

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

Tribunus



Plebis

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June 2014

The Day Everything Passed

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING (MOSTLY) WITHOUT CONTENTION

By Times Reporters

At the Town Meeting May 17, voters passed all 72 budget items, from the school operations budget of nearly \$1,500,000 to items less than \$1,500.

When the school budget passed without murmur and other items caused debate, Moderator John Skrip cracked a joke. "You people are more concerned about spending \$1,500 than you are a million and a half."

Registered voters at the meeting numbered 88. They were joined by a couple dozen non-registered residents, representatives from the school, and second-home owners concerned about the pipeline issue.

The three or four issues that might have been contentious turned out not to be.

The first potentially argumentative proposal was to change the new town administrator position from part-time to full-time. Some in the audience thought the

Cont'd on p.2

Residents Say "No Pipeline, No Way!"

RESOLUTION PASSES UNANIMOUSLY AT TOWN MEETING

By Bill Price



After months of rumors, limited information, and open questions about one of the most contentious stories in Town in years – a proposed major gas pipeline expansion project – informed and unified full- and part-time residents have voiced strenuous opposition.

On May 8, a group representing pipeline-owner Kinder Morgan and its operating subsidiary, Tennessee Gas, hosted a public information meeting at the Fire House. Nearly 200 Sandisfield residents and friends were present for the event. It was one of the largest such gatherings in memory, topping even the big turnout in the

same building that overrode the Town's initial agreement about a "Wild and Scenic" designation for the Farmington River 25 years ago. Only this time controversy was absent.

The audience listened attentively while the company's project managers and specialists ran through slide projections of maps and facts and figures including supposed "benefits" such as additional tax revenue from a new 36-inch pipeline they want to install.

Construction is planned to begin about March 2016 until the end of November. The new line would run alongside two existing 24-inch pipe-

Cont'd on p.3



A brand new resident. See a second photo with one of his or her siblings on page 17

INSIDE

PAGE

Election Results	2
IMPORTANT: POST OFFICE NEWS	4
Under Milk Wood	8
New Hardware Store, Otis	9
Spring Calving	12
New Flea Market, Right Here	15

Results of Annual Town Election

MAY 19, 2014

MODERATOR (1 YEAR)

John Skrip, Jr. 156*

SELECTMEN (3 YEARS)

Jeffrey J. Gray 113*

Mark P. Newman 82

TOWN CLERK (3 YEARS)

Dolores Harasyko 167*

TREASURER (3 YEARS)

Teresa L. DellaGiustina 163*

AUDITOR (1 YEAR)

Ralph E. Morrison 83

Bethany R. Perry 111*

BOARD OF ASSESSORS (3 YEARS)

Teresa L. DellaGiustina 163*

SCHOOL COMMITTEE (3 YEARS)

Nicholas DellaGiustina 162*

BOARD OF HEALTH

Margaret O'Clair (1 year) 157*

Victor Hryckvich (3 years) 161*

PLANNING BOARD

Thomas H. Jacobs (1 year) 159*

Robert H. O'Brien, Jr. (2 years) 133*

Andrew L. Snyder (3 years) 149*

Gary E. Bottums, Sr. (5 years) 147*

LIBRARY TRUSTEE (5 YEARS)

Clare M. English 162*

CONSTABLES (3 YEARS)

(VOTE FOR NOT MORE THAN TWO)

Nazario J. Sanchez 132*

Joseph P. Zeller 132*

Dana Beardsley 74

Help Wanted

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE NEEDS VOLUNTEERS HOLD JUNE 21: POSSIBLE COMMUNITY MEETING

At the Strategic Planning Committee meeting held toward the end of May, a tentative date for a community meeting was scheduled for June 21, Saturday, from 10 a.m. to noon, at the Old Town Hall at 3 Silverbrook Road.


The committee needs to review with residents next steps on replacing or repairing town buildings and the definite replacement of the highway department garage. They also want to review with residents the development of a Town Master Plan and form subcommittees to help with such a plan. They need to form subcommittees of residents to usher these ideas through to completion.

At the tentatively scheduled meeting, the committee has invited Berkshire Regional


Planning in order to seek direction on developing a Master Plan. The Board of Selectmen, town officials, and the Town Clerk and Town Administrator will be asked to participate, as well.

The committee feels that it may not be possible to proceed with either work on town buildings or a Master Plan until additional members are on board.

Please check the town website soon for confirmation of the scheduled meeting. www.sandisfield.info.

The next meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee will be June 11, 7 p.m., at Firehouse #2. 

Finance Committee Vacancy

The Sandisfield Finance Committee has an open committee appointment and is actively looking to fill this position. If interested, please contact John Skrip, 258-4788, or Kathy Jacobs, 258-4535. 

EVERYTHING PASSED

Cont'd from p.1

position should be re-opened. Others thought it was a structural change in town government and did we want to insert a "layer" between selectmen and voters.

Selectman Patrick Barrett pointed out that current administrator Lisa Blackmer had more than proved herself and the value of the position. Others in the audience agreed and asked why we should change administrators in mid-stream.

The article passed, and Sandisfield, at last joining all other hill towns in Berkshire County, now has a full-time administrator.

Out of concern that many in the audience would trickle away, Roberta Myers proposed that Article 73 – the pipeline resolution – be jumped ahead. Of all the issues, this one drew the most comment, all opposed. The major opposition was from STOP (Sandisfield Taxpayers Opposing the Pipeline), a local grass roots organization working to prevent the pipeline expansion. See the article "No Pipeline, No Way" that outlines the whys and wherefores.

Police Chief Michael Morrison will be able to buy a new 4-wheeled drive police vehicle for a little more than \$40,000, and turn in his rather worn-out

21-wheeled police car. There were questions as to why a new vehicle was needed, but no real debate.

Anyone who checks Select Board minutes for early 2014 would find that they include detailed discussions of Town financial accounts. The Town Meeting included similar discussions about the complications of funding and parceling tax money out for this or that.

Voters tried hard to grasp the difference between the stabilization fund, the overlay account, and any number of other confusing items between the left hand and the right hand. At one point, Moderator John Skrip, trying to shortcut budget details, said, "Its taking money out of the left-hand pocket and putting it into the right-hand pocket." That didn't stop the questions.

At one point in the meeting, Strategic Planning Committee members Kathy Jacobs and Mary Turek pointed out that their committee – which is considering major and very expensive projects for the Town, consists of only four people. "We need help if we're going to get anything done," they both said. "We want to parcel out sections of the projects to different individuals or groups so there is community input into everything we do. We need any decisions to be a product of entire community."

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

The Town Moves Ahead

The Town recently voted to make our part-time administrator full-time. This shift in Town governance is a good thing.

The Town elects three Selectmen to run the place. The administrator answers to them. But all three serve the Town part-time. Oddly enough, these three part-time individuals do not add up to one full-time person – all three have full-time jobs somewhere else.

Town administration is increasingly complicated – more so for sure than when the 3-member Select Board was formed, possibly in the 18th century. It's even more complicated than it was 10 years ago. It will be an enormous help to these elected part-time volunteers to work with an administrator full time. The Town Clerk might have been able to do that duty 20 or 50 years ago. But not today.

Bill Price
West New Boston

Need Help in an Emergency?

NOW EMERGENCY NEEDS YOU!

EMT and Fire services are on call when you need them. Now you can help them – and your neighbors.

A new round of classes will begin soon, but Fire Chief Ralph Morrison says he needs men and women to fill those classes. “Both the Fire Department and the ambulance service needs fresh

faces.” To step up or just to talk it over, call Chief Morrison at 413-441-2126.

Most training for both departments is done in-house, but occasionally classes are held in adjoining towns. For instance, a training class will be held June 7, from 8 a.m. until 2 p.m., at the Tolland Fire Department building on Rt. 57. A school bus filled with “kids” will be used as a training center and, rest assured, the “kids” in this case will be rescued. The practice will make perfect. Visitors and observers welcome.

NO PIPELINE, NO WAY

Cont'd from p.1

lines that already transport some 71 million cubic feet of gas per day to Connecticut distributors according to Kinder Morgan. Known as a “loop,” the proposed additional line, entirely within town borders in the Beech Plain section, is essentially a 4-mile long high-pressure storage container that could be used to boost velocity in an existing, frightfully old system (1952 and 1981).

Outside the fire house, opponents waved signs and expressed their disdain of the idea. “Hasn't this town sacrificed enough for sixty years? We have done our part. Enough is enough,” said one. “If Connecticut needs the gas, then expand down there and leave us alone.” “Why do we have to shoulder this burden?” said another. “All risk, no benefit” was the chant.

Following the presentation, for nearly two more hours, the audience peppered the company panel with questions and concerns, many involving safety. Long-time residents rose to say how terrified they had been when evacuated during a rupture and near explosion that was caused by blasting during the 1981 installation. Cold Spring Road resident Roberta Myers asked what has changed to assure such an incident would not happen this time. An-

other Beech Plain resident and pipeline abutter, Jean Atwater-Williams, played a dramatic video clip of a 2012 pipeline gas explosion in West Virginia.

Others complained about potential environmental degradation and fears of bad economic consequences for the Town. Several suggested the proposal was abjectly unfair while others questioned whether another gas pipeline was even necessary in view of the State's commitment to clean energy alternatives.

When asked if down-line distributors wanted extra gas for more lucrative overseas sales, the Kinder Morgan public relations executive's response was vague if not evasive. He said, “Think of us as a toll road,” explaining that Kinder Morgan is only the transmission company and they have no say in where the product goes ultimately.

A non-resident stood to say that the project could result in much-needed jobs or at least valuable training for aspiring construction workers, but otherwise there was little sympathy for the proposal.

Selectmen Barrett and Gray concluded the meeting by affirming that the Town would oppose the project.

The meeting was video-recorded and can be seen at vimeo.com/96666709 (very large file, 2 hours duration). The KM slide presentation of May 8 can be viewed on the town website at www.sandisfield.info.

Daffodils

I may have mentioned earlier
That in the winter my daffodils live
Down near the aquifer
Exercising on a tiny treadmill
Made of roots and berry seeds,
Preparing to embarrass me
When they appear in May
All yellow, firm and beautiful
Having wasted nothing
In their cold ballet.




On the other hand
I don't use my winters well at all.
I cuddle, kiss and eat too much
And thrash the Gods for freezing me,
And get so fat and anxious gulping pills
That in a jealous rage
I go out
And pick my daffodils.

Val Coleman

Fast-forward to the annual Town Meeting on May 20. A standing room-only crowd, rare for this venue, was on hand. Many, including a number of (non-voting) seasonal residents, attended in order to support the “citizen's petition,” a legally non-binding resolution that opposes the construction of a new pipeline in Sandisfield.

People stated long lists of reasons why this expansion would be deleterious for Sandisfield. Several statements were read including one by Otis Woodlands home owner, Barbara Stomper of New Jersey. She said, “Kinder Morgan operates a pipeline in our town and it has been nothing but trouble. They ran it through a beautiful park and reservoir.” Against a display of disturbing images of damaged and badly scarred land she said, “This is what you can expect to happen here.”

When asked if the Town was prepared to handle a pipeline incident emergency, Chief Ralph Morrison responded candidly and with a note of resignation, “Good luck,” he said.

With no apparent support for the idea from the floor, Moderator John Skrip asked for hand ballots to be raised. The result: votes for the Resolution – unanimous. The Selectmen assured the residents that they would press state politicians to do all they can to block or delay or modify the project. 



Moreover...
Priority Mail

By Simon Winchester

In India, where I lived for many years, it was always the *nai* who knew the gossip. The *nai*, the barber, patiently clipped the hair of his clients who told him things; and the *nai* duly passed on these things – slightly tintured, no doubt – to the next in the chair. And so on went the news, round and round until everyone knew everything, or a version of it anyway.

Here in Sandisfield there are few such gathering places where the commonweal of the village is exchanged. Only three: the transfer station, the country store, and the post office. And if we are not careful, the post office may not be with us forever.

Country post offices have a rare quality – ours most especially. Old Ben Franklin's USPS seems to turn something of a blind eye to the doings of its officers out in the hinterland. The strict regulations that apply in New York and Seattle and Los Angeles tend to be happily forgotten out in wildernesses like ours.

Take our post office phone number, for instance. It is quite unlisted, and the USPS demands officially that you call an 800 number in goodness knows where – India, probably – to find out the services on offer. But we here all know it anyway – 258-4940 – and Karen Cooley, to whom we have just bade farewell, was always content to answer cheerily. On occasion she'd stay open a minute or two later than she should. Once she even left a package hidden under a tree in the nearby woods so I could collect it that night.

Regulations? Humbug.

As a test, I once mailed a letter at a scientific base in Antarctica, putting as the address only "S. 01255. USA". Karen knew in an instant, and it was in my mailbox when I arrived home. I doubt such flexible friendliness would obtain in New York or even in Great Barrington.



New Postmaster Tina Levasseur

Now we welcome a new postmaster, the delightful USPS veteran, lately of 18 years in Becket, Tina Levasseur. Just like Karen, Tina pledges to do all she can to keep our tiny office running. The bosses may cut the hours she's open – 6 a day soon, down from today's 7½ – and they may limit some services. But so long as we come a-calling – and that is crucial, for if we stop using our Post Office, the bean-counters will happily close us in a heartbeat – Tina will keep it going.

So get thee hither. Buy a stamp every day. Be a pest. Run our Tina ragged. And as there isn't a *nai* in town, let's keep our post office open. ♡

BREAKING NEWS AT THE PO! TELL 'EM WHAT YOU THINK!

By Bill Price

The US Postal Service is considering what to do with your post office:

1. Keep it open with limited hours?
2. Close it and provide roadside mailbox delivery?
3. Close it and find an alternative location at another local business?
4. Close it and provide PO Box service at a "nearby" post office?

They've asked postal patrons – you and me – to help them decide. I hope they mean it.

You should have received a Customer Survey in the mail. If not, you need to pick up a copy of the survey at the PO. On it you can express your preference for one of the four options, and you can list the hours you want the PO to be open.


You need to return the survey in an enclosed envelope by June 18.

A public hearing will be held July 2, Wednesday, at 1 p.m. to share the survey results, answer questions, and provide additional information. Old Town Hall, 3 Silverbrook Road. The PO will share the results of the survey with residents and solicit more input on the options.

The letter from the USPS that accompanied the survey form said: "Although survey results will be known and shared, the Postal Service will not make a final decision regarding this office until after the public meeting."

They said they want to hear from us. Tell them what you think. ♡

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Sandisfield Historical Commission

HISTORIC HOMES RECOMMENDED FOR NATIONAL REGISTER LISTING

By Ron Bernard

ELIGIBLE HOUSE NAME	LOCATION	OWNER
Peter & Sarah Strickland	No Beech Plain Rd.	Cruey/King
Lt. Ichabod Crittendon	No. Beech Plain Rd.	Goldsmith
Capt. Russell Deming	So. Beech Plain Rd.	Hernandez/McCollough
James Adams	No. Beech Plain Rd	Kelly/Weller
Josiah & Elizabeth Hulet	Cold Spring Rd.	Bernard/Atwater-Williams
Baptist Parsonage	Hammertown Rd.	Levine
Joseph & Elizabeth Wolcott	Silverbrook Rd.	Manacher
Gideon & Jane Harding (Sears-Hawley)	Silverbrook Rd.	Winchester
Dr. Erastus & Sarah Beach	New Hartford Rd.	Crofut/Luxon
Nathaniel Bosworth	New Hartford Rd.	Baiamonte/Nakamura
Henry & Martha Balch	New Hartford Rd.	Meier
Constant & Mary Bosworth	Gremler Rd.	Galler
Samuel & Prudence Wolcott	New Hartford Rd.	McKee
Nathaniel & Beulah Dowd	New Hartford Rd.	Blachere
Joseph Sears (Elizur Spencer)	New Hartford Rd.	Creem
Silas Holcombe/ Benjamin Pierce Tavern	New Hartford Rd.	Ball
Jonathan & Elizabeth Webster	Rood Hill Rd.	Rocco
Solomon & Susannah Smith	Sage Rd.	Grumbach
Jonathan & Lucinda Shepard	Sandy Brook Tpke.	White
Loyal & Abigail Humphrey	North Main St.	Levine/Crobier
Daniel Brown (Town Founder)	North Main St.	Parisky
Sanford Brown	Sandisfield Rd.	Campetti
NB Congregational Church	Sandisfield Rd.	
Samuel & Catherine Parsons	Sandisfield Rd.	Campetti
S.C. Parsons & Son Store	South Main St.	Sanchez
Dr. Samuel Parsons	South Main St.	Pease
Oliver & Emily Bosworth	Sandisfield Rd.	Michelson
Levi & Caroline Pease	Sandisfield Rd.	Vaughn
Eliakim & Sarah Hull	Sandisfield Rd.	Linkovich
Burt Tannery (Atwater Clubhouse)	Sandisfield Rd.	Bihari
Jabez & Rebecca Bosworth Inn	Sandisfield Rd.	Zimmer/Mayer


One of the primary functions of a local historical commission is to provide guidance and assistance to owners of historic properties, especially in regard to recognition on historical local, state, or national registers.

Last year the commission began to update the Town's official inventory of architectural and historic assets including antique homes of which there are at least 100 in town. The existing survey (1979) is outdated and incomplete.

In the first phase of the update, approximately one-third of known antique properties were examined by a historical consultant hired by the commission. Based on architectural integrity and historical factors, 31 buildings were recommended for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (see left). The remaining 70 or so houses will be evaluated later this year and in 2015. Some of these are also expected to receive eligibility. The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) requires an up-to-date town survey before new applications can be considered.

Sandisfield already has three locations on the Register: the New Boston Inn, the Montville Baptist Church (Arts Center), and the Philemon Sage House in South Sandisfield. Although strictly honorary with no restrictions except if work on a property includes state or federal funds, an NRHP designation is prestigious and may add value as well as certain protections.

Two informational sessions by Commission chairman Ron Bernard are scheduled this month to review the historical importance and architectural characteristics of the eligible properties. MHC consultant Bonnie Parsons who has guided hundreds of applications will be present to explain the process.

The sessions will be held on consecutive Saturdays, June 14 and June 21, at the Sandisfield Arts Center, Hammertown Road in Montville, 10:00 a.m. to noon. Open to the public, each session will review about 15 different houses. Anyone interested in the history of Sandisfield or in the National Register application process should attend. For more information see the Arts Center's ad in this issue or contact me at 413-269-0012 or Ronbernard@aol.com. 

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LOCAL WRESTLERS BUILDING NEW TRADITIONS

Student members of the wrestling team at Monument Mountain Regional High School, from the “hill towns” of Sandisfield and Otis, have done well for their school.

“They’re winning matches with other high schools,” said Coach Gordon Soule. “Robert Yvon is Junior Western Mass. Champion. These young men all work hard. They’re dedicated. We have outstanding juniors coming along for next year.”

The team members, said the coach, are the foundation of resurgence of wrestling at Monument Mountain. “They bought into wrestling early when it wasn’t popular, and they’re doing great.”

Sometimes a sport can run in families. Monument wrestling alumni Marty Cormier, from Sandisfield, a member of the 1989 team (“Arguably the best wrestling team in school history,” says Coach Soule) is Nate’s father and Stephen’s uncle. “Marty is very active with the youth program and assists with the high school,” said the coach, “as does the boys’ grandmother, Barbara Cormier.”



LtoR: Nate Cormier, Craig Cooley (team co-captain), Ron Moretz, Stephen Cormier, Robert Yvon, Cole Carson, Robert Kahlstrom, Bart Christiano



Robert Kahlstrom (left) with Clayton Gaudette (team co-captain)

Kids Beat Folks Again

The Monterey Baseball Cal Ripken League has fielded two AAA baseball teams this season with players from Otis, Monterey, Sandisfield, and surrounding towns. The Blasters and The Crushers are players 8-11 years-old with home games at Greene Park in Monterey Center. The season schedule runs until June 25.

At the annual Memorial Day Players vs. Parents game (photo below), the youth players won for the 10th straight year. The young players outlasted their parents who complained of sore arms, bad backs, and tired knees after only two innings.

Photo: Melissa Zdziarski



Arts Center is More Than Just "Arts" IT'S ALSO A "CENTER"

By Alice Boyd

There is a perception that the Arts Center is a stuffy place. Not so. It's a place to laugh, learn, relax, be inspired, and reflect. This month we're offering a range of programs that are practical, educational, and relevant to many of us. And if you've never been to the Arts Center before, give me a call and we'll send you free tickets to a show or event. Here's what's happening in June:

Tai Chi, June 2nd–July 7th: every Monday from 7-8 p.m.

Loggers Workshop, June 10, 3 to 6 p.m., the Mass Department of Conservation & Recreation will present a workshop to review logging regulations. Free.

Folk singer Bill Staines, June 14, 8 p.m. Singer/songwriter who has toured nationally for over 40 years.

Historic Homes: Sandisfield Architectural Survey, June 14 and 21: 10 a.m. Mass.

Historical Commission consultant Bonnie Parsons and Ron Bernard will give a workshop on the process of nominating properties for the National Register of Historic Places.

What's It Worth? June 14 and 21, 1 p.m. Appraisals. Bring in any item (except jewelry or rugs) or photos. David LeBeau will identify your piece and provide a fair market value.

Vincent Van Gogh ... And the books he read, June 7, 10 a.m. Carol Berry has been studying Van Gogh for 15 years and provides a compelling insight into the man and his work.

Under Milk Wood, June 28, 7:30 p.m. The Sandisfield Players present a Dylan Thomas radio play full of humor about a day and night in a quirky Welsh seaside town. A limited number of free tickets are available for local residents who have never been to the Arts Center. Call 258-4792 or e-mail info@sandisfieldartscenter.org.

Jim Singelis Returns to SArC

By Alice Boyd



Black and white Study #2

In his second solo show at the Sandisfield Arts Center, New Marlborough artist Jim Singelis continues to turn his gaze upon himself, exploring the visual art of the self-portrait. Jim works up his enigmatic and emotionally charged paintings

from his memory, obscure photographs, and the ever-honest mirror.

Perhaps because he is primarily engaged in regarding his own visage (although several of the works explore other subjects), his scrutiny is not restricted to his external appearance; instead, exterior and interior, subject and object mingle and interpenetrate. Curiously, in the majority of these self portraits, the eyes are obscured, smudged or remain undescribed, so the faces depicted do not meet the artist's – or the viewer's – gaze directly.

Singelis has radically offered to give the art away to those who connect with it deeply enough to want to own it, provided that they make a meaningful contribution to the Sandisfield Art Center. His paintings will remain on exhibit until June 14.

A Review

A Modern Marriage, In Another Country

By Val Coleman



Courtney Maum
Photo: Colin Oane

You can't put it down. Sandisfield's own Courtney Maum has written a strong book in *I Am Having So Much Fun Here Without You*. It is a compassionate book that flings you through a very modern marriage that sprints from country to country and brings a beautiful French lawyer and a British painter together in a sweet, unpretentious story. I loved it

... indeed, I missed a couple of meals finding out what happens next.

You start out in love with the heroine, Anne-Laure, but ever so slowly you latch onto the first person Englishman Richard Haddon who is trying so hard to sort it all out ... his genuine love for his wife, his passion to modernize his art, an adorable baby daughter, a complicating mistress, and a spooky painting of a blue bear.

There is much in the way of clearing out the dross of a modern marriage: acceptable infidelities, stretches without sex, gender competition ... all of which get cleaned up as the novel advances towards a beautifully scrambled climax that involves Richard's bizarre artistic "installation" in a Parisian gallery.

I refuse to tell you any more of the plot. It's all too much fun as it unfolds. I can say that the geography is great; Channel ferries, Brittany, a lovely lyrical trek through traditional Paris, and some Orwellian London.

I have two complaints; the title is too cool and the prose is sometimes too clever for this old man. But buy it, you'll love it. 🍷

Fundraiser for Cora Barrett

Cora Barrett was featured in a Berkshire Eagle story in April. Cora, who is 4 years old, is in need of heart surgery. The Sandisfield COA is hosting a Pasta Fundraiser on June 7 to help her parents with transportation and housing costs for visits to Boston for her care. Two seatings, 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. \$10 for adults, \$5 kids 5-12, under 5 free. Tickets in advance or at the door. Silent auction. Firehouse #2 on Rt. 57. Call Susan Galik at 258-4113.

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What's It All About, Dylan?

By Ben Luxon

NEWS ON UNDER MILK WOOD. Performance scheduled at the Sandisfield Arts Center, June 28, 7:30 p.m.

Rehearsals are underway and we're taking on the task of bringing our Welsh villagers to life and enjoying Dylan Thomas' wonderful sense of humor and the ridiculous, as well as the breathtaking beauty and sheer exuberance of his language. Our 20 players are each playing two to three roles.

The play will be "staged" as if it takes place in a recording studio in a "we're on the air" situation, which was how Dylan Thomas intended it to be performed.

Since the play is not well known in America, we have decided to include a few visual effects to help our audience. For example, a large 16' by 6' wonderful painting by Susie Crofut represents the imaginary town of Llaregubb and its surrounding countryside, Milk Wood, Donkey Down, the harbor and sea, and out-lying farms.

To help distinguish our characters, we will use some appropriate headgear: headscarves for the women "gossips," a postman's hat, police constable's helmet,

and night caps in the dream section. Very simple ways of identifying various characters and situations.

This is all very well, I hear you say, but what is this play all about?

Very simply, it describes one day in the life of this small town. It starts at night: "It is spring moonless night in the small town, starless and Bible black, the cobble streets silent"

As listeners we enter into the often bizarre and funny dreamworld of our villagers. Dawn breaks and the play continues to live through Llaregubb's waking day – its scandals, fights, longings, fears in a small town where everybody knows everybody and everybody's business as well. The play ends when dusk falls and darkness once again reigns.

The many short scenes are introduced throughout the play by two narrators who have the bulk of Thomas' poetic language.

Randall Jarrell, one of America's leading 20th century poets, describes the play perfectly:

"Reading Under Milk Wood is a piece of easy and magical piety, since it is as good a celebration of A




Sandisfield Players at Rehearsal

Photo: Ron Bernard

Day in My Home Town – this one is a Welsh fishing village – as anybody is ever likely to write.

"Thomas describes the people and things of Llaregubb and then lets them speak for themselves. Everything that all of them say is living almost beyond life: It would be hard for any work of art to communicate more directly and funnily and lovingly what it is like to be alive.

"... because the people of Llaregubb are hopelessly, helplessly human, he loves them without qualification. Just to make sure that this last work of his would be able to mesmerize anybody at all, Thomas put most of its poetry into prose. Whether you can read poetry or not, read modern poetry or not, you can read [and in this case, listen to] Under Milk Wood." 

wm. brockman real estate

the berkshires

You should not list your home or land with us because we have sold 14 properties just in Sandisfield (or almost half of all sales) in the last two years, from \$70,500 to \$3,500,000. Or because we have the Top Selling Broker for 2013 in all of Berkshire County.

You should have us represent you because what we do "best" is custom-tailored every time, to every client, and every experience.

Achieving your goals is what we do best.

Your satisfaction is our only measure of success.

Visit berkshiresforsale.com and brockman.us (coming soon) to see our nearly 60 listings and to search for your new home!

- ◆ West St. 6.77 Acres with wide road frontage and two brooks. \$55,000
- ◆ Otis Wood Lands Premium Building Parcels \$150,000 to \$178,000
- ◆ 1850's farmhouse bordering Silver Brook. 3 bedrooms \$163,000
- ◆ 2 BR Contemporary - Private & affordable! Big screened porch! \$200,000
- ◆ 1 bedroom home a short stroll to West Lake & 1200 ac. State Forest Just \$125,000

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We Have a Hardware Store Again

IN EAST OTIS, ACROSS FROM KNOX TRAIL INN

By a Times Reporter

Country living often means DIY – do-it-yourself – if you are handy, that is.

The rest of us depend on our many terrific local contractors. So when the hardware store in Otis Center went out of business everybody felt the loss and the inconvenience. Enter Bruce Taylor who recognized the need and has done something about it.


A native of Bristol, Conn., Bruce spent his summers at the family cottage in Otis, loved the area and moved up full-time several years ago. “I worked on that cottage for almost 25 years,” he said. “There’s no better way to learn than by doing.”


Bruce’s Hardware in East Otis is the result of that practical experience, together with his knowledge of the retail side from years in the business working for others.

The venture represents a big financial commitment. He bought an old but ample build-

ing across from the Knox Trail Inn and turned it into a modern establishment with shelves packed with things homeowners and contractors need. Sandisfield carpenter Mike Loring worked through the winter to transform the interior into a clean, bright, and inviting space.

Bruce said, “I want to put my experience to the best use. Here, if you need it, you’ll probably find it or we’ll get it for you right away. We are in the problem-solving business and committed to excellent service in a friendly, helpful atmosphere.” The store will be open 7 days a week, from 8 a.m. (except Sundays, from 9 a.m.).

Bruce makes it a point to learn his customer’s names too, a pretty good indication of his style and approach to customer service. His parents, Joan and Tom, are usually there, too, putting up merchandise or assisting customers. Stop by, introduce yourself, and buy something you need. You know you need something. 



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And the books he read.



14TH & 21ST 10 AM
HISTORIC HOMES:
SANDISFIELD ARCHITECTURAL
SURVEY WITH **Ron Bernard**
and **Bonnie Parsons**



14TH & 21ST 1 PM
WHAT'S IT WORTH?
APPRAISALS WITH
David LeBeau



14TH 8 PM
BILL STAINES
Folk Singer



28TH 7:30 PM
UNDER MILK WOOD
a play by **Dylan Thomas**
directed by **Ben Luxon**



Funded in part by the Massachusetts Cultural Council and Local Cultural Councils

Memorial Day Parade, 2014

“Our thanks to everyone who helped make this year’s parade a great Town event,” say co-sponsors Maria Domato, American Legion #456, and Ralph Morrison, Fire Chief. “Our thanks to all of you.”

Photos: Tom Jacobs/Bill Price



Our Fire Department crossing our new bridge.



Norton Fletcher



Maria Domato and Ralph Morrison.



Abigail



TOWN BUSINESS

Submitted by Town Clerk Dolores Harasyko

Edited by Bill Price

Last month readers were asked if The Times should continue to publish minutes of Select Board meetings. Most who responded said yes, but that the focus on main issues and that we should not publish minutes more than two months after the meeting date. We can agree with that, and that's what we'll do for now.

Detailed meeting minutes and agendas for upcoming Select Board meetings are available at the Town website, www.sandisfield.info. Go to Meetings, then to Board of Selectman. Minutes can also be reviewed at Town Hall.

SELECTMEN'S MINUTES, MARCH 31, 2014

The highway department has been pothole patching, adding gravel to dirt roads, and salting due to the ice.

Treasurer Teresa DellaGiustina presented options to cover \$87,000 highway department overage. Patrick pointed out that the severity of the winter was a direct factor in the overrun and that all expenditures were valid snow and ice related.

Teresa recommended using the stabilization fund. Selectman Jeff Gray felt strongly about not increasing the tax rate to cover this and prefers that option. Patrick would like to consider the issue and vote at the next selectmen's meeting. Rosario

suggested voting now and request from the assessor's one-half of the expense and the other half from stabilization. He reviewed with Teresa the free cash and stabilization accounts. After the Town Meeting free cash will be around \$300,000, stabilization around \$950,000. Rosario feels strongly that we should use the stabilization but not pay it back and request half from the assessor's overlay account. This way the bottom line budget amount will not change nor will it affect the tax rate, and we would not need a Prop. 2½ override.

Motion by Rosario, second by Jeff with Patrick abstaining to place an article on the FY2015 warrant to pay the snow and ice overrun by transferring half of the amount from stabilization without a payback and request half from the assessor's overlay account. Motion passed.

Alice Boyd and Ron Bernard in representing the Sandisfield Arts Center. They ask the town to transfer ½-acre parcel of land next to SArc, which has been using the land with the town's permission for parking. They would like to clear the land in order to create an organized parking lot and remove the Town from liability. The proposal has to be voted on at town meeting to allow the Selectmen to handle a sale, lease, or transfer.

SELECTMEN'S MINUTES, APRIL 7, 2014

Executive Session for the purpose of conducting collective bargaining session on the Highway Department Union contract.

At regular meeting immediately following, reviewed and signed letter requesting a transfer from the Surplus Revenue Account to cover a portion of the highway department snow/ice overrun.

Town Administrator Lisa Blackmer reviewed a discussion with Representative Pignatelli's office regarding additional money for snow and ice

overages. She will attend the AGLC meeting in Boston. Secretary Shore will be at this meeting discussing the possibility of using lottery money for snow and ice overages. Lisa will represent the town in seeking funding for pothole repair.

Ron Pachulski asked about the gas pipeline issue. Lisa reviewed the work she has been doing on this. There will be a public informational meeting in the near future.

SELECTMEN'S MINUTES, APRIL 14, not submitted as of press time.

SELECTMEN'S MINUTES, APRIL 22, 2014

Steve presented highway dept. updates. Last week they worked on broken rims which resulted from the hard winter. Beaver problems continue: two men check at least twice a week on the beaver dams. The road grader was prepared for spring grading beginning this week.

Steve reviewed the last snow/ice event. He took a lot of criticism for the last order of salt from some residents. His February order for 100 tons had been on back order, and he was able to cancel 60 tons. He accepted the other 40 since the snow and ice season wasn't over and the weather forecast was calling for bad weather and his supplies were depleted. We had two more snow/ice events since then.

Discussed the Pothole Repair bill. We are attending a Highway Superintendent meeting next Thursday in which the topic of discussion is the additional Chapter 90 funding specifically for road repairs related to this past winter.

Kim Paspuletti asked about the bridge by Silverbrook and River Rd. Steve has been lobbying for the state to move the repair higher on their priority list.

Cont'd on p.14



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Spring Calving

FARMING CAN BE A SERIES OF THINGS THAT GO WRONG

By Brigitte Ruthman

There are three new calves, all strong bulls kicking up their heels. The cows call to them, directing their guttural bellows to each of their own, even as the calves grow to the size of dots playing chase at the far end of the pasture.

If they don't return, the protective cows give chase, their huge freshened udders bouncing at a slow trot, the whole of it reminding of rotund mothers at the beach scrambling to retrieve disobedient toddlers unaware of danger in the waves.

It's midway through spring calving, which inevitably brings challenge as well as joy.

Ruby gave up Zeus, a big red bull with a white sword on his forehead on March 26. An easy birth.

It didn't go as well for Titania, a two year-old heifer, who needed help as she strained to expel her first calf, Thor, through her unstretched hips on March 30. A big, strong milking shorthorn, she was no match for her firstborn, stuck at the shoulders.

Thyme's belly was bloated, her breathing shallow.

My fingers wriggled through to figure the calf's position in the birth canal, finding a massive nose I imagined might have been a mistake of swapped semen. I wondered if the massive boy-shaped head wasn't a Holstein, born of a mistake of artificial insemination. Holsteins are a bigger breed. The insemination is as quick as a thin straw's worth of semen delivered to the farm in a tank in the back of a Subaru.

The half-dollar sized front hooves – which would never be as clean again – thrust forward a few inches at every contraction, then drew back. They twitched with life. At some point, when the placenta broke free, the calf would need to breathe on its own or die.

Friends Wade and Henry responded to my call for help as a cold rain and darkness began to fall.

"Don't panic," Henry said.

"I'm not," I said, "That's why I'm calling you."

Titania was flighty now, determined to escape the barn and the pain she believed the place was causing. She wanted to return to the far end of the field where she herself had been born, and she bolted when I opened the sliding door. We stopped her, bringing her down beneath the overhanging roof in the half frozen, slippery mire of manure, snow, and ice.

Water the temperature and feel of icicles poured over the three of us. Pulling as hard as we could, in rhythm with Titania's contractions, the calf emerged, sliding like a freshly caught fish and just as slippery with amniotic goo into the mire.

We cleared his twitching nose and brought him back to the barn and I held

him upside down to clear the fluid from his throat to keep his lungs from infection – all 100 pounds of him. It would be the rest of the night before Titania recovered enough to bond with her firstborn.

Thyme, who last year nearly succumbed to a rare pinched nerve when Babe, her bull calf, was born, had another bull on April 10. Things went well for a day. Farming, remember, can seem a series of things that go wrong. When I opened the barn door the next morning I found Thyme down on her side. Her belly was bloated, her breathing shallow.

Milk fever is a life threatening condition that happens when freshening high-producing cows drain their own bodies of calcium for the sake of their udders and their calves. Thyme might have been down for 10 of the 12 hours I had to correct her before it was too late. I called Copake veterinarian Dr. Wayne Hassinger, the closest living incarnation to James Herriot this side of England.

I never imagined as a child, reading *All Things Bright and Beautiful* and *All Creatures Great and Small* by flashlight under the covers, that I would re-live some of the episodes that connected animals to their caretakers and defined nurturing and farming in a way that seemed more of a religion than just a way of life to me. These days, there are few farm vets willing to lose pay while driving or to give up the higher pay of caring for horses, dogs, and cats.

I hastily unwound the intravenous tubing and attached it to a bottle of calcium, then placed the needle under Thyme's thick hide and held the bottle above her. The therapy might have been enough hours earlier but now it as just buying time. With her head down, Thyme couldn't "burp" the gasses her ruminant belly needed to expel. Her body was depleted. She was dying.

Doc called halfway here. "Is she bloated?" he asked knowingly.

"Yes," I said.

"You can relieve the pressure by giving her a needle," he said as calmly as he had once explained exactly how to recauterize a calf when a dehorning effort nicked an artery that spurted blood. He explained which rib I needed to find in order to place the needle. On my second try the hissing sound of a deflating balloon brought the smell of fermented hay through the stent.

Thyme swallowed. Her eyes followed her calf in the barn bay. "Drive fast," I told the doc.

When Wayne arrived, he put his tools in a bucket and reached Thyme's side. He found the water mark where wet hair gave up the subtle waves of blood moving through the jugular along her neck, and thrust the needle in. The cow's body quivered as the calcium returned to her organs. He added potassium, then drew a large tube into the first of her four stomachs to further relieve the gasses.

Half an hour later we pulled Thyme to her haunches. She was standing two hours later, cooing in the language that is unique to cows communicating with their young.

Next, Daisy and Smitty are due to deliver their calves on summer fields. 🐄



Selectman's Letter

By Patrick Barrett


I would like to thank the many Sandisfield residents who came to the Kinder Morgan presentation at Fire Station #2. The proposed expansion of the Tennessee Pipeline is a serious issue facing our community. Residents resoundingly said NO to this project.

It is important that our community stays united and doesn't lose momentum as this fight shifts to the State level. We need to let state agencies understand that they cannot purchase pristine lands in Sandisfield under guise of conservation, pay reduced taxes on this property, and then allow a 36-inch gas pipe through this very property. My thanks to the Sandisfield Fire Department for hosting this meeting.

Congratulations to the residents who participated in the 2014 town elections. Public service is a major time commitment, but our town cannot function without these dedicated individuals. I look forward to serving another year alongside my colleagues and friends, Jeff Gray and Rosario Messina. Sandisfield is facing major challenges this year. As your elected executive body, we will continue to work hard on your behalf.

The Council on Aging hosted a candidate's forum this year. Having a chance to meet and ask questions to candidates running for office is an essential part of the democratic process. I hope this will become a yearly tradition.

COA Director Linda Riiska wanted to remind residents that in order to have representatives from the Lee Visiting Nurses provide services at one's home, residents need to have a primary care physician from Massachusetts. Our thanks to Linda for her dedicated work on behalf of our seniors and for this important reminder.

Sandisfield Town Manager Lisa Blackmer put the finishing touches on the Senior Tax Work-Off Program. We look forward to a successful implementation of this overdue program, and see this as long-term benefit not only for our seniors but our community as a whole. 

Pavilion Plans Approved

By Ron Bernard


The ambitious plans to rehabilitate the American Legion Pavilion and grounds at Hamilton Grove passed a critical milestone on May 20 when the Sandisfield Conservation Commission approved a modified work plan — a "Negative Determination," in municipal-speak.

The numerous deficiencies and inadequacies of the building as well as safety issues and necessary work for the grounds were reviewed in The Times last fall. Since then planning has been slow but steady. The Pavilion's close proximity to the Farmington River/flood plain raised unexpected and thorny regulatory questions that drew attention from the State Department of Environmental Protection. After site visits and numerous public meetings, including postponements due to inclement winter weather, the parties have finally arrived at a workable program.

Maria Domato, Commander of Post 456, said, "The idea was to lay out a comprehensive plan so that everything was clear to all the boards and commissions. We wanted to get it right. Everybody's input was important. The process took longer than I had hoped but it was worth it. We did not get everything we proposed, but at least now we can move ahead."

The first thing the public should notice is work on the park-like grounds including better signage, re-grading of the long driveway, attractive new plantings and removal of dead or dying trees. After years of shrouding by a line of mature spruces, the Legion's lovely pond will once again be revealed and accessible.

The Post has secured enough funding and in-kind offers to remedy the most urgent problems. Work on the interior of the building will occur in two phases starting this summer with the infrastructure priorities and conclude in 2015 with improvements to the kitchen and bathrooms.

Phase three will require financial support from the public. A general appeal will be announced later this year. In the meantime, if you would like to assist in any way, contact Maria Domato at 413-258-4578. Send your tax-deductible donations of any amount to: American Legion Pavilion Building Fund, PO Box 88, Sandisfield, MA 01255. 

Support Your Pavilion —June 1

Do you need or want to trade or sell automotive parts, household goods, or anything else that could be found at a tag sale? Friends of the Pavilion will hold a Swap-Meet/Flea Market at the Pavilion grounds on Sunday, June 1, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., rain or shine. Vendor spaces: \$15, no reservations needed. All proceeds go to the Pavilion Building Fund. Contact: Legion member Steve Carroll, 413-269-6139.

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Council on Aging



By Susan Galik

COA hosted a lawyer who specializes in Elder Law.

I'll be honest. If you had asked me ahead of time, "Do you think you'll learn anything new?" I would have said, "No. We had a lawyer here two years ago." Boy, was I wrong.

We could have used an extra hour just to cover everything we wanted to ask. My biggest take away? Have \$100,000, not 40/20 on your car insurance. If you own your home, one accident can put a lien against it. Next take away ... talk to a lawyer who specializes in Elder Law before you give your house to the kids. Next time, and there will be a next time, I will have more questions.

On that same Wednesday, May 14, we also hosted an Ask the Candidates event. Mr. Ralph Morrison explained, a bit, as to what the Auditor's job is. Make suggestions as to how to get more bang for your buck. And, of course, why he wants the position. Mr. Gray and Mr. Newman talked about why they want to be selectman and what they would work on. Mr. Zeller told us he would love to continue serving us. Mr. Sanchez wrote a brief note on his past service and his desire to continue. Congratulations to whoever wins. I believe this was a good forum to learn more about our local candidates. Perhaps we will do it again.

JUNE 7. We will be having a Pasta Fundraiser for 4-year-old Cora Barrett. Cora needs heart surgery and her parents could use some help paying transportation and housing costs of their visits to Boston for her care. The dinner will have two seating's, 5 p.m. and again at 6. Cost is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children aged 12-5, under 5 is free. The event will be held at Firehouse #2. Along with the dinner, there will be a Silent Auction. As of this writing, we already have dozens of gift certificates for local restaurants, baked goods, and much more. Tickets are being sold at The Farmington River Regional School, Papa's, Otis Egg Farm, Farmington River Diner, New Boston Inn, Villa Mia, and Tuckers. Please call Susan at 258-4113, if these places have sold out of tickets. Tickets will also be available at the door.

We are looking into a picnic basket raffle in July. More on that later. Meanwhile, we have regular meetings on Wednesdays along with pot luck, bingo, and laughter. No classes or forums are scheduled during the summer Enjoy. ♡

TOWN BUSINESS

Cont'd from p.11

Ron Pachulski asked about West St. and W. Hubbard Rd. He feels they are in very bad shape. Steve explained that he is working with the town administrator to seek funding. To repair the two roads would be approx. \$700,000. Steve wants to finish New Hartford Rd. first.

Roberta Myers requested permission to place signs opposing the gas pipeline issue. The signs could not be placed on town property and need to be 150 feet from the polling place. Permission was allowed for three temporary signs to be placed on private property with owner agreement and to be removed after the Town Meeting.

Reviewed and signed the special permit for Kim Paspuletti DBA Joyce's Trading Post.

Patrick expressed the need for the town administrator's position to become full time. She has been an asset working on the pipeline, grant research, chapter 90, additional chapter 90 for pothole repair, personnel issues, conservation easements and the special permit process.

SELECTMEN'S MINUTES, APRIL 28, 2014

Steve presented highway department updates and reviewed the problems with the grader. It is parked off the road on Rt. 183 and is out of operation. They were unable to determine the problem and have a call in to C. N. Wood to dispatch a mechanic. The grader is coned off and out of the way.

Steve has an opportunity to demo a Bobcat mini excavator for one week at no cost to the town. They will use it to replace a large culvert on S. Beech Plain Rd. Jeff requested that they try it on some ditch work.

Discussed the public meeting with Kinder Morgan regarding the gas pipeline which will be held May 8 at the Fire Station #2. Lisa will look into whether this is classified at a public information meeting or a public hearing. We will not hold a regular selectmen's meeting next week on May 5.

Under topics not reasonably anticipated Patrick requested permission to proceed with the trails at Yanner Park. He would like to work with Greenagers and Berkshire Natural Resources in creating trails for hiking, cross country skiing, and snow shoeing. Greenagers is a high school group that creates and maintains trails. Jeff agreed with the idea and encouraged Patrick to go forward. ♡

Gram's Redneck Resuables

“PERPETUAL FLEA MARKET” OPEN FOR BUSINESS

By Ron Bernard

Photos: Jean Atwater-Williams

Something is always going on at the old Kimberley place at the top of Town Hill Road, a stone's throw from the West Otis line at Rte. 23.

Their big sawmill buzzes, whirs and spits out small mountains of sawdust most all the time. Strong-backed men do real work here – never mind the weather or too frequent atrocious conditions; chain saws and wood splitters galore; enormous trucks delivering logs to be transformed into split fire wood for loyal customers.

Since 1985, Kimberley brothers Ron and Roger have operated a well-known forest products business that includes all aspects of the local industry. They have continued the family tradition of working this land that dates back to 1870 when great-great-grandfather Henderson Kimberley came over from Otis and bought some 175 acres for cultivating, maple sugaring, potatoes, and hog-raising. One of the last family farms in Sandisfield, it is the longest continuously operating one. Considering the 20th century's near



total transformation of the local economy away from agriculture to whatever it is we do now, this is saying a lot.

To visit this place is to step back to 19th century agrarian Sandisfield. Don't expect to find a pretty park. This is an authentic Berkshire working farmstead – proud and little changed over all these years.

For almost one and a half centuries, enterprising Kimberleys have adapted their family business to meet the times and circumstance. Now the fourth and fifth generations have added a new element to the mix. They like to think of it as a “perpetual flea market.”

A big family place like this will accumulate a lot of paraphernalia. Matriarch Beverly “Gram” Kimberley decided that the time had come to let go of a lot of great stuff. What better way than to use it all as a foundation for a tag sale/consignment shop. But she's motivated by more.

“It bothers me that people just throw away perfectly good everyday products,” she said. “The landfills are full of reusable items. That's the basic concept here.”

Bartering, swapping, repair, and reuse are New England Yankee traditions. It's better for the environment, and it's fun to find treasures and even swap things.

They have a good location, easy access, directly roadside. Merchandise is neatly arranged on shelves and tables in a quaint but ramshackle house with its own pretty cool history. The two-room building appears to date to the Civil War era and has been on the Kimberley's property since well before living memory. Originally the house was one of three schoolhouses in close proximity in the once bustling West Otis hamlet. It was moved to its present location long ago. According to family tradition the building was offered to the Town of Sandisfield for use as a school for a period when there was a spike in the number of farm children in the Town Hill section. Much later it served as a residence for Claude and Eleanor Kimberley who are fondly remembered in this town. It seems fitting that this re-purposed schoolhouse has become a recycle center.



What can folks expect to find? “Just about anything, you name it,” said Beverly. “I have antiques – lots of 'em. There are plenty of country things like farm tools, furniture, auto parts and accessories, gardening items, and such.”

And local handicrafts.


While we were there, Otis resident and chain saw-carver Dave Conklin was transforming a “big ugly log” into a beautiful six-foot tall wood nymph bird house. There's something irresistible about Conklin's amazing folk art carvings. (Bev plans to raffle off this marvel at the end of the afternoon on Sunday, June 29. Tickets may be purchased during normal hours of operation).

“I expect the inventory to turn over quickly so there will be plenty of new things all the time. Everything is priced to sell, and we'll have many free items too,” she said.

She's not kidding about free. Already, a local family whose washing machine was broken found a good one there. “The mom was desperate,” Beverly said. “We gave one to her. Anyone in need can come here and we'll do what we can for them. This is all about helping neighbors and the community while reducing waste in the landfills, not necessarily making money.”

The trove of Kimberley heirlooms and country items is sure to deplete soon enough. Beverly is counting on donations – still serviceable things that might otherwise be tossed into local dumps. Planning an estate or big tag sale? Why not do it here and take advantage of a ready and eager customer base?

Beverly is already looking ahead. “We have five acres next to the main house that I hope to fill with flea market and crafts vendors. I hope we can have a Sunday farmers' market here as well. Watch for announcements about that.”

Gram's Redneck Resuables at 186 Town Hill Road, ½ mile south of Rte. 23, will operate seasonally five days a week. Open afternoons Wednesday through Friday. Weekends, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Contact: Bev Kimberley, 413-269-4695/6530. 

Sandisfield Historical Society



By John Kuzmech, Acting President

Our regulars were pleased to see new members of the community come to lively oral history of our beloved Norton Fletcher at our May meeting. We hope to keep attracting new people to the Historical Society.

Consistent with our purpose of gathering and preserving history, we will have more entertaining speakers this summer. Our guest at our next monthly meeting, June 21, will be octogenarian Willard Platt, another old timer who will give us his account growing up in Sandisfield.

Willard is also my neighbor, and I have come to love him like a father so it is befitting of his cheerful disposition that he speaks the week after Father's Day. At 11 a.m., June 21, Willard will take to the front of the church (now the Historical Society) just like pastors of a century ago. Please come hear this old timer tell how he learned to drive a car by plowing the Campetti fields and how the steam engine carried granite behind his house. Listen as he tells us the mischief of his 40-year-old pet mule (do people remember Joey?).

Willard is a keen observer. His memories are crisp. Perhaps he will describe the covered medicine wagons in Ohio where he saw snake oil salesmen peddle their tinctures. Although Willard cannot recall the names of the girls who were unlucky enough to sit in front of him in Emily Clark's class in the New Boston school (yes, the very girls who had their hair dipped with India ink from Willard's inkwell), he can

still paint a vivid picture of moonlight skiing down a local hill and watching men collect ice for the ice houses.

Allow me to correct an error in the May edition of The Times about our annual Summer Fair. The annual Summer Fair will be held July 5, not July 15 as previously published. (July 15 is my wedding anniversary, so I knew it was somehow important, but I plugged in the wrong date.)

On the topic of the Summer Fair, this is a source of revenue for our meager operating budget. Our members make the tasty treats for the bake sale while burgers and dogs are donated. We invite you to come on July 5 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., and support our vendors. Please contact Marcia (258-2898) for more details about the fair or to be a vendor at \$15 per spot or a table. We can always use volunteers to cook and set up and sell items.

The Historical Society is seeking donations of good saleable items for the huge tag sale we have during the July 5th fair. Please call me at 258-4906 – we'll come by and collect your donated items. We hope you can come to the Fair, say Hi, buy some stuff, and grab lunch. It helps us pay our bills.

We welcome all at the Historical Society. Come check us out and help us keep going. Like any organization in this town, we are a small group, but there is a sense of community. Please come to our next meeting, June 21 at 11 a.m., to hear Willard's account. Bring a dish of food if you wish; we will have a potluck meal to follow. You can reach me at 258-4906. ♡



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Comings and Goings



HENRY HIBBINS SALZANO

Henry Hibbins Salzano was born on December 11, 2013 to proud parents Jennifer and Joe and big sister Julia of Montville. His other Sandisfield relatives include grandparents Joseph and Sally Salzano of Beech Plain, and Great Uncle Paul, Great Aunt Alexcia and cousin Andrew Adams, also of Beech Plain.



PRESENTING TWO NEW KITS

The new owners of Stone Bridge Farm on Sandisfield Road in West New Boston, Michele Marincola and George Wheeler, announce the birth of three baby foxes (called kits) under their shed near the Buck River in their woods. They first saw their new neighbors May 11 at noon. One of these guys is featured on page 1.

MARION BERNSTEIN, A TRIBUTE FROM GERTRUD MICHELSON

Marion was a warm, fun-loving person. She would call to coax me to go to concerts, movies, Historical Society meetings, and dinner at Kent Pizza. We would talk about whatever we had on our minds and spend a joyful evening. Marion came to almost all of our family events, Thanksgiving, Christmas dinners, birthdays, and just get together at our house in Sandisfield and also in NYC.

I met Marion and Ray in 1952 when I married Dan Pinsky, who was Ray's friend. Ray was a composer and Dan a classical pianist. Ray's sister, Ellen, and Marion and I went to Cambridge, England to visit Valerie when she was studying for her Ph.D. We drove all over, with me driving because neither could master the left-hand roads. We heard Bryn Terfel sing in a choir in Chester, England before he became famous. We were in awe of his talents and that of the Welsh choir. We had a lot of fun on that trip. On several occasions she came with me to Mexico to visit with my cousin Marianne Yampolsky, a well-known photographer.

Marion dealt with adversity and tragedy in her life with amazing strength. She kept on going with persistence and humor. She was idealistic and generous with her encouragement and concrete help. She gave us many of her photos and things she wanted us to have – just for fun! We miss her acutely and sadly and will continue to think of her positive attitude forever!

(Gertrud's note was received too late to be included in the May obituary for Marion.)

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THANKS, BUT . . .

I want to thank you all for the cards, kind words, and expressions of appreciation. I will miss all of you and our chats. However, retirement is kinda nice.

Karen Cooley
Serving us at the PO from 1989,
Postmaster 1999-2014
Route 8 (for now)



WHERE HISTORY HAPPENED

Our thanks to the Sandisfield Highway Department for excellent installations of the last two permanent historical markers at West New Boston (Old Town Hall) and Sandisfield Center (by the sculpture). These locations were more challenging and required some ingenuity. This completes the marker project begun last summer to commemorate the five original villages including New Boston Village, Montville and South Sandisfield (Historical Society building). Good job, fellows.

Sandisfield Historical Commission.



PIPE DREAMS

In the debate arising from Kinder Morgan's proposal to expand the presence of gas pipelines under our land in Sandisfield there is a great divide that is amazing . . .

On one side of the divide is the certainty of damage to our environment and increased threats from escaping gases that lead to slow but clear corruption of the air we breathe and the water we drink. It includes the dangers of explosions and fires and the certainty of dropping real estate values with concomitant losses to our tax base. Damages to the ecosystem we cherish are not in doubt.

From the other side come the preposterous and untrue allusions by Kinder Morgan to the economic benefits of these expanded pipelines. They would have us believe that there are economic advantages. Any economic advantages are only for Kinder Morgan's CEO and shareholders. Their intention is to sell the transported gas to places outside Sandisfield, to other states and even to other countries. No jobs and no profits will come or stay in Sandisfield. I was here for the last invasion and expansion in 1981 and saw and met with several of the workers. They and their equipment were all from outside of the state. They spent little if any money here and then moved on and left us with restricted, stripped, and dangerous land.

This is a simple case of the great divide...on one side is Kinder Morgan and company, who are positioned to gain record-breaking profits. On the other side of the divide, Sandisfield's citizens are given record losses of safety, security, and property values.

Thelma Esteves
South Beech Plain Road
Sandisfield home and landowner for 50 years



By Laurie Foulke-Green, Librarian

A special Thank You for a complimentary copy of *Sandisfield: An Intimate History and Some Comments*, by Elizur Yale Smith, from The Sandisfield Historical Commission.

Next Genealogy Assistance Classes: June 25 and July 30, Wednesdays, at 6:30 p.m. Call for Genealogy Requests at 258-4966, Monday and Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday or via e-mail at sandisfieldlibrary@yahoo.com.

NEW BOOKS:

- The Bourne Ascendancy/Eric Lustbeder
- The Beekeeper's Ball/Susan Wiggs
- The Hurricane Sisters/Dorothea Benton Frank
- Written In My Own Hearts Blood/Diana Gabaldon
- Invisible/James Patterson
- The Last Kind Words Saloon/Larry McMurtry
- Top Secret Twenty-One/Janet Evanovich
- Mr. Mercedes/Stephen King
- Terminal City/Linda Fairstein
- Nantucket Sisters/Nancy Thayer
- The Matchmaker/Elin Hilderbrand

OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

From **Maria Domato**, Commander, American Legion Post # 456. To save the Pavilion. If you missed the fundraiser swap meet on June 1, cash donations are very much welcomed and needed for the rehabbing of the Pavilion. Checks can be made out to the American Legion Building Fund and sent to PO Box 88, Sandisfield, MA 01255.



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NOW HEAR THIS!

Edited by Laura Rogers-Castro.

Please send notices for Now Hear This! to calendar@sandisfieldtimes.org.

JUNE EVENTS

Swap-Meet/Flea Market, American Legion Pavilion, Rt. 8, New Boston, June 1, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., rain or shine. Vendor spaces: \$15, no reservation needed. All proceeds to the Pavilion Building Fund.

Tai Chi on Mondays from 7:00-8:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center with Sandisfield resident and Tai Chi Instructor Barbara Penn, 413-269-0233. \$9 or 6 classes for \$48.

Vincent Van Gogh & the Books He Read, Saturday, June 7 at 10:00 a.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center. Carol Berry returns to present a biographical sketch of the artist with a focus on the diverse books he read.. \$10.

Cora Barrett Fundraiser Spaghetti Dinner on Saturday, June 7, seatings at 5:00 and 6:00 p.m. at Fire Station #2, Route 57. Funds to benefit the heart surgery for Cora Barrett, daughter of Selectman Patrick Barrett. Sponsored by the Sandisfield Council on Aging. (\$10 adults, \$5 ages 5-12, free under 5).

Loggers Workshop, June 10, 3 to 6 p.m. Free of charge at Sandisfield Arts Center. Are you currently logging or interested in getting a logger's license? The Mass. Department of Conservation & Recreation will present a workshop.

Historic Homes: Architectural Survey with Ron Bernard and Bonnie Parsons on Saturday, June 14 and 21, at 10:00 a.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center. \$5, light lunch included.

Appraisals with professional personal property appraiser David LeBeau on Saturday, June 14 and 21, at 1:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center. \$5 per item, light lunch included.

Flag Day on Saturday, June 14, at 1:00 p.m. The American Legion Post 456 will be disposing of unserviceable American flags at the pavilion fire pit at 1:00 p.m. Flags can be given to any Legion member or drop off at the fire pit any time prior to 1:00 p.m.

Bill Staines, Folk Singer on Saturday, June 14, at 8:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center. \$15.

Genealogy Assistance Class on Wednesday, June 25, at 6:30 p.m. at the Sandisfield Library. Free.

Under Milk Wood, a play by Dylan Thomas on Saturday, June 28, at 7:30 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center. Presented by the Sandisfield Players ("Rascals" and "Our Town") and directed by Ben Luxon. \$10.

UPCOMING EVENTS IN SANDISFIELD

Post Office Community Meeting on Wednesday, July 2, at 1:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Old Town Hall

to discuss options for Sandisfield's postal service needs.

Special Sandisfield Day on Saturday, July 12, sponsored by PACE (People's Action for Clean Energy) and the Sandisfield Arts Center. Tour a new solar home, swim in York Lake, boat on West Lake, hike to Abbey Lake, enjoy a gourmet dinner, and hear opera arias. For more information, call Judi Friedman, 860-693-4813.

ServSafe Class on Monday, July 28, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall. The class is for local restaurants and anyone else who needs to renew or obtain certification. The cost is \$140 with a textbook or \$110 if the participant has the book already. For more information, please contact Margaret O'Claire, 258-4400.

JUNE EVENTS IN SURROUNDING TOWNS

Open House Reception to honor Laurie Crittenden Nikituk on Monday, June 2 from 5:45-7:00 p.m., at the Farmington River Regional School Cafeteria. Laurie served for many years as a member and Chair of the School Committee. Contributions to the Laurie Nikituk Annual Art Scholarship/Campership also can be mailed to FRRSD, c/o Art Scholarship, 555 North Main Road, Otis, MA 01253.

Sup & Swing with Ed Wirt & the Skeletones on Saturday, June 21, BYO picnic at 6:00 p.m. and music at 7:30 p.m. at the Izaak Walton Pavilion, Route 8 and Tannery Road, Otis. Inquiries, 413-269-6273.

Vendors Needed for the 4th Annual Tag/Craft Sale to benefit Tolland Ladies Aid Society Scholarship Fund. The event will be held on Saturday, August 23, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Spaces for \$15. Contact Shirley, 258-4255 or jarmclark@verizon.net

Stitchers Welcome to the Otis Country Quilt Guild, Tuesdays from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m., at the Otis Town Hall (enter through back). For more information, contact Barbara Foley 413-789-1414.

ONGOING EVENTS

Selectmen, every Monday at 7:00 p.m., Town Hall Annex.

Farmington River Regional School District, first Monday of the month, 7 p.m., Farmington River Regional School, Rt. 8, JoAnn Austin, Superintendent. Public Welcome.

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

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

Conservation Commission, third Tuesday of the month, 7 p.m., Town Hall Annex.

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

Council on Aging, every Wednesday, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Senior Center, Town Hall Annex. Pot luck lunch at noon, bingo at 1 p.m. Free blood pressure screening every fourth Wednesday.

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

Historical Commission: Third Wednesday of the month, 7-8:30 p.m., Sandisfield Library.

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

Sandisfield Public Library Hours: Monday and Tuesday, 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; Wednesday, 6:30-8:30 p.m.; Thursday, 2-5 p.m., Saturday, 9 a.m.-12 noon. Phone: 258-4966.

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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.

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 or donate online at our website: www.sandisfieldtimes.org.

Copies of *The Sandisfield Times* are available in Sandisfield at A&M Auto, the Arts Center (in season), the Transfer Station, Post Office, the New Boston Inn, New Boston Crane & Sled, the Silverbrook Café & Country Store, Villa Mia, MJ Tuckers, When Pigs Fly Farm and Town Hall. Copies are also available in Otis at Katie's Market, Papa's Fuel, Otis Library, and the Farmington River Diner. Other locations include the Monterey General Store and the Southfield Store in New Marlborough. Back issues are available for purchase.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

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Editorial Staff

Editor: Bill Price, cell 413.429.7179 or email: w.billprice@gmail.com

Subscriptions/Advertising/Production/Distribution: Ron Bernard

Graphic Design: Tina Sotis

Founding Editor: Simon Winchester

Website: Jean Atwater-Williams

Now Hear This! Laura Rogers-Castro

How to Contact Us

Letters to the editor: . . . letters@sandisfieldtimes.org

News, ideas, tips & photos: . . . editor@sandisfieldtimes.org

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