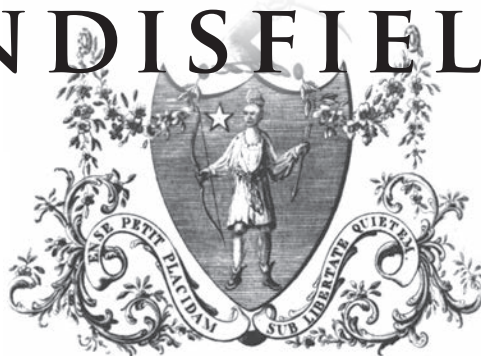


THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

Tribunus



Plebis

RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume XIII, Number 3

June 2022

Write-in Candidate Wins Big

JOHN FIELD NEW SELECTMAN

By Hannah Van Sickle

Election Day brought one surprise upset along with a vote to keep things as they have always been.

236 voters cast ballots in the Annual Town Election May 16, a 15 percent jump in voter turnout over last year. While the increase suggests that democracy is alive and well in Sandisfield, it might simply be that politics depends on the weather – which was clear, sunny, and near 70 degrees on election Monday, after a long winter and often gloomy spring.

Eleven residents stepped up to fill open seats in Town government, vying for a total of nine positions. Only two were contested: Select Board and School Committee.

The single ballot question – to change the Town Clerk position from elected to appointed – failed to pass, leaving Sandisfield in possession of its more than two-century tradition.

SELECT BOARD

In what turned out to be possibly the biggest upset in Sandisfield’s long election history, incumbent Selectman George Riley lost his seat to write-in candidate John Field who garnered 198 votes to Riley’s 37.

“It’s gonna be a job!” Field told The Times via phone, citing his attendance at several recent Select Board meetings as spurring him to wage a write-in campaign.

Field, who has resigned from his current seat on the Planning Board, announced his write-in campaign on the ConnectSandisfield Facebook page on May 4, a mere two weeks before the election.

He said he has been “wanting to run for quite a while.” He ultimately took action after the Select Board decided to take the Dark Sky bylaw under their purview

Cont'd on p.6



Young and otherwise rode the American Legion float at the Memorial Day Parade. Other photos, pages 10-11.



It's Official: We're Historic

NEW BOSTON VILLAGE LISTED ON NATIONAL REGISTER

By Ron Bernard, Chairman, Sandisfield Historical Commission

New Boston Village has been acknowledged by the US National Park Service as a district worthy of listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The announcement was made by Secretary of State William Galvin in a letter to the Sandisfield Historical Commission on April 20.

The approval comes ten years after the commission initiated the process to apply for recognition with a state-required “inventory” of the Town’s historical and architectural assets. New Boston Village joins three other Town sites already listed on the Register: The New Boston Inn, the Philemon Sage House (South Sandisfield), and the Montville Baptist church, now home of the Sandisfield Arts Center.

An outside consultant was retained by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) to document the historical and architectural significance of about forty properties in the defined area of New Boston. The research, which lasted several years, led to an application for nomination which was accepted by the state commission last year. (See map of proposed district, Sandisfield Times, November 2021, pp.2-3)

Cont'd on p.7

Our Local Businesses

About Snow Farm

FLOWERS, VEGETABLES, GARDENING, LOGGING

By Bob and Sue Tarasuk

Snow Farm is a fully productive livestock farm. Raising pigs, cows, sheep, chickens, and turkeys.

Oh, and doves.

We have done this for over 40 years. But it's not a petting zoo.



This year we had 16 lambs. Our sheep are to be sheared at the end of May. We use and sell the wool for all the knitters that still love to knit.

Most of our animals that we raise are slaughtered here at our farm and end up in our five freezers that feed our family, which consists of us and three grown kids and four grandchildren. This has been the case throughout our lives. We regret we are not "USDA-approved" to sell our meat.

As you drive by our farm you get the sense and feeling of magic. We raise animals who get to live in a place they might think of as paradise. But, to repeat, Snow Farm is not a petting zoo. There are no animals that are safe to pet or to hold.

Aside from that, we raise all our vegetables and freeze them for our winter stores. We have a root cellar where we put up all our tomatoes, jams, pickles, salsa, apple sauce, potatoes and other root crops.

We have a fully productive greenhouse operation that hosts all of our annuals, perennials, vegetable plants, shrubs etc. We sell these and use them in gardens we design. We have many CSA's that come annually and pick up their vegetables on a weekly basis.

Susan and daughter Emily both have degrees in Plant and Soil Science from UMass and 30 years of hands-on knowledge that now expands 50 years.

Another addition to Snow Farm's beauty is our cut-flower business. Susan grows all of our cut flowers here at our



farm. We have a CSA cut-flower business that we sell to our customers and also sell our cut flowers through the Southfield Store and new this year at Spice 320 en route to Winsted. By the way, if you haven't been to Spice 320 yet, well, you need to stop there for homemade take-out meals and local crafts. Rt. 8, just south of Tom Bell's Lumber Yard.

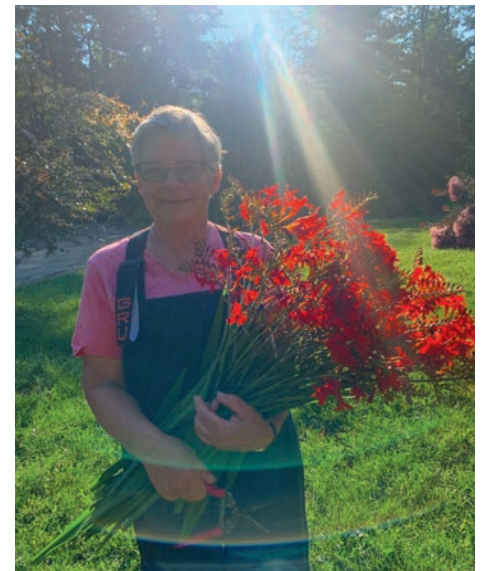


You can also find our organic flower bouquets at the New Marlborough farmers market on Sundays from 10 to 1pm on the New Marlborough Green.

Bob, a licensed Massachusetts Forester, has been managing approximately 20,000 acres of forestland for 47 years. His degree is from the University of Connecticut majoring in fish, wildlife, and forestry. Land management plans, chapter 61 certification, recreation, view clearings, and anything else that connects you to the land you own. Bob also works with his son Cole in the logging business. There are always those logging jobs that require an amazing conservation ethic and many of our clients only want Cole's conservation ethic operating on their land.

Sue's identical twin sister Marie raises all our vegetables, in all of our vegetable gardens. Her relentless work leads to the most amazing organic farm-raised vegetables you will only find here at Snow Farm. If you come for a visit, you will feel welcomed by Marie's smile and embrace.

Last but not least, our farm would not be as healthy and strong as it is, without Winsted Feed and Supply of Winsted, where Rich Miles, his wife Sissy, and daughter Bonnie have kept our animals on the best possible diet. Not only that, but every Monday all of our grain is delivered to our barn. This family business is what farming and life is all about. Stop in and see them on Route 44, not far east of Winsted.



SNOW FARM

16 South Beech Plain Road
Open by appointment.

Call 413-717-0579

www.snow-farm.com





Roger and Out

By Simon Winchester

What on earth now, you might well ask?

With the exasperated resignation on May 23 of Finance Committee Chairman Roger Brown, the Town seems to be facing a renewed period of administrative turmoil. The departure of the Town Assessor has hardly helped; nor that the Select Board has both a brand-new elected member and a brand-new chair. For the time being it has to be acknowledged that so far as Sandisfield's future is concerned, all bets are off.

All this has happened just when the dust was settling after the hurried resignations and early retirements a year ago. It has also coincided with the arrival in Town Hall of a pair of new and seemingly professional town officers – the appointed Interim Town Manager Jonathan Sylbert and the newly-elected Town Clerk, Douglas Miner. A very public clash between Mr. Sylbert and the long-serving Mr. Brown appears to have been the trigger for a fast-moving series of events.

The clash erupted at the May 14th Town Meeting, as the community was slogging its patient way through the new \$4 million budget, painstakingly constructed by Mr. Brown and the three regular members of his committee with input from the Select Board. When the preapproved warrant article requesting \$350,000 for a second-hand fire engine came up, Fire Chief Ralph Morrison rose with a motion to amend the figure to \$700,000 for a brand-new version.

Chaos ensued. Doubling a request for money seldom happens, but few here like to stand up to the soon-to- retire Morrison who won the day, thanks in part to the eloquent support of Mr. Sylbert.

With his many years of experience running the finances of Monterey, Sylbert seemed able to conjure a means of paying for the new engine, taking some money from this account, some from that, perhaps borrowing the balance. Roger Brown, clearly agitated by being put on the back foot and having his well-planned accounts thrown into disarray, in the end agreed that an arrangement could be found and Mr. Morrison could have his new engine.

But it left scars; and one of those close to Mr. Brown muttered darkly after the meeting that the whole affair "was an obvious set-up."


Worse was to follow. The election on the following Monday dismissed the Select Board chairman, George Riley, and placed onto the three-member body the well-liked but inexperienced local arborist John Field. The newly constituted Board then assembled the following Monday, with some indications of the manner in which the town may now be run – with the Town Manager taking something of a front-and-center role in conducting business.



Thus Roger Brown was more than a little surprised to see on the meeting agenda the matter of "appointments to the finance committee." This is not, nor ever has been, a topic for formal consideration by the Board, since it has long been the remit of the Town Moderator initially to nominate committee members (the Board has final say). Jonathan Sylbert was having none of it, however; and took issue with Roger Brown that effectively ended with Sylbert turning to Brown and saying that there was a vacancy on the committee and "why aren't you doing your job" in having it filled? It was a public dressing-down, which served only to amplify what had occurred at the meeting nine days before.

That did it for Brown. He wrote his resignation letter that evening – effectively saying, I don't need this – and spent the week handing over his files.

The Finance Committee will now be asking Moderator Dominic Konstam, who did a very creditable job in running the Town Meeting, to come up with two names for the Finance Committee. There is some doubt that they will find a leader with quite the financial chops of long-time banker Brown.

In wondering about our town's future, it has to be recalled that the new Town Manager is a transplant from the government of Monterey – which to any student of these affairs is one of the most toxic administrations in Berkshire County, a miasma of lawsuits, boycotts, and private investigators. Could such happen here? Those who recall Macbeth's nightmare fear that *the woods of Birnam shall come to Dunsinane* take heed, lest Monterey's trials one day come to rest here, in Sandisfield. 



Jacki with her charter's catch of six halibut,
Photo credit: Robert Bitso

Town Assessor Retires

By Bill Price


Jacqueline Bitso, who has served as Sandisfield's Principal Assessor for 15 years, will retire July 15. Jacki holds a Massachusetts Accredited Assessor (MAA) designation, which is recognized nationally as representing significant training and continuing education in the field.

She began her career as a clerk in the assessor's office in Tolland about 30 years ago and subsequently worked in Lee and Tyringham before joining Sandisfield's Town Hall.

Jacki and her husband Robert are looking forward to getting more use out of their family camper. They were recently 2½ months in Alaska and returned at the end of May from a week on Cape Cod.

"I'll miss the people at Town Hall," she said. "I've worked with wonderful people. I've had a nice 15 years."

Assessors value or assess all real and personal property within their community. They do not determine tax rates, which are determined through Town Meeting budgets and adjustments from state aid.

Members of Sandisfield's Board of Assessors are Chairperson Bethany Perry, Kathie Burrows, and Steve Kopiec. 



Town Meeting, By the Book

FOR THE MOST PART, MOST AGREE TO AGREE

By Tom Christopher

America as a whole may be paralyzed by political polarization, but democracy still seems to work in Sandisfield – at least according to the Town’s Annual Meeting May 14.

Some 76 residents assembled in the DPW garage at 10:00 a.m. as Town Moderator Dominic Konstam requested civility, urging anyone who expressed an opinion not to include personal remarks, and to respect neighbors’ right to differ.

Emotions often ran high, but Dominic’s request was generally met by everyone who took the microphone to amend an article or express an opinion.

In an attempt to streamline the decision process, the warrant that the Select Board presented included a mere 23 articles, but discussions overruled the brevity and the meeting stretched to a marathon four hours.

THE MONEY

Predictably, Article 3, the town budget for Fiscal Year 2023, which ran to 104 line items, attracted scrutiny. Interim Town Manager Jonathan Sylbert pointed out that, if not for the inclusion of a few items from FY2022, the FY2023 budget would have actually shown a decrease from the previous year. As it was, the increase for the coming year showed only a 2 percent bump, a notable achievement in a time of rapid inflation.

Explanations of a few individual items were requested, for instance the increase of \$25,299

in the cost of unemployment insurance for town employees and \$62,846 for town employee benefits. According to Sylbert, the first was prescribed by the state and the second reflected an increase in the number of employees depending on the town for health insurance.

Among the long list of budget items, the Town’s school fee, to the sum of almost \$1,500,000, passed almost without comment.

THE TOWN MANAGER

Article 9, a request to budget \$9,500 to employ a recruitment firm to “assist, advise, and support the Town Manager Search Committee” was greeted by the Finance Committee’s comment that the problem in the past had not been in finding town managers but rather in supporting them adequately once hired.

Several members of the public praised the record of Manager Sylbert and one recommended that the \$9,500 be devoted instead to persuading him to accept a permanent appointment. This was followed by applause, after which Mr. Sylbert noted his appreciation but added that there were other issues to resolve before he could decide if he wanted to apply for the permanent position.



Annual Town Meeting, DPW Building, May 2022. Photo: Sandisfield Times

He added that following a professional path to attract and interview candidates would be essential to a good outcome in any case. This article passed with a vote of 39 in favor and 37 against.

THE FIRE CHIEF

The principal drama of the meeting came with Article 11, which proposed that the town allocate \$350,000 for the purchase of a used fire truck.

Fire Chief Ralph Morrison was prepared with an impassioned speech that finding such a vehicle that suited to the conditions in Sandisfield would be difficult, if not impossible, and that a used vehicle would come with no warranties. In his view the proposal was a false economy as prices for fire trucks are rising by as much as \$100,000 a year and that replacing a used truck in a few years would be very costly. He requested an amendment that a sum be changed to \$700,000 to purchase a “demo” fire truck, a new vehicle that had been used in demonstrations that would be cheaper than a new truck but offer comparable warranties and be available for delivery in 2 to 3 months, rather than the year or more required for a new truck.

After some discussion about the source of the extra funds, the Article was amended to reflect Fire Chief Morrison’s proposal that the town investigate purchasing a new, demo or used truck, and that \$700,000 be allocated for this purpose with \$350,000 from Free Cash and \$350,000 from the Capital Stabilization Fund. The amended article passed by the required 2/3rds majority.

ZONING QUESTIONS, INCLUDING CANNABIS

Article 18, a proposal to amend the Zoning Bylaws by adding a bylaw enabling the permitting of accessory dwelling units to serve homeowners as a source of rental income, was vigorously opposed by Select Board Chair George Riley who maintained that as currently written it would deprive residents of any right to input on changes and development of adjacent properties. A vote sent this proposed amendment back to the Planning Board for rewriting.



*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

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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

Offering gracious, warm hospitality and charming, immaculate accommodations in the historic c. 1785 Elijah Twining house.

Cont'd on next page

Another proposal by the Planning Board, a change to the Zoning Bylaws to permit shared driveways, was amended to include a stipulation that any such plan must first be submitted to the Highway Superintendent for approval. This article passed as amended with the required two-thirds majority.

Article 20, a proposed zoning bylaw prescribing the conditions that must be met by any cannabis growing operation within town limits, also provoked spirited debate. A similar proposal last year had failed to pass and had been returned to the Planning Board for rewriting.

The Berkshire Eagle, as reported by Heather Bellow on May 18, described the “grand compromise” that created the new bylaw that indeed did pass.

The bylaw requires indoor and outdoor grows to be on a minimum of 50 acres, and with road setbacks of at least 250 feet. As long as it meets these and other parameters, there is no restriction on the number of cultivators. Only two recreational, nonmedical, retail pot shops are allowed in town, however.

Also under the bylaw, deliveries of recreational marijuana to homes are prohibited and odor regulations will be enforced for all varieties of businesses. A small citizens’ subcommittee will review all cannabis permit applications and advise the Select Board.


Select Board Chair George Riley recommended an amendment to reduce the 50-acre requirement to 20 with a setback of 100 feet, in order not to discriminate against owners of smaller properties. Local homeowners replied that without such a size guarantee that their homes would not be visually or otherwise affected by industrial growers, they could not support the bylaw. Most agreed that a bylaw was necessary, even if it did not meet their particular specifications. The amendment failed.

After an acknowledgement of the hard work by the Planning Board in drafting the new bylaw and ushering it through a tricky approval process, the article passed with only three votes against.

THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE QUESTION

Unanimity returned with Article 23 and a citizens’ petition that the Regional School District Agreement between the towns of Otis and Sandisfield be amended to specify that all motions on joint School Committee business be decided by a majority vote, “provided that at least one Committee member from each town votes on the prevailing side of any such motion.”

This was an attempt to redress a situation in which Otis, with four School Committee members to Sandisfield’s three, currently has the ability to decide any question without input from our town. This petition met with universal approval. The question will next be addressed at the Otis Town Meeting, which is expected to veto the idea out of hand.

Dominic adjourned the meeting at 2:00 p.m. 

Absolute Beginner Ukulele

YOU TOO CAN LEARN TO PLAY AN INSTRUMENT

By Bill Price

WHAT: A completely free 4-week course to introduce the Ukulele to ANYONE. No prior musical experience required. No instrument required.

WHO: Jean Atwater-Williams is no stranger to teaching music. She holds a bachelor’s degree from Boston Conservatory of Music and over the years has taught Junior High and High School music and has directed adult and children’s choirs.

WHY: Jean said, “I have always loved music and sharing that love with others. My ‘instrument’ had always been my voice, but in 2017 I purchased my first ukulele. I began to play and I was hooked (some might say obsessed)! When Covid lockdowns came into effect, I decided I would use the time to improve my skill on the instrument. I took online classes and collaborated virtually with other musicians near and far (one of my collaborators is from Finland!). Playing the ukulele brought me a great deal of peace and joy during a difficult time and I want to share that joy with others.”

Learning to play an instrument is good for anyone at any age, and the ukulele apparently is an easy instrument to learn (which is part of the reason it has become so wildly popular). Aside from the fun and social connection that comes from playing with others, studies show that playing music activates the brain in a profound way, using more gray matter than most other activities and strengthens the connections between the left and right sides of the brain. In fact, playing an instrument does more to keep your brain sharp than the standard recommendation of doing puzzles.




From left, Roseanne Hoekstra, Jean Atwater-Williams, Liana Toscanini, and Connie Canty, with brand-new Kala ukuleles.

Jean added that she is grateful to The Kanikapila Project (www.kanikapilaproject.org) and The Uke Hut in Queens, New York. “They provided a generous donation of six brand-new Kala ukuleles. Together with a couple of ukes from my personal collection, it’s now possible for me to offer loaner ukuleles for a class of eight. Students can also bring their own instruments.”

Anyone who has a desire to explore playing an instrument, this is your opportunity. The class is free and instruments are provided during class. So what are you waiting for?

WHEN: Saturday mornings from 10:30 to noon on June 11, 18, 25, and July 2

WHERE: Community Room, New Boston Fire House, South Main Street (Rt. 8), Sandisfield.

To register, send an email to atwaterwilliams@gmail.com or a text to 860-604-4323. Include your name and phone number and whether you will need a loaner instrument. If you have access to one of your own, feel free to bring it. Class size is limited to the number of ukuleles available and is already half full. First come, first served. 

KOHLER ENGINES

ATV

SNAPPER PRO

Kawasaki ENGINES

POLARIS

NEW BOSTON CRANE SERVICE & SLEDS

HONDA ENGINES / **TRITON TRAILERS**

Simplicity

DR (Professional Power Done Right)

INTERSTATE BATTERIES

FERRIS

STIHL

American Conveyors & Log Splitters

Branson TRACTORS

Husqvarna

GENERAC

Route 8 / P.O. Box 691
Sandisfield, MA 01255
www.newbostoncrane.com

Call/Text 413-258-4653
fax 413-258-2884
nbcinfo@gmail.com

Sales, Parts & Service Available for ATV's, Snowmobiles, Motorcycles, Lawn & Garden Equipment, Generators, Log Splitters, Trailers

Write-In Candidate Wins Big

Cont'd from p.1

– adding it to the Town Warrant at the Annual Town Meeting without due process – after it had been tabled by the Planning Board due to lack of “time to work it through and give enough public input.” A less-than-equitable practice requires a two-thirds majority for the Planning Board to add an item to the Town Warrant versus a simple majority for the Select Board to add an item.

“I thought that the meetings were run pretty poorly ... and [I vowed] not to just stand around and watch,” Field explained.

As Sandisfield’s newest Select Board member, Field has “a lot to bring to the party,” namely 20 years as a business founder and owner (he created and owns the local firms of John W. Field Tree Service, Inc., Field Property Management, LLC, and Radius Crane and Rigging).

Possibly, he added, the biggest asset he will bring to the Select Board is experience purchasing equipment, “because we need a lot of it, and there’s a lot to [the process],” he said – pointing to routine, big-ticket purchases by the Highway Department, Fire Department, and Police/EMS – citing risk management as the key to success in this area.

A life-long Sandisfield resident, Field is poised for the 3-year term ahead of him. “I have no agenda,” he said, “I just have experience, and I plan on working hard – something I do every day.”

Regardless of the outcome, running for town office is a serious commitment – something George Riley understands well.

“I have enjoyed working to serve this town on the Select Board for the past four years,” he said in a written statement. “I’m proud of all I’ve accomplished, and especially that I’m leaving the Town in a far better state than it has been in a very long time.

“I do regret that, after all the work involved in recruiting and building a first-rate team in Town Hall, I won’t personally get to enjoy working with them in the future – but others will, and that’s good.”

A gracious man, Riley added, “It’s been a real pleasure to join with those dedicated individuals who are determined to move Sandisfield forward, despite all odds, and I sincerely hope they will continue to prevail.”

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The only other contested race was for a 3-year term on the School Committee, in which Amanda Leavenworth earned 132 votes to Paul Adams’ 32.

“This was my first foray into public office since



The Select Board at its May 23 meeting following the election. From left, Alex Bowman (masked), new Chairman Steve Seddon, John Field, and Interim Town Manager Jon Sylbert.

Photo: Bill Price

moving to Sandisfield,” Adams told The Times in a written statement.

“Having married into a 5th generation Sandisfield family (and fathering the 6th generation), I enjoyed the process of running, especially meeting people and talking about school issues. My opponent certainly has more name recognition having grown up here, and I wish her well given the challenges ahead.”

Leavenworth, a lifetime resident of Sandisfield, points to “the future of our next generation” as her inspiration to seek a seat on the School Committee.

“Making sure our students are academically prepared for the middle schools in our area should be everyone’s top priority,” she said, citing more dialogue – with other families whose children are currently attending FRES – as the first step toward not only hearing residents’ concerns but also beginning to address them.


Looking ahead, education tops Leavenworth’s list of agenda items.

“I attended Farmington River for the entirety of my elementary schooling, [and] I did not have a great experience,” she told The Times in a written statement. “Sure, the small community made for amazing friends ... [h]owever, academically I graduated from FRRSD and was behind,” she points out, which, now that she is a parent, means she remains invested in speaking for all the Town’s children, not just her own.

UNCONTESTED

In a series of uncontested races, Dominic Konstam was elected moderator (1 year); Douglas T. Miner as Town Clerk (the one-year remaining of former Town Clerk Dolores Harasyko’s last term); Bethany Perry to the Board of Assessors (3 years); Barbara Cormier (5 years) and Lisa Leavenworth (3 years) to vacancies on the Planning Board; and Mary Turek was elected Library Trustee (3 years).

Dr. Stephen Rubenstein was elected unopposed to the Board of Health (3 years). He said his primary reason for running was, “to provide additional information concerning public health issues, disease prevention, treatment, the availability of various health services in our locale, and any other health matters pertinent to the well-being of our residents.” He will be busy, initially, with familiarizing himself with the functions and requirements of a regional Board of Health.

In keeping with 260 years of local tradition, voters overwhelmingly opposed changing the status quo regarding the Town Clerk – in other words, switching from electing to appointing – with 150 nays to 77 yeas. The Town Clerk will remain responsible to the voters and not to the Select Board. 




Flag Day, June 14

BURNING CEREMONY AT 5 P.M.

Do you have an unserviceable, worn-out United States flag?

Your no-longer usable flags can be dropped off any time at the Sandisfield American Legion Pavilion on Rt. 8 in New Boston. Leave them on the counter by the fire pit.

A burning ceremony to dispose of them properly will be held June 14, Flag Day, at 5:00 p.m., at the Pavilion. Everyone is welcome. 

Maria Domato, Commander, Post #456

It's Official: We're Historic

Cont'd from p.1

Listings of neighborhood-districts on the Register confirm that a community's historical character is substantial and affirms local awareness about the value of preservation. This has been the case with New Boston, settled in 1752 by the Daniel Brown family and incorporated and named as the Town of Sandisfield in March 1762. The 18th century New Boston Inn, originally built and operated by the Browns, is one of the oldest continuously operated inns of its kind in the country and is the centerpiece of the district.

While strictly honorary, the listings of districts on the state and national registers are a source of community pride and create outside interest in, for example, tourism and home buying.

Property owners are under no obligation or restriction whatsoever. National Register historic districts should not be confused with local historic districts that are established under town bylaws and have certain prescribed powers concerning alterations to buildings visible from the street. There are no local historic districts in Sandisfield.

NRHP listings also confers an extra level of review and protection for properties in a district that might be affected by government construction projects such as roads and bridges. Also, matching grants by the State are possible for improvements to government facilities in a listed district. An example is the Sandisfield Public Library which is in the New Boston Village Historic District and is therefore eligible for matching funds as available.

The Sandisfield Historical Commission is working on road signs and an interpretive marker. A public ceremony to inaugurate the Historic District is tentatively planned for early August.

For more information, contact me at ronbernard@aol.com or the other members of the Sandisfield Historical Commission: Liana Toscanini, Roseanne Hoekstra or Connie Cauty.

BUT A SETBACK FOR KNOX TRAIL RECOGNITION

In a related development, the MHC refused a joint application by the Otis and Sandisfield historical commissions to proceed to the next stage of filing for nomination of the Knox Trail on the National Register.

The decision was addressed to Tom Ragusa of the Otis Historical Commission, who has researched the history of the Knox for more than thirty years. Otis had retained a professional consultant to prepare the initial inventory document.


The letter reads in part: "MHC staff have evaluated the Area Form [inventory] provided for the



Knox Trail in Otis and Sandisfield. We appreciate the effort you have made to prepare the information, but in our opinion, the area does not appear to meet the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.”

Because the supporting research does not extend across the entire length of the original road with connections that linked upstate New York to Boston, the Commission may be concerned about integrity. The Knox Trail is a unique and complex entity so documenting the entire trail of some

300 miles to the high standard required would be highly impractical if not impossible.

While disappointing this may not be the last word in the effort to get federal recognition for the Sandisfield/Otis section, the only remaining undeveloped portion of the original trail. New strategies and approaches are under consideration locally together with interested outside parties with expertise. In the meantime, historical interpretive markers will be installed at significant way points along the trail in both towns. 



The New Boston Inn, c. early 1900s. DeMars image, courtesy Great Barrington Historical Society

recreation COMMITTEE

KICK-OFF SUMMER AT LOOKING GLASS GARDENS

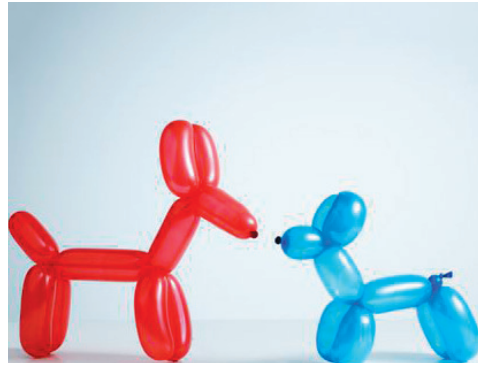
SUNDAY, JUNE 26, 12:30-3:30 P.M.
RAIN OR SHINE

By Lynn Rubenstein

The perfect way to start the summer season: a **Free Magical Family Day**, hosted by Looking Glass Gardens, 19 Dodd Road.

The fun begins at 12:30 p.m. Grab a bag of popcorn, some cotton candy, and a cold drink (all free) before settling in to enjoy **Ed Popielarczyk's Comedy Magic Show** which starts at 1:00 p.m.

After the show, Ed will sculpt animal balloons for the kids. Or the kids may decide to go on a pony ride at Sunny Rose Farm (a short walk up an easy path, also free).



A few carnival-style games will help keep you busy (hint: you may go home with a new friend with fins). Jean Atwater-Williams will focus on making our ears happy with her ukulele.

A grant from the Sandisfield Cultural Council helped make this event possible.

At the time of this printing, our Kids Fishing Derby on June 4 has not taken place, so watch this space for the results.

As always, we look forward to any suggestions you may have. Wishing you endless smiles: Lynn Rubenstein, Laura Messina, Anina Carr, Laurie Seddon.



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

CW NELSON LANDSCAPE DESIGN & NURSERY

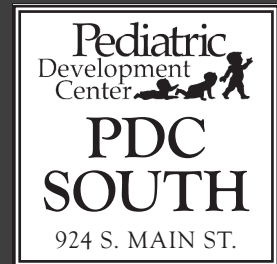
Landscaping & Masonry
Retaining Stone Walls
Patios and Walkways

Grading & Drainage
Septic Systems
Excavation
Driveways
Garden Planning
Landscape Planting

Waterfalls & Fountains
Water Gardens & Koi Ponds

413-258-3375
www.cwnelson.com
chuckwnelson@earthlink.net
*find us on Facebook

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.

Certified Therapists
offering evaluations & visits
at your home, in our center,
or through telehealth.

Dept. of Public Health Certified
Early Intervention Program.

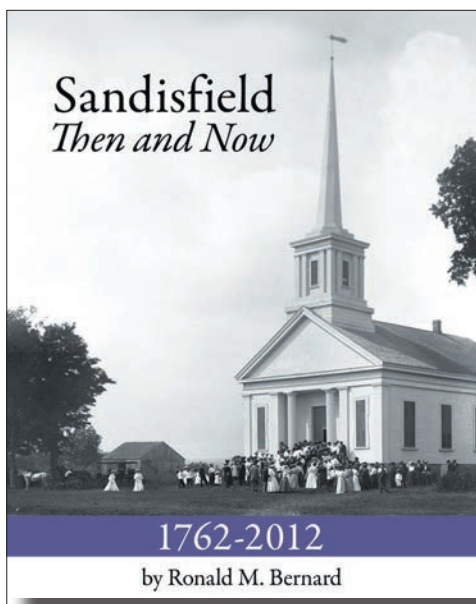
924 S. Main Street
Great Barrington
413-717-4083

pediatricdevelopmentcenter.org

Summary of Town's History on Website

Sandisfield Then and Now was published in 2012 in conjunction with the Town's 250th anniversary celebrations. It is a comprehensive history of our town from its founding in 1762 through our time. Included are histories of more than 160 antique houses and historic sites. But at 512 oversized pages, there is much to see.

Now a summary titled, "Sandisfield: Celebrating Our Sestercentennial 1762-2012," is available on the Town's website.



The seven hundred and fifty hard-cover copies printed have sold. According to author, Ron Bernard, there are no plans to reprint, but he is considering a compact disk version.

Copies are available to read at the Sandisfield Library and at the Town Hall Annex (see Town Clerk) and downstairs in the Council on Ageing meeting room. Many private homes in town have a copy. The public libraries in most surrounding towns also have copies.

And now, thanks to the Town's diligent webmaster, Larry Dwyer, a useful summary, "Sandisfield: Celebrating Our Sestercentennial," has been posted on the Town's website at these convenient locations: www.sandisfieldma.gov/about-sandisfield ; www.sandisfieldma.gov/files/ and www.sandisfieldma.gov/where

Ron has copies of the pamphlet that was distributed as a public service by The Times in its August, 2012 issue. If interested, contact him at ronbernard@aol.com.

JOHN FIELD
TREE SERVICE, INC.

QUALITY TREE CARE...SAFELY DELIVERED

fieldtreeservice.com 413-329-6519

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

The Space Race

Don't let WFH become WTF

If you're DIY, policy up

FRANK CONSOLATI INSURANCE

Condo and Homeowners Insurance Since 1942
71 Main Street, Lee MA 413-243-0105

COOK BUILDERS

Superb Craftsmanship

All Phases of Building & Remodeling
New Home Construction, Additions & Renovations

CALL TODAY: (413) 229-2793

Serving the Tri-State area for over 45 years

MEMORIAL DAY PARADE 2022

Memorial Day photos: Janey Beardsley, Ron Bernard, Lorraine German, Jennifer Hibbins, Dawn Lemon Odell, Bill Price

After two years of Covid “Drive N’ Wave” parades, Sandisfield turned out in greater numbers than seen for many years to celebrate America’s fallen veterans with a morning parade and a near-lunchtime barbecue at the American Legion Pavilion on Rt. 8.

After a stop at the New Boston Cemetery for an honoring ceremony, the parade continued toward New Boston and a second stop at the Berkshire Skilled Care & Rehabilitation facility, which honored veterans at the center before finishing up at the Pavilion.

Parade planning, which took about four months, was more extensive than in the past. Parade sponsors, Ralph Morrison of the Sandisfield Fire Department and Maria Damato, Commander of American Legion Post #456, along with Lynn Rubenstein of the Recreation Committee, want to thank everyone who marched, rode, or drove in the

parade, including: The Sandisfield, Otis, and Tolland Fire Departments, the Sandisfield Police Department, The Lee High School Marching Band, Members of American Legion Post #456, Recreation Committee, Cultural Council, Council on Aging, Sandisfield Historical Society, Domaney’s in Great Barrington, Brad Curry and the New Boston Inn for donations to the dessert table, Mr. and Mrs. John Skrip and all the other volunteers who donated goods, set-up, and clean-up during and after the parade and barbecue.

Ralph asked specifically to thank Zoe Nelson for driving the school bus and the Messina Brothers Company for donating the bus.

This year was the first time in recent memory that all three Selectmen either took part in the parade or were at the post-parade barbecue at the American Legion Pavilion.





Now accepting new students!
 Group or private riding lessons available at your home or on our Sandisfield farm
 Boarding and Leasing Horses Available
 Specializing in Eventing, Dressage, and Hunter-Jumper lessons
 Lessons available for all ages
Rose Nelson, Instructor and Owner
 •
 Massachusetts certified,
 Pony club eventing participant and USEA eventer
 Email: sunnyrosefarm@yahoo.com
 Phone: (413) 446-4944



Veterans policing the spent shells following the honorary volley.



The Wall of Honor, gathered by the Recreation Committee in honor of all Sandisfield veterans.





The Librarian's Corner

By Terry Spohnholz

Library hours

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

Wednesday, 2:00–7:00 p.m.

Saturday, 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Closed Thursday, Friday and Sunday

Phone: 258-4966

Email: sandisfieldlibrary@gmail.com

LIBRARY EVENTS

ARTS AND CRAFTS

Arts and crafts combined with story-telling at the library every Second Saturday of the Month, from 11 a.m. until noon.

June 11, **Story-Telling** crafting fun.

July 23, **Ed the Wizard** will bring his fun and fantastical balloon making to the library.

August 6, **Something's Fishy!** A fun show for An Ocean of Possibilities by nationally recognized story teller, Mary Jo Maichack who sings, plays guitar, tells tales and leads the fun in this puppet show with audience participation.

NEW BOOK ARRIVALS

ADULT FICTION AND NON FICTION

- *The Homewreckers* by Mary Andrews
- *Aunt Dimity and the Enchanted Cottage* by Nancy Atherton

- *The Lioness* by Christopher Bohjalian
- *Countdown to Midnight* by Dale Brown
- *The Sound of Darkness* by Heather Graham
- *The Boardwalk Bookshop* by Susan Mallery
- *Overboard* by Sara Paretsky
- *22 Seconds* by James Patterson
- *Nightwork* by Nora Roberts
- *The Summer Place* by Jennifer Weiner
- *The Lost Summers of Newport* by Beatriz Williams


CHILDREN'S SECTION

- *The Bad Seed Goes to the Library* by John Jory

We continue to add new and, enlightening books to both the adult section (upstairs) and children's section (downstairs). The Children's section is replete with books, games, toys, and a train set.

We also offer notary service, public computer and printer availability, free wi-fi, and access to e-books from Massachusetts libraries with your Sandisfield Library card. If you have a particular author or book in mind, and the Sandisfield Library does not have it, we can borrow it from other libraries. It may take a week or two while the book winds its way from one end of Massachusetts to here.

BOOKS FOR SALE

To make room for new book acquisitions, we are weeding out old but in-excellent-condition fiction, non-fiction, and children's books. For sale at \$2.00 for hardcover, \$1.50 for softcover. \$10 dollars gets you six hardcover books. 

WHAT KIND OF COUNTRY

By Karen Garfield
New Hartford Road

What kind of country
Lets their children
Perish
At school
In daytime.

What kind of country
Sells AR-15s
To boys
To men
Anytime.

What kind of country
Sells firearms
Bombs
Ammunition
Many times.

What kind of country
Has gun stores
Next
To schools
Many times.

What kind of country
Blames teachers
Social workers
Policemen
In daytime.

What kind of country
What kind of country
What kind of country

What kind of country
Lets their children
Perish
At school
In daytime.

★ DINE IN OR TAKEOUT

*HOUSE SPECIAL PRIME RIB
(thursday-saturday)

Weekly
Specials

CHICKEN PICCATA
CEDAR PLANK SALMON
PULLED PORK MAC 'N CHEESE

or...

GREAT APPETIZERS
GRINDERS & SPECIALTY PIZZAS
BUILD-A-BURGER & SALADS
WINGS, WINGS & MORE WINGS!

Chef Jess Gannon
from the kitchen of...



LIVE ENTERTAINMENT ★

(every weekend)

Join Us for:
Musical Bingo
Horseshoe Leagues
Trivia Nights

Private
Parties

CHECK OUT OUR FULL MENU AT:
knoxtrailinn.com Like us on Facebook
Follow us on Instagram
@theknoxtrailinn

The Minery Sanctuary

FORGIVING CAN WORK WONDERS

By Tom Christopher

A Yankee of the old school, Robert Minery, known to everyone as Bob, was born in Sandisfield and lived his entire 82 years on the family farm on Cold Spring Road. Bob died March 2015.

His relationship with the land extended beyond its agricultural uses; Minery was a keen admirer of nature and wanted his 173 acres to pass into the ownership of the Massachusetts Audubon Society for preservation as a nature sanctuary.

Now, thanks to the persistence of the Society, and the support of Sandisfield's town government and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, Minery's wish is being honored.

The delay of seven years in the transfer of the property was the result of Mr. Minery's idiosyncratic beliefs and thrift.

He saw no conflict with his love of nature in devoting a small (approximately one acre) parcel of his farm to a primitive landfill for use by the towns of Otis and Sandisfield. When he eventually discontinued this activity, the Department of Environmental Protection demanded that the site be properly closed, something that Mr. Minery declined to do.

In response, the Department attached a lien for \$400,000 to the Minery farm until such time as the closure of the landfill should be completed.

Mr. Minery also declined to pay property taxes to the towns of Sandisfield and Otis, within whose borders his farm lay. At the time of his death the arrears with the town of Sandisfield were in excess of \$100,000, and he owed Otis an additional \$3,200. Finally, Minery also left unpaid bills with MassHealth, the basis for another \$100,000 lien.

Untangling all these complications was no easy process, noted Rob Wilber, Director of Land Conservation for the Massachusetts Audubon Society. However, he added, there was strong incentive to do so.

The Society had already assembled 770 adjacent acres into the Cold Brook Wildlife Sanctuary. The addition of Minery's property would connect the Sanctuary to the 6,616 acre Sandisfield State Forest and the

6,600 acre Otis State Forest, and would be an important step in a larger conservation scheme to create a continuous corridor from the Green Mountains of Vermont to New York's Hudson Highlands. Such connections are especially important in an era of climate change, for as the changing climate threatens native plant and animal populations, connectivity becomes critical to allowing them to migrate and find new habitats with the greater landscape.



The remains of Bob Minery's shack where he lived alone for many years.



Bob made use of cast-off bedsprings from his landfill as fencing. A few still stand along Cold Spring Road.


Photos: Bill Price

Massachusetts Audubon has tested the groundwater on the site of the former landfill three times, each time securing a result of normal. It has hired a contractor to remove all the "surface metal" of discarded items from the site of the former landfill, after which it will cover the site with soil and sow seed to provide vegetative cover. These plans have met with the approval of the Department of Environmental Protection, which has

committed upon their completion to removing its lien.

Negotiations with MassHealth have persuaded that state agency to accept a payment of \$5,000 as satisfying its lien.

Likewise, the Town of Sandisfield is reportedly poised to accept \$30,000 as payment in full for the taxes owed to it. Given that the town government had not expected to recover any of Minery's back taxes, this payment would be welcome, especially as the conversion of the property to wildlife conservation will relieve any future danger of liability which might accrue to the town for its past use of the landfill if the Minery property was ever developed for residential use.

Negotiations for the purchase of the property from the Minery estate will proceed as soon as all the liens are settled. Nature lovers can rejoice, and Robert Minery can rest easier. 

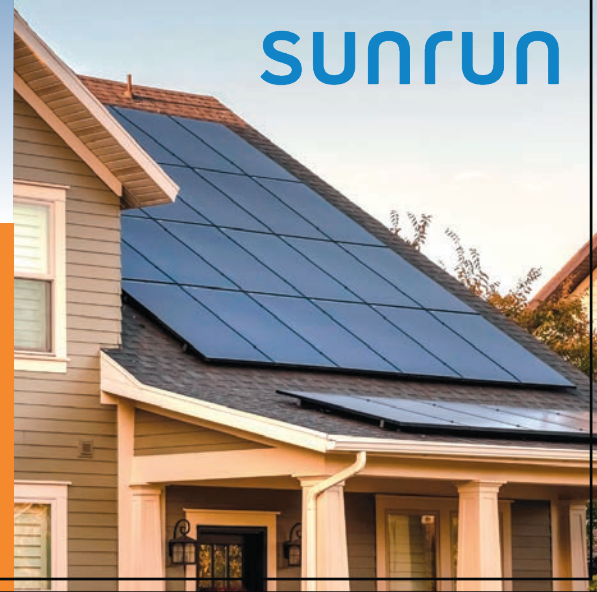
See how much you could save by going solar.
Call or text today for a free consultation.

Copyright © 2020 Vivint Solar Developer, LLC. All rights reserved.
Vivint Solar Developer, LLC (FIN: 80-0756438) is a licensed contractor in each state in which we operate.
Massachusetts License: 170848; 15688 A; SS-002342

Call to see if your home qualifies for a zero cost installation and equipment.
Go green to save green!

CHARLEY GIAIMO
(413) 645-4944
charley.giaino@sunrun.com

SUNRUN





Rapper Freddie Gibbs, left, and Bob Tarasuk in a scene from the film "Down with the King."
Photo: Provided by Diego Ongaro, courtesy of The Berkshire Eagle

Sandisfield Film Released Online

"DOWN WITH THE KING" STARS THE BOB

By Bill Price

You will soon be able to find "Down With the King" on your own viewer of choice. The film will be available on digital and on demand sites on June 28. A trailer can be seen now by searching Downwiththeking. It was also posted on ConnectSandisfield by the film's

director Diego Ongaro. If that's not enough, the film will be highlighted in the July/August Berkshire Magazine. It was first screened locally at the Berkshire International Film Festival in December.

This is the second collaboration between Bob Tarasuk, Sandisfield farmer, and Ongaro, formerly of Sandisfield now living in Norfolk, Conn. "Down With the King" was filmed mostly in the Sandisfield woods and on Snow Farm, the Tarasuk family's farming and logging operation on South Beech Plain Road.

As we wrote on the Jan/Feb issue of The Times, "The film features real-life rapper Freddie Gibbs who plays 'a disillusioned rapper who comes to a Berkshire town much like Sandisfield to reevaluate the meaning of life and befriends a farmer, played by Tarasuk.' ... In the film Bob gets to teach the rapper a few realities of life, such as how to work through the fall and winter and the mud and the cold and how to slaughter animals that you've fed for months. This is all brand new to the big-city rapper who finds a new sense of purpose in Sandisfield."

The film is the third featuring Sandisfield. The other two? "Bob and the Trees," 2015, also starred Bob Tarasuk and was directed by Diego Ongaro. The second, two years later, was Karen Allen's "A Tree, A Rock, A Cloud," which featured the SilverBrook Café. 🍷

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.

The Times is distributed free of charge to all Sandisfield postal address and boxes. Free copies are available at the following town locations: The transfer station (Wed/Sat/Sun), the Library, When Pigs Fly Farm, and in New

Boston at A & M Auto, and the New Boston Inn. The Times is also available in West Otis at the laundromat, library, the Farmington River Diner, Fratelli's, and Otis Rec Center; in East Otis at Katies, Pappas, and the Knox Trail Inn. Also at the Monterey Library (outside box), in Colebrook at the post office and the general store, and at the New Marlborough General Store. Back copies are available for purchase.

The Times can be mailed to your home (non-Sandisfield addresses only) by paid subscription (see form at left) or you can read it (free) online as a PDF document at www.sandisfieldtimes.org. Classified ads, 30 words or less, are free.

We welcome submissions, comments and suggestions, including letters to the editor by the 15th of the month prior. Maximum 300 words. 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.

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) _____

Editorial Staff

Editor: Bill Price

email: editor@sandisfieldtimes.org

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.



The Sandisfield Arts Center

Welcome Back

by Barbara Penn

The Sandisfield Arts Center 2022 season launched with a festive “Welcome Back” Dinner-Theater on May 21, with delicious and creative food by chef Adam Manacher. Organizers (and performers) Jean Atwater-Williams, Linda Mironti, Mary Anne Grammar, and Ben Luxon credit the evening’s success to amazing volunteers from our community: Susan Van Sickle for the decadent brownie dessert; Susie Crofut for beautiful floral table and stage arrangements; Steve Kopiec for all-round help; and volunteering in myriad roles to greet, host, serve, manage parking: Anni Crofut, Jaye Moscariello, Linda Storms, Bill Taylor, Bill Haines, Tom Christopher, and John Skrip.

The entertainment included a Neapolitan Song from Linda, a Dorothy Parker short story read by Mary Anne, Ben and Linda singing “I Remember It Well” from Gigi, and a short play on the frustrations of never-ending customer-service transfers, “The Challenge of Bureaucracy,” performed by Jean with Linda Mironti, Mary Anne Grammer, Linda Storms, and Ben Luxon.

Thanks also to all who came to enjoy the food and festive reunion!

JUNE EVENTS FOLLOW THAT GREAT KICKOFF



Award-winning singer-songwriter Roger Street Friedman is back, this time on our main stage. Roger performed for us last year at a great outdoor community event and we’re thrilled to bring him back, along with the chamber-folk duo of Ari and Mia. A family-friendly event, with a special price for kids. June 11, 7:30 p.m.

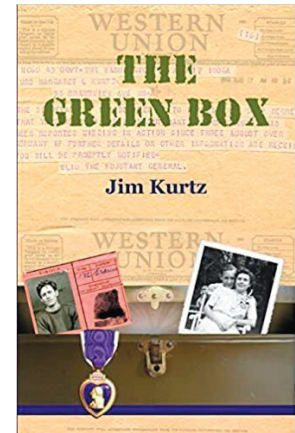
In the Gallery, join us for a free opening reception for Mill River neighbor and painter Jacob Fossum’s “Two Candles” show June 4, 4 to 6 p.m. Fossum is on the faculty at Bard College at Simon’s Rock and a founding member of the Railroad Street Collective. The show continues to July 3.

THE DANIEL MANACHER PRIZE


We’re honored to launch the Daniel Manacher Prize for Young Artists this year. Three young Berkshire artists will be selected as finalists and each receive \$350 in support of their art practice, as well as a group show of their work at the Sandisfield Arts Center in August. The prize was created by Adam Manacher and Carol Birnbaum, in memory of their son Daniel Manacher and his passion for art. The submission deadline for next

year’s prize is June 15. Check the Arts Center website for application guidelines.

June 17 at 7 p.m., Riley and Bogart Muller will host the return of the Free Family Film series with the original 1977 “Star Wars.” Riley and Bogart provide juice boxes and popcorn for family fun.



June 25 we are delighted to present The Green Box. Author Jim Kurtz will read from his book The Green Box, with an accompanying slide show. The Green Box is the gripping story of an ordinary man called to war, a story rediscovered by a son through a handful of telegrams, letters, and other clues. Kurtz shows us how his father answered the call to duty, carried out bombing missions in service to his country, and suffered the inhumane conditions of a German POW camp and the lasting effects we today call PTSD. Audience members will also get a preview of the documentary film in development. Book signing afterward.

Note that requirements for proof of vaccination and masking will depend on current CDC and local guidelines; check the Arts Center website. 



sandisfield
ARTS CENTER

★ 5 HAMMERTOWN ROAD, SANDISFIELD, MA ★

SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 4 - 6 PM - GALLERY EVENT

RECEPTION WITH THE ARTIST: JACOB FOSSUM.

“TWO CANDLES” EXHIBIT WILL BE ON DISPLAY THROUGH JULY 3. FREE

SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 7:30 PM

ROGER STREET FRIEDMAN CONCERT. CHAMBER-FOLK DUO

ARI AND MIA OPENING (\$20)

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 15, MIDNIGHT

SUBMISSION DEADLINE FOR

DANIEL MANACHER PRIZE FOR YOUNG ARTISTS

FRIDAY, JUNE 17, 7 PM

FAMILY FILM WITH BOGART AND RILEY MULLER. FREE

SATURDAY, JUNE 25, 8 PM GALLERY EVENT

THE GREEN BOX. READING, SLIDE SHOW, PREVIEW OF A DOCUMENTARY FILM ABOUT WORLD WAR II IN DEVELOPMENT.

BOOK SIGNING. (\$20)

PROOF OF VACCINATION REQUIRED

FOR DETAILS AND MASKING REQUIREMENTS, VISIT SANDISFIELDARTSCENTER.ORG



Drive With Patience

Road work began mid-May at the top of the hill on Rt. 57 to the bottom of the hill at the small Buck River Bridge. Road Superintendent Brad Curry does not anticipate setting up a detour so drivers should anticipate occasional delays because the narrow, steep road does not allow for a lot of leeway.

Resurfacing is also underway on Rt. 183 between the Connecticut state line and the South Sandisfield Cemetery. Same rules: No detour, bring patience. Curry said that, in addition, the lower portion of Rt. 57 leading up the hill toward Tolland has been resurfaced, at last.

He added that this round of road repair should be finished by the end of July, "just in time to start on other roads." 🏠

From the Town Webmaster: Larry Dwyer

Your Electric Bill Has Two Parts

Your electric bill has two parts: **Generation** ("supply") and **Distribution**.

Distribution in Sandisfield is by Eversource. You have no choice about this.

But generation can be by Eversource or another company. Eversource's current fixed residential generation rate ("Basic Service" January-June 2022) is 13.7 cents per kWh.

The town, however, has locked in a generation rate from First Point Power until January 2023 at 10.3 cents per kWh. This is a considerable savings. In addition, First Point's energy comes from 100% renewable (wind) sources. You should be enrolled in the First Point program, unless you have opted out from it. Check the first page of your bill: "Supply" should be from First Point Power. If not, you can call them at 401-684-1443 to enroll. 🏠

Thanks, Jeff

Retired NASA Engineer Jeff Bye is leaving the Green Committee to move on to the Capital Improvement Committee. Larry Dwyer of the Green Committee wrote that Jeff's guidance "helped us find better path in the design of our solar arrays for the Town Hall and DPW Garage. Despite spearheading the installation of Broadband in Sandisfield ... he was still able to find time to advise [our] committee. We all wish Jeff the best working with the CIC and I'm sure his input will be highly valued." 🏠



Shire Forestry

Adam Brown
Consulting Forester
MA License # 461

P.O. Box 171
Sandisfield, MA 01255

shireforestry@gmail.com
Cell: 413.854.7525

- Forest Management/Stewardship Plans
- Chapter 61/A/B Program
- Timber Sales
- Boundary Marking
- GIS Mapping
- Foresters for the Birds
- Wildlife Habitat Improvement
- Recreational Trail Layout



HOMEIMPROVEMENTS

STEVEN SEDDON, SR.

Building and Modifying Homes
in the Berkshires
Since 2001

413 563 1483

sshomeimprovements@live.com

www.sshomeimprovementsma.com



**NOW! HIKING TRAILS
INSTALLED & MAINTAINED**

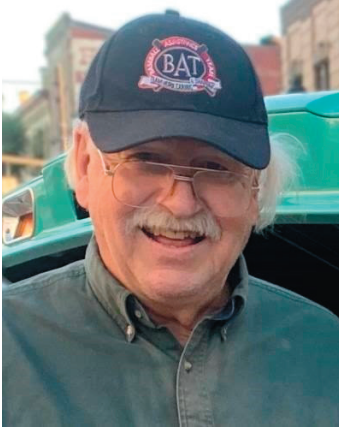
TIM DEMING
Field and Brush
Mowing

•
413.537.6681
1403 New Boston Rd.
Tolland, MA

tdeming1@hotmail.com



Comings and Goings



GENE KEARNS
1945-2022

Gene Kearns, who had lived on Elk Road in South Sandisfield since his high school graduation, died April 12 due to an accident. He had many long-time friends in town.

Born on July 16, 1945, Eugene Louis Kearns graduated from Simsbury High School in Connecticut. He loved the outdoors, working on his property, antique hunting, and classic cars. He was a loyal friend and deeply cared for his family and friends.

Gene served in the Vietnam War as an Army specialist from 1966-1968. He took part in the Battle of Khe Sanh, an intense 77-day siege.

Following his service, Gene graduated from Central Connecticut State University in 1973.

In 2016, the Abigail Phelps Chapter, DAR, presented Gene with the Vietnam War Commemorative Award. On the same day Susan Elliott presented the Quilt of Valor that chapter members made in collaboration with the Avon Congregational Church.

Gene leaves his sister, Joyce Kearns Morris and her husband Philip; nephew Brian L. McDermott and Brian's children, Alexandra, Brennan, and Madelyn McDermott; and his niece Bridget McDermott and Bridget's children, Cedar and Addison Fillmore, as well as many loyal friends.

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated May 3 at St. Catherine of Siena Church, West Simsbury, Conn., followed by Military Honors and a gathering at the church for family and friends. Donations may be made online to the Wounded Warrior Project. The family thanks all veterans who have served. The Carmon Funeral Home & Family Center of Avon cared for the arrangements. Condolences may be left online at www.carmonfuneralhome.com.



ANNETTE LEVINE FELDBLUM
1943-2022

Annette S. Feldblum, 79, who was raised in Sandisfield, the daughter of Morris and Rose Levine, died May 5 in the presence of her family.

She was born on February 6, 1943 in Winsted. She attended Searles High School in Great Barrington, after which she lived in North Dartmouth and Charlton, Mass. For the last 20 years, she lived in Desert Hot Springs, California.

Annette bred and showed championship Maltese for over 25 years. She also enjoyed vacationing at her cottage at the Bay of Fundy, New Brunswick. She volunteered at Jewish Family Services in California.

She leaves three daughters, Lisa R. Stochaj and her husband James of Dudley, Mass., Erica L. Feldblum of Webster, Mass., and Wendy S. Feldblum of Pike Road, Alabama; two grandchildren, Benjamin J. Stochaj and his fiancée Katherine E. Powell of Somers, Conn., and Alaina M. Stochaj of Nashville, Tennessee; a great-grandson, Easton James Stochaj; four nieces including Lenore Wadman whom she considered a 4th daughter; and her former husband, Stephen Feldblum of Naples, Florida. She was preceded in death by a brother, William S. Levine and a sister, Dolores Brill.

A graveside service was held May 9 in Sandisfield Center Cemetery. Rabbi Neil Hirsch officiated. Donations in her name may be made to Maltese Rescue California, c/o Tami Karlsson, 20821 Broken Bit Drive, Covina, CA 91724. Arrangements were under the direction of Sitkowski, Malboeuf & Hickey Funeral Home, Webster, Mass.



NOW HEAR THIS!

Edited by Laura Rogers-Castro.

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

JUNE EVENTS

Sandisfield Select Board Meetings are currently through Zoom and in-person. Please visit sandisfieldma.gov or call 258-4711 for information.

Playgroup on Tuesdays from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. at the Otis Town Hall. Sponsored by South Berkshire Kids. Weather permitting. Pre-registration not necessary. Led by Nina Carr. Meet outside behind the Otis Town Hall in the gazebo for stories and songs followed by creative crafts. For confirmation, please call Nina Carr (258-3314). Free.

Chair Yoga on Wednesdays at 2:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall on Silverbrook Road, sponsored by the Council on Aging. For more information, contact Nina Carr (258-3314). Free.

Farmer's Market on Fridays in June, weather permitting, from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the New Boston Inn parking lot behind the building (corner of Routes 8 and 57). Fresh produce, eggs, baked goods, crafts.

Kids Fishing Derby on Saturday, June 4, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. sponsored by the Sandisfield Recreation Committee at the American Legion Post #456 on Route 8 in New Boston. The Legion has donated 200 brook trout, hatched and reared at the Berkshire National Fish Hatchery. No license required for children under 15. Ages 15-17 need a free Massachusetts fishing license (massfishhunt.mass.gov). Anyone older must have a valid fishing license. For more information, call Lynn (413-269-7357).

Gallery Opening and Reception with Artist Jacob Fossum on Saturday, June 4, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center on 5 Hammertown Road. The show will continue to July 3 and is on view before performances and other events, or by appointment. Proof of vaccination required. Free.

Story-telling at the Library on Saturday, June 11 at 11:00 a.m. Arts and crafts combined with story-telling.

Free Car Show on Saturday, June 11 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., with live music from Blue Yonder and outdoor grill, at the New Boston Inn (Corner of Routes 8 and 57).

Roger Street Friedman Concert on Saturday, June 11, at 7:30 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center on 5 Hammertown Road. Chamber-Folk Duo Ari and Mia will open. Proof of vaccination required. \$20, \$10 under 12.

New Boston Church Service on Sunday, June 12, at 10:00 a.m. at the New Boston Congregational Church, Route 57. All are welcome!

Family Film, The Original "Star Wars" on Friday, June 17, at 7:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center on 5 Hammertown Road. Juice boxes and popcorn provided for family fun! Proof of vaccination required. Free.

The Green Box: Book and Film Preview on Saturday, June 25, at 8:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center on 5 Hammertown Road. Jim Kurtz will read from his book with an accompanying slide show. There will also be a preview of the documentary film about World War II. Book signing. Proof of vaccination required. \$20

Free **Magical Family Day** on Sunday, June 26, 12:30-3:30 p.m., rain or shine, at Looking Glass Gardens, 19 Dodd Road. The perfect way to start the summer season. Popcorn, cotton candy, cold drinks all free before Ed Popielarczyk's Comedy Magic Show at 1:00 p.m. Pony rides for kids at Sunny Rose Farm (a short walk up an easy path, also free). Carnival-style games. Jean's ukulele. All funded by a Sandisfield Cultural Council grant.

EVENTS IN SURROUNDING TOWNS

Playgroup on Thursdays from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the Monterey Library. Sponsored by South Berkshire Kids. Weather permitting. Pre-registration not necessary. Meet for stories and songs followed by creative crafts. For information, please call Nina Carr (258-3314). Free.

Great Barrington Farmer's Market on Saturdays, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on 18 Church Street in Great Barrington. Featuring locally grown and produced foods, including fruits and vegetables, cheese, meats, breads, and more.

Kids Fishing Derby on Saturday, June 11 from 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. at the Berkshire National Fish Hatchery on 240 Hatchery Road in New Marlborough. For children 13 and under. Sponsored by the Friends of the Berkshire Hatchery in conjunction with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Jacob's Pillow Community Day on Saturday, June 11, from noon to 3:00 p.m. Family-friendly performances by Berkshire County regional dance artists, movement classes, dance-themed children's activities, tours, and a special performance by Cuban flamenco dancer Irene Rodriguez. The event will be held on the Pillow grounds in Becket. Free.

Sandisfield's Farmers' Market

Fridays in June, weather permitting, from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the New Boston Inn parking lot behind the building (corner of Routes 8 and 57).

Fresh produce, eggs,
baked goods, crafts.

The Historic 1737 New Boston Inn

Restaurant, Tavern and B&B

Seven Guest Rooms, All Private Baths
(Breakfast for Guests Only)

Reservations Strongly Recommended

Restaurant open FRI & SAT 12-9 & SUN 12-7

Pets
Welcome!

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

CAR SHOW
JUNE 11 1-4

LIVE MUSIC WITH
BLUE YONDER
OUTDOOR GRILL!

Friendly
Spirits
(as seen on
Syfy
Channel)

Renewing America's Chestnuts

HELP WITH PLANTING, STAY FOR BBQ

By Bill Price

An American Chestnut farm is being planted in north Sandisfield and you can help.

The 2022 planting will take place on June 4, about the same day this issue of The Times will be available, so you may be too late for this year, but keep watch for next spring. It's going to take a few years.

Douglas and Josie Miner on Cronk Road at the end of West Street have laid out about an acre and a half of open farmland and are beginning to plant what will eventually be about 2,000-3,000 American Chestnut trees.

They will need help every spring doing so. They have 432 seedlings to plant this year, and we're all invited to help. From 9 a.m. until noon. There is some skill involved, but experts from the Rhode Island/Massachusetts branch of The American Chestnut Foundation will be on hand to see that the seedlings get a good start. It's not something young children can do on their own.



The field ready for Chestnut seedlings

Photo: Doug Miner

The large field is fenced and ready to go, with a big field covered with wood chips. A barbecue will be available after the planting, so come ready to stay awhile. Or just plant and go, your choice.

Officially the address is 40 Cronk Road, but to reach the place drive to the upper end of West Street and just keep going onto the dirt road. You'll see the place. 📍

Don't Miss This Show

WRITTEN AND PERFORMED BY YOUR OWN KIDS

By Bill Price

Go over and under the oceans while staying right here in your own back yard.

The Farmington River Regional School, grades 2-6, invite you to attend their 2nd Annual Community Production, June 10, 6:30 p.m., at the school, Rt. 8 just north of West Otis Center. This year's presentation is "The Underwater Adventures of Marvelous Marina and Poop-Deck Pete," starring Starla Koerber as Marina and John Magovern as Pete.

The script was written almost entirely by students. Several



students submitted ideas at the end of the school year in 2021 and Art Teacher Laura Catullo combined the ideas into a rough draft and helped the script writers organize the scenes and create the dialogue. The theme this year is a reminder that the ocean is teeming with amazing life and needs our attention, care, and protection. A few local theater-wise people gave ideas for choreography and stage sequencing, but most of the work was done by students.

This is the second annual performance produced by the Farmington River Community Productions. The goal is to encourage student-created scripts on topics related to environmental conservation/education while involving community members in

the process. The theme of last year's "The Cowhands and the Aliens Rescue Earth" was saving the earth from climate disasters.

The productions are funded in part by grants from the Otis and Sandisfield Cultural Councils. The grants allow for a local accompanist, Isabel Marcheselli, and Berkshire Choreographers to help students prepare for the final performance.

Everyone in the community – that means YOU – is invited to attend this year's production, free of charge. 📍



Top: Painting the backdrop, Bottom: Rehearsal
Photos: Laura Catullo

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

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



The Times is grateful to readers who donate all through the year and at our Year-End Fundraiser.



The Berkshires' Premier Boutique Real Estate Firm

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

in good part it's because we work really hard we care and we listen

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

Chapin Fish, Broker The #1 Selling Realtor in the Berkshires cumulatively over the last 12 years with over \$166 million in sales

BROCKMAN real estate
brockmanrealestate.com
413-528-4859

Our store
farm & home
and office
will open as soon as renovations and restoration are complete at
MONTEREY GENERAL
448 Main Road in Monterey
montereygeneral.com
brockmanrealestate.com
413-528-9100