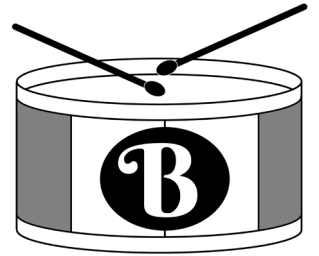


# Becket Beat



Keeping neighbors connected

Vol. 1, No. 4 - August 2022

## AROUND TOWN

### History of Robinson Farm

by Marcia Parnell



If you ask around, you'd likely find a common thread among the reasons so many Becket residents came to be here: a desire to leave the city for the pristine setting and slower pace of our town. But there are probably only a handful that can trace that desire back over a hundred years of family history like Bill Robinson can.

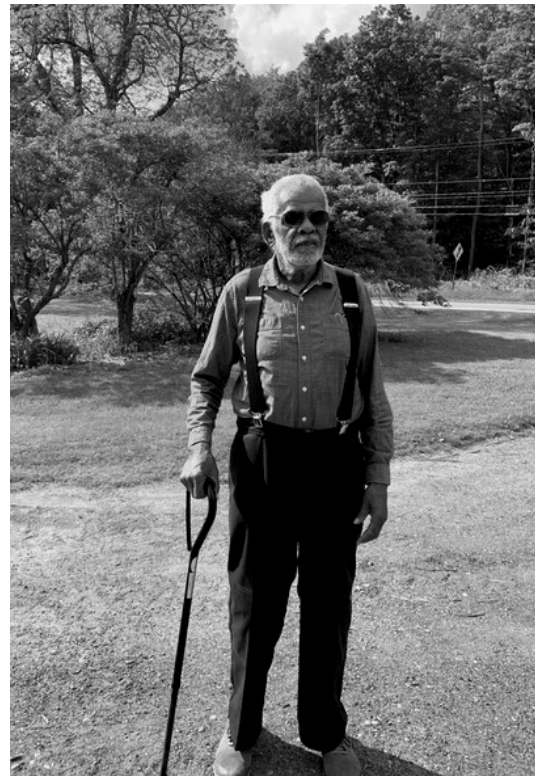
Bill's grandfather purchased the 115-acre Robinson Farm in 1906. According to Bill, his grandfather came from the city of Waterbury, CT, where he was a self-employed coal-cellar cleaner. The work was dirty and hard on his lungs and after a time he was advised to move to the country for the fresh air. How did he learn about Becket? Another familiar thread -- a family connection. The elder Robinson's brother-in-law worked as a cook at the YMCA/Chimney Corners Camp.

When Bill's grandfather acquired the farm, there was just a house on the property. He brought two teams of horses with him from the city for transportation. Bill estimates his father was four years old at the time. Sadly, Bill's grandfather died in 1917, leaving Mrs. Robinson and her six children to support the farm. She told Bill's father that he had to get a job to help support the family and she took in foster children.

Back to Waterbury went Bill's father, where he got a factory job and married Bill's mother. Still, from time to time, Bill and his family visited and stayed in Becket. One of Bill's fondest memories about his family's early days in Becket was a story about his father. When his father was just 12, his grandfather bought a car in Springfield but the senior Robinson, who could drive a team of horses, had no idea how to drive a car. He sent Bill's father to Springfield in his place, where he was taught how to drive, fix a flat tire, and do simple maintenance like oil and water. When he was finished with his training, he drove the car all the way home by himself.

Bill's parents separated when he was five years old. He wound up in the foster care system in Waterbury, which was tough on Bill. Eventually he graduated from Leavenworth High School and then enlisted in the Navy in 1943 at age 18. After his discharge, he moved to his maternal grandmother's home in New Haven, CT, where he got a job, a car, and married his wife of 50 years, Catherine. He also went back to school for Mechanical Engineering but unable to get a job in that field, joined the New Haven Police Department. While with the NHPD he earned a degree in Forensic Science and eventually retired after 25 years of service.

All the while, Becket remained an important part of Bill's life. He and Catherine traveled the long and bumpy route north almost every weekend with their kids -- William, Steve, David and Sharon. By the time he retired, Bill had inherited the Becket property from his mother. Despite friends questioning the choice to move



*continued on page 3*

# Letter from the Editor

by Kathy Baugh

Welcome to the August edition of the *Becket Beat*. We have some great news to share. The *Becket Beat* has been granted charitable status from the State and can now accept donations. We will be putting a donation button on our website in the near future . . . stay tuned.

A big thank you to everyone who has given us feedback or ideas for articles. One such piece of feedback was that we omitted Camp Lenox from the camps article in July. We had actually discussed including Camp Lenox but due to their address being in Otis opted not to. As it turns out, while the mailing address is in Otis, the bulk of the property is in Becket and the town of Becket is responsible for it in terms of codes, permits, etc. So, it seems we share somewhat of a joint custody situation with Otis, when it comes to Camp Lenox. Therefore, we want to officially acknowledging Camp Lenox, a premiere sports camp, as our fifth amazing camp option in the town of Becket. Please go to their website ([www.camplenox.com](http://www.camplenox.com)) for more details.

The *Becket Beat* is available online at [www.BecketBeat.org](http://www.BecketBeat.org) and at the following drop off locations: Becket Town Hall, Becket Post Office, Becket Athenaeum, Becket Arts Center, The Becket Motel, Papa Bob's, Sherwood Shoppe, and The Route 8 Pub. We also have a Facebook site where you can learn about and/or share all things Becket ([www.facebook.com/groups/becketbeat](http://www.facebook.com/groups/becketbeat)). If you wish to reach out to us with feedback, suggestion or an article, please e-mail us at [info@BecketBeat.org](mailto:info@BecketBeat.org).

## ENJOYING LOCAL RESOURCES

### The Berkshire Fishing Club: A Hidden Gem in Becket

by Jeanine McAdam

One of Becket's best kept secrets is that it is home to The Berkshire Fishing Club, located on Palmer Brook Lake off of Plumb Road. This hidden gem is a private fishing club with no houses on the shoreline and no jet skis, sailboats, or high speed power boats in the waters – just peace and quiet for fishing, kayaking, and canoeing. Open late Spring, Summer and early Fall, this tranquil location is breathtakingly beautiful and serene.

The dam that created the 125-acre Palmer Brook Lake was built in the 1960's and has been privately owned by the same family for years. To create the dam, trees were cut down and the area was flooded. The submerged stumps can be seen through the crystal-clear water and create interesting homes for a variety of aquatic life.

Alan Strassler, President of the Club, in describing the benefits of the club said, "We have all the equipment you need for a day of fishing on our private lake. It's great for friends and relatives visiting since no fishing license is required."

The Club offers catch and release bass fishing. The boats are equipped with electric trolling motors, mounted seats, and small gas motors. Also, the Bass Fishing School offers instruction (learn rigging and lures) to become a better angler from beginner to expert and the beautiful lodge with a screened porch is a lovely place to relax after a day on the lake.

This 800-acre site is set in the deep woods of Becket. Along the shoreline deer, bears, loons, and bald eagles can be seen plus the occasional turtle and bullfrog. There are at least three to four beaver huts and from the water the beavers can be observed working hard on their homes.

Not into fishing? Recreational kayaking and canoeing are also available. Paddling along the shoreline and looking into the deep woods gives one a connection to nature that is hard to come by. The roar of cars and sounds of civilization are silent because there are no roads or houses nearby. Just the burble of the streams feeding the lake and the sound of the birds and other wildlife scurrying in the woods.

The Berkshire Fishing Club is for members only but anyone can enjoy its offerings by purchasing a day or seasonal pass. For more information, call (413) 243-5761 or visit their website: <https://berkshirerfishing.com>.





### **Robinson Farm, continued from page 1**

to a mostly all white community, Bill and Catherine had no doubts about making Becket their full-time home. As Bill puts it, “I imagine there are people here in Becket that don’t like me because I’m black but you will find that anywhere.”

Despite his familiarity with the town, Bill had to adjust to full-time country living. He was asked to join the Becket police and became a part-time officer for 10 years. The calls he responded to, such as a loose cow, were nothing like the calls he answered in New Haven. He also served on the Board of Health. He enjoyed that responsibility because he learned about wells and septic systems – necessary knowledge for life in the country.

Today Bill lives on the farm with his son David, who raises Black Angus cattle and sells firewood. “Becket has been a god send for me. I’ve made good friends here. Even though I can’t drive anymore, I have friends that pick me up and take me to the senior dinner, take me to church. It’s rare that someone would think enough of me to come to interview me. I just live here and I enjoy it.”

### **TOWN GOVERNMENT**

## **Meet Our New Town Clerk: Robin Mathiesen**

by Ann Krawet

Who would have guessed that our new Town Clerk honed her managerial and organizational skills in the entertainment world!! Robin’s pre-Becket career as a Production Supervisor for live television and theater productions (think Radio City Music Hall, among many other venues across the country) demanded the skill set she now utilizes as Town Clerk – organizing and keeping close track of detailed information, adhering to deadlines, and having a top-notch communication, people-focused persona. Robin settled in Becket about four years ago, attracted by its small-town ambiance, the quiet so different from city living, and the trees on and near the land she bought. She is a member of the ZBA and other local organizations and enjoys meeting so many “nice and interesting people” in Becket.

As Town Clerk, Robin is Becket’s chief election official, recorder of vital statistics of residents (births, etc.), recorder of town official actions and documents (with certification), the town’s licensing officer, and the annual Census administrator. That means she registers voters, oversees and tests the voting machines, certifies absentee ballots/nomination papers/petitions, resolves conflicts, and is the preparer of the ballot and Election Cycle Calendar in accordance with State law. She issues hunting/fishing/trapping/dog licenses, burial, and raffle permits, and business certificates. She prepares the town’s street, school, and jury lists. She apprises town officials of the MA Open Meeting and Conflict of Interest laws. Once licensed, she could be a Notary and Justice of the Peace.

WELCOME Robin to the multi-faceted Town Clerk position!

**Contact Robin: 413-623-8934, extension 111**

**Robin’s office hours at Becket Town Hall: Tuesday/Thursday 10am-6pm and Wednesday 12-8pm**

### **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

## **Be Ready to Vote in Massachusetts 2022 Elections!**

### **Important Dates:**

- **Saturday, August 27:** Last day to register to vote and change party enrollment for state primary
- **Monday, August 29:** Vote by Mail application for the September 6 primary must reach the Becket election office by 5pm
- **Tuesday, September 6:** State primary election, including Berkshire County District Attorney and County Sheriff
- **Saturday, October 29:** Last day to register to vote for state election
- **Tuesday, November 8:** State and town elections

Not registered? Currently registered as Unaffiliated and want to cast a party vote in the Primary? Prefer to vote by mail?

Get all the details you need at: [www.townofbecket.org/town-clerk/pages/voter-registration](http://www.townofbecket.org/town-clerk/pages/voter-registration)  
[www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/eleupcomingelections/upcoming-elections.htm](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/eleupcomingelections/upcoming-elections.htm)

# It's Back to School in August for CBRSD

**Becket Washington Elementary School - [becket.cbrsd.org](http://becket.cbrsd.org)**

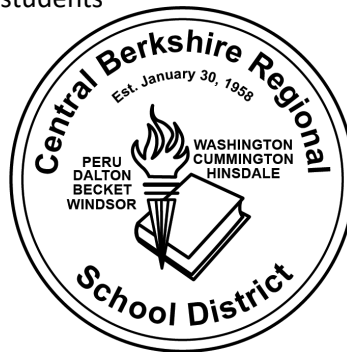
August 30: Orientation half-day for Pre-K and Kindergarten students  
August 31: First day of school for all Becket Washington School students

**Nessacus Middle School - [nessacus.cbrsd.org](http://nessacus.cbrsd.org)**

August 30: Orientation half-day for 6th grade students  
August 31: First day of school for all Nessacus students

**Wahconah Regional High School - [wahconah.cbrsd.org](http://wahconah.cbrsd.org)**

August 30: Orientation half-day for 9th grade students  
August 31: First day of school for all Wahconah students



## BECKET WASHINGTON COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP (BWCP) NEWS

### Becket Arts Center

### Annual Gala at Camp Watitoh feat. The Whiskey Treaty Roadshow

**Date:** Sunday, August 28, 5-8:30pm

**Tickets:** \$40 in advance; \$45 day of event & at the door

Join the Becket Arts Center for their biggest fundraiser of the year and enjoy:



- Dinner by KJ Nosh
- Bar Service by Another Round
- Raffle
- Live Music by The Whiskey Treaty Roadshow
- Dancing

Info & tickets: [www.becketartscenter.org/gala](http://www.becketartscenter.org/gala)

### Becket Athenaeum

### Book Sale Fundraiser & Community Events

**Saturday, August 20: [BecketAthenaeum.org/events](http://BecketAthenaeum.org/events)**

Come browse through an array of books, audiobooks, and more on the library lawn from 10am-4pm (weather-permitting)! Cash and check donations are accepted and all proceeds support the services and programs at the Becket Athenaeum.

Also enjoy New England Birds of Prey by Wingmasters at 11am, storyteller Eshu Bumpus at 2pm (returning to us after an amazing show last summer!), and lawn games outside the library all day.

Birds of Prey and Eshu will move inside the library if the weather doesn't cooperate.

If you have items to donate for our book sale or can volunteer your time, please contact [booksale@bwlibrary.org](mailto:booksale@bwlibrary.org) and thank you!

## Becket Beat

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*The Becket Beat* is published monthly. Submission guidelines and more at: [www.BecketBeat.org](http://www.BecketBeat.org)

# Community Calendar August 2022

see other side  
for more >>



Full listing & details: [www.BecketBeat.org/Community-Calendar](http://www.BecketBeat.org/Community-Calendar)

## ARTS, CULTURE & MUSIC

**Saturdays & Sundays in Aug:** PillowTalks @ Jacob's Pillow / 4pm / Free

**Mondays, Aug 1** (Michael Hamburg), **Aug 15** (Bob Reiss): Exploration Lectures / Becket Arts Center / 6:30-8:00pm / BAC members Free, non-members \$5

**Saturday, Aug 6:** Member Show Reception / Becket Arts Center / 10am / Free

**Saturdays, Aug 6, 13, 20, 27:** Live Music / Route 8 Pub / 6:30pm / See calendar for more information

**Saturday, Aug 6** (12-5pm), **Sunday, Aug 7** (10am-5pm): Open Studios Drive About / Becket Arts Center

**Sunday, Aug 7:** Music in the Garden  
Patsy Cline Tribute / Canterbury Farm / 2pm / \$20

**Wednesday, Aug 10:** Poetry Reading (David Giannini & Jessica Laser) / Becket Athenaeum / 3-4pm / Free

**Saturday, Aug 13:** Chantell McFarland & Louise Mosrie Live Music / Becket Arts Center / 5pm / Free

**Saturday, Aug 27:** Innate Art Exhibit Reception / Becket Arts Center / 2pm / Free

## MORE COMMUNITY EVENTS

**Mondays, Aug 1, 8, 15, 22, 29:** Chair Yoga  
Washington Town Hall / 11am / Free

**Tuesdays, Aug 2, 9, 16, 23, 30:** Senior Yoga w/ Rima Sala / Washington Town Hall / 9am / Free

**Tuesday, Aug 2:** Book Club-*Beheld* @ 1:30-2:30pm / Herbal Tinctures @ 6pm / Becket Athenaeum / Free

**Wednesdays, Aug 3, 10, 17, 24:** Storytime & craft for kids / Becket Athenaeum / 10:30-11am

**Wednesdays, Aug 3, 10, 17, 24:** Yoga / Becket Town Hall / 9am / \$3

**Friday, Aug 5:** Free Dinner @ Federated Church / 5-7pm

**Fridays, Aug 5, 12, 19, 26:** Tai Chi / Becket Arts Center / 10am / \$10 per class

**Saturdays, Aug 6, 20:** Food Pantry / Becket Federated Church / 9-11am

**Monday, Aug 8:** Cookbook Club-*The Gefilte Manifesto* / Becket Athenaeum / 6pm

**Sunday, Aug 14:** Time for Tami Support Party @ Papa Bob's / 1pm / \$20

# PAPA BOB'S

*Where friends Meet...*

**Food • Drinks • Entertainment**

**FREE MUSIC**  
Sat 4-7pm Sun 3-6pm


**WED:** 4-10pm  
**THUR:** 4-11pm  
**FRI:** 4pm-12am  
**SAT:** 1pm-12am  
**SUN:** 1-8pm

Sat/Sun: Ice Cream Cart  
Sat, Aug 20: Pig Roast

71 Chester Rd, Becket  
413-623-8777



**Café & Country Store / 413-623-2338**  
**Open Wed-Sun 8am - 7pm**  
**Kitchen closes @ 3pm / Pizza til 6pm**



## Cormier Tree Service

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Tree Removal Tree Topping Wood Chipping	Excavation Driveways Patios Mulching	Plowing Stonework Land Clearing  PO Box 148 Becket, MA 01223 413-822-0739 gerrycormier@yahoo.com
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Proprietors:  
Gerry Cormier  
Randy Cormier



## CORMIER LANDSCAPING

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Lawn Service Excavation Retaining Walls Decks	Driveways Patios Mulching Custom Property Design	Clean Ups Tree Work Plowing Stone Work
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Proprietors:  
Gerry Cormier  
Randy Cormier

PO Box 148  
Becket, MA 01223  
413 822-0739  
gerrycormier@yahoo.com

# Community Calendar August 2022

see other side  
for more >>



Full listing & details: [www.BecketBeat.org/Community-Calendar](http://www.BecketBeat.org/Community-Calendar)

## TOWN GOVERNMENT

**Wednesdays, Aug 3, 17:** Select Board  
Town Hall & Zoom / 7pm

**Wednesday, Aug 3:** Board of Health / 5pm

**Wednesday, Aug 10:** Planning Board / 6pm

**Tuesday, Aug 16:** Energy Committee / 4pm

**Tuesday, Aug 23:** Conservation Commission / 6pm

Additional info: [www.townofbecket.org/calendar](http://www.townofbecket.org/calendar)

Learn more about town Boards and Committees:  
[www.townofbecket.org/boards](http://www.townofbecket.org/boards)

## MORE COMMUNITY EVENTS

**Wednesday, Aug 17:** Estate Planning with Pamela Green / Becket Athenaeum / 6:30pm / Free

**Saturday, Aug 20:** Becket Athenaeum Book Sale Fundraiser & family friendly events / 10am-4pm

**Tuesday, Aug 23:** Hands on Nature - Butterflies & Moths / Becket Athenaeum / 11am

**Saturday, Aug 27:** All You Can Eat Breakfast  
Becket Federated Church / 8-10:30am / \$8

**Sunday, Aug 28:** Becket Arts Center Gala with The Whiskey Treaty Roadshow / Camp Watitoh / \$40 / 5pm

# Canterbury Farm

*Nordic Center • Bed & Breakfast*

1986 Fred Snow Road, Becket, MA  
Phone: 413-623-0100

<https://canterbury-farms.com/>

**JEFF WILKINSON**

(413) 269-4500

[Jeff@StoneHouseProperties.com](mailto:Jeff@StoneHouseProperties.com)



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Pat Parkins Bréhan Bruce-Cole

413.822.6836

413.717.0527

-Organic Practices-

[gardensofthegoddess@gmail.com](mailto:gardensofthegoddess@gmail.com)

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**413-623-2244**

[www.thebecketmotel.com](http://www.thebecketmotel.com)



**413-447-5846**

Ginger Connor, The Becket Connection

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