

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

Tribunus



Plebis

RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume I, Number 4

July, 2010

JUST WHAT IS GOING ON WHEN YOU SEE OR HEAR... THOSE MEDICAL MEN IN THEIR FLYING MACHINES?

One misty night last month many of us who were still up might have wondered why a low-flying helicopter was swooping around loudly for an unusually long time. It wasn't a raid by the Feds, and they weren't filming a remake of a Coppola movie – it was in fact a LifeStar chopper, with its pilot who was just a mite hesitant about where to land. Patricia Hubbard has been finding out about the crucial role that these costly machines play in maintaining the well-being of our townsfolk.

We all know that Sandisfield residents enjoy the quiet wooded beauty of our region of the Berkshires, and that Sandisfield is, geographically, the largest town in Berkshire County. That means that many of us live in remote locations. Indeed, that is probably what drew us to come to live in Sandisfield in the first place. And when all is well, this is a wonderful place to live.

But, when we have an accident, or a heart attack, or are in some other dire situation requiring immediate medical attention, our remote locations could be

a problem. We may never think about this problem, but the Fire, Police and Emergency Management personnel who address these problems all the time have to think about it. Our remoteness is a challenge- and so those who are charged with looking after us have created multi-level support mechanisms to do so.



cont'd p.2

AVIAN NOTES

Margaret O'Clair



THOSE ADORABLE BIRDS THAT DON'T KNOW THE WORDS

Hummingbirds belong to us, and us alone. They are found only in the Americas and nowhere else on the planet. True, Africa has a family of tiny iridescent nectar eaters called sunbirds, but they can't hold a candle to our avian acrobats. Because hummers can reverse their wing feathers they can, in effect, rotate their wings and fly perpendicular, backwards and hover.

Most species are found in Central and South America and found in every conceivable habitat from the Neotropical forest floor to as high in the Andes as nectar-bearing flowers will grow. At some point in time, there are hummers in Alaska all the way to Tierra del Fuego.

Southern California and the southwest benefit from their
cont'd p.3

THE JEEP AND THE SANDISFIELD SAMARITAN

The Sandisfield Times is very much your newspaper – and those of us who put it together each month are eager to publish as many points of view as there are readers in our town. Recently one of those readers, Larry Dwyer, wrote us a mildly critical letter (see page 14). We asked him if he would write an essay for us, to illustrate the question of Unity and Division in a Small Massachusetts Hill Town. He agreed to do so, as the following short story:

Fritz walked into the side door of Frank's house and stood inside of the entrance to the kitchen and called, "Hello Frank! Where are you? I need you."

The door was never locked in the daytime, and there was no need to knock. Fritz only had to call to see if someone was home, but with the windows open and the curtains waving in the summer breeze, he could see that the house was not empty. Ruth came into the kitchen from the living room.

"Oh, Hi Fritz. Frank is working outside in the garage."

"Ruthie! I need Frank. Mr. Suter broke down with his Jeep in Williamstown. I need Frank to come with me, to help fix the Jeep."

"Oh dear. Just call Frank, he'll hear you."

"Thank you Ruthie. I'll see you later."

Fritz walked out back towards the garage and called out, "Frank, where are you?"

Frank's garage was a patchwork of additions that were added onto the old bungalow, and when you walked inside, there was always an aroma of freshly mowed hay. The bungalow was the living quarters before the new house was built during the war years, and there was no electricity or running water in those days. Lighting was by kerosene lamp, and of course, an outhouse was built about thirty feet away.

"Fritz! Back here," answered Frank.

Fritz walked into the garage and into the side shop where Frank was threading some pipe for an attachment on his tractor.

"Hurry Frank. Leave that there and you get your tools, we have to go to Mr. Suter. He broke down with his Jeep in Williamstown and we have to pick him up."

cont'd p.2



THOSE FLYING MACHINES

cont'd from p.1

The Ambulance Squad and Emergency Management Teams are able to help residents in need with basic emergency medical care often en route to our local hospitals. They are constantly training to hone their skills. An EMT provides basic pre-hospital emergency life support. Experts say that during the first ten minutes of cardiac arrest there is no difference between the level of care provided by a Paramedic and a doctor. If a situation requires a higher level of skill, Sandisfield has a contract with Advanced Life Support (ALS) /Paramedic in Winsted. They provide the next level of medical assistance.

For accidents requiring immediate care at a trauma center, Life Star Helicopter service is employed. Level 1 Trauma Centers in our area are Hartford Hospital, Springfield Hospital and Albany Medical Center. The Berkshire County Sheriff's Communications Center, located at the Sheriff's Office headquarters in Pittsfield, provides fire, police and ambulance emergency and non-emergency communications for twenty-six cities and towns. At the accident site a single person is designated as the sole "communicator" with the helicopter. That person is a member of the Fire Department, the Police Department, or Emergency Medical Services (EMS).

The helicopters have amazing dexterity and require a landing space of 3600 square feet. They are provided latitude/longitude coordinates for the designated landing sites. Weather and visibility do determine where the helicopter can land and this has to be left to the pilot's discretion. Recently a Life Star helicopter was called to an accident in Sandisfield on a misty night. The pilot determined that the visibility at Fire Station #2 was unacceptable for landing and he was detoured to Carr's Field. In fact Sandisfield has twelve landing sites for Life Star Helicopters.



LIFE STAR HELICOPTER LANDING SITES

Location	Latitude	Longitude
Connie Cauty – Rte. 57, Bosworth Rd	42 07 15	73 10 35
Town Hall – Silver Brook Road	42 06 03	73 05 82
Carr's Field – Route 57	42 05 84	73 05 39
Charlie Pease – Route 8	42 05 69	73 04 90
Eric Pachulski – Roosterville Road	42 04 72	73 04 27
Fire Station #2 – Route 57	42 06 76	73 08 91
Gas Line – Route 8 Rest Area	42 07 46	73 03 95
Gene Riiska – New Hartford Road	42 03 20	73 07 50
Hryckvich Farm – Beech Plain Road	42 09 62	73 07 06
Hryckvich Saw Mill – Route 8	42 06 46	73 07 03
Rowely Farm – Cold Spring Road	42 09 58	73 07 03
West Lake – West Street	42 07 74	73 09 73

So next time you see or hear a whirling dervish of a machine, all lights and blades and noise and fumes, settling down behind the trees somewhere in town – spare a thought: for the Sandisfield men and women who have hurriedly cleared and organized one of these pre-designated landing spots; for the chopper crew who will put their aircraft down in a part of the world with which few outsiders are familiar – and for the passenger whom they came for, and whom they will be flying swiftly away: a person in trouble, maybe, but a person in a whole lot of good hands. 🇺🇸

SANDISFIELD SAMARITAN

cont'd from p.1

"What, the Wagoneer?"

"That's the one."

"Williamstown! Cheese and crackers! What's he doing up there?"

"I don't know. Hurry, let's go."

Without hesitating or even a grumble, Frank dropped what he was doing, wiped his hands on an old rag and retrieved his toolbox.

"Put the tools in your car and follow me," said Fritz.

Fritz turned around in the driveway onto Route 57, and headed towards Williamstown, and Frank followed.

Mr. Suter was retired now, but earlier in his career he served as Chairman of the Board of Geigy Chemicals. For a man of his means, he lived in a fairly modest house in Mill River, but with a spectacular view of the Berkshire Mountains. Surrounded by books, Mr. Suter spent many hours reading during the day. If Mr. Suter needed any kind of mechanical or carpentry work done on his house or dairy farm, Fritz would be the first person he would call. Mr. Suter was Swiss, and Fritz was German, but they had an understanding. Frank always said that Fritz was very loyal to Mr. Suter, but the respect and loyalty were mutual.

As they drove towards Williamstown, just on the outskirts of town, they could see Mr. Suter's Jeep Wagoneer on the side of the road. They pulled up behind the vehicle, Fritz approached Mr. Suter first.

"Mr. Suter. How are you doing? I'm glad to see you're all right. What seems to be the matter here?"

"Thank you for coming Fritz. I see you have a helper. Who is this here?"

"This is Frank. He's the best mechanic in Sandisfield. He can fix anything," said Fritz half jokingly.

"Pleased to meet you Frank."

"Good afternoon Mr. Suter. Were you waiting long?"

"No, no, not at all. The shifter came apart on the Jeep and I had to pull over here."

Fritz interrupted, "Here Mr. Suter. You take my car, and Frank and I will fix this and drive it back to your house."

"Thank you Fritz, and thank you Frank."

Fritz turned around, "Frank, get your tools and let's see what's wrong here."

As Mr. Suter drove off, the two men walked towards the Jeep, and evaluated the problem. As it turned out, it wasn't all that difficult to fix. The shift linkage rod end had sheared off, and by wrapping some wire around it, they were able to nurse the Jeep back to Fritz's house, where they could make permanent repairs.

The next day, Frank was back at work in his garage, when an unexpected visitor came by that afternoon. Mr. Suter had come to Frank's house and he handed Frank an envelope. When he opened it, inside was a one hundred dollar bill.

Frank said, "Mr. Suter, What's this for?"

"That's for you."

Frank said, "When I went with Fritz to help out, I wasn't expecting any money. I can't accept this."

Mr. Suter scowled, "No. You take this and that's it. Goodbye."

Looking slightly annoyed, Mr. Suter turned around, walked to his car and drove off. Frank went inside and told Ruth about Mr. Suter's visit and then he went over Fritz's house.

"Fritz, Mr. Suter came over to my house and gave me a hundred dollars. I wasn't expecting any money, I was just helping out."

In a somber tone, Fritz replied, "Frank look. You never argue with Mr. Suter. When he gives you something, you just take it. Now you take that money, and you go out to dinner with Ruthie, and have a good time."

Taking Fritz's advice, Frank took Ruth down the road to Daffer's restaurant on Route 57 that night, and they had one of the best dinners out, that they could remember, for a long time. 🇺🇸

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

By Simon Winchester



Photo: Setsuko Winchester

The verb “to keep” has no fewer than fifty-nine main meanings listed in the dictionary – a fair number, you may think, but actually only half the number of meanings that are assigned to the verb “to take”, and a mere

fraction of those for “to set”, which occupy no fewer than 21 full dictionary pages.

But stay for a moment with “keep”, and with Meaning No. 37 of the nearly three-score that are listed, since it just happens to pertain to us (and to Cambridge University, oddly). Ever since the year 1400 or so, this meaning of keep was “to reside, to dwell, to live or to lodge”. The sense has since passed out of use everywhere in the world - except in the aforementioned university, and according to the dictionary “in parts of Massachusetts and New England”. These places, Cambridge and hereabouts, are thus the only sites known on earth where “to keep” means to lodge, and where as a consequence the phrase “keeping room” still survives and flourishes.

I always thought that a keeping room, usually next to the farmhouse kitchen, was where the family stayed

to “keep” warm. It turns out to be more prosaic: that merely for the family to be staying, in this obscure corner of our tongue they were said to be keeping.

Most people in these parts have a keeping room. Some are large, some small. Many are eccentric: I know of one that has no fewer than eight doors leading in and out of it. It is like Piccadilly Circus – a central hub of this little old house, where people come in from outside, go into the kitchen, down to the basement, upstairs to the attic, into a spare room, into a larder, out to a hallway...it just goes on and on, even though the room itself is tiny, with barely space to swing a cat. It is just a nexus of complexity, a place where – forgetting the cat - a spider might comfortably hide, biding his time, waiting for the inevitable passage of his prey.

And our town, so I was thinking, has a keeping room of its own – another Piccadilly Circus-like nexus of complexity that is going to be very much in the news and in our thoughts over the next long while. It is a keeping room with a name – New Boston – and it is centered on the fearsomely complicated road and river junction of Routes 8 and 57, and a number of smaller lanes and entranceways besides, where the Commonwealth, in its infinite wisdom, is planning to start two years’ worth of bridge reconstruction next spring.

Everyone is going to be affected by the coming work. The noise will be terrific. Strangers will be living in caravans on site. The comings and goings of all will be directed by more traffic lights than currently exist in Times Square. Tannery Road will be closed down completely, to the chagrin of those who live

there (including our Police Chief). The newly and pleasingly modernized shop we all know as Pete’s Store will have to have lights telling the few who can squeeze into its much-diminished parking lot whether they have a green light to go, or whether they are likely to be greeted by an armada of trucks as they leave. Anyone wishing to go to the New Boston Inn will have to similarly hope and pray; and anyone crossing between Sandisfield and Tolland, or between Otis and Winsted, will have to suffer endless signal delays.

But when it is all done, they say in 2013 – the bridge stronger and more sensibly aligned, a riverside park in the place where the old houses once stood – we will have a new and unrealized potential – a chance to remake this joining of the roads and the rivers into the one true focal point for our little town. After all, the components will all be in place: an ancient inn, a friendly country store, a green and flower-filled park, a clear and swift-flowing stream, and a swarm of people and vehicles all moving in a vortex – there will be no livelier place in Sandisfield, to be sure.

So why don’t we begin to think how we’d like it to look, three years from now? We could plan it, make it pretty, make it fun. Why not give ourselves a 250th birthday present – a town center at last, something good and long-lasting and well thought-out, something for us – using dictionary Meaning No. 24 – to keep. ♣



ADORABLE BIRDS *cont'd from p.1*

closeness to the wintering grounds of such beautiful species as the Rufous, Broad Tailed, Black Chinned and Magnificent Hummingbirds, all of which have bred in those states. The west coast is fortunate to have a year-round resident. When I visit my family in Seattle, I am always astonished to see Anna’s Hummingbirds in their garden – at Christmas!

In the eastern half of the US, we have only one summer hummer, the familiar Ruby Throated, named for the brilliant red gorget of the male. Sometimes the iridescent green of the back and wings appear black, but that is an illusion created by the reflected angle of the light. How do they get here? Thanks to the wonders of modern technology we know that every year thousands of Rubies gather along the Mexican Yucatan Peninsula to eat, gain weight and store up energy. After a while, for a few weeks every evening, hundreds of the little birds head north over the Gulf of Mexico arriving in our southern states the following afternoon; an amazing 500 plus miles non-stop flight with no room for error.

Sandisfield’s hummers arrive at the beginning of May. The female builds a tiny nest, lays two tiny eggs and raises two tiny birds by herself. As far as I can tell the males spend the summer fighting, to defend their territory and especially their



feeders. In a good year I have had to put out six or seven feeders in my yard. This year it is only three.

One year I found a hummer spread eagle on the hood of my truck. I picked the little bird up, its head lolled ominously so I wrapped my hand around it and tucked its head between my thumb and index finger, with just its beak sticking out. At a loss for what to do next, I got

a nectar feeder, sat on the truck fender and began dipping its beak into the yellow “flower” of the feeder. I felt movement in my hand. The beak stayed in the nectar without my help, the bird appeared to be drinking on its own. His head popped out of my hand, he took a look at me and SHRIEKED so loud, I unfurled my fingers. He crouched on my palm for a few seconds, stood upright, shook himself from head to toe like a wet dog and went off straight up like a rocket and was gone. Now that was a very good hummer year. ♣

INTERNS REQUIRED!

You may notice a fresh by-line in this issue, that of **Nicholas Dyja**, to whom we extend a very warm welcome.

Nick is 15 years old, a student in New York who summers here. He read a copy of *The Times*, liked it and wrote to ask if he could work for us. And so he is - reporting occasionally, performing scut-work mostly - as an intern.



Photo by Setsuko Winchester

We welcome young interns at any time of the year who might have their long-term sights on a career in journalism or communications. Having one’s own transport would be useful, but is not essential if parents are able to help. Duties would be light, varied, sporadic, unremunerated and generally fun.

Please apply to the editor.

BRINGING AN ANGUISHED WORLD TO OUR COMFORTABLE HILLS

By Nicholas Dyja

A profound sense of global inter-connectedness begins with one's first step into **The Stanmeyer Gallery**, which has been recently opened close to the Sandisfield line in West Otis, by the renowned and globe-trotting photojournalist **John Stanmeyer**. The gallery is in a former horse barn, the kind of cozily familiar place we



know all too well; the photographs, though, are of an utterly different and unfamiliar world – and seeing them in this Berkshire environment affords the viewer a sense of removal from their sometimes shocking and always ultra-serious themes. A visitor in deep in the Berkshires gazing at a group of Afghani boys toiling away making bricks in a village eight thousand miles away is a gentle reminder of the comforts of Western living.

This level of comfort can be welcome at times though, simply because Mr. Stanmeyer's photography deals with such sensitive subject matters. Taken over roughly the last twenty years, his work largely focuses on the plight

of the developing world, from the slums of Calcutta to Haitian emigrés. Mr. Stanmeyer's goal is not to just present "a pretty picture" but to "raise awareness, and challenge consciousness". His work has been featured in such publications as *Time* and *National Geographic*, and he has won the prestigious Robert Capa Gold Award.

His desire to spark awareness was the reason why he chose his studio in West Otis as the location to showcase some of the best work of an illustrious career. He believes the location to be a fitting "...vehicle to engage discussion and promote change."

Visually, the photos are beautiful and the composition clever. For example, one photo makes it seem as if a boy's body is made of bricks. Another highlights the mysticism of Sufism through swirling colors and burning incense. For a journalist so devoted to changing policy and improving the state of the meek, Mr. Stanmeyer admits that when taking photos, "I'm always thinking. Whether it be about the moment, the lighting, the person, I am constantly thinking."

Topics such as the war in Afghanistan could easily be personified through a snapshot of a carcass, or a wounded man being hustled through the streets of Kabul. Those simple types of photos would not suit Mr. Stanmeyer's cause, however. "I tend to move away from those "direct approach" photographs." Mr. Stanmeyer explains, "I don't want to just show you something, I want to make you think."



Photo by John Stanmeyer



By Adam Manacher

GRILLER WAR: IT'S ALL IN THE TIMING

Summertime, and everyone's grilling. It is always a challenge to have all the grilled food done just right and at the right time. What follows are a few tips regarding cooking order and timing, which is an important part of mastering the grill.

If you can, when you prepare your fire, have a two-level fire: a double layer of coals on one side of the grill and a single layer on the other. This allows you to manage the heat for different items as you cook.

Start with cooking your vegetables first. It is a great way to minimize distractions and stress when you want to focus on the all-important meats. This is also a good "safe food" practice. Have a heatproof platter or a warm place off the grill for putting vegetables once they are cooked. Be sure to brush your vegetables with olive oil and lightly salt them (or any other seasonings you may like) before you toss them on the heat.

Grilling corn on the cob? That should go on first, and depending on your method (soaked or not, foiled or not) it will take about 15 minutes on a moderate flame. Onions and eggplant, cut to 1/2 inch thick rounds, and peppers, cut into 1 inch strips, should go on next. Cook for 10 to 15 minutes on the hotter flame. The onions, in order to bring out their sweetness, should cook long enough to brown or slightly char before flipping them. Let the eggplant and peppers soften and slightly char

cont'd p.6

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The Gardeners' Almanac

Nancy Flach



July, summertime and the livin' is easy. The wild roadsides are blooming - with muted orange day lilies that escaped from a pilgrim's garden several hundred years ago. Following right behind them comes the delicate Queen Anne's lace whose original seeds came from cultivated carrots many years ago; and bringing up the rear are our own New England asters with varying hues from light to dark blues and purple.

But so much for Nature's garden. What about our own, which we've worked so hard to nurture and raise? Now is the time when they begin to rebel like errant teenagers, wild and worrisome, inviting in companions whose habits we don't approve - like the Japanese beetle that came to us by ship in the early eighteen hundreds. With no predators, the beetles have become an obnoxious and destructive pest. With a body that glows an iridescent copper and a luminous jade green head, the insect could inspire the making of a grand lapel pin in the hands of a skilled jeweler. It is common to see crowds of them lurching on kale and having dessert on rose petals while at the same time actively mating, one on top of the other. It is while they are in the throes of ecstasy that they can be picked up easily and dropped into a glass filled with soapy water.

A few reminders: Don't let the dog days of summer keep you from enjoying a plentiful late crop of produce. Vegetables such as corn, beets, spinach, radishes, and lettuce can now be seeded directly into the ground. Lightly side-dress established corn and tomatoes and tidy up the debris around the plants to avoid powdery mildew. Trim sucker growth to let air circulate and all will be well.

With the many variables our gardens heap upon us, one thing is for sure and that is that if we tend to them lovingly with care, they will respond to us favorably, bringing us pleasure while teaching us patience (maybe).

July To-Do List:

- ✿ Do raise the blades on your mower. 2 1/2 to 3 inches is a good height for mid summer.
- ✿ Do leave blueberries on the bush at least one week after turning blue to allow them to sweeten. (A good idea is to cover them with a floating row cover for protection)
- ✿ Do remember to adequately water plants as most need an inch or two of water a week.
- ✿ Do dead head every day if you can.
- ✿ Do remember to continue feeding the birds. 🐦

ASK (PROPERLY) AND YE SHALL RECEIVE

In a moment of carelessness we suggested last month that our ever-vigilant Fire Department doesn't apply for, or receive, grants. Far from it: as Patricia Hubbard explains, we can and do get lots of goodies - but only if we learn exactly how to ask.

The Sandisfield Fire Department, Police Department and Emergency Management have been actively pursuing both Federal and State grants over the last few years. Emergency Management Director, John Burrows, Fire Chief Ralph Morrison and Police Chief Michael Morrison have all attended grant writing classes to learn the fine skill of grant writing. According to Fire Chief Morrison, they have learned that it is important "to be precise and specific" when applying for a grant. He gave as an example the need to cite the exact model and number of the radios that were part of a grant requested (and granted last year). He said that had they not been precise about the specific model number of the radios, their grant would have been rejected.

Chief Morrison noted that specificity is important since in order to meet federal standards it is necessary to provide documentation and receipts for all the items purchased under the grant. The federal standards are rigid and the precise record keeping is key to continued success in obtaining federal grants.

Last year the Sandisfield Police Department successfully applied for and received a grant for Traffic Enforcement and Equipment. They were awarded \$8,400 for six mobilizations at \$900 each and \$3000 for equipment. The shrinking state budget has impacted funds for this fiscal year.

The Sandisfield Fire Department and Emergency Management have been successful in applying for and being awarded grants. In 2005 they received funds for a Rescue Boat, a Kubota ATV, a Polaris ATV, and two snowmobiles. In 2006 they received funds for the air compressor to refill the self-contained breathing apparatus. In 2007 they received \$42,500 for radios, repeater and generator for the fire stations.

At the present time Sandisfield, as part of the Massachusetts Berkshire Fire Chiefs Association, has applied for a grant for Better Communications in the Berkshire County. This is part of the mutual aid relationship that Sandisfield has with many of the other towns in the area. Since each town is lacking in necessary manpower to handle a crisis, the police and fire departments in each of the towns provide "back up" to one another. At present, State and Federal monies are tight, but our departments continue to search out appropriate grants and spend their time applying for them. 🐦



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SATURDAYS JULY 17TH & JULY 24TH
10:30 AM - NOON \$5

2010 FORUM ON AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE:
WAR AND PEACE

July 17: Val Coleman will talk about the overall landscape of war and peace including the history of pacifism, non-violence, 'just war' and the equally important connections to personal courage and cowardice.

July 24: Bill Cohn's talk, entitled "Why We Fight," will challenge the pervasive American cultural beliefs that the United States has never gone to war without good reason and without humanitarian intentions.



GRILLER WAR *cont'd from p.4*

EDIBLE SANDSFIELD before turning them over (if you have the patience, peel and discard the charred pepper skins, and throw the peppers back on for 2 minutes!). Soft vegetables like zucchini or summer squash can be cut lengthwise into 1/2 inch thick pieces and cooked for 3 to 5 minutes on each side. Tomatoes, too, cut in half, can go on the grill 5 minutes per side.

Once your vegetables are done, keep them warm, and the meat can go on the fire. Chicken breasts should be seared over the hot fire (the skin will have grill marks and the meat begins to turn white) and then finished cooking over the more moderate heat. This prevents them from getting too dry. Cook about 10 minutes on one side, 5 on the other. Chicken thighs and legs should be cooked over the high heat for 15 to 18 minutes. Remember, if you have a meat thermometer, internal temperature for chicken needs to be 160 degrees.

Steaks should be cooked over high heat. Allow 8-10 minutes for a 1-inch steak (4 to 5 minutes a side) to be rare, 12-14 for medium. Cooking to "touch" means that when you are getting close to doneness, press the steak with your finger tip: Rare will be soft, medium will be firm but yield to the touch and well done will be firm.

Hamburgers should be cooked over the high flame until they release their juices on top of the burger. Cook another minute and flip over for 1 or 2 minutes depending on your preferred doneness.

Always let the meat rest for 4 to 5 minutes after cooking before cutting to let the juices be re-absorbed and keep the meat juicy. While it's resting you can quickly reheat your veggies and call everyone to the table!

A quick simple recipe for steak lovers...

3lbs. flank steak. Marinate for at least an hour in:

2 small cloves garlic crushed, 3 tbsp. olive oil, 2 tbsp. dry red wine or sherry wine, 2 tbsp. soy sauce, 2 or 3 tbsp. of crushed rosemary. Rub the marinade over the meat and refrigerate. Grill over high heat. Let rest. Slice thinly and serve. 🍴

Arts and Culture Review:

Tina Sotis

Sandy Parisky "VIBRANT WORKS"

I've watched Sandy Parisky's growth as an artist since we met about nine years ago, so it is with pleasure that I write this review of his work that is on exhibit at the Butler-McCook House in Hartford, CT.

What impresses me so much about Sandy's style is his intuitive understanding of how to create the illusion of light and how to force the viewers' eye to move around a composition in a way that makes sense. For a visual artist these are very difficult tricks, and he accomplishes them wonderfully by a masterful use of both color juxtaposition and a full range of darks and lights. In "Cinque Terre", he chose a rich, deep yellow for the house (offset by blue windows), which is resting on, and in front of, violet cliffs. Behind those brilliant cliffs lurk a forest of subdued blues and brownish greens. Five colorful row boats float together in the sea at the base of the cliff, its violet tones carried into the water. The genius in this pastel is the way Sandy forces our eye to follow the light: The entirety of this composition is made of blues and violets except for the house and one of the little boats - and that boat is located directly under the house, its beautiful yellow reflection traveling vertically through the deepening blue water, off the bottom edge of the pastel. In this way, he created a visually powerful vertical movement seconded only by the strong horizontal expanse of the violet cliff.

"Fox Tracks", another pastel (20" x 25"), is a dramatic rendition of an icy river. It again exemplifies how Sandy is able to create movement and light in a painting: The foreground is entirely composed of vast sheets of ice, snow and teal blue water. The large chunks of ice become smaller as they recede into a gray-blue mist. Dark brownish green pines with highlights of maroon offer a shadowy contrast



Cinque Terre by Sandy Parisky Pastel, 15" x 17" ©2010

and mystery in the upper left of the composition. This is a very quiet, lovely piece; a simple subject matter: just a frozen river, lovingly done.

Sandy had just decided to put more time into his painting when I met him (he was in the process of retiring), and the evidence of his commitment to his art is powerful indeed. His work - which was already strong - has become even richer and more complex, his sense of composition is more sophisticated. His use of color now lends an element of mystery to his paintings that wasn't as obvious before. And it's all happened because of his tireless pursuit of mastery at his craft. An artist who works "en plein air", Sandy travels extensively and takes his art supplies to many of the places he visits. He works continuously at improving his skills and is inspired and challenged by "the subject matter at hand."

Limited space prevents me from discussing the remaining six pieces in this show, which are on display until August 15th. However, these works (in color) and more information about Sandy can be found online at www.sandisfieldtimes.org/parisky.pdf. For information about the show, email butler.mccook@ctkandmarks.org or call 860-247-8996 ext. 23. 🍴



EMS/FIRE BLOTTER

The Sandisfield Volunteer Fire Department and Ambulance Squad responded to the following incidents during April of this year:

Fire Calls:

Power Lines Down	4
Motor Vehicle Accidents	1
Sprinkler Activation, no fire	1
Fire Alarm Activation, no fire	3

Ambulance Calls:

Motor Vehicle Accidents	1
Medical calls	11

TOTAL ALL CALLS 21

Please contact Chief Ralph Morrison at 258-4742 if you are interested in joining the fire department or becoming an EMT on the ambulance squad.



FROM THE OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK



Dolores Harasyko

It has just come to my attention that effective January 1, 2010, you need to register for saltwater fishing. It is free this year, but there will be a separate fishing license and a fee beginning in 2011. The registration is done online at countmyfish.noaa.gov or by calling 888-MRIP-411. I do not have registrations in the Town Hall. It can only be done online or by calling.

GETTING A ROOM AT THE PINSKY'S

By Val Coleman

Libby Schnovsky Pinsky was slightly deaf...and a good thing too...each summer her home in Sandisfield was filled with a hullabaloo of kids and their parents who came up from the Bronx and Brooklyn slums to “board” or “room” in the big white house at 6 Silverbrook Road. A summer “boarder” was fed three meals a day and a “roomer” had their own special space on the black iron woodstove and in the ice box (or “refrigerator” depending on what year you’re talking about.)

“There were kids and chickens all over the place,” said Anne Pinsky Hoffman and her husband Phil, sitting in the living room of the copy of their old house, an almost identical building constructed this year on the same site...right up the road from the Sandisfield Town Hall.

The old house, with all its echoes, built in 1799, burned to the ground mysteriously in February of 2008.



Photo by Richard Migot

Anne’s mother, Libby, and her husband David Pinsky, who organized the boarding house in 1922, were prominent members of Sandisfield’s Jewish community which had been founded after the First World War by the philanthropy of Baron Maurice de Hirsch who financed the migration of European Jews to America to escape the pogroms and start anew as small agricultural communities.

During the early 20th Century there were many boarding and rooming houses in the Berkshires. But there was something special about the house at 6 Silverbrook Road...it was, among many other things, a dairy farm. Ten milk cows ambled next to the house, and a garden of potatoes, carrots and beans and dozens of chickens provided much of the food cooked on the old black stove. The leftover milk was sold to the Borden Company’s outlet in Otis.

But more important, it was a place born of compassion (the Yiddish word is *rachmunis*) created as an alternative to the demoralizing slums

of New York where the elder Pinskys originally had settled from Russia.

Getting a room at the Pinskys in Sandisfield was a big deal. A letter of application had to be written and approved and a square spot on the stove reserved. Libby Pinsky and her children read and answered the letters (some of which required translation from Yiddish) and braced themselves in the Spring for the invasion. The old house had 13 rooms and as many as 10 families would come up from New York each summer. The husbands stayed in the city to work during the week.

For almost forty years, the place rang with children’s voices. Picnics and baseball, swimming and singing, replaced the gloom and heartache of the slums for three precious months.

A typical summer day would end up in the Montville dance hall (long since demolished) with a rousing square dance, music provided by players from all the nearby towns. The local entrepreneur was Abe Baranoff, who saw to it that the square dances went long into the night, usually ending with what Anne called “grand parties, great fun and endless laughter.”


During the day, the boarders and roomers shared the chores of the farm with the Pinsky family. And although this was a summer vacation for the children, those who were having difficulty at school back in New York took special remedial classes.

Everyone had something to contribute; actors and musicians put on small musicals and one act plays, and the weekends were especially exciting when the husbands came up from the city to join their families.

Summer in the old house at 6 Silverbrook Road in Sandisfield, Massachusetts from 1922 until the early 1960s was a liberating American moment that should never be forgotten.

Even when the “boarding” and “rooming” ended in the 1960s, the old house remained a gathering place for New York families, many of them artists and academics...some of them veterans of the civil rights movement.

Many of the families who came to Sandisfield to live at the old house in the summertime stayed and still prosper here. The Dryanskys and Levines and Marilyn Gore, for example, still members of the Sandisfield community, are veterans of Silverbrook Road.

Anne Hoffman, who grew up in the old house with four brothers and a sister, decided, in 1985, to write a book. She called it “Sandisfield, Biography of a Town”. 

A WALK IN THE WOODS

By Nicholas Dyja

Towards the end of last month six young members of the fifty-year old volunteer body known as the Student Conservation Association spent a hot and tough week improving conditions on a popular trail that circumscribes York Lake at the western edge of town.

The trail a gentle, scenic walk through the Sandisfield State Forest, has proved so popular that last summer it was designated as a Healthy Heart Trail by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation. Unfortunately parts of its two-and-a-half-mile length have become flooded and boggy, requiring hiking boots and gaiters just to complete.

The trail’s poor drainage was the main concern for the team, though they could do nothing to resolve it – they could only mitigate its effects. They did their best to make the path easily usable once again by placing stepping-stones and building bog-bridges. The three young men and three young women on the team spent ten long days working on the trail - devoting one week to setting stones and their final three days to constructing bog-bridges, clearing brush and removing fallen trees from remaining parts of the trail.


The work itself can be exceptionally arduous. To move a stone stable enough to be used as a stepping-stone the team had to employ a “rock-lever”, or a massive six-foot, twenty pound piece of metal, as leverage. Some of the stones were so massive that moving just three of them could be an entire day’s work. The bog bridging was much less of a hassle, and when compared to working with the stones the business of building bog-bridges was “the fun part” according to one team member.

The team members – most are in their very early twenties - have backgrounds as varied as the work they do across the state: one graduated from Kenyon College as a Drama major, another graduated from Stonehill College having majored in Philosophy. Not all the team hails from New England: one has come to York Lake from Michigan. And though not all of the team have degrees in Environmental Science, everyone, according to the team leader, shares the common goal of conservation.



Photo: Setsuko Winchester

The improvements they have been tasked to complete should be greatly welcomed. By the time we went to press it was beginning to look as though the crew was well on its way to returning this trail back to its glory days - a trail that Thoreau himself would have loved, a quite and leafy place for an exceptionally pretty walk in our woods.

(More details about the Student Conservation Association, which was born in 1957 as the result of an essay written by a young Vassar student, can be found at <http://www.thesca.org>) 

HATCHED, MATCHED & DISPATCHED



AEDAN JOHN CANNAMELA BORN JUNE 20, 2010

Aedan John Cannamela was born on Sunday June 20, 2010, at 1:08pm. weighing in at 7lbs 6 oz and 20 inches long to proud parents Sarah Harasyko and Justin Cannamela. Equally proud grandparents are Dolores and Steve Harasyko and Robin Cannamela.



BERNARD BIHARI NOVEMBER 11, 1931-MAY 16, 2010

Bernard Bihari, of New York and Sandisfield, died on May 16, 2010. Julia Schopick, a medical/health advocate and the host of www.honestmedicine.com, wrote a lovely tribute to Dr. Bihari, which we reprint here with her permission. Julia's commitment to helping people change the ways in which they relate to our medical system stems from her experience with late husband Tim Fisher, who died from a cancerous brain tumor.

Last Sunday, the world lost a truly wonderful man: Dr. Bernard Bihari, a medical hero, and one of my personal heroes, as well. Dr. Bihari was the genius who discovered that a very low dose of naltrexone, a drug that had been approved at a higher dose by the FDA for another purpose entirely, could help people with some of the most difficult-to-treat diseases. Thanks to Dr. Bihari, tens of thousands (some say hundreds of thousands) of people with multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis, lupus, HIV/AIDS and even cancer are now living better lives. Many are symptom-free.

Dr. Bihari had the highest of credentials: a Bachelors degree from Cornell, and his MD degree from Harvard. But he never lost sight of his true mission: to lessen the suffering of real people. And that he did. My work has led me to talk personally with so many of the people LDN (low-dose naltrexone) has helped -- especially people with MS. And many of them are now my good friends. 🍷

Celebrate Tolland!



Saturday,
July 10 - 11am

BICENTENNIAL PARADE

Followed by
**FESTIVITIES
on the GREEN**

Noon: Awards, Presentation
of Town Flag

Burial of Time Capsule, Booths,
Food & Much More!

2 pm: Historical Presentation at Church

2 pm: Kid's Games on the Green

3 pm: Bicentennial Cake

and program by Bruce Mandel

Happy 200th Tolland!



Dona Turek & Justin Kilgore **Married May 24**

Dona Turek, daughter of Mary & Donald Turek of Sandisfield, was married to Justin Kilgore on May 24, 2010, on Oppenheimer Beach on the island of St. John, USVI. The bride, 26, was raised in Sandisfield, graduating from Monument Mountain Regional High School in 2002 and Castleton State College in VT in 2006. On May 27, 2010, she graduated from Albany Medical College with a Master's Degree in Physician Assistant Studies. The groom, 32, grew up in Wichita, KS and Atlanta, GA, and served in the US Marine Corps reserves for 8 years. He graduated from Georgia Southern University in 2006 and received his Master's Degree in Physical Assistant Studies from Albany Medical College in 2009. Dona and Justin will move to Saranac Lake, NY, in the heart of the Adirondacks on July 1. Justin will be working as a Hospitalist Physician Assistant while Dona will be working in the Urgent Care Clinic. The Adirondacks will always be a special place for Dona and Justin who got engaged on a 3-day backpacking trip there in 2009.



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Country Diary

Mick Burns

THE POOR ROBINS' ALMANACK

This year the miracle which is spring came early. In mid-March the weather turned mild and never looked back. The dense icy layer, which had provided a lasting base for some wonderful back country skiing this past winter, was no match for the warmer than usual temperatures. An early warm spell is not unusual, but it is often followed by what I refer to as "the refrigerator": a time when the swelling of buds on trees and emergence of plants ceases due to a return to cold temperatures for a period of days or weeks. This effect was hardly noticeable this year, especially at lower altitudes. The sugaring season was fickle, my 51 taps producing only about one-third of last year's abundant nine gallons. Then everything seemed to speed up: the ice on the ponds melted early; crocuses, daffodils, tulips bloomed early; I was picking asparagus in early May and wild strawberries before June 1st! And then there are the robins: I actually saw one bold individual in February!

Robins are skillful fliers and I love their song. The way they tease countless numbers of worms from the lawn is astounding to me. However, some of their domestic pursuits are not always so flawless. Once, while searching for an old soapstone quarry in the Quabbin Woods, I scared up a young robin,


probably on its first flight. It flew down the slope from me, landing on a low bush. In the next instant two bullfrogs leaping caught my eye. There was the quarry, camouflaged by the aquatic plants which completely covered the watery surface. As I took a step toward it the young bird flew a short distance over the water and managed to light on a stick protruding a couple of feet above the water's surface. The frogs started moving toward the bird. At that moment I understood the dream unfolding. I hurried to move to the opposite side of the water hoping the flier would stay put. Of course this was foolish on my part as my movement prompted the young one to attempt to fly. It was unable to gain altitude, landed on the water's surface and was instantly in the mouth of a frog and pulled under.

Another time, during the early phase of construction of my barn home, I entered the unenclosed structure to find a small sky blue egg broken on the floor. After some investigating I found, on the long beam supporting the rafters, a curious situation. A pair of robins had several nests under construction in adjacent rafter bays. One nest was nearly complete and on both sides of it were 3 or 4 additional nests in each direction at lesser stages of completion, one of which had an egg next to it resting on the beam. Apparently they had become confused about the exact location of their nest, the rafter bays having a nearly identical appearance. They had employed plenty of nest building effort, enough to build 2 or 3 complete nests, but, alas, they had not one ready when the eggs had to come out.

So, I was not surprised when, last year, I discovered a nest on the ground, under the landing of the back door, nestled against the foundation. I thought there was little chance of their raising their young to

maturity, but decided to leave the nest alone. Before long four eggs appeared and every day I expected them to be gone, eaten or destroyed by some snake or neighborhood dog. But they hatched and as the chicks grew I found myself becoming more hopeful about their survival. Peering in daily I could see the four little downy fuzzballs or sometimes four large pinkish mouths, rimmed in pale yellow, waiting for a delivery.


In time as the chicks grew, the fuzz became feathers and the four began to resemble miniature versions of their parents. Any day, I thought, they will start to fly. When I next checked there were only three remaining and I assumed the oldest, most mature one, had made it out of the nest. Excited by this apparent success, I kept a close eye on the nest, hoping to glimpse the landmark (or is it airmark?) event in the life of a young robin. During the next few hours, as I worked inside, I could hear quite a bit of robin chatter coming from outside. I assumed the parents were excited and were making a lot of noise as a diversion, to keep attention away from the fledglings. An hour or 2 later the nest was empty, no young ones in sight. Yet, in the top of the nearest tree the adult robins were squawking up a storm and flying tight, small circles. Then I saw the reason: a red squirrel. "No," I thought "It couldn't be." As I moved to get a better view I discovered that yes, it could be. The little bugger was sitting on a branch, contentedly munching on what remained of a young robin, oblivious to the noise and activity of the excited parents.

This year there is a pair of robins nesting on the ground in the same manner as last year, but at the side door. I don't have much hope for them. 



OUR FARMING AMBASSADORS



The Otis Farmers Market, now in its sixth season, is held every Saturday from 9am to 1pm, rain or shine in the parking lot of L&M Auto on Rt. 23 in East Otis, now through Columbus Day Weekend. Sandisfield's agriculturalists are well represented with **Snow Farm** (Emily Tarasuk, pictured right), **Ledgefield Farm** (Nancy Flach), and **When Pigs Fly Farm** (Sandra & Andy Snyder, both of whom helped set up the market and are actively involved in its management). Andy (shown left) says business increases quite a bit when second homeowners come up for the season, but he has noticed a dramatic increase in local buying, perhaps part of the "buy-local" or "locavore" trend. 



Photos Richard B. Migot

THE MAN WHO TICKED OFF COMRADE LENIN

Sandisfield has over the years played home to a remarkable and very varied cast of characters. Ron Bernard, who is editing the mighty book that will help celebrate our 250th anniversary in the year 2012, profiles one of our more unforgettable residents.

George E. Sokolsky (1893-1962) was perhaps Sandisfield's most famous resident in modern times. He was born in Utica, NY son of an orthodox rabbi, a Russian émigré driven out by the pogroms of the 1880s. Raised in New York's poor and tough Lower Eastside, he was exposed to four languages at home before learning English. He eventually mastered seven.

Sokolsky's brilliant career as a journalist, author, syndicated columnist (350 papers) and as a weekly radio broadcaster on the ABC network, had a propitious beginning. While a newspaper boy in high school, he met Joseph Pulitzer, the famous publisher. His son, George Jr., wrote: "Pulitzer took a liking to him and offered a full scholarship at Columbia University." There Sokolsky participated in ultra left activities but was expelled one week before graduation in 1917. Without a degree and therefore no chance to work for a major American newspaper, he booked one-way passage to Stockholm for a promised job. He was duped. No such job. However during the voyage he befriended Leon Trotsky who was returning to join the revolution in Russia. Sokolsky soon followed and was hired by The Petrograd Daily News. The experience was transformational. The brutal injustices by the Bolsheviks in the 1918 revolution turned him into "a flaming reactionary." His writings angered Lenin. Sokolsky had to 'get out of town' -- fast.

He went on to report from China and became a life long friend of Chiang Kai-Shek. After

14 years he repatriated with reputation as a world affairs expert, a re-born advocate for the American way of life and as a staunch anti-communist. He became an intimate of J. Edgar Hoover and was practically the only major journalist to support Sen. Joseph McCarthy although his positions were moderate. His columns and many speeches, which pulled no punches, were widely



published. Sokolsky became extremely influential on the American political scene and he had access to everyone important.

In 1933 the Sokolskys acquired an old farmstead in remote Sandisfield as a refuge from the public eye. He spent nearly 30 years improving the property he loved which he called "The Kim-Feng Farm" in honor of his departed first wife. In 1946 he helped found the Sandisfield Taxpayer's Association, an energetic grass roots effort to guide the town to improve infrastructure problems like bad roads and town services. Prominent public figures and major Hollywood personalities were frequent guests at the former "Amen Farm" on North Beech Plain Road.

He died in December, 1962 in New York. George Jr. recalled: "The pallbearers included former President Herbert Hoover, Gen. Douglas MacArthur and Bobby Kennedy representing his brother, the President." (Above, with best friend, "Joe", 1958).

(With great appreciation for biographical information to George Sokolsky Jr., resident of Otis).

OUR GRADUATES

Congratulations to our graduates!

Graduating from Monument Mountain are:

- Michael Carr*
- Zachariah Ferron*
- Jacob Wilcox*
- Travis Wilcox*

Graduating from Mount Everett:

- Andy Ignace*

Sixth graders leaving FRRSD are:

- Shelby Baily*
- Katrina Campetti*
- Lily Cormier*
- Paige Gray*
- Nicole Hryckvich*
- Anna Snyder*
- Scott Stringham*
- Bart Christiano*



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THIS LORD NELSON LIKES HIS WATERS FRESH

By Courtney Maum



Photo by Setsuko Winchester

As it often happens in Sandisfield, a visit to **Looking Glass Gardens** will leave you wondering whether you've fallen through a portal into a magical, foreign world where world peace is achievable and doves are more common than black flies. Koi ponds, waterfalls, gurgling streams banked by determined stalks of water celery and a view that just won't quit; a veritable neverland awaits at **19 Dodd Road**.

Although he's an accomplished landscaper today, when he was a little boy living a rock-skip away from the Farmington River, Chuck Nelson wanted to be a cowboy. This spirit for adventure saw him travel across Europe for nearly ten years after he finished his tour with the US Army. With such demonstrated wanderlust, you would think he might have acquired a taste for the exotic, but he says his German mother still makes his favorite version of lasagna. German lasagna? Come to think of it, that is pretty exotic.

An avid fan of skiing and swimming, Chuck is the proud father of three lovely girls, the youngest of whom is on her way to becoming an accomplished equestrian. In an interview at his nursery, Chuck admits that he loves every little thing about the work he does, so much so that he can't possibly imagine what else

he would be doing if he wasn't in nature and construction. A fourth-generation landscaper, Chuck Nelson purchased what is now 50 acres of property in 1984 with his wife, Zoe, constructing their home with logs culled from their land. Together, they raked and scrubbed and heaved and hoed in an effort to stop the endless eruptions of "Big Muddy", their pet name for their land.

It might very well have been his struggles with Big Muddy that led Chuck to specialize in waterscaping. An impromptu visit to Looking Glass Gardens will prove that Chuck has managed to transform this unruly element from foe, to friend. The fifteen hundred gallons of water he uses daily in his nursery come directly from irrigation systems he has set up himself; the only well on the property is attached to the family home. Every inch of land at Looking Glass Gardens exists to demonstrate how responsible site management can enhance a property's natural features. In addition to countless plants, trees, shrubs and meandering stone paths, you'll find an eight-foot waterfall, waterscaped ponds and exotic pools of languid, rainbow colored Koi fish. With hard work and sheer brainpower, Chuck managed to transform The Big Muddy into a real-life paradise, and he intends to enact similar miracles on other people's land. From driveway and septic installation, to grading, drainage and the moving of boulders, his professional team will make sure that you can enjoy your property for years to come, no matter what Mother Nature has in store for you.

As if running a giant nursery and an entirely family-owned landscaping business wasn't impressive enough, The Nelsons have recently added a pool, patio and reception pavilion to the ever growing enchantments at Looking Glass Gardens. With one of his daughters already married on his land, and another one about to be, it's only natural that Chuck says his family is his proudest accomplishment. After a wonderful Thanksgiving spent in Niagara Falls with his children (and his children's children, and his faithful sidekick, Charlie the Pomeranian), Chuck is looking forward to another family getaway to Letchworth, NY, "The Grand Canyon of the East". Otherwise, he's content to spend the days translating his energy and passion into functional structures of unprecedented beauty.

C.W. Nelson Looking Glass Gardens, 19 Dodd Rd, Sandisfield, MA 01255, 413-258-3375, chucknelson@earthlink.net. Or visit www.cwnelson.com or www.lookingglassgardens.com.



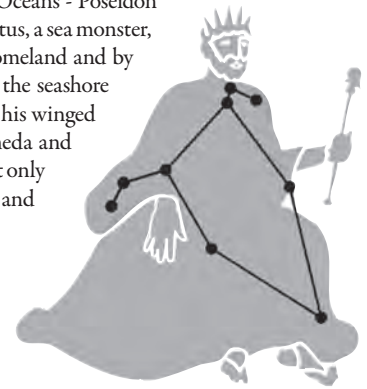
Weather & Stars Randy Siddell

LOVE IN THE SKIES

Low in Sandisfield's northeastern night sky this month, about 30 degrees above the horizon, lies the constellation Cepheus. Inside the triangle formed by the familiar constellations of the Little Dipper, the W-shaped Cassiopeia and Cygnus the Swan (or the Northern Cross), lies a house-shaped collection of stars.

It is this pentagonal arrangement that has come to be known as Cepheus. Greek myth describes Cepheus as the King of Ethiopia, husband of Cassiopeia and father of Andromeda. But why is a collection of stars named after an African monarch?

It is a charming tale. When Cassiopeia boasted that she and her daughter were more beautiful than any of the sea nymphs working for Poseidon – the Greek God of the Oceans - Poseidon punished Cassiopeia by sending Cetus, a sea monster, to ravage the entire coast of her homeland and by chaining Andromeda to a rock by the seashore as a sacrifice. Perseus, flying by on his winged horse Pegasus, spied poor Andromeda and rescued her from her awful fate - but only on the condition that Cassiopeia and Cepheus allowed him to marry her.



They did – and Poseidon, when Cepheus and Cassiopeia died, placed them side by side in the heavens. Now Cepheus and Cassiopeia, along with Andromeda, Perseus and Pegasus (all close by), share eternity together in the night sky. Thus is this corner of the sky a memorial of love, an astral Taj Mahal.

A more scientific note of interest about Cepheus: Because of the earth's tilt on its axis, it wobbles as it spins, (think of a top as it slows its spinning motion), causing our north pole to move in a circle that takes 26,000 years to complete each rotation. We think of Polaris, our north star, as the one constant in the night sky, an object that has guided ship's captains for centuries. But because of the rotation of the earth's axis, 1000 years from now our north star will no longer be Polaris, but Iota Cephei; then, 2200 years later, it will be the turn of Gamma Cephei – both stars that lie among those of Cepheus, our Ethiopian King. A potent reminder of that old adage, the only constant is change.

Other cosmic magic to watch for in July's night sky:

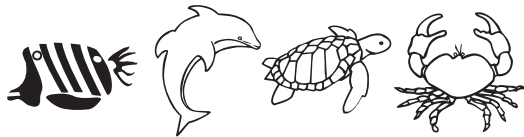
On July 2nd, the newly-discovered Comet McNaught is at its brightest in the predawn hours. A good pair of binoculars should reveal this comet and its tail.

The star Mu Cephei, also in the aforementioned Cepheus, can be seen with binoculars. The source of its more common name, "Herschel's Garnet Star" becomes obvious when you see this beautiful red-orange star in the middle and slightly below the "base" of the pentagon shape.

Venus, Saturn and Mars are visible at the same time in the west-southwest sky an hour after sunset. As the month progresses, the three planets move closer together and will be separated by only 8 degrees at the month's end.

Jupiter will be visible in the east after midnight all month.

The Delta Aquarids Meteor Shower occurs on July 18th, continuing into August. It peaks this month around the 28th. Best viewing will be in the east after midnight, but it will be at its most intense before sunrise. So get up early, Sandisfielders! ☄



THEY'RE OFF TO THE CAPE – THANKS TO YOU, AND YOU, AND YOU...

For the last decade our local Farmington River Elementary School has been sending its 6th grade students to spend five October days on Cape Cod on a "rite of passage" experience. They bunk together in cabins, then spend their days in field groups doing activities - building a suspension bridge, learning about geology and meteorology, working in tide-pools, going on whale watches, dissecting fruit and small creatures. The children learn to work together, as well as to be independent while being away from their families.

This year, budget cuts threatened the program. Parents were told the travel costs could no longer be paid for by the school – and that the trip's overall cost would go up by fifty dollars each. If the kids who had waited for years to go on the trip still wanted to go, we as their parents had just a month to come up with the two thousand dollar shortfall.

Our solution? First we panicked; and then decided to fund-raise, and in spades. The timing was perfect: a Revolutionary War Encampment Re-enactment was scheduled to be held on the school grounds in a few weeks - a perfect opportunity for us to get out the begging bowls. The Sandisfield and Otis Cultural Councils, who sponsored the event, agreed, and that's exactly what we did!


We sold hamburgers, hotdogs, popcorn, snacks and drinks. We gathered donated items from area retailers and held a prize raffle, and also a 50/50 raffle. We dug up our gardens and divided our perennials and gathered more donations from area nurseries and had a plant sale. Area businesses and families donated too.

Through the efforts and determination of the parents of the 5th grade class, we were not only able to meet our goal, but we managed to cut our children's overall tuition (including transportation) by about 40 percent! Not bad, huh? Never doubt the power of a dedicated parent!

So the parents, teachers, and children of Farmington River Elementary School's Fifth Grade Class would like to thank the following for their donations to our Nature's Classroom 2010 Fundraiser:

- Windy Hill Nursery
- Snow Farm
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We would also like to thank those who anonymously donated, as well as the *Lebanon Militia* and the *Sandisfield and Otis Cultural Councils* for allowing us to hold our fundraiser during your event.

Thank you all again! 

THE HAWLEY FARM AT SPECTACLE POND, COLD SPRING ROAD

By Ron Bernard

Tucked into the northwest corner of town, hard by Lower Spectacle Pond and a section of the old Knox Trail, are 900+ magnificent acres including the pond, a reminder of life in early Sandisfield. Starting in 1855 "The Hawley Farm" was assembled from at least nine contiguous farms and parcels by William Henry Hawley (1827 Otis-1909).

He was the 5th great grandson of Joseph Hawley (1603 England-1690) a founder of Stratford, Connecticut Colony, and progenitor of one of the most prominent families in New England in the 18th and 19th centuries. William's grandfather, physician John Hawley, (1737 Farmington, Conn-1810), settled in New Boston and married Rosanna Fuller in 1759. It is possible she was the first white child born in Sandisfield, in 1740 (then part of Southfield).

Hawley had been a teamster, a lumberman and a purveyor of coal and feed. In addition to the farm, he established a very productive sawmill which operated until the 1970s. William called his place "Mill Brook Farm" where he raised prized Guernseys and oxen reputed to be "the finest in town." Mr. Hawley was active in Massachusetts agricultural circles as well as in community service and politics, and in the Otis Congregational church.

His only son, Frank Edward (1863-1944), carried on the family enterprise. Frank married Rosa Langdon from Otis and they had two daughters, Nora and Ada who would be the last Hawleys to live on the old homestead.



Sawmill, c. 1900

Ada (1890-1957) married Alford Rowley in 1908 and they raised four children here: William, Beatrice, Marvin and Charlotte (Eleanor). William (1909-1989) and Marvin (1916-1985) continued operations until Marvin's death. In the latter decades the "Rowley Bros. Farm" produced maple syrup, lumber, fire wood, and gravel.


Starting in 1939 they began to build cabins, privys and camp sites around the Pond. These were rented, together with row boats, very nominally, each summer for over 65 years. Some of the sites were named for families who returned faithfully every year.



Mr. and Mrs. WILLIAM H. HAWLEY

William Rowley married Ruth Snow from Otis in 1931. She died in 2004, age 93, the last member of this grand family which had been here for 150 years. The Rowleys and Hawleys before them intermarried with many of the oldest families in Sandisfield and nearby Otis and Tyringham, establishing the very deepest of roots in the area.

Matriarch Ruth Snow Rowley's passing created an inevitable and complicated situation for the extended family (and the town). What would be the fate of this beautiful property? Family members had different opinions but in the end, controversial ruinous development was averted. This special place together with its gorgeous Spectacle Pond, overlooking rolling fields and an intact original stand of old growth hemlock, was saved. With the collaboration of the Mass Audubon Society all family interests were transferred to the State and in 2007 this enchanted place was incorporated as "Spectacle Pond Farm" into the adjacent Otis State Forest to be preserved for all time.

So while the many surviving buildings which had served so well for so long are now empty and dilapidated, awaiting their own fate, they are both witnesses to and legacy of one of the most enduring family stories in the town of Sandisfield. 



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If you're interested in a
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Sandisfield, MA 01255.

Include five lines of text
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address, phone, email and
website if applicable. If you
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substitute a tag line or short
description of your services.



NOT A LOVE LETTER

I think that some of Simon Winchester's comments in his editorials are a little polarizing between the old and new residents and resentment is building in our community. I wanted to reply with a sarcastic note, but now is probably not the time. Our country is currently facing some difficult situations, such as two wars, banking problems, health care, home foreclosures and now a disaster in the Gulf. Our lives are not perfect, and perhaps some desire more than what they need, but if your situation is tolerable then you should be grateful for what you have. I see many people in the Berkshires, who live in less than ideal conditions, but are perfectly content. Let's not belittle people because they are less fortunate than us.

Sandisfield has always represented a little slice of heaven, despite varied levels of income. For the most part, we have respected each other, and gotten along fairly well. Let's try and keep it that way by building bridges, rather than by exaggerating our differences.

Larry Dwyer
37 West Street

FIBER IS GOOD FOR YOU

Dear Editor,

I am pleased to inform readers of The Sandisfield Times that all of the towns in Western Massachusetts considering the warrant article to participate in a community owned fiber network have voted unanimously to approve it. That's well over 30 towns, and Sandisfield is among them! The next step is for each town to appoint a delegate and an alternate as representatives. The first organizational meeting for delegates was held June 26th in Cummington. But this does not let the average citizen off the hook! There is more to be done, and only citizens can do it.

Our politicians, from our governor to our local representatives, are all in support of bringing broadband to western Massachusetts. That's a good thing, but it doesn't necessarily mean installing the best, most state of the art technology. In fact, the DSL components that are currently in operation in limited parts of the Berkshires are hand-me-downs. They were removed from other areas

of the state (the Boston area, for instance) so that better technology could be installed there. Guess what technology? That's right – FIBER! Also, some Wireless Internet providers have proposed to our politicians that their technology will serve our region adequately, and it may be tempting to accept this easy way out, especially when you have a company willing to build it. But it just isn't so. Wireless may work in flatter areas, but it will not provide universal coverage in our hilly, heavily forested Berkshire landscape. Furthermore, it will negatively impact our quality of life by scarring our beautiful vistas with hundreds or thousands of wireless towers.

The people have spoken and they want Fiber. It is the most appropriate technology for our area, and it is the only technology in existence today that will meet our future needs. We can't accept hand-me-down or temporary solutions. Let our politicians know that we deserve access to the same technology that is available to citizens of the Greater Boston area. Fiber in areas such as ours may not be feasible under the profit models of traditional providers, but it is absolutely do-able under the model of a community-owned regional network.

For more information about the ongoing efforts of Wired West and answers to any questions you may have about community owned fiber networks, please visit www.Wired-West.net. To reach your state officials, please write or call Benjamin Downing, State Senator, at 413-442-4008 or Benjamin.Downing@state.ma.us and Smitty Pignatelli, State Representative, at 413-637-0631 or rep.smitty.pignatelli@hou.state.ma.us.

Sincerely
Jean Atwater-Williams
182 Cold Spring Road



COMING HOME

Simon Winchester in June wrote about feelings of contentment and fulfillment in *Coming Home to Sandisfield*. But relationships have infinite variety--and what follows, a short story, is about the seduction and pressure that greet me in Sandisfield.

I arrive and see her beauty that's been waiting for me. I feel her pushing away the city's tension that had been inside me.

But she quickly tells me, "Why have you been away so long? There's so much I need."

I want to give her my attention, but I'm tired from the three hour drive from New York City. "I'm not forgetting you," I promise. "We'll be together soon."

I have a mistress because my wife believed we were being daily attacked by the stress of work and city life, and needed something that could form a stress buffer. She believed that she knew what it could be: an old New England country home.

She imagined a house with great stone walls for the foundation that immediately gave the feeling of protection; hand-made molding in the rooms that announced the house's uniqueness and helped us feel ours; an attic revealing old, thick beams, which called out that we were joined to the support of the house and its traditions.

My wife persisted, and then ten years ago, we bought a home in Sandisfield. The house became my mistress.

She speaks to me as soon as I arrive: "There's so much of me to enjoy. But you need to spend more time with me, look at my needs. Take care of me better."

I sit in her rooms and appreciate the personal lines and angles in the walls and ceiling, and an old front doorknob rings a bell with a singular sound. I study doors with different designs that continually announce that the house has a unique feeling wanting to join itself to me and soothe me.

But as I walk around with her, she keeps whispering, "Don't forget me, take care of my problems." She is the beautiful, demanding and expensive mistress.

Rotten clapboard is quickly removed. A roof leak, although only a small wall stain, gets repaired right away. Outside paint peeling is constantly smoothed and painted over.

A contractor arrives, who explains different ways to make a repair. One way will endure seemingly forever, while the second, and much cheaper, repair will last for perhaps ten years.

"Look, how much longer will either of us be here?" jokes this roofer, who's also around age sixty-five. Yet I tell him to do the more costly repair. I feel the responsibility to my mistress, to make sure she's taken care of even when I won't be around.

But with time a question about all mistresses appear: Are you becoming too old for her, or is she becoming too expensive for you?

City friends ask when my wife and I will sell the Berkshires house and return full-time to our "real" home in the city. "I keep hearing you talk about the heavy traffic you drive in to get to your country house," a friend argues. "The work you're always doing on it, and the cost. Maybe I hear you more than you hear yourself. Sell the place, return to being in the city with us all the time"

I finally tell myself I'm not that old, that I can satisfy my responsibilities to my city life while still coming here to enjoy her. But isn't this how you reason, or rationalize, when you have a beautiful mistress?

Allan Luks
Sandisfield Rd., Sandisfield

I read with interest your essay, *Coming Home to Sandisfield*. I always wondered what happened to my little Ford 8-N Tractor. Ford made millions of those after WW11. Many went to Russia. According to Art Bachetti it was the best machine Ford ever manufactured. It was Art who helped me purchase and then care for the one I left behind. When we first purchased our Sandisfield house, we lived in Hartford, CT and traveled to Sandisfield for weekends as soon as we could get away on Friday afternoons. We did last minute shopping in Riverton, CT and immediately spotted a tractor for sale. Saturday morning I took our little Fiat (for which we paid \$900 new) to Bachettis in Great Barrington where I met Art senior. I told him about the tractor, and he said, "Let me go take a look." He called me and said, "Buy it, and I'll go down with my grandson to pick it up." That's how the Ford 79111C tractor got to Sandisfield. The tractor served us well as did Art, who had repaired tanks in North Africa during WW11. Art, who passed away some while ago, was a wonderful person and character.

Howard Smith
Great Barrington

NEW SELECTMAN

I want to thank all 222 voters who made it to the polls, and especially the 106 who voted for me. Every vote counted in this close election. As your new Selectman, I will work hard, be honest, thoughtful, and have an open mind for all residents of Sandisfield. I am only a few weeks into the job but already love it. I have really enjoyed the interaction with residents and contributing to various road-related discussions at each meeting. Dolores is a big help and working with Patrick Barrett and Richard Campetti has been smooth. As a unit, we get along very well. Please feel free to contact me with your concerns and again, thank you for this opportunity to serve you and this great little town.

Jeff Gray
Stump Road, Sandisfield



NOW HEAR THIS!

JULY ANNOUNCEMENTS

From the Office of the Board of Selectmen: There is **FREE mulch** available at Yanner Park on Town Hill Rd. This mulch resulted from the ice storm of 2008. It is available for residents only, not for commercial use. Help yourselves.

The Farmington River Watershed Association (FRWA) was recently awarded a grant of \$30,450 over three years by the Massachusetts Environmental Trust (Thanks to motorists who purchase specialty license plates). This will enable FRWA to sample stream communities, evaluate stream crossings, and do public outreach in the Massachusetts part of the Farmington Valley, especially in Otis, Sandisfield, and Becket. Learn more about the project: contact FRWA by phone or email at 860-658-4442 x205 or efelding@frwa.org.

July 4, 10am-1pm, Jacob's Pillow: "Let's Dance!" The event features free dance workshops in Pilates, Zumba, swing dancing, free performances by Boston Tap Company and a group known as Ballroom Dance for Tough Guys, giveaways, music, and food and drink. A free Master Class with Festival artist Camille A. Brown will also be offered for intermediate/advanced dancers (Registration required. Call 413.243.9919 x5 for information).

Saturday, July 10th from 10-3:30 in Otis center on the Church Green on Rt 8: The Annual Otis Library Country Fair. Over 40 artists and craftsmen from throughout New England will be selling handmade jewelry, pottery, artwork and more. There will be a bake sale, raffle, tarot card readings, book sale and barbeque all to benefit the Otis Library and Museum.

Saturday, July 24th 9-3pm, Farmington River Elementary School, 555 Main Road (Rte. 8), Otis: The Third Annual Otis Arts Festival

Entertainment will feature Moonshine Holler, Appalachian fiddlers and singers (11 am-1 pm), Henry the Juggler (11 am), Leland Martin, fiddler and Joe Dziok accompanist (1:15 pm-3 pm). Admission is **FREE**. This event is supported in part by a grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Information: 413 269-0220.

August 1, Noon-5pm, at The Wicket Grounds Croquet Club, Burt Hill Rd, Tolland: The Bi-Centennial Cup, croquet tournament, takes place. Call Joseph Clark, 258-4025, for more information.

Sunday, August 22, 2:00 PM, Tickets \$65 Berkshire Hatchery Foundation, Inc.

9th Annual Lobsterfest
Hatchery Road, New Marlborough
Raw bar, Steamers, Chowder, Lobster, Corn,
For info call 413 528-9761
Lake Trout and Salmon raised at the Hatchery

JULY CALENDAR

July 3, 1pm Sandisfield Library Summer Reading Kick Off Party with Magician, Gregory McAdams
Pre-registration required: sign up at library or call 258-4966 or 258-4285

July 3, 6:15pm Jacob's Pillow Inside/Out: Tap Dancing

July 4-August 7, Tues/Thur/Sundays 8am-9am Sandisfield Arts Center Stretch/Yoga Class
Call Lauren Paul to register/for info: 258-4296

July 7, 1pm-2pm, Town Hall Annex Council on Aging Pot Luck Lunch and Bingo (Meets every Wednesday)
Mary Slater 258-4778

July 10, 10am-3pm, Sandisfield Historical Society, Sandy Brook Turnpike Sandisfield Historical Society FAIR
Tag Sale, Bake Sale, Raffle, Farm Stand, Craft Vendors

July 10, 3-5pm, FREE Sandisfield Arts Center Artists' Reception
The Art of Mary Davidson & Keith Davidson

July 10, 8PM Sandisfield Arts Center From Woad to Wellingtons
An evening with Ben Luxon, Fiddler Maggie Holtzberg, Piper Nancy Tunecliffe, Singer Gwendolyn Tunecliffe
To Benefit the Bill Crofut Arts Fund

July 15, 7pm, Town Hall Annex 250th Birthday Committee Meeting

July 16, 7pm, American Legion Hall, Rte. 8 Turkey Roll to benefit The American Legion
Prizes for highest dice rollers plus Food, Bar, Raffle, 3lb Lobster Raffle

July 17, 10:30-Noon, \$5, Sandisfield Arts Center Forum "War and Peace" hosted by Val Coleman

July 24, 10:30-Noon, \$5, Sandisfield Arts Center Forum "Why We Fight" hosted by Bill Cohn

July 28, 11am-2pm, Town Hall Annex Council On Aging Free Blood Pressure Screening (Every 4th Wednesday)

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Terranova's and Legacy Bank. Other locations include the Monterey General Store, the Southfield Store and Bizalion's French Cafe in Great Barrington.

The Times can also be mailed to your home by paid subscription (see form below) and is available free online as a PDF document at www.sandisfieldtimes.org.

We welcome submissions, comments and suggestions, including letters to the editor **BY THE 15TH OF THE MONTH PRIOR**. We may edit for space, style or clarity. We will try to publish Public Service Announcements when we have room, with priority given to Sandisfield organizations. No portion of the *The Sandisfield Times* may be reproduced without permission.

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