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The
Animal
issue

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SAY HELLO TO MY LITTLE FRIEND(S)

Do you have an animal friend? I have a few and I love each and every one of them, just like we love each of the humans in our lives in a specific way. I've been a horse person since I was in the womb, so I live and breathe horses! I am also a feline fan – what can I say? I just love those little furballs.

If you take the time to get to know an animal, or many, you will quickly recognize each and every one of their individual personalities. We're all the same: all unique. And these animals often take a piece of our hearts, and it's theirs for the rest of our life. But honestly, that's how it should be!

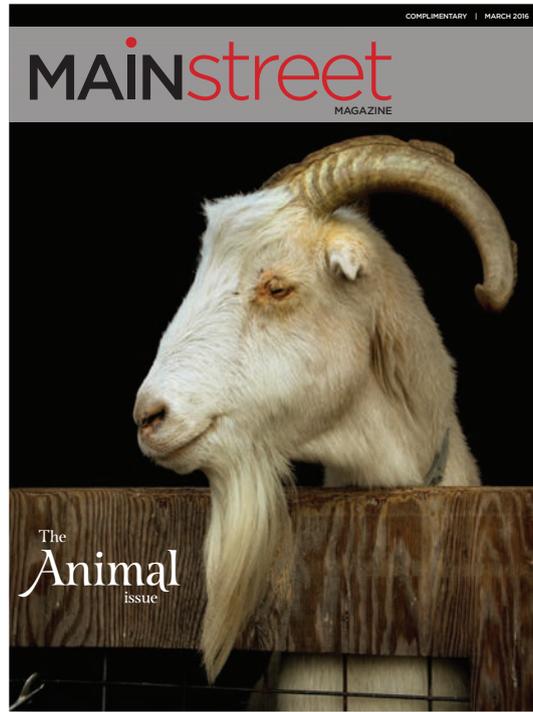
I believe that being around animals and knowing how to treat an animal makes us better people. I grew up on a horse farm (we also had dogs, cats, and guard-geese), and I believe that it made me more in touch with nature, it taught me compassion for all living things and to respect them. We then take those values and use them in our lives and for the rest of our lives. If you're an avid reader of this magazine, you've probably noticed our monthly "Farm Groupie" feature. I personally love reading about the love and companionship between a farmer and his/her animals. I think it appeals to my own bias that animal people are just a tad bit different, because we have great love, compassion, and respect for another living thing that is not a human.

An animal issue?

With all of that animal-love being said, we decided to dedicate an entire issue to our beloved animals. And why not? Do you know how many people have pets? A lot! Our neck of the woods is dotted by all kinds of farms, and how many people have a dog, cat, or other animal that they live with? So many of us!

So we wanted to dedicate an issue to the animals that make our lives better! We start with our artist profile of Marty Zelonky, but the animals of Alaska influence his art; our friendly faces are ... well, you guessed it: animals; we examine equine movie stars; we also take a look at the Trevor Zoo in Millbrook; Claire gives us a glimpse at the North American opossum; we also meet Dr. Katherine Skiff Kane a local veterinarian; and Allison gives us a snapshot of the animals that used to live here, some of which have since gone extinct. We hope you enjoy, and perhaps you'll share a story or two with your animal friend?

- Thorunn Kristjansdottir



MARCH 2016

The wise goat, taken on Kent Hollow Road in Kent, CT.

Cover photo by Lazlo Gyorsok

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FURNITURE MAKER:
MARTY ZELONKY



By CB Wismar
arts@mainstreetmag.com

Martin “Marty” Zelonky’s sculptural furniture pieces are the result of an intense dialog.

The initial stages are held entirely in his imagination ... the place where the whisper of an idea persists until it becomes a full on shout. True dialog, however, requires a second voice ... equally strong, equally well defined.

Trees tell great stories. Each tree with its rings and the shape of its trunk and bend of its limbs speaks to the climate and winds, the sunlight and rain that were part of its formation.

Marty Zelonky talks to trees. The results of these dialogs take

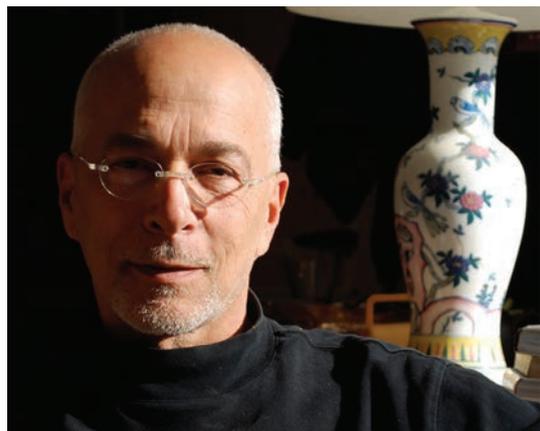
years to find resolution in the elegant lines and forms of Zelonky’s furniture. His sculptural pieces show great respect for the character and quality of the wood that becomes a bench, a table – formal pieces worthy of museum presentation and informal pieces to be used every day. A dining room table. A garden bench. They are equally the product of this extended dialog.

No two pieces are the same. Marty Zelonky is an artist, not a fabricator. These are pieces of sculpture that have great utilitarian use.

The long and winding road

Just as a tree becomes the product of its environment, Zelonky’s artistry is the product of his own journey which is far more complicated than a weekly circuit between New York City and Lime Rock, CT.

It began in Milwaukee, where he grew up, and from where he looked to a wider world. “I went to Woodstock when I was 17,” reflects Zelonky. “I was blown away.” And the road opened up in front of him.



Academic work at the University of Wisconsin, first in English, then in a fusion artistry and industrial design formed his appreciation of the mystique of design and the primal pleasure of working with his hands. One summer he ventured west, lived on a commune and worked in their efforts to build log cabins.

Back in college, he lived in a house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright during his “Prairie” period and realized, in horror, that to keep warm, the residents were sacrificing Wright-designed furniture to the fireplace.

Degree in hand, he became a teacher and mentor in a groundbreaking “Capstone Project” in Lockport, Illinois. Working with teens who had become, in his words, “misdirected,” Marty supervised the cooperative project of building a house. “I was the managing builder, the plumber, the electrician and did all the finishing work,” he remembers. “In the second year of the program, the *Chicago Tribune* came out and did a story on our efforts.” Mission accomplished.

And the road beckoned, and Marty Zelonky headed west.

North to Alaska

Living in Seattle, Marty found work in a cabinet shop, but when the work slowed, he needed to find a job. With the urging of a friend, he applied to teach school in Alaska. It was another adventure, one that lasted

seven years and saw him evolve from school teacher to school principal in a remote town 180 miles north of the Arctic Circle to becoming Assistant Superintendent of the North West Arctic School District. His territory of responsibility encompassed an area larger than the state of Indiana and involved weekly commuting in the small propeller planes that are the workhorses of the massive Alaskan wilderness and by dog sled.

“When we first arrived at the end of summer in Kotzebue, my first assignment, the plane landed on the beach. Once we found our house, we looked for the local store, a place to buy provisions.” The smile on Martin’s face belies the sheer drama of the moment. “There was no store. Nothing.” The people in the town explained that the provision ship would arrive in October. “We had to buy everything we needed for the entire year.”

What couldn’t be purchased from the supply ship either had to be grown during the short season, or hunted or fished. “The Inuit are great hunters. They had lived in that environment for millennia, and know where to fish, where to hunt – and have uncanny skills at both. There was no electricity, no phones, no running water. We quickly learned what it meant to survive. If I wanted a boat for fishing, I had to build one. I ended up building the first solar-powered home north

of the Arctic Circle. The skills I had learned along the way certainly paid off.”

So, Martin observed, and taught, and learned to live in a very different environment. “There is a great balance between humans and the animal kingdom around them,” he offers. The oceans teemed with fish, and whales frequently breached in the bay on which their small town was positioned. Transportation relied on human strength or the stamina of dog teams pulling sleds across the vast sweeping vistas of snow and ice.

“If you look at the Garden Bench, you’ll see the image of a whale worked into the back rest.” Martin’s awareness of the animal world around him is mirrored in his understanding of the wood with which he works. His newest work, the “Flutter” table, could be an arctic seal swimming through the Bering Sea.

If I can make it here, I can make it anywhere

After seven years, Alaska could not exert its hold for long. “As assistant superintendent, I had become deeply engaged in the politics of education, and knew I had a great deal to learn.” So, with his young daughter in tow, he headed from above the Arctic Circle to New York City. “I had learned to live in the wilderness, so I figured I could handle New York City,” Martin admits in an intellectual leap that evokes the easy laughter that comes from a man of deep experience, vivid imagination, and patient understanding.

He enrolled in a graduate program at Columbia and managed to register his daughter in the otherwise closed registration of exclusive Columbia Grammar Prep. It was there, by sheer coincidence that he met Audrey, his wife. “She was called in as a last minute replacement for a teacher who abruptly left the school just as the year was beginning,” recalls Martin. “I went to Parent/Teacher night wondering what this new teacher could possibly know about my daughter.” He came away convinced that the two would marry. Love at first sight. And his life journey continued.

“When Audrey and I moved into our place in New York, we had an instant need. Furniture.” So the front room became a workshop and Marty began to create the pieces that would fill their three bedroom apartment – tables, chairs, a bed, cabinets – the artist filling his space with art “...and filling the place with sawdust,” Marty says with a smile.

And, weekends at the Jersey Shore

As their lives progressed, Marty and Audrey became close to her family and, since Audrey’s school year afforded her open time in the summers, they would rent houses near the home owned by her family on the New Jersey shore. “Our requirements were always the same: enough bedrooms for our growing family, and a garage suitable to be a workshop.” Marty’s creative spirit needed an outlet that could be fulfilled through long summer nights working to realize his annual project, the end results of his dreams and dialog with trees.

It was the mid 1990’s when Marty and Audrey turned their attention north. They wanted a place of their own and Marty wanted a studio that was permanent, a place he could build out and equip with the variety of tools and supplies that he needs to create his pieces.



Opposite page, top to bottom: Garden bench with whale. Marty Zelonky. Above: Flutter table detail. Below left: Garden furniture. All photos courtesy of the artist.

“We were in Ancramdale for 11 years before we moved into Lime Rock. It was time to move and both of us started looking,” recalls Marty. “By pure coincidence, we both came, independently, on the same house. It had been vacant for several years, but the ‘bones’ were good and the space just felt right.”

Homeward bound

In the shop that occupies part of the ground floor and looks out onto a deck and the hills beyond, Marty Zelonky carefully works bits and pieces of wood into museum-quality sculptures that are dramatic furniture. Throughout the process of wrestling through the creation in his mind of each new piece, he is mindful of what he will ask of the wood.

“You don’t just look for wood ... you look into the wood,” he cautions. “Finding the right pieces is never easy. Often the most important tool used in the creative process is the skill of your sawyer, the person who presents the raw slabs of ancient trees that will be shaped and formed into the finished piece.”

Marty Zelonky is quite circumspect about the influences both artistic and stylistic that have been part of the journey. “Frank Lloyd Wright, for sure, and George Nakashima,” a Pennsylvania sawyer, now passed, whose imaginative work is now carried on by his daughter, Mira.

“I spent invaluable time with Sam Maloof in Pasadena, California (the MacArthur Foundation Genius Award-winning woodworker whose beautifully made rocking chairs have graced the White House), stopping along the way at Paolo Soleri’s Arcosanti community in Arizona. The impact of their thinking has been profound.”

But Marty Zelonky’s work, reflecting the journey, is totally unique. The Flutter table is done, and the dialog continues. Marty Zelonky has already begun the dialog, envisioning his next piece, and waiting to find the right pieces of wood to complete the thought. ●

Marty Zelonky’s work can be seen on his website www.craftedcountryfurniture.com as well as at SomethingsGottaGive.in in Lakeville, CT. www.somethingsgottagive.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.





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~~friendly~~ faces: meet our pets, fur-babies and friends



Otis is a handsome long-haired male cat. He was born 8/15/09 and at six weeks old his pet parents, Fridrik and Ashley Kristjansson [disclaimer, Ashley works for the magazine and is a crazy cat lady!], brought him to his *furrever* home. He has a love for turkey deli meat, Friskies Party Mix, cat napping, chasing laser lights, being brushed, snacking on catnip, drinking water from the bathroom faucet, and sponge baths. “I like being an only fur baby. I get all the attention and love I could ever ask for – I just hate the kisses that come with it.” [Or that’s what Ashley thinks he says]. Like many cats, Otis is all about routine and starts meowing for breakfast just before 7am every day. “If my humans don’t get up fast enough I sit on their night stands and knock over the TV and DVD remotes ... they don’t like that too much.”



Waco is a year and half year old Pineapple Green Cheek Conure, all the way from Okeechobee, FL. Owner, Sheri Kiernan says it takes a *long* time to earn the trust of these birds, but now they have a very strong bond, and Waco lives with Sheri in Copake, NY. He is a unique tropical parrot with such a big personality packed in that tiny body! “I do flips, give Sheri kisses by nibbling her lips, and mock her kissing noises. I play games with her too by rolling on my back, and wrestle her hands with my beak and feet.” Although Sheri clips Waco’s wings so he’s not fully flighted, Waco has flown away many times. Luckily Sheri always manages to catch him. This summer Waco will wear a stylish leather body halter with a leash, so he cannot fly away. Say, does Waco want a cracker?”



Dachshunds **Billet**, **Annie**, and **Penny**, all reside in Pine Plains, NY, with proud pet parents are Hannah Peters and Kyle Zuluaga. They are the best watchdogs, but more importantly, the best snugglers. They always alert their owners when there is bad weather, due to the fact that they don’t like going outside. “Our favorite things to do (in order) are sleep in bed, eat breakfast, sleep by the fire, snack, nap on the couch, eat dinner, and if the weather holds out, maybe a nice walk – but only if it’s above 40 degrees.” They are also quite competitive when it comes to getting affection and are not afraid to push each other aside for some extra love [sounds like sibling rivalry to me!]. They are pretty fierce lovers. “But before we snuggle, can we please have some more food?”



Sebastianne is a two year old single mane Lionhead rabbit. The breed is known for their outgoing personalities and intelligence. With free roam of several rooms in the house, she hops around exploring; chewing wooden toys (and sometimes the coffee table), snacks on treats, naps on fleece blankets, and loves a good nose and forehead petting. “I also like spending time in my bedroom, which is on the second floor of a luxurious two story cardboard bunny cottage.” Like all rabbits, Sebastianne is quite athletic and can jump three feet off the ground from a seated position, and five feet horizontally. Sebastianne’s pet parent, Memoree Joelle [the magazine’s farm groupie], spoils her rotten, feeding her vegetables from local farms. Together, they like staying up late, adventure, and eating raspberries. Shared dislikes are slamming doors and unexpected visitors.



Jersey calf **Paola** was born in late January, weighing in at only 30 lbs. Her mother’s name is Peach, but Paola is primarily cared for by the farmers at Chaseholm Farm in Pine Plains, NY. “The girls at Chaseholm were worried I wouldn’t have the same strength as the other calves. I couldn’t drink or stand for the first day and so I was wrapped in a blanket and helped to take in colostrum. Without that I wouldn’t have lived.” Since then Paola has put on some weight and learned to stretch her legs and drink on her own. “I’m still small, but I’m tough!” Right now Paola’s favorite thing to do is to run the length of the barn and then turn around and do it again [we call those zoomies when horses do it]. Sounds like Paola has the makings of becoming a Jersey jock!



Steve is a bearded dragon and is about seven or eight years old, measuring approximately 12½ inches long (including his tail). Steve is more active during the summer compared to the winter months according to his owner, Jim Buhs. Regardless of the time of year, Steve has quite the appetite. “I like to eat different types of worms but my favorite are mealworms. I also like fruits and vegetables. But please don’t feed me lettuce and spinach – it’s bad for me.” Steve recognizes Jim’s voice, likes sitting on Jim’s shoulder, and roaming around the apartment – following Jim around like a dog. But he also likes spending time in his tank under the heat lamp. Jim is thinking about getting a leash for Steve, and showing him what Millerton is all about, when it’s warmer that is.



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CARI SWANSON OF
WINDROCK FARM
IN AMENIA, NY

Equine movie stars

By Christine Bates
christine@mainstreetmag.com

Movie and TV stars are hidden from view in our countryside, from Great Barrington, MA to Millbrook, NY to Kent, CT, but others can be found grazing in fields. Horse wrangler Cari Swanson of Windrock Farm in Amenia trains horses to appear in movies, TV shows, music videos, and special events. Main Street Magazine watched Cari as she put her star horses through their paces on a Sunday afternoon. The interview ended inside her kitchen with a horse practicing patience and good behavior.

When did you begin training horses?

Actually I started when I was a kid in Ohio teaching my horses to do tricks. I was very involved with riding and training horses in 4-H and pony club. When I moved to New York City I escaped to the country to ride on weekends. Finally in 1995, after a successful career in magazine publishing, I decided that horses made me the happiest and I moved to Windrock Farm full time to board and train horses.

I have competed in show jumping, eventing, and FEI dressage. I am a USDF Silver medalist and a judge for dressage. About seven years ago I expanded my work to train horses for movies and have spent the last three years working on the feature film, *Winter's Tale*, and Cinemax television series, *The Knick*. Right now I have eight horses in training.



Above: Movie star Listo, an Andalusian stallion owned by Ashley Waller, with his trainer Cari Swanson. Photo courtesy of Cari Swanson. Below left: Lily, a paint, at home in Cari's kitchen. Photo by Christine Bates.

How do you train a horse for film?

For film the horse has to have the right disposition. My favorites are stallions, then mares, and lastly geldings. Geldings always seem a little flat to me. Typically it takes nine to twelve weeks of "liberty training" to teach a horse for film. Using six-foot long whips and my voice and body language, I train a horse to react in a certain way by responding to a specific signal. Think of it as a horse on remote control. The horse must seem to be responding to the dialogue of the actor and the action on screen. For example, a horse will respond to a signal to look to the side, paw the ground, rear up, back up, kneel, kiss, shake his head yes or no. The trainer on the set, usually standing right behind the camera, communicates with the horse. Think of the whips as the baton of a conductor. The actor just has to look confident, stay relaxed, and say his lines while the horse responds to the commands of the trainer.

Do you give them treats?

No treats. Just a firm pat and a "Good boy." If you give horses treats they can get full and then not obey you. Treats also encourage biting, which can be detrimental if your actor is hurt. Safety is always my primary concern.

Do you train actors to sit on horses?

Most actors don't know how to ride. Usually it takes four to ten sessions on a well-trained horse to prepare an actor to appear to be riding while the trainer is actually guiding the horse's movements. For the movie *Winter's Tale* I worked with Colin Farrell. What a nice guy! And actors enjoy working with me. Sometimes they come up here to have riding training off the set. Ethan Hawke said I was the only trainer that ever explained the bio-dynamics of a horse and rider to him.

How do you manage a shoot?

You know that movie people say the worst things on a set are animals and children because they are so unpredictable. Horses have to be able to behave on a set. They can't be easily spooked when there is so much going on – cameras, lights, people, noise. Actually Listo knows the word "action" and moves into place for a shot all by himself. And they have to be patient. My mantra on set is hurry up and wait. This is the most important trick a horse must learn to be successful on set.

My first concern is to protect the horse and make sure he's safe. I always have at least two "wranglers" per horse on a set. I need time to scout the site, prepare, and prep. Recently I had to measure an elevator before the shoot to make sure that Listo would fit. You have to

Continued on next page ...



Above: Party animal Listo with a nude model and live hawk. Notice trainer Cari Swanson holding Listo. Photo courtesy Cari Swanson. Below: Wearing a top hat, Cari Swanson is dressed as a male carriage driver on the set of *The Knick*. Photo courtesy of Cari Swanson.



make sure the actor will be comfortable sitting or riding on the horse because horses respond to energy. Recently I had an hour to train a nude model to ride on Listo bareback while holding a white hawk. Initially she was terrified but after instruction she rode through the party bareback. Bond, a 20-year-old gelding, just made an E-trade commercial with Kevin Spacey on stage at a symphony hall. When Spacey mounted him booming, "Seize the day!" Bond didn't flinch.

The Cinemax cable show, *The Knick*, starring Clive Owen, is set in turn of the century New York before automobiles. On the set I'm called the Producer of Horses and Carriages. I manage 20 horse wranglers (two per horse on set), and 25 carriages. Those old carriages can be dangerous and pieces are always falling off. It is a challenge to keep them all working properly. I've become a member of SAG, the Screen Actors Guild, because I'm often in the horse scenes dressed as a man driving a carriage, or in wardrobe to direct the horses.

What has made you succeed in this male dominated business?

It's true there are very few women. Communicating with producers, directors, cameramen, and actors is easy for me. You have to go with the flow, be prepared and always diplomatic. Organization is key. Someone called me General Patton. Leadership skills are important. When Ang Lee was filming *Taking Woodstock* he asked his cast, "Why can the horse hit his mark every time and you actors cannot?"

What's the best part and worst part of the film business?

The worst part is the human tempers on set. Everyone is under pressure with limited time and budgets. I've found that the most successful people are the easiest to work with. Collaboration and working together is the flip side and the best part. It's so exciting and satisfying to work with a team and see a project happen.

I love teaching and learning. Half of my family members are teachers and I guess I am too.

Do horses have understudies?

There were four white horses in *Winter's Tale*. The main horse, a stand in, and galloping horses.

Horses in the distance are usually doubles that are ridden by stunt people.

How do you find gigs? Is there a lot of competition?

Prop masters know me from my work and there are three talent agencies that specialize in animals. They call me whenever a horse is involved. There are more movie horses out west, but less competition here on the East Coast.

How do you charge?

Rates vary depending on the job, but a specialty horse can earn a day rate of \$1,000, plus the transportation, handlers, and trainer fees add another three to five thousand per day depending on the size of the job. Weekly and monthly rates would be less per day.

What are the other activities of your horse business at Windrock?

It's important to diversify. The film business is feast or famine so I also have my training clients, private riding classes, judging, and finding good matches between horses and people. I would never let a horse go to a bad home. And I do public appearances – meet and greets with Listo. Right now I'm working on a business plan.

What are your other interests and activities?

Horses are my passion. I'm the founder of the Horse Rescue, Rehab and Retirement Foundation for older horses. Also I am working on a documentary about women in their nineties called *Nine Decades*. These women have lived through an amazing time – the Depression, World War II, the Cold War, the Internet age. We have to finish up the film because we're losing subjects.

Besides all that, I love travel, nature, poetry, history, and film. I just went to Iceland to check out Icelandic sheep dogs. What an amazing place of waterfalls and beautiful scenery. ●

To reach Cari Swanson, visit her website at www.cariswanson.com.

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A DAY IN
THE LIFE:

A calf is born in the Hudson Valley

By Memoree Joelle
info@mainstreetmag.com



Have you ever wondered what cows think about all day? When you drive by fields where herds of cattle are serenely grazing, are you ever curious about whether or not they feel time passing? Are they enjoying their day? Do they consider each day unique? Do they have moments of doubt, or regret?

They certainly feel joy, pain, and fear. That we know. We also know that cows form close relationships and bond with just two or three other cows in their lifetime, much like human friendships. Also like humans, cows are devoted mothers and are very protective of their young. Curious and inquisitive, they love to investigate their surroundings, and possess basic problem solving abilities. Cattle have excellent memories, and will hold grudges for years, making them even more similar to humans. Like us, they get very stressed under poor living conditions. Knowing all of this, have you ever wondered what they experience of the world on a daily basis?

Since moving to this rural landscape where a daily cow sighting is a given, I have found cattle to be intriguing creatures. Two summers ago, I had the opportunity to spend time with them when I worked on site at Herondale Farm, where the young calf featured in the photos was born.

Humane vs. feedlot system

So, what does a day in the life of a cow really look like, beyond the obvious grazing and lying beneath trees? More specifically, a day in the life of a beef cow on a small, sustainable farm in the Hudson Valley.

Let's face it, there is a marked difference between the typical day of a cow on a small organic farm, and a cow that is raised on a factory farm, eventually penned into a feedlot to live out its days. Millions of cattle are forced to lead short, miserable lives before being slaughtered in deplorable conditions. That's just a fact about the big beef industry in the United States. I don't mean to encourage or discourage eating beef, but merely to point out that the life of a cow can vary greatly depending on his human handlers and birthplace. For meat eaters, it is a hopeful and more peaceful solution to source beef from farms like our own Herondale Farm, and other local farms who farm humanely.

The bovine family life

The calf in the photo was born at Herondale in late January. I had the privilege to meet him when he was a week old, all eyelashes and long, wobbly legs. A true beauty, he is a cross of Murray Grey and English White, and clearly, he's going to be a heartbreaker.

Back when I worked at the

farm, I was able to observe the daily lives of the animals. Gentle creatures, these cows don't spook easily or fear humans. Cautious yet relaxed, they spend the day grazing together, resting, and depending on the season, being moved to different pastures on a rotational basis. When a young bull calf like the one pictured is born, just like female calves, he remains with his mother to nurse until he is weaned. If he is not intended for breeding, he will be castrated at nine months and then join other steers (I like to think of this time as the cow version of adolescence and entering high school). I have watched these guys play together, and most will allow you to pet them. The females are a bit more skittish, but all in all, the whole bovine family lives a life of peace and comfort.

The reality is...

Jerry Peele, who owns the farm, doesn't name the males. That's because one day, years down the road, the steers must be sent to slaughter. That is the reality of any beef farm, though it's upsetting to think about when looking at the face of such a cutie. Still, let's consider the fact that most of us are omnivores, and the reality is that this calf is one of the lucky ones. He won't live out his life in fear of being prodded, or made to stand in his own feces

being fed an unnatural diet high in corn to fatten him up for processing. By contrast, millions of cows WILL live that way. I don't question what those animals think about all day, because I already have a good idea – they think about what's going to happen next, and how miserable they feel.

Had our calf come into this world on a ranch or a factory farm, this little face would not have the chance to be at peace. He would have been torn from his mother's side at birth, instead of running along beside her. He would never have known the comfort of spending his days and nights surrounded by family. Had he been destined for veal, it would be even worse. But this calf was lucky, and he was born here. Here, the grass really is greener.

If you happen to be vegetarian or vegan, good for you. But if you enjoy meat, you still have the power to choose which type of farming you support with your wallet. So, the next time you drive by a field of cattle grazing, consider your choices, and consider the cows. ●

The calf in these photos was born at Herondale Farm in Ancramdale, New York. He is a steer and will be raised entirely on grass and hay. For more information, contact the farm. www.herondalefarm.com.

See Video



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Why hunting & shooting preserves matter

REAL ESTATE
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By Christine Bates
christine@mainstreetmag.com

For Main Street's "Animal" issue, we investigate shooting and hunting preserves for our monthly real estate article. These preserves can generate income from unproductive rural acreage, conserve natural habitats, and attract tourism dollars. Our area, located only two hours north of New York City, not surprisingly, has many types of preserves that offer a range of outdoor recreational choices.

More condos, more second homes, more farms converted into private estates, more no trespassing/no hunting signs, more fragmentation of the land. Shooting and hunting preserves help protect large tracts of land from development and provide access to safe hunting for sportsmen and women. Looked at it from a real estate investment perspective, it can be a strategy to make money to pay the taxes, maintain raw land, and simultaneously protect it for future generations. All of this is accomplished as a private initiative without involving government ownership, management, or investment.

No agricultural property tax exemptions for hunters

Creating a hunting, shooting, or fishing preserve will not reduce the land's property taxes. Even though the acres of trees, streams, and brush produce income for the owner, it will not qualify a preserve's land for an agricultural

tax exemption in New York. For tax assessment purposes, shooting pheasants and fishing for bass are regarded as recreational activities, not agricultural, and wild game is not considered to be livestock. However, preserves, which include fields where crops are harvested, can benefit from an agricultural exemption and the corn and sorghum left around the field's edges are an excellent backdrop for upland shooting.

An owner can qualify for federal income tax deductions over a number of years if a conservation easement is placed on the property. The 400 owner members of preserves, like Mashomack in Pine Plains, may be able to reduce their individual federal income taxes because they have restricted development on over 1,900 acres, the largest amount of acreage ever received by the Dutchess Land Conservancy. (See *Main Street* from October 2013, which explains conservation easements, and January 2014 which details rules for agricultural property tax reductions).

Preserves are big business

The billion-dollar hunting preserve industry is growing in popularity as public and private lands available for hunting decrease and natural habitat is lost. Since 1982

the American Farmland Trust has estimated that more than 24 million acres of farmland have been converted to urban sprawl, while hunting preserves have protected over 16 million acres. These preserves manage wildlife habitat, and provide outdoor recreational opportunities. Controlled burns, succession planning, timber management, and low-till farming actually improve the quality of the land. An added benefit of these preserves is ensuring natural habitat for non-game species, predators, songbirds, and native pollinators like bees and butterflies.

Shooting and hunting preserves vary widely in their size, structure, and amenities. The ones in our region don't offer hunting of big game, like Ted Turner's ranch out west. They are typically not fenced and don't offer "canned hunts." Although deer hunting is permitted in season, most preserves focus on upland bird shooting and fishing. Members own some preserves like Mashomack in Pine Plains. Others are private, for-profit clubs with hefty membership fees, and many are open to the paying public. Preserves can be homey and

Continued on next page ...

Above: Duck hunting in wetlands. Photo courtesy of Orvis Sandanona.



Photo source: istockphoto.com contributor SteveOehenschlager

community-oriented like the Old Newgate Coon Club in Norfolk, CT, or Ralph Lauren photo shoot perfect like Orvis's Sandanona in Millbrook. The style can be that of a pickup truck with a rifle rack or Barbour jacket with a game pocket, but all of these preserves save wilderness for everyone a little longer.

Regulations

Like most industries, shooting, fishing, and hunting preserves are subject to government regulation. New York, because of its tradition of hunting and larger available tracts of land, has a much greater number of licensed commercial preserves than Connecticut or Massachusetts. New York issues three types of permits. The Commercial A. Shooting Preserve allows an operator with at least 100 contiguous acres, leased or owned, to purchase and release captive bred birds like pheasants for game hunters. There are 228 preserves of this type in New York. This designation allows bird hunters to hunt on the property without a license from the period of September 1 through April 15. Operators of this type of preserve are required to release a minimum number of birds during the season, for example 250 pheasants, 100 quail, etc., and daily records must be kept of all birds killed. New York also issues permits to breed white tail deer and for fishing in man-made, stocked ponds.

Each of Connecticut's 29 commercial preserves must have a minimum of 200 contiguous acres. Most are located primarily in the northeastern corner of the state known as the "last green valley."

Fairholm Farm, a 100-year-old dairy that milks 400 cows, started operating an upland shooting preserve on 350 acres in 2005 as a second business. "It's been a good little side business and we meet wonderful people from all over," according to the owner.

Massachusetts has even fewer preserves. The Chief of the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife estimated that there are less than half a dozen

permitted shooting preserves in the entire state.

Pick your preserve

Perhaps the most exclusive deer hunting in our immediate region is free and open by invitation only to experienced deer hunters. For over 35 years an elite group of hunters have assisted the scientists at the Cary Institute in the Town of Washington to control the deer population on the institute's 2,000 acres. The purpose of the program is to protect the structure and function of the forested ecosystems on the Cary property and to minimize damage caused by deer to the forest understory. On average 30 deer including does are shot annually. When deer season is over, hikers and scientists return to enjoy and study the woods.

Most of the licensed preserves in our area offer "upland bird hunting," which requires the preserve to purchase and release large quantities of game birds raised for the sport – Bobwhite quail, Ring-necked pheasant, Chukar and Hungarian partridges, Mallards and other ducks. Nationally an estimated 40,000,000 of these game birds are raised each year for the roughly 5,000 game preserves nationwide. Part of the attractiveness of shooting in a preserve with controlled release of birds is a longer hunting season, from September to April, and no requirement for a hunting license. Pheasants for this purpose have been raised at the Sharon Pheasant Farm in Connecticut since 1955. Owner Robert Wilbur raises the birds from chicks to mature 21-week-old birds and sells over 20,000 of them to private preserves and state-owned hunting grounds. Most of Wilbur's customers are in New York, which is more "hunter" friendly and has more open land.

Opened in 1992, the Tamarack Preserve is owned and operated by Tim Bontecou, former Chairman

Continued on next page ...

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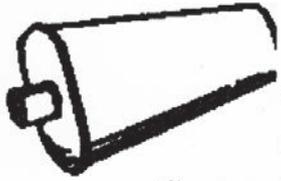
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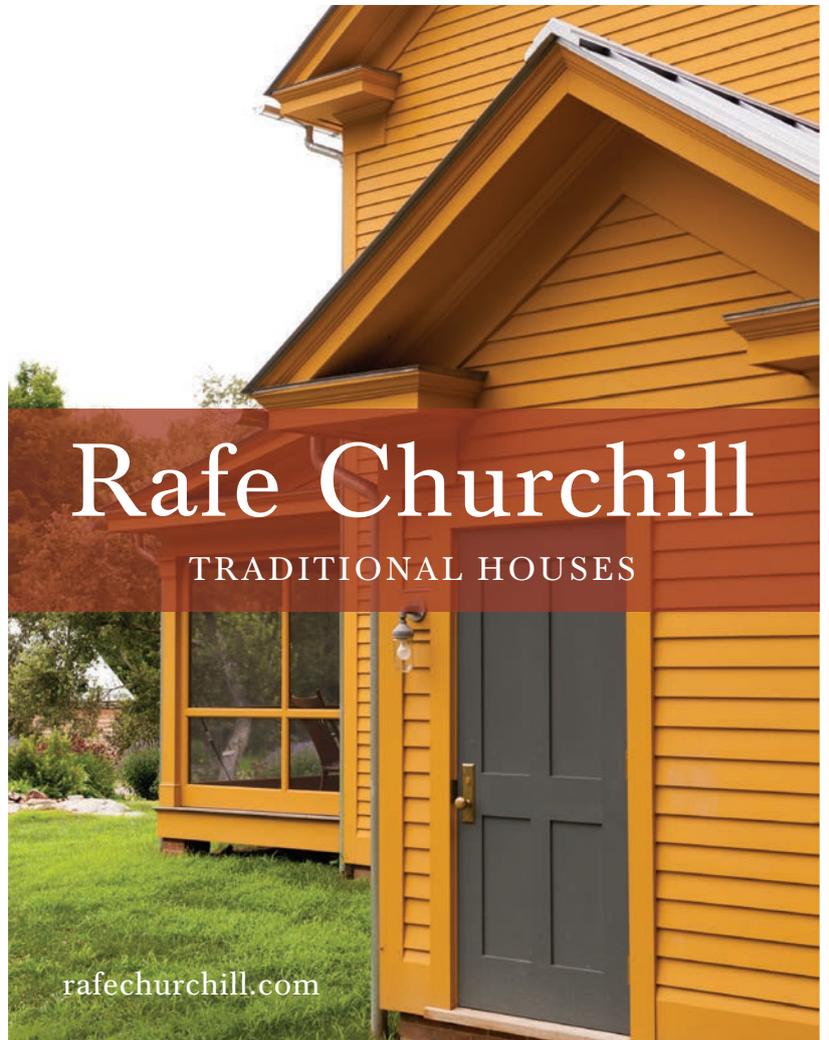
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of the Dutchess Land Conservancy. Eight hundred acres of the preserve leased from the Bontecou family has been farmed, hunted, and fished for over 80 years, and Tamarack was created to allow the land to remain undeveloped. Members can hunt deer, upland birds, geese, turkey, ducks, and fish for trout and bass. Fly fisherman catch and release over 80% of the fish they catch in the 90 acres of ponds. Hunting members go out with a guide and “Try to stay ahead of the natural avian predators like hawks and eagles,” according to Bontecou. The private club accepts members by sponsorship.

Sandanona in Millbrook, created by John Wing in the early 1900’s, is the oldest licensed shooting preserve in the entire country. In 1995 it was purchased by Orvis and offers hunting memberships to those who can prove their shooting expertise and understanding of gun safety in the field. Four hunting areas, each 40 to 60 acres, are stocked with game birds from October to April 15. Members go out with a guide and dogs, and can hunt as many times in the season as they want. Shot-guns are even available for rental. Every bird shot is cleaned and processed and given to members. “Orvis remains committed to spreading the outdoor hunting lifestyle,” said Sandanona spokesperson Peggy Long. “Thousands of people have learned to hunt here. This sport is becoming more and more popular as people learn about hunting. And it grows the local economy through tourism. People from New York and Connecticut come here and fall in love with Millbrook.”

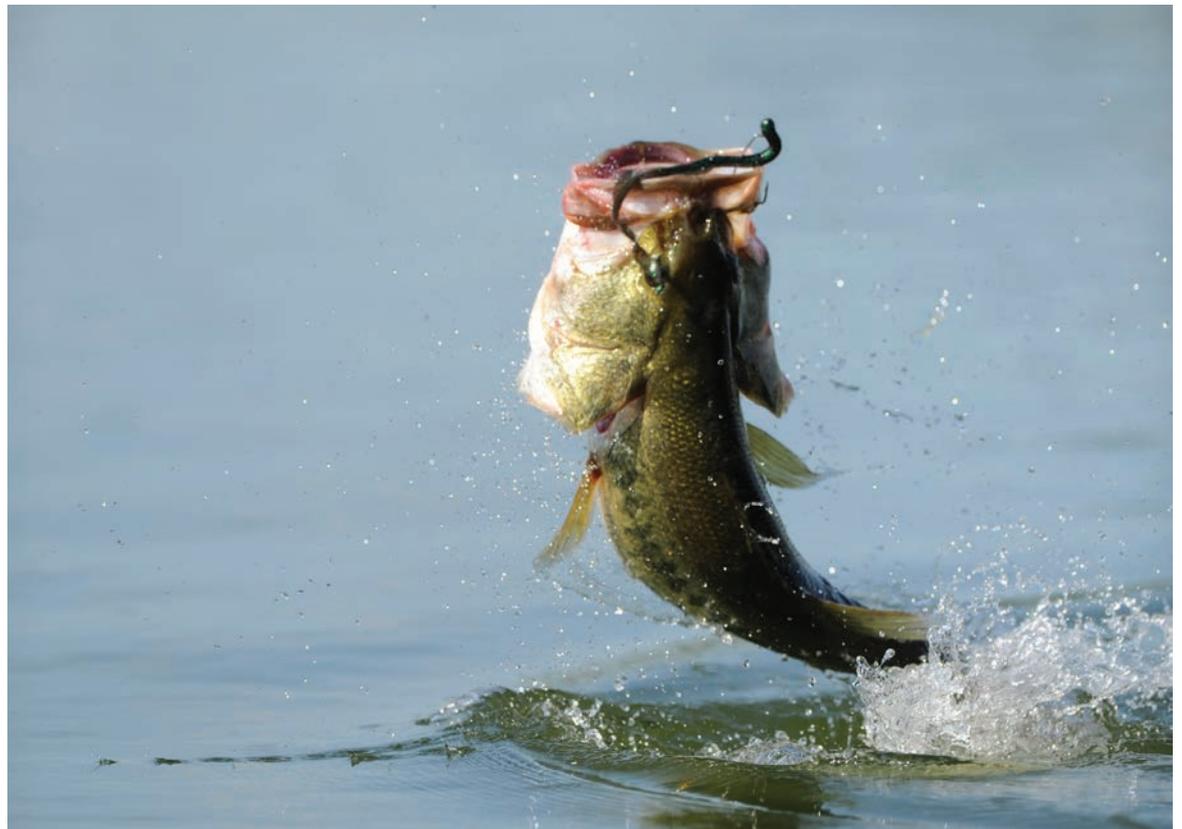


Photo source: istockphoto.com contributor DSams

Lido’s II Hunting Preserve in Hillsdale is an option for those sportsmen who want to try preserve shooting before joining. With over a 1,000 acres, Lido’s II was created when the original founder became too old to manage the preserve and a group of young members took charge to continue the tradition. Here hunters can pay by the day – \$300 to shoot 10 pheasants or partridges. Or you can join as a member for \$1,500 and hunt deer and wild turkey.

Whether you are a hunter or hiker or a farmer trying to hold on, hunting preserves benefit all of us. To quote Teddy Roosevelt, “In a civilized and cultivated country wild animals only continue to exist at all when preserved by sportsmen. The excellent people who protest against all hunting and consider sportsmen

as enemies of wild life are ignorant of the fact that in reality, the genuine sportsman is by all odds the most important factor in keeping the larger and more valuable wild creatures from total extermination.” ●



Above: Open mouth bass. Left: The Old Newgate Coon Club is an environmentally friendly preserve that also offers safe hunter courses, Boy Scout jamborees, and steak bakes. Photo courtesy of The Old Newgate Coon Club. Below left: The Orvis club house. Photo courtesy of Orvis Sandanona.



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Trevor Zoo

CONSERVATION AT WORK
AT MILLBROOK SCHOOL



By Olivia Hansen May
info@mainstreetmag.com
All photos courtesy of
Millbrook School

About a mile off Route 44 in Millbrook is Millbrook School, a co-educational boarding school that is home to 300 adolescent humans – and red pandas, ring-tailed lemurs, golden lion tamarins, and the red wolf.

On one side of Millbrook School Road lies the habitat of the human species in the form of dormitories and classrooms, where students live and learn. On the other side is the Trevor Zoo, where these same students engage in hands-on care and conservation of 80 species and more than 180 exotic and indigenous, and sometimes endangered, animals.

Peaceful coexistence

Spreading over six shady and meandering acres, the AZA-accredited Trevor Zoo is the only zoo in the country located at a high school. This provides Millbrook students a rare and wonderful learning experience.

The Trevor Zoo was founded in 1936 by Frank Trevor, Millbrook School's first biology teacher. Trevor also possessed a passion for sharing

his love of wildlife with all people, especially children. Eighty years later, his vision is still going strong. Work in the zoo is a core part of the Millbrook School curriculum and its community service requirement.

All students must contribute time and services in the zoo in their third form (freshman) year. In addition, some students, affectionately known as zooies, take their zoo involvement to the next level by joining the Zoo Squad to further their knowledge and engagement with the animals during their time at Millbrook.

It's not only Millbrook students who have the opportunity to visit the zoo and learn from the animals. For visitors from the community, the zoo makes for an intimate, informative, and engaging excursion. Students and staff alike are keen to share their knowledge and are always enthusiastically open to questions from zoo guests.

Dr. Alan Tousignant

As a student at Millbrook I recently sat down with Dr. Alan Tousignant, director of the Trevor Zoo, to talk about the zoo's work and its importance to the school's students and the local area.

What are you most proud of at the zoo?

I think our biggest and best achievement is the work that we do with our students every week. We work with over 75 students every day as part of their community service within the Millbrook School community. Most of those students work in caring for animals and learning about wildlife and conservation.

We also work with three to ten students every afternoon in an activity called Zoo Squad, which is an alternative to playing on team sports. That work allows us to do bigger projects, things that take longer than the community service period allows for. We've been working with students since 1936, so that's a lot of alumni and current students that have been able to work with animals.

What makes this zoo unique?

We are the only AZA (Association of Zoos and Aquariums) accredited

Continued on next page ...



Above top: River Otters. Photo by Jessica Bennett.
Above: Director Alan Tousignant. Photo by Daniel Cohen.



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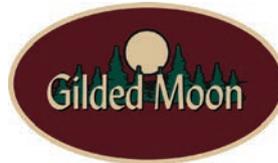
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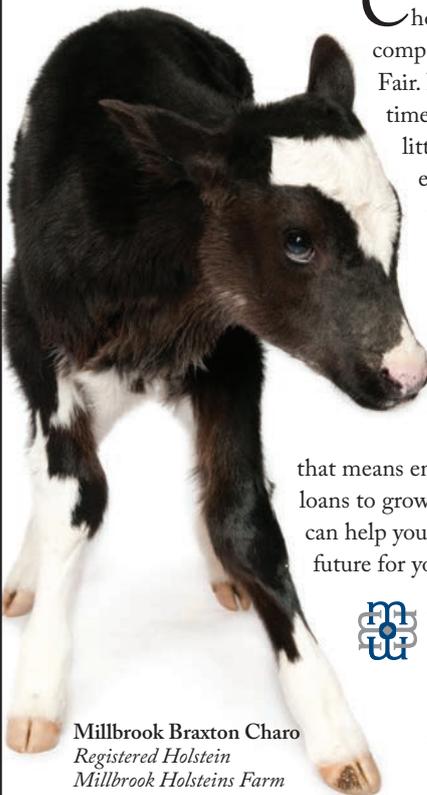
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zoo that is owned and operated by a private boarding school. The opportunities we provide to our students for hands-on learning and care for wildlife is extraordinary because of the supervision that we can give. It's a boarding school, so pardon the pun, but we have a captive audience.

Many of our students are here all of the time, which is very different than most zoos' volunteer programs where the students are coming in and out for relatively short periods of time each week. That model is very similar to our summer volunteer program, where we work with students from the general community. But during the school year we are able to see our students every day and often two to three times a day. So, the supervision is fantastic, and that allows us to have extensive training for those students who are working with the animals.

How does having a zoo on campus enhance the education of the students?

From my perspective, probably the biggest factor that we can shed light on is the natural world and the need for conservation. To be able to conserve the natural world, you need to understand it. One of the things



Above: Black and White Ruffed Lemur with Nick Genovese '16. Photo by Daniel Cohen.



that Frank Trevor recognized is that animals are much more engaging than a textbook – now that's not to say that you don't get great information from a textbook or videos.

When you're looking at an animal, and that living being is staring back at you, there's a connection there that is buried deep within our brains that is linked to our evolution. We're in a relationship with the natural world whether or not we like it or believe it. Interacting with another living being provides an avenue for a more in-depth understanding of that living being and, potentially, ourselves.

What are the zoo's plans for the future?

Well that's an interesting question because this is our 80th anniversary. It's also our accreditation year. With

those two events it will be kind of a big celebration in the summer.

We've been accredited since 1989, and every five years the zoo has to go through the process again. To prepare for that there are lots of short-term plans to make sure everything is up to snuff.

The biggest project on the immediate horizon is the renovation of the Mill. The Mill is the oldest building on campus and a very integral part of the school's history. It's been in disuse for several years now, and the renovation of that will begin in the spring. That will be a welcome center for the zoo and will accommodate a small green store. We have lots and lots of people that ask if we have a gift shop. We are hoping to have a very conservation-oriented set of store items. The new welcome center will also allow us to help members of the public understand the link between the school and zoo. Most visitors don't know why we have a zoo or why the zoo is run by a school.

What do you think the students get out of the interaction with animals? What do they learn?

It's actually quite variable. Some students form a deep relationship



Above top: Golden-Lion Tamarin. Photo by Daniel Cohen. Above: Red Wolves. Photo by Jessica Bennett.

Continued on next page ...



with a particular animal, they just love that animal. For example, we had an older lemur for a long time, who has since passed away. It was a male lemur named Patches. There were certain students that absolutely loved that animal. So that became a very personal connection for them with Patches.

Other students are much more varied, they're just interested in all

cast of animals that we post on the zoo's website.

Do you have any anecdotes from students in the past?

You know, it's actually funny ... Jono Meigs, the previous director, and I have always said we are going to write a book about all the various things that we've seen over the years. Some of them are just hilarious. For instance, a lot of work with students is teaching them skills and basic chores that they might not have done in the past. Sometimes watching a person learn how to use a shovel or a broom for the first time can be amusing for us older folks.

But there's also, of course, lots and lots of animal-based stories of students having that first connection. Snakes are a good example. We have lots of students and people in general that come to the zoo that are afraid of snakes. But then they learn what a snake is, what it's doing, and how it's trying to, I always say, make a living. Once they learn that, they can become more comfortable. So things like that can be really exciting for us to see. A student who comes in with a deep-seated fear of snakes, then after a while is holding a snake, is really proud of that moment.

We also have number of alumni who have gone on to veterinary school and have become veterinarians or work in zoos or conservation. And when those alums come back, it's always very rewarding for

them to say, and they quite often do, that they got their passion for this kind of work at the Trevor Zoo. It's where they got started, and it's why they continue the work. That's very gratifying as well as exciting for thinking about the future of our program.

Why do you do this? Why did you become a zoo person?

I think we all get in the business because we love animals and love working with them. For me, it's been a very interesting transition from animal care and husbandry to administrative work and planning the vision for the zoo.

What you begin to see is that if you do that job right, you're creating even greater opportunity than in the past for the visitors and students. Our students are even more enriched by their zoo experience because we're trying to teach them more. We're trying to increasingly involve them in what the zoo is doing on all levels. They don't just learn how to take care of a particular animal. They understand why we perform that care in a particular way. They learn the connection between animal care, its role in the natural world, and why conservation is so important. And if we do our job right, I think we're going to graduate some really good conservation-minded people – and boy do we need it! •

The Trevor Zoo is located at Millbrook School, 131 Millbrook School Road in Millbrook, NY. It is open year-round, seven days a week from 9 am to 5 pm. Admission is \$5 per adult; \$3 for children and senior citizens. Contact the zoo for group tours, school trips, and birthday parties. For more information, including teacher guides and live video feeds to animal areas, visit www.millbrook.org/TrevorZoo or call (845) 677-3704.



Above top: Red Panda cub Faith with mom Hope. Photo by Kandice Zakarian. Above: Millbrook students with iGlobe. Photo by Alan Tousignant.

of the animals and try to absorb as much as they can. In fact, we have other students for whom less direct animal interaction is more interesting. They're learning a lot about the graphics and making engaging graphics for the visitors to see, or they're interested in the cameras and technology behind the live broad-



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BACKYARD ANIMALS: the north american opossum



By Claire Copley
info@mainstreetmag.com

Northern Dutchess County and the surrounding area is home to countless species, many of whom live in or near our yards. Think for a minute about the critters on your property. Deer, of course, seem to know no boundaries. But there are possums, woodchucks, rabbits, foxes, squirrels, chipmunks, moles and voles, coyotes, bears, frogs, snakes, toads, skunks, wild turkeys, bobcats, turtles, raccoons, mice, and countless insect and bird species. And what do we really know about them?

Just as there are “good” and “bad” insects and pathogens in the garden landscape, there are also a number of beneficial vertebrates that can be lured into the garden by providing shelter, food and water sources. In our yards, we usually fight against wildlife when we should be inviting more diverse species. Each animal makes a contribution to the ecosystem even if it is only as predator or prey. The balance of wildlife is increasingly imperiled by cars, poisons, hunting, trapping, and environmental stress. When one population fails, the ecosystem becomes unbalanced. Some animal populations falter as others flourish. It is a fine balance that we are interfering with even without trying.

Opossum, a marsupial

One of the most reviled animals in our backyard bunch is the opossum. Despite its appearance, the opossum is not related to the rat. In fact, the opossum is not a rodent at all, but a marsupial,

or “pouched” mammal, and is related to other marsupials such as the kangaroo and the koala. Opossums are small grey or white creatures with long pointy snouts and hairless ears and tail. They have 50 teeth, the most out of any North American mammal, and opposable, clawless thumbs on their hind legs.

The Virginia opossum, aka the North American opossum, is the only opossum found north of Mexico and holds the distinction of being North America’s only marsupial. In the United States, it is typically referred to simply as “possum.” The name comes from the Algonquin Indian name for the animal, pasum. How the initial “o” was appended no one seems to know for certain. The Virginia opossum is found throughout Central and North America east of the Rockies from Costa Rica to southern Canada. The species was intentionally introduced into the West during the Great Depression, probably as a source of food. With few natural predators, the absence of hunting, and an abundance of food and shelter, possums have adapted well to living close to people in urban and suburban environments and their range is still expanding.

A possum’s many attributes

The possum is a nocturnal animal about the size of a house cat. Possums are scavengers, and they often visit human homes or settlements to raid garbage cans and dumpsters. They are attracted to carrion and can often be spotted near roadkill. Possums also eat grass, nuts, and fruit. They will hunt mice, birds, insects, worms, snakes, and even chickens. In fact, they eat pretty much anything they find.

Possums are excellent tree climbers and spend much of their time aloft. They are aided by sharp claws, which dig into bark, and by a long prehensile (gripping) tail that can be used as an extra limb. Possums nest in tree holes or in dens made by other animals. They have opposable thumbs on the hind feet for holding onto branches. Possums are usually solitary and nomadic, staying in one area only as long as food and water are easily available.

The possum doesn’t hibernate in the winter. It will often hole up (literally in holes in trees or burrows of other animals) during very cold weather because they run the risk of getting frostbite on hairless ears, tails, and toes. They will take cover in sheds or old buildings, cavities in rocks, brush piles, and hollow trees or fallen logs. Though they will temporarily occupy abandoned burrows, they do not dig or put much effort into building their own. As nocturnal animals, they favor dark, secure areas below ground or above. Experts recommend making sure you have available shelters for possums should you want to attract them to your yard.

Baby possums

Possums are fascinating, if arguably repulsive-looking, animals. I think it is their hairless tail that makes possums particularly creepy. Like kangaroos and koalas, infant possums stay inside the mother’s pouch to nurse and develop. A female possum gives birth to some twenty

Continued on next page ...

tiny babies, about the size of honeybees. Not all these tiny possums survive but those who do spend their first months developing inside the cozy, protected pouch. As they grow, the pouch becomes crowded. Eventually the young possums run out of room and begin to ride on the mother's back until they are old enough to be out on their own. These baby possums are undeniably cute.

Playing dead by design

By nature, possums are not aggressive or destructive and do not pose a threat to humans. When cornered by humans or other animals they hiss and spit like the devil and then play dead. "Playing possum" is a passive defensive tactic used by the possum as well as other species in the animal kingdom. The response functions to turn off all signs of life that might trigger the predator to attack or continue its attack. The possum appears to be in a catatonic state and this condition may last for as little as a few minutes or several hours. Poking and shaking will not revive the animal from its catatonic state nor will it flinch from abuse while in this state.

The only potential threat possums may pose to pets or domestic livestock is to horses, particularly if possums set up shop in horse barns. A disease known as *equine protozoal myeloencephalitis* or EPM can be caused by a bacterium that can be present in the feces of possums. If horses were to eat food or water contaminated with feces of infected possums, they would be at high risk for contracting this disease.

The sanitation engineer

Whether rural, residential or in the wilderness, possums are a benefit to the areas they inhabit. Their diet includes all types of bugs and insects including cockroaches, crickets, and beetles. They love snails. They also eat mice and rats. The possum is attracted to our neighborhoods by the availability of water, food sources left out at night and overripe, rotting fruit that has fallen from trees. The possum in turn helps keep our neighborhoods clean and free of unwanted, harmful garden pests and rodents, which may carry diseases. The possum has earned the title of "Nature's Little Sanitation Engineer."

Possums have a remarkably robust immune system, and show partial or total immunity to the venom of rattlesnakes, cottonmouths, and other pit vipers. Possums are about eight times



less likely to carry rabies than wild dogs. The occurrence of rabies in possums is extremely rare, only about one in eight hundred possums is infected with the virus. This may have something to do with the possum's low body temperature (94-97° F) which makes it difficult for viruses to survive in a possum's body.

Helping fight ticks

But the real benefit of possums to our area is that they single-handedly reduce our tick population. Ticks are attracted to possums and all small mammals, but most of them never survive on a possum's body long enough to taste a single drop of blood. As part of their ongoing study into the spread of Lyme disease, scientists at the Cary Institute in Millbrook decided to study the part different mammals play in the life cycle of ticks and the spread of Lyme disease. They tested six species – white-footed mice, chipmunks, squirrels, possums, veerys, and catbirds – by capturing and caging them, and then exposing each test subject to 100 ticks. What they found, is that of the six, the possums were remarkably good at getting rid of the ticks – much more so than any of the others. "I had no suspicion they'd be such efficient tick-killing animals," said Rick Ostfeld, resident tick expert at the Cary Institute.

Indeed, among other opossum traits, there is this: They groom themselves fastidiously, like cats. If they find a tick, they lick it off and swallow it. Actually possums removed some 96% of the ticks they were exposed to. Extrapolating from their findings, Ostfeld said, the team estimated that in one season, a possum can kill about 5,000 ticks. This super exterminator also kills venomous snakes and small rodents and cleans up carrion from our yards and fields.

Perhaps allowing possums to steal some chicken eggs and garden veggies from time to time is a fair trade for decreasing tick-borne diseases like Lyme, and keeping our yards clean and sanitary.

The possum was once a favorite game animal in the United States, in particular in the southern regions which have a large body of recipes and folklore relating to it. A traditional method of preparation is baking in pies, or roasting, but there are numerous recipes online should you feel adventurous.

Here in Dutchess County over 90 percent of the land is privately owned, and many important habitat areas in the county occur on private lands. It is we, the landowners, who are responsible for the biodiversity and health of our lands, which includes the health of our wildlife populations. Protecting our local wildlife can also help protect the landscapes and habitats that make our area distinctive. We are so used to thinking about these animals as annoyances or worse, we forget that they were here first, and will, hopefully, persist long after we are gone. Our homes and gardens have been superimposed on their homes and they are adapting as much as we are. In fact, the continued health of our forests, meadows, and surrounding lands depends on these animals. In coming issues I hope to focus on other backyard species in our area so we can get a better understanding of what role they play in our lives. •

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DR. KATHERINE
SKIFF KANE:

A respect for Life

By Carol Ascher
info@mainstreetmag.com

I am talking about animal psychology with Katherine Skiff Kane, D.V.M., my veterinarian and neighbor, as we drive through the snow-encrusted hills to treat a sick horse in Warren. Dr. Kane's medical equipment and mobile pharmacy are neatly stored in the back of her truck. Three small dogs clamber around us; they accompany Dr. Kane on all her house and barn calls. Although an assistant usually drives with her, today's visit is to a horse she knows well, and whatever help she needs I can offer.

"Animals teach us every day, if we're open." Dr. Kane reflects, and contrasts their qualities – forgiveness, honesty, loyalty – with the greed and selfishness she too often sees in human beings. "Animals are direct," she adds.



Living amongst animals

Dr. Kane is a small woman with a thick braid down her back. Beneath her layers of warm, often patched coveralls, she has the lithe body of a yoga practitioner and a rider skilled in dressage. On the wall of her barn are multiple blue ribbons her horses have won.

Early mornings, I see her leading her three horses out to pasture on our sparsely settled road. In the evenings, after her last clinic patient has been treated, Dr. Kane's final task before going home is to stop at her fields and check on her horses.

I ask whether most veterinarians live amidst as many animals as she does, and the difference that having them makes. She tells me that most veterinarians acquire animals under various unfortunate circumstances: like the three cats who wander around her clinic, surrendered by clients unable to care for them, her Appaloosa mare, May, whose owners were in dire financial straits, or two of her three dogs who were left to her when their owners died.

It is clear that Dr. Kane relishes the support and companionship of her animals; she sees them as there for her, rather than viewing their care as yet another chore. Raising and training horses also makes her feel "more real, more legitimate, and more comfortable," she says, when she recommends solutions to her clients.



Above: Dr. Katherine Kane with an alpaca patient. Below: Another patient. Photos by Olivia Valentine Markonic.

How it all began

Katherine Skiff Kane spent much of her childhood on the Skiff family's ancestral farm, where her octogenarian father still lives. She got her first horse at age eleven and has had at least one ever since. When she was in high school her horse was in a bad trailer wreck. She watched engrossed for three hours as the surgeon sewed the horse back together. When the horse returned to her barn she did the aftercare.

"That pretty much decided it," she says: she knew she wanted to be a veterinarian.

In fact, Dr. Kane intended to become an equine veterinarian. But in the late 1980s Purdue University, her alma mater, offered veterinary students a well-rounded education that rotated through small animal medicine and surgery and large animal medicine and surgery, including horses and camelidae, as well as food animals like cows, sheep, goats, and pigs. Since around ten percent of all veterinarians work for government or industry, often regarding

food safety, veterinarians were also trained in food safety, pathology, and epidemiology.

"Most people don't realize that veterinarians are largely in charge of the health of our food supply," she explains.

In college, Dr. Kane had worked as an understudy with Dr. Everett Vreeland in the northwest corner of Connecticut. Vreeland had an old-time mixed practice: "One room, one phone. He was in his office in the morning, and went on the road in the afternoon," she says. "September, he closed up entirely to go fishing."

Enter Dr. Vreeland

Two and a half years after graduating from veterinary school, Dr. Kane was working for an equine practice on Long Island when she received a note from Vreeland. "I'm selling my practice. You can have all my equipment and my client list for

Continued on next page ...

\$35,000.” After a week of debating, she accepted his offer.

Dr. Kane laughs at the rudimentary practice she inherited: “The first thing I did was get a pager!”

But she stresses the important vision Vreeland passed on to her of a compassionate veterinary practice, attentive to the needs of both animals and people. “House calls for euthanasia are essential, he would tell me.”

House calls, and a personal touch

I am reminded of Dr. Kane’s two visits to our house during last year’s long winter. Initially I wanted her to confirm that our cat Chulo, at twenty-two, was finally nearing his end, and a few days later, with snow falling outside our bedroom window, my husband and I sat on the floor stroking Chulo while Dr. Kane helped end his life. The dignity and intimacy of our cat’s death is one I will always cherish.

Then, following Dr. Kane’s suggestion, we brought in Willie, our ten-year-old cat, who paid his respects to his dead friend and quietly left the room.

These days, another veterinarian



Above: Dr. Kane examines a patient at his level (on the ground) due to his discomfort upon arrival. Dr. Kane talks with the dog’s owner. Photo by Carol Ascher. Below left: An alpaca patient. Photo by Olivia Valentine Markonic. Below right: Dr. Kane giving one of her horse patients a shot while on call. Photo by Carol Ascher.

assists in her Cornwall Bridge clinic a day a week, which allows Dr. Kane to spend about half her time on the road, attending to both large and small animals. “I’m on-call all the time for large animals,” she says, and tells me that she was ready to go back out to care for an alpaca at ten o’clock the previous evening, but luckily the advice she offered over the telephone improved the animal’s condition.

Extinct species

Describing her practice as “an almost extinct species,” Dr. Kane shows me this year’s Purdue University College of Veterinary Medicine Annual Report. Of those Purdue graduates in private practice, 85.4 percent treat small animals, 11 percent treat large animals, and only 3.4 percent have a “mixed

animal” practice.

The rarity of practices that treat both large and small animals is not hard to explain. Most veterinarians have a debt of over \$200,000 by the time they receive their degrees. Small animals can be efficiently scheduled at a clinic, which makes small-animal practices more lucrative. Also, liability issues and hazards increase when a veterinarian is on the road and in other people’s houses and barns.

As the percentage of women veterinarians has grown steadily (80 percent of today’s veterinary students are women), veterinarians increasingly balance their practice with caring for their families; few can be on call nights and weekends, as Dr. Kane has been most of her professional life.

All young professionals need mentoring, and Dr. Kane counts herself lucky to have been mentored by both Dr. Vreeland, from whom she inherited her practice, and Dr. Allen Schoen, who brought an acceptance of acupuncture to mainstream veterinary medicine, and who taught her the quiet fo-



cused attention she tries to bring to encounters with every animal and their owner.

In return, Katherine views mentoring the young women who work in her office and accompany her on the road as her way of giving back to the community. Although not everyone has become a veterinarian, she is gratified by their respect for all life.

“You spend a lot of time talking about life in a veterinarian’s truck,” she says. “You discover who you are and what you’re going to do with who you are.” ●



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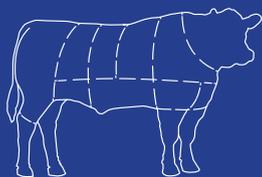
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WHAT WAS HIDING IN THE WOODS?

ancient animals of our region

By Allison Guertin Marchese
info@mainstreetmag.com

When you think of ancient animals roaming around Dutchess County, Berkshire County, and Columbia County, it's hard to imagine the likes of a Mastodon wondering around the Taconic Mountain Range. Well, start your imagination rolling, because that's pretty much what happened.

In 1705, the town of Claverack, New York, just about 40 minutes from Millerton, happened to be the site of the first recorded find of Mastodon remains in North America. A farmer tilling his land located a five pound tooth at the base of a hill. That find was the start of something big. The Dutch farmer's discovery proved that giants roamed the earth. From there Mastodons were uncovered in several locations and continue to be dug up.

In 1972, in the black earth fields near the Warwick-Chester border, an entire Mastodon was found. The skeleton has been carbon dated and reveals that the beast, nicknamed "Sugar" lived around 7900 BC. The 20-foot Mastodon is on display in the lobby of the Bio Tech building on the Orange Community College campus in Middletown, NY. What's most interesting is that according to researchers, a human-fashioned spear point was found embedded in the animal's ribs. Further forensics revealed that the bone had grown around the spear point, leading researchers to conclude

that the Mastodon survived the spear attack and lived on to a ripe old age.

Fossils, crustaceans, and dinosaurs

There are over two hundred fossil sites of Mastodons in North America. In these sites teeth along with bones and tusks were found. What's more, the oldest animal fossils in the Middle Atlantic States are found in the slate belt of eastern New York. The 517 million-year old fossils from Claverack, Columbia County, include trilobites and microscopic remains of many other marine animals. The Claverack site was found in the early 1980s by an amateur paleontologist who noted limestone beds and collected larger fossils of trilobites in the rock. Trilobites resemble ancient crustaceans like crabs and insects.

But let's move back to the big animals ... the range of bizarre beasts, from microbes to reindeer and other cold-adapted animals were found spread through New York in several locations. Fossils date back to the "Ice Age," about 20,000 to 10,000 years ago with New York. We can even trace dinosaurs dating back to the Late Triassic period (c.205 million years ago), evidenced by footprints made in soft mud in Rockland County, NY.

It's not at all difficult to imagine that over 100 years ago, when a thing as strange as a Mastodon bone was



found, newspapers throughout New York had a field day. In 1899, on November 20th, *The New York Herald* reported that "portions of a Mastodon have been found in Dutchess County, in a swamp on the old McPhearson place, in the Hyde Park Road, near the homes of Frederick W. Vanderbilt, and other prominent New York persons. Workmen digging a drain found several fragments of heavy bone, 15 feet below the surface, and some feet deeper part of a mammoth tusk."

The article goes on to report what the notable weekenders did. "Mr. Edward Storrs Atwater, a wealthy resident of this city, has retained the

Above: "Thos. J. Horne & Mastodon, 9/10/23." Photo from the public domain from the Library of Congress. Left: Mastodon print by Charles Knight, 1897. From the public domain via https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Knight_Mastodon.jpg.



Continued on next page ...



Left: Comparison of size between *Arctodus simus* and *Homo sapiens* (© Dantheman9758-Wikipedia GFDL). Below: Allison's toe next to the cat prints that she discovered. Below left: A drawing of a wolverine. Image source from the public domain via www.aitc.sk.ca/saskschools/animals/wolverine.html.

bone and will present it to Vassar College. The college officials are desirous of making further excavations in the hope of unearthing the entire skeleton.”

What was here before the days of Christopher Columbus

Other studies have revealed even more fascinating facts about what was hiding in our woods. Prior to Europeans settling here, large mammals walked the forest including Elk, Caribou, Cougar (Mountain Lion), Wolf, Wolverines, Giant Short-faced Bear, and Giant Beaver.

The Short-faced Bear was particularly scary even to Mastodons, which despite its smaller size, would attempt to consume the bigger prey. It was the fastest bear ever to live, traveling 40 miles an hour and weighing up to 1,500 lbs. The Short-faced Bear appeared about 800,000 years ago, and became extinct about 11,600 years ago. There's a possibility that this bear roamed in an ancient lands now called Manhattan.

Twelve thousand years ago, giant beavers roamed New York. These animals had a head like a black bear and weighed about 150 lbs with a two-foot tail. The beaver liked to eat soft marshy grass and they could consume a lot of grass with six inch

incisors sharpened for eating on bark and trees, but like our beavers today, they ate plants not other animals. By 10,000 BC, these giant beavers were extinct.

One of the most curious creatures to live in the region is the wolverine, the largest of the *Mustelidae*, which is a family member to the weasel. Back in time these muscular carnivores were also called “glutton” or skunk bear. Make no mistake, though they aren't as big as a bear, and more the size of a small dog, these guys traveled alone, and packed a punch. They smelled pretty foul too, and were fond of marking their territory so hence the reference to skunks.

The other odd characteristic was that the wolverine possessed a strange tooth that allowed it to bite through frozen meat! They were so powerful and fearless in fact, wolverines would

try to steal food from bears. Unfortunately their coats were immune to frost and they were hunted for their pelts. Sadly the wolverine no longer roams our area due to trapping. Some believe, however that Queechny Lake in Canaan, New York, was originally called Quickhatch, which is the Native American word for wolverine. These ferocious animals are also referenced in Captain Ellis' 1747 history of Columbia County, NY.

Big cats roamed the area

Stories of mountain lions in New York and Connecticut have almost reached the height of myths and legends. While researching my book, *The Hidden History of Columbia County, NY*, I read several newspaper accounts of a mysterious black panther traversing the hills of Austerlitz, New York, and darting in and out of caves at No Bottom Pond, also in Austerlitz.

People in Greenwich, CT, reported a mountain lion loose in their community just two years ago, and one was supposed to have been struck by a car and killed in Milford, CT. Another was said to have been sighted in Craryville, NY, just this past February. In that case, there were photos taken of the cat, but alas there are always skeptics!

In the nearby Berkshires hills of Massachusetts, there have been literally thousands of sightings, though authorities insist that the animal is officially extinct in the United States.

So as ironic as this may be, I was hiking not too long ago in the section of woods in Dalton, Massachusetts, called “Happy Land,” when I spot-



ted a distinctive track in the snow. I snapped a photo of it with my cell phone and forgot about it until I started doing research for this article. Just out of curiosity I pulled it up and matched it against a couple of mountain lion track photos and drawings I found online. I certainly can't confirm that the tracks match, but when viewed side-by-side they certainly look like a match.

So I suppose the lesson here is to consider what might actually be extinct. According to researchers in another realm, we've only just explored 5% of the oceans and most recently, for the very first time, a giant squid in Japan was finally captured on video with a camera developed by scientist, Edith Widder. ●



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TRAILS LESS TRAVELED:

a winter walk in the woods



Above: Raccoon prints beside Bog Meadow Pond.

By Ian Strever
info@mainstreetmag.com

Please meet Ian Strever, a new addition to the Main Street family. Ian, in addition to being an avid outdoorsman and writer, is also the Vice-Principal of Housatonic Valley Regional High School. Ian will be sharing with us some of his outdoor adventures.

I never understood treadmills, even during the winter. Standing there, facing a wall, or at best, a window, they look like medieval torture devices. The simple addition of some manacles would qualify them for listing in the Geneva Conventions. Sure, it's cold outside, but isn't your sanity worth more than a sniffly nose and some chilled extremities?

Which is why I drove past the gym last weekend en route to the hiking trails at the Sharon Audubon Society. While the rest of the east coast was getting buried by a blizzard, I drowned my snow-deprived sorrows with a couple of hours outdoors in my warmest layers of wool and down, doing my best to walk the line between sweating and freezing. Dressed properly, I will always opt for the outdoors. Nature finds a way of presenting the challenges we need to get fit: if you are an hour into a hike, and you run into a daunting hill, you don't have much choice but to climb it. If you're in a gym, you step off the treadmill and finish watching the rest of *The Sopranos* on your couch.

The Sharon Audubon Society

The Sharon Audubon Society really consists of two properties: the Emily Winthrop Miles Wildlife Sanctuary and the Sharon Audubon Center. The former is tucked away in the backwoods of Sharon, but just take the hill across from the covered bridge in Cornwall, and you'll be there in five minutes. The loop itself is easy – at every turn, I could imagine the property's namesake strolling arm in arm with one of her aesthete friends, remarking on a Black-capped Chickadee or a Red Breasted Nuthatch.

For the record, I don't really know what either of those looks like, except one probably has a black cap, and the other likely has a red breast. Which was part of my reason for going to the Audubon Society. I'm pretty physically fit, but my environmental fitness leaves something to be desired. I've only recently been able to reliably distinguish hemlock from spruce, granite from schist, beaver from muskrat. Pretty much every large raptor is a red-tailed hawk in my book.

On the trail

Fortunately, both of these properties offer opportunities for me to exercise my ecological muscles. The Pond Loop Trail at the Miles Sanctuary circles an active beaver pond, and on the day I visited, pressure bubbles percolated beneath the surface, issuing eerie tones into the surrounding hills. I circled the pond in less time than it took me to get dressed, so

I opted to follow an abandoned road towards the other pond on the property. This evolved into more of a bushwhack, but a more vigorous workout, and I chased a stream to its source in a marsh about a quarter mile above the ponds, using my neglected compass to chart a reasonable course back to my car.

I probably didn't need the compass – the area is not that large – but I was grateful for the practice when I shuttled over to the trails at the Audubon Society, located right on Route 4 in Sharon. This area promised more of a workout – the organization boasts of 11 miles of trails here, and they do request a trail use fee of \$3 (more on that later). Confident in my orienteering skills, I took a passing glance at the map at the visitor center and headed for the longest trail, which was marked with red blazes and called the Deer Trail. Until it isn't. About half a mile in, the trail blazes turn from red to blue, and then to yellow, and while they are not hard to follow, it does become disorienting to hikers without a map. Those are available online and on-site, and as they informed me later, I was on the Ford Trail, which took me around the northwest edges of the property.

Sometimes, however, we just need to turn off that impulse to know exactly where we are and let

Continued on next page ...

“way lead onto way,” and so it was that I enjoyed a sojourn through some old growth hemlock, oak, and beech (see!). There are magnificent hemlocks on the far end of the trail, some towering to a hundred feet as the trail charges up a challenging slope for a quarter mile into mixed hardwoods and a curious loop that indicates the beginning of the Hazelnut Trail. It was at this point that I lost all trace of the blazes, and while a map would have helped, I wasn’t all that concerned because of the size of the property. I meandered through the woods, following a southeasterly course, and soon I had spotted the Hendrickson Bog Meadow Trail, an abandoned road that is a kind of thoroughfare through the main attractions of the center.

“What do you see Tonto?”

The primary mission of the center is educational, and I decided to set aside my athletic aspirations to hone my environmental acumen. Wildlife can be elusive during the winter, but one of my favorite pastimes in the snow is tracking animals. The media would have you believe this is easy to do, but you’re never looking at perfect casts of a print. Smudges and slips can make a deer print look like a moose print, and there is very little to distinguish a coyote print from that of a domestic dog.

Patches of half-inch snow freckled the south shore of Bog Meadow Pond, allowing me to follow one very canine set of prints around a definitive set of rabbit prints and, well, so goes Darwinism.

Not many trails charge a usage fee, and while I



don’t agree with the practice in general, it is justified here. There are informative write-ups about peepers, beavers, and seasonal transients, posted at the spots where one might spot them, and I appreciated the maintenance of the extensive boardwalk

once in the wild, with a Barred Owl who perched on a limb across from me for ten minutes and carried on a kind of silent conversation about my presence there.



Above: Ice on Carse Brook at the Emily Proctor Miles Wildlife Sanctuary. Above top: Red-tailed hawks inside the aviary at the Sharon Audubon Society.

along Bog Meadow Pond, which allowed me to explore the marshy fringes of the pond without compromising the ecosystem. I can only imagine that this would be an incredible place to view avian activity when the majority of it returns in the spring.

If you can’t wait that long, however, there is a raptor aviary on the property that is simply mesmerizing. The society has taken in a number of non-releas-

able raptors over the years, and they are kept here, inside spacious cages with informative placards that describe their characteristics. There is something transcendent about raptors, and this setting offers the visitor the singular experience of standing mere feet away from these magnificent birds. I have experienced this

On this winter day, I was alone with ten birds who inspected me, monitored my movements, and in the case of the raven, let out a pulsating ray-gun sound that I haven’t heard since *Lost in Space* reruns. On this visit, I spent a long time admiring their handsome American Kestrel and hoping for an appearance of the adorable Eastern Screech Owl, whom I had fawned over on a previous visit. Alas, he was elusive on this occasion, as if charged by the Society staff to keep me coming back for more.

I spent three hours total in the two properties – at least two and a half more hours than I would have spent on a treadmill. To be fair, I wasn’t in motion the whole time, but my mind was, and instead of wondering when Netflix would release the next season of *Narcos*, I was wondering when the peepers would announce the return of spring. If wellness is more than just physical fitness, places such as this deserve your membership fees as much as gyms. ●



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POWER COUPLES:

Jonathan Bee & Kent Hunter

By CB Wismar
info@mainstreetmag.com

Walk into Hunter Bee in Millerton, and you'll sense that someone is watching you. True, Kent Hunter and Jonathan Bee may see you come in and be ready to welcome you to their store, but it's another set of eyes so piercing that you'll almost feel them.

Garbo.

Curled up on a fur throw that came from the home of Joan Rivers, she quietly eyes the traffic going through the door of 21 Main Street and presides over the operation. She misses nothing, but keeps her counsel as customers come and go. Rescued dog extraordinaire, Garbo turns this "power couple" into a trio and enhances the magical experience of wandering through what Jonathan and Kent refer to as a place filled with "appropriate vintage ware." Hunter Bee may be hard to quantify in a few words, but the presence of Garbo puts it all in perspective.

Jonathan and Kent met over 20 years ago in New York, long before Garbo was a pup. An artist and entrepreneur (Jonathan) and an ad agency designer and art director (Kent) became a couple and early on pursued their mutual interest



Above, L-R: Kent Hunter and Jonathan Bee. Below: An interior of Hunter Bee, showcasing a number of their unique finds and offerings.

in the ephemera that is not only antiques, but found art, intriguing folk art creations, and industrial art pieces that can be "quirky," and intriguing. They've been married for four years, and celebrate their anniversary every year on the day remembered by most in the area as 'The Great Halloween Snow,' October 29, 2011.

The artist from New York

Jonathan's a New Yorker ... born and bred. A child prodigy who created and starred in his own television program at the advanced age of 13, he went to New York University, learned film production, started magazines ("DV-8," an eclectic mix of music, art, and fashion), has been a widely respected installation artist, created and marketed the first printed yoga mat, has done creative work in fibre art and metal, and is currently focused on his writing. An exhausting resume, to be sure, but

truly only the context for the important role Hunter Bee has played in the area.

The designer from Texas

Kent is from Abilene, Texas – quite a far cry from New York on the best of days. With a degree from Rice University, he migrated through local, then regional and finally national agencies in New York to work as an art director and designer for iconic brands including Hunter Douglas and the Guggenheim Museum. Along the way, he worked with decorators and designers in creating visual experiences for marketing and advertising. And, he started collecting.

As often happens, New Yorkers find respite and relief from the intensity of the City by finding ways and places that make weekends and vacations less stressful and intense. Apartments and subway travel give way to rolling hills, larger homes, and leisurely drives exploring the countryside. Jonathan had family in Great Barrington, which provided a weekend destination, and pursued

artist residencies in Stockbridge and Northampton.

The family home also provided another much-needed facility. With their keen sense of design and appreciation of the unique and fanciful, Kent and Jonathan had assembled quite a collection of objects in their New York apartment. The basement in Great Barrington became a fitting place to fill with antiques and curiosities found during their weekend visits.

As their collection grew, the reality of so many fascinating things, and so little space, cascaded into a discussion of what could be done with all of these treasures. Both Jonathan and Kent love the hunt. They love to explore and uncover and discover objects that may be overlooked or ignored. Mid-Century furniture. Signs. Industrial fittings. Paintings. Lamps. Figurines. Table settings. Glassware. Curiosities of many sizes, shapes, and purposes.

Continued on next page ...



So many things ... so little room

Somewhere in close coincidence to the realization that available spaces were filled and there was still more to discover and buy, the notion came to open a store. The idea was spontaneous. Open a store that sold antiques and ... But where? Kent and Jonathan knew Route 22 well. They had driven by Millerton, but never actually stopped to explore the town. When a friend suggested they look more closely, a “walk around” led them to a dramatic conclusion. This was the place. The intersection of city and country. A town filled with genuine neighbors who would quickly become friends. There were storefronts on the market, including the former Millerton Market.

The year was 2008. The space was available. The stars aligned. Enter Hunter Bee: “a quirky collection of industrial objects, mid-century modern furniture, and American country pieces.” All of that ... and, so much more.

The objects collected and presented in the store are far from just “things” that the two have managed to acquire for re-sale. There is an emotional and artistic investment in every piece. Kent and Jonathan acquire only pieces that appeal to them, that they would add to their



Above: Garbo, lying on her throne, is aware of everything going on in the store. Below: Lightning art.



personal collection, if only there was room.

“Our tastes have merged,” suggests Jonathan. That’s what supports “the thrill of the hunt.” Hours of searching, miles traveled, investments made become justified when something they would both like to own comes in to view.

The Hunter Bee style

Their tastes have allowed them to create a collection that has both attracted an active and loyal following. The phone rings with some regularity with long-time customers wondering “what’s new ... what’s different ... what’s fun?” Often, when they discover a new piece, they will acquire it with specific customers in mind.

“Humor is incredibly important,” offers Kent. “We love to find that one object that will bring humor to the shop.”

The beauty of community

A commitment that both Jonathan and Kent made when they opened the doors to Hunter Bee was to be more than just another retail store on Main Street. With their energy and talent, they wanted to become active in the community ... to make contribution to the vitality of the business district and to the broader sense of community in neighboring towns.

Their energies have been quite apparent when one identifies some of the events that have come to define the area. “Fall For Art” is a grand example of what the Hunter Bee influence can mean. Their annual participation in Trade Secrets further cements their relationships to the community at large.

“One of the great things about being here is the support we’ve gotten from the community.” Kent begins the thought and Jonathan moves it forward. “It’s not just the merchants’ group, the business community, but the people who may have come in the store as customers and have become friends.”

As so many have noted about the area, it is a place where “A-listers” can live in comfort and, should they so choose, in relative anonymity. Actors, writers, financial powerhouses, titans of industry ... they live side-by-side with families who have populated the hills and

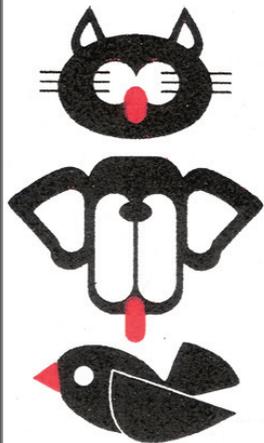
valleys for generations. Both the famous and the not-so-famous find their ways into Hunter Bee. The eclectic offering, the imaginative presentation and the sheer fun of being in the store becomes a great equalizer. People come back. They identify with the spirit and character of the place.

“We’ve had book signings here ...” Kent suggests by way of illustration. “Frank Langella held a book signing here when *Dropped Names* came out in 2012.”

“And, Dana Cowin was here with *Mastering My Mistakes in the Kitchen*,” adds Jonathan.

Garbo has moved only slightly as the conversation flows on. There is a “zen-like” quality about her that captures the mood of Hunter Bee and supports the ambience that Jonathan and Kent have brought to Millerton. In all its eclectic majesty, Hunter Bee does not feel frenetic. It is relaxed and ... as a great tribute to the spirit that Kent Hunter and Jonathan Bee invested in the store ... simply fun. •

To learn more about Hunter Bee and the men (and dog) behind it, please visit them at 21 Main Street in Millerton, or online at www.hunterbee.com.



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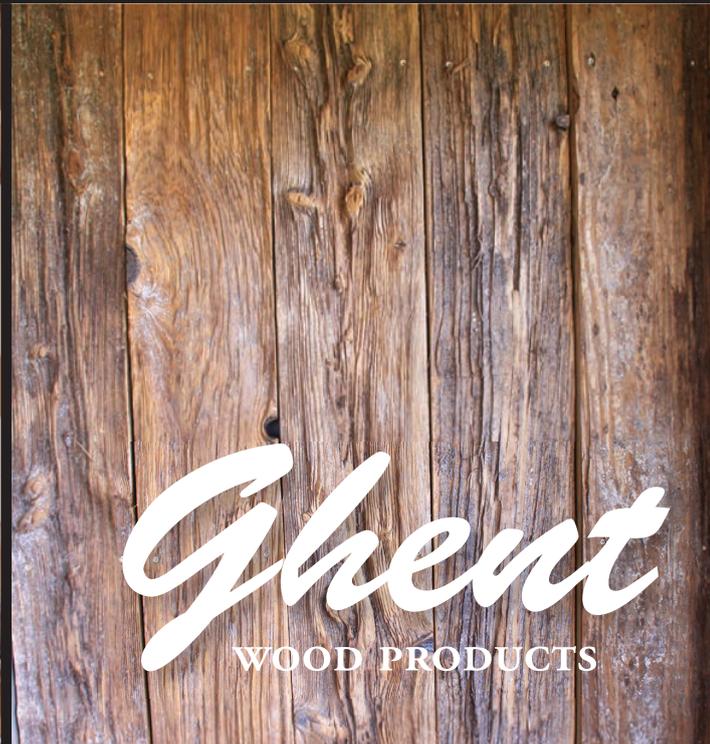
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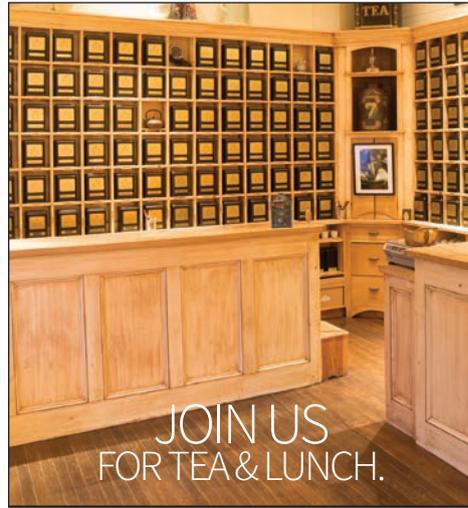
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A REMARKABLE
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Rescued horses

By David C. King
info@mainstreetmag.com

We are blessed to have so many beautiful horse farms in the Berkshire-Hudson Valley region. One of the most picturesque of these, and one of the most unusual, is the 140-acre horse sanctuary owned and operated by Equine Advocates, just outside the village of Chatham, NY. The farm is home to more than 80 equines, mostly horses, with small numbers of other equines – mules, donkeys, burros, ponies, and miniatures. The one thing they all have in common is that all have been rescued by Equine Advocates.

Susan and the founding of Equine Advocates

Susan Wagner, founder and President of Equine Advocates, started the organization in 1996, operating first out of her apartment in Queens, NY. The difficulty in finding homes for the equines they rescued led to the building of the Chatham farm in 2004, calling it the Equine Advocates Rescue Sanctuary.

Relying on their dedicated staff and with the help of volunteer workers, they created a beautiful panorama of rail-like fences marking off gravel roads, pastures, paddocks, and stables for the many equines they have rescued.

“Instead of building one very large farm,” Susan explains, “I hoped to create the feeling of a ‘horse village.’ Because horses are herd animals, they thrive on companionship, so they live here in pairs or groups as large as eight or nine equines in the larger pastures. Every horse has a 12’ x 12’ stall, each with its own paddock and pasture area, and they are spread out, producing the ‘village’ image I hoped for.”

Getting to know every equine

As visitors tour the grounds, they find photo plaques at every pad-

dock, with the story of each equine and an account of why he or she came to be rescued. The story of a Thoroughbred named Press Exclusive (picture next page) dramatizes the need for what Susan Wagner calls a “complete new mindset” in our treatment of horses and other equines.

“Press” was a popular young race horse who had winnings of nearly half a million dollars, then added to the owner’s wealth by giving birth to nine foals. When Press could not get pregnant a tenth time, she became obsolete, no longer able to produce income for the owner. Her reward for having spent her life in service to this family was to find herself in an over-crowded truck headed for a slaughterhouse. Only a brutal incident spared Press from completing that journey.

In the crowded truck, the terrified mare was knocked to the floor, kicked and trampled, until finally rescued with the help of Mindy Lovell of the group, Transitions Thoroughbreds, who was on the scene. Press had suffered four broken ribs, countless lacerations, and her head was so swollen, she could barely see. The vet on the scene was prepared to euthanize the stricken horse, but Lovell took the horse and miraculously was able to nurse her back to health. Equine Advocates heard about her story and offered Press the forever retirement home she always deserved.

“What was astounding to me,” Susan recalls, “was the callous indifference displayed by the owners. After making all that money through her winnings as a race horse and then as a broodmare, they seemed to have no qualms about letting her go to slaughter.”

Changing attitudes

Susan’s ultimate goal is to convince

the American people to adopt a new approach to the treatment of horses and other equines. One of the most important steps taken by her and by the organization was to invite leaders of the growing movement for more humane treatment of equines to come to an Annual American Equine Summit. The purpose of the Summits is to address major issues, to raise public awareness, and to hold an awards dinner for individuals who have made outstanding contributions. There are also special presentations by authorities in various fields. Videotapes of these talks are available to other organizations.

The Summits, now entering their fifth year, have helped to elevate Equine Advocates to an unofficial position as the leading organization in this steadily growing movement.

A series of crusades

While the overall goal of Equine Advocates is to create a more humane mindset regarding the treatment of equines, the staff and volunteers find themselves engaged in a variety of crusades to create change in specific areas. Many owners of horses fail to realize that they are making a long-term commitment to the animal. Too often, as the equine becomes less fun and more of a burden, the owners find it easy to turn the horse over for sale at a low-end meat auction, which often means a one-way trip to a slaughterhouse.

One of many crusades staff members wage is to rescue urban carriage horses. “City streets are brutal on the horses’ hooves,” Susan states, “and they suffer a variety of painful injuries from the equipment and accidents, as well as the trauma



Above top: Panorama of the farm. Photo by Jim Radley. Above: A before and after photo of a rescued horse by the name of Jasmine. Photos courtesy of Equine Advocates.

Continued on next page ...



Above: Press Exclusive. Photo by Nousha Salimi. Right: Press and Susan Wagner. Below: Rescued Wild American Mustangs, Hayden and Nelson at Equine Advocates. Photo by Jim Craner.



of city traffic noise.”

Rescue, however, is almost impossible. The reason: carriage horses have a four-digit number carved in the front hoof which serves as a “license plate” to identify the horse and stable. When the horse is sold, the number is often deliberately filed off, making identification specifically as a New York City carriage horse extremely difficult. In 2010, when Susan was contacted by

Elizabeth Forel, the president of the Coalition to Ban Horse-Drawn Carriages who saw a horse at an auction with the number intact. Susan joined that organization in rescuing the former NYC carriage horse and gave him a permanent home at the sanctuary where he will live out the rest of his days. The arrival

of the horse, now named Bobby II Freedom, thrilled everyone at the farm. And Bobby responded by rolling happily in the fresh grass.

Estrogen and Hormone Replacement Therapy

The most repugnant crime against horses has been the development of estrogen and hormone replacement

therapy drugs (ERT/HRT) produced from *pregnant mares’ urine* or PMU for short. This substance was first developed in 1942 by American Home Products, which later became Wyeth Pharmaceuticals.

The resulting Premarin and three related substances, Prempro, Premphase and the newest PMU drug, Duavee were hailed as the “natural” way for women to avoid the painful effects of menopause. No one seemed to notice the heartless treatment of horses that was involved in the production of Premarin.

For six months of a mare’s pregnancy, she was kept in a confined stall, unable to turn or lie down, attached to plumbing, held in place by straps, and a pouch attached to the mare’s urethra which constantly collects the estrogen-rich urine. After the pregnancy, the foals are usually fattened at feedlots for sale at slaughter auctions. The mare is impregnated again and returned to the “pee line.” When the production of estrogen declines, the mare is usually sent to a slaughterhouse.

Since 1942, PMU production primarily took place in Canada, but now since Wyeth merged with Pfizer in 2009, most PMU production has been transferred to China where there is little to no oversight and no horse rescue. There are reportedly 90,000 mares standing and suffering on PMU lines in China today.

Equine Advocates is in the process of launching a public awareness campaign to American women and gynecologists against the use of PMU drugs. Most doctors today are instead recommending other plant-based medications which they say are better and safer than equine estrogens which have been documented to increase the risks for breast cancer, heart attacks, heart disease, strokes, clotting, dementia, and a host of other life-threatening illnesses.

Over the years, Equine Advocates has proudly rescued many PMU mares and PMU foals, who now happily graze with one another at the sanctuary.

Mustangs and burros

Another challenging crusade has involved trying to help the mustangs

and burros that once roamed free in large numbers on public lands across the American West. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has been rounding up, capturing, and auctioning off wild horses and burros and in the process destroying the viability of the herds that still remain on the public lands. This is being done to provide more grazing land for cattle ranchers. Even worse is the BLM’s new 2017 budget proposal which, if passed, would remove their protected status of wild horses and burros, thus allowing them to be sold for slaughter.

Equine Advocates is proud to have rescued two Wild American Mustangs who are permanent Sanctuary residents. Nelson, was captured by the BLM as a foal in Nevada and Hayden, was captured in 2007 in the Pryor Mountains of



Montana when he was two years old. Their stories help to educate visitors about the tragic plight of America’s Wild Horses and Burros.

Finally, one of the most vital activities for Equine Advocates is public outreach. “Education is the key to changing attitudes,” Susan states. And in 2006 the organization opened the doors to its Humane Education Center. The beautiful farm building is used for classes, lectures, and special events. It also provides a special place for young people to learn about the humane treatment of equines. ●

Equine Advocates is open to visitors during Spring, Summer and Fall on Open House days where the public can see what an amazing, nurturing place this is. The Open Day Visitors’ Schedule for 2016 is posted on the organization’s website at www.equineadvocates.org. Admission is free.



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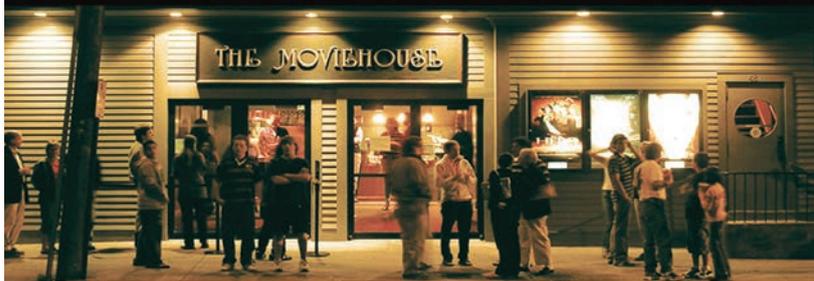
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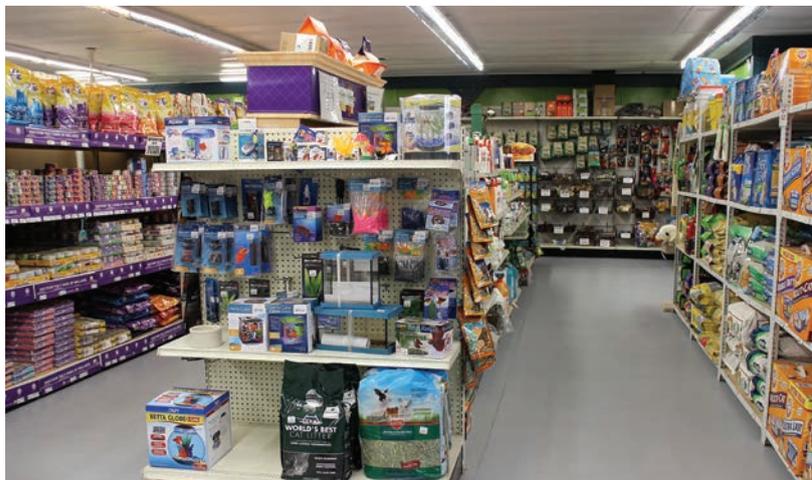
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Agway started in May 1994 as Millerton Co-op Inc. Before that it was a farmer owned co-op that had a business relationship with Agway. In 1996 the Chatham store opened, followed by the Claverack store in 2000, and the Great Barrington store in 2009. General manager Paul O'Neil says even though they serve thousands of customers a month, they know most of their names and what they are looking for. They even offer a wide array of frequent buyer clubs with loyalty discounts and free products. Agway offers a full line of pet food and supplies as well as sell complete lines of wild bird seed, and farm animal supplies with delivery service available to farms. Sometimes shopping for the correct product can be overwhelming, but the educated sales staff can recommend products to suit each person's need. They offer a carry-out service, too. Although Paul understands there is an upswing in the online shopping sector, he realizes demand for the services that a company like his provides that other businesses cannot (such as sponsoring the local little league team, help support the local community center or fire department, and provide employment for locals, all of which are extremely important to Paul). "I believe the future is bright and we look forward to being a part of the community we serves for years to come."



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Litter box problems?

One of the questions I seem to be asked frequently is, "How do I stop my cat from going outside of its litter box?" The answer isn't always an easy one. If your cat is using its box only part of the time, you may have to do some investigating in order to get to the root of the problem. Here are some common reasons why cats say no to the box:

1. It's not clean enough. Cats are fastidious creatures and tend to bury their urine and feces. If using a clumping litter, make sure you scoop out the solid waste and urine clumps at least twice daily. If using a clay or other non-clumping litter, scoop out solid waste daily and replace with fresh litter weekly.
2. Too many cats for one box. If at all possible, provide one box per cat, preferably in different spots in your home.
3. Your cat doesn't like the litter being used. Most cats prefer a softer litter with a sand-like consistency. Clay and pelleted litters can be a little hard on the feet. There are many varieties of natural, plant based litters on the market today. These are mostly made from wheat, corn, or walnut shells and are biodegradable, as well. Also, there are now litters on the market designed to attract a cat to its litter box by using a proprietary blend of herbs cats find interesting. Many people have reported great success with them.

These are just some of the most common reasons for cats to abandon their litter boxes. Sometimes the issues related to this behavior are multi-faceted and complex. Please remember, it is very important to first rule out any physical cause for this behavior, such as urinary tract infection or blockages.



333 Main Street, Lakeville, CT • Phone: 860-435-8833

Are you a responsible dog owner?

Having a dog is a great source of pleasure, but along with it comes responsibility. Our dogs depend on us for much more than just the basics of food and shelter. Being a good dog owner requires a commitment to doing the things that keep your pet safe, healthy and happy.

Here is a quick quiz to help assess your status as a responsible dog owner:

- 1) Do you make regular visits to the vet? Don't wait for injuries or sickness to visit your veterinarian. Dogs need annual wellness checks and regular vaccination updates. Since dogs age faster than their owners, they need more frequent check-ups to stay healthy as they get older.
- 2) Do you groom your dog regularly? Regular grooming (such as brushing, bathing and nail trimming) keeps your pet clean and comfortable. It also helps keep his/her skin and coat healthy and provides opportunity to identify potential problems, like rashes and parasites, before they become too serious.
- 3) Do you give your dog sufficient exercise? No matter the breed, size or age, every dog needs appropriate daily exercise for good health and well being. Whether it's a long walk, a visit to the dog park, or simply playtime in your yard, responsible dog owners make time for exercise.
- 4) Do you practice training commands with your dog? Practicing even simple commands (i.e. sit, come, stay) provides intellectual stimulation and helps enhance his/her bond with you. A dog who receives regular command practice is typically better behaved and happier.
- 5) Do you keep your dog safe? More than one million dogs are hit and killed by cars every year. Always use a leash when taking your dog for a walk, and be sure to keep your dog safely confined to your yard at all other times.

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Parasite prevention for your pet (and you!)

The possibility of parasite infection in animals and humans is an everyday threat. Understanding how they are transmitted and how to treat and/or prevent them is key. Intestinal parasites may not only infect your furry companions, but some of these parasites may be passed from animal to humans causing illness or disease (these parasites are called zoonotic).

A stool sample should be checked by your veterinarian at least once or twice yearly. Watch for signs of illness which may include diarrhea, vomiting, blood in stool, weight loss, scooting, occasional coughing, dull coat, or distended abdomen. These symptoms may be mild or severe; depending on the severity of the infection. Many animals may have intestinal parasites without any symptoms. Most parasites shed microscopic eggs or spores that go undetected in the stool unless examined under a microscope. Safe and effective medications are available for the treatment of intestinal parasites. The most common intestinal parasites found in our area are:

Roundworm – can be contracted at birth or drinking the mother's infected milk or the environment, such as eating other animals' feces, or eating rodents or other small animals. If seen in stool or vomit, they look like spaghetti like segments. **Tapeworm** – contracted through fleas. Often spotted in the stool or around the rectum, Tapeworm's appearance resemble a grain of rice. **Hookworm** – enters the body through the skin. Contracted through contaminated sources in the environment (soil), ingestion of prey animals, through the uterus or mother's milk. **Whipworm** – an intestinal parasite ingested through food or water that contains Whipworm eggs. **Giardia** – spread through fecal contaminated water, food, or soil by ingesting a cyst form of the parasite. **Coccidia** – a microscopic gastrointestinal parasite that reside in soil for potentially long periods of time. Ingestion from contaminated sources in the environment (mice, soil) causes infection.

Recommended prevention: Clean up feces regularly in yard; use a year-round, monthly heartworm prevention which also protects against common intestinal parasites; do not allow your dog or cat to drink standing water or eat feces; consult your veterinarian if you notice symptoms of intestinal parasites. To prevent zoonotic disease: wash hands thoroughly after handling animals; wear gloves when working outdoors (gardening, etc.); wash hands after cleaning litter pans and cover children's sandboxes.

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



WHAT'S YOUR SIGN?

ARIES (March 21–April 19)

Is the route you take to work stress-free? If not, your day is spoiled from the start! Do what you promise to do.

TAURUS (April 20–May 20)

It is rare that one is in control when two have a say. But you don't have to fear, you're in good shape and can take on a challenge.

GEMINI (May 21–June 20)

If you think about it, you have a reason to celebrate. Do a few things around the house and fix what's broken. You'll feel even better!

CANCER (June 21–July 22)

You miss the good old school days and wish to further your education. Don't stress and let everything take its course.

LEO (July 23–Aug. 22)

You need to think how you can improve relations with other family members. Support others with your humanity.

VIRGO (Aug. 23–Sept. 22)

Give someone who doesn't necessarily deserve it another chance. You're not alone in this. Don't let anything stop you from doing what you know is right.

LIBRA (Sept. 23–Oct. 22)

Be sharp and remember last month's lesson. Relationships are easy and should be in good balance, regardless of if they are with friends, a spouse, or strangers.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23–Nov. 21)

Set an example at work. But don't let others' problems become your problems. Keep calm.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22–Dec. 21)

Ideas that pop into your mind can cause you to toss and turn. View this as an opportunity to mature your patience.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22–Jan. 19)

Controversy will affect you. Take the initiative and take the lead in completing the project.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20–Feb. 18)

You're sensitive these days, and need support. But don't let an opportunity to do good pass you by.

PISCES (Feb. 19–March 20)

You don't feel good and your self-confidence isn't at its best. Concentrate on it, otherwise you run the risk of it getting worse. Listen to your inner voice.

I'M ALL EARS!

Hearing is a very important part of not only our senses, but to animals, too. And have you ever noticed how animals ears have much more movement than ours? That's because humans only have six muscles that control the outer ear, whereas animals have more. This sparked our interest to learn just a bit more about the two most common house pets (cats and dogs) and their ears.

CATS:

During our research we learned that cats have thirty-two individual muscles in each ear, which allow them to independently move each ear. Because of this mobility, a cat has the ability to move its body in one direction and point its ears in another. Here are few fun facts we found on caster.com.

- Deep inside your cat's ears are three semicircular canals filled with fluid and lined with tiny hairs. The movement of the fluid over the hairs tells your cat's brain which way he/she is moving. Another body, the vestibule, transmits information about whether he/she is right-side up, upside down, lying on its side, and so on. The semicircular canals and the vestibule are crucial to your cat's "righting reflex," which allows him/her to land on his/her feet (most of the time) if he/she falls.
- Their ears serve as a mood barometer. We've all seen aggravated cats with ears lowered and turned sideways, and furious or terrified cats with their ears laid flat against their head. But the position of his/her ears can indicate a whole array of emotions, ranging from happiness to curiosity to complete relaxation.
- Cats have super-powered hearing. Dogs are known for their acute hearing, but cats' hearing is actually better. Cats can distinguish sounds much higher in pitch than dogs can, and their ability to detect low-pitched noises is almost equal. Not only that, but they can detect even tiny variances in sound — just one-tenth of a tone apart. This allows them to easily figure out how big or small a prey animal is, and it puts humans with perfect pitch to shame.

DOGS:

No matter the shape or size, all dogs' ears serve the same purpose: hearing. According to thebark.com at least 18 muscles work to tilt, raise, and rotate these furry appendages, helping the dog identify and capture sounds from different directions. Here are a few facts we found on thebark.com about our canine ears and hearing.

- A dog's level of attention can be determined by watching his/her ears. Erect ears facing forward indicate that he/she is engaged, and slightly pulled-back ears signal that he/she is feeling friendly; ears laid tightly back against the head suggest a fearful or timid reaction.
- Dogs' ears move independently of one another.
- Even during the quiet hours of the night, the world is a noisy place for dogs, who can hear the high-frequency pulse of the digital alarm clock and appliances, and bodily vibrations of termites in the walls.
- A dog's ear canal is L-shaped: vertical toward the jaw, then takes a 45° turn horizontally toward the ear drum. This makes examination challenging and predisposes dogs to a variety of ear ailments, including parasites.
- Domestic dogs can hear significantly higher frequency sounds than humans, although not as high as cats.



Photo source: istockphoto.com contributor GlobalIP

LAZLO GYORSOK'S SQUIRREL



PET SUPPLY DROP-OFF

ATTENTION PLEASE!

Cascade's Spirit Shoppe has become a pet supply drop off location - collecting food, toys, and beds year round. Currently they are working hand in hand with Center For Compassion, based in Dover, NY. With hopes to connect with other local organizations, the less fortunate pets are and pet parents will get the help they need. For more information please call Lee Bates at (845) 373-8232.

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One of our photographers, Lazlo Gyorsok, is always out and about taking amazing photos! (If you don't already, you should follow him on Facebook or check out his website!) The goat on the cover is one of his pics. Pretty cool, right? Well, Lazlo sent us this gem right before we went to press and we thought it was so cute that we wanted to share it with you! Thanks for the picture, Lazlo!

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