

THE SANDSFIELD TIMES

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April 2023



An old man who should know better clearing his roof.

The Constant that is Change

A MOVE CAUSES A RESIGNATION

By Hannah Van Sickle

There was nothing cutting-edge about Alex Bowman's decision to renovate his 1970s log cabin kit-turned-home and achieve net-zero energy consumption in the process; a change was needed, and it was simply the responsible thing to do in this day and age — at least that's his perspective, one he's brought to his seat on the Select Board since May 2021.

I caught up with Bowman at his home on New Hartford Road (just south of Riiska Brook Orchard) on a recent weekday morning, arriving

Cont'd on p.6

MARCH MADNESS

SURVIVING THE BIG-BAD NOR'EASTER

Report and photos by Ron Bernard

For at least a week leading up to March 14, weather persons at TV stations in Springfield, Hartford, and Albany, dove into overdrive over the prospects for the first significant storm of Winter 2023.

This meant that they would get *even more* air time between the mostly boring commercials that fill the meager 30-minute evening newscasts.

The non-stop messaging to hapless residents of southern New England and New York State barely concealed their dread and doom. "It's gonna be bad." "The National Guard is on alert." "Tons of heavy wet snow will be followed by brutal wind." "You there, in the hill towns, expect two feet or more." "Trees are going to fall on power lines and maybe on your house while you freeze in the dark. No telling for how long. Prepare!"

Cont'd on p.5

INSIDE

SHORT-TERM RENTAL HEARING.	2
SCHOOL SIGNUP	3
UKULELE LADY	9
BURIED IN SNOW.	10
A LESSON PLAN GONE AWRY	12
FRANCIS DEMING	16



Election 2023

Taking out nomination papers is the usual way to get on the ballot for election to Sandisfield public offices. However, as of March 23, the last day to take out nomination papers, only six residents had done so for the eleven open positions.

The only contest so far is for the single open seat on the Planning Board which has two nominees.

A final opportunity to be nominated and get on the ballot will be at the Town Caucus to be held at Old Town Hall, Tuesday, April 4, at 7:00 p.m.

Town Clerk Douglas Miner said, "We need voters to step up to run for office and to attend the Caucus on April 4. We need more bodies!!"

The election, Monday, May 15, will be held two days following the Annual Town Meeting, Saturday, May 13.

Taking out nomination papers so far:

- Dominic Konstam. . . Moderator 1 year (incumbent)
- Douglas Miner Town Clerk 3 years (incumbent)
- Steve Seddon Select Board 3 years (incumbent)
- Paul Adams Planning Board 5 years (incumbent)
- Jeffrey Bye Planning Board 5 years
- Clare English Library Trustee 5 years (incumbent)

No interest has been shown so far in the following positions:

- Select Board 1 year School Committee 3 years
- Bd of Assessors 3 years Constable 3 years
- Board of Health 3 years Constable 3 years



SHORT-TERM RENTAL HEARING

The Planning Board is holding a public hearing on Tuesday, April 11 at 6:30 p.m., at Old Town Hall to act on a proposed bylaw to establish Short-Term Rental regulations. These will impact all those who use their homes for Air BnB or other short-term rentals. The draft of the bylaw is available for viewing on the Town website (sandisfieldma.gov) and may be inspected by appointment at the office of the Town Clerk during regular business hours. The hearing is in-person with Zoom capabilities. Please contact the Planning Board to obtain the conference ID and password to attend online.

Word from Your Town Moderator Two Openings on the FinComm

By Dominic Konstam Jr.

One of the great responsibilities of the Sandisfield Moderator is to find, vet, and appoint townspeople to the Finance Committee.

This is no small chore.

The Finance Committee is one of the most important groups that keep Sandisfield thriving and running like the well-oiled civic mechanism that it is.

I'm the current Town Moderator and I'm seeking individuals to join Myles, Skip, and Olivia as they keep the town's budget aligned with what they feel the people of Sandisfield want most.

Committee responsibilities include advising on budgets which may raise or lower taxes or affect the longevity and health of our town's finances. Most importantly, the committee stands as a trusted group by the people of Sandisfield to decipher proposed spending, protect emergency funding, and advise the voters on what is best for our town.

If you are interested in joining the committee and you are a strategic thinker, perhaps have a knack for Excel, and would like to help shape Sandisfield's future, send an email to me at dom.k.95@gmail.com.

I encourage everyone to participate, and I look forward to chatting with all of you.

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Monitoring Review at FRRSD

FOCUS IS ON SPECIAL EDUCATION AND CIVIL RIGHTS

From Michael A. Saporito, Director of Student Services

Every three years, the Massachusetts Office of Public School Monitoring visits each district school in order to monitor compliance with federal and state special education and civil rights regulations.

The regularly scheduled review of the Farmington River Regional School District will take place during the week of April 24.

The areas to be reviewed related to special education include student assessments, determination of eligibility, the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team process, and IEP developments and implementation.

Areas of review related to civil rights include bullying, student discipline, physical restraint, and equal access to school programs for all students.

In addition to the onsite visit, parent outreach is an important part of the review process. The review chairperson from the Office of Public School Monitoring will send all parents of students with disabilities an online survey that focuses on key areas of their child's special education program.

During the onsite review, the chairperson of the district's Special Education Parent Advisory Council will be interviewed. Other activities may include interviews with district staff and administrators, reviews of student records, and onsite observations.

Parents and others may call the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Public School Monitoring Chairperson, Sandra Hanig, at 413-314-6707 to request a telephone interview. Accommodations for translation will be available.

About sixty business days after the onsite visit, the review chairperson will provide the district with a report on areas in which the district meets or exceeds regulatory requirements and those in which correction or improvement is necessary.

The public will be able to access the report at www.doe.mass.edu/psm/tfm/reports.

Farmington River Regional School District

Otis & Sandisfield

Preschool/Early Kindergarten and
Kindergarten Registration & Screenings

NEW STUDENTS ONLY

The Farmington River Regional School District will be accepting registrations and scheduling screenings for enrollment in our Preschool Program and Kindergarten for the '23-'24 School Year.

Children who are residents of Otis or Sandisfield and will be **THREE** years old BEFORE **September 1, 2023** may be eligible to enter our public **Pre-school/Early Kindergarten Program in the fall**.

For the upcoming school year, our Preschool/Early Kindergarten Program will offer families the following options (*minimum 3 days/week required*):

- 5 half-days a week (8:30-11:30 am) for 3- and 4-year-olds
- 5 full-days a week (8:30 am - 2:30 pm) for 4-year-olds ONLY (*must turn 4 by September 1, 2023*).

Preschool/ Early Kindergarten Screenings:

April 5, 2023
9:00 am - 3:00 pm



Children who are residents of Otis or Sandisfield and will be **FIVE** years old BEFORE **September 1, 2023** may be eligible to enter our **full-day Kindergarten Program in the fall**.

Residents of neighboring communities are also invited to apply.

A screening is required for all enrolling children*, and will take place in half-hour increments. The screening will be conducted in the areas of speech and language, fine and gross motor development, and learning skills. *No screening is required if your child is already enrolled in our Preschool program.

Interested families should call the Front Office at Farmington River Elementary (413) 269-4466 to schedule an appointment and to arrange a time to pick up a registration packet.

Kindergarten Screenings:

April 6, 2023
9:00 am - 3:00 pm



Vote-By-Mail Applications Available

Early mail-in voting applications for our upcoming local election are now available. If you would like to participate in early voting or vote by mail, you may request an application by contacting the Town Clerk's office. The last day to request a mail-in ballot is Wednesday, May 10. Applications can be picked up in person or downloaded on the Town Clerk page on the Town Website.

Please note that while early-voting applications are available now, ballots will not be sent out until

after the Caucus on April 4. The Caucus is an important event where voters select candidates for local offices, and we encourage all registered voters to attend.

If you plan to vote in person on election day, please remember that the polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall, 3 Silverbrook Rd on May 15.

We hope that all eligible voters will exercise their right to vote in this important election. Your participation is crucial to our democratic process, and we encourage you to take advantage of the early-voting options available to you.

Contact the Town Clerk's office with any questions.

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SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE NOW

APPLICATIONS DUE APRIL 30

By Nina Carr

Attention graduating high school seniors who reside in Sandisfield!

The Sandisfield Scholarship Committee would like to receive your applications for a scholarship to help pay for your college attendance.




Applicants can attend either a 2- or 4-year college or university. Applications are due by April 30

and should include your high school transcript, as well as a letter from you that explains your future plans. It would help if you can include a couple of letters of recommendation from teachers and/or coaches.

To qualify, you need at least one-year full-time residency in Sandisfield. Contact us at 413-258-3314 or write to PO Box 651, Sandisfield, MA 01255. We'll send you an application. Good luck, seniors!!

Since I moved to Sandisfield in 1979, a group of interested people have organized and awarded scholarships to our town's graduating high school seniors. At first it was the Sandisfield PTA when we had our own elementary school. Then the group became the Sandisfield Scholarship Committee.

Our committee is currently in need of new members for our group so we can continue the tradition. I hope this article can stir up a few new volunteers. The amount of time needed is really quite small, since we only meet a few times a year. If you're interested, please contact me at 413-258-3314 and leave a message. Thanks, and see you soon, I hope. 



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EASTER
DINNER
April 9

PSYCHIC
WEEKEND!

from 4/22 at Noon until
4/23 at 11:30 am

Reservations
required

March Madness

Cont'd from p.1

Holy cow. For a moment I thought this could be it. Worried friends sent supportive messages from Florida and Arizona. "It's been good to know you." "Take care."

Up to that point, in this year's upside-down winter of above normal temperatures and mostly rain, we had forgotten what snow/winter looked/felt like. After all, we had just moved the clocks up an hour. Meteorological spring was only a week away. Incessant TV ads shilled for seasonal allergy pills and lawn tractors. St. Patrick was on parade. Hordes of pampered college students were already heading south for "spring break."

HERE IT COMES...

But this time, the forecasters pretty much nailed it. You have to give them credit, except for the part about high winds, mercifully. Otherwise, Mr. Nor'easter arrived on schedule and as advertised – heavy, wet snow, copious and relentless.

Tuesday morning. Up early after a restless night, power still on. I muttered to Jean, "We'll be lucky to make it to noon."

Fifteen minutes later, lights out. It was snowing like hell, piling up fast. Pointless to ask Eversource for an estimate. So, like the other 802 Sandisfielders whose druthers included Florida, we hunkered down with extra victuals, batteries, a little transistor radio, some jugs filled with water, to await our fate.

IT KEPT SNOWING...

Nothing to do all day except feed the wood stove, shovel the walk, and talk to each other (?!). By early bedtime, fifteen inches on the ground and still snowing. I felt bad for the birds and all the drooping trees, clearly in agony. So far, no plowing.

Wednesday morning. Awoke to a scene reminiscent of *Doctor Zhivago*. Eight more inches and counting, with broken branches of all sizes strewn everywhere. Our repositioned GMC and Jeep, now invisible but snow-cushioned, had dodged the bigger fallen limbs.

Sadly, we lost what remained of our 240-year-old apple tree that had mostly succumbed to a storm three years ago. Its ultimate demise was inevitable. (See "Homage for an Apple Tree," Times, November 2020.)

Soon we heard for the first time that wonderful, thundering scrape-crunch sound of the stalwart Sandisfield snow plows clearing the way for power crews. Never mind that we were totally plowed in. Cold Spring Road was open! We could deal with four-foot solid mounds later.

By midday, all sorts of vehicles bearing alien state

license plates were roaming the Beech Plain in dangerous conditions in search of downed wires and damaged transformers. Heroes. Power snapped on at 7 p.m., sign that the storm and major inconvenience was over.

LESSONS LEARNED...

The ordeal brought out the best in people. Residents with tractors and small excavators cleared debris for linemen, for example on the always-rough Hammertown Road which had numerous problems. A Beech Plain resident tried to find someone to clear the lengthy driveway of a marooned disabled veteran. Selfless acts by neighbors and strangers took place all over town.



The Town had its act together. Despite dealing with the most challenging and precarious situation since the ice storm of December 2008, the Sandisfield DPW managed to update residents in real-time about storm management strategies and specific problems such as sightlines, road blockages, and downed wires. The information was thorough, clear, and reassuring. It was a great example of the value of automatic online notices from the Town. Everyone, sign up for E-Alerts on the Town website. Thank you, DPW. Well done, fellows.

And cheers too for Police Chief Mike and Mrs. Barbara Morrison for transporting besieged residents to Fire House No. 2 warming center and to welcoming residences with generators.

Elevation matters. Snow accumulation was largely dependent upon altitude. The official (computed) elevation for Sandisfield is 1,567 feet. But elevation ranges from 833 at New Boston to 1,795 on Town Hill Road. Sandisfield Center environs are around 1,600 while the Beech Plain section is roughly 1,450.

Estimated snow totals in Winter Storm 2023 ranged from about 25 to 30 inches in the higher places to perhaps half that in New Boston. A few miles south over the Connecticut line, residents asked, "What storm?"

Think Spring! 🍀

APPLYING FOR RELIEF

According to a report in The Berkshire Eagle, Sandisfield, Becket, and Hinsdale declared storm emergencies in order to apply for state aid from the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency to help cover the extra costs of storm clearance.

The Eagle reported that Sandisfield road crews "contended with long days. They are responsible for plowing more than 80 miles of roadway, many of them dirt. And those roads had already begun to thaw before the storm hit. 'These guys killed themselves,' Town Manager Jonathan Sylbert said. 'The crew worked as much as they can. They did a great job.' The Department of Public Works also had to order more fuel

for the equipment. All the extra work during the storm cost all three towns in extra pay that included overtime."

The Eagle concluded: "But heroes are born when the weather rages.

"'You got to love it when your neighbors have the heart and the equipment to come through when it counts,' wrote resident Mark Fay on the Connect Sandisfield Facebook page.

"Fay was referring to the two residents who plowed out Hammertown Road so they could pull a power company bucket truck up the hill. Two humble heroes, it turns out: Both declined to be named in the paper.

"'It's just neighbors helping neighbors,' one told The Eagle." 🍀

The Constant that is Change

Cont'd from p.1

just 15 minutes later than expected after making the 42-mile, round trip to drop my daughter at school in Stockbridge — which, in a bout of serendipity, proved an entirely apropos way to kick off our conversation about Bowman's impending resignation from the Sandisfield Select Board on May 14 (cutting his three-year term short by one) and what prompted it.

"We love being here, but we don't love getting here," Bowman said matter-of-factly, citing the growing challenges he and Jess Coffrin have faced raising their young family in such a rural locale — chief among them, the endless driving — which is why the family has decided to relocate to the Northampton area. (They will remain part-time local residents.)

While a 14-acre property in a tiny town with no real center served as a bucolic backdrop for their children's early years, the task of raising an eight-year-old second grader and five-year-old Kindergartener here has become increasingly daunting as they seek to explore arts, sports and other extracurricular activities — which is why the myriad walkable, bikeable communities in Hampshire County (where Bowman grew up) are so alluring.

"It's hard to raise kids in Sandisfield, and I don't know how people do it," Bowman said of the close to 1.5 hours local students spend on a bus each day — valuable time that could be spent doing other things, "enriching things". Which goes hand-in-hand with town politics.

"I think we have to really focus on what Sandisfield should be doing — which is making a good community for children," Bowman said, citing the inherent connection between the regionalization of the schools with the subsequent loss of a true community center in Town. "Everything flows out of that [foundation]," he underscored.

Bowman is quick to admit the challenges of holding public office in a small town. "I believe we have to think about how to be creative," he said, pointing to the pitfall of wanting to keep up with what other towns are doing despite those models not always scaling to a small town like Sandisfield.

"It takes a village," he said — from volunteers on boards to on-call members of emergency services — "and as we lost our community in schools, we've lost these people, too," he said, pointing to the real need for a collective attitude of figuring out how to make things work and getting them done.

Bowman feels it might boil down to a single, rhetorical question: What does Sandisfield want to be?



Alex Bowman and Jess Coffrin on top of Maine's Cadillac Mountain last summer.

"There is so much opportunity," Bowman said, pointing to the absence of zoning and other regulations which, while they allow for lots of privacy and sprawl, creates other challenges such as simultaneously managing our roads with residents' rising expectations for how they should be maintained.

Despite relatively low taxes when compared with other communities in the Berkshires and across the Commonwealth, the majority of Sandisfield's budget goes to the school and the highway department. "We don't have much else," said Bowman of another simple fact: We need to invest in something that makes people want to be here; not for a weekend or two, but all the time — "And I don't know how to get there, but [as a town] we've got to think about it."

Looking back on his tenure, one that began in a time of turmoil, Bowman feels good about what's been accomplished. "I think we've gotten to a place where there's a lot of stability and people are more confident in the way the town is being run," he said.

For someone keen on transparency and accountability, Bowman feels less successful in having achieved that — particularly with the highway department. "That was one of the things I wanted to do," he said, "pointing to an endless cycle of band-aid fixes, in particular on the dirt roads, rather than real solutions.

"We need to change the way we look at things — the way we do things — and we need people involved," he said, which, without participation, is a tall order. "We need a conversation about what we value, and we need to make sure that we're putting our money toward that." Which means the way things have always been done might not cut it anymore.


For many who turn up at these community convenings, prudent moves like protecting the night skies and seeking alternatives to fossil fuels (or — gasp! — moving to electricity for town heating systems) are considered too far afield.

"There are just so many people who are like, 'Oh, we don't want to be on the cutting edge,'" says Bowman of the minority who do show up for these conversations when they are held. As to his response?

"It's not cutting edge, these changes are what we need," he says with equal parts passion and hope that, going forward, more folks will not only show up but also bring with them open minds.

For the remaining weeks of his term, and for the sake of Sandisfield's posterity, Bowman has an ardent wish:

"Imagine if, rather than saying 'why bother?', folks started asking, 'What can we do?'"

This is the stuff dreams are made of. 

recreation COMMITTEE

Hop Into Spring BUT FIRST WE FLOATED INTO MARCH

By Laurie Seddon

Winter weather didn't stop the Sandisfield Recreation Committee from Floating Into March! In case you missed it, here's a little recap.



Leona Russo and her grandmother, Mary Gonzalez, organized a bird's nest with candy eggs.

On Saturday, March 11, we hosted our Float unto March event at Fire Station #1 on Rt. 8. True to its name we served root beer floats as well as cupcakes with all the seasonal toppings you could imagine: marshmallow peeps, mint chocolate chips, M&M's, maraschino cherries, sprinkles, and more! If sweets weren't your thing, we also made adorable faux birds nets from hanging terrariums, moss, colored craft eggs, and other stuff.

Would you be surprised to hear that our younger guests had a lot of extra energy after all those sweets? Not to worry, the children entertained themselves by playing games like Duck, Duck, Goose; Simon Says; and Freeze Tag.

Thank you to everyone who joined us and a special thanks to the Sandisfield Fire Department for allowing us to host our event at the Station. A special shout out to Lisa Vaeth for volunteering to assist us at the event.

Did you know we welcome volunteers? You don't need to be a full-time committee member to help. Contact us anytime for more information.

AND save THE DATE

Join us as we **Hop into Spring** on **Saturday, April 22nd, from 10:00 a.m.-noon** at the **Old Town Hall**. Paint flowerpots, plant seedlings, do butterfly crafting, enjoy dirt pie and ... **BERKSHIRE BUNNIES!!** Please **RSVP by April 15** to **413-269-7357** or **email us at sandisfieldevents@recreationcommitte.info.**



Maewen Wilson, decorating a cupcake.

Photos: Lynn Rubenstein

Hop Into Spring

with the
Sandisfield Recreation Committee

Everyone is invited! Join us for veggie & flower seed planting, flowerpot painting, butterfly crafting, dirt pie and...

Berkshire Bunnies!!

Saturday, April 22nd
10AM to 12PM

Old Town Hall
3 Silverbrook Road
Sandisfield, MA



FREE EVENT
RECREATION COMMITTEE
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All Ages Welcome

RSVP by 4.15.23 to 413-269-7357 or email us at
sandisfieldevents@recreationcommittee.info

Disposal of Household Hazardous Waste

Sandisfield residents can dispose of their household hazardous waste at Lee Wastewater Treatment Plant, 379 Pleasant St, Lee, MA 01233 on Saturday, May 20, 2023 from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Pre-Registration is required. See adjoining ad for contact information.



Household Hazardous Waste



For Residents of:

**Alford Becket Egremont Great Barrington Lee Lenox Monterey
Mt. Washington New Marlborough Dalton Otis Richmond Sandisfield
Sheffield Stockbridge Tyringham Washington West Stockbridge**

When: Saturday, May 20, 2023, 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Where: Lee Wastewater Treatment Plant, 379 Tyler St., Lee, MA 01233

WHAT TO BRING

From The Yard/Garden

Pesticides, Fungicides
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Chemical Fertilizers
Lighter Fluid
Moth Balls

From the Workbench

Rust Proofers
Wood Preservatives
Wood Strippers & Stains
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Lead & Oil-Based Paint
Varnish
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Adhesives
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For additional questions, call Tri-Town Health Department at 413-243-5540



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WINTER SNOWFALL AND EXTREME TEMPERATURES TO DATE

2022-2023 Snowfall to date as measured/estimated at a Beech Plain back-yard weather station (elevation 1450')

November 2022	2.0 inches
December 2022	15.5
January 2023	7.0
February	9.5

March	
4	6.0
11	2.0
14-15	25.0
20	0.5



SEASON TO DATE 66.5 INCHES

EXTREME TEMPERATURE:

February 1 minus 17.2



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Sandisfield's 'Ukulele Lady'

ORGANIZING A BENEFIT IN HAWAII

By Times Reporters

If Jean Atwater-Williams, a graduate of the Boston Conservatory of Music, missed taking a course in ukulele back when (actually, there were no courses at BCM), well, she's making up for it now.

Her later-in-life passion to play the instrument and encourage others to do so as well brought her into contact with the Kanikapila Project, a New York-based non-profit dedicated to "music education programs, providing instruments to underserved communities and supporting music therapy initiatives across the country."

Jean was tapped to lead planning for a one-time event in Honolulu on April 30. Proceeds will benefit Kapi'olani Medical Center (children's hospital) in Honolulu. A number of world-famous ukulele players, notably Jake Shimabukuro who fills concert halls for outstanding performances, will be on hand.

The ukulele (pronounced "oo-koo-le-le") has long been the centerpiece of folk music tradition in Hawaii. The diminutive instrument was introduced to the mainland in 1915 and achieved great popularity in the 1920s. After WWII, returning GI's sang (played?) the little instrument's praises. One of them was the exuberant TV and radio personality, Arthur Godfrey who in the mid-1950s sparked the second "uke craze" or "wave" among his 40 million followers on CBS.

It has taken another fifty years for a serious and widespread revival of interest in the ukulele to develop which it has and not only in the U.S. The humble uke is among the easiest of instruments to learn to play, a big reason why countless beginners have picked one up in recent years.

Music is a major aspect of Jean's life. She said, "I have loved music since I was a young child. I enjoy singing and remember harmonizing with environmental sounds such as from a lawnmower and our vacuum cleaner. As a teenager, I played guitar and piano, mostly to accompany myself while singing. My degree is in Vocal Performance.

"As I aged and my [soprano] voice changed, I realized that I might have to consider other instruments besides voice. I recalled a time when I was in Hawaii and exposed to the ukulele for the first time."

She decided in 2017 to purchase one and self-teach. Discovering that the learning curve for this instrument was very short and that the ukulele had true musical potential, Jean resolved to "get serious about improving my skills." She added that the pandemic was

an opportunity to take online lessons and practice.

She joined a group consisting of ukulele enthusiasts with widely varying experience from the around the U.S. and Canada plus Mervi, a woman in Finland. Jean was the only trained singer to the delight of the group.

In February 2022, Jean attended an ukulele festival in San Diego where one of her online collaborators introduced her to Kimo Hussey, internationally-known ukulele player and instructor.

"I mentioned my idea to offer a free beginners' course in Sandisfield and would he know how I might obtain some instruments for loan to students. He introduced me to [philanthropist] David Blake, founder of the Kanikapila Project, who arranged a donation of six instruments."

Later, Mr. Blake, impressed with her initiative and results, asked Jean to be (unpaid) "project manager" for the benefit event. The group aims to raise \$100,000 from this event.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR JEAN?


"I am working with the Kanikapila Project and with UMass Medical Center on a pilot program to connect ukulele players with the hospital's established music therapy department. We hope that this will be model for other health care facilities across the country," she said. An IT pro and data base creator, Jean is helping to develop the Kanikapila Network, a database of ukulele players and venues to be available for music therapy programs everywhere.

Ron Bernard, Jean's husband, told the Times that she "has been working on this event 'day and night' for months over Zoom, with endless conference calls and even personal collaboration in New York and Boston. This is a big deal."

Ron related how Jean has had to juggle a thousand moving parts: assembling a steering committee, securing a local event planner, developing strategies and publicity, all done remotely over five or six time zones. "She is even doing direct long-distance fund raising," Ron said.

"She was already busy with IT work and volunteering, but now I almost have to book time with her."

Ron is excited about Jean's amazing opportunity, a big first step, to establish something important. "She'll be out there in advance for about ten days, crazy busy," Ron said. "I know she is excited at the chance to work with the top of the top of the ukulele world but I hope she can find time to enjoy Hawaii."

To learn more about this event and the Kanikapila Project, go to www.KanikapilaProject.org 



Jean was introduced to the ukulele at Kapalua Bay, Maui, 2005, by the hotel's cultural liaison. She describes the experience as "my holding-a-new-baby moment."



Jean with professional Hawai'ian musician, Zanuck Lindsey, performing in New York, March 2023.



Joshua's Farm: Buried in Snow

EVEN THE SNOW SHOVEL NEEDED A SHOVEL TO FIND IT.

Report and photos by Brigitte Ruthman

Thirty-one inches. On top of five.

That's three feet of snow.

For those intrepid souls unwilling or unable to flee south, the hours of March 13-14 will forever be remembered.

Beware the Ides of March.

Forecast as rain changing to snow, it nearly copied the great white hurricane of 1888 when the lambs of March 11 that year were crushed by a cold front, dumping an historic five feet of snow on New England over the next two days. In 1993 another storm crippled the Northeast on March 13 with up to 30 inches.

The Ides of March was a warning from the conspirators in 44 B.C. who assassinated Julius Caesar as a message to sacrifice the well-being of civilization. The Romans were so dramatic.

This time the hill towns of Berkshire County were a much narrower ground zero to live out the fateful legacy of mid-March, and only at elevation. A light rain began to fall, and transitioned to snow by bedtime with no mingling of ice to reduce the depths.

What would have been in summer an all-nighter of crushing, noisy, heavy rain instead blew in quietly as two feet of pillowy, soft snow. Unrelenting, waves of it continued to blow in quietly throughout the day Tuesday, finally leaving totals not seen in a generation.

At least not mine.

JOSHUA'S CHICKENS AND COWS: DIGGING OUT

The three-minute trip to the mobile henhouse in the field took 45 minutes. The bucket of water carried that far was nearly emptied of its contents by then, swimming as I was nearly waist deep. It was time enough to marvel over the silence of the cottony thick landscape, transformed as it was to a new, higher plain.



The cows seemed to understand their predicament.

Trapped as they were by an eight-foot tall bank that had slid off the barn roof and blocked the exit, they seemed unbothered as I shoveled them an exit after first digging through to the water trough.

In nearby Canaan, Conn., a roof collapsed around that time under the weight, killing two pregnant cows.

Pippa looked around the corner, 40 feet away from the stanchions where she and four others had to walk through neck-high snow.

Cows don't generally want to climb or push through anything more than a foot, unless they have to. This time, they did.


With no electricity for two days and a generator gasping its last sticky carburetor breath, it was back to hand milking. No radio or motor sound, just the soft breath of patient cows.

The other henhouse was buried up to its roofline. Even the snow shovel needed a shovel to find it.

The intrepid town highway drivers kept the roads clear, using a grader instead of the big plow where the heavy deep snow line mingled with mud. It was as good as seeing Santa Claus when the machine rumbled up the road.

And yet the historic storm that also dumped 40 inches in Colrain and more than three feet in a line north through Cummington left much less in Northwest Connecticut. New Boston recorded a measly sixteen inches.

It was 50 degrees a week later, when a powerful geomagnetic storm delivered the northern lights, *Aurora borealis*, to the early morning sky.

Punitive as winter might be, the survivors of the great white hurricane of 2023 can forever boast that the Ides of March this time had a colorful curtain call. 

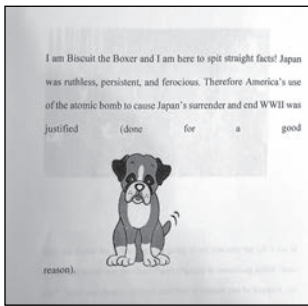




A Lesson Plan Gone Horribly Awry

By Simon Winchester

Example: From a high-school in China, 2022. “The containers for milk are always square. Containers for mineral water are always round, and round wine bottles are usually placed in square boxes. Write an essay on the subtle philosophy of the round and the square.”



Example: From a high school in Berkshire County, Massachusetts, 2022: “I am Biscuit the Boxer and I am here to spit straight facts. Japan was ruthless, persistent

and ferocious. Therefore, America’s use of the atomic bomb to cause Japan’s surrender and end WWII was justified.”

First, a caveat. There are significant differences in intent between the two passages. One is simply an end-of-year examination; the other a suggested model for 17-year-olds on how they might present wartime history that they already know to children younger than themselves and in lower grades.

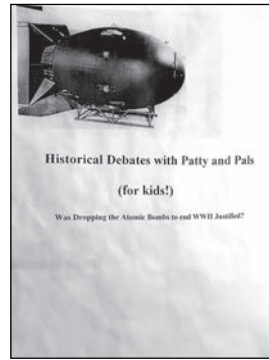
Even allowing for the difference, the comparison reveals much.

The first, a pretty severe test of how a near-adult might grapple with a thorny intellectual problem, might tempt a child to cleverness.

The second, a tired continuation of age-old prejudices, seems more likely to mire the student in rank stupidity. As an example, it is rendered ludicrous by its lazy and childish presentation. At best, if the example was meant to show how *not* to teach a tough subject to lower grades, its length, detail, and repetition simply *enhances* the prejudices.

I have long wondered about the troubled state of modern American education. Wondered, as in: how can a nation that sends men to the moon or invents the Macintosh computer sport a significant cohort

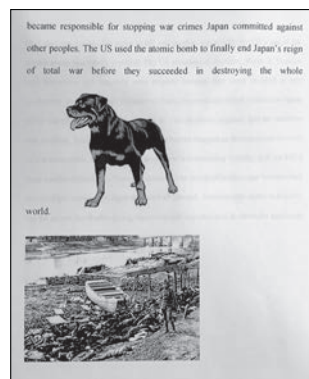
of teenagers who – if you believe the stories – think the Vietnam War was fought against the Germans or that the city of Berlin was until recently divided by the Great Wall of China.



– for Biscuit is but one of the players – was presented. The parent did not wish to be identified; and after I spoke to the school principal it was agreed that the institution not be named either, because of the potential embarrassment.

It was a young teacher, new to the school but not to teaching and who came here from the New York City public school system, who decided on the pet-friendly approach to wartime history. The general idea: Historical Debates with Patty and Pals. Biscuit is one of the Pals. Patty is Patty the Poodle. “Hi,” the lesson begins, “I’m Patty the Poodle and my friends and I are here to talk to you about WWII.”

There follows a brief historical overview, a mention of the Manhattan Project and the fact that the then American President had to make the decision on whether or not to destroy Hiroshima. Biscuit the Boxer offers his previously mentioned judgement about Japan being ferocious and so forth; whereupon



dropped a second over Nagasaki for good measure, Japan might have succeeded in, as Rover puts it, “destroying the whole world.”

To sum it all up, Lucy the Lab and Gary the Greyhound weigh in, each grinning in cartoonishly satisfied manner, concluding (with the concurrence of the now reappeared Patty the Poodle) that Harry Truman’s decision was to guarantee democracy and freedom “for everyone in the world.”

Your newspaper, thinking all this pretty juvenile

The document featuring the cheery-looking pet called Biscuit the Boxer perhaps illuminates, to a degree, how this has come about.

The text was handed to us by a Sandisfield parent whose child attends the school at which this menagerie



and offensive stuff, besides being factually wrong, promptly complained on your behalf to the school principal. The principal confessed to being shocked, shocked upon learning of this simplistic drivel being taught – even as an example – in the classrooms. An order promptly went out for the lesson to be withdrawn, and with immediate effect. The young teacher responsible was hauled into the office and given a stiff talking to. Patty and Pals, so far as I am aware, have now been expunged from the curriculum – at least here in Berkshire County. Public embarrassment and humiliation have been avoided, locally at least.

But I have to wonder whether other similar nonsense – such as this trivialization of so highly complex and world-altering topic – might not be on the syllabus of other schools, in other jurisdictions.

If so, that might well have helped prompt such idiocies as the existence of Vietnam’s Third Reich and the Great Wall of Berlin to percolate into so many of today’s teenage American brains. And so - many thanks to the Sandisfield parent who brought the offending document to our attention. And for thereby helping us – locally at least – to square this particular circle, Chinese examination style. 🇺🇸

Simon Winchester, the paper’s founding editor, published a review of We Are Electric: Inside the 200-Year Hunt for Our Body’s Bioelectric Code, and What the Future Holds, by Sally Adee, in The New York Times Book Review, March 26. Simon’s examination of this complicated subject and important book is cogent and worth the effort to look it up. You thought the Pentagon came up with something when it invented and researched LSD? You ain’t seen nothing yet.

– Bill Price, Editor



The Sandisfield
Arts Center

Coming Season

by Hilde Weisert

The Sandisfield Arts Center is beginning our season in April with “getting ready month.” House Manager Steve Kopiec is overseeing turning on heat and water and getting rid of any residue of winter critters. The Building and Grounds Committee ensures the outside is well-groomed and welcoming, and volunteers pitch in with anything else on the Spring Opening Checklist.

On Saturday, May 13, we kick off the season with a return of Linda Mironi’s Evening of Song, a gala celebration with eclectic songs from the Great American Songbook including special songs for Mother’s Day. Linda will be joined by Brian DeLorenzo whose “Brian Celebrates Sinatra at 100” was named “Top Ten of New York Cabaret 2015.”

A few other highlights:

- Sunday, June 11, the musical wonder **Zoë’ Lewis** is back with a family-friendly performance. A free reception for a very special **Kids Art Show** precedes the performance. The Gallery has a great line-up of other shows including Sandisfield artists Josie Miner and new work from Jaye Moscariello, as well as the **2nd Annual Daniel Manacher Prize for Young Artists** with opening reception August 19.
- Saturday, July 22, we’ll show “**A Stage of Twilight**,” the latest film from renowned actor and filmmaker Karen Allen who will join us for a conversation about the film.
- August will include an **Open Mic** event for Sandisfielders to raise their voices in song, poetry, or stories.
- Saturday, September 9, our fall season begins with a special showing (delayed from 2020) of “**Two Gentlemen Folk**” a one-hour film recorded at Jacob’s Pillow featuring Ben Luxon and Bill Crofut and shown on PBS in 1987. Ben and director Bill Cosell will be there for conversation and world-class chef Adam Manacher will make dinner for this fall fundraiser.
- Sunday October 22, **Foraging for Mushrooms** with mycologist **Matt Glushein**, then gathering at Matt’s Sandisfield home to create delectable mushroom nibbles and taste natural wine from Depart Wines.

Cont’d on p.14

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LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING

By William Wordsworth

I heard a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sate reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that green bower,
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played,
Their thoughts I cannot measure:—
But the least motion which they made
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man?



BOOKS FOR SALE

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NEW BOOK ARRIVALS

Adult Fiction and Non-Fiction


- *Old Babes in the Woods* by Margaret Atwood
- *Russia* by Antony Beevor
- *I Will Find You* by Harlan Coben
- *Poverty, by America* by Matthew Desmond
- *Sam* by Allegra Goodman
- *Time's Undoing* by Cheryl Head
- *Murder Your Employer* by Rupert Homes
- *Mala's Cat* by Mala Kacenberg
- *The Sister Effect* by Susan Mallery
- *Wade in the Water* by Nyani Nkrumah

- *The London Séance Society* by Sarah Penner
- *The End of Drum Time* by Hanna Pylavaian
- *Worthy Opponents* by Danielle Steele
- *Hang the Moon* by Jeannette Walls
- *The White Lady* by Jacqueline Winspear

Children's Books

- *How the Crayons Saved the Earth* by Monica Sweeney
- *Hooray for DNA!* by Pauline Thompson
- *The Pigeon Will Ride the Rollercoaster* by Mo Willems

The Children's section is replete with books, games, toys, Brio trains, and lots of arts and crafts supplies. We also offer notary service, public computer and printer availability, free wi-fi and access to e-books 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. 



The Sandisfield Arts Center Coming Season

Cont'd from p.13

- Saturday October 28, if you love Sandisfield, you can see something miraculous—**Sandisfield without the Trees**, courtesy of LIDAR images showing fire pits, old stone walls, and an introduction to this amazing technology. Apples, donuts, and cider served.
- Saturday, November 25, we're happy to continue the tradition of **tea and conversation with Sandisfield's own author Simon Winchester** – a good way to work off any Thanksgiving overeating with stimulating mental exercise.

As always, thanks to our volunteers and to the Sandisfield Cultural Council which helps support some of these events. There's much more to come, to be announced in the May Times and on our website, www.sandisfieldartscenter.org. 

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CRITTER CORNER



Mr. Bob Cat of West Hubbard

On March 9, this bobcat came poking around the heated bird bath on top of our well head, searching for a squirrel that wisely hid in the rocks around the well. He eventually gave up, or was distracted by another lunch opportunity.

*Paul Jacoby and Barbara Lynn
West Hubbard Road*



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Comings and Goings



Francis Deming with the planer from the Old Red Shop, 2011

FRANCIS DEMING

1934-2023

DESCENDANT OF ORIGINAL SANDISFIELD SETTLERS

Francis W. Deming of Tolland, 88, a childhood resident and well-known figure in Sandisfield, died peacefully March 5, surrounded by his loving family at their winter home in Oldsmar, Florida. Francis was Tolland's oldest resident.

His last wish was to return to Oldsmar. With the help of Gary O'Brien, his family "sprang him from his hospital bed" and rushed him to Florida despite being slowed down by a speeding ticket in Georgia. His daughter, Mary said, "It was worth it. When we pulled into the driveway Dad's family, friends and neighbors were there to greet him. Oh, the smile on his face was priceless." His son, Tim, called the experience, "Dad's Cannonball Run!"

Francis was born in Winsted, Conn., August 30, 1934, to Clarence and Dorcas Deming. His Deming ancestors were among the original settlers of New Boston in the 1760s.

He is survived by his loving wife of 64 years, Judith (Middleton) Deming, of Otis Mass., and four children, Edwin (Cheryl), James (Maryann), Timothy (Evelyn) and Mary (Mark). He also leaves eleven grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by his brother, Robert in 1979.

In 1910, his grandfather, Frank Deming of Tolland, bought the "Old Red Shop" wood products manufactory in Roosterville, New Boston. He made barrel heads and fish pole handles and dowels. According to the history of the iconic building, formerly home of the O. D. Case School Desk company, in *Sandisfield Then and Now*, "Local patrons could also order custom made small chicken coops. Frank's son, Clarence sold the property to an investor in 1928, but continued to run the business. He bought back the title in 1939. After the Shop closed it stood hauntingly vacant for many years until it was demolished in the 1960s. The Demings continued to live in one of the former company houses until Mrs. Deming's death which marked the end of a chapter of Sandisfield's history.

Francis recalled growing up in the Shop's shadow and its mill pond. He said, "They fished for Farmington River bullheads, pickerels and trout which were abundant. In winter, large 'ice cakes' were carved out of the pond and placed in the ice house under sawdust for later sale to residents." As a child, Francis remembered seeing left-over raw materials for caned-seat chairs.

Francis attended at the one-room schoolhouse in New Boston before graduating from the Lenox School, a preparatory school for boys. In the early 1950s he worked part-time at the Lost Wilderness dude ranch on the Tolland/Sandisfield line and was included in a story about the ranch in the Sandisfield Times (November, 2019). He also later worked for the proprietors of the New Boston Inn.

A U.S. Army veteran, he was employed by Hebert Construction of Torrington for 29 years, then was a foreman with Walgren Tree Company.

For about ten years Francis operated a farm stand in the parking lot at Tuckers Restaurant in Sandisfield and later at the old Halls store in East Otis. Both stands became summertime fixtures where Francis greeted friends, met new people, and told colorful stories of the old days. As a guest speaker he enthralled a large gathering at the Sandisfield Historical Society (see Sandisfield Times, March 2015).

Francis was lifelong friends with Bill Riiska of South Sandisfield, as well as his deceased friends Willard Platt, Nick Hryckvich, and Walter Lincovich.

Francis Deming will be remembered as a down-to-earth, unselfish man who was always available to help others.

Celebration of Life will be held at a later date, announcement to follow.



Comings and Goings



BARBARA PENN

A long-time seasonal resident on Hammertown Road, Barbara Penn died on February 14, 2023, in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. A member of the board of directors of the Sandisfield Arts Center, Barbara was an ardent supporter of art in all its forms and a good friend to many Town residents. An obituary will appear in next month's Times.



★ DINE IN OR TAKEOUT

New Winter Menu!

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Town of Sandisfield FY24 Budget Calendar

Budget process began in December 2022 and continued through January, February, and March 2023, involving all Town boards, Select Board, and Finance Committee. The process will continue with meetings and discussions between now and the Annual Town Meeting, May 13.

Date	Activity	Who
March 28-April 2	Review Public Hearing input	Town Manager, Select Board, Finance Committee
April 3	Warrant closed	Select Board
April 2-24	Prepare Annual Town Meeting warrant recommendations	Select Board, Finance Committee, Town Manager
May 1	Finalize, vote, and sign Annual Town Meeting Warrant	Select Board, Finance Committee, Town Manager
May 2	Warrant posted and mailed	Town Clerk
May 13	Town Meeting	

Municipal Calendar 2023

APRIL

- April 4: Caucus – Old Town Hall 7 P.M.
- April 7: Last day to file caucus certificates
- April 10: Last day to file nomination papers with the clerk
- April 12: Last day to object or withdraw from nomination, 5 P.M.

MAY

- May 5: Last day to register to vote
- May 6: Last day to post the Warrant
- May 8: Last day to apply for mail-in ballot (absentee or early)
- May 11: Last day and hour to apply for in-person ballot 5 P.M.
- May 13: Annual Town Meeting (Location TBD) 10 A.M.
- May 15: Annual Town Election Old Town Hall 7 A.M.- 8 P.M.



Letters to the Editor

To the Editor:

Thank you for your splendid community paper. I read it all, every Time!

Bonner McAllester, Monterey



**SANDISFIELD'S
MEMORIAL DAY PARADE
SUNDAY, MAY 28
OLD TOWN HALL TO NEW BOSTON**

Council on Aging



COA Report

By Nina Carr

The COA had a wonderful turnout for our “delayed by the storm” Corned Beef and Cabbage Luncheon. A huge thank you to our chef Shirley Spring and to her helpers Linda Riiska and Ann Wald! The entire meal was delicious!

Our Public Health Nurse, Jill Sweet, was unable to make her scheduled visit because of the storm, but she will be coming again on April 19 at 10, for our Blood Pressure/Wellness visit.

April 19 is also the date for our next luncheon. Noon, basement of Town Hall. Come and join us. You don't have to be a COA member, though we'd love to have you.

Chair yoga classes continue to be well attended, why not stop by and give it a try. The class is very informal, and lots of fun. They take place at the “Old Town Hall” at 2 p.m. on Wednesdays.

Coffee Hour in the COA room, downstairs at Town Hall, features tasty treats as well as good conversation. Why not join us? We are there every Wednesday at 10 a.m.

Snow is melting. We'll be seeing daffodils before you know it! 🌷

The **Otis Gazette's 3rd Annual Business Directory**
Is being mailed Every Door Direct Mail
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NOW HEAR THIS!

Edited by Laura Rogers-Castro. Please send notices for Now Hear This! to editor@sandisfieldtimes.org

APRIL EVENTS

Sandisfield Select Board Meetings are currently through Zoom and in-person at 6:30 p.m. on Mondays unless otherwise posted. 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. No pre-registration is necessary. Led by Nina Carr. This fun program includes free play, crafts, stories, and songs! A great time to meet up with friends and meet new friends! For confirmation, please call Nina Carr (258-3314). Free.

Coffee Hour on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. at the Council on Aging, Town Hall Annex. Snacks and conversation. For more information, contact Nina Carr (258-3314). Free.

Chair Yoga with Wendy Larsen 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.

New Boston Palm Sunday Church Service on Sunday, April 2 at 10:00 a.m. at the New Boston Congregational Church, Route 57. Weather permitting. All are welcome.

Town Caucus on Tuesday, April 4 at 7:00 p.m. at Old Town Hall on 3 Silverbrook Road.

New Boston Easter Sunday Church Service and Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, April 9 at 10:00 a.m. at the New Boston Congregational Church, Route 57. Easter egg hunt for the children. Weather permitting. All are welcome.

Sandisfield Planning Board Public Hearing on Tuesday, April 11 at 6:30 p.m. at the Old Town Hall on 3 Silverbrook Road. The hearing is to act on a proposed bylaw to establish a Short-Term Rental bylaw. The draft is available for viewing on the Town website (sandisfieldma.gov) and is on file and may be inspected by appointment at the office of the Town Clerk during regular business hours. The hearing is in-person with Zoom capabilities. Please contact the Planning Board to obtain the conference ID and password to attend online.

Monthly Wellness, Blood Pressure Clinic, and Coffee Hour on Wednesday, April 19 at 10:00 a.m. at the Council on Aging, Town Hall Annex. Snacks and conversation, too. For more information, contact Nina Carr (258-3314). Free.

Hop into Spring with the Sandisfield Recreation Committee and Berkshire Bunnies! on Saturday, April 22 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall on 3 Silverbrook Road. Everyone is invited to join the Sandisfield Recreation Committee for veggie and flower seed planting, flowerpot

painting, butterfly crafting, dirt pie, and the Berkshire Bunnies!! Lots of fun planned! Please RSVP by April 15 to sandisfieldevents@recreationcommittee.info or 413-269-7357.

ONLINE EVENTS

A Farm and Garden Show with Sandisfield Residents Bill Taylor and Jaye Alison Moscariello streamed every Monday, from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. at berkshireradio.org.

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, please call Nina Carr (258-3314). Free.

Transformational Breathwork with Sandisfield residents Antonia and Roger Vanoro on the last Friday of every month from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. at the Monterey Community Center. A combination of deep rhythmic breathing, vocalization, self-massage, and energetic movement. The suggested fee is \$30. For more information, visit ccmonterey.org.

Painting with Margaret on Saturdays from 1:00 to 2:15 p.m. at the Monterey Community Center at 468 Main Road. Visit ccmonterey.org for more information. No fee.

Berkshire Grown Winter Farmers Market on Saturday, April 15, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Housy Dome on 1064 Main Street in Housatonic. Featuring locally grown and produced foods, including fruits and vegetables, cheese, meats, breads, and more. Masks are not mandatory, but encouraged.

Forest Bathing on Sunday, April 16 at 10:00 a.m. at Peoples Forest in Barkhamsted, Connecticut. Experience a peaceful, relaxing reset of your body.

Leave the hustle and bustle of everyday life to take a peaceful ramble through the wood. There will be frequent stops to let you immerse yourself in the rhythms and world of the forest. Free. Please meet at Matthies Grove parking area just to the right of the entrance booth of East River Road, Barkhamsted.

Documentary Film "Symphony of Courage" on Thursday, April 20, from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Otis Town Hall sponsored by the Otis Historical Commission and Otis Preservation Trust as part of the Notice Otis Series. Symphony of Courage is a 30-minute documentary by Voice of America that tells the story of brave young Afghan musicians who have had to evacuate their country. Today, they are making music again in a new, welcoming homeland through the efforts of some special people, including Dr. Ahmad Sarmast. Local residents Lesley Rosenthal and Jessica Lustig will speak about their work with the Afghan project depicted in the film. To register for this in-person event, please visit www.otispreservationtrust.com or www.townofotisma.com. No charge but donations are welcome.

Earth Day '70s & '80s Dance Party on Saturday, April 22 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Becket Arts Center in Becket. Dress in your favorite digs from the 1970s or 1980s and DANCE. For more information, visit becketartscenter.org.

Spring Arts Market on Sunday, April 23, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at St. James Place on 352 Main Street in Great Barrington. Local and regional artists and vendors. Admission is free.

Barkhamsted Earth Day Nature Festival on Sunday, April 30 from 12:30 to 5:00 p.m. at Matthies Grove on East River Road in Peoples Forest in Barkhamsted, Conn. Enjoy talks, displays, and everything natural at this event. Free food, music, and live Birds of Prey Show. All are welcome.



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