

# THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

*Tribunus*



*Plebis*

RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume XIII, Number 5

August 2022

## Have You Noticed?

### RIGHT HERE IN RIVER CITY

By Tom Christopher

Have you noticed the Farmington River running drier this summer? The reservoirs seem full – and many are – but the rivers feeding them have been reduced to trickles.

And have you, like me, been struggling to keep your garden adequately irrigated?

I learned recently that this news should come as no surprise.

I had hoped that my Sandisfield landscape would somehow prove immune to the worst of the climate upsets that have been plaguing much of the rest of the United States. Surely my New England hilltop wasn't going to suffer the same fate as Texas or Oklahoma.

A couple of weeks ago, however, I belatedly came across an article, published in June of 2020 in the online journal Inside Climate News, which revealed that far from being immune to this global warming trend, Sandisfield is actually in the cross-hairs. Citing a peer-reviewed study published in the scientific journal PLOS One, the author of the Inside Climate News article reported that in fact the northeastern United States has proven the fastest warming region in the lower 48.

A little digging found this conclusion duplicated in another report on the U.S. Geological Survey website. Apparently, a survey of weather records from the last 50 years has found that we in the Northeast have already passed the 2 degrees Celsius

*Cont'd on p.7*

## New Boston Church Enjoying Revival

### POPULAR PASTOR FILLING THE PEWS

By Ron Bernard

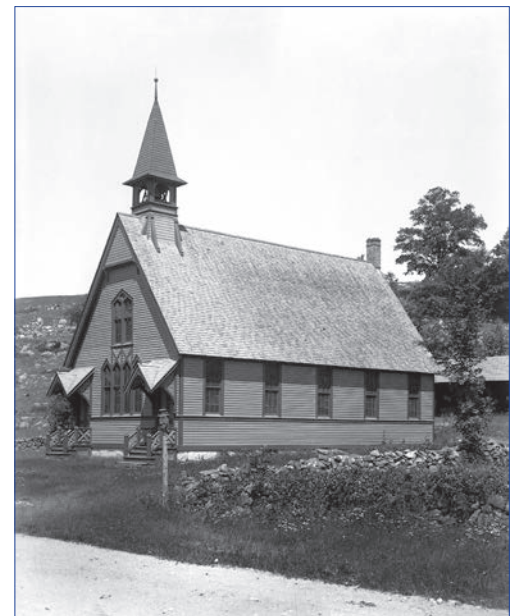
“Survival of New Boston church may require a timely miracle,” was the headline of a Berkshire Eagle feature story on November 22, 1982.

Forty years ago, prospects for the charming “Little Brown Church,” as it has always been known, were not good. Except for a brief resurgence of interest and volunteer support in 1979 when the building celebrated its centennial, attendance at services had been trending down for decades, especially from the early-1970s when the congregation numbered 26.

Charles Knight, a young, earnest but unordained minister, was hired at that time. He instituted certain unpopular policies and some church members were put off by his style of preaching. Regular attendance fell to six. Meanwhile, he had to deal with serious problems with the building including a flooded basement, bum furnace, bad roof, obsolete wiring, and more. Seemingly, the situation could not get worse.

But it did.

About a year later, The Eagle reported that attendance was now only four. No new members were at the door. Shaky finances and the plagues of “bad luck” and structural problems continued. Discouraged and blaming himself, Mr. Knight



*The New Boston Church in the early-1900s. There are no trees in the pasture behind the church, but plenty of rocks.*

*DeMars image, courtesy Great Barrington Historical Society*

told the reporter, “We are almost broke.” Soon after, he withdrew.

### KEEP ON KEEPING ON

The stalwart little congregation regrouped and somehow managed to keep going, and stabilized the building. The old parish hall in back, however, was beyond salvation and closed. Retired and other preachers from around the area filled in for holy days and some Sunday services.

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# At the Select Board

By Bill Price

Minutes of Select Board meetings relay more clear information than in the past and are more current. They do, however, still run a few weeks behind meetings, despite the fact that minutes are preferably posted before follow-up meetings for consistency and continuity.

This reporter, though, understands the lag. Transcribing and typing up Sandisfield's minutes is hard work and for the most part crushingly boring. Translating minutes can test even an excellent typist's determination to come to work the next day.

In any event, for this issue of The Times we've referred to the last posted minutes, which take us up to June 27. As of press time, no July minutes have been posted. Recent Town appointments are listed on the facing page.

## JOB FILLED

Police Officer Mary Bredenfoerder was appointed Public Safety Officer at the July 18 Select Board meeting.

## JOB, JOBS

**Vacant positions in Town government:** Administrative Assistant for the DPW and the Planning Board, Town Asset Custodian, Transfer Station Attendant, Treasurer/Tax Collector Assistant, Principal Assessor, Assistant Town Clerk, Webmaster, Animal Control Officer (requires training), Building Maintenance Technician, and Town Manager.

Job descriptions and requirements for most of the positions can be found on the Town website.

## NO BROADBAND YET AT TOWN BUILDINGS

As of July 25, Spectrum had yet to hook town buildings to the new broadband wires circling throughout Sandisfield. Interim Town Manager Jon Sylbert has reached out to Spectrum several times without success.

## Temporary Health Inspector

By Times Reporters

The unexpected death of Victor Hyrckvich, Sandisfield's long-time Board of Health member and septic inspector, created a vacancy in an important aspect of life in Sandisfield. Because other board members have not completed the training required for qualification to assess new septic systems or oversee systems for ongoing home construction, a temporary solution was needed.

At least for the time being, septic inspections and design are being conducted by Jayne E. Smith, a registered sanitarian, of Smith Environmental Solutions, Sheffield. Ms. Smith can be reached at 413-717-8922 or at jayne@smithenvirosolutions.com. Her firm specializes in well design, environmental permitting, and septic services (perc tests and T5 inspections customized to each client's needs.)

Members of the Sandisfield Board of Health are Keith Larsen (until 2024), Kim Spring (until 2025), and Steve Rubenstein (until 2025).

## Community Survey WHAT DO YOU THINK?

by Jennifer Hibbins

The Sandisfield Cultural Council wants YOUR opinion! What types of cultural programs in town would you like to see in the next few years?

Our mission is to broaden and enhance the cultural life available to residents of the town of Sandisfield. This year we funded grants to 19 organizations totaling \$6,576.

We funded programs in music, dance, theatre, history, and environmental stewardship, as well as supporting community events like the Sandisfield Memorial Day Parade and Magical Family Fun Day, and we supported educational programming for youth and seniors.

Funds for our local Cultural Council awards come from the Town of Sandisfield (\$500) and the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

We know what WE like, but we want to know what YOU, residents of Sandisfield, would like us to help fund.

To help us do that, please complete our brief, anonymous survey to help us set our funding priorities for the next few years. You may complete it online at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/VV9XHZB](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VV9XHZB) (or link through the Town website) or pick up a paper copy at the library or post office. Please complete all surveys and return them by Friday, August 12.

# Volunteers Step Up, Some Down


By Bill Price

## STEP UP

- Katie Murray was appointed to the Recreation Committee.
- Karema Almeida and Alexcia Adams joined the Cultural Council.
- Jennifer Hibbins and Jennifer Lenzie were appointed to second terms for the Cultural Council.
- A Cannabis Sub-Committee of 3-5 residents was established to advise special permit applicants regarding cannabis-related projects. Five appointments have been made provisionally but the committee's composition is not yet finally determined. The committee will first meet probably on August 17.

## STEP DOWN

- John Burrows resigned as Town Constable. The Select Board chairman praised John and expressed appreciation for his many years of service. Police Chief Mike Morrison was appointed temporary constable.
- Dana Beardsley resigned from the Police force.
- Dawn Lemon resigned from the Recreation Committee.
- Jeff Bye resigned from the Green Committee.
- The Broadband Committee was disbanded. Chairman Jeff Bye requested the move, writing that since "Spectrum has completed their installation of their broadband wires and has begun installing high-speed internet to Sandisfield homes, I believe the Broadband Committee has served its purpose."

Board Chairman Steve Seddon thanked the committee for their hard work and dedication to bringing broadband to Sandisfield, and motioned to disband the committee. 

# Child Car Seat Fitting

Does your child fit correctly in his or her car seat? Is it fastened according to the best safety requirements? Call soon to make an appointment for a free car seat fitting through the Southern Berkshire Public Health Collaborative. Contact Jill Sweet at [jill@tritownhealth.org](mailto:jill@tritownhealth.org) or call 413-717-7209.

Find out more about the program at [www.sbpbc.tritownhealthdepartment.org](http://www.sbpbc.tritownhealthdepartment.org).



# New New Boston Store Debuts

## READY FOR YOUR BUSINESS

By Ron Bernard

Nick and Megan Smigel opened their Farmington River General Store doors July 11. Announcements were made wherever they could, especially on Facebook's Connect Sandisfield.



Nick and Megan on opening day.

Photo: Bill Price

Nick said, "As soon as we thought the shelves were stocked with enough to make it worthwhile for people to come in, we opened." So, as yet, no grand opening, although they are considering an organized event later this summer. Meanwhile, they are pushing as many social media buttons as possible to reach shoppers.


Plus, they have the drive-by announcement: picnic tables are arranged outside under umbrellas, firewood stacked and ready for sale, an ice machine.

Inside, the Smigels are building inventory. They ask every customer what else they would like to see. Stocking local produce, a highly desired category, is not a straightforward process so that may

take a little while. Megan said, "Our chickens are not yet laying. If anyone has extra fresh eggs to sell, give us a call."

Rather than a big rush for their first couple weeks, Nick said, "People are drifting in." But awareness and interest is very high in town.

Now folks have to actually come through the doors and check out the neat and well-organized place. Given the thrilling public reaction to the concept of a new store in town, people need to follow through. If you have been there but did not find anything you want, have patience – the Smigels are working on it.

For everyone else – go there, buy something. Help the Smigels help the community. 

## New Boston Church Enjoying Revival

Cont'd from p.1

Attendance remained low but steady. Turnouts at Easter and Christmas were respectable.

A long-time summer resident during that period told The Times, "I remember going to a service years ago. There was only a handful of people there, and they just left at the end. No one even said hello to me. I never went back."



Pastor Eric Kriebel with his wife, Jennifer, and son, Jacob, 4.

Photos: Ron Bernard

Then, in 2017, prayers were answered. A mini-miracle (some might say) did arrive in the person of the Rev. Eric Kriebel. Only 36, he appeared and acted with the maturity and confidence of someone with decades of experience behind a pulpit in front of diverse congregations.

"I was called to this life's work, to help people," he said. "My great-grandfather was the founding pastor of a Congregational church in Pennsylvania in 1895. Faith and ministry have been at the core of my family's life. I preached my first sermon at fifteen and worked in youth ministry [migrant camps and homeless shelters] in Florida where we lived." In a subsequent email to the Times, he added, "I also taught history and Greek for a year at a private Christian school in Florida."

Rev. Kriebel came to Sandisfield with credentials. He is a graduate of Pensacola Christian College (B.A., Bible Studies; minor, history education, 2004) and holds a master's degree in Christian Education from New England Bible College (2007).

And experience. He has served in churches in New York State and Connecticut. "I served as Associate Pastor at a church in Manchester [Conn.] for five years," he said. "I'm here because I was inspired by pastor Toby Quirk's book about the challenges

– and great rewards – of small rural churches. I have found my pastoral home here at this special place." He lives with his wife, Jennifer and son, Jacob in Torrington, Conn., where he is employed by the U.S. Postal Service.

Attendance at services in New Boston began to increase almost as soon as he arrived.

Michael Gantt, a minister from Brattleboro, Vermont, who served in the New Boston Church as a student pastor in 1971, wrote an on-line article titled, "Planting the Seeds of Renewal" which described a re-visit to New Boston in 2018.

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

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

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

Four years later a reporter who is not in the habit of attending church was struck on several occasions with how very personal and connected Rev. Kriebel is with *individual* parishioners. He knows everybody's name and their family situations. His sermons are positive and not overbearing. He is charismatic and genuine.

You are likely to hear, "Mary's mother is in the hospital, let's pray for her recovery," "Bob's brother is recovering from surgery, let's give thanks for that." "(Somebody) has passed away, let's have a moment of silence to honor their life."

Following a recent Sunday service, most of the congregation gathered outside to greet, chat, and enjoy fellowship. Parishioners waited patiently for a turn to have a word with Pastor Eric. While waiting my own turn, I approached a few others to learn what drew them to this place that day. Each party responded in almost exactly the same way,



Congregation on a recent Sunday.

"... because of Eric! He is wonderful." No need to increase the size of the interview sample.

There is one more thing that needs mentioning. Eric told The Times, "I write to each of my parishioners once a month." These are personalized, hand-written notes. Imagine that.

Seating capacity in rows of original pews is about 85. Today average attendance is about 45 and increasing, which is one of the congregation's aims. This level is probably already near or above historical highs. Other goals include creating a presence on social media, especially Facebook, right away. "We are completely invisible," Eric said, "but we are working on it." Also envisioned are programs for children and expanded parking to accommodate growing attendance. "Eventually we might offer weekly services," he said. But there is a critical need for more volunteers to help with the property and the benefit dinners.

Church Moderator Sandy Morrison has held things together for about the past fifteen years. She is grateful to her band of committed volunteers especially the members of Sandisfield Fire Department and for use of their firehouse for functions.

Finances are a particular problem right now. "We rely heavily on proceeds from our semi-annual benefit dinners at the main firehouse," Sandy said. "But our income has dropped a lot over the last two years because we were restricted to outside drive-by pick-up instead of the popular big community gatherings we always had." These are going to resume. Mark your calendars for Saturday, September 17. Details to follow.

The congregation is facing the same expensive structural problems as 40 years ago. The furnace needs repair or replacement, ideally this year. The roof is approaching the end of its functional life and the basement (and structure) could benefit from a concrete floor. Exterior painting has to be addressed. It's a daunting list.

In fact, several more miracles may be required but there is good leadership and energy and momentum in New Boston. We might add that this

*Cont'd on next page*

“special place,” the last church in Sandisfield, an improbable survivor, is a big part of the heritage of our Town.

According to recent reports, people who have seen the church’s interior for the first time are stunned at its beauty and craftsmanship. That is worth a visit all alone. The hope is that the community comes together to save our lovely Little Brown Church and that it continues to thrive. 🏡

## THE LITTLE BROWN CHURCH

The New Boston Church is the most distinctive and iconic structure in New Boston village. It was built in Gothic Revival-style in 1879. The likely benefactor was Orlow Northway, a wealthy and trusted town leader and village resident. Northway headed an effort to bring a railroad line to Sandisfield in the early-1870s but the scheme failed, bankrupting many townspeople who had invested with him. Northway, a Sandisfield native son, was deeply remorseful.

Ransom Gladding, a master carpenter, and his brother Lewis, also a carpenter, built the Italianate-style house across the street from the church in 1876-78. We suppose that the brothers, who were otherwise employed by Northway, helped to construct the church.

A significant heritage asset, the building is in virtually original condition. It is a major “contributing element” in the New Boston Village National Register Historic District which received listing by the U.S. Department of the Interior in April.



*Early-1900s birds eye view of New Boston village taken from Tolland Mountain includes the Northway place (center) and the church and the Gladding house opposite (top left) on Sandisfield Road.*

*DeMars image courtesy Great Barrington Historical Society*

**SERVICES** are held generally twice per month on Sundays at 10:00 a.m. throughout the year. All are welcome. Venues are posted in The Times under Events. For more information, contact Pastor Eric Kriebel at ekriebel112781@gmail.com or at 860-940-4524.

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The road past the Transfer Station was finished in mid-July.

Photo: Bill Price

# The Roads are Getting Fixed

## BUT SLOW DOWN, FOR YOUR OWN SAKE

By Bill Price

The steep part of Rt. 57 (Sandisfield Road) past the Transfer Station was rehabbed in early July and it's a treat to drive. But because the hill can now be climbed at full speed without downshifting, don't do it. Go slow. Enjoy the road. Be safe and help your neighbors be safe, too.

Second, the long Sandisfield stretch of Rt. 183 (Sandy Brook Turnpike) should be paved all the way to Colebrook by the end of July, and likewise smooth as silk and a treat to drive. The same kindness applies. Be safe. Just because you can drive it fast, don't.

The Sandisfield portion of Rt. 57 east of New Boston (Tolland Road), the steep hill, was paved in June. Take it easy there, too, going uphill and downhill.

A recent post on Facebook/ConnectSandisfield pointed out that the newly paved Rt. 57 for some drivers has become "the Indianapolis speedway on weekends." The post drew over sixty comments, most of them in agreement. Police Chief Michael Morrison responded, saying he'll step up patrols "in the areas of concern."

Another post warned:

"New Road Surface"

"The speed limit is still 35"

"Or we'll put back the potholes."

The potholes don't need to be replaced on Town Hill Road. Underground springs continue to turn certain spots on the road into persistent, dangerous, and deep potholes, despite the best efforts of Brad Curry and his staff. Everyone who has hit one of those holes or that bumpy section just downhill from Yanner Park tries to remember where they are for next time. Some drivers have lost axles, others have replaced tires and/or rims. Can these holes be fixed to stay fixed? 🙄



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## Have You Noticed?

*Cont'd from p.1*

(3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) increase in average temperatures that the international scientific community has agreed is the maximum allowable without dire consequences.

The reason for our regional temperature increase is thought to derive from the Northeast's exposure to the warming waters of the Atlantic Ocean.

Whatever the reason, though, we have been experiencing markedly warmer winters with less snow and hotter summers.

Have you noticed the recent trend toward an extra mud season in December?

On average our weather has actually been somewhat wetter – warmer air will hold more humidity – but the precipitation is falling in fewer, more violent storms. This is especially the case in summertime, a situation which is exacerbated by water evaporating faster from the soil during our on-average hotter weather. Combined with the fact that plants need more moisture during hotter weather (they cool themselves by sweating water from their leaves in a process called transpiration), these factors are leading to more frequent situations of drought.

It's important to note that climate trends are not always reflected in the weather. Despite the warming trend in the Northeast, for example, we did escape the extreme heat that afflicted much of the rest of the country in the early part of this summer due to a temporary dip in the Jet Stream that bathed our region in cooler Canadian air. On average, though, our summers have been recently notably hotter, and will be more so going forward.

As a gardener, I'm limited in my response to summer drought by the modest yield of our well.

I'm starting to plan my planting as I used to do many years ago when I was a temporary resident in central Texas. There, midsummer was a season

of dormancy in the garden, as extreme heat shut down plant growth. I would plant vegetables in the spring to take advantage of the cooler, moister weather, watch my plantings wither in July and August, and then replant in September.

These days, I'm devoting the limited water I can supply to keeping my tomatoes and squash plants going. I'm using the raised beds next to the house for spring crops because those beds dry out faster than the in-ground garden.

Currently, I'm starting lettuce and Napa cabbage seedlings under lights in my basement so that I can replant those raised beds when the weather moderates (I'm hoping) in early September.

Climate change means that the first fall frost arrives later, so the fall growing season is longer and should reliably mature a full crop of cool weather greens.

My wife Suzanne and I are doing what we can to reduce our contribution to the greenhouse effect and climate change. We just installed a heat pump system in our house which should dramatically reduce our consumption of fossil fuel for winter heating – previously we had relied on a propane-fired furnace, which will now be relegated to the role of a backup during the coldest days.

I'm also bracing for further changes in my garden, however.

An ecologist at the University of Massachusetts Amherst who I interviewed for "Growing Greener," my radio program and podcast, told me that the prediction she trusts best is that by the middle of this century, central Massachusetts will have a climate similar to that of present-day Maryland. I'm not likely to live that long, but in the meantime, I may begin experimenting with okra and sweet potatoes.

I don't know how okra and sweet potatoes will go with Yankee pot roast, but we will see. 🍷

# Election Laws Have Changed

## NOT BIG CHANGES, BUT IMPORTANT

*By Bill Price and Sandisfieldma.gov website*

Several changes instituted during the Covid pandemic – once considered temporary – have been made permanent. Some of these changes may already be familiar to voters.

The new election reform law also makes absentee voting process and early voting by mail processes consistent and simpler. Voters can now cast ballots by mail, with no excuse necessary, for all elections, simply by notifying their election officials.



Voters should already have received an official 2022 Vote by Mail application from the Elections Division of the Commonwealth. Included in the mailing was a tear-off postcard application that, in order to vote by mail, needed to be returned to the Sandisfield election office. The first deadline for applications to vote by mail is for the September 6 State Primaries; the application must reach the Sandisfield election office by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, August 29.

If you wish to vote by mail but have lost or discarded the Vote by Mail application, visit Town Hall where the Town Clerk will provide you with the proper forms.

**Voter registration deadline** for all elections and town meetings will be ten calendar days before the date of the meeting or election. For Sandisfield 2022, the last day to register to vote in the September 6 primary is Saturday, August 27, from 9:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. and from 3:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. For the November 8 election, the last day to register to vote is Saturday, October 29, during the same hours listed for the primary.

**For more information**, visit the Secretary of the Commonwealth's website at [www.sec.ste.ma.us/ele/eabsentee](http://www.sec.ste.ma.us/ele/eabsentee). Or drop in at Town Hall and ask, "What gives about voting in Massachusetts?" 🍷

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# "We Are Still Here"

## A SERIES OF PROGRAMS BEGINS LATE AUGUST

By Ellen Crobier

The "We Are Still Here: Indigenous Peoples of the Northeast" multidisciplinary program will take place at locations throughout Berkshire County from August 26 until September 29.

The focus is on the culture and history of indigenous peoples of the Northeast. All aspects of the program include indigenous leaders.

The program will include free events that will help the public understand both the past and present cultures and lives of local indigenous people. Art show by indigenous artists, music performances, tours of historic sites with emphasis on connections with the indigenous communities, guided reading groups focused on books by indigenous Northeast authors, and four online lectures.

The Hawk Henries concert on September 8 will not be free, but tickets are available.

The program is sponsored by Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Berkshire Community College. Program partners include local non-profits, Berkshire Community College, and the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area. The Sandisfield Cultural Council provided a grant to help fund the program, as did many other Berkshire towns and in-kind cultural programs.

Space is limited for some of the events. Registration will open in August at [berkshireolli.org/universitydays2022](http://berkshireolli.org/universitydays2022) or call 413-236-2190 for information.

# FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

Readers might be interested to know that **Atwater Pond**, the complex of buildings off Shade Road with a pond and 321 acres recently offered for sale at \$18,000,000, has seen a price reduction to a more manageable \$10,000,000. Another realtor reports that the listing is no longer active.

Bad news is that a deer was killed crossing Rt. 57 near Bosworth Road in late July, and earlier a bear cub was killed on West Road near the lake. Drive carefully, the animal you save may be a local.



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# Jacki Retires

## GO FISHING, JACKI. ENJOY.

When Jacki Bitso retired mid-July after nearly 30 years as a Massachusetts Accredited Assessor, State Representative Smitty Pignatelli stopped by Sandisfield Town Hall to acknowledge the appreciation of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for her dedication. Jacki started her career in the assessor's office in Tolland and subsequently worked as an assessor in Lee and Tyringham. She served the last 15 years as Sandisfield's Principal Assessor.

On her last day of work, about two dozen residents, friends, neighbors, and co-workers gathered at Firehouse #1 training room for a farewell supper organized by Jayne Beardsley, Administrative Assistant at Town Hall, and catered very well by McGrane's on the Green in Winsted.

Photos: Bill Price/Brad Curry



Jacki Bitso with State Representative Smitty Pignatelli.



The farewell supper at Firehouse #1 training room.

# Council on Aging



By Nina Carr

The Council on Aging has been trying to include as many seniors as possible in our programs. To help figure out ways to do that, we held a very successful Networking Luncheon for COA board members on June 29 at the Old Town Hall. Sandisfield board members were joined by board members from Monterey, Otis, Tolland, and Tyringham, nearly 30 people in all. The food was great, thanks to Linda and Barbara, and the conversation even better.

We are continuing our weekly "Coffee Hour" on Wednesdays at 10 at the Town Hall (formerly the Town Hall Annex), and our free Chair Yoga classes are continuing on Wednesdays at 2:00 p.m.. Instructor Wendy Larsen makes exercising tons of fun. Everyone is welcome, and we would be happy to add other programs to our schedule if anyone has suggestions.

If there are any Seniors in town who are trying to access the "Prescription Advantage" Program to lower their prescription costs, they can get help by calling 1-800-243-4636. This program helps those who have reached what's called the "donut hole" in their prescription program.

Also, for Seniors or caregivers who have need of advice or help with problems that may crop up, you can always call Elder Services at 800-544-5242.

Everyone, have a great rest of the summer.

### Route 57 on the New Marlborough Village Green



## NEW MARLBOROUGH MEETING HOUSE

August 6 4:30 pm **Kristin Kimball and Mark Kimball of Essex Farm**  
A discussion about the benefits of organic food and sustainable farming, new systems of distribution, and what the Kimballs and Essex Farm have in store for the future.

August 13 4:30 pm **Rhythm Future Quartet**  
Gypsy Jazz with joyful abandon, rocketed into the future by incorporating multiple influences...it's downright infectious!

August 27 4:30 pm **Actor John Douglas Thompson**  
An interview with Award-winning actor John Douglas Thompson on his incredible journey to become one of the most compelling classical stage actors of his generation.

Sept 10 4:30 pm **Neave Trio - Violin, Cello, Piano**  
The group's 2019 album *Her Voice*, was named one of the best recordings of the year by both *The New York Times* and BBC. Performing works by Chaminade, Tailleferre, and Ravel.

Sept 17 4:30 pm **Wael Farouk, Piano Solo**  
A program including preludes by Alexander Scriabin, Rachmaninoff's Sonata #2, opus 36, and the famous Mussorgsky *Pictures at an Exhibition*. A Harold Lewin Memorial concert.

Oct 1 4:30 pm

**Simon Winchester and Alice Sedgwick Wohl**  
Discussing Alice's new book, *As it Turns Out: Thinking About Edie and Andy*, about the relationship of her sister Edie and the artist Andy Warhol.

## Meeting House GALLERY

July 29 thru Aug 28

**Simply, The Berkshires**  
Artists express their connection to the Berkshires, and celebrate and honor how the Berkshires feeds the creative spirit.

July 30 1-4 pm

**Young Artists Celebrate New Marlborough**  
New Marlborough artists ages 5 through 14 present their celebration of New Marlborough in a one-day show

Sept 2 thru Oct 2

**The Annual New Marlborough Artist's Show Opening Reception September 2, 5-7 p.m.**  
After a two-year break, the annual show showcasing New Marlborough's finest fine art!

Tickets: [nmmeetinghouse.org](http://nmmeetinghouse.org) | (413) 229-5045

# The House Needs Painting Again!

## THE CHARMS OF A PERENNIAL CHORE

Recently, three reporters for The Times hired independent family contractors to paint or stain their Sandisfield homes. Both Tom and Simon hired Santiago Madrid of Pittsfield while Ron hired Giovanni Tintin of Lee. During an editorial conference for The Times, the reporters each mentioned an amusing anecdote about the work, and your editor asked the three of them – all good writers – to tell their stories for the amusement of our readers. Sort of a summer break. If you have a house story, not necessarily about painting, write it up in about 400-500 words and send it to [editor@sandisfieldtimes.org](mailto:editor@sandisfieldtimes.org).

– Bill Price, Editor



## SANTIAGO. IN SANDISFIELD.

By Simon Winchester

Getting hold of him wasn't quite as easy as I had hoped. The line was crackly and our first conversation was not unlike Abbott and Costello's *Who's on First?*

"Is Santiago there?" I asked. No, came the reply, "Santiago is in Chile. You're calling Peru." I replied, "I know the capital of Chile. But I'm looking for Santiago the painter." There was

chortle down the line. "Si señor, this is Santiago. But you are calling me in Peru. Of which the capital is Lima."

Maybe he was having fun with me. Maybe the line was bad. (I suspect the former.) That was in January. Heavy snow was on the ground and I had called knowing that Santiago Martin, who for the past decade has run his family house-painting business near Pittsfield and who had already painted my house twice, was a hard man to track down and book. But I was sure that during that somewhat Kafkaesque exchange – he was on a Peruvian midsummer vacation when I called – he had indeed accepted my booking for May.

I called in late April to check. His recording said he was "now fully booked for all of 2022, but maybe I can fit you in for 2023." But he called back. "Don't you worry, Mr. Simon. All is good. I will be there next week. What color you like? I will do the trim the first day, then you choose."

Monday was like D-Day, but without the sea. A small invasion force of vehicles, ladders, cloths, vats of paints of the purest white. And people. Santiago. Santiago's wife, Claudia. His son, Antonio. His son's friend. His son's friend's brother. Occasional other relatives stopped by, everyone cheerful, laughing, gossiping.

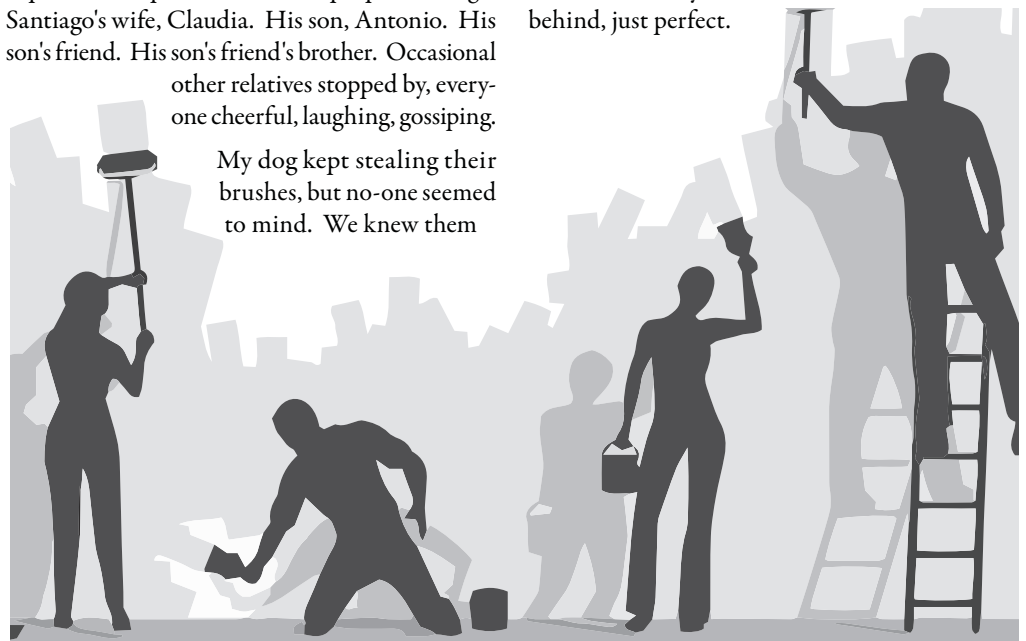
My dog kept stealing their brushes, but no-one seemed to mind. We knew them

all, from the last time the family descended on us five years ago. And five years before that that. "You still want to come down to Peru for Christmas, Mr. Simon? We take you best places, for sure."

We chose primrose yellow for the house that night, they picked it up at dawn on Tuesday, and then, like an army of happy honeybees, swarmed over the house - which in a trice changed from drab cream to spring primrose, clapboard by precise clapboard, in five minute time-lapse intervals.

Had I been a good Catholic I would have called it an Immaculate Transformation, so quick, so painless, so perfect, and to passersby, so awesome. Someone called out from a passing truck: "Prettiest house in Sandisfield."

After three days, they were leaving, the cloths and the ladders and the vehicles in a convoy vanishing to their next job. "See you in five years, Mr. Simon. Unless you come on holiday to Peru. Where the capital is Lima. And I am Santiago. Please do try to remember." Then, in a small cloud of dust, he and his immense extended family were gone. And the house they left behind, just perfect.



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## NO WI-FI FOR YOU!

By Tom Christopher

I am cheap. Because I come from Yankee stock, this is a point of pride (my Yankee grandparents used to describe it as being “careful”). When we built our house 20 years ago, my wife Suzanne and I did all the painting indoors and out.

After a decade, with the exterior stain clearly failing, I applied a couple of new coats with the help of a friend’s son, who kept pointing out to me the ways in which I was violating best safety practices. In between such comments, he did a good job.



When the time came a couple of years ago to re-stain the house yet again, my former assistant had moved on from casual labor, and even I knew that, at my age, I shouldn’t be up on ladders or climbing around on the roof. My first reaction was to use an online service that would connect me with local contractors. I called the recommended painter and set a date for him to come and inspect the job. I took the afternoon off. When he didn’t show up, I reached him by telephone. He explained that he was based in Stockbridge and that it wasn’t worth his time to drive to Sandisfield.

My next move was to call neighbors Susie Crofut and Ben Luxon to get the name of the painter who had done such good work on their house. They gave me the phone number of Santiago Martin.

When I called Santiago, he explained to me that I wouldn’t just be hiring him, I’d be hiring his whole family. Santiago showed up promptly at the appointed time (even though he came from Pittsfield, further even than Stockbridge) and a couple of days later sent me a detailed quote. His price, while not as “careful” as I might have wished, was reasonable, especially in light of the amount of preparation the house required. We shook hands and made a date for the following spring.

Santiago, his wife, and two sons arrived in May and immediately set to work washing mildew from the siding. We chose a color of stain, and they sent me off to Great Barrington to acquire the necessary gallons.

When the house had dried out, Santiago sent his sons up to paint the second story, while he tackled

the ground floor. His wife took charge of masking around windows and doors. One of Santiago’s sons asked for our wi-fi password, presumably so that he could keep up with messages from his friends while he was out here in the woods.

Santiago told me in no uncertain terms that he would prefer that I not supply that bit of data as it would certainly distract his son from work.

During the family’s infrequent breaks, they told me about experiences in their native Peru.

Far more quickly than I expected the job was done, and done beautifully with two coats of opaque stain neatly applied. The price was as quoted, even though Santiago and his family had, at my request, also painted our woodshed, at no extra cost.

Santiago said that he and his wife were considering returning to Peru to work as tour guides. For my house’s sake, I hope they do not. If they do, though, I would not hesitate to follow them wherever they wanted to lead me.



## NOT A MOVE WASTED

By Ron Bernard

Our very old house was well overdue for painting even before the friendly pipeline construction people showed up in 2016 with heavy dust-making equipment. For the following two years an endless stream of semis and dump trucks were going to pulverize poor Cold Spring Road right outside the house. We were advised to delay the painting. It was good advice but it meant that another two years would pass before the deteriorating clapboards could be protected.

We started early trying to find painters. Finally in March 2017 someone from a nearby town promised to get the job done “by the end of summer.” How much will it cost? What? Open-ended estimate: \$1 billion! And he and an assistant would need an entire month. Seriously? Fine. Whatever.

Oh foolish me, I assumed the work was going to be finished *that* summer. But no. So, after two seasons of rain delays and enough excuses to fill a tractor-trailer, we parted ways amicably.

Luckily that very week a snazzy color promotional flyer from Gioservices, LLC, of Lee appeared in our mail box (and possibly yours, too).

Owner Giovanni Tintin returned my call immediately. “We are booked solid for the rest of the season but I can come by tomorrow,” he said. “Here we go again,” I thought.

I’m not sure if Giovanni specified a time but at 7:30 a.m. he was at the door, pen and clipboard in hand. Friendly but very business-like. After a fifteen-minute walk-around and assessment of what we needed he presented a detailed work plan. The estimate was lower than the previous one and seemed reasonable. He made it clear however that they would do exactly what was listed on the plan we signed. Not a brush stroke more. “We’ll be here in three weeks. I’ll call.”

Somehow, I believed him.

I could not quite place his accent and asked about his family origin. I guessed Italian. You know, because of “Giovanni.” Wrong. Well then maybe French or Basque because of his last name. Wrong again. He proudly said with a smile, “We are from Ecuador! See you in three weeks.”

Jean and I set out on a fifteen-day RV trip to Canada timed so that we would be home well ahead of the work. We were surprised to get a message at our campground 300 miles away. “Mr. Ron, this is Giovanni. We are at your house doing the prep. No need for you to be here. Goodbye.”

Holy Smoke. We broke camp and set a mobile-home speed record to arrive at dusk just as they were cleaning up. The other guy had said prep would take a week “at least.” Giovanni, his wife and brother and sister-in-law did it – by the book – in one day.

Painting took only the next two days, dawn-to-dusk. They worked relentlessly, never wasting a move, like beavers. It reminded me of one of those sped-up time-lapse films. One short lunch break, no talking.

I asked him if while he was there, he would paint a small adjoining shed. It wasn’t in the agreement. He didn’t do it. I didn’t ask twice.

I have never met anyone quite like Giovanni Tintin and his family. He is a really sharp businessman, unbelievably efficient, a working dynamo. His company’s motto is, “Professional, Quality, Reliable, and Affordable.” That’s accurate in our experience.

Three years later the paint still looks great.

Contact: Gioservicesllcpainting@yahoo.com; 413 854-4079. 📧





# The Sandisfield Arts Center

## August at the Arts Center

### BACH, SHEELA CLARY, SMARTPHONE PHOTO WORKSHOP, MANACHER AWARD WINNERS

By Hilde Weisert

Thanks to the Sandisfield Cultural Council for their support (along with that of an anonymous donor) of the world-class poetry event offered free to the community on July 17. Many poets, poetry lovers, and poetry curious came and enjoyed an afternoon of poetry and conversation co-hosted with Voices of Poetry. Ben Luxon led off with a short history of the spoken word at the Arts Center, followed by readers Hilde Weisert, Neil Silberblatt, Kate Rushin, Doug Anderson, and the internationally known Molly Peacock.

August at the Arts Center is anything but the summer doldrums. We begin with Success Stories with Moth Story Slam winner Sheela Clary and other storytellers on August 6 at 7:30 p.m.


The next weekend, come to a free gallery opening reception and awards presentation for the three winners of the Daniel Manacher Young Artist Award: Julia Rose Miner, Natasha Wein, and Alorah Welti. This award, established in memory of Arts Center friend and artist Daniel Manacher by his parents, Sandisfield residents Adam Manacher and Carol Birnbaum, recognizes the work of talented early-career artists. Visit the website to see examples of their work ([sandisfieldartscenter.org](http://sandisfieldartscenter.org)). We're sure you'll want to see it in person and meet the artists.

A "shout-out" to Gallery chair Jess Cofrin who managed the complex logistics of an art contest from start to finish.

Saturday, August 20, is an artistic double header. At 11:00 a.m., master photographer and popular teacher Thad Kubis returns for a free introduction to smartphone photography.

And that evening at 7:00 p.m., the well-known Bach disciple Andrew P. Sheranian, founding director of The Bach Project at Ashmont Hill Chamber Music, will perform and provide insights into selections from the Well-Tempered Clavier as well as Partita No. 5 in G Major and the Italian Concerto. We thank North Beech Plain neighbors Jeffrey Gonyeau and Jack Dennerlein for bringing Andrew to us and for helping support this performance.

Finally, if you're reading this before 4:00 p.m., July 31, you still have time to get to the fascinating performance of Tennyson's epic poem "Enoch Arden," set to music by Richard Strauss, read by Ben Luxon and at the piano Ben's grandson, Josh Luxon.

At the time of this writing, we are requiring masks at our events due to the nasty spike of the latest Omicron variant. 

*Note: We regret that the family film series offered in past pre-Covid years by Bogart and Riley Muller has been canceled. Much appreciation to Bogart and Riley for offering this series in past years.*

## Where We Are

The Sandisfield Town Hall got its signpost last month. Installed by the Town's road crew, the sign also designates the Clam River Reserve, which was developed and is maintained by the Berkshire Natural Resources Council. The Clam River Trail, a popular new Berkshire hiking trail, begins at the Town Hall parking lot and winds under cathedral pines a couple miles along the river, circling uphill to connect with the Hammertown Loop. 

Photo: Brad Curry



## sandisfield ARTS CENTER

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**SAT., AUGUST 6 AT 7:30 PM \$10**

**SUCCESS STORIES: SHEELA CLARY AND OTHERS**

**SAT., AUGUST 13 FROM 2-4 PM FREE**

**GALLERY OPENING RECEPTION AND AWARDS PRESENTATION  
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GALLERY OPEN BEFORE AND AFTER EVENTS AND BY APPT. THROUGH SEPT.

**SAT., AUGUST 20 FROM 11 AM - 1 PM FREE  
INTRO TO SMARTPHONE PHOTOGRAPHY**

MASTER PHOTOGRAPHER THAD KUBIS

**SAT., AUGUST 20 AT 7 PM \$20**

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## Jobs Open at FRRSD

The Farmington River Regional School is seeking qualified, experienced paraprofessionals to assist classroom teachers in pre-kindergarten to 6th grade. FRRSD is also seeking a part-time Front Desk Receptionist beginning in the Fall of 2022. Applications can be found on-line or at the front office. Send letter of intent and current resume to Eric Jesner, Business Manager, FRRSD, 555 North Main Road, Otis, MA 01253 or at [ejesner@frrsd.org](mailto:ejesner@frrsd.org).

# STEAK ROAST

To Benefit the  
Sandisfield Fire/EMS  
Department

**SAT., AUGUST 13**  
5:00-9:00 p.m.

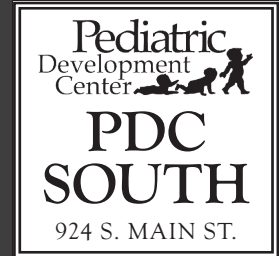
Firehouse #2 on  
Sandisfield Road, Rt. 57.

Tickets \$30. Purchase from any Fire  
or EMS volunteer or call A&M Auto,  
258-3381.

*Indoors at the shed, music, raffle*

*Tickets must be purchased ahead  
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# recreation COMMITTEE A Truly Magical Day

By Laurie Seddon

Magical Family

Fun Day at the end of June at Looking Glass Gardens was both fun and magical.

It was a hot and sunny afternoon, a perfect day for the Recreation Committee, with support from the Sandisfield Cultural Council, to throw its most festive summer event.

More than fifty residents, neighbors, kids, parents, grandparents, Sandisfielders of all stripes and sizes joined us for carnival-inspired games, contests, and prizes of real live goldfish. Popcorn. Cotton candy. Ed the Wizard with his hilarious antics, magic tricks, and amazing animal balloons.

After all that excitement some chose to relax listening to the talented local Ukulele Artisan, Jean Atwater-Williams, while others went over to the adjoining Sunny Rose Farm for pony rides.

The Committee thanks everyone who attended and, in particular; our hosts, Chuck and Zoe Nelson of Looking Glass Gardens and their daughter, Rose Nelson of Sunny Rose Farm. Thanks also to Jean Atwater-Williams, our Ukulele Artisan, and Ed Popielarczk AKA Ed the Wizard.

**SAVE THE DATE!** We are calling on all ice cream lovers (all ages) to join us every Saturday in August between noon and 1:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Library for FREE ice cream treats. A different flavor every week. (Non-dairy options available as well.)



Caden Debellis won a goldfish



Watching Ed



Ed the Wizard



Isla Murray at Sunny Rose Farm



Starla Koerber

## ★ DINE IN OR TAKEOUT

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By Terry Spohnholz

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### BED IN SUMMER

By Robert Louis Stevenson

In winter I get up at night  
And dress by yellow candle-light.  
In summer, quite the other way,  
I have to go to bed by day.  
I have to go to bed and see  
The birds still hopping on the tree  
Or hear the grown-up people's feet  
Still going past me in the street.  
And does it not seem hard to you,  
When all the sky is clear and blue,  
And I should like so much to play,  
To have to go to bed by day.

### LIBRARY EVENTS

August 6 – Something's Fishy! A Fun show for "An Ocean of Possibilities" by Mary Jo Maichack, a nationally recognized story teller 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 Best is Yet to Come by Debbie Macomber
- It All Comes Down to This by Therese Anne Fowler
- One-Shot Harry by Gary Phillips
- Portrait of an Unknown Woman by Daniel Silva
- The IT Girl by Ruth Ware
- The 6:20 Man by David Baldacci
- The Big Dark Sky by Dean Koontz
- Sparring Partners by John Grisham
- Shattered by James Patterson
- I'd Like to Play Along by Tom Segura
- Grace Under Fire by Julie Garwood

- Nightcrawling by Leila Mottley
- The Power Worshipers by Katherine Stewart
- The Woman in the Library by Sulari Gentill
- The Mermaid of Black Conch by Monique Roffey
- Chrysalis by Lincoln Child
- Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow by Gabrielle Zevin

### Children's Section

- Every Dog in the Neighborhood by Philip C. Stead
- Not Quite Narwhal by Jessie Sima
- First Day Critter Jitters by Jory John
- Vincent Can't Sleep by Rosenstock
- Vincent Paints His House by Tedd Arnold
- Madeline Finn and the Therapy Dog by Lisa Papp
- Madeline Finn and the Shelter Dog by Lisa Papp
- Madeline Fine and the Library Dog by Lisa Papp

The Children's Section is full of books, games, toys, and a train set. We also offer notary service, public computer and printer availability, free wifi and access to ebooks from the 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.

### BOOKS FOR SALE

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



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# Comings and Goings



**TOM PENNINGTON**

1951-2022

Thomas Wilbur Pennington, who for 40 years was Sandisfield's "tree guy," died July 6 in Montgomery, Massachusetts.

He was born in Westfield, Mass., on November 27, 1951. After graduating Westfield High School, Tom worked at Columbia Bicycle Manufacturing and Noble Hospital, both in Westfield. With his guitar in hand, he hitched a ride to Salinas, California, where he learned the arboriculture trade.



*The Tree Guy's first business card.*

When he returned to the east coast, he moved to Sandisfield in 1980 and for the next four decades was the prominent "tree guy." His reputation is survived by two dominant local arborists, his son Will Pennington and his stepson, John Field. This experience has been passed down through generations as Tom's grandchildren seem to have sawdust already flowing in their veins.

Once back in Massachusetts, Tom, taught by his father as a baker, worked as a cook at the New Boston Nursing Home and the former Cina's/Daffer's Restaurant. At Daffer's he met Wendy Hallock, a waitress, and fell in love. He also met Frank Dwyer who became a lifelong friend. Frank later became a realtor and helped Tom buy land and a house up the road from Daffer's. This is where Tom and Wendy decided to raise their

family. Tom then started his own tree service company: T.W. Pennington Tree Surgery, which he managed and worked until his retirement.

Music played a big part in Tom's life. He enjoyed playing his guitar with a great many friends over the years. He met and helped maintain too many musicians to list. With his love of music, Tom learned to dance with Wendy and they danced at all the local events, often drawing a crowd. Tom was a valued communicant at Russell Community Church where he played his beloved hymns on Sundays. In his last days, even while battling cancer, he made gestures of climbing trees and playing the guitar.

Second to music was the family's tradition to spend as many weeks on the Cape as possible. No matter what, Tom made sure to bring his family on a vacation every year. The Cape was where family came together. Tom loved to watch the tide go in and out, the sunsets, and play cribbage and music. The little cottage, Lilac, was always special to the family.

Tom lived a life of service and devotion. Brought up in difficult financial circumstances, he learned early to work hard and put value on family, daily bread (his father taught him the baker's trade), worship, nature, friendship, and music. He was also a church and community volunteer and a co-caregiver for an elderly Alzheimer's patient, for whom he played hymns for hours.

His friend and partner, Kathy Lee, describes him as the salt of the earth, kind, humble, and strong. For years, as he battled cancer, he fought the good fight and kept the faith. Tom spent the last six years leading the family, taming the wilderness around their mountain home, feeding the birds, and anchoring Kathy's public advocacy work.

Tom cared for Kathy's 92-year-old mother "as if she were his own."

Tom was a loving husband to his wife of 30 years, Wendy (Hallock) Pennington, who passed away in 2015. He was predeceased by his parents Frances (Burek) and Wilbur Pennington. Tom raised and is survived by his daughter Sarah Pennington of Pittsfield, his son Will Pennington (Lindsay) of Sandisfield, his daughter Jennifer Field of Sandisfield, and his son John Field (Tara Birkett), also of Sandisfield. Tom is also survived by grandchildren Liam, Everleigh, John III, Mitchell, Desiree, Ariana, and Kasandra, and great-grandson Roman. He is also survived by his brother Forrest Pennington (Patty), their daughter Erin (Matt), their son Forrest II (Alita), his sister Annette Hutchins (Gary). Tom is also survived by his loving partner/fiancée, Kathy Lee Scholpp of Montgomery.

Tom's many friends and relatives and the congregation of Russell Community Church will miss him sorely and remember him fondly. Recently in the hospital, he found a cookie on his lunch plate, and someone asked whether it was a really good cookie or not. Tom smiled and said, "Where I am going, I will have as many cookies as I like, and they will be the best cookies in the world."

God bless you Tom, enjoy those magnificent cookies, you have earned them, every last one.

A memorial service will be held Saturday August 6, 2022 at the Russell Community Church at 58 Main St., Russell, MA at 11:00 a.m. Burial will follow in the Sandisfield Center Cemetery at 1:00 p.m. In lieu of flowers, please plant a tree, dance, or play a song for Tommy. - *By Tom's Family*





# Comings and Goings



**MICHAEL ANNECHARICO**

1965-2022

Michael Charles Annecharico passed away suddenly on February 14 at his home in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, at the age of 57.

Michael was born and raised in Sandisfield. He is predeceased by his parents, Carol and Charles Annecharico, and his brother Charles.

He is survived by his brother Aaron, his brother and sister-in-law Allen and Lorraine Annecharico, his niece Allyssa Annecharico and her husband Jacob Kerswell, and his nephew Charles Annecharico and many cousins and relatives.

A celebration of his life took place at the American Legion Hall in Sandisfield, following services at Our Lady of the Valley Church in Sheffield, on July 23.



**VICTOR HRYCKVICH**

1955-2022

Victor Hryckvich died unexpectedly on June 23. A formal obituary and family tribute will follow in our September issue.

Victor was born August 28, 1955 to Nicholas and Doris Hryckvich. Like both his parents, Victor was born, raised, and worked his entire life in Sandisfield.

He was a town official for over 25 years, serving as chairman and member of the Select Board, the Planning Board, and Board of Health. He was the Town's sanitation inspector and conducted septic planning for all systems built in Town.

For many years he maintained Vic's Seafood in a parking lot in Lee, selling

off the back of his truck fish he caught himself off the Massachusetts and Rhode Island coasts. He also maintained the family's lumber mill, Hryckvich Brothers, on Rt. 8 just north of New Boston and kept a small herd of cattle at the family farm on Beech Plain Road

Victor is survived by his wife, Nina, and daughters, Theresa, Nicole, and Jessica, all of Sandisfield.

A memorial service was held at the New Boston Inn on Saturday, July 23. The Inn and its garden were filled with well-wishers celebrating Victor's life and extending love to the family.

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# CRITTER CORNER. . . . .



## The Falcons of Hanging Mountain

By Sean Fleuriel

We have a family of peregrine falcons as neighbors.

Their nest is near the top of Hanging Mountain below New Boston, along the west side of Rt. 8 just south of the Farmington River bridge. We live at the foot of the mountain and have a view of the falcons' nest from our back porch.

A few weeks ago, my girlfriend Kristie McLaughlin, supervised by Mass Wildlife biologists, helped band three new chicks and give them a preliminary health checkup. Mass Wildlife strongly advises that people should not handle

falcons or approach their nests without supervision. Falcons will attack anyone who approaches the nest.

It is tricky getting to a falcon's nest. A climber has to rappel down to the nest, when the parents are out snatching other birds to bring back to feed their chicks. Once the climber is at the nest, the chicks are safely gathered and brought up to a ledge.

In one of the photos, Kristie holds one of the chicks while biologists give them fluids and food, test them for diseases, and place bands on their legs. The bands give information about where the falcons travel. On this day, the biologists and climbers also built up the nest to improve drainage and provide more shelter for the chicks.

Peregrine populations crashed, along with other raptor species, due to the use of DDT many years ago. Their populations have bounced back, but biologists still work to monitor their populations and try to improve their survival.

Falcons typically like to nest on steep cliffs where people are interested in rock climbing, thus their presence on Hanging Mountain. The recent purchase of a section of the mountain by the Western Massachusetts Climbers Coalition will contribute to the safety of the nest, which is protected by the Department of Natural Resources. Climbers work with biologists to assist them in accessing nests, as well as implementing climbing closures to allow falcons space to raise the chicks.

Photos: Kristie McLaughlin and one of the biologists



## Janey Beardsley's Fox

Janey took several pictures of this fox stalking through her backyard on Sandisfield Road at the eastern end of Montville. Finally, he took a leap at something that, despite his best efforts, remained uncaught. Janey posted her pictures on ConnectSandisfield



## Cooling Off

One day in early July, Diane Barth on Sandy Brook Turnpike (Rt. 183) spotted this moose crossing the pond behind her house near South Sandisfield Road.

# NOW HEAR THIS!

*Edited by Laura Rogers-Castro.*

*Please send notices for Now Hear This! to [editor@sandisfieldtimes.org](mailto:editor@sandisfieldtimes.org).*

## AUGUST EVENTS

**Sandisfield Select Board Meetings** are currently through Zoom and in-person. Please visit [sandisfieldma.gov](http://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. No pre-registration 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 at 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 August, 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, and crafts.

**Something's Fishy! A Fun Show for an Ocean of Possibilities** at the Sandisfield Library on Saturday, August 6 time TBD. Nationally recognized storyteller Mary Jo Maichack will sing, play guitar, tell tales, and lead the fun in this puppet show. For information, email [sandisfieldlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:sandisfieldlibrary@gmail.com).

**Live Music** on August 7, 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., August 14, 2:00 to 5:00 p.m., and August 21, 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the New Boston Inn. Visit [www.newbostoninn.com](http://www.newbostoninn.com) for updated information. Free.

**Steak Roast** to benefit the Sandisfield Fire/EMT Department on Saturday, August 13 from 5:00 to

9:00 p.m., at Firehouse #2 on Sandisfield Road, Route 57. Steak, baked potato, corn, salad, and dessert. Tickets \$30 and must be pre-purchased from from any fire or EMS volunteer or call A&M Auto (258-3381). Indoors in the shed, music, raffle.

**New Boston Church Service** on Sunday, August 14, at 10:00 a.m., at the New Boston Congregational Church, Route 57. (See our story on page 1 of this issue of The Times.) All are welcome!

**Berkshire Public Health Alliance Public Health Nurse** on Wednesday, August 17 at 10:00 a.m., at the Sandisfield Council on Aging, basement level of the Town Hall Annex. The nurse will provide an assessment, including a blood pressure check and wellness update. All are welcome. Free.

**Townwide Drive-By Tag Sale** on Saturday, August 20 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (raindate: Saturday, August 27). Sellers will be listed on a tag sale map and in social media for a fee of \$25 directed to the Sandisfield Historical Society. Anyone in Sandisfield can register to be included by contacting either Maxine Kupperman-Guinals ([slix92@aol.com](mailto:slix92@aol.com)) or Joanne Lazarowitz Olsen ([joanneo@aol.co](mailto:joanneo@aol.co), or 917-686-1985).

**Selections from The Well-Tempered Clavier and Other Keyboard Works by Bach** with Andrew Sheranian, on Saturday, August 20 at 7:00 p.m., at the Sandisfield Arts Center at 5 Hammertown Road. Sheranian is a well-known Bach disciple and founding director of The Bach Project at Ashmont Hill Chamber Music. He currently is Organist and Master of Choristers at the Parish of All Saint, Ashmont in Boston. Masks required. \$20.

## 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. No pre-registration is necessary. Meet for stories and songs followed by creative crafts. For information, call Nina Carr at 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, August 13 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.

**A Stroll on the Bidwell Grounds with Richard Greene** on Sunday, August 14, from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the Bidwell House Museum in Monterey. An interesting and informative guided stroll to learn about the flora and fauna. The terrain can be uneven so wear proper shoes and bring water and a snack. Limited to 20 people and pre-registration ([bidwellhousemuseum.org](http://bidwellhousemuseum.org)) is required. \$10.

**Market at East End Park in Winsted** on Saturday, August 20, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Farmers, crafters, and other vendors.

**Hidden Woman State Company presents Elizabeth Freeman** on Sunday, August 21, from 3:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Bidwell House Museum in Monterey. A one-woman performance on the museum grounds. For information visit [bidwellhousemuseum.org](http://bidwellhousemuseum.org). Pay what you can!

## SAVE THE DATE

**Housatonic Heritage Walks** on five weekends (September 3 and 4, 10 and 11, 17 and 18, 24 and 25, and Oct 1 and 2). More than eighty free, guided walks will be offered throughout Berkshire County, Massachusetts, and Litchfield County, Connecticut. Family friendly, informative walks offered in partnership with the region's historic, cultural, and outdoor recreation organizations. For information, visit [www.housatonicheritage.org/events/heritage-walks/](http://www.housatonicheritage.org/events/heritage-walks/).

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*The Times is grateful to readers who  
contributed in July:*

*Sean Fleuriel  
Hilde Wiesert*



**T**HE 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

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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](http://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.

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*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](mailto:editor@SandisfieldTimes.org).*