

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

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Volume VII, Number 4 *July 2016*

Planning Board Adopts Master Plan

COME TO A POTLUCK SUPPER, SEPTEMBER

By Andy Snyder, Secretary, Planning Board

At their May 24 meeting, the Sandisfield Planning Board formally adopted the Master Plan in its entirety as presented by the Master Plan Steering Committee.

What's all the fuss about? Why does this matter? What does it mean for me? Who cares?

The reality is that this matters to each and every one of us who reside in this beautiful spot we call Sandisfield, whether we live here year-round or are second-home owners.

A Master Plan offers a vision of future possibilities for the town and provides a blueprint of how to reach those goals. And, importantly, a Plan offers opportunities for grant funding that is not open to towns that don't have one.

The development of the Master Plan was the work of the Sandisfield Master Plan Steering Committee, which was formed as a subcommittee of the Planning Board. The group was comprised of members representing other Town Boards, two members of the Planning Board, and several interested citizens. The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission played an important role in guiding the committee in its work.

The planning process also incorporated broad community input through the development of a public opinion survey, two public informational

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Dateline: Cornwall, England.

The Sandisfield Players on the stage where they performed "Our Town" at the end of June. Story and more photos in next month's issue of The Times.

Photo: Minack Theatre

The Silverbrook Stars in a Movie

A SHORT FILM, MADE WITH HEART

By Bill Price

Quiet on the set. All of us tip-toed around the Silverbrook Café recently while a movie was being shot inside the old building.

Because the sound of cars could be picked up by microphones inside, passing drivers were asked to slow down; they did so not only because they were asked but also because of the Sandisfield police cruiser parked nearby.

Lights and cameras were assembled on the front porch, while actors and crew members wandered to and from the upstairs apartments which had become, during the filming, make-up and production offices.

Although Sandisfielders tried to keep the noise down, a few distant gunshots could still be heard as some of us continued to shoot at squirrels raiding bird feeders or chicken-stealing foxes.

Karen Allen, the local actress who starred in "Raiders of the Lost Ark" and "The Perfect Storm" and is also owner of Karen Allen Fiber Arts, a textile/clothing store in Great Barrington, was the film's director.

She had long wanted to film Carson McCuller's short story, "A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud." The story, only 5 pages in length, involves a bar and grill, a bartender,

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Town of Sandisfield Town Hall Annex Hours and Select Board Summer Schedule

Selectmen's Office and Town Clerk

258-4711
Monday 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Tuesday through Thursday
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Board of Assessors

258-4701
Tuesday through Thursday
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Treasurer

258-4712
By Appointment

Tax Collector

258-4977
Monday 1 p.m. to 7 p.m.
Tuesday, Wednesday, and
Thursday
1 p.m. to 4 p.m.
Closed Friday

Select Board Schedule

All meetings at Town Hall Annex, 7 p.m.

- July 5, Tuesday, after Independence Day holiday
- July 18, Monday
- August 1, Monday
- August 15, Monday

Edna Leavenworth, Tax Collector, Retires

By Bill Price



Edna Leavenworth, left, worked with Town Clerk Dolores Harasyko at Town Hall for nearly two decades.


More than forty friends and coworkers crowded into Villa Mia on a recent Tuesday to thank Edna Leavenworth for her 26 years of service as Sandisfield's Tax Collector. Villa Mia opened especially for the occasion and served a superb buffet supper.

Edna was appointed Tax Collector in 1989 when her predecessor stepped aside. She told the Select Board at the time: "Well, I'll try it, and we'll see what happens." In eight subsequent elections, no one ever ran against her.


She is proud of the fact that Sandisfield's real estate tax delinquencies are a mere 2 percent of

the total when many other Berkshire municipalities have a much higher rate of shortfall.

When Edna announced her retirement this year, her daughter Lisa ran for the position, running uncontested. Because the job of Tax Collector, like that of Town Treasurer, may be turned over to a part-time professional accountant, Lisa is learning the ropes from her mother but is also waiting to learn the future of the elected position.

Edna's farewell gift from the town was a magnolia tree. It's a young, good looking tree and should soon bloom beautifully with Edna watching from the front porch. 

Town Administrator

The Town of Sandisfield is seeking an experienced part-time Town Administrator. A bachelor's level degree in public administration is preferred; or any equivalent combination of education, training, and experience which provides the required skills and abilities to perform the functions of the position. Strong leadership, interpersonal, negotiation, oral, and written communication skills required. Salary negotiable. Send resume and cover letter by July 18, 2016, 2:00 p.m., to Town Administrator Position, Sandisfield Town Hall, PO Box 90, Sandisfield, MA 01255 or e-mail to sandisfieldtownclerk@verizon.net. The Town of Sandisfield is an EEO/AA employer. 

Town of Sandisfield Major Positions Open

Town Accountant

The Town of Sandisfield is seeking a part-time Town Accountant for approximately 6 to 8 hours a week. Salary negotiable. Send resume and cover letter by July 5, 2016, 2:00 p.m., to Town Accountant Position, Sandisfield Town Hall, PO Box 90, Sandisfield, MA 01255 or e-mail to sandisfieldtownclerk@verizon.net. Call 413-258-4711 for a copy of the job description. The Town of Sandisfield is an EEO/AA employer.

Pipeline: The Bull in Our China Shop

By Bill Price


Energy giant Kinder Morgan is preparing to do what it wants across a nearly 4-mile stretch of northern Sandisfield.

So far, KM and its subsidiary Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company have been constrained by the Massachusetts Superior Court to wait until after July 29 to gain access to Otis State Forest where they plan to widen an existing pipeline through land protected by Article 97 of the State Constitution. The wait was to give the state legislature time to vote on whether or not to grant a waiver of Article 97. The legislature adjourns on July 29, and if a vote is taken and the waiver refused, all parties could be back in court. If the legislature grants the waiver or doesn't vote, KM could presumably proceed.


In the meantime, Select Board Chairman Alice Boyd told The Berkshire Edge, the online daily newspaper, that KM appears to be "renegeing" on the \$1,080,000 Community Benefits Agreement negotiated to mitigate damages to the town during construction, plus \$30,000 spent by the town in legal fees. With KM not returning phone calls or emails, Alice told the Edge, "I have absolutely no trust or faith in this corporation."

KM representatives have, however, attended the last two Sandisfield Conservation Commission meetings. Primarily the company has been seeking approval on steps it has taken regarding the more than 100 enforcement orders the Commission imposed on the work.

At the June meeting, more than forty observers, many wearing Stop the Pipeline T-shirts, attended in support of the Commission. When KM objected to their presence, Commission Secretary Clare English pointed out that KM's complaint was out of order. While it was a working meeting and attendees were not allowed to participate, they were free to be present and observe the proceedings.

KM expects to attend the next four monthly meeting of the Commission, which meets the third Tuesday of every month at Town Hall Annex, 7 p.m. The next meeting is July 19. 

The Silverbrook Auction

The scheduled auction in June of the Silverbrook Bar and Café by TD Bank was postponed until July 21 at 2 p.m. No reason was given for the postponement. 

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Break a Leg, You Players!

Happy landing to our friends and neighbors who performed “Our Town” in England during the last week in June. They were performing as we were going to press here. Their adventures will be reported in the August Times.

The Eagle to Fly Again

New ownership at The Berkshire Eagle promises to revive this fall the local coverage that was so important to Berkshire towns when the paper was owned by people who actually lived here. In his *Moreover* column

on page 15, Simon Winchester writes about the coming changes in the Eagle.

In fact, Simon, the founding editor of *The Times*, will play a role in the Eagle’s revival. He has agreed to join an Editorial/Features Advisory Board formed by the new ownership with the idea that local internationally known writers and artists can add to the paper’s content and support the editorial staff. Simon writes that he is delighted to have been asked to play what part he can in “helping to re-fashion this once-wonderful newspaper into a vital part of today’s American journalistic landscape.”

*Bill Price
West New Boston*

DANCE ORLANDO

We are mostly filled with ordinary days,
From here to there without the interruption
Of our sea of candy dancing,
Blameless, sweet, and softly played.

Until an M-15 annihilates the dance,
Re-kindles Hell,
Unwinds embrace,
And assassinates the puzzle of romance.

Yes, we’ve all been there
In the secret corners of our mind
Where fantasy presides and righteousness decides,
And then we’re back to candy-dancing ... and we’re blind.

*Val Coleman
Town Hill Road*



Selectman Stricken

Selectman John Skrip has undergone surgery in Yuma, Arizona, for a bleeding ulcer and ruptured intestine that occurred while he was in Mexico. He remains in the Yuma Hospital where, his wife Rosanne reports, he is healing slowly. John suffered complications from the surgery and, Rosanne said, “had the wind knocked out of him. He is in better spirits now and on the mend,



*John Skrip
Photo: Alan Boye*

but we can’t anticipate a timeline for coming home.” John will undergo a short-term rehabilitation before leaving Arizona.

Meanwhile, since two makes a quorum on the Select Board, the

Selectmen left standing, Alice Boyd and Jeff Gray, will carry on and the town’s business can proceed. At their June 13 meeting, Alice and Jeff adopted a Remote Participation Policy so that when John’s health improves he can carry on business by telephone or internet-enabled audio/video conferencing.

Rosanne sent her and John’s appreciation for “everyone’s prayers, positive thoughts, and love sent our way. We’re looking forward to coming home to the Berkshires and will use all of your offered help when we get back.”

Planning Board Adopts Master Plan

Cont’d from p.1

meetings, and many stakeholder and personal interviews conducted by representatives of the BRPC. This valuable input helped shape the content of the Master Plan. Developing the Plan took approximately one year from start to finish.

The Plan is a living document that will help direct decision making in Sandisfield for the next ten to fifteen years. The Master Plan considers all aspects of what makes us a community and offers a strategy for progressing in the future. It is meant to be revisited every five years or so to see if we are still on the correct course to reach our goals or if our goals have changed.

The Master Plan focuses on topics that include Population and Demographics, Economy, Infrastructure, Services, Housing, Transportation, Land Use, Natural and Cultural Resources, Open Space, and Recreation. Each of the areas has its own section where the topic is explored in depth. Key issues are identified and problem areas flagged. Each topic then lists specific goals, objectives, and specific actions to be taken to reach those goals.

Later in the Master Plan the goals, objectives,

and actions are prioritized and given a time frame for completion.

How do we proceed from here?

Over the summer, all town residents should examine and explore, review and discuss the Master Plan. It is available at the Town Hall Annex during business hours. A draft of the Master Plan is available online at berkshireplanning.org/projects/sandisfield-master-plan.

In September, a townwide potluck dinner will be held, possibly at Firehouse #2, with all residents invited and, especially, All Boards. The dinner will be an opportunity to discuss moving forward with the Plan, and will offer anyone interested in taking on a task the chance to step up and help their town.

Correction to Audit Year

In our June issue *The Times* reported that the last Sandisfield audit was conducted in 2007. Clare English, former Town Treasurer for 22 years, points out that while the last full audit was indeed held for FY2007, a cash audit was held in January 2012, when she retired, and that “All the books were clear.”

AROUND TOWN HALL

By Alice Boyd, Chairman, Select Board

Setting Priorities

Selectman Jeff Gray and I send best wishes to fellow Selectman John Skrip, and we hope to see him back at work soon.

I'm a believer in setting goals. I'm also one of those people who make lists. A year ago the Select Board initiated a goal-setting process. We agreed on a list of seven action-oriented categories. Under each category we itemized goals. This list hangs over my desk, and I review it regularly. We've completed some goals, made progress on others, and a few remain incomplete. Let's look at why that is so.

Running this town is akin to chasing a moving target.

Legitimately, we've been shorthanded at Town Hall without a Town Administrator. We've initiated significant personnel changes that have taken time and energy but in the long run will positively impact the town's finances and future. And admittedly I did not expect to be spending so much time on three separate issues: the pipeline, Broadband, and the Municipal Aggregation Program.

Projects that were not on our list of goals are complete, or nearly so, while a few items remain unfinished. For example we now have a Personnel Manual but not everyone has a job description.

So at an upcoming Selectmen's Meeting we're going to be reviewing last year's goals and setting new ones for Fiscal Year 2017.

The following is my list of priorities:

1) Implement the new Master Plan. I am very proud of the team that worked so diligently on the Master Plan. With the assistance of the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission we now have a roadmap to our future. But first, we have a variety of tasks in order to implement the Plan. If you'd like to help, join us this September when the Board will host a potluck dinner along with the All-Boards Meeting. Together, we will take the Master Plan to the next stage.


2) Get our financial house in order. Thanks to the support of our voters we'll be hiring new staff and reshaping how we run our town finances. We're upgrading our financial software, implementing a check and balance system, and reassigning job components.

3) Improve our roads. Working with the Highway Superintendent we're putting a 5-year plan in place to address road improvements throughout our town.

We may be paving fewer roads and grinding and oiling others, but we're moving forward. Later this summer, West Street will be done along with parts of Town Hill Road. We've just received approval for the state-funded Complete Streets Program that will open the door for other funding and amenities.

4) Broadband. Working with Jean Atwater-Williams, Sandisfield's representative and Technology Committee chairman, and Jeff Bye, a recently retired NASA engineer, we're determining the fastest, most cost-effective and efficient way to bring high-speed internet to your home. I've had the privilege of working with Selectmen and Broadband Committees from four neighboring towns with the shared goal of getting this done. We recognize that having a plan and timeline in place will help our property values, home sales, and our economic future. We're working with the Governor's liaison, gearing up for grants, and getting ready to move forward with a plan that will work. It's going to happen.

5) Finish our new web site. The design is done, programming is underway, and we'll soon be offering an interactive site where you'll be able to conduct town business online. And we'll have a staff member responsible for keeping the website updated daily.

I hope you'll join us at Select Board meetings and participate as we tend to town business. You'll be surprised at all of the tasks at hand. 

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Nobody Sells more real estate in Sandisfield than Brockman

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School Trends Not Good

ENROLLMENT, SPENDING PER-PUPIL HEADING IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS

By Ron Bernard

It could be the most important story no one has heard much about.

Small towns all over south Berkshire County are experiencing a steady decline in school enrollment with no apparent end in sight. Many factors, mostly consequences of the region's weak economy and poor infrastructure, are contributing to the trend.

Hill towns like Sandisfield have always contended with inadequate school funding, limited services, and geographical isolation. But they managed to fulfill their duty to educate children without bankrupting the system.

It was never easy.

It is going to be even more difficult in the years ahead.

The enrollment problem today boils down to fewer family formations, including move-ins, and smaller family units. This has serious implications for the quality of social and fiscal life and even the viability of communities to remain as stand-alone municipalities.

Concerned officials are openly discussing school consolidation even as many children already endure long car and bus rides.

State Representative Smitty Pignatelli addressed the problem at a Massachusetts Municipal Association meeting in October, 2014. He said, "We have more deaths than births, and enrollment is down to only about 4,000 in a huge area of some 500 square miles." He mentioned that perhaps five of the 16 schools open at that time might have to consolidate (The Sandisfield Times, November, 2014).

Because the enrollment issue came up at the 2016

Town Meeting during discussions about the school budget, the Times has examined the trend over the decade ending next year (see table).

Using 2008 as the base line, Sandisfield's combined school enrollment has declined from a total of 127 children ten years ago to an estimated 90 for the upcoming year, a drop of 29%.

Enrollment fluctuates yearly due to different factors, but basically it appears that in just ten years our public school pupil population has reduced by at least one-quarter.

Meanwhile, Sandisfield's assessment for school expenditures has ballooned from approximately \$1.11 million to \$1.43 million, an increase of 29%.

Consequently, the per-pupil cost has risen by 82% from about \$8,700 in 2008 to an estimated \$15,900 next year. (According to the Massachusetts Department of Education, the state-wide average cost per pupil was \$14,900 in FY 2015, the latest year available).

A few aspects of this complicated picture are relatively positive. Sandisfield's education spending as a proportion of the total budget is trending slightly down from 51% in 2008 to about 45% estimated for next year.

In addition, the Farmington River Regional School District which includes the elementary school in Otis that serves Otis and Sandisfield (about 130 pupils total in pre-Kindergarten through grade 6), has done a respectable job in managing costs as much as possible without sacrificing quality.

Jane Gleason, District Business Manager, explained that certain major cost drivers, notably out-of-district/school choice, "special education,"

Ten-Year Trend Sandisfield Schools FY2008 - FY 2017


ENROLLMENT	2008	2014	2015	2016	2017(est)	%CHG
Elementary	57	51	44	39	37	
Middle School	41	16	11	15	13	
High School	29	40	42	39	37	
Out of District (SpED)	N/A	3	3	3	3	
TOTAL	127	110	100	96	90-29%	
Education Budget (millions)	\$1.11	\$1.47	\$1.42	\$1.42	\$1.43	29%
\$Spent per Pupil	8,740	13,364	14,200	14,792	15,889	82%

and employee health insurance, have been steadily increasing and are not very controllable by the District. "Our health insurance costs increase an average of 10% per year," she told the Times. "We are seeking alternative (health insurance) plans in an effort to contain premiums."

Recently, the district has offset some of the increases with reduced operating expenses due to improved energy efficiency and favorable fuel prices.


Staffing, she said, has remained constant over the past four years and staffing cost has increased at a rate of only about 2.2% per year.

But the major trends are deeply rooted and are without obvious or easy solutions. Possible consolidation with another town at the Otis facility could improve matters in the short-term.

Otherwise, feeble enrollment will continue to fuel the vicious cycle because most school costs are basically fixed and have to be spread over a flat taxpayer base. With little or no growth in the town, tax rates must rise which in turn will further pressure property values. Absent significant economic growth and a larger full-time resident population, Sandisfield is facing a dilemma. 



Call for Yuletide Actors

Actor volunteers wanted for two plays to be performed during Yuletide Extravaganza in December. Needed: One boy age 9-12 to play a major role, one woman in early twenties, men aged 18 and up. Auditions to be held at the Sandisfield Arts Center, Sunday, August 14. (Specific time to be announced in August issue.) For further information, please contact Tina deManbey at 258-4016 or email at asmall-crowd@verizon.net. 

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Yoga in the Gardens

Beginning Saturday, July 9th

LOOKING GLASS GARDENS will host Yoga classes instructed by Kim Kost (200-hour Certified Teacher). Kim has trained at Yoga To The People and she continues training at the Dharma Yoga Center in New York.

Classes will be held from 10 am to 11 am for all levels and will be held bi-weekly. \$15.00 per person.

Children under 18 must be accompanied by a parent or have a signed waiver.

Bring a towel or yoga mat and enjoy a relaxing yoga session surrounded by our beautiful gardens.

LOCATION: LOOKING GLASS GARDENS
19 Dodd Road
Sandisfield, MA 01255
413-258-3375

Farmstand Relocated

The TerMar Triangle Farmstand at the intersection of South Sandisfield Road and Rt. 183 has moved away from the roadside, just a couple hundred feet into the yard where it is easier to park.

With a larger space, Marcia Patterson and Terry Ignace, who have operated the stand since 2002, can offer a wider variety of items. Bacon, sausage, chops, and ribs from their own pigs can be found in the large freezer inside the salesroom. In a fridge are fresh farm eggs from a Colebrook farm and strawberries and vegetables in season, grown in their 2-acre garden. On racks outside are rows of flowers for the garden people. And honey and maple syrup. Cokes are available, too.

Terry can provide firewood, natural lumber, custom signs and planing, and kiln drying.

The stand is open, Marcia said, "sunrise to sunset." Payment on the honor system. If you need to call, you can reach the proprietors at 258-2898.



Marcia Patterson at the Stand.



The Music of George Shearing and Beyond

The Sandisfield Arts Center became a jazz club in early June when the James Argiro Quintet performed the signature jazz arrangements of George Shearing. The group included, from left, James Argiro on piano, Jason Schwartz on bass, Rich Goldstein on guitar, Clark Seibold on drums, and Mario DeCiutiis on vibraphone. Photo: Peter Levine

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Simply Brilliant

VAL COLEMAN'S "AN APPRECIATION OF POETRY"

By Barbara Penn

At the Arts Center on June 11, Val Coleman simultaneously gave us the vast sweep of poetic history while illuminating specific poems, writers, and themes as seen by his poet's eye and by his spirit of intuition, tenderness, and compassion. The audience was mesmerized.

Val's definition of poetry is "prose under sail." He then proceeded to show us why.

He chronicled the history of poetry from its beginnings when, as he says, humans acquired the hyoid bone (necessary for speech), through the ancient epic of Gilgamesh, the first recorded poem (chipped out on stone), all the way to Snoop Dogg, with stops for Shakespeare, Keats, and the Beats along the way.

It was a brilliant talk, creatively presented. To me, the talk had the feel of a poem in its immediacy, rich images, and tone. Val's choice of poets and poems and his vivid language made us feel the beating heart of poetry in poets as different as Oscar Wilde and John Donne, Garcia Lorca and Amiri Baraka. Magnificent!


He surprised us with deeper looks into poets we thought we knew, like the romantic sonneteer Edna St. Vincent Millay writing as a witness to history with these lines read to the troops before

the D-Day landing: "They must not go alone/ into that burning building – which today/is all of Europe."

When Val praised Wilfred Owen's "Dulce and Decorum Est" ("it is sweet and right to die for your country," intended cynically) as among the finest poems ever written, his reading the poem aloud convinced us. His love and deep understanding of Walt Whitman was palpable, as was his love affair with Emily Dickinson, which he says is "fixed like a star in the sky."

In the 20th century, another witness to history was William Butler Yeats in "The Second Coming." Val noted "the amazing images ... the falcon circling so wide he cannot hear the call of sanity, [and] the ultimate irony that the Christian belief in the Second Coming of Christ will become a beast slouching toward Bethlehem."

For Val Coleman, Yeats' "the center will not hold" is "the ultimate caption for the 20th century."


But the center, as the heart of poetry, did hold in Val's hands in this remarkable talk, ending with one of the most moving, deeply honest readings I have ever heard: Val Coleman and Dylan Thomas merged into one voice in his reading of "Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night." 

You can hear Val Coleman's "An Appreciation of Poetry" at www.sandisfieldartscenter.org/links.

A Gift to the Town

By Bill Price



Before the Sandisfield Players took "Our Town" to Cornwall, England, they mounted matinee and evening performances at the Arts Center. The afternoon performance filled the house on the sunny June 18 Saturday, and the 8 p.m. show nearly sold out as well. An excellent article about the Players and their performance of "Our Town," by Hannah Van Sickle Barrett, appeared in The Berkshire Edge, datelined June 18, see www.theberkshireedge.com. The following week the 26-member troupe flew across the Atlantic to Cornwall where they performed at an open-air arena twice the size of the Arts Center stage, with a crashing surf as the backdrop. Their adventures on the road will be in the August issue of The Sandisfield Times. 

The matinee audience for "Our Town" filled the room.

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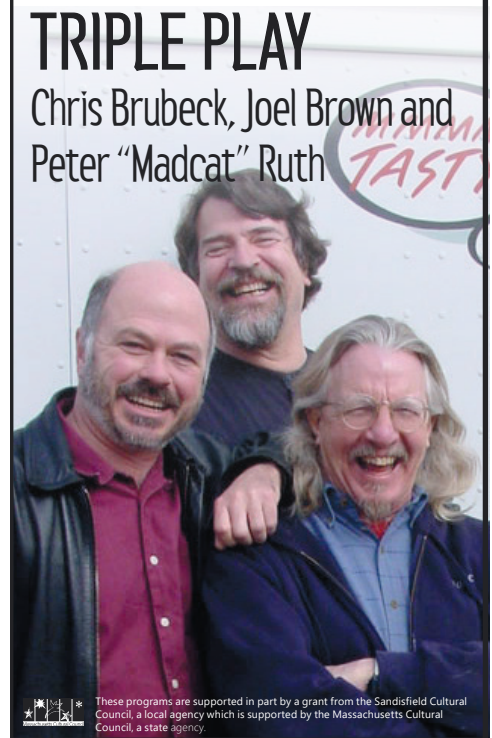
The Conservation of
Tulio Lombardo's "Adam"

sat, july 23 8 pm \$20

children under 12 - \$10

TRIPLE PLAY

Chris Brubeck, Joel Brown and
Peter "Madcat" Ruth



These programs are supported in part by a grant from the Sandisfield Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



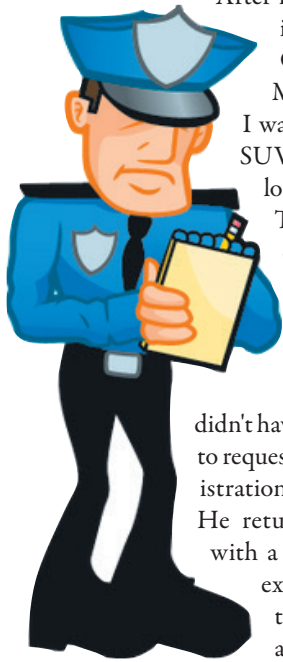
ON THE GROUP W BENCH

By *Brigitte Ruthman*

On April 3, after milking cows, I drove my green 2011 Chevy farm truck from Joshua's Farm along back roads to Salisbury to pick up hay from Chip's barn near The Nature Conservancy fields where the hay is harvested. It's a trip I often take.

This one, though, took me to the Group W bench.

My truck had an outdated emissions sticker. In Massachusetts, the sticker also covers a cursory safety inspection for such things as blinkers, windshield wipers, and brake lights. It has to be renewed annually for a \$35 fee.



After rounding the corner in Clayton, on the Connecticut side of Mill River in Canaan, I was pulled over by an SUV police vehicle with lots of flashing lights. The New Marlborough officer behind the wheel had been hiding in a driveway.

Officer Mullen didn't have much to say except to request my license and registration. I gave him both. He returned a while later with a third item I hadn't expected, an infraction ticket for having an expired sticker.

I attempted to engage Officer Mullen in a conversation about where exactly we were relative to the state line or, if we couldn't agree on that, would I have a chance to get a new sticker the next day without a fine.

He just said, "Massachusetts," walked away and was gone.

Where we were depends on who you ask. One side of the road is Connecticut and the other Massachusetts at that point, a few yards before it's

entirely in Connecticut. It is maintained by Connecticut's Department of Transportation and the local fire chief answers calls there because, he said, there is so much confusion. Connecticut state police patrol it, right up to the four corners in Mill River.

Right, I did pass through Massachusetts with the same sticker. But in Canaan, ranking officer resident state trooper Greg Naylor said he always gave warnings for first-time emissions sticker offenders – before Connecticut abolished the stickers altogether a few years ago.

I called New Marlborough Police Chief Graham Frank who politely suggested I check "not guilty" on the ticket and mail it back without paying the \$55 fine.

I did. I thought I was right or would have a chance to prove it.

Around the middle of the following month I received an acknowledgement of my plea and a strange demand – a \$25 filing fee to grant me the right to object.

Now, the ticket I was issued did not mention a \$25 nonrefundable obligatory fee imposed by the Registry of Motor Vehicles, whether or not a guilty finding resulted.

This gave me pause.

In every court I have worked in since 1983, the Constitution has guided laws – specifically that probable cause is the standard by which a fine or arrest is lodged and the right to contest precedes a conviction or finding of wrongdoing beyond reasonable doubt.

That even applies to an emission sticker. I got a new sticker for \$35 on April 4 from Ralph Morrison's excellent local shop, the day after Officer Mullen stopped me.

I sent the \$25 demanded for the filing fee on April 26, a few days after receiving the notice. Either the check didn't get processed quickly enough or the mail was slow because by May 2 I received a second letter dated April 28 – 25 days after my alleged violation – notifying me that my license to drive, which has had no citations against it in 40 years of driving, was to be automatically suspended May 28.

In order to avoid the suspension I was ordered to pay a late fee of \$45, a "release fee" of \$10, and the initial \$55, now ordered without due process. My right to object was erased, and the total due was \$110.

If I failed to pay, the letter said, in addition to a license suspension, I would need to pay an additional \$100 "reinstatement fee."

Go ahead, try to get through to anyone at

MassDot where a recorded message offers call-back appointments at the RMV's discretion a day or two later. At this point I was regretting not paying the initial \$55, having lost more than that in time off from work.

I called the ombudsman named Fred at the RMV who checked and said that indeed my check had been processed and I should ignore the second letter. A hearing date was being mailed out.


I took more time off from work to appear before a magistrate in Southern Berkshire District Court June 2, and waited on the Group W bench alongside two other alleged perps – one of them a young lad with a similarly vexing dilemma.

I was ready with evidence of where I was that day, but when the chief said he would not be pursuing the ticket it was dropped.

The magistrate then offered that I ought to be thankful, because a guilty finding would have marred my driving history for six years and been sent to my insurance company. This rather smacked of an admonishment and made me wonder again about due process, especially since no evidence had been heard.

The fact is, I get it. The stickers are important to keep unsafe vehicles from the road, especially older ones. But in small towns like these and a country where government is prompting civil unrest, it makes sense to offer a softer approach, with the idea of getting the inspections to happen rather than imposing unreasonable fines.

Overreaching lawmakers should take note. We don't owe government what it doesn't earn. Our local lawmakers should remember that Massachusetts is where this great country got its start.

The \$25 fee to appeal to the Registry of Motor Vehicles, which goes to the courts and is kept by the Commonwealth regardless of the outcome of the case, is simply illegal. 

Out on a Limb: an op-ed

Subject should be interesting to most of us and have a strong link to Sandisfield, written by and for Town residents. The Times does not accept Out on a Limb contributions submitted anonymously, but if the author identifies him or herself to the editor and asks not to be named in the article we may agree to withhold the author's name on a case-by-case basis.

Send to Editor, Sandisfield Times, P.O. Box 584, Sandisfield, MA 01255 or by email to editor@sandisfieldtimes.org.

Memory Road

It's All About Us

By Bill Price

We're introducing a new feature this month – a nostalgic photographic recollection of Sandisfield.

Each month, probably, we will feature a photograph of Sandisfield residents or a place or event from several yesterdays ago that could be recognized by people here now. Some of the images may come from local photographer's archives, the Sandisfield Historical Society, or newspapers like The Record which published here for about a decade in the 1970s or the more recent Sandisfield Newsletter.


We especially want you to send us old snapshots. There are no rules, but the subject matter should be relevant to Sandisfield between the 1950s and 1990. We won't have room to print all submissions, and even though your Aunt Tilly means a lot to you she may not to our readers. We will make exceptions to our "no rules" rule when it seems to make sense to us.

When you send photos, include

a note with as much detail as possible. Names, dates, locations, whatever is going on in the picture. We would like to credit whoever took the photo, so let us know that too.

If you're online, send your photos by email to editor@SandisfieldTimes.org. Include your name and telephone number. If you can, scan your photo at high resolution – at least 600 dpi is preferred. If you can't, we'll work with what you send.

If you're not online, send an original copy of the photo with a note to PO Box 584, Sandisfield, MA 01255. We will return your original. Do not send your only copy. Do not send a photocopy of the photo as they do not reproduce clearly.

Now, check family scrapbooks and that shoebox with Mom's pictures in it. As hurtful as it sounds, the 1950s-1990 have become historic. While we were busy doing other things, history happened right here. 



The Clark Sisters

Sandisfield blue-blood through their mother, the Clark sisters were the last surviving members of the Sears family which settled here in about 1760.

The photograph was taken at the New Boston Congregational Church in April 1985, probably at Easter services. Left to right are Isabelle K. Clark, Helen S. Clark, and Emily J. Clark Vogellus. Far left is Charles Knight, pastor.

The sisters were very proud of their early American roots and family heritage. They were great-grandnieces of native son and famous poet/educator Edmund Hamilton Sears who wrote the Christmas carol, "It Came Upon The Midnight Clear."

Emily was a life-long parishioner and patron of the New Boston church. She and her husband, Clifford Vogellus, lived in the former Caleb Burt House (c.1820) on Sandisfield Road across from the site of the current town library. The house burned from an unknown cause in 1993. Isabelle, who never married, died in 1987 in Sandisfield at age 88. Helen Sears Clark, also unmarried, died in 1995 in Winsted at 92. Emily Vogellus died in 1996 in Winsted, age 96.

Photo: Don Victor collection/The Record.

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The Silverbrook Stars in a Movie

Cont'd from p.1

a few customers, an old timer, and a young paperboy.

Ms. Allen first read the story when she was in her early 20s. "It stayed with me all these years. A young boy and an older man meet by chance on a rainy morning at a bar/café in the 1940s. The film is their conversation about love and loss and experience and understanding."

When she began to assemble a production crew last winter, she already had the location in mind.

She had driven past the Silverbrook Café for years on her way to and from the Hartford airport. Familiar to anyone who has ever passed through Sandisfield, the Silverbrook had been closed for over a year since former owner Connie D'Andrea closed her store/bar/restaurant and locked the door.

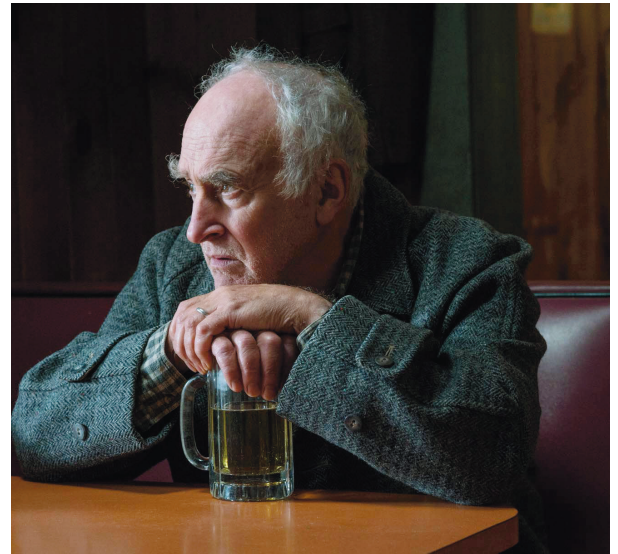
Ms. Allen said, "I always thought it could be the site of Carson's story, but I hadn't been inside until about three years ago. When I did go inside, the bar was in the right place, a couple booths on the side, just as I saw it in my imagination."

A construction crew spent much of May and early June turning the inside of the building into what a bar/café would have looked like in the 1940s. A worn jazz sign on the front of the building caused more than a few people to stop out front and ask if the old place was reopening. A few 1940s cars were hired for scenes outside

the café. A working 1947 bicycle was found and it didn't take long for the young actor playing the paperboy to learn how to ride it.

Working with Ms. Allen behind the camera was first-time film producer Bryan Long of Rattlestick Playwrights Theater and co-producer Diane Pearlman, an independent entertainment producer, who is also executive director of the Berkshire Film and Media Collaborative.

The work of production designer, Kristi Zea, would be familiar to anyone who has seen "Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps," "The Departed," or "Silence of the Lambs." Richard Sands, the director of photography, has worked with directors such as Spielberg, Coppola, and Sam Raimi.



Photos: Peter Baiamonte

This page, from top to bottom:

Jeffrey DeMunn, a veteran actor, is playing the "old man." Recently he portrayed Dale Horvath on the last two seasons of "The Walking Dead."

Setting up for a scene on the porch.


The crew assembled in front of the Silverbrook Café.

Two Sandisfield residents working on the film were Midori Nakamura, assistant to the director, and Peter Baiamonte, photographer. Both are long-time friends of Ms. Allen.

The resulting film will play for only about 20 minutes, but Ms. Allen anticipates that it may have a long life. Editing and other production work will be finished in September in time to be offered to next year's major film festivals, including the Berkshire International Film Festival.

A co-sponsor of the film is the Carson McCullers Center in Columbus, Georgia, and in July 2017 the film will be featured at an international conference in Rome in honor of the 100th anniversary of her birth. Because of McCuller's stature as a major American author, in China and Europe as well as the U.S., the film will be made available to universities and other educational institutions.

The making of a 20-minute film is a labor of love.

It has to be, since nobody is going to make a lot of money with "A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud." But everyone involved in making the film had a good time in downtown Sandisfield and it was work they wanted to do, so maybe that part of it doesn't matter so much. 



*This page, starting upper right going clockwise:
Star Jeffrey DeMunn with director Karen Allen.*

Jackson Smith, 12, a first-time actor from Housatonic, played the paperboy. The director said he was chosen for the part because "he had the ability to listen."

The crew shoots a scene with the paperboy on his route near the Hryckvich farm on Beech Plain Road.

The paperboy on his bike and a 1947 Packard convertible approach the Silverbrook.

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October 8 Award-Winning Authors with Host Simon Winchester

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historia (Greek) - "inquiry, knowledge acquired by investigation." The discovery, collection, organization, and presentation of information about past events.

'Of Blacks we had very few...'

By Ron Bernard

In the second half of the 19th century, Sandisfield's native son George A. Shepard had no peer.

Consummate public servant, historian, town booster, public speaker, and a poet of some note, Shepard knew the townspeople intimately. At a packed Congregational meeting house at Sandisfield Center on Christmas Eve 1874, he recited a nearly 400-line epic poem he had written about his hometown, "A Few Things in Rhyme."

In his poem, Shepard recounted the social history of Sandisfield in a playful style that poked fun at dozens of friends, neighbors, and contemporary and past characters in delightful rhyme.

An example:

*Of Sages, there was near a score,
Sages by name if not by lore;
And Smiths enough were scattered 'round
To populate a one-horse town.*

But he also wrote:

*We had our lean ones and our fat ones
We had our thorough and our slack ones
But very few we had of Black ones*

Actually, according to census records, in the early 19th century at least, black residents in Sandisfield were rather common.

Early Blacks in Sandisfield

One of the first recorded instances of blacks in Sandisfield was captured in the Select Board minutes of March 12, 1777.

In a well-researched article, "Freeman's Petition" in The Sandisfield Times, September 2015, Historical Society president John Kuzmech wrote about Paul Freeman, a slave of town founder, Capt. Jacob Brown. After Brown's death, Freeman made a poignant petition to the Select Board to be freed (manumission) under an agreement he had with Brown. He cited his service at the side of Brown on a military mission in the early days of the Revolution. All we know of Freeman are contained in those minutes. We don't even know if his petition was granted, but his fate is certainly worth further research.

Although slavery was not officially abolished in Massachusetts until the state ratified the 13th Amendment in 1865, the practice had essentially ended here by the late-18th century. No slaves are listed in the 1790 US census of the Commonwealth.

However, blacks lived in Sandisfield, more than "very few." In her chapter about the ethnic history of the town in *Sandisfield Then and Now*, historian Charlotte Westhead described the census of 1790:

"The (census) enumerated white males and females by age and gender. A separate

category, "free other" (non-white), contained nine entries for Sandisfield. One free-other, probably a servant, lived in the Amos Hall house. The Rev. Eleazar Storrs and James Merits each had one non-white living in his house. Stephen Cambridge and a "non-white, other" occupied a separate house without white people. Phineas Booth, identified as "negro," lived with four free-others and a white woman (possibly all one family)."

She wrote that the 1810 census includes only one "free person of color," Elizabeth Smith, who seemed to live alone and was not part of another household. However, Charlotte found 31 local non-whites (unnamed) in the employ of 25 local men.

The 1850 census included 13 black residents here, mostly members of two families plus some laborers. Ten years later the census listed blacks and mixed-race families by name, including Huntley, Gardner, Jackson, Martin, Memley, Whitford and Robbins.

After the Civil War, the Town's fortunes declined dramatically. As farmers abandoned the land and population declined, so did opportunities for employment and fewer blacks were listed as residents. Charlotte wrote, "In 1880 four Blacks were enumerated including Frank Carr, 19, and Maggie Williams, 25, both born in Connecticut. Moses Forest, 35, and Abram Garnert were born in Massachusetts."

By the 1890s there were only a few black individuals in town as has been the case down to this day. Ordinarily that would have been the end of the story.

However, two long-forgotten but very relevant photographic images recently surfaced. I just love old photos. They always have a story or two to tell.



New Boston East School, class of 1903. Laura Fryer, teacher, is the tallest person in the back row. Another teacher or assistant to her left is unidentified. Stansbury children: front row, Josephine, age 10; 3rd row far left, is Henry, 8; top row, right, is Raymond, 12.

The Carey-Stansbury Family

As was customary at the end of a school year at each schoolhouse, a photograph was taken at the New Boston East School (now part of Fire Station No. 1) in June 1903.

The teacher was Miss Laura A. Fryer, age 31. Born in England in 1873, she immigrated to Vernon, Conn., at age 10 with her parents, Fred and Sarah. Her father worked in the Vernon woolen mill, rising to Overseer (supervisor) by 1910. Laura, who apparently never married, was a long-time school teacher in Vernon.

The 1903-04 Annual Town Report indicates that Laura was hired to teach at

New Boston East for the final 5½ months of the 8-month 1902-03 school year. Her pay was \$32 per month, almost 15% higher than for the other teachers. Was Laura able to negotiate her higher salary because she was available and willing to come here on short notice? Because she was mature and experienced? Or maybe because of her irresistible slight British accent? We don't know, and in any case Miss Fryer's is the back story.

We are more interested in four children in her class who happened to be black, possibly the first black children in a Sandisfield school in a long time.

Siblings Alice, Raymond, Josephine, and Henry Stansbury, ages 13, 12, 10, and 8 respectively, lived in Sandisfield. Alice may not have been enrolled in the school.

Their grandfather, William H. Carey, born free in 1840 in New York, and his wife, Harriet Elizabeth Seeley, born in 1846 in Connecticut, arrived in Sandisfield in the late-1890s. I could not learn much about William but I was able to trace Harriet's background. She came from Barkhamsted, Conn., daughter of Charles Seeley (1806-?) and Nancy Sailes (1812-?), both recorded as black in the censuses of 1850 and 1860. Her mother, Nancy, was the daughter of Elias Sailes but for the record her line ends there. Apparently Nancy Sailes Seeley died in 1864 and was buried in New Haven.

According to the 1900 census, the children's grandfather, William Carey, worked as a "laborer." The family rented one of two houses in New Boston owned by then Selectman Frank Rugg. The houses were on Sandisfield Road, just east of the current Library and across the road from Rugg's home. Rugg lived in the c.1820 Caleb Burt House, owned by the Vogelluses when it burned in 1993. It is very likely that Carey was recruited and employed by Rugg, who owned numerous properties in town and who also served as Sandisfield undertaker.

The Carey household included his daughter, Mary "Sibbie" Stansbury and her four children all possibly born in nearby Tolland where the family lived in the 1890s. Sibbie was 17 in 1888 when she married Edward Stansbury. However by 1900 Edward was absent, and he is lost to history. In 1904, Harriet Carey and daughter Mary Stansbury and her children left Sandisfield and moved back to Tolland. William Carey died before 1910, possibly the reason that the little clan left New Boston.

On December 30, 1904 young Raymond Stansbury, age only 13 years, 10 months, died in Tolland of a "heart embolism." His death record also indicates that he was to be interred by undertaker Frank Rugg at the New Boston Cemetery, which is only a short distance up the road from where his family lived across from Rugg's house.

Harriet Carey and her daughter, Sibbie, moved with Sibbie's children to Great Barrington before 1910. Both had remarried. Very likely both husbands




Another 1903 class photo also at the New Boston East schoolhouse, now part of Firehouse #1 on Rt. 8, with three of the Stansbury children.



The eldest Stansbury child, Alice, does not appear in either class photograph. We have no further information about her.

Photos: Ronald Bernard collection

William Carey and Edward Stansbury had died. Josephine Stansbury later married William Rice, mulatto, of Danbury, Conn., to where she moved.

The youngest sibling, Henry George Stansbury, was living with them in 1920. Henry never married. He served his country in World War I and died in 1928 in Sheffield, Mass. He is believed to be buried in Elmwood Cemetery, Great Barrington, under a military veteran's headstone. 



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A Lot of Bears Around Here

After their long winter's sleep the black bears have showed up again, scavenging bird feeders for seeds and suet and peering in windows, crossing open porches and knocking over garbage cans. We have to watch for them on the road (they don't share, but fortunately they do scare).

On Town Hill Road, Matthew Virginia is regularly visited by three bears, one a tagged animal from Connecticut that doesn't scare easily. The other two, he says, scatter at a handclap. All three are fun to watch, Matthew said, but he added, "I'll be glad when they can eat berries rather than scratching around my place."

Two local photographers caught visiting bears in the act.

Up on Cold Spring Road, Ron Bernard saw this young untagged bear ready to cross his stone wall. He said, "It's a persistent bear - even bold - and not at all easy to shoo away. He's been visiting my neighbor's houses, too. He's known to DEP animal control, since he just keeps coming back."

Further south, George Wheeler of Stone Bridge Farm on Rt. 57, Sandisfield Road, walked outside one morning in early May. Strolling under his apple tree, he heard noises overhead, looked up, and saw a lithe and sinewy black bear in the tree, reaching for the bird feeder. When the bear saw George he jumped down. George took his picture, and then both George and bear went in opposite directions.



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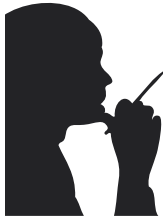
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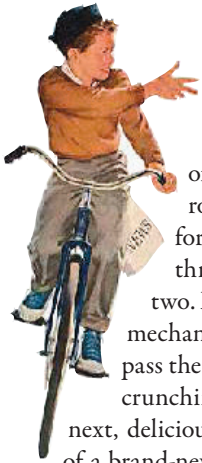


Moreover...

By Simon Winchester

A Berkshire Jewel To Shine Again

Each summer's morning I now awaken to a sound that I hadn't heard for more than half a decade.



The normal daytime beginnings were there already, of course, as *continuo*. The rooster had been screeching for an hour. The dawn-chorus thrushes had been singing for two. But this new sound was more mechanical: a speeding car about to pass the house, slowing quickly, then crunching into the driveway and next, deliciously, that old familiar herald of a brand-new day: the squeal of a lowering window, the faint whispery whistle as a hurled something flew through the air, and then thwump!, as whatever it was hit the lawn.

The first time, I got up and peered from the window.

There, lying on the grass by the mudroom steps, wrapped in a translucent orange waterproof, was my first re-subscribed copy of the day's Berkshire Eagle.

I remembered now: I had started my subscription again, after five, six years away. And so I turned to my still-sleeping wife and said what I hope others in the hundreds may well be saying in coming months: My dear, The Eagle has landed.

What a great, great newspaper it used to be!

Ben Bagdikian, just dead at 96, had long studied the world's newspapers and back in the Seventies wrote that the three greatest in the world were, in order – Le Monde, the best global; the New York Times, the finest national; and The Berkshire Eagle, the best of all the world's locals.

A friend told me just today, as I write these words, that she came to the Berkshires thirty years ago in part because it had such a wonderful daily paper. She read it then, from front-page to Dilbert, over her breakfast. It told you everything you needed to know about the goings-on from the Vermont line to Litchfield. It had the best columnists, the best reporters,

all the weather and baseball, and the crossword was difficult enough you felt good when it was completed.

When my friend came here the Miller family owned the Eagle. Kelton Miller, a hawk-beaked Republican back when to be such was a noble thing, started it in 1892 – an afternoon paper with one Linotype, one compositor, and a single flatbed press. It soon became a Yankee institution, winning Pulitzers, a beacon of excellence for the profession around the country. It had 32,000 loyal subscribers. The Nieman Foundation at Harvard said that the Millers employed their resources “to provide readers with what they deserved, and what they needed ... the hallmark of great journalism.”

But then, in 1995, it all went bad. One of the Miller sons made a series of dreadful real estate investments; GE pulled out of Pittsfield; the first breezes of the digital gales began to stir the cornstalks. The family, mouthing regrets and pleading poverty, agreed to sell, and a faceless, shameless corporation from far away bought the operation. The newsroom was promptly decimated, the paper thinned, and thousands of dismayed readers – my friend included – drifted away.

Finally, after more a century of publication when the vibrant might well have evolved into the venerable, our daily suddenly seemed senescent, ready merely to lay down and die.

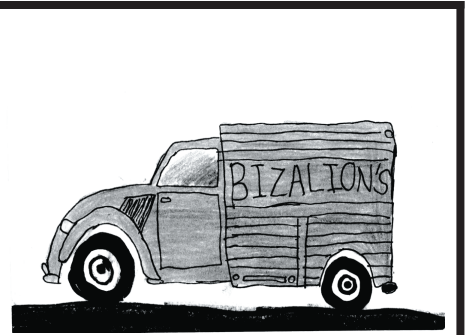
Except, hold on! The story didn't end, hasn't ended and now probably will not end.

Last spring four local investors, as appalled as were all of us in the Berkshires at the likelihood of the loss of the newspaper, decided to club together and buy the Eagle and its three small sister newspapers.

Fred Rutberg, the Stockbridge judge who is the keen new president of the paper, plans to remake the Eagle, completely. He and his three colleagues are determined to haul it back to its days of excellence, to turn it into what all believers in democracy want newspapers to be – the town square, a place, paper and digital, where all is sounded, debated, discussed, and one hopes agreed upon.

I know two of the four investors, and believe in their determination, just as they believe in the worth of their venture. As do others: Fred reports that each day people in the street tell him the Eagle has already improved, “even though we really haven't done a thing to it yet. I guess they want to believe it is getting better, just because we own it. But things will start to change this fall. Then, I hope, you'll notice.”

My friend, the lady who had come here in part because the paper was once so fine and respected, is similarly hopeful. She has re-started her own subscription; and it was this very morning that I am writing these words that she, too, heard the thwump of an arriving paper on the doorstep. “I missed it,” she said. “I never knew how much.”



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The Librarian's Corner

By Terry Spohnholz

You know you've read a good book when you turn the last page and feel a little as if you have lost a friend.

—Paul Sweeney

Full-blown summer has arrived. Time to grab two or three books (the easy read-in-a-day kind, not Dostoevsky), stuff them in the beach bag with the crackers, cheese, and wine and find a spot in the sun, preferably with the sounds of surf and children laughing.

Here are the latest arrivals and don't forget old but favorite authors in the stacks.

Romance

Daughters of the Bride, by Susan Mallery

Ryan's Hand, by Leila Meachan

The Angels' Share, by J.R. Ward

Mystery and Suspense

Among the Wicked, by Linda Castillo

Killer Look, by Linda Farstein

The Lost Girls, by Heather Young

The Black Widow, by Daniel Silva

Night and Day, by Iris Johansen

Extreme Prey, by John Sanford

From NPR Book Reviews and NY Times Best Sellers

A Hero of France, by Alan Furst

Heat and Light, by Jennifer Haigh

The Bridge Ladies, by Betsy Lerner

Over the Plain Houses, by Julia Franks

The Last Painting of Sara De Vos, by Dominic Smith

HAPPENINGS AT THE LIBRARY


Ed the Wizard, July 9, Saturday. Wizardry and the magic of reading all interspersed with laughter. Come enjoy an afternoon of entertainment for young readers of all ages, followed by an ice cream social. Who can resist a scoop of vanilla ice cream in ice cold root beer or orange soda. Fun for all ages.

Christmas in July, July 20, Wednesday, 6-9 p.m. Yes, snowflakes are falling and jingle bells are in the air in the library's lower level. A card making class to get you a head start on Christmas. Contact Kathie Page for details, 258-4943.

Sandisfield Women's Book Group, July 20, Wednesday, 7 p.m. Discuss *The Martian*, by Andy Weir in the library's lower level. Deep and sometimes not so deep discourse on the author, the themes, and of course, the book. Call Anita Carr, 258-4930, as sometimes the venue changes.

eBook Collections. Yes, we have the golden key and doors can be opened. So jump in and indulge with your Nooks, Kindles, Macs and PCs. You will need your library card number and pin or password. For most of you, your pin is the last four digits of your library card. Stop by the library for a demonstration or to get "the cheat sheet." Even I, hard-core lover of actual pages that turn and whisper when you read, borrowed "a book" from this large expansion of our library.

Notary Public. Need a document notarized – the library can accommodate. Well, strictly speaking the librarian can. I am pleased to announce that I am now certified as a Notary Public in the state of Massachusetts. So if the library is open, the notary is in.

Our Children's Section. Our thanks to the Sandisfield Cultural Council for a grant that enabled us to bring the Children's Section into the 21st century. Great books to delight toddlers, grade-schoolers, and even young teens have been added to our Children's Corner. In June we had a Butterfly Garden for several weeks where we watched caterpillars transition to butterflies and served as a basis for artwork by Sandisfield youngsters. 



Comings and Goings

ANN HRYCKVICH RANSOM CONNOR 1916-2015

Ann Ransom Connor died at age 99 on February 9, 2015, in Dallas, Texas. Born Ann Hryckvich in New York City, the oldest of four children of Frank and Mary Hryckvich, she came to Sandisfield when she was three. Ann was brought home for a burial and memorial service for her and her second husband, Raymond Connor, June 4 at the Sandisfield Center Cemetery.

In 1933, when Ann was 17, she married Clayton Ransom. They had one daughter, Connie. Clayton died in 1969. In 1972, Ann married Raymond T. Connor, Jr., of Pittsfield. Ann and Ray lived in Hartford, Connecticut, until 1974, when they moved to Dallas to assist Ann's daughter with a family business.

Ann was an independent woman who owned several businesses during her lifetime, including insurance, real estate, building, and a nursing home.

Ann and Ray retired to a condo in Hallandale, Florida, in 1991 where she became president of the condo association. In 2009 they moved to Lehigh Acres, Florida, to be closer to Ann's sister, Laura. Ray died in 2011.

Ann is survived by her daughter, Connie Davis of Galveston, Texas. She is also survived by three grandchildren: Laurie Smith and her husband, Mike, of Cedar Hill; Lisa Lynn of Ovilla; and Larry Lynn and his wife, Tiffany, of Garland, all in Texas. Also five great-grandchildren: Stephen Smith and his wife, Shelley; Jonathan Smith; Sarah Smith; Melissa Prince; and Clayton Lynn. Three great-great-grandchildren: Brianna Smith; Kaitlyn Smith; and Andrew Smith. She is survived also by her brother Nicholas Hryckvich and his wife, Doris, of Sandisfield. And many nieces, nephews, and cousins. She was predeceased by her sister, Laura Wilson, her first husband, Clayton Ransom, and her brother, Alexander Hryckvich, who died in 2015.

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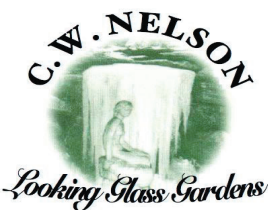
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Three Scholarships Awarded

By Laura Rogers-Castro

Three Sandisfield high school seniors were awarded scholarships this year by the Scholarship Committee: Lily Cormier, Nicole Hryckvich, and Anna Snyder.

Graduates of Monument Mountain Regional High School, they were presented with scholarship letters by Scholarship Committee member Bethany Perry during an Awards Ceremony at the school in early June.

The three award winners have different goals in mind. Lily intends to major in Political Science at Hartwick College. Nicole will study biology at Berkshire Community College. Anna will attend Salem State University to study World Languages and Cultures.

The Sandisfield Scholarship Committee offers scholarships each year based on the amount of money generated from various fundraisers held throughout the year. This year scholarships ranged from \$350 to \$500.

The next fundraiser will be a Silent Auction hosted at the Sandisfield Historical Society's Summer Fair on Saturday, July 2, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The Silent Auction will offer the opportunity to purchase gift cards, museum passes, and certificates for service to local businesses at bargain prices. Items available at the Silent Auction include a family membership to the Hancock Shaker Museum, passes to the Norman Rockwell and Berkshire Museums, gifts cards to Wards Garden Center and Guido's Market. Local businesses, including A & M Auto and C.W. Nelson Landscaping, have donated to the fundraiser as well.

For additional information about the Scholarship Committee, please talk with one of our members: Anina Carr, Teresa DellaGuistina, Bethany Perry, or Laura Rogers-Castro. Please attend this year's Summer Fair on July 2 and support our local scholars. 🍷

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NOW HEAR THIS!

Edited by Laura Rogers-Castro. Please send notices for Now Hear This! to calendar@sandisfieldtimes.org.

JULY EVENTS

Sandisfield Historical Society Summer Fair on Saturday, July 2, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., at the Meeting House on the corner of Route 183/ Sandy Brook Turnpike and South Sandisfield Road. Tag sale, food, Silent Auction with gift cards and museum passes, and Pet Parade (with prizes!) at 11:30 a.m. For information, contact John Kuzmech (258-4906).

Historical Society Monthly Meeting has been rescheduled for July 9, 11 a.m., at the Meeting House. To help determine the future of the Society. Potluck lunch served following the meeting. Contact John Kuzmech (258-4906).

Sandisfield Arts Center Gallery Opening Reception on Saturday, July 9, from 2:00-4:00 p.m., at the Center, 5 Hammertown Road. The Gallery will feature work by Carol Kiendl. The exhibit is on display July 9-31 and open during performances.

Church Service on Sunday, July 10, at 10:00 a.m., at the New Boston Congregational Church, 4 Sandisfield Road (Route 57).

After the Fall: The Conservation of Tullio Lombardo's "Adam" on Saturday, July 16, at 4:00 p.m., at the Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Road. The presentation by Dr. George Wheeler will show how a team of scientists, conservators, and curators developed the knowledge for the conservation of marble sculpture and the tour-de-force reconstruction of Lombardo's 1495 figure which fell and shattered in 2002. \$10.

Triple Play featuring Chris Brubeck, Peter "Madcat" Ruth, and Joel Brown playing their unique blend of blues, jazz, folk, and funk on Saturday, July 23, at 8:00 p.m., at the Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Road. \$20, \$10 for children under 12.

EVENTS IN SURROUNDING TOWNS

Berkshire South Regional Community Center. Two free Open Houses for Sandisfield residents on Sunday, July 10 and Sunday, July 31, from 8:30 to 5:00 p.m. at Berkshire South Regional Community Center in Great Barrington. Show proof of residency and Sandisfield residents can try out the Center for free. Go for a swim, break a sweat on the cardio machines, hike a trail, or bring the kids and enjoy the play equipment in the courtyard.

Watercolor Painting with Sylvia Foster on Saturday, July 16, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., at the Otis Town Hall, Route 8. Cost is \$10 and registration is required (sylbilfoster@gmail.com).

Plant Dyes and Fibers on Saturday, July 23, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., at Bidwell House in Monterey. Learn how to process wool and plant-based fibers while dyeing skeins in an outdoor dye bath. Using plants, berries, and nuts, participants will learn to make their own cordage. Members, \$10. Non-members, \$15.

Tolland Volunteer Fire Department Steak Roast on Saturday, July 16, at 5:00 p.m., at the Tolland Public Safety Complex, Route 57.

SAVE THE DATE

Hilltown Rodders Car Show in Otis, Sunday, August 7, 9:30 a.m.-3 p.m. At Izaak Walton Field., Rt. 8 to 1 Tannery Road. Spectators free. Benefit: Shriners Hospital, HospiceCare Berkshires, and Otis AmVets. No dogs or alcohol. Rain date, August 14.

Sandisfield Volunteer Firemen Steak Roast, Saturday, August 13. Dinner from 5 to 7 p.m., dancing from 6 to 8:30. Firehouse #2 on Rt. 57. Tickets, \$25. Tickets will not be available at the door. Tickets can be purchased from any volunteer or call A&M Auto, 258-3381. Ice cream sales to benefit Sandisfield Scholarship Fund.

ONGOING EVENTS

Select Board, The Select Board meets at the Town Hall Annex on Mondays. Regular meetings are held at 7 p.m. and working sessions at 2:30 p.m. See posted agendas for meeting schedules.

Farmington River Regional School District, first Monday of the month, 7 p.m., Farmington River Regional School, Rt. 8, Otis.

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

Cemetery Committee, second Monday of the month, 6 p.m., Town Hall Annex.

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 Saturday of the month, 9:30 a.m., Sandisfield Library.

Strategic Planning Committee, third Wednesday of the month, 7 p.m., Fire Station #2 on Sandisfield Rd.

Sandisfield Public Library Hours: Monday/ Tuesday: 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; All Wednesdays: 2-5 p.m.; Thursday: 5-7 p.m.

Historical Commission: First Wednesday of the month, 7 p.m., Rt. 57 Firehouse. No meeting in July.

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