

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

Tribunus



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RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume XV, Number 6

September 2024

NO SWIMMING Reinstated at Spectacle Pond BUT THERE IS HOPE. WILL VISION PREVAIL?

By Ron Bernard

Since at least the 1760s people have been wading/bathing and swimming – cooling off and exercising – in the incomparably beautiful Spectacle Ponds of the Beech Plain in northern Sandisfield. And probably Native Americans did too, long before that.

That cherished tradition is in jeopardy.

For the past six years everything was hunky-dory. Individuals and families, especially during summers in the Covid period, came on nice days to picnic and mostly waded at water's edge. A surprising number of athletically fit individuals regularly come to swim the length of the lower pond.

A few weeks ago, the state's "Swim at Your Own Risk" sign was replaced with "DANGER No Swimming."

Not surprisingly, there was an inevitable and precipitous drop in visitors.

"DANGER No Swimming" really means "GO AWAY." So they have.

Because I live near the lower pond several Beech Plain neighbors asked me what was going on. I checked with the Town. Administration was not notified. Also, there was no advisory posted on the DCR web site.

I have exchanged productive calls and correspondence with the DCR's press section to find out

Cont'd on p.2

All the Work Up at Riiska Brook Orchard

APPLES NOW, AND FRESH DONUTS LATER THIS FALL

NEXT SUMMER, HOPEFULLY A CAFÉ TOO

By Emily Melchior & Calvin Rodman



The Galas are ready for picking.

We opened our Pick Your Own Apple season on September 7, the first Saturday of the month. Ready to pick are the McIntosh, Cortland, Honeycrisp and Galas. Later this season, Macoun, Spencer, Fuji, Empire, Braeburn and Idared will be available.

And there is more coming.

We want to share with Sandisfield and beyond some of the improvements we've been working on over the past year.

Most of that work has been outside in the orchard, and we just finished

painting the outside of the farmhouse with a fresh coat of white.

But with the house, most of our work has been on the inside. We've put up new walls and doors and are now hard at work installing a brand-new commercial kitchen. Anyone who has built a commercial kitchen from scratch knows how much planning and effort goes into each piece of the project. We've been at it over the past year and are almost ready to turn on the equipment.

Cont'd on p.4

NO SWIMMING Reinstated at Spectacle Pond

Cont'd from p.1

what has happened and to see if something can be done. I was referred to the following department policy for undesignated beach sites (2022):

Section 12.06 - Rules of Conduct on DCR Properties – Beaches .(3) No person may swim, bathe, dive or wade from any watercraft, personal watercraft, dock, raft, or pier; nor may any person swim, bathe, dive, or wade from the shoreline of DCR property unless such shoreline is officially designated as a swimming area and such activity occurs during designated swimming hours.

There are 94 DCR designated pools and beaches in Massachusetts including 63 inland fresh water facilities. Three are local: York Lake, Benedict Pond, and Otis Reservoir/Tolland State Forest.

WHAT'S GOING ON?

I was told that Spectacle Pond is not classified as a "designated" beach *because water quality is not regularly tested*. Therefore, this amazing pond which has been a comfort and the joy to generations of Sandisfielders and others is, all of a sudden, not fit for swimming.

According to the spokesman, DCR's standard operating policy for its waterfronts was updated in 2022 to be consistent with DCR regulations. We are not sure what that means but its consequence is indefinite prohibition of swimming at non-designated beaches like Spectacle Pond.

SOME POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

1. DCR could make an exception and a new sign like, "Swim At Your Own Risk. Water Quality Unknown"
2. Lower Spectacle Pond could be designated as a DCR beach for swimming with regular water testing, in season, probably done by or for the Sandisfield Board of Health. A new beach a short distance away from the boat launch area might be necessary and there could be boundaries.
3. No change in policy.

BUT THERE IS HOPE

At press time came word that the DCR has agreed to reconsider the situation and factors needed to make a determination. Certainly no promises but it is a positive development.

Among the factors are, "available funding, staffing and availabilities and conditions of facilities at the site for visitor and staff use." Not a small potato in that bunch.

For sure, like all visionary ideas, this one has challenges and no shortage of reasons why it cannot be done.

STATE ALREADY VERY INVESTED HERE. WHY NOT A LITTLE MORE?

The state since 2007 has invested significantly in Spectacle Pond Farm, possibly the best of all such jewels in its pouch. But what's the point if almost nobody comes to experience the place?

In June, The Times reported about the rehabilitation of an historic abattoir that is a short walk from the pond. A top-notch restoration company is currently working on the building. DCR is weighing ideas for public use, possibly as an educational venue.

We think the abattoir could be only one element of interest to attract people to Spectacle Pond Farm and to Sandisfield.

The only original section of the historic Knox Trail could also tie in. It runs nearby from the "nose" between upper and lower ponds through DCR land. The Knox is on tap for a ton of regional publicity and awareness as part of "America 250," the country's semiquincentennial in 2026.

And consider this: New Boston village and the 18th century New Boston Inn is only a few miles away. The village was named in 2022 as a National Register Historic District. Plus, Sandisfield boasts some one-hundred antique houses, Revolutionary War era cemeteries and other interesting assets.

We have a wonderful new and growing system of hiking trails through historic land and unspoiled scenery. Hanging Mountain in New Boston has been discovered and is rated as possibly the best new rock climbing venue in the country. Remember, this town was a serious tourist destination in the 1920s and 1930s. It could be again.

It is too early for a Pond agenda item for discussions by various Sandisfield boards. But for now, let's think big, fingers crossed and see what happens.

The Times will report on developments. 🇺🇸



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Out on a Limb: Op-Ed:

Subjects should be of interest to most of us and have a strong link to Sandisfield, written by and for Town residents. Address either PO Box 584, Sandisfield, or email. Opinions in Out on a Limb articles are those of the authors and do not represent The Sandisfield Times.

Cannabis in Sandisfield

NOT THE EXPECTED WINDFALL

By Bill Price

Three years ago, when five cannabis facilities were proposed for Sandisfield, the industry was projected to pour as much as half a million dollars a year into the Town's treasury. That kind of windfall seems further and further out of sight.

So far, only one facility is open for business. Daydreamz Estates is selling its organically grown cannabis to shops in Great Barrington, on the Cape, and in Boston.

A second business, SAMA Productions, expects to complete construction of its growing facility within the next few months and should begin producing cannabis with next spring's growing season.

Meanwhile, with more growing sites opening in the Northeast, the wholesale price of cannabis has experienced "serious fluctuations" – according to one industry insider – moving in a kind of yo-yo fashion. One large facility, Temescal Wellness in North Adams, declared bankruptcy last month after construction issues and, according to *The Berkshire Eagle*, a "supply glut in the state cannabis market."

IT ALL BEGAN WITH HOPE

The local industry got under way in May 2019 when Jennifer Pilbin, formerly of Norfolk, Connecticut, stopped at a home on Town Hill Road to explain that she planned to buy adjoining property for a cannabis growing facility. Within a few months, Pilbin instead bought 70-some acres on West Hubbard Road. Her plans never got underway for a variety of reasons, including resistance by a group of adjoining homeowners. Ultimately the Sandisfield Board of Health closed her property because of unsanitary conditions. The acreage is now for sale in two lots, one of 25 acres for

\$125,000 or together for \$299,000.

In 2019, at the request of the Select Board, the Planning Board began the complicated process of writing bylaws for the Town in order to regulate the size and scope of cannabis establishments and their impact on neighbors and the Town.

In the meantime, SAMA Production LLC purchased 60 acres near Town Hill Road and Abby Road for a cannabis-growing site. Because of Covid regulations, SAMA's first outreach meeting in December 2020 was held in a tent outside Firehouse #2, which would have been fine had it not been during a snowstorm with the temperature inside the tent near freezing. One Select Board member estimated revenue to the Town as high as \$350,000, about as much, he figured, as the Town would receive in real estate taxes for 110 new homes. Significant opposition to the plan grew rapidly, with some residents forming a group called Sandisfield Neighbors for a Pot-Free Forest.

As for the Town's Cannabis Bylaw, after failing to pass a 2/3 vote at Town Meeting in 2021, the redrafted and amended bylaw was proposed again at the 2022 Town Meeting and passed with only three votes against it.

Thus, in April 2022, five proposals were in the works. Along with Daydreamz, SAMA, and Pilbin, two other applicants expressed interest. Berkshire Mountain Cannabis proposed a site on North Beech Plain Road and a group called Green Patriot asked for an outreach meeting, although its planned site was unknown.

Of the five, Daydreamz was nearly in business and SAMA, having relocated to a site south of New Boston,



*Phillip Blume and Hanna O'Brien outside the fence to their facility.
Photo: Bill Price*

was busy clearing rocks and trees and levelling its new property. Soon, BMC shifted its plans to the former Villa Mia site and Green Patriot withdrew entirely.

DAYDREAMZ ESTATES

Daydreamz is surviving on grit and determination. Owner/operator Phillip Blume worked initially with his company partners and hired help. He now works mostly alone.

Starting in 2019, Daydreamz cleared some 50,000 square feet out of a pine forest on the steep hillside above Town Hall to create windrows of growing beds by hauling topsoil and mixing it with Sandisfield earth. The few dozen rows now nurture about 700 cannabis plants which are protected by a state-required chain-link fence, with access by finger-print ID.

At first Blume concentrated on selling dried cannabis, but he is considering working with distributors who make other products, like THC extracts, gummies, and a product called diamonds.

Initially planning to be a cannabis entrepreneur, Blume said, "Now I'm a farmer. I'm trying to do my best to get good product, clean and healthy for people to use. We're one of the few outdoor organic cannabis farms in Massachusetts."

His partner, Hanna O'Brien, pitches in with the work when she's not at her newly opened second-hand shop in New Hartford. As well as cannabis, Phillip and Hanna cultivate about twenty beehives and a small flock of chickens, which are

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- Boundary Marking
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- Foresters for the Birds
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- Recreational Trail Layout
- Climate Forestry

All the Work Up at Riiska Brook Orchard

Cont'd from p.1

Once the new kitchen is up and cooking, we'll be able to offer fresh homemade donuts.

Over time, we plan to install a café setting with food offerings beyond donuts. That dream won't be ready until very likely next summer. We've renovated the house so that the first floor includes a seating area to accommodate a café.

More importantly, we've been investing in the future of the orchard itself.

We have planted new apple trees to replace ones that were dying, and also planted peach and pear trees. It will be a few years before they produce a crop, but for the peaches, we planted Redhaven, Cresthaven, Glowingsstar, and August Rose. For the pears, we planted Harrow Crisp and Harrow Sweet. We've also planted raspberry bushes and will have these expanded offerings in years to come.

In total, we've added nearly 100 trees this year and 250 raspberry bushes. We want to keep adding more apples and pears and additional varieties in the near future. Our goal is to be open more of the year with expanded food and produce offerings of many kinds. 🍷



The donut machine after its complicated setup, almost ready to fry up some fresh cider donuts.



The farmhouse, freshly painted. Emily and Calvin bought the historic Riiska Brook Orchard in August 2022.

Photos: Riiska Brook Orchard



**Opening day is
September 7!**



Pick Your Own Apples

Open Saturdays and Sundays from 9am – 4pm
101 New Hartford Road, Sandisfield
Check out our Facebook page and
website for more info
www.riiskabrookorchard.com

Help Wanted

Town of Sandisfield – Position Vacancies

- DPW Equipment Operator/Laborer
- DPW Superintendent
- Assistant Town Clerk
- Facilities Maintenance Technician
- Fire/EMS Admin
- Tree Warden

Town of Sandisfield – Board & Committee Vacancies

- Conservation Commission
- Finance Committee (2)
- General Bylaw Committee (4)
- Zoning Board of Appeals (3)

Visit www.sandisfieldma.gov for job descriptions and employment application. 🗳️



CodeRED, To Protect Us All

The Town of Sandisfield has implemented CodeRED, an emergency notification system that will send alerts via phone-call/voicemail, email or text message.

The system will be used for a multitude of emergency situations, including but not limited to road closures/detours, severe weather warnings and evacuation requirements.

Additionally, the system can be used for important updates including, Town Meeting/Election reminders, Town Office/Transfer Station closures, and tax bill due date reminders.

Go to sandisfieldma.gov and follow the prompts to register. If you having trouble signing up, please contact Janey Snyder at jbeardsley@sandisfieldma.gov or 413-258-4711 Ext. 1 for assistance. 🗳️



Select Board Dispatches

By Janey Beardsley Snyder, Acting Town Manager

The Select Board has been working hard toward filling vacancies, implementing tools to increase public safety, and considering ideas to support a successful budget season.

Recent updates include:

The process for hiring a new Fire Chief is almost complete. One candidate has been offered the position. The Select Board will enter into Executive Session to discuss the applicant’s employment agreement terms.

The Town Manager Search Committee has interviewed five candidates for the

Town Manager position. The Search Committee will now review and make a recommendation to the Select Board.

CodeRED is officially live. CodeRED sends emergency notifications via phone call/voicemail, text message, and/or email. Notifications may include important Town happenings, road closures, or inclement weather warnings. Visit www.sandisfieldma.gov for registration directions.

A joint Work Session was held with the Select Board and the Board of Assessors to discuss the possibility of implementing a split tax rate. A split tax rate would set apart Residential tax rates from Commercial/Industrial/Personal Property tax rates.

The Select Board meets at Town Hall, 66 Sandisfield Road on Mondays at 6:30 p.m. Zoom participation is available. Visit the website to confirm the date of the next meeting. To request an agenda item, please contact Janey Beardsley Snyder at jbeardsley@sandisfieldma.gov no later than the Wednesday before the upcoming Select Board meeting.

Don’t forget to subscribe to E-Alerts on the Town website, www.sandisfieldma.gov for important updates and announcements! 🗳️



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Sandisfield Arts Center

Two Months at the Arts Center

By Suzanne OConnell

AUGUST LAST

JOSH LUXON-ROBINSON

A sold-out performance greeted Josh Luxon-Robinson, the grandson of the late Ben Luxon, when he performed on Sandisfield Arts Center's



Photo: Larry Dwyer

Steinway Model S piano, Sunday, July 28. Josh performed a virtuoso variety of well-known compositions by Brahms, Rachmaninoff, and Bernstein, to two less known pieces by Medtner. The performance

was outstanding, ending with a standing ovation. If you'd like to hear him again or missed his performance at the Arts Center, you have the opportunity to listen to him on his YouTube channel: www.youtube.com/@joshluxrob.

THE SUPREME COURT

About twenty people from around South County enjoyed a fascinating lecture "Constitutional Limits and the Role of the Supreme Court: Lessons from Franklin Roosevelt's Struggle with a Conservative Court" on August 10. The speaker, Kenneth Cohen, an accomplished Boston attorney, explained both historical and contemporary Supreme Court decisions from a legal rather than a historian's perspective. The engaged audience peppered Mr. Cohen with questions for over half an hour after the formal lecture ended.

SMALL WORKS

Another fascinating exhibit, "Small Works," opened in the gallery on Saturday, August 17. The exhibit includes paintings and sculptures that invite viewers to pause and investigate intimate renderings whose impact exceeds their small size. Featured local artists include Mary Brenerman, Steve Butler, William Carlson, Jacob Fossum, Josephine Allesi Freedman, Ann Getsinger, Cameron Goodyear, Josie Miner, Jaye Alison Moscarillo, Amy Pressman, and June Wink. The Gallery is open for viewing on Saturdays and Sundays from 11 to 3 until September 8.



SEPTEMBER COMING

THE DANIEL MANACHER PRIZE

The "Small Works" exhibit will continue until September 8. It will be followed by the opening reception on September 14 from 2:00-4:00 p.m. for the Third Annual Daniel Manacher Prize for Young Artists.



sandisfield
ARTS CENTER

★ 5 HAMMERTOWN ROAD, SANDISFIELD, MA ★



Saturday, September 14
**DANIEL MANACHER PRIZE FOR
YOUNG ARTISTS**

Group show featuring artwork of winners of 2024 Daniel Manacher Prize for Young Artists. Opening reception 2-4 pm. Free.

Saturday, September 21 6:00 pm
**ANNUAL GALA DINNER HONORING
BEN LUXON**

Delicious dinner prepared by Adam Manacher followed by a star-studded salute to the incalculable contributions by Ben to the Arts Center. All proceeds benefit the Arts Center. \$75

Saturday, September 28 7:00 pm
"DICK AND JIM" Original play by poet/playwright Neil Silberblatt tracing the friendship and artistic collaboration between photographer Richard Avedon and essayist/activist James Baldwin. \$20 Ages 12 and under \$10.

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

SANDISFIELDARTSCENTER.ORG

This year's entries were juried by Josephine Halvorson, an accomplished artist with a studio in Sandisfield. Josephine is Chair of the MFA Program in Painting at Boston University's College of Fine Art.

This year's three winners are Mico Aldmar Mendoza, Aidan White, and Warwick Willow. Their work, in addition to last year's winner, Laina Falcon, will be on display weekends from 11:00 a.m.-3 p.m. until October 6.

The Daniel Manacher Prize for Young Artists is open to artists, 17-26 years of age who reside or go to school in Berkshire County and work in painting, drawing, mixed media, and sculpture. The work must be less than 60" in any direction, under 60 lbs., and created in the past three years.

In a statement, the Daniel Manacher Prize for Young Artists announced: "We are happy that the judge's have found young artists who tenaciously pursue their vision, seek to make ordinary objects extraordinary, and bring community into conversation. We hope the prize carries forward values that were important to Daniel."

GALA FUND-RAISING

This year's fund raising Gala takes place Saturday, September 21, beginning at 6:00 p.m. and will honor the beloved Ben Luxon. Ben's extraordinary contributions to the Arts Center include creating the Sandisfield Players, inviting world-class musicians – many of them his friends – to perform here, reciting poetry, and so much more. The evening will include a delicious dinner prepared by our master chef Adam

Manacher and clips and remembrances of such performances as Our Town, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, and The Stamp Collection. Tickets for the fund raiser are \$75.

"DICK AND JIM"

Richard Avedon, one of the world's most famous photographers, and James Baldwin, best-selling novelist and essayist and a leading literary voice in the American civil rights movement, were high school friends. In the 1960s they collaborated on a book, *Nothing Personal*, about the state of life in America.

On September 28, beginning at 7:00 p.m., their story will be brought to life thanks to an original play by poet, playwright, and cultural activist Neil Silberblatt and enacted by actors David Boaz and Geof Newton.

The play revolves around imagined conversations between Avedon and Baldwin leading up to the publication of their book, *Nothing Personal*. According to Amazon.com, the book connects Baldwin's thoughts "through an interconnected range of questions, from America's fixation on eternal youth, to its refusal to recognize the past, its addiction to consumerism, and the lovelessness that fuels it in its cities and popular culture. He [Baldwin] recounts his own encounter with police ..." Although published sixty years ago the story is painfully familiar today.

The reading will be followed by a Q & A with the author about his research into the lives of Avedon and Baldwin.

New Boston Congregation Celebrating 150th Anniversary

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER AND COOKOUT, SEPTEMBER 29

By Ron Bernard

Members of the New Boston Congregational Church have much to celebrate this year. In an era when traditional Protestant churches in America are closing at the rate of some three-thousand per year, the doors of Sandisfield's last functioning church are wide open.

Sustained attendance at year-round, bi-weekly Sunday services is robust. This remarkable revival owes in large part to the arrival in 2017 of a charismatic and upbeat pastor, Rev. Eric Kriebel. (See "New Boston Church Enjoying Revival," Sandisfield Times, August 2022).

Congregation moderator Sandy Morrison, who stepped in as lay leader 17 years ago after Theresa Campetti passed away, can also take justifiable pride in what has transpired. Her steady presence from an attendance low point to today's filled pews deserves much credit.

This year a well-designed website was introduced, which includes information about new committees and activities in community outreach, communication, fund raising, and for the care and preservation of a splendid, historic building. The church is a significant "contributing element" to the New Boston Village National Register Historic District which was listed by the U.S. Department of the Interior in 2022.

On Sunday, September 29 the congregation will dedicate the service to the many hundreds of Sandisfield residents since the 1870s who worshiped there and were good stewards who ensured that later generations could enjoy this beautiful space and place.

SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER

A very special guest speaker and former pastor (1970-71), Reverend Michael Gantt and his wife, Barbara (organist) will attend, coming from their current home in Brattleboro, Vermont. Rev. Gantt will recall his ministry here and how the experience in a small rural community church influenced his career in the clergy,



Early 1900s view looking south.

DeMars image, Great Barrington Historical Society collection

including missionary work in Africa. Rev. Gantt, an author, conducts a radio show in Brattleboro. His poignant visit to New Boston in April 2018 after 48 years was covered in the Sandisfield Times that July.

Rev. Gantt also wrote the foreword for the limited-edition book, *The Little Brown Church of New Boston, Mass* which was published earlier this anniversary year. The 400-page book is a comprehensive history of the church including the history of congregationalism in Sandisfield, the inception of the New Boston congregation, and everything known about the building and its role in New Boston's history. Copies for purchase to benefit the church will be available at the service.

In a letter to The Times, Rev. Kriebel said, "This special day will be made even more special if we can get people who have moved away or who have ever attended or had any connection to the church to join the celebration. Perhaps it could be a version of the popular Old Home Sunday tradition when families, friends, and neighbors [and former pastors too] used to meet here for a day of reminiscing. Everyone in the

community is welcome on this remarkable anniversary occasion. I really hope we can fill the church!"

Donations of any amount are dearly needed especially for building maintenance and repair. Donors may go to the website, newbostoncongregationalchurch.org and tap the "Donations" button or donate by check made to New Boston Congregational Church. Mail to NBCC, P.O. Box 81, Sandisfield, MA 01255.

COOKOUT TO FOLLOW SERVICES.

Immediately following services and fellowship there will be a cookout on the premises. Hamburgers and hot dogs and soft drinks will be available for picnic-style or take-out.

TALK AND TOUR OF THE CHURCH.

For those interested after services, there will be a brief historical summary and a tour of the inside of the church which is in virtually original condition. If you have never been inside or it has been years, this is your chance for a real treat and to reconnect with and appreciate this precious Sandisfield heritage.

SERVICE:

Sunday, September 29, 2024
10:00 a.m.

New Boston Congregational Church
4 Sandisfield Road

Cookout to follow.

Website:

newbostoncongregationalchurch.org



The School Discussion

AGREEMENT MAY BE NEAR

By Bill Price

The apportionment of costs between Sandisfield and Otis for funding the Farmington River School District has been under discussion by the combined school committee since late 2022. After three years of discussion and detailed examinations, a resolution may be at hand.

At the last committee meeting on August 5, one Otis member voted with the three Sandisfield members to approve a new apportionment method. Discussion ensued as to how the 4-3 consensus could be strengthened, targeting a 7-0 consensus, as it was felt that a stronger consensus would improve the chances of obtaining passage when the two towns vote on the amended Regional District Agreement (RDA) at town meetings.

Changes aimed at strengthening the consensus will be discussed in the committee's next regular meeting on September 9. Meetings are held on the first Monday of each month, but delayed this month due to the Labor Day holiday.

It's not over until it is over, but it seems that the end may be in sight.

Committee meetings, open to the public, are held at the Farmington River School Library at 7:00 p.m. They are available for viewing on a Zoom connection.





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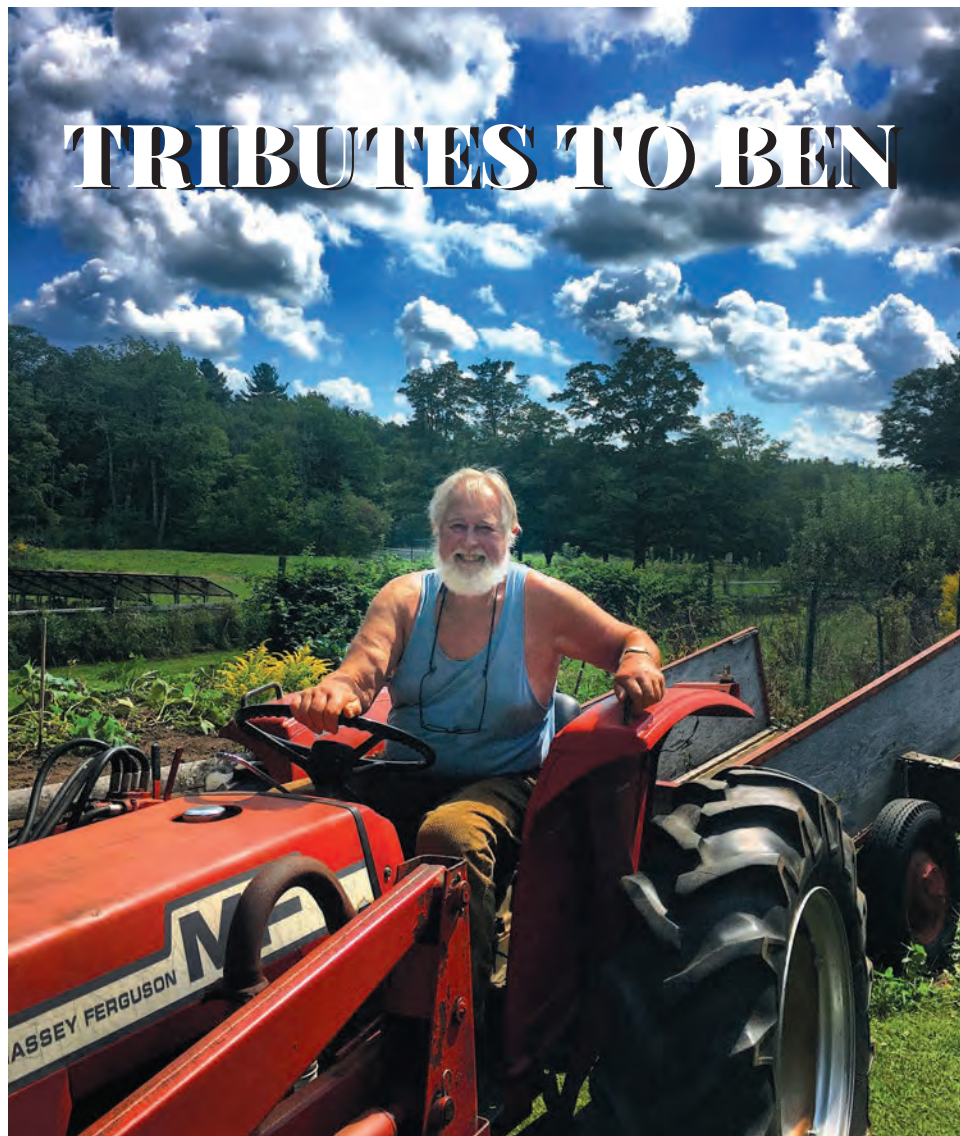


Photo: Peter Baiamonte

Tina Sotis: I met Ben at Liana Toscanini's house about 22 years ago. One afternoon, I was doing some paperwork for her in the little side room off of her kitchen when I heard a knock at the front door. I couldn't see who it was, but a jolly, booming voice rang out, demanding to know if Liana had any Campari. The friendliness and confidence in that voice was unmistakable, and I stopped what I was doing and smiled to myself. "This," I thought, "must be the famous Ben Luxon." From that point forward, I got to know this welcoming, warm, and down-to-earth man who gave so much of himself to his friends, his community, and to the world.

I joined the Sandisfield Players in 2013, cast as Mrs. Webb in "Our Town." I had no idea whether or not I could act, but Ben inspired me, practically pushing my panicked self onto the stage, and eliciting performances from me I didn't think possible. I thrived under his watch; he saw something in me I didn't know existed. He changed my life, and those of everyone in his orbit.

I still can't believe that I'll never hear that merry, exuberant baritone voice again. There will never, ever be another Ben Luxon, and the world is a little darker because of our loss.

BEN

A tribute by Jerry Herman

A big bear of a man.

An immense talent.

A sweet guy.

Ben was all these things and more.

Who can forget his "Brother Can You Spare a Dime?"

"Johnny Comes Marching Home" or "Mr. Bear?" More than just a song when he did them, putting his heart and soul into their performances.

Benny the boy wonder, who grew up in Cornwall and started singing in the local pub his father took him to.

He was to become a teacher but decided to pursue music instead at the London Guildhall and became an internationally known baritone and opera star.

He traveled the world, performing at the storied opera houses around the world.

He had a wonderful sense of style and timing.

Who can forget him as the chicken in "Jack and the Giant Beanstalk?"

His voice reverberates in my head when I think of him.

His humility was touching. I remember on more than one occasion, him questioning how he ever got to where he was.

He loved performing.

He loved working and he even liked complaining about his aches and pains after toiling all day in his gardens.

He was a wonderful friend, eager to help, especially if it involved working in nature, whether cutting down trees for firewood or clearing rocks from the soil when preparing new garden beds.

His work at the Arts Center will long be remembered. Gathering a group of players together, some of whom had never before been on stage, and wielding them into an amateur troupe of thespians, putting on such plays as "Under Milk Wood", "The Stamp Collection," and "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory." Even having the troupe perform the American epic, "Our Town," at the Minack Theater in his native Cornwall.

Ben will be sorely missed.

BEN LUXON: A VOICE FOR ALL SEASONS

By John Funchion

When my friend, the late Charles Fidler, the brilliant conductor of the Torrington Symphony Orchestra where I played violin, invited me in 2016 to join a theatre group in Sandisfield for the role of the “Undertaker” in Thornton Wilder’s “Our Town,” I jumped at the chance. To have even a small part in this play about a small New England town, which broadens to encompass all of mankind, and to have it produced in an actual small-town in Massachusetts by a group of amateur actors offered an opportunity for a wonderful experience.

Charles’ invitation was punctuated with a comment that the director of the theatre group, the Sandisfield Players, was Ben Luxon, who in previous years had been an internationally known opera star. Having researched elements of the opera for a book twenty years earlier, it piqued my interest to meet a person like Luxon, a well-known baritone, let alone act under his tutelage and guidance on the stage.

Indeed, for the next five years, Ben Luxon and his group of Sandisfield Players combined their musical and theatrical knowledge for nearly yearly productions. Ben’s death this July marked the end of a wonderful period of creativity in our small towns.

With humility and love of the stage and all things musical, Ben guided all of us – amateurs that we were – through the joys of seven glorious productions. His evocative descriptions of all things dramatic were riveting. Always inspirational, his remarkable ability to memorize lines was our model.

As a director, Ben was a master at developing refinement of character which made all of us very comfortable, regardless of any or no theatrical experiences. Ben was the shepherd guiding the willing sheep to a place of confidence.

Another aspect of his role as our director was his skill at building our sets. For each production, whether it be “Our Town” or “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory,” he oversaw all of the carpentry involved for each set. His equally talented, artistic wife, Susie Crofut, designed and painted all of the stage accoutrements.

Ben was a Renaissance man in the world of theatre. The success of most theatre groups, whether large or small, depends on many multiple talents. Ben embraced all of them, always aware of what appealed to audiences. Once he assumed the role of a humorous, squawking chicken in “Jack and the Giant Beanstalk,” the audience roared with laughter.

And when Ben made arrangements for us to take our production of “Our Town” to Cornwall, England, he and Susie had their personal imprint on every aspect of the production and the set design at the incredible cliff-side Minack Theatre. We were the only American troupe to bring that play to Porthcuno. On the Friday night before our opening Saturday, we portaged all of our props down ninety-five stone steps to the stage built into the cliff side. One week later we lugged it all back up those steep stairs. It was our theatrical highpoint.

Always playing a character in our plays, Ben often lip-synced songs in order not to overwhelm the rest of us, even with what was left of his amazing, aging baritone voice. As a form of ruse for the audience, it was very effective and just another example of his thoughtfulness.

The idea of the Sandisfield Players began when Luxon and his friend Val Coleman wrote a small play about life in the town of Sandisfield for Sandisfield’s Semiquincentennial Celebration. They cast it with local amateur actors, a few of whom continued the idea and kept the Players going. Twelve productions later, with participants ranging from age eight to eighty, our run came to a close with the highly acclaimed and successful “Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.” In between, we even did a very successful rendition of Dylan Thomas’ “Under Milk Wood.”

For sure, all of this could not have happened if it were not for the musical and theatrical gifts imparted to us all by that amazing, brilliant Ben Luxon. His God-given, beautiful voice afforded a lifetime of exquisite performances and gave us all witness to a Voice for All Seasons.

John Funchion is an author. He lives in Norfolk, Connecticut.

Flora Parisky: Ben Luxon transformed Sandisfield with the creation of the Players. He built a congregation of inspired and dedicated residents who built what dreams are made of.

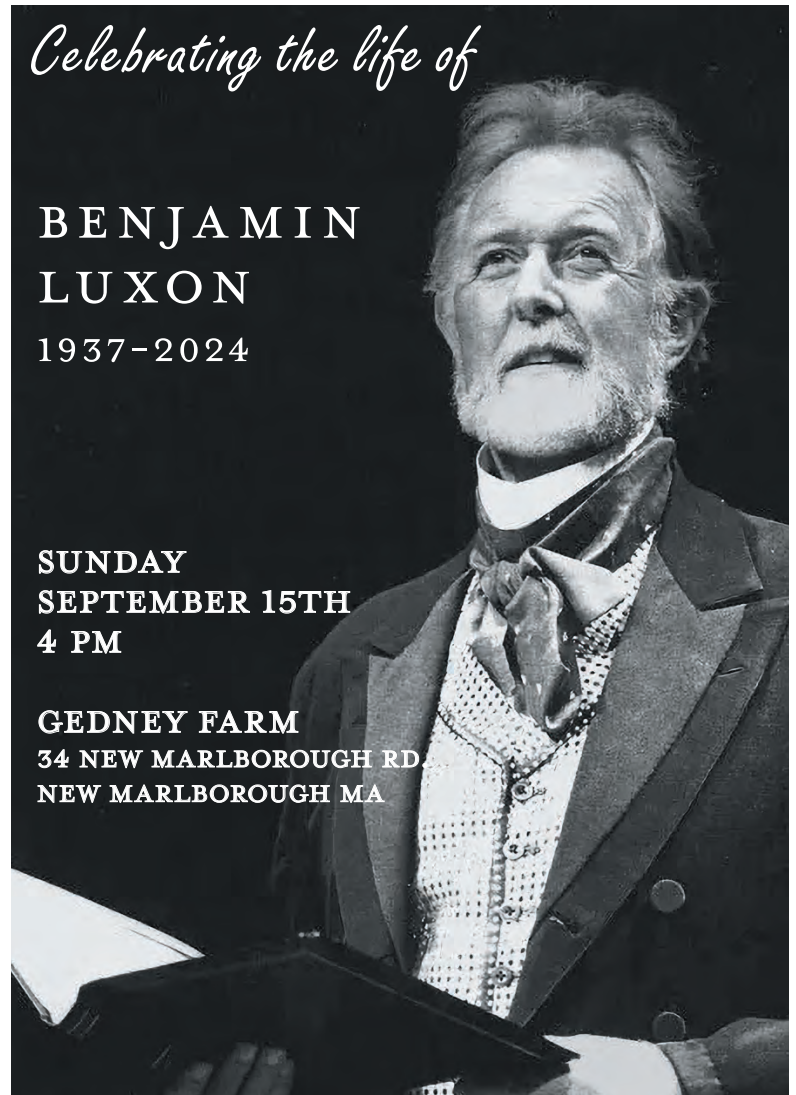
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Good News for Our Ash Trees

FIGHTING BACK AGAINST THE EAB

By Tom Christopher

For anyone who loves Sandisfield's forests, the arrival of the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) a dozen years ago was a tragedy. The Times published a scary article, "Kiss Your Ash Goodbye," in 2013.

Now there may be good news for our surviving ash trees.

HOW IT GOT HERE

In its original homeland, northeast Asia and Russia, this colorful beetle is a minor pest.



Because the ash trees there evolved along with the EAB, they developed chemicals in their tissues that made them semi-immune, so that the beetle is only

successful in attacking already weakened trees that are failing from other causes. As Dr. Claire Rutledge of the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station explained to me recently, the EAB actually performs a useful service in its native range, helping to recycle the wood of such dying trees and making room for new growth.

When, however, the EAB hitchhiked to North America in the wooden packing materials of Asian goods sometime before 2002, it turned into something much more menacing.

Our ash trees, which had never had contact with this pest before, had less defenses against it. And so the beetle could attack even healthy trees successfully.

In addition, there were few predaceous insects in our woods who recognized the EAB as edible.

These two factors led to population explosions whenever EAB beetles arrives in some area of eastern North America. The beetles breed unchecked, laying eggs in bark crevices of the ash trees that hatch in a couple of weeks into cream-colored,

worm-like larvae that bore down into the sapwood of the tree, disrupting the flow of nutrients. Within a couple of years typically the boring larvae will girdle and kill the tree.

WHAT HAPPENED HERE

The effect in Sandisfield has been to kill almost all the ash trees within our woods, which had constituted about 3 percent of all our trees. The loss of so many trees has been devastating, not only in terms of tree biodiversity but also because 98 species of our native insects depended entirely on ash trees for their survival, and an additional 300 or so native insect species also fed at least partially on them, including about 150 species of moth and butterfly caterpillars which were important foods for songbirds raising chicks.

Besides the losses that result directly from the loss of the ash trees, their deaths also create an opportunity for further forest degradation. The loss of each ash tree

opened a hole in the Sandisfield forest canopy, an opportunity for the growth of other plant species, and all too often these have been aggressive non-native invasive plants that do not support native wildlife.

FIGHTING THE EAB

Fortunately, insect specialists such as Dr. Rutledge had learned from previous invasions of foreign pests and were able to take action quickly.

Under the leadership of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, researchers were sent to the EAB's homeland to find predatory insects that fed more aggressively on it, and testing began in laboratories to make sure that these predators would not attack any North American insects as well. Four species of Asian wasps were identified in this way that parasitized emerald ash borers at various stages in their lives, and a program began to release them as a "biological control" into North American woods where the EAB had already appeared.

BUT NOW A THREAT TO BEECH TREES

If you have noticed dark stripes between the veins on the leaves of our local beech trees, you've detected the latest threat to our forests, beech leaf disease. Not much is known as yet about this disease, other than the fact that it is associated with infestation by a non-native nematode, a microscopic worm. First detected in northeastern Ohio in 2012, beech leaf disease appeared in southwestern Connecticut in 2019, and has spread to the forests of Massachusetts since then.

Where this pest originated and how it spreads is still not clear. However, the effects are obvious. Leaves that emerge in the spring with the characteristic discoloration turn leathery, curl, and drop prematurely from the tree as effected branches die back to the trunk. Young trees are more susceptible and typically die within a few years of infection. Older trees tend to hang on a couple of years longer before they too die.

A couple of pesticides have shown some effectiveness at controlling the nematode when applied as foliar sprays or injected into the tree trunks. This sort of treatment may provide protection for landscape specimens but can't stop the spread of the disease through our woods.

American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*) is a mainstay of our woods, supporting numerous native insects and producing oily nuts in late summer that feed a wide range of wildlife, including squirrels, chipmunks, black bear, deer, foxes, ruffed grouse, ducks, and wild turkeys. Beech trees are also popular nesting habitat for songbirds such as wood thrushes, scarlet tanagers, and our state bird, the black-capped chickadee.

These biological controls, according to Dr. Rutledge, have proven effective in reducing EAB populations to a low level.

However, they were most effective in preventing ash tree deaths if they were introduced early, when EAB had just arrived in an area and before its population had exploded. Unfortunately, the beetles' arrival in a community often went undetected until they were already very numerous and the trees began to die.



Dr. Rutledge and her colleagues found a reliable early detection system in the activities of a native wasp, the smokey winged beetle bandit. Female wasps of that species sting and paralyze wood-boring beetle that they bring back to their subterranean nests to save as food for their offspring. Dr. Rutledge and her colleagues have found that the beetle bandit is adept at locating any EAB beetles in the area. The wasp likes to excavate its nests in the soft, sandy soil of baseball infields. Dr.

Rutledge enlisted a host of citizen scientists to watch baseball fields with beetle bandit colonies, equipping the volunteers with nets to catch and release the wasps as they bring their prey home. This has proven to be a very efficient EAB detection system.

The combination of early detection and biological control offer hope for the future of our ash trees. Although all of our native ashes are vulnerable when attacked by large populations of EAB, some individual trees have proven resistant when exposed to smaller infestations.

Indeed, according to Dr. Rutledge, some 40 percent of our native white ashes, the most common species in our woods, have shown such resistance and can survive the more limited attacks. Some individuals of the green ash, popular as a street tree, have also proven similarly resistant. This has led Dr. Rutledge to feel some optimism for the future of this genus of trees.

“Kiss Your Ash Good-Bye” was the title of an article in the April 2013 issue of this paper. Thanks to the expertise of our forest scientists, this advice seems to have been premature. 🍷



FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

Our former Highway Superintendent, **Brad Curry**, was pictured on the cover of the Country Journal for August 22. In the adjoining article related to the photo, Brad reported that his department was working well. It appears that he is dealing in Huntington with many of the same issues he dealt with in Sandisfield: grant funding, culvert repair and replacement, road grading, paving contractors, what to do with surplus equipment. We wish Brad well and were glad to see him in the paper. 🍷

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FOR A PIG ROAST

LIVE MUSIC • FOOD • BOUNCY HOUSE

Saturday, September 14th, 5pm

Free Event • All Ages Welcome

RSVP by 9.4.24

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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

Sandisfield Ladies Book Club, September 26, Thursday at 6:30. We will meet to discuss “The Violin Conspiracy” by Brendan Slocumb. A musical thriller featuring a black classical musician’s desperate quest to recover his lost violin on the eve of the the most prestigious musical competition in the world. This month’s meeting will take place at the Sandisfield Library.

Games Night at the Library, September 18 starting at 6:30 p.m. 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 smile and your friends. We’d love see them all. Light refreshments provided.

All month long – It is never too late to participate in the Massachusetts Center for the Book 2024 Reading Challenge. September’s book is a debut book by a Massachusetts author.

October 12, Saturday, at 1:00 p.m.

Arr me matey, partake in me Pirate adventures at the Sandisfield public Library with Ed the Wizard.

Treasure Hunt:

- Search for: Rings, Doubloons, Tattoos, Gem Stones, and more!
- Each Pirate receives an Eye Patch, Pirate hat, a Treasure Chest to fill, and Balloon Sword
- After the treasure hunt – a cookie and ice cream feast!

LATEST ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY SHELVES

(adult fiction and non-fiction)

- *Fall Crafts Across Cultures* by Bogart Spaniol
- *Practice* by Rosalind Brown
- *The Dark Wives* by Ann Cleeves
- *Spirit Crossing* by William Kent Kreuger
- *The Mercy of Gods* by James S. A. Corey
- *A Sorceress Comes to Call* by T Kingfisher
- *The Full Moon Coffee Shop* by Mai Mochizuki

- *The Seventh Veil of Salome* by Silvia Moreno-Garcia
- *Hum* by Helen Phillips
- *By Any Other Name* by Jodi Picoult
- *Angel of Vengeance* by Douglas Preston
- *Fire and Bones* by Kathy Reichs
- *Joy* by Daniele Steel
- *The New Whole 30* by Melissa Urban
- *State of Paradise* by Laura Van Den Berg
- *A Council of Dolls* by Mona Susan Power

Older Children

- *Pokemon Super Duper Extra Deluxe Essential Handbook* by Scholastic
- *Cat on the Run in Cucumber Madness* by Aaron Blabey



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A Nice Place to Visit

THE MILL RIVER STORE IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Story and photos by Larry Dwyer



Black raspberries

Occasionally on my way to Great Barrington I'll stop by the Mill River Store. In August I noticed fresh produce on sale, so I bought some black raspberries, currants, and cherries. I tried the black raspberries and they were simply out of this world. They were totally unlike the bitter and flavorless blackberries you

often get in the supermarket. They were sweet and delicious, unlike any I have ever tasted before.

I asked about the source of the fruit and was told that most of the produce in the store is locally grown.

In 2011 in The Times, I reported on the closing of the Monterey General Store. Since then, most of the other general stores in this region have closed as well and I have always wondered how the store in Mill River had survived.

It seems that the Mill River store survived by completely revamping itself.

Dave Herrick, who operated the store for 25 years, sold it in 2017 to Jessica Holcomb who then operated the store, but it began to fail and, ultimately, she closed the store in January 2020. The post office, which was in the same building, was relocated, causing some inconvenience to customers.

Eventually the store was bought by a mother and son team, Jan Johnson and her son, Pete Chapin.

A former Wall Street lawyer and who worked for Disney for 11 years, Jan Johnson grew up on a farm where her father and grandfather kept bees. In 2004, when she moved to the Berkshires, she did the same, creating Berkshire Wildflower Honey in southern Mill River. In 2013, the team bought 32 acres more where mother and son started the Mill River Farm.

Having purchased the Mill River Store, Johnson and Chapin turned it into an outlet for the products from their farm. These included fresh greens, eggs, chickens, turkeys, and bacon and ham from the farm, as well as creamed honey, lotions, lip balms, and candles from their ten beehives.

The store also sells products from other local farms such as Nourse Farms, Yonder Fruit Farms, Klien's Kill Fruit Farm, dairy from High Lawn Farm, and cheeses from Four Fat Fowl. Homemade breads and baked goods are provided by Deb Bernardini, a professional baker from Southfield.



Deb Bernardini provides fresh baked goods.



To maintain the character of a traditional general store, the Post Office was also brought back to the building, to the delight of local customers.

The limited seating on the porch is in high demand by local residents.

The Mill River Store, 2024

DINE IN OR TAKEOUT

- ★ *New Summer Menu!*
- *HOUSE SPECIAL PRIME RIB
(served every thursday-saturday)
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- Sept 6th Scott Silvia 6:30pm
- Sept 7th Alex Rohan Band 8pm
- KTI Car & Bike Meet & Greet
Every Monday 6pm
- Sept 13th Jason & Trev 6pm
- Sept 14th Whiskey City 8pm
- Sept 15th Boondocks & Blossoms
Paint & Sip 1pm (sign-up on Facebook)
- Sept 21st Even It Up Band 8pm
- Sept 22 Hilltown Blues Band 2pm
- Sept 28th Live Music TBD 8pm

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Cannabis in Sandisfield

Cont'd from p.3

guarded by a wise black dog that shies away from bears and foxes but otherwise is a good watchdog.

“We want to make life up here sustainable for us. I’d like to build greenhouses to grow vegetables, microgreens, a full circle of vegetables. Make our place into a kind of homestead.”

SAMA ON RT. 8

We stopped at SAMA Productions south of New Boston and met John Heck, a SAMA principal, and two of his team members, Conor Ford and Amy Goss. They were on-site to greet half a dozen inspectors from the Massachusetts Cannabis Commission who were on an official tour of the facility.


To avoid further conflict on Town Hill Road, SAMA moved to this 14-acre site in 2021 at the suggestion of Brian O’Rourke, a Selectman at the time. This site is on the east side of Rt. 8, two miles north of the Connecticut border.

The property has been cleared and fenced, with six greenhouses and a 5,000 square-foot warehouse for drying and processing almost ready to go. The facility seems to only need a piece here and a piece there, and it could be in operation.

Heck said that various delays, including difficult to obtain electrical equipment and other issues, had caused their project to be about a year behind schedule. He regretted that they had missed this year’s growing season. “Next spring” he said, “we’ll be ready to rock and roll.”

BMC AT VILLA MIA

The building and grounds at the former site of the restaurant Villa Mia were bought in 2021 by Berkshire Mountain Cannabis, after abandoning its project on North Beech Plain Road. BMC planned to turn Villa Mia into a retail store for cannabis and related products, announcing its intentions at an outreach meeting. The group’s attorney suggested the store could generate an estimated windfall of \$300,000 in tax revenue. BMC pointed out that Villa Mia would need an interior rebuild at an estimated cost of \$700,000. The proposal was approved and seemed ready to move into gear.

Three years later, however, the building remains unchanged and empty, though the For Sale sign is gone. BMC does not respond to phone calls or emails requesting information on its plans for the former Villa Mia. 



Who Doesn't Like a Pig Roast?

BUT THEY COULD USE A LITTLE HELP

By Times Reporters

Could you pitch in to help at the Recreation Committee's Pig Roast on Saturday afternoon, September 14, at the American Legion Hall?

The Committee needs two people to help check guests in on arrival. They also need a few people to help monitor the bounce house. If you would like to help, please message the Committee on ConnectSandisfield or send an email to sandisfeldevents@recreationcommittee.info.

And see the ad on page 13.

CRITTER CORNER . . .



A hummingbird moth and a butterfly compete for nectar one afternoon this summer.

Photo: Cindy Ragusa



Just out of curiosity...

If I could sell my house for \$_____, I would list my home this spring.

Text your answer to, or call 413.528.4859

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NEW MARLBOROUGH MEETING HOUSE

Meeting House events can sell out!

Buy tickets **ONLINE** at: nmmeetinghouse.org or call 413.229.5045



Sept 14 - 4:30 pm
From Mozart to Piazzolla:
A Panorama of Musical Expression
 World-class musicians, violinist Eugene Drucker, cellist Roberta Cooper, and pianist Gili Melamed-Lev thrill the audience with the music of Brahms, Beethoven, Piazzolla, Bartok, and Mozart.



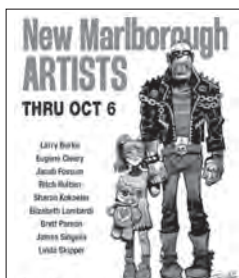
Sept 21 - 4:30 pm
ARKAI - Crossroads
 A thrilling afternoon with the award-winning electroacoustic violin and cello duo, Arkai. Arkai has inspired audiences around the world through their genre-defying string music, blending every-thing from classic ballads to fascinating and exciting new music.

Due to a generous grant from the Dr. Robert C. and Tina Sohn Foundation, **TICKETS FOR ARKAI ARE \$25.** \$10 Card to Culture /Community tickets also available



Oct 5 - 4:30 pm
Simon Winchester
 in Conversation with Journalist
Linda Greenhouse:
"Election 2024"

Simon Winchester, widely acclaimed author of more than 30 books, and Linda Greenhouse, longtime reporter on the Supreme Court for *The New York Times* and winner of the Pulitzer Prize, will discuss what is at stake in the upcoming elections. There will be plenty of time for questions.



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**The 26th Annual
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 The annual showcase of New Marlborough's finest fine art!

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

SEPTEMBER 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 is unnecessary. Led by Nina Carr. This fun program includes free play, crafts, stories, and songs! A great time to meet with friends and make 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.

State Primary, In-Person Voting on Tuesday, September 3 from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Old Town Hall on Silverbrook Road.

Pick Your Own Apples at Riiska Brook Orchard starting Saturday, September 7, from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. at 101 New Hartford Road. Check Facebook page and website at www.riiskabrookorchard.com.

New Boston Church Sunday Worship Service on Sunday, September 8 at 10:00 a.m. For more information and to view the calendar, visit newbostoncongregationalchurch.org. All are welcome. The New Boston Church is located on Route 57.

New Boston Inn's Mad Hatter Murder Mystery on Friday, September 13 from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. at the New Boston Inn located at the intersection of Routes 8 and 57 in Sandisfield. \$75.

Opening Reception-Third Annual Daniel Manacher Prize for Young

Artists on Saturday, September 14 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center at 5 Hammertown Road. The show runs until October 5 when the Arts Center is open for events. Free.

Pig Roast on Saturday, September 14 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the American Legion Post 456 on Route 8 sponsored by the Sandisfield Recreation Committee. Live music, food, bouncy house. This is a free event and all ages are welcomed. Please RSVP by September 4 to sandisfieldevents@recreationcommittee.info.

International Observe the Moon Day on Saturday, September 14 starting at 7:30 p.m. at Riiska Brook Orchard. Join Carol Ivers, Planetarium and Observatory Director from Central Connecticut State University to observe the moon using a reflecting telescope. Cloudy weather cancels. Free.

Gala Annual Fund-Raising Dinner. Honoring Ben Luxon on Saturday, September 21 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center at 5 Hammertown Road. The evening will include a delicious dinner prepared by Master Chef Adam Manacher and clips and remembrances of performances. \$75. For more information, visit sandisfieldartscenter.org.

"Dick and Jim." An Original Play about the friendship of Richard Avedon and James Baldwin on Saturday, September 28 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at 5 Hammertown Road. "Dick and Jim" is an original play by poet/playwright Neil Silberblatt tracing the friendship between a photographer and essayist/playwright/activist. For more information, visit sandisfieldartscenter.org. \$10-20.

New Boston Church Sunday Worship Service & 150th Celebration on Sunday, September 29 at 10:00 a.m. For more information and to view the calendar, visit newbostoncongregationalchurch.org. All are welcome. There will be a cookout following the service. The New Boston Church is located on Route 57, See article on page 8.

SAVE THE DATE

Landscape Geology: A Billion Years of Earth on Saturday, October 5 at 10 a.m., at the Sandisfield Arts Center. Professor Paul Karabinos, Chair of Geology, Williams College, will speak about the iconic Berkshire landscape and how diverse terrains captured in classic paintings reflect the underlying geology and recent glaciation. \$10.

ONLINE EVENTS

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

EVENTS IN SURROUNDING TOWNS

Berkshire Mobile Farmer's Market on Tuesdays from 12:30 to 3:00 p.m. at the Monterey Community Center. Pay what you can afford. Accepts state and federal food benefits. Meats, maple syrup, cheese, eggs, and vegetables.

New Marlborough Farmers Market on Sundays from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on the Village Green located in front of the Old Inn on the Green on Route 57.



**NEW BOSTON
CHURCH SERVICES**

September 8
September 29
*(Special guest speaker and
150th Anniversary
Commemoration Service)*

October 13

ALL WELCOME

Rt. 57 near New Boston Inn
newbostoncongregationalchurch.org

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(Anonymous)*

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