

The Times Is Nine Years Old!

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

Tribunus



Plebis

RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume X, Number 1

April 2019

Short-Term Rentals to Pay State Taxes

AN OPTION FOR A LOCAL TAX

By Roger Kohler, Planning Board Chairman

At the request of the Select Board, I attended a workshop in early March sponsored by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to outline a new Massachusetts law regulating short-term rentals that will take effect July 1. Following is a brief overview of information from the event that I recently reported to the Planning and Select boards. It is a summary only, and residents who offer short-term rentals should seek additional information at www.mass.gov, search for "short term rentals."

WHAT IS A SHORT-TERM RENTAL?

A short-term rental is an occupied property (not a hotel, motel, lodging house, or bed and breakfast) where at least one room or unit is rented out through the use of advanced reservations for a period of less than 31 days. These include apartments, houses, cottages, condos, and furnished accommodations.

STATE TAXES WILL APPLY

All "short-term rentals," including those hosted online through Airbnb, VRBO, and Homeaway, and other sites will be taxed as of July 1 the same way as current hotels, motels, and bed and breakfasts. Short-term rentals will have to pay the state excise room tax, currently 5.7 percent of the rent charged directly to the

Cont'd p. 4, Column 3

Public Safety Officer Gets a Nod

SELECT BOARD SAYS "YES" TO PROPOSED FULL-TIME POSITION

By Seth Kershner and Bill Price

At their March 25 meeting, the Select Board approved the idea of funding a new full-time Town employee to serve in a hybrid role as police officer, firefighter, and EMT.

As The Times reported last month, like many small towns in the area, Sandisfield has historically built its protective services by forming volunteer fire and rescue squads and employing part-time police officers. However, the dwindling number of volunteers staffing the fire and rescue crews and the few police available, a rise in the number of 911 calls, and increases in the state's training and paperwork requirements have overburdened and threaten to overwhelm the volunteer departments.

Sandisfield is not alone. Other South County towns have struggled to recruit and retain volunteer EMTs and firefighters.

According to a March report in the Berkshire Record, Egremont is taking steps to make their fire chief a paid position. Egremont's current chief told the weekly newspaper that a shrinking pool of volunteers makes it "harder to keep up with paperwork and regular maintenance on top of weekly trainings."

Locally, an informed source tells the Times that the privately-run Otis Rescue Squad is looking to expand its coverage from five to seven days per week. Traditionally, Otis relies on a pool of volunteers to respond in the evenings and on weekends – times when the full-time, paid rescue staff are off-contract. But lately, they have had difficulty mustering a crew and have been relying on mutual aid from Becket EMTs to cover the night shift.

Last December the leaders of Sandisfield's fire and police departments proposed creating the new full-time position of Public Safety Officer. Fire Chief Ralph Morrison and Police Chief Mike Morrison have since met several times with the Select Board and once with the Finance Committee refining and narrowing their proposal.

As they see it, the Public Safety Officer would serve as the town's daytime first responder, with police, fire, and EMT responsibilities.

Cont'd p. 3



DRIVERS: PLEASE WATCH OUT FOR TURTLES IN APRIL & MAY!



Select Board Report

Most of the Select Board's time and attention in March has focused on the budget. The warrant for the Annual Town Meeting in May needs finalizing in March, and the budget is, as always, a balancing act. The School District budget and Sandisfield's share of that remain difficult and significant issues, which we are still negotiating.

The Board had a work session with the DPW Superintendent on March 14. Mud season, the worst in memory throughout the county, was naturally the first topic. Brad outlined the steps he had taken to pre-empt some of its worst results. We need to expect and prepare for more severe and unpredictable weather events altogether. A program of grading/crowning, drainage ditches, and culvert and driveway runoff control for all our roads will be undertaken. It may take years to remediate all 93 miles of town roads.

We discussed town equipment. One of the DPW trucks has been in the shop more often than on the road, and we need to get rid of it. DPW needs a smaller pickup truck, big enough for a plow yet small enough for some of our smaller roads and parking lots. The other piece of problematic equipment is the backhoe loader, which has been "red tagged", meaning it can't be taken on the road. This is a crucial piece of equipment for the drainage work mentioned above, so we need to get it out of the DPW yard. Trying to repair it is not cost-effective; a new loader costs \$129,000, but we can get a decent used one for half that amount. The Board recognizes that the effective maintenance and improvement of our roads requires properly functioning equipment, and will put both of these items on the Town Meeting warrant. The DPW crew has been doing a great job of repairing other pieces of necessary equipment.

We also discussed our remaining Chapter 90 funds. Brad presented various alternatives, with pros and cons and costs, for treatment of some of our most critically deteriorated roads: West Hubbard, Town Hill at Route 57, River, and Dodd Roads. We will start some of these projects in April. We are also meeting with Allstate Paving concerning their past work on Cold Spring Road, South Sandisfield Road, and West Street, all of which need to be remedied.

In general, we recognized that the consensus in town has been that the DPW crew has done great work this winter in the face of very challenging weather, and we thanked Brad for his leadership in pulling this all together.

We had a very interesting meeting with June Wolfe of Construct, Inc. and Ann Wald regarding senior and affordable housing in Sandisfield. The next

step will be to get a committee together to do an inventory of available land, resources and needs, and possible partnering with surrounding towns.

NOTICE: The DCR is opening York Lake for the summer season starting in May. On April 27 there will be a volunteer cleanup day at the lake, starting at 12:30. Please join this effort to prepare our lake for a great summer!

Mark Newman
Brian O'Rourke
George Riley

Free Playgroups Open

By Nina Carr

With Spring on the way, this is a reminder for families with young children that Southern Berkshire Kids sponsors two "playgroups" a week in our area.

On Mondays we meet in the basement of the Sandisfield Library at 9:30-11:00 and on Tuesdays at the Otis Town Hall at the same time. Both playgroups are free and children from birth to 5 years and their caregivers are welcome. Reservations are not required. Just drop in.

On April 18 at 10:00 a.m., a special program will be offered at the Otis Library. Former preschool teacher and author Mary Ames Mitchell will read and sing from her children's book/ballad, *Henry's Big Kaboom*. Mary wrote the sing-along ballad as a way to introduce her preschool grandchildren to her ancestor General Henry Knox and his contribution to the Revolutionary War. Please join Nina Carr and Sue Ebitz for this free interactive story hour. 🍷

Scholarships Available

APPLY BY APRIL 20

By Laura Rogers-Castro

Applications for the 2019 Sandisfield Scholarships are now available for high school seniors planning to attend a two- or four-year college this fall.

Funds provided through the scholarship can be used for any college expenses during the second semester of the student's freshman year.

To be eligible, you must be a current resident of Sandisfield and a resident for at least one year.

The one-page application form is easy to complete. Other documentation required includes a copy of high school transcripts, three letters of reference, and a formal letter of interest.

The deadline to submit the application and documentation is on or before April 20. Applications are available at the Sandisfield Post Office and Public Library, in addition to Monument Mountain Regional High School.

The Sandisfield Scholarship Committee would like to thank all residents and others who help make the scholarship possible by supporting us at the Historical Society's Summer and Holiday Fairs and at the Sandisfield Firemen's Steak Roast. Special thanks this year are extended to Ralph Morrison, Lynn Rubenstein, and the Sandisfield Historical Society in memory of Norton Fletcher.

Donations are always welcome and appreciated. If you would like to make a donation or sponsor a scholarship (\$250-\$500), please send a check to PO Box 672, Sandisfield or contact Laura Rogers-Castro (258-4688) or Nina Carr (258-3314).

Another way to support the scholarship fund is to purchase a child's T-shirt for \$11 or two for \$20. Sizes include children's small, medium, and large. The attractive bright green T-shirts can be purchased by contacting me at the number listed above. 🍷



*The Hillside
Garden Inn*
An Intimate B&B

The perfect place for your out-of-town guests!

- ★ ★ ★ ★ ★
- Five-Star Trip Advisor® Rating
- Sumptuous, Multiple-Course Homemade Breakfast
- Screened-In Patio Overlooking Tranquil, Park-like Grounds and Beautiful Lush Gardens
- Welcoming Wraparound Porch Overlooking the Farmington River
- Easy Access Flexible Check-In/Out Times

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Offering gracious, warm hospitality and charming, immaculate accommodations in the historic c. 1784 Elijah Twining house.

3 Tolland Road
Sandisfield, Mass.
413.258.4968
www.hillsidegardeninn.com

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

OUR THANKS

Many contributors chipped in to help with this month's issue of The Times, our 9th birthday.

Michelle Arnot and Setsuko Winchester organized a Contributor's Committee of 4 consisting of Rita Kasky, Brigitte Ruthman, and themselves. Brigitte is one of our chief reporters, but we're glad to have Michelle, Setsuko, and Rita on the job as well. Roger Kohler reported on a seminar he attended. Jerry Herman kicked in a summary of what was fixed at the Arts Center over the winter. Laura Rogers-Castro wrote about her love for vernal pools.

Two regulars submitted pieces, Simon Winchester on his new Real ID and Tim Brooks on Sandisfield

wrestlers. Our town librarian, Historical Society president, COA reporter, and PTA members all turned in their work on time. Reporter Tom Christopher was on vacation, but will return soon to write about local stuff. And, though on vacation far away, Ron Bernard and Jean Atwater-Williams contributed their crucial work from wherever they could find a wi-fi signal. Our local delivery guy and poet, Val Coleman, sent us a verse for April. And with her creative design skills, Tina Sotis put it all together as she has for all 9 years of The Times.

We're grateful to all who contribute to the paper. We can always use more. Send us stories, photos, letters, and ideas.

Bill Price and Seth Kershner

Public Safety Officer Gets a Nod

Cont'd From p. 1

As outlined, the PSO would staff the police desk Monday through Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., and serve on-call for an additional four hours of each shift.

The chiefs pointed out the necessity of the position because of "the increase in calls, the hours needed to service those calls, and the increased paperwork needed to comply with State regulations and ambulance billing requirements. Most of our volunteers work outside town and are simply not available during daytime hours. We often can't staff emergency calls."

Advocates for the PSO position point to much greater longer-term costs of having to hire a private ambulance squad to make up for a lack of volunteer EMTs. An estimate from a Pittsfield company to cover Sandisfield seven days a week – during daytime hours only, when volunteers are spread thin – was projected at an annual cost to the town of \$345,000.

A growing number of Sandisfield ambulance calls come from Tolland, which has three residents who are certified EMTs but no ambulance service of its own. If a call comes from the North Tolland area, Otis Rescue Squad usually responds; otherwise, Sandisfield Fire and Rescue has to respond.

At a March 14 joint meeting of the Tolland and Sandisfield Select Boards, Fire Chief Morrison restated his case for the Public Safety Officer position and urged the town of Tolland to consider making an annual contribution to help finance it. He pointed out that between February 5 and March 7, Sandisfield Fire and Rescue responded to 27 medical calls, four of which were in Tolland. Over one six-month period, Fire Chief Morrison

mentioned that the Sandisfield EMS crew was summoned to Tolland a total of 20 times.

This proposal apparently has the support of the Tolland Select Board, which has placed the issue on the warrant at their Annual Town Meeting this year.

(Tolland selectman Eric Munson could not be reached for comment as this issue of the Times went to press).

The Sandisfield Select Board has long supported the concept of a paid, full-time position that would ease some of the strain on an otherwise all-volunteer department. At the March 14 joint meeting, Selectman Brian O'Rourke said he sees the position as a way to avoid bringing a privately-run service to Sandisfield. "I personally feel like in the long run, this will save the town a lot of money."

According to Sandisfield's budgeting process, following the Select Board's vote to approve the request, the issue is then forwarded to the Finance Committee. If it meets with approval there, the proposal can be included on the Town Meeting warrant.

In an email to the Times, Joe Gelinas, chair of the Finance Committee, said that he and other committee members reviewed the first written proposal in mid-March, but were not prepared to vote at that time. The committee did, however, send several questions about the proposal to the Select Board. Too late for this issue of The Times, the Committee was scheduled to meet March 27 to discuss and possibly vote on this and other budget issues forwarded by the Select Board.

"This position is to improve the quality of service to our community," Fire Chief Morrison said in a statement to The Times. "Please to come to the May Town meeting to show your support." 🐾

Election Schedule

ELECTION AND TOWN MEETING, APRIL/MAY

- April 11 Town Caucus. Old Town Hall, 7 p.m.
- April 18 Last day to object or withdraw nomination papers
- April 29 Last day to register to vote at the Annual Town Meeting and the Annual Town Election. Registration will be held at Town Hall Annex from 2 to 4 p.m. and 7 to 8 p.m.
- May 18 Annual Town Meeting, Fire Station #2, Rt. 57, 10 a.m.
- May 20 Annual Town Election, Old Town Hall, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

RUNNING FOR OFFICE

As of press time, following are the names of those who have taken out nomination papers for election to the open offices.

Office	Term	Currently held by
Moderator	1 year	Simon Winchester
Selectman	3 years	George Riley
Board of Assessors	3 years	Bethany Perry
School Committee	3 years	John Skrip, Jr.
Board of Health	3 years	Kim Spring
Planning Board	2 years	
Planning Board	5 years	Paul Gaudette
Library Trustee	5 years	Clare English

Except for the School Committee position, all those taking out papers are the current office holders. Nomination papers were available until March 26. Others can be nominated at the Town Caucus.

TOWN CAUCUS

The Town Caucus will be held on Thursday, April 11 at 7:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall, Silverbrook Road. A final opportunity to be nominated for an office will be at the Town Caucus.



On the Road

By Sandisfield Times Reporters

Mud season offers a good reason to take stock of the roads. In a statement to the Times, Highway Superintendent Brad Curry put things in perspective: "Residents have enjoyed a relatively mild mud season in the past couple of years. This year's winter with a lot of rain and fluctuating temperatures of warm and extreme cold has locked moisture in the ground so the melting snow doesn't drain away easily."

Curry said that he and his crew have been working "every day grading and filling in low spots and knocking down the high spots. We have been adding stone as the budget permits to help stiffen up the roads."

Still battered from last year's Rugg Bridge detour, River Road is in a sorry state. Curry told the Select Board at a March 14 work session that he would like to chip seal this narrow dirt road running along the Clam River. Another option would be to pay extra for a more durable alternative to chip seal. Selectman Brian O'Rourke said that given how little River Road is now used, it would be better to save the extra expensive treatments for a more heavily used byway, like West Hubbard Street.

OH MY DODD!

Poor old Dodd Road has been the focus of several articles this year – as well as a letter from Jack Grumbach on page 19.

Curry noted that Dodd appears to be "one of the more trafficked dirt roads I've seen in town." This time of year, it is also one of the most heavily rutted. Selectman Newman offered his opinion that much of the damage to the road is "self-inflicted." Citing the frequent journeys made along the road by construction equipment belonging to an area business owner, Curry agreed with Newman.

The Highway Superintendent suggested that the Town do a traffic study to assess just how much use Dodd Road actually gets.

Discussion quickly centered on what was described as "water issues," leading Curry to wonder if there might be a natural spring or two lurking beneath the road somewhere. Chairman Mark Newman said that he would prefer to see what the DPW accomplish with "gravel and grading" alone. If after a year goes by and there are still problems, Newman said, then he would want to explore more intensive work on the road. Selectman Brian O'Rourke agreed that grading is a "big factor" in any plan to fix Dodd Road. But he also warned: "If we don't do water mitigation first, whatever else we do will be a waste of money." 🗑️

March Mudness: Tips for Surviving Mud Season

An evil combination of rain and warm days melted frozen dirt roads into brown and black mush. This year's mud season was worse than usual. One resident's husband required a hospital visit, but needed help to get down the steep mud road to reach a paved road. A local farmer lost clients who couldn't come in to pick up milk and eggs. Oil delivery trucks couldn't make it up hills or sometimes across a level roadway. Wood trucks mired down. Gravel couldn't be delivered. Drivers gave up.

Brad Curry, DPW Superintendent, offered the following rules for mud season:

- Stay off the dirt roads, if possible. If you do not have to travel on them, don't. The more the vehicles stir up the mud, the deeper the mud gets and the longer it takes to dry out. If you live on a dirt road, try to minimize your trips.
- Pay attention to our signs. If we post a sign that says "caution mud" there will be mud and you may want to use an alternate route. If we post a sign that says "road closed" well, that should be self-explanatory.
- If you must travel a dirt road, try to time your trips to coincide with the colder temperatures when the mud will solidify. Early morning trips might be easier, especially if the temperatures went below freezing.
- If you see anyone tearing up our dirt roads, i.e., 4-wheel drive mudding, please call the police. They are tearing up your road and your tax dollars. 🗑️



South Beech Plain Road, mid-March
Photo: Mary Ann Grammer

Short-Term Rentals to Pay State Taxes

Cont'd From p. 1

Department of Revenue ("rent" includes all service charges and cleaning fees.)

All short-term rentals will be required to obtain a Certificate of Registration from the Commissioner of Revenue and be on the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development Registry. Hosting platforms that collect rent must be certified but there is no information yet on the registration process.

Once registered and certified, Short-Term Rentals that are rented for 14 days or less over a calendar year do NOT have to pay the state or local excise room tax.

LOCAL TAX OPTION

A local tax option is available to communities like Sandisfield to add up to 6 percent on top of the state's 5.7 percent tax.

If adopted, this would apply to all rooms subject to the state tax. The Department of Revenue would collect and distribute this money back to the town every year. While Sandisfield has no plan to institute such a local tax on rentals, fifteen towns and cities in Berkshire County have implemented the option.

A town can accept the local room occupancy excise tax by a simple majority vote at a town meeting. If, for example, fifteen residents attended a town meeting and eight voted to approve the local option tax, the tax would be applied.

It is unknown how much money is generated by short-term rentals in Sandisfield. But, for example, if that amount is \$50,000, at a rate of 6 percent that would be \$3,000 to the town. While no one will compare that amount to a flood of cash, some might be happy with having a small stream of positive cash flow.

All taxable rooms in Sandisfield would be affected by the local option, which would include the New Boston Inn and Hillside Bed & Breakfast. There is no way to only tax short-term rentals and not tax existing inns or B&Bs under this rule.

LOCAL REGULATIONS

Through general and zoning bylaws, towns may address issues regarding safety, economics, noise, parking, and the environment that may come from short-term rentals. Inspections for rental units, limiting the number of them (similar to liquor licenses), lot size requirements, occupancy caps, location, and parking restrictions are possible. There are still unanswered questions about use of the public water supply and septic system limits.

This is a brief overview of the new regulations. For additional information, residents who rent rooms or houses on a short-term basis are encouraged to visit www.mass.gov, search for "short term rentals." 🗑️

Affordable Housing? Here?

CONSTRUCT, INC. WANTS TO HELP

By Seth Kershner

It's been said that Sandisfield has trouble holding onto its young. Once area teens leave school, they very often quit town, too.

According to the latest U.S. Census Bureau data, people in their twenties represent less than eight percent of the population of Sandisfield; those in their sixties make up the largest demographic group.

A lack of younger people worries Fire Chief Ralph Morrison, who cites it as one of the main reasons it has been so difficult to recruit volunteer EMTs and firefighters.

Even if young people want to live here, can they afford a home?

Massachusetts state law actually requires all municipalities to have 10 percent of housing designated affordable; Sandisfield is not currently meeting this requirement.

June Wolfe, Housing Director for the South County-based nonprofit Construct, Inc.,

addressed this issue and discussed possible solutions at a March 4 Select Board meeting.

Wolfe believes that lack of affordable places to rent contributes to this crisis of young people not staying in Sandisfield. And makes it much harder for senior citizens, as well.

U.S. Census Bureau data indicates that about seven percent of households in Sandisfield are rentals. "If Sandisfield has very few apartments for rent," Wolfe said during her presentation, "it may be one reason that youth live elsewhere."

The mission of Construct is housing for everyone, Wolfe explained. Her organization helps communities find funding to build affordable housing units through private, state, and federal grants. They then handle the development, construction, and maintenance aspects of a project and help towns navigate the regulatory process. Founded more than 50 years ago, Wolfe's organization has built affordable and senior housing – mostly rental



units – in Stockbridge, Great Barrington, Becket, Lee, and Egremont.

In an email, Paul Lischetti, Housing Director at Hilltown Community Development Corporation, explained that construction costs and other fees associated with housing development "often make it impossible to build affordable housing unless there is a substantial subsidy coming from the Commonwealth, HUD, a town, or other grant sources." Lischetti added that the HCDC, which helps build affordable housing in Chesterfield, Goshen and other rural communities in the Pioneer Valley, typically uses a variety of public and private grant and loan funds.

One way to reduce the cost to Sandisfield would be working in partnership with other communities. The towns of Tolland, Otis, Tyringham, and Monterey have approached Construct, Inc. about collaborating to create senior housing. In an email to the Times, Wolfe explained: "They understand that all of their towns want this but it makes more sense to share and build it in one place, not five places." According to Select Board meeting minutes, Selectman George Riley embraced the partnership idea.

If Sandisfield decides to work with Construct, the next step will be to form a committee to do an inventory of available land, resources, and needs. Anyone interested in getting involved in this kind of project should contact either the Select Board or Ann Wald, who invited Construct to make the presentation. Ann can be reached at 413-258-4415 or at annaw2@verizon.net.

Unpredictable or severe weather can pose a threat to life and property in Sandisfield!

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND A 2-PART COMMUNITY RESILIENCE-BUILDING WORKSHOP

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 2019, 5:00-8:00 P.M.

AND

WEDNESDAY APRIL 10, 2019, 5:00-8:00 P.M.

OLD TOWN HALL, RTE. 57, SANDISFIELD

A LIGHT MEAL WILL BE SERVED

Sandisfield is working with Berkshire Regional Planning Commission to host an important Community Resilience-Building Workshop, that brings together knowledgeable residents like you, to identify and prioritize actions to reduce risk and improve resilience to natural hazards like flood, fire, tornado, or severe storms.

The Workshop will allow us to apply for grants from both the state and federal governments, to implement the preparedness strategies identified. Please help us clarify the Town's priorities, improve community resilience and enhance natural hazard mitigation efforts....RSVP to mmcdonough@berkshireplanning.org, or call 413-442-1521 x16, no later than Monday, April 1, 2019.

We hope you can join us April 3rd & 10th - Thank you!

SANDISFIELD MUNICIPAL VULNERABILITY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE
John Burrows, Chairperson

Fleur de lis Housekeeping

Licensed, Bonded and Insured

Deep cleaning
from top to bottom

Suzanne Hoynoski, Owner

(413) 258-4070

(860) 309-6598

Est. 2002

Age-Friendly Sandisfield

HOW DO WE KNOW WE'RE GETTING UP THERE?

By Rita Kasky

I have often wondered just how one knows when one is a Senior. I know, it sounds pretty silly, but just consider:

- An 18-year old in high school could be called a Senior
- A 22-year-old college student may be called a Senior
- A 40-year-old at the office might belong to Senior management
- A 50-year-old is targeted by AARP Magazine as a Senior
- A 65-year-old at Guido's in Great Barrington qualifies for discounts as a Senior.

Google will tell you that a Senior is an older or more experienced person, or someone holding a high and authoritative position or (get this) a person who is a specified number of years older than someone else. Well, I could go on and on about the definition of the term Senior and then try to figure out who is and who isn't or who feels like a Senior and who doesn't.

What's being a Senior really all about? How do you know when you've joined the ranks of Seniors? And how do you feel about it?

A trip to one of Sandisfield's Wednesday morning Elder Services Senior Center gatherings gave me a chance to pose these questions to some of our residents. The lower level of Town Hall (aka the basement) serves as the home of the Senior Center, which is a member of the Council on Aging.

In mid-March I joined Linda and Shirley and Betty for a while and then along came Edna and, shortly after that, Frank. OK, I thought, this is the bunch that will fill me in on the facts of Senior lives. Since it's sometimes easier to interview one's peers (especially when it comes to age), I confessed that statistically I, too, am a senior. I confessed the shock I felt the first time the cashier at Big Y asked, "Do you need help getting the groceries to the car, ma'am?"

Shirley, for one, doesn't think of herself as a senior. While she retired from her job at the laundromat when bending became a problem, she's energetic and doesn't let issues with bending compromise her enjoyment of life. Shirley credits her family for keeping her on her toes with remarks like "C'mon, Mom, get up and let's go," and she's most grateful for those opportunities. Shirley's cool! Oh, yes, she did mention that she did feel 'a bit' like a senior when the family put a chair in the bathtub for her so she could get in and out. Not a bad idea for many of us. And, by the way, she suggests getting a "gofer" to do the heavy-lifting!



Linda shared that she has had an enjoyable working life although too often she found herself out of a job, being replaced by "younger people," those with the tech skills that her generation didn't grow up with. (Several people I spoke with that morning referred



to losing jobs because of age discrimination). Linda is the case manager for our Elder Services Program, knows the ins and outs of all the services available, and is a major resource for our Sandisfield program. Linda's a "senior" too, although deep inside she feels like 17! What a great attitude!

To me, Betty is a real heroine, having raised nine children. Over the last several years she has begun to feel like a senior – who can blame her with a family of that size? She's sunny and smart and engaged in conversation with interesting comments and witty remarks.

Frank wandered in with his dog. A former advertising man, he had a long and fruitful career working on engineering accounts and then, another casualty of age discrimination, he began a consulting firm doing that very same kind of work. Now at 93 he's a volunteer driver for our local elders, taking them to doctor's appointments, shopping, whatever. And he looks real happy about it.

Edna says things don't feel much different now that she's retired. That's the spirit!

For me at 78, like Linda I feel young "inside." Not quite 17 as she does, more like 40-ish, and while I have aches and pains I find this time of life more rewarding and exciting now that I have time to appreciate all that exists around me – the nature of it all, the ability to pick and choose what projects I want to be involved in, and the feeling that I no longer have to prove anything to myself. I'm satisfied with what I've done with my life and look forward to more interesting and enriching opportunities.

What about you? I'd love to hear from anyone who has a story to share about life in Senior world.

It seems that we are losing our senior population faster than we are replacing it. The Wednesday morning gatherings (which include home-cooked lunch) have just a small group of followers. So let's encourage others to drop in and share their stories, see folks they haven't seen in a while. We can all learn from each other. 



**Carl
Codling
Construction**

Tiling Baths Doors Kitchens Flooring
Trimwork Windows Custom Cabinetry

Insured
MA CSL #103868
MA HIC #165386

(c) 413.854.8136 (h) 413.258.2861 carlecod1@verizon.net

30+ YEARS EXPERIENCE
REMODELING DONE RIGHT

Historic Southfield Home Destroyed by Fire

FORMER CHURCH DAMAGED NEXT DOOR

By *Brigitte Ruthman*

By the time a newspaper deliveryman passed through the village center just after 3:30 a.m. on March 15, flames were pouring through the windows of a Southfield home. The blaze threatened to quickly claim the former Southfield Church and the Southfield Store on either side.

The unidentified driver began honking his horn to awaken residents who then called 911 and touched off a first alarm at 3:42 a.m.

“More than 100 firefighters got out of bed that morning,” said Fire Chief Charles Loring, who pulled up to find the historic village home – built in the 1800s – engulfed in flames and the church already on fire. Loring quickly called for mutual aid. Those that responded included ladder trucks from Canaan and Monterey which proved crucial to saving the church building, now rented for artist and living space

“I thought we were going to lose the church,” said Loring, who is also the town’s highway superintendent. “Without the ladder trucks we would have.”

The ladder trucks were used to help hoses reach the three-story steeple, where a side panel was removed so crews could douse the outer wall.

In order to deliver a steady, continuous volume of water, a water shuttle was initiated between fire-tanker trucks and the pumper trucks equipped with hose lines. Used now throughout much of the region, water shuttles are crucial to rural firefighting where hydrants are unavailable and a lack of water can stop a firefight regardless of manpower.

While the home at 15 Norfolk Road and everything inside was lost to the fire, no one was hurt. The owners – Emily Newman and Jeremy Stanton – were living across the street at the time while repairs were being made to their home following a small electrical fire two weeks earlier.

Firefighters and rescue equipment arrived from nearby towns including Sandisfield and as far away as Falls Village and Egremont. Other town departments were called to stand by in case they were needed at the scene.

Given the proximity of the burning house to other buildings, fire crews worked feverishly to keep the



The morning after the fire. The destroyed house stood behind the scorched picket fence. Although the adjacent church building sustained damage, New Marlborough Fire Chief Loring said the structure is repairable.

Photo: Setsuko Winchester

fire from spreading. The Southfield Store, another abutter, was not damaged, although it could have been. “There was enough of a breeze for the fire to spread to the store too,” Loring told the Times.

The cause of the blaze remains under investigation by state fire marshals and the insurance company. But it’s unlikely a specific cause will ever be found because of the extent of the damage, Loring said. ♡

Emily Newman is well known to many in the area as the practice owner and a staff veterinarian at Bilmar Veterinary Services in Great Barrington. A Go Fund Me page has been established to help the family at: <https://www.gofundme.com/emily-amp-jeremy-stanton-fire-recovery-fund>

The Historic
1737 New Boston Inn
 Restaurant, Tavern and B&B

Reservations Strongly Recommended
 Restaurant open Thursday-Sunday noon till 8pm
 Sat. and Sun noon till 9pm

Piano Music Live Friday nights 6-8:45
 Seven Guest Rooms, All Private Baths (Breakfast for Guests Only)

Pets Welcome!

101 North Main St., Sandisfield, MA (Corner of Rtes. 8 & 57)
 413-258-4477 • List of events at www.NewBostonInn.com

Police/Fire/EMS Logs



POLICE

POLICE, CONT'D

February 24 911 hang up, Tolland Road
 February 25 Tree blocking road,
 South Beech Plain Road
 February 26 Fire alarm, Rood Hill Road

February 2019 Incidents, 911 Calls

February 1 Illegal dumping, North Main Street
 February 1 Mutual aid to Otis
 to assist with traffic at fire
 February 1 Mutual aid, Fire Call in Otis
 February 5 Medical call, Sandisfield Road
 February 7 Motor vehicle fire, South Main Street
 February 13 Well-being check, Cold Spring Road
 February 13 Assist citizen, South Beech Plain Road
 February 13 Tree on wires, Elk Road
 February 15 911 Hang up, Sears Road
 February 17 Suspicious activity, Sandisfield Road
 February 21 Motor vehicle accident,
 South Main Street
 February 22 Wires down, South Main Street
 February 23 Structure fire, New Marlborough
 February 24 Disabled motor vehicle, Sandy Brook Tpke



FIRE

February 2019 Incidents, 911 Calls

February 2 . . . Stand-by at station for structure fire in Otis
 February 7 Motor vehicle fire, South Main Street
 February 22 Tree on wires, South Main Street
 February 23 Mutual aid to New Marlborough for structure
 fire
 February 25 Tree on wires, Sears Road.
 No crew available. Highway department
 made check. Unfounded.
 February 25 Wires down, South Beech Plain Road
 February 26 Smoke detector activation.
 Investigation completed. No fire



EMS

February 2019 Incidents, 911 Calls

February 2 Medical call, transport to
 Fairview Hospital
 February 5 Medical call, transport to
 Fairview Hospital
 February 11 EMS/ lift assistance
 February 11 Motor vehicle accident, mutual aid to
 Tolland, transport to Noble Hospital
 February 21 Motor vehicle accident,
 Route 8 South, no transport
 February 24 Medical call, transport to
 Fairview Hospital



RALPH E. MORRISON

413-258-3381



A & M AUTO SERVICE

COMPLETE AUTO & TRUCK CARE
 IMPORT AND DOMESTIC

24 HOUR HEAVY DUTY & LIGHT TOWING & RECOVERY
 FLAT BED SERVICE

ROUTE 57/EAST

SANDISFIELD, MA 413-258-3381

KNOX TRAIL INN

1898 EAST OTIS RD (RT 23) EAST OTIS, MA
 413-269-4400
 KNOXTRAILINN.COM



PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE OR FACEBOOK PAGE
 FOR HOURS OF OPERATION AND ENTERTAINMENT SCHEDULE

WINTER SNOWFALL AND EXTREMES



2018-2019 to date, as measured/estimated at
 a Beech Plain back-yard weather station.

EXTREME TEMPERATURES

Nov 22, T'Day 2 degrees F
 Nov 23 -1 degree F
 Dec 20-22 2.71 inches rain
 Jan 21. -12 degree F
 Jan 31. -8 degrees F

SNOWFALL INCHES

November 11.5
 December 4
 January 2019 15
 February 2019 11
 March 3 6.5
 March 22 1.0
 March Total. 7.5

SEASON TO DATE 49.0 INCHES

Trespasser: One Hungry Owl

By Setsuko Winchester

After nearly 12 years living full-time in Sandisfield, I had never seen an owl close up until recently. I'd spotted one from a distance a few times and would hear a hoot now and then, nothing specific or memorable. But, last year, I started hearing the distinct cry, "Who-cooks-for-yooou," "Who-Cooks-for-yooou." Sometimes far, other times quite close. Then, early this year, as I was walking our dog Tusker down our road around dusk, I spotted a very large owl perched in one of the trees along the road near the house.

It was the first time I was able to observe one at close range. It sat on a low branch, turning its head round and round as it eyed me and the dog while I tried to get a better look. It had a marvelous snowy white coat with short dark stripes. Since they eat mice and small predators, I was thrilled that we had a resident mouser on the premises to police our barn and chicken house. I was able to get a nice shot of him with my phone and sent it to a friend who identified it as a barred owl, native to the Northeast and not an uncommon species around here. But for me it was a special encounter and a thrilling moment. That's the top photo on the right.

Since then, the number of Sandisfield neighbors reporting barred owl sightings have become almost common.

What may not be as common is what happened in early March after a snowstorm.

At dusk our goose began screeching at the top of its lungs. The other birds, eleven chickens, were also making a huge racket. It reminded me of the time raccoons poached our chickens, which was why we close them up in their coop at night.

This time, however, it was still daylight. What could be wrong? I opened the door but saw nothing. As I looked around the chickens quieted down. Then I spotted a chicken shoved into the back corner of the chicken house, laying on its back.

I thought: We have a predator. I headed off for a pair of gloves when the chickens and the goose began screaming all over again. I ran back to find probably THAT owl trying to capture one of our chickens. I took its picture, again. That's the bottom photo on the right.

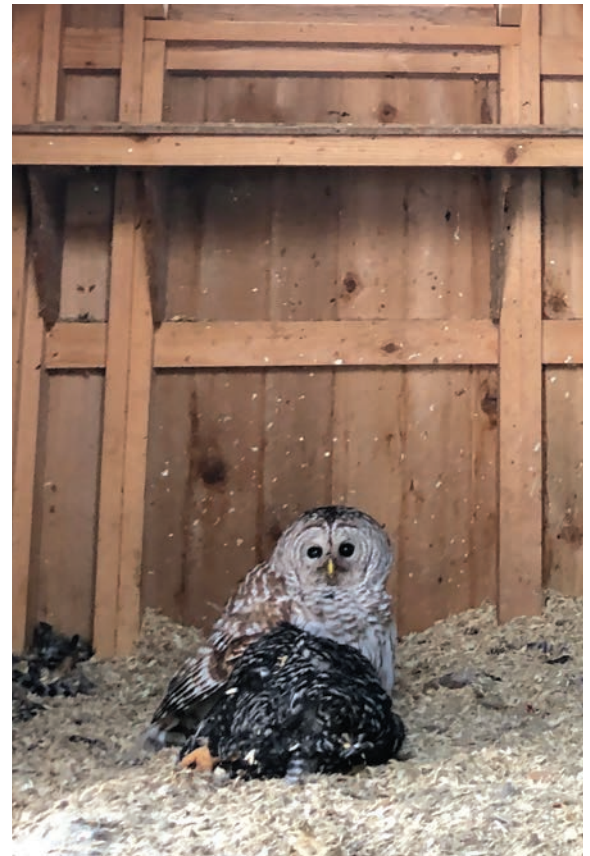
Then I managed to grab a shovel and entered the coop armed. The owl flew out the back of the coop – but every time I turned around the owl came back in and tried to grab one of the chickens, many of whom were wounded. But, thanks to Goosie, they were all alive.

With the side and ramp doors frozen to the ground – which was how the owl got inside – I found a board to block the doorway and propped a feeder against it to keep it in place.

Now we make sure to do this before dusk. Once we got a bit too relaxed and the owl came back and attacked one of the chickens again, but we've stayed alert since then. So far so good.

A neighbor offered to shoot the owl. I said no thank you. After some reading, it seems snow attracts the owl to bird feeders and places where small animals like mice or voles can be easily spotted, like our chicken coop.

Hopefully, the coming spring will shift the owl's focus, as surely as it has already unfrozen all our doors.



MJ TUCKERS PIZZA & PUB
 ROUTE 8 / 61 S. MAIN ST., NEW BOSTON, MASS
 "THE WAY THINGS USED TO BE"
 a FAMILY FRIENDLY RESTAURANT WITH A RUSTIC ATMOSPHERE

ASK ABOUT OUR FAMOUS HORSESHOE TOURNAMENTS

HOSTING PARTIES AND EVENTS | SEE US ON FACEBOOK
 FOR INFORMATION AND TAKE-OUT CALL 413 258-4040

OPEN WED & THURS 3-9; FRI - SUN, NOON TO CLOSE

Council on Aging



Reliable Transportation Needed

by Nina Carr

Spring began for the COA with something completely new.

Our "Age Friendly Berkshires" meeting with Vin Marinaro and Peg McDonough on March 20 was informative and enjoyable. We had a good turnout of both our "regulars" and some new faces.

We all agreed that the biggest impediment to "aging in place" in Sandisfield and the rest of Berkshire County is reliable transportation. There was a very constructive discussion on this subject with more to come in the future.

The "Age Friendly Berkshires" initiative is currently engaged with a variety of programs and is open to any suggestions for new ones. We look forward to seeing Vin and Peg in town again soon.

Our Wednesday meetings continue as usual with a couple of added attractions in April. Our chair Yoga Class with Wendy will begin on April 3 at 2:00 p.m. in the COA room at the Town Hall Annex. You don't have to be a member to take part.

Also one of our favorite activities will take place the afternoon of April 15. A Spring and Easter flower arranging class with Bob from "Wildflowers" in Great Barrington. The cost is \$10 for materials. It's a good idea to pre-register since we have a limited amount of space. Please call Linda 258-4816 or Nina 258-3314 to reserve your spot.

Here are some dates to remember:

- April 2 Foot Clinic
- April 3 Business Meeting
- April 3 Chair Yoga begins @2:00
- April 17 Pizza and Cards
- April 24 Blood Pressure Clinic and Visiting Nurse



Ink Wash by Michelle Arnot

Happy Spring

SNOW FARM BLOSSOMING

By Lindsey Noble Smith and Susan Tarasuk

We're entering into our fourth year as flower farmers. The greenhouse has been fired up for several weeks and sprouted seeds trays are quickly covering all available surfaces. We are excited about the beauty we have planned for you this season.



We're also excited to bring back both the Spring and Summer CSA Flower shares. With a subscription, you can receive a large bouquet every Saturday morning. We have teamed up again with Fuel so you can choose to pick up your bouquets at either Snow Farm on South Beech Plain Road or at Fuel in Great Barrington. This Spring enjoy four weeks of unique heirloom narcissus and double peony tulips. Summer brings ten diverse weeks of big bountiful bouquets. Visit our website to fill out your enrollment form at www.snow-farm.com/csa, or call us at 413-258-4929.

FARMINGTON RIVER REGIONAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OTIS, MA

Preschool Registration and Screening

New Students Only

THURSDAY APRIL 11TH

FROM 9:00 A.M. TO 2:30 P.M.

The Farmington River Regional School District will be accepting registrations and scheduling screenings for 3 and 4 year old children for our public preschool program for the 2019-2020 school year. Children who are residents of Otis or Sandisfield and who will be three years old before

October 1, 2019 may be eligible for this program. Residents of neighboring communities are also invited to apply.

For the upcoming school year, our tuition-based program will offer families the following options:

- 5 half days a week 8:30-11:30 for all 3 and 4 year olds (minimum of 3 days required)
- 5 full days a week 8:30-2:30 for 4 year olds only (must turn 4 by October 1, 2019)

The screening will be conducted in the areas of speech and language, fine and gross motor development and learning skills. Screening is required for all new enrolling children. Children currently enrolled in our program do not need to be screened.

Interested families should call Teresa DellaGiustina at the school (269-4466) to schedule an appointment for screening and pick up a registration packet.

APRIL ORNITHOLOGY

April is a long-legged bird
Standing high above the other months
Who are neatly assembled,
Prepared to do their usual thing.

But not April,
An independent cuss
Who spends his thirty days
Hot and cold, wet and dry,
Sweet and sour.

You may wake up some April morning
And be kissed by a lovely day
Or socked by a snake of a storm.
You see, long-legged birds are very proud
And, unlike most of us,
Unbowed.

*Val Coleman
West New Boston*



Moreover... Get Real, People

By Simon Winchester

As of late last month, I am in the happy position of being able from now on to visit America's nuclear power stations. There are sixty of them dotted about the country; the nearest one is over in New York State at Indian Point, a little way down the Hudson from Peekskill – sufficiently far from home that I don't feel a pressing need to go and have a look.

But the point is: I could if I wanted. And yet most of you who are reading this cannot. And you cannot, because – and from here on in this column is going to read like a Public Service Announcement – you don't have the right kind of ID card.

I do, and I have it because I went up to Pittsfield to get it.

You can do the same. And indeed so you must, because after the end of October 2020 – just next year – you'll need one of these fancy new ID cards to get into a federal office building, to be allowed to board a plane – which is probably the most crucially important of all the privileges you'll accrue – and, if you're eager to get a jolt of radioactive iodine or want to relive the best moments of The China Syndrome, to be allowed to stroll unmolested around Indian Point and all of its glowing siblings.

It is called a REAL ID card. Despite its important name, it resembles in fact nothing more than a new/improved driver's license.

It is all an invention of the same furrowed-brow legislators who 18 years ago gave us, post-9/11, the USA-PATRIOT Act. I had imagined that REAL ID would be an acronym like its legislative cousin, whose initials stand (if you've forgotten, or maybe never knew) for Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism.

But it wasn't – it wasn't shorthand for Rewriting Every American Law to Imply Doomsday or any such silliness. It was simply the consequence of an Act, signed in 2005 by President G.W. Bush, "to establish and rapidly implement regulations for state driver's license and identification document security standards, to prevent terrorists from abusing the asylum laws of the United States, to unify terrorism-related grounds for inadmissibility and removal, and to ensure expeditious construction of" – guess what – an early version of The Wall near San Diego.



To acquire one is a little bit complicated, and you'll be turned away if you don't have the necessary documents.


If you try to apply at the RMV in Pittsfield sans proper paperwork, you'll probably be shouted at, because that's what RMV folks like to do. If you get it at the AAA office nearby, however, they'll be nice to you – but firm nonetheless, and ask you very nicely to go home and come back with everything.

Which includes a file folder full of the following bumf: your existing driver's license; a valid U.S. passport that shows your full name; if you don't have one of these, then your birth certificate and a marriage certificate showing that you changed your name, if you did; two documents—bills, most probably, utility bills preferably, or bank statements—that show your current address; and another document that shows that you are the actual owner of your Social Security number – a W2, a 1099 or, indeed, your Social Security Card itself, which must not – and here I see a wicked glint in some legislator's eye, knowing the trouble he'll cause – be laminated.

Many a glum person did I meet leaving the AAA office, muttering imprecations that ended with a variation on the theme of "I had it all, except that my card was laminated."

All that; plus a new photograph taken by the AAA's charming resident portraitist, the handing over of a crisp twenty-dollar bill – and you're done.

A week later, a letter from the RMV in Boston, and inside was a new license bearing, in my case, and to the probable irritation of any police officer who stops me, my full name, which, being of British origin, sports three first-names, being Simon, Bernard and Adrian. Other than displaying my embarrassingly expanded name the license is different in only one other way: it has a tiny yellow star in the top right-hand corner – to some, maybe not the most happily chosen motif. A tiny badge of honor showing that I went early, before the rush that will inevitably develop as the deadline approaches.

So, people of Sandisfield – may I suggest you all make arrangement to get thyself promptly to Pittsfield, with all necessary paperwork, and get yourselves your REAL IDs. Then you'll be ready to go off to Bradley and get on a jet, go to the Social Security Office in Pittsfield (or to the Fish Hatchery in Hartsville, which is Federal, after all), or, best of all, to visit an atomic power station. The excitement is mounting. Only remember: no lamination, anywhere. 

BEER ★ WINE ★ LIQUOR

Domaney's



Fine Wine ★ Unique Beer ★ Discount Liquors
Temperature Controlled Wine Room ★ Cigar Humidor

66 Main St. Great Barrington, MA 01230
p. (413) 528-0024 ★ f. (413) 528-6093

www.domaney.com

recreation COMMITTEE

By Theresa Spohnholz, Secretary

This small but dedicated group spent the last few bone-chilling months (with accompanying wind, freezing rain, and continual gray clouds) master-minding an array of fun activities for the spring. So grab your calendar – the one on your smart phone or if you are like me the printed calendar with the pictures of where you might want to go, be or become – and mark these dates!

April 13, Arts & Crafts. The Committee sponsors the Arts and Crafts Kids Program at the Library from 1 to 2 p.m. The theme is butterflies and flowers! The Rec Committee sponsors this creative opportunity every second Saturday at the Library.

April 20, Easter Eggstravaganza! The traditional Easter egg hunt will blossom before your eyes from 1:00 to 3 p.m. at the Community Center park near the Library. There will be egg-hunting, prizes, Easter piñata bashing, egg decorating, and Easter goodies.

April 23, Yoga with Ann Gadwah. Roll out your mats, stretch out those winter kinks, and join in for some easy exercise. Beginning on Tuesday, April 23, Yoga class will take place at 6 p.m. at the Old Town Hall. Next class will be Tuesday, April 30. Starting monthly in May, the first three Wednesdays will be Yoga night, on the fourth week of the month it will be held Tuesday. The cost is \$5 per person.

May 1, Paint And Sip. You provide the sip, we provide the paint, canvas, and the master painter from Berkshire Sip and Paint. An adult-oriented activity for those who have a bit of Van Gogh or Picasso in their hearts or just want to color outside the lines. Light snacks and soft drinks provided; participants can bring any beverage of choice. Totally fun on Wednesday, May 1 from 6 to 8 p.m. at Fire House #1, the newly refurbished firehouse at 79 S. Main Street, Rt. 8, in New Boston. Cost \$30, register online at www.BerkshirePaintandSip.com.

*Coming Up – Stay Tuned for Details!

- **BIKE BRIGADE FOR THE MEMORIAL DAY PARADE**
- **BUS TRIP TO THE SCIENCE MUSEUM IN BOSTON (THIS WAS SO MUCH FUN LAST YEAR WE ARE DOING IT AGAIN!)**
- **TRIP TO MYSTIC AND/OR CONCERT**

Do you have ideas on fun things we can do? Or, better yet, would you like to volunteer to help us put some of these great events together? If so, please contact us at sandisfieldcommunitycenter@gmail.com or drop by the library. Librarians are full of information. 📧

Current active members of the Recreation Committee are Billie Anderson-Pachulski, Chair, Theresa Spohnholz, Secretary, and Roger Kohler, Christina O'Brien, and Megan Smigel.



Behind the Scenes at the Arts Center

VOLUNTEERS PITCH IN OVER THE WINTER

By Jerry Herman

When the Sandisfield Arts Center opens for the 2019 season at the end of April, a lot of planning and work will have been done behind the scenes.

The Building and Grounds Committee met several times over the winter to discuss, remedy, and upgrade deficiencies in our 180-year-old building. Repairs and other things the general public will never notice have been accomplished to make the operation and running of the facility better and easier than ever.

Most of the fixes were electrical in nature, with upgrades to the exterior lighting and switches as well as to the lighting in the upstairs space. An upgrade to the existing fire alarm system is planned for the near future, with additional sensors to be placed at strategic locations in the building.

Drainage for the site was discussed with various solutions developed to mitigate erosion at the lower parking area and at the driveways.

All these improvements will help make attending events at the Arts Center safer and more comfortable for all residents and visitors.

Significant upgrades to the stage lighting system were looked into but shelved due to the prohibitive cost. Instead, a facilities expansion will be pursued, seeking to expand storage space and relocate the green room to allow for better functioning of the downstairs space.

Various proposals have been offered for the development of the adjacent area where the old school house once sat, now outlined by a low stone wall with a plaque explaining its history.

As always, all work is done on a volunteer basis and fresh ideas and help are welcomed. Volunteers keep the Arts Center thriving, not only for the preservation of the historic building and the challenges associated with keeping such a building alive and breathing, but also in planning and helping to host our events.

If you're not already volunteering, please consider joining us and your neighbors in any of the variety of roles available. It's a great way to meet interesting people, contribute to the community in preserving this historic gem, and get an inside look at the theatrical, musical, film, and lecture offerings during our season. 📧

NEW BOSTON CRANE SERVICE & SLEDS

Snowmobiles, ATV's, Generators, Trailers,
Lawn & Garden Equipment, Log Splitters

Parts & Service available for most
bikes, ATV's & snowmobiles




 • Husqvarna • Timberwolf •  • STIHL • 

OPEN: Tues - Fri 9am - 6pm / Sat & Mon 9am - 3pm
Sun 9am - 1pm / closed Mon (Nov 1–April 1)

Route 8 / P.O. Box 691
Sandisfield, MA 01255
www.newbostoncrane.com
413-258-4653
fax 413-258-2884
nbcss@verizon.net



The Librarian's Corner

By Terry Spohnholz

Library Hours:

Monday and Tuesday, 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.;

Wednesday, 2:00-5:00 p.m.; Thursday, 5:00-7:00 p.m.;

Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-1 p.m.

Phone: 258-4966

What Robins Bring

The Robin

The robin is the one

That interrupts the morn

With hurried, few, express reports

When March is scarcely on.

The robin is the one

That overflows the noon

With her cherubic quantity,

An April but begun.

The robin is the one

That speechless from her nest

Submits that home and certainty

And sanctity are best.

Emily Dickenson

I know that spring is coming. Yesterday a robin flitted above me in the gnarled, bare old tree as I gazed out my window. A dive towards the ground, a graceful swoop back to the top branches. And the earth smells of itself. Dark and dank, wet and wonderful. Harbinger of the flowers to come. For now the snow still covers the front yard. But I see the last gasps, like old fingers clinging to the safety of the trees and shadows, shrinking away from the light. I am glad. I love the snow and the warmth of hot cocoa, but now I want to throw on hiking boots and stride down forest lanes, seek flowers and plants peeping out at me, and most importantly hear the songbirds above me, warbling their delight and mine.

NEW BOOK ARRIVALS

Cemetery Road, Greg Lies. Two murders, one town, and a lifetime of secrets. Best-selling author of the Natchez Burning trilogy returns with an electrifying novel of friendship, betrayal, and shattering secrets that threaten to destroy a small Mississippi town.

Here and Now and Then, Mike Chen. The heartbreak of an unavailable father in this novel of a time-traveling secret agent from 2142. An adventure entangled in the fabric of space-time but at its essence a story of a father and a daughter.

Underground, Will Hunt. Get your flashlight,

hold your nose, and do not be afraid of the dark. Explore the world that lies beneath our feet, the subways and sewers of New York City, a 35,000-year-old mine in the Australian outback, and the sewers of Paris.

The Late Bloomers Club, Louise Miller. Pure fantasy but this cheery novel allows a reader to escape to where homemade cakes are made, summer evenings glow with fireflies, and thoughtfulness and good triumphs.

The Island of Sea Women, Lisa See. The bestselling author explores the matrifocal haenyeo society in Korea, caught between tradition and modernization. A beautiful novel of friendship, heartbreak, and forgiveness.

The Last Woman in the Forest, Diane Les Becquets. A woman loses her first love tragically only to discover he might have been a psychopath. This novel is set in the snowy wilderness of northern Alberta and is full of twists.

You Are My Happy, by Hoda Kotb. A delightful children's books celebrating the things that make us happy every day – the big things and the small.

HAPPENINGS AT THE LIBRARY

Arts and Crafts at the Library. On Saturday April 13, the Library will hold a fun crafty event for kids that involves flowers, butterflies and things that speak of spring. Crafting begins at 1 p.m. and ends at 2. Come join us!

Library Passes – Tired of watching old DVDs, bored, looking for something different? The library has passes to five Springfield Museums, the Clark Museum in Williamston, as well as discounted coupons for the Connecticut Science Museum which is featuring an award-winning exhibition on "The Human Body." Explore your world.

AUDIOBOOKS AND PAPERBACKS

In order to provide more room for our expanding collection of new library books, we are forced to say good-bye to some old friends: our paperback selection and audio books. (Only a few audio books left.) They are all gently used. The audio books are fifty cents each and the paperbacks thirty cents or four for a dollar. Stop by, take some home. ♪



Sandisfield Historical Society



Let's Go!

By Ann Wald, President

Spring is here, and we are ready to go.

We are still working on installing and setting up a real bathroom. Details as we get further along.

Our first meeting is April 13, 11 a.m. We hope to see you all there at the Society's meeting house at the corner of Rt. 83 and South Sandisfield Road. All are welcome. We'll discuss the agenda for the year. Stay for a pot luck lunch and conversation. Ideas and volunteers for the Society are always welcome. Contact me at 413-258-4415 or at annaw2@verizon.net.

At our following meeting on May 11, antiques expert David Lebeau will conduct an appraisal day from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. for everyone who has something that might be worth enough for retirement or just some item that they wish to know more about. ♪

KWIK^{color} PRINT

INCORPORATED

EXPERIENCE • SPEED • QUALITY

- Full Color Digital Printing
- Full Color Envelope Printing
- Large Format Printing
- High Speed Copying
- Laminating
- Inline Bookletmaking
- Perfect Binding
- Folding
- Perforating
- Mailing Services
- Graphic Design Services

35 Bridge Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230

Ph: 413.528.2885 Fx: 413.528.9220

typesetting@kwikprintinc.com
www.kwikprintinc.com

Wetlands in the Woods

AN EARLY SIGN OF SPRING

By *Laura Rogers-Castro*

I am so happy when vernal pool season arrives.

Vernal pools are those magical “wetlands in the woods” alive with the sounds of frogs in early spring, in my opinion one of the first signs of season’s change.

Walking down the road from my home on Town Hill in early April, I can usually hear the “quacking” of wood frogs from a small neighborhood pool. Wood frogs, sometimes called raccoon frogs because of the mask of black banding on the side of the face, are hardy frogs that survive the winter with a kind of antifreeze in their bodies. Wood frogs are the first frogs to emerge in spring and arrive at the vernal pools, but they are not the only animal to make the trek.

Vernal pools are breeding places. The key to the success for many animals relying on this specialized wetland for breeding is the lack of fish. “Vernal” means ephemeral. These pools are temporary, often filling with rainwater and rising groundwater and drying up by the end of the season. There is no outlet or inlet of water feeding the pool.

Many kinds of vernal pools exist and one definition does not fit all. Although some animals use the pools for convenience, several called obligate species need vernal pools to survive.

The wood frog fits the category of an obligate species. This small frog spends most of its life in the surrounding woodlands until it is time to breed. The males arrive first to the pool and begin their mating call (the quacking described earlier) to attract the female frogs. Males clasp to females and fertilize the eggs as they are released. At first, the jelly-like egg mass is the size of a quarter but becomes larger as it absorbs more water. The mass consists of several hundred to over 1,000 spherical balls. Quickly, the eggs develop into tadpoles which, within a little less than 3 months, turn into frogs. The life cycle needs to be fast before the vernal pool dries up.



A wood frog.

Spotted salamanders are also obligate vernal pool breeders. This salamander is striking, between its large size of about eight inches and the beautiful yellow spots covering its body. If you are lucky, you may witness a mass migration of spotted salamanders heading to a vernal pool. This migration happens during one of the first heavy rainstorms in early spring. Spotted



*A spotted salamander.
Photos: Paul Fusco*

salamanders are silent breeders. There is no mating call from these amphibians. A search for spotted salamander eggs is best conducted by looking for a smaller, oval jelly blob consisting of about 200 eggs attached to a branch or the stem of a shrub under the water.

When breeding is complete, both spotted salamanders and wood frogs travel back to the nearby woodlands. They both may be uncovered during summer under a log or a rock near a stream, or even in a wood pile or garden.

The conservation of vernal pools is inconsistent from state to state and can be from town to town. In Massachusetts, vernal pools are classified as wetlands and a special provision under wetland laws protects the surrounding woodlands from development, often up to 100 feet beyond the pool’s boundary. The surrounding woodlands are important as this is where most of the time is spent by animals dependent on the pools.

Other animals, such as spring peepers, garter snakes, black bears, and great blue herons, to name a few, can be seen at a vernal pool. The most important idea here is to become aware of these unique hidden wetlands and make it a spring ritual to hear the frogs or look for the salamanders as you explore another one of nature’s little miracles in our beautiful town. ♡

Laura Rogers-Castro of Town Hill Road is a natural resource educator for the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection.

OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS



Audies, awarded annually to audiobooks for 24 years, are the Academy Awards of recorded novels and nonfiction. An Audie is a nice thing to win. Narrated and recorded by actors, voice professionals, and occasionally even by the author of the book, audiobooks are one of publishing’s most productive sectors. This year’s Audie for nonfiction was won by **Simon Winchester** of Silverbrook Road for his narration of his latest book, *The Perfectionists*, published last year by Harper Audio. The founding editor of The Times, Simon writes the column, “Moreover,” which in this issue is on page 11.



News from the PTA

FARMINGTON RIVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

By Linda Curtiss and Aimee Magovern

During the first week of March, the first and second grades celebrated Dr. Seuss' birthday and Read Across America. Meaghan Martin, 1st grade teacher, and Sarah Tracy, 2nd grade teacher, organized the week's activities for the children based on a different Dr. Seuss book each day.

The celebrations began with special guest readers. A few family members and community members visited the classrooms and read to the students.

Cash calendar drawings will continue through April 5. Be sure to check the school website and the PTA Facebook page for the winner each day. We are thrilled to report that we reached our goal of \$15,000 this year. We are grateful for all the sponsors that made this possible. We would also like to thank all the families, students, and staff who actively participated in this fundraiser. Because of you, the students and staff at Farmington River Elementary will be able to enjoy another year full of extracurricular activities. We couldn't do it without you!

Our top sellers this year were Jenna and Connor Lewis (\$2,520), Cole Kennedy (\$2,060), and Dakota Soules (\$1,100). The classroom with the highest average sales per student was Mr. Keller's 5th grade class, with \$5,950



Trooper Brendan O'Neil, Massachusetts State Police, reading to the 3rd grade class.
Photo: Katherine Graham

(an average \$541 per student). Mrs. Hamill (\$440), Mrs. Decker (\$300), and Mrs. Maxton (\$280) were the staff members with the highest sales.

A special thank you to parent and PTA member Dawn Lemon for organizing and facilitating this fundraiser, as well as to all the Farmington River office staff for helping with the daily drawings and communication of the winners, and to Kwik Print in Great Barrington for producing the calendars.

The next PTA meeting will be Thursday, April 25, at 3:15 p.m. in the school's library. All are welcome to attend. Childcare is available during meetings. 🇺🇸

The Berkshires' Premier Boutique Real Estate Firm

with a unique gift of matching just the right property with just the right buyer.

(in part it's because we work really hard and we listen)

#1 Selling Realtor in the Berkshires 2017 - Chapin Fish (just as he was in 2013, 2014, and 2015)

BROCKMAN
real estate
berkshiresforsale.com

Considering Selling?
Contact us for an honest and professional market analysis.

Visit us at our store & office
276 Main Street
Great Barrington

farm & home
American-made & Quality Goods, Gifts & Furniture for the Home and Garden

farmandhome.us
berkshiresforsale.com
413-528-9100

A Puzzle a Day

By Michelle Arnot

“You must have a great vocabulary!”

New acquaintances often make this assumption when they learn about my background as editor of dozens of national puzzle magazines.

If I had a nickel for each time I get that reaction, I'd make a down payment on a Great Barrington AERIE (puzzle clue: 'Penthouse'). Everyone expects that I'm a walking dictionary due to my years as an acrossionado, to use the word I made up to describe my work in the puzzle field.

These days I serve as an official scoring puzzles at the annual American Crossword Puzzle Tournament in Stamford, Connecticut, which took place in March. More than 500 solvers paid good money to spend the weekend testing their word power.

But, truth to tell, my vocab is skewed toward four-letter words. Not the naughty ones but the oddball ones that grout the grids of American crosswords. Puzzle solvers recognize the lingo of Crosswordese, which consists of phrases, word fragments, and abbreviations. Due to their letter structure, four-letter type entries prop up the corners of the crossword puzzle.

Getting to know as few as 25 of these letter combinations can boost your solving ability as well as your ego and brain power. Four-letter words like OGEE (Clue: 'Curved molding') and OMOO (clue: 'Melville book') are the ABBA ('Swedish pop group'), BETA ('Phi—Kappa') and GALA ('Black tie event'). Vowel-rich combinations that give those in the know a jump-start. I write the answers in all caps because upper case letters are the currency of crosswords. Not cursive but back to grade school letters that are legible in their little square boxes.

My third-grade teacher (a good friend of a Sandisfield neighbor in a small world coincidence)

had no inkling how studying the crossword in my Weekly Reader would determine my livelihood.

Even then I tried my hand at creating a crossword for our class magazine. I got some things right, like ending a word with a black square, interlocking words across and down, and checking the spelling of the words in the grid. But I didn't yet know that there are specifications and that the patterns are symmetrical. While some experts tout a puzzle a day as a mental workout that keeps the brain nimble, I like to believe it keeps the doctor at bay. At the very least, it's a welcome distraction.

There are pockets of acrossionados in the Berkshires, and if you are one please join me at the West Stockbridge Library on Saturday, April 12, for a session on puzzle solving and construction, or Saturday, July 13 at the Sandisfield Arts Center.

In the meanwhile, CIAO ('Goodbye to Giovanni').

Emerging

By Brigitte Ruthman



Impatient cows nudge the dry tufts for what's hiding beneath. Clover, timothy and dandelions wait for snow to melt first around the base of trees.

How do they know?

The new green will appear a month after the sap ascends, then a chorus of peepers a month again. Winter, then, will be safely behind.

Daffodils open, not so pretty but among the first. Bold and bright and gaping wide-mouthed in yellow pools against the snow. Sharp and tasteless to the cows and deer that walk around them and the wild garlic and skunk cabbage, too.

How do they know?

The tufted titmouse calls Peter, Peter, Peter. Phoebes are more patient than the hurried chatter of chickadees looking to rebuild nests and find their mates. Phoebee, Phoe-bee.

The bluebirds alight, finding the boxes laid in the field years ago, their wings as bright as the emerald green of new leaves.

How do they know?

Maybe because of the rotting ice, where deep-throated frogs wait. The cooped-up chickens are laying again. They knew because the sun is lingering now, even if just to slant through the windows in the cold.



How do they know then that the coyote is lurking, hidden beyond the tree line? They can't see through the icy window.

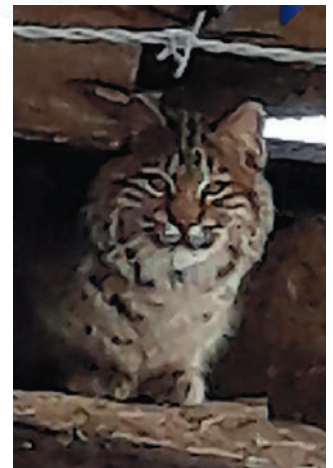
To hurry it all is to hurry the end, after the tree peepers fall silent and fireflies alight on the branches where they have been.

And the wait begins too quickly all over again. ❄️



Making Friends With a Bobcat

Michael Loglisci, a self-described "somewhat new resident," sent this photo of "a bobcat I have kind of befriended on South Beech Plain Road. I've seen him/her weekly for the past month." Here it's crouched among the logs, but if you can, as Michael suggests, "zoom in to get a good look at its facial markings."



❧

Comings & Goings



EDWARD O. RIISKA, JR.
1943-2019

Edward Ova Riiska Jr. died on Friday, March 1. His wife, Linda, said, “Ed spent his whole life in this town, and it was important to him.”

The son of Edward and Edna Henry Riiska, Ed was born November 11, 1943. He grew up on the family farm on New Hartford Road and for much of his life lived not far from his early home.

By his early teens, he knew that he loved cars, not cows. He loved both working on cars and racing them and could build a race car from bottom up. For 30 years he raced at Lebanon Valley Speedway. A well-respected driver known for driving clean, Ed was proud to mentor new drivers. He loved racing and even after he retired from the sport continued as a spectator and supporter.

He worked in a variety of jobs, the longest for 17 years as Sandisfield’s highway superintendent from 1991 to 2008.

Linda reminisced recently about his dedication to the town and its roads. “Ed had a strong work ethic and spent many miles and hours checking all the roads before, during, and after storms. He really checked the ‘mountain.’ He didn’t want anyone to have problems going up or coming down from Tolland. He also knew that ‘Maryanne’ had to head to work at 3:30 a.m., and that ‘Shirley’ was coming home at midnight, and he tried to ensure that their roads were ready for them.

Linda said that “people still mention seeing Ed out there raking a dirt road behind the tractor or digging out a culvert. He was a working supervisor. He tried to do as many repairs on town equipment as he could. He was great at tinkering and ‘cobbing’ things together. He liked the challenge to see if he could repair something or create a replacement if needed.”

Linda said how friends told her memories of Ed. “Patrick Barrett reminded me about the ice storm that occurred on the weekend Ed retired and how surprised he was to see the bucket loader coming down the road with Ed up in the bucket cutting limbs to help clear the road.”

After he retired, Ed continued to do roadside mowing for nearby towns until 2018. In a tribute, the New Marlborough Highway Department wrote that “Ed was the best roadside mower that New Marlborough has ever seen. The entire department would agree that Ed was not only an important member of the highway crew, he was also a special part of our family.”

For leisure he played a competitive 9-5 card game and enjoyed traveling, mostly to casinos with his wife and family.

He leaves behind his loving wife of 56 years, Linda (Goodenough) Riiska; their two daughters, Eve (John) Bannish and Lisa (Ralph) Leavenworth; four granddaughters and two great-granddaughters. He is also survived by two brothers: Tom and Gene Riiska; two sisters: Shirley (Carl) McArthur and Maybelle Jacquemin; his nieces; his nephews; and a multitude of loving friends.

Donations in memory of Ed may be made to either HospiceCare in the Berkshires or Smilow Cancer Center in Torrington, Connecticut, through Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home, 426 Main Street, Great Barrington, MA 01230.

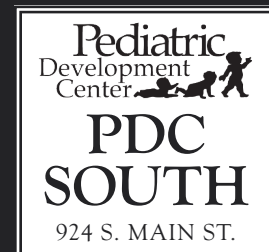
Linda remembered a rule of Ed’s from the time he was highway superintendent here. “He hated 3-day weekends because he was sure they would never have three days off. You can see by this winter that that tradition continues. If there is going to be bad weather, it will come then.”

For all
your
ifs,
ands
or buts.



FRANK CONSOLATI INSURANCE
Home Auto Business Life
71 MAIN STREET, LEE MA
413-243-0105

**Concerned about your infant
or toddler’s development?**



Give us a call and we can set up an appointment to talk with you about any concerns you may have.

**Trained Therapists
offer evaluation & home visits
to eligible children.**

Dept. of Public Health Certified
Early Intervention Program.

**924 Main Street
Great Barrington
413-717-4083**

pediatricdevelopmentcenter.org

Another Wrestling Win

SAM CORMIER TAKES SECOND TITLE IN TWO YEARS

By Tim Brooks

Five student/athletes from Sandisfield, members of the Spartan wrestling team at Monument Mountain Region High School, took part in this year's Western Massachusetts Division III Wrestling Championships held at Franklin County Technical School on February 9.

Last year team member Sam Cormier, then a sophomore, won first place at the 132 pound weight class. He followed up last year's victory by moving up three weight classes to the 152 pound class and winning this year, too.

Another team member, Caleb Pollard of Lee, wrestling in the 113 weight class, also won a championship for Monument Mountain.

It was the second year in a row that Monument won two titles. Last year Cormier and John Field, both of Sandisfield, won championships.

Taconic High School won the team title for the second consecutive year with four individual champions, while three wrestlers from Hampden Charter won their respective weight classes. Franklin Tech and Monument Mountain each had two winners.

On winning the title in two separate weight classes, Sam Cormier said, "It feels great. I'm the first Cormier to ever do that so I'm happy about that. I've worked for it all season. I've put in a lot of work with our 113, who's another kid that's always working in the room, and I feel it's a well-deserved championship on both our parts."

The other Sandisfield team members at the tournament were Sean Flaherty, senior, who won 5th place in the 220 weight class; Caden O'Rourke, junior, who also won 5th place in his class; and Eli Cormier and Gavin Murray, both freshmen.

Team coach Simon Jones praised his team and their hard work through the season. He added, "My assistant coach Stephen Cormier is also from Sandisfield and is a graduate of the program. He's a cousin to the other Cormiers on the team."



Sam Cormier winning a match.



The Spartan Wrestling Team

Top row (left to right): Sean Flaherty (Sandisfield), Caden O'Rourke (Sandisfield), Micah Loy, Erick Rawson, Ian Babcock, Assistant Coach Stephen Cormier (Sandisfield)

Second row: Head Coach Simon Jones, Manager Charity Loy, Eli Cormier (Sandisfield), Katahdin Jenen, Sam Cormier (Sandisfield), Brady Whalen, Luca Merelle, Gavin Murray (Sandisfield)

Front row: Dylan Tinker, Caleb Pollard, Logan Mead

Photos: Lisa Cormier



HOMEIMPROVEMENTS

STEVEN SEDDON, SR.

Building and Modifying Homes
in the Berkshires
— Since 2001

413 563 1483

sshhomeimprovements@live.com

www.sshhomeimprovementsma.com



Letters to the Editors

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP

I'd like to send a special thank you to the town's ambulance squad for helping me in my time of need.

Rosemary Allan
Tannery Road

THANK YOU

Our family sends our thanks and appreciation to everyone for their support and caring words following the too-soon death of my husband, Butch/Eddie Riiska.

Linda Riiska
New Hartford Road

MORE ABOUT DODD ROAD

In the article "Furor over Dodd Road," your reporter writes: "The road once continued west to intersect with the York Lake Road." Not quite. Dodd Road once met the road leading west to York Lake, and it still does. However, at that point, Dodd Road made a 90-degree turn south, emerging at Route 183. That portion of the road has never been good.

In the fall on 1965, my wife and I started up Dodd Road from New Hartford Road, but became lost and decided to take the first turn at an intersection. Little did we realize, having done so, that we were still on Dodd Road. Not far from our destination at a friend's house, we became mired in a pond created by a beaver dam just down the hill from the turn. Ivan Fidelke towed our car out the next morning. Later, in recognition of the confusion of the right-angle turn in the road, as well as its frequent impassability, the Town renamed the road (along with some other roads) to Sage Road.

Don't ever try to get to Sage Road from Dodd Road unless you have an ATV. Some mapping applications, like Waze, still haven't learned that lesson, much to the chagrin of friends and service and delivery drivers.

Jack Grumbach
Sage Road

NOW HEAR THIS!

Edited by Laura Rogers-Castro

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

APRIL EVENTS

Playgroup on Mondays from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. at the Sandisfield Library Community Room (below the library). No pre-registration necessary. The playgroup features a story time in the library. Led by Nina Carr. Free!

Wednesday Weekly Gatherings from 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Council on Aging, basement level at the Sandisfield Town Hall Annex on Route 57.

Community Resilience-Building Workshops on Wednesdays, April 3 and 10 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Old Town Hall, Silverbrook Road. Sandisfield is working with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission for these workshops that bring together residents to identify and prioritize actions to reduce risk and improve resilience to natural hazards such as flood, fire, tornado, and severe storms. A light meal will be served. Register as soon as possible at mmcdonough@berkshireplanning.org or 413-422-1521, ext.16. (See notice, page 5.)

Town Caucus on Thursday, April 11 at 7:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall on Silverbrook Road. Visit the Town Hall Annex for more information.

Arts and Crafts on Saturday, April 13, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. at the Library/Community Center. Sponsored by the Sandisfield Recreational Committee.

Easter Eggstravaganza on Saturday, April 20 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at the Library/Community Center. Egg decorating, piñata, Easter goodies. Sponsored by the Sandisfield Recreational Committee.

New Boston Church Service on Sunday, April 21, at 10:00 a.m. at the New Boston Congregational Church, Route 57. All are welcome!

Yoga with Ann Gadwah, on Tuesday, April 23 at 6 p.m. at Old Town Hall, Silverbrook Road. Next class will be Tuesday, April 30. Contact the Recreation Committee or Library for more information. \$5.

Blood Pressure Clinic with Porchlight Visiting Nurse Association on Wednesday, April 24 at 11:30 a.m. at the Council on Aging, basement level at the Sandisfield Town Hall Annex on Route 57.

York Lake, a Working Party. Saturday, April 27, 12:30 p.m., meet at the York Lake parking area. Volunteers to help with planting and minor cleanup. Tools provided. Sponsored by the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

An Introduction to Smartphone/Tablet Photography on Saturday, April 27 from 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center on 5 Hammertown Road. Spend time with local photographer and teacher Thad Kubis and learn the basics of smartphone photography (Android and iPhone) and then go beyond the

basics to fully use, control, and create with your smartphone or tablet camera. Thad will cover composition, HDR, live mode, basic, and more advanced editing functions. Free.

Opening Reception: "Capturing Light" Photos by Thad Kubis on Saturday, April 27 from 2:30 to 5:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center on 5 Hammertown Road. Free.

SAVE THE DATE:

Paint and Sip Party on Wednesday, May 1 at 6:00 p.m. at Fire Station #1, 79 South Main Street, Sandisfield (the newly refurbished firehouse on Rt. 8 in New Boston). All painting materials and light snacks will be provided. \$30, pre-register at berkshirepaintandsip.squarespace.com. Sponsored by the Recreation Committee.

OTHER EVENTS IN NEARBY TOWNS

Spring Happenings Walk on Tuesday, April 9 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Bob's Way, on Route 23 in Monterey sponsored by the Berkshire Natural Resources Council. A moderate 2-mile hike to look for signs of spring along the trail. Please bring lunch/snack, water, and wear appropriate footwear. Free. Email Mariah (mauman@bnrc.org) for more information. Severe weather will cancel the hike.

Berkshire Grown Farmers Market on Saturday, April 20, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Monument Valley Middle School on 313 Monument Valley Road in Great Barrington. The market features locally grown and produced foods and gifts.

Power of Community Video Screening on Wednesday, April 24, at 7:00 p.m. at the Monterey Community Center located at 468 Main Road. Power of Community features an hour-long interview with Pat McCabe, a renowned Native American activist, artist, and ceremonial leader. Free.

Video Screening Bill McKibben Keynote Speech on Thursday, April 25, at 7:00 p.m. at the Monterey Community Center located at 468 Main Road. McKibben is a pioneer of the climate change movement, best-selling author, journalist, environmental activist, and founder of 350.org, a global grassroots climate change movement. Free.

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

P.O. Box 584
Sandisfield, MA 01255
www.sandisfieldtimes.org

The Sandisfield Times is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization staffed by volunteers from the Sandisfield community and funded by individual and business sponsors. Its mission is to connect the community through reliable, regular, and relevant information. The paper is published 11 times each year, with a joint January-February issue and monthly issues thereafter.

Donations of any amount are needed to ensure the continuation of this newspaper. Please send checks to: The Sandisfield Times, P.O. Box 584, Sandisfield, MA 01255 or donate online at our website: www.sandisfieldtimes.org. Donations to The Sandisfield Times are deductible under section 170 of the Federal Income Tax Code. Donations do not include subscriptions. Subscriptions do not qualify as donations.

Copies of The Sandisfield Times are available in Sandisfield at A&M Auto, the Arts Center (in season), the Transfer Station, Post Office, the New Boston Inn, New Boston Sleds, Villa Mia, MJ Tuckers, the Library, Town Hall, and the Council on Aging meeting room.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

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

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES
PO BOX 584, SANDISFIELD, MA 01255

Name _____

Address to where *The Times* should be delivered:

City, State, Zip _____

Email address: _____

Phone (only used if paper is returned by USPS) _____

Copies are also available in Otis at Berkshire Bank, Katie's Market, Papa's Fuel, Otis Library, Otis Rec Center, Farmington River Diner, Otis Poultry Farm, Otis Woodlands (May-September), Knox Trail Inn, and the Laundromat. Locations in Monterey include the Library (temporarily located at the firehouse) and the Roadside Café. Also available at the Southfield Store in New Marlborough, and at the general store and post office in Colebrook. Back issues are available for purchase.

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

We welcome submissions, comments and suggestions, including letters to the editor by the 15th of the month prior. We may edit for space, style or clarity. We will try to publish Public Service Announcements when we have room, with priority given to Sandisfield organizations. No portion of the *The Sandisfield Times* may be reproduced without permission.

Editorial Staff

Editors: Bill Price and Seth Kershner

email: editor@sandisfieldtimes.org or cell 413.429.7179

Advertising/Subscriptions: Ron Bernard

Graphic Design: Tina Sotis

Website: Jean Atwater-Williams

Now Hear This!: Laura Rogers-Castro

Founding Editor: Simon Winchester

How to Contact Us

Mail can be directed to

The Sandisfield Times, PO Box 584, Sandisfield, MA 01255.

If internet accessible, all letters, news events and tips, ideas, obituary and family announcements, photos (600 dpi if possible) and advertisement queries to editor@SandisfieldTimes.org.