

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

Tribunus



Plebis

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Volume VIII Number 3

June 2017

Town Meeting 2017

ALL ARTICLES PASS BUT ONE

By Tom Christopher

Town meetings are a famous staple of small-town New England culture.

Sandisfield's 2017 meeting opened promptly at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, May 13, at Firehouse #2 under the expert direction of Moderator Jean Atwater-Williams. 83 registered voters signed in, out of nearly 600 voters in town. A couple dozen non-voters attended as well, to see what was going on in town.

The town's \$3.1 million budget for fiscal year 2018 was broken down into some 76 articles up for consideration. Most of the articles were moved and passed unanimously, including the school budget of \$1,451,512, which was a slight decrease from 2017.

But a few articles proved contentious or at least required some explanation from members of Select Board or the Finance Committee.


Article 3, for example, raised some eyebrows with a second increase to the Town Administrator's salary in less than a year. Hired originally as a part-time employee, Town Administrator Willie Morales had seen his salary boosted by \$18,000 at a special town meeting in February in recognition of the extra hours he was working. This time Article 3 recommended increasing Morales' salary to \$73,000, in recognition of his becoming a full-time employee, including an additional sum of \$2,000 for expenses. Some members of the voting public expressed concern at this second escalation. Chairman of the Select Board Alice Boyd noted that a good town administrator such as Morales brings in more than their salary in grants. Selectman John Skrip noted that even with the raise, Morales would be earning less than many other town administrators in the Commonwealth and that another town had already attempted (unsuccessfully) to recruit Morales at a higher salary.

Members of the Finance Committee advised that in addition to his salary, Morales would be receiving health and vacation benefits costing the town \$13,000 annually. When asked if he intended to stay with the town, Morales stated that the ethics of his profession

Cont'd p.4



Marching Through Sandisfield

Legal efforts to stop Tennessee Gas Pipeline from cutting a parallel path beside two existing lines through the Beech Plain section of Sandisfield having failed – as did “standing in front of the machines” – this feller buncher took down trees by the fistful in May. With a claw at the end of an articulated arm and a circular saw as a sidekick, the feller buncher gathers several small trees at a time or one large tree, saws them at the base, and piles them into a stack ready for mulching or to be hauled away. All workers not operating the feller buncher are to be at least 250 feet away; the saw can send wood chunks flying, sometimes pieces of the saw. See pages 10-14 for more on the progress of the pipeline. 

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OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

They Made the Cover!

Lindsey Smith and Susan Tarasuk were all over the Berkshires in May on the cover of Berkshire Magazine, presenting a cut-flower arrangement from SnowFarm Cuts.

Lindsey, a farmer-florist, and Sue, a horticulturist, jointly operate Snow Farm Cuts, a cut-flower CSA with flowers grown at Snow Farm Nursery & Greenhouse. The Community-Supported Agriculture plan, now offering a Summer Plan from July-September, provides members with seasonal flowers for Saturday pickup at Fuel in Great Barrington or at Snow Farm, 16 South Beech Plain Road, Sandisfield.

See their website at www.snowfarm.com/csa for share options and to enroll. See also the Snow Farm ad on page 14.



Master Plan Committee Underway

By Dawn Lemon

Twenty-two community volunteers gathered in March at Town Hall Annex for an initial Master Plan Committee meeting, organized and lead by John Skrip, Select Board member.

The Sandisfield Master Plan draft, completed by the Strategic Planning Committee in conjunction with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, was presented to the Select Board in the spring of 2016. A public meeting was held at Old Town Hall that April.

The purpose of the March meeting was to form an advisory committee that will set forth a vision for the future physical development of the community. Working from the Master Plan Draft, committee members will examine the demographics of the community, housing stock economic development, transportation network, open space and natural resources, historic resources, and community services and facilities.

The committee will establish a complete understanding of present conditions, needs, long-term challenges and opportunities for the Town of Sandisfield.

“We are optimistic,” said John Skrip. “The committee will work with the Board of Selectmen to achieve and implement our goals.

“All Sandisfield residents and property owners,” he said, “are encouraged to join the committee, bring forth ideas and interests, and be part of planning an enriched future for Sandisfield.”

If you are interested in learning more or joining the committee, please contact John Skrip at 258-4788 or email at sandisfieldmasterplan@gmail.com.

Bad News at York Lake Beach

By Ron Bernard

Last month The Times reported that despite rumors York Lake Beach would be open this summer. We’ve since learned that, yes, it will be open, but that’s about all.

The local supervisor of the Department of Conservation and Recreation has let me know that the DCR press secretary, who gave us the good news, had been misinformed.

Beautiful York Lake will itself be open, and the beach. But due to budget cuts there will be no toilet facilities available, no changing rooms, and no clean-up services. This is bad news for Sandisfield. York Lake is where we go to cool off. In addition, there will be no water-quality testing, according to what we were told.

The only good news is that there will be no fee to use the beach and the grass will be mowed. Mowing is about the only service the DCR will provide at York Lake Beach this summer.

The crucial rule at the beach this summer will be “If you carry it in, carry it out.” Clean up your area after every picnic and every swim. Keep the beach clean for your friends and neighbors.

Town Hall Hours for the Public

A clarification: Town Hall Annex, the headquarters building for town government, opens to the public at 9 a.m., Monday-Thursday. While staff is on-site from 8 a.m.-2 p.m. on those days, the building is not available to the public until 9 a.m. The Annex is also open Mondays from 6-7 p.m. by appointment.



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Free Play Group, Tuesdays

Young children in Sandisfield and nearby towns – and their caregivers – are invited to join in the fun at the free playgroup sponsored by Community Health Programs in the gym at the Otis Town Hall. Every Tuesday from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

The program is designed for infants, toddlers, and children up to age five or so. Activities include games, puzzles, arts and crafts, and outdoor play. We plan to continue to meet through most of the summer. This is a great opportunity for kids and adults to meet and make friends in a supportive environment.

Contact: Nina Carr at 258-3314.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



Photo: Stephanie Zollshan, *Berkshire Eagle*

Thank You, Sugar Shack

Members of the Sugar Shack Alliance put their bodies on the line to protest the pipeline extension being carved through the northeast corner of Sandisfield.

As Tennessee Gas' workers prepared to begin tree-cutting on the pipeline May 2, more than fifty Sugar Shack demonstrators blocked access roads in a peaceful demonstration. Eighteen were arrested by proper, patient state policemen; a few days later six more were hauled in. All were booked and released for a hearing in June. Pictured here in a dramatic *Berkshire Eagle* photograph is Vivienne Simon, arrested the first day.

Sugar Shack is an environmental action coalition in the Northeast that uses nonviolent disruption to oppose the fossil fuel industry and work toward renewable energy. Members have attended nearly every Sandisfield Conservation Commission hearing since the ConCom started reviewing the pipeline procedures over a year ago.

They have been good friends of Sandisfield's own efforts to delay or stop the pipeline construction.

Bill Price
West New Boston

Children of May

There are some red blossoms
In my picture window.
They are the children of May ...
Soft, water-color red in the morning
And crimson in the evening.

They get up and dress,
Shower from time to time,
And around the middle of the month
Forget their conversation with the Gods
And die.

Val Coleman
South Beech Plain Road

TOWN NEWS

By Bill Price

NEWS FLASH: BRIDGE REPAIR DELAYED

As *The Times* was going to press, we learned that long-awaited repairs to the Rugg Bridge, the one-way crossing of the Clam River on Rt. 57 near the Library, will be delayed. Work was expected to begin in early June.

The Select Board announced at its regular meeting, May 30, that all three of the bids opened in late May were significantly higher than expected. Earlier engineering estimates had projected costs in the range of \$1 million; the firms that offer to do the work think more. A state grant is in place to help cover most of the expense.

The selectmen are considering options. In any case, the start date will be delayed. The work is expected to take six months to complete, once it starts.

SELECT BOARD REALIGNED

Board chairman Alice Boyd stepped aside at the first Board meeting following the election, citing family concerns that could too often take her out of Sandisfield this summer. With new member Mark Newman seconding, she nominated John Skrip as chairman. Alice said she has thoroughly enjoyed being chairman, and John said, "I'll do my level best. I'm open to everybody. Call me at any time and I'll get back to you. Our goal is to keep moving forward." His phones are at Town Hall (258-4711) or at home (258-4788).

SUMMER SCHEDULE

The Board will shift to summer schedule this month. Instead of weekly meetings, the Board will meet the second and fourth Mondays at 7 p.m., Town Hall Annex.

BROADBAND

The Town continues to negotiate with Frontier Communications and the Massachusetts Broadband Institute. Of the four-town broadband coalition, Monterey has decided to "go it alone" with another plan. Since Frontier will string lines from Connecticut, it is not expected that Monterey's absence will create a change in plans with the other three towns: Sandisfield, Tolland, and New Marlborough. Monterey has asked, if their plans change, they could rejoin the coalition. The answer was yes, but with a fee to help the coalition cover legal and planning expenses. All of the above is subject to change, since broadband accessibility is a moving target.

"UNDER MILKWOOD" COMING HOME

The Sandisfield Players will perform Dylan Thomas' "Under Milkwood" on June 10 at the Arts Center. In May they took the show on the road to Stockbridge and Norfolk. June 10 is the time to see it at home. See the SARc ad on page 9.

Rebuilding a Stone Wall

Sam Mercier tapped the finishing touches on a wall he reconstructed at the George Wheeler/Michele Marincola residence on Sandisfield Road mid-May. A resident of New Marlborough, he has built or rebuilt a few dozen stone walls across New England. A resident of New Marlborough, Sam learned his craft from stone masons on Martha's Vineyard. "A lot of excellent masons are there," he said. "I learned from some of the best." Sam can be reached at (508) 560-7844 or mercierstone@gmail.com.

Photo: Bill Price



Town Meeting 2017

Cont'd from p.1

called for serving a community for at least two years and that he intended to observe this rule. A motion to vote by “secret” paper ballot was defeated when Skrip said, “Either we want Willie or we don’t, and we should be willing to say so.” Article 3 passed with the support of a majority of the voters.

Article 8, a proposal to appropriate \$176,000 to purchase a new truck for the highway department, also drew questions. Road Superintendent Bob O’Brien explained that none of the three trucks currently owned by the town were in reliable operating condition, and Selectman Boyd added that a new truck recently purchased had proved a lemon and would be the subject of a class-action lawsuit. O’Brien stated that to reduce the price of the new or used vehicle, the truck that would be ordered would have a manual transmission and be fitted with a plow the town already owns. The Finance Committee observed that the funds for the purchase would come from the town’s Stabilization Account, which currently includes nearly \$1 million. After some discussion, this Article, which required a two-third majority to pass, was carried unanimously.


More contentious was discussion surrounding Article 24. This article called for the appropriation of \$94,110 for machinery maintenance. David Hubbard of the Finance Committee made a motion to amend this article by inserting a requirement that all town vehicles be equipped with a data-collecting GPS device which, Hubbard insisted, would enable more efficient operation and more economical maintenance of the town fleet.

Town Administrator Morales explained that to install such equipment without first

obtaining the agreement of the Highway Department employees union would be in violation of state law. A number of voices were heard for or against this amendment, which failed to pass. The article itself, then, carried by a majority.

The next debatable subject, article 57, called for the town to appropriate \$200,000 from free cash to purchase land on Sandisfield Road for a potential home for a new town hall. (See the sidebar on this page “A Home for Town Hall?” for the outcome of that idea.)

A final contentious subject was article 60, which called for the town to raise and appropriate funds for a variety organizations such as the Council on Aging and the Recreation Committee. Historical Commission Chairman Ron Bernard spoke up about this article’s \$5,000 decrease in funding for the Historical Commission. He proposed that the funding be restored so that the commission could continue the process of securing recognition from the Massachusetts Historical Commission of Sandisfield’s many historic buildings and recognition of historic districts within the town by the National Registry of Historic Places. Bernard’s amendment was defeated. The article was passed as written.

On a lighter note, discussion of Article 46, a request for an appropriation of \$4,285 for street lighting expenses in Fiscal Year 2018, elicited the annual question of how many streetlights exist in Sandisfield. The answer, by Town Clerk Dolores Harasyko, was that this year there are 23. Who would have suspected our town boasts such a great white way? This article, incidentally, passed unanimously. 



A HOME FOR TOWN HALL?

By Simon Winchester

Sandisfield’s new town hall and seat of government, much vaunted, talked about and dreamed about is, for the time being, homeless.

The Select Board had hoped that slightly more than 19 flat and open acres on Route 57 across from the firehouse would prove an ideal site, and had planned to earmark \$200,000 of savings to buy it. But the Town Meeting decided otherwise: a two-thirds majority vote was required for land purchase and the measure gained 37 votes while 23 residents opposed it – meaning that it failed by a scant three votes.


This was a major blow for the Strategic Planning Committee, which had chosen the land with what they believed was some care.

Selectman John Skrip spoke in favor of the purchase, noting that the land was an exceptional value and that its purchase would allow the town, if the town voted to do so, to build a new town center in the future. Finance Committee member David Hubbard vigorously supported the plan, explaining that current town buildings were inadequate to the needs of the town and that even if brought up to code – which could cost several hundred thousand dollars – would still be inadequate. Further, he added, the land was sufficient to support some additional commercial development, which would be a substantial asset to the town.

During a robust debate townsfolk were reminded that this was the same parcel of land passed over three years ago by Berkshire Rehabilitation & Skilled Care Center which had found the land wanting in several respects: it failed a perc test, there was a great deal of unbuildable ledge, and a considerable amount of wetland, which vexed the Conservation Commission.

In addition a number of abutters – most notably the Segrin family, who were in clear opposition at the Town Meeting – objected to the likelihood that a major structure on the land would disturb their own domestic water supply.

After its first failure, two attempts were made to reconsider the article. The first was withdrawn and the second failed because it was put forward 18 minutes after the vote – and the town limit for reconsideration of an article is 15 minutes.

So – three votes too few and three minutes too late and the new town hall still doesn’t have a home. 

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ELECTION RESULTS



Newest Members of Town Government

The winners of the May 15th Annual Town Election were sworn in at the first Select Board meeting following the election. 150 out of 591 registered voters cast ballots.

Most candidates ran unopposed. However, in the Select Board race

Mark Newman received 84 votes against write-in candidate Bethany Perry's 40.

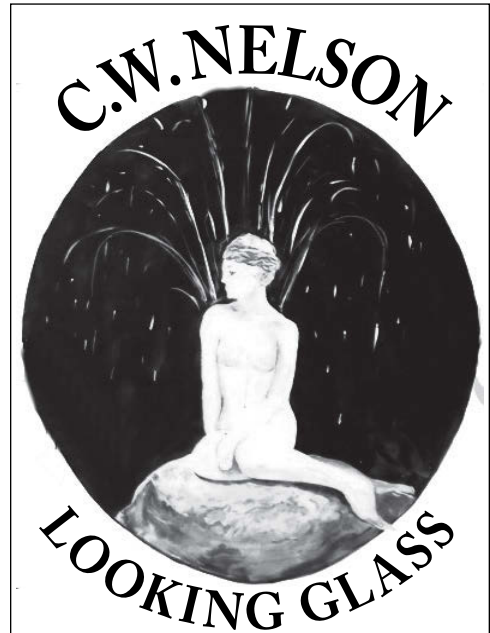
Assessor Steve Kopiec received 44 votes against 20 for Roger Kohler; both were write-in candidates.

From left, Library Trustee Mary Turek; Planning Board member Roger Kohler; School Committee member Billie J. Anderson Pachulski; Assessor Steven Kopiec; Moderator Simon Winchester; and Select Board member Mark Newman. All were given the oath of office by Dolores Harasyko (right), who herself was re-elected for an eighth term as Town Clerk.

Not present were four re-elected members of town government: School Committee member Nicholas Dellagiustina; Board of Health member Victor Herkyvich; and Constables John Burrows and Nazario Sanchez.



Newly elected Select Board member Mark Newman sits between member Alice Boyd and John Skrip. John was elected Select Board Chairman at the May 22 meeting.



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Memorial Day Parade 2017

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Photos: Bill Price



The Fire Department and American Legion Post #456 thank everyone who turned out for this year's parade.



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A Little Bit is Legal

NEW CROP FOR FARMING COMMUNITIES

By *Brigitte Ruthman*

Marijuana, pot, weed, that very icon of hippiedom and an alleged gateway drug in a country besieged by addiction, was legitimized by a majority vote in the November ballot in the Commonwealth of Puritanical Massachusetts, over the objections of lawmakers and lawmen.

A majority of voters in better than 75 percent of towns believed marijuana arrests were clogging the courts, wasting taxpayer dollars and enriching gangsters instead of state coffers while denying recreational users what some describe as less harmful than a martini.

It is now legal to grow and use marijuana recreationally, as long as you aren't hooking up the tiller to plant a crop, building greenhouses, or forming a cartel.

And it's happening here.

Sandisfield's hardscrabble farmland has never been much for fashionable crops like wheat or corn, but its remote nooks and crannies and isolated dwellings along remote dirt roads have been attracting pot dealers and growers for years.

The most notorious was in 1995 when federal FBI and ATF agents, with assistance from the National Guard, joined forces at a 90-acre Clark Road property. Arrested in the bust were 60-year-old Edward J. Brennan

and 58-year-old Marcel Rosenzweig in connection with the largest and most sophisticated marijuana farm in Massachusetts history.

The arresting agents found 5,500 plants inside a three-story barn-like structure, \$207,000 in cash, and an array of sophisticated equipment used to grow the crop. A machine gun was found under a mattress and three other loaded handguns, presumably to shoot predators of some sort.

Four years later, six Connecticut residents were indicted for selling the weed. Rosenzweig, described by today's police chief Michael Morrison as a man who "kept to himself," died in 1997. The pot had hit the fan earlier than 1995.

In May of 1981, *The Record*, edited and published in Sandisfield by Phil Blampied, reported the story of a bust at what was then the Silverbrook Grille that netted 25 pounds of cannabis. Involved were Sandisfield Police Chief Stephen McCuin,

Connecticut and Massachusetts state police, and agents of the Federal Drug Enforcement Agency. Arrested were Sandisfield resident Jonathan B. Shapiro of Beech Plain Road, a man from Great Barrington, and another from New Jersey. The out-of-stater was given most of the credit for the illegal activity.

The arrest itself was a dramatic scene, as Chief McCuin described it, with seven or eight police cars suddenly converging on the Silverbrook "and people running around like you wouldn't believe." The report added that some Silverbrook neighbors thought, at first, that a fight was going on. One



Growing pot in the forest.

neighbor reported, "I almost called the police."

In 2009, a pair of Connecticut men, Cheyne Mazza of Oxford and Jose Dos Santos of Waterbury, were implicated in another growing operation on Route 57 discovered when firefighters were called to a house fire in July of 2009 sparked by an overheated grow lamp. The house, bought in 2007, had been gutted and refitted as a greenhouse where 23 pounds of marijuana from 300 plants were found.

Medicinal marijuana is one thing, and worth about \$400 an ounce for treatment of various ailments from glaucoma to the side effects of cancer treatment. Recreational use now opens the door to a variety of retail sales, though lawmakers have stalled transactions until 2018.

Attorney Michael Cutler of Northampton, a key player in getting the question on the ballot and drafting the language, said police can document

erratic driving and field sobriety without a test. Pot, he claims, is less toxic than alcohol.

"You can't kill yourself with pot, but you can with alcohol," he said.

The primary goal for legislators was to carry out the public will to get marijuana off the black market and regulate it, he said.

That leaves open the question of growing your own, which is still under debate at hearings being held across the state this spring. Though the allowance won't change, Cutler believes the number of allowed plants and the security under which they are grown is up for discussion.

Plants – up to 12 for a household of two or more – must be kept "secure" from others. For anyone contemplating planting seedlings along with tomatoes and peppers, it's not clear whether "secure" means a locked greenhouse, a porch off a high-rise apartment, or an electric fence around the garden. Police, focusing on public safety, aren't interested in figuring it out.


It takes four months and lots of sunshine to grow the valuable buds, now said to be ten or 20 times stronger than they were a generation ago. Remember those photos of pot smoking at Woodstock? That stuff was buffalo grass compared with the high-octane weed available today.

Chief Morrison said the results of the referendum have caught police agencies in a startling and unsettling situation. Although it would seem easy to count up the maximum 12 plants allowed in a

locked kitchen garden – and 10 ounces of dried weed under lock and key inside – it's not clear how to arrest a pot-stoned impaired driver caught smoking a joint on the road. There is no breathalyzer – yet – for driving under the influence of pot. Evidence is clear, however, that driving under the influence of pot is a danger.

As in Connecticut, where the debate over legalizing marijuana drew dozens of objecting police chiefs to the State Capital a few weeks back, police here see the new liberalization as a risky time until things are sorted out.

The legislative hearings in Connecticut also drew proponents, one of whom drew gasps when he suggested that legalization would not only drop the price for medicinal marijuana but gain health benefits recreational users can't yet imagine.

Either way, in Sandisfield, a town notorious for its outlaws, there are sure to be more of them. 

Don't
Miss This

"The Stamp Collection"

WORLD PREMIERE OF AN
ORIGINAL PLAY BY VAL COLEMAN

"The Stamp Collection" by local poet and author Val Coleman will be presented by the Sandisfield Players at the Sandisfield Arts Center, directed by Ben Luxon. Based on actual events and set on the eve of World War II, the play chronicles one summer in a young boy's life and his experiences with an older woman suffering from hemophilia. The play is poignant and sweet; its language and metaphors rich with Coleman's poetic eye and skill.

Saturday, July 8, 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, July 9, 3:00 p.m.,
Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Road. Tickets \$20, under 12 \$5.
Reserve at www.sandisfieldartscenter.org or 258-4100.

Xiew from the Arts Center

Asking Sandisfielders for Their Two Cents

LOOKING FOR IDEAS

From Sandy Parisky and Susie Crofut,
SArC Co-Presidents

What sorts of events, programs, and activities would you like to see at the Arts Center?


In the past, the Arts Center has offered a range of events that reflect the passions and talents of our community and ideas generated by our programming committee. Ranging between \$10 and \$20 for adults and \$5 for children under 12 years, these events rely

upon donations and fund-raising efforts to offset expenses that tickets sales alone do not cover.

This coming summer and fall we are again scheduling concerts, community theater, lectures, and workshops, but we have added a new series of FREE family-oriented events: Friday movie nights, an Autumn pumpkin-carving extravaganza, and a yuletide festival. Visit our website at www.sandisfieldartscenter.org to see the schedule.

As we prepare for the 2018 season next year, we're hoping to build on the momentum of the past and to further tailor programs that appeal to the community that we would like the Art Center to serve.

What sorts of events, programs, and activities would engage your interest? If you haven't visited the Sandisfield Arts Center before, what could we offer that might entice you to come?

Please share your thoughts, opinions, and interests. We'd love to hear from you. Please email us at info@sandisfieldartscenter.org, call 258-4100, or write us at Sandisfield Arts Center, PO Box 31, Sandisfield, MA 01255. 


A Fun – and Moving – Evening

By Barbara Penn


Amazing talent was on display at the Arts Center in early May at the Family Cabaret Night – an evening of pleasures from the opening to the powerful ending. Assembling and directing these wonderful talents was the creative producer, skit creator, and performer, Anni Crofut.

Young singer/guitarist Galen Winsor and singer Emily Woodland began the Cabaret. With only their voices and guitar in balance and harmony, the performance was brilliantly simple and clear. Considering the two performers are teenagers, the maturity of their voices and depth of emotion was remarkable.

They were followed by the comic performance of *Cullen and Evan, the Incredible Duo*, dancer Dominique Simoneaux, and an *acapella* group that performed three very different songs. Raphael Kummer-Landau, provided a taste of Broadway, accompanying himself on the piano singing "Finding Neverland" and a touching "Proud of Your Boy." Rachel Siegel and Ben Luxon reprised their piece from the Arts Center's spring gala and again brought down the house. Grace Rossman, reading one of her poems for a "better world," was a powerful expression of hope in a difficult time.

The evening ended with the *acapella* MAX choir singing "(I Can't Keep) Quiet" as the Moving Arts Exchange performed an original dance that laid raw the emotion of the lyrics, each footfall like a heartbeat pounding in unison to the dancers' feet, building in intensity, like caged animals longing for release. Their collective sigh at the end, their out-breath, filled every corner of the room. Electrifying. 

Unexpected Resignation

The Arts Center board of directors received a letter of resignation last month from Anna Konopatskaya informing them that she was stepping down from the Managing Director position because the scope of the job and her personal needs were not a good fit. Co-presidents Sandy Parisky and Susie Crofut said this decision was not anticipated and that the board will continue to move forward. 

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A Familiar Story

LATEST COUPLE TO ADOPT AN HISTORIC HOUSE

By Ron Bernard



The new owners of the parsonage: Jennifer Rudolph (left) and Katie Brenney

We have seen this story before. Grand old houses, Sandisfield's precious heritage, often long vacant, welcome caring new occupants.

Last year, newcomers Jennifer Rudolph and Katie Brenney of New York became the latest to continue an encouraging trend of home ownership here by buying the 165-year old former Sandisfield Center Parsonage.

Busy professionals, their search for a getaway place took a familiar road.

"We threw a wide net geographically," said Katie. She spoke of pouring over real estate listings from the tip of Long Island to upstate New York and southern New England. Price and travel time from the City were important considerations. "Unfortunately, online photos can be misleading and we ran into that a lot. This house was different, just as advertised, and perfect for us," she said.

Katie is a PGA golf pro who works for a youth program in metro New York that teaches golf fundamentals as well as life skills. A native of northern Minnesota, she knows all about long, cold, snowy winters. "Sandisfield reminds me of the area where I grew up," she said. "I feel at home here."

Jennifer's parents have a home in nearby Southfield so this area is quite familiar to her. A graduate of Fordham Law School with litigation experience, she is co-founder of Scientific Global, a consulting agency in New York for leading pharmaceutical companies.

Their new-old home has been remodeled. The focal point is a spacious kitchen suitable for a master chef. A good kitchen was an important feature for the two who love to cook and entertain. The interior retains architecturally significant original features that blend in with modern appointments.

From Parsonage to Home

The Parsonage is the sole surviving structure from when, for more than a century, Sandisfield Center was the town's true geographical, social, and economic center.

The Center included a farmers' market, a meeting house, taverns, general stores, shops, schoolhouses, even Sandisfield's first post office in 1809. The Center was a busy place seven days a week.

Known locally for more than 150 years as "the rocks"



The parsonage as it appeared about 1910 after relocation. Note the embedded wagon tracks across the rocks.

Photo: DeMars image courtesy Great Barrington Historical Society.

— because the land here is mostly exposed ledge — today the town-owned space is quiet. A monument stands at the corner of Rt. 57 and New Hartford Road near the site of the Congregational Church. The loss of the church in 1908 due to a fire caused by lightning marked the end of the Center as Sandisfield's "center." An historical marker tells of the important role the Center played in the Town's founding and development.

The Parsonage was built in 1852 together with the third and last Congregational meeting house here. Originally this 2½-story Greek Revival-style house stood west of the church. In 1887, the Congregational Society sold the parsonage and its 14 acres.

Sometime after 1902, new owner Mary Messler Swift of Poughkeepsie, N.Y., widow and matriarch of the large Atwater-Doty family who summered at the Center for many years, moved the building to its present site. Expanded, it became the gateway house to Sandisfield Center at the top of Sandisfield Road.

Thomas and Anne Mulvaney of Queens, N.Y., arrived in 1940. In 1965, the property passed to their daughter Ruth and her husband, Robert Freeman, who are remembered as a very civic-minded couple. Robert served as Selectman from 1978 until 1990. Ruth started child education programs through her church and she coached children with learning disabilities. The property passed out of the Freeman family in 2001.

Jennifer and Katie plan to marry this September at their home. Meanwhile they are making friends, supporting community functions, and doing interior decorating. Katie said that they look forward to retiring here one day. That is good news for this venerable house and for the community.



The parsonage today.

Photos: Ron Bernard

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Sybil Perry

artist reception

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Robert Bielsky

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directed by benjamin luxon

with the sandisfield players

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over there: the great war

to end all wars

with Bill Cohn

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.

Big Trucks on Small Roads

By Times Reporters


In a front-page story May 21 The *Berkshire Eagle* reported on the damage to Sandisfield roads caused by TGP tractor-trailers hauling heavy equipment and tubes of pipe. Reporter Heather Bellow outlined the promises made to repair the roads, but wondered if the company would fully comply.

Select Board Chair Alice Boyd was quoted: "It's crazy. They're coming in from all directions."

Some tractor-trailers have been misdirected over our narrow, sometimes steep dirt roads in order to avoid small bridges with restrictive weight limits. Some have gotten tangled.

A tractor-trailer hauling a wide construction building, the whole outfit 77 feet long, was sent wrong on Rt. 57. It came down one-way River Road to avoid our failing bridge by the Library and couldn't manage the corner at South Beech Plain Road. He had to be coached across the narrow bridge near the Silverbrook Café by Road Superintendent Bob O'Brien.

Another, hauling a bulldozer by misdirection up South Beech Plain, jack-knifed at the right-angle turn on the steep hill at the lower end of the road. The driver claimed to have been guided by instructions from Mass DOT. It cost a transmission, a lot of help, and about three hours to get untangled.

Since the jack-knife incident, TGP has tried harder to comply with complaints from Town Hall and tractor-trailers have stuck mostly to Rts. 8 and 23 to Cold Spring Road. But not always. 



Bringing in timber for decking the wetlands. Photo: The Berkshire Edge



"How do I get out of here?"



"Oh, xxxx."

One load of several tons of pipe passing a home on Cold Spring Road. Construction will require nearly 180 truckloads.

Photos: The Sandisfield Times



Marching Through Sandisfield

The crews worked from both ends of the right-of-way, cutting and stacking as they moved toward the middle. The trees and brush are clear now and haulers can remove the log piles to make room for stump removal crews. Then comes the bigger job of digging the 7-foot-deep trench and laying the pipe. The project is expected to be completed late this fall. 🇺🇸



Decking to protect wetlands.



The feller buncher, up close.



In line, clearing trees and brush.

*Trees stacked along Beech Plain Road, ready for mulching.
Photos: The Sandisfield Times*



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Don't Blame the Company

By Ron Bernard

In late May, thousands of healthy trees in a 4-mile swath through conservation land and wetlands were destroyed in order to build a parallel third pipeline through the Beech Plain section of Sandisfield. The aftermath resembled tornado damage. The downed trees will be hauled out and soon crews will begin working dawn-to-dusk, six or seven days a week, to dig a 7-foot-deep trench for the line.

Following nearly four years of struggle against a powerful company backed by laws and a Federal commission, it seems that now is an appropriate point to judge performances of the various participants and agencies that could have made more of a difference to avoid this calamity. As one who is directly affected, what follows is how I see things.

The Company. Houston-based Kinder Morgan, parent of Tennessee Gas Pipeline Co. (TGP), is an industry giant in the ranks of Exxon and Shell. As such, it is neither “greedy” nor making “obscene profits,” but merely operates like all other corporations in our capitalist system under the laws and established conventions. Think of it as a top-of-the-food chain predator, not unlike the lion that attacks the hapless zebra. The lion and the company are both doing what they have to do to survive. Don't blame them. Blame our policymakers.

The company did cancel the proposed 120-mile, \$3.3 billion “Northeast Energy Direct” line across

northern Massachusetts, citing lower demand, and wrote off \$100 million. Nevertheless, KM was determined to complete the relatively insignificant and also unnecessary “Connecticut Expansion,” if for no other reason than to put a stake in the heart of Article 97 of the Massachusetts constitution as a warning to other states. Assessment: Arrogant, relentless. Grade: N/A

Our Policymakers

Governors of the New England States. During Christmas week, 2013, six New England governors – four Democrats, including lame duck Deval Patrick, and one each Independent and Republican – met quietly in Hartford. They drafted a manifesto to encourage more transmission infrastructure in New England to boost supply, they said, and to reduce energy costs to home owners and industry. Many of them professed to be supporters of alternative energy. Kinder Morgan effectively used the governors’ appeal to justify the Northeast line and the Connecticut Expansion. Assessment: Shameless hypocrites. Grade: F

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. FERC’s motto should be, “We have never met a pipeline we didn’t like.” At least that would be honest. Throughout the tortuous approval process, impacted individuals and stakeholders attended FERC’s public hearings. FERC encouraged submission of comments and concerns which worried citizens presented passionately. It was all for show. This commission has enormous power and is virtually immune from challenge. It was established to facilitate energy transmission, not to be fair. Sadly, the commission is married to the industry. That’s why the FERC staff lawyer told our neighbor in 2013, “We approve 99% of these projects.” Assessment: Desk jockeys on automatic pilot. Grade: F

The Judge. Last year Superior Court Judge John Agostini refused to rule in favor of the Commonwealth’s petition to make an exception to the 1938 Natural Gas Act for Otis State Forest conservation lands under Article 97 protection. But for this, the

case could have headed to the US Supreme Court, creating a huge, possibly fatal delay. Instead, he kicked the can, expecting that a vote of the legislature would shove the case up the appellate ladder. But the Statehouse did nothing, essentially giving the company a green light and a huge setback for opponents. Assessment: Feckless. Grade: D

State Representative Bradley. In August 2015, on behalf of TGP, Garrett Bradley, (D) Hingham, on the eastern shore, inexplicably introduced a bill to transfer Otis State Forest lands out of Article 97 protection. Howls of protest arose across the state. In July 2016, the Boston Globe ran an exposé about Bradley and his law firm’s “audacious” scheme to skirt campaign finance laws to enrich themselves. Bradley immediately resigned from office, after 16 years. Assessment: Scoundrel. Grade: No grade low enough for this guy.

The Legislature. Faced with a Catch 22-type dilemma, leaders worried that the bill to waive Article 97 protection for Otis State Forest might pass and the company could simply proceed. But if the bill was voted down, the company would definitely file suit. If the state lost in high court, Article 97 would be mortally wounded. So the bill died in committee. But now the company had the upper hand and the DEP, the DCR, and the Attorney General were undermined. Sandisfield’s fate was sealed and Article 97 was effectively toothless. Assessment: Gambled and lost. Grade: D

In 2014-15, **State Senator Ben Downing** and especially **Representative Smitty Pignatelli** were vocal champions for the Town and opponents. Commendably, they rebuffed Kinder Morgan’s request for a bill. But by mid-2016 with the inevitable looming, Pignatelli advised the Town to hedge and negotiate for what it could get. This may have played into KM’s hands. It certainly depressed the morale of landowners and others. Sen. Downing has since retired and Rep. Pignatelli has moved on to other issues. Assessment: Should have stayed the course. Grade: B-

Governor Baker. He opined that it would have been better if the existing two pipelines had been made larger back when. That’s about it. Assessment: Disengaged. Grade F.

State Agencies Supposed to Protect Us. The departments of Environmental Protection and Conservation and Recreation pretended to fight. Threatened with eminent domain, DCR capitulated last December. Their press release touted extra compensation from Kinder Morgan for the state. DCR ecologist Nancy Putnam earned a personal “A” for calling out serious deficiencies such as likely blasting in TGP’s initial application. Assessment: The people running these agencies really don’t care that much. Grade: D

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The Attorney General challenged TGP in court and for a while it looked like the state could prevail. But once the judge passed the buck to the legislature which did not act, the AG folded. Assistant AG Matthew Ireland was well prepared, vigorous, and convincing. No shame on him. Assessment: Was this case too politically risky for AG Maura Healy? Grade: D

U. S. Congressional Representatives. Question: Where were Sens. Markey and Warren and Representative Neal in 2014-16 when their party was in power and they had real influence? Answer: In hiding. In April, 2017 *after* FERC had issued the Notice to Proceed, the three demanded that the project be stopped, which of course everyone knew would not happen. Assessment: Disingenuous. Grade: F

The Town of Sandisfield. Between 2014 and mid-2015 the Select Board and the Town Administrator acted like deer in headlights. Voters in May 2014 gave officials cover with a non-binding resolution to oppose the pipeline unconditionally. Grass roots opponents were raising hell and making headlines. But other than a few platitudes about the pipeline being a bad thing for the Town, there was almost no engagement with FERC or State agencies. Opponents were told time and again that the Town had real standing and should be leading the charge. Eventually the company dangled a possible payout in the hopes of a friendlier atmosphere. The chairman at the time took the bait, got burned. Assessment: Ineffective. Grade: D

The current administration has been more engaged but has also given mixed signals. Despite warnings, they too yearned for a windfall which was the same mistake. No Town property is impacted except road damage and a few road cuts. The landowners are the victims. The Town should be compensated for legal fees and road deterioration, to the penny, nothing more. Assessment & Grade: Incomplete.

Likewise, the **Conservation Commission** which could have had considerable say through the process was invisible for more than two years. Members either did not attend or speak at hearings about this colossal environmental issue. Commissioners did not even read the Mass EPA reports, thousands of pages of details, schedules, maps, impact statements and so forth. Only after a TGP-paid consultant was retained in 2016 did the ConCom get seriously involved. Assessment: Would rather deal with driveway cuts and septic systems. Grade: C+

Berkshire County Regional Planning Commission. Executive Director Nat Karns attended important public hearings. Well prepared, he was a strong voice at the podium and predicted consequences better than anyone else, all of which are coming to pass now – roads, traffic, and disruption. Assessment: Understood the threat, greatly appreciated. Grade: A



Author Ron Bernard's home on Cold Spring Road is in the middle of the construction project. This 200-year-old stone wall on his property will be demolished for a "holding space." TGP has promised to rebuild the wall, which will make it a new wall.

The Aggrieved

Constitutional Article 97. This 1972 landmark legislation guaranteed that conservation land would be afforded the highest possible permanent protection by the State. In the long-run, a now enfeebled Article 97 could be the biggest casualty of all. Along with all the citizens of the Commonwealth.

The Tribes. A coalition of Native American tribes, actually "sovereign nations," learned about the project in 2013. Their interest is protection of sacred ceremonial sites. TGP has confirmed that about 24 sites will be destroyed. The US Historic Preservation Act affords the nations extraordinary review privileges called "Consultation." Because of a snafu at FERC, the tribes could not become engaged until December 2016, after final environmental reports were published. Their law suit vs. FERC is pending even as the destruction/construction proceeds.

The Opponents. The only steady presence has been a collection of grass roots opponents including Sandisfield Taxpayers Opposing the Pipeline (STOP), Berkshire Environmental Action Team (BEAT), Massachusetts PipeLine Awareness Network, and No Fracked Gas in Mass. They continue to advocate. The Sugar Shack Alliance, a statewide environmental group, staged non-violent protests near Spectacle Pond resulting in 24 arrests. These committed groups continue to keep the issue in the public eye.

The Landowners. The FERC approval process gave landowners plenty of opportunity to comment. However, their observations and protestations carried little weight. The company seized property under threat of eminent domain. Meager one-time compensation to landowners was an offer that couldn't be refused. This was especially bitter for families who have been on their land since before 1951, the advent of the first pipeline. Meanwhile, landowners must pay property taxes on the seized land, which is also badly devalued, while having limited access to it. Absurdly, landowners are responsible for security of the right-of-way. Numerous abutters are affected to different degrees but are excluded from the formal process. TGP enjoys perpetual rights but does not pay royalties. Fairness and concern for residents' well-being is not part of this process. 🗣️

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.

They Did Not Get the Memo, Yet

An ancient pond in the wetlands besides the old schoolhouse on Cold Spring Road is ably managed 24/7 by an on-site beaver. No one informed him or the many creatures and their young that depend on this habitat that they are in mortal danger because the new pipeline will soon be installed directly through their backyard.

From his lodge in the middle of the pond, this fellow has been busy for two years keeping up the place. Amazingly, he dropped a sizable tree precisely above the stream at the point where it passes under the road, obviously intending to improve his homestead.

Trying to pick a fight, a human neighbor of the beaver told a supervisor from the company contracted to remove trees along the right-of-way, a weathered man with years of experience felling timber, "I'll bet you couldn't drop a tree as well as that." "I sure as hell could!" said the supervisor. "With your teeth? At night?" asked the neighbor. The supervisor conceded the point.

Despite two weeks of noisy disruption, none of the nesting wildlife, including the beaver, a few mallards, and several species of turtles, have abandoned their homes yet. However, the wood ducks, naturally skitish, did not hang around this year.

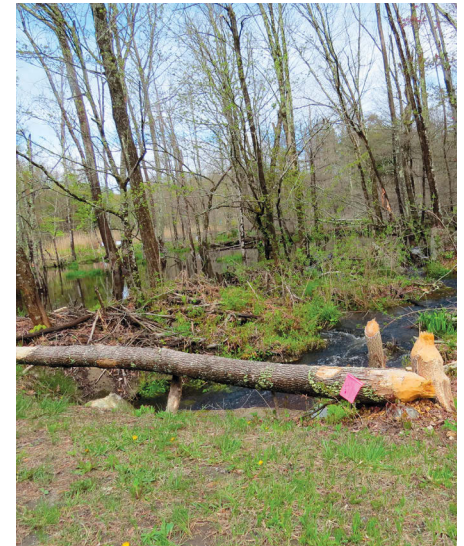
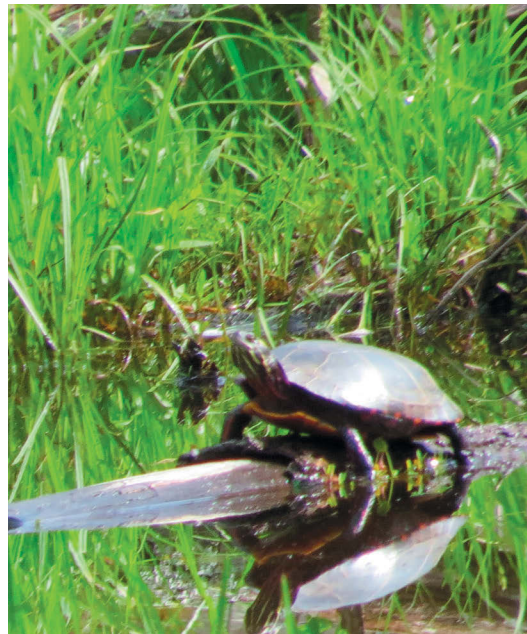


Photo: Cindy Ragusa



Other Photos: Sandisfield Times

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Moreover... Police

By Simon Winchester

My oldest son is currently in Northern India, waiting for the snow to melt in the Rohtang Pass so that, for a summertime job, he can drive up from New Delhi and into the seldom-seen Himalayan mountain region known as Ladakh. The Rohtang is a notoriously dangerous gateway – its name means Pile of Corpses – and I, sitting peacefully in Sandisfield, am mildly concerned for my boy's welfare.

Which is why I started the other day on seeing a police cruiser unexpectedly parked in my driveway. I had been working all morning in my barn-study, and had left to walk the hundred yards back to the house to make myself some lunch. When I glanced up from the stove, my heart sank.

This is how they break bad news, I said to myself. *Two police officers, one a woman. One to give the details, one to offer comfort, to make the cup of tea.* In a moment they would ring the doorbell.

What was it? An avalanche? A car wreck? Terrorism (Ladakh is in Kashmir, notorious for Bad Stuff)?

But no. Only one officer got out of the car. It must be something else, thanks be.

I greeted him at the door, still a trifle anxious. *Don't worry,* he said. *I was just passing, and noticed your barn door was a little ajar. I thought I should check that there was someone home.*

And that, I thought to myself, is what real policing is all about. Checking. Noticing. Just passing. Doing so more slowly through the evening. Checking that shop doors are locked. Making sure all children are off the streets. Listening for the unusual (I remember our local policeman back in London hearing a driver

having trouble changing gear. He took down the plate number and called it in. As he thought, the car had been stolen. No arrest, but a quiet satisfaction.)

Sandisfield is crawling with police just now, as the pipeline saga winds to its inevitable conclusion. Cold Spring Road is home to so many state troopers it looks ready for a presidential visit; and when matters get a little out of hand there are arrests, conducted for the most part politely but firmly.

People may be angry with the pipeline company, the government, the town. But by and large the police are seen simply to be doing their job, and there are few if any complaints.

My meeting with Mike Johnson – the genial half-Irish sergeant who had noticed the barn door I had carelessly left half-open – was only the second in my fifteen years here.

The first came within days of my moving in, back in 2001. No cruiser then, but a truck, with Mike Morrison – the chief then, as he still is – there to welcome me. But also to tout for business. *I breed llamas,* he said. *If you're ever in need of a llama, I'm your man.*

That's *country*, I said to myself.

I had moved up here from New York City – no llama merchants in Manhattan, for sure – and before that had lived in Hong Kong. Few encounters with police there, other than a would-be robbery in Hong Kong: our elderly maid had been sitting on her bed taking off her stockings when a man's head popped out from underneath. She bashed him with a shoe, he jumped out of the window and from the sound of his cry, said Martha, probably hurt his ankle. The police were there when I got back from the movies and they calmly surmised was he was an illegal immigrant, frightened and hungry, and he'd be nursing his leg in the jungle, as indeed he was. He was sent back to China, having jumped the border fence the day before. I lived in the countryside then too, and thought the gentle approach of the country constabulary admirable.

It's much the same here. Jerry Herman likes to tell a "call your mother!" story.

"Some years ago," said Jerry, "when my mother was

still alive, I used to call her every evening at about 9 p.m. One weekend we went away to visit friends in Pennsylvania and, with one thing and another, I didn't call her that Saturday night. When we arrived back home in Sandisfield there was a note on our door from Mike Morrison telling me to *call my mother* and then to *call him to let him know that I had*. I still don't know how my mother, probably 87 at the time, tracked down the police chief in Sandisfield. Obviously she was worried that something had happened to us because I hadn't called. I called her to let her know that we were alright and then called Mike to tell him I had done as instructed and he could rest easy, that all was right with the world again."

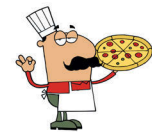
And Val Coleman, down on River Road, still drives to Lee early each morning to have breakfast at Friendly's. Often his companion is just the *Times*; but then "most every morning I chat with an affable state trooper all decked out in whistles and guns. He's a wonderful companion with a long brave history, and we talk about 'pull overs' and our respective families ... Despite my liberal passions, I've always admired cops and this fella is a paradigm of what keeps us safe and sane."

Which is exactly how I felt when Sandisfield Patrolman Mike Johnson stopped by – safe and sane. I'm glad he noticed my barn door and had wondered if all was well. Glad indeed, and relieved that my son, eight thousand miles away, had evidently lived to see another Himalayan day, and that I need not worry (too much). 🇺🇸

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Comings and Goings



A NEW FRIEND
& NEIGHBOR

MYRNA LOUISE RODMAN
BORN APRIL 30, 2017

at Lenox Hill Hospital
New York City.
7 lbs, 12 oz.

Mother: Emily Melchior
Father: Calvin Rodman

The family's weekend home is on Fox Road.

Sandisfield Historical Society



Our Plans for This Summer and Fall

By Ann Wald, President

We at the Sandisfield Historical Society have been busy planning events for the coming year.

By the time you read this we will have held our May meeting with both the advisory committee and our members. I was given the honor of representing the Society in the Memorial Day parade.

On June 3 we will hold our regular meeting at 11 a.m. at the Historical Society building on Sandy Brook Turnpike (Rt. 183) at South Sandisfield Road. We will discuss our plans for events during the summer and the food we will be offering at the Health Expo on June 10, which is sponsored by the Sandisfield COA at the American Legion Pavilion.

We have pending plans for a flea market in July.

On August 12 from 2-3pm we would like to invite the residents of our fair town to join us in Roosterville at the site of the old desk factory ("The Old Red Shop"). We will have a speaker with the hopes of educating everyone about this forgotten historic treasure.

There will be a meeting and open house on September 9 at the Society and in October we will be holding our regular apple fest with wonderful food and pies for sale. We hope to have a variety of vendors also.

We will discuss the remainder of the year as we go along. We will keep you posted, and as always you the residents of this little town in the Berkshires are more than welcome to join us. You are the future history of this town. If you are interested in taking part in any of our activities, please call me at 258-4415.

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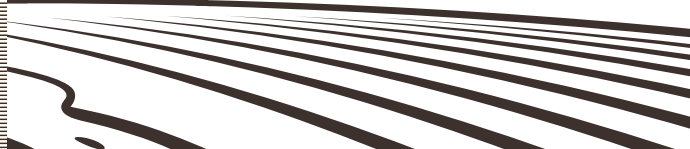
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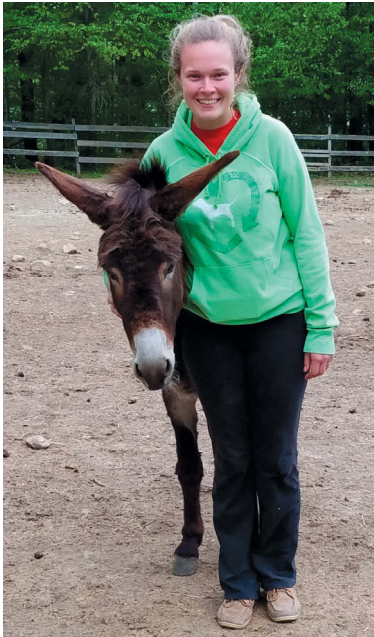
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Open House: June 18 Sunny Rose Farm/Looking Glass Gardens



Rose Nelson with her new donkey, Honey Bee.

To introduce Rose Nelson's Sunny Rose Farm, an open house will be held at her new indoor riding/training facility on Sunday afternoon, June 18.

All are welcome to stop by and tour the barn and grounds and meet the animals, including Rose's miniature horses and the newest resident, Honey Bee the donkey. Anyone interested in riding will have a chance to meet Rose's clients and learn about riding programs and services, including horse boarding. Free pony rides and face painting will be available for children. Parents, ask Rose about her first summer kids' camp to be held June 26-30.

Chuck and Zoe Nelson, long-time proprietors of Looking Glass Gardens, will open their grounds for touring as well.

Refreshments including soft drinks and BBQ snacks will be available.

When: Sunday, June 18 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Rain or shine.

Where: 19 Dodd Road, South Sandisfield

Contact; Chuck, Zoe, or Rose Nelson. Tel 413-446-4944 or sunnyrosefarm@yahoo.com. 



Everybody gets to ride at Sunny Rose Farm. Rose's miniature horse Scrappy and his new friend, Delilah the chicken, are an item this spring. After this picture was taken early last month, said Rose, Delilah hopped off Scrappy's back but then "followed Scrappy all around the yard the rest of the day."

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Letters to the Editor

Church Bell Rings Again

At the New Boston Congregational Church, the bell tolls again.

We were without a bell rope for a time, until Rod and Ralph got interested in our problem and made some inquiries.

Now, thanks to the donation of a rope, to John Field for the use of his bucket truck, and the help of Jordan, Andy, and Richard, the bell rope was replaced on May 12.

Thanks again to all who made this happen. Much appreciated!

New Boston Congregational Church
4 Sandisfield Road

Congratulations!

Hearty congratulations to The Sandisfield Times on completing seven splendid years. I read The Times from cover to cover each month, and every time laugh or cry at Val's latest poem. Once more I feel connected to this town I have loved for so many years.

Many thanks to all who work so hard and consistently each month maintaining The Times' high standards and relevance.

Roberta Myers
Monterey, California

CORRECTION

In an article in May, The Times reported that the disbanding of the technology committee resulted in a savings of \$22,500. This was incorrect. The savings was \$2,500. We regret the error.

Council on Aging



Wellness Fair

Come one, come all! Ages 1 to 101. Something for everyone at the Health/Wellness Fair, Saturday, June 10 at the American Legion Hamilton's Grove Pavilion, 10 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

- Veterans Administration Van
- Community Health Van
- Southern Berkshire Elderly Transportation Van
- SNAP (Nutrition/food stamp information)
- Hospice Care in the Berkshires (HCIB)
- Healthy food provided by Sandisfield Historical Society

- Information on aromatherapy soaps, candles. Massage and acupuncture demonstrations/information.

- Meet your town policemen.

See posters in town or call 258-4816 for information.

QiGong on Mondays and Fridays, 11:00 a.m. at Old Town Hall.

Regular COA business meeting, June 7, Wednesday, 10:00 a.m., Town Hall Annex basement

Pizza and cards, June 21, Wednesday, at noon at Town Hall Annex basement

Blood Pressure Clinic, June 28, Wednesday, 11:00 a.m.-noon at Town Hall Annex basement.

Tax work-off positions available as the good weather opens more opportunities.

Volunteer transportation available on Tuesdays. Call 258-4816 for appointments. ♡

Farmington River School PTA

By Wendy Berman, President

We celebrated Teacher Appreciation Week in early May to show our appreciation for all that our teachers do for our children and our community. Thank you to all of our parent volunteers who made the week with all of its varieties possible. The PTA couldn't have done it without your enthusiasm and help.

On May 5, we also celebrated School Lunch Hero Day (created by author/illustrator Jarrett Krosoczka, who visited the Farmington River School in January). We recognized our wonderful lunch ladies with gift baskets and students also celebrated by presenting them with cards as thanks for "keeping our bellies full with healthy meals each day."

National School Nurse Day was May 10, when we recognized and honored Denise Zuidema, our amazing school nurse, who fixes us up when we get hurt and tries to keep us healthy throughout the school year.

PTA officers for the 2017-2018 school year were elected at our May meeting. Our current executive board will remain in place for one more year: President Wendy Berman; Vice President Craig Drenga; Treasurer Dawn Lemon; Secretary Aimee Magovern. We're already discussing plans for next year and are excited at the possibilities since we have a very healthy bank account. ♡

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Now Hear This!

Edited by Laura Rogers-Castro.

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

JUNE EVENTS

Film and Lecture on Saturday, June 3, at 4:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center at 5 Hammertown Road. Robert Bielsky presents legendary WWII partisans, the Bielski Brothers in the documentary "Jerusalem in the Woods." Suggested donation: \$20.

Free Movie Night! Mary Poppins on Friday, June 9, at 7:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center at 5 Hammertown Road. Popcorn, too! Online tickets are recommended to ensure a seat: www.sandisfieldartscenter.org.

Crafts for Kids with Lynn on Saturday, June 10, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Library, lower level. This craft day, led by Lynn Rubenstein, will have Father's Day in mind. Story time will be at 9:30 upstairs, before the crafting class.

Wellness Fair sponsored by Council on Aging on Saturday, June 10, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the American Legion Pavilion at Hamilton Field on Route 8.

Under Milkwood performed by the Sandisfield Players on Saturday, June 10, at 7:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center at 5 Hammertown Road. \$20, \$5 children.

Church Service on Sunday, June 11, at 10:00 a.m. at the New Boston Church, Route 57. All are welcome.


Sandisfield Film at BIFF

The 30-minute narrative short film, "A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud," filmed in Sandisfield last summer with editing completed this year, will be shown at the Berkshire International Film Festival in Great Barrington on June 3 at 3:30 p.m. Tickets are available for \$12.

Included with the admission is a discussion with the filmmakers, including director Karen Allen of Great Barrington. Also showing at the same screening is "A Domestic Dilemma," a film of McCuller's short story of the same name, produced by Jonathon Demme for HBO in 1991.

The film has won awards at a number of international film festivals, including Best International Narrative Short at the Manchester Film Festival in England and the Remi Award at the Worldfest Film Festival in Houston.

Jackson Smith of Housatonic, who plays the Boy in the film, won the Newcomer Award at the USA Film Festival in Dallas.

A showing of the film at the Arts Center is possible this summer or fall. 

Over There: The Great War to End All Wars lecture by Bill Cohn, Trinity College Visiting Professor of History and American Studies on Saturday, June 24, at 4:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center at 5 Hammertown Road. \$10.

Blood Pressure Clinic on Wednesday, June 28, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in the Council on Aging Meeting Room, downstairs at the Town Hall Annex, Route 57.


JUNE EVENTS IN SURROUNDING TOWNS

Opening Celebration Outdoor Sculpture Exhibition on Sunday, June 11, from 3:30 to 7:00 p.m. at The Mount, 2 Plunkett Street, Lenox. Free celebration. Exhibition includes Setsuko Winchester's Freedom from Fear/Yellow Bowl Project.

Courtney Maum in Conversation with Beauty Expert Jane Larkworthy on Sunday, June 18, at 2:00 p.m. at the Norfolk Library Bookloft, 9 Greenwoods Road E, Norfolk, Connecticut. In conjunction with the publication of Courtney's second novel, *Touch*. For information, call 860-542-5075.

Learn to Make a Terrarium

A free class on making a terrarium will be held on June 28 at 1:30 p.m. at the Berkshire Rehabilitation & Skilled Care Center on Rt. 57 in New Boston. Terrariums are glass decorative environments that containing soil and plants, often in miniature.

The owner of Greener Leaves Greenhouse, Kathy Carroll, will teach the class. Space is limited, so in order to reserve a place please RSVP to Cindy Faggioni at 413-258-4731 at the Center by Friday, June 16. The class is open to the community. All the Center asks is that you bring a non-perishable food item as a donation to be given to a local pantry. 




Courtney Maum

Former Resident Publishes Second Novel

By Bill Price

Courtney Maum's second novel, *Touch*, a satirical account of "a New York City trend forecaster who finds herself wanting to overturn her own predictions, move away from technology, and reclaim her heart," was published in May. Courtney and her husband and daughter moved from Tannery Road two years ago to neighboring Norfolk, Connecticut.

Her new novel was described in a starred review in *Publisher's Weekly* as "perceptive" and "thought-provoking." *Interview Magazine* wrote: "*Touch* bristles with insights into the longing for warm, messy, inefficient, and imperfect human life." Courtney will begin a 20-city book tour this month.

She will discuss her novel at two local events: at the Norfolk Library's Bookloft in conversation with beauty expert Jane Larkworthy on June 18 at 2 p.m., and in Lenox at The Mount's Literary Roundtable with Joe Donahue, host of WAMC's "The Roundtable" on July 6 at 3:00 p.m. 

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



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*The Times is grateful to individuals
who have donated this month.*

Hilde Wiesert



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