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MAGAZINE





Before



Before



After



Before



After



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IT'S MY BIRTHDAY!

We are celebrating a birthday – Main Street Magazine turns six years old this month! Wow, that went by so fast. It feels like ... well maybe not yesterday, but maybe more like last year ... when Ashley and I were literally walking door-to-door in the dead of winter introducing ourselves to various local businesses, telling them that we were going to be creating and publishing this magazine, and asking if they'd like to advertise. I'm not going to lie to you and tell you that it was easy, because it wasn't. We even had someone say to us, "Call me in a year – if you make it that long." But we had a number of supporters from day one, and they became advertisers and are the ones who helped to make us what we are. The biggest thank you goes out to all of them.

A lot has changed in these six years; the magazine has grown and evolved. We have more contributing writers and photographers. We have more amazing advertisers who make this publication possible. Our distribution area has also grown along with how many magazines we publish. We as people have also grown and evolved; Ashley and I both got married and became mothers. But during this time, the one thing that has always remained true is that we continue to try to tell a good, positive, and local story. That has always been my goal, and I will continue to strive to bring that to you.

With that being said, three years ago this March, we published our first "Animal and Farm" issue. Since then it has been a huge hit. People just love their pets, animals, and their farmers! And we don't blame them because we feel the same way. This very issue marks our fourth consecutive "Animal and Farm" issue and we're very excited about it – we're animal people and I grew up on a farm, how could we not love this issue, right? Ashley, in particular, loves the "furriently faces" on page nine. If she had it her way, we'd have "furriently faces" every other month. I also enjoy them, but I like learning about all of the amazing and dedicated people that are in our region who care for animals and the earth (by being farmers) more though. Caring for animals as well as being a farmer is hard work! They are the ones who get up before the rest of us, take care of animals no matter the weather, and they help to put food on our tables – to name just a very few contribution that they make to our local and global world.

So join us by celebrating all of the animals and farmers in your life when you read this issue. And while you're at it, join us in our birthday song!

– Thorunn Kristjansdottir



MARCH 2019

A bobcat at the Trevor Zoo at the Millbrook School in Millbrook, NY.

Cover photo by
Lazlo Gyorsok

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* Correction: In our February article on the new art school in Columbia County, Dominique stated that Frederic Church had been a founder of the Hudson River School of American landscape painters, he was however not the founder, but he had been a central figure.

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The Master on the Mountain



By CB Wismar
arts@mainstreetmag.com

Murray Zimiles does not ride to hounds. Outside his Millerton, NY, home and studio is not an adjoining barn with horses ready to chase across the Dutchess County hills with the Millbrook Hunt. But, when the red-coated riders and eager American and Penn-Marydell hounds gather in the crisp morning air, Murray can hear them nearby.

And, so it was that the extraordinarily accomplished painter drew on his experience of creating elegant animal, village, and countryside paintings and began painting the nearby fox hunting scenes in vivid detail.

The rolling hills of the Hudson Valley and the clamor of foxhounds is far away from Murray Zimiles's roots. "I was born in Brooklyn," he says with a hint of irony. "I wanted nothing more than to break out and experience the world. Then, for the years I taught at SUNY Purchase, when I asked my students where they wanted to end up, it seemed that the answer was always ... 'Brooklyn.'"

Escape from New York

So eager was he to leave the teeming streets, that Murray excelled in his schooling and entered college at the age of 15. "I went to the University

of Illinois in pre-engineering," he recalls. "The dean assured all of us working toward an engineering degree that two-thirds of us would flunk out in the first two years."

Not only did Murray buck the trend and achieve academic mastery during his first two years, he made a dramatic decision just as his engineering studies were to take off. He wanted to study art, not engineering. The farewell words of the dean still ring in his ears: "Good luck, young man. You're going to need it."

Certainly, there may have been some good fortune that came his way through the ensuing years, but the overarching impression that one gets from becoming immersed in a Murray Zimiles painting is a jaw-dropping sense of his enormous talent. The range of his accomplishments as a multi-disciplined visual artist and as a passionate teacher is simply awe inspiring. This is not simply an artist. This is a master.

Do what you want!

One important source of encouragement and nurturing came from Murray's aunt and uncle, artists and educators in their own right, who offered Murray respite and inspiration during summers spent with

them in Provincetown, MA. "Do what you want to do..." suggested his uncle, and Murray took those encouraging words to heart.

Zimiles's presence in the outskirts of Millerton, in a house he built himself, stems from the capstone of his career – 39 years as a professor at the State University of New York, Purchase campus, sharing his imaginative style, insight, and mentoring to the painting students who flocked to his classes.

The journey to Purchase started decades before when, having garnered his BFA from Illinois, Murray accepted a scholarship and teaching assistantship at Cornell, where he excelled in painting and printmaking, gathering up his MFA on his way to a year studying lithography at the École nationale supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris.

Being centrally based in Paris gave Murray the opportunity to travel throughout Europe. Rail fares were inexpensive and there was so much to absorb, so many experiences to have, and to express in his work. Not the least of the attractions was the lure of coming into meaningful contact with his heritage.

When Zimiles left Paris to accept teaching positions at both New York's prestigious Pratt Institute and at the iconic Silvermine College of Art in Connecticut, it would not

be the last time that he followed his muse in France or to the search for his roots.

The magic that was Silvermine

The pool of extraordinary creators and thinkers who were drawn to the Silvermine area of New Canaan included such luminaries as Buckminster Fuller, Norman Cousins, Philip Johnson, and Gabor Petty. The influence of Silvermine College of Art – a ten year grand experiment that offered the intersection of brilliant artists with eager students – was global. When the opportunity came to bring new life to a French art school that would allow Silvermine students to spend a year abroad, the mantle of leadership for the French project fell to Murray and his long time friend Alex Shundi, another brilliant painter, teacher and conceptual artist.

Murray spent a full academic year at Silvermine-Lacoste School of Art – an adventurous year of cleaning, rebuilding, painting, and mentoring. “Alex and I had flipped a coin to see who would be the director,” Zimiles says with a gentle smile.

The professor

After a year, there was a new calling – an assistant professorship opened up at SUNY New Paltz, and Murray was on his way. After four years, the New Paltz assignment became the offer of a full professorship at SUNY Purchase.

An academic career of such distinction would be enough of a legacy, but when the rich output of striking images, elegant landscapes, and consuming emotional and sociological studies are overlaid, Murray Zimiles’s career underscores the designation of “master.”

Validation of that designation can be found in the formidable list of collections that hold Murray Zimiles works. Among those notable institutions with his pieces in their permanent collections are the Museum of Modern Art (MOMA),



New York; the National Collection, Washington, DC; the Jewish Museum in New York; the College of Fine Arts in Sydney, Australia; the Royal Norwegian Government; and the New York Public Library.

Encountering the past

Son of an immigrant, Murray Zimiles spent great time and effort to reconnect with the heritage that his family had left behind when they escaped from the horror that had become Europe. His father and step-mother had both escaped the Holocaust, and the drama, the terror and the abject horror for those who were swept up in the chaos and destruction of that time became a focus for him. His *Fire...* series depicting the burning of wooden synagogues in Poland forges a unique tension between the tragedy of the events and the mastery of his artistry.

His deeply evocative and emotional Holocaust paintings have been exhibited around the world from the Sydney Jewish Museum in Sydney, Australia to the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York.

The baying of the hounds

But, back to the hunt, the echoing hills at the edge of Millerton and the hounds eager for the chase. Murray had emerged as a brilliant landscape painter and, through a se-

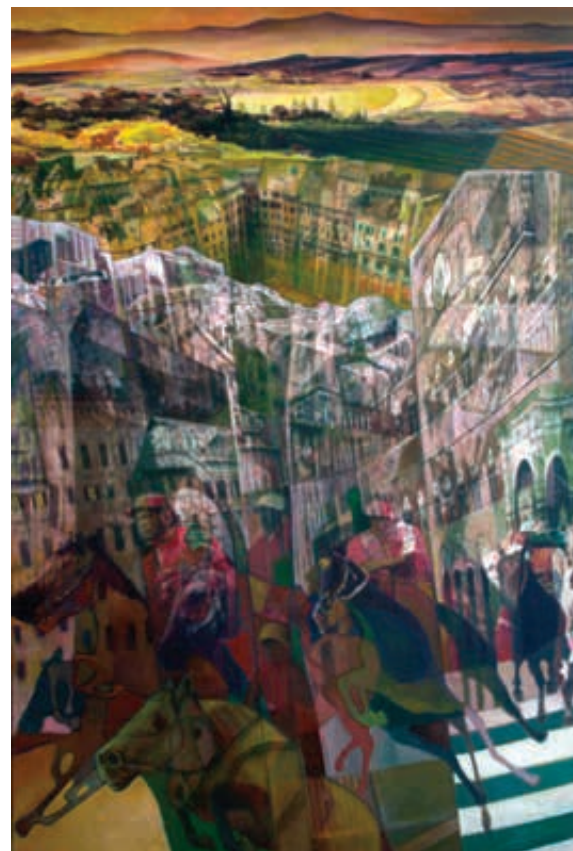
ries of fully immersive pieces in his *Palio* series – inspired by the Palio di Siena – created works that force perspective into colorful, near geometric components. The legendary horse races held in the town square of Siena, Italy, have been motivation for a collection of dazzling paintings depicting not only the horses and riders, but the town, the surrounding hills of Tuscany, and the almost geometric patterns of light in the sky.

“I had done paintings including all sorts of animals ... and right in front of me, there were magnificent horses, hounds, and their festooned riders.” Enter The Hunt.

The Millbrook Hunt, first organized in 1907, continues to be a local tradition. Utilizing the technique and perspectives that have endeared the *Palio* series of collectors and museums, Murray Zimiles has brought his vibrant, totally engaging mastery home. •

Murray Zimiles has a vibrant website that invites exploration and immersion into the breadth of his expertise and experience, www.murrayzimiles.com.

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.



Opposite page, top to bottom: *Siena – Palio - Tuscany*. Self-portrait in the studio. This page, above, L-R: *Hunt 4*, 2017, 60 x 40, oil and mixed media on canvas. *Palio 9*, 2018, 60 x 40, oil and mixed media on canvas.

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Lucy is the official greeter at Elizabeth's Fine Jewelry and Gifts. Her responsibilities include saying hello to everyone who comes into the store, playing with children, and offering her belly to anyone who is willing to rub it. She is a ten-pound Cavapoo, a King Charles Cavalier and Poodle mix. "I was born in Naples, Florida, so these winters can be tough on a little dog. Thankfully, I have some fashionable outfits that keep me warm. When my family is away, you can find me at Trotta's Fine Wine and Spirits with my favorite dog sitter, Barb." Lucy loves her half hour lunch breaks; Nancy and Taylor are always happy to share some human food. Her hobbies include pouncing on the annoying crickets in the rose garden, playing with her two favorite nine-year-old boys, and snuggling with the family.



Charlie is a Syrian fancy bear hamster. Although his exact age is unknown, owner Caroline Markonic, celebrated her first "gotcha day" with him on February 16. Charlie is quite the artist. With non-toxic paint on his feet, he walks all over a canvas leaving colorful and adorable paw prints. "My work hangs directly above Caroline's bed and is a great conversation piece." Besides painting, Charlie loves to run on his wheel (at night, because he is nocturnal). Charlie may just be a little hamster, but he has a huge personality. "He hates raisins and won't keep food in his bowl. He stuffs it all into his cheeks and buries it right next to where he sleeps, for safekeeping, I guess," says Caroline. "I don't bite, I love everyone I meet, and the feeling is reciprocated by those who meet me."



Meet **Elsa** the goat, lifelong resident of Marsh Meadow Farm in Germantown, NY. She was born and raised on the farm, one in a long generational line of goats from the farm. She is an ADGA (American Dairy Goat Association) registered American Alpine goat, which is known for great dairy capabilities. She is eight years old and semi-retired from milking now, but she is still queen of her herd. Elsa is very protective of her human mom, Elfreda Meacher, when she is in the goat pen, becoming Elfreda's guard and making sure all the other goats stay away. Elsa loves getting special treats like apples and pine branches and spends her days relaxing in the sunshine – usually in the same exact spot everyday.



Peppa is a one and a half-year-old skinny pig, a species with the same genetic makeup as a guinea pig that only has fur on its nose and feet. "Skinnies can be considered rare, as there are very few caviaries [small-scale breeding locations] for skinny pigs in New England." While Skinies take more care to raise, Peppa's owner, Allison Bryant from Salisbury, CT, has definitely enjoyed raising such a friendly, outgoing breed. Additionally, her caviary, Salisbury Skinies, sells skinny pigs to help spread skinny joy to the New England area! Peppa herself has given birth to two litters of babies and is a wonderful mama. While skinny pigs can come in many colors, Peppa is a special variety, a red Dalmation sow. She is always up for munching on fruits and veggies, and loves snuggling in her soft bedding. "She has a sweet and endearing personality and is much cuter 'in pig' than in pictures!"



Roly is a handsome short-haired gray cat. He is originally from a farm in Ancramdale, NY, but was adopted (along with this brother Chip from the same litter) when he was only a few weeks old by his pet parents, Donald and Gail Fournier, of Copake, NY. He is a very lovable house cat who love catnaps, batting around cat toys, wrestling with his brother, and snacking on human food. "My purrrrents (see what I did there?) have tried purrrrrretty hard to break me of that habit, but it's a lost cause. I still beg for food from the dinner table with a gentle tap from my paw and a purrrrrsuasive meow." According to Gail, Donald is his favorite human! "He's always sleeping next to Donald, laying on his lap when he's watching TV, or begging for some of his snacks, too." I guess we now know who feeds him from the table!



Sonic is a seven-year-old albino hedgehog. Because he lacks pigment, he doesn't have the normal bluish gray color and therefore is white with red eyes. Although hedgehogs originate from Europe, Sonic was purchased from a pet store in Newburgh, NY, and now resides in Millerton, NY, with his pet parent, Jonathan Scarinzi. "I am equipped with quills over the majority of my body – like a porcupine, however they do not have hooks and only poke like a pin. In fact, our quills are hollow and full of air." Hedgehogs are nocturnal, which means they spend most of the day napping (sometimes curled up into a ball) and the evening foraging for food. "My favorite pastime is when Jonathan draws a warm bath and places me in a ball shape in the water where I float. It's like a day at the spa!"

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Where to send your best friend?

CHIP BARRETT OF LEDGEWOOD KENNELS, TOWN OF NORTH EAST, NY

By Christine Bates

christine@mainstreetmag.com

When did you start Ledgewood Kennel?

My wife Kirby and I started the kennel in 1986 with just a few runs on our lower farm. Gradually we noticed a need for a bigger kennel so we built a larger one in 2000 with the latest construction methods and design approach including radiant floors, central air conditioning, and large runs. We've been in business about 33 years.

What's special about Ledgewood?

Our facility is located on our 50-acre working farm surrounded by hay fields that have never had chemical fertilizers or pesticides applied to them. The kennel is tucked in the woods, 400 feet off a quiet county road on Silver Mountain just outside of Millerton, NY. It has a great setting with plenty of room and spectacular views.

Our business plan was to have a clean, healthy, spacious facility in which pets get plenty of personal care in a country setting. Amanda, our kennel manager, who has been with us for over 12 years, is one reason our kennel is so great. Ledgewood's success is first and foremost the people working here. All of them really like what they are doing and are true professionals.

From a business perspective one of our most important and valuable assets is a commercial special use permit for our facility, which pertains to the property and allows us to legally operate, including a small and large animal veterinary practice at the facility. This permit is crucial to the business and is now very difficult, if not impossible, to obtain.

What is a dog's day like at Ledgewood?

Every dog has his own private kennel with an inside and outside run. Three times a day the dogs can play in a private outside play area. There is a morning, afternoon, and final check at 10pm. Dogs receive the food their owners specify twice a day and any required meds. Everyone on staff is trained to spot any health issues and we have a 24/7 on-call vet that is ten minutes away. We also have a spring-fed pond where dogs can play in the summer.

We wanted to make our kennel stand out from others and become a full-service fun facility for the area. In addition to boarding, dogs can be groomed, trained and learn how to become a "dock dog."

Rosie runs Ledgewood's "doggy spa" which offers grooming, bathing, and nail trimming. Rosie has been here for ten years and she's the best.

Melissa heads up the training and daycare department located in a separate 1,200 square foot area with rubber floor mats, cathedral ceilings, and lots of windows. Melissa has about every training certificate there is and offers most stages of canine obedience in the spacious camp/daycare where trained professionals keep a close eye on pets as they learn and play up a storm.

What about the jumping dogs?

The dock dog facility has been up and running for over ten years and was actually the first sanctioned site in the



Above: A very competitive Labrador leaps in a Dock-Dog competition. Events are held at Ledgewood's pool. Photo courtesy of DockDogs. Below, left: Two Retrievers hang out together outside. Photo by Christine Bates.

country. We were even featured on the *CBS Early Show*. When we decided to install the facility we really did it right with underground electric, water, and cable designed to meet the requirements of the sport.

In the summer months, dogs train in our 40 foot pool located in a private field on our farm near the kennel. Toby and Nicky are the professionals who offer training and just swimming for your pets.

Do all dogs like to learn to jump? How does the competition work?

Some dogs, like St. Bernards, just don't like water. Some shepherds don't like water either but their ability to focus can make them great competitors. Of course, water dogs, like Labrador and Retrievers excel. Dogs compete in their size category and receive scores for longest jump, highest jump, and retrieval speed. The record length jump is 30' measured by where the tail hits the water. There are regional and even national championships.

Continued on next page ...



The whole sport started when some ESPN guys were partying and watching their dogs play in a pool. They thought it could be a great sport. Now it's worldwide with clubs in England, Australia, and even Japan. When we have a club competition here there are usually 30 or 40 dogs jumping plus all the owners and friends coming to watch. There's a food truck – it's a lot of fun.

How many dogs can you board? How long do they stay? Where do they come from? How much do you charge?

We have had pets who stay for as long as several years for a variety of reasons – for example if their owner is relocated internationally, is ill, or building a house. Most of the time the stay is between two days and a week.

We sometimes have a waiting list on major holidays and the summer months. Spring break is another very busy time when schools are out, families take vacation and the dog can't go along. At the very slowest time we are still over half full.

Grooming, training, and daycare are always busy. Our clients are from all over and even drive up here from New York City. We charge \$29 for a single day and \$24 for multiple days, plus charges for any additional services. Our goal has always been to price below the competition. We intend to stay small. We never want to become a factory.

What is your role in running the kennel?

Besides building the facility and maintaining it, I'm the behind-the-scenes guy who takes care of all the paperwork, the insurance, the payroll, marketing, etc. We advertise locally on Robin Hood Radio, and in print in *Main Street* because I believe in supporting local businesses. Of course, the best kind of advertising is word-of-mouth from happy clients – there are over 2,000 of them. The internet is pretty important to us and we include a lot of information on our website, including our prices.

Is there specialized software used by kennels?

Yes, we use the same software platform that beauty salons and police departments use when checking in people. You enter all the information – boarding, grooming, daycare, training, retail products, etc. When the dog arrives the software keeps track of all of the pet's information and even finds a kennel number. The software also downloads into QuickBooks. I'm not a budget kind of guy, but I do watch our numbers to make sure we're on track.

Are there special regulations for operating a kennel?

Once a year we are visited by the Town Fire Marshall and initially the County Health Department approves the facility. Technically any location



Above: Speed retrieving is one talent showcased in a DockDog competition. Photo courtesy of DockDogs. Below, right: Rosanny Urena, Ledgewood's experienced groomer, is working on Rider, a PBGV (Petit Basset Griffon Vendeen) from Milbrook. Below, left: Dogs can run free in a fenced outside area. Photos by Christine Bates.

with five or more dogs needs a special use kennel permit.

Do you ever turn away a dog or send them home?

No, our kennels are set up so if we have a difficult pet we do not need to handle them, so even a vicious dog poses no threat to staff. Oddly enough two of the most ferocious dogs we've ever had were a Great Dane and a Chihuahua.

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We do insist that all dogs here are current with all recommended inoculations. Sometimes we recommend that they have a flea bath or visit the groomer when they first arrive. All owners must sign a contract with Ledgewood that basically says that if something happens that it's not our fault and we won't be held responsible.

What is the most difficult part of running a kennel?

Making sure that the animals are properly taken care of, every day, 24 hours a day is the challenge. I grew up on a horse farm so I understand the constant demands of taking care of animals. Oh, I should mention that we also take care of birds, and other exotic pets. They usually stay in the office. •

To learn more about Ledgewood Kennel, you can visit them at 639 Smithfield Rd, Millerton, NY, or call them at (518) 789-6353, or visit them online at www.ledgewoodkennel.com.



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Ruff!

> What kind of dog does Dracula have?
A bloodhound.

> Why did the dog cross the road?
To get to the barking lot.

> What does my dog and my phone have in common?
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> Are dogs good at science?
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BLUEBERRY SOUR CREAM

Muffins

By Jessie Sheehan
info@mainstreetmag.com

Although this came to me quite recently, I have now decided that everyone needs a fantastic blueberry muffin recipe in his or her back pocket (or, at the very least, in their latest copy of *Main Street Magazine*). After coming to said decision, and embarking down the blueberry-studded recipe development path, I have also concluded that a “fantastic” muffin is trickier to create than you might think. But rest assured: I have done so.

Tricks and tang

These muffins are generously peppered with berries, and I even include a trick for working with frozen berries, which can often impart a green hue to baked goods. They are sweet, but not overly so – this is very much a muffin recipe, and not a cake one. The sour cream in the batter adds the subtlest tang and makes for an über-tender muffin and a hefty glug of vanilla is the perfect compliment to the berries.

The oil and extra yolk make for the moistest of breakfast treats and the muffins rise and dome beautifully in the oven (which is not always easy to achieve when muffins are baked at home in a conventional kitchen). And, finally, they have the most gorgeous, sparkly tops from a hefty teaspoon of raw sugar sprinkled upon each and every one.

Trial and tribulations

Truth be told, I went through several versions of this recipe, before finally achieving muffin-perfection. My first attempt was a delicious but flat-topped, cake-like treat that was, sadly, tinted green (a discovery made when cutting into the first muffin). By rinsing and drying my frozen berries prior

to folding them into the batter, I was able to retain the traditional colors of the blueberry muffin’s interior (white “cake” studded with bright blue berries). And by filling my tins almost to the top, plus baking the muffins at a high temp, and then dropping it, I was able to produce the muffin crowns of my dreams.

I reduced the sugar as well, in order to keep this treat out of the cake family altogether, and due to the hefty final sprinkling atop each one. Truth be told, I don’t actually mind when my muffin tastes like cake, but I realize I am in the minority here.

Long story short, my friends, I am hoping this recipe makes it into your repertoire, or, at the very least, that you give it a shot next time the craving hits, which I’m hoping might be right about now.

Here’s what you’ll need:

2 cups all-purpose flour
 1 1/2 tsp baking powder
 1/4 tsp baking soda
 1 tsp table salt
 1/3 cup vegetable oil
 1 tbsp pure vanilla extract
 1 1/4 cups granulated sugar
 1 egg
 1 yolk
 2/3 cup sour cream
 2 cups blueberries, frozen is fine

Turbinado sugar for sprinkling

Here’s what you’ll do:

Preheat the oven to 400-degrees. Place paper liners in a 12-cup muffin tin and set aside.



Combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in a small bowl and whisk to combine.

In a medium-sized bowl, combine the oil and sugar and whisk vigorously to combine. And the egg, yolk and vanilla, and whisk again. Add the sour cream and whisk a final time.

Gently fold the dry into the wet using a rubber spatula, but stop when streaks of flour are still quite visible. Do not over mix. If using frozen blueberries rinse them in cold water several times until the water lightens a bit in color. Then dry them thoroughly. If using fresh, this is not necessary. Add the blueberries to the flour-streaked batter and fold them in only until just a streak or two of flour remains. Do not over mix.

Place a slightly rounded 1/4 cup of batter in each cup, and lightly sprinkle the muffins tops with 1 teaspoon each of the Turbinado sugar. You may use up all the batter filling a 12-cup tin,

or you may have enough left for one or two more muffins.

Bake for about 20-25 minutes, at the halfway point, drop the oven temp to 350-degrees and rotate the tin. Begin checking on the muffins at about 20 minutes. The muffins can be pulled from the oven when a tester inserted in the center comes out clean or with only a moist crumb or two. If your berries are fresh, the muffins will bake more quickly.

Once cool enough to handle, remove the muffins from the tin, bake off the extra batter, if you have some, and serve warm or at room temperature. ●

Jessie is a baker and cookbook author; you can learn more about her through her website jessiesheehanbakes.com.

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Cannabis Legalization

WILL POT CREATE AN ECONOMIC BUZZ? WHAT TO EXPECT.

By Christine Bates
christine@mainstreetmag.com

When voters went to the polls in November 2016 there was another surprising winner – the legalization of recreational marijuana. In four states – California, Nevada, Massachusetts, and Maine – voters decided to make marijuana consumption for recreational purposes legal, joining Colorado. There are already eight retail recreational stores open in Massachusetts with another four coming soon.

Like picking apples, visiting farm stands, sampling craft beers, or, in the case of Maine, eating lobsters, cannabis tourism is already underway in New England.

In New York, Governor Cuomo has announced his intention to legalize recreational marijuana. According to a January 2019 Quinnipiac poll, 65% of New York residents support the measure. What should we expect for our local economy and real estate values? And what is the difference between CBD and THC – the active ingredients of hemp and marijuana?

Colorado high

Marijuana has been a boon to the Colorado economy with sales hitting \$1.5 billion in 2017 and generating more economic output than 90% of the other industries in the state. There are also negative impacts. Law enforcement is battling an active

black-market with arrests for illegal manufacture and possession.

In Colorado, legalization increased commercial real estate prices of warehouse and industrial properties in certain permitted zones. Between 2009 and 2014, in anticipation of legalization, 36% of all new industrial tenants were related to the marijuana industry according to commercial real estate broker CBRE. Data centers and self-storage facilities have been repurposed for the cultivation and manufacturing of marijuana. The overall impact on commercial real estate has been lower inventory and 27% higher demand for warehouses, 17% for storefronts, and 14% for land. Commercial landlords' biggest concerns seem to be smell, fire danger, moisture, security, and receiving cash for rent.

Land values have increased where outside cultivation is permitted. Retail shops have helped to revitalize some vacant suburban strip malls. Because of federal regulations of marijuana which restrict banks' ability to accept cash deposits generated by marijuana sales, landlords often charge two to three times market rates when leasing properties.

An academic study published in *Economic Inquiry* in early 2018 found that legalization even increased housing values in Colorado. More people



Above: Young woman holding hemp seeds. Photo: istockphoto.com contributor belchonnock. Below, left: The newly opened Theory of Wellness store in Great Barrington, MA, often has a line out the door.

seem to want to live where legal marijuana is sold. Users, job seekers, and entrepreneurs have flocked to the state. Home prices are higher in the 60 cities where marijuana is legal than in the 200 where it is not. Residential price levels are estimated to have increased 12% a year where it is legal, and only 9% where it is not. Residential neighborhoods with grow houses, typically in depressed areas, trade at a discount, but those close to retail businesses can trade at a premium.

Researchers studied the impact on Pueblo County, CO, and determined that legal cannabis brought \$58 million to the local struggling economy according to *The Denver Post*. Much of the revenue was used to improve infrastructure, but the county devoted \$420,000 to college scholarships for 210 students. This year tuition assistance will increase to \$750,000. The report also studied the negative impacts of legalization including illegal growing, but found, on balance, no increase in homelessness or use among youth.

Meanwhile in California...

California was the first state to legalize medical marijuana in 1996 and by January 2018, with regulations in place, recreational marijuana could be sold legally with a 15% statewide tax



Continued on next page ...

plus additional locally imposed fees and taxes. Total annual tax revenues are headed for \$1 billion a year.

A Keller Williams real estate broker claimed that a \$2.5 million dollar greenhouse on ten acres, which would have sold for \$2.5 million before legalization, now goes for \$5 million. Over 20 pot-related transactions have closed in the last few years totaling over \$100 million.

What's up in Great Barrington?

January 11, 2019, was the first day of legal recreational marijuana sales in Great Barrington, MA, and Theory Wellness's retail store had an orderly 2.5-hour line out the door on a recent, frigid Saturday. The store's head of marketing estimates that Theory Wellness will contribute between \$100,000 and \$200,000 in tax revenues to the Town of Great Barrington this year.

The store will also add an estimated ten to 15 full-time jobs with the additional positive economic impact of attracting visitors to town. In a conversation with Rich Aldrich, who handles commercial real estate for Stone House Properties in the Berkshires, he indicated that legalization has "certainly moved the market for selling and leasing commercial space. We've closed a dozen transactions

with another couple pending. It's not just retail. It's warehouses for growing as well. Investors are purchasing and leasing at premium prices and there's very little inventory."

Aldrich reports that these deals are usually all cash with out-of-state investment groups that are anxious to get started. There is also agricultural interest in outdoor cultivation. Zoning is the key in every location with each town adopting its own regulations. In Massachusetts the state Revenue Commission estimated that the recreational marijuana sales tax of 6.2% and excise tax of 10.75% would add \$44 million to the state's coffers this year.

What it could mean for New York

After the NYS Health Department study concluded that the benefits of legalizing marijuana outweigh the cost, Governor Cuomo has proposed legalization as part of the state's budget process this year. He estimates that tax revenues could reach \$300 million by 2023 when fully implemented.

In the meantime, regulatory details are missing and it appears that individual counties could opt out. What is clear is that counties, towns, and villages should be considering the eventuality of recreational marijuana



Above: Hemp grown in a field is a beautiful sight. Photo: Chris Regan

legalization when considering changes to zoning ordinances. Hypothetically the excise taxes levied on regulated retail cannabis sales should flow down to local economies as an additional source of revenue to support services, reduce property taxes, and fund scholarships and infrastructure. The cost of fewer arrests for possession and the reduced expense of incarceration should also be beneficial at the state level.

Growing hemp is already legal in New York

Hemp is a variety of the species *Cannabis Sativa L.* Unlike the hallucinogenic strain of cannabis, hemp contains almost no THC – tetrahydrocannabinol, the main active ingredient of the cannabis plant which creates a "high."

Hemp is grown and harvested for its fibers and stalks. Its seeds and flowers are used in animal feed and health foods. Specific strains of hemp also produce CBD oil, which has an assortment of claimed medical benefits whether ingested or rubbed on. Tea, creams, oils, and supplements containing CBD can already be purchased legally. The federal Hemp Farming Act of 2018 became law in December 2018 and removed hemp (defined as cannabis with less than .3% THC) as a Schedule I controlled substance, which makes it an ordinary agricultural product.

Chris Regan, owner of Sky Farm lettuce, grew two acres of hemp last year as a pilot, and plans on expanding to eight acres grown under con-

tract to Hudson Hemp this year. "It's a lot less labor than salad greens and slightly more profitable," according to Regan. "Hemp can tolerate a lot of different soils and is a vigorous plant. It's potentially a much larger market in terms of acreage than marijuana. It's a beautiful plant and I hate to harvest it."

There is a problem with deer, which, to everyone's surprise, enjoy eating hemp plants. "Next year I'm putting up a fence," Regan stated.

Another real estate play

If you want to invest in cannabis real estate with all of its risks and rewards you could buy Innovative Industrial Properties, a publicly traded REIT (IIP) that invests in companies that grow, store, and distribute medicinal cannabis. It's now trading at over 100 times earnings and was the first cannabis IPO. The company has already purchased and leased a 127,000 square foot warehouse for medical marijuana in Hamptonburgh in Orange County, NY.

Remember that under federal law marijuana is still illegal and states where it is legal require that marijuana must be grown in the state where it is sold. If that changes, cannabis grown in sunny California would be much cheaper than in New England and real estate prices for warehouses and stores might decline. ●

Main Street Magazine neither advocates nor opposes the legalization of marijuana.



Above: The sleek interior of Theory Wellness on Stockbridge Road, Great Barrington, MA. Photo courtesy of Theory Wellness.

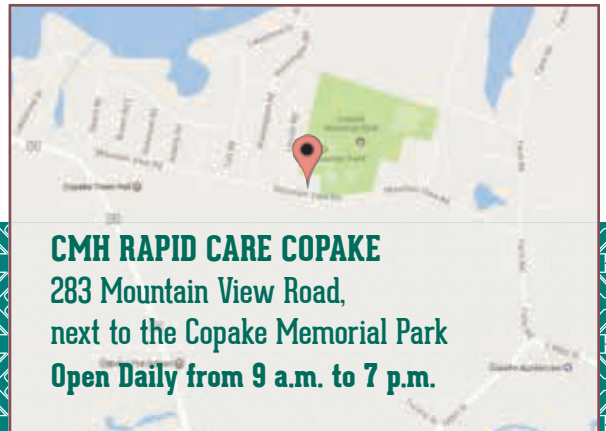
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The myth of the mountain lion

By Ian Strever
info@mainstreetmag.com

Consider the cat. From stem to stern, it is a marvel of biological design. Each individual organ in its body serves a function that contributes to the survival of the whole in such an orchestrated way that it is hard not to conclude that there is a divine hand at work in its creation.

The cats of literature

The wonder of its perfection compelled the eighteenth-century poet Christopher Smart to compose large sections of his epic, *Jubilate Agno*, as a paean to his cat, Jeffery.

*For God has blessed him in the
variety of his movements.
For, tho he cannot fly, he is an
excellent clamberer.
For his motions upon the face of
the earth are more than any other
quadruped.
For he can tread to all the measures
upon the music.
For he can swim for life.
For he can creep.*

Jeffrey was a domesticated house cat, but in their most exalted, wild forms, cats perform all of these tasks and more with a terrible cognizance that caused William Blake, to wonder about a tiger, "What immortal hand or eye / Could frame thy fearful symmetry?"

Undomesticated cats

Cat studies in literature abound (see Hemingway, T.S. Eliot, et al.),



Above: Bobcats like this one in Sharon feast on the small birds and rodents that make their homes in hay fields and walls. Photo credit Bill Wakeley. Below, left: The St. Croix Cougar, captured here on trail camera in Wisconsin, went on a multi-state epic before being hit by a car in Connecticut. Photo courtesy of Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

perhaps because of their elusive and fickle character, which makes for both good drama and the stuff of urban legend in our area. Undomesticated cats are thrilling sights whenever one spots one, and I can recall with perfect clarity the three times I have seen one around here. Twice in Sharon and once in Kent, CT, they emerge like apparitions, wild and stealthy, and usually slip back into the forest like mist.

Bobcats, that is.

My best view of one was through the kitchen window of my friend's home in Sharon, before which the bobcat conducted a veritable parade by their standards of privacy. Although its movements were like those of a house cat, its flared beard and lack of a tail suggested a wild-

ness about it in the way that you can just tell with some humans: "that guy has been in a bar fight."

Its eyes have just the right slant that car companies replicate in the headlights of their cars to suggest aggressiveness. Whether considered piecemeal from behind plate glass or instantaneously when one is lucky enough to stumble upon one on a trail, the wonder of this creature is that one immediately knows not to mess with it.

The bobcat

Fortunately, bobcats don't really want any part of humans, either. Leave them to their hunting and they will never look to engage with anything larger than a deer, and that only when food is scarce and starvation looming.

Their diet is primarily rabbits, birds, rodents, and the occasional fish, with some other animals mixed in as opportunity presents itself. For that reason, I always keep an eye on stone walls and the margins of fields, where rabbits and mice burrow, in hopes that a bobcat might be on the prowl.

A couple of other witnesses were in the room when I spotted that

felicitous feline promenading through the grass, so I could confirm the sighting. Only a foot or two in height and weighing somewhere in the neighborhood of twelve pounds, there was no question that this was a bobcat and not a house cat. It certainly wasn't a mountain lion.

Or was it a mountain lion?

Yet, in talking with some people in the area, there are some devoted naturalists who will swear on their mother's grave that they have seen mountain lions in our area, despite all scientific evidence to the contrary.

Mountain lions (variously called cougars, pumas, panthers, or catamounts) are much larger than bobcats and are consequently categorized in the *Puma* genus rather than the smaller *Lynx* assignment that contains bobcats and lynxes. They stand about three feet, but males can weigh over 200 pounds, and in contrast to a bobcat, can stretch to about seven feet in length, including a long tail that is absent on the smaller animal. As a consequence of



Continued on next page ...

their size, their diet includes larger mammals, and in the west they are frequently blamed for attacking livestock, leading to their hunting (and overhunting) by ranchers.

Where best to find mountain lions

It makes sense that cougars would prowl the midwest, where larger game is the norm, their single-color fur blends into desert backdrops, and populations are sometimes in need of an apex predator to keep numbers in check. Puma concolor contains six subspecies (mostly in South America), and the North American one is distinguished by region, although their native range is almost exclusively in and to the west of the Rocky Mountains, with the exception of the Florida Panther.

Those two habitats, however, reflect the incredible adaptability of this creature. Equally at home in the mountains and in swamps, it can thrive wherever there is ample food, which could be just about anywhere in the Americas. Its range covers 110 degrees of latitude, from British Columbia to the southernmost Andes, and while it has been largely extirpated from the eastern United States by hunters, occasional sightings have been confirmed. Mountain lion scat has been scientifically verified in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine over the past few decades, but these artifacts have been attributed to cougars that were released animals or pets. Evidence of their existence has never been persistent or common enough to suggest a resident population.

In the age of ubiquitous cameras, physical evidence is the only real way to determine the presence of mountain lions in New England. Residents have submitted scores of blurry photographs to environmental authorities, and all but a few are deemed hoaxes or misidentified animals such as Great Danes

or bobcats. When an animal leaves scat or hair, however, the evidence can be tested to match DNA with known subspecies. Most confirmed cougar sightings are of formerly captive animals with links to South America, where they were captured and illegally sold.

The St. Croix Cougar

But then there is the St. Croix Cougar. In 2011, a driver on the Merritt Parkway in Milford, CT, struck and killed a young male, the first confirmed existence of a mountain lion in the state in over 100 years. An autopsy and DNA tests not only identified the biology of the animal but linked it to the DNA of a native population of cats in the Dakotas, over 1600 miles away. Mountain lions typically disperse over an area of several hundred miles, and none had ever been known to range more than six hundred miles from their home. This creature had roamed farther than any other known cougar, but why?

Cougars disperse in search of food and mates, and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) scientists concluded that mating was the most likely reason for this animal's migration. In the months following its death, they traced its genetic and literal footprints back through New York and the north-central United States and Ontario to its first documented appearance near St. Croix, WI. In search of a resident population, the animal extended its range for months, subsisting on porcupine and other native species until it reached Connecticut.

The need for apex predators

According to the state DEP, "[it] is unlikely that New England will soon witness another long distance disperser," but all the same, some naturalists are optimistic. Susan Morse, founder and science director of Keeping Track, is convinced of their eventual return and even their necessity – along with wolves – as apex predators that will control the deer population in New England.

Their versatility and dispersal



throughout the Mississippi corridor support her belief, and while that would present some challenges for human-cougar interactions, she believes, "it would be the best thing for our forests."

More than just a biological factor, however, mountain lions hold an important place in our culture and mythology. Donald Schueler put it best in his book, *Incident at Eagle Ranch*, "[the] mountain lion works a strong magic in the imagination of many Americans. It is the ultimate loner, a renegade presence in the wildest canyons and wildest mountains, the sign of everything that is remote from us, everything we have not spoiled."

With any luck, we'll get a second chance with cougars in New England. Let's try not to spoil it. •

Above: The scale and depth of tracks and the absence of claws are ways to distinguish wildcat tracks from other mammals. A cougar's tracks (directly above) are much larger and deeper than a bobcat's (above top).

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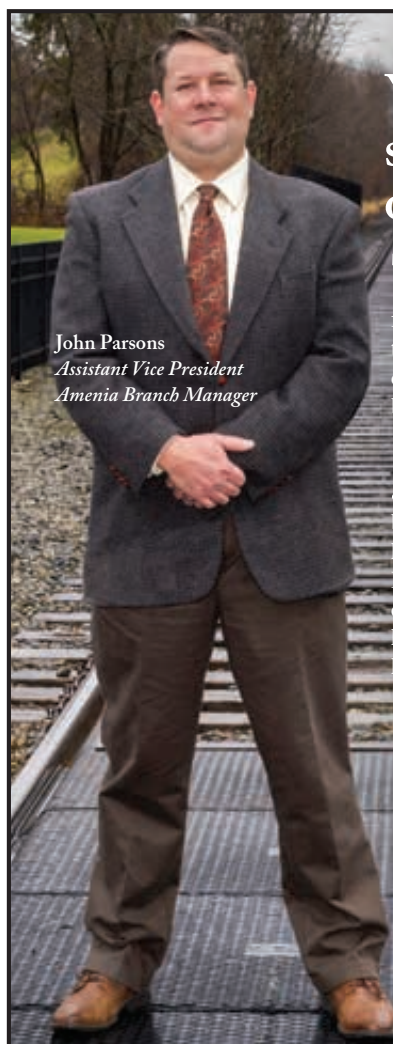
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A place where nature & man conspire to sustain one another

By John Torsiello
info@mainstreetmag.com

When you own a home with a special provenance, living within its confines on a daily basis sinks into your soul. When that home, or farmhouse in this case, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, well, the emotions that daily life within its almost 250-year-old year walls evokes makes the impressions of permanence and place all the more tangible.

That's the case for Leslie Farhangi and her husband, John Tuke, who have lived on the Dakin-Coleman farmstead in Northeast, NY, for almost 30 years, raising their children there and using the property as it was intended when first developed around the time of the American Revolution. Albeit the agricultural or "farm" usage of the property is as a home for elder horses and the growing of rows of peonies that Leslie uses in her artisanal Peony Vodka, the land remains true to its original purpose, a place where nature and man conspire to sustain one another.

The farm and farmhouse

"The history of the home and farm is pervasive," said Farhangi, as she was headed out to care for her boarded horses. "It's a very big house that was, I believe, used as a two family home, although it appears as though it is a single dwelling. It has an unusually wide center hall that hints at its usage as a home for two separate families. And the ceilings are high for its time.

Most of the historical details of the original home are intact and we have done very little to change it. We did make some alterations in the early 2000s when we removed a bay window and had new windows, 12-over-12 as in Colonial times, installed. We also added on to the main house a kitchen and a family room."

Farhangi and Tuke bought the property in 1989 and in the early 2000s purchased half of an adjoining farm, adding 200 acres to their parcel. They later sold a farmhouse that went with the purchased property, known as the Duncan Farm, along with 25 acres, bringing the current size of the Dakin-Coleman Farm to 175 acres.

Re-gaining a connection to the land

The farm is actually considered a part of the Coleman Station area, which is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places, mainly for its past as an area where a number of farms supplied local communities and those farther afield with the staples of life. In addition, the buildings and boundaries haven't changed in 200 years.

Farmland protection and preservation is seen as key by many as retaining a link to the region's agricultural past that seems to slowly slip away from year to year.

"Housing developments, shopping malls, and suburban neighborhoods swallowing up farmland due to growth in the economy and urban sprawl," commented Jim Lauderdale of The Association for Living History, Farm and Agricultural Museums. "Historic farms and everything you might associate with these places teach us about where we come from. We can learn what it meant to provide for your basic necessities of food, clothing, and shelter in the past. We can gain an appreciation for the sacrifices of people that came before us and a better understanding of how we came to where we are as a nation today."



Above: The Dakin-Coleman farmstead as seen from the air. Below, left: One of the farm's residents. Photos courtesy of Leslie Farhangi.

Lauderdale said that by visiting these sites, people can regain their connection to the land and learn heritage skills that may improve their modern lives. "Many historic sites and agricultural museums have noted an increase in requests for programming that helps people connect in a meaningful way to their past. This increase in interest gives hope for the future of historic farms, their homes, buildings, and farmland."

Farmland preservation

Of course, the history of the United States is directly linked to agriculture. Most people living in this country today would not have to look too far in their family tree to find a farmer. Said Lauderdale, "Preserving historic farms and farmlands preserve our history as a nation. But it also a difficult task. Much like every other industry, agriculture has changed drastically in the last 50 years due to advances in technology. As we progress, as a nation, we seem to be moving further

Continued on next page ...





Above, top to bottom: The historic Dakin-Coleman main house as seen from the air. Leslie Farhangi walking between the barns with one of her horses. Photos courtesy of Leslie Farhangi.

and further from our connection to the land. As that connection is lost, or we forget how important it is, it is easy for us to lose sight of where we came from.”

Dakin-Coleman’s main house

According to the National Register of Historic Places, the main house on the Dakin-Coleman Farm is a two-story, five-bay hand-hewn timber-frame structure on a stone foundation. It is sided in clapboard and topped with an overhanging side-gabled roof shingled in asphalt pierced by a single brick chimney on the east end. Mature trees surround it. A one-story shed-roofed wing projects from the west, with larger wings behind it.

A small gabled porch with round columns shelters a centrally located main entrance. The windows are

flanked by wooden louvered shutters, except for Palladian windows above the main entrance and in the gables. The wooden paneled front door, flanked by sidelights and topped with a transom, opens onto a broad center hallway. An original staircase and doors remain on the west side, while the entryways opposite are open. Its floor is medium width heavy oak shiplap, as are the two western rooms. Their fireplaces share a chimney but are slightly different, as the southwest one is original, but the northwest one has had new brick put in. It has its original crane and beehive oven.

The National Register of Historic Places website says that on the east of the house is a large open drawing room, created by removing a wall that separated the two parlors. Some of the original 12-inch flooring planks, with forged-head nails, remain in the corner. A brick fireplace with a neoclassical mantel is located on the end wall. French doors open to the exterior from the rear. A chair rail runs the length of the wall.

The staircase has original square newels and balusters supporting a simple molded pine handrail. It leads to a second floor with a similar layout. On the east side of the central hall are two large doors, apparently original, with one perhaps taken from the first floor. Two newer bathrooms have been added in the rear, both using the original wide pine floorboards. The southeast room has its original fireplace of cut marble. A doorway connects it to the second story of the kitchen wing, which also has remnants of the original hearth. A full basement extends under the entire house.

The property’s history

According to the National Register of Historic Places, the land the house stands on was first owned by Simon Dakin, a Baptist minister from Concord, MA. He bought 107 acres for his son Caleb to start a farm on in 1773. It is believed that Caleb built the house shortly thereafter, making it the oldest extant residence in the Coleman Station area.

Caleb Dakin died young. His will divided his holdings, which he had increased during his life to 275 acres into 10-to-12-acre strips and distributed them among his wife and daughters, under the control of his only son, Caleb, Jr. One of these divisions went down the house’s center, giving credence to Leslie Farhangi’s opinion of the home’s one-time use. It was split between Myra Dakin Goodrich and Achasa Dakin Coleman, with occupancy rights granted to Dakin’s widow Rhoda and his unmarried daughter Betsy.

The property reportedly was transferred again when Caleb Jr. died a year later. His nephew Amasa Dakin Coleman acquired the property from his mother upon reaching the age of majority in 1834. Sometime during that decade the interior was modified slightly, with the wooden neoclassical mantelpiece added and the flooring replaced in the east parlor.

It is said that by 1850, Amasa Coleman had increased the size of the farm to 150 acres. He strongly supported local improvements such as the New York and Harlem Railroad, going so far as to testify in court on the railroad’s behalf when his neighbors contested the compensation it offered them for their nearby farm. He would later lobby for the opening of a station on his property near the farms of the area, which were beginning to specialize in raw milk production, and it and the area would eventually take its name from him.

These days, when Leslie Farhangi and her husband John Tuke look out one of the home’s windows, unfolding before them is a scene of open rolling hills and meadows. It never fails to delight them and others who visit. Those same views likely drew Simon and Caleb Dakin to this special property so many years ago. And that means something in an age of ever transient existences. ●



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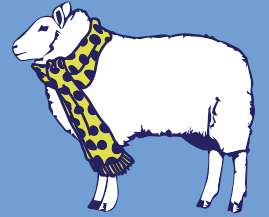
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Donkey Calm

By Regina Molaro
info@mainstreetmag.com

Unlike some people who yearn to pursue a lifelong passion, Steve Stiert knew little about donkeys until he got better acquainted with these intelligent animals with large soulful eyes.

His fondness for donkeys evolved organically. In 2011, Stiert's daughter Rebecca – a pre-veterinarian student at University of Massachusetts Amherst – joined the “donkey club” at school.

A new adventure awaited

“I knew nothing about donkeys. I often sent Rebecca electronic ‘care-packages’ with funny photos and videos. In my search for what I presumed would be a trove of humorous media about donkeys, I found lots of video and stories. After watching them, I discovered that I had a strong affinity for donkeys,” reveals Stiert. He describes them as calm and stoic yet affectionate and playful.

At the time, Stiert was going through several major life changes. Recently divorced, he was also losing interest in his long-time career as a software engineer.

“The time seemed right to embark on a new adventure,” says Stiert. Despite concerns from others that his “sudden passion” seemed more like a mid-life crisis, in the autumn of 2011, he devoted his time to getting

educated on donkeys and preparing his property for their arrival.

Enriching lives

In 2012, Stiert launched Donkey Park, Inc., a community service non-profit. Its mission is to enrich the lives of donkeys and the communities with which they interact – through education, welfare, research, and ambassadorial activities.

After putting in 26 years of work at IBM, Stiert was involuntarily retired due to downsizing. “It was a good thing for both IBM and for me since it allowed me to pursue my passion full-time,” says Stiert.

Donkey Park, Inc. currently has a total of 13 donkeys and hybrids. The herd includes nine miniature donkeys; two large standard donkeys; a zonkey (zebra-donkey hybrid); and pony mule (pony-donkey hybrid). When the miniature donkeys serve as ambassadors or therapeutic animals, they go under the moniker “Little Brays of Sunshine.”

Through Little Brays of Sunshine, Stiert and his family of donkeys enrich lives, spread happiness, build confidence, and ease stress. After spending time with the animals, many people discover capabilities that they never knew they had.

The donkeys bring sunshine to senior residences/nursing homes, veterans' homes, and rehabilitation centers. Stiert explains that the mini donkeys are ideal since they can walk right up to a person's wheelchair and lean their heads into a person's lap, eliminating the need for strength or hand/coordination skills.

The most common feedback he receives is that the animals get people out of their rooms and talking. “Isolation is one of the most destructive elements of the nursing home environment,” he adds.

THE DONKEY PARK, INC. ENRICHES THE LIVES OF DONKEYS AND HAS CALMING EFFECTS ON THE COMMUNITIES WITH WHICH THEY INTERACT



Above: Hiking with the donkeys at the scenic John Borroughs' Slabside Park. Below, left: Donkey Park founder and director Steve Stiert with his buddy Flint.

Therapeutic ambassadors

Other ambassadorial activities include visiting nature centers and libraries. During these excursions, Stiert educates the public on donkeys and enables one-on-one interactions. He also does group visits at schools including ones serving those with special needs. He also brings the donkeys to visit Girl Scouts and colleges including Bard College during stressful mid-terms.

The herd also embarks on group visits to addiction centers as well as Gateway Community Industries in Kingston, NY; and Northeast Center for Rehabilitation and Brain Injury in Lake Katrine, NY.

Stiert's donkeys regularly work with The ARC of Dutchess to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Through their engagement feeding the donkeys and performing necessary tasks, people gain confidence and a sense of value.

“One man had anger issues, but gradually over time, he had more positive interactions with the people around him. When he's with the donkeys, he says he never worries about losing his temper,” reveals Stiert.



Continued on next page ...

Hudson Valley Walk with Donkeys

When Donkey Park, Inc. first launched, Stiert and his team took the donkeys for walks on nearby rail trails as a means of socializing them and training the handlers. Since this was so well received, he created a Hudson Valley Walk with Donkeys group via Meetup.com. It now has more than 900 members.

Donkey Park, Inc. also offers intro classes and donkey training classes for the public. The classes are sponsored by SUNY Ulster and Cornell Cooperative Extension, and are also offered directly through Donkey Park, Inc. The non-profit also runs the 4-H Club called the Bray-niacs as well as clubs for children and young adults. These often lead to participation in shows such as the Guilford County Fair Donkey and Mule Show.

Donkey conference and more

In 2015, Donkey Park hosted a Hudson Valley Donkey Conference. Attendees included both veterinarians and farriers, and donkey owners and enthusiasts. Presenters hailed from prestigious schools such as Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine as well as other internationally recognized donkey welfare organizations.

The donkeys also participate in community events such as the Santa on the Walkway (through Walkway Over the Hudson), First Day Hike (held on January first through Meetup.com), and Esopus Winter Wonderland Parade. Winter hikes on nearby trails are offered occasionally. Since the donkeys spread smiles and warm hearts, Stiert tries to make them accessible year-round.

Donkey Park, Inc. rarely charge fees for events and never charges for community-service events. "This is our way of giving back, but it also recognizes that many people don't have the budget for animal therapy. It also minimizes risk for the organization and the welfare of our animals becoming dependent on fundraising," reveals Stiert.

They're not stubborn!

This donkey enthusiast enjoys watching joyful interactions between people and donkeys. After interacting with the animals, many people have told Stiert that the donkeys' behavior and demeanor have defied their expectations. The animals weren't mean, stupid, or aggressive as many mistakenly perceive them to be.

"I believe donkeys are best served when provided with the mental and physical stimulation that they lose



Above: Donkey Park friend Khari Wellman enjoying festivities during Donkey Park's annual Holi-Brays event. Below, left: Big Susie enjoying a hug from her nonagenarian friend Honey.

when they're removed from the wild and domesticated," mentions Stiert. He explains that despite their reputations for being stubborn, donkeys are independent thinkers, are curious, and intelligent.

"The stubbornness is a misunderstanding of their strong sense of self-preservation and independent thinking. They don't relinquish responsibility for their welfare to 'alphas,'" explains Stiert. When a donkey is perceived as stubborn, it needs more time to process and assess what's being requested and what the handler expects. Just as man's best friend will bite when mishandled, donkeys can defend themselves, but it's not their nature to kick or bite humans unless provoked or mistreated.

Stiert encourages people to visit the donkeys at his donkey park, but requests that they call in advance to confirm a time. Thanks to the success of this good-will venture, his operation is outgrowing its current space, which means that Stiert is seeking a larger location.

"The opportunity to work with people and see them grow is one of the reasons that I have no regrets. Aside from my kids, launching this organization has been the best thing in my life. Its therapeutic nature makes my head a wonderful place to live," concludes Stiert. He is grateful to his very dedicated, caring volunteers who help made this a success. ●



To learn more about the Donkey Park you can call Steve Stiert at (845) 389-9159 or visit them online at www.donkeyparks.us.

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Cinema & culture ... in the boondocks

CINDY HESLIN AND JEFF PALFINI

By CB Wismar

info@mainstreetmag.com

You likely have to be “of a certain age,” to remember the song *Down in the Boondocks* made semi-popular in 1965 by country singer Billy Joe Royal.

Cindy Heslin and Jeff Palfini certainly do not qualify.

Nor, for that matter, were any of us around when Private William Walter Grayson fired the first shot in the Philippine-American War in 1899 – only important for reference, since it was that conflict that spawned the term “boondocks” to mean the remote countryside where Philippine guerrillas badgered American troops. The conflict ended, but the term came home with the veterans, and “boondocks” has been part of our colloquial language ever since.

And why, you may well ask, is all of this relevant? Because Jeff Palfini and Cindy Heslin have adopted the moniker to distinguish their cultural contribution to the Tri-state area – The Boondocks Film Society.

But, more on that, later.

Jeff and his travels

There have been interesting travels in Jeff's background. Born in Connecticut, he's managed to spend time in Virginia for college, Budapest, Hungary for fun, Los Angeles for

work and San Francisco for work ... and love. He's a writer who caught the wave of emerging technology, fed the explosion of magazines focused on the tech trend and continues to do freelance copy writing, far from Silicone Valley in Northwest Connecticut ... a place that some might refer to as, well, “the boondocks.”

But, more on that, later.

Cindy and her wanderlust

Cindy is no stranger to travel, having grown up in Rhinebeck, NY, and gone to school at Western Connecticut before “wanderlust” took over and she drove her van west, ending up in San Francisco. She had, in 2010, met a young man who shared her interest in film. They were attending the long-lamented Kent Film Festival and seemed to connect from the very first meeting. She wanted to travel, however, so off she went to San Francisco, where Jeff would end up, as well. These days, Cindy spends her days as a studio assistant to widely celebrated artist Philip Taaffe, helping to prepare his large works for shipment to a global audience.

Celebrating independence

Film and the appreciation for the independent productions, sometimes “quirky” in content and delivery, that have become classics is more than a mutual interest. Cindy and Jeff don't always agree on the value of a certain film, but the creative concept of creating film events transcends the minor disagreements. They bring a dedication to



the appreciation of cinema that finally leads us to being “in the boondocks.”

Jeff, while he was in Budapest, had connected with a group of ex-patriots who would gather, periodically, to share themed pot luck dinners, some wine, and a film. Returning to the US, the notion of film nights came with him. What started out as a living room venture with very basic equipment projecting on a bed sheet took a significant leap forward when, now living in San Francisco, Jeff piloted a film night at a de-commissioned US Mint that was in the process of being converted to a museum. The film they screened that night? Why, *Bullitt*, of course, the 1968 San Francisco-based film starring Steve McQueen, Jacqueline Bisset, and Robert Vaughn that still boasts one of cinema's most iconic car chases.

When Cindy and Jeff returned to New England, the notion of a more defined film festival came with them. There were a few commercial film houses within reasonable distance, but those were primarily booked for first run films and specialty art programs. What of the great archive of “indies?”

Continued on next page ...



Above, top to bottom: Screening of *Spider Baby* at 5 Harts in Dover Plains, NY. Sepia photo of soldier: Pvt. William Walter Grayson, credited with firing the first shot in the Philippine-American War where “boondocks” became part of the American vernacular. Photo source: Wikipedia, public domain. Below, left: Jeff Palfini and Cindy Heslin.





The right venues

Not far from where they lived, the Colonial Theatre stood empty in Canaan, CT, and with a bit of urging, it became the setting for the first Boondocks Film Society event – *Arizona Dream*, a film starring Johnny Depp, Jerry Lewis, and Faye Dunaway that had a very turbulent beginning and morphed into a “cult classic.”

Choice of the film was important ... but so was the enveloping experience. Food, beverages, and entertainment were an essential part of the mix. After all, the Budapest film nights always included theme-driven food and adult beverages.

The uniqueness of the film, the cuisine that the film may suggest or demand, the variety of venues that the region offered that could be tied thematically to the film all became ingredients as Jeff and Cindy expanded

the reach of “Boondocks...”

A film featuring classic aircraft? Why not screen it at an airport. The facility in Great Barrington, MA, seemed like a logical choice, so *Porco Rosso* was screened in one of its hangars.

Better Off Dead, which turns on skiing seemed the perfect presentation at Catamount Ski Area. Berkshire Mountain Distillers was the correct spot to present the Coen Brothers classic *Miller's Crossing*, set in Prohibition New Orleans.

Each Society outing is promoted with a specially designed poster that will suddenly appear in local shop windows and bulletin boards. Often designed by Cindy and Jeff, the graphics are fresh, the information presented just enough to let devotees figure out where, what, and when. Then make sure they collect the art-

istry for themselves. Attendees receive a commemorative poster designed by local artists as a parting gift.

Coming attractions

Cindy and Jeff have announced future Boondocks Film Society programs with the March offering scheduled. The film to be screened will give aficionados the chance to see Natalie Portman's first big screen venture, the French production *Leon: The Professional*, which also stars Gary Oldman and Jean Reno. The production is set in New York City and is in English, so no need to polish up your high school French to enjoy the evening. The selected venue? Big Elm Brewing in Sheffield, MA, at 7pm on Friday, March 8.

One can only speculate, but if ... and we realize that this is a big “if” ... there is ever a film made about Private William Walter Grayson and his seminal role in bringing “boondocks” to the American parlance, it may well end up at a Boondocks Film Society event, proudly curated by Jeff Palfini and Cindy Heslin. The film would likely be projected in the boondocks, perhaps somewhere along the Appalachian Trail in the woods atop a local mountain and presented with a meal of adobo, lumpia, and tapuy washed down with a chilled San Miguel. •

Find out more about Boondocks Film Society, their past programs, and upcoming events at www.boondocksfilmsociety.org.

Above: Promotional posters for Boondocks Film Society created by Cindy Heslin. Below, left: Screening of *Harold and Maude* with live score by Avi Jacob at Wassaic Project Summer Festival.





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Music to their ears

HOW THE RIGHT SOUNDS CAN SOOTHE & HELP YOUR PET LEAD A CALM & HAPPY LIFE

By Joseph Mentebello
info@mainstreetmag.com

Anyone who is a pet lover and owner knows that there is nothing we won't do to make them happy and comfortable. We cuddle with them, share our bed; we worry about what we feed them and about leaving them alone. We do everything we can think of to enhance their lives. Yet more than 29% of all dogs suffer from at least one anxiety or fear issue and 16% of all dogs are suffering from multiple anxiety and/or fear issues.

One of the things many of us do is leave the television or radio on when we leave our pets alone. We believe that the sound will keep them company. Not a good idea, according to Janet Marlow.

Internationally known as a composer, researcher, and author, Marlow has spent over two decades studying and understanding animal hearing and how sound affects their behavior. She is the founder and creator of Pet Acoustics, a global, pet centric company offering a unique range of innovative species-specific products based on pet hearing sensitivities.

A life with music

Marlow, who was born in London, England, was surrounded by music as a child. Her father was a violinist and a composer; her mother was an opera singer. When they moved to America, her father went on to compose and conduct music for Broadway shows.

"I grew up hearing my father on his piano, experimenting, composing, studying chords. Sound and music were such an integral part of my life," explains Marlow. "My



Above: Parker is all set for an afternoon of listening to music especially for cats.

father decided I should play the violin. I said Okay. I was always willing to try something new and my father encouraged me. I was never afraid to try. Courage has been the juice that propelled me to do other things. It brings satisfaction in life. I became a violinist; went to the High School of Music and Art. The culmination was playing Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with Zubin Mehta in Montréal when I was 17."

Marlow went on to master the guitar, played native American music, debuted at Carnegie Hall, and worked with Grammy Award winner Paul Winter and his music farm in Litchfield, CT.

She continued traveling and having music as the center of her life. When she married Alan Brennan, a fellow musician, and started a family, she settled down and began the second part of her music career – helping animals. And it all began with her cat.

What animals sense and hear

"We had a 15-year-old cat who insisted on going outside one cold, rainy day," says Marlow. "For two

days we couldn't find him and finally he came crawling out of the woods. I took him to the vet, where he had to spend some time. When I went to visit I would sing to him. I would play music and the other animals there would go into complete relaxation."

"I became committed to finding out why animals are so soothed by music. I studied the decibel levels of animals and started writing music specifically for them."

"Sound for an animal is extremely important and triggers their behavior. They hear much more than we do. A cat can hear a sound before a human and therefore may wind up scurrying under the bed before there is even a knock on the door. A horse will know that a storm is coming because they are the most immersed in air, which is the conduit for sound and the animal will start getting emotionally agitated in the barn. Dogs hear twice as much as

Continued on next page ...

humans, cats three times as much. We are not aware of their sensitivities and once I began studying I wanted to bring that knowledge to pet owners so they could implement it in their own environments.”

Of course, not all music is helpful to animals. We as humans think that any sound will calm an animal, emulating the feeling that someone is near. But a radio or a television is usually five or six feet off the ground, sitting high above the pet. The music played, in most cases, is two-dimensional and has a very small dispersion in space.

Pet Acoustics

Pet Acoustics music for dogs and cats has had a calming effect on countless pets. Janet Marlow is internationally recognized for her research and contribution to understanding acute hearing in pets and the importance of sound as a trigger for behavior. She has discovered that the combination of music modified in frequency and decibel ranges resulted in calmed behavior in dogs, cats, horses, and birds. This was the basis for her invention — species-

specific music.

“Music is good, voice is not,” says Marlow. “So we want to immerse the animal in an environment in which music is very powerful for them. It’s extremely powerful for us as well. Our entire bodies are receptive to the frequencies and tones of music. My concept is to modify music to each animal’s sensitivity zone. In the wilds, our dogs and their ancestors would listen for sounds in the air. If the sound was of a certain frequency or volume that would trigger hyper vigilance. They would make a decision and get out of there. They can make the same decision in our homes.”

“Within a minute of listening to this music an owner can see their pet change out of stress into a state of calm. That leads to a healthy and happier life. I only use instruments that are sustaining instruments, like violins, harps, lutes, guitars, piano, and then I go into each track and modify the frequency content according to the comfort zone of the dog. I then create the overall track. Clinical studies have proven that the effect of the music modified by frequency for the animal has a calming behavior effect and has a positive result.”

She truly is an animal’s best friend

Marlow is truly an animal’s best friend. She has become internationally recognized for her contributions towards understanding the uniqueness of hearing in animals and its relationship to behavior. She has been featured on *Animal Planet*, *CNN*, *Martha Stewart*, *Good Morning America*, and in *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*. She was awarded the 2017 Pet Age Women of Influence in the Pet Industry. *Entrepreneur Magazine* named Pet Acoustics Inc. one of the *Top 100 Companies for Brilliant Ideas*. She is the author of *Dogs and Cats Can Hear Much, Much More* and *The Magic of Music for Pets*.

“Our pets give so much to us and we in turn only want the best for them,” says Marlow. “We can make their time with us even more comfortable by learning how to put them at ease in times of stress. Music has a calming influence on humans, so my belief has always been that it can have the same affect on animals if we tailor it to their needs. With the right music your pet feels calm and secure even when left alone. That’s the magic of music.” ●

To learn more about Pet Acoustics, visit www.petacoustics.com.



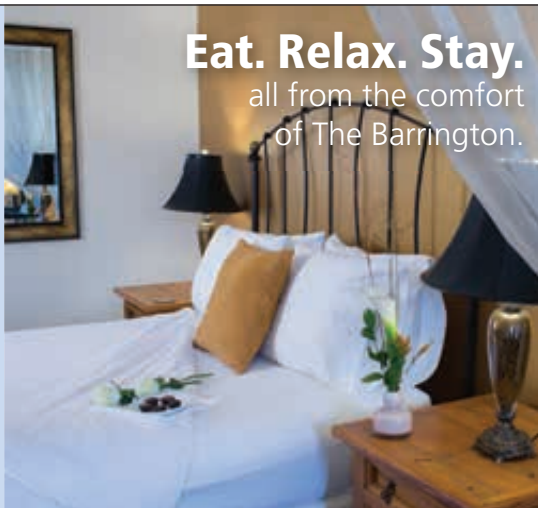
Above: Music is helping this dog to have a peaceful nap. Below, left: Janet Marlow, sharing her product with one of her fans.





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FALCONS & FALCONRY

By Dominique DeVito
info@mainstreetmag.com

Once upon a time, we humans had to hunt for our food, and not in the aisles of markets, but in the great outdoors. Having neither sharp claws, large teeth, great speed, nor wings, we had to rely on our smarts, and that meant finding help.

Reliable help.

The swift and sure falcon became part of our arsenal dating back at least 4000 years. Our ancestors recognized that these magnificent birds of prey could strike game in the air and on land, and didn't make a mess of it during the kill.

Peregrine history

Falcons were once prolific in many parts of the world, stretching from Europe into the Middle East and Asia. As a bird of prey, the peregrine falcon is a raptor, and one of many that fall under the hawk family, which includes longwings, shortwings, and broadwings. The peregrine falcon is a longwing, as are sakers and gyrfalcons. These are most commonly used for hunting. Shortwing hawks include goshawks and sparrowhawks; broadwings include eagles and buzzards.

Peregrine falcons are the fastest of the raptors, with cruising speeds of up to 55 miles per hour, and when stooping (coming in on the prey), can reach speeds of over 200 miles

per hour. As we know from our driver's education instruction, the impact of something coming at you at that speed is deadly.

Peregrine falcons have curved beaks to tear into flesh, relatively large eyes that can take in great distances, and very large, sharp talons that close when the falcon is about to strike so that the prey is pierced straight through, dealing an instant death blow, after which the talons are extended to grab and carry the prey. The peregrine's natural diet is mostly other birds, but they are many and varied, including those most desired by their trainers – pheasants, pigeons, and ducks.

Peregrine falcons are classified as carnivores. They weigh from two to five pounds, and have a wingspan of three to three-and-a-half feet. Females are larger than males and are the true "falcons;" males are called "tiercel." Peregrine pairs mate for life, but only come together

to reproduce, as they are solitary hunters. Formidable and intense, peregrine falcons are surprisingly docile, which is how they came to be trained millennia ago.

In North America and right here on the Hudson

In the United States, the peregrine falcon population has rebounded from near extinction in the mid-20th century to their numbers being considered strong and growing throughout North America. It turns out most bridges spanning the Hudson River from Manhattan to Albany have nesting boxes on them, according to the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). A pair nests on the Dunn Bridge between Albany and Rensselaer counties, in fact, and there's another pair on the Mid-Hudson Bridge between Highlands and Poughkeepsie. There are cameras on the bridges, and between March and July you can log in to see live footage of them in action (go to www.dec.ny.gov for more).

Continued on next page ...



Above: Saker falcon (*falco cherrug*) during a falconry show. Image source istockphoto.com contributor kertu_ee. Below, left: Predatory steppe eagle. Image source istockphoto.com contributor Yevgeniy Drobotenko.



Falconer's Association

Most states have associations or groups dedicated to falconry, including New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. The North American Falconer's Association estimates there are about 5,000 licensed falconers in the US. Members of these organizations are true devotees of the birds themselves and the sport of falconry. Some of them hold events where you can spend supervised time with a hunting bird, and some of them participate in agricultural shows to educate people about their birds of prey.

The New York State Falconry Association discusses the sport with reverence. "Hunting with a wild bird of prey is an exhilarating and fulfilling endeavor," the website explains, continuing, "There is nothing quite like watching your hawk pursue and ultimately take its quarry. Or marveling as it flies toward you through the trees and lands deftly on your waiting glove. The bond between falconer and bird is a lifelong, deeply treasured relationship ... becoming a falconer must be done with great forethought and readiness."

Lest someone not take this advice seriously enough, the site states clearly, "It requires seriousness and

maturity. It requires considerable time and resources. It is not to be taken lightly. It is not a hobby. It is a lifestyle."

Falconry opportunities

A great opportunity to work one-on-one with a bird of prey is offered by New England Falconry, based in Hadley, MA. New England Falconry has a partnership with the Woodstock Inn & Resort in Woodstock, VT, where Master Falconer Chris Davis brings his harris hawks for newbies to experience the handling and flying of the trained birds. And you don't have to stay at the Inn to sign up for the experience.

(Learn more at falconryatwoodstockvt.com).

We are fortunate to be able to share where we live with a variety of impressive birds of prey – even eagles and turkey buzzards. I saw a pair of bald eagles over a field in Chatham, NY, the other day. There are also kestrels, red-tailed hawks, merlins, osprey, northern goshawks, northern harriers, and more. The DEC has a beautiful identification

sheet on the Raptors of New York on its website at www.dec.ny.gov.

Ancient women falconers

Falconry has historically been a sport most participated in by men, but women have long been involved. Many notable women, in fact, from countries around the world. Seven schools of falconry were developed based on the practices of Kochicu in Japan around 358. She was the daughter of the Emperor. In Sardinia in the mid to late 1300s, Eleanor of Arborea was an experienced falconer who was also a judge and was the first to pass laws to protect certain birds. Mary Queen of Scots was a falconer, as was Mary of Canterbury, who was the Grand Master of Falconry for Queen Elizabeth I. In Russia in the 1700s, Catherine the Great was a passionate falconer and devotee of birds of prey, preferring the Merlin to all others.

Modern women falconers

Hooray for the internet's ability to bring groups of people together. The International Association of Falconry (www.iaf.org) has a Women's Working Group that promotes women in falconry. At thegreatbig-story.com you can see a video of American Lauren McGough talking about how she learned falconry in Mongolia and continues it to this day. If you take up the sport, let us know about it! •



Above: A golden eagle. Image source istockphoto.com/contributor/ian600f. Below, left: A man teaches a boy the art of falconry. Image source istockphoto.com/contributor/coscaron.



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THE WARNER THEATRE: *A LIVING MONUMENT*

By CB Wismar
info@mainstreetmag.com

It was 1931.

Al Capone went to prison. Gambling was legalized in Nevada. The Dust Bowl devastated the Upper Midwest. Bread was eight cents a loaf. In New York City, the Empire State Building was completed and the George Washington Bridge was opened.

Ninety miles away in Torrington, CT, the Warner Brothers Studio unveiled its newest cultural landmark, the Art Deco masterpiece Warner Theatre designed by celebrated architect Thomas Lamb. 1,772 seats. It was such a major event that Governor Wilbur Cross attended the opening. Movie tickets were 25 cents.

Film industry changes

It was 1948.

Citing anti-trust violations, the US Supreme Court forced the major film studios to divest their theatres, changing the film industry and ending, forever, the “studio system” that had been the ultimate “vertically integrated” industry. The Warner Theatre had run first run films and allowed Warner Brothers to “preview” new films before they invested heavily in advertising campaigns. Their marketing department had determined that the population of Torrington was a microcosm of New York City – which made it the perfect focus group.



Sold to private interests, the Warner carried on until 1978, when the theatre was shuttered and, within years, targeted for demolition. Who would want such a cavernous theatre when multiplexes were sprouting up in every major city and HBO, Showtime, and a collection of national channels were available on cable television systems?

Saved from the wrecking ball

Enter the Northwest Connecticut Association for the Arts, a non-profit assembly of passionate citizens who did not want to see the landmark Warner marquee demolished and the theatre slip into fading memory.

With passion, dedication, and real bravado, the Association prevailed, bought the theatre and on May 22, 1983 re-opened the Warner Theatre. There was much to be done. The refurbishing took years and significant grants and funds were raised throughout the community. But when, refurbished and renewed, it re-opened in 2002, the Warner Theatre had been restored to its original beauty. A landmark (it is on the US National Registry of Historic Places) had been preserved for succeeding generations.

The theater now

It is 2019.

The performance schedule at the Warner is impressive, by any standards. It has become a cultural landmark in Northwestern Connecticut, drawing audiences from throughout the tri-state area and beyond.

The celebrated Warner Stage Company, led by executive in charge of production, Sharon Houk, stages four major productions each season on the Warner Main Stage and four more compact productions on the stage of the Nancy Marine Studio Theatre, a smaller 280-seat theatre in the Warner complex.

“We probably have 800 names in our records – people who love to act, to work backstage, to play in bands



and show orchestras,” affirms Houk. “There are countless volunteers who make things run smoothly in the house ... and some exceptionally talented people who end up making our shows so rewarding to the acting company and to the audience.”

Global reach, local impact

Houk also manages the International Playwrights Festival, now in its eighth year, a monumental effort that begins with 150 scripts that are submitted, a team of 15 readers to cull through the submissions, then the final readings, selections, directorial assignments, casting and ... full production of the winning one-act plays.

Throughout the year, the Warner presents a wide and colorful, balanced program. Under the guidance of executive director, Lynn Gelormino, the schedule balances plays, concerts, films, ballet from both their neighbor, the acclaimed residential dance program the Nutmeg Ballet Conservatory, and performances by internationally celebrated MOMIX and PILOBOLUS dance companies, as well as the elegantly acrobatic feats of CIRQUE Dream Journey. In addition, the large audience capac-

Above: The inside of the Warner Theatre in all of its glory. Below, left: The theater's marquee at night.

Continued on next page ...

ity makes the Warner a perfect venue for graduations – six each year at last count.

“We attract audiences from 39 states and several international destinations,” comments Gelormino. “We welcome 100,000 attendees each year to the Warner. Program diversity and audience appeal are very much on our minds.”

That diversity is fueled by presentations of *Metropolitan Opera Live* in the Nancy Marine Studio Theatre and a rich schedule of productions by students of the Warner Theatre Center for the Arts.

The lure of the stage

The educational arm is led by Isabel Carrington, its director of education and includes a wide range of classes and mentoring programs from stage acting to technical skills to design and directing. A vibrant summer program has participants going from first script reading to finished production in two weeks. “It’s incredible,” comments Lynn Gelormino. “Every year the campers truly amaze us with the way they dive in and bring a play to life. The audiences just love it.”

Now in its 26th year, the school welcomes nearly 300 participants a year and proudly records their post-graduation accomplishments. Many actors, technical directors, producers and directors have matriculated from the Warner Theatre Center for the Arts.

See for yourself

With its wide ranging offerings, the Warner rightly encourages audiences

to check, frequently, with their robust website – warnertheatre.org.

Coming up in the weeks and months ahead are sweeping productions of *Mama Mia!* the musical celebration of the super group ABBA, a reprise of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* offered as the summer fare at the end of July and several engaging plays that will be presented in the Nancy Marine Studio Theatre. *Ken Ludwig’s Baskerville*, a comic send up of the Sherlock Holmes mystery *Hound of the Baskervilles* and the musical *Disaster* which incorporates some of the great pop tunes of the 70s will be presented in March and June, respectively.

For those who enjoy live musical performances, Indigo Girls (March 23), The Allman Betts Band (March 30), and Eli Young Band (August 30) will perform on Warner’s Main Stage while rock legend Steve Katz of *Blood, Sweat and Tears* fame brings his one man show of songs and stories to the Nancy Marine Studio Theatre on April 24.

Neatly interspersed between sprawling musicals, well-crafted comedies, evenings of live music, live opera presented with discussions and stunning dance performances are productions by and for a younger audience. Daytime performances of *Magic School Bus* and *Amber Brown is Not a Color* will attract hundreds of grade school students from around the region to the historic theatre.

When the Northwest Connecticut Association for the Arts harnessed their passion to save the Warner Theatre, their ambition was to retain the theatre’s position in the community and to present programming that would encourage, welcome, enlighten and entertain that community.

It is 2019.

Mission accomplished. ●

Visit the Warner Theatre website at www.warnertheatre.org for information on up-coming performances, volunteer opportunities, classes at the Warner Theatre Center for the Arts, and to purchase tickets for any of the offered programs. Additional information can be obtained by phone at (860) 489-7180.



Above: *Newsies* on the Warner Theatre’s main stage. Below: A view from the theater’s orchestra pit.





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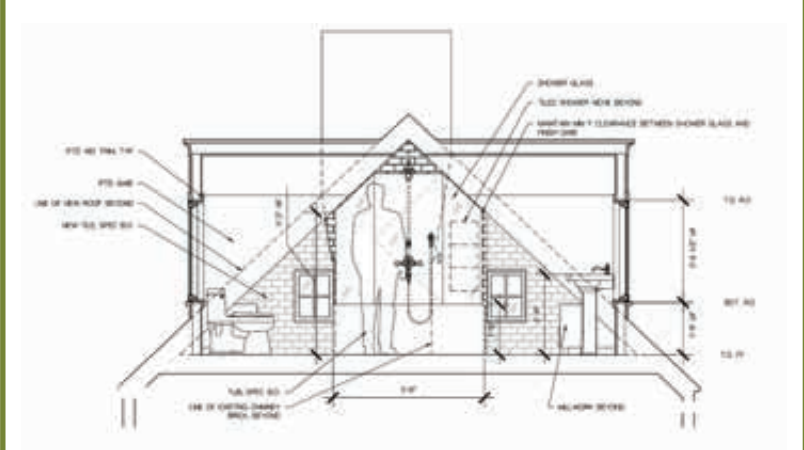


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Willowbrook Farms

A family-owned dairy farm and a cozy, colorful roadside shop. 196 Old Post Rd 4, Millerton, NY. thefarmstoreatwillowbrook.com

Willowbrook Farm was established by the Beneke family back in 1943. Since then, they added a small self-serve stand just selling sweet corn, but the stand was so popular that they decided to build the Farm Store five years ago. Willowbrook raises their own pork and beef, grows their own sweetcorn, as well as some other vegetables, and as a member of Hudson Valley Fresh (HVF), they also carry all of HVF products, have their own eggs, a large variety of cheeses, gourmet grocery items, baked goods, and unique farm-related gifts, too. “We feel that our store is a one-stop-shop: you can pick up what you need for a family dinner or weekend getaway. Our customers are from the Tri-state area, many of which have become our friends,” says manager, Heidi Beneke-Main. Willowbrook is proud to be a small family business and enjoys being able to share the farm life with their customers. They pride themselves on how their animals are treated – on most days when you pass by you will see the cows grazing in the pastures. Heidi says they are hoping to hold more events in the coming year and is even looking into mail order meat. “Our Wagyu beef has been a huge hit in the store, in fact there has been a waiting list for it.” The farm store is open annually from May through November.



Sand Road Animal Hospital, LLC

Traditional veterinary services and more. (860) 824-5223. 136 Sand Road, Falls Village, CT. sandroadanimals.com

“Improving the healthcare of pets one pawprint at a time,” has been Sand Road Animal Hospital’s reason for getting up in the morning since 1989. Owned by Dr. Dave and Cindy Sandefer, their diverse campus of five buildings provides an environment to meet the needs of pets and their loved ones through all stages of life. In addition to traditional veterinary services they also have a holistic healing center offering acupuncture, spinal adjustment, and a Chinese herb pharmacy. Sit Play Stay provides a fun and enriching experience for pets at their new pet resort. Pets come for enrichment classes, training classes, doggie daycare, or overnight stays while their “pet parents” are away. The well-being of pets would not be complete without good nutrition and the Sand Road Animal Hospital staff is there to educate and answer all of your questions at their 2,000 square foot retail store. They believe pets bless our lives in unexplainable ways, and Sand Road Animal Hospital is here to enrich the lives of these pets through extraordinary veterinary care and holistic services to support the entire wellbeing of your pet. “If our clients, patients, and guest are excited to get out of the car and run to our doors to be greeted by a friendly face, then we know we have done our job well.”



The Beeman Method

Key to successful horse/human relationships. (845) 518-9376. 41 Barney Dr., Millerton, NY. beemansbetterdeal.com

Margaret Beeman has been called a horse whisperer more times than she can count. “But I don’t whisper,” she says, “I speak right up.” The volume of her voice doesn’t matter. Her secret is her deep understanding of the horse as a species, of its language, its herd culture, and its natural movement so that it feels safe and keeps its rider safe. Mutual respect between horse and human is the cornerstone of the Beeman Method’s authentic horsemanship. Horsemanship is not a discipline, as riding and driving are, it is a skill that enhances these disciplines and the overall relationship of horse and rider. Horsemanship teaches the rider what the horse can and cannot do, how the horse processes information, and how to communicate in a way that the horse can understand. “Learning how to work within the horse’s capacity of understanding makes the horse’s life less stressful and our time with our horses much more rewarding,” she said. Margaret teaches the Beeman Method, which includes classroom study, at her facility in Millerton, NY, or travels to her students at their homes and/or stables. She has taught horsemanship to all ages, but has developed a special course for older riders who are returning to riding after a hiatus. Margaret is the author of *The Better Deal: Practical Horsemanship Training for Your and Your Horse*.



Locust Hill Market

Year-round market full of local products, produce, and meat. (845) 489-3187. 3691 Rt. 82, Millbrook, NY. locusthillmarket.com

Locust Hill Market is a family-run farm and market located in Millbrook, NY, offering farm-grown fruits, vegetables, pork, chicken, 100% grass-fed beef, and other specialty products. After raising beef cattle for years, Tom and Amanda Skuza saw the need for locally-raised products for Millbrook and the local community. They began growing produce and expanded the farm in the summer of 2015. Throughout the summer months, Locust Hill Market is stocked with many varieties of fruits and vegetables grown in their Millbrook garden for you and your family to enjoy. The store is full of local products, produce, and all their farm fresh pork, chicken, and 100% grass fed beef year-round. Locust Hill Market is truly a family affair, with Tom and Amanda passing on their passion for farming to their two sons, Henry (age 9) and Elias (age 5), who both love growing up on the farm, spending time in the garden, taste-testing the vegetables, and helping care for all the animals! One of the main reasons Tom and Amanda got into farming was to work with other small farmers. “We help to support at least ten other farms in the Hudson Valley by carrying their products in our market.” Going forward they want to grow their beef herd so that they can expand.

INSURING YOUR WORLD

Animals, animals, animals... you can't live with them and you can't live without them – when it comes to insurance! A standard homeowner's policy provides automatic coverage for dogs, cats, and small exotic animals for the liability that they create, but what about "large animals," like horses, cows, etc.? The insuring agreements are quite specific in stating that they will cover one large or two half animals ... so a cow or horse or two goats, sheep, or pigs. Anymore than these numbers and you will need to put a farming endorsement on your homeowner's policy. What if your son or daughter has a 4-H project such as a show cow at another farmer's barn? Again, you would need that farming endorsement added to your homeowner's policy. Another issue may arise when your daughter leases a barn and pasture for her pleasure horse away from the house where she lives. Liability must be endorsed to reflect this additional location to ensure proper coverage in the event of a liability loss. What about the animals themselves? Well you can obtain pet insurance for your small animals and some automobile policies have endorsements covering them should they be injured while riding in your car. For horses and cows, mortality policies are available for injury or death. So do your homework prior to acquiring any type of pet as it relates to your insurance coverage.



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

Kneller Insurance
Agency

Top 5 dangers to pets in winter

- 1) **Frostbite and hypothermia** – As temperatures fall, pets are at risk of lowered body temperatures, cardiac arrest, freezing tissues, and other problems associated with frostbite and hypothermia. Provide warm shelter, appropriate winter clothes if necessary, minimize outdoor time, and dry pets off when they come indoors so they can warm up quickly.
- 2) **Poison** – The smallest amounts of antifreeze, de-icer, common winter chemicals, and some human foods can pose poisoning risks. Clean up any chemical spills immediately, and keep chemicals out of reach of pets at all times. If pets show poisoning symptoms, seek a vet's care immediately.
- 3) **Fire and burns** – When pets are cold, they may get closer to fireplaces, space heaters, and other heating elements, where they risk singed fur or skin burns. Do not use exposed heating elements or open flames around pets unless they are closely supervised. Avoid heated blankets in pet beds since wrinkles and folds can cause the blankets to overheat and may cause burns. In the event of a fire, take all possible steps to rescue pets without risking human life, including notifying fire and rescue personnel about the presence of pets.
- 4) **Dehydration and malnutrition** – Pets need more calories in the winter months to generate sufficient body heat to stay warm, and adequate water can help them combat the effects of cold. Dry skin, dull coats, and weight loss are common effects of dehydration and malnutrition in the winter. Use a heated pet bowl to keep water from freezing in outdoor pens, and always have plentiful clean water available for pets to drink. Consider increasing meals slightly to provide adequate winter nutrition and compensate for calorie-burning weight loss, as well as help pets store a layer of fat for winter insulation.
- 5) **Getting lost** – Winter rain, ice, and snow can wash away and cover scent markers and visual clues pets might use to orient themselves and find their way home. Always keep a close eye on pets outdoors and do not let them wander without supervision. Use sturdy leashes, and keep yard gates firmly fastened. Having pets microchipped, wearing updated identification tags, and having a recent photo on hand will help if it is necessary to search for a lost pet.

Phone 518-789-4471
Route 22 Millerton, NY
www.agwayny.com



Be well!

We all know sickness warrants a visit to the Veterinarian, but how often should we visit the Veterinarian when our dog or cat is well? What should we expect in those wellness visits and how do we financially prepare for them when the average cost of owning a pet is approximately \$1,900 per year – or more?

Puppies and kittens begin vaccinations around 8 weeks of age. They receive a series of vaccinations and considered according to their age, lifestyle, geographic location and state laws. Puppies and kittens visit the veterinarian every 3 to 4 weeks until approximately 16-18 weeks of age and are spayed or neutered between 6-18 months of age.

Adult dogs (ages 1 to 7-10, depending on breed and size) and cats should receive yearly physicals and vaccination boosters, which are administered every 1-3 years, depending on the vaccine. Laboratory tests, preventive medicine/supplements, and nutritional counseling are addressed during the annual visits. Lifestyle, age, and geographic location may change, which may affect the medical wellness plan. Bi-annual physicals are recommended for senior dogs and cats (7-10 and older).

Seeking a veterinarian with a high standard of care is key and preparing for the cost of that care is important. When necessary, ask your veterinarian for a treatment plan cost prior to the visit to help budget for what is needed. Consider Pet Insurance as another option for unexpected injuries or illness. Some veterinarians may have in-house health care plans, which are all-inclusive budget plans that allow the yearly costs to be paid on a monthly basis. A well-trained support staff will discuss all financial options and help you decide what is best for your budget.

Phone 518-789-3440
199 Route 44 East, Millerton, NY
www.millertonvet.com



NESTING IOI

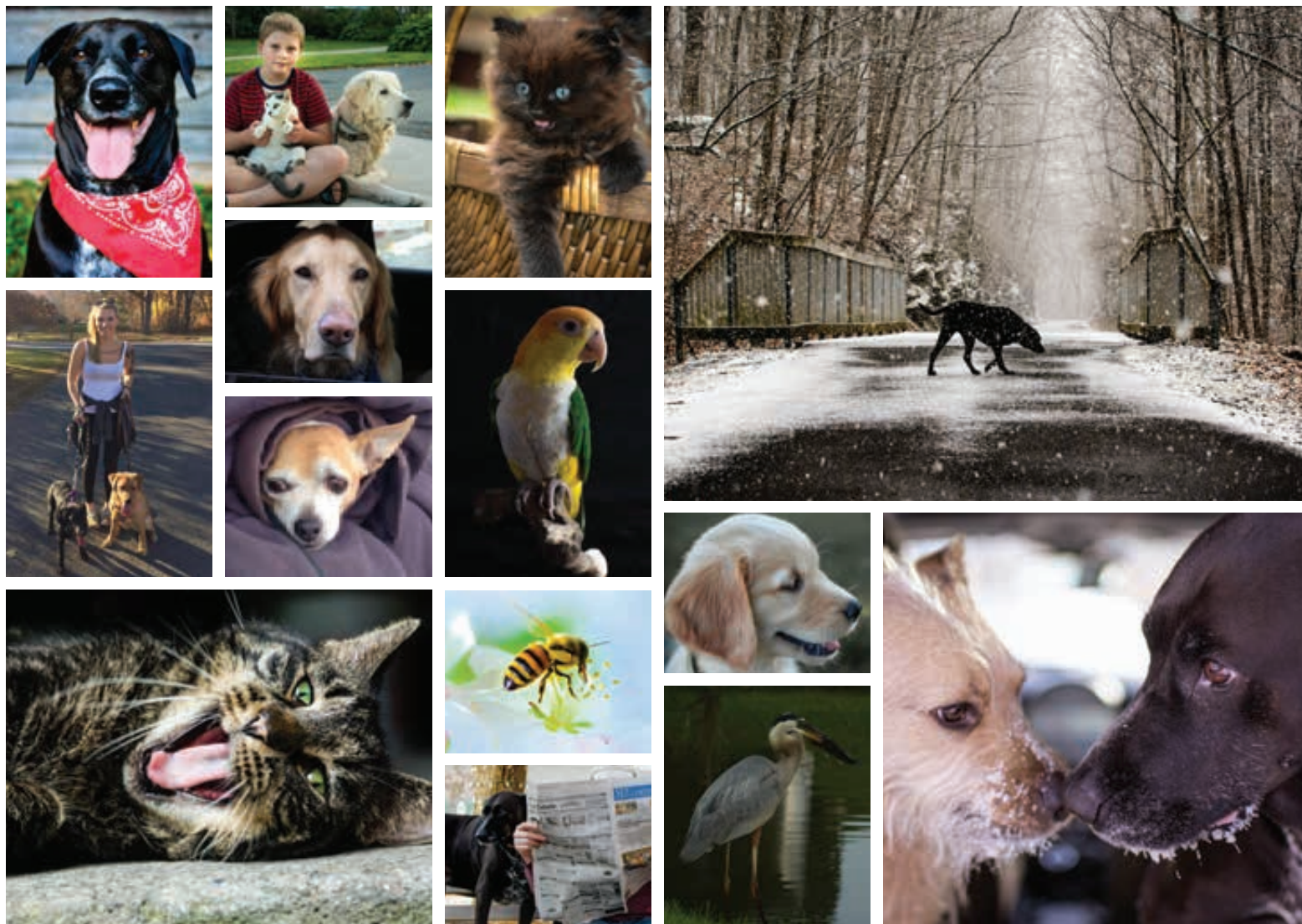
March is an important time of year to prepare for the birds. Whether you stop feeding in March or feed all year round by bringing your feeders in every night, there is a lot to do to help the birds.

March is an important time to put out birdhouses. Many birds use a birdhouse. What species uses a birdhouse depends on the size of the hole and the placement of the birdhouse. A basic birdhouse with a 1 1/2" hole can be put on a pole or placed on a fence post in the open part of your yard for bluebirds or tree swallows. If you place the house 5' high on a tree, chances are a chickadee, nuthatch, or downy woodpecker will nest there. If you place it on the side of a building or by shrubby trees, then a house wren will move in. Take your empty caged suet feeders and add dog or llama hair and add 4" pieces of colored yarn (never sewing thread). The birds will pull the hair and yarn out to line their nests. Do not use dryer lint.

Most birds will typically hatch two batches of fledglings and will start laying eggs the end of April or first two weeks of May depending on the warmth of the Spring weather. Hopefully you did not clean up last year's summer gardens so in March the birds still have natural seed heads to eat. Plan to plant more native fruit trees and shrubs to bring more songbirds to your yard. You will be glad you did.



(413) 644-9007 • www.wild-birdstore.com
783 South Main Street, Great Barrington, MA



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All of Millerton's businesses welcome you!



Photos by: Olivia Markonic

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¹ To earn the Reward Rates and ATM fee refunds, all qualifications must be met in the qualification cycle. The "qualification cycle" is a period beginning the first business day of each month through last business day of the month. The "statement cycle" ends the last business day of the month. Make 10 debit card purchases per monthly qualification cycle (transactions must be posted and cleared, not pending). You must be enrolled in our e-Banking service and authorize the Bank to deliver your monthly statements electronically to qualify. If you do not log into your e-Banking account for twelve (12) months, you will be automatically un-enrolled from e-Banking, and e-Statements will expire. A \$.50 monthly service charge for paper statements will be charged each month you do not receive your account statement electronically. As long as you are enrolled when your statement cycles, you will not receive a monthly service charge for that month. You must have at least one direct deposit or one electronic payment post and clear to your account each monthly qualification cycle.

² ATM Fee Refunds up to \$25.00 per cycle when all qualifications are met. ATM Fee Refunds are automatically paid on the last day of your monthly statement cycle. International ATM fees are not refunded.

*APY – Annual Percentage Yields are accurate as of 02/01/2019. Minimum deposit to open account is \$25. Reward Rate tiers are as follows when qualifications are met: If your daily balance is \$.01 up to \$25,000, the interest rate paid on the entire balance will be 1.98% with an annual percentage yield of 2.00%. An interest rate of .50% will be paid only for that portion of your daily balance that is greater than \$25,000, and the annual percentage yield for this tier will range from 2.00% to .50% depending on the balance in your account. The Base Rate of 0.05% APY will be earned on all balances if qualifications are not met. Rates may change at any time, and may change after the account is opened. Fees may reduce earnings. Available for personal accounts only. Certain restrictions may apply, please contact a Customer Associate at 860.596.2444. Please see our separate Fee Schedule for other fees that may apply to this account.