

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

Tribunus



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July 2018



Photo: Aquarium, staff member

To Boston to See the Fish

By Bogart Muller

About 6:30 Sunday morning, June 24, fifty-six people and one luxury bus and driver arrived at the Sandisfield Library to begin a trip across the state to the New England Aquarium in Boston.

The tickets, purchased in advance on a “first come/first serve” basis, sold out within weeks of the trip’s announcement. It was a great kid/parent ratio and everyone was excited to be there for this really fun ride to Boston and home again.

We left town at 7 and headed east toward Tolland. A smooth ride up the hill and over the winding, up-and-down road all the way to Southwick and then Westfield to catch the Mass Pike proved our driver was performing above and beyond the call of duty. Controlling a bus that full takes nerves ... especially on unpredictable Rt. 57. Snacks, loads of snacks, were handed out like every hour to ensure the passengers were comfy and cozy for the 2½ hour ride.

On arrival on Boylston Street, we were ushered into the aquarium without any hang-ups or delays. Lots of “oohs and aaahs” came from our group as we first saw the penguins.

Everyone soon spread out and occasionally bumped into one another while we explored this giant four-story fish tank holding probably 900 different species of marine life. There were sharks, eels, jellyfish, octopus, sea lions, and so many weird looking fish. Some even glowed in the dark!

It was another short ride on the bus to the Prudential Center located in Copley Square. Here there was shopping (PLENTY of shopping ... I was sitting in a

\$160,000 Tesla X3 until Tina dragged me out of the dealership). And so many restaurants it was hard to decide on where and what to eat.

The bus loaded up at 5:30 p.m. with an exhausted crowd and back home we headed.

What was really cool about this trip was the people of Sandisfield on the journey were all seen in a different light. Everyone was cheerful and kids laughed. No one at all brought up any of our Town’s infrastructure problems or politics or bumpy roads. We were families being families together and sharing happiness, laughter, curiosity, and kind of forgetting about the problems at home for just a little while.

Many thanks to Billie Jo Pachulski, Dawn Lemon, Chrissy O’Brien, Roger Kohler, and Terry “our Librarian” Spohnholz for making this entire trip epic in so many ways. 🍀

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Common Sense—and Swimming—Returns

By Ron Bernard

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation heard our plea last year.

The DCR had arbitrarily posted a sign (among many others) that prohibited swimming at Lower Spectacle Pond. "DANGER NO SWIMMING."

In the Times last September I complained that the sign and policy seemed scary, unfair, uncaring, and unnecessary.

People had been wading and swimming at Lower Spectacle Pond since the 1750s. I wrote about the only recorded drowning which happened in the late 19th century and had nothing to do with swimming – a guy fishing with a friend at 3 a.m. fell out of the boat and drowned. There was a near drowning in the 1970s. No other recorded instances.

Sometime this spring, just as we had asked, the DCR changed the sign and policy. It now reads: "NOTICE NO LIFEGUARD ON DUTY SWIM AT YOUR OWN RISK."

That's more like it.

Now, everyone, come back and enjoy this delightful place without fear of being busted for taking a refreshing dip in your public pond. Tell your friends and neighbors, too.

Out on a Limb: an op-ed

Subjects should be interesting to most of us and have a strong link to Sandisfield, written by and for Town residents. Address either PO Box 584, Sandisfield, or email editor@sandisfieldtimes.org



2016/2017, No Swimming



2018, Swim At Your Own Risk



The Arts Center Installs a New Sign


Photo: Jerry Herman

Summer Schedule for BOS Meetings

FROM THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN:

Please note that the Board of Selectmen will meet every other Monday evening in July and August. Meetings will be held on July 9 and 23 and August 13 and 27.

Please join us, share your concerns and questions with the Board. Come and take part in community deliberations. On the Mondays we don't meet, enjoy the summer evenings with your family and friends.

Weekly meetings will resume every Monday in September. 

Seven EMS Volunteers Honored

This spring, the Sandisfield Emergency Medical Service, responding to an emergency, saved a life in Sandisfield. CPR was administered to the patient who was transported to the Berkshire Medical Center in Pittsfield.

The emergency technicians who took part were honored in May by the Western Massachusetts Emergency Medical Services Committee. The awards were the first time the unit has been honored by the committee.

The Sandisfield responders honored were:

Mary Bredenfoerder

Michael Morrison

Sheri Jennison

Ralph Morrison

Alec Morrison

Zoe Nelson

Barbara Morrison

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Are There Still Clams in the Clam River?

We'll all be glad the answer is yes. They're not exactly clams – rather, freshwater Eastern Pearlshell mussels – and may not be as plentiful as years ago, but they are still here and thriving in both the Clam and the Farmington rivers.

Near the end of June, I met with Dr. Peter Hazelton, a researcher with the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program of Massachusetts Wildlife, at Town Hall. He is shown here holding the shells of two Eastern Pearlshells from the Farmington.

In Sandisfield to conduct a field survey of the Farmington River Basin, Dr. Hazelton said, "If people see a small team of researchers in wet suits and goggles, snorkeling along your rivers, it's probably us." The team worked the Farmington, Clam, and the Buck rivers in June; they will return in August.

We'll include a story about what Dr. Hazelton and his team are searching for – the endangered Brook Floater



mussel – next month. For now, it's important to know that the mussels "provide an important service for the ecosystem. They filter algae and other bacteria out of the water and play a significant role in cleaning the rivers." Dr. Hazelton added, "The Clam is certainly a healthy river. It has an intact riparian area, much of it still forested and protected."

Asked if the mussels were good to eat, Dr. Hazelton said, "Better to buy your mussels and clams at The Other Brother Darryl's in Otis. None of our freshwater mussels should be used for food. It's much better not to eat them, collect them, or use them for bait. They're better left alone for the sake of river conservation. If you see them, think about how long they can live – some up to 70 years – and how important they are to fish and the streams. Like most wildlife, they're best appreciated in their habitat and left alone."

In a time of a lot of bad news, the news about the mussels in the Clam was all good. We hope the team finds a few Brook Floaters in August.

– Bill Price
West New Boston

Repair Scheduled for Cold Spring Road

By Seth Kershner

It's official.

In just a matter of weeks, repairs will begin on Cold Spring Road – courtesy of our friends at Kinder Morgan.

That the company will cover the costs only seems fair, given that their trucks and heavy machinery were responsible for much of the damage done to the road over the past two years. Rather than blacktop, however, the road will be resurfaced using the "oil and stone" method, also known as chip seal.

While a road paved with blacktop might last up to 15 years without needing major repairs, chip seal typically lasts five years.

Hammertown Road resident Hilde Wiesert, who uses Cold Spring Road daily, told the Times, "I don't know anything about the type of road material being proposed but what is important to those of us that were so affected by the construction traffic and road deterioration last year is that the company should at the least rebuild that road to the best condition possible and not cut corners."

Reached by phone, DPW Superintendent Bobby O'Brien told The Sandisfield Times that he was happy that the town would get anything from the company. "My ultimate dream was for them to put blacktop on the road," O'Brien said. "But that was always the best-case scenario."

Kinder Morgan, required to return roads to pre-construction status, last fall informed the Town that it would pay for chip seal.

At an April Select Board meeting, former Chairman John Skrip said he hoped that Kinder Morgan could be convinced to upgrade and pave Cold Spring Road with blacktop.

According to O'Brien, repaving Cold Spring Road with asphalt would only have cost the company \$180,000 more than resurfacing with chip seal.


What followed was a daisy chain of requests for a blacktop upgrade that started with O'Brien before heading to Rep. Smitty Pignatelli (D-Lenox). Pignatelli, in turn, was charged with passing it along to Lt. Gov. Maura Healey, who was then to make contact with Kinder Morgan.

It is not clear whether the request in fact ever reached company representatives. The Times

contacted Rep. Pignatelli's office but did not hear back before this issue went to press.

A frequent Beech Plain traveler said, "It is only right that they are going to provide a new road even though chip sealing has not been popular in other towns. Traffic is relatively light up here so hopefully we won't see the potholes that showed up on Town Hill Road after it was chip sealed."

Ron Bernard, who resides on Cold Spring Road, said, "I look forward to a new, smooth road, at last, but now the worry is that people may drive too fast. We'll manage though."

Chip seal work on Cold Spring Road is slated to begin at the end of July and should last at least two weeks. It will include the small portions of the road in Otis. The contractor, All States Asphalt of Sunderland, is the same firm that applied chip seal to Town Hill Road and West Street last fall and in June was completing work on West Street. 

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Moreover... Post Office: We're Off!

By Simon Winchester

In the belief that the success of all journeys requires a good map, I am pleased to reveal for the first time, and as we begin our long and steady progress toward opening the **Sandisfield Post Office Café and Provisions Store**, a diagram of our destination.

Michael White, who may well be asked perform the eventual construction, drew the plan. Please study it – though remember that it has been drawn simply to begin a conversation, nothing more. The eventual internal arrangements of the café – if, indeed, it is ever built – may look nothing like this at all.

To help you with orientation – the existing Post Office stands above the long and windowless wall at the top of the drawing. Post Office parking is to the left of the plan. The café's putative front door is at the top right; the door for deliveries is at the bottom of the drawing, to the left of the extension that we have labeled "Pantry." Café parking for about ten vehicles will be to the right of the front door. The lawn, which occupies an impressive space also to the right of the building, will have tables and umbrellas in the summertime. The sounds of the nearby brook and the forest birdsong are delightful, pleasant, and relaxing.

Many wrote to me after I first put forward the idea. Everyone I have talked to in town seems thrilled by the basic idea. But equally, everyone has his or her own idea for how the outfit should be run – and to that end I propose first of all that we set up a small committee of interested Sandisfielders to consider the various options.

My personal email is simonwinchester@mac.com. Write to me, please, to let me know if you would care to join this committee. After winnowing down the expected throngs of applicants to a group of maybe eight people, I will arrange for us to meet – in the raw space itself – probably in August or early September.

My own view is that the café should perform two complementary functions. It should during daylight hours be a meeting-place, indoors always and *en-plein-air* in season, with coffee and tea and other sensibly-priced-and-good-for-you drinks, together with a modest selection of home-made-and-bad-for-you baked goods.

At the same time – and for (as I shall explain) electronic keycard holders, all day and all night – it should be the one place in town to buy locally made and locally grown goods – frozen soups, meats of various kinds, vegetables, eggs, dairy, and flowers.

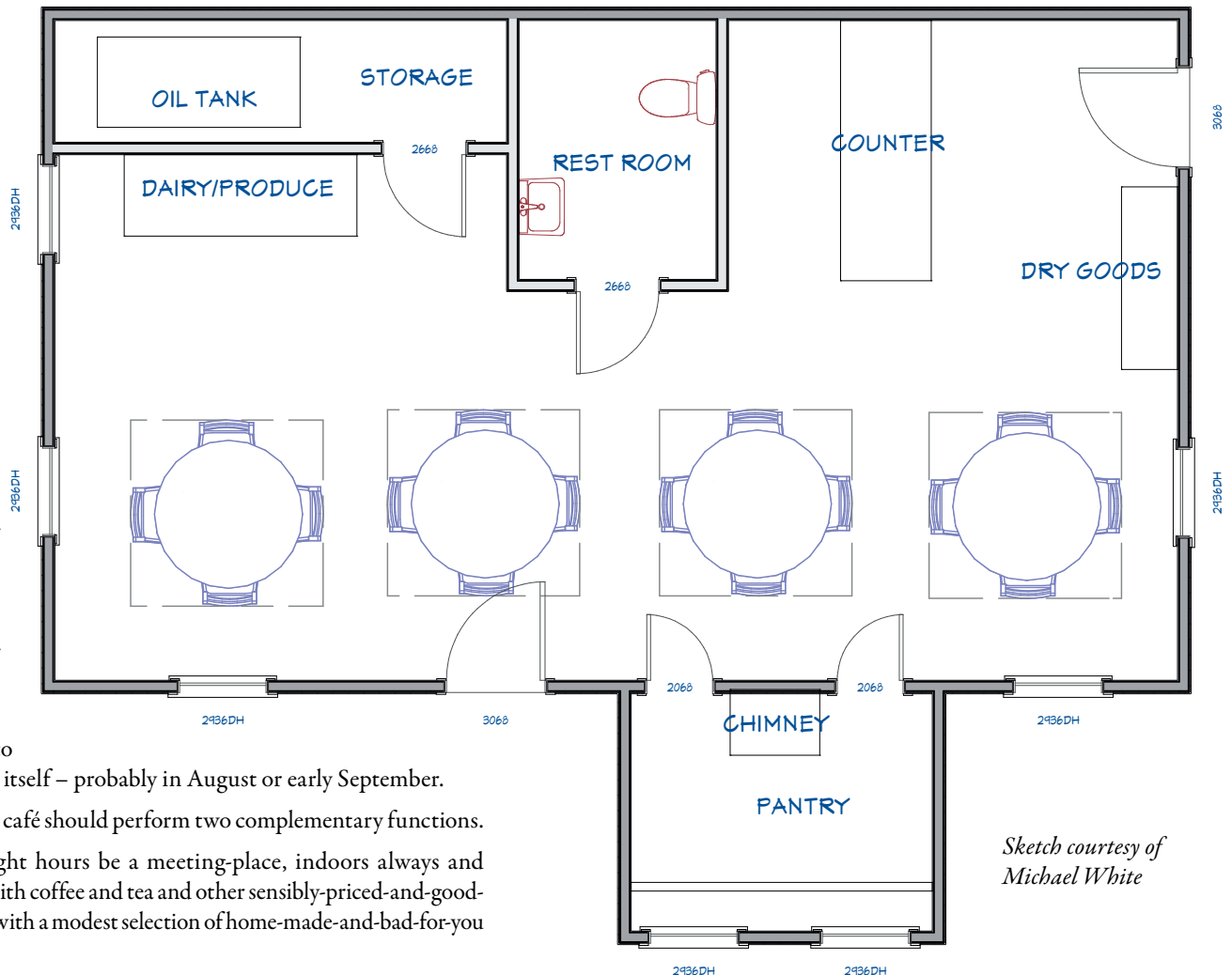
Imagine. It is seven on a winter's night and, *quelle horreur!* an empty larder, nothing to eat, no milk for the coffee, no dessert, no ice-cream, a wailing child. No problem: no more than (for many of us) a mile away, and in theory open all hours, could be a ready supply of all the basics, the sale of which – and here's the best thing – not only solves your problem and calms the infant, but directly benefits our neighbors who made or grew the stuff in the first place.

I have my own ideas for the mechanics of how this should operate. Ideas about whether there should be staff. About how people should pay (hint: electronics will make things easier.) And indeed, how we pay for setting up the whole shooting-match – for I now know the estimated outlay of funds, and it isn't a pretty figure, at least, the soup-to-nuts figure isn't pretty.

But I will leave all these details until the first meeting of the committee – and I assure you that my ego will absent itself from the meeting, and my own ideas will be as valued or valueless as everyone else's.

The important thing now is to move. We have a self-evident wish. We have a nicely-drawn plan. And so let us begin the journey – which after all, like all journeys, begins with a single step.

Your emails, please. simonwinchester@mac.com And then, let's hope – if we build it, you will come. 🍷



Sketch courtesy of Michael White

From Your Select Board



Selectmen at work. From left, Chairman Mark Newman, Brian O'Rourke, George Riley

We have a new Select Board! Mark Newman is no longer the "new man", but now the senior member. He was elected Board Chair on May 17 at the reorganized Board's first meeting.

Since then we have hit the ground running, with a host of pressing issues to tackle: our weekly meetings have expanded from under an hour to over two hours in length. In no particular order, we've been dealing with:

- Negotiations for a new three-year union contract for DPW employees;
- The details of finishing the Rugg Bridge;
- Permits for the new DPW garage;
- Numerous requests for end-of-year transfers of funds;
- Bulky waste collections at the transfer station;
- The Open Meeting and Public Records laws;
- Broadband issues;
- York Lake issues;
- Cemetery software;
- Ongoing grant proposals, including a cardboard compactor and Swap Shop at the transfer station;

- Zoning issues;
- The State's "Green Communities" program (very promising – more on this to come);
- Solar farms;
- Critical problems with storage of Town records.
- Selectman Riley attended a useful "Newly Elected Selectman Training" in Boston provided by the Massachusetts Municipal Association.

New Committees

Despite the Chair's concerns about the number of committees in this small town, two new committees were approved: a Maintenance and Repair Committee to try to keep up with the most urgent repairs to our town buildings, and a Capital Improvement Program Committee to identify, prioritize, and propose funding for the many major capital projects we are facing.

We may also need to revive our defunct Zoning Board of Appeals, so we can deal with several unpermitted dwellings and structures.

If you want more details, you can go to www.sandisfieldma.gov/board-selectmen and look for the minutes of our meetings in the lower right corner. Minutes are also available at Town Hall during business hours.

Summer Schedule

During July and August, the Board will meet every other Monday evening. Meetings in July will be July 9 and 23; August meetings will be August 13 and 27. Please join us, share your concerns and questions, and be a part of the community. The Mondays we don't meet, enjoy the summer evenings with your family and friends. Weekly Monday meetings will resume in September.

- Mark Newman
Brian O'Rourke
George Riley

Two Events Not to Miss Shop and Dine Locally

Summer Fair and Flea Market on Saturday, July 7, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., at Fire Station #2 on Route 57. More than 25 vendors – both local and from out of town – will offer a wide assortment of items. Raffles, baked goods, tag sale, and more to benefit the Sandisfield Historical Society. Refreshments available to benefit the New Boston Congregational Church.

Sandisfield Volunteer Firemen Steak Roast on Saturday, August 11. Dinner from 5 to 7 p.m., dancing to a live band from 6 p.m. Firehouse #2 on Rt. 57. Tickets can be purchased from any volunteer or call A&M Auto, 258-3381. Tickets not available at the door. "We need to know how many steaks to buy," said one of the volunteers.

Cemetery Cleanup Continues

We need volunteers to help with our scheduled Beech Plain Cemetery cleanup.

Saturday, July 21, 9 a.m., meet us at the cemetery on North Beech Plain Road, about two miles north of Cold Spring Road.

Bring gloves, bug spray, and a chair to take a break. We'll be dragging brush to the edge of the road for the DPW to haul away.

Thank you. See you there. The Sandisfield Cemetery Committee

Last Call for Help at Fire Station #1

By Times Reporters

Just a bit more will finish the job.

The new training center for Fire and EMS volunteers is nearly complete. The building, the former American Legion headquarters on Rt. 8 just south of the Pavilion, has been completely rebuilt inside and out with new plumbing, electricity, walls, and floors.

When the building ultimately opens, says Fire Chief Ralph Morrison, the project manager, it could also be used as a community center.

"We've had great support and great volunteers," he said. "And a lot of people have donated money for the project. We still need just a bit more."

If you have already pledged a donation, please contact Ralph at A&M Auto. Other contributions in any amount can be made to the Sandisfield Fire Department, PO Box 22, Sandisfield, MA 01255.



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ST - JULY 18

Learning to Live Off the Land

Excerpt from Chapter 6 of *Soil & Shul in the Berkshires: The Untold Story of Sandisfield's Jewish Farm Colony*

By Lorraine German

The challenges of working Berkshire County's farmland had driven more seasoned farmers westward, and the colonists were anything but seasoned. These city-bred immigrants weren't equipped for the hardships they would face as New England farmers, not the least of which was Mother Nature. Sandisfield's weather was unpredictable and could change drastically from one day to the next, often without warning. An unexpected snow, rain, or wind storm could wreak havoc on crops and livestock. Further underlining the precariousness of their situation were unforeseen difficulties, like the potato blight in the fall of 1904 that rotted most of that year's crop and eliminated any hope for a profitable harvest.

Burdened with farms that failed to provide adequate incomes, these industrious immigrants found other ways to make money. The men hunted fox for their pelts and families gathered the blackberries and chestnuts that had been disregarded by native farmers to sell to markets in New York City.

A handful of colonists were more fortunate than their neighbors because they didn't rely on crops as their means of support. Samuel and Tillie Kaplan raised cattle and sold the meat to local butchers. Other families raised chickens that the rabbi slaughtered before they were shipped to New York's Jewish neighborhoods. Some, like Elias and Bertha Lipsitz, owned acres of forested land and sold the timber to Burton Ives for his sawmill. During the summer, salvation for most of the families in the colony came in the form of boarders from the city.

The colonists' treatment of their farm animals led to frequent complaints of animal cruelty. Some offenses were relatively minor and the result of inexperience, such as pairing a cow with a horse to pull farm equipment. Other offenses, though, were much more serious. Max Schubert and Henry Lerner were found guilty of beating and underfeeding the horses in their care. Isadore Rosner was charged with animal cruelty after he used a horse with a broken leg.

A story that appeared in *The Berkshire Courier* in the summer of 1905 illustrates the immigrants' lack of understanding of acceptable farming methods and marketing practices.

A Great Barrington butcher was offered three veals a few days ago. It was brought in from Sandisfield by one of the Russian Jew families lately settled there. The veals were in a wagon driven by a woman. She asked the butcher to step out and look at the meat.

He did so and at once mentally decided it to be too youthful. "How old?" he asked. The woman replied one of the calves was three weeks old, the other three days and the third "stillborn." The butcher expressed regret but explained that his customers were a trifle notional in regard to their meats and generally liked their veal a little older than that offered and especially older than the youngest of the trio.

By the winter of 1905, the majority of families were barely scraping by. Not only were their farms mortgaged, so was much of their livestock. As a result, families who couldn't afford to buy the hay to feed their animals were prevented from selling them. Instead they lost them to starvation. The only thing that saved the colony from extinction following that long winter was the financial support of the Jewish Agricultural and Industrial Aid Society.

After surviving their brush with disaster, it was obvious the farmers would have to band together and help each other if they were to make it through another winter. A good many of them followed David Pyenson's advice and turned their attention to cows and chickens for their livelihood. Sandisfield's hillsides and pastures provided fertile grazing land and the colony's cattle and poultry farmers had already proven there was a market for their products. The changes the farmers made not only helped them make it through another winter, they altered the course of the colony's future.

Not everybody gave up on general farming, though, and some even succeeded. Daniel Klein came from New York City to a farm in South Sandisfield in 1908. At the cattle show in New Boston the following year, this novice farmer won first prize for his radishes, second prize for his cabbage, and another prize for his turnips. Five years later, Daniel's farm was so productive he grew a mind-boggling 380 bushels of potatoes, 2,000 heads of cabbage, and 30 bushels of tomatoes with only his wife, Yetta, to help him.

* * * * *

Soil and Shul will be printed in a limited edition scheduled for release in late August. Preorders are being accepted. See order form on this page or order online at Sandisfield.ArtsCenter.org "gift shop."

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July at the Arts Center

JAZZ AND RACHMANINOFF ON OUR NEW STEINWAY, MORE COMMUNITY OUTREACH

by Hilde Weisert

Thanks to the generosity of many friends of the Sandisfield Arts Center, our new (restored 1930's) Steinway piano will debut on our stage in July for jazz from Chris Brubeck and Triple Play (July 21) and a classical concert by internationally-known pianist Frederick Moyer (July 28).

To bring more of our neighbors in Sandisfield and surrounding towns to the Arts Center, we've given out free passes to the Council on Aging and placed others at the library and the post office.

Free Family Film Night continues on Friday, July 27 – watch our website or Facebook to see what's on.

We're also welcoming new residents with two free passes, so if you're new to Sandisfield or know of someone who is, please email us at info@

sandisfieldartscenter.org and we'll mail welcome passes.

As part of our expanded outreach, the South Berkshire Chamber of Commerce auctioned off a season pass for two at their June auction.

Another aspect of outreach is our relationships with our many advertisers throughout South County and Winsted. If you patronize them (see the program brochure or the Arts Center lobby for who they are), please let them know their support is appreciated!

Also on this page, you'll read about the building of a "community space" and the new historical marker on our grounds.

As always, presenting local talent is a big part of our mission. On July 14 at 4 p.m., local authors Miriam Karmel and Tom Christopher talk about their new books and, on July 28 at 10:30 a.m., local crossword-puzzle maven Michelle Arnot will help us understand how to speak crosswordese.

Also upcoming in July is Elizabeth Post in the Gallery, with a free opening reception July 7 at 2 PM – a great occasion to meet neighbors, nosh on light refreshments, and see some wonderful art.

A New "Community Space"

TAKING SHAPE WITHIN STONE WALLS

By Ron Bernard



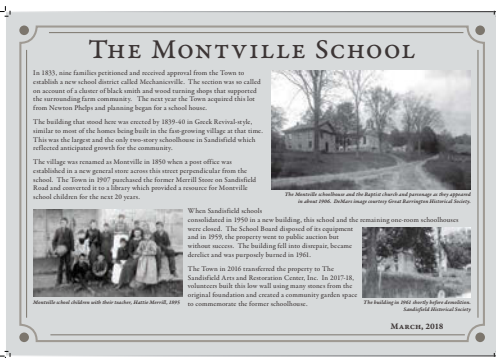
Some things take a while to get done. An example is the improvement of the small wooded lot adjacent to the Arts Center on Hammertown Road.

A building that once stood there, originally the home of the Montville schoolhouse – built around 1840 and closed in 1950 – became derelict and was demolished by the Town in 1961.

Since then the lot was mostly a jumble and thicket of stones and boulders, brush and scrub trees and material that remained from the demolition. Not so attractive, actually.

Last summer volunteers, generously aided by C. W. Nelson Landscaping, cleared the lot. In the fall, a low New England-style dry wall was built on the footprint of the schoolhouse's foundation.

Most of the stones used had been part of the old school's foundation. There were not quite enough



to complete the project so a call went out to residents in the September, 2017 Times for donations of "nice flat stones" to cap the wall.

Thanks especially to Susan Baxter Wright of Cold Spring Road and Jennifer and Katie Rudolph of Sandisfield Center and others, sufficient "toppers" were found and hauled in to complete the wall.

Last month a historical marker to commemorate the old Montville School was installed. Its handsome stand was donated by Mr. John Harney, professional steel fabricator and long-time friend of Jean Atwater-Williams.

The enclosure is envisioned as a community space available to all. A committee is evaluating concepts ranging from a professionally designed garden to more simply just a pleasing grassy area to complement the beautiful Arts Center building next door. The project is anticipated to be completed next spring. Until then, stop by, wander the old site, contemplate, take a rest on the new old stone wall.

SANDISFIELD ARTS CENTER



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JULY

FRI, JUL 6 5:30 PM
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AUTHORS Miriam Karmel and Tom Christopher
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SAT, JUL 21 8 PM \$20
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Michelle Arnot:
On speaking Crossword-ese"

SAT, JUL 28 8 PM \$20
PIANO RECITAL
To celebrate the Arts Center's new piano!

MC Mass Cultural Council Triple Play is supported by a grant from the Sandisfield Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



Pastor Makes a Return Visit

In April, the New Boston Congregational Church was visited by Michael Gantt, who served as pastor at the church nearly 50 years ago. Now a pastor in Brattleboro, Vermont, Gantt is also a conference speaker and author currently doing missionary and humanitarian work in West Kenya with the Immanuel Christian School for the Deaf, www.kenyadevfund.org.

Pastor Gantt published the following description of his return visit on his "Planting the Seeds for Renewal" blog on his website, www.mkgantt.com, which is devoted to religious, family, and political concerns.

BACK TO NEW BOSTON

By Michael Gantt

In 1970-71, I was newly married and graduation from Bible College was approaching quickly.

Each Sunday my wife and I drove from our home in Lenox, Massachusetts to the rural community of Sandisfield, Massachusetts, where I served as student pastor of the New Boston Congregational Church. The Junior and Senior classes at my school had provided limited pastoral leadership to the small congregation for a number of years. When I graduated, in 1971, I left a Junior classmate of mine in charge.

I did not return to New Boston – until one Sunday this past April.

After 48 years, my path happened to cross with a young man who is currently providing pastoral care for the church. He invited me to visit to stand behind the very pulpit from which I preached almost one-half century ago. It was surreal, to say the least.

When I last stood in that place I was married less than one year, childless, and did not yet even have a degree in my hand. Now, almost 50 years have passed; six children, 12 grandchildren, and 46 years of pulpit ministry in southern Vermont. We have all buried loved ones, welcomed new members to our family, succeeded in some things, failed at much. One thing has remained constant: The faithfulness of God.

Snugly tucked in the Berkshire Hills of Western Massachusetts, Sandisfield is a tiny, somewhat isolated community with a population of around 800 persons. Over the years, every church in town has slowly dried up and faded away – except for the little congregation at New Boston Congregational.

For 144 years they have opened the doors for the preaching of the gospel. Oh, they have struggled against the tide. The community has changed, population has declined, and finances have been a real and constantly present issue in keeping the doors open at the "Little Brown Church" as it is known. But, open they are, and I was blessed to hold my bride's hand as we walked into that beautiful sanctuary once again.

In a day of shopping-mall churches and mega ministries, few of us ever think of the faithful, sometimes tiny, congregations who faithfully hold



Photo Deena Forcier

forth the light of life in little out of the way places that most of us couldn't even find on a map.

There was no big orchestra that April Sunday morning. Two older gentlemen and a wonderful lady led us in worship by guitar. It was simple. It was genuine. It was a sweet, precious time of worship. I was so powerfully moved by the simple eloquence of the moment. There was no pretense to make, no egos to stroke, no effort was made to impress; just 25 or so glad voices willingly lifted up in worship to the King.

Cont'd p.13

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Broadband: Choosing the Right Goals

A HIGH SUBSCRIPTION RATE IS CRITICAL

By Alex Bowman

As a Verizon subscriber, I pay \$62.77 per month for a digital subscriber line (DSL). That includes taxes and fees and the price for a copper phone line which is required by Verizon to receive DSL. I work from home and depend on having a reliable, “unlimited” connection.

DSL is downright awful compared to all the other city internet connections I’ve used since 2001, but it has allowed me to move to Sandisfield full-time. Most of the time, I’m able to teleconference, we have a constant stream of internet radio, we watch Netflix, we use FaceTime to check in with family, I’m able to turn up the heat on our thermostat before returning from a long winter weekend away.

The town needs broadband “yesterday,” but we have skipped a critical step in the latest round of the procurement process: determining what is best for the townspeople.

What Does the Town Want or Need?

The reverberating sound byte has been that we are going with the option that has “no cost to Sandisfield” and we have “no operational responsibility.” Without more rigorous success criteria, we are likely to end up with an undesirable result.

The analysis presented by the Broadband Committee at April’s meeting did not address what the town of Sandisfield wants or needs, but merely tried to make it easy to compare many attributes of three company’s responses to the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI) Notice of Funding Availability.

The submitted proposals used very limited information about Sandisfield: three pages of a larger document created by MBI about all the underserved towns, two pages of which had large maps. Each company generated nearly identical proposals for ALL underserved towns. The only difference was a calculation based on the following Sandisfield attributes: grant funding availability, household count, telephone pole count, and expected fiber miles count.

They did not look at what may be different about Sandisfield that may require a more creative approach.

Based on those proposals, the Broadband Committee made the recommendation to go with Crocker Communication’s bid focusing mostly on a single key distinction: “no cost to Sandisfield.” The Select Board accepted the recommendation and made the decision to move forward with only Crocker.

The key distinction for Sandisfield’s broadband network should not be “no cost to Sandisfield.”

The Highest Possible Subscription Rate

The number one priority should be to get the highest possible subscription rate. And the number one factor in getting the highest possible subscription

rate is likely to keep out-of-pocket costs (subscription + fees + taxes) as low as possible. “No cost to Sandisfield” means the costs will be split by the subscribers, potentially sacrificing affordability of a nearly compulsory service with no alternatives.

Not including one-time fees, or taxes, the selected proposal estimated that at a 55 percent subscription rate, the monthly subscription price with phone will be \$140. At 75 percent subscription rate, the monthly price drops to \$116. This subscription rate variable is a huge unknown and the costs are barely back-of-napkin cost estimates. If Crocker underestimates the cost, it is highly likely that the difference will be passed on in monthly subscription fees.

If Crocker commits to their current price as a “not to exceed” price, then we can look more closely at subscription rate variable. It uncovers a much larger risk.

Unique to Sandisfield

Among the underserved towns, Sandisfield is unique because it has a large percentage of secondary homes. The most recent census (2010) listed Sandisfield as having 370 resident households (55%) and 301 vacant (secondary) units (45%).

The question then becomes, if residents meet a strong subscription rate of 80 percent resulting in a 44 percent town-wide take rate, we then need a minimum of 25 percent of those largely unanalyzed 301 secondary homeowners to pay about \$1,700 per year (or about \$17,000 over ten years) for internet for their secondary home. Only if more than two out of three non-resident households subscribe do we drop down to \$115 per month. Is 80 percent resident subscription a realistic estimate? What is realistic for non-residents? No one seems to know, and this could easily separate success from disaster.

Another complicating factor is that potential subscribers can just switch back to DSL at less than half the price because they’re willing to put up with reduced service to save \$800 per year! If that happens, then the monthly subscription price for the remaining subscribers increases.

Three Core Goals

To take another approach, I suggest we establish three core goals to exploring more in depth to determine our path forward. In order:

1. Highest possible subscription rate
2. Sufficient connection
3. Upgradeable to what the future may hold.


If we meet these goals, it will ensure we have a great broadband network in Sandisfield.

By no means do I have the answers how to best achieve these goals. There are many different solutions that could work, but without setting the right goals and understanding the tradeoffs, we could easily end up with internet service that is only affordable to the wealthier townspeople.

As with any project, we need to set strict cost controls to ensure we have broadband affordable to everyone. To get the highest subscriber rate:

- It’s possible we may need to make the project tax funded
- It’s possible we choose not to install the most cutting-edge technology but choose upgradeability
- And it’s possible we may take on some of the operation responsibilities.

We may need to choose a different solution than Crocker can provide.

All options should still be on the table. We all want internet ASAP, but choosing a provider on the wrong goals is a potentially disastrous decision. 

Alex Bowman, after nine years in business/IT consulting, led the fulfillment operations platform team at Plated.com for three years. A South Sandisfield resident, he is currently working on launching a startup operation to help local food producers more easily market and sell their food.

A POLICY STATEMENT: CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

The Town of Sandisfield has adopted a new Capital Planning policy to guide the Town's planning, reviewing, and coordinating of capital improvements. This planning process provides the town with a complete picture of its capital needs. The policy is printed here in full, with the exception of sample spreadsheets and references. A copy of this plan, with spreadsheets and references, has been posted to the "Citizens Action Center" box on the Town's website at www.sandisfieldma.gov.

Capital improvements are tangible assets or projects that are estimated to cost over \$25,000 and to have a useful life, or extend that life, for five or more years. Examples include vehicles, buildings, roads, and bridges.

Implementation of this plan will start this summer with the appointment of a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Committee and the completion of an inventory of all of the Town's capital assets. The capital plan will allow town officials and taxpayers to know what capital improvements are required over the next ten years, the total cost of those improvements, and the funding sources that may be available to address those needs. Projects will be prioritized and undertaken as resources are identified.

Sandisfield residents interested in serving on the CIP Committee should submit their request in writing to the Town Administrator. Appointments to the committee will be made in July.

From the Finance Committee and the Select Board

Purpose of Capital Improvement Planning

To effectively maintain the Town's infrastructure and protect the value of its capital assets, this policy outlines guidance for planning, reviewing, and coordinating capital improvements. Adherence to this policy will help the Town meet its capital needs despite limited resources.

Applicability

This policy establishes a framework for long-term capital improvements, sets guidelines and expectations for all Town departments in planning for and requesting capital projects, and outlines consensus budgetary goals for the Board of Selectmen, Town Administrator and Finance Committee.

Capital Improvement Program Committee

The Sandisfield Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Committee is charged to oversee Sandisfield's capital improvement program. The committee shall consist of five members, one of whom is the Town Administrator, who shall serve as the CIP Committee Chair. The Board of Selectmen shall appoint CIP members who shall be registered voters or taxpayers of the Town of Sandisfield, no more than one of the four appointed members may not

be a registered voter. Appointment of the four appointed members shall be made at the first Select Board meeting after the start of each fiscal year. CIP members shall serve for terms of three years. The Board of Selectmen shall fill all vacancies by appointing a registered voter or taxpayer to serve the un-expired term.

Policy Statement

The Town will maintain its physical assets by providing funding in the operating budget to protect its capital investments and minimize future maintenance and replacement costs. To provide and preserve the infrastructure needed for achieving the highest levels of public services and quality of life possible within available financial resources, the Town will maintain an annually updated, ten-year plan for capital improvements. The Town will emphasize preventive maintenance as a cost-effective approach to capital reinvestment and replace exhausted goods as necessary.

The CIP Committee shall identify and prioritize projects, analyze funding, and create a long-term financial plan achievable within the Town's budget limitations. The Capital Plan developed under this CIP will identify:

- Capital projects
- Anticipated start date
- Anticipated completion date
- Amount to be spent each year
- Financing plan
- The Capital Plan will be developed in accordance with the attached Capital Improvement Budget Calendar.

A. Definition of a Capital Improvement

- A capital improvement is a tangible asset or project estimated to cost over \$25,000 and to have or extend five or more years of useful life. These include:
 - Real property acquisitions, construction, and long-life capital equipment
 - Major improvements to physical infrastructure, including roads, highways, bridges, sidewalks, storm water drains, water distribution systems, septic systems, and sanitary sewer systems
 - Major renovations of existing capital items that extend their useful lifespans, as distinguished from normal operating expenditures
 - Planning, feasibility studies, and designs for potential capital projects
 - Items obtained under a long-term capital lease
 - Bulk purchases of similar items, like software or furniture, with expected useful lifespans of five or more years that, when aggregated, have total costs exceeding the capital threshold

B. Inventory

To support a systematic acquisition and replacement schedule, the Town Administrator will work with the Town Accountant and Town Treasurer to annually update and maintain a detailed inventory of all capital assets, which shall include dates built, acquired or last improved, original cost, current condition, expected and remaining useful lifespans, depreciated value, extent of use, and any scheduled replacement or expansion dates. The attached Facilities Inventory Form and Assets and Fleet Inventory Form will be used for this purpose.

C. Develop Project Requests

Each year department heads, board and committee chairs, and other appropriate officials will submit capital project requests using the attached Capital Project Submission Form.

D. Evaluation of Capital Projects

The CIP Committee will then evaluate and prioritize the requests using the following ratings: Approved projects are entered into the ten-year capital plan as described next.

Priority A:	Urgent, high priority projects which should be done if at all possible. A special effort should be made to find sufficient funding for all of the projects in this group.
Priority B:	High priority projects which should be done as funding becomes available.
Priority C:	Worthwhile projects to be considered if funding is available; may be deferred to a subsequent year
Priority D:	Low priority projects; desirable but not essential; insufficient data/analysis to support request.

E. Multiyear Capital Plan

The CIP Committee will annually update and propose for adoption by the Finance Committee a ten-year capital improvement plan (see attached 10-Year Capital Plan Form), including the upcoming fiscal year's capital improvement budget (see attached Annual Capital Budget Form) and a nine-year projection of capital needs and expenditures that details their estimated costs, descriptions, and anticipated funding sources.

Throughout the year, the Town Administrator will monitor active capital projects to ensure they remain properly funded and will report any capital plan amendments to the Board of Selectmen.

F. Capital Financing

To provide reserve monies for the CIP, the Town will maintain a capital improvement special purpose stabilization fund. Doing so enables Sandisfield to pay outright for moderate-range capital and other maintenance expenditures and thereby preserve debt capacity for major, higher-dollar purchases or projects. This approach balances debt with pay-as-you-go practices and protects against unforeseen costs. The target maintenance level for this reserve shall be 15 to 25 percent of the Town's annual operating budget.

Options to finance projects with short useful lifespans shall include current revenues, the capital improvement stabilization fund, and short-term debt (5-10 years). Long-term debt is an appropriate funding source for projects with very high dollar amounts and lifespans of 10 years or more.

The CIP shall be prepared and financed in accordance with the following policies:

Special revenue sources (e.g., grants, revolving funds) shall be evaluated as funding options whenever practical.

The annual operating costs of each proposed capital project, as well its debt service costs, shall be identified before any long-term, bonded capital project is recommended.

Short-term debt may be used to fully finance purchases with useful lifespans under 10 years.


Major capital projects, such as new construction or major renovations to existing facilities, may be accomplished through capital or debt exclusions.

G. Capital Project Closeouts

The Town will endeavor to close out all capital projects within six months of completion or discontinuation. As they are closed out, the Town

Accountant will do the following:

- For bonded projects with residual balances, the Town Accountant and Treasurer/Collector will propose reallocating any balances for other applicable capital projects.
- For projects funded with available revenue (tax levy or reserves) having residual balances, the Town Accountant will propose reallocating the balances for other capital projects or will close the balances to the appropriate fund surplus.

Once approved by the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee, funding articles will be prepared for the Annual Town Meeting warrant. 

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BUDGET CALENDAR

August	Town administrator distributes capital manual (forms and instructions for completing) and capital budgeting guidelines. Departments begin considering their capital needs for the upcoming fiscal year. Complete the annual update of capital asset inventory (buildings and equipment).
November - January	Departments submit capital projects to town administrator, who compiles them into a comprehensive capital package. Capital package given to Capital Improvement Planning (CIP) committee for review. CIP committee meets with department heads, provides feedback, and requests clarification. Department heads revise submissions as necessary. Hold joint (i.e., all boards) town budget meeting. Present revenue and expenditure projections, free cash estimate, and overview of prospective capital needs.
February	CIP committee submits capital budget and multiyear plan to selectmen via town administrator. Town administrator updates revenue and expenditure projections with latest data and revises financing plan based on updated revenue projections.
March	Town administrator finalizes proposed capital budget and presents it to the selectmen for approval.
April	Board of selectmen forwards capital and operating budgets to finance committee for review. Finance committee reviews capital and operating budgets and meets with department heads as necessary. Finance committee finalizes its budget recommendations. Selectmen post town meeting warrant.
May	Town meeting

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New Owners for Historic Beech Plain Property

AND THE COINCIDENCE OF THE CLOCK CASE

By Ron Bernard

An important saying in the historic preservation field: “The best way to preserve the character of an old house is not to spend money on it.” In other words, remodeling vintage houses according to changing styles of decoration, especially on the exteriors, should be avoided.

The c.1785 James Adams House on North Beech Plain Road in northeast Sandisfield is certainly historic. Built in Federal-style by a Sandisfield founding family, the house’s history is probably unique for having been a continuous farmstead over some 190 years for four unrelated families: Adams; Belden; Strickland; and Miller.

The place is also believed to have been a tavern in the 1790s, too late to have extended hospitality to Henry Knox’s teamsters in 1776 as they hauled cannons captured at Fort Ticonderoga across the famous namesake trail just north of the house.

Given the level of wear-and-tear as an inn but mostly from two centuries of farming and Berkshire winters, it is a wonder that the house is still with us. Yet the main structure is sound and well built. Its visible exterior is virtually original, a chief reason why the house has qualified for consideration for a National Register of Historic Places designation.

You may be wondering, “What about the interior?” That is another matter.



*The James Adams House as it appeared in 2010.
Photo Sandisfield Then & Now*

Since 1976 the house has been a private, non-farm residence. Our former neighbors, John and Sheila Kelly of New York, enjoyed peaceful weekends and gatherings here since the mid-1990s. They were

aware that original interior fabric had succumbed to floor plan alterations, even including a staircase relocation, by previous owners. Nevertheless, old windows, doors and hardware, and impressive out building foundations survive, legacies from the Federal period that remind us of important heritage here.

New Owners Up to the Challenge



*Jack Dennerlein (left)
and Jeff Gonyeau.*

Photo Ron Bernard

Jeffrey Gonyeau and Jack Dennerlein of Boston’s Dorchester section took title last month. Fully aware of the challenge to rehabilitate and even restore some of the interior to period, the partners have the requisite experience and know-how to do the job, and, so far, they are undaunted.

Jeff, who grew up in upstate New York, is a historic preservation consultant who works with public and private parties on structural preservation. He also works with the statewide historic preservation advocacy organization, Preservation Massachusetts, as its Preservation Circuit Rider for Eastern Mass. Jack, also a New York native, is a professor at Northeastern University and an expert in the field of ergonomics (science of improving design of working environments). A mechanical engineer by training, he holds degrees from SUNY Buffalo, MIT and the University of California at Berkeley.

Their search for a weekend retreat in Berkshire County (a reasonable distance from Boston) began about 18 months ago. Jeff said, “We started with no particular type of place in mind. Our Dorchester home is Victorian era and we have some experience in restoration. Eventually our agent, Lisa Peltier, who got to know us pretty well, suggested the house in Sandisfield. To be honest we had never heard of the town before. Neither had any of our friends. Among our criteria was privacy in a quiet country setting. An old house to boot really piqued our interest.”

Purely by coincidence a mutual Boston friend, Katherine Hein, happens to also be a Sandisfield part-time resident on Viets Road. She sang the praises of Sandisfield, which gave them confidence to proceed. “With that it only took one visit to the house to recognize the potential, warts and all, so we committed,” said Jeff.

Was this meant to be? Perhaps so. Consider that Jeff was born in Ticonderoga, New York. Jack finds it weirdly interesting that Fort Ticonderoga is the nominal beginning of the “Knox Trail” that in 1776 ran from there for some 175 miles – crossing virtually less than a mile north of this property – and on to Dorchester Heights, less than a mile from where they now live in Boston.

Want Another Coincidence?

Consider the Beech Plain connection of an old wooden clock and clock case that has passed down through Jack’s family. Jack related the story to the Times.

“When Jeffrey and I bought our house in Dorchester 12 years ago, my mom gave me a car load of furniture – lamps, a coffee table, night stands, chairs, and a clock. Everything was broken. My family never threw away things that we could fix ourselves. That load of broken stuff illustrates this tradition. I quickly fixed everything – except the clock. The cardboard box containing its wooden gears was a bit intimidating, although the case is beautiful. We put it away to be fixed later, but soon forgot it.

“During a renovation last fall, I found the clock in a closet. Instead of getting the wood gears working,



Jack’s clock, now Jeff’s.

I retreated to a simple modern battery-operated clock works with a ‘bim bam’ chime and I gave the clock to Jeffrey for Christmas.

“Later, Jeff was looking through the copy of *Sandisfield Then and Now*, the Sandisfield history that Sheila Kelly gave to us, and we discovered that the case was built

on this very road. Now we own two things from North Beech Plain Road that need restoration – a house and a clock.”


The clock case was the product of William Carter, a principal of the Porter & Carter Furniture Co. The company operated as a mill and wood-turning shop under various owners from about 1815 through the 1880s. It was located in extreme northeast Sandisfield close to the Otis town line.

A boom in clock making occurred in the 1820s, particularly in central Connecticut, and clocks were sent all over the country. But the intricate and delicate, generally wooden mechanisms, needed protection and attractive housing. That’s where Otis-born master woodworker William P. Carter (1783-1870) burnished his reputation in the 1830s.

Clocks with wooden mechanisms gave way in the early 1840s to new designs and mechanisms and mass production in the Connecticut factories.

This probably signaled the end of such especially beautiful clock cases like Carter's.

Was it a bit of fate or just chance that led our new neighbors here? Time may tell.

Meanwhile, a hearty Welcome-to-Sandisfield! to Jeff and Jack and good luck to them. We'll check back from time to time and report about their progress. 



*The old Porter & Carter shop, still standing.
Photo Sandisfield Then & Now, 2011*

Pastor Makes a Return Visit


Cont'd. from page 8.

The little church at New Boston will no doubt continue to face enormous issues in holding back the tide of progress which pushes such antiquated movements aside for the bigger, the better, the more impressive and, often, less spiritual. I encouraged them to hold fast; to not be intimidated by their smallness in the shadow of the big, big world that is pushing in – but to continue to be a very bright, little light in that place.



The interior of the New Boston Congregational Church.

I sensed something special in New Boston on that April Sunday; something not of this earth. A little breath of Heaven was blowing through that old chapel and this thing I do know: That wherever the breath of God blows it brings life. I am praying the breath of God that blows through that “little brown church” will blow new life into the community that surrounds it.

As I drove back to the “big city” of Brattleboro, Vermont, I wanted to hold my breath just long enough to exhale a little bit of that heavenly breeze into my town, because Lord knows, we need it. 

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By Terry Spohnholz

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Be happy for this moment. This moment is your life.

- Omar Khayyam

Glorious summer moments! Golden sunshine reaching out to warm me. Graceful butterflies meandering among the flower garden. Good gracious, it's summer. Gallivanting lightening bugs flickering in the evening night. Gathering all these moments.

Please note that beginning in July the Library will be open on Saturdays from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Happenings at the Library

Saturday, June 30 at 1:30 p.m., **Ed the Wizard** returns to the library for his Rocket Building workshop. Learn the basics of flight and test your skills. The workshop is geared for Grades 1 and up, but all are welcome. Join us after the rocket launches for summer treats.

Alas, Lynn Rubenstein, our wonderful craft person will be taking a hiatus from Kids Crafts at the Library. Thank you, Lynn, for all the fun times this year! Lynn will return in September for more fun and creativity.

Community Play group in the Sandisfield Community Center (basement space below the library) is also taking a summer hiatus. Anina Carr will be back in the fall for free play and table-top activities and a trip upstairs for story time in the library.

Summer Reading Program – The theme this year is “Superheros – Reading is a Super Power.” Prizes, fun activities and, of course, a party at the end of the summer to celebrate our “Super Readers.” Our kickoff for the program and ice cream social occurred on Wednesday June 27. Stop in the library for your Reading Super Power Pac and get started. Ages 2-12.

New Books in the Library

High Tide Club by Mary Kay Andrews – This book was recommended by my mentor and favorite boss ever, Clare English. Absolutely a great summer read with characters I fell in love with. Who can't resist a feisty girl with a Maine Coon cat on a leash! (*And she is not even the main character.*)

Warlight by Michael Ondaatje – a thrilling novel of adventure, love, intrigue, and desire. Set in London, 1945. A journey through reality, recollection, and imagination in a magnificently written novel. Ondaatje won the Booker Prize for his novel, *The English Patient*.

The Outsider by Stephen King – the prolific author is back with another great horror story. Accused of a horrific murder of a young boy, Terry Maitland – baseball youth coach, family man, all-round good guy – is arrested and the town turns against him. (As seemingly every character says at one point: “He coached my son/grandson!”) The case is driven by Detective Ralph Anderson, a man who liked Terry and can't believe that he would commit such an atrocity, but who also knows that all the evidence points to his guilt.

Then She Was Gone by Lisa Jewell – though non-fiction, this book reads like a classic thriller. Beauty, obsession, and the natural history heist of the century.

Neverworld Wake by Marisha Pessl – Her third book is a wonderful offering not only in the young adult genre but also science fiction. The story is a balanced blend of the solid (a murder-mystery element) and the fantastical (the “Neverworld” sci-fi element, also a mystery).

And other things...

The library has several family passes for various museums around the Berkshires. Stop by the library and inquire.

Many thanks to Dassy Herman who once again donated the gorgeous flower boxes that grace the Library front wall. I promise to keep them weeded and watered. 🍷

It is not how much we have, but how much we enjoy, that makes happiness.

– Charles Spurgeon

Sandisfield Historical Society



By Ann Wald, President

Summer Fair and Flea Market, July 7

- We will hold our Summer Fair and Flea Market on July 7 at Firehouse #2 on Route 57 (207 Sandisfield Road) from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.
- Our fair last year was a huge success and we expect this year to surpass that.
- More than 25 vendors will be selling a wide assortment of items.
- A fellow from East Hampton, Connecticut, will be showing all types of boxes to suit your fancy. Very unique items.
- A lady from Amenia, New York, will offer hand-cut donuts, breads, and preserves.
- A local mother will be selling baked goods as a fundraiser for autism research.
- Refreshments will be available for purchase to benefit the New Boston Congregational Church.
- Please join us. You will be surprised at the wide assortment of items that will be offered. We look forward to seeing you there.

Also, we'd like to see you at our regular meetings, the second Saturdays of the month. Stay for our potluck lunch after the meetings, all held at 11 a.m. the second Saturday of the month at our Meeting House, Sandybrook Turnpike (Rt. 183) at South Sandisfield Road.

- August 11, at the Meeting House: Election of Officers
- September 8, at the Meeting House. Regular meeting, discuss October's Apple Fest
- October, Apple Fest.
- November, our annual wine and cheese social with a Veteran's Day topic guest speaker
- December, our Christmas Fair.

Watch for dates. Contact me at annaw2@verizon.net. 🍷



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Spring Flowers and Birds Bring Summer Home Again

Photos: Cindy Ragusa



Yellow Rumped Warbler

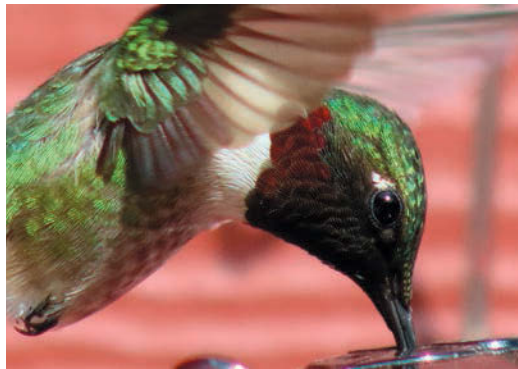


Trout Lily on Cold Spring Road



Purple Trillium

Hummingbird



Crocus

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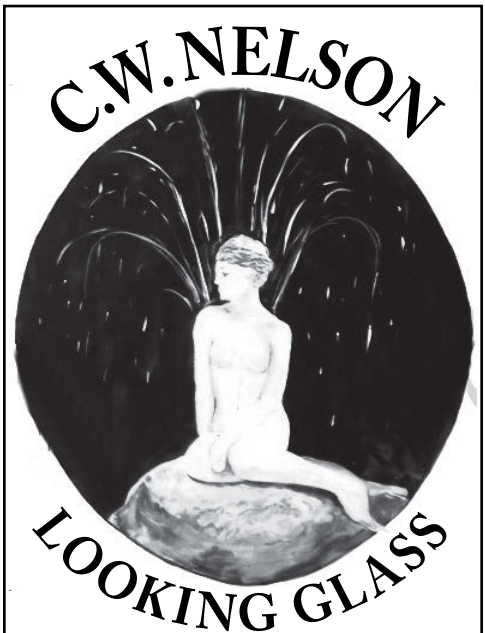
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Police/Fire/EMS Logs



POLICE:

May 2018 Incidents

- May 2 Section 12/Medical, West Hubbard Street, transport
- May 3 Brush fire, Tannery Road, fire controlled
- May 3 Vandalism, South Sandisfield Road, PD report taken
- May 4 Medical, Sandisfield Road, transport
- May 4 911 abandoned call, Sears Road, PD response
- May 5 Citizen assist, South Main Street, PD response
- May 5 Medical, Sandisfield Road, patient refusal
- May 5 Medical, Hammertown Road, patient refusal
- May 5 Burglar alarm, OWL, Lake Shore Drive, secure
- May 6 Medical, Sandisfield Road, transport
- May 8 Tree/wires, Viets Road, removed
- May 12 Burglar alarm, OWL, Tamarack Trail, secure
- May 14 Tree/wires, Silverbrook Road, removed

- May 15 Well-being check, Viets Road, checked/report taken
- May 16 Medical alarm, Sandisfield Road, unfound
- May 16 Burglar alarm, Town Hill Road, secure
- May 16 911 call, Sandisfield Road, unfound
- May 17 Burglar alarm, East Hubbard Road, secure
- May 17 Medical, Sandisfield Road, transport
- May 18 Hunt/complaint, South Beech Plain Road, report taken
- May 18 Citizen complaint, Sandisfield Road, unfounded
- May 18 Fire alarm, Webster Road, cancelled/response
- May 20 Burglar alarm, Town Hill Road, secure
- May 21 Medical, Sandy Brook Turnpike, transport
- May 22 Animal call, Town Hill Road, PD responded
- May 22 Medical, Sandisfield Road, transport
- May 22 Burglar alarm, Fox Road, secure
- May 22 Burglar alarm, Sandisfield Road, secure
- May 23 Medical, Granville Road, Tolland, patient refusal
- May 17 Medical, Burt Hill Road, Tolland, no transport



FIRE:

May 2018 Incidents

- May 3 Brush fire, Tolland FD assist, mutual aid
- May 8 Wires down
- May 14 Wires and tree down across road
- May 18 Fire alarm activation, investigate, no fire
- May 29 Smoke detector activation, investigate, no fire
- Mar. 29 Assist individual
- Mar. 31 Motor vehicle accident, Tolland, transport to Baystate Noble Hospital, Westfield

Our First Responders Need Help

By Times Reporters

Once again the call has gone out for volunteers for the Sandisfield Fire Department and the Emergency Medical Service.

“We need new volunteers, men and women, for both departments,” said Fire Chief Ralph Morrison. “We’ve had some response since last year, but not enough. All neighboring towns need help, too. We’re going to be in a lot of trouble if new people don’t turn out.”

Ralph added that while the departments could use younger volunteers, “older volunteers are more than welcome, too. We have a job for everyone.” Older



EMS:

May 2018 Incidents

- May 2 Medical, Otis ambulance responded to the call
- May 3 Medical, Otis ambulance responded
- May 4 Medical, Otis ambulance responded
- May 5 Medical, no transport
- May 5 Medical, no transport
- May 6 Medical, transport to Fairview Hospital, Great Barrington
- May 16 Medical, no transport
- May 17 Medical, transport to Charlotte-Hungerford, Torrington
- May 21 Medical, transport to Berkshire Medical Center, Pittsfield
- May 22 Life alert activation, investigate, malfunction
- May 23 Medical, mutual aid to Tolland
- May 27 Medical, mutual aid to Tolland



volunteers, for instance, could take highway safety training in order to direct traffic at a fire site. “Not everyone,” Ralph said, “needs to drag a hose.”

Training for the Fire Department and EMS ambulance service is mostly local and on-site. Ambulance volunteers do attend state-sponsored classes and graduate as certified emergency medical technicians. EMTs can carry their credentials with them if they move to other towns or states.

The Town pays a modest stipend for responding to calls. Ambulance staff can receive a daily fee for weekend days if they agree to be on call in Sandisfield.

To volunteer for either department, call Fire Chief Ralph Morrison at 258-4742.

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In Memoriam ...

TWO STEERS, ON THE RUN

By Susan Van Sickle and Bill Price



Two enormous red and white Hereford steers made their escape from a pasture near the center of Tolland on June 2nd. They were on the run in Sandisfield for nearly a month.

The owner came down the hill to work with Kim Spring, Sandis-

field's Animal Control Officer, and Police Chief Michael Morrison to round up his runaways, but with no luck. Either the steers weren't where they were last seen or they'd run deeper into the woods.

Steers are castrated bulls destined in most cases for the slaughter house; Herefords, in particular, produce excellent steaks and roasts. These two steers tried to escape their fate, but, near the end of June, their lives on the lam reached a sad end.

However, they had a good month. After their breakout, they made their way downhill through the woods to the Colebrook Reservoir where they hung out for a week. Eventually they made their way around the lake and across Rt. 8, heading west.

Sighted again near Riska Brook Orchard on New Hartford Road, they wandered the mountain top for a few days, grazing now and then among the apple trees.

They were reported as far west as Sandy Brook Turnpike. Brigitte Ruthman, owner of Joshua's Farm and no stranger to cattle, was called to see if she could come up with a plan to capture them. "They're a little wild now," she said, "and going to be hard to catch."

One of your reporters, on the way home one afternoon, came face-to-face with them on Rood Hill Road, not far from the intersection with South Sandisfield Road.

Their next stop was at neighbor Katie and Doug Rocco's place. When Katie tried feeding them to round them up, they bolted through some electric fencing and disappeared into the woods.

But the story was destined to end badly.

We wanted to imagine these two desperadoes still roaming the woods, making friends with the bears and the deer and the other wildlife. We still like that idea.

Instead, the steers were spotted in New Marlborough, not far from Norfolk Road. Once again they tried to escape, but this time, as the saying goes, they were "put down."

The authorities were concerned that had the steers escaped again, they could have wandered the roads at night where they could have been hit by a car, causing a lot of damage to passengers and to themselves. Had they been captured, they would have been trucked to a slaughterhouse, where they didn't want to go. R.I.P. 🐄

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Letters to the Editor

WEST LAKE MOTOR FREE

Although I do not live in Sandisfield, I do enjoy the area so very much.

I especially love canoeing on West Lake on a quiet night, and most of the time I have it all to myself.

West Lake is supposed to be a canoe/kayak lake only, no motors allowed. But many a time I am enraged at seeing bass boats being backed in and motoring across the lake. Large wakes from their motors tear up the shoreline.

I have called the EVPs but because it is a town pond/lake, they won't touch it.

I would ask whoever takes care of the road into the boat landing and cuts the grass to please put some large boulders or posts at the shoreline where boats are being backed in so they can no longer do so.

All boaters who use West Lake should understand it is a quiet lake and should be kept that way. Let's keep the lake what it should be, a quiet lake – so it stays this way. Help protect the shoreline, plants, and soil and the dam from damaging wakes.

Thanks so much for your time

– Fran Lewis
West Springfield



A Very Small Bird

Bug tiny,

A very small bird

Was on Route 8 this morning

And I got to thinking

How we preside,

How we have the whip hand,

And how she undoubtedly

Has a world of her own

With all sorts of things,

Like memories of the time

She rode the wind

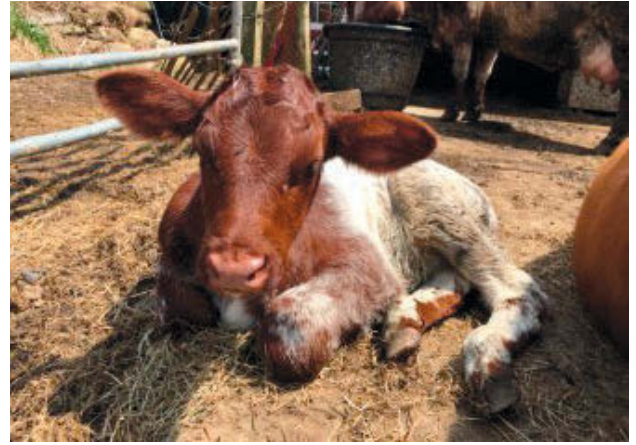
And met an eagle.

Val Coleman
West New Boston

Presenting Mr. Bo Jangles

*A milking shorthorn roan bull calf.
Bo was born April 30 in a snow squall at Joshua's Farm on Dodd Road. His mother is nine-years old, a senior citizen in bovine circles.*

Photo: Brigitte Ruthman



What's this Trunk or Treat?

No, it's not packing for a vacation to Disney World, it's not an elephant sniffing around your refrigerator, and it's definitely not a day at the spa.

It's a fun and safe alternative to trick-or-treating door-to-door. At trunk or treats, costumed children walk through a parking lot, stopping at cars (the trunk part) that are decorated for the holiday and receiving candy (the treat part).

The Sandisfield Recreational Committee will be sponsoring a TRUNK OR TREAT on Wednesday, October 31. We are looking for individuals and businesses who would like to join in this spooktacular event. Contact the Recreational Committee at sandisfieldrecommitte@gmail.com or the Sandisfield Free Public Library at Sandisfieldlibrary@gmail.com. 🇺🇸



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Now Hear This!

Edited by Laura Rogers-Castro.

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

JULY

Free Movie Night on Friday, July 6, at 5:30 p.m., at the Sandisfield Arts Center located on 5 Hammertown Road, off Route 57 in Sandisfield. This month's selection will be posted on www.sandisfieldartscenter.org.

Summer Fair and Flea Market on Saturday, July 7, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., at Fire Station #2 on Route 57. Raffles, baked goods, tag sale, many vendors, and more to benefit the Sandisfield Historical Society.

Opening Reception: Elizabeth Post on Saturday, July 7, at 2:00 p.m., at the Sandisfield Arts Center located on 5 Hammertown Road, off Route 57 in Sandisfield. The use of wool and recycled sweaters to create unique dolls. The Gallery will also be open during performances through July.

New Boston Church Service on Sunday, July 8, at 10:00 a.m., at the New Boston Congregational Church, Route 57. All are welcome.

Miriam Karmel and Tom Christopher Talk About Their New Books on Saturday, July 14, at 4:00 p.m., at the Sandisfield Arts Center located on 5 Hammertown Road, off Route 57 in Sandisfield. "Garden Revolution" by Tom Christopher will be explored in images and words, a radically new way to garden. Miriam will read selections from her recently published short story collection, "Subtle Variations and Other Stories." \$10.

Cemetery Clean-up on Saturday, July 21, at 9:00 a.m., at the Beech Plain Cemetery located about 2 miles north of Cold Spring Road. Bring gloves, bug spray, and a chair to take a break. Participants will drag brush to the edge of the road for the DPW to haul away.

Triple Play on Saturday, July 21, at 8:00 p.m., at the Sandisfield Arts Center on 5 Hammertown Road, off Route 57 in Sandisfield. Chris Brubeck's Triple Play returns to play their unique blend of blues, jazz, folk, and funk. \$20, tickets can be pre-purchased at sandisfieldartscenter.org.

Free Movie Night on Friday, July 27, at 5:30 p.m., at the Sandisfield Arts Center located on 5 Hammertown Road, off Route 57 in Sandisfield. The movie selection will be family friendly and posted on www.sandisfieldartscenter.org.

Michelle Arnot on Speaking Crosswordese on Saturday, July 28, at 10:30 a.m., at the Sandisfield Arts Center located on 5 Hammertown Road, off Route 57 in Sandisfield. This morning of coffee and crosswords will include an overview of crossword history, introduce the basic principles of American crossword puzzle construction, and peek behind the scenes at the New York Times and the annual American Crossword Puzzle Tournament.

A Piano Recital with Frederick Moyer to Celebrate the Arts Center's new piano on Saturday, July 28, at 8:00 p.m., at the Sandisfield Arts Center located on 5 Hammertown Road, off Route 57. Mr. Moyer will perform a program including works by Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Chopin, Rachmaninoff, Gershwin, and Oscar Peterson. His recitals are engaging and feature his MoyerCam, a projection system that allows the audience to see his hands as he plays. \$20. Tickets available online at www.sandisfieldartscenter.org.

SAVE THE DATE

Sandisfield Volunteer Firemen Steak Roast on Saturday, August 11. Dinner from 5 to 7 p.m., dancing to a live band from 6 p.m. Firehouse #2 on Rt. 57. Tickets can be purchased from any volunteer or call A&M Auto, 258-3381. **Tickets not available at the door.**

Open Mic Night on Friday, August 17, at 7:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center. Bring your talent, tell a story, read a poem, tell a joke, sing a song, play an instrument during this free event. For more information, contact John (258-4788 or 203-233-0518).

OTHER EVENTS IN SURROUNDING TOWNS

Bidwell Country Fair-Free Community Celebration on Saturday, July 7 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., at the Bidwell House Museum on 100 Art School Road, New Marlborough. Live music by Moonshine Holler and The Adams Brothers, Butler's Rangers re-enactors, children's activities, garden tour, exhibits, and more.

Otis Arts Festival (Save the Date) on Saturday, September 1 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., at the Farmington River Elementary School in Otis. Vendor applications due August 1. \$25 for non-Otis residents. Contact culturalco.otis@yahoo.com or 269-4674 for more information.

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Of what to be
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But to live
As nature meant to portray
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But we ourselves
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And never reminisce.



— Mary Ann Gacek
Beech Plain
Written "years ago"



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Diner, Otis Poultry Farm, Otis Woodlands (May-September), Knox Trail Inn, and the Laundromat. Locations in Monterey include the Library and the Roadside Cafe. Available also at the Southfield Store in New Marlborough. Back issues are available for purchase.

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