

Annual Town Meeting

Saturday, May 13, 10 am

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume XIV, Number 2

May 2023

Town Charter Committee Is At Work

MAJOR CHANGE IN TOWN GOVERNMENT PROPOSED

By Bill Price

Does our small village stretched out across the hills of western Massachusetts need a state charter to get its business done? After all, we've struggled along for 260 years without one. Other towns do without, while others have adopted charters with pretty stringent rules and regulations.

Town Manager Jon Sylbert is pretty sure we could use one, and last winter organized a Charter Committee of five to look into the question and come up with answers.

Cont'd on p.8

Town Records: Online and Searchable

TWO CENTURIES AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

By Ron Bernard

Town Clerk Douglas Miner reports that Sandisfield town records from 1762 to 1972 have been digitized and are freely accessible online.

This important and powerful new resource is the product of a partnership between the Sandisfield Town Clerk's office and the Boston Public Library in conjunction with Massachusetts website, DigitalCommonwealth.org

More than a thousand public libraries have an arrangement with a non-profit organization called The Internet Archive, which since 1996 has been building a digital library of Internet sites of all types including municipal records.

Expect to hear much more about this amazing undertaking to create a central repository of "all knowledge" in digital form drawn from innumerable published sources.



Sandisfield's archives are the result of the hard work and perseverance of Flora Rhodes, who served as Town Clerk from 1972 to 1995. Flora transcribed more than 200 years of municipal records, much of it hand written, on a manual typewriter.

Photo: Sandisfield Then and Now

The organization claims that "Like a paper library, we provide free access to researchers, historians, scholars, people with print disabilities, and the general public. Our mission is to provide Universal Access to all knowledge."

Now all Sandisfield Town records between 1762 and 1972 – including Select Board meetings, Town meetings, election results, vital statistics (births, deaths, marriages) and more – are available to anyone willing to search.

Town Clerk Miner said, "One of the best aspects of this project is that it has cost the town nothing to digitize our extensive archives and to host and preserve them on Internet Archive's server."

Cont'd on p.6



Memorial Day Parade To March Again

DON'T MISS IT. SUNDAY, MAY 28, 10:00 A.M.

The Parade gathers at Silverbrook Road and Rt. 57, behind the Old Town Hall.

The Parade is sponsored again by the Sandisfield Fire & Police Departments and the Sandisfield Recreation Committee. All are welcome to join in as participants, marching, driving antique cars, riding on homemade floats. Please let Fire Chief Ralph Morrison know if you want to show up and march or drive. 413-258-3381.

If you have kids who'd like to join in the Bicycle Brigade, deliver them and their bikes at Old Town Hall about 9:00 a.m. or soon after for bike decorations donated by the Sandisfield Cultural Council.

The Parade starts at 10:00 a.m. at Old Town Hall, proceeds down Rt. 57 to the New Boston Cemetery where an Honor Guard and Service will take place at 10:15. The Parade continues down Rt. 57 to a stop at the Berkshire Rehabilitation & Skilled Care Center to honor the veterans living there.

The Parade continues south through New Boston, ending at the American Legion Pavilion near Fire Station #1. A Wreath-Laying Ceremony will take place, leading to a Town BBQ picnic at the Pavilion.

If you'd like to volunteer to help at the BBQ or donate goods, please contact Lynn Rubenstein of the Recreation Committee. 413-269-7357.

Come to the Parade. You'll see your neighbors along the parade route and wherever you feel like it, park your car, get out, and say hi to veterans, the marching band, Fire and EMT trucks and drivers from neighboring towns, and, especially, your Sandisfield Fire and EMT Departments. 🇺🇸



TOWN REPORTS

Copies of the 2022 Annual Town Report are available online at www.sandisfieldma.gov. Paper copies can be reviewed at the Library and Town Hall.

Prior to the Town Meeting May 13, copies of the Town Warrant will be distributed online on the Town website and in paper at Town offices.

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Big Detour for a Small Ditch

By Simon Winchester

Town Hill Road is going to have a busy June, thanks to a tiny culvert over a nameless seasonal rivulet far away downhill on Route 57.

The culvert has been in bad shape for years. It's failing wall has been marked with a traffic cone for as long as we can remember. Now that Sandisfield has been given enough state money to fix it, our road crew – after its commendable response to last winter's unusually capricious storm season – is going to dig it up and replace it.

In normal circumstances, an easy job requiring a bit of plowing on the side of the road to create a short detour to keep Sandisfield's traffic flowing.

But the nameless brook has produced wetlands on both sides of Route 57, making it impossible for Brad Curry's road crews to stray off the pavement. Plowing through the adjoining wetland to construct a truck-worthy and temporary roadway would cause untold damage, besides adding yet another fortune to the cost of the culvert replacement.


The regrettable option was to close Route 57 altogether, for the entire month of June.

Through traffic heading toward Route 8 – or coming from it – will thus have to divert up or down the steep and hitherto blissful quietude of Town Hill Road, then use Route 23 to get to and from Otis to join with Rt. 8. Lighter traffic (less than 5 tons) heading toward or from Rt. 8 will be encouraged to divert onto smaller Cold Spring Road.

The stoppage will begin June 1st and, though the work of lifting out the culvert and putting in a new and improved version will only take a couple of weeks, Mr. Curry has opted for a month-long closure out of caution. This is Sandisfield, after all. Who knows what will turn up when the old culvert is uncovered.

Yet another generally peaceful byway, the unpaved Silverbrook Road, is also being affected by the culvert replacement. Local residents will likely use it rather than the longer Town Hill Road detour, and during the closure of Rt. 57 Fire Chief Ralph Morrison decreed that Silverbrook should be readied for any emergency.

This has resulted in a slight widening of Silverbrook Road at strategic corners, in case vehicles need to pass one another. In some places small trees have been taken down, prompting a few residents to grumble that wealthy homeowners' views are being improved at taxpayer expense.

This is not so: all is being done for the general good, says Fire Chief Morrison. The roadwork along Silverbrook has nothing to do with cosmetics and everything to do with the little culvert downhill on Rt. 57. 




From the Sandisfield Town Website:

Dear Residents of Sandisfield,

We are excited to announce the Town of Sandisfield has received funding for the culvert bridge located on Route 57, and work will soon be underway!

Construction is scheduled to run from June 1, 2023 to June 30, 2023, at which time this section of Route 57 will be closed.

A detour will be set up from Route 8 to Route 23 to Town Hill Rd for commercial through traffic, and Route 8 to Cold Spring to Route 23 to Town Hill Rd for cars and light trucks, 5 tons and under. Please plan accordingly. A map of detour routes is available on the town website.

We understand that this may cause inconvenience to community, but we assure you that it is necessary for the safety of all residents. We will work diligently to complete the work as soon as possible to minimize any disruptions to the community. We appreciate your patience and cooperation. Thank you! 

New School Chief Selected

TIM LEE TO BEGIN JULY OR SOONER

By Bill Price

Following the resignation of its superintendent last fall, the Farmington River Regional School District conducted a search for a replacement. In April Timothy Lee, the former superintendent of Lenox Public School, accepted the offer of a three-year contract.

The FRRSD consists of one school – the Farmington River Elementary School – that serves children from Sandisfield and Otis, along with pupils from other districts who have opted in through school choice. The school, located in Otis, consists of 124 students from pre-K through 6th grade. Its current budget is \$4.7 million, approximately \$38,000 per pupil.

Interim superintendent Robert Putnam will remain in place until Lee begins his duties in July or before. Lee is currently acting principal at Lenox Memorial Middle and High School.

In a restructuring following the resignation, the superintendent position was separated from the school principal role. Laura Flower has served as FRES principal since January.

Putnam, who did not apply for the permanent position, has enjoyed a renewed enthusiasm among pupils, teachers, and parents at the school. His ability to work with people, his daily presence which often included greeting students as they stepped off their school bus or came in the door in the morning, and publishing an informative and thorough newsletter every week contributed to his success.

In a comment to The Berkshire Eagle, Putnam said that one of his main contributions to the district was “a belief in the school's ability to overcome obstacles, a positive attitude, and a willingness to do whatever needs to be done to ensure the school runs smoothly.”

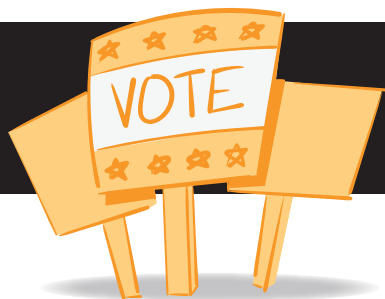
Are you looking for town* information?
Go directly to our website at
www.sandisfieldma.gov

What can you find on the website?

- **Departments and Contact Info**
- **All upcoming Town events**
- **Meetings and agendas from all committees**
- **Minutes from all committee meetings**
- **On-line bill pay for convenience**
- **Subscribe to receive updates from any/all departments**

SANDISFIELD
MASSACHUSETTS

*Connect Sandisfield is not a town operated page. For the most accurate and updated town information please visit our website directly and subscribe for updates.



The 2023 Town

← SELECT BOARD →

The Offices and Candidates

By Bill Price

Only one seat is contested this year, the 5-year term on the Planning Board where Paul Adams, the incumbent, has been challenged by Jeff Bye. For the seven other seats the single candidate who has signed up will be elected without contest. Three seats, the Board of Health and two Constable positions are without candidates.

Candidates Steve Seddon, Paul Adams, and Jeff Bye took out nomination papers, the usual route of election. The other spots were filled at the Town Caucus on April 4. The Caucus this year was attended by 27 registered voters, possibly a record number.

One of the candidates nominated at the Caucus was Robert Fedell of Town Hill Road. Fedell was nominated for the 1-year term on the Select Board, to fill the seat being vacated by Alex Bowman, who resigned two years into his 3-year term. Fedell's seat will be up for election again next spring.

Steve Seddon supplied The Times with comments as to why he was running for a second term after three years on the Select Board and one as Chairman. The Times was unable to reach Robert Fedell, the other Select Board candidate, so there is no comment from him in this issue.

The election is May 15, two days after the Annual Town Meeting. The election will be at Old Town Hall, 3 Silverbrook Road, from 7:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.

OFFICE	CANDIDATE
Moderator (1 year) . .	Dominic Konstam, for re-election
Town Clerk (3 years) . . .	Douglas Miner, for re-election
Select Board (3 years)	Steve Seddon, for re-election
Select Board (1 year)	Robert Fedell
Board of Assessors (3 years)	Roger Brown
Planning Board (5 years) . .	Paul Adams, for re-election
.	Jeff Bye
Board of Health (3 years).	No candidate
School Committee (3 years)	Melissa Bye
Library Trustee (5 years) .	Clare English, for re-election
Constable (3 years)	No candidate
Constable (3 years)	No candidate



STEVE SEDDON, SR.

I am running for a second term for the Sandisfield Select Board. I have lived in town since 2004 with my wife Laurie and our four children.

I was elected to the Select Board in September 2021 at a special election which was the result of a resignation. Since then, I have enjoyed working with the other members and our Town Manager in shaping policy and direction for the town.

Policy has been a focus point of mine. Making sure issues are handled with consistency, equality, and transparency. The latest DPW union contract was one of the first issues the Select Board worked on after I was elected. We developed a new pay matrix that pays DPW employees based on licenses attained rather than just time employed.

This board has adopted financial policies from the state that determine the annual procedures and obligations of the members of our financial team. This road map will help with future employees as well as current ones.

We adopted building code and bylaw violation policies to handle complaints in both areas evenly. At a Special Town Meeting the Select Board brought forward a bylaw proposal that ties the citations for violating the bylaws or the building codes to the properties as liens to give them more teeth. This article was voted on by the residents and approved.

As a board we were very rushed last year to complete the annual budget due to complications that were out of our control. However, with many meetings and the help of our Town Manager we put together a responsible budget and an article proposal to apply accumulated free cash towards the levy, essentially returning it to the taxpayers. Those actions resulted in our tax rate dropping from 12.90 per thousand to 10.59 per thousand. Unfortunately, homes were selling during the Covid pandemic for elevated sales prices which drove up the assessments of many of our properties, keeping us from realizing the full benefit of the action.

I intend to keep working to create responsible budgets and shape the direction of this town with the help of the entire team. None of these accomplishments can be done alone, and I am thankful to everyone who pitched in.

I encourage everyone to subscribe to E-Alerts on the town web site www.sandisfieldma.gov. Click on subscribe to E-Alerts and select the boards, committees, and departments you would like to follow as well as General Alerts. You will be provided with meeting agendas and minutes as well as updates for road closures, construction, weather alerts, etc., all delivered to your email.

Election

PLANNING BOARD



Paul Adams with his son Andrew.

PAUL ADAMS


I would like your support to continue serving on the Sandisfield Planning Board.

Why I am running. I've always respected my Dad's choice to be involved in his community as a selectman. Watching him I learned the value of giving back to your town. This is why in 2022 I volunteered and was appointed by the selectmen to serve on the Planning Board for one year. I recognize the challenge of creating rules to both keep our town's character and build a strong future. I think we have accomplished much in the last year and would like to continue serving our town.

About me. I grew up not far from here in Charlton, a small town in Saratoga County, New York. While not quite as sparse as Sandisfield, Charlton shared many of the same great qualities: Open woods, rural character, and a North East climate with four great seasons – the 5th season we have here called “mud” was not one I was acquainted with as a child. Growing up I developed a love of the outdoors and now find many places here to satisfy my hiking, biking, and skiing activities.

In 2005 while living in St. Paul, Minnesota, I met and eventually married a Sandisfield native Alexcia Fales. She had the requirement that we eventually move back East to be near family. So, in 2013 we decided to build a house on land off North Beech Plain Rd that her grandparents Alex and Vi Hyrckvich bought in 1950.

I'm proud to be raising our son Andrew as a 5th generation Beech Plain Road resident. I am blessed to work from home in the software field and get a lot of enjoyment from this corner of the world. I fell in love with the land, small town and neighbors-helping-neighbors quality of life here and am proud to call Sandisfield home.

I welcome your thoughts and would appreciate your support to continue on the Planning Board. You can reach me at 7 North Beech Plain Road, pda@acm.org, 269-0230. 




JEFF BYE

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Jeff Bye. My wife Melissa and I became permanent residents of Sandisfield in 2015. We moved here from Houston after I retired from a fascinating and rewarding 35-year career with NASA at the Johnson Space Center as an electrical engineer, during which I served in numerous highly technical and leadership roles. While living and working in Houston, we grew our love for the Berkshires over the many years we visited Melissa's grandmother and mother at the family farm in New Marlborough. When we retired, we knew that our forever home would be in the Berkshires.

Soon after moving to Sandisfield I was appointed to the town's Broadband Committee once the Select Board became aware of my skill sets and extensive experience with telecommunications systems. I served as the chairman of the Broadband Committee from 2016 until June of last year. Once Charter Communications completed construction of their state-of-the-art fiber to the home network for providing high speed Internet service, the Broadband Committee was disbanded as its important job was completed.

Recently, I served on the town's Green Committee after being asked to help solicit and select a contractor for the design and construction of solar power systems that have been installed at Town Hall and the DPW garage. I am currently a member of the town's Cannabis Committee.

Why am I running for a seat on the Planning Board? I want to continue serving our town and help plan for Sandisfield's future. At NASA, I lived by the rule that you if you fail to plan, plan to fail. I believe my decades of strategic planning, problem solving, and leadership experience at NASA will make me a valuable member of the Planning Board as the board develops new and revises existing bylaws as necessary. I am also a patient listener and effective communicator who understands the importance of hearing from my fellow residents their priorities, ideas, and vision of how to make Sandisfield a place we are all happy to call home.

I would consider it a privilege to serve on this important board and would appreciate your vote. 



Town Records: Online and Searchable Cont'd from p.1

In the past, access to town archives required in-person visits to Town Hall. Finding obscure information, for example about old warrants or elections, was not easy and generally something that only intrepid, dogged researchers would undertake.


Town clerks are regularly contacted by people, many from out of town, seeking information about family births, marriages or deaths. This information was on file but was a time-consuming distraction for the staff.

The new online platform contains several thousand searchable pages in 14 volumes generally organized by date, several decades per volume. Vols. 11-14 are devoted to vital statistics. The amount of information is massive so "key word" search commands need to be clear and as targeted as possible. Otherwise the program may willy-nilly generate hundreds of irrelevant references. At this point there is no archive-search tutorial so trial-and-error is required. (See sample view of web page, right.)

But, once you get the hang of it, searching the archives is an adventure and fun and potentially very satisfying.

Doug Miner told the Times, "I'm proud we were able to make the Sandisfield archives accessible to everyone. This is a testament to the hard work of my predecessors, Mary Kronholm, Dolores Harasyko, and especially Flora Rhodes. Flora

transcribed all this information. We hope that Sandisfield's example will inspire other towns to prepare and digitize their historical records to make them accessible to the public."

The archives are accessible by going to Sandisfield town website, <https://www.sandisfieldma.gov>, then to the Town Clerk's page and hit the "Boston Public Library" button. Alternatively, the records can be accessed directly from Internet Archive at <https://archive.org/details/townofsandisfield>. Note: The volumes cover pages will be redesigned and enhanced with additional information to ease searching. 

SANDISFIELD CEMETERY COMMITTEE

Is looking for a **Groundskeeper**
Part-Time Position available June 1st

Must be:

Licensed/Insured
Reliable, Hardworking
Have references.

Duties:

Clean up brush • trim branches
haul away debris • painting • planting
any other C.C. requests

Must have own equipment

For more info contact:
Brenda 860-605-6939
Lynn 413-269-7357



Flora Rhodes, Sandisfield Historian and Town Clerk

Flora Rhodes served as Town Clerk for 24 years, from 1972 to 1995. Her devotion to assembling and preserving in typewritten form 210 years of Sandisfield history was a tour-de-force, a legacy that few other towns can claim, if any.

Flora transcribed not only decades of hand-written Town records but she accumulated and compiled scrapbooks and family histories and much more. She typed every bit of it on a manual typewriter (not a computer), thousands of pages, flawlessly with virtually no strike-outs or corrections. (It is believed that no other municipality in the Commonwealth has comparable archives of this scale and quality, ready for digitalization.)

A long-time town correspondent to local newspapers, Flora knew more about the history and culture of Sandisfield than anyone before or since. She would be thrilled to know that her commitment and almost super-human achievement was not in vain. What she did is now preserved and accessible for us and future generations to discover all about this remarkable town that Flora loved so dearly.

A tribute to Flora was published in The Sandisfield Times, December 2010. 

“The House is On Fire”

ALL SAFE, EXCEPT FOR WATER DAMAGE

By Bill Price

Among the five most frightening words anyone can hear must be “the house is on fire.”

That’s exactly what Nicholas Smigel thought when, in his dining room mid-morning Monday, April 10, he saw smoke blowing down from his roof.

According to his report to Heather Bellow of The Berkshire Eagle, Smigel ran outside to see what was up, saw flames on his roof around his solar panel, and ran back inside to bring out his daughter who, 4 years old, was alone in her room upstairs.

His wife, Megan, was at their Farmington River General Store on the other side of a wide parking lot and their other two children were at school. With everyone safe, it was time to call 911.

Sandisfield’s Fire Department, which has a station about 400 yards from the Smigel’s home and business on Rt. 8 in New Boston and whose chief, Ralph Morrison, is the proprietor of A&M Auto less than a mile away, were on the job within minutes. The fire was knocked down, said Morrison, in 10 to 15 minutes, but stubbornly kept reigniting even though power to the solar panels had been turned off.

“It went out and then started back up, and started back up, and started back up,” Morrison told the Eagle reporter. This, called “stranded energy,” is apparently unique to solar panels in that energy can stay within a fire damaged unit and cause it to reignite.

A state electrical engineer is investigating the fire’s cause, which seems to have been from a solar panel malfunction. Apparently solar installation fires, while rare, can occur. The lesson seems to be that roof solar panels should be inspected at regular periods by the manufacturer.

The fire caused significant damage to part of the roof and the attic, though minimal damage inside the house. The house did sustain water damage, however, and the Smigels have taken up residence in a nearby location until their home can be rehabilitated.

LIQUOR LICENSE PENDING


Knowing their neighbors depend on the store, the Smigels reopened their Farmington River



Fire Chief Ralph Morrison credits the amazing turnout of supporting fire departments from neighboring towns. “It was our mutual aid crews in action,” said Ralph. “Units from Monterey, Otis, Colebrook, and Riverton showed up to help us. We respond to their house fires, and they respond to ours. It works.”

Photo: The Berkshire Eagle

General Store as soon as the fire was truly extinguished.

Unrelated to the fire, patrons might be pleased to know that the store expects to be able to sell liquor soon. The Town Select Board approved a license for the establishment at their April 3 meeting, with the last hurdle being state approval. The Town attorney expected at the time that that approval would come through quickly, but the store has heard nothing about their application since the initial April 3 approval. 



The Smigel’s roof on fire.

Photo: Megan Smigel



The Historic 1737 New Boston Inn

Restaurant, Tavern and B&B

Six Guest Rooms, All Private Baths
Restaurant open THURS 12-8, FRI & SAT 12-9, SUN 12-8
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MEMORIAL WEEKEND MAY 25 - 29

\$189 a night two-night stay minimum Full breakfast 1 morning.
SUNDAY PARADE 10am.

Pets Welcome!

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

CINCO DE MAYO
MAY 5th
 Regular AND
 MEXICAN FOOD Menus!

MOTHER’S DAY SPECIALS

Town Charter Committee Is At Work

Cont'd from p.1


A committee of neighbors began meeting in January and is expected to work through mid-summer. Barbara Cormier is Chair. Members are Alex Bowman, Doug Miner (Town Clerk), Joanne Olson, and Brigitte Ruthman. Town Manager Sylbert plays an advisory role. The Collins Center, part of the Massachusetts Municipal Association, Boston, attends committee meetings via Zoom to provide counsel and advice.

One of the points against putting the Town under a charter's regulations is that it becomes harder for the Town to shift gears. Change requires a charter revision which is significantly trickier than rewriting a bylaw.

The rationale for the need for a charter, however, is persuasive. It was spelled out last January in the following request for committee members:

"As with many Massachusetts towns with populations under 5,000, the Town does not have a charter. Instead, Sandisfield operates under what is often referred to as a "legal base," which includes local bylaws, state laws accepted, and special acts of the legislature requested by the Town. Although the lack of a charter is common among Massachusetts towns with populations under 5,000, there has been a trend over the last few decades for these towns to write and adopt charters. The reasons for this are clear: the world in which towns operate has become significantly more complex over the last half century, and the pace of change continues to accelerate. Even just since 2000, the environment that towns operate in has changed substantially, with new state and federal laws, new demographic and environmental challenges, changing financial circumstances, rapidly-changing technology, and a growing divide between residents' expectations and towns' ability to deliver.

"Some towns have responded to this by making the occasional changes to the structure via bylaw changes or narrow special acts. While these can certainly help solve some challenges, they are unlikely to solve all of the issues, and they can also introduce new challenges. As many towns have found, a stronger solution is to take a comprehensive and systemic look at how the Town government is operating, understand what is working, and identify any changes that would help provide the community with a government that will be more effective, efficient, responsive, and transparent. Moreover, whether the resulting changes from a charter process are major or only small updates, codifying those changes in a single, clear document can help the Town government better serve the public and help the public better understand the Town government.

"At the same time, partially because undertaking the writing of a charter can have such a significant impact on the town for years or even decades to come, it is also an extraordinarily challenging endeavor – statutorily, logistically, and politically. For that reason, most towns embarking on the charter-writing or reform process seek outside expertise." 

Methods to Change Local Government

BYLAWS AND "PERMISSIVE" LEGISLATION

- Can be used to change certain elected positions or boards to appointed; allow selectmen to act as certain offices or create position of town administrator
- Changes require town meeting or town election vote

HOME RULE CHARTER

- Elected charter commission prepares new charter
- Charter defines structure of local government
- New charter generally proposes significant changes to structure, such as creation of town manager or administrator position, changing boards or commissions, or consolidating or creating departments
- Requires approval at annual town election

SPECIAL MUNICIPAL LEGISLATION

- Town submits proposed structural change to Legislature
- Requires legislative approval
- Can be used to create town manager or administrator position

*Adapted from Municipal Advocate,
Massachusetts Municipal Association*



sandisfield
ARTS CENTER

★ 5 HAMMERTOWN ROAD, SANDISFIELD, MA ★

SAT., MAY 7 - JUNE 4 FREE
BERKSHIRE ARTIST GUILD GROUP SHOW
OPENING RECEPTION SUN., MAY 7TH, 4 - 6 PM.

*Welcome Back for our
2023 Season!*

SAT., MAY 13, 7PM \$40

EVENING OF SONG

Prosecco and dessert cabaret. Eclectic song selections from the great American songbook and jazz to Broadway with **Linda Mironti** and **Brian De Lorenzo**. Special guests: **Anni Crofut**, **Kathy Lawrence** and **Ben Luxon**.

**FOR DETAILS
VISIT SANDISFIELDARTSCENTER.ORG**

recreation COMMITTEE



Join Us.
Have Some
Fun, Too.

AND COME TO
THE PARADE

By Laurie Seddon

Do you like to meet new people, shop, and have fun? Do you have the time for one meeting per month and an average of one event per month?

The Sandisfield Recreation Committee has two open full-time seats available.

We are looking for people who love their community and want to help build long-lasting connections within Sandisfield and beyond. If you are interested and think you could be a good fit, contact Chairperson Lynn Rubenstein at 413-269-7357.

Did you know we also welcome volunteers? If you'd like to get involved but don't want to commit to a full-time seat, you can simply listen in to our meetings via Zoom or join us in person. If we have an event coming up that sounds like you'd like to help out, speak up! We'd be glad for extra helping hands. The more the merrier!

The Annual Sandisfield Memorial Day Parade, Sunday, May 28

Sponsored by the Sandisfield Fire & Police Department and The Sandisfield Recreation Committee. If you would like to decorate a float or participate in the parade, contact Ralph Morrison at 413-258-3381.

Calling All Kids and Bikes. Bicycle Brigade decorating begins at 9:00 a.m. at Old Town Hall, sponsored by the Sandisfield Cultural Council.

The Parade starts at 10:00 a.m. at Old Town Hall, Rt. 57 at Silverbrook Road. It proceeds down Rt. 57 to the New Boston Cemetery, Rt. 57, where an Honor Guard and Service will take place at 10:15 a.m.

The Parade continues down Rt. 57 to a stop at the Berkshire Rehabilitation & Skilled Care Center.

The Parade ends at the American Legion Pavilion on Rt. 57 for a Wreath-Laying Ceremony.

A BBQ picnic winds up the day at the Pavilion. Anyone who would like to volunteer time or donate goods, please contact Lynn Rubenstein at 413-269-7357. 🍷

Sandisfield Memorial Day Parade and BBQ

Sunday, May 28th

Sponsored by the Sandisfield Fire & Police Departments
and the Recreation Committee

- 9AM Bike Decorating* at Old Town Hall
- 10AM *Sharp* Parade begins at Old Town Hall, Parade participants must arrive at 9AM
- 10:15AM Honor Guard & Service at New Boston Cemetery

The parade will make a stop at
Berkshire Rehabilitation & Skilled Care Center
and end at the American Legion
with the wreath ceremony. BBQ to follow.

If you would like to decorate a float or drive in the parade, contact
Ralph at (413) 258-3381. Anyone wishing to volunteer or
donate goods, contact Lynn at (413) 269-7357

*Sponsored by the Cultural Council



Sunny Rose Farm

Now accepting new students!

Group or private riding lessons available at your home or on our Sandisfield farm

Boarding and Leasing Horses Available

Specializing in Eventing, Dressage, and Hunter-Jumper lessons

Lessons available for all ages

Rose Nelson, Instructor and Owner

•
Massachusetts certified,
Pony club eventing participant and USEA eventer

Email: sunnyrosefarm@yahoo.com
Phone: (413) 446-4944

historia (Greek) - "inquiry, knowledge acquired by investigation" The discovery, collection, organization, and presentation of information about past events.

Ye Olde Trodden Paths

SANDISFIELD'S ROADS THROUGH THE WOODS

By Ron Bernard

Why are Sandisfield's roads so apparently random, so incoherent?

In fact, a certain logic to their construction exists which may not be apparent to casual motorists making their ways up and down over our surviving country lanes.

Transport yourself back to the year 1651. Imagine you are standing on the road where your residence will be many years later. Around you are no houses or structures of any kind; no evidence of Europeans, just a humble path, a vector through deep woods created by animals and those who hunt them.

The path connects to others which run in every direction, dictated by the landscape, often leading to rivers and bodies of water. It is a network, actually, a natural one. But it is from another time.

For eons ancient game paths were used as foot paths by native Americans, in our case the Mohicans from the Hudson River Valley who encamped in summers all over Sandisfield. Over time the paths evolved into discernible, fixed trails.

Beginning in the late-17th century, a few of the trails had become bridle paths and then were widened for general travel including westward migration.

One example of shifting road purposes is our historic Knox Trail. Originally a footpath, it became a "war road" which, with connections, spanned 300 miles from Boston to upstate New York, a Dutch colony.

Another is US Route 1 (today mostly I-95) which stretches down the U.S. eastern seaboard. Its antecedent was a patchwork of Algonquian nation trails/roads extending from Canada to the Carolinas.

In the 18th-century, homesteaders developed trails into farm roads to be connected to local mills and settlements. By the early-1800s some of these trails were straightened and widened into stage roads called highways and turnpikes. Many of them, with another century of improvements, continue essentially over their original beds.

SANDISFIELD DEVELOPMENT

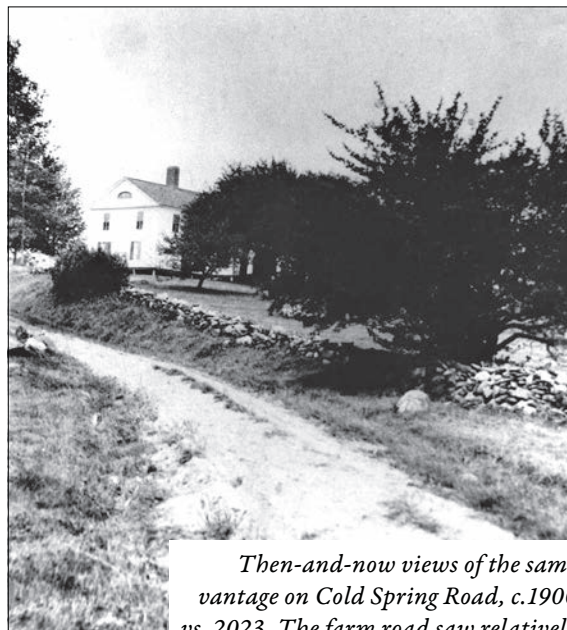
In Sandisfield, it would be another hundred years, until March 1751, when Thomas Brown (1726-1811) and his wife and infant child from Enfield, Conn., probably following a native trail along the Farmington River, arrived in Housatonic Plantation No. 3. The Browns built a shelter at the foot of Tolland Road beside the Farmington River, believed to be approximately where the old New Boston Store formerly stood.

M. Robins in the *Bulletin of the Massachusetts Archaeological Society* (1984) had this observation about early settlement.

Both the Indians and the English selected sites for villages with the same characteristics in mind: good drinking water, cleared land for planting, etc. Consequently, many English settlements occupied the sites of former Indian towns, and thus the original trails were continued in use.

The scenario is somewhat different for Sandisfield which was totally wild and undeveloped. In 1752, patriarch Daniel and Mehitable Brown and their other adult children joined Thomas in the spot they named New Boston. "Proprietors" had obtained the (hunting grounds) land from the Stockbridge Indians in 1738. The pioneering Browns agreed to establish a community later named Sandisfield.

Their son Jacob Brown (1728-c.1775), a trained surveyor, drew "Plan of Township No. 3" in 1764. He laid out parcels of common property and home/farm lots in patterns primarily along the existing "roads" such as they were, no doubt with priority given to mill locations. (Brown's map and a table of Sandisfield road names and derivations are available in *Sandisfield Then and Now*, pp. 13 and 32).



Then-and-now views of the same vantage on Cold Spring Road, c.1900 vs. 2023. The farm road saw relatively light usage over about 150 years after settlement. Its appearance here would have been similar to other secondary roads in town at that time.



EXAMPLES OF ROAD DEVELOPMENT IN SANDISFIELD

The first Beech Plain section settlers were the Adams of Preston, Conn., who arrived in about 1760. They set up a mill at Spectacle Pond and eventually owned much of the land on either side of an existing, ancient Indian pathway today called Cold Spring Road. It connected the east-west (Knox) trail (now mostly State Route 23) with Spectacle Pond eastward to the north-south trail at the Farmington River in Otis (Route 8).

This road, five miles long and with many previous names, was never considered an important thoroughfare like Sandisfield Road, Town Hill Road, or New Hartford Road. But it was the lifeline of Beech Plain farmers. Its history could be the story of virtually every other connecting farm road in Sandisfield, all of which probably emanated from the native trails network. Examples of very old, relatively lengthy secondary farm roads are Silverbrook (formerly Old Stage Coach Road), Beech Plain, Hammertown, and Bosworth, which have never been or only partially paved.

PAVING

Hard topping of the major arteries or portions of them such as Main Street through New Boston and all of Sandisfield Road probably commenced after World War I. Several important roadways that connected major sections of



A horse and buggy traversing the hilly roads of Sandisfield.



Stage driver John Hall and a passenger stopped by a roadside watering trough. Prior to automobiles there were many watering sites all over town but few survived continual road alteration and culvert installations. The site of one trough, located at a perpetual spring on the north side of River Road in West New Boston, is marked now by a wooden well cover.

c.1906 DeMars images courtesy of Great Barrington Historical Society

town including New Hartford, Town Hill, and Cold Spring were paved years later. In 1952, only 23 of about 90 road miles were hard surface. Not much has changed. Today 45 miles out of about 96 are paved, according to the Town DPW.

So, the next time you are bumping along at 25 mph on one of our historic 250-year old "dirt roads," enjoy the moment and be thankful that you are not going home on a winter day in a farm wagon being pulled by a horse named Slowpoke. 🐾

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Sandisfield Resident Honored

SUSIE CROFUT RECEIVES BOARD LEADERSHIP AWARD

By Linda Storms



It was both a delight and a surprise for Sandisfield's Susie Crofut when she recently opened *The Berkshire Eagle* and discovered that she had won the 2023 Board Leadership Award of the Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires for her long-term service on the Sandisfield Arts Center board.

The Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires (NPC), similar to a Chamber of Commerce, offers information and resources to more than 1,000 nonprofit organizations in Berkshire County. Susie will receive the award at NPC's annual Berkshire Nonprofit Awards dinner on May 23 in Pittsfield.

As a new Sandisfield Arts Center Board member, I welcomed the chance to sit down with Susie and discuss her thoughts regarding her award, the Arts Center (formally SARc, the Sandisfield Arts and Restoration Committee), and her life in Sandisfield.

Susie has always been a country person. She grew up, the youngest of three, appreciating the beauty and fragility of nature in Litchfield, Connecticut. Her mother, a land conservation activist, and her father were committed to the well-being of their town. Susie has shown the same commitment to Sandisfield since moving here in 1977. She immediately felt at home in our sprawling town.


Some years later, Susie and her late husband, folk singer and banjo player Bill Crofut, joined the efforts of the trustees of the B'Nai Abraham synagogue and other volunteers to raise funds for the repurposing of the synagogue, originally a Baptist church, as a community arts center. Susie credits Liana Toscanini for her early leadership in getting the Arts Center fully established. Early fundraising events such as collaborations between her husband Bill and singer Ben Luxon, along with grants and donations and the work of numerous volunteers, led to the founding of the Sandisfield Arts Center in 1995. The mission of the Arts Center is to "preserve our historic building and provide cultural and educational opportunities for our community."

In her capacity as past president and current board member, Susie brings a comprehensive perspective of culture and the arts to our community. Music has been her passion since childhood, and she enjoyed singing with The Munich Bach Choir as well as performing professionally with Bill in India. Her travels to Africa and Southeast Asia, sometimes while pregnant and with a toddler in tow, reinforced her commitment to the value of music to connect local people across cultures.

Susie has always shown an aptitude for art. Working with Bill she illustrated album covers and a book, *The Moon On One Hand*, which won the American Library Association Award. She studied at the Vermont Studio Center after her three daughters were grown, and is an accomplished and recognized artist who feels most at home with watercolors, painting everyday things that we see in nature. Susie created many of the sets for plays performed at the Arts Center.

She credits her studies as a history major at Wellesley College with bringing art and music together for her and is passionate about bringing those things to our community.

She continues to be inspired by her husband, Ben Luxon, by the creativity and compassion of their children, and by the meaningful friendships she has developed through the Arts Center.

Susie is honored to receive the NPC award for Board Leadership, and continues to strive to find new ways to make the arts more appealing and available for our town. She is particularly proud of the Arts Center's upcoming June 11 children's art show and the July 16 afternoon of Romantic music by pianist Joshua Luxon-Robinson, Ben's grandson, both of which will be offered free to the community. 

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The Sandisfield Arts Center

Arts Season is Here

BERKSHIRE ARTISTS' GUILD SHOW AND THE RETURN OF EVENING OF SONG

by Hilde Weisert

Our doors open May 7 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. with a free reception for the opening of "Spring Forward," a group show of members of the Guild of Berkshire Artists. With the work of eleven artists in many different media, the show will offer a great introduction to what's new and interesting in the Berkshire art world. The show runs through June 4.

The artists featured in Spring Forward are Leslie Alfin, Karen Carmean, Gail Gelburd, Serena Weld Granbery, Carolyn Kelley, Thaddeus Kubis, Patti Lippman, Doane Perry, Amy Pressman, Bruce Shickmanter, and Natasha Wein.



On May 13, Mother's Day eve, the Evening of Song cabaret returns with eclectic song selections from the Great American Songbook and jazz to Broadway, accompanied by Prosecco and dessert. Linda Mironti and Brian De Lorenzo are featured performers with special guests Anni Crofut, Kathy Lawrence, and Ben Luxon. Evening of Song is supported in part by a grant from the Sandisfield Cultural Council, which in turn is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency. Tickets are limited – reserve early on our website at www.sandisfieldartscenter.org.

At its April meeting, the Board elected two new Board members, Jaye Moscardiello and Linda Storms, who have both volunteered at the Arts

Center and in other community events since moving to Sandisfield.

In very sad news, long-time Board member Barbara Penn died in February. Most recently, Barbara was Board vice-president and chair of the Program Committee, leading the committee through the planning for our 2023 season. Barbara also started the Board Development committee some years ago to create a Board Handbook and ensure the smooth functioning of the Board, our committees, and our wonderful corps of volunteers. Barbara first came to Sandisfield in 1982 as a writing retreat, when she lived in New York, and she taught many Tai Chi classes for the Council on Aging here and at Berkshire South. For a write-up of Barbara's extraordinary life, please see the Arts Center website at www.sandisfieldartscenter.org.



Picture above is *Spring Celebration 40" x 30"* (colorful abstract) by Natasha Wein, one of the artists featured in this month's Arts Center gallery show "Spring Forward."



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LOCAL ARTIST TO SHOW AT WEST STOCKBRIDGE GALLERY

An exhibition of seascape triptychs and landscapes, painted in the Berkshires and California by **Jaye Alison Mascariello** of New Hartford Road, will be on view at the Art on Main Gallery, 38 Main Street, in West Stockbridge from May 4-7, from 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

A second exhibition, "Elemental," a show of abstract work also by Mascariello, will open at the same gallery with a reception May 27, noon-4:00 p.m. The gallery will continue to show "Elemental" May 25-28 and June 1-3, 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. and again on Sunday, June 4, TBD.




A One-Day Workshop for Kids, 7-14 FLYING CLOUD FARM IN NEW MARLBOROUGH

Flying Cloud Farm will hold the first of four STEAM workshops for children ages 7-14 on Saturday, May 20, from 9:30 a.m. until noon at the farm at 731 Sandisfield Road in New Marlborough.

Ceramicist and science educator Jane Burke will lead activities that connect Science, Engineering, and Math to making Art.

The workshop will be free thanks to the generous support of the Monterey, New Marlborough, and Sandisfield Cultural Councils.

Pre-registration is required. Contact Jane at janesburke@gmail.com or text 413-429-6103. 📍



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The Library also offers notary service, public computer and printer availability, free wifi 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.

NEW BOOK ARRIVALS

Adult Fiction and Non-Fiction

- *The Last Remains* by Elly Griffiths
- *Dirty Laundry* by Disha Bose
- *A Fever in the Heartland* by Timothy Egan
- *Shadow of Death* by Heather Graham
- *All the Days of Summer* by Nancy Thayer
- *The Moose Paradox* by Antti Tuomainin
- *Homecoming* by Kate Morton
- *Camp Zero* by Michelle Sterling

New to the Children's Section

- *The Tale of Despereaux* by Kate diCamillo

Two new Vox Books In the Children's Section

Vox Books are books that talk and have been known to replace ipads on long car rides to the beach.

- *Pete the Cat's Groovy Imagination and Beekle*

The Children's section is replete with books, games, toys, Brio trains, and lots of arts and crafts supplies.

THE SWING

By Robert Louis Stevenson

How do you like to go up in a swing,
Up in the air so blue?
Oh, I do think it the pleasantest thing
Ever a child can do!
Up in the air and over the wall,
Till I can see so wide,
Rivers and trees and cattle and all
Over the countryside—
Till I look down on the garden green,
Down on the roof so brown—
Up in the air I go flying again,
Up in the air and down!



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Comings and Goings



LESLIE J. GARFIELD

1932-2022

Well-known New York realtor and patron of arts, Leslie Garfield died in that city on December 16, 2022, following several months of illness. He was 90.

Mr. Garfield and his wife, the late Johanna Rosengarten were frequent weekend and seasonal residents of Sandisfield. Jo's family bought the c.1780 Benjamin Smith House and former farm on Fox Road in 1938. The Garfields generously supported Berkshire cultural venues and events, particularly Tanglewood and the Sandisfield Arts Center. Jo died in August 2021 (see Sandisfield Times, September 2021).

Until he suffered a stroke in May 2022, Mr. Garfield was a major presence in the New York art world and a prominent print collector, his passion. In 1972, he established the real estate brokerage firm, Leslie J. Garfield & Co., specializing in sales of town houses. The firm is now managed by his son, Jed.

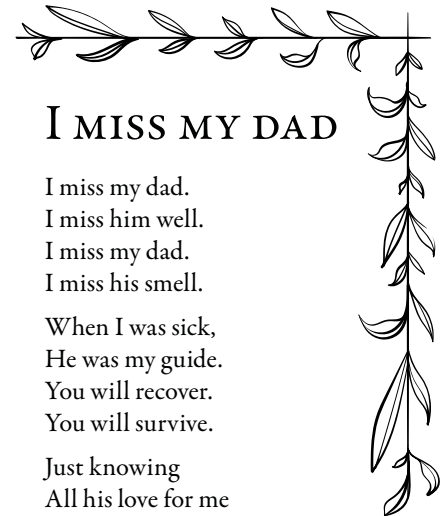
He was a long-time board member of the New York Youth Symphony, the Archives of American Art, the International Print Center, and the Chazen Museum of Art in Madison, Wisconsin. He also had extensive associations with the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum, the Metropolitan Museum, all in New York, and the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. He was a member of the Grolier, Century, and National Arts Clubs.

A graduate of the University of Wisconsin, he earned an M.A. degree in Chinese Studies from Harvard University and an M.B.A. degree from Columbia University. During the Korean War he served in the U.S. Army in Germany.

He is survived by his children, Clare (Peter Lusardi); Jed (Karen) of South Sandisfield; and son, Cory. He will also be missed by his grandchildren, Clay and Charlie Garfield.

The family cherished their historic Sandisfield property which they called "the farm." They always looked forward to being in Sandisfield. He enjoyed gardening and the solitude and calm that their place provided from his busy life as a real estate broker in New York. Daughter Clare said, "When my parents met, my dad also fell in love with the house which may have been one of the reasons that they were brought together." In recent years, their visits here became less frequent because of their dependence on others to do the driving. "Dad's last wishes included a return weekend visit to Sandisfield but, sadly, his condition prevented that. The farm was absolutely integral in my parent's lives," she said.

The Garfield children intend to keep the Fox Road property in the family, hopefully to be embraced by their grandchildren and beyond.



I MISS MY DAD

I miss my dad.
I miss him well.
I miss my dad.
I miss his smell.

When I was sick,
He was my guide.
You will recover.
You will survive.

Just knowing
All his love for me
Could heal my aches and pains
For free.

Just knowing that
He really cared.
Just knowing that,
Would ease my fear.

But who can
Reassure me now?
There is nobody
Like him around.

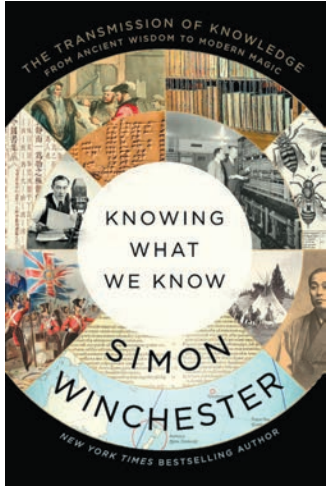
That's how life
Was meant to be.
But it's sad,
So sad to me.

*Karen Garfield
New Hartford Road*

Simon's New Book

HOW WE LEARN THINGS, REMEMBER THEM, AND TELL OUR CHILDREN

By Bill Price



A few readers could be excused for assuming that Sandisfield's prolific author Simon Winchester (of Silverbrook Road) had run out of topics for another book. They will have to guess again.

After writing about subjects as diverse as the Pacific Ocean and

the Atlantic, China, the Erie Canal and the Transcontinental Railroad, the creation of the Oxford English Dictionary, the San Andreas Fault, an exploding island, and the solid foundations undergirding geology, Winchester came up with yet another idea to examine with his authorial combination of fact, anecdote, and wit.

Published last month by Harper, his new book, *Knowing What We Know: The Transmission of Knowledge from Ancient Wisdom to Modern Magic*, will help readers know and understand a lot of things many of those readers think they already know and understand but probably not as much as they imagine. And the book will entertain at the same time.

Early reviews have labeled the book "brimming with fascinating information" that examines "how we acquire, retain, and pass on information – and how technology's current capability to do those things for us might be threatening our ability to think."

As described on Amazon Books: "With the advent of the internet, any topic we want to know about is instantly available with the touch of a smartphone button. With so much knowledge at our fingertips, what is there left for our brains to do? At a time when we seem to be stripping all value from the idea of knowing things—no need for math, no need for map-reading, no need for memorization—are we risking our ability to think? As we empty our minds, will we one day be incapable of thoughtfulness?"

In a starred review, Booklist wrote that Winchester's "ebullient style and countless irresistible anecdotes and strange facts" are "evident on every page." That combination, along with his "abiding interest in history, human innovation, and distinctive ability to share his insatiable curiosity with enthusiastic readers," results in his "sheer joy in imparting what he learns."

Sandisfield Historical Society

Christmas Fair a Success

By Anna Wald, President

We are back. Our first monthly meeting will be Saturday, May 13 at 2 p.m. Take a break after the Annual Town Meeting at 10, and come over to our meeting at 2. Help us set our agenda for the rest of the year.

Everyone knows how wonderful the Christmas Fair turned out. Great vendors and wonderful items for sale, and a great group of people to make it all work. Gary Bottoms and everyone from beginning to end.

How about Santa? I hope he doesn't decide to retire.

Thanks to the Recreation Committee and Lynn Rubenstein especially for all the toys Santa was able to hand out. The great music confirms that there is a lot of talent in our town.

The COA sold raffle tickets for three beautiful baskets and donated all their profits to the Society. Thanks, friends.

The Historical Society is selling raffle tickets for an ATV from New Boston Crane. Please buy one or two to help us reach our goal and to provide funds for our new bathroom. A lot of folks can't join us at the meeting house due to the lack of these facilities

The Society would like to present programs to inform our neighbors on the history of the town as well as individual families. Please join us at our May meeting at the Meeting House, intersection of South Sandisfield Road and Sandy Brook Turnpike (Rt.183). We would love to see you.

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★ UPCOMING EVENTS ★

Tequila Tasting Dinner
Details & date TBD

Cinco de Mayo Dance Party May 5th
Mexican specials & music by DJ Sancho!

Knox Comedy Night May 19th
Tickets available at Eventbrite & knoxtrailinn.com

The Hilltown Blues Jam
Every 3rd Sunday of the month@2pm

Musical Bingo May 7 & 28 at 2pm
Paint & Sip Party June 14th@6:30

Knox 6th Anniversary Party June 24th
All day party with food & entertainment!

Bands every Saturday!

The School Play

FRIDAY AND SATURDAY,
MAY 19-20

By Bill Price

If you've never been to a grade-school play performed at a country school, now is your chance. It's always a highlight of the school season and a pleasure to watch, even if you're an anxious parent or you don't know any of the kids on stage.


This year the annual spring production, "The It's Never Too Late Show," will be performed at the Farmington River Elementary School in Otis on Friday, May 19 at 6:30 p.m. and again on Saturday, May 20 at 4:30 p.m.

This year's production is the third student-written and -performed musical since 2020. As with the others, the musical was written and will be performed by an ambitious group of 4th, 5th, and 6th graders with help of the school's Arts Teacher and Musical Director, Ms. Laura Catullo.



The format of this year's show is a late-night talk show with guests who share their experiences with endangered animals in danger of extinction, such as rainforest birds, dinosaurs, polar bears, pandas, and gorillas. The normal talk-show group includes the band, hosts, guests, audience participation games, and lots of music, laughter, and fun.

Every year, more and more students want to be involved in the production, including writing the script, acting the roles, helping with backstage work, and creating props and stage sets. As always with school productions, a hard-working parent volunteer group has helped with stage management, baked goods for the bake sale, selling 50-50 raffle tickets, and preparing their children for their stage roles. The production has also enjoyed the collaborative support of local musicians, choreographers, and science and earth-savvy individuals who lend their expertise toward each production's ultimate successful performance.

Supported by the Otis and the Massachusetts Cultural Councils. 



Letters to the Editor

THAT REMINDS ME ...

I so enjoyed the lead story in your April issue, "March Madness."

It brought back memories of harder times and winter storms that our blended family of nine experienced at Cold Spring Farm years ago.

When we moved permanently to Sandisfield in the early-1970s, my husband, Ronny, a dentist, opened his office in Lee. We were well aware of and ready for outages from still unreliable power. Joe Wirth had meticulously wired the house but Ronny kept the gas and kerosene lamps and propane for the refrigerator and stove ... just in case.

There was no telephone service until much later but Ronny had to be connected for medical emergencies. In 1964, he ran a wire over the ground through the Rowley farm fields and trees to connect to the nearest utility pole. Every year the line had to be repaired from being cut during hay mowing.

In winter, everyone then was used to hunkering down during bad weather which meant frequent power outages. We melted snow for water and filled a 10-gallon milk can with water from Spectacle Pond to flush toilets. But these became family events and could be fun and opportunities to play games and bake all sorts of things until nightfall sent us to bed. Lots to remember!

*Roberta Myers
Monterey, California*

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Files remaining will be destroyed in 3 months.

NOW HEAR THIS!

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

MAY 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. Pre-registration not necessary. Led by Nina Carr. This fun program includes free play, crafts, stories, and songs! A great time to meet up with friends and make 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.

Farmer's Market beginning Memorial Day weekend Fridays from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Farmington River General Store on Route 8.

Annual Town Meeting on Saturday, May 13 at 10:00 a.m. at Firehouse #2, 207 Sandisfield Rd. (Rt. 57).

Sandisfield Historical Society on Saturday, May 13 at 2:00 p.m. Meeting House at intersection of South Sandisfield Road and Sandy Brook Turnpike (Rt. 183). First meeting of the year.

Evening of Song on Saturday, May 13, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center on 5 Hammertown Road. **The season's primary fund-raising event.** The popular "Evening of Song" cabaret will include music, Prosecco, and special desserts! The eclectic song selections include music from the great American songbook and jazz to Broadway, with Linda Mironti and Brian De Lorenzo, with special guests Annie Crofut, Kathy Lawrence, and Ben Luxon. \$40.

New Boston Church Service on Sunday, May 14 at 10:00 a.m. at the New Boston Congregational Church, Route 57. All are welcome.

Annual Town Election on Monday, May 15 from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall on 3 Silverbrook Road.

Free Children's Arts/Science Workshop with Flying Cloud Farm for children ages 7-14 on Saturday, May 20 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Ceramicist and science educator Jane Burke will lead activities that connect science, engineering, and math to making art. The workshop is free thanks to the

generous support of the Sandisfield, Monterey, and New Marlborough Cultural Councils. Pre-registration is required (contact Jane, janesburke@gmail.com or text 413-429-6103). Flying Cloud Farm is located at 731 South Sandisfield Road in New Marlborough.

Monthly Wellness, Blood Pressure Clinic, and Coffee Hour on Wednesday, May 17 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.

Memorial Day Parade and Recreation Committee Activities on Sunday, May 28, beginning at 9:00 a.m. with bike decoration at the Old Town Hall on Silverbrook Road. The parade begins at 10:00 a.m. at Old Town Hall. The Honor Guard and service will be held as the parade stops at the New Boston Cemetery at approximately 10:15 a.m. A culmination of activities will end at the American Legion, with a wreath ceremony and BBQ.

ONLINE EVENTS

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

EVENTS IN SURROUNDING TOWNS

Smithsonian Exhibit Crossroads: Change in Rural America at the Bushnell-Sage Library on view through May 6. "Crossroads," a traveling Smithsonian exhibit, offers small towns a chance to look at their own path to highlight the changes that have affected their fortunes over the past century. The exhibition will prompt discussions about what happened when America's rural population became a minority of the country's population and the ripple effects that occurred.

Playgroup on Thursdays from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the Monterey Library, sponsored by South Berkshire Kids. Pre-registration not 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 every alternate Saturday beginning January 28, 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.

Family Self-guided StoryWalk at Thomas & Palmer Brook from Saturday, May 6 through Monday, May 29 from dawn to dusk in Great Barrington. "Wild Mindfulness" will be on display for a self-guided adventure. "Wild Mindfulness" teaches, guides, and allows children (and adults!) to experience mindful moments through guided imagery and breathing techniques as they follow along a young girl and her adventures camping and exploring in the wild.

Knox Trail Guided Hike narrated by Tom Ragusa on Sunday, May 7 at 1:00 p.m. in Otis. Join Tom on a 2.8 mile hike to explore the history of the Knox Trail during the Revolutionary War. Please register per car at www.hilltownhikers.com. Meet at the Norton Road extension in Otis. Suggested donation is \$5. Maps and bottled water will be provided. Be prepared for muddy conditions, some road walking, and deep woods.

Kids Fishing Derby on Saturday, May 13 from 9:00 to 10:30 a.m., sponsored by the Friends of the Berkshire National Fish Hatchery, at the National Fish Hatchery in Monterey. Children will learn how to fish while competing for prizes. No child leaves empty-handed!

Great Barrington Farmers Market on Saturdays, May 13, 20, and 27 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.

The It's Never Too Late Show on Friday, May 19 at 6:30 p.m. and Saturday, May 20 at 4:30 p.m. at the Farmington River Elementary School on Route 8 in Otis, with generous support from the Otis Cultural Council. The musical production is the third student-written and performed musical since 2020 and highlights endangered animals in peril of extinction. The format for the show is a late-night talk show with guests who have something to share about their experiences with extinction and endangerment. There will be a talk-show band, hosts, guests, an audience participation game, and lots of music, laughter, and fun. Seating will be cafe style with several tables for families as well as row seating for smaller groups of attendees. No charge but donations are welcome.

Sheffield Farmers Market on Fridays from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. beginning May 26 in downtown Sheffield at the First Congregational Church parking lot on 125 Main Street. Local farmers, food producers, artists, and educators to promote local business, healthy eating, and social gathering.

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



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*The Times appreciates donations received
last month.*

Platt family farm

Jeanne Randorf & Robert McMahan

Richard Rook

Sally Vaun



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Donations of any amount are needed to ensure the continuation of this newspaper. Please send checks to: The Sandisfield

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