

# THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume XV, Number 3

June 2024

## The Untold Truth About Baked Beans

### FAMILY INSIGHT IN A BOOK ABOUT NEW ENGLAND CUISINE

By Tom Christopher

Bostonian Meg Muckenhoupt brings a victim's passion to her 2020 book *The Truth About Baked Beans*. Subtitled "An Edible History of New England," it's required reading for anyone who has ever enjoyed the best of our traditional cuisine – think clambakes – and wondered why such an otherwise cultured region would tolerate "bar pizza" and so many other culinary atrocities.

It also provided a belated insight into the life of my late father, Robert Christopher.

My father was the child of a very old, if undistinguished, Yankee family. His mother, my grandmother, was deeply proud of her descent from an otherwise forgotten younger brother of President John Adams, a fact no one in the family was ever allowed to forget.

My grandfather Christopher took equal pride in his upbringing as a "United Empire

*Cont'd on p.6*

## Voters Say "No" to Two Big Items SCHOOL, OTHER ITEMS OK

By Bill Price

The Sandisfield Annual Town Meeting was calm and amicable, despite the fact that residents went into the meeting facing about a 6.5% increase in Town expenditures over the previous fiscal year.

The meeting, held May 18 at Firehouse #2 on Sandisfield Road, took nearly three hours and drew only 66 voters and a few non-voting residents. Town Moderator Dominic Konstam kept the agenda items moving, faltering only a couple times when because of amendment confusion the audience lost track of what was being voted on. Each time Konstam brought them back to the proposal at hand.

The proposed budget was for just over \$4 million, an increase over last year of about \$230,000. This could have resulted in a serious bump in property taxes, which has many voters on edge.

Cordiality prevailed, however, as residents voted to reduce the tax levy by appropriating just over \$300,000 from the Town's Free Cash account and, more importantly, disapproving two large Town vehicle purchases.



*Voters study the Town Warrant.  
Photo: Jane Kaufman, The Berkshire Eagle*

The Town operating budget came in at about \$3,996,000, still an increase of nearly 5.4 percent, but possibly a softer landing for taxpayers.

### THE AMBULANCE AND THE FREIGHTLINER

The only contentious items were two large expenditures for which residents lopped off nearly \$550,000. Rather than allocate \$300,000 for a new ambulance and another \$300,000 for a new dump truck, they voted to spend much smaller sums for repairs on the vehicles.

Town employees and volunteers who work with the equipment were disappointed. The ambulance, which has served since 2012 and has 60,000 miles on it, experiences an electric short in its computer causing occasional power failures to the interior functions, including oxygen, suction, air conditioning, and heat, distressing attendants as well as patients.

In its report on the meeting, The Berkshire Eagle reported that "Select Board member Robert Fedell,

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# Seminar on Short Term Rental

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

By Bill Price

The Town's point person regarding the recently State approved Short Term Rental Bylaw for Sandisfield hosted a meeting at Town Hall at the end of May to review regulations with current and potential landlords. The Planning Board authored the new Bylaw over the last several months.

Town Clerk Douglas Miner, assisted by Barbara Cormier, Chair of the Planning Board, and Jeff Bye, Planning Board member, met with eight residents and homeowners who rent out part of their homes or separate houses.

Currently about 40 Sandisfield STRs are registered with the State, but Doug told *The Times* that the Town doesn't know how many are active. Those that are rent their homes or apartments through short-term rental websites such as Airbnb, Vrbo, and HomeToGo.

Doug reassured the participants that for his part he was looking for a team effort between the Town and the landlords. He hoped the Town could act as a cooperative partner rather than simply an entity imposing rules and collecting taxes.

Doug said, "We want regulated short-term rentals to be a positive addition to the community. They contribute to the local economy while helping to promote the character and integrity of this small town.

"Sandisfield's relative remoteness is an attraction for many who are seeking a respite 'in the woods,' or a peaceful hide-away for a weekend or a few days."

Doug continued, "With a town comparable in land-size with Brooklyn, New York, but with about 3 million fewer people, we have few businesses to attract people. But we have a world-class rock-climbing site, Hanging Mountain, that brings climbers from all over the world. We have hiking trails that compare favorably with any in the Berkshires. We have pristine rivers and reservoirs. Our Short-Term Rental owners promote all of these to the benefit of the Town."

In a note inviting the renters to the meeting, it was pointed out that anyone currently engaged in short-term rentals or who plan to do so in the future must register with the Town Clerk's office by August 1. After that date, daily citations can be issued for any property operating without proper registration.

Rentors are encouraged to thoroughly review the Short-Term Rental Bylaw. Should you have any questions regarding the regulations, contact the Town Clerk's office. Copies of the Bylaws can be found on the Town website [www.sandisfieldma.gov](http://www.sandisfieldma.gov) or on paper from the Town Clerk's office.

# Board of Health Permitting Going Online

Submitted by the Sandisfield BoH

The Sandisfield Board of Health is shifting from an all-paper permitting and record-keeping system to an online digital permitting system commonly known as PermitEyes.

This system is widely used throughout Berkshire County by municipalities for issuing permits and record keeping with the convenience to both apply and pay for permits online.

Contractors have generally been happy for the availability to file digitally at their convenience. However, they will still need to submit a hard copy of engineered plans for the BoH's paper file.

The Board of Health will continue to accept paper applications and payments during the transition to the online system.

The link to access Sandisfield's PermitEyes system can be found under Sandisfield's Board of Health town webpage at [www.sandisfieldma.gov/board-health/pages/board-health-online-permits](http://www.sandisfieldma.gov/board-health/pages/board-health-online-permits).

Please contact Health Agent Jason Dragonetti at [jason@tritownhealth.org](mailto:jason@tritownhealth.org) or 413-258-4711 x9 if you have any questions or need assistance. Agent Dragonetti, who works through the Southern Berkshire Public Health Collaborative, is also working with the towns of Mount Washington and Sheffield.

# Select Board Reorganization

By Bill Price

After each Town election cycle, it is customary for the Select Board to reorganize itself and possibly elect a new chairman.

This year, Selectman John Field declared his hands full with his "side responsibility" as Acting DPW Superintendent. Selectman Bob Fedell, with only a year's term under his belt and beginning a three-year term, said he felt not quite ready for the job.

That left Steve Seddon still standing as Chairman. The reorganization was no reorganization.

**Chris Maccarini, PMP**

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# The Election Where Everyone Won

A mere 56 individuals made it to the polls in Sandisfield's Town election on May 20, out of a potential of 673 registered voters.

There were no disappointed candidates. All of those who signed up to participate in Town government won election, all of the positions having been unopposed.

Moderator	Dominic Konstam, incumbent	48 votes	1 year term
Board of Assessors	Steven Kopic, incumbent	53 votes	3 year term
Board of Assessors	Jeffrey Bye, first term	49 votes	1 year term
Select Board	Robert Fedell, incumbent	46 votes	3 year term
Board of Health	Keith Larson, incumbent	44 votes	3 year term
Planning Board	Dominic Konstam (write-in candidate)	21 votes	5 year term
School Committee	Carl Nett, incumbent	45 votes	3 year term



## Scholarship Winner Announced

**CONGRATULATIONS, ASHLEY!**

*By Elaine O'Brien, Chair, Scholarship Committee*

The Sandisfield Scholarship Committee is pleased to announce that this year's recipient of our scholarship award of \$1,000 is Ashley Kopic.

A 2024 graduate of Monument Mountain High where she was a High Honors Student, Ashley, 17, will double major in the highly competitive fields of Mechanical Engineering and Software Engineering at the Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, New York.

Ashley is the daughter of Steve and Mieko Kopic.

Her grades and reference letters are very impressive, and we feel that she will accomplish her goals in furthering her higher education. 🍀



## Busy Summer at the Legion Pavilion

*Submitted by Maria Domato, Commander*

TRACTOR PULLS, the last Sunday of June, July, and August at the Sandisfield American Legion Pavilion, 81 South Main Street, on Rt. 8 near Firehouse #1 and the Farmington River General Store. 9 a.m. until noon. Free event, everyone invited to participate or simply watch. Just show up. Food and drinks available for purchase.

FLEA MARKET, July 6 at the American Legion pavilion. Big lawn, bring your own table, \$20.00 for unlimited space. Vendors welcome. Good location on Rt 8 at 81 South Main Street. For information and reservations call Maria at 413 258-4578. If no answer, please leave a message and your call will be returned asap. 🍀

## Transfer Station Hours Restored

Beginning July 1, Sandisfield Transfer Station Hours will return to 19 hours per week.

Wednesday: 12:00-5:00 p.m.

Saturday: 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Sunday: 11:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

Applications for FY25 Transfer Station stickers can be found on the Sandisfield website under Transfer Station. Applications can be mailed with a stamped return envelope or stickers can be purchased in-person at Town Hall Monday, Wednesday, or Thursday, 10:00 a.m to 3:00 p.m, or at the Transfer Station during operating hours. The fee is \$90.00 for one sticker and \$10.00 for the household's one additional sticker.

Textile recycling is available at the Transfer Station. Recycle clean old clothes, towels, bedding, or any other textiles by dropping them in the blue containers located near the exit of the Transfer Station. 🍀



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## Employment Opportunities: Town of Sandisfield

The Town of Sandisfield has many employment opportunities and opportunities to participate in the functionality of the Town.

If interested in any of the following positions, please visit [www.sandisfieldma.gov](http://www.sandisfieldma.gov) to our Employment Page for job descriptions and submit a letter of interest with an employment application to Janey Beardsley at [jbeardsley@sandisfieldma.gov](mailto:jbeardsley@sandisfieldma.gov)

### Benefitted Positions

- DPW Superintendent
- Town Manager

### Appointed Positions

- Animal Control Officer
- Fire/EMS Chief
- Planning Board Administrative Assistant
- Tree Warden

### Board/Committee Positions

- Conservation Commission
- Finance Committee
- General Bylaw Committee
- Town Manager Search Committee
- Zoning Board of Appeals

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# How Many Jobs Does Janey Have?

## ACTING TOWN MANAGER WEARS MANY HATS

By Bill Price

A 25-year-old kid (excuse the expression, really, woman) is the individual who, with the help of a few friends, seems to be the one keeping our town on the rails.

Janey Beardsley, first hired three years ago as part-time Assistant to the Select Board, now manages a vast array of duties at Town Hall and is often referred to as the “go-to person” there.

An example of the esteem with which she is held by Town residents occurred when she stood up to explain an issue on the warrant at last month’s Annual Town Meeting. When she introduced herself as Acting Town Manager, the residents spontaneously gave her a round of applause that echoed through Fire Station Two.

After the abrupt resignation in April of the former Town Manager, the Select Board invited Janey to step into the job as Acting Town Manager while a search for a permanent replacement began. Similar to past requests to increase her duties at Town Hall, Janey rose to the occasion again and said, “Yes.”

She told *The Times*, “These are some big shoes to fill, but I am really fortunate to have such an amazing support system among my peers. I am confident that if I don’t have the answer, I can certainly reach someone who does.”

She is not only Acting Town Manager, but is still performing her other duties at Town Hall, which would fill any number of resumes.

As Administrative Assistant, Janey composes Select Board meeting minutes and agendas and operates as the Board’s liaison. The long list of her other responsibilities include: answering questions and furnishing information to the general public and Town employees; processing property and injury insurance claims and vendor warrants; issuing permits, applications, and licenses; maintaining the Town website; and assisting with preparation of the Town’s annual budget and annual reports.

In January, Janey passed her courses for designation as a Massachusetts Certified Public Purchasing Official.

When she first applied for the position as part-time Assistant to the Select Board in July 2021, Janey was unaware of the many doors the job would open. With significant turnover in almost every department at the time, she said that walking into the Sandisfield Town Hall was very intimidating. However, she has built strong bonds with all Town employees and now considers them close friends.

*“When our previous Town Manager abruptly resigned, the Annual Town Meeting was in jeopardy of not happening on schedule. Janey Beardsley as the administrative assistant to the Town Manager and the Select Board understood what needed to be done. Janey created a draft warrant for town counsel to review based on the master budget spreadsheet that the Select Board was using to contain all of the Fiscal Year 2025 financial needs. This document was reviewed and Janey then made final adjustments in time to get the warrant to the Town Clerk to print and send to all of the residents and meet posting requirements. Our town is very fortunate to have such a capable true professional working in our Town Hall.”*

Steve Seddon  
Select Board Chair

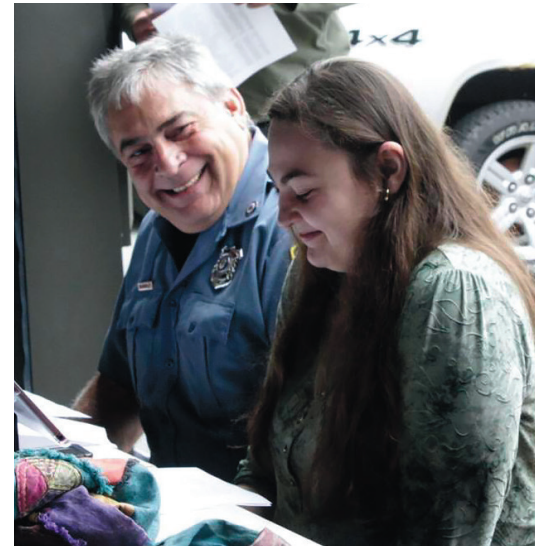
Within a year Janey was hired as the Select Board’s full-time Administrative Assistant as well as Assistant Treasurer/Tax Collector.

Of the help she’s received, she said, “I’ve been extremely fortunate to have kind and knowledgeable mentors, not many people in municipal have had that privilege.”

In light of her new role, Janey has been accepted into the MMA & Suffolk University Local Government Leadership & Management Program, a graduate-level academic program geared towards creating a solid foundation in public management. The program will take her away from Town Hall for 25 Fridays from September 2024 to May 2025.




Janey Beardsley and her fiancé, Skylar Snyder.



At the Annual Town Meeting, Janey Beardsley acknowledges applause in her honor. Beside her is her father, Constable Dana Beardsley.

Photo: Jane Kaufman, *The Berkshire Eagle*

A Sandisfield resident since 2004, Janey graduated Westfield State University in 2021 with a BA in English and Communications. Immediately out of college, she became engaged to her longtime partner, Skylar Snyder. A few months later they purchased Walter Linkovich’s former home in Sandisfield Center.

Janey said she is “grateful” for the opportunities Sandisfield has brought to her and looks forward to continuing her work with the Town. 

## The Untold Truth About Baked Beans

Cont'd from p.1

Loyalist.” His childhood community consisted of Yankees who had chosen the losing side in the American Revolution and were forced to relocate to Nova Scotia as a result. They had maintained ties to the old country, however, and frequently spoke of “going home,” which is what my grandfather did as a teen when his father resettled on a hardscrabble farm in New Hampshire soon after the turn of the 20th century.

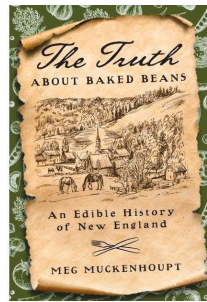
My father always maintained that his ancestors had been the respectable New Englanders. John Hancock, according to him, signed that declaration of independence so enthusiastically because he had been convicted of smuggling and was facing financial ruin unless the government changed.

One tradition the Christophers had maintained through all their years of exile was that of flavorless, overcooked food.

I particularly remember a Thanksgiving at my grandparents’ house when my grandmother had decided to follow a recipe she found in the local newspaper and, instead of roasting the turkey on Thanksgiving Day, shoved it into the oven 24 hours ahead of time after setting the temperature to 200 degrees. What came to the table was like something Howard Carter had removed from King Tut’s sarcophagus: dark brown, tough, desiccated, and as

unpleasant as the mummy’s curse. We choked it down without comment.

Fortunately for me, such experiences were mostly confined to holidays because my father had been corrupted. He told me once that something he liked about joining the Army at the outbreak of World War II was that the food was so much better than what he had been getting at home. This re-education was completed a decade later when Time Magazine sent him as a foreign correspondent to Italy. My mother learned a new kind of cooking during the family’s years in Rome, and it was spaghetti and risotto that I grew up on.



So how did so many of us end up eating molasses sweetened soupy beans and canned brown bread? In *The Truth About Baked Beans* Meg Muckenhoupt

explains that this was not in fact traditional New England fare despite the common story that the local Indians had shown the Pilgrims how to simmer beans with bear fat and maple syrup in earthen pots buried in hot rocks.

Of course, the indigenous peoples of New England had grown and eaten beans, especially after European colonists had extirpated the deer on which the natives had previously relied, but they had typically boiled them with bits of meat, corn, squash, and Jerusalem artichokes to make a nutritious mush. This, incidentally, was a recipe adapted by the early colonists who often ate such mush for every meal. Maple sugar was not common among the indigenous people of the coast, who prized the cane sugar they could trade for with the white man far too much to dump it into the beans.

According to Muckenhoupt, our contemporary, molasses-sweetened baked beans are a Victorian invention that was heavily promoted during a late 19th century “Colonial Revival,” in which Bostonians celebrated a largely invented story of their ancestral ways and virtues.

Even more insidious was the influence of reformers of that era. Their leader was Ellen Swallow Richards, a formidable individual who in 1870 became the first woman admitted to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She decided to apply her education as a chemist to developing a healthier, affordable diet for the poor. The New England Kitchens she and her followers established around Boston and Providence in the 1890’s offered extremely cheap meals, recipes included, to anyone hungry enough to eat them. Green vegetables and fruit were eschewed as an extravagance, and fish was rejected as insufficiently filling. A cookbook by a member of this movement, Mary Hinman Abel, promised to feed a family of six for 13¢ a day and included menus such as a dinner of corn mush and molasses, with a second course of bread and grated cheese, all washed down with tea.

Muckenhoupt suggests that poverty and the poor selection of ingredients at local groceries was the reason that the tastier cuisines that arrived in New England with immigrants of various ethnicities did not survive long here. The ubiquity of salt cod made the far more perishable fresh fish unpopular even in fishing communities. Fortunately, clam chowder, although disdained by the oyster-eating well-to-do, flourished as a poor peoples’ food until over-harvesting and pollution destroyed the oyster beds and the rest of society discovered just how good chowder can be.

*The Truth About Baked Beans* presents a fascinating, if depressing, story, and I recommend it to all New Englanders. If nothing else, it might make you feel positive about the changes our region is currently experiencing.

When I make baked beans, for example, I cook traditional yellow-eye beans, a flavorful heirloom still grown in Maine, with double-smoked slab bacon in chicken stock. No molasses. And then, in a tribute to my father and mother, I add a big glug of dry Marsala wine. My grandparents, no doubt, are rolling in their graves. 🍷



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# Sandisfield Arts Center

## June at the Sandisfield Arts Center

By Suzanne O'Connell

May set the stage for a robust season at the Sandisfield Arts Center.

It began in the gallery with the opening of a group exhibition "After the Thaw" that ran until May 31. The group exhibition highlighted the transition from the whispers of warmth and lengthening of days at the beginning of spring to full-blown summer images.

Our June exhibit, "Notes from the Interior," features works on paper and beckons both artist and viewer to delve into the depths of their consciousness, unveiling the treasures hidden within. The show opens June 8 with a reception from 4:00-6:00 p.m. It closes July 7. The gallery is open Saturdays and Sundays 11:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., except for June 29 and 30.

Friends and family gathered in the rain on Sunday, May 5, to honor Val Coleman, with the dedication of the new Memorial Garden on the site of the old Montville School. A bench in his honor provides a comfortable place to relax and enjoy the garden's tranquility. Val was a long-time Sandisfield resident and active SARc member.

Roughly fifty people gathered on Saturday, May 25, at 7:30 p.m. to watch award-winning photographer, journalist, and filmmaker Andre Lambertson's heartwrenching and uplifting documentary, "The Whole Gritty City." The film highlights the importance of school marching bands to the community, especially teenagers in New Orleans. The film aired on CBS and won a Christopher

Award, which is a salute media that "affirm the highest values of the human spirit."

Two popular performances will be hosted in June, both starting at 7:30 pm. On **Saturday, June 15, Tomáš Kubínek** will perform. Tom is considered a "comic genius, and an all-around charmer, offering audiences a joyous experience." He has won the hearts of thousands in theaters, opera houses, TV specials, and on Broadway. Will he win yours here in Sandisfield?



Chris Brubeck's Triple Play returns to the Arts Center on June 22

The always popular **Triple Play** returns on **Saturday, June 22**, with Chris Brubeck, Joel Brown, and Peter "Madcap" Ruth performing world class jazz and improvisation. They've performed at SARc many times in the past to sold-out audiences. You'd be advised to reserve your tickets early at [www.sandisfieldartscenter.org](http://www.sandisfieldartscenter.org). I've already got mine.

June events close with **Lara Tupper's community writing workshop on Sunday, June 30 at 2:00 p.m.** The Art Gallery show will remain open through the first week in July. 🌟



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June 8 – July 7

NOTES FROM THE INTERIOR

Group Show featuring works on paper  
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Sat., June 15, 7:30 pm **TOMÁŠ KUBÍNEK:**  
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Meet a comic genius, virtuoso, and all-around charmer who has thrilled audiences in theaters, opera houses, tv specials and on Broadway. \$20 / 12 & Under: \$10

Sat., June 22, 7:30 pm **TRIPLE PLAY** 🌟  
Back for an evening of world-class jazz and rollicking fun led by Chris Brubeck and featuring Joel Brown and Peter "Madcap" Ruth. \$25

Sun., June 30, 2 pm **PICK UP THE PEN: START YOUR WRITING PROJECT**  
Lara Tupper's community writing workshop. See website for registration.

FOR DETAILS, RESERVATIONS, AND UPCOMING EVENTS, PLEASE CHECK OUR WEBSITE.

[SANDISFIELDARTSCENTER.ORG](http://SANDISFIELDARTSCENTER.ORG)

## Voters Say “No” to Two Big Items

*Cont'd from p.1*

who serves on the New Marlborough Fire Department, said he has ridden in the ambulance when the electrical system has failed.” He said at the meeting, “It’s quite exhilarating to be rocking down the road in pitch black trying to do CPR.”

The Eagle reported that Police Chief Michael Morrison pointed out that the ambulance is not safe. “He said the dealership where the Fire Department has taken the ambulance hasn’t been able to diagnose the problem.” He added, “We did a great deal of due diligence in finding an ambulance under \$300,000,’ adding that the one it would replace has brought in more than \$500,000 in its lifetime.”

Rather than purchase a new vehicle, which would not have had to be paid for until delivery in a year or so, voters approved repair and maintenance for the ambulance up to \$20,000.

A similar result occurred with the Department of Public Works proposed expenditure of \$300,000 to replace a 2017 Freightliner dump truck with 36,000 miles on it.

The Eagle reported: “Highway foreman Tony Suarez said the Freightliner has a litany of problems. In addition, he said it could take three to four years to get a new truck. By a majority, voters pared down the expenditure to just \$30,000 to pay for repairs rather than buying a new truck.”

Referring to the two close votes, Town Clerk Douglas Miner told a WAMC radio interviewer that, regarding the truck, it seemed that “people thought it made more sense to just do maintenance for the year and see what turns out. The ambulance is a 2012, so it’s 13 years old, it’s our only one. I personally was surprised that didn’t get voted for.”

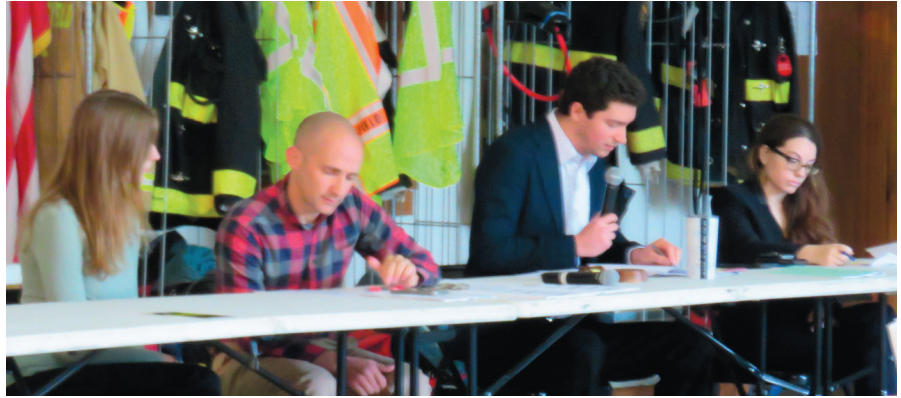
A strong point was made that once repairs on the vehicles are underway a better understanding of the need for new vehicles would be apparent and if necessary financing could be considered at a special town meeting.

### OTHER VOTES

The Town voted \$7,000 for improvements at the town’s scattered cemeteries and \$1,000 for three entry-point signs for the recently approved New Boston Village National Register Historic District

A proposal for a new bylaw that would have permitted commercial tent camping needed a 2/3 majority vote. It failed by a vote of 21-20. By then, near the end of the 3-hour meeting, several voters had left.

The bylaw, prepared by the Planning Board, was in response to brothers Willard and Robert Platt,



*At the head table: Emelia Fedell, Assistant Town Clerk; Douglas Miner, Town Clerk; Dominic Konstam, Moderator; Town Counsel Nicole Costanzo of KP Law, Town Attorney*


*Photo: Sandisfield Times*

long-time Sandisfield landowners, who plan to build a campground on their property on the opposite side of the Farmington River from Roosterville Road. Their family once operated a tent-camping facility on the site. The brothers felt their location near the Hanging Mountain climbing site would provide overnight camping for climbers who currently have limited places to stay in Sandisfield. The brothers were encouraged to follow their plans via a Special Permit request to the Select Board, using the bylaw proposal as a guide.

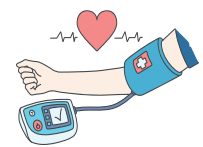
The Town returned the appointing authority for the Finance Committee from a committee led by the Town Manager to the Town Moderator. The Eagle reported that “During the discussion, there was a question about whether [Dominic] Konstam’s position as both town moderator and Finance Committee chair posed a conflict of interest. The town is seeking opinions from both the state Ethics Commission and from the Elections Division of the Secretary of State’s Office. Konstam said he would step down from the Finance Committee if it is determined that serving in both roles poses a conflict of interest.”

A modest expenditure of \$13,000 in Select Board stipends was approved. In an interview with WAMC, Northeast Public Radio, Town Clerk Douglas Miner explained that prior to the meeting the Select Board members had opted to forego their annual stipend

in a modest give-back to the Town. Miner said, “One of the first motions of the meeting was to restore that. Everybody appreciated the sentiment of the Select Board members and they’re still free to return it, but it was ultimately decided that [if for some reason] we have to bring in a new select board member, the stipend should not be set at zero.”

In a more immodest amount, taxpayers approved without discussion \$1,580,296 for School Operations for their children’s attendance at the Farmington River Regional School District. 

## Monthly Wellness Blood Pressure Clinic



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**JUNE 19**

**JULY 17**

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**Collaborative's**

**Public Health Nurse**

**Jill Sweet 413 717 7209**

**Jill@tritownhealth.org**





## Letters to the Editor

### THE AMBULANCE DECISION

I was disappointed at the Town's decision to vote down the ambulance at a time when we are trying to encourage young people to join our firefighters and EMTs.

It was, however, heartwarming to see our Memorial Day parade and the young people ready to serve our community. We all have to remember how important it is that our fallen soldiers gave their all so each of us could have our vote heard.

I am hoping that when we have another chance to vote we remember that when a firefighter and EMT gets the call to respond he or she are leaving their safe home to help someone in need. They need the safest equipment we can provide them.

Thanks for all your past and future support and once again I am asking and encouraging all to consider joining our firefighters and EMTs.

*Zoe Nelson, EMT  
Dodd Road*

# recreation COMMITTEE

Please join us for our next big event, Family Fun Day! This year we are pleased to announce Henry the Juggler as our special guest. Sunny Rose Farm will also be giving \$2 pony rides and Bubs Beans & the Dogs will be there! If that isn't enough fun planned, there will be a bounce house too! **Please join us on Saturday, June 29th, at 10AM at Looking Glass Gardens. RSVP by June 21 to [sandisfieldevts@recreationcommitte.info](mailto:sandisfieldevts@recreationcommitte.info)**

We are excited to announce our newest Recreation Committee member, Melissa Antoniazzi!. Melissa, a resident of Otis, has joined our committee as a full-time volunteer. Thank you, Melissa. 🇺🇸

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THE SANDISFIELD RECREATION COMMITTEE PRESENTS:

## ... Family... Fun Day

**06 | 29 | 2024**  
**10am - 1pm**

**FREE EVENT!**  
**ALL WELCOME!**

**Looking Glass Gardens**  
19 Dodd Rd.  
Sandisfield, MA

\$2 Pony Rides by Sunny Rose Farm  
Performance by Henry the Juggler @ 11am\*  
Bubs Beans & The Dogs (for purchase)  
Bounce House | Popcorn

\*Juggler Henry Lappen sponsored by:

RSVP BY JUNE 21ST  
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# MEMORIAL DAY PARADE & BBQ

By Laurie Seddon, Recreation Committee

Photos: Sandisfield Times


We couldn't have asked for better weather or a better turnout for the Annual Memorial Day Parade and BBQ. It was a beautiful way to honor our fallen heroes.

The Recreation Committee cannot do this alone, in fact we were thankful to have so many volunteers this year. Thank you to the Sandisfield Police and Fire Departments for all your efforts to make this happen. Thank you to Maria Domato for donating the American Legion Post #456 so our community could gather on this day of remembrance.

Thank you to the Lee High School Marching Band, who once again were stars in our parade.

Thank you to many individuals for all their efforts to help organize this event; Eric Pachulski, Zoe Nelson, Janey Beardsley, Roseanne Skrip, Dennis Olson, Matt Gallagher, Chapin Fish, Dan Antoniazzi, Michael Murray, Dawn Pachulski, Brad Schomburg, Susan Galik, Billie Pachulski, and Maria Ahlin.

Thank you to the Cemetery Committee for all the wreaths and effort to display them. Thank you to the Council on Aging for donating the ice cream.

Thank you to the members of the Sandisfield American Legion Post #456 and the Otis Honor Guard and Drum Corp. for your continued dedication. 







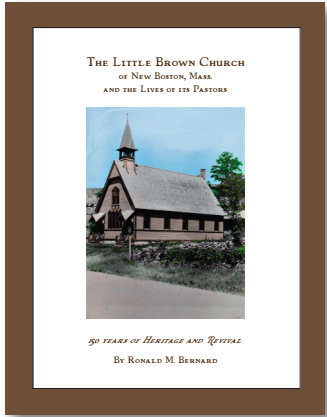
*Making her Memorial Day parade debut is Rose Nelson's Boadacea, known as "Bo."*

*Bo is a Friesian Shire cross, 13 years old, ridden here by Jake Blass.*



# SANDISFIELD HISTORY BOOK

*Limited Edition*



The Little Brown Church of New Boston, Mass is a history of Sandisfield from the perspective of the Congregational churches in Sandisfield from 1754 through today and particularly the definitive history of the venerable New Boston church and its congregation since inception in 1874. Much more than a history of a church, the book includes original and expanded research about events and local families and organizations that shaped social life in Sandisfield and in neighboring towns. All net proceeds benefit New Boston Congregational Church. Inventory is very limited so act now to be assured of a copy.

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*Net proceeds to benefit the New Boston Congregational Church*

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## UPCOMING EVENTS ★

- June 1st Evan Lanoue Trio 8pm
- June 3rd KTI Car Meet & Greet 6pm
- June 7th Jason & Trev 6pm
- June 8th Gen X Band 8pm
- June 14th Scott Silvia 6 pm
- June 15th Whiskey Traveler Band 8pm
- June 16th Hilltown Blues Jam 2pm ★
- June 21st Standard Edition Trio 7-10pm
- June 22nd Sidetracked Band 8pm
- June 29th Hot Shot Hillbillies 8pm

**KTI Car Meet & Greet  
Every Monday at 6pm!**



# Ladies Book Club

At their May meeting, the Sandisfield Ladies Book Club met at the Town Library to discuss the novel *The Cuckoo's Calling* by Robert Galbraith. Attending were, from lower left, Diane Caswell Christian (a newcomer to Sandisfield since October), Theresa Spohnholz (far left, Town Librarian), Rosanne Carinci-Hoekstra, Rosanne Skrip, Flora Parisky, and, in front, Joanne Olson. Ellen Crobier was the photographer/participant.

If you would like to join future discussions, email Terry at [sandisfieldlibrary@gmail.com](mailto:sandisfieldlibrary@gmail.com). Next month's meeting is June 27, Thursday, at 6:30 p.m., to discuss *Under the Southern Sun* by Paul Paolocelli.



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- 11:30am-12pm: Welcome & Coffee
- 12pm-1pm: Arts on Prescription - Where are we now?
- 1pm-2pm: Lunch with orchestra & chorus (provided)
- 2pm-3:30pm: Social Prescription - Past, Present & Future in Massachusetts

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- Concert Tickets \$30. Senior/student discounts available. Purchase at [www.longwoodsymphony.org](http://www.longwoodsymphony.org).
- AUGUSTA READ THOMAS *Fanfare of Hope & Solidarity*
- VAUGHAN WILLIAMS *Symphony No. 5*
- BRAHMS *Schicksalslied (Song of Destiny)*
- BEETHOVEN *from Christ on the Mount of Olives: Hallelujah* with Longwood Chorus



SCAN FOR TICKETS AND INFO



# Saving the Abattoir

## SAVING THE WHAT?

Story and photos by Ron Bernard

Have you noticed how often French words or phrases are used when English equivalents are unavailable, not descriptive, or just not very nice? Here is an example. *Abattoir* is a more elegant synonym for the cringeworthy, slaughterhouse.

There is an abattoir in Sandisfield. A humble structure, it was part of the venerable farm at Spectacle Pond. Estimated at almost 200 years old, the weathered building is a significant historical asset, one of the last its kind in Massachusetts. It is a reminder of another time here, a direct connection to Sandisfield's history. The abattoir will be saved.

The Mass. Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the state owner and caretaker of the property, has a plan to rehabilitate the abattoir in place and to make it available to the public for educational purposes.

### THE FARM AT SPECTACLE POND



*Aerial view 1999 (Rowley family)*

The original farm dates to about 1760 when Richard Adams and his adult sons and families of Preston, Conn., settled Beech Plain section. They established one of the first mills in Sandisfield near Spectacle Pond and the source of the Clam River.

After several generations of Adams, the farm passed in 1856 to in-laws, the Hawleys. They managed operations until 1909 when patriarch, William Hawley died. Mr. Hawley had expanded

the property, ultimately reaching 900 acres including a large portion of Lower Spectacle Pond. His in-laws, the Rowleys were in charge for about 75 more years. This was the longest continuously running farm in town history, spanning some 225 years. Moreover, it was under the auspices of only one extended family which is unique and also amazing.

The mill closed by the mid-1980s and the farmstead went dormant. After matriarch Ruth Rowley died in 2004 the various heirs could not agree about what to do. A controversial plan from a developer to build upscale houses on the property was averted when, with the approval of the family and the Sandisfield Select Board, the State took title in 2007.

Everything including many farm buildings, the pond and a pristine section of old growth forest was incorporated into contiguous Otis State Forest. Renamed as "Spectacle Pond Farm," the land automatically qualified for permanent protection under Massachusetts constitutional Article 97 with the DCR in charge.



*The abattoir awaiting its fate 2010*

DCR determined that six buildings, some with historic significance were deemed unsafe and were removed. A large 18th century English-style construction barn was stabilized in 2019 in the hopes that it could be rehabilitated. Its future is uncertain. Two old houses and a couple of sheds in the remaining group are beyond salvage and will probably be removed. Timing is yet to be announced.

### ABOUT THE ABATTOIR

A DCR representative told the Times, "This abattoir is the rarest and most stable of all the buildings there and is the only known remaining abattoir in DCR's portfolio."

The Massachusetts Historical Commission's statewide inventory includes less than a dozen of this type which speak to centuries of agricultural tradition in Massachusetts.

"The structure will be preserved as part of the historic landscape but not for active reuse. Potential uses include storage, interpretive signage and possibly scheduled tours," the agency said. "DCR has lost many timber frame buildings in recent decades, especially in Western Massachusetts. This project will help to preserve a tangible artifact from the agricultural history of Sandisfield and the region."

Fabric from the other period buildings slated for removal, such as clapboards, will be used where possible. A major component in the slaughter process, the cauldron, was previously

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Stabilization 2019




The building is fenced during restoration



Undergoing rehabilitation 2024

removed. Hopefully it or a facsimile can be found. Otherwise, much of the original apparatus in the abattoir is intact. Also, certain classic farmstead objects from the Rowley Farm period may be restored for display.

Kronenberg & Sons Restoration of Middletown, Conn., a highly regarded contractor, is doing the work. The company, a third-generation family owned and operated firm, specializes in the “restoration, preservation and adaptive re-use of period structures.” Estimated to cost about \$500,000, the project is expected to be completed this fall. 

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# Town Ordered to Rectify Wetland Harm

## VIOLATIONS ON DODD ROAD

By Jane Kaufman

From *The Berkshire Eagle*, May 2, 2024.  
*Used with permission.*

The town is facing possible legal action from the state after a town-hired contractor's work on a stretch of unpaved Dodd Road went awry and flooded nearby protected wetlands.

In an effort to correct the spongy condition of the unpaved road, the town replaced two culverts and put reclaimed gravel on the road bed last summer at a cost of \$15,195.50. But shortly after, rain washed the fill into a nearby wetlands area, damaging an estimated 6,000 square feet — an area a little smaller than a tennis court.

It resulted in a Conservation Commission order to halt further work. And now, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection has stepped in to add its own litany of violations regarding Dodd Road with potential legal ramifications.

Complicating matters and possibly delaying a response from the town may be this: Town Manager Jonathan Sylbert resigned recently, having already given notice that he was resigning as the interim director of the town's Department of Public Works. "I'm not in control of Dodd Road," said John Field, who is on the Sandisfield Select Board and, as of Thursday, was appointed as the liaison to the town's Department of Public Works.

On Feb. 16, DEP conducted an "unannounced site inspection," according to a six-page unilateral administrative order signed by Michael J. Gorski, regional director of MassDEP, Western Regional Office in Springfield and dated April 26.

According to the order, 100 linear feet of protected lands were altered, dredged or filled near an unnamed tributary of Sandy Brook.


In addition, staff of Mass-DEP noted "alteration of [bordering vegetated wetlands] by way of destruction of vegetation and the discharge of Fill into the [wetlands] consisting of corrugated pipes, soils, and woody material. The Department estimates at least 150 square feet of alteration and at least 30 square feet of discharge of fill to the wetlands."

One hundred fifty square feet is about the size of one and a half garages. The order says Sandisfield violated portions of the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act and state regulations for failing to get required authorizations for the work. It also violated the Massachusetts Clean Water Act and water quality certification regulations by illegally discharging fill materials to waters of the United States within the commonwealth.

MassDEP further ordered Sandisfield to cease and desist "direct or indirect discharges" to buffer zones, resource areas or waters.

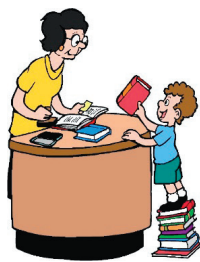
It ordered the town to provide short-term stabilization — "at a minimum erosion prevention and sedimentation barriers." It further ordered the town to inspect these controls after rainfall exceeding 0.5 inches within 24 hours and to file a restoration plan within 30 days and to "fully implement" a restoration plan by Oct. 15 "unless a documented unforeseen occurrence renders this deadline impossible to achieve." In that case, the deadline would move to Nov. 15.

"Failure to comply with this Order may constitute grounds for further legal action," the order warns. Among the people copied on the letter were Heather Parent, MassDEP regional counsel.

The town has a right to an adjudicatory hearing, but must file a request for one in writing within 21 days of the issuance of the order. 







# The Librarian's Corner

### Library hours:

Mon., Tues., and Wed. 9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Wednesday evening 5:00–7:00 p.m.

Saturday, 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Closed Thursday, Friday and Sunday

Phone: 258-4966

Email: sandisfieldlibrary@gmail.com

Our new website: sandisfieldlibrary.org

## Events at the Library

June 27, Thursday, at 6:30 the Sandisfield Ladies Book Club will meet to discuss Under the Southern Sun by Paul Paolocelli.

June 19 starting at 6:00 p.m. we have Games Night at the Library. Join in for the flavor of the month: Pinochle, Rummy, Apples to Apples, Scrabble and more. All ages are encouraged. Bring your wits and your smiles. We'd love see them both. Light refreshments.

All month long: It is never too late to participate in the Massachusetts Center for the Book 2024 Reading Challenge. June's book is a book that inspired a film or television series. Books are almost always better than the movie.

### LATEST ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY SHELVES (ADULT FICTION AND NON-FICTION)

- *The Ministry of Time* by Kaliane Bradley
- *Butcher* by Joyce Carol Oates
- *Funny Story* by Emily Henry
- *A Better World* by Sarah Langan
- *Table for Two* by Amor Towles
- *The Murder Inn* by James Patterson
- *The Secret Lives of Booksellers and Librarians* by James Patterson
- *The Titanic Survivors Book Club*
- *Westport* by James Comey
- *The Paris Novel* by Ruth Reichl
- *Women and Children First* by Alina Grabowski
- *Death Behind Every Door* by Heather Graham
- *Camino Ghosts* by John Grisham
- *You Like it Darker* by Steven King
- *Lies and Weddings* by Kevin Kwan
- *Mind Games* by Nora Roberts

- *The Light Eaters* by Zoe Schlanger
- *One Perfect Couple* by Ruth Ware

### YOUNG ADULT / OLDER CHILDREN

- *Sweet Valley Twins 2* by Francine Pascal
- *Sweet Valley Twins 3* by Francine Pascal
- *Sweet Valley Twins 4* by Francine Pascal

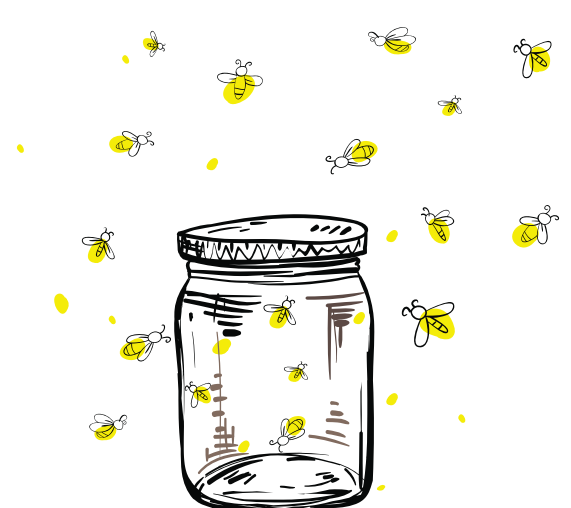
### CHILDREN'S BOOKS

- *I Wish You More* by Amy Rosenthal

## Poem of the Month FIREFLIES IN THE GARDEN

By Robert Frost

Here come real stars to fill the upper skies,  
And here on earth come emulating flies,  
That though they never equal stars in size,  
(And they were never really stars at heart)  
Achieve at times a very star-like start.  
Only, of course, they can't sustain the part.



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# Comings and Goings

## GERTRUD MICHELSON 1929-2024



Gertrud Michelson, known as Trudel, 94, died April 12 from Covid-19 pneumonia. With the help of Hospice, she was able to die at home in Sandisfield with family and friends around her.

Trudel was born in New York City to Dr. Nicholas Michelson and Franziska Boas, a modern dancer and dance therapist. She married Daniel Pinsky, music editor and pianist, in New York. They had three daughters Valerie, Carol and

Cynthia (Cindy). Though they divorced, they remained friends.

From the start, Trudel was an artistic, creative, innovative, independent thinker who took action. She attended the Walden School and was accepted to Barnard College when she was 16 years old.

As a divorced mother of three, Trudel went back to school earning her Masters in Social Work from Yeshiva University. She also became a Horticultural Therapist adding to her skills to help others. Initially working for Child Welfare, Trudel retired from the City of New York in Homeless Services in a supervisory role.

Earlier in her career, she worked at Walden School, as well as working for anthropologist Margaret Mead who was a friend and colleague of Trudel's grandfather, noted anthropologist Franz Boas. Trudel was hardworking and resilient despite many challenges.

In retirement, she traveled with friends and made long-lasting friendships in Mexico where her cousin, photographer Mariana Yampolsky, lived. Trudel also participated in many programs where she made stained glass, paintings, woodworking, and sculpture; classes she thoroughly enjoyed. Family and friends have many of these pieces to kindle and cherish her memory. She will be deeply missed.

Trudel is survived by her three daughters; Dr. Valerie Pinsky, Carol Pinsky, and Cindy (Bill) Pinsky Jennings as well as her granddaughter Zoe, sister Dina (Michael), and brother Ernst. She also leaves her nephew, niece, and their families as well as cousins. She was predeceased by her parents, step-mother Eva Michelson, her former husband Daniel, and many friends and relatives.

Trudel's family wrote: "We are very grateful for the care she received while at home by our cousin Nina as well as Helen and Irina, who all went well beyond what was their 'job' and gave our mother loving care.

"We will hold a memorial service June 29, Saturday, at 2:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center on Hammertown Road. All are welcome to join us to celebrate our mother."

If desired, donations can be made to a charity of your choice that aids the underserved.



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# NOW HEAR THIS!

*Edited by Laura Rogers-Castro. Please send notices for Now Hear This! to [editor@sandisfieldtimes.org](mailto:editor@sandisfieldtimes.org)*

## JUNE 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](http://sandisfieldma.gov) or call 258-4711 for information.

**Playgroup** on Tuesdays from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. at the Otis Town Hall. Sponsored by South Berkshire Kids. No pre-registration necessary. Led by Nina Carr. This fun program includes free play, crafts, stories, and song. A great time to meet with friends and meet new friends. For confirmation of dates, 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 3 Silverbrook Road, sponsored by the Council on Aging. For more information, contact Nina Carr (258-3314). Free.

**New Boston Church Sunday Worship Service** on Sunday, June 9 at 10:00 a.m. For more information and to view the calendar, visit [newbostoncongregationalchurch.org](http://newbostoncongregationalchurch.org). All are welcome. The New Boston Church is located on Route 57 near the New Boston Inn.

**New Boston Inn's Free Car Show** on Sunday, June 9 at 1:00 p.m. at the New Boston Inn at the intersection of Routes 8 and 57 in Sandisfield.

**Gallery Opening and Reception**-Notes from the Interior on Saturday, June 8 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center at 5 Hammertown Road. This show, featuring works on paper by various artists, will run until July 7. Free.

**Tomáš Kubínek: Certified Lunatic and Master of the Impossible** on Saturday, June 15 from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center at 5 Hammertown Road. Kubínek is a comic genius, virtuoso vaudevillian, and all-around charmer who gives audiences an utterly joyous experience they'll remember for a lifetime. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Sandisfield Cultural Council. Mature audiences. \$20.

**Blood Pressure Clinic** on Wednesday, June 19 from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the Town Hall Annex, Council on Aging. All ages welcome. Free.

**Chris Brubeck's Triple Play** on Saturday, June 22 from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center at 5 Hammertown Road. Chris Brubeck's

Triple Play features Joel Brown on guitar, Peter Madcat Ruth on harmonica, and Chris Brubeck on bass, trombone, and piano. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Sandisfield Cultural Council. For more information visit [sandisfieldartscenter.org](http://sandisfieldartscenter.org). \$25.

**Ladies Book Club Meeting** on Thursday, June 27 at 6:30 p.m. at the Sandisfield Public Library. The discussion will be on *Under the Southern Sun* by Paul Paolocelli.

**Pick Up the Pen: Start Your Writing Project** on Sunday, June 30 from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center located on 5 Hammertown Road. In this 60-minute workshop led by Lara Tupper, you will learn practical tips and easy prompts that will allow you to develop a writing routine to complete a project. No prior writing experience necessary. Space is limited and registration is by sending an email to Lara's website ([www.laratupper.com](http://www.laratupper.com)). This program is supported in part by a grant from the Sandisfield Cultural Council. Free.

## 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](http://berkshireradio.org).

## EVENTS IN SURROUNDING TOWNS

**Sheffield Farmers Market** on Fridays from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. at 124 Main Street in Sheffield. Local food and crafts.

**Great Barrington Farmers Market** on Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at 18 Church Street and continuing on Saturdays into November. Featuring locally grown and produced foods, including cheese, meats, breads, and more. Local musicians performing across a variety of styles and genres will be showcased.

**Art Lab: Mold a Memory** on weekends from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Chesterwood on 4 Williamsville Road in the Glendale section of Stockbridge. This is a free program for all children and their caregivers. Make your own monument or work with others to design something unique. For more information, visit [chesterwood.org](http://chesterwood.org). Free, but please register.

**Music Brings Communities Together-Criollo Clasico** on Saturday, June 8 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Becket Arts Center. Criollo is one of the most eclectic Caribbean Musical ensembles

touring today. Bring a lawn chair and a picnic. Free and open to the public. Donations welcome.

**Free Science and Art Workshop** at Flying Cloud Farm on Saturday, June 15 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in New Marlborough. Science, technology, engineering, art, and math for children grades 1-6 with Ceramicist and Science Educator Jane Burke and Artist Scotty Salame. Pre-registration is required. Contact Jane at [janesburke@gmail.com](mailto:janesburke@gmail.com) or text 413-429-6103. Free.

**Arts and Crafts Marketplace** on Saturday, June 22 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Becket Arts Center.

**The Bidwell Country Fair** on Saturday, June 22 from 12:00 to 5:00 p.m. at the Bidwell House Museum on 100 Art School Road in Monterey. Free.

**New Marlborough "One Town, One Read" Book Club** on Saturday, June 22 from 2:00 to 3:30 p.m. at the New Marlborough Meeting House on 154 Hartsville-New Marlborough Road. The first selection is *Summer* by Edith Wharton. Wharton scholar Alan Price will provide important context for the book, written during WWI. For more details and to reserve a free ticket, visit [nmmeetinghouse.org](http://nmmeetinghouse.org).

**Music Brings Communities Together-Kilashandra** on Saturday, June 22 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Becket Arts Center. Kilashandra is an Irish jam band that mixes traditional and modern Irish music with twists of blues, rock, and soul. Bring a lawn chair and a picnic. Free and open to the public. Donations welcome.

**Poetry on the Piazza** on Saturday, June 22 from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Chesterwood on 4 Williamsville Road in Stockbridge. Join award-winning poets Rodney Jones and Owen Lewis. Reception with the poets following the reading. For tickets, visit [chesterwood.org](http://chesterwood.org). Free, but donations will be accepted!

**Berkshire Botanical Garden 'Music Mondays'** summer concert series at 5 West Stockbridge Road, Stockbridge, Mondays from July 1 through August 5, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Food trucks, picnicking, and dancing. Features some of the region's most talented performers. Attendees are invited to picnic amidst the Garden's beauty. Barefoot dancing on the lawn is encouraged. Tickets are \$15 each for BBG members, \$20 each for non-members. Visit [BerkshireBotanical.org/MusicMondays](http://BerkshireBotanical.org/MusicMondays) for scheduling information and to purchase tickets.



# THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



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*Thank you to last month's donors:*

*Joanne Paladino*

*Susan Diamond*

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