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## Lakeville, Conn.: A Norman Rockwell Kind of Place

Weekenders and younger families are settling down in the scenic village

By **BILL CARY**

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Sunrise from Route 41, just north of Lakeville, Conn. *PHOTO: STEWART CAIRNS FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*

Self-described “serial movers” Brian Good

all and Nina DiSesa bounced around apartments in Manhattan and weekend homes in the Hudson Valley over the course of their 24-year marriage. Then, they discovered Lakeville, Conn.

Six years ago, the semiretired advertising executives bought a magnificent 1763 Georgian home on Main Street in the Litchfield County village.

“My wife and I have done a lot of traveling both in our careers and our personal lives, and we decided this is one of the most beautiful places in the world,” Mr. Goodall said.

Tucked into the northwest corner of the state, Lakeville is in the town of Salisbury, which has about 4,000 residents and one of the lowest real estate taxes in the state. The village sits at the edge of Lake Wononscopomuc, the deepest natural lake in Connecticut.

“We love how bucolic and beautiful and serene the countryside is,” Mr. Goodall said. “At the same time, the area is full of so many cultural features.

“We walk to the dry cleaners, walk to the post office,” he said. “It’s a very convenient way to live, and at the same time we have wonderful privacy.”

Home prices in the village have been fairly stable. So far this year, through Sept. 30, 28 single-family homes have been sold, with a medium price of \$470,000, according to the Connecticut Multiple Listing Service. For the same period last year, 17 single-family homes were sold, with a medium price of \$500,000.

Many of the full-time residents started out as weekenders from New York.

“What we are seeing is more younger families moving up here starting at three days a week and slowly transitioning to full time,” said Pete Feen, an eight-year resident and an agent with Elyse Harney Real Estate. “Part of the reason for this is that our public schools are really good, and the career-oriented mother, father or both can pop back and forth to New York City for meetings but do not have to work 9-5 Monday to Friday.”



Lakeville's Main Street. PHOTO: STEWART CAIRNS FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

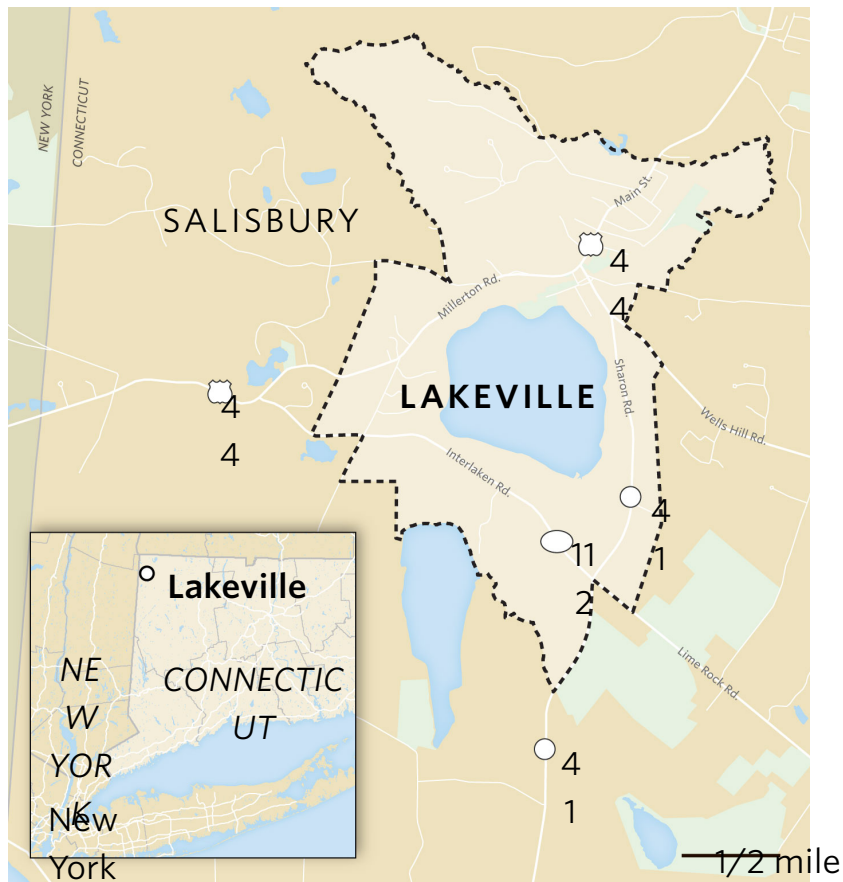
Anne Young takes a train into Manhattan one day a week for her job as a writer for the Foodstand app and works from home the other four days. She and her husband, Ben, a landscape architect, bought an expanded 1932 Sears, Roebuck & Co. kit house a year ago.

place in our mind,” Ms. Young said.

“It feels real, like a real town,” she said. “It’s a real place that has really deep roots and is very welcoming and worldly.”

“We want to raise a family and Lakeville is a great

The Lakeville business district is centered around a section of Main Street (Route 44) dotted with restaurants, churches, an art gallery and shops. It continues north toward the village of Salisbury, which is 2 miles away.



“With the close proximity of Lakeville, Salisbury and Sharon, it’s almost like one community,” Mr. Goodall said. “Our life is spent equally between the three villages.”

The Lakeville Historic District, which is on the National Register of Historic Places, covers about 10 acres of the village center. It includes a mix of residential, commercial and industrial architecture from the 1750s through the 1930s.

“The great thing about where we are—85 miles from Manhattan—is that it’s too far to do a commute every day,”

Mr. Feen said. “That protects us from urban sprawl, protects the character of the town.”

Tom Metzger, an agent in Lakeville with William Pitt Sotheby’s International Realty, echoed Mr. Feen.

“It’s just far enough from New York that this area will never be overrun,” Mr. Metzger said. “It’s the country still. It’s still small-town America, very Norman Rockwell-ish.”

Mr. Goodall and Ms. DiSesa seem to have put their serial moving days behind them.

“We now spend 70% of our time here,” Mr. Goodall said. He and his wife also have an apartment in Midtown Manhattan. “It’s extraordinary to be this much further north but with such wonderful amenities. We’re able to eat like we do in the city.”

**Schools:** The town of Salisbury is served by two schools: Salisbury Central School (prekindergarten to grade 8) in Lakeville and Housatonic Valley Regional High School (grades nine through 12) in Falls Village, which serves Salisbury and five surrounding

towns. The high school has a math proficiency of 86% and English proficiency of 88%, according to U.S. News & World Report. Three private schools are located in Lakeville or Salisbury: the Hotchkiss School and the Salisbury School (both grades nine through 12) and Indian Mountain School (prekindergarten to grade nine).



'Three Bulls,' a bronze sculpture by Peter Woytuk, on the campus of the Hotchkiss School. *PHOTO: STEWART CAIRNS FOR THE WALL STREET JOURNAL*

**Parks:** The Town Grove is a park on Lake Wononscopomuc with swimming, sailing, paddle tennis, grills and playground equipment. Ice skating, lap swimming, and walking and jogging on an indoor track are available at the Hotchkiss School. Weather permitting, skating is allowed on Factory Pond. There are also many hiking and biking trails in the area, including the Appalachian Trail.

**Transportation:** It is about a 20-minute drive to the Metro-North station in Wassaic, N.Y., and then a two-hour ride to Grand Central Terminal.

**Dining:** The Woodland offers sushi and creative takes on American classics. The Boathouse Restaurant at Lakeville also serves sushi, along with a raw bar and old-fashioned dishes. Casual fare can be found at Mizza's Pizza Restaurant, On the Run Coffee Shop and Black Rabbit Bar & Grille.

**Entertainment:** Lakeville has a road-racing track, called Lime Rock Park. The prep schools in town have art and music programs and speakers series. The Moviehouse in Millerton, N.Y., which is five minutes away, shows first-run movies along with documentaries, operas and art films. Millerton also has a year-round farmers market. The White Hart Inn in Salisbury hosts Trivia Nights.