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VROOM! VROOM!!

Well, you thrill-seekers, you bike-riders, and car enthusiasts out there: here's the issue for you! I promised our readers that we'd have an issue about cars and about transportation related topics, which include bicycles and horses, too! So for all of you who had enough of flowers and girly stuff in our "Wedding" issue this past February, here's the issue for you! I hope that you'll enjoy it, because we've compiled a number of fascinating stories as they pertain to this transportation and automobile theme.

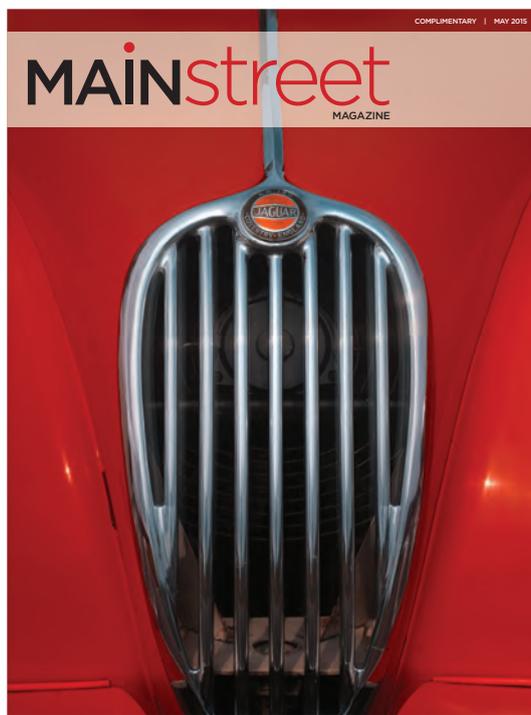
Personally, I truly appreciate a good car – I'll pass on the jalopies, thank you very much. I used to have, what one might call, a heavy foot (age has lightened it), and so I have a particular appreciation for classic cars, American muscle cars, and just all around beautiful cars. Due to this appreciation, I was truly excited and intrigued by a number of our stories. But what's funny is that a few of my writers, who are essentially non-car people, said that they were truly excited by the stories, too. That was fun to hear, because I am certain that there is something in this issue for everyone!

Oops, we did it again...

We got so excited about this transportation theme, that I ended up doing what I swore I wouldn't do: expand the magazine beyond 56 pages. As you might notice, this May issue is 60 pages. My predicament was that we had so many great stories, like that of Skip Barber, which just had to be told properly, and in order to do so needed an extra page. Truth be told, we simply couldn't confine a few of the stories, and we also had lots of fun ourselves on this one.

Additionally, the momentum picked up on this theme (I guess we have quite a few transportation fans out there), because our advertising line-up called for more space. So that worked out nicely: we had stories that also needed more space, and that's how we ended up with 60 pages. But as I mentioned in Christine's story on me in our Entrepreneur series in the March issue, I want to keep the publication at 56 pages because that's a good (and manageable) number for me. But I suppose that every so often it's necessary to break the rules, even if they are my own! And truth be told, I didn't mind so much in this case, because I think that the result is fantastic! So dear reader, please enjoy, and I hope that the sun shines bright and you enjoy a drive in your favorite car, a bike ride down a beautiful country road, or an awesome ride on your horse!

- Thorunn Kristjansdottir



MAY 2015

A red hot ride! A beautifully classic red Jaguar grill graces our "transportation" themed issue this month. Ladies and gentlemen, start your engines!

Cover photo by Lazlo Gyorsok

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the art of bringing
CLASSIC
CARS to life:
 Northwest Corner
 Classic Cars

By Brandon Kralik
 arts@mainstreetmag.com

Classic Cars are most definitely art. They are expressions of imagination and skill acquired by experience, study, and observation. As a symphony, where many musicians fine tune their instruments and contribute their own individual elements to the orchestra, an automobile is a concert of talent from the design, the sketches, clay models, the casting of parts and mechanics to be considered before any model of a car is put into production. From these works of art take on a life of their own. Of course some cars are purely practical, for getting from point A to point B, but, like a well crafted painting in relation to a poster, other automobiles become treasured, they can become heirlooms, prized for their beauty and the emotional power they evoke. "I don't know much about art, but I know what I like," is a phrase that is often heard in the art world, and one that can also be applied to classic cars.

"My baby" the '70 1/2 Camaro

Myself, not being a "car guy," much of the talk from those who live and breathe cars is lost on me, so I admit that when I first entered Northwest Corner Classic Cars in Lime Rock to talk with owner and founder Chris Little, I did not know what to expect. What I did know is the fleet of fully restored and/or mechanically reconditioned muscle cars that sat on the showroom floor were beautiful and met my aesthetic tastes when it comes to cars.

Chris and Rascal (the shop mascot) greeted me as I came in. A 1941 Wurlitzer Jukebox stood in

one corner and an original Mobil gas illuminated Pegasus sign on the opposite wall. Next to the Jukebox sat a deep blue '70 1/2 Camaro, Chris' "baby" as it turned out, and he told me the story of how it brought him together with the shop's lead mechanic Rick Peppe, who had been tuning and racing the car at the time. Rick, it was explained to me, is the guru of carburetor engines, which is becoming a lost art. A lot of this kind of mechanic work is intuition. You have to deduce based on your experience.

Chris told the story of how that Camaro's first engine; a built 383 small block, super charged with two carburetors, which sat like a sculpture on a pedestal in the showroom, had been replaced with a mild big block Chevy engine. The Chevy engine didn't suit his thirst for speed, and as a result was replaced by an original in the crate, never been fired, GM big block LS7 engine which, he says, was fantastic. But, again, in his quest to make the car a bit faster, another modified LS7 to gain an additional 150+ horse power was installed to increase the car's 1/4 mile performance. Wow! That is love. Four engines in seven years. I admit that as soon as Chris went into the numbers, block types, and horse power stuff, I nodded my head as the information went in one ear and out the other. But what did stick with me was the light in his eyes, and his genuine enthusiasm for what he does.

Specializing in American muscle

Northwest Corner Classic Cars specializes in mechanical restoration, performance upgrades, maintenance, and custom fabrication of American muscle cars. They do not do body work or paint jobs, but they do just about everything else and take great pride in bringing these works of art back to life. Chris tells me that they can tune Bentleys,



Above, top to bottom: A Super Bee. A 1966 Chevy Nova Super Sport. 1969 Dodge Super Bee in B5 Blue.

Ferraris, and other foreign cars, and they work with a variety of customers to help them with cars that cannot be cared for by regular mechanic shops.

Chris and his team go through the entire mechanical system of the car and eliminate the car owner's fear of the car breaking down so that the owner can truly enjoy driving the car and not have to worry about whether or not they will have to call a tow truck. Clearly, customer satisfaction is key to this business' success.

A key to keeping one of these cars healthy, Chris explained, is to use the proper parts. When these cars came off the assembly line for instance they didn't overheat, which is a common fear that owners of such cars have. There are lots of reasons a car can overheat, but one of them is replacing factory parts with ones that are inferior. Most of the customers who purchase cars return to Northwest Corner Classic Cars to have their cars maintained precisely, because they trust the experience and service that Chris and his staff provide.

The only original Indy 500 pace car from the 1964 series of Mustangs is for sale, complete with

original decals, stripes, and the original paint job. The only thing that has been replaced is the upholstery on the front seats and the visors, which match the original vinyl, and which was done by them at the shop. It is impressive to see a 50 year old car where nearly everything from the chrome, to the rubber, to the dashboard is original and so well cared for. When I enquired about the price my jaw dropped. "That's all?" I expected that something this nice would cost a good bit more, but all in all, I found the prices to be completely fair for such beautiful cars.

A lifelong passion

I asked Chris how he came to learn all of this and he answered like a true artist: it has always been in him. His love for cars has been lifelong and he has always had a head for all the stats and particulars of the cars that he now is able to own, rebuild, and sell. He explained that he once owned a '68 GTO, the perfect muscle car, but became overwhelmed by the daunting task of replacing all of the missing parts and fixing the myriad of mechanical issues. He didn't have anyone that he could take it to that could help him, and so he sold the car at a loss. Now Chris has a shop that fills that void for other enthusiasts who love the cars but lack the time or experience to fix them themselves, providing the services for those customers who don't want to work on their cars all of the time themselves. A great deal of care is given to each car to ensure that the customer doesn't have to worry about such things and be a MacGyver on the road. As is true with any good artist, this kind of work is a passion and Chris is doing what he loves.

Many people, and I have known quite a few myself over the years, have cars such as these. These people love their cars, but for one reason or another some mechanical issues arise (like the car won't start), and that grouped with not knowing what to do with the car, results in it being parked. Chris explained that they get a lot of calls on such cars, they go out, put them on the truck, get them in the shop, and bring them back to life. He says the look on people's faces when they are then able get in their dream car, it starts, and they can drive away is extremely satisfying.

Every car is a story. Why is it sitting there, tires dry rotted, sitting out in the weeds by the side of the garage? It could be that it was a memento,



Above top: A 1970 Chevelle Malibu. Left: Chris and his baby, the '70 1/2 Camaro. Right: Another satisfied customer drives away, this time in a 1966 Chevy Bel Air with a built 468 Big Block engine. Below left: The 1947 Chrysler Town and Country.

perhaps it was his son's car and he went off to Vietnam, that has happened a lot, and they just don't have anybody to resuscitate it.

The tale of a Cadillac

Chris shared one of his most satisfying success stories. "A very nice lady came to me with a Cadillac. She had a son who had joined the military and gone off to one of the Middle East wars and this was his car. Before he left, he had this '62 Cadillac, two door coupe, which he had parked in his mother's garage, and then he went off to war. The car had been sitting there for five years and just before he was scheduled to return home, his mom called us and said that she wanted to surprise him and have the car up and running when he got home. We brought the car into the shop and got it all fixed up and when the son returned, his mother brought him in to our shop, and he was just blown away!" I watched a smile come across Chris' face as he told the story – talk about happy!

"This is what I love doing," he said, "taking old cars that have been sitting, continuing their story, and seeing the owners drive away with a big smile on their face, and a thumb in the air!"

Pimp my ride: customize it

Custom fabrication is one of the things that they can also do at Northwest Corner Classic Cars, and Chris took me out back to one of the many garages behind the showroom to show me one such particularly challenging project that they were working on. The car was a 1947 Chrysler Town and Country, straight eight, convertible. When I saw this car my eyes got wide! What a beauty!

The wood work along the doors and around the back of the trunk was stunningly beautiful. The canvas top, along with the rest of the car was

in pristine condition. Chris explained that this car did not have power steering, power breaks, and was a stick shift, which required the use of the clutch pedal and therefore was difficult for the woman who owns it to drive. She had bought it from a dealer, drove it home, put it in the garage, and didn't touch it again for nearly a decade. When she learned what Chris and Rick could do with cars, she brought it to them with some specific requests. She wanted it to have an automatic transmission, power breaks, and she wanted to have the entire car updated so that she could drive it.

Looking into it, Chris discovered that there has never been an automatic transmission on an engine like this one. He called around to a number of shops looking for an adaptor plate for an automatic transmission and the answer was always "no." It didn't exist. They had to customize an adaptor plate, which has gone through several cuts and revisions (it can't be off by 30/1000 of an inch), and it is now being fitted to the engine in the main shop along with the other assemblies which will bring this beautiful car back to life. Creative problem solving.

These guys do things that the general repair shop just isn't equipped to do and by accepting challenges that the customer brings to them, they can create a one-of-a-kind car that has never existed before. If that isn't art, I don't know what is. ●

For more information about Northwest Corner Classic Cars, please visit them at 438 Lime Rock Rd., Lakeville, CT, or online at northwestcornerclassiccars.com and don't forget to like them on Facebook.

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.



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Michele Lelandais is the store manager at Salisbury Breads in Salisbury, CT. She says that she enjoys her job because the store has such a wonderful wide range of baked goods of various kinds to offer a wide range of people. Favorites are sticky buns, pies, baguettes, cheeses, pastries, and many types of bread. All are freshly baked daily by Bruce Young, bakery chef and co-owner. Michele says that she enjoys the Northwest Corner because of the unique group of residents who she believes have a different attitude towards life than the rest of the state. In her free time she enjoys skiing, horseback riding, dining out, and listening to music. A dream car? She has fond memories of her aunt's 1954 turquoise Thunderbird and wouldn't mind one herself.



Charles Paley recalls growing and selling sweet corn since he was 14 years old, which eventually led to opening Paley's Market in 1982 and becoming the staple produce item at Paley's. After taking a year off from growing produce, Charlie says they are back and better than ever and he is excited to be working with his staff this season. Over the winter he enjoyed cross-country skiing, but this summer he is looking forward to swimming and paddle boarding, and of course tinkering with his 1922 Model T Ford that was actually his dad's. Charlie likes motorcycling, too, and says this is a fantastic area to enjoy a nice ride. Sounds like you have a lot on your plate this season Charlie ... no pun intended.



Becky Welsh is the owner of Shear Illusions Salon in Sharon, CT. She grew up in South Amenia, NY and eventually made her way to Sharon after many stops along the way, including San Diego. She is a graduate of Boce's Trade School and worked at various salons before settling in her current location 10 years ago, and she is offering a free small shampoo to clients in celebration of her anniversary. She likes people very much and learning from their life experiences. She also gets satisfaction from her hair creations and keeping her clients happy. In her free time she likes going to the beach, hiking, camping, and spending time with her daughter. She loves her VW Tiguan, although she wouldn't mind owning a Lincoln MKZ someday. Nice choice!



George Kittle is a Geer Village resident after having lived in Cornwall for a good piece of his life. He was born in Marin County, CA and when he was a child summered in Cornwall with relatives. He is a Yale graduate and worked for the *San Francisco Chronicle* and taught English at a prep school in that area. He has traveled the world and was awarded an around-the-world pass from Pan-Am. He enjoyed Europe and his favorite places included Paris, Italy, and Germany. He also lived in Greenwich Village, N.Y., and came to know many well-known writers, poets, and musicians of the 60s. Among his favorite cars were his MGs and Jaguars and says that there was nothing better than driving them with the convertible tops down.



Lori Cassia-Decker and **Amy Corso** are not only taking on new business adventures together. Lori is on the board of the Ryan McElroy Children's Cancer Foundation, which raises money for children in the Hudson Valley that suffer from cancer and other life threatening illness's. Lori is on the board of the Mid Hudson Road Runners Club and are race directors for the Miles of Hope Breast Cancer Foundation 5K walk/Run and Kid's 1 mile (held on April 25), the Millbrook Duathlon and Kid's Run will be held on May 9th, and the Walkway over the Hudson Half Marathon on June 13th, Amy is a volunteer for both. All of the money raised for these events will stay in the Hudson Valley and Lori and Amy are beyond proud to be apart of.



Jonathan Eisermann (pictured with his daughter **Kellie**) has been an owner, field manager, and company representative for Four Seasons since 2004. His work duties include services, maintenance, repairs to swimming pools, mowing, running big machinery, and more. Jonathan loves the fact that he gets to work alongside his family and friends everyday. His leisure activities include snowmobiling, ATV riding at their beautiful family cabin up north, and of course spending time with family and friends. Jonathan is from the area and likes the fact that he lives in a small town where he knows the majority of the people either from work or school. Jonathan looks forward to meeting with new customers and seeing other local business succeed in the upcoming season.

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cycling health tips

MAINTAINING A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

By *Thorunn Kristjansdottir*
info@mainstreetmag.com

I was recently given a bicycle for my birthday. I used to ride all of the time in my pre-teens and through my teenage years, then with the onset of college and adulthood, my cycling time and interest altogether disappeared. But now with my flashy new present, I am hoping to rejuvenate that interest, especially with the beautiful spring weather that is finally here.

A bike ride to me is not ala Tour de France, nor that of an extreme mountain biker, but it is more along the lines of your average bike rider who enjoys a nice ride on a country road on a beautiful day, and riding for a few miles. If I truly get “into cycling” that may change, but for now I’ll stick to the more calm kind, and enjoy the scenery and wind through my hair.

Asking the professionals

I thought that as I get back in the saddle, that I should make sure that I do it right. Mary O’Neill has written two very helpful and informative articles in this issue about cycling, one is about the Rail Trail and some local biking events that you should check out if you’re interested in cycling or getting back into it. In the second article she talks with Tammy Payer of Berkshire Bike & Board in Great Barrington, MA, and Tammy provides some great information in the interview as it pertains to finding the right bike for you, the fit and style, as well as some additional information about bike safety. Definitely worth checking out.

In addition to carefully reading Mary’s two articles, I also sought out some other sources before I started cycling. I thought that in order to make sure that I don’t injure myself or do something silly as I get back into the swing of things, that I should talk to someone who knows a thing or two in this department. So I gave Dr. Gene Chin a call. Dr. Chin is an Emergency Room doctor at Sharon Hospital, and he’s also an avid cyclist himself. What a perfect person to talk to!

Dr. Chin began by advising that good, basic safety is very important, and that especially includes wearing a helmet. He noted that you don’t have to splurge on the most expensive helmet, because they are all certified before they hit the store shelves.

Dr. Chin advised that one of the most important things to consider before you even get on a bike has to do with your health. If you have a pre-existing medical condition or have specific concerns about your health, that you should talk with your doctor before you begin a new exercise regiment. For example if you have a heart or lung condition, or have an orthopedic condition that calls for a



lower impact exercise, like swimming, it wouldn’t be advisable for that person to take up running for example. So talk with your doctor.

Stress and don’t overdue it

The second thing that Dr. Chin and I talked about was the importance of the fact that when you start cycling, you need to ride to your ability. He advised that you don’t want to find yourself exhausted and miles away from home. That’s definitely not a scenario that I want to find myself in. So I think that it’s good to remember that the ride downhill is fun and easy, but that we oftentimes have to make it back up the hill, which is maybe not as fun. And with the onset of spring and summer and increasing temperatures, remember to bring water with you to stay hydrated. You don’t want to find yourself miles away from home and you’re “out of gas.”

The discussion about riding to your ability brought us to Dr. Chin’s third point: don’t overdue it in the beginning. He said that what may happen is that you start off with great ambition, but you may overdue it and can even injure yourself in doing so, or may just get really sore muscles, and that can result in turning people off from the exercise altogether.

As Dr. Chin and I discussed the obvious health benefits of cycling and exercise in general, we reached the topic of stress. As most of us are aware of, exercise can be a great stress-reliever. But Dr. Chin pointed out something that I found to be very interesting: exercise can also be a source of stress for some people. We lead such busy lives and so finding the time to schedule in exercise can cause unnecessary stress. Dr. Chin’s advice is to change this, and not think of it as needing to fit exercise into our schedule, but make exercise a part of the

schedule. Sounds pretty simple! Make exercise a part of your life and avoid the stress. Check, and done.

Don’t just look at trees, share the road

I asked Dr. Chin what it is about cycling that he enjoys the most, and he said that he’s been cycling since high school and that it’s a relaxing way to get out and see the beautiful scenery. It’s also a great source of stress relief for him. I then asked him what some of his favorite cycling routes were and he said that some of the roads in and between Lakeville and Sharon are beautiful, as is the road from Sharon to Kent, he said it’s also great to take a ride on the Rail Trail, and he particularly enjoys cycling in the Twin Lakes area.

Dr. Chin then reminded me of something very important: we cannot forget that while we’re riding and enjoying the scenery, that we can’t forget about traffic. “You can’t just look at the trees,” he said jokingly. We are sharing the road after all, so while cycling we have to remain safety conscious and be mindful of traffic, which includes intersections. He also noted that cycling has become a more popular sport so there are even more cyclists out there sharing the roads. “You see folks of all ability levels and ages out cycling, even whole families cycling together, and that’s wonderful to see,” he said.

I now feel that I’m a little better prepared before hitting the road with my brand-spanking-new bike. I have all of the required tools: bike, helmet, water bottle. Now I just have to pick my route, and I have to remember to listen to my body to avoid overdoing it and possibly injuring myself. So since that’s all taken care of, it’s time to hit the road and have some fun! •

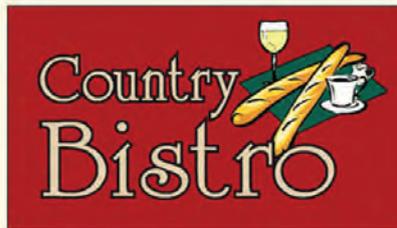


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RACER AND
ENTREPRENEUR:

skip barber

By Christine Bates
christine@mainstreetmag.com

The idea of a Main Street Magazine “car” issue started when we interviewed Sam Posey in late 2014. Vintage cars, sports cars, and car racing are an overlooked, but important, part of our regional economy and style. In keeping with the car theme we interviewed Skip Barber, an entrepreneur and race car driver, who built the Skip Barber Racing School into a global business and now owns and manages Lime Rock Park, a road racing venue and historic landmark in the Town of Salisbury, Connecticut.

How did you start racing cars?

The car culture of the 1950’s was totally different than now. It was a rite of passage to get your driver’s license on the day of your birthday. Every college had a car club and the cars were English or European sports cars. I came from a very modest background, but I was a good student and, for some reason, Harvard gave me a scholarship. I worked four jobs and saved enough money to buy my first car, a 20-year-old MG, in my sophomore year. In the middle of the night, we’d “race” our cars in Cambridge, from rotary to rotary, with somebody timing us with a stopwatch to see who was fastest through the run.

When did you start racing professionally?

I took my senior year off and joined the Merchant Marine for a year to save money to buy half an Austin-Healey Bugeye Sprite. My first race was in 1958 and I managed to graduate from Harvard in 1959. All I wanted to do was race cars. But until

the end of my racing career, I always had a day job to support racing cars. Car racing was a rich man’s sport back then. It takes a lot of money to race professionally, no question.

Why did you start a racing school?

In 1975 I thought I had a tremendous racing sponsor, but the deal completely fell apart and I had no “ride.” I’m shy and was never very good at marketing myself as a driver, but I had done research on what I thought it would take to create a racing school. I thought it would be easy. You know, rich guys with money falling out of their pockets, they would come in droves to be taught how to race and drive quickly and competently, right? I thought I could even work on my sun tan. That certainly was not the case, none of that turned out to be true. It was a lot of work.

Were the first few years difficult? What did you learn?

I started the business with three race cars I borrowed from friends, and four students. It was a very difficult first year. But by the next season, I had figured out I really liked the problem solving, working out the logistics, the operations – the business side. I also figured out I was a good teacher in the technical and technique sense, but I saw that I wasn’t cut out to teach the same thing to a different group, week after week. That’s why I hired great drivers who were also excellent teachers.

Above:
Skip Barber
when he won the
national Formula
Ford title in 1969.
Photo courtesy
of Lime Rock
Archive.

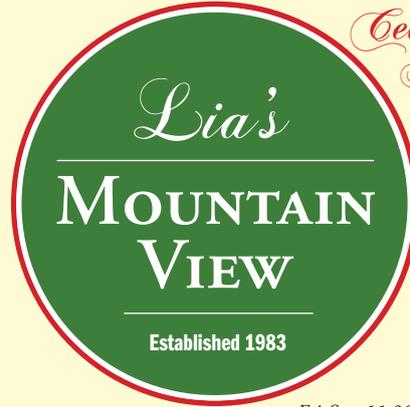
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The school had a tremendous fall in 1976, so I decided to send the race cars and the instructors to Florida for the winter and sell schools at tracks down there. In 1977, we expanded to another very popular track, Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course, near Columbus. I borrowed money against my house to buy three new race cars. Also in 1976, we started the Skip Barber Race Series. The idea, which was unique to the U.S. at the time, was for competing drivers to rent identical Formula Ford race cars from the Skip Barber Series. I wanted racing where it didn't matter how much money you had; you were driving the exact same car as everyone else in the championship, where the driver's ability mattered, not their checkbook. We started it as a way to attract more students to the School, but the Series became a much more important income generator. It made us.

How did the Skip Barber magnet end up on Jerry Seinfeld's refrigerator on the *Seinfeld* TV show?

To be precise, it's a decal, not a magnet. Jerry and two of his writers took our course in 1994. Every graduate gets a "goody bag," with decals, patches, that sort of thing. The next thing we know, we see it in the show on the fridge. We didn't ask him to do that. We didn't even know about it. We didn't pay for it. A few months after Seinfeld graduated, my PR guy used a photo of Jerry that was taken when he was at the school and put it on the cover of the school newsletter. So the next TV season, they added the newsletter taped to the freezer side of the fridge!

What was the secret to the success of the school?

The school was the result of a "racer mentality." We tried to do everything as well as it could be done.



Above: The start of the IMSA sports car race, a July tradition. Photo by Casey Keil. Photo courtesy of Lime Rock Park. Below left: Skip Barber (right) instructing two students soon to become professional drivers. Photo courtesy of Lime Rock Park archives.

I never focused on how to make more money, just on how to be the best racing school. It succeeded because we had great instructors. I hired the first two instructors and, after that, they recruited and trained other instructors. Our aim was always to have the best product. In some years one-third of the drivers at the Indianapolis 500 were graduates of our school. Because the school had sponsors, such as BF Goodrich and Zerex Anti-freeze, I could charge less than the actual cost of running the programs. In effect, every student had a "scholarship" because the school and series were subsidized by the sponsors.

The school's income stream from races, sponsorships, and fees made us profitable. For example, Chrysler paid us \$1.5 million per year for a number of years and another \$3.5 million leveraging its relationship with us. As the head of Chrysler put it, "We want to be a great company and so we want to have relationships with great companies."

What was the hardest part of running your business?

The same as anyone else. Making payroll and cash flow.

Why did you sell the racing school?

My plan was not to sell the racing school, but to combine it with other large companies in the racing business in order to create a major racing presence. By the late 90s, the school had five base locations and was available at more than two dozen of the best tracks in America. We had 230 employees, and we had top-tier corporate sponsors. I wanted a partner for capital and expertise in areas where I didn't have a lot of experience. There were a number of suitors, but I chose the wrong partners. My fault. My management team and I were supposed to continue to run the business, but the deal didn't work out as planned. In 1999 the school was acquired by a leveraged buyout group, and by 2001 it was a disaster and I was no longer involved with running it. Choosing the wrong partners was the biggest mistake of my life.

When did you end up as the owner of Lime Rock Park? How did that happen?

The park was built as a European road racing track in 1957 by a group of private individuals who loved racing. In 1969 a Greek shipping magnate bought the track, but by 1983 he had lost interest in it and wanted to sell. Investors wanted to buy it and turn it into a sort of race track resort with a hotel! How was that going to work in the winter? If they did that, I was certain the track would fail. So I put together a group of six guys who loved racing. We borrowed all the money from a bank and each of us had to make a mortgage payment every month. In the banking downturn in the late 80's some of the partners ran into financial trouble or lost interest, and I gradually bought the others out.

What is your role at Lime Rock now?

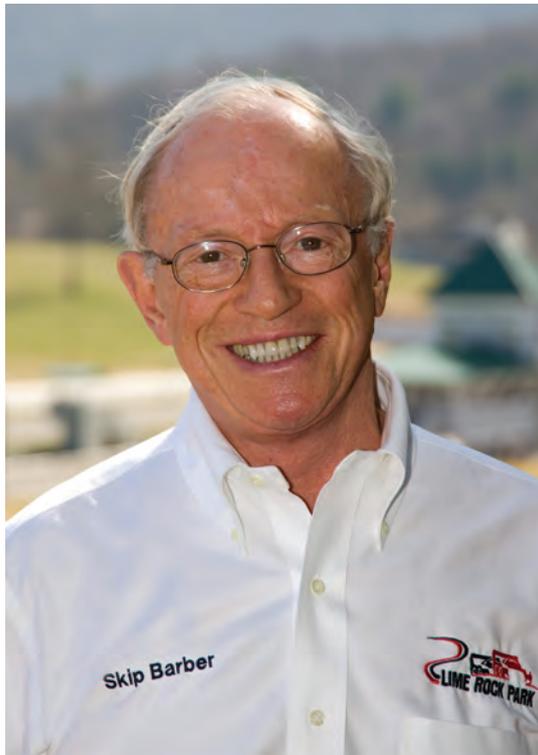
About six years ago I made personnel changes here and decided to manage the park full time myself. One of our policies is, "No jerks." We have about 21 great, full-time, year-round employees and, of course, many more during the racing season.

What changes can we expect at Lime Rock?

Lime Rock has been voted the most beautiful racetrack in the United States, and the fifth most beautiful in the world. In 2008 we rebuilt the race track itself with a three-foot gravel base and new asphalt. We continue to make track improvements, of course. But our market research revealed that the number one reason people come here is for the experience. People like sitting on the grass, in their lawn chairs with their coolers. "The racing" was number five on the list.

We are now right in the middle of a massive infrastructure rebuilding project that we are calling "Road to 60" – Lime Rock's 60th anniversary is in 2017 – that is focusing on improving everything for the spectators, including better viewing areas, a

Continued on next page ...



Above left: Skip Barber today. Above: An aerial view of Lime Rock Park where car enthusiasts gather to show off their rides. Below, top: Memorial Day Trans Am Championship. Below, bottom: Racing at Lime Rock. All photos by Casey Keil. All photos courtesy of Lime Rock Park.

better paddock, re-built bathrooms, all those sorts of things. We are adding new events, such as car shows and non-automotive things. One example is the Muddy Chef Land Rover weekend, which brings car enthusiasts here who make gourmet meals at Lime Rock in the evening after spending all day driving around the tri-state area off-roading, skeet shooting, and fly fishing. The world needs to know that we are not “just” a race track. It’s an automotive-based venue with all kinds of activities.

We also created the members-only Lime Rock Drivers Club (LRDC) in 2007, which is similar to a high-end golf country club. You pay a five-figure fee to join and have 40 to 60 days a year where the track “belongs” only to the club members to drive their personal sports cars, get coaching, and compete in a race series. The strong camaraderie you find in motorsport is a great part of its appeal. (Watch the video at <http://limerockclub.com/lime-rock-drivers-club-salisbury-conn> to get a feeling for driving at Lime Rock.)

This winter we bought snowmaking machinery and grooming equipment and made the infield’s 1/2-mile long autocross course a “snowcross.” People bring their cars to slide and spin and drift on it for a few hours. It’s a lot of fun for driving enthusiasts. But they also get taught by our coaches to be better, more confident, safer drivers on the street in the winter. We were sold out every Friday and Saturday from January through mid-March.

What is your favorite event at Lime Rock?

Definitely the Historic Festival on Labor Day weekend. This is the 33rd year of our big vintage racing event. We’ve got race car parades, a fancy concours, a swap meet, entertainment. Last year, we had Sir Stirling Moss as the Honored Guest, and displayed Ralph Lauren’s car collection. It was fantastic.

Is it true that a Formula One race is coming to Lime Rock in 2017?

No, that was just an April Fools’ joke that we played last year! Anyone who follows racing knows that Formula One races, by regulation, only race on tracks that are 2.5 miles or longer in length, and could never be held on this track, which is a mile and a half long.

What do you think makes a great race car driver? Any books to recommend?

Great drivers have to be smart and totally committed to racing. There’s something called the racer mentality, which is total focus on winning. Good eyesight is also important! If you really want to understand what it’s like to be a race car driver, read *The Art of Racing in the Rain*, by Garth Stein. It’s not a textbook; it’s a wonderful novel told through the eyes of a dog, whose owner is a racing driver. It was a *New York Times* Best seller not long ago.

What are your hobbies?

Some people say I’m a “genius” when it comes to collecting vintage cars. Maybe, but what I can say is that at times these cars helped save Lime Rock or bought groceries, although my goal was always to keep them, not to speculate.

My strategy was really simple. I always bought the best and paid asking price. I caught a rising market in Ferraris and it worked out great. Right now I’m making some early 60’s Porsches much better than when they were new.

Is there anything you regret?

Sometimes I regret that I didn’t make my racing career work better.

Do you have plans to preserve Lime Rock Park well down the road?

I can tell you that whatever I end up deciding, it will be to absolutely ensure that Lime Rock Park



remains a race track far into the future.

You’ve achieved a lot in your life. What are you proudest of?

No doubt it’s that the racing school and the race series that provided so many opportunities for people wanting to get into the racing business. And by that I don’t mean just drivers. We helped launch hundreds of careers for mechanics, writers, photographers, PR people, managers. And of course a whole bunch of really good, good drivers... ●

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GREAT GASTRONOMY

back in the kitchen café

By Thorunn Kristjansdottir
info@mainstreetmag.com

As you may have noticed by now, this issue has a bit of a transportation theme to it. So how does that apply when it comes to reviewing a local restaurant? That is the question that we asked ourselves, because when we have themed issues we do try to tie all aspects and articles together into that one theme. But food and transportation? I don't know – food trucks?

I was stretching on this. So here was my thought process: we could review a restaurant close to Lime Rock Park, or we could find a café where one could purchase sandwiches to bring along for a picnic on a bike ride – or any combination thereof. Then I questioned whether it was necessary to tie absolutely *everything* into this theme or not, and then I honestly just got hungry! As I was realizing that it was lunchtime and that I was incredibly hungry (and tired of overthinking this whole thing), I saw a post on Facebook from Amenia's Back in the Kitchen Café, where they were showcasing their day's specials. I started salivating. They had me at Fontina cheese and avocado.

You might remember the cake that graced our March cover, our birthday cake for our anniversary issue? Well, that cake was made by Peg McEnroe of Back in the Kitchen Café, and what a cake it was! Deeee-licious! So knowing that, and having "Facebook-stalked" their pastry pictures a time or two in the past, I got very excited about the lunch I was about to order. And what did I learn from this? Fate and destiny take care of everything.

Breakfast, lunch, and pastries

The café is located at 3312 Route 343 (just east of the Route 22 light in Amenia), and is entered into at street level. Now here's the theme tie-in, ready? The café is a great place to stop in for a cup of coffee before or after going to the barn, to stop for brunch while out cruising, or if you're biking on the Rail Trail stop in for lunch. It's the perfect round-trip actually: ride from Millerton on the Rail Trail, when you reach Amenia stop and re-hydrate, have a great lunch at the café, and then ride back to Millerton! And there's my plan for this coming Saturday.

But it wasn't Saturday today and I was hungry. So let's turn back to the Facebook post that initially got my attention, and their day's specials. On this particular day the café had a Fontina cheese panini with avocado and sun-dried tomato pesto (pictured top right). They also had two Frittata choices: tomato, spinach and Goat cheese, and then a broccoli and cheddar

one. You could get the Frittata by the slice or with greens or with soup. That sounded like a good lunch! They also had a Three Salad Plate, which consisted of your choice of any three salads with mixed greens.

Not too long after reading through the special's board, my eyes wandered to the pastries on the counter and in the pastry cooler. I do love a freshly baked croissant, or a beautifully delicious looking cupcake! On this day they had an amazing-looking flourless chocolate cake. Whoa! And they also had a mixed berry crumble pie (both pictured above). Those both sounded like pretty healthy choices, with no flour and fruit respectively, right? Self-deception at its best, I know.

Delicious posts

As I mentioned, I've seen the Facebook posts from the café a few times, either announcing their specials (like today) or posting pictures of their latest pastry creations. For example, they had caught my attention a few days prior when they advertised not one or two soup choices, but four! They had a cream of tomato (vegan and gluten free, by the way), chicken corn chowder, black bean (also vegan and gluten free), and a chicken, celery, and red quinoa. So when I mentioned above that ordering a Frittata with a soup or salad would make for a good lunch, seeing the varying (healthy) soup choices makes that statement even more apparent.

I have to admit though, seeing their pastry posts is down-right dangerous. They had posted pictures of carrot cupcakes around Easter, a few weeks prior to that they had "Blackout cupcakes" that were loaded with chocolate and looked simply insane! And they had me at "three layer chocolate cookies and cream cake" a few days prior to that! Do I have a sweet tooth? Why, yes. But when you see pictures of these incredible creations, you can't help yourself! My saving grace is that I can't walk there and get a slice ...

although the Rail Trail leads directly from Millerton to Amenia, and maybe the walk counters the calorie intake? Something to contemplate I suppose.

Finish your food before you have dessert

Before allowing myself to indulge in the sweets, I did what my mother taught me to do: eat all of your food before you have dessert. My sandwich was everything that I had hoped for. I loved the combination of the fresh bread, with the great flavor of the cheese, avocado, and sun-dried tomatoes.

Ashley ordered the House Roasted Turkey Sandwich on white bread, which comes with lettuce and tomato, and your choice of mayo or mustard (pictured above, lower left). She was quite happy with it, for I didn't hear a peep out of her (minus the chewing sounds) for a good ten minutes. The chips that come with the sandwiches are the old fashioned kind, not too greasy, and are a nice pairing to the sandwiches.

Once every last bite of my panini was gone, I quickly picked up my fork and tried a bite out of the flourless chocolate cake and the mixed berry pie. You certainly could have fooled me about the flourless part, because the cake was so rich and delicious. It's one of those denser kinds of cakes that you don't need to eat the whole slice because it's so incredibly rich, but you could certainly use a glass of cold milk with it! The mixed berry pie was much lighter, on the other hand. And I loved the brown sugary, oatmeal flavored crumble part of it. Yum-my!

Thank you to Peg and her staff, now I have to roll myself back onto the Rail Trail to try to burn off the calories before my next visit. And by the way, please save me a slice of the cookies and cream cake. ●

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full circus farm:

FARMING WITH DRAFT HORSES IN PINE PLAINS, NY



By Memoree Joelle
info@mainstreetmag.com

Dutchess County is getting two more young farmers thanks to the Columbia Land Conservancy, who has extended their reach into surrounding counties in New York and Connecticut. Mark Stonehill and Miriam Goler founded Full Circus Farm on rented land in Pine Plains, where they will be organically farming vegetables using a team of two Haflinger draft horses. Both natives of New York City, the couple moved to Maine two years ago to learn how to farm using draft horses, and this past August, permanently relocated to Pine Plains. Here, they are close to family while having the space and the healthy soil to farm on.

A sense of adventure

But unlike city dwellers who head upstate to escape urban life, Mark and Miriam were not looking to escape New York City at all. The pair met in high school, and have been together since, and some of their fondest memories of their formative years are of their urban adventures. “We would agree to meet at random subway stops, like one out on Staten Island, even though that was very far from our homes. We just loved exploring the city, and still do,” Miriam says.

They chose to leave out of necessity, since one can’t put draft horses and a dairy cow on a New York City rooftop garden (unless the laws have changed). Miriam studied environmental engineering at Cornell, where she began doing conservation work. Additional classes in sustainable agriculture opened her eyes to the environmental impact of the way we farm, and after working on a student farm over the summer, she switched her degree to agricultural sciences. When she returned home to NYC, she worked for Just Food’s Farm to Pantry program, then took a farming job at Quail Hill

Farm in Amagansett, Long Island, which was a larger, tractor-oriented operation.

“It was a valuable experience, but tractors make me feel queasy,” she explains, a sentiment shared with her by Mark, a graduate of Macalester College. After studying urban geography and environmental education, he worked for New York City’s parks and recreation department and then at the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens children’s garden. His long-term career plan was originally directed toward the design of city streets and bike routes, but love, both for Miriam and for farming with horses, led him down a rural path. Now both happily at home in a red barn in Dutchess County, they’ve traded sidewalks and metro cards for muddy boots and horse reins.

A horse, of course

The couple felt ready to apply the farming knowledge they acquired in Maine when they began looking for their first draft horse team. After meeting many horses, they knew they had found their pair when they came across Sandy and Sunshine, eight and nine year-old Haflingers. This particular breed is the smallest size draft horse in existence, and are closer to the stature of a pony than that of a horse.

Sandy and Sunshine were chosen for their quick learning curve and easy temperament. “Working with horses connects you to the land and to what you’re doing. Because horses are so observant of everything going on around them, you have to be tuned in and alert as well, because you’re working together. I love having that connection,” Miriam

Continued on next page ...

related as she and Mark showed me their slightly rusty, but fully functional equipment that they bought in Pennsylvania.

In fact, there are only a handful of farmers who farm with horses, though it makes perfect sense to do so. It's better for the soil, which Mark explains is because tractor wheels, especially in the muddy season, compact the soil too much. Horse manure is great for the soil, and they don't burn up fossil fuels the way diesel-powered tractors do. Overall, it's a more self-sufficient way of farming. Aside from the one tractor they use to compost, which is the only task the horses can't do, Miriam and Mark use horse power for everything from plowing, weeding, to moving the hen house. The hens, by the way, are not for meat, but for laying eggs for personal use at the moment.

Other animals on the farm are June, the family dairy cow, and two of her cow friends, Minnie and Peaches, who are borrowed from nearby Chaseholm Farm to keep June company. Touring the pasture and barns, it is obvious that the couple have a tight bond with their animals. "Our daily morning routine is milking her together," Mark tells me, as June, a Jersey Canadienne, licks his hand, and reaches her head through the fence to find Miriam's. It's a long way off from their days of subway hopping in NYC, but the city is only a train ride away, after all. "We definitely plan on making this our permanent home," Mark assures, and eventually, they plan on adding a pig or two to the family, as they are excellent composters. But since June is already a bit jealous of the two new horses, there's no rush on that.



Above top: Mark and Miriam milk their cow, June, together every morning. Above left: Mark ground drives Sandy. Above right: The adventurers, Mark and Miriam. Below left: Sandy and Sunshine.

Fruits and vegetables

In addition to their organic vegetable operation, the couple does their own fruit tree grafting, and those trees will be available for sale beginning in 2017. For now, this season will bring in their first vegetable harvest, which will be sold to customers as CSA shares. A CSA model allows them to get the necessary funds to begin farming in early spring, but more importantly, it allows them to connect directly with their community.

Shares are picked up right at the farm, and are currently available in unlimited quantities (though that may change soon, so sign up now if you haven't already!). They offer both full and half shares, at \$600 and \$375, respectively, and for that you get a box of assorted seasonal produce from June to November. The variety offered is impressive, and the farmers also invite you to walk the fields and participate in potluck dinners held at the farm. "The community aspect of this is very important to us," Mark says of the CSA model. "We want to connect with people, and build long-term relationships with our neighbors."

When not on the farm, Mark works with kids at the after-school program hosted by the NECC in Millerton, and Miriam tutors kids in math and science. They both enjoy working with children, and as part of an outreach effort supported by a local ESL program, soon kids will be able to learn

how to grow food on the farm. Mark and Miriam are also in the process of becoming fully certified as organic, and even though they have never farmed any other way, now they will have the paperwork to prove it.

The name Full Circus is a play on the much more common farm name, "Full Circle," and conveys the sense of fun the couple want to bring to their work. While the couple does not have plans to perform acrobatics on the backs of animals, they do know how to juggle, and will teach anyone who wants to learn. Miriam shared a dream she had one night shortly after they moved here, in which their two draft horses had been replaced with circus elephants. Mark's contagious laughter at the very notion of that idea is a reminder that hard work doesn't always have to be serious. Every day is an adventure, every season brings new surprises, and life really is a full circus. •

Mark and Miriam would love to hear from you. To tour their farm, or sign up for your CSA share for the season, email them at fullcircusfarm@gmail.com. Visit their website, fullcircusfarm.wordpress.com, or call the farm: (518) 789-0025.

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where to put your car

THE IMPACT OF GARAGES ON RESIDENTIAL REAL ESTATE VALUE

By Christine Bates

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For our first “mobility” issue, this month’s Main Street real estate story considers garages and looks into the value a garage adds to a residential property. We talked to assessors, building departments, realtors, new home builders, car collectors, contractors, and home buyers, and consulted with industry specialists. Here is what we found out.

Horses to cars to garages

When automobiles were first introduced at the beginning of the 20th century, they were either kept in a detached carriage house together with the horses, or stored in a rented, large, heated one-story building built specifically for cars. By 1910 there were too many cars for the offsite garages and owners wanted their automobiles closer to home.

The first garages for residences were modeled after carriage houses, with barn-style doors that swung outward. These were difficult to open in the snow. The problem was solved when C.J. Johnson invented the first overhead door in 1921 and then the electric garage door opener in 1926. The Overhead Door Corporation he founded is still in business today. (It wasn’t until 1993 that the Consumer Product Safety Commission passed a law requiring all garage doors to have photoelectric and pressure-sensitive sensors to protect children from injury. Be sure to check on the safety of old garage doors). By the mid 1920’s Ford was selling over two million Model T’s every year, and real estate agents reported that the first question asked by home buyers was about the garage – “The house without a garage is a slow seller.”

How important is a garage in selling a house today?

Garages are seldom pictured in real estate listings. They are the invisible room – mentioned, but usually not photographed. “After a winter like the present one, the importance of garages is magnified,” commented Elyse Harney of Elyse Harney Real Estate.

Every realtor we spoke with agreed that certain



Above and below right: Mike Metzger built this garage to house his valuable collection of Corvettes and automobilia. Photos by Peter Greenough. Below left: This two car 20’ x 30’s post and beam carriage house from Country Carpenters arrives ready to assemble. Photo courtesy of Country Carpenters.

buyers wouldn’t even look at a house if there wasn’t a garage. They also agreed that a garage might be even more important to full time residents dealing with weather year round than to weekenders. “If the buyer is looking for a space to put his tractors or vintage cars, a garage has to add value,” said John Harney, a realtor with William Pitt Sotheby’s International Realty. “But the reason it has value will be the next buyer who also has cars or trucks.”

Mike Fitting, Salisbury’s Building Inspector, who built a large heated garage six years ago, said, “When it’s time to sell, I’ll market the house at Lime Rock.”

Mike Metzger, a retired high school coach from Long Island, built his dream garage in Salisbury, CT to shelter his collection of Corvettes and a 1970 Plymouth orange Road Runner Super Bird that Sam Posey’s mother formerly drove in Sharon Memorial Day Parades (the garage’s interior is depicted above, to the right). The garage has radiant heat and lifts to facilitate work on the cars. Metzger estimates that the 30’ x 50’ car cathedral he built in 2004 would cost about \$200,000 to construct today. The obvious future buyer of the property would be a serious car collector.

A completely different approach to adding value with a garage is a new, shingled carriage house garage built in 2010 in Salisbury with an elegant studio apartment above that provides rental income. Lori Belter, the listing agent with Best & Cavallaro, estimates that the carriage house adds \$200,000 in



value to this home (see photos on following page).

It’s probably not a wise idea to build a garage to sell your house

“The cost of building a new garage is just too high to justify a questionable return,” recommends William McGinn, a realtor at Best & Cavallaro. *Remodeling Magazine* agrees with him. Their research indicates that adding a garage to a mid-range home in New England would cost \$57,000, but recoup only \$36,000 on resale – a loss of 40%. Even worse, at the upscale end of the real estate market, a larger, more expensive garage might approach a \$100,000 price tag, and the owner would receive only 54 cents on the dollar when the property is

Continued on next page ...

sold. Only a master suite addition, a composite deck, and an extra bathroom offer worse returns on your investment.

Do think about new garage doors

Building a new garage to help sell your house doesn't seem financially sensible, but adding new garage doors to an existing garage offers the highest return on resale – over 90% of the cost – compared with any other improvement you can make to an upscale house. Attractive new overhead doors might cost around \$3,000 installed, and, like entry door replacements, they add tremendous curb appeal to your house.

“Do your homework and make sure that you give as much importance to choosing your garage doors as choosing your front door,” blogs Pat Best of Best & Cavallaro. To give a listed property a more expensive look, she suggests buying “an unembellished wood or faux wood insulated door and having your carpenter add barn style trim and great hardware.”

McGinn concurs. “This is an extremely high impact improvement, particularly if the doors are high quality and are visible from the road.”

Add an attached garage if you are building a new house

“I would not recommend someone add a garage to sell a house, but certainly any new construction should have an attached garage,” according to Elyse Harney. “The real value of an attached garage can be in the apartment space above. This can be finished or unfinished – the point is you would be able to add additional living space.”

“Most million dollar houses have nice garages,”



Above top and left: This traditional shingled carriage house looks old, but was built in 2010. It includes an elegant studio apartment on the second floor. Photos courtesy of John Atchely. Above right: A metal clad garage adds an important design element to a new, rural contemporary house in the Town of North East. Photo by Peter Greenough. Below left: Garage doors can make a dramatic difference for a small investment. Before and after photos courtesy of Madsen Overhead Doors.

observed Salisbury Assessor Kayla Johnson. “If a garage is attached to the house, it is assessed as non-livable square footage. If it’s a separate building, it’s assessed based on the type of construction, and square footage and whether or not it has living space.”

Fitting says that almost all new home building permits he has issued in Salisbury include an attached garage. But aesthetics matter, especially to weekenders. “The garage shouldn’t look like a suburban two car garage,” advises Best. “Many weekend buyers would prefer a detached carriage house with a country style.”

Traditional or contemporary style?

If you are planning a dream house, the newest trend is to incorporate the garage into the overall design of the home. In imagining a garage for their contemporary home in Boston Corners, owners Dan Sternberg and Debbie Cooper have devised a dramatic solution (see photo above, right).

Sternberg and Cooper explained: “Planning the house we found ourselves on the horns of a dilemma. We wanted a garage connected to our living space, but didn’t want it to look like a garage from the approaches to the house. Our architects, Elizabeth Demetriades and Patrick Walker, squared the circle for us. Rather than de-emphasizing the

garage, they incorporated it as a powerful element in the overall design. And as a bonus, we took advantage of the dramatic height of the structure to capture a wonderful studio space.”

At the opposite end of the traditional to contemporary spectrum is Country Carpenters in Hebron, CT which sells pre-cut, standardized post and beam structures. These are shipped and assembled on site on a prepared foundation. Country Carpenters Bill Lozier estimates that a 22’ x 30’ carriage house style garage with room for two cars costs \$14,710 before shipping and taxes (see photo on page 25). The labor to put the building up will add 70% on top of the base price of this model. And the owner must still purchase the shingles, prepare the foundation, pull the permits, purchase overhead doors, arrange for any plumbing and electrical, and build a connecting breezeway. Lozier estimates that 30 to 40% of his installations are for new homes, and the rest are additions to existing homes. (You can check out all the options at www.countrycarpenters.com).

When you are buying a house, appreciate the value of an existing garage and understand the cost of building a new one. Remember that the garage should be appropriate for the property and that you can change those ugly, old overhead doors easily and inexpensively. And try not to fill the garage up with all your other stuff. ●





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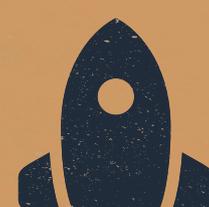


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car care (for women)

By Sarah Ellen Rindsberg
info@mainstreetmag.com

Cars and finance share a characteristic that is ripe for change. Traditionally, management of the two has fallen into the male realm. Literature and workshops on finance for women are plentiful, but information on car maintenance geared toward women is still a rarity.

When the topic of this article was introduced to Cindy Heck, Vice President of North East Muffler, in Millerton, her response was: “cool.” Although she has seen an increase in the number of car savvy women in recent years, there is still room for improvement. She is particularly attuned to areas where women need to be better informed.

Routine (or a not so routine) service

Knowledge is especially important when taking a car in for routine service. Heck cautioned against “scare tactics.” An appointment for routine maintenance may turn into more than one had bargained for. If new brakes are advised, it’s time to step back. “If nothing feels out of the ordinary on the brakes, she needs to ask why and make her own decision,” Heck said.

One of the basics of maintenance is monitoring the engine’s oil level. Oil is vital to the engine’s health because it is the agent that keeps the internal parts moving, enabling the engine to power your vehicle. Pull out the dipstick (look for the plastic handle under the hood), and wipe it clean on a rag. Put the dipstick back in the oil well and pull it out again to determine the level. When it lies below the minimum mark, it’s time to refill.

Guidelines on when the oil should be changed vary according to the age of the car. Newer cars often go five to 10,000 miles before the light on the dashboard appears. Older cars need to be changed more frequently; every 3,000 miles is a common guideline.

Having witnessed an oil change, this is on the top of my list of items to relegate to a mechanic. This is not due to a lack of capability, but rather the mess entailed – not to mention the fact that disposal of the dirt-filled oil is a huge quandary. On the other hand, learning how to perform this procedure does lower the bill.

Antifreeze, overheating, tire wear and tear

Heck finds that many are not aware of the importance of antifreeze flushing. If antifreeze becomes clogged, the engine will overheat.



Many of these tips contain the added benefit of cost savings. For example, changing the air filters not only prevents the engine from overheating; it also increases fuel economy.

Heck stressed the importance of having the tires rotated: “Tires need to wear evenly, otherwise the car may pull to the side of uneven wear and steering could be compromised. This could be a sign of alignment issues or failed parts.” She suggests combining tire rotation with every other oil change.

To see how much tread is left on a tire, insert a coin in several of the grooves. Tire pressure can be checked with a gauge at your local gas station. The two preceding tips will help prevent accidents and flat tires. Maintaining proper pressure also increases gas mileage.

Wiper blades are often overlooked. To insure visibility during hazardous conditions, blades need to be changed periodically. In addition, when blades have unprotected edges, the glass may be cut or scratched, necessitating costly windshield repairs.

Waxing in the extreme heat and cold

When speaking of waxing in this context, the term does not apply to a salon but instead to your car; it needs to be beautiful too! Waxing helps maintain the exterior’s luster. Applying a protective coat twice a year is recommended.

Heck explained: “In the summer, extreme heat fades the car faster and bugs get into the finish. In the winter, wax helps ice slide off without damaging the paint. It also helps to seal the paint so salt

can’t penetrate.” Grab some rags and start applying or add it to the list of services at the car wash.

In terms of fashion, a prevalent interest among women, in the domain of car maintenance, it’s best to forgo the finery. Until Chloé starts designing a stain-proof line, demonstrating fashion sense in this arena will have to wait.

It’s never too early to start learning. Occasionally, a group of girls comes to North East Muffler. They are girl scouts, fulfilling requirements for a car care badge.

Car care should be an every-day thing

The research for this piece was conducted during the month of April, coincidentally dubbed National Car Care month. Actually, in the words of many a sage, “Every month is car care month.”

The purchase of a car is significant, whether it be new or pre-owned. Proper maintenance will extend the life of the vehicle. If something seems amiss or is not functioning properly, run it by a mechanic.

Knowledge is empowering. Follow your drive and maintain your car. ●

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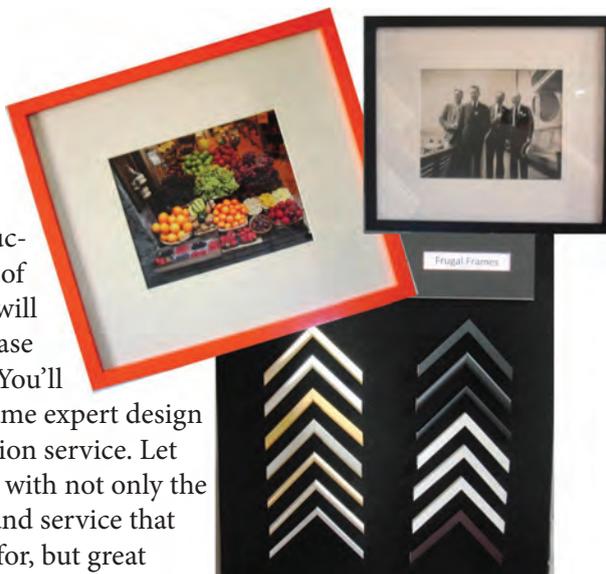
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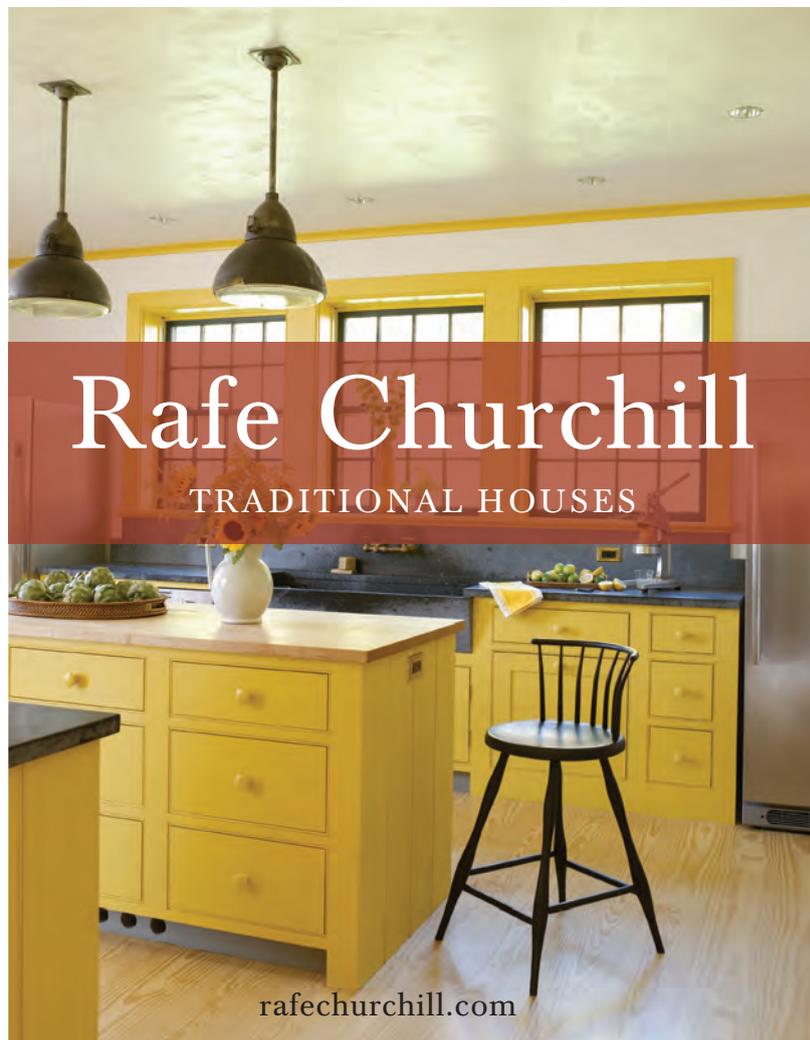


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ON TRACK FOR BEGINNER BIKING

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

Finding the right bike route in our area, especially if you are a novice, can be challenging. Traffic, elevations, and varying road conditions can all serve to increase the barriers to a pleasant ride and thwart the best cycling intentions. Luckily for us we have the answer to these problems right in our backyard. The Harlem Valley Rail Trail provides miles of safe and relatively flat terrain so you can focus on the sheer joy of being on two wheels and not on the truck overtaking you on the left.

Stretching from the trailhead in Wassaic to the village of Millerton, NY is 10.7 miles of bike path converted from the now-defunct New York and Harlem Railroad bed. Make it a round trip journey and you have yourself a respectable ride for a beginner. North of Millerton, the trail is in varying stages of completion and involves some on-road cycling that a neophyte might find to be outside her comfort zone.

Critical to developing and maintaining the Rail Trail is the non-profit Housatonic Valley Rail Trail Association (HVRTA) located in Millerton.

From locomotive to locomotion

According to the HVRTA website, the New York & Harlem Railroad was built north to Chatham from New York City. It was an alternative to river transport for products and people through New York State and points northward. In 1968, the New York Central Railroad merged with the Pennsylvania Railroad. This rail behemoth proved to be too big and failed to thrive. After 1980, despite vigorous opposition, service was cut back to Dover Plains in an effort to save money.

In 2000, MetroNorth service to Wassaic was reinstated. Facilities and infrastructure along the line were upgraded and built to increase capacity and frequency of service. Since 1981, the Harlem Valley Rail Trail preserves the old track beds for public use, and it is here that the Rail Trail can be found.

HVRT Got a Friend

The Harlem Valley Rail Trail is owned by the State of New York. The Dutchess County portion is leased and maintained by the county itself. Aiding in upkeep and restoration of the trail is HVRTA. According to executive director Lisa DeLeeuw, HVRTA is a non-profit friends organization that works with state and local government, private groups, and local citizens to advocate and execute the expansion, beautification, and maintenance of the trail (both existing and proposed) from Wassaic to Chatham. HVRTA has excellent relations with

all stakeholders involved in the improvement and upkeep of the trail and provides a valuable source of private funding that supplements monies from state and municipal allocations.

Aside from DeLeeuw, HVRTA runs on volunteers, individual donations, and grants from foundations and the state. On the Wassaic to Millerton segment, HVRTA has installed benches, signs about local history and nature, and portable toilets. It also maintains the trail and works with the local community to promote this valuable centerpiece of downtown Millerton.

Trail elevation of the local economy

The trail itself does not climb all that much, but you cannot say the same about its economic relevance. According to DeLeeuw, in a 2012 survey of trail usage by the non-profit Parks & Trails New York, it was estimated that 125,000 individuals use the portion of trail that includes the Wassaic to Millerton segment each year. That's a lot of cyclists, walkers, strollers, roller bladers, and scooter-ers from the local community and beyond.

DeLeeuw comments that during the week the trail is mostly used by locals and many of these are walkers. For people of a certain age, the trail provides a predictable terrain for walking. During the weekend it's a whole different story. You only need to set your foot or wheels in Millerton on a warm sunny weekend to see what the trail adds to the town and surrounding area. Black cycling shorts punctuate the local shops and restaurants and the trail is heaving with mixed use. Whatever mode of transportation that is used to convey oneself along the trail, the effect is common – good health, recreation, relaxation, and fun.

According to Dick Hermans, manager of Oblong Books & Music in Millerton and chair of HVRTA, "The exact measurement of the trail's economic impact is difficult, but it is obvious every weekend from April through November that individuals and families come from near and far to use the trail. The center of Millerton is bustling on weekends." With the work projected for the trail in the next few years, Hermans predicts that, "...this activity will only increase when Dutchess County completes the trail going north from Main Street (in Millerton)." In fact, on April 11 an additional 1.25 miles of completed trail opened that runs north and south from the Taconic State Park entrance in Copake Falls.



Continued on next page ...

Around the bend

One of the most amazing aspects of the Wassaic to Millerton segment of the trail is the diversity of the ride. This is not a monotonous slog from point A to point B. The scenery, flora, and fauna change dramatically throughout the 10 miles. This only adds to the adventure and beauty of the journey. After all, a ride on the Rail Trail is not, nor should it be, only about clocking up the miles.

In Millerton, the ride begins with woods and a path cut through walls of rock. It's easy to imagine being a train passenger slowly making your way through this narrow canyon. In the winter, ice hangs precipitously like a clinging glacier and in the summer you can almost always see water trickling down its face. Plants like Herb Robert and Marginal Wood Fern thrive in this "vertical wetland."

Farther south you emerge from the rocky corridor to be greeted by a "pyramided" rail bed which elevates you above the surrounding countryside for views of the bucolic fields beyond. Then you reach the Webutuck Creek floodplain with its habitat of centuries-old trees such as silver maples, eastern cottonwoods, and sycamores.

And so it goes with a constant change up of vegetation, geography, and views as you ride south to Wassaic. Animal and bird life also abound, making the Rail Trail a complete two-wheeled immersion into local wildlife. The HVRTA website is a wonderfully-researched site filled with information about the natural surroundings, as well as history of the towns through which the trail passes. This local color will enhance your journey down the tracks.

Ticket to ride

Coming from points south to ride the trail? Not a problem since MetroNorth's Harlem line to Wassaic makes it possible to import your wheels on certain off-peak trains. You can purchase the \$5 lifetime bike permit at stations or on trains and there are a number of "bicycle trains" on weekends.

First class outing

Each summer the Harlem Valley Rail Ride takes place along portions of the trail. It begins and ends in Millerton at Eddie Collins Field and winds its way through the back roads of New York. This ride is well organized and executed, full of riding (up to 100 miles of it), and most of all – fun. The day starts with a hearty breakfast and culminates with a celebration and BBQ – plus a swim in the town pool. This year the event will be held on July 26, 2015. There are a variety of distances one can opt for, but all of them spend some time on the Rail



Photos, this page: The Rail Trail is used by walkers, bikers, joggers, and roller skaters alike. Directly below is the entrance to the Rail Trail at Main Street in Millerton. There are information placards throughout the Rail Trail like the one depicted here with information about Millerton. Map on previous page courtesy of HVRTA.

Trail as part of the route.

This year there is good news for novice riders and families (children under 14 ride free with a registered adult). According to the Rail Ride website, there is now a 23-mile option which will "take you through 10 miles of smooth, traffic-free trail. At which point, you will ditch the trail and ride four miles to an incredible new rest stop, with a panoramic view of the valley. Then it's back to the trail, and to the festival and barbecue."

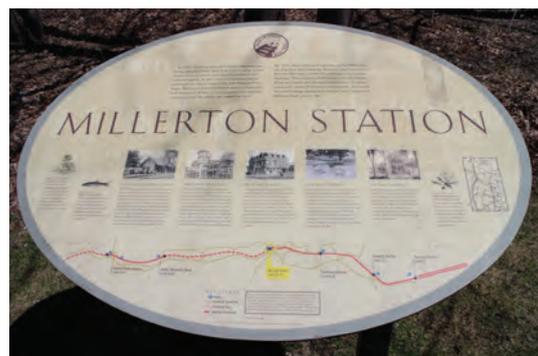
Rules of the road

It's easy to be swept away by the beauty and reverie of your ride, and consequently disregard basic rail safety and etiquette. On those weekends when you are sharing the trail with many others certain rules are necessary. Most importantly, always ride on the right. When passing another person, do it on the left and announce your intention clearly. Bikers must yield to walkers and skaters. Therefore, if you are looking for an unimpeded ride on the weekend try to get out there early. The trail crosses several intersections with local roads, so dismount and check both ways before crossing.

Since the trail passes near private homes, keep to the trail and hold noise levels to a minimum. Lastly, this is a carry-in, carry-out trail and although there are portable toilets located at Millerton, Coleman Station, Amenia, and Wassaic trailheads there are no waste containers. Lastly, the trail is open from dawn to dusk for year-round enjoyment.

A bicycle trail built for you

The Harlem Valley Rail Trail is one of the most scenic and well-used recreational opportunities in our local area. Whether you are a beginner or experienced rider you can find an enjoyable ride filled with history and natural abundance. Pump up those tires, kick up that kick stand, and experience it for yourself. ●



For more information about the Rail Trail including interactive map, downloadable brochure, local history, trail descriptions, and links to area resources and attractions; ways to become a member, volunteer, or contribute time and funds; and directions and parking information go to www.hvrt.org. To find out more and to register for the Harlem Valley Rail Ride visit www.harlemvalleyrailride.com/home.html. For information about how to transport your bike via MTA service to Wassaic go to <http://web.mta.info/bikel>. For more information about Parks and Trails New York go to www.ptny.org/index.shtml.

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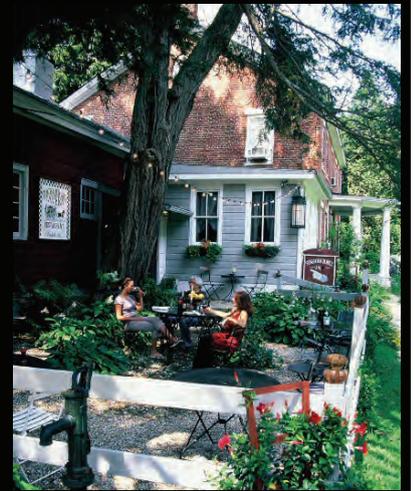
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PROFILE: PERSON OF INTEREST

By Christine Bates
christine@mainstreetmag.com

Sometimes you encounter extraordinary people, often serendipitously. Meeting Sam Posey inspired this *Main Street* feature article about a remarkable individual who has lived an expansive life beyond the borders of one career. Many such remarkable people live quietly amongst us. They inspire us to live bigger lives, follow our passions, and pursue our dreams.

How to define the man

Who is Sam Posey? Architect, professional race car driver, TV sports announcer, writer, model train enthusiast, painter, parent. All of the above. Sam has lived a very full life, most of it on Low Road in Sharon where he keeps his cars and spends eight hours or more a day in his studio writing and painting. “My wife and I don’t go out to dinner or the movies. We’re in here working.”

There are few signs of Posey’s non-artistic life in the barn studio. An Emmy for his TV sports writing sits casually on a counter next to a sink. Paintings of female nudes and barns are propped up against the walls. There are no racing trophies in sight. The ramp into the studio is the only sign of Parkinson’s disease, which started to slow Sam down twenty years ago.

He is a handsome man with the mischievous look of Dennis Quaid. “I don’t think about Parkinson’s, I’m not Michael J. Fox.” His wife, artist Ellen Griesedieck, takes care of the medical part of his life that he seems to overlook, although he admits, “It’s damn inconvenient.”

A love of art and racing

Posey, whose father was killed at Okinawa near the end of World War II, spent his summers and weekends growing up on Low Road. Raised in New York City, Posey freely admits that he was never an outstanding student or athlete. He discovered his artistic talent early while a student at The Buckley School. “They asked us to draw a landscape and everyone else had the horizon all the way at the top. Mine was different. It was mostly sky.”

Continuing his education at The Gunnery, Posey entered his paintings in the annual Housatonic Art Exhibition and won three years in a row as a high school student. The attraction to car racing occurred on a trip to Europe with his mother when he read the book *Champion Year* by Mike Hawthorn, the UK’s first Formula One champion. “I fell in love with racing at 14.”

Fortunately Lime Rock Race Track was close by. His mother bought a one-share interest in Lime



Rock for \$250 that permitted Posey to begin driving on the track as a part owner. He was 16 when he was in his first competitive race.

After graduating from high school, Posey was accepted at Rhode Island School of Design and majored in painting. “I could drive from Providence to Sharon in my Corvair Sprint in two hours and 45 minutes.” By his senior year in college he was a full time race car driver. “Art schools and racing are very similar. They are both extremely competitive.”

“In racing you have to get started somehow and show talent right away. You need money to get started and I had a small inheritance from my father to support myself. It took me three years to get fully employed.”

Unlike today, the racing world in the 60s and 70s was different and professional drivers could race in several different series: Formula One, the CanAm, the Trans-Am, the fast oval track of the Indianapolis 500, NASCAR, Formula 5000. “I had a long career from 1965 to 1981. In one year I was 5th in Indianapolis, 2nd in the Formula One, and first at the Trans Am in Lime Rock.” Posey is modest about his racing career. “I’m not a legend. Mario Andretti is a legend. I’m lucky I survived the sport.”

Asked about his most thrilling win, Sam said it was one month in late 1966 when he won races



Above top: Skip Barber named the Lime Rock straight after Sam Posey. Above: Sam Posey still takes his racer out for a spin around Lime Rock. All photos in this article courtesy of Sam Posey.

Continued on next page ...

in four different series every weekend for a month. And then there was the third place win at Le Mans with his future wife Ellen in the stands. At Lime Rock in 1967 he was the first driver to cover one lap under a minute when he crushed the previous record of 1:015 in 58.6 seconds driving a McLaren.

Posey retired from racing in 1982 when he was 38. "I was lucky. You have two to three crashes a year and I was only injured a few times. Lots of my friends were killed. My career had peaked, my son was born, and my TV work was becoming more and more important. My own father died when I was one. I didn't want that to happen to my son."

A career in television

"The TV work was blind luck. In 1974, ABC put me in a booth at the Indianapolis 500 with Jim McKay to see how I would do. I was completely unprepared and it never occurred to me that I would have another chance. I did another 25 Indie races after that. You have to think of something interesting to say, keep your eyes open, and mouth shut."

Gradually Sam expanded his reporting beyond car racing to the Tour de France and a Trans Antarctica expedition and won an Emmy for his sports writing in 1989. Sam's hand started shaking from Parkinson's about the time his contract with ABC was up for renewal in 1995. "They fired me and said I could work for ESPN, which was just starting up, and cover Formula One racing. Instead I accepted an offer from Speed Vision, a startup with no ads and no audience which eventually became NBC Sports. Sam's voice is still on the air today for 90 second Formula One and Le Mans pre-race introductions. "They send me the photos and I write the text. It takes four or five hours to write and



Above: Sam's painting studio on Low Road in Sharon. Below left: A small part of Posey's 60' by 8' train layout occupies the basement on Low Road in Sharon. Photo by Tom Powell.

then another three or four to make the changes. It's so satisfying. I've been doing this for forty years."

Posey's self-described greatest thrill was not winning a race or being on TV. It was being on the cover of *Modern Rail Road* magazine. With a young son at home, Sam's childhood passion for model trains was reignited. Over sixteen years, with help of master modeler Rolf Schneider, Sam designed an enormous sixty feet by eight feet train layout. Sam documented this surprisingly competitive project in his 2004 book, that has sold over 20,000 copies in hardbound, *Playing with Trains, A Passion Beyond Scale*.

Sam Posey, the architect

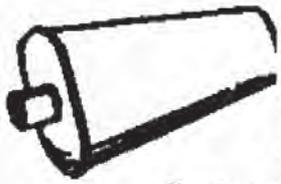
Architectural projects also began taking up more of Sam's time. "Between 1995 and 2005 I was doing several buildings at a time." Three spec houses were aesthetically rewarding but not highly lucrative. Sam designed homes for racing friends like Skip Barber and art world friends like master printer Ken Tyler. With an artist's eye for placement and light, Sam, who has never had any formal architectural training, has an enormous library of architectural books from which he draws inspiration. He often worked with his registered architect brother David Moore, and talented builders to construct modern, traditional homes, which strive to combine light with security. "A certain sense of nookiness with sunshine," says Sam.

Currently Posey, who has been on the Board of Directors of Indian Mountain School for twenty years, is busy organizing a group landscape show at IMS's new arts center. The theme is open land and vistas. Preserving farms and fields is another of

Sam's passions. The show, like Sam, will be competitive with \$10,000 in prizes to be awarded to three winners by two professional judges. He's also editing a new book titled, *Where the Writer Meets the Road*, a compilation of his TV writing and *Road & Track* articles. Additionally he and his wife Ellen are trying to raise a matching one million dollars to realize the ambitious American Mural Project in Winsted, CT that celebrates American workers. Most days find Sam painting, sometimes with a live model. "It's the most fun. It's three hours of intensity. The sessions are three hours long, and very intense. Figure painting is a huge challenge and I have a long way to go."

On my first visit to his studio at the end of October, Sam was working on some paintings of barns. He had just taken down a show of nudes at the Ober Gallery in Kent. "I love seeing my pictures out of the studio. In public they have another kind of life. I care a great deal if people buy my paintings. It's not the money, but that someone is willing to pay to share your vision." Sam has paintings and prints in museums from the Walker in Minneapolis to the Tate in London. "I want to sell to local people. That's why I'm going back to barns."

Posey still does 30 or 40 laps around the Lime Rock Track in his Formula Ford race car a couple of times a years. Parkinson's hasn't affected his ability to paint or drive or write or design buildings. "I'm one lucky guy." ●



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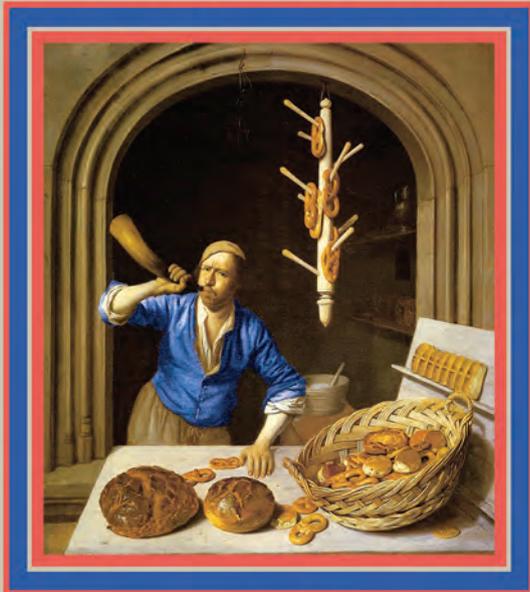
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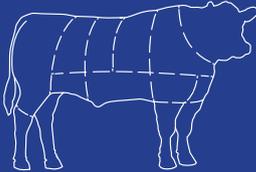
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ALEX KRAMER OF
THE MOTORWORKS



Above: Alex Kramer at work at The Motorworks. Photo by Walter Hergt, walterhergt.com.

By Memoree Joelle
info@mainstreetmag.com

Alex Kramer was fifteen years old when he bought his first car, blew out the engine, and learned to rebuild it. He had help from a family friend, a mechanic who would stop by every day after work to offer his advice, share tools, and check his progress. But for the most part, he rebuilt it with his own hands, and apart from a break he took to earn an environmental science degree, he's been working on cars ever since.

"I've always loved taking things apart and putting them back together," he relates, surrounded by the tools of his trade in his shop on South Center Street in Millerton.

Learning and teaching

Alex has owned and operated The Motorworks since 2007, but has been a professional mechanic for almost twenty years now. Before starting his own business, he worked at a racetrack and in numerous small garages in New York and Connecticut, learning as he went. He learned his trade from reading a lot of books, hands on experience, and the wisdom of his mentors, of which there have been many over the years.

"This is an old school type of trade, where even though it's not typically called an apprenticeship, the way you learn is by watching and listening, and then learning the concepts well enough that you can apply them on your own. When you're stuck, it's a simple matter of acquiring the tools to get yourself unstuck. Those might be actual physical tools, it might be knowledge, or a missing piece of data."

Alex takes as much satisfaction in learning as he does in sharing his knowledge, both with aspiring younger mechanics and with his customers. "I enjoy being able to explain to people what's going on with their cars. When people can take the time to understand it, they're less likely to feel taken advantage of, so it's also empowering them as well."

At home, he enjoys teaching his son, Noah, how to take care of his first four-wheeler, though at age nine, it's too early to tell whether he'll pick up the desire to rebuild an engine one day.

"Go ask Alex"

Known in our area as much for his thoughtful attention to both cars and their owners, Alex has established a following of people who trust his skills, expertise, and transparency. Having become the go-to guy for anything and everything car-related, it's no surprise that when I first moved to Millerton and needed car advice, I was told by a local, "Go ask Alex. If he doesn't know, then whatever you're talking about just doesn't exist."

A car, much like a human, has personality

The advice has proven to be accurate. Talking to Alex about the inner workings of cars is almost a divine experience, whether you're into cars or not. He describes cars as machines that have human fingerprints.

"Even though it's a machine, it is still a human creation, so in a way a car acquires all of the little idiosyncrasies the people who designed it put into it. In that sense, cars have unique personalities."

Alex has made an art of being in tune with those personalities and recognizing each one, though he humbly refers to what he does as straightforward, binary work. "It's not a complex job like that of a doctor, who is looking inside a human body to detect its inner workings. This is a machine and I can open it up, identify exactly what's going on, and determine what may go wrong a year down the

road, or what is unlikely to go wrong."

He especially enjoys working on older cars, whose histories divulge themselves through all of their many gears and replaced parts. There are several very dated British and American gems hanging out in his garage, their owners happy to leave them to Alex's care. After hearing him talk about their unique ticks and quirks, it's hard not to look at them as human-esque – a curmudgeonly older gentleman, an elegant dandy, a boxy sportsman. They're all there, telling their stories. But whether old or brand new, what is most satisfying, Alex says, is returning a car to its owner running not just smoothly, but giving the ride that car was meant to deliver – as the saying goes, a well-oiled machine.

A comic thriller about a mechanic ...

Alex is also currently co-authoring a book with author Peter Richmond, of Millerton, which they describe as "Just a typical comic thriller involving a mechanic, a stoner hacker, a terrorist from Kazakhstan, and some fissile black-market uranium." (I wondered if, once completed and published, whether Alex will provide a complimentary copy with each tune-up?).

Motorworks provides repairs, diagnostics, restoration and import services to vehicles ranging from rare and vintage autos, both foreign and domestic, to the family car. They are also a New York State inspection station, and now too dabble in literature on the side. ●

If you have an auto-related question or are interested in the outcome of the comic thriller about a mechanic, call Alex at (518) 789-7800, or drop by at 23 South Center Street, Millerton, N.Y., or online at www.themotorworks.biz.



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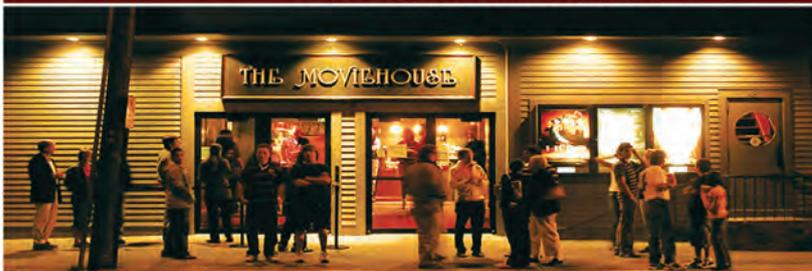
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A WOMAN'S GUIDE TO BIKING



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

In my youth, teens, and twenties, cycling was a word I associated with autonomy, empowerment and a more immediate connection with my surroundings. As a child I rode my bike with a banana seat, and monkey bars accessorized with streamers and a silver bell. A baseball card clamped with a clothespin to my front wheel provided cool sound effects. In high school it was how I commuted to my weekend job at Wendy's, and my chariot to friends' parties. When I obtained my first job in Manhattan, my overtime wages from "busy season" went directly toward a gleaming black and green Ross Mount St. Helen mountain bike that I had coveted all winter long. Then, in graduate school it was my preferred mode of transportation along Chicago's lakefront from Rogers Park to my classes in Lincoln Park.

Moves to Manhattan and London marked the next miles of my life along with marriage and motherhood. The memories of the joy I had found in the saddle receded into the distance. Since then I have tried to resurrect my biking life, but my efforts are sporadic and tentative, not to mention exhausting. These feelings were punctuated last summer by a challenging ride up Route 112 toward The Hotchkiss School intersection, where in making my slow and steady progress up that grueling mountain of a road, I was passed on my left – by a jogger. My efforts to return to the saddle came to a screeching halt.

Where the boys are

I am envious of the bikers I see on the roads, but the gap between me and them grows wider every year. It's not just the equipment, it's who they are. And who are they? Mostly men. Mostly going very fast. I know there are women cyclists but I just don't see that many of them out and about, and the ones that I do see look way more pro than I could ever be. In a word, I am intimidated.

So ladies, this article is just as much for me as it

is for you. Hopefully you will find some confidence and basic knowledge that will help you put your mettle to the pedal. It's time to rekindle that love of cycling and claim a place on the road.

Back in the saddle

My quest for information took me to Berkshire Bike & Board (BB&B) in Great Barrington, MA. It was there, as if to validate my intention for this article, that the Universe granted me BB&B manager Tammy Payer.

Let's just get this out in front – Tammy is awesome! She was the perfect person for me to interview. With a slight build that belies her intensity and gritty resolve, she patiently answered my questions and told me her story. A divorced mother of four, she stumbled on to cycling five years ago at the end of her marriage. Tammy explained, "As a divorce gift to myself, I decided to buy myself a big-girl road bike. I knew very little about what I wanted or needed. I came here and relied on the expertise of the staff. With the interest-free financing I was able to buy a bike I could grow into. Then I started riding, exclusively on back roads because I didn't have the confidence to ride with traffic." The rest is herstory. Now Tammy rides – a lot.

She parlayed her newly-found passion into a job at BB&B as a way to cement herself into the biking community and to fund her healthy addiction to cycling. And her four kids? They all ride too. According to Tammy, "It has been an amazing family experience for all of us, and my kids even come with me on group rides that I lead from here at the shop."

Prêt-à-Rider vs. Bespoke

You can buy a bike ready to ride or you can have one designed to specifications. Much of this decision depends on budget, terrain, and intended and aspirational usage. Are you riding for your health, to create social opportunities, or provide you with

a competitive outlet? It could be a mix of all of the above, but it is an important point on which to gain clarity, as it will determine the type of bike you purchase.

Not all bikes are created equal when it comes to a woman's proportions. Options for women's bikes are increasing and BB&B has a number of them to choose from. These bikes are strong enough for a man, but made for a woman. Tammy was adamant that women don't need to settle for "pink it and shrink it" models. However, there are "in line" bikes that are made more for a man's proportions, but can overlap with the size of many women. According to Tammy, it has to do with center of gravity – ours is lower – and the fact that you want that weight over the pedal. In addition, "women typically have narrower shoulders, longer legs, and a shorter torso than men." For a woman, this means narrower handle bars and a longer head tube.

There are also different types of bikes: road, hybrid/utility, mountain, and comfort. Where, how, and for what distance you plan to ride will help Tammy determine which style of bike is right for you. Road bikes are more aero-dynamic with narrow tires and lower lines to reduce friction with the air and road. Hybrid or utility bikes have more upright handle bars with tires that are a bit wider and grippier. Mountain bikes have disc brakes to be able to stop in wet and muddy conditions, wide and really grippy tires, and higher degrees of shock absorption as well as sturdier frames. Comfort bikes have the ample seats and upright handle bars for maximum comfort and minimum strain on neck, shoulders and arms.

All of these bikes can be bought off the rack, or customized to fit your body, like that couture dress. This is especially true for road bikes. However, the difference between the dress and the bike is that for the money you might spend, you will probably get

Continued on next page ...

more wear and comfort out of your designer bike. To aid in assessing that proper fit, particularly with a road bike, BB&B has a body scan machine to scale a bike to your proportions in ways to enhance performance and comfort.

If you go the route of customizing your bicycle, then the selection of handlebars, seats, pedals, components, wheels, and brakes all come in grades of “good, better, and best” said Tammy. Frames are constructed of more economical aluminum and carbon, which is lighter and more costly. “Once I know what you want from a bike and any physical limitations you may have, then I can suggest what parts you can economize on and what parts it makes sense to splurge. The point is that you can upgrade components gradually without buying a whole new bike.”

Another consideration is whether you will be riding by yourself or in a group. As a group rider you need to find one that aligns with your ability, stamina, and priorities. Once you decide that, then you need a bike that fits in with that crowd. You can't use a mountain bike to keep up with a pack doing 50 miles on hilly road terrain. It will be exceedingly difficult to keep pace. On a “drop ride” where the group rides together to the extent that everyone keeps up, you need to keep pace. If you can't, you are dropped and need to make your way back on your own. No-drop rides, in the words of Disney's Lilo are *ohona*, which “means family... and no one is left behind – or forgotten.” These are the rides you want as a beginner.

The three evils: Pressure points, friction, and chafing

Tammy insists, “There is no reason to be uncomfortable on a bike.” However, in the beginning depending on where and how far you ride, there may be aches and pains and the breaking in of certain body parts as you toughen up. The choice of accessories, also in grades of good, better, best, can really help in reducing the interrelated negative effects of pressure points, friction, and chafing. “That is why proper fit of the bike and the clothes is so important,” maintained Tammy. In general she counseled, stay away from cotton and seams.

As a rule, better shorts have more panels, wider leg bands to prevent riding up, a gel-filled chamois lining, and more mesh to wick away moisture. As for that delicate question about underwear under your bike shorts, take your lead from men in kilts – don't wear any. Underwear traps moisture, which increases friction and chafing. Its seams also create pressure points down below. To help with the chafing that is bound to occur to some degree, Tammy ardently recommended Hoo Ha Ride Glide, made for women by women to protect the nether regions. Oh, and men love using it too.

For a jersey, choose a synthetic material to wick away moisture so it dissipates and the shirt dries



quickly. Cycling socks should be synthetic or wool with no toe seam that can cause pressure and soreness.

There are other important accessories that not only look cool, but also serve essential functions. Gloves with pads keep hands from slipping and reduce pressure on hands and wrists. Cycling glasses reduce glare and protect eyes and the delicate skin around them from debris kicked up by another cyclist or passing car and insects. It's no fun getting swatted in the eyeball by a horsefly while speeding downhill at 30 mph. Shoes for a beginner should be flat. Look for a touring shoe that you can walk in, but that also converts to a clip on when you reach that level of expertise.

For safety, you need to be self-supportive when it comes to flats and other break downs. A seat bag outfitted with a spare tube, patch kit, CO₂ cartridge, and tire levers is critical – as well as the knowledge of how to use those tools. A portable pump is also recommended. To keep from tanking in the middle of your ride, bring one water bottle per every 20 miles of riding, and a nutrition supplement in bar or powder form (for dissolving in your water).

Protecting your noggin

Arguably, the most important piece of equipment is the helmet. You should look for one certified by SNELL and appropriate to the riding you are doing. For example, mountain bike helmets have more posterior protection. Helmets with a lower profile and more vents aid in the aerodynamics of road biking.

Tammy introduced me to the newest helmet technology, MIPS, which stands for Multi-directional Impact Protection System. Invented in Sweden, MIPS is a sheathing on the inside of the helmet that is designed to mimic the fluid surrounding your brain and cushion the head to mitigate the effects of an angled impact with forward momentum.

Clocking the miles

One last item that can enhance your riding is an odometer or bike computer. On the basic level it can measure distance and speed. More elaborate versions measure heart rate, cadence (important for optimizing your shifting), and weather. These handlebar computers can download and upload rides from sites such as MapMyRide and Strava. According to the website Sportive Cyclist which compares the two, “Both ... are based on a similar principle. You take a GPS device out on your ride to capture where you went. When you're done, the route and performance details are uploaded to the relevant website, where you can browse, analyze and share with friends.”

A bicycle built for you

The happy ending to this story is that you can break back into the world of biking and do it in a way that makes sense for your budget, your body, and your goals. Tammy and her colleagues at Berkshire Bike & Board are ready and willing to help. As Tammy has experienced as a customer, “People here are not looking to sell you a bike. Anyone can do that. We want to sell you a lifestyle and help you be part of a larger community of bikers. It can seem intimidating at first. Believe me, I know that. But our job is to make you comfortable so biking becomes part of your life.”

With a high level of customer service, technical expertise, and quality merchandise designed for women, Berkshire Bike & Board is your one-stop shop for once again, or for the first time, experiencing the joys of a bicycle built for you. •

Berkshire Bike & Board is located at 29 State Road in Great Barrington (there is also a Pittsfield location). You can reach them at (413) 528-5555 or on the web at www.berkshire-bikeandboard.com. Their extensive website details group rides leaving from the shop, bike buying guides, and area resources. Tammy plans on offering workshops and rides for women. Check the website or contact the store for details.

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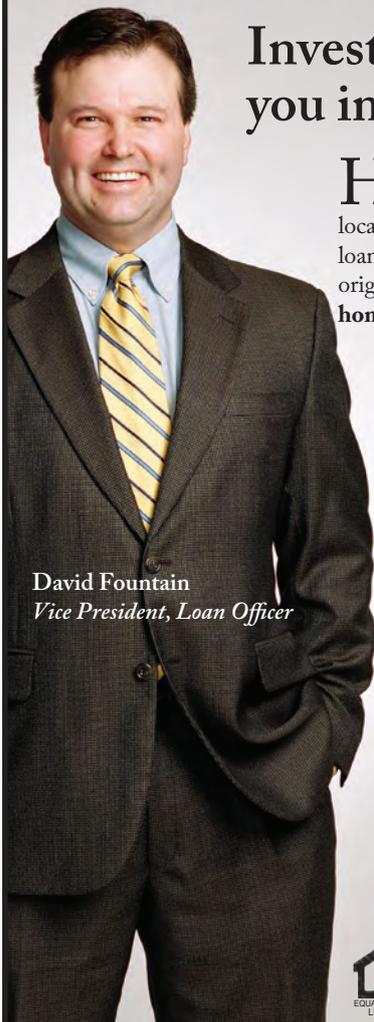
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wheels & water

By Claire Copley
info@mainstreetmag.com

At a time when we find ourselves at odds with the environment depending on where on Earth you are (e.g. California's current drought issues), it is important to see the bigger picture and to understand the environmental issues – as well as the solutions. In this transportation themed issue, Claire explains how automobiles, and what is associated with them, have historically impacted our environment, and how we can help solve these issues.

The impact of the automobile on the American environment has been profound. Cars (and trucks) consume resources, increase our oil dependency, pollute the air, land and water, and transform our landscape. Our reliance on the automobile has created a network of roads, parking lots, shopping malls, and urban sprawl. These have, in turn, created new and even more damaging types of environmental concerns.

Automobiles became the primary mode of personal transportation in the United States in the 1910s and 1920s. Some suggested it was a boom to individualism, freedom and liberation, while others maintained it would be the bane of modern society. Cars have been blamed for most urban (and suburban) problems including pollution, energy exploitation, congestion, traffic fatalities, suburban sprawl, and the demise of the pedestrian.

We know all about the air pollution caused

by automobiles and the statutory alterations that were imposed to make them run more cleanly. Governments have fought long and hard with the industry to mitigate the damages to our air quality and atmosphere since the 1960's. Motivated by our increasing environmental concern, automakers continue to pursue cleaner, healthier operating systems for cars. There is no doubt that our air has improved since the 1960s when emission restriction was first imposed. As a child in Los Angeles I recall the everyday pain in my lungs as I walked home from school.

Pavement plight

But despite our efforts on reducing emissions, there are other problems created by our auto addiction. Few of us realize that the vast network of paved-over landscape presents its own grave dangers to our wildlife, to plant and animal habitat, and most of all to our water supply. Roads, buildings, and paved areas threaten our environment by sealing portions of our landscape with materials that do not allow liquid to penetrate or pass through them.

In some ways, it was rural areas like ours that were the most impacted by the automobile in the early days. Some of the earliest paved roads were landscaped parkways along scenic routes that brought people from the cities. Cars (and trucks) could potentially help confront some nagging rural problems such as isolation, the high cost of transporting farm products and labor, and the development of local rural economies. Highway construction influenced settlement patterns and made it possible to connect urban and rural communities. As communities grew, more and more of

the ground area was devoted to paved streets and parking spaces.

Aside from the damage done to the ozone layer which set in motion a whole host of environmental degradation we call Climate Change, building new roads, highways, and business corridors damaged plant and animal habitats; fractured wildlife areas and migratory routes, and dislocated and even destroyed neighborhoods. But even more concerning is the invisible damage to our water sources and groundwater tables. Roads and pavement made of asphalt and concrete effectively seal surfaces, repel water, and prevent precipitation and meltwater from infiltrating soils, thus disrupting the water cycle as well as polluting our water system. Storm water runoff has become a challenge that hydrologists all over the country are dealing with.

Rainwater and runoff

We don't often think about the issues associated with the spread of roadways and overbuilding in our landscape. The paving over of large swathes of landscape means that water from rainfall cannot be absorbed into the ground. Instead, rainfall rushes off roofs, roadways, sidewalks, bridges, parking lots, driveways, and other impervious surfaces. There are contaminants in this runoff water: oil, salt, rubber, heavy metals, chemicals, sand, trash, and a host of others are washed into streams, rivers, and sewage systems. High sediment loads from streambed erosion and construction sites, and waste such as cigarette butts, animal feces, six-pack holders, and

Continued on next page ...

plastic bags are carried by surges in storm water.

In cities, the runoff waters are collected by sewerage systems causing them to overflow. When this happens the raw sewage is released into streams, rivers, and oceans. The quantity as well as the quality of runoff water negatively impacts fish, animals, plants, and people.

The type of water pollution caused by excessive runoff is called “non-point source pollution” as opposed to say, a manufacturing facility pumping contaminated wastewater into our waterways (“point source pollution”). Although the federal government regulates both point and non-point pollution through the Clean Water Act, it is more difficult to control non-point pollution in the environment. Not only do we have too much water all at once rushing into our waterways, but it is polluted as it flows over chemically treated fields, paved areas and roadside ditches.

Impervious surfaces and groundwater

Impervious surfaces, like roads and buildings, also collect solar heat in their dense mass. When the heat is released it raises air temperatures producing urban “heat islands,” increasing energy consumption in buildings to cool these hot spots. When storm water runs off these surfaces it is heated. This heated water reduces oxygen in stream and lake water, killing aquatic wildlife and substantially altering conditions for aquatic ecosystems.

Impervious pavements deprive nearby tree roots of aeration, killing trees and eliminating tree shade from the urban setting. Because impervious surfaces displace living vegetation, they reduce ecological productivity and interrupt the cycling of carbon dioxide. It's all an inter-related process in which each alteration causes progressive weakening and damage to other systems.

Flooding is impacted by runoff as well. In the past decades we have been witness to more and more serious flooding. Runoff from an acre of pavement is about 10-20 times greater than the runoff from an acre of grass. Large amounts of runoff travel fast and flow into whatever streambed or river is handy. Streams and rivers fill more quickly, overflowing banks, and damaging surrounding habitat.

In some areas, lower groundwater tables may result from increases in new building, since so much of the water gained from rainfall does not replenish the groundwater. Rainfall soaking into the ground is the natural way to cleanse water and filter contaminants, as water flows through to the groundwater. Soil is full of bacteria, which break down contaminants, and fill the water table with fresh, clean water.



Above: An example of a block of concrete turf block – grass in a geometric patterns of concrete cubes.

New eco-friendly technology

It is difficult to conceive of reducing all of the construction and use of impervious surfaces as long as population growth, automobile dependency, and structural development continue to rise. Luckily technology has produced new and better materials with which to build and pave. The question is: will we use them? These new materials tend to be more expensive and require new modes of installation. (What in heaven's name do we do with the world's steamrollers if we no longer use asphalt?). Using these new materials is our best hope of reducing storm water runoff and its damage. New design principles and practices to keep surfaces permeable to the fullest extent possible would go a long way towards addressing the problem and protecting our water supply.

“Green roofs” are a way that more and more buildings are dealing with this problem in cities. A green roof is built to support the weight of soil and planted with vegetation. This vegetation filters rainwater, provides insulation, and helps lower urban air temperatures. Green roofing has been shown to help in urban environments all across the world.

Permeable pavers

Engineers have developed permeable materials that can replace asphalt and concrete. Products that are as strong as asphalt and concrete but allow water to pass through them are on the market now. The most useful of these has been the invention of pervious concrete. This is a porous paving material that permits storm water runoff to percolate through it. It can be used to pave streets, parking lots, and driveways.

There are many types of pervious, permeable, and porous pavers that can be used by homeowners as well: Driveways, patios, swimming pool surrounds, paths and parking areas. Many of these products begin the filtering process inside the paver

itself. Permeable paving is any system that is set in sand or gravel and allows water to drain off of the pavers. This kind of paving has been used for years as in brick or flagstone paths laid on a compacted bed of crushed stone. The new paver technology takes traditional common sense to a whole new level.

My favorite modern paving system is concrete turf block. Interlocking pieces of concrete are laid on a specially prepared foundation that promotes percolation. When installed, the pavers allow grass to grow up from the center of each piece. The grass can be mowed like a lawn. Eventually all you see is grass with a geometric pattern of concrete cubes. It's a durable, attractive, and a well draining solution for patios, driveways, and paths. It's perfect!

An added benefit of permeable paving is that it doesn't allow water to puddle as rain and melting snow drain down to the substrata. This means no ice build-up in the winter, and who among us cannot appreciate that?! Permeable and porous pavers are becoming a more widely recognized drainage solution. The greatest recent stride forward has been the Environmental Protection Agency officially naming PICP (Permeable Interlocking Concrete Pavement) as a Best Management Practice for landscape architects and builders. This means they will be more widely recommended and used.

We must find ways to reduce the area of impervious surfaces, and use more natural green space in our planning. We cannot turn the clock back or reduce our population growth or our dependence on cars, but with some commitment and thought we should be able to move forward in a less damaging manner. •

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Welcome Dr. Katie Vagliano!

Millerton Veterinary Practice is pleased to announce Dr. Katie Vagliano has reunited with Dr. Carrie Cannon, practice owner of MVP. Dr. Vagliano previously worked at MVP between 2008 and 2011. MVP and its staff are proud to have her back! Dr. Vagliano has been practicing Veterinary Medicine for 11 years and is a graduate of Tufts Veterinary School. Dr. Vagliano resides in Norfolk, CT with her husband, two children, two Great Danes and two cats.

Congruent with the philosophies of Dr. Carrie Cannon, Dr. Vagliano has an interest in the integration of alternative therapies and western medical care to offer clients additional options for their beloved companions' care. She received her training through the distinguished International Veterinary Acupuncture Society in Veterinary Acupuncture.

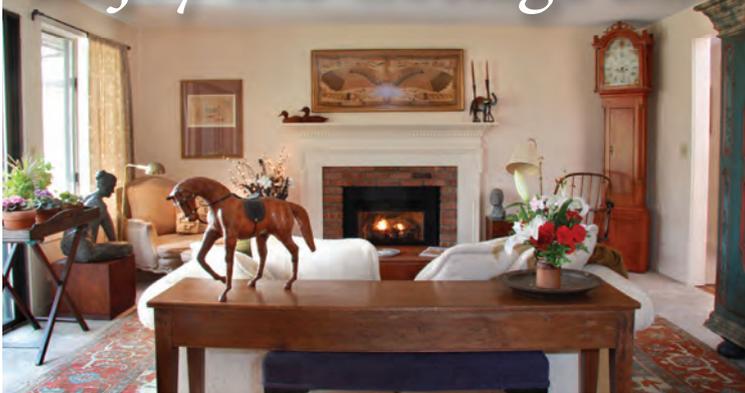
Dr. Vagliano will allow for expanding availability of services to MVP clients by offering additional Monday office hours, continued evening appointments, and Saturday hours. Dr. Vagliano enjoys all aspects of small animal medicine and particularly values the opportunity to educate people about their animal companions' health. She considers her style of practice as "family medicine," recognizing the importance of maintaining canine and feline health which results in the entire family benefiting from the long and happy lives of their companions. Every animal and every family is unique and she welcomes the opportunity to work with the individual needs of every patient and client.



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ARCHITECT'S SPOTLIGHT:

darlene riemer

By John Torsiello
info@mainstreetmag.com

Photos courtesy of
Darlene Riemer

Main Street Magazine caught up with busy Amenia-based architect Darlene Riemer for a chat recently. Riemer moved to the area from Rhode Island in 1967 when her husband, Bob Riemer, accepted a teaching position at Webutuck High School, where he taught chemistry and physics. The couple has two children, and four grandchildren. Her office is housed in a large yellow Victorian building in Amenia.

Why and how did you get into the field of architecture?

In grade school the teacher would always call me back to “reality,” by telling me to stop dreaming. I have always dreamed about what could be, how I might change the world, or spaces that people lived in. While others were playing hopscotch, I was drawing floor plans with chalk in the schoolyard, and pretending to live in a space, noting where the doors and windows would be, and imagined the view from within my space, as I stood there gazing at the landscape.

I grew up in Rhode Island, and my father worked in the shipyard as a draftsman, and there was always a drafting table in our home, with all the plastic accouterments, such templates, and compasses that I could use to draw whatever I imagined. It all seemed so normal, and I wondered why every home didn't have a drafting table. Later in life my father worked in Groton, Connecticut, designing submarines. He was the greatest influence in my choosing my profession. He always believed I could do anything I set out to do.

I was 12 years old when I decided that I wanted to become an architect. I elected to take a mechanical drawing class in seventh grade, and was told, politely, it was only for boys, and I would have to take an art class instead. I knew then that this was a “man's” world, and females were not welcomed.

That obviously did not deter you?

No, I researched what it would take to become an architect. I was ready for the challenge. The journey was long, and not at all linear. The five-year professional degree was only the beginning. There was the required three-year internship with a licensed Registered Architect before qualifying to “sit” for the week long written exam, which was given once a year.

Where did you acquire your schooling?

I applied to Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute School of Architecture. I was accepted. There were 70 students who started with me, and 35 at graduation, four of whom were women, including myself. This was just the beginning, but I persevered, prevailed, and I graduated with a Bachelor of Architecture, and a Bachelor of Science in Building Science. That was 25 years ago. Shortly after receiving my license, I started my own company.

Who and what were your influences in your career as an architect?

While most of my colleagues continued on to design corporate headquarters, statement buildings, and lavish commissions, I sensed the importance of architecture was designing places where people actually lived. What they valued in the space they occupied.

Do you have a certain style or philosophy that you adhere to?

Residential design is all about having the client comfortable in their environment, and once this is achieved one can go out into the world, knowing

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your home will always embrace you when you walk in the door.

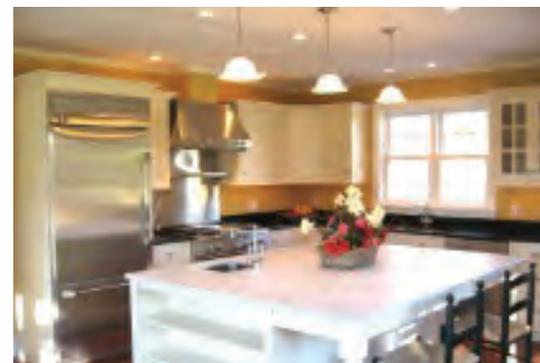
Do you and your clients collaborate on the design of a home, or do they come to you to design it for them with some input from the client?

In fact, when clients come into my office, while they are interviewing me, I am also interviewing them. I listen to what they consider important to the design. Typically someone will come in with a folder of images, of what they want, or absolutely do not want in their home. The homeowner is first and foremost in the process. They may discuss a certain experience, or attribute that is important, and I will translate this into reality. It is often a “give and take” process. I liken the process to a photograph that gradually comes into focus in a tray of chemicals in a darkroom.

Do you attempt to marry your homes with the natural settings they are located in?

The Hudson Valley area is blessed with astonishing views. Siting the house is critical to both capturing the views and settling into the landscape. Walking the property, getting out the compass, and putting a few stakes in the ground to set the house’s edge is most critical. Since many of my clients are weekenders, the stakes may sit for two weeks or so, until their next site visit. And perhaps they will get moved, or they may become the permanent markers. I had one client, a pilot, who flew over the site one weekend and gave me the coordinates for the corner of the house as he saw it from his aircraft.

This multitasking scenario enables me to work on several projects at the same time, as there is a time lag in the decision-making process, which I



Previous page: A Classic Greek Revival home that Riemer designed an addition for in Stanford, NY. Above top: A rear view of the Greek Revival. Above left: Darlene Riemer in her office. Above right: A remodeled kitchen area in a Millerton home. Below left: An entryway into the Greek Revival.

don’t mind. I may take on a pool house design, or an addition to an existing house, or whatever fits into the schedule, while other decisions are being weighed. It is not a perfect world, and compromises are always being made whether it is the budget, or the details. I always tell my clients, “This is your home, it has to be right for you, I am not moving in!” I have designed 57 homes, and 250 additions, and each is different and memorable.

Do you feel you are always changing and growing as an architect, or do you stick to what has made you successful?

The architectural practice of yesterday is not the same as today. There are many designers who may call themselves “architects” and they have no license to practice architecture and don’t often know how to build a house. Because of this lack of licensure and unskilled builders, my practice has evolved to design-build-delivery. We want it done right. When we first meet with a client, the owner, the builder, and architect all sit at the table to collaborate. Early on the budget can be formulated, expectations can be gauged, and the outcome is a better building process.

Our building component, Riemer Construction, knows what we look for in our details, and will often do a mock-up for the client to view at the site. Any number of concerns can be discussed, as this makes for a better project both for the homeowner, and our firm. The American Institute of Architects advocates collaboration as the future for the architectural profession. We build what we design, and the client is involved throughout the process.

How have you and your firm changed over the years?

Our license requires continuing education courses to learn about new materials and methods, as well as renewal energy strategies we employ in our designs. Our team brings all of these measures to the table, and we educate the client along the way. In the past we have worked with many builders, and were disappointed when some would substitute materials that were not up to the standards set by our firm. This was truly an evolutionary development for us, and change is welcomed. Growth of the firm through change and technology makes for a better-built environment, and hopefully, as Vitruvius, author of *The Ten Books on Architecture*, professes that a structure should exhibit the three qualities of firmitas, utilitas, venustas (to be solid, useful, and beautiful). We bring history and the future in what we design.

Talk about one of your favorite commissions. Why is it so? What was unique about it?

My favorite design is a 3,000-square-foot addition to an existing Classic Greek Revival home. It embodies the qualities I strive to achieve throughout my architectural practice. The addition is seamless, and one cannot tell where the original building ends and the addition starts. It was one of my most challenging projects. I have a “passion for detail.” I enjoy the challenges, the projects, changes, and the energy I gain from the process. ●

To learn more call (845) 373-8353, or email Darlene at riemeraia@hotmail.com.





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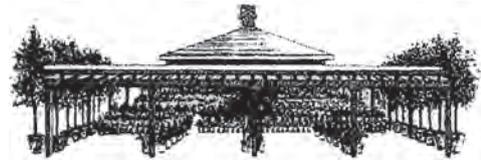
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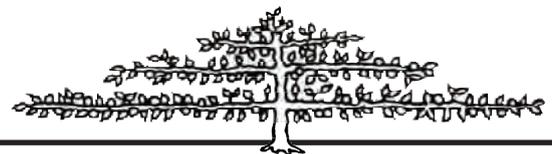
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BACKYARD TRAVEL IN THE HUDSON VALLEY

saddle up, and giddy up!

By Paige Darrah
info@mainstreetmag.com

In this month's installment of Backyard Travel in the Hudson Valley, our contributing writer Paige Darrah goes to visit the fine folks and horses at Cricket Hill Farm in Ancramdale, NY, and to the tack store, Horse Leap in Amenia. Horses were not too long ago mankind's primary source of transportation. Nowadays, they are primarily used for pleasure riding, and what a pleasure they are to ride!

If the Hudson Valley was an independent nation, its national sport would be horseback riding. Our residual non-riders can be overheard muttering "I've always wanted to take up horseback riding." Well, this article is for those HV citizens. The ones eager to get in the saddle, the ones who want to become more outdoorsy, but yet remain stylish. Giddy up.

Phoenix and being in the moment

As you drive to the stables, you're milling over and cataloging the bevy of tasks you need to check off today. There's dry cleaning to drop-off, emails to respond to, children to cart around, miles to run, and groceries to shop for. But the 'gotta get things done' mentality melts away as soon as you hang a right onto Snyder Road and see Phoenix (an über majestic and friendly white horse who could easily be on the cover of one of those cheap romance novels). Even if you're an outsider, once you're in the stables at Cricket Hill Farm, the option to multi task disappears and you're in the moment, which is a lovely place to be. You're marveling, you're grooming, you're tacking, you're riding.

The stables are filled with upbeat, energetic jams (Billy Joel, The Pretenders, that kind of thing); young horse trainer ladies sporting low ponytails



Above: Two riders work on their lesson in Cricket Hill's indoor arena. Below left: Cricket Hill's friendly Phoenix.

and high gloss paddock boots; and Jami's enthusiasm. Jami Wallace is a senior instructor at Cricket Hill. She grew up in Connecticut; lived in the city for 17 years where she was an NYC Mounted Park Ranger (I'm pretty sure that's the best kind of ranger to be); and taught at Post University's Equine Business Management program. Jami is funny, and she's the second most outwardly happy Northerner I've ever met. Jami knows when the horses have an itch and where it itches. She talks to the horses; she has a nearly telepathic rapport with them.

I asked: "How does one go about taking lessons here at Cricket Hill Farm?"

Jami responded by explaining, "Everyone sets up one lesson to begin with. I always tell people it's a very good idea to come and find out if you like us. You need to like your riding instructor. If you don't get along, if you don't understand each other ... find someone else."

Cricket Hill (aka CHF) has 12 lesson horses of all ages and stages. The CHF staff set their riders up with a horse that suits them based on size, temperament, and training. So Jami set me up with Ray. Ray's an older fellow, a perky 29 year-old. Ray doesn't have many teeth left, but that's okay. His adorable pink tongue hangs out of his mouth like one of those yellow smiley face emojis. "Ray is a former show horse, but he still likes to work," Jami said. "Work is good!" Jami said as if speaking for Ray.

Re-riders taking time for themselves

"The demographic we've been getting a lot of lately is adults whose kids are in high school or are going to college, and the parents now finally have time for themselves. They've ridden before, but haven't had a chance to ride in a long time. I teach a lot of 're-riders,'" explained Jami.

One such re-rider is Melinda Macchiaroli, owner of Bhodi Salon & Spa in Hudson.

I asked Melinda what she loves about horseback riding in the Hudson Valley. She said, "I absolutely love the connection I feel when riding a horse. It's a chance to move with grace and power. Riding specifically in the Hudson Valley is so wonderful because of the change in seasons. It's a way for me to experience the beauty of nature and be outside in every season."

"Is it an escape for you?" I asked.

"Yes. It's one of those rare times I leave my phone aside. I don't think of anything else except exactly what's going on in that moment. It is the epitome of Presence," explained Melinda.

Evening riding

Jami is putting together an evening riding group for adults (neophytes welcome). It'll be on Wednesdays from 6:30 to 8:00, the perfect après-workday

Continued on next page ...

escape to take up with a friend or spouse. The group will ride in the outdoor arena, on the trails, and around Cricket Hill's mini lake that's full of heron, ducks, geese, and curiously large turtles.

"It's gorgeous out here in the evening, and very quiet! It stays light until 9pm." If you're interested in partaking, call or email Jami to sign up.

The obligatory grooming process

Students groom and tack up their horse before riding, which is a bit complicated and takes a while to learn. First you loosen up the dirt and hair by massaging the horse with a circular brush with rubber bristles. Then you brush him with a soft brush, then with a stiff brush. Then you comb his mane and tail. Then, facing the back of the horse, you run your hand down his leg and dig the dirt and poop out of the crevices of his horse shoes with a metal pick.

"Grooming does a whole bunch of things. Not only is it healthy for the horse since you're getting rid of all that dirt and loose hair, but you get to inspect the whole horse," Jami explained. "So you can see if he has any cuts or bumps, or lumps or bruises."

Grooming also allows you to connect and bond with the horse. While grooming, you're also able to begin a conversation with a new riding companion, or to continue a conversation with an old friend.

Keep an eye on your horse's ears. If the ears reel backward, the horse doesn't like whatever it is you're doing to him (i.e. brushing him too hard on his belly). If the horse is licking and chewing, that's a happy horse. "Licking and chewing are expressions of contentment and happiness for horses," Jami explained.

When you're about 10 minutes into the cosmetology session, you get the feeling that the farm should pay you for this part; or at least not charge you for it. (Insider tip: once you're familiar with the grooming and tacking process, arrive 30 minutes before your lesson so you can spend the entire hour on the horse. You'll still have to brush Mr. Ed's hair, but at least you won't be paying for it).

Saddling up

You're supposed to have engaged core muscles and a straight back while you're riding – no leaning forward and absolutely no "banana backs" while riding! Jami offered an amusing anecdote to get me to stop leaning forward. "Okay Paige, you're at an elegant dinner party with a very low décolletage and the girls will pop out if you lean or arch over. The dinner course is over, your chair is pulled back. The queen is there too by the way."

So I bounced around on the saddle and attempted to apply what Jami was saying. In horseback riding you eventually realize that if you use your body parts to match the horse's body parts,



Above: Paige strikes a pose in the saddle. Ray, the horse, patiently awaits his treats, with instructor Jami holding onto Ray's reins.

the horse will go where you're going. You learn to give the horse little cues with your calves and your derrière.

Then there's this thing called 'posting.' Posting is that vaguely sexual motion that English riders do when they're trotting, cantering, or jogging. It looks easy; you know it can be done because the other girl in the ring is doing it. But when you post, you are moving in rhythm with the horse, posting to every other step. Posting was the goal Jami and I worked towards.

"So what are a few key ideas I should keep in mind as I'm trying to post?" I asked.

"Let the horse push you forward. Your job is just to stretch, not to try and push yourself up. You stretch down, you stretch up, your hips move forward. In posting, the part of you that actually moves is your pelvic girdle. You'll be surprised how little you have to do on a horse," explained Jami.

You get so into it, so engaged in trying to follow the animal's rhythm, that the hour always ends too soon. I then exclaimed: "Look at me Jami! I'm turning! I'm going round and round."

"I see you. It's time to get down now," she said.

Where to buy sexy horse riding outfits and general equestrian gear

Let's not forget the Waspy clothes. This region has two key equestrian outfit retailers (aka tack stores): Rhinebeck Tack and Horse Leap in Amenia. Jami and I prefer the latter.

Barbara opened Horse Leap in Amenia, NY in 2006 after noticing a hole in the equestrian outfitter market – the regional stores only offered high-end supplies and show gear. There were few options for the amateur rider or the rider of middle-class means. Horse Leap, by contrast, offers a robust selection of new and second hand breeches (riding pants, pronounced 'britches'), riding tops, boots, bridles, etc.

They carry a lovely brand called Kerrits whose 'crossover fullseat' breeches have a chic, tailored look. Barbara confirmed what I'd hoped to be true: wearing these pants in your non-horse riding life is totally fine and not at all pretentious. "10 years ago, I'd have to say 'yes.' But riding pants are quite fashionable now. I get lots of customers who aren't riders in here." Permission granted.

At the end of your riding session, after you've returned your horse to the stall and replaced his reins and bridle with his halter, you get to feed him two carrot-flavored treats from the palm of your hand. This appears to be Ray's favorite part. Your clothes smell like hay for the rest of the day, so you're intermittently reminded of your ride as you get back to the real world of multitasking between the kids and the iPhone. And you look forward to your next foray around the farm. •

For more information about riding in our area, check out these local barns:

Cricket Hill Farm in Ancramdale, crickethillfarm.org, (518) 329-6166, and staff@crickethillfarm.org. The horses and the staff take Mondays off. Equipment is provided. Adults lessons are an hour long, \$85 with Jami, \$110 with the head instructor, Becca. Children start out with a half and hour lesson, and that's \$75. Children can do pony rides at four years old.

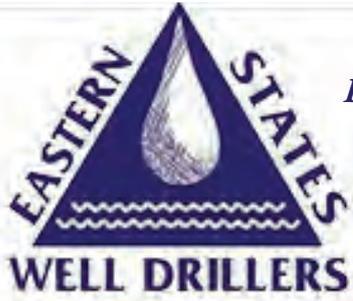
Blue Rider Stables in South Egremont, MA, bluerider.org, one-hour group lesson \$50, one-hour private lesson \$65. They offer a mindful selection of workshops like 'Neighmaste' (yoga on horseback. No, I'm not joking). Very zen.

Riga Meadow in Salisbury (ask for Becky), rigameadow.com, (860) 435-9991.

Cedar Crest Farm in Pine Plains, equestcenter.com. Lessons in show-jumping, cross-country and dressage to riders of all abilities 9am-4pm, Tuesday through Sunday.

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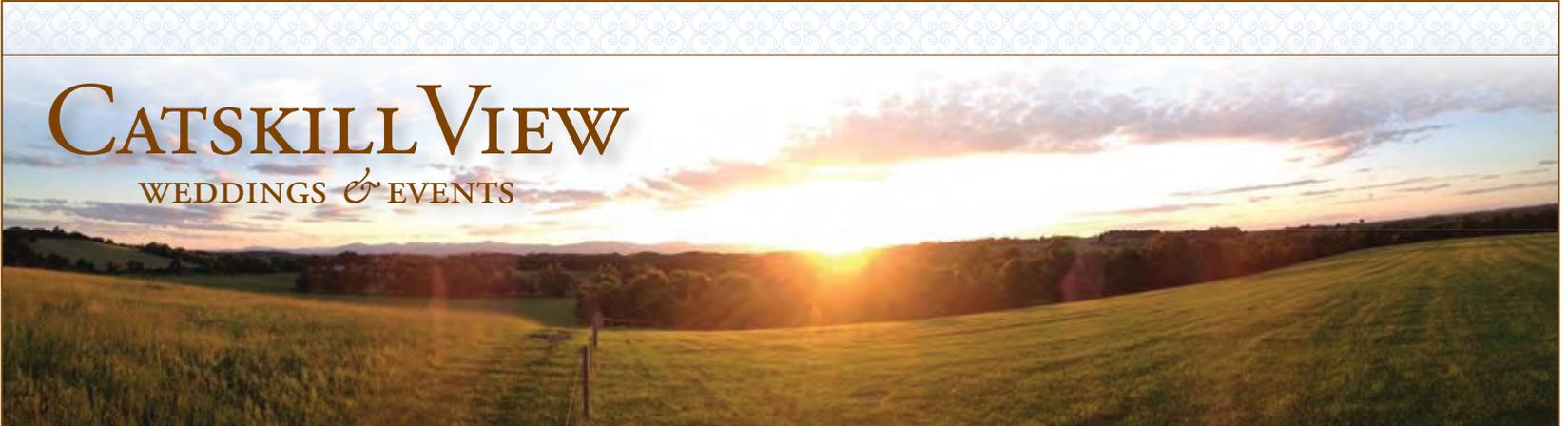
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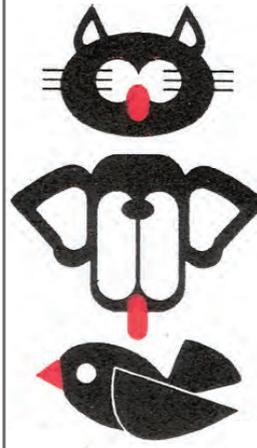
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To get your car ready for spring and summertime driving, you should check your oil. Some of the newer cars have much longer oil change intervals than the older models. Some newer models have oil changes every 10,000 miles. But if you have a car that can't go 10,000 you should check your oil every 3,000 miles or so between changes.

Some new cars don't have a conventional dipstick, the oil is checked with the info screen on the dashboard. Inspecting the pressure and condition of your tires is also important. The recommended pressure can be found on a sticker in the drivers door jam. Testing the car's battery can be done easily. Replacing a weak battery is always more cost effective than having a breakdown. Temperature changes can cause a weak battery to fail. Wiper blades are vital to safe driving in wet conditions. Manufacturers suggest replacing wiper blades every 6 months. Most people might not think about their air conditioning system this time of year. It would be a good idea to try your A/C after this long winter.

The roads this year have been unusually rough you could have tire damage, bent rims and suspension problems. The rough roads are caused by frost heaves. This occurs when water under the blacktop freezes, pushing the road surface up from underneath. The roads should smooth out when the ground temperature rises. That will lead us into pothole season. Lastly, after this winters heavy use of road salt, make sure you give the undercarriage of your vehicle a thorough flushing to help reduce the risk of rusting. Our cars are our second biggest investment, proper care and maintenance are vital to reliable operation.



Dominick Calabro
(518) 398-5360
3 Factory Lane,
Pine Plains, NY

Auto maintenance tips after the winter

With spring finally upon us and the long hard winter just a bad memory, it's time to pay a little attention to the vehicles that got us through all that snow and ice. The winter is not only tough on our cars mechanically, but it's also hard on the body and undercarriage. The ice-melt chemicals (calcium chloride and magnesium chloride) that the State Highway Departments spread on the roads in liquid form are terribly corrosive to our cars and trucks, and it pays to spend some time washing all that off as best we can. Not only do you need to wash the outside of the car, but roll up your sleeves and get up underneath things including the insides of the wheels, inside the wheel wells, underneath the doors and bumpers, and underneath the floor as much as possible including the suspension components. Pop the hood and wash out underneath there as well. Keep away from electrical components as best you can, but things are used to getting wet under there so you don't need to worry too much. Flush out around the inner fenders and down in the back corners as much as you can. If you take your car to a car wash, spend the extra money and get the "underbody wash." Taking the time to do this at least in the spring, if not a few times during the winter, will help prevent costly repairs in the future and prolong the life of your second biggest investment.

— SHARON —
AUTO BODY

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T: 860 364 0128 | F: 860 364 0041

sharonautobody.com

Dollars & sense

Nearly 80 percent of U.S. taxpayers will receive a federal refund this year, and many of you won't be sure what to do with that money.

"Your tax refund can start you on the path to long-term financial security," says George T. Whalen, President of the Bank of Millbrook. "Take a moment to evaluate your financial situation and decide where those dollars will make the most difference."

For those eight out of ten of you, the Bank of Millbrook has these suggestions:

- **Save for emergencies.** Open or add to a savings account that serves as an "emergency fund," which should hold three-to-six months of living expenses.
- **Pay off debt.** Pay down existing balances either by chipping away at loans with the highest interest rates or eliminating smaller debt first.
- **Save for retirement.** Open or increase contributions to a tax-deferred savings plan like a 401(k), offered through an employer, or an IRA, set up with your bank.
- **Put it toward a down payment.** The biggest challenge that most first-time home buyers face is coming up with enough money for a down payment. If you intend to buy a new home in the near future, putting your tax refund toward the down payment is a smart move.
- **Invest in your current home.** Home improvements will pay you back in the long run by increasing the value of your home. This can include small, cost-effective upgrades like energy-efficient appliances.

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



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LISTINGS:

ANIMAL CARE, ETC.

Agway
518 789 4471
agwayny.com
BensDotter's Pet
413 528 4940
Boundaries for Pets
800 732 3181
boundariesforpets.invisiblefence.com
Millerton Veterinary Practice
518 789 3440
millertonvet.com
Petpourri
845 435 8833
Wild Birds Country Store
413 644 9007
wild-birdstore.com

ANTIQUES

Millerton Antiques Center
518 789 6004
Susan Silver Antiques
413 229 8169
susansilverantiques.com
Tristate Antique Restoration
518 329 0411
tristateantiquerestoration.com

APPLIANCES

Gordon R. Keeler Appliances
518 789 4961

ART & DESIGN

Cheryl Hutto
413 298 0673
crowhills.com
Clark & Green Inc.
clarkandgreen.com
Darlene S. Riemer, Architect
845 373 8353
Darren Mercer Architect
914 391 4490
Gilded Moon Framing & Gallery
518 789 3428
gmframing.com
Housatonic Fine Art & Custom Framing
860 619 8097
Martina Gates Fotoworks
martinagates.com
Neumann Fine Art
neumannfineart.com
Salisbury Artisans
salisburyartisans.com
Snyder Printer
518 272 8881
snyderprinter.com
The Arts at Hotchkiss
860 435 4423

hotchkiss.org/arts

AUTOMOTIVE

Factory Lane Auto Repair
518 398 5360
Jack's Auto Service
845 373 9757
jacksautoservice.com
Lime Rock Park
860 435 5000
limerock.com
Millerton Service Center
518 789 3462
North East Muffler
518 789 3669
Northwest Corner Classic Cars
860 596 4272
northwestcornerclassiccars.com
Ruge's Subaru
rugesauto.com
Sharon Auto Body
860 364 0128

CAFES & FOOD & WINE

52 Main
518 789 0252
52main.com
Cascade Spirit Shoppe
845 373 8232
Charlotte's Restaurant & Catering
845 677 5888
charlottesny.com
Church Street Deli
518 329 4551
Country Bistro
860 435 9420
thecountrybistro.com
Cozy's Pizzeria
518 592 1700
Four Bros. Drive-in
ameniadrivein.com
Harney & Sons
518 789 2121
harney.com
LaBonne's Markets
860 435 2559
labonnes.com
Lia's Mountain View
518 398 7311
liasmountainview.com
Mountainside Cafe
860 824 7876
mountainsidecafe.com/cafe
Pastorale
860 435 1011
Pine Plains Fine Wines
518 398 7633
Red Devon

845 868 3175
reddevonrestaurant.com
Salisbury Breads
860 435 8835
salisburybreads.com
Salisbury Wines
860 435 1414
salisburywines.com
Stagecoach Tavern
413 229 8585
stagecoachtavern.net

CARPENTRY/BUILDER

Churchill Building Company
860 596 4063
churchillbuildingcompany.com
George Lagonia Jr. Inc.
518 672 7712
lagoniaconstruction.com
Nailed It Building & Construction
518 929 7482
naileditbuilding.com
Over Mountain Builders
518 789 6173
overmountainbuilders.com
Rafe Churchill
rafechurchill.com

FARMS & FARMING

Hawthorne Valley Farm Store
518 672 7500
hawthornevalleyfarm.com
Hudson Valley Harvest
hv-harvest.com
Madava Farms
crownmaple.com
McEnroe Farm Market
518 789 4191
mcenroeorganicfarm.com
Paley's Market & Garden Center
860 364 0674
paleysmarket.com
Quattro's Poultry Farm & Market
845 635 2018
Ronnybrook
518 398 6455
ronnybrook.com
Walbridge Farm Market
845 677 6221
walbridgefarm.com
Windy Hill Farm
413 298 3217
windyhillfarminc.com

ELECTRICAL

Berlinghoff Electrical Contracting
518 398 0810
berlinghoffelectrical.com

HEALTH & BEAUTY

Academy Street Salon
860 435 3500
academystreetsalon.com
Amore Nail Spa
518 592 1133
amorenails pamillerton.com
D's Salon & Spa
860 435 8700
Facebook: /dssalonandspa
Hylton Hundt Salon
518 789 9390
hyltonhundtsalon.com
Kelly & Co. Hair Salon
845 373 8490
kellycompanyhair.com
Robert Dweck, MD
Counseling for the
Body & Mind
845 206 9466
robertdweckmd.com
robertdweckmd@gmail.com
Sharon Hospital
sharonhospital.com
Sharon Optical
860 364 0878
sharonopticalct.com
Shear Illusions Salon
860 364 5111

HOME HEATING, ETC.

Crown/Dutchess Oil & Propane
518 789 3014
dutchessoil.com
Herrington Fuels
518 325 6700
herringtonfuels.com
Lindell Fuels
860 824 5444
Taylor Oil
800 553 2234
gmtayloroil.com

HOME SERVICES

Associated Lightning Rod
518 789 4603
alrci.com
Eastern States Well Drillers
518 325 4679
easternstateswelldrillers.com
Ed Herrington Inc
518 325 3131
edherrington.com
Hussey Painting LLC
860 435 8149
husseypainting.com
Madsen Overhead Doors
518 392 3883
madsenoverheaddoors.com
Sheldon Masonry & Concrete
860 387 9417
W.B. Case, LLC
860 364 2169

INSURANCE & FINANCE

Bank of Millbrook
845 677 5321
bankofmillbrook.com
Brad Peck
518 329 3131
lofgrenagency.com

LAWN, GARDEN, POOL

4 Seasons
518 789 0591
Country Care Property Management
845 518 0632
Domenick Lopane, Jr.
518 789 6170
Millerton Nursery & Garden Shop
518 789 3771
millertonnursery.com
Mountain Valley Gardening
518 965 9982
Race Mountain Tree Service
413 229 2728
racemtree.com
Robbie Haldane
518 325 3200
robbiehaldane.com
Stonehedge Landscaping Inc

845 233 0722
stonehedgeand.com
Up Country Services
860 364 0261
upcountryservices.com

LIFESTYLE & EVENTS

Alicia King Photography
aliciakingphotography.com
Berkshire Internation Film Fest.
biffma.org
Catskill View Wedding & Events
518 592 1135
catskillviewweddings.com
Noble Horizons
860 435 9851
noblehorizons.org
Sharon Playhouse
860 364 7469
sharonplayhouse.org
SVNA
860 435 0816
salisburyvna.org
The Moviehouse
518 789 0022
themoviehouse.net
Trade Secrets
860 364 1080
tradesecretsct.com

REAL ESTATE

Bain Real Estate
860 927 4646
bainrealestate.com
Copake Lake Realty Corp.
518 325 9741
copakelakerealty.com
Elyse Harney Real Estate
518 789 8800
860 435 2200
HarneyRE.com
HW Guernsey Realtors Inc
845 677 5311
hwguernsey.com
Paula Redmond Real Estate, Inc.
845 677 0505
paularedmond.com

SPECIALTY SERVICES

Country Gardeners Florist
518 789 6440
countrygardenersflorist.com
Countrytown Marble & Tile
518 325 5836
Ghent Wood Products
518 672 7021
ghentwoodproducts.com
Kenny Funeral Homes
860 364 5709
kennyfuneralhomes.com
Michael D. Lynch Law
860 364 5505
michaelylynchlaw.com
Roaring Oaks Florist
860 364 5380
roaringoaksflorist.com
Stone & Tile Services
860 824 5192
stonepolishingct.com
Valentine Monuments & Sandblast
518 789 9497
VKLarson Communications
917 678 7689
vklarsoncommunications.com

STORES

Crane's Outdoor Power Equipment
860 824 7276
cranesope.com
Hammertown
hammertown.com
Horse Leap
845 789 1177
horseleap.com
Pieces
914 388 0105
Saperstein's Dept. Store
518 789 3365
SomethingsGottaGive
860 824 8045

WHAT'S YOUR SIGN?

ARIES (March 21–April 19)

It's OK that things in your life are upside down as long as it's within reason. The danger with having too many projects is that some of them will not be gotten to.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20)

It's fun to be given attention by people, especially the people that think you're interesting. If you get the opportunity to take control, grab it!

GEMINI (May 21–June 20)

It's useless to have all of the answers if you can't implement them into correct action. Just remember that sometimes the other shoe does drop and not everyone is your friend.

CANCER (June 21–July 22)

The questions on your lips are exaggerated, irritatingly complicated and way too important. The key to success is to believe in it.

LEO (July 23–Aug. 22)

Remember it's better not to have to argue. Be friendly, especially in conversations.

VIRGO (Aug. 23–Sept. 22)

It's better to be friendly with coworkers when something unexpected comes up. Beware complications, simplicity is always the best route.

LIBRA (Sept. 23–Oct. 22)

You're open-minded, but when it comes to some of the "far out" ideas, you're stuck in your ways. Enjoy the special moments with your family.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23–Nov. 21)

An issue over a jointly-owned object or something that was borrowed will cause issues in a romantic relationship. Don't be biased.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22–Dec. 21)

So this is what the view from the Love Boat looks like! Nothing but love, happiness, and giddiness. Be steadfast and yourself and it'll all work out.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22–Jan. 19)

Though it's tempting to agree with others to keep the peace, it isn't the right solution. Just be patient.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20–Feb. 18)

Keep in mind that at this time in your life, it'll serve you best to tend to your family and environment. Pay attention to what's being said to you, even though you may not understand all of what's said.

PISCES (Feb. 19–March 20)

Even though your personal life is time consuming, you can't let that impact your work. Better the circumstances in your life that don't make you happy.



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