the time.

For commercial and residential clients we also ground outdoor art. We have protected all of the sculptures at The Storm King Center and on the roof of the Metropolitan Museum. I can't tell you how many Alexander Calder sculptures we have grounded. We also do work for artists to protect their studios from lightning.

What about international clients?

We have just started working on the largest



Above: Rob Cooper enjoys camel meat with his Saudi clients in Riyadh.



Above: Associated Lightning provides lightning protection for sculptures on the roof of the Metropolitan Museum like this Roxy Paine metal tree and in the fields of The Storm King Center.

construction project in the world, the four billion dollar King Abdullah Petroleum Studies and Research Center in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia designed by Saha Hadid. We are doing the lightning protection specifications and supervising the work. I have to go over there again next month. On my last trip there was rain, thunder and lightning for the first time in two years.

How do you market your services?

Almost all of our business is through referral from engineers, architects, and customers. East Coast Lightning Equipment located in Winsted, CT, is the biggest supplier of lightning materials in the country and makes the absolute best products. They are good friends of ours and we cross-market.

We are also a preferred vendor with Chubb Insurance, which insures high-end properties. Chubb won't insure a house worth more than a million dollars if it doesn't have lightning protection.

About 90% of our business is through referrals, but we pay Google to put us at the top of the page when you type in "lightning rod."

How many employees do you have? Are they difficult to keep?

We have 17 full-time employees and, because of our commercial business, our installers are paid union electrician wages or prevailing wage rates. No one seems to leave. We've had some employees for 20 years. I guess it's that we pay well in an area where there aren't high salaries, and we provide good benefits.

Who has helped you grow your business?

Our main supplier, East Coast Lightning Equipment, has been key in growing our business. They do everything for us. Salisbury Bank has been tremendous. They really understand our business and have provided credit when we need it. Also our attorney/accountant Scott Shallo in Hudson continues to be an important advisor to us. Those

are important relationships for any business.

Did the great recession affect your business?

We remained busy during the recession and avoided laying anyone off even though it took customers longer to pay. Now we are really, really busy.

What's the biggest danger in your business?

Lightning protection begins at the top of buildings so our crews work up high and scramble up scaffolding and across steep roofs. I used to do that, but not anymore. Our insurance is really costly; the same rate that roofers are charged.

What's your advice to anyone starting a business?

You have to put in a lot of hours, 14 to 16 hours a day, and do a lot of the work yourself. You have to know the business and research everything. The business owner must always know every aspect of the business and who is doing what.

In March of last year you were elected to the Village Board in Millerton and got more votes than anyone else. Why did you run?

I ran for the Village Board because I know it is tough to find people that are interested in local government. I had some experience doing this, because I was on the board in the late 80s and early 90s when I served with one of the best Mayors Millerton has ever had, Jacob Shofet. ●

Full disclosure: The author of this interview first met Rob Cooper when he jump-started her car in front of Her- rington's. We serve together as Village Trustees in Millerton. Cooper recently donated his crew to install a central vacuum system and new electrical outlets in the Village Hall.

To learn more about Associated Lightning Rod you can reach them at (518) 789-4603 or on the web at www.alrci.com.

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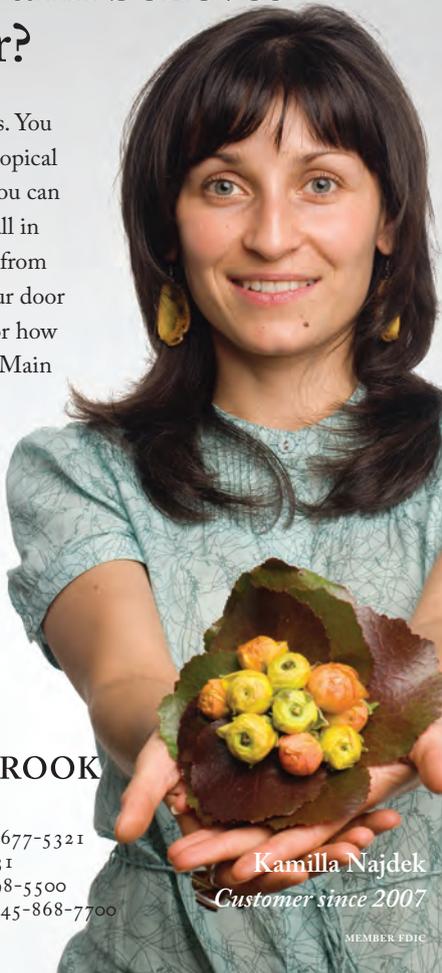


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Kamilla must dream in organics. You see it in her shop, from the tropical wood furniture to the small gifts you can buy for friends. You see it most of all in her flower designs. We could see it from the moment she walked through our door with a business plan and a vision for how an empty storefront on Millerton's Main Street could be brought to life.

We were so impressed, we approved her business loan within two days. Visit Kamilla's Floral Boutique and see for yourself. Afterwards you can stop by the Bank and let us know what you think.



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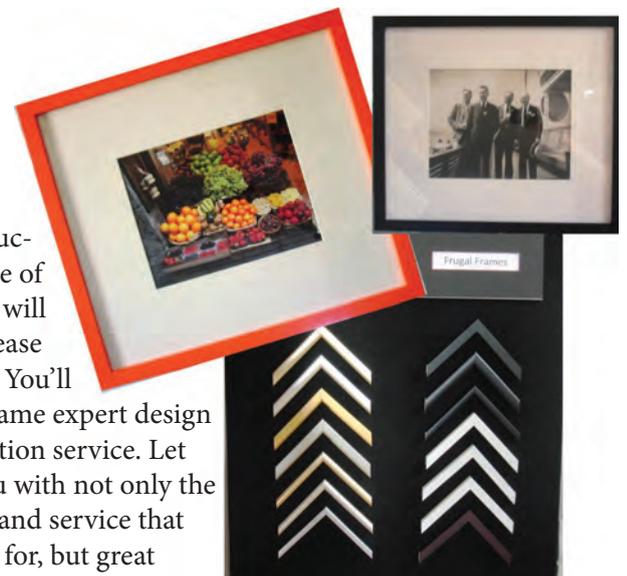
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GREAT GASTRONOMY: , COZZY'S pizzeria

By Thorunn Kristjansdottir
info@mainstreetmag.com

I don't know if you've noticed, but it's January and it's cold outside! At this time of year, I find that I don't go out as much, and that includes going out to eat. I either cook at home (something warm, comforting and filling like chicken noodle soup), or I pick something quick and satisfying up on my way home from work. Enter Cozzy's Pizzeria.

Cozzy's is not just on the way home heading out of Millerton, NY, it's also very reasonably priced with extremely generous portions, and it's really good! Plus, he delivers, too. So let's start with the pizza, since it's part of the business' name.

If you like real, authentic New York style pizza, Cozzy has mastered it. Whether you want a classic Margherita pie, pepperoni, a loaded meat lover's pie, or something crazy like ham and pineapple – it's all delicious! The same goes for the Calzones, Strombolis, and the rolls. Coz's menu boasts such choices as a Classic Stromboli with mozzarella, ham, sausage and pepperoni; Meat Lovers' Roll which has pepperoni, sausage and meatballs; Chicken and Broccoli roll (yes, please!); the Roni Roll, which I still to this day don't know what it entails; and the Veggie Roll which has roasted onions, roasted red peppers and mushrooms. Or if those don't strike your fancy, then you can load a roll or calzone up with any of the topping (or this case, innard) choices that Cozzy has to offer.

The healthy choices

There's way more than pizza on this menu. There are over half a dozen salad choices, ranging from your classic Garden Salad, Caesar Salad, Greek

Salad, and Chef Salad, to the more exotic Buffalo Chicken Salad. I've ordered quite a few of them and each and every time the salad is fresh, tasty, and it is always presented beautifully! Did I mention tasty? And honestly, how can you beat a large Greek Salad for \$8? You spend about that just in gas driving to the grocery store!

Cozzy also has a number of wraps on his menu, and he offers whole wheat wraps for the super healthy minded. He's got a Veggie Wrap, Chicken Pesto Wrap, Grilled Chicken Wrap, and a Turkey Club Wrap, to name a few. If wraps aren't your thing, he's also got up to a dozen sandwich and hot sub choices, like Meatball Parmigiana.

For those of you who are like me and enjoy a hot cup of soup on cold days, Cozzy always has hot soup available. I've tried both the Corn Chowder and the Minestrone, and they really hit the spot!

A mixed and varied order

When I ordered on this chilly day, I actually skipped ordering the soup, but I got a good assortment of food to tell you about. Of course I had to order a large pie. You just can't go to Cozzy's without getting a few slices – that's just how it goes. I also ordered wings off of his appetizer menu, and this time I went for the barbeque flavor. Delicious, as always. And the blue cheese dip that accompanies the wings brings out the barbeque flavor all the more. But if you're not a fan of wings, Cozzy also has garlic knots which hit the spot every time, mozzarella sticks, Jalapeño poppers, French fries and cheese fries, and he's also got chicken fingers.

Needless to say – it's all good!

On this day, I was craving a salad more than anything else. I ordered the large Greek Salad which consists of mixed greens, cucumbers, tomatoes, red onions, black olives, pepperoncini peppers and feta cheese. Fresh. Delicious. Yummy!

A Cannoli for me and a Cannoli for you, too!

Until this very day, I had only ever seen Cozzy's famous Cannolis. I've been told that Cozzy makes them himself and that they are unlike anything else. So I took advantage and asked for two to finalize my order. When I got my food, the Cannolis looked not just delicious, but beautiful in their little to-go box. I took them out very carefully to take a photo to share with you, and I "accidentally" got some of the Cannoli filling on my finger – hold the phone! What is that pure deliciousness?

I knew that Cannolis are somewhat of a traditional Italian/Sicilian dish, so I looked it up to know for sure. This little piece of heaven originated in Sicily, and it consists of the shell which is essentially fried pastry dough. The filling is sweet and creamy and most often contains some ricotta. I'm not certain what Cozzy uses in his filling, but I don't need to know. All I know is that it is delicious! But be careful, the powdered sugar goes everywhere, and that stuff is just evidence and will give you away!

Regardless of what you order at Cozzy's, you're sure to have a great meal with plenty of food, and your wallet will be left in tact, too! ●

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chaseholm farm creamery

TALES OF A FARM GROUPIE

By Memoree Joelle
info@mainstreetmag.com

Snow lightly blanketed the pasture the morning I visited Chaseholm Farm in Pine Plains. A few small Jersey cows stood serenely with their faces toward the winter sun, and the air was still outside the large white barn that houses the creamery. Inside, a slow transformation was taking place. Behind those walls, thousands of yeasts and microorganisms were hard at work, forming layers of mold into the rinds of some of the most incredible cheeses in the country.

Rory Chase, the cheesemaker, and the Chase family farm

Rory Chase has been making his small batch artisanal cheeses since 2007, after returning to his family's farm from California and turning his grandfather's barn into a creamery. He studied cheesemaking both at Cal Poly and at the University of Vermont before starting his original company, the Amazing Real Live Food Company. That name still appears on the labels, but soon look for the Chaseholm name on all of the cheeses. And don't worry, nothing but the name has changed.

Rory is committed to crafting natural, small production cheeses made mostly in the French tradition. Everything is done by hand, largely by Rory himself and his small staff of three, though a few part timers come and go. His sister Sarah manages their herd of around one hundred cows, made up of Jerseys, Holsteins, and a few brown Swiss. They graze on rotated pasture most of the year, and all of their supplemented feed is milled on the farm.

The Chase siblings approach everything they do

on the farm according to the principles of sustainable agriculture, honoring the land their family has farmed since the 1930's.

"We believe the quality of our milk is deeply related to the quality of our soil and the life it can support. Creating farmstead cheeses give us a chance to see our product from pasture grass to Camembert, our attention guiding it all the way. We are here to continue our family farm and a tradition of agriculture in our region while making products that honor both the body and the farm as living organisms and promote their good health," stated Rory.

Milk's relationship with pasteurization, bacteria, enzymes and more

Rory currently makes seven different cheeses, all made from milk from his family's own herd. Five of those are pasteurized using a technology that heats the milk to the lowest temperature possible that is sufficient to kill bacteria, while keeping much of the enzymes intact. The morning I visited was a cheesemaking day, and he let me peak inside the special atmospheric vat pasteurizer he had just filled with three hundred gallons of white frothy milk, fresh from the morning milking session.

After forty-five minutes, all of that delicious milk gets put to use making even more delicious cheese. Five of the cheeses are made from the pasteurized milk, and one hundred twenty-five gallons

Continued on next page ...

went toward the “Red Beard” cheese on that particular day. Red Beard is definitely the most pungent of the cheeses, with a rind that gets washed in hard apple cider and finished with an apple brandy. If you’re a fan of stinkier cheeses, this one’s for you.

On the other end of the spectrum, the supremely mild Farmer’s Cheese is made in the style of a Boursin. These are not aged, and come in a variety of flavors perfect for spreading on toast. Basil and garlic, horseradish, dill, and just plain sea salt are included in the line-up, so there’s something for everyone.

The Chaource style Moonlight cheese is covered by a sea salt and ash rind (which is entirely edible, like all of the rinds) and lovingly hand rolled into a log. It is best served at room temperature, and is divine with Champagne. In fact, Chaource was first made in the Champagne region of France in the fourteenth century, in the town of its namesake. It is slightly aged, with a texture very similar to a chevre-style. I love to impress my French friends with this cheese, because it holds its own when compared to its French counterpart, and proves what we are capable of producing right here in the Hudson Valley.

But perhaps my favorite of all of Rory’s softer cheeses is the double cream Camembert. Rich butterfat content makes this creamy, traditional Normandy style cheese melt in your mouth. I like to enjoy this one with slices of apple, or better yet, paired with a dry, French style hard cider.

Raw milk cheeses are available, too

Chaseholm makes two raw milk cheeses, meaning the milk does not go under pasteurization at all.



Above top, left: Chaseholm Farm. Above top, right and center: Soft cheeses are formed into logs and balls then some are covered with sea salt and ash rind, and then packaged. Above four images: Different kinds of cheeses in their various aging stages in aging rooms. Below left: Queso Blanco, ready for feasting.

These semi-hard cheeses are perhaps the easiest to digest, so if you have a problem with lactose, rest assured these contain very little, if any. Since the milk is left raw, all of the enzymes needed to digest what little lactose remains are there, and I have easily consumed an entire wedge of each without difficulty.

It’s hard to choose a favorite between the Alpage, which is a Gruyere-style cheese, and the Stella Vallis, made in the style of the classic French Tomme. The Stella Vallis is aged around four months, has a slightly nutty characteristic, and is excellent with dessert. The Gruyere is also slightly nutty, and a bit firmer since it is aged for almost a year in the cave. I tend to use it for melting into the best grilled cheese anyone could ever dream of, though it is equally delicious on its own.

The world of Queso Blanco

Last but not least, Chaseholm offers one cheese that is not French in style, but Latin instead. The Queso Blanco, which I have not tasted, is a pasteurized, rindless cheese and is available in sea salt, chili pepper, or herbes de Provence flavor.

Both raw and pasteurized cheeses are fermented at variable pH levels, and the metamorphoses of milk becoming cheese largely involves controlling acid and moisture, temperature, and salt. The whey is separated from the curds, and is sent to a few

lucky pigs I happen to know in the area. The curds are then cooked, stirred and coagulated, and the rest of the process is a detailed science of washing, ripening, and then depending on the cheese, my favorite part – aging. Rory let me tour the aging rooms, where dozens of wheels of glorious cheese were slowly developing in a cool 53 degrees. I lingered near the Tomme, feeling very much like a giant mouse in my own personal heaven. When ready, they will all be cut, and packaged by hand before being sent off to a market, farm stand, or grocer that is very likely near you.

All seven of the Chaseholm Farm cheeses can be purchased at area farmer’s markets from Millerton to Great Barrington, and are sold at numerous grocery stores throughout the region, and even at Whole Foods. In addition to cheese, Rory makes naturally fermented sauerkraut, and now offers raw milk, which is only available directly from the farm at his sister, Sarah’s, farm store. The farm store is just up the road from the creamery and offers their cheeses, raw milk, pastured beef, über ethical veal, fresh eggs, and sauerkraut for sale. All of the products are of course made right on the farm! •

For more information about the Chaseholm cheeses or about Chaseholm Farm please visit them on the web at www.chaseholmfarm.com, visit the farm store by appointment or on Saturdays from 10-4, or by calling 518.339.2071.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO AGRICULTURAL TAX ASSESSMENTS

By Christine Bates

christine@mainstreetmag.com

Realtors mention “Ag exemptions” when they are trying to sell large parcels of land. Your neighbor has a field of hay and is paying a lot less in property taxes than you are. Who gets these “Ag” reductions? How do they work? This month’s Main Street article on agricultural tax assessments focuses on Ag assessment rules in New York, Connecticut and Massachusetts and their impact on our taxes and quality of life.

What are Ag exemptions? Why do they exist?

“Get one thing straight,” Ed Hoxsie, Executive Director of Dutchess County Soil & Water Conservation District, said loud and clear. “There is no such thing as an Ag exemption. Every owner pays property taxes. Ag assessments are based on agricultural usage, not market value.”

The so-called Ag exemption is the difference between a property’s market value assessment and an agricultural assessment. Land actively devoted to agriculture is assessed at a lower value if the owner can meet certain requirements. Every state has a ‘Use Value Assessment’ law for farms, forests and open spaces. Most of these laws were passed in the 60’s and 70’s to protect farming activity and maintain open spaces, but also to be fair to farmers. Studies have proven that farms and fields demand far fewer services than residential properties. As farmers often say, “Cows don’t go to school and cabbages don’t dial 911.”

Acres in Ag assessments

The total acreage covered by Ag assessments doesn’t change very much year to year. “I looked back five years... the number of acres has not fluctuated more than 3.8% in that time period, so it is fair to say that it stays constant,” according to the Town of North East’s Assessor Katherine Johnson. In North East alone the number of acres granted an Ag assessment in 2012 was 10,005 out of total town acreage of 27,271 – around 220 parcels out of 1,903 in the town. “Half of my job is dealing with agricultural assessments.” Johnson estimated that these reduced assessments increase everyone else’s taxes about 11% to 12% annually. In Salisbury there are 4,717 acres with Ag assessments and Assessor Barbara Bigos estimates that it saves owners on average \$150 in taxes per acre per year.

Although agricultural acreage has not changed significantly, the use of the land has. Steve Nack of Columbia County Soil and Water Conservation says the number of dairies in Columbia County has



Above: Lee Farm West in Salisbury, CT has 199 acres. Based on an agricultural tax assessment the owner pays less than \$3,000 in property taxes. Photo courtesy of John Harney.

dropped from 200 to 20, but CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) activities and greenhouses are taking their place. More activities, from horses to bees, now qualify. Hoxsie observed that Dutchess County had 275 dairies in the 70’s and now has only 24; however, land is being used for higher value crops like hops, and specialty vegetables.

You don’t have to be a farmer to qualify

Every state has different rules and regulations. (See chart for state-by-state comparison). New York requires a minimum of seven open acres, which produce at least \$10,000 in revenue. Massachusetts requires five acres with only \$500 in sales, and Connecticut doesn’t have a minimum acreage or income requirement. Common to all is that an agricultural activity must generate revenue. In Massachusetts that could mean having five acres of pasture and selling a few sheep to meet the minimum revenue level of \$500. In New York the higher revenue requirement of \$10,000 (unchanged since the 1970’s) can be met by leasing the land to a farmer who has an agricultural operation with at least \$10,000 in revenues. Johnson estimates that about 75% of Ag assessed properties in North East are rented, rather than owned by farmers. Connecticut is much more flexible and relies heavily on the judgment of the assessor. Like New York and Massachusetts, a product must be produced for sale from eggs to hay. Any land that cannot be tilled, an

abandoned empty pasture, or a bush-hogged field would not qualify because no income is produced.

Elizabeth Van Diepen of Elyse Harney Real Estate in Millerton affirmed that having acreage already being farmed and covered by an Ag assessment is a selling point. “I always bring it up. People really start thinking about it when a property has over 20 acres. Now all of a sudden people are looking for land. It’s really exciting when land starts to sell. It means people have cash.”

Valuing agricultural land depends on the assessor and the state

Excess residential acreage in New York may be assessed at a market value of \$10,000 to \$15,000 an acre or higher, but an Ag assessment may reduce it to a \$1,000 an acre or less. The “Ceiling value” is established by New York State, depending on soil type. As an example of the tax savings involved, a 389 acre farm in Amenia, which recently sold for \$5.5 million, pays taxes on an Ag assessment of only \$722,600. John Harney of John Harney Real Estate Associates pointed to the 199 acre farm for sale in Connecticut on the border with New York, which has annual property taxes of only \$2,888 because of its Ag assessment.

The methodology for determining the value of agricultural acreage varies from state to state, asses-

Continued on next page ...

“AG” TAX ASSESSMENTS - KEY FACTS IN NY, CT AND MA			
STATE	NEW YORK	CONNECTICUT	MASSACHUSETTS
Legislation	Agricultural & Markets Law 305	Public Act 490, Passed 1963	Title IX Chapter 61A
What taxes are reduced?	All county, town, village and school taxes	All property taxes - consolidated town & school tax bill	All property taxes - consolidated town & school tax bill
Agricultural assessment requirements	7 contiguous acres minimum Agricultural use for past 2 years Product sales of \$10,000 annually from land or from leasing farmer Less than 7 acres if produces in excess of \$50,000 in revenue directly to owner	Assessor makes decision. No minimum acreage for farmland. Land must be used to produce a product, not just for personal use	Single ownership of 5 contiguous acres or more actively devoted to agriculture Agricultural use for past 2 years \$500 + gross sales first 5 acres + \$5 per additional acre
How assessment value is established	Value per acre depends on soil ranging from \$1,998 for best organic soils to \$50 for worst soils. Determined by calculation of county Soil & Water Conservation	Individual assessor determines	State Farmland Valuation Advisory Committee makes recommendations. Assessor has final determination.
Application process	Soil and Water Conservation determines soil of parcel File Form RP 305 Agricultural Assessment Application with assessor. A separate application for each parcel is required.	Complete form from assessor’s office Owner must supply agreement with farmer	Owner applies to Board of Assessors by October 1 Once approved lien filed on property
Timing	By March 1 for tax year July 1 to June 30	September 1 - October 31	October 1 for next tax year
Renewal	Annually with form RP305 R by March 1	Not necessary unless land changes use or ownership Periodically reviewed by assessor	By October 1 every year for next tax year
Limitations/pentalties/special provisions	Within agricultural district must remain in agricultural for 5 years, and outside for 8 years or be subject to conversion payment if usage changes	Subject to a conveyance tax penalty if sold within 10 years, even if land remains agricultural	Roll back tax for 5 years if use changes Subject to conveyance tax if land is sold for a different use within 10 years
Rental requirements	Written five year rental agreement with farmer. Land producing less than \$10,000 in sales may qualify if leasing farmer’s total revenue exceeds \$10,000. Lease must be filed with assessor	Agreement with farmer on file	Agreement with farmer on file

essor to assessor. In New York the value is based on the quality of the parcel's soil as determined by the GIS maps of the Soil and Water Conservation District. These values are adjusted every year. For a \$40 fee per parcel an owner receives a break down of the quality of the soils, which can range from \$1,998 per acre for organic muck to \$50 for the worst kind of soil. This information is given to the assessor with revenue proof to establish the assessment. Over the past seven years, during a time of decline in real estate values, New York State doubled the ceiling values on agricultural assessments; however, legislation has just passed limiting future annual increases to 2%.

It's more complicated in Massachusetts and depends on crop, barrels per acre, type of land, geographic location and soil rating. The Farm Land Advisory Valuation Committee supplies the recommended values to the assessors. According to Gus Martin, a farmer and appraiser who has been involved since the law was passed in 1974, cropland usually comes out around \$150 an acre and vegetables at \$600 acre.

In Connecticut each assessor has great flexibility in determining the Ag assessment based on recommended guidelines. Salisbury's Assessor Barbara Bigos is an expert and gives courses to other assessors in how to establish values.

Farmers pay very little rent per acre

The tax savings are so significant to the owner that most farmers do not pay very much if anything for renting and using the land. Sometimes the owner will even agree to pay for the seed. Exactly how much farmers pay, "Is a well-kept secret," according to Elyse Harney of Elyse Harney Real Estate. Tom Henry, a specialized agricultural property appraiser, said that farmers often provide other services like plowing, fencing, and property maintenance in lieu of rent.

Ag assessments can be tricky

"Some lawyers in Connecticut advise owners to not seek an Ag assessment," according to Elyse Harney "because if the property is sold within 10 years of being granted an Ag assessment, even if it remains agricultural, the seller will pay a conversion tax at the closing. This can be a big surprise."

In New York and Massachusetts there are penalties only when the land use changes, not the ownership. In the Town of North East, Assessor Johnson hasn't seen a roll-back in six years, but the state law says that if the land is converted to non-agricultural use within eight years (five if within an Ag district) the owner will pay five times the taxes saved in the most recent year of benefit plus a 6% interest charge for the full period.

In Massachusetts, Sheffield's Assessor Tammy Blackwell agreed, "Sometimes it's not worth the trouble if the soils are poor, or if you intend to sell." The Massachusetts requirement that places a



Above: Selling organic produce at NECC Farmer's Market, Dominic Palumbo farms 20 acres in Sheffield. The farm's owner qualifies for an agricultural tax assessment. Photo by Christine Bates

lien on Ag assessed properties can complicate sales because towns reserve the right to purchase the property to prevent development.

Agricultural assessments may not be lower than market assessments depending on location. In certain upstate areas of New York, like the Western Tier, the mandated "ceiling" values can actually be higher than the market value assessment, according to Eric Ayelson, Dutchess County Director of Real Property Tax Service Agency. The designation is of most value in areas of high real estate values like Long Island.

And then a farmer can just decide it's too much trouble. A 25 acre plot in Millerton lost its Ag tax assessment classification when the farmer decided the field was too small and hard to get to. He just stopped plowing without notifying anyone. So far the owner has not found a replacement farmer and the assessor re-instated a residential market assessment.

Ag tax assessments are complex and every state has additional tax incentives for specific agricultural activities. For example in New York there are special rules regarding sales tax exemptions, orchard and vineyard exemptions, and provisions for farm buildings and historic barns. Some towns in Connecticut have Open Space assessments that do not require farming. Every state has separate laws regarding forest assessments. Issues surrounding reduced use-based tax assessments are complex and anyone interested in understanding whether a specific property would qualify should consult with his or her local tax assessor. •

TRUE OR FALSE: AG TAX ASSESSMENT QUIZ

1. Every state has agricultural tax assessment legislation to reduce property taxes on agricultural land, but the rules vary from state to state.
2. An agricultural tax assessment exempts land from property taxes.
3. Each state has its own system for determining the taxable value of agricultural land.
4. Renting agricultural land to a farmer is a financially attractive proposition.
5. If land is under a conservation easement it cannot qualify for an agricultural assessment.
6. To be eligible for an agricultural tax assessment land must be located within a designated "Ag District."

ANSWERS

1. TRUE.
Each state differs in minimum amount of land, revenue requirements, how the assessor values the land, renewals, etc. For farmland, New York requires seven acres, Massachusetts five, and Connecticut is flexible.
2. FALSE.
Everyone pays taxes. Agricultural land is typically assessed at a lower value than residential vacant land.
3. TRUE.
In New York the assessor bases the value on the type of soil. In Massachusetts the value is determined by the type of crop, type of soil, and location east or west of the Connecticut River. Assessor's in Connecticut operate under guidelines, but have considerable autonomy in determining values.
4. TRUE & FALSE.
Depending on location and type of land, renting it to a farmer will produce minimal income to the property owner, but the benefit of reduced property taxes can be substantial.
5. FALSE.
A conservation easement is permanent and provides a one time income tax benefit to the donor, but does not reduce annual property taxes. An agricultural tax assessment typically reduces the assessed value of the land and must be renewed or reviewed periodically. There can be penalties for changing land usage depending on the state. Many properties under conservation easement are farmed and also receive an agricultural tax assessment.
6. FALSE.
The land can be anywhere; however, there are some other benefits to being in an Ag district.



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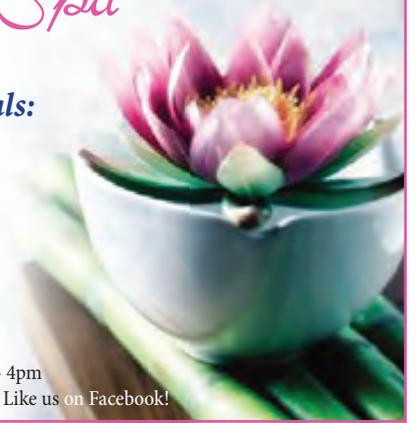
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SKI JUMPING OVER SALISBURY

By Mary B. O'Neill
info@mainstreetmag.com

The Northwest Corner of Connecticut is known for many attractions and pursuits – hiking, fall foliage, fine dining, antiques, art galleries, and let's not forget ski jumping. Whoa, wait one minute. Ski jumping? Isn't that the alpine sport practiced high in the mountains that defies gravity and leaves spectators with a pit in their stomachs? You betcha! Salisbury's history is ski-deep in a rich passionate association with the sport.

Next month, the 88th annual Salisbury Winter Sports Association (SWSA) Jumpfest will coincide with the Opening Ceremony of the Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia. This is especially serendipitous since women, some of whom have jumped here in the past, will be competing in ski jumping there for the first time. Finally, they will receive recognition for the dedication and mettle they have been showing for years, albeit unacknowledged by the Olympic Committee.

Imported from Norway

Ski jumping in Salisbury dates back to the mid-1920s with the arrival of the Satre brothers from Norway. To recreate the feeling of home they constructed a jump consisting of a snow-packed cabin roof with a jerry-rigged ramp to lengthen the "in run" (the sloping path of icy snow the jumper skis down to build speed and momentum). Soon after, they founded the Salisbury Outing Club, which held its first official meet in January 1927. The following year the town of Salisbury began to marshal its support of the jumps with activities to engage the wider community, a tradition that continues to this day.

During World War II jumping competitions were discontinued and the jump site fell into disrepair. After the war, a group of intrepid local men met to talk about reviving the sport. They organized themselves, leased land, constructed jumps, joined the Eastern Ski Association and in today's parlance rebranded themselves the Salisbury Winter Sports Association (SWSA).

SWSA is still thriving thanks to a dedicated, passionate, and fiercely loyal board and cadre of other volunteers. This non-profit organization is fueled solely by the scrappy grit of its volunteers, private donations and fund raising events. Its ski jumping competition has continued through the years and has remained vibrant and inclusive.

Making a mountain out of a snow hill

Each winter a group of two dozen hearty souls make their way to Satre Hill in a ski jumping spin on the movie *Field of Dreams*. These bundled and booted individuals descend upon the jumping area

murmuring, "If you ice it, they will come."

According to Willie Hallihan, SWSA board member, this crew just knows to show up on the Wednesday evening preceding the jumps each year. While most of us fear that slippery slope in life, these volunteers crave it. Whatever the weather on that night the flood lights go on, the bulldozers and heavy equipment roar to life, and the snow makers spew the white stuff into the air.

The snow is transported up the hill to the base of the tower by truck. From there it is fed into an auger, which loads it into a corn blower appropriated from its more traditional task of blowing corn into a silo. (I told you SWSA was resourceful and scrappy). This blower sends snow 70 meters into the air to the crest of the in run. The snow then slides down the ramp's plastic liner to the end, which is the area known as the "take off." So begins the annual ritual of creating an eight-foot wide, six-inch deep "sidewalk of snow and ice" running 300 feet to the top of the jump.

That takes care of the in run, but what about the landing hill area where jumpers set down after flight? That process starts in November when snow makers are cranked up. This hill is packed, raked, and repacked in the tradition of old wine-making – with human feet stomping on the snowy surface with skis.

Taking the leap and rebuilding the jump

In 2011, Salisbury and SWSA played host to the Junior Olympic Competition on its newly-completed jump constructed by local builder and designer Seth and Rafe Churchill. This jump allows the Salisbury jump to conform to current standards, thus ensuring SWSA's regular hosting of the event every five years. The funds for this \$700,000 project were raised privately with enthusiastic moral and financial support from the local community.

The Junior Olympics, now known as the Junior Nationals, are due to return to Salisbury in 2016. For Hallihan, SWSA's sterling reputation amongst jumping competitors, coaches and organizers lies in the dedication of its volunteers and their attention to hill prep and event administration. Ken Barker, SWSA's board president, is proud that SWSA garnered the USSA Ski Jumping and Nordic Club of the Year award in 2011. Barker was told by officials that, "No other club could pull off three events in a season on an all-volunteer basis." Each Jumpfest utilizes the skills of over 100 volunteers. During the Junior Nationals that number swells to double that amount, performing tasks from shepherding jumpers up in the jumping tower, to ticket sales, to publicity.



Photo by Ian Johnson

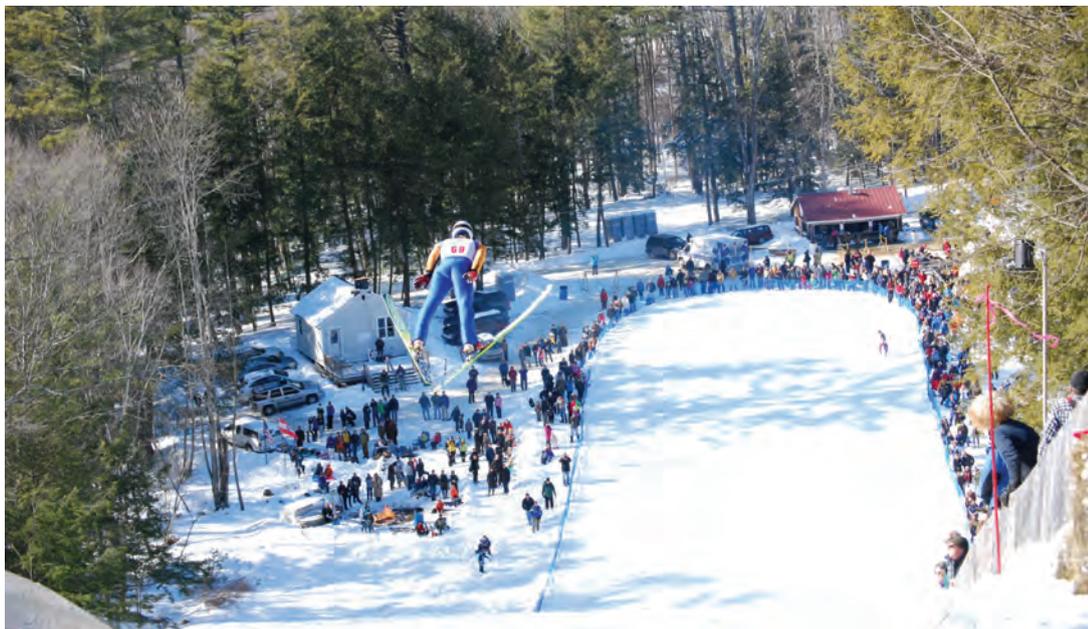
Incubator for the Olympics

Learning to ski jump is an incremental pursuit and one that SWSA is willing to teach anyone who wants to learn. Barker touts Salisbury as one of the few venues that can bring a jumper from beginner to Junior Nationals because it possesses a 20, 30, and 70 meter jump – all of the jumps necessary to progress in the sport. Hallihan likens Salisbury's ski jumps to the farm league for Major League baseball. SWSA uses the facilities at Satre Hill to identify, cultivate, and train local talent. Conquering the 70 meter hill is vital to a jumper's progression to the 120 meter behemoth you see at the Lake Placid training facility and at the Olympics.

Each winter SWSA hosts a jumping camp over school vacation as well as weekend coaching and practices. At these sessions a child begins on her alpine skis, boots and bindings on the 20 meter jump, which resembles large mogul more than a proper ski jump. When ready, the jumper moves to her alpine boots attached to jumping skis and finally to jumping boots and skis. From there she moves to the 30 meter hill. Next is the 48 meter hill at Lake Placid, then back to Satre Hill for the 70 meter Junior National jump height before returning to Placid for the Olympic-level 90 and 120 meter jumps.

Barker points out that the young jumpers can

Continued on next page ...



Left: Mid flight, photo by Jonathan Doster. Above: Landing hill, photo by Kathleen Doyle. Below: The in run on the 70 meter jump, photo by Jean Saliter.

really get a feel for soaring off the 20 and 30 meter hill. It is this feeling that keeps these neophytes unclipping skis, trudging up to the top of the jump and doing it all over again – for hours. However, to truly experience sustained flight you need to go off the 70 meter hill. Hallihan asserts that from this height, if you jump with head forward, skis spread in a V formation, arms at your side, and all human instincts for self preservation checked at the starting gates, you will have become as close to a human wing and true flight as possible.

This year's Olympic Games will be especially poignant for SWSA. It is the first time that women will be competing for gold in ski jumping after a lengthy, puzzling, and frustrating effort to get to the Olympics. Throughout its history SWSA has supported and trained women as they moved through the ranks and hit the ice ceiling. SWSA has even written letters of support to the United States Ski Association and the International Olympic Committee in support of women's ski jumping at the Olympic level. Barker contends that, "SWSA has always backed female jumpers. We've never seen a reason not to include women. They are tough, determined athletes, and deserve to compete at the highest levels."

The Salisbury ski jumps have nurtured Olympic competitors year after year. Peter Frenette, a competitor in the 2010 Vancouver Olympics who is guaranteed a spot in Sochi next month sailed through Salisbury in his youth. In 2000, a 15-year old Lindsey Van competed here. She is hoping to be named to the Olympic team on January 23rd. Several years later Nina Lussi, along with her siblings Danielle and Miles, honed their skills at Satre Hill as well. Lussi also has hopes for this Olympics. Other jumpers who competed in Salisbury are Nicholas Alexander and Nicholas Fairall.

Salisbury is a family

The Salisbury jumps become a special part of these young jumpers' story. Nina Lussi, presently training

in Norway, speaks fondly of her time competing in these parts. For Lussi and other athletes Salisbury is ski jumping's past and future. She observes that, "Kids from the East, as well as from all over the country, have had the chance to jump off this legendary hill, and I am sure it is not one they will easily forget."

The ties between jumpers, SWSA and this town are strong. Lussi reminisces that, "Salisbury is a family – once a part of it, always a part of it. I could start naming names of the faces I see year after year, working their butts off to get the hill up and running, but I am sure I would leave someone out, and that simply wouldn't be fair! All I can do is thank you and hope that I will come back again someday and send a few more jumps off it."

In turn, these budding competitors become hometown kids to SWSA and the spectators. Lussi fondly recalls an example of this close-knit community feeling just this season, "I had been in correspondence with Mike Harney regarding my love for his Hot Cinnamon Spice tea from Harney & Sons. He took the initiative to make my time in Norway as enjoyable as possible by arranging for a box to be sent to my hotel in Lillehammer. I was ecstatic! I rarely get mail, and to get a package full of my favorite tea made me so happy."

You can ring your bell

To cheer in the language of ski jumping the cow bell is *de rigueur*. Clapping in mittens while holding hot cocoa is well nigh impossible. You could try shouting your support but it will leave you hoarse and your cheers carried off in the wind undelivered. The cow bell is the traditional and effective way to show your enthusiasm. You can purchase these at the Jumpfest along with other SWSA ski jumping accoutrement like the snappy red ski cap and fleeces sold by Peter Becks Country Store with a portion of the proceeds going to SWSA.

Jumpfest 2014

The 88th Jumpfest takes place from February 7th through 9th. The event includes Friday night target jumping under the lights, chili cook off and



the ever-popular human dogsled races. Saturday brings the Salisbury Invitational Jumping Competition, ice carving contest, and the Snow Ball dance. Sunday concludes the weekend with the annual Salisbury Volunteer Ambulance breakfast and the Eastern U.S. Ski Jumping Championship.

The existence of ski jumping in this region is unique and for many, unexpected. SWSA's goal is to create awareness and enthusiasm for the event and the sport itself. With this winter's Olympics right around the corner the timing is perfect. To experience the thrill of ski jumping steeped with history, small-town charm and hospitality, head to Satre Hill where you can marvel at young talent and future Olympic hopefuls letting fly over Salisbury. •

For more information and up-to-date event listings about SWSA and Jumpfest go to www.jumpfest.org. SWSA is a non-profit organization that also supports youth ski programs including jumping, cross country, and downhill scholarships to several area grade schools as well as Olympic athletes.



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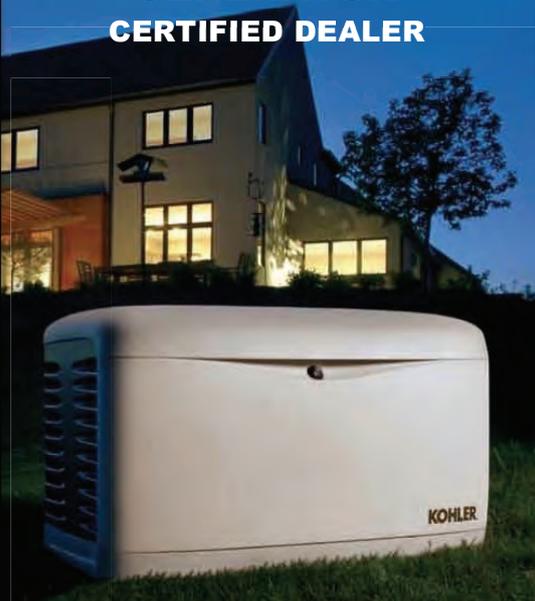
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becoming wild
A CONVERSATION WITH CHRIS MADDOX

By Melissa Batchelor Warnke
info@mainstreetmag.com

I met Chris Maddox under a November new moon. A group of us were twenty minutes late to the Wild Woman Circle she was leading in Millerton (wrong directions, poor street lighting) and were terrified to interrupt the small group of apparently meditating ladies. I was about to make a run for it when Chris ushered us in, hugging each of us and saying “You’re not late. You’re here at the perfect moment. This is the perfect moment.” It was disorienting, in a nice way.

Chris comes from a Houston-based Marine family and her positive energy derives from the root; her great-great-grandmother and great-aunt were both healers. Two years ago, Chris quit her day job to create The Wild Woman Project, which aims to “help Budding Visionary Women align with their true voice so they can express and lead with authenticity and power.” Now 29, she offers moon circles, trainings, workshops and a one-on-one 40-day transformation.

Stepping into the circle

I’m a conflicted mix of true believer in sisterhood and authenticity and ornery skeptic, a woman left to steep in New York City for a little too long. After agreeing to go to the circle with a friend, I had tried to eliminate all variables from the situation. What was the itinerary? Should I wear yoga pants? Could I pay the \$15 suggested donation by check? I was positively fretting about the logistics of finding my inner goddess.

While the program varies by leader, circles generally light a candle, acknowledging that you are in a sacred space, set ground rules, talk about the month’s astrological theme, visualize, meditate, share experiences, set intentions and end with a wild heart meditation. Simple as it sounds, I left feeling truly changed; energetic, inspired and open. Chris belly laughs a lot. She swears. She makes phrases that would generally alarm me – “soak in true heart energy,” for instance – seem completely normal. When I interviewed Chris a few weeks after our first meeting, I felt I was speaking with a woman who was completely herself, without reserve.

How did The Wild Woman Project start?

I was a full-time yoga teacher and had been part of the Vagina Monologues and V-DAY movement [to end violence against women] for four or five years. In early 2011, someone recommended that I read the book *The Women Who Run With the Wolves*. I remember reading the first page in the Time Warner Building’s Borders and electricity just running through my body. It’s all about the wild woman archetype. I was leading a circle of women and the phrase “The Wild Woman Project” kept coming to me. I bought the URL without knowing what I was going to do with it.

In the circle I was leading, we had seen our intentions come to fruition over the years. We just saw crazy stuff. Our friendships had gotten so deep and we knew it was real. These circles are at the heart of what is now The Wild Woman Project;

the vision is to see these circles expand all over the world. We just launched January 1, 2012 and are in Canada, Trinidad, Australia, and all over the US.

So The Wild Woman Project is a one-woman show with volunteer support?

I’m really lucky that so many people have offered to do a video or graphic design work for it. I’m just now getting settled into the entrepreneur aspect of it; I see my calendar and know when I need to be speaking about the next thing, I do the video editing, I run the website. Eventually, the dream is to give some of that away, but it’s a mom and mom shop.

You recently moved to West Stockbridge after a decade in New York. What has the change felt like?

New York is so vibrant and creative, but I’ve found a new dimension of myself in the quiet. I enjoy being in a cycle, living in a place where it’s dark at 4:30 pm in the winter and how different that is from the vibrant summer. Learning from nature is a huge part of the project; the Entire Moon Cycle, from New to Full to New again, mirrors every creative cycle within us. Being up here is really, really sweet.

You say that wildness is “your truest, most authentic voice, who you really are.” What are social and cultural barriers to women recognizing their own wildness?

Advertising. Women our age are out-earning our male counterparts; we’re a big ticket in terms of

consumption. We're constantly being told that we need some product to make us whole, that we need this lipstick or that bag or this surgery. That's dangerous because it's everywhere; we have to be very careful about what we consume. When I see an advertisement on Hulu, I literally mute it and look away until the show comes back.

The mythology that we cannot trust each other is also tough. We're seeing change in this arena, but the stories that we're told about competition between women get internalized. There's a lot of healing to be done around sisterhood.

What do you do off the clock? Do you feel pressure to be a sensei all the time or do you ever watch *The Real Housewives*?

I think there's a balance. With all this talk of wildness, there's still discipline that's required to keep your mental space clear. I've studied yoga for a long time and I've started recently pretty seriously studying Sufism. They're practices; you have to show up every day, even if it's just a little bit. I totally watch *Parks and Rec* and drink wine and I'll have a cigarette now and then. Whatever the brand of the Wild Woman Project, I love that it's very free. My dad recently said to me "you're not as enlightened as you think you are!" I said, "I don't claim to be enlightened, I claim wildness, so I'm good." It's important as a student and teacher to be constantly breaking down that idea of specialness.

What are some of the most moving moments that you've seen within a circle?

I've seen women who were participants in circles become circle leaders and how it's really helped them to blossom. It opens up areas of their life that were unexpected – getting into psychology and going on to be a therapist, harnessing their creativity, having a new photography business. A woman told me last night that she had sent an intention in our October circle to start to sing again, and the very next day a person walked into her office where she does a graphic design job and asked, "Do you sing?" Now she's singing with a choir.

There are a million examples; seeing partners show up, seeing new opportunities that seem to fall from the sky once they say it out loud. Part of it is really getting deep enough within yourself to find what it is that you want to create and then stating it in public. It makes it real. The way we hold it is powerful too, but part of it is just getting into that space.

If you meet someone at a cocktail party, how do you put the project into terms they can understand right away?

I say I teach people how to lead their own women's circles in their communities. I don't push hard. Of course I want every person in the world to thrive in a circle, but do I definitely know that's right for



Top image: Chris Maddox (depicted center) and her wild women playing around. Photo by Maki Hirose. Bottom left: Chris in the heart of her wild woman circle. Photo by Melissa Batchelor Warnke. Bottom right: The circle where the wild women of Millerton gather. Photo by Melissa Batchelor Warnke. Opposite page: Chris and two of her fellow wild women enjoy the outdoors. Photo by Maki Hirose.

every person? Not necessarily. There are forces at play that are mysterious and beyond pitching. Hazrat Inayat Khan, a Sufi teacher who came over to harmonize the West, taught not to wake someone who is asleep. They'll unfold. They'll wake when they need to wake.

When someone shows up to a circle and we create a truly non-judgmental space, some part of us comes forward; it's like our soul. There's something that clicks in the beginning of the circle where people say, oh wait, I have permission. There are amazing women everywhere but there is something really special about the women of Millerton. They go deep and they're very respectful of each other. I trust that even if everyone in Millerton doesn't come to this circle, the fact that ten women are coming all the time means that they're lit up. And the way that they're living is going to touch other people and ripple out.

What kind of personal sacrifices have you had to make to get The Wild Woman Project off the ground?

Financially, it hasn't been super easy. It's getting much better, but there was a real learning curve. I left New York City one year in and part of it was because I realized I couldn't just be hustling to

pay my rent or I wasn't going to have any energy for this. Simplifying my life has been such a good teacher; I learned how much crap I was consuming. Though I guess some people would think of it as a sacrifice, leaving New York was a huge blessing. I honestly feel so fortunate every single day to feel like I have something so exciting to do. On the morning of January 1, 2012, I was in Los Angeles and I remember crying out of joy and going, "Oh God I am finally doing what I'm supposed to be doing. Thank God." There's so much pressure about finding it and I never felt like I quite got on top of it. There were all these pieces that sort of fulfilled me but then I was missing another part. The Wild Woman Project is an amalgam of everything that I loved and had any talent at. It feels like a huge gift. ●

Learn more about The Wild Woman Project at www.thewildwomanproject.com or email chris@thewildwomanproject.com.

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- **AIR LEAKS**
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Hylton Hundt Salon

Salon for both ladies and gentlemen. Route 44 East, Millerton, NY. (518) 789-9390. www.hyltonhundt.com

Janice Hylton and Bonnie Hundt both worked in salons in the city, but opened up their salon 17 years ago. They put together what they took from their experiences and put together a formula by which clients can come in, feel welcome, enjoy a magazine, a great cup of coffee, and share in great conversation in a spa atmosphere. Over the years they've formed many great relationships with their repeat customers and are always available to sit down for a free consultation with new clients. Hylton Hundt offers all hair services: color, corrective color, highlights, hair cutting, and Marie does terrific updos! They are excited to share that they're expanding their services with Kim, who has just become certified in waxing. Color is always something that is important to Janice and Bonnie, as they do everything that they can to keep up with what's happening in the industry; the same high-end color you can get in the city, you can get here. Janice, Bonnie and their staff attend classes to keep up with the evolving hair trends and pay close attention to hair cutting techniques and products. They are very careful in picking out products for their salon, making sure it's safe for their clients. One bit of advise: Be kind to your hair, you wear it every day!



The Cord King

Firewood deliveries and stacking for the surrounding Hudson Valley. (845) 797-6877.

Jeff Viola attended college for forestry and started his business 20 years ago. He manages wood lots for timber production in the Hudson Valley, western CT and southern MA. The wood used for firewood is either diseased, dying, or undesirable species. They're also able to salvage trees that have come down in recent years' hurricanes. The Cord King delivers by the cord to Dutchess, Ulster, southern Columbia, and northern Putnam counties. With the green energy movement, Jeff started offering kiln dried wood three years ago. He leaves it in the kiln for ten days with temperatures exceeding 190°F. It makes a beautiful product and is recommend by some federal agencies because it kills any insects that may be harming other trees. It's also beneficial in the fact that you aren't supposed to move wood over 50 miles, but on top of that, folks that use wood burning as a source of heat said it is the best product they have used. Along with kiln dried being the new hot trend, Jeff and his crew offer seasoned wood and stacking in a nice neat pile. If you're thinking about alternative ways to heat your home at a greener and more economically friendly way, call The Cord King. They are a small piece of the green energy pie, and they're local!



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Taylor Oil Inc. has been a family owned and locally operated business, with offices in Millerton, Dover Plains, Pine Plains, Millbrook, and Pawling, for the past 86 years. Founded as a fuel oil supply business, Taylor Oil Inc. is now your "One stop home energy shop." Whether it is for home heating systems, air conditioning and humidity control installations, fuel oil, propane, or kerosene fuels, complete plumbing and water treatment systems, home heat monitoring systems, and more, Taylor Oil Inc. is your premiere resource in the Dutchess, Columbia, Litchfield, and Putnam county areas. Third generation company leadership is provided by President, Thomas Taylor, and he is ably supported by his sons Mark, Kevin, and Daniel. They pride themselves on great personal customer service and building long-term customer relationships. Getting to speak to a real person when you call, day or night, for service, or being able to schedule fuel delivery and pay your bill online from the company website, are just a few examples of the customer-first experience the company provides. In these budget conscious times, the company offers several Budget Plans for its customers as well. Taylor Oil Inc. and Taylor Propane wish everyone a healthy and happy 2014, and look forward to servicing their existing and new customers in the year ahead.



Out Back Storage, Inc.

Personal storage. 11 Mechanic Street, Amenia, NY. (845) 373-9539. www.outbackstorage.net

In 1999, being in close proximity to the rail trail in Amenia, an idea was sparked for Peter and his brother: start a storage company with 5x5 storage units for bikes and accompanying gear. Eventually Out Back Storage grew into personal storage units, serving northeast Dutchess county and northwestern Connecticut. They also help out their community by donating units for local organizations. With several other storage companies in the area, they are very competitive with prices and there is always someone to talk to in the office five days a week, Monday through Friday from 8:30-4:00 pm. You are able to access your personal belongings seven days a week with an automatic gate that opens in the morning and closes at night for security. They do not offer climate control units, but they do have many different size units depending on your needs. Sizes range from 5x5, 5x10, 10x10, 10x15, 10x20 with the largest box being 10x30. This can easily store your classic car or boat for the winter. Give them a call today to learn how they can help you store your belongings.

INSURING YOUR WORLD

As we enter the year of 2014, I'd like to bring up the hot topic of health insurance once again. It is imperative that those of you who are sole proprietors or closely held corporations without payroll or individuals seeking health coverage are going to be receiving non renewal notices from your respective health insurers! Please do not take these notices lightly, you will have two options, to access the NYS Public Exchange and its 4 options for carriers or try an off exchange plan which will not qualify you for any tax benefits as an on exchange plan. As of the writing of this article I am not aware of any of these plans that provide for out of area benefits so you may need to change doctors or hospitals depending upon the plan you choose. The other big change, other than rate increases, are that most of you will be experiencing higher out of pocket expenses since the Federal guidelines only provide for 4 different rating plans for out of pocket expenses. Your choices are Bronze, Silver, Gold, & Platinum. Bronze having the highest out of pocket expenses and Platinum the lowest. Within each metal tier there may be a few options yet one needs to study these carefully as they are quite different than what you have been used to, so do your homework. If you are a group of 2-49 employees, you will have less restrictions and a bit more flexibility, I will discuss these options in the next article. Please take your health care notices seriously so as not to have a lapse in coverage.

Kirk Kneller
Phone 518.329.3131
1676 Route 7A, Copake, N.Y.



Brad Peck, Inc.

Health & winter dangers

FEET:

You will be walking your dog and unless you fit it with shoes or boots, which is fine if your dog is happy with them, your dog will pick up rock salt on its footpads. Left alone, rock salt will irritate your dog's footpads and they may become sore. Do not allow your dog to lick its feet, which could cause diarrhea and vomiting, and make sure that you wash and dry your dog's feet when you return from your walk. Trim the hairs between your pet's toes to minimize the amount of ice and snow it collects. You could also rub petroleum jelly on your pet's foot pads. Around your own home, consider using a pet friendly ice melt.

Apart from ice melt, your pet may come into contact with antifreeze. The taste of antifreeze is sweet and attractive, yet it is a deadly poison. If you are using antifreeze, wipe up any spills and keep it well out of reach. Better yet, consider using an anti-freeze-coolant made with propylene glycol, which can be ingested in small amounts without causing significant harm.

SKIN:

In winter the humidity of the atmosphere is usually less. Your pet's skin will be drier and could flake. To help avoid this, brush your pet regularly, minimize the frequency of baths, and feed your pet a healthy diet; avoid extra oil or feed supplements unless your vet recommends it. Be vigilant, skin problems are most likely present when your pet has dry flaky skin, its skin looks sore or has open sores, is losing excess hair, its coat is dry and hair pulls out easily, and if your pet is nibbling and biting at itself.

After a spell outside, monitor your pet's ears, paws, and tail, which could get frostbitten. Damage to your pet's tissues will not show up for several days, however, the affected areas will feel very cold. If you suspect frostbite you could try soaking the affected areas in warm water for about 20 minutes but do not massage the frostbitten area. Keep your pet warm and wrapped up and take it to the vet as soon as you can.

Phone 518-789-4471
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www.agwayny.com



Dollars & sense

Rainy-day funds, savings for college, or just making your rent payment are all easier when you develop a budget and stick to it. "Setting a financial goal can be very motivating," says Bank of Millbrook executive vice president Stacey Langenthal. "Whether you are saving for a family vacation, a house down payment or even a new pair of shoes, stick to a plan and you'll achieve your goal."

The Bank of Millbrook recommends the following steps when creating a budget:

Be a Spending Sleuth: Track every penny you spend for a month. Keep receipts and write everything down. This will help you see where you can cut back.

Count Your Money. Determine the total amount of money coming in. Include only your take home pay (your salary minus taxes and deductions) as well as tips, child support, investment income, etc.

Itemize, Categorize, Organize. Categorize your receipts using a budget sheet like the one offered by the American Bankers Association Education Foundation.

She Shoots, She Scores. Set realistic financial goals and develop your budget to achieve them. Subtract your monthly expenses from your monthly income. Find ways to cut spending and set limits on things like entertainment expenses.

Stick to it. Keep track of your spending every month. Update your budget as expenses or incomes change. Once you achieve your financial goal, set another.

Save, Save, Save. Make one of your financial goals to save a certain dollar amount each month. Start an emergency fund if you don't already have one. You never know when you may need it.

Stacey M. Langenthal
Executive Vice President
(845) 677-5321 x102



marketing lol

This time of year is prime time to take stock and gear your business up in the new year! It's a great time to reflect on what marketing strategies you tried in the past year, to look at what proved to be effective, what needs to be finessed, and what simply did not work. It's also a great time to set goals and come up with strategies for the new year: what do you want to accomplish this year that you didn't in the previous year?

The most important thing in any business is that you need to continuously stay in front of both your existing, as well as your (potential) new customers! How do you stay in front of them? There are countless ways to do that (through such veins as advertising), and that's the easy part. But the key is that you need to be in front of the folks that are most likely to need and want your products and/or services. So knowing your customers and client base is crucial in any business. From there you can better figure out what marketing and targeting strategy will be most effective for you and your particular business, it may involve direct mail, advertising, radio, or even a personal letter or phone call. And again, the best way to determine which strategy will work for you: know your customers!

Happy New Year!



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WHAT'S YOUR SIGN?

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

The New Year will evoke your desire to improve your home. Embrace your friend in need, because you're more than capable.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

It's tricky to speculate and give advice about what the future may bring. Show patience and follow up with confidence. Others are curious and will try to find your weakness.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20)

You're the center of celebration and everyone wants to be around you. The stars are aligned and show that you're surrounded by people who can be trusted.

CANCER (June 21-July 22)

You need to get used to speaking clearly so that those that listen to you won't have doubts about your plans. Be careful not to disappoint people though.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22)

You have nothing to be ashamed of and can therefore present the world with your pride. Choose the right moment and be careful about what you give of yourself.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

The subject matter of your personal life will really take shape. If you show others that you really want to push yourself, you'll become an example and they will more likely help you.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

You set the bar high and you'll achieve it. And try to escape the extreme laziness of letting circumstances and or others decide your life for you. No more excuses!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

It is a good time to grapple secrets and other embarrassing matters. Your persistence accomplishes that no one will resist you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

Use this time to make long-term financial plans. Answer the call if you want, but if not, then don't be afraid to say it.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

Nothing kills a friendship as instantly and quickly as financial matters. Avoid such experiences by giving yourself sufficient time. This can possibly be effective in matters of the heart, too.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

The solution to your problem is close by, but you suspected that very solution already. Let yourself dream! Don't pretend to know what people are thinking.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20)

Today is the day that you're supposed to give your heart everything when it comes to friendship or romantic/love matters. Don't be shy, you have all of your ducks in a row.

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