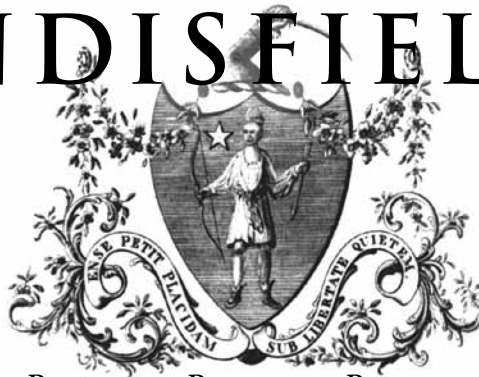


# MONEY, POLITICS, ART & CRIME

# THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

*Tribunus*



*Plebis*

RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume III, Number 2

May 2012

## A BUDGET SHORTFALL? TIME TO BITE THE BULLET

By Rhee Kasky and Simon Winchester

*Unlike many poorer local towns, Sandisfield does still have money in the bank – but it won't last long if we keep using it (as we did last year) to balance our budget. So this year we are having to think constructively about a tough decision – whether to slash our budget or accept a modest raising of the taxes: around \$1.00 per thousand of assessed property values, which for some will be as much as \$400 a year. This most critical vote will come on May 12<sup>th</sup> and Rhee Kasky explains the background.*

Having recently come from a very professional and informative discussion with our representatives from the Massachusetts De-

partment of Revenue (a meeting open to the public at the Town Hall Annex on April 19) we are offering you a heads up on the estimated income and expense budgets for Sandisfield's FY2013 budget.

In the face of a sluggish economy it is not difficult to imagine that our town once again faces serious financial challenges as we prepare to vote on the budget at the Annual Town Meeting on May 12, 2012. We had a hard time passing a budget last May and the process may be just as daunting this time around. So it is probably in everyone's best interest to examine the following summary of the proposed FY2013 budget before you come to the meeting. *Cont'd P.2*



Photo: John Stanmeyer

## ONE OF OUR OWN DOES GOOD

"Otisfield" woman to helm new mag

By Sandisfield Times Reporter

Anastasia Stanmeyer, who arrived here with her family four years ago after more than a decade in Asia, is to be the first editor of a glossy new journal devoted to all things Berkshire, and to be called *Berkshire Magazine*. Ms. Stanmeyer, 48, who lives with her photographer-husband John and their two children on a former horse farm on Rte 23, will oversee the launch of the magazine with the July issue.

Stanmeyer has extensive freelance experience – having worked for *Time*, *Newsweek* and *AsiaWeek* while living on the island of Bali and for daily newspapers in Dallas, San Francisco and Boston.

Geoffrey Morris, the head of the media group that already publishes five other magazines in an area that stretches from Bedford, NY to Litchfield, CT, said of *Cont'd P.13*




## BREAK-IN SPREE A Spring Offensive

By Sandisfield Times Reporter

Sandisfield Police are being kept unusually busy these days by a burglar, or a group of burglars, who have so far broken into no fewer than seven homes in and around town.

According to Police Chief Mike Morrison, a "person of interest" has recently been summoned to appear in court in Great Barrington. Residents are being cautioned to keep a look out for strangers and for odd behavior and to call 911 if something looks suspicious. Be sure to report anything out of the ordinary in your neighborhood.

Of the properties intruded upon so far, five are houses in the Sandisfield section of the Otis Woodlands, one is on Cronk Road and most recently a property on Silverbrook Road was targeted.

Sandisfield's tiny police force has been helped in their efforts to track down and apprehend the culprits by officers from nearby Otis as well as the State Police in Lee. 

**BUDGET SHORTFALL** *Con't from P.1*

Moreover, by the time you read this article you will have received your copy of the Annual Report (blue, with a pretty Happy Birthday cover to disguise the painful details inside), a line-by-line breakdown of the figures shown below. The expense budget has been put forth by the town departments, it has been approved by the Selectmen and now only awaits your vote. This is democracy at the sharp end and it is important that as many townspeople as possible come and take part.

We have also outlined the estimate of town revenues below, and most critically we have provided information on the Proposition 2 1/2 override vote which will be the key. We have to either raise the shortfall of over \$125,000 by upping taxes or we have to slash \$125,000 worth of town services from our budget

It is a stark choice, but the third way, plundering the money from savings is, frankly, unsustainable. If we keep on doing that, we'll soon be running on fumes – and then we'll run out altogether.

This is important enough to bear repeating. We just cannot – we must not – continue to take money from our savings. We took \$150,000 out of two different accounts last year when Prop 2 1/2 didn't pass. If we continue to draw down these accounts, it won't be long before they are entirely depleted, leaving nothing for emergencies. We also want to remind you that we already take \$50,000 out of Free Cash to help offset some of the tax rate – we simply cannot take more.

**PROJECTED REVENUE FOR FY2013.**

- Tax levy limit.....\$2,476,797
  - Other income ..... \$290,866
  - Total estimated revenue ..... \$2,767,663
  - Amount over the levy limit\* .....\$125,568
- \*That's why we need to have the Prop 2 1/2 override.*

**TOTAL EXPENSE BUDGET FOR FY 2013 BY DEPARTMENT (THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE BROKEN DOWN LINE BY LINE ON THE TOWN WARRANT).**

- Town services (includes insurance, retirement, employee benefits.....\$544,902
- Highway and safety.....\$757,055
- Debt and reserves .....\$176,246
- Other warrant articles .....\$8,000
- School budget.....\$1,362,441
- Cherry sheet offsets (state and regional assessments, abatement allowance overlay) ..... \$44,569
- GROSS BUDGET: ..... \$2,893,231**

**Proposition 2 1/2 Override** - an explanation (in simple terms, I hope!)

Proposition 2 1/2 is a mechanism that is used when the current tax levy limit is not sufficient to cover the town's operating expenses. Prop 2 1/2 was approved by Massachusetts voters in 1980 and implemented for the first time in FY 1982. Prior to its passage, municipalities created their budgets by determining how much it would cost to provide the community's programs and services and then raising the necessary funds through the tax levy. Under Prop 2 1/2 municipalities in Massachusetts cannot raise the local tax levy more than 2 1/2 % above the current tax levy plus any new growth in any one year without tax payer approval. This means that instead of beginning with a budget based on programs and services the town wants to provide, the town now begins with a set amount of tax levy funding and determines what programs and services it can provide based on that amount.

Tax levies and Prop 2 1/2 formulations can be difficult to understand and our space here is limited. Prepare yourself in more detail for the discussion that will take place on May 12<sup>th</sup> by Googling Proposition 2 1/2 and you will discover a plethora of information. Come to the meeting prepared, bring your questions and vote intelligently.

We'd like to thank Teresa, Kathy and Jackie for their assistance and patience in gathering the information for this article. You're terrific! 🐾



# Cat Case Dropped

*By Sandisfield Times Reporter*

All charges have been dropped in the Sandisfield cat-attack case, which we reported two months ago. Southern Berkshire Court gave no reason for dismissing the case against local resident Gene Anderson, who had been accused of firing a BB-gun at his neighbor's pet. 🐾

*See Letters to the Editor, page 21.*

## ATTENTION PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING!

**There will be an All Boards Public Information meeting on Monday, May 7, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall, 3 Silverbrook Rd. to review the FY2013 warrant. At least one member of each board, committee and department will be present and Sandisfield residents are encouraged to attend. There will be a discussion about the impact of cutting budgets by 6 to 10% if the Proposition 2 1/2 override is not passed at the Annual Town Meeting on May 12.**

Spring 2012

Spring is contrary  
To being old.  
Fresh upturned bugs and rabbits  
Aren't welcome in the afternoon  
When I want to take a nap  
And think about my wintry soul.

I'll go along with flowers,  
Even go outside  
If God insists  
I celebrate his whiskey season  
As though nothing ever died.

But Spring remembers everything  
That went before  
A dead soldier stands  
And beckons  
At the open April door.

*Val Coleman*





# BRIDGE WATCH - WORK STARTS ON NEW BOSTON BRIDGE


By Ron Bernard

Photo: Setsuko Winchester

The long-dreaded but necessary New Boston village bridge replacement project is about to commence. Sandisfield and especially New Boston will likely experience the greatest disruption since the construction of the Colebrook River Lake and Route 8 realignment some 45 years ago.

After years of discussion and study, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation has formally contracted with J. H. Maxymillian of Pittsfield to manage the complex project. According to company spokesman, Vern Palen, a definite schedule will follow "pre-construction meetings" in early May. The initial phase, which involves repositioning of utilities such as power and telephone lines, lane realignment (down to one lane) and traffic control measures, will begin by the end of the month. The project is expected

to last until mid-2014 and promises considerable inconvenience to travelers, disarray and disruption of village life, and likely economic consequences for local businesses. The timing of the replacement of this 82-year-old bridge is also ironic --and especially unfortunate -- in view of Sandisfield's 250th anniversary activities and celebrations planned for the summer.

Once the nightmare is over hopefully we can appreciate our new, safe and attractive bridge as an asset. Until then, somehow, we will endure. 



wm.

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*"Be true to your work,  
your word, and your friend."  
Henry David Thoreau*

Image: Tina Sotis ©2011

# The Gardeners' Almanac



By Sue Tarasuk, Horticulturist

## Lovely Bloomers

Peonies, when grown under proper conditions, have been known to bloom year after year for half a century or more. Nine out of ten times when I ask one of my clients to tell me their favorite plant, they mention the peony. Not surprising as the peony is hardy to Zones 2 to 7 or 8 - they like the moist conditions of the northeast and are relatively easy to grow. They come in numerous colors and some are deliciously scented.

The herbaceous peony is the one we most often see in the garden. It has foliage that dies down in the winter. The tree peony, not as common, has a woody stem that does not die down in the winter and should not be cut down.

The ideal location for your peony is in a sunny, well-drained site with good air circulation. Avoid planting them against the house as they will send up their tender shoots too early and risk a late freeze. East or west facings are ideal locations.



You can purchase peony roots as bare-root in the fall and plant in September or October or in pots and planted anytime of the season. When planting your peony, be sure to prepare the soil. I like to add a shovelful of good compost to the hole, and then I place my roots or potted plant in. It is very important that the crown and eyes of the peony are no more than 1 or 2 inches covered by soil. (Planting too deeply is the most frequent reason why peonies fail to bloom). Set your plants at least 3.5 feet apart. If planted in the fall as bare root, cover your roots with mulch to keep your plants from freezing and thawing and the chance they may heave out of the ground.

Once you have your peony planted, little maintenance is required. In the spring I top-dress my plants with a shovelful of good compost and add a couple of handfuls of bone meal per plant. Peonies are not heavy feeders so these slow-release fertilizers are ideal. Be careful not to put heavy wet material (compost or mulch) onto the crowns as this may rot them.

Peonies like lots of soil moisture so keep them watered - especially if newly planted - with about 1" of water per week. Even after they bloom, they will be making buds for next year's flowers and will need the moisture.

Few pests and diseases affect the peony. The one thing I find likely to cause problems is grey mold or Botrytis blight. Symptoms of this fungal disease include browning and withering of developing buds and death of the stem beneath, or sudden wilting and death of young shoots. To control Botrytis, cut off infected shoots and, if necessary, cut out decayed parts of the crown under the soil surface. You can then dust the plants with powdered sulfur and replace some of the soil near the cut surface with fresh soil. These cultural practices will keep the fungi at bay.

Ants on peony buds are neither a cause for concern or necessary to encourage buds to open. They are simply after the sugary nectar the buds exude. Ants signify you have a healthy bud.

Tree peonies are not trees but deciduous shrubby perennials. They can grow to about 3-4 feet tall and as wide. They bloom in an amazing array of colors and their blooms are huge, typically 8-10" in diameter. They are simply gorgeous plants. Tree peonies enjoy the same conditions as the herbaceous peony does. They like partial sun to full sun, moist soil and neutral to partially acidic soil. They do not like a lot of fertilizer so just a sprinkling of bone meal after they bloom is all they need - perhaps a top dressing of compost as well. In the spring all they need is some pruning of dead wood. This is normal winter die-back, and you should see new buds formed along the woody stems below.

The tree peony performs best if some winter protection is provided. You can protect them by surrounding them with wire frames filled with leaves. Stake the woody stems so snow will not cause them to break as they are very brittle.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at [susantarasuk@gmail.com](mailto:susantarasuk@gmail.com) or come by the greenhouse at Snow Farm and I will answer any questions you may have, or we could just chat about the peony. ♡

Photo: Wikimedia Commons

## MAPLE REPORT

By Tom Ryan



This past winter felt like a hiccup between Fall and Spring and was pleasantly mild. That's great for many of us - unless you collect maple sap. Sap started to flow early this year, right around the middle of January, and then it stopped just after the first week in March when this area saw daytime temperatures reach the mid 70's with nights above freezing. The long stretch of warm days shut off sap production resulting in a very short season. Small producers had the best chance at making the most of the season if they took a chance and tapped early while many of the larger producers held out and set their taps until the middle of February. I took an informal poll of some of the area maple syrup producers and all but one reported reduced production. Almost everyone I asked reported production being cut to the tune of 30% to 70%. I produced a whopping two quarts of syrup from the six taps in my backyard - a rough rule of thumb is to expect about a quart of syrup per tap so I was operating at about 33% capacity.

There is an old saying amongst sap collectors, "a north or west wind is the best wind, but a wind from the south or east will give you the least." My assumption is that a south or east wind will carry warmer air, whereas a north or west wind carries the cooler air that is critical to bringing the nighttime temperatures below freezing and maintaining the tree's ability to flow sap. So, in the end, this maple season was short and not so sweet. ♡







# 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration 2 Months and Counting!

By *Laura Rogers-Castro*

The clock is ticking and the big 250th Sandisfield Celebration is right around the corner. The weekend of July 27th, 28th and 29th will begin with a special treat on Friday evening at the Sandisfield Arts Center. Under the working title "Rascals and Others," our very own world famous singer/actor and impresario Ben Luxon, will create a sketch through time with a dozen or so unique skits representing the history of Sandisfield. Beginning in 1776 with the Knox Trail, each skit will be separated by 25 years and feature interesting characters from the past. Seasoned actors will join with people from town in highlighting their recollections of an earlier Sandisfield. The stories and legends comprising the skits will be complemented with songs, visuals and video and will run the gamut from fun to sometimes sad and even tragic!

Anina Carr, Val Coleman, Jean Atwater-Williams, and Ron Bernard are joining Ben in the development of this project. The group is looking

for people to help produce as well as play various roles (contact Ron at 269-0012 or Anina at 258-3314). The event promises to be memorable, reasonably priced and a highlight of the weekend celebration.

On a different note, there is still time to submit vendor applications (contact Barbara Cormier at 258-4402) for food and crafts. Residents of Sandisfield and the surrounding area are encouraged to contact the 250th Celebration Committee if they would like to demonstrate a skill or craft during the Country Fair on Saturday, July 28 or Sunday, July 29. Demonstrations are designed to be informal and could include sharing a hobby such as fly-tying or information about researching your family's history. The next scheduled Sandisfield 250th Committee meetings are on May 16 and 30 at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall Annex. All are welcome. For more information and to verify the meeting schedule, contact Laura at 258-4688.



## Camp Wa Wa Segowea

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10 Stump Road (Off West St., 2 miles from Rt. 57)

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- Mail my book to the name & address below (I've added \$4 per book for shipping)
- I'll save the shipping charge and pick up my book(s) in Sandisfield.

**Make check payable to  
Town of Sandisfield History Book  
and mail to:  
Sandisfield Then and Now  
PO Box 770  
Otis, MA 01253**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**☞ Please note that the one-time production run of this book will be limited. To ensure that you get yours, place your order right away!  
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or 413-441-9542**

# TOWN BUSINESS



*Edited by Rhee Kasky*

*Note: Due to an error of omission the April issue of the Sandisfield Times did not carry the summaries of the Board of Selectmen's meetings between January 23 and February 27. Important information was discussed at those meetings and we are including them in this issue.*



## Meeting of January 23, 2012

**Attending:** Richard Campetti, Jeff Gray, Steve Harasyko

**Unable to attend:** Patrick Barrett, Dolores Harasyko

Kathy Jacobs and Barbara Cormier came in with an update from the 250<sup>th</sup> Committee. They would like to have a beautification project that could include local landscapers and gardeners showcasing and advertising their work. Areas for display would be the library, cemetery and Town Hall and they would like to have the Selectmen judge the gardens. Victor Hryckvich is working on vendor permits for which there will be no charge. The 250<sup>th</sup> and the Council on Aging would like to be on next week's Selectmen's agenda.

Steve presented a quote from Charlie Pease for repairing the roof over the town garage and the back door of Old Town Hall. The quote of \$4439 is for temporary repairs to the roof and repair of the door. The entire roof is in need of replacement and there are no guarantees that it will not continue to leak. Steve has met with several contractors and Charlie is the only one responding with a quote. He is fully licensed and insured. The Selectmen will review and discuss next week.

Steve discussed replacing the small roller as the hydrostat is gone and it is unstable and dangerous to operate. He found a used one for \$9,000 and will use Chapter 90 funds to purchase it. A new one would cost approximately \$30,000 and renting one costs \$250 per day.

Discussed the status on Route 183 with regard to Lane Construction. MASS DOT is still in discussion with Lane. Jeff will review the core testing with Steve.

Discussed FEMA and Hazard Mitigation. We need to form a committee to work on grants through FEMA. Steve suggested that Patrick contact Alice Boyd for this.



## January 30, 2012

**Attending:** Patrick Barrett, Richard Campetti, Jeff Gray, Steve Harasyko  
**Unable to attend:** Dolores Harasyko

Kathy Jacobs, Barbara Cormier and Linda Riiska came in representing the 250<sup>th</sup> Committee. They discussed vendor licenses with Victor Hryckvich and he will discuss them with the Board of Health. They had a good meeting with the police and fire departments regarding the 250<sup>th</sup> celebration, commending them on their willingness to participate.

Barbara Cormier and Linda Riiska also represented the Council on Aging (COA) with a proposal for a Senior Tax Workoff Program. They have visited several surrounding towns and have gathered information on their programs. They have also discussed the program with Smitty Pignatelli and Ben Downing. They would like to include the proposal on this year's Annual Town Warrant for a vote. They are willing to amend the proposal to whatever the Selectmen suggest. The COA will be in charge of all the paperwork and oversee the various jobs. Selectmen voted to include the proposal on the warrant. We will meet with the COA to go over the wording and Patrick will contact the assessors and other boards to review the program.

The COA would like to move their location to the Old Town Hall as the current location is not handicap accessible. They can make the space look better and have more room for seniors. The town would still have the use of the building for elections and meetings. The COA would like the Planning Board and the Board of Health to move out of the Old Town Hall and into the downstairs area of the Town Hall Annex. Richard suggested they contact the building inspector first. Patrick suggested they contact the Planning Board and the Board of Health as they should have knowledge of this and agree to it first.

Steve presented the Highway Department updates. Reviewed the quote from Charlie Pease to repair the roof at the town garage and the back door of the Old Town Hall. Selectmen voted to allow Charlie to do the work.

Discussed Route 183 and Lane Construction. An option under discussion with MASS DOT is Nova Chip Seal. Chapter 90 may pay for the work but that is not a guarantee. We may have a problem getting funding for future repair work.



## February 6, 2012

**Attending:** Patrick Barrett, Jeff Gray, Steve Harasyko  
**Unable to attend:** Richard Campetti, Dolores Harasyko

Steve reported on Highway Department updates. Discussed Route 183. Lane Construction says that the mix they used on Route 183 is state approved but the state does not agree.

Highway Department working on brush cutting.

Steve is putting together estimates for work on Hubbard Road to the corner of West St. plus Gremler and New Hartford Rds (by Viets). Discussed money still available in Chapter 90 funds.

Planning Board in to submit their budget request. They asked to be on next week's agenda to discuss the Right to Farm Bylaw which they would like to have on this year's Annual Town Warrant. They were reminded that the bylaw has to be reviewed by Town Council and then accepted by the Selectmen. They will have a public hearing on the bylaw before the Annual Town Meeting.

*Information on meetings on February 13 and 20<sup>th</sup> not available.*

*Cont'd Next Page*





**February 21, 2010**

**Attending: Richard Campetti, Jeff Gray, Steve Harasyko, Dolores Harasyko**  
**Unable to attend: Patrick Barrett**

Steve invited Lane Construction to meet with the Selectmen to discuss the situation with Route 183. Lane representatives Ron Herzig, Jess Glover and Cliff Twiss were present.

Mr. Herzig explained that there has been a large turnover in staff at Lane Construction. Jeff Gray said we have a lot of questions about the job they did on Route 183. Mr. Herzig has met with Mass Highway representative Kathy Stevens. The product called Superpave is the approved product to be used in the upcoming year for any projects funded through Chapter 90. Ms. Glover explained the different levels of the Superpave product. The mix Lane used on Route 183 is a stronger mix, level 3, which is used for single axle traffic. Jeff asked about the compaction. Per Lane, it is a little low. Richard asked about the life span. They responded that it is typically 20 years. The Mass Top product which is in the contract has about a 15 year life span. Lane did the complete project except for the culverts and guard rails.

Richard explained that one of our concerns is that if the road doesn't hold up we may not be able to apply for Chapter 90 funding for repairs. Jeff reviewed the process with Peter Niles from Mass Highway. Lane is confident that the road will hold up. The Selectmen requested a written guarantee and Lane responded they would be happy to comply. Steve explained that an extended guarantee has been offered and Lane will put it into writing for Steve to review and present to the Selectmen for payment.

Simon Winchester from the Sandisfield Times asked for clarification about the product and the guarantee and said it should all be in writing. Lane confirmed that it would. Steve asked that the surcharges be removed from the bill and Lane agreed.

Selectmen unanimously agreed to level fund their salaries for the third year. They will give the Administrative Assistant a 2% increase.

Discussed options for handicap accessibility for the COA at the Town Hall Annex. Discussed the Senior Tax Writeoff program. Patrick is looking into the Mass General laws regarding this program.

Discussed work done by Assistant Assessor Jackie Bitso on state-owned land.

Steve provided Highway Department updates. Discussed future paving and overlay work. Discussed follow up to the FEMA meeting he attended. Discussed the slow response from FEMA re Storm Irene. We still do not have any reimbursements coming in. MEMA (Mass Emergency Management Agency) has now taken over. All of Southern Berkshire County is in the same predicament.



**February 27, 2012**

**Attending: Patrick Barrett, Richard Campetti, Jeff Gray, Dolores Harasyko**

Discussed cutting law book subscriptions as Mass General Laws are available on line.

We will follow up with the Assessors on new growth numbers.

Reviewed Council on Aging budgets. They are reducing the costs for Elderly Transportation and increasing their regular operating budget. We will ask them to come to the next Selectmen's meeting.

Discussed Free Cash account. Discussed the Town Clerk's budget. Dolores is increasing her budget to cover the cost of the State Primary in September, the Presidential and State Election in November, the town meeting in May and a possible election for Prop 2 1/2. She is also budgeting for an Assistant Town Clerk for 6 hours a week. Her plan is to train an assistant who could then run for the position.

Discussed a fireproof file cabinet. This is the third year the Town Clerk will be applying for one. It has been declined the past two years. Jeff suggested applying for one again as it is greatly needed for storing records.

Discussed FEMA update on Storm Irene.

*Cont'd P.11*

**MAY JUNE EVENTS**  
**THE SANDISFIELD ARTS CENTER**  
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 413-258-4100  
 WWW.SANDISFIELDARTSCENTER.ORG

**Saturday, May 19 7 PM**  
**\$10 Adults \$5 under 14**

**ANNI CROFUT'S CABARET!**



**In the Gallery: GROUP OF FOUR**  
**Artist Reception: June 2, 6PM**  
**On Display May 18 - June 11**

Joe Baker, Susie Crofut, Jeannette Graham and Rose Tanenbaum showcase their paintings completed over one year in Larry Zingale's Housatonic workshop.

**Saturday, June 2 8 PM \$20**  
**Triple Play!**

**Chris Brubeck**  
**Joel Brown**  
**"Madcat" Ruth**



**Saturday, June 9 10:30-Noon \$5**  
**The Alexander Technique with Betsy Politan**  
 For reservations call 617 277 2224 or 413 258 2820. For more information visit [betsypolitan.com](http://betsypolitan.com).

**Saturday, June 10 4:00 PM \$20**  
**Gala Second Annual Concert Benefit for Ferris Burtis Music Foundation**  
 Yevgeny Kutik, violin and Timothy Bozarth, piano  
 Julian Muller, cello and Anne Chamberlain, pianist  
 Morwenna Boyd, guitar  
 With Guest Artist Kathleen Callahan, soprano, and Herbert Burtis, pianist



# Rock, Twig and Leaf: Ramana Gallery Celebrates Art in Nature

Article and Photos by Tina Sotis

This is the story of an art gallery born of a tragedy that rocked Sandisfield one year ago. Artists and best friends Ana Maria Hoffman and Theresa Hryckvich were fashioning a podium out of materials found in the forests of Sandisfield for the memorial service to honor Anne and Phil Hoffman. In the process of doing so they realized that they both were thinking the same thing: a need to create a space for their artwork. They invited Ana Maria's close friend, Ramon Gutierrez, to join them. Theresa knew the owner of a suitable building and one month later Ramana Gallery was up and running.

The gallery, on Route 7 in Sheffield, showcases individual works of art created from items found in nature. The building blocks of most pieces originate in Sandisfield - bark, branches or stone that get turned into jewelry and sculpture. Even display pieces such as price tags are made from natural materials. The gallery gets its strength and uniqueness because each of the co-owner's visions is based on variations on the same theme.

Theresa is a painter, working in oils or acrylics. She has been an artist her whole life and yearns to go west to explore that part of the world. She is inspired by the outdoors and she works by isolating and focusing on the beauty of a single subject and creating the image around that, leaving out surrounding details. She loves being co-owner of a gallery that "showcases and highlights natural materials."

Ana Maria Hoffman also uses objects found in nature to make her jewelry. She says, "Each rock or twig is perfect just as it is." She sees the materials she uses as sacred, "Having nature's energy around me is inspiring." She loves the feminine aspect of nature and as a woman she identifies strongly with the work she creates. She also appreciates the small things that nature has to offer, but will not take a living thing from the forests that they explore to find their materials. "Instead," she says, "we will find a perfect dead twig, make an object of art out of it, and bring it back to life. Ana Maria also paints, focusing on issues of women's empowerment.

Ramon, the only one of the three who does not come from Sandisfield, works in the painting, sculpture and crafts media. "My connection to Mexico, where I was born, influences my work, which expresses my experiences as a newcomer to this culture. Nature allows me to dig deep into myself, being in the woods makes you face who you are."

The energy and enthusiasm of these three young people, along with their unwavering commitment to their vision, is what makes this gallery so special.

They are open April thru December from Tuesday to Sunday. Winter hours vary. Please call ahead. Phone is 413-717-4030. Address is 1840 N Main St, Sheffield, MA. 🍷





## THE CLAM RIVER GREENWAY DEPENDS ON YOU!

By Liana Toscanini

Berkshire Natural Resources Council (BNRC) owns 475 acres along the western side of the Clam River. There is a dream to create a stream-side trail and restore or improve the trout fishery in the river. That plan has been blocked by the “missing piece” – a 55-acre privately owned parcel with a half mile of river frontage. A map at [www.bnrc.net](http://www.bnrc.net) shows just how important this puzzle piece is to completing a two-mile long Clam River greenway.

BNRC has been given the option of purchasing the property by West Stockbridge conservationist, Edward Denham. The price is \$300,000. According to the most recent Berkshire Natural Resources Council newsletter, they have raised \$280,000 of the \$326,500 needed in total (including closing and administrative costs). This sum must be raised entirely through private giving – BNRC does not have a public partner on this project. Success will guarantee public access to these beautiful lands, along with long-term conservation stewardship. Walkers, anglers, hunters, and foot-dabblers will be able to travel streamside from the bridge on Hammertown Road south all the way to Route 57. In addition to river access, the new parcel includes a beautiful isolated marsh along a cold water stream feeding into the Clam River. Wildlife signs abound. The nearest houses are about a mile away, and with the land upstream to Lower Spectacle Pond all conserved by the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, the 55 acres on the table will complete a remarkable riparian greenway.

### RIVER POWER

The wild Clam River drops through a forested, cliffy valley dotted with old mill foundations that whisper of an historic prosperity once created by water-power. Trout lurk in its pools, and a wide range of wildlife, from black bear to white tailed deer, browse from water’s edge to the higher forests.

In 1885, historian, George Shepard wrote, “Clam River is a tributary of the Farmington, its two first branches rising, one in West Otis and one in Monterey, and it is fed and its volume is much increased by a stream issuing from Spectacle Pond. It affords water for mills or factories, and takes its name from the “fresh water clams” found along its course, that wash



out of Spectacle Pond.” Ron Bernard, author of the soon-to-be-published Sandisfield Then & Now history book, visited the site. He writes, “Well-preserved foundations and retaining walls suggest this was a busy place from about the 1840s at least into the 1870s. The most fascinating surviving element is a 300-foot sluice or artificial channel that diverted water from the river to the mill. The nearby box shop probably made containers for shipment of cheese, an important Sandisfield agricultural product at the time.”

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

For more information on the Clam River campaign or other BNRC projects, please call Tad Ames, Narain Schroeder or Doug Bruce at 413.499.0596.

Send your donation to BNRC, 20 Bank Row, Pittsfield, MA 01201 or donate online at [www.bnrc.net](http://www.bnrc.net).

## Huge Sandiswall 2012! Fundraiser Tag Sale

Mark your calendars! On Saturday and Sunday, June 30 and July 1 between 9:00am-3:00pm, there will be huge tag sale at When Pigs Fly Farm on Route 57 in Sandisfield for the benefit of Sandiswall 2012.

Sandiswall 2012! is a 20-section folding panel art installation that honors Sandisfield residents, whether full- or part-time. It will also have a memorial section for those who have passed away.

Naturally, there will be items of great interest, so do come by and show your support for the Sandiswall 2012!

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# Election (MONDAY, MAY 14) - Don't Forget to Vote!

## ELECTION PROFILE PATRICK BARRETT

Dear Neighbors,

It is hard to believe that three years have passed since I sought your support in order to implement my vision for helping to improve Sandisfield. During this time I fought for the interests of Sandisfield at the state and local level, helping to enact positive change in our community. It is my sincere hope that you will see fit to re-elect me as your Selectman.

During my 2009 campaign, one of my main goals was to help create better roads of communication so that residents are aware of what is happening in Sandisfield. I helped to form a committee for the sole purpose of bringing a town website to Sandisfield. Jean Atwater-Williams spearheaded this committee and thanks to the hard work of many individuals we now have a professional website in which to more easily disseminate information to the public as well as to sell the merits of our town via the World Wide Web. For the past couple of years I have written a monthly column in the Sandisfield Times updating residents on the events taking place in their town government. In these articles I have tried to recognize the many accomplishments and hard work put in by our various town boards and community/civic minded citizens.

In 2009, I promised to reach out to state and local officials in order to promote the interests of Sandisfield. In November 2011, I initiated a regional Selectmen's forum with the towns of Monterey, New Marlborough, Otis, Tolland and Tyringham to help foster closer ties amongst our neighboring communities. This forum has since led to the creation of the South County Small Towns Association, a group that is dedicated to meeting regularly and presenting a united front in advocating for our common interests at the state level. In the past three years I reached out numerous times to State Representative William "Smitty" Pignatelli's and State Senator Benjamin Downing's offices seeking help on such issues as the Route 8 Bridge Project and the resurfacing of Route 183. When FEMA representatives gave town officials a hard time over reimbursement funds during Tropical Storm Irene I successfully sought assistance from United States Senator Scott Brown's office. If re-elected I look forward to continuing to build on the strong relationships I have established with these officials.

I am especially proud of the professional, collegial working relationship that I have developed with fellow Sandisfield Board of Selectmen Richard Campetti and Jeffrey Grey. Our Board spearheaded a campaign to tear down the dilapidated Route 8 houses. Working together and collaborating with the Sandisfield Board of Health, Sandisfield Finance Committee and other community members, we were able to clean up this picturesque area of town. Thanks to the support of the Wilber family and the taxpayers of Sandisfield we now have a parcel in which to develop a small town park. The Route 8 house project was a perfect example of how a united town government can enact positive meaningful change.

With repeated cuts in state funding and a continuing sluggish economy, our community faces difficult challenges ahead. If re-elected, my first priority will be to work with professional grant writer Alice Boyd to help put in place the essential items needed so that Sandisfield can be competitive in obtaining future grant monies. As a community we need to develop an open space plan and town master plan. The lack of these two documents has severely limited the town's ability to cash in on significant grant funding. I will work closely with my fellow Board members and Sandisfield Highway Superintendent Steve Harasyko to create a long term plan for fixing the deteriorating road infrastructure in town. I will help take the town website to the next level by getting agendas and minutes from town meetings posted on this important communications vehicle. I also would like to form a committee to tackle the issue of planning for a new Highway Department building/municipal building. In order to obtain grants, communities must have shovel ready projects. By pro-actively planning for this town need we will be better able to place Sandisfield in a position to save money on this eventual project.

In my three years in office we as a community have been able to knock down houses, build a professional town website, improve town communication, develop closer relationships with our neighboring communities and work with state officials for the betterment of Sandisfield. I have a profound love for Sandisfield and am honored to be one of your Selectmen. I am asking for your support on May 14th in order to be able to continue working for the residents of Sandisfield. 🇺🇸

Sincerely,

Patrick W. Barrett

## WHO'S ON THE BALLOT

MODERATOR - One Year

JOHN SKRIP, JR., 123 No. Main St.  
Candidate for re-election

SELECTMEN - Three Years

PATRICK BARRETT, 26 Rood Hill Rd.  
Candidate for re-election

TREASURER - Two Years

TERESA DELLA GIUSTINA, 45 Clark Rd.  
Candidate for re-election

AUDITOR - One Year

RALPH E. MORRISON, 7 Tolland Rd.  
Candidate for re-election

BOARD OF ASSESSORS - Three Years

KATHLEEN K. BURROWS, 174 New Hartford Rd.  
Candidate for re-election

SCHOOL COMMITTEE - Three Years

GARY BOTTUM, SR., 184 New Hartford Rd.  
Caucus nominee

BOARD OF HEALTH - Three Years

KATHLEEN FARICELLI SEGRIN,  
188 Sandisfield Rd. Candidate for re-election

PLANNING BOARD - Five Years

LIBRARY TRUSTEE - Five Years

MARY L. TUREK, 158 Sandisfield Rd.  
Nomination papers

## QUESTION 1

Proposition 2 1/2 Levy Limit Override (G.L. Ch. 59 sec. 21C(g))

Shall the Town of Sandisfield be allowed to assess an additional \$150,000 in real estate and personal property taxes for the purpose of funding the Fiscal Year 2013 Operating Budget beginning July 1, 2012.

## QUESTION 2

Shall the Town of Sandisfield be allowed to exempt from the limitations of Proposition 2 1/2, so called, the amounts required to pay for the bond issued in order to pay costs of road improvements to New Hartford Rd., and for the payment of all other costs incidental and related thereto?





**TOWN BUSINESS** *Cont'd from P.7*



**March 12, 2012**

*Attending: Patrick Barrett, Richard Campetti, Jeff Gray, Steve Harasyko, Dolores Harasyko*

Highway update: Steve attended a conference on mitigation. Mike Kulig explained that there are still opportunities for Strap Grants. Steve reiterated that we need someone who can write grants.

Reviewed Chapter 90 funds. There is approximately \$500,000 left in the account, \$80,000 of which is earmarked for projects. Steve would like to use Chapter 90 funds to replace a culvert on New Hartford Road and repair the area up to Viets Road. Approximate cost for this project is \$100,000. Steve obtained quotes for repaving parts of New Hartford Road, West Street, Town Hill Road, West Hubbard and South Sandisfield Road. He discussed using a cold mix instead of a hot mix and is seeking advice from the Selectmen on how to fund this project. Steve suggests funding half as a "raise and appropriate" article on the Annual Town Warrant and half from Chapter 90 funds. Richard and Patrick agreed to put this before the voters in May and Jeff would like to target one road at a time from Chapter 90. Steve explained that he will never have enough money from Chapter 90 to fund this and continue to maintain all the other roads. Patrick suggested following up with the DOR about funding this as a capital expense. Also under discussion was adding a leveling course to put the crown back in the roads.

Steve had a discussion with Lane Construction and they are working on a letter of guarantee for Route 183. They are offering us a five year guarantee in lieu of the normal one year guarantee.

Steve requested an extra week of time off for a medical procedure in lieu of a 2% raise for fiscal year 2013. Approved by all.

Discussed repairs in the men's room at the Town Hall Annex. Patrick will contact a plumber for an estimate.

Discussed a special permit request for the Goosens property on New Hartford Road.

Reviewed and discussed FY2013 budget submissions.



**March 26, 2012**

*Attending: Patrick Barrett, Richard Campetti, Jeff Gray, Steve Harasyko, Dolores Harasyko*

Treasurer Teresa DellaGiustina in to review options for funding the work to be done on New Hartford Road. To move forward with the debt exclusion, the Selectmen need a 2/3 vote and, if passed, the town would need a 2/3 vote at the Annual Town Meeting. Then the question would be placed on the Annual Town Ballot. Discussed repairing all of New Hartford Road rather than just the 1 1/2 mile. The approximate cost for the 1 1/2 miles project is \$400,000 (New Hartford Road is about 4 miles long). Half of the funding would come out of Chapter 90 funds and half from a loan. Jeff would like to be able to do a debt exclusion to fix all the roads. Approximate cost would be \$2.5 million. The loan can only be for five years as specified by Mass General Law. Motion by Patrick, second by Richard (Jeff opposed) to allow the Treasurer to move forward with a note for \$200,000 for New Hartford Road improvements. Motion passed by majority vote.

Teresa reviewed unemployment insurance. We cannot opt out of the program at this time of the year.

Teresa explained the problem regarding the gas and diesel account which is \$15,800 overdrawn. She believes that there is a programming problem and the readings may not be accurate. It may also be due to the rising cost of fuel. Steve will have the computer programmer come and review


the program and enhance it with better breakdowns. He will have it broken down by pump number, department, vehicle, operator and mileage. Teresa recommends having a Special Town Meeting before the Annual Town Meeting to transfer \$15,800 from Free Cash. Discussion followed. Due to a mild winter there is money left over in Snow and Ice. Even though the fuel is used by several departments, we will apply the overdraft to Snow and Ice.

Chapter 90 reimbursement request for tree work on South Beech Plain Road was approved. Mass Highway has contacted Steve about the millings from the Route 8 reclamation job currently underway. They have offered the millings to the town and Steve will be able to use them on some of the dirt roads.

The Conservation Commission has requested Special Municipal Employee status for Elizabeth Stockman. Ms. Stockman will need to file a disclosure form and present it to the Selectmen for approval.

Kim Spring appointed Inspector of Animals.

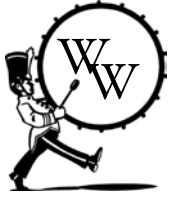
Reviewed and signed letter requesting a flyover for the 250<sup>th</sup> celebration. Reviewed request for permission to use town roads for a bike ride by The Village Ride. Reviewed list of concerns about the ride from Police Chief Michael Morrison. We will forward these concerns to The Village Ride and wait for a response before granting permission. We informed them that Route 8 is not in our jurisdiction and provided a contact for them at Mass DOT. Reviewed final budget for FY2013.

Discussed a letter received by Tom Ryan regarding fees for building permits. Will follow up with the Building Inspector. 



Explore the Clam River on our free guided hikes. See March and April at [www.bnrc.net/events](http://www.bnrc.net/events) or call Amanda or Doug at 413.499.0596 for more info.

**BNRC.net**  
BERKSHIRE NATURAL RESOURCES COUNCIL



# Middle Mile Moving Ahead

Article by Jean Atwater-Williams

Photos by Setsuko Winchester

G4S, the company the MBI has engaged to install the fiber optic cable that will connect our town's anchor institutions to its state of the art broadband network, has been very busy in Sandisfield lately. And because of the mild winter the installation is well ahead of schedule. Right now the fiber is "dark" - this means that although cable may be physically attached to the poles it is not yet ready to carry any signals or traffic. "Lighting the fiber" is expected to happen sometime in the first six months of next year. At that point, Old Town Hall, Town Hall Annex, the library, the fire houses and the police will be able to take advantage of the fastest possible internet. Hopefully our businesses and residences (i.e. the "last mile") will not be far behind!



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# Selectmen's Letter

By Patrick Barrett

The town of Sandisfield has recently been struck by a series of break-ins and robberies, five at houses in Otis Woodlands (two on the Sandisfield side) and one on Cronk Road. Sandisfield Police Chief Michael Morrison has beefed up patrols in these areas and is conducting an investigation in collaboration with the Otis Police Department and the Massachusetts State Police. We are asking that Sandisfield residents take proper precautions when leaving their homes: lock all areas of potential entry; be aware of suspicious vehicles and people in your neighborhood; and check on homes of neighbors who might be out of town. If anyone has information regarding this crime spree, please contact the Sandisfield Police Department or the Massachusetts State Police. We appreciate the efforts taken by our Police Department and are fortunate to have such dedicated and professional police officers to protect our town.

The Sandisfield Board of Selectmen would like to congratulate Josephine Freedman and all of the contributors to the *Sandisfield Eats* cookbook. Driven by members of the Sandisfield Historical Society, this cookbook contains a wide variety of recipes, anecdotes and stories about our town. It makes for a wonderful reading experience. Thanks to everyone who contributed to this book, making it a worthwhile and lasting contribution to our 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

The issues regarding the full-depth reclamation and resurfacing project on Route 183 have been brought to a successful conclusion. During preliminary state testing of the work done on Route 183 by Lane Construction Company, MASS Highway officials indicated that the top coat wasn't a state approved mix and that the compaction wasn't sufficient for the type of material being used on the road surface. After further testing was completed, MASS Highway Department District 1 Supervisor Peter Niles indicated that the material used on Route 183 was in fact a state approved mix, properly applied by Lane Construction Company. He believes the work done on this road sufficiently meets state standards. Lane fully cooperated with town officials throughout this process and generously extended the warranty on the road from one year to five years. We would like to thank Lane officials for the professional manner in which they handled this situation. We sincerely appreciate their willingness to extend the warranty. We would also like to thank Highway Superintendent Steve Harasyko for the numerous phone calls/e-mails/

meetings he made in order to ensure that the work on Route 183 was of the highest quality.

The MASS Highway Department has given the town free millings from the resurfacing project currently taking place on Route 8. Our Highway Department is using this material to help build up some of our more problematic dirt roads. A good portion of these millings have been used on Silverbrook Road with smaller amounts distributed on North/South Beech Plain, Stump, Bosworth, Shade, Sullivan and Cronk roads. When compacted, the millings should help keep the roads in tact during severe weather conditions and hopefully help prevent the repeated wash-outs that have occurred in recent years. Grading continues on dirt roads throughout town and the Highway Department has been putting down extra gravel in problem areas.

We would like to thank Robbin Campetti, Lisa Levenworth, Tina Ferry and all of those who helped the Sandisfield Recreation Committee put together the wonderful Easter egg hunt at the American Legion Hall. This event is always a big success because of the hard work put in by the members of the Committee. As a parent of three young children, I am continually amazed at the support our community provides for our kids during the holidays.

On April 19<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Department of Revenue officer Dennis Mountain gave a presentation of our current budget as well as an overview of Proposition 2 ½. This presentation was held at the Town Hall Annex with the hope of further educating town residents and officials on the current state of our finances. As our state liaison for many years, Dennis has helped provide quality service to Sandisfield and has been instrumental in guiding local leaders through the nuances of municipal finance. We appreciate Dennis' willingness to lead this important educational discussion. On May 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. the Selectmen host an all-boards meeting at the Old Town Hall in order to go over this year's proposed budget. It is our hope that this meeting will provide residents with the opportunity to ask budgetary questions of the various department heads and to be better informed heading into the Annual Town Meeting.

Based on the stagnant growth in town, and the continued cuts in state funding, it has become clear that Sandisfield's Proposition 2 ½ levy limit is no longer a viable number. The Selectmen unanimously recommend an increase in our levy limit in the amount of \$150,000. This figure was recommended to town officials by Dennis Mountain and would give us a minimum cushion of \$25,000 for future years. Raising our levy limit will allow the town to continue to provide the basic services we currently offer. Our Free Cash Account has taken big hits over the last couple of years as it has been used to prevent a

Proposition 2 ½ override vote. For a number of years town departments have issued level funded budgets at a time when inflation has been increasing dramatically increasing. As a result, excess end of year monies that would normally flow into the Free Cash Account are no longer being replenished at previous year's rates. Free Cash is generally used to provide up-front monies necessary to operate the town before tax receipts can be collected for financing a new budget season. With money that normally feeds our Free Cash Account drying up and increasing demands to access these funds, we are in an unsustainable fiscal situation. On May 14<sup>th</sup>, please join us in voting for increasing our levy limit.

We would like to thank Elaine O'Brien for her help in preparing the Annual Town Report. This is a major undertaking and Elaine's years of experience, coupled with her attention to detail, have once again been instrumental in producing this important report. The Annual Town Meeting will be held Saturday May 12<sup>th</sup> at 10 a.m. in the Old Town Hall and elections will be held on Monday May 14<sup>th</sup>. Please come out and have your voices heard at these two important events.

Last, we send our condolences to State Senator Benjamin Downing on the sudden death of his younger brother, Nathaniel Downing. During his career, Senator Downing has actively supported our town, always willing to work on our behalf when called upon. Following in the family tradition of public service, Nathaniel Downing was pursuing a law degree and was actively engaged politically in local, state and national politics. Our thoughts are with Senator Downing and his family during this difficult time. ❧



## ONE OF OUR OWN DOES GOOD: ANASTASIA STANMEYER

*Cont'd from p.1*

his choice of Ms. Stanmeyer: "We are excited to have someone with such talent, experience, and creativity leading the editorial team as we launch *Berkshire Magazine*. Anastasia has the worldly experience and local knowledge needed to create a superb magazine for the people of the Berkshires."

For her part, Ms. Stanmeyer said she was "thrilled" with the new job. "The magazine will have first-rate writing, drawing from the wealth of talent right here in our backyard. There is definitely a need for a quality magazine that covers the diversity of our area. I look forward to being its editor." *Berkshire Magazine* will send 15,000 copies to local mailboxes, with 5,000 for sale on local news-stands. ❧



By Adam Manacher

## Shoots of Joy

Even in today's world of year round available produce "springtime" still means asparagus season. No vegetable signals the oncoming growing season more than the sweet, slightly grassy quality of fresh asparagus. Maybe that's why it adorns so many at the spring festival tables of Easter and Passover. Although this past winter was unseasonably warm, the first "greens" of the coming summer harvest reassure us that the growing cycle goes on.

Asparagus comes in a variety of styles at the grocery stores. You'll find fat and thin asparagus as well as green, white and even purple asparagus. Talk to an asparagus lover and they will surely have an opinion as to which kind they consider "the best." The truth is each style is delicious and easy to prepare. Here are a few tips that may help the less initiated find their way toward a successful relationship with asparagus. Flavor is more influenced by freshness than thickness. Fresh asparagus has a mild "earthy", even nutty flavor. Freshness is important since the sugars break down quickly once picked, similar to corn on the cob. Be sure the body of the stalk is very firm, the head is tight and compact and the bottoms are not shriveled or dried out. Texture is determined by the thickness or diameter of the stalk. Thin asparagus, although considered to be tender, can often be a bit stringy. This is because, though there are fewer fibers, the fibers are more

concentrated. Fat asparagus have a tender interior and a richer, meaty quality. This additional richness also imparts a nutty flavor.

Asparagus of any variety need to have the bottoms trimmed. This process in itself can stir debate amongst cooks! The bottom tip of the stalk is woody, especially with thick asparagus. Even when cooked, this part remains dense and tough. The "traditional" way to remove this part is to hold the middle of the stalk in one hand, the woody end in the other, and "snap" the end off. Many chefs feel that this technique often breaks off more than just the woody portion. An alternative method is to use a knife to remove the remaining last inch and a half. This should take off anything inedible. Some cooks, and I am not one of them, will also lightly peel the outer layer of fat asparagus. This is not necessary with thin stalks.



Here in the United States green asparagus is the most common variety while in Europe white is the norm. The only difference is the manner in which they are grown. White asparagus has no exposure to sunlight. Using a "hilling" method the dirt is mounded as the stalk grows, depriving it of light. Sometimes called "white gold" it is considered to be a more tender product. Regardless of the color asparagus is a great source of vitamin B and potassium. Green asparagus has the additional benefit of abundant vitamin C.

Asparagus is simple to cook. Boil or steam them until the point of a knife can just pierce through. Be sure to chill them under running cold water once done or they will continue to cook and have a mushy quality. Serve cold or reheat just before eating. Roast or grill them by tossing lightly with olive oil and laying out flat on a roasting pan in the oven or across the grill on a medium flame. Cook on a high heat about 5-7 minutes or until knife tender and the outer coating browns and caramelizes just a bit. This intensifies the nutty flavor, particularly in the fatter stalks.


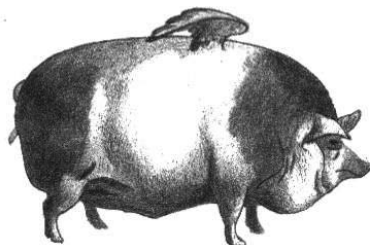
A versatile vegetable, asparagus can be served as a salad, a side vegetable, or as a main ingredient in a dish. For a cool summer salad, steam, cool and marinate in vinaigrette with orange zest. Top with some shaved Parmesan cheese before serving. Serve asparagus as an accompaniment to any main dish. Simply boil or steam and toss with either a bit of olive oil or clarified butter, sprinkle with kosher salt and serve warm. Or create a risotto or pasta dish featuring asparagus as the main component. Asparagus also makes a great addition to a frittata for Sunday morning brunch. Steam the asparagus and cut into 1/2 inch pieces, sauté some mushrooms, add to beaten eggs with some goat cheese, pop into the oven and break out the mimosas! 

Photo: Wikimedia Commons

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# SANDISFIELD ARTS CENTER KICKS OFF SEVENTEENTH SEASON


By Sandisfield Times Reporter

Eleven performance events, two forums, four workshops and four gallery exhibits make up the offerings for SArC's 2012 season and Sandisfield's 250th year. As usual, there's something for everyone. The lineup begins on May 19th with Anni Crofut's wildly-popular family Cabaret, a delicious evening of outrageous local talent spanning comedy, opera, dance, jazz, poetry, martial arts and more! The Cabaret will be followed on June 2nd by Arts Center favorite Triple Play, whose three outstanding and versatile professional musicians, Peter Madcat Ruth, Joel Brown and Chris Brubeck will bring their distinctive blend of folk, blues, jazz, funk, and classical to the Arts Center stage. On June 9th, melt away your tension with "The Alexander Technique," a body movement workshop. The following day (June 10th) the 2nd annual Ferris Burtis Music Foundation Benefit Concert will take place. This event features several of the enormously talented young classical musicians the Foundation has assisted in the pursuit of their education and careers - a rare opportunity to glimpse true virtuosity. All the while, the downstairs Gallery will be showing new work from "The Group of Four", local artists who have spent the last year expanding the boundaries of their artistic expression and experience. The perfect chance to meet and mingle with these gifted painters (and perhaps make a purchase) occurs on June 2nd at their gallery reception.



And all of the above is happening in just the first few weeks! The balance of the season will continue to delight and inspire. There will be folk and classical music, Celtic music and Irish step dance, SArC's annual Forum on History and American Culture, mushrooming, yoga and knitting workshops, an original historical drama in honor of the town's 250th based on Sandisfield's real life legends. And that doesn't even cover the hero worship, angelic children's voices, a guitar quartet and three more gallery art shows, including an exhibit of the community's own images of Sandisfield.

Go to [www.SandisfieldArtsCenter.org](http://www.SandisfieldArtsCenter.org) for full details and be sure to sign up for email event reminders so you won't miss a minute of the excitement! 

Go to [www.SandisfieldArtsCenter.org](http://www.SandisfieldArtsCenter.org) for full details and be sure to sign up for email event reminders so you won't miss a minute of the excitement! 

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**SATURDAY, JUNE 16, 2012**  
★ 8 am to 10 pm ★

**8 - 10 am PANCAKE BREAKFAST**

**10 am - 4 pm ALL-DAY  
CHILDREN'S ENTERTAINMENT**  
featuring Petting Zoo and Inflatable Park

**11 am DOG SHOW**   
Community Dog Walk to follow

**11:30 - 2 pm BURGERS & HOT DOGS**  
provided by Boy Scout Troop 45 of Otis

**12:30 - 2 pm 3RD ANNUAL  
TALENT SHOW**

 **12:30 ZUMBATHON**

**2 - 4 pm CLIFF BRODEUR &  
THE HOUSATONIC PHILHARMONIC**

**4 - 10 pm TASTE OF OTIS &  
BEER GARDEN**

**4 - 6:30 pm BERKSHIRE BATERIA**

**6:30 am - 9:30 pm DOOLEY AUSTIN**

**7 - 9:30 pm PAJAMA PARTY &  
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[CelebrateOtis@yahoo.com](mailto:CelebrateOtis@yahoo.com)

# Timberframing

By Larry Dwyer

Timber Framing, or post-and-beam construction, dates as far back as 500 A.D. and incorporates the use of mortise and tenon joints. This type of joint dates back even further to ancient Egyptian furniture. Timber framing is a very durable type of construction as can be attested to by the many middle-age European buildings that are still standing today. Timber framing was eventually replaced by less costly balloon framing (Chicago construction) beginning in 1832 and possibly fifty years earlier in Ste. Genevieve, Missouri, a French settlement along the Mississippi.


On the surface, timber framing appears to be a simpler form of construction than conventional light-frames as there are fewer cross members and uprights. Unlike light-frames which gain strength from OSB (Orientated Strand Board) siding or plywood timber frames are self-supporting. The difficulty with timber framing lies with the size of the beams and the intricacy of the joints. The advantage of light-framing over

timber framing is that it is a lot easier to handle a 2' x 4' than a 24' long, 12" x 8" solid oak timber. The intricate joinery and the handling of huge timbers require many hands, thus increasing construction costs. Thinking historically, you also have to realize that portable electric circular saws weren't invented until 1923 and not widely available until after WWII, so all the joints were created by using a hand saw, mallet and chisel. Advancements in electric woodworking tools, cranes and rigging devices simplified construction and timber framing was revived in the 1970s.

There are several timber frame homes in Sandisfield. One example is the home Don Turek constructed in the early 1980s. (See photos below.) Don went even a step further by creating his own timbers. All the beams in his frame were cut from local trees that he felled and hauled out of the woods with a tractor and help from a few friends. Don began cutting his own logs to make the beams. It was a tedious process, taking way too long, so he hired Buster Hamilton to cut the logs in his saw mill. Don said, "I couldn't have built my house without help from Buster Hamilton. He was like an angel from heaven." Don was

short of funds at the time and was further helped by good-natured Buster who told him, "Don't worry about the money. Pay me when you can."

Timber frame sections are divided into four-sided bays and as you assemble a timber frame, upright sections called bents are raised. A bent is one side of a bay. It requires a lot of muscle to raise a bent without a crane and when Don was raising his frame, he did it the old-fashioned way. When he needed a helping hand he would stop and employ strangers who happened to be passing along on the road. For Don, building his house was a painstaking process, but it was a labor of love. Even with the help of his friends, Buster Hamilton, his son Richard and a few strangers, it still took him more than two years to complete the frame.

If you have an example of a timber frame house or barn that you would like to share, please contact the editors of the *Sandisfield Times* at [editors@sandisfieldtimes.org](mailto:editors@sandisfieldtimes.org). 





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## Snapshots of Sandisfield



### A Call for your Photos. Drawings. Paintings. Quilts

The Sandisfield Arts Center is holding a special exhibition of photographs and works of art describing the Town of Sandisfield. We want you to bring us pictures, drawings, paintings, quilts, anything that tells a story of Sandisfield and we will display them in the downstairs gallery as part of the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration.

Grab your camera. Search in your attic and old files for photos and artwork that capture some aspect of Sandisfield that is dear to your heart. Houses and barns, animals, (wild and domestic), landscapes, people.

Bring your photos and artwork to us on Saturday, July 21, 2012 from 1 to 3pm and we will hang them in the gallery.

There are a few rules:

1. Your pictures or works of art should be ready to hang and should not be bigger than 30 inches in any direction (including frame or mat).
2. Please fill out the form below and bring it with you. Three entries per person.
3. You can offer your entry for sale. Just indicate the price on the entry form. The Sandisfield Arts Center will take no commission.
4. A special note: Every effort will be made to safeguard the artwork, but by entering your work, you will exempt the Town of Sandisfield, the Sandisfield Arts Center and all individuals involved from liability regarding harm to or loss of the work.

#### ENTRY FORM • SNAPSHOTS OF SANDISFIELD

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Age, if under 18 \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

No. of Entries \_\_\_\_\_ Description of entries (Price if appropriate) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Clam River Ramble

Photos and Article by Laura Rogers-Castro

In our beautiful Sandisfield there is a special place that is owned by the Berkshire Natural Resources Council (BNRC). I recently had the opportunity to visit the property on a guided public hike led by the Council's Stewardship Manager Doug Bruce and Intern Tierney Rosenstock. BNRC has owned land on the Clam River since 1996 when they acquired 3.5 acres at the Hammertown Road bridge. Since then, they have conserved an additional 470 acres along the river.

We began our excursion with an introduction by Doug to a piece of the property that is being managed as a habitat for the New England cottontail. Most of us have seen Eastern cottontail, a more common and easily adaptable rabbit, but the New England cottontail is considered scarce due to the loss of dense understory habitat.



grouse and sighted a hermit thrush. At the base of a large, beautiful hemlock was evidence of a black bear in the form of several piles of scat (animal poop for the uninformed!) The river was somewhat deep in areas and there were several

about goldthread and striped wintergreen. My favorite was viewing rattlesnake plantain, an orchid with leaves patterned like snake scales.

We continued our walk back on Hammertown Road and soon arrived at our vehicles. The walk was a wonderful way to spend a day off from work. How lucky we are to have the Clam River in Sandisfield. Thanks to Doug and Tierney for the walk and thanks as well to BNRC for their efforts in conserving this piece of Sandisfield for all to enjoy. (Author's note: BNRC will be leading several hikes in Sandisfield in the upcoming months. Visit their website at [BNRC.net](http://BNRC.net) for more information.)



BNRC will be removing about 9 acres of mature forest on the periphery of 11 acres of old field in order to enhance the habitat for the New England cottontail, a species that is under consideration for the federal list of endangered species.

We then headed into the woods, traveling an old woods road edged by beautiful stone walls, past an old foundation and eventually down to the Clam River. We heard the drumming of a ruffed

small cascades, including a spot that resembled an infinity pool. It was very beautiful and our party was blessed to have such a crisp Spring morning with a brilliant blue sky to enjoy the adventure.

Our return trip included notes on some of the plants in the area. BNRC Intern Tierney is studying conservation ecology and is quite good at plant identification. We discovered fun facts

## Note to All Subscribers

In the past few months, we have received some copies of monthly issues marked by the Post Office "Return to Sender, Not Deliverable as Addressed, Unable to Forward". We realize that some people change their residences at different times of the year. We have made an effort to contact people if they have furnished an email address or current phone number. If you have not received your subscription issue to the *Times*, please contact us at [editor@sandisfieldtimes.org](mailto:editor@sandisfieldtimes.org) and let us know which issues you have missed along with a current mailing address so we can supply you with these missing issues. You can also drop us a note at The Sandisfield Times, PO Box 584, Sandisfield, MA 01255. Thank you for your understanding.





# Sandisfield Historical Society News

By Josephine Freedman

The following are Sandisfield Historical Society 2012 events:

**SAVE THE DATES:**

- July 7<sup>th</sup> ..... the Summer Fair
- October 6<sup>th</sup> ..... the Apple Fest
- November 4<sup>th</sup> ..... the Wine and Cheese party
- December 1<sup>st</sup> ..... the Christmas Fair.

If you have ordered your *Sandisfield Eats* cookbook you can pick it up at any of these events and at the 250<sup>th</sup> celebration at the end of July. We still have about 85 copies left out of the 260 that were ordered. If we sell most of them we will decide in May whether there will be a second printing. The book has been so popular that many members of the community have been buying multiple copies. So be sure to get yours as soon as possible

Barry Freedman is the Sandisfield Historical Society treasurer and the keeper of the books. He was away from town for most of April and apologizes that he did not leave copies of the books with Norton Fletcher or Villa Mia. You can get a copy for \$15 by calling Norton at 413-258-4520 or stopping in at the Villa Mia. Since Norton does not leave town like the wandering Freedmans do, you should be able to get a cookbook when you call.

If you have any questions, call Josephine Freedman at 413-258-4786, or email [freedmjl@aol.com](mailto:freedmjl@aol.com).


If you send a check to the Sandisfield Historical Society at P.O. Box 513, Sandisfield, MA 01255, a book will be reserved for you. Fill out and send the form below.

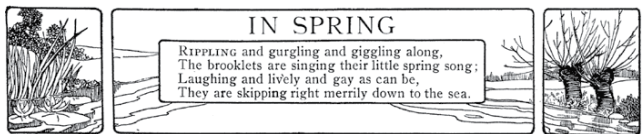
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Number of books \_\_\_\_\_ x \$15.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_


Thank you so much for your continued support of the Historical Society.

The next scheduled meeting will be held on May 13, 2012 at 11 AM at the South Sandisfield Meeting House. All are welcome to join up for a pot luck lunch. 



# POLICE BLOTTER

## January through March 2012

- January 3      Trespassing complaint, Hubbard Road
- January 8      Vandalism complaint, Sandy Brook Road
- January 8      Vandalism complaint, Sandisfield Road
- January 11     House alarm, Beech Plain Road
- January 11     Trespass notice, Hubbard Road
- January 13     Motor vehicle accident, North Main
- January 13     Breaking and entering complaint, North Main
- January 16     Motor vehicle accident, North Main
- January 16     Noise complaint, North Main
- January 19     Wires down, North Main
- January 26     Assist Fire Department, Sandisfield Road
- January 30     Assist medical, Sandisfield Road
  
- February 4     Domestic complaint, Beech Plain Road
- February 5     Missing funds complaint, Sandisfield Road
- February 5     Summons served, North Main
- February 5     Strange person, Sandisfield Road
- February 6     Assist medical, Beech Plain Road
- February 8     Motor vehicle accident, New Hartford Road
- February 8     Wires down, South Main
- February 11    Strange vehicles/persons, Silverbrook Road
- February 11    Domestic complaint, Roosterville Road
- February 13    Operating without a license complaint, New Hartford Road
- February 16    Erratic operator complaint, South Main
- February 16    Motor vehicle accident, Sandisfield Road
- February 16    Disabled vehicle, South Main
- February 16    Wires down, Sandisfield Road
- February 18    Assist medical, Clark Road
- February 22    911 hang-up, Stump Road
- February 23    Motor vehicle accident, Hubbard Road
- February 25    Assist medical, Sandisfield Road
- February 26    Assist New Marlborough Police Department and Fire Department
  
- March 1        Breaking and entering, stolen ATV, South Main
- March 2        Motor vehicle accident, Town Hill Road
- March 3        Wires down, North Main
- March 6        Assist Fire Department, Sandisfield Road
- March 11       Domestic complaint, Roosterville Road
- March 12       Strange person, Sandisfield Road
- March 18       House alarm, South Main
- March 20       Erratic operator complaint, South Main
- March 21       Assist medical, Sandisfield Road
- March 21       Assist Fire Department, South Main
- March 23       Breaking and entering complaint, Lakeshore Drive, Otis Woodlands
- March 23       Breaking and entering complaint, Silverbrook Road
- March 24       Summons served, North Main
- March 26       Operating under the influence/operator complaint, Town Hill Road
- March 28       Assist medical, Sandisfield Road
- March 30       Breaking and entering complaint, Deer Run, Otis Woodlands
- March 30       Suspicious vehicle, Lake Shore Drive, Otis Woodlands 

# This Old Wall

By Larry Dwyer

I was getting ready to take a short hike around West Lake with my wife when my daughter called up from downstairs, "Dad! I need help to dig out a big rock!" Somehow I knew this was coming.


My daughter Camille was back home from college for the week and she was digging in the yard to plant a vegetable garden. I went down to where she was working and helped her dig out a nice sized flat boulder. We began by digging around it and finally, after struggling for an hour and breaking two shovels, we got it just high enough to become a very prominent obstacle in her new vegetable garden. Standing there sweating, asking my wife for water and staring at the rock, I thought I had enough exercise for the day, but we went all hiking anyway.

Camille is studying geology and as we walked down Lower West Street she said, "I was at a lecture and a geologist said that you can tell the purpose of a stone wall by its width. Thin walls were used to pen animals and thick walls were created by stones (field stones) plowed up from the ground."

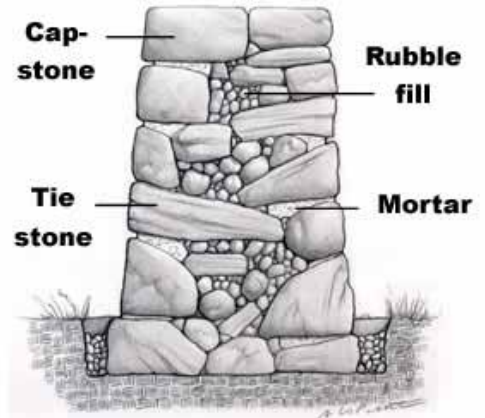
As we walked up the trail towards Abbey Lake we came upon one of the many stone walls that traverse the woods in Sandisfield. We looked at the wall and discussed whether it was a thick or thin wall. It was hard to tell, but it was long and went way into the woods and up over the hill. From the length, we assumed it was a field wall. Last year, on Shade Road, Ron Bernard pointed out a stone wall which was the perimeter of an area of about 250 square feet. Ron said this was

definitely a pen for farm animals. When we finally arrived home, after we met Don Turek who showed us a coyote den (a future story), and Lori Wilkinson who was out walking her four dogs and told us about the York Lake Trail (another future story), Camille and I tackled the stone again. We lifted it just high enough with the broken shovels to get a nylon strap around it and then I strapped a Come-Along to a tree and we winched the rock from the hole to the side of the soon-to-be garden.

Staring at the stone, I thought about how much energy we expended moving just this one rock, and then I thought of the early settlers who built the stone wall that we passed in the woods. They would have had to duplicate our effort hundreds of times to create that wall. Of course, one colonial farmer was a lot stronger than my daughter and me combined - I estimated the weight of the rock at 250 pounds - so two strong young farmers, raised on home grown food, could have easily lifted it. They also had draft horses and oxen to assist with the larger boulders, but still it would have been a tremendous effort by any standard.

I searched the Internet for the history of New England stone walls and came across this passage, "Stones were seldom hauled any further than necessary." This sounded like very good advice to me, so in that case I guess that stone will never be moved again, at least not by me. Well no matter, late that night I took some Tylenol and had a good night's sleep. 

Photos: Wikimedia Commons



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Dear Editor,

I have great respect for Margaret O'Clair and appreciate her wonderful "Avian Notes" in the Sandisfield Times. I applaud her call (*see Letters to the Editor "Let's have Some Choices"; March 2012*) for using our abundant supply of water in Sandisfield to make electric power.

I urge all of us to employ the two greatest sources of energy available to us now: energy efficiency in our homes and businesses and conservation in our daily lives and then we should use "alternatives to fossil fuel" and nuclear power.

There is a cost to all sources of generating power: wind turbines may be troublesome to some birds and bats; damming rivers and streams may be troublesome to some fish; oil spilling on land and in our waters; dirty coal hurting our air. I would much prefer a solar farm than an oil spill or a nuclear power plant accident.

Sandisfield is very close to nuclear plants: Millstone (CT), Vermont Yankee (VT), Indian Point (NY). I would much prefer looking at acres of solar panels than being impacted for generations by a radioactive plume (most recently Fukushima [Japan]). In 1986, when the Chernobyl accident occurred (Prypiat [Russia]), songbirds were affected along the coast of California.

We need all forms of benign alternative energy and conservation and energy efficiency.

Lou Friedman  
Canton, CT and Sandisfield, MA



To the Editor:

Considering the potential damage to the reputation of a local business man, does *The Sandisfield Times* intend to report the outcome of the case of the alleged shooting of the cat Jellybean on Hubbard Road a year ago? Given the reference to the cat by name and the vivid description of its injuries from a BB gun "slug", readers are seemingly invited, regardless of the legal outcome, to conclude that the alleged

attacker (a) is an enemy of all cat lovers; (b) addresses his neighbor with foul language; (c) deserves a 5-year sentence for animal cruelty; (d) makes reckless and unfounded charges concerning the loss of his own nameless chickens to the neighbor's marauding "pets"; (e) owns a BB gun capable of making a loud report, and used it to commit the alleged crime; (f) lied about his whereabouts nearly a year ago on the date of the alleged crime; and (g) does not love - and is not loved by -- his neighbor.

In the event that the accused plumber/chicken farmer does not actually serve five years for animal cruelty, his accuser will nevertheless have the satisfaction of seriously damaging his reputation and his business, somewhat abetted by the attendant publicity.

Although long-running feuds between abutting neighbors are, journalistically speaking, a hazardous area, I think that adding a Crime reporter to the *Times'* staff is a great stride forward in sophistication for a small-town paper. I don't insist that *The Times* "should only print good news," and I salute its fearless commitment to the principle that "all the truth is told and all the right is done". I look forward to more of that.

John Yaeger  
Sandisfield, MA

*Editor's Note: We just heard that the case has been dismissed. See article page 2.*



To the Editor:

I didn't know to whom to address this so I just picked you.

I've written about this before but nothing has changed. We aren't getting the newsletter until long after I can pick it up at several places in town for free. So why do we need to subscribe? We also contribute because we do admire the work you are doing.

We will not renew.

Ray Stollerman

*Editor's Note:*

*The Times, which is supported primarily by donations, is distributed free by volunteers to more than 20 public locations around Sandisfield and in three surrounding towns. Most places receive their copies in about two days from printing and many get them on the same day. Mailing takes longer because of manual preparation and USPS delivery schedules. The Times is available by mail as a service for those who want to be assured of receiving a copy. If you could help distribute please contact editor@SandisfieldTimes.org or call Ron at 413 269-0012.*

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# Comings and Goings



## ROBERT KIDDER GREEN July 4th, 1920 – April 8th, 2012

Bob Green, a banker and war hero who left an indelible imprint on Sandisfield after his four decades of life here, died in Florida on Easter Sunday, a few months shy of his 92nd birthday – which would have fallen on Independence Day. He died from complications following hip surgery, his family said.

There are unconfirmed plans for his widely dispersed clan to memorialize his long and remarkable life at a summertime gathering at his house and 400-acre estate on Sears Road – the land “he loved and cherished more than any other he knew”, according to one of his sons. Thus far his most enduring Sandisfield monument is our firehouse on Route 57 – the financing for which he arranged, to underline his commitment, as he saw it, to the organization, management and safe-keeping of his adopted town.

Robert Kidder Green was born in Pawling, New York, where his father Egbert Green ran the tiny Pawling National Bank. After education at

Amherst College and Harvard Business School, Green was called up into the US Army’s 78th “Lightning” Division in 1943, just in time to be sent off to the D-Day invasion force (he arrived in Normandy on D +3). As a Private First Class, he had a classically “good war”, seeing action in the exceptionally bloody Battle of Hürtgen Forest, the Battle of the Bulge and the taking of the famous Remagen Bridge across the Rhine which he later admitted was first taken almost by accident by members of his platoon - members who were, as he once put it, “comprehensively inebriated.” He received two Bronze Stars and, for injuries sustained in the battles, two Purple Hearts.

After the war he joined the investment firm of White, Weld which, until its takeover in 1978 by Merrill Lynch, was a centerpiece of the Boston Brahmin banking universe. He rose steadily through the Merrill hierarchy, eventually becoming a Senior Vice President.

In 1950 he married Emily Jane Rees, and lived for most of his working career in Ridgewood, New Jersey. In the early 1970s he purchased Woodcrest, the former boys’ camp at the top of Cider Mill Hill, off Sears Road, and soon afterwards, abandoning the suburbs for good, he dedicated the remainder of his active years to improving and maintaining the property. In addition he played a significant role in town government, serving on the Finance and Planning Committees, as well as helping the Fire Department and the Winsted Hospital. In failing health in the mid-2000s – despite being a small, wiry and very tough man, given to heroic wintertime exploits on the frozen lakes here – he was persuaded to settle in Atlantic Beach, Florida, where he died on April 8th.

Bob Green leaves two sons, Richard and Jeffrey, and two daughters – Katherine of Great Barrington, and Ann, who lives in France. There are also seven grandchildren. ♥



# NOW HEAR THIS!

*If you have an event that you would like to see listed here, please email [calendar@sandisfieldtimes.org](mailto:calendar@sandisfieldtimes.org). We reserve space for those events that involve Sandisfield residents or that take place in Sandisfield and neighboring communities.*

## ANNUAL TOWN MEETING & ELECTION

Saturday, May 12, 10:00 a.m. Annual Town Meeting at the Old Town Hall

Monday, May 14, 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Annual Town Election at the Old Town Hall

\*Please note that the following offices are up for election this year: Moderator, Selectman, Treasurer, Auditor, Board of Assessors, School Committee, Board of Health, Planning Board and Library Trustee.

## ONGOING EVENTS

Town Meetings (Info call 258-4711)

Selectmen, every Monday at 7 PM, Town Hall Annex.

The Children's Health Program Play Group, every Monday when school is in session, 9:30 AM - 11 AM, Farmington River Elementary School music room. Led by Laura Mesina. For more information call 413-644-0104 X 1159.

Farmington River Regional School District, first Monday of the month, 7 PM, Farmington River Regional School, Rte 8, JoAnn Austin, Superintendent. Public Welcome.

Planning Board, second Monday of the month, 6 PM, Old Town Hall.

Senior Lunch Program, every Tuesday when school is in session, 12:15 PM, Farmington River Elementary School. For more information or reservations call Lynette 413-269-4466. Cost \$2.

Board of Assessors, second Tuesday of the month, 5 PM, Town Hall Annex.

Conservation Commission, third Tuesday of the month at 7 PM, Town Hall Annex.

Otis/Sandisfield Kiwanis, every Wednesday, 6:30 PM, Otis Town Hall. For more information call Andy Pyenson, President at 413-269-6060.

Board of Health, first Wednesday of the month, 6 PM, Old Town Hall.

Boy Scouts, every Wednesday, 6:30 PM, Otis Town Hall, Elizabeth Kuzmech, Scoutmaster 258-4906 [kuzmech5@verizon.net](mailto:kuzmech5@verizon.net).

Council on Aging, every Wednesday, 11 AM - 2 PM, Senior Center - Town Hall Annex. Pot Luck Lunch at noon, Bingo at 1 PM. Free blood pressure screening every fourth Wednesday.

Finance Committee, second Wednesday of the month, 7 PM, Sandisfield Library. Public welcome.

PTO, second Thursday of the month, 3:15 P.M., Farmington River Regional School. Child Care provided.

New Marlborough Village Association  
Music & More's 2012 Murder Mystery Writers Contest

Death by Organic Food and Killer Clichés

New Marlborough, MA (April 1, 2012) - Mystery writers, prepare for death: The 2012 Murder Mystery Writer's Contest, sponsored by Music & More and the New Marlborough Village Association, has set a June 15 deadline for submissions to the annual contest for Berkshire County residents.

This year's contest, titled "Slice 'em & Dice 'em or I think I need to Lie Down Now," culminates on Aug. 4 at 4:30 p.m. with a free public reading at the Meeting House at the village green on Route 57. Judges will select the top three winners, with prizes of \$300, \$200 and \$100.

Guidelines call for the victim or victims to be killed off with organic edibles that are ingested, absorbed or otherwise introduced into the body with lethal intent. In addition, this year each story must include at least one cliché relating to the story (i.e. "blood is thicker than water"). A humorous approach is welcome but not required.

After the readings, the top three winners will be announced and awarded prizes of \$300, \$200 and \$100. Submission rules:

- Deadline for submissions is midnight, June 15, 2012.
- The contest is limited to full- or part-time Berkshire County residents.
- Manuscripts must be emailed to [mystery-writerscontest2@gmail.com](mailto:mystery-writerscontest2@gmail.com) or sent on a CD to John Manikowski, P.O. Box 149, Mill River, MA, 01244. The first submission will be the only manuscript sent to judges so please do not send more than one manuscript
- The writer's name may not appear on the manuscript; submit name and contact information on a separate cover page.
- No hard copies will be accepted
- Writers may submit more than one story.

More about this year's contest and last year's winning stories can be found at <http://www.newmarlborough.org/Writers.htm>



## THE SANDISFIELD LIBRARY NEWS

By Laurie Foulke-Green, Librarian

Here's a list of new books:

*In One Person* by John Irving

*The Cottage at Glass Beach* by Heather Barberi

*A Land More Kind Than Home* by Wiley Cash

*The Lion is In* by Delia Ephron

*Home* by Toni Morrison

*The Sins of the Father* by Jeffery Archer

*Unnatural Acts* by Stuart Woods


*11th Hour* by James Patterson

*The Body in the Boudoir* by Katherine Hall Page

*Dead Level* by Sarah Graves

*The Road to Grace* by Paul Richard Evans

Here are the extended dates for the Ancestry.com assistance classes: Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8:30 - April 25, May 30, June 27, July 27, August 29 and September 26.

We are also having a book sale! Paperbacks are 50 cents and hard covers only \$1.00. Hurry in, they are going fast! 



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*The Sandisfield Times* is an independent nonprofit organization staffed by volunteers from the Sandisfield community and funded by individual and business sponsors. Its mission is to connect the community through reliable, regular, and relevant information. The paper is published 11 times each year, with a joint January-February issue and monthly issues thereafter.

*The Sandisfield Times* does not yet have a 501(c)(3) designation, therefore donations are NOT tax-deductible at this time but **donations of all sizes are needed to ensure the continuation of this newspaper.** Please send checks to: *The Sandisfield Times*, P.O. Box 584, Sandisfield, MA 01255. For more information visit our website [www.sandisfieldtimes.org](http://www.sandisfieldtimes.org).

Copies of *The Sandisfield Times* are available in Sandisfield at A&M Auto, the Dump, Post Office, Town Hall, the New Boston Store, the New Boston Inn, the SilverBrook Café and Villa Mia. Copies are also available in Otis at Katie's Market, Papa's Fuel, Southern Berkshire Realty, Otis Library, the Farmington Elementary

## SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

To have the *The Times* mailed to your home, please complete the information below and send a check for \$25 (annual subscription fee for 11 issues) made out to *The Sandisfield Times* to:

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES  
PO BOX 584, SANDISFIELD, MA 01255

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City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (only used if paper is returned by USPS) \_\_\_\_\_

School (during the school year) and Terranova's. Other locations include (in Monterey) the The Roadstore Cafe, the Monterey General Store (There is a box affixed to the front of the building containing *The Sandisfield Times*.) and the Southfield Store.

*The Times* can be mailed to your home by paid subscription (see form below) or you can read it (free) online as a PDF document at [www.sandisfieldtimes.org](http://www.sandisfieldtimes.org).

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### **Editorial Staff for this issue:**

**Co-Editors:** Tina Sotis and Simon Winchester

**Copy Editor:** Rhee Kasky

**Graphic Design:** Tina Sotis

**Contributors:** Jean Atwater-Williams, Ron Bernard, Val Coleman, Larry Dwyer, Josephine Freedman, Rhee Kasky, Laura Rogers-Castro, Tina Sotis, Liana Toscanini, Simon Winchester and our Regular Columnists.

**Photos:** Laura Rogers-Castro, Tina Sotis, Setsuko Winchester, Wikimedia Commons

### **How to Contact Us**

Letters to the editor:.....[letters@sandisfieldtimes.org](mailto:letters@sandisfieldtimes.org)

News, ideas, tips & photos:.....[editor@sandisfieldtimes.org](mailto:editor@sandisfieldtimes.org)

Advertising questions: .....[advertising@sandisfieldtimes.org](mailto:advertising@sandisfieldtimes.org)

Entries for calendar of events: .....[calendar@sandisfieldtimes.org](mailto:calendar@sandisfieldtimes.org)

Birth, marriage, and death notices:.....[registrar@sandisfieldtimes.org](mailto:registrar@sandisfieldtimes.org)