

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

Tribunus



Plebis

RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume I, Number 8

November, 2010

VOTE EARLY! VOTE SMART!



As we all should know, Tuesday, November 2nd is Election Day. We thought it would be helpful to give you a summary of the issues that are on the ballot. Every election is important. And since we live in such a small town, it is important that we all vote to make sure that our voice is heard throughout Berkshire County and beyond.

In this article we present not only a list of Offices that are up for election, but three very important Ballot Questions.

OFFICES ON THE BALLOT

- GOVERNOR
- LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR
- ATTORNEY GENERAL
- SECRETARY OF STATE
- TREASURER
- AUDITOR
- REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS
- COUNCILLOR
- SENATOR IN GENERAL COURT
- REPRESENTATIVE IN GENERAL COURT
- DISTRICT ATTORNEY
- SHERIFF



BALLOT QUESTIONS:

Question 1

Sales Tax on Alcoholic Beverages:

The proposed law would remove the Massachusetts sales tax on alcoholic beverages and alcohol, where the sale of such beverages and alcohol or their importation into the state is already subject to a separate excise tax under state law. The proposed law would take effect January 1, 2011.

What does this mean?

The question would repeal the current 6.25% sales tax on beer, wine and liquor imposed last year. Before last year Massachusetts had no sales tax on the purchase of alcohol. However, there was an excise tax on alcohol purchases.

FOR: The group in favor of this repeal (Committee to Repeal the Alcohol and Sales Tax) claims that the sales tax has hurt small business owners who sell alcohol, particularly near New Hampshire, which has no sales tax on alcohol. They claim that they have seen a decline in business in those stores.

AGAINST: The group against the repeal (Committee Against Repeal of the Alcohol Tax) of the sales tax believes that since alcohol is not a necessity, it does not deserve a special tax exemption. The only goods in Massachusetts that are exempt from sales tax are necessities like food, clothing and prescriptions. Revenues from the alcohol tax provide dedicated funding for health care services for more than 100,000 residents with behavioral health problems. Massachusetts has some of the highest rates of alcohol and drug abuse in the country. Most states have a sales tax on alcohol in addition to excise taxes. If the tax is repealed it is believed that Massachusetts will face a budget deficit.

Cont'd p.1

GOT MILK?

Patricia Hubbard



Photo by Patricia Hubbard

A very small farm in Sandisfield is becoming the epicenter of a very large controversy. The issue at hand revolves around a "Cease and Desist Order" issued to Brigitte Ruthman of Joshua's Farm on Dodd Road. The order, issued on August 6th by the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture and Resources (MDAR) ordered her to "cease and desist the distribution of raw milk."

Brigitte operates a one-cow shareholder dairy and was distributing raw milk to the three people that invested in the cow. Brigitte also raises a range of heirloom chickens at her farm and sells the eggs to individuals and some of the more prestigious local inns.

This is a complicated story. We have already received two different Letters to the Editor regarding Brigitte's plight and the impact it has on small farmers throughout Berkshire County. There is the question of raw milk: why are the laws so restrictive and why do they vary so much from state to state? There is the question of herd-share: should a farmer be able to provide a product to other "owners" of his (or her) livestock? There is the question of what it takes to survive as a small farmer. Caught in the middle is Brigitte Ruthman, a farmer who has decided to fight the establishment to maintain what she believes are her inalienable rights.

Cont'd p.3



TOWN BUSINESS

Rhee Kasky

This new monthly column will highlight the business addressed by the Select Board at their weekly meetings. We hope that you find it helpful.

September 7 - Selectmen attending: Patrick Barrett, Jeff Gray. Also Attending: Joe Zeller, Acting Road Foreman.

Absent: Richard Campetti, Dolores Harasyko (Town Clerk).

Joe Zeller presented: Chapter 90 Project Request for 850 tons of gravel to be used on Upper Sears Road, South and North Beech Plain Roads, Roberts Road and Silverbrook Road.

Fall Grading has begun.

Discussed culvert and header walls replacement on Route 57, and culvert replacement needs on Town Hill Road (by Abbey Road).

Joe recommended stockpiling 10 tons of cold patch for winter pothole repairs.



September 13: Selectmen attending: Patrick Barrett, Richard Campetti, Jeff Gray. Joe Zeller (Acting Road Foreman).

Absent: Dolores Harasyko (Town Clerk).



He dug a pit and fell into it himself

Road Hill residents expressed concerns about truckers and logging trucks using the long portion of the road. Doug Rocco reported that trucks create noise, dust and traffic on this dirt

road. Residents complain that this recently graded road is beginning to show wear and tear. Marty Cormier, representing residents Hank and Joyce Zelek, whose property is being logged, said he would meet with loggers and request they take the shorter route to Rte 183.

Tom Ryan reviewed need to update town forestry plan following ice storm of 2008. Grants are available. Deadlines to apply are between September 30, 2010 and May 30, 2011.

Library renovations have interfered with handicap accessibility to front door. Building Inspector will follow up.

Announcements for Road Superintendent position will be placed in the Berkshire Eagle and Berkshire Record. Closing date for applications is October 6, 2010 at 4 pm. Additional need to replace Bill O'Brien, retiring from road crew on December 31.



September 20 - Selectman attending: Patrick Barrett, Richard Campetti, Jeff Gray. Dolores Harasyko (Town Clerk); Joe Zeller (Acting Road Foreman).

Steve Harasyko provided update on volunteer work being done at Yanner Park. Land being cleared, trees removed, weeding under way. Labor and equipment have been donated.

Clare English explained Free Cash Account. Monies not spent at the end of each fiscal year are rolled into Free Cash Account. Clare requested a transfer of \$3,000 from Free Cash to Tax Lien Account to pay legal fees related to properties upon which a lien has been placed. There was a request for an \$18,000 transfer to the Highway and Bridges Account to cover the cost of blacktop that was ordered in July but not budgeted properly.

Elaine O'Brien, representing the Board of Assessors, recommended a transfer of \$100,000 from Overlay Reserve Account (accumulating since 1980's) to offset the tax rate. (The Overlay Reserve Account is established annually to fund anticipated property tax abatements, exemptions and uncollected taxes in that year. This fund is not established by the normal appropriations process, but rather is raised on the tax capitulation sheet.) The FY2010 tax rate is \$8.63 per thousand and the projected rate for 2011 is \$9.41. Transfer of funds would lower the 2011 rate to \$9.00. This will be an article on Warrant at the October 13th Meeting.

Approved request for sign on River Road stating "Slow, Pedestrians". Signs will be placed at both ends of the road since it is popular with walkers.

Dump stickers will remain at \$20 per household. Annual business license fees will not be raised.



September 27 - Selectmen attending: Patrick Barrett, Jeff Gray. Dolores Harasyko (Town Clerk) Joe Zeller (Acting Road Foreman).

Absent: Richard Campetti.

Fire Inspection Fees will increase by \$5.00 effective October 1, 2010.

Robert Minery from Cold Spring Road requested help regarding perc tests for his property. There is currently a lien on the property and a pending court case and the Environmental Protection Agency has stopped Mr. Minery from installing a well. Sandisfield Board of Health also denied permission at this time.

Rte 8 House- Patrick Barrett reported that the Gross house will be reviewed in court on October 20, 2010, at which time we will seek an injunction on the property.

Yanner Park - Question regarding disposition of wood from site. Town cannot donate the wood to any town or private organization, and cannot profit from the sale of the wood. Determination will be made whether wood should be given to volunteers in exchange for their time and use of equipment. Town Council will be consulted.

After a follow up discussion regarding the previous week's recommendation that an item be placed on the October 13th Special Town Meeting warrant regarding the transfer of funds, it was determined that the School Committee did not anticipate needing additional town money this year (thus taking the pressure off of that line item in the budget.) The item will not be on the Warrant.

Joe Zeller reported on highway projects:

Culvert work at Silverbrook Road/Rte 57.

Culvert work at an area below the post office will begin in two weeks.

Next in line are culvert repairs on Town Hill and Stump Road and smaller repairs on Tolland Road.

Request for gravel approved.



October 4 - Selectmen attending: Patrick Barrett, Richard Campetti, Jeff Gray. Dolores Harasyko (Town Clerk), Joe Zeller (Acting Road Foreman).

Susan Van Sickle appointed to School Committee for remainder of year.

Margaret O'Clair reviewed Board of Health staff issues. There have been inappropriate time sheets, inconsistent office hours (more than provided for in the budget) and problems with floor space. The Treasurer notified Margaret, as Health Board Chair, that the board must approve time sheets and bills with original, not photocopied sheets and there must be original signatures on the sign off.

Joe Zeller reported that we: put in for sand from the county bid; plowing Tannery Road; and the firehouses.

Patrick Barrett explained Open Meeting Law. Public can attend and participate in any open meeting. However, Chairperson must recognize the speaker from the floor.



October 13 - Selectmen attending: Patrick Barrett, Richard Campetti, Jeff Gray. Joe Zeller (Acting Road Foreman), Dolores Harasyko (Town Clerk).

Assessor Elaine O'Brien and Clerk Jackie Bitso were present for Tax Classification Public Hearing. Elaine answered questions and explained the different tax classifications. Selectmen voted and passed unanimously on Elaine's recommendations. (The Sandisfield Times will write a story next month explaining the different tax classifications).

Plans have been received for the Route 8 & 57 bridge replacement project. Jeff Gray will review and present any questions at the next Selectmen's meeting.

Warrants for the November 2, 2010 state election reviewed and signed.

Highway Department wrapping up blacktopping and continuing fall grading.

Furnaces in all town buildings will be cleaned.

Yanner Park - The upper field has been cleared, the old foundation has been removed and the remains are at the front of the park to serve as a base for the parking lot. Next steps are stump removal and bulldozer

Cont'd on p.7



Photos by Patricia Hubbard

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Musings from Quill Hill

Patricia Hubbard


It's November. Today the wind is blowing very hard up here, and the colorful leaves are pretty much gone. Do you think that we, in Sandisfield, are more attuned to the change in season than people

who live elsewhere? I am beginning to think that we are. This month, turkeys seem to be a recurring theme. Margaret O'Claire educates us about them in her Avian Notes, and Adam Manacher provides us with tips about how to make Thanksgiving easier on the chef.

And it makes me realize that I have been thinking about turkeys a great deal over the last few months. Anyone who drives around our roads encounters them almost daily. They start out as little birds with pinfeathers, and look at them now! I've been thinking about the mother turkeys and their rafter of young. Have you noticed how they seem to believe in group activities? There always appears to be at least two mothers, sometimes more, with young turkeys of all ages. I keep thinking how very smart they are about child rearing. One mother takes the lead, and one mother watches their backs. It is what a community really should be all about. Helping each other out. And as we move into the holiday season, it is something to consider. How can we help each other?

Our Good Samaritan column did not have a submission this month. So, think about what you can do...small or large...to help a neighbor. I know I appreciated all of the good wishes that I received over the last month. Sometimes, just letting someone know that you care is more meaningful than you can imagine.

This is election season. And although we are not voting for a new president, we are voting for our governor, and there are three important questions on the ballot. We have tried to give you a brief overview of those questions, with the arguments pro and con for each. Your vote is always important. So take the time to understand the ballot questions, and please Vote.

Stay warm. Have a great Thanksgiving. And stay in Touch. 

Patricia

GOT MILK?

Cont'd from p.1

So where to start? We are going to publish this story in parts...since it is too large for a single issue of our small newspaper. And since this is an ongoing battle, we will be able to provide updates on Brigitte's progress.

Let's start with the background:

Brigitte spent time as a herdsman on a dairy farm in Vermont when she was a teenager, and was smitten. She knew then that she wanted to run a dairy farm, but she wanted to do it "her way". She earns her living as a reporter for the *Waterbury Republican Newspaper*, but farming is her passion.

Brigitte started her farm in Sandisfield in 1996. She cleared the land herself over a period of many years. She built a log house in a way that she believed would preserve the field. She created beautiful free flowing gardens, and she built a chicken coop. She began by raising free-range chickens and selling their eggs. And then she built her dairy barn with old timbers from a demolished 1700's barn.

She believed that raising cows was what she was meant to do. She conducted extensive research and in 2009 she bought Daisy, a milking shorthorn (an heirloom breed with a great temperament). Brigitte drove Daisy home from Vermont in her car (yes, her car!) and raised Daisy from a newborn because it was less expensive than buying a full-grown heifer. Brigitte had a plan. She was going to get a good breeding calf and slowly increase her herd.


On April 6, 2010, Daisy gave birth to her first calf. She had a difficult delivery, and gave birth to a very large calf. Since there was no vet on call, Brigitte delivered the calf herself. The reward was a healthy female calf which led Brigitte to believe that many dairying days were ahead of her.

So Daisy began producing milk to feed her calf, and Brigitte was ready to embark on her raw milk venture. Brigitte was determined to provide half of Daisy's milk to Ruby Mae (the calf) and half to the three investors who were interested in obtaining raw milk.

The law in Massachusetts states that a farm must be a licensed Class A Dairy to sell either raw or pasteurized milk. The rules do not address herd shares. It is technically not illegal to drink unprocessed milk from a cow you own.


Brigitte investigated turning her farm into a licensed Class A Dairy. She believes it would cost her close to \$80,000 to meet the standards required. She doesn't have that money lying around, and as she says "No banker would loan me money for one or two cows". (I guess it is kind of a Chicken or the Egg kind of tale. She is too small to get the money required to grow large enough to qualify for a loan).

Brigitte has a top-notch law firm in Boston working on her behalf. Her objective is to "make this work. Not do battle".

Next month we will look at what raw milk is all about. It is a food source that is growing in popularity and yet seems to be under fire both here, in Berkshire County, and throughout the country. 

ROUTE 8 HOUSES - THE SCOOP SO FAR

The first step in fulfilling the Town Vote to remove the two houses on South Main Street (Rte. 8) was accomplished early in September with the demolition of the Wilber House, pictured below. On Wednesday, October 20, Charlie Kaniecki of the Massachusetts State Board of Health, along with Sandisfield Board of Health members Margaret O'Clair and Kathleen Faricelli-Segrin, went to the Pittsfield Housing Court seeking an order to tear down the condemned house at 93 South Main Street. The Court granted this request and, using free cash funds that were

procured for this project at the Annual Town Meeting, the Town move forward as soon as possible with the demolition of this house. The Sandisfield Board of Selectmen would like to thank Mr. Kaniecki and Kathleen for their help on this project. A special thanks to Margaret O'Clair for the many years and numerous hours she has spent trying to rectify the situation. We look forward to seeing this project through to completion and creating a safe and beautiful downtown area in which our community can take pride. 



Photos by Patricia Hubbard



THE SANDISFIELD ARTS CENTER

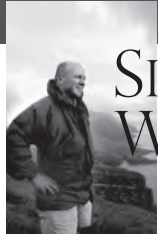
5 HAMMERTOWN RD, SANDISFIELD, MA
413-258-4100
WWW.SANDISFIELDARTSCENTER.ORG

FRIDAYS IN NOVEMBER
7:30PM \$5



Diego Ongaro hosts
Classic 70's Noir
Nov. 5 *The Conversation*
Nov. 12 *Taxi Driver*
Nov. 19 *Chinatown*

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 27TH 8PM
\$20



SIMON WINCHESTER

This local author will talk about his latest book

ATLANTIC: Great Sea

Battles, Heroic Discoveries, Titanic Storms, and a Vast Ocean of a Million Stories.

Photo: Setsuko Winchester

SATURDAY DECEMBER 11TH 7PM
ADULTS \$5/CHILDREN UNDER 14 FREE

THE EXTRAVAGANZA

In its short history The Extravaganza has included choral music, plays, story telling, community singing, children's choirs and dance groups, all celebrating this wonderful festive time of year. Everyone is welcome. There will be the traditional mulled wine, sweets and cakes and cookies.



THRU DECEMBER 11TH

CATA ART SHOW

FREE

Artwork by Eric Schumann



COMMUNITY ACCESS TO THE ARTS (CATA) offers arts workshops to over 500 people with disabilities throughout

Berkshire County. CATA artwork tours throughout the region allowing the community to witness first hand the talents of the artists with disabilities. The exhibit includes paintings, prints and drawings made in workshops led by faculty artists **Pat Hogan, Marlene Marshall, Senta Reis and Michael Wolski.**



Question 2 Comprehensive Permits for Low- or Moderate-Income Housing



Cont'd from p.1

The existing state law allows qualified organizations wishing to build government-subsidized housing (including low or moderate-income units) to apply for a single comprehensive permit from a city or town's zoning board of appeals (ZBA). This ballot question, if passed, would repeal this law, requiring those organizations to obtain separate permits from each local agency or official having jurisdiction over any aspect of the proposed housing. The repeal would take effect on January 1, 2011, but would not stop or affect a proposed housing project that had already received both a comprehensive permit and a building permit for at least one unit.

What does this mean?

Under the existing law the ZBA must hold a public hearing on all applications for low- or moderate-income housing, and consider the recommendations of local agencies and officials. The ZBA may grant a comprehensive permit that may include conditions or requirements concerning the height, site plan, size, shape or building materials of the housing. If there is a concern regarding the ZBA decision, the applicants may appeal to the State Housing Appeals Committee (HAC).

A ZBA decision must be "consistent with local needs", which means 10% of the city's or town's housing units are low- or moderate-income units, or such units are on sites making up at least 1.5% of the total private land zoned for residential, commercial, or industrial use in the city or town. (That assumes, of course, that the city or town has zoning restrictions in place).

FOR: The group in favor of (Coalition for the Repeal of 40B) repealing the law believes that this will ensure that quality affordable housing is built and remains for the people who need it, and that Massachusetts needs more affordable housing for the aging, the next generation, teachers and public employees. They say that the current law promotes subsidized, high density housing on any parcel of land without regard to local regulations, the neighborhood or the environment. By stripping away local control, the law has destroyed communities in rural, suburban and urban neighborhoods.

AGAINST: The group opposed to the repeal (Campaign to Protect the Affordable Housing Law) says that this referendum would abolish the primary tool to create affordable housing in Massachusetts without providing any alternatives. They also say that the Affordable Housing Law protects seniors and working families and enables them to buy houses in Massachusetts. In addition, this group insists that construction jobs will not be maintained as a result of the law. Although the repeal states that it will not affect previously approved projects, the group opposed to appeal states that thousands of previously approved homes will not be built.

Question 3 Sales and Use Tax Rates

This proposed law would reduce the state sales and use tax rate (which was 6.25% as of September 2009) to 3% as of January 1, 2011. It would make the same reduction in the rate used to determine the amount to be deposited with the State Commissioner of Revenue by non-resident building contractors as security for the payment of sales and use tax on tangible personal property used in carrying out their contracts. The proposed law provides that if the 3% rate does not produce enough revenue to satisfy any lawful pledge of sales, rates would instead be reduced to the lowest level allowed by law. This would not affect the collection of monies due the Commonwealth prior to January 1, 2011.

What does this mean?

The obvious implication is the reduction in state sales tax. However, the impact of changing the sales tax is complicated. It is important to determine whether the financial benefit from reducing state sales tax will offset the loss in state revenue. And, for us, in Sandisfield, we need to think about how much we need from the state in support. It seems clear that businesses along the New Hampshire border are more sensitive to the sales tax discrepancy than we might be. We certainly might like the idea of paying less for our purchases, but the question is, what is the real cost of this change? It is important to really think through the question. We are including a chart that shows the impact on the town of Sandisfield.

FOR: The group in favor (Alliance to Roll Back Taxes) states that the sales tax was raised last year to 6.25% and that jobs were lost. (It is unclear if there is a direct correlation between the two events).

They also state the following:

- A "yes" vote to roll back taxes will
- Create 32,929 productive, sustainable jobs
- Give back an average of \$688 – every year to each taxpayer
- Save Northern Massachusetts Retail Businesses and jobs by keeping shoppers here
- Attract shoppers from Rhode Island, Vermont, Connecticut and New York.

AGAINST: The group against the sales tax repeal (Massachusetts Coalition for our Communities) states that the current sales tax helps pay for our schools (see chart next page), police, fire protection, safe roads and bridges, clean water and quality health care. Our communities rely on local aid to pay for schools, public safety and emergency services. This proposal would take away about \$2.5 billion in state revenue. That is about half the total amount that the state sends to our communities each year to help pay for public education.



Book Review

By Val Coleman

ATLANTIC

GREAT SEA BATTLES, HEROIC DISCOVERIES, TITANIC STORMS, AND A VAST OCEAN OF A MILLION STORIES

BY SIMON WINCHESTER



It's a wonderful book. No, it's more than a wonderful book, it's a great steamship of a book that takes you on a voyage east from New York harbor, south from the Greenland Sea, west from Gibraltar and Luanda and north from the Antarctic. First, there's the language, then there's the science and then, possibly best of all, there are the narratives. Oh, the narratives! Some of the best are Simon Winchester's own adventures in Godforsaken places like the Faroe Islands and the Skeleton Coast of Africa. Then there are the stories of the far-ranging Phoenicians, the pirates (Black Bart, Captain Kidd, Edward Morgan, Mary Read and Anne Bonny) and the unspeakable slave trade.

Let me get this part right. In barely nine pages, Winchester encapsulates the "middle passage", the brutish slinging of 11 million human beings across the Atlantic buried head to toe in the holds of "barques

and brigs or three-masted square rigged vessels." He tells us about the "slave castles" on the African coast, strange overbuilt mock ups of European castles that sit on top of bestial dungeons where the slaves, plucked from the interior, were held for transport west to the Americas. There is the "final indignity" of the passage, a "slave scramble" in which a crowd of buyers "like a crazed mob at a department store sale" rush aboard the ships to make their selections from the fettered slaves thrown onto the quarterdeck. It's numbing stuff.

And more. One has to talk about Winchester's crisp, graceful prose. It's hard to explain what happens; you get carried along in a sort of "Simon Dance," a tempo all his own that seems to make everything bearable. In fact, it occurred to me that this very book, *Atlantic*, a rich mixture of both science and story telling, is something of a paradigm, a gathering of all of Winchester's work. This work of non-fiction is so full of information, so brilliantly rendered, that it may stand alone as a reference work on the Atlantic Ocean. As such, I think we should have a deeper, more scholarly index.

And I must tell you about the "science". The Atlantic Ocean took its current shape about 10 million years ago, and is the result of several hundred million years of shifting plates and continents which Winchester, the geologist, leads us through most lucidly. And that, in turn, can lead us to the question of how he handles global warming with all its drowning shorelines and controversy. He does just fine, thank you. He reports the latest facts about melting glaciers and rising seas. He even scans the possibility that we are entering a natural warming cycle, but the hard facts of

man-made intrusion into the chemistry of our planet are there as well. A testier Winchester appears in a chapter entitled "Change and Decay All Around The Sea". With a bow to Rachel Carson and a fascinating turn on the pioneers of flight across the ocean, he tells us that aircraft in flight are "dirty and fuel-hungry monsters" that are poisoning our precious globe. "A fully laden Boeing 777 traveling from London to New York will stream out fully seventy tons of carbon dioxide." And there is more, of course. The emissions of ships and the awful effect of industrial waste. But just when you are despairing about an oxygen-deprived planet, Winchester, like any good literary magician, opens another door reporting the recent discovery of *Prochlorococcus*, minute sea creatures that come in the trillions and produce approximately one fifth of the oxygen we breathe.

All in all, this is a grand parade of a book, full of the adventures, the optimism and the thrill of well-spoken history. Vikings and Norsemen vie with Christopher Columbus and John Cabot. Longboats and square riggers make way for the destroyers and aircraft carriers of World War II. Roosevelt and Churchill are here, signing the Atlantic Charter in August of 1941.

There is even a touch of poetry.

Read this book, it's a rouser!

Atlantic: Great Sea Battles, Heroic Discoveries, Titanic Storms, and a Vast Ocean of a Million Stories will be published by HarperCollins, New York, November 2nd. 📖

How a "yes" vote on Question 3 could impact our school budget:

(Source: www.votenoquestion3.com)

	State Aid	ARRA*	Question 3	One-year cut	Cut since '08
Sandisfield total	962,250	-62,065	-109,696	-18 %	-25 %
<i>Municipality:</i>					
Sandisfield					
Local aid	104,068	-6,712	-11,864	-18 %	-10 %
Roads and bridges	259,454	-16,735	-29,578	-18 %	-16 %
Local aid total	363,522	-23,447	-41,442	-18 %	-14 %
<i>School district:</i>					
Farmington River					
Chapter 70	412,520	-26,608	-47,027	-18 %	-16 %
Student transportation	166,591	-10,745	-18,991	-18 %	-48 %
Special education (est)	5,548	-358	-632	-18 %	-70 %
Other aid	14,069	-907	-1,604	-18 %	-57 %
District total	598,728	-38,618	-68,254	-18 %	-31 %

* The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) added \$2 billion in federal funds to Massachusetts' budget this year. Those funds expire after the FY2011 budget.

If the Fire Department Can't Find You, They Can't Save Your Life!

Do you have a reflective house number in front of your home? The Sandisfield Volunteer Fire Department has asked that we remind every resident of the town that you need to have a reflective house number at the end of your driveway, and that you need to make sure that it is visible and not covered with bushes. If the Fire Department or Ambulance Corps can't find your house, they can't be there when you need them. According to Fire Chief Ralph Morrison the problem of identifying houses is becoming more pressing as new houses are built in the area, and as old house numbers don't get replaced.

To order the house numbers you can obtain a form at Town Hall Annex, or at A&M Auto. Make sure that you insure the safety of your family by displaying the numbers in a visible manner.



AVIAN NOTES

Margaret O'Clair

TURKEYS

Everyone knows that Benjamin Franklin thought the wild turkey a more worthy choice for our national emblem than the Bald Eagle. Furthermore, John James Audubon chose the wild turkey for Plate No. 1 in his seminal work, *Birds of America*. The wild turkey was an important food source for the early settlers and even though the colonists brought domesticated turkeys with them from Europe we know they continued to hunt the plentiful wild ones. It was most likely the steady loss of habitat that led to the demise of the turkey in the northeast. The wild turkey is a forest bird, it depends on the seeds, nuts and acorns found on the forest floor. True, it emerges into the open to eat insects, grasshoppers and even grass and wildflowers, but it must have the forest to roost at night. The steady expansion of open farmland along with the growth of cities and towns in the 18th and 19th centuries inevitably led to the loss of forests and therefore to the loss of the wild turkey.

After the Civil War – and the history of Sandisfield can attest to this – there was a huge shift of population away from marginal rural farms in the northeast. People moved to the cities and out west, and many farms were simply abandoned – so by the mid-20th century much of the northeastern forests had regrown and were thriving. Led by the pioneering efforts of the Ornithology Lab at Cornell University, the northeastern states were able to reintroduce the wild turkey to the region in the 1970s and 1980s. I saw a pair of wild turkeys on an isolated road in western Kentucky in 1964, a rare sight then; now I pay no attention to them crossing my lawn.

On to Thanksgiving...

All domestic turkeys are descended from our wild one. The native Americans of Mexico are believed to be the first to domesticate the turkey and the early conquistadors took some of them from the New World back to Europe in the early 16th century. The domesticated turkey reached England in 1524 where it was confused with the guinea-fowl which had reached Europe via Turkey – and both birds were called turkeys.

Today's Thanksgiving turkey bears little resemblance to the early domesticated varieties. First of all, it is a huge bird called the Broad Breasted White. Its breast is so large that a breeding male cannot mount a female and so all commercial turkeys must be artificially inseminated to produce eggs. (Please, no turkey-baster jokes.) The eggs are incubated and the chicks raised indoors in pens in thousands. The commercial turkey is also white for a reason: dark-feathered birds leave tiny pin-feather marks when plucked, giving the carcass an



Painting by James Audubon

unattractive appearance of being covered with blackheads.

The Broad Breasted White was developed for a purpose, to convert feed to meat, mostly breast, as quickly as possible in a crowded and stressful environment. The poor thing does a wonderful job.

Inevitably there was a reaction against this kind of industrial agriculture, and today there are hundreds of small farms and hatcheries trying to revive and popularize the old heritage breeds such as the Jersey Buff, Bronze, Bourbon Red and Narragansett. Hancock Shaker Village has a flock of the latter.

Whether it is a Butterball or a Bourbon Red – have a great Turkey Day! 🍗

Wine & Cheese Party at The Sandisfield Historical Society

The Sandisfield Historical Society will hold its annual "Wine and Cheese Party" on Sunday, November 7, 2010 from 2 to 4 PM. Come to the historical meeting house on Rt 183 in South Sandisfield, and meet with President Norton Fletcher who can tell you about some local history. This is a free event and everyone is welcome.

This is a great opportunity to meet your neighbors and friends from Sandisfield and other towns. We look forward to seeing you on the 7th. For further information and directions, call 258-4786 or 258-4520.

THE SANDISFIELD LIBRARY NEWS



Tara Beardsley, Library Trustee

Well folks, the Library held its second story hour on October 16th. The turnout? Not so good. The next one is scheduled for November 20th at 12:00. Laurie is planning to read stories pertaining to the Thanksgiving holiday. Come on parents, bring those children down - it's no fun without them!

Our Library Director, Sadie O'Rourke, is continuing to take classes to ensure the progression of our library's capabilities.

Donna Menta has agreed to act as a library volunteer in order to help Laurie as needed. Thanks Donna!

The Library Board has applied to the Cultural Council for a grant to develop a new and exciting Children's Program. We will let you know the details when they become available.

And here are our newest titles:

Backspin by Harlan Coben

Iris Country Courtship by Patrick Taylor

Fall of Giants by Ken Follett

Painted Ladies by Robert B. Parker

Let us know what other titles you would like to see in our library. We'll be sure to get them for you.

As a reminder once again, library hours are:

Monday & Tuesday: 9-12:30pm

Wednesday: 6:30-8:30 p.m

Thursday: 2:30-5:30pm

Saturday: 9-Noon

Closed Friday and Sunday

**** Please note: in the event of inclement weather please call the library at 258-4966 to confirm they will be open during normal business hours. ****

LIBRARY WISH LIST: A computer chair that they could use for the second computer station.

Thank you! 🍗

THE SANDISFIELD WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

Wednesday, November 17, 7PM - location to be determined. Potluck dinner and book selection meeting. All women welcome.

Info: Charleen Peet - 258-4166.

November's book is *The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society*, by Mary Ann Schaffer and Annie Barrows. Copies available at the library.

AN ATTIC TREASURE

By Lorraine German

Who would have suspected that a piece of Sandisfield's past would find its way into one of the most famous folk art museums in the country? But that's exactly what happened 35 years ago when a sign that had once hung on Allen Hawley's tavern was purchased by Colonial Williamsburg. The sign's fate might have taken quite a different turn had it not been for the enterprising auctioneer who was packing up the contents of a Winsted, CT home in the early 1970s. A colleague had told him that there was nothing of value left in the attic, but he decided to look for himself and found an old wooden sign tucked away under the eaves. It was a large sign, 3 ½ feet high and 4 ½ feet wide, with a lion painted on one side and an eagle on the other. Each side had the words A. Hawley's Inn painted in bold letters and the painter, a man named Rice, signed it in one corner. As it turned out, it wasn't just any tavern sign because the artist who painted it was William Rice, one of the best known sign painters of 19th century New England. Rice worked throughout the Connecticut River Valley and local newspapers carried advertisements for his shop in Hartford, CT 'at the sign of the lion' - a lion that might have looked very similar to the one on Hawley's sign.

The Hawley tavern was originally run by Allen's father, Zina, and was located two miles south of New Boston, near Hanging Mountain. One traveler, who stopped for the night on his way to Ohio in 1820, described his experience in a letter to his brother: "Put up at Z. Hawley's tavern; found Mr. H. an obliging man; his wife was rather morose and crabbed; but as I was only a pilgrim and stranger, thought little of it." The pilgrim continued on his journey the next day, following the road northward along the Farmington River on what is now Route 8.



Zina's wife, Lucy, died in 1825 and six years later, he and his new wife, Patience, left Sandisfield to join other family members in northeastern Ohio. A group of businessmen from Becket, MA had purchased land in the Western Reserve in 1810, and many families from Sandisfield and the surrounding towns settled there during the first decades of the 19th century. Allen Hawley took over his father's tavern after Zina's departure and commissioned Rice to paint a sign, possibly to advertise the change in ownership. The eagle on the sign has 24 stars scattered above it, which could indicate that it was painted prior to Arkansas' admission to the Union in 1836.

For reasons no longer known, Allen Hawley didn't stay in the tavern business and the 1850 Sandisfield census lists his occupation as farmer. The old sign that had hung outside his inn remained in the Hawley family until it was removed from that Winsted attic years later. It was sold at auction to a prominent Connecticut antiques dealer soon afterwards, and in 1975, it was purchased by Colonial Williamsburg, where it still proudly hangs in the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Museum.

Lorraine German and her husband Steve are the owners of Mad River Antiques, LLC in North Granby, CT. Steve's mother, Sylvia German, has lived in Montville since 1922.

TOWN BUSINESS

(Cont'd from p.2)

work. Jeff Gray is volunteering his dozer. There was discussion about the condition of the house on the property, which will probably have to come down. Fireplace could be saved and included in the pavilion. Volunteers will work until early November.

Dolores presented sealed applications for the Road Superintendent job for which ads were placed in the Berkshire Eagle and Berkshire Record for two weeks. Selectmen opened and reviewed applications and will set up interviews for the following week.



Sandisfield Conservation Commission meeting, September 21, 2010

Present: Richard Campetti, Chair; Susan Bubenas, Karen Cooley, George Green, Mary Turek.

Discussion regarding the Sanchez property. Registered letter received but no word from the property owner.

Request for a Certificate of Compliance received from Frances Schultz. Commission made a site visit. Unanimous vote to grant certificate.

Bill Crandall was present as requested. He was given a list of wetland environmental consultants and will keep the Commission informed.

Short discussion regarding Otis Woodlands (OWL) sending in a Notice of Intent (NOI) regarding the lake. According to the DEP, OWL had not filed the paperwork correctly nor had they submitted the correct amount of funds. A site visit has been set for October 5 at 5:00 pm.

Public hearing for Robert Minery. Lengthy discussion regarding the Request for Determination. Commission made a negative determination on the request.

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"Be true to your word and your work and your friend"

Henry David Thoreau

Sandisfield Historical Society Cookbook/Memoir Update



The committee met in September to discuss the format and contents of the cookbook and reviewed recipes submitted prior to 2010 to include in the book. We are asking for help from the community to identify these people and if possible, submit a little story about them.

The following are the names of the people who moved away or who are deceased and need to be identified: Melba Loof Burrow, Lucille Peterson, Diane Fredsall, Cynthia Matheson, Dottie Nichols, Joyce Campetti, Mary Ann Brown, Frank Vasquez, and Millie Priest.

If you know anything about the listed people, please call Josephine Freedman, 258-4786 or email freedmjl@aol.com, or write to P. O. Box 138 Sandisfield, MA 01255 with any information.

We continue to request recipes and/or memoirs

from anyone in town, so please help make this an outstanding historical book for the 250th anniversary celebration. Please call or send your submission to Josephine Freedman. We will continue to place recipe/memoir templates in the post office and library for your convenience.

Whatever you can offer us would be greatly appreciated. Thanks for your help. ♥

Josephine Freedman



Weather & Stars

Randy Siddell

ORION THE HUNTER HARBINGER OF WINTER, NURSERY OF STARS



Orion is one of the most recognizable constellations in the winter sky. As darkness descends Orion dominates the southeastern sky. Not only does Orion include some of the brightest stars, it is one of the few constellations that one can easily associate with the drawings of myth. Because of that, it is one of the first constellations most people learn to identify. Orion is also one of the most ancient constellations known in legend and accounts of it date back to earlier than 2000 B.C., even warranting a mention or two in the old testament of the bible.

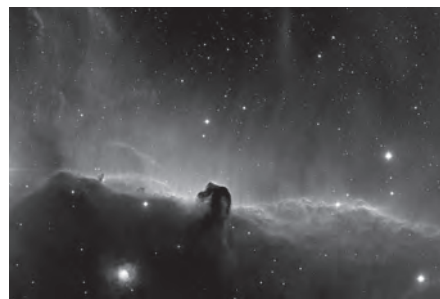
Known in Greek legends as The Hunter, in Chinese as Shen (also The Hunter) and in Arabic legend as Al-Jauza, the savior of Gilgamesh. As with most constellations each culture has handed down its own story. Some remarkable variations exist, such as the ancient Sumerian legend which describes the star pattern as a sheep, or the Aboriginal version which sees the star pattern as a canoe, though most see Orion as a great and powerful hunter or warrior. Greek mythology offers this version: Orion, a handsome giant and son of Poseidon, the sea god, declared his intention to marry Artemis, goddess of the hunt and the moon. Apollo, Artemis's brother, unhappy with

the match, tricked Artemis into killing Orion with an arrow from her bow. Artemis, in her sorrow, placed him among the stars, where he appears as a giant, with a girdle, sword, lion's skin, and club. Sirius, his dog, follows him, and the Pleiads fly before him.

Orion, often referred to as a stellar nursery, is a treasure trove of nebulae which are formed by residual gas and dust produced during star formation and illuminated by the newly formed stars. Perhaps the most easily recognizable nebula is the Horsehead, located near the left most star (Alnilam) in Orion's belt. Invisible to the naked eye, it can be seen in photographs, appearing as a sea horse swimming among mist and ocean waves. The Witch Head Nebula depicts an eerie resemblance to a witch gazing on Orion's brightest star, the blue supergiant, Rigel. Perhaps the most photographed object in the sky is the Orion's Great Nebula. Easily seen with the naked eye, it is actually what appears as the middle of the three stars that form the sword hanging from Orion's belt. The first credited astro-photo in history was taken in 1880 of the Great Nebula. The Flame Nebula often appears in the same photograph as the Great Nebula and gets its name from the brilliantly colored hydrogen gas cast off by a newly formed star.

Spectacular color photos of these nebula can easily be found online.

Clear skies. ♥



The Horse Head Nebula



The Witch Head Nebula

Photos by NASA



Lessons

*Last evening,
Mother moon came over,
Her bright pale face lit the night.
Her long dark hair
Settled over the hilltops,
Wrapping velvet strands around me.*

*"Tell me how to greet the morning, mother one!"
I asked.*

*"Watch the deer.
Be as gentle and as alert,
Learn the patience of the frog,
Move around the flowers
Like the hummingbird.*

*Remember the beaver
Who winters with his family
Under the snow and ice.
Observe the crows
Who understand congregation.*

*Contemplate the turtle
Who carries his home on his back.
Rest like the woodchuck.
In the heat of the day.
Be as loyal as the goose.*

*Practice the dignity of the heron.
Plan ahead like the chipmunk.
Glide carefully through life
Like the quiet snake.
Cooperate like the ant.
Try to die privately
Like the chickadee who found
A hole in the fencepost."*

*This is what the moon told me
And I am telling you.*

- Judi Friedman





Adam Manacher

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

The Thanksgiving turkey: the centerpiece of the meal, the pride of chef, and the bird that brings fear to the person responsible for preparing the feast. Will it be dry? Will it be cooked in time? Should I brine it? Should I deep-fry it? Should it be stuffed? How do I carve it? And all the family is there to give thanks, and, to critique. The pressure is enough to make the "black Friday" holiday shopping craze a pleasurable experience.

So, for this month's column I will offer a chef's therapy for the potential anxiety of cooking the holiday turkey. Cook it the day before! (I hear the gasps!) While this is a less romantic path, if you follow my little tricks to make sure it is tasty and succulent, you can still wow everyone at the table and have a house full of enticing aromas on the actual day.



I refuse to offer any advice as to the brining or stuffing or frying (which I've never attempted personally). General instructions and guidelines for their preparation can be found at the grocery store, in your favorite cookbook or through on-line web sites. The one suggestion for fresh, farm-raised birds (Pigs Fly, Snow Farm, etc.) is that they take less time to cook... so beware. Be sure you have a good thermometer to follow the temperature.

Since I suggest cooking the day before, you should cook the bird just to the minimum for doneness. The following day I propose the following steps to a great turkey meal. If the turkey is stuffed, remove all the stuffing. Carve the cooked turkey the morning of the meal. (Again, I hear the gasps). For me carving a whole turkey at the table is an overrated event. Everyone is waiting, other food is getting cool, and it's usually a mess. Trade in the drama of carving for the

calm and control of a well-orchestrated feast. Remove the white breast meat in two whole sections and set them aside covered with foil. For the dark meat remove the legs and thighs and wings. If you think someone may want to eat a whole drumstick set one aside. Otherwise take all the meat off the thigh and leg bones and the wings. Set aside the skin from both. Take the carcass and pick off any remaining pieces of turkey meat. Make a turkey stock by placing the cleaned carcass, bones and wings into a large stockpot with a small quartered onion, a chopped carrot, a few sprigs of parsley and a bay leaf. Bring to a boil and then leave to simmer. Skim and discard the foam that rises to the surface of the stock. Meanwhile take your thighs and legs and pull the meat apart into smaller sections. Pieces should be about the size of a paring knife blade. Be sure to remove the hard long pieces of cartilage from the leg meat and any veins or gelatinous fatty tissue from the thighs. Place all the thigh, leg and wing meat into a large sauté pan and onto the stovetop. The turkey stock, simmering, can now be added to the pan in small amounts to slowly braise the dark meat. Keep the heat under the sauté pan very low so that the liquid is just at a simmer. When the braising liquid has reduced to an almost dry pan add more stock. The dark meat will cook like this, slowly, for 2 or 3 hours. For a special addition to the flavor add a ¼ cup of champagne (it doesn't need to be an expensive one) to the pan two or three times throughout the cooking time just before the addition of the stock. You can also add a couple of sprigs of thyme or other herb of your preference. Notice that over time, cooking in the reducing stock, the meat softens and darkens to a nice rich color. During this time while the dark meat is slow cooking there is time to do all your other preparations for the meal: vegetables, salad, desserts, setting the table, etc.

An hour or so before sitting down to eat slice the white meat turkey breast to the thickness you like. Transfer the sliced breast into an ovenproof serving platter; add a small ladle of turkey stock to the dish for flavor and moistness. Heat, covered with foil, in a 325° oven for 20 minutes or until hot. Take all the reserved skin from the thighs and legs and any other crispy pieces that you may have and place them on a small cookie sheet or tray. In a 375° or 400° oven (even a toaster oven) reheat them until they get nice and crispy. Remove from the oven and chop them into large crispy pieces. Sprinkle them over the warm turkey breast just before serving. Transfer the braised dark thigh and leg meat and any of the rich dark reduced stock from the pan into a serving platter for the table. Serve the turkey and all the favorite fixins you've prepared and relax. And give thanks that you cooked the turkey the day before! 🍗



**"THEY BEGAN NOW TO
GATHER IN THE SMALL
HARVEST THEY HAD, AND
TO FIT UP THEIR HOUSES
AND DWELLINGS AGAINST
WINTER, BEING ALL WELL
RECOVERED IN HEALTH AND
STRENGTH AND HAD ALL
THINGS IN GOOD PLENTY."**

William Bradford

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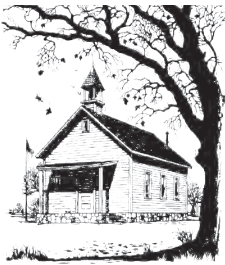
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FARMINGTON RIVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BULLETIN

Tara Beardsley



As many of you may be aware, Farmington River has implemented a new character education program called "Character Counts" which is being led by Superintendent Mike Saporito. The program revolves around the "Six Pillars of Character" which include trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship.

As part of this initiative, each day after the Pledge of Allegiance, students recite a "Character Pledge" which is led over the intercom by two sixth grade students. After visiting the 2nd Grade class one morning, and having the privilege of hearing the pledge, which the kids all knew by heart, I was so moved that I thought it should be shared:

CHARACTER PLEDGE

Respect, responsibility and citizenship, too,

They bring out the best in me and you.

Trustworthiness and being fair,

Help to show others that we really care.

We all know what's right, we know what's good.

We will do the things we know we should!


As part of the community building efforts at the school, a new program is being offered every Tuesday through May 2011. Senior citizens are invited to visit the school cafeteria on Tuesdays at noon to enjoy a delicious lunch for a nominal fee of \$2.00. Reservations are required, and can be made by calling 269-4466. The 4th and 6th grade students will help serve, clear and clean tables during the luncheon. ****In the event of inclement weather, those with reservations should be sure to call the school before venturing out, in case of school closing or early dismissal.*

The school is holding its annual food drive, collecting non-perishable items for Thanksgiving baskets that will be donated to needy families in our communities. Each grade is given a specific list of items that are needed. Students are asked to please donate from their class wish list.

Below you will find a list of upcoming school events:

- Nov. 1st Mobile Dentist Visiting School
- Nov. 11th No School- Veteran's Day
- Nov. 18th ½ day- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Nov. 24-26 No School - Thanksgiving Break
- Dec. 13-17 Book Fair
- Dec. 15 ½ Day - Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Dec. 23-31 No School - Winter Break

Please visit the school's website at:

farmingtonriverelementary.com for more school news. 



Country Diary

Mick Burns

METACOM, NO DOT.

Although I first saw the sign which read "King Philip's Stockade" as a young boy, it would be many years until I could more fully appreciate its meaning. To my young mind these three words brought up images of velvet robes and golden crowns. And stockade? That is some kind of fort, right? And who is Philip, and why have I not heard of him if he was a king and living so close, right here on the edge of our town? (That town was Longmeadow, MA). I can't recall any definitive or lasting answers to these questions from my parents, who, in my world at that time, were the source of all knowledge. I never actually visited the "stockade" as the few times I convinced my parents to pull into the entrance it was closed. It was many years later that I noticed the small plaque on the bank of the Housatonic River on Bridge St. in Great Barrington. It commemorates one of the last events of what has come to be called King Philip's war.

King Philip turned out to be Metacom, a Wampanoag Indian who was fated to be the symbol of the last organized attempt by Massachusetts natives to drive the English from the continent. He, and his brother, Wamsutta, were given Christian names by the Plymouth colony authorities at the request of their father, Massasoit, before his death in about 1661. Since first feasting with the Pilgrims in 1621, Massasoit had managed to keep relations with the invaders cordial. At his death, his eldest son Wamsutta, known to the whites as King Alexander, was elevated to leader of the Wampanoags. The tensions resulting from the clash of the two

cultures increased and the nervous Plymouth leaders, worried about possible violence, sent an armed escort to bring Wamsutta before them to pledge his loyalty upon his arrival. The humiliated chief became ill and once allowed to leave, died on the way home. The Indians blamed his death on the English. Metacom became chief and over the ensuing years, as hostilities increased, he must have realized that his people, their land, and way of life were disappearing for good. He tried to enlist the support of other New England Tribes, but all were hesitant to fully commit to him as many were Christianized and had adapted to life with the Colonists. They were not willing to challenge such a powerful entity as the English. Metacom was not ready when conflict finally did come. One of his trusted men, a Christian Indian named John Sassomon, had gone to Governor Winslow and revealed the plan for a general uprising. When Sassomon was found dead shortly after, three Wampanoags were captured, tried and hanged. This infuriated Metacom and his people and a couple of weeks later, after the Indians began to gather and prepare to make war, a white youth shot and wounded one of them as they ransacked the settlement of Swansea. This was in June 1675.

Over the next weeks the Wampanoags burned several settlements in southeastern Massachusetts and by August had joined forces with the Nipmucs (of interior Massachusetts), their strongest ally in the whole affair. The militias of Massachusetts and Connecticut were mobilized but the Indians managed to keep one step ahead of them all summer until, on October 5, a large part of Springfield was burned. The attacks were continued successfully until the last major assault, on Hatfield, MA, during which the Indians were finally repulsed. It is believed that Metacom spent much of his time that fall and winter attempting unsuccessfully to secure the cooperation of various other tribes in the region, including the Mohawks, traditional enemies of the New England Algonquians, which included the Wampanoags.

To be continued... 

History's Mysteries



George Hulet property near Montville, possibly on Hammertown Rd., apparently abandoned. c.1906. If you can identify this place, contact Ron Bernard at info@sandisfieldThenAndNow.org or call 413-269-0012.

FUNDRAISER HELD FOR THE NEW BOSTON CHURCH

ON Saturday, October 23, the New Boston Congregational Church held its Harvest Supper, one of the four fundraising dinners that it holds each year.

The congregation was originally formed in 1876 by Reverend Calvin McLean who was able to get the church built three years later in 1879. The church was built of chestnut and if you look around at the wooden supports inside the building today, you can feel the stability and permanence that chestnut provides.

large rollers. The chandelier in the center is original and was considered to be very sophisticated in its day. The original bronze bell is still used to summon congregants to worship.

In 1955 the bell played an important role in Sandisfield history by warning residents of the coming hurricane Diane. Flood victims in the town were evacuated to the church. The baptismal font in the front of the church, as well as the side door, were given in memory of Charles Dixon, a Sunday school teacher who was killed in World War II. There is a single gold star in the back room of the church in honor of his service.

As the town has gotten smaller, the congregation of the church has decreased in number. At present, there are somewhere between 50-75 members on the roster, but many of those members are not active. Services, conducted by Spiritual Leader Louise Daigle, are held at the church on the first Sunday of each month, from Easter to Christmas, 9am. A Christmas Eve service is held as well.

As you can imagine, with declining membership, it becomes increasingly difficult to provide the funds necessary to pay for the heat and other utilities required to maintain the building. The various dinners, which are open to the public, provide the only real means of financial support to the church. So, if you missed the most recent Harvest Dinner, be sure to think about Corned Beef and Cabbage in March! And take a look at our photos of this worthy event below!



Photo by Satsuko Winderster

A former visitor to the church looked up at the ceiling and remarked that it looked like Noah's Ark had been turned upside down to cover the church. One of the striking features of the church is the diagonal pattern of the wood on all of the doors. The back wall of the church actually slides into the back room on several



All photos by David Hubbard



Comings and Goings



Richard Zeitel
1937 - 2010

Veterinarian, humanitarian, impossible jokester, dear husband, father, brother, uncle, and friend passed on September 28th 2010 surrounded by family at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in NYC.

Richard was born February 17th 1937 in Brooklyn, New York and grew up in Queens. He earned his undergraduate degree from St. John's University and went on to graduate from Cornell University's School of Veterinary Medicine in 1962. After serving two years in the army in Fort Riley, Kansas, he returned to New York where he built a small-animal hospital in Oceanside, LI and was in practice for 35 years. During this time Richard served as president of LIVMA and was involved with numerous community and school endeavors to promote the well being of all animals. After retiring in 1997, he and his wife, Jean, resettled in the Berkshires in Massachusetts.

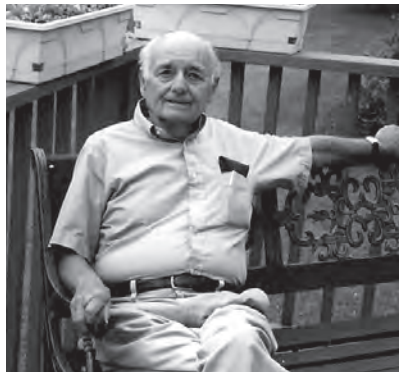
Richard was happiest when he was working in his gardens, golfing, reading or spending time with family and friends. His quick wit and sense of humor are legend. A kind, caring, compassionate, generous and wise individual was he.

Richard will be sorely missed and forever loved.

Married for 47 years, he is survived by his wife Jean, daughter Suzann, son-in-law Sasha, son Derek, sister Gilda Fischer, brother-in-law Fred Fischer, two nieces, Terry Ann and Christina, one great-niece and three great-nephews. Richard was predeceased by a daughter, Jennifer, in 2006.

A memorial service was held on October 23rd at the Sandisfield Arts Center.

Richard so loved this community, a place he called home.



Harold Pachulski
1924 - 2010

Harold Pachulski, 86, of West Hubbard Road in Sandisfield, died Thursday, Sept. 30, 2010, at Fairview Hospital in Great Barrington.

Born July 29, 1924, in New York, N.Y., son of Oscar and Meta Bachteler Pachulski, the family moved to the Bronx in his early childhood where he attended local schools. A veteran of World War II, he enlisted in the Navy in July 1941. He served in both the Atlantic and Pacific theaters until being honorably discharged in October 1945. Harold married his wife, the former Elizabeth Giegerich, on May 12, 1946 in the Bronx. The couple raised five children and together the family moved to Sandisfield in June 1953. He worked for Winthrop Chemical in Manhattan and later at Son-Chief Electric in Winsted, Conn.

He leaves his wife of 64 years, Elizabeth Giegerich Pachulski, along with their children, Eric Pachulski and his wife, Dawn, of Sandisfield, Chris Bragdon and her husband, Chuck, of Sandisfield, Carol Touponce of Great Barrington, Ronald Pachulski of Sandisfield, and Maria Ghi and her husband, Philip, of Ashley Falls. He also leaves his sister, Joan Hassell of York, Pa., eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

A service celebrating the life of Harold Pachulski was held on Monday, Oct. 4, 2010, at Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home in Great Barrington, conducted by the Rev. Charles VanAusdall. Burial with Military Honors followed at Sandisfield Cemetery.

Those who wish may make memorial contributions to the Sandisfield Ambulance Squad through Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home, 426 Main Street, Great Barrington, MA 01230. Remembrances, memories and reflections may be sent to the family through www.finnertyandstevens.com.



**Ashley Wilcox
&
Chad Cruden**

Ashley Wilcox and Chad Cruden were married Aug. 18, 2010, at the Sandisfield American Legion Pavilion. The brookside ceremony was followed by a cocktail hour then a buffet dinner. The evening ended with an impressive fire works display.

Ashley is the daughter of Robin and John Wilcox of Sandisfield. Chad is the son of David and Tina Cruden of Winsted.

50th Anniversary Shirley and Homer Spring, Jr.



A surprise party was held on October 9th at the Sandisfield American Legion Hall to celebrate the 50th Wedding Anniversary of longtime Sandisfield residents, Shirley and Homer Spring, Jr. Shirley was born in Sandisfield and has lived here all of her life. On October 18, 1960, she and Homer were married here, and have lived here ever since, raising their four children.

Many close friends and family attended the party including their children: Michael Spring of San Francisco, Todd and Lou Anne Spring of Torrington, Connecticut, and Alison and Gifford Benedict and Kim Spring, of Sandisfield.

Homer and Shirley's granddaughter, Cailie Ann Benedict, who turned two on Halloween, was there to join in the celebration. She represents the family's third generation of Sandisfield residents.

Homer and Shirley would like to give a special "thank you" to Marion and Joe Solgovic of Torrington and their families, and to everyone who helped make their day a very special event.





CEMETERY ARTICLE KUDOS

I wish to commend the writer of the article on The Cemeteries of Sandisfield in the recent issue. Having a practice in cemetery design and construction for over 40 years, I found it very well written and informative. It is good to remind everyone what a historical resource cemeteries can be.

Being a summer resident of East Otis, I have occasion to pick up your publication and now have signed up to get it by e-mail as I find it to be an excellent source of information about the area.

Ralph J. D'Amato, Jr., R.L.A., A.S.L.A.
Landscape Architect/Cemetery Planner
Rockville, Maryland



THE KINDNESS OF STRANGERS

Dear Members of the Sandisfield Volunteer Fire Department,

This letter is a long overdue "thank you" for helping us out during those heavy rains of the 2005 Columbus Day weekend.

Our basement sump pump stopped working and water began to rise rapidly. We kept using all sorts of methods to fight a losing battle. We tried everything to keep the water from running under the door and up through the drains, all without avail.

It was not that long after Hurricane Katrina and we had bags of clean clothes and blankets ready to send to the South. Instead, in an ironic twist, we used the bags like sandbags to stop the water from pouring under the door.

We knew that this was not considered a true emergency and the fire department could only pump water out of a basement when it reached a certain depth. We called Great Barrington for someone to service the pump but with all the water coming from the sky, everyone was out on service calls.

We looked around and realized if we didn't do something soon, we would lose everything - our furnace, washer and dryer and freezer - things we couldn't recoup so easily. So we called the fire department anyway.

You came and were wonderful. First of all you surveyed the area and secured electrical cords which could have become dangerous. Then, even though it was not part of your job, you problem

solved what you could do. You were kind.

Let me say it again. You were kind. We found out later it was Ralph Morrison who asked for some tape, a screwdriver and a knife. He and others discovered the pipe was full of holes (we never knew, since it was such a dry summer). You jury-rigged another hose to the pump, took another pump and got it working and immediately the basement began to drain.

During the year, we kept saying that we have to write and thank you, but time slipped by. Emergencies get solved before "thank you's" are sent out. During the year we looked around and as the seasons passed, we realized what we almost lost.

We were able to have a Thanksgiving in our home because we could take out the frozen turkey. Our freezer was still working. We were able to have a Christmas in the house because the stacked wood was dry and the furnace was still going. When it was time to do spring cleaning, we could do it because the washer and dryer were working fine.

It was all because you were kind.

Sincerely,

Ruth Dec-Friedman and Richard Friedman



WHERE HAVE ALL THE VOTERS GONE?

To The Editor:

I would like to bring your attention to a matter regarding voter turnout for local issues.

On October 13th a Special Town Meeting was held at the Old Town Hall. The meeting notice was posted in five locations around town: on a sign near the Sandisfield Historical Society; at the New Boston Market; at the Post Office and at both the Old Town Hall and the Town Hall Annex. The meeting was scheduled for 7 pm. I arrived at about 6:50 and there 11 people in the hall. By 7 pm the "crowd" had grown to 12, that's 3 short of the number of voters required to act on the two warrant issues related to town finances. In order to proceed, Clare English pulled out her cell phone and called around to find 3 more registered voters to come for the presentation and to vote.

So, here's my question: why, when we have 583 registered voters in Sandisfield, did we have to scrounge for a quorum? I realize that some of our neighbors are not here during the week, and that others may be working, but where are the rest of us when we're needed? We have important issues at hand, often related to finances. Those finances come from the taxes that we pay. We need to pay more attention to town business. We choose to live here and support the work of the town with our taxes, but that is not enough. We have a responsibility, each of us to the other, to help manage our town as best we can. Enough said, except that if you run into any of the following people, thank them for performing their civic duty by voting on October 13: Patrick Barrett, Jacki

Bitso, Kathy Burrows, Chrissy Campetti, Richard Campetti, Robbin Campetti, Clare English, Jeff Gray, Sonja Gray, Dolores Harasyko, Steve Harasyko, Mary Leary, Jim Leary, Bill O'Brien, Elaine O'Brien, Bonnie O'Brien, Joe Zeller.

Rhee Kasky, Silverbrook Road, Sandisfield, MA

Editors Note: Point well taken. This particular meeting was scheduled after our last issue went to press. In case you are not aware, our website is updated regularly, so if we are given information on last minute meetings we will post it. We ask: Is there another way to get the word out about important Town Meetings? Suggestions?



LETTER FROM THE SELECTMEN

Special thanks go out to Steve Harasyko and Tom Jacobs for initiating a volunteer effort to clean up Yanner Park. To date Steve, Tom, and Richard & Robbin Campetti have cleared the main field by dropping numerous trees, digging out an old foundation on the property, and redistributing the mountains of wood chips that were generated as a result of the FEMA clean-up of the ice storm. Following the first phase of the original Friends of Yanner Park development plan, they hope to have a graded gravel parking lot in place for this fall. Selectman Jeff Grey will be donating his time along with a bulldozer from Annecharico Construction to help fix the parking area. Steve and Tom have embarked upon this improvement program not only to benefit people who want to use Yanner Park, but also to provide an area that can be used during the Town's 250th anniversary celebration. Thanks again to everyone who has worked on this important initiative.

We would like to welcome Susan Van Sickle to the FRRSD School Committee; we appreciate her willingness to accept a one year appointment for this important position. The Sandisfield Highway Department, along with Tryon Construction Company, has finished putting in a bigger culvert near the Silverbrook Café. This much needed repair should cut down on flooding issues in this section of Town. Due to the recent heavy rains, grading of dirt roads has been slowed considerably. Community members residing in these areas are asked to be patient; the highway department will be getting to your road in the near future.

We would like to thank Dolores Harasyko and the election workers for their hard work during the recent state primary. A lot of work goes on behind the scenes in preparing to carry on our democratic tradition. Dolores also was generous enough to have gone into the New Boston Rehabilitation Facility in order to register new voters. We sincerely hope that everyone will have his/her voice heard by taking part in this November's general election.

As of October 1, the fire inspection fee has gone up five dollars. Due to the continued sluggish economy, the Sandisfield Board of Selectmen has decided to keep all other Town licensing fees and the dump sticker fee at last year's rates.

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Those businesses who have already paid for their one-year listing will continue to be posted here until their one-year sponsorship expires.

We welcome advertising and offer an ad rate sheet which can be downloaded off of our website or please email advertising@sandisfieldtimes.org and we will be happy to send you one.

NOW HEAR THIS!

If you have an event that you would like to see listed here, please email Liana Toscanini at calendar@sandisfieldtimes.org or call 413-441-9542.

We reserve space for those events that involve Sandisfield residents or that take place in Sandisfield and neighboring communities.

REGARDING THE TOWN DIRECTORY: We will republish the Town directory in the December issue, and it is always available for download from our website, www.sandisfieldtimes.org/towndirectory.pdf.

NOVEMBER EVENTS

Tuesday, November 2, 7AM-8PM, GENERAL ELECTION, Old Town Hall. 258-4711.

Wednesday, November 3, 11AM-2PM, Council on Aging. November Birthdays celebration, Town Hall Annex. Each Wednesday there is pot luck lunch and Bingo. Mary Slater - 258-4778.

Wednesday, November 3, 7PM, History Book Committee Meeting. Sandisfield Library. Special presentation on "Industry" by Bob Royce. All welcome. Contact Ron Bernard - 269-0012.

Friday, November 5th, 7:30PM, Film Fridays, Sandisfield Arts Center. \$5. Diego Ongaro hosts Classic 70's Film Noir. Tonight's film: *The Conversation* starring Gene Hackman. 258-4100 or www.sandisfieldartscenter.org.

Saturday, November 6, 9-12:30 PM, Highland Communities Initiative "Winterizing Old Homes and Historic Buildings", William Cullen Bryant Homestead, Cummington, MA. Talks, tours and demonstrations. Trustees Members \$5, Non-members \$10. Call 413-268-8219 for information.

Sunday, November 7, 2-4PM, Sandisfield Historical Society annual Wine and Cheese party. Route 183, South Sandisfield. Free. President Norton Fletcher will talk to guests about local history. For information and directions call 258-4786 or 258-4520.

Monday, November 8, 6 PM, Town Website Meeting, Town Hall. Contact Jean Atwater-Williams 269-0012.

Friday, November 12th, 7:30PM, Film Fridays, Sandisfield Arts Center. \$5. Diego Ongaro hosts Classic 70's Film Noir. Tonight's film: *Taxi Driver* starring Robert DeNiro. 258-4100 or www.sandisfieldartscenter.org.

Saturday, November 13, 10AM-Noon-Highland Communities Initiative "Your Land, Your Legacy: An Introduction to Estate Planning" Workshop. Explains basic steps of estate planning. Sheffield Library. 413-268-8219. Free

Saturday, November 13, 11AM, Historical Society Meeting. Sandy Brook Turnpike (Rt.183). Norton Fletcher, President - 258-4520.

Sunday, November 14, 8-11AM, Otis Library and Museum Annual Pancake Breakfast fundraiser. Farmington River Regional School, Route 8 in Otis. All-you-can-eat for \$4.99 adults, \$3.99 children and seniors. For info call Steve Graves 269-4632.

Wednesday, November 17, 6PM, Women's Book Group, location to be determined. Book selection meeting and Pot Luck Dinner. Call 258-4166 for information.

Thursday, November 18, 7PM, 250th Birthday Committee Meeting, Town Hall Annex. Steve Harasyko 258-4460, Kathy Jacobs 258-4535 and Elaine O'Brien 268-4465 co-chairs.

Friday, November 19th, 7:30PM, Film Fridays, Sandisfield Arts Center. \$5. Diego Ongaro hosts Classic 70's Film Noir. Tonight's film: *Chinatown* starring Jack Nicholson. 258-4100 or www.sandisfieldartscenter.org.

Saturday, November 20, 12-12:45PM, Sandisfield Library Story Hour for Children Pre-school-8. Sandisfield Library. Laurie Green 258-4966.

Wednesday, November 24, 11AM-2PM, Council on Aging. Free Blood pressure screening. Town Hall Annex.

Saturday, November 27, 8 PM. Local author Simon Winchester talks about his latest book "Atlantic". Sandisfield Arts Center, \$20. 258-4100 or www.sandisfieldartscenter.org

Saturday, November 27, 3-5PM. To Benefit the Sandisfield Arts Center: SALE of Silver Twist's sterling silver jewelry. Home of Susie Crofut & Ben Luxon, 2 New Hartford Rd. Sandisfield. Vibrant, Fair Trade, hand-made jewelry. Designs by Anni Crofut and nine international designers. For information and to RSVP call 258-4994.

ONGOING EVENTS

Town Meetings (Info call 258-4711)

SELECTMEN, every Monday at 7PM. Town Hall Annex.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION, third Tuesday of the month at 7PM. Town Hall Annex.

BOARD OF HEALTH, first Wednesday of the month at 9AM. Town Hall Annex.

PLANNING BOARD, second Monday of the month 6PM. Town Hall Annex.

BOARD OF ASSESSORS, second Wednesday of the month 5PM. Town Hall Annex.

COUNCIL ON AGING, every Wednesday 11AM. Town Hall Annex.

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 11-Noon, Aqua Wellness Exercise Program for Seniors and the Disabled. Kilpatrick Fitness Center at Simon's Rock. \$3/each session. Even people on oxygen can participate. Dave Collopy, Facility Director, 528-7773, Email: dcollopy@simons-rock.edu or General information number 528-7777.

1st Monday, 7PM, Farmington River Regional School District meets. Public welcome. JoAnn Austin, Superintendent 269-4466.

Tuesdays, 9:30-11:30AM, Community Health Program Family Network Playgroup for kids 5 and under. Old Town Hall Building. Info: 528-0721.

Tuesdays through May, LUNCH FOR SENIORS! A community service offered by the Farmington River Regional School with assistance from 4th-6th graders. \$2 per person. Call 269-4466 on the Monday before to reserve your spot!

1st Wednesday of every month, 11AM-2PM, Council on Aging, Town Hall Annex. Monthly birthdays celebration, Pot luck lunch and Bingo.

4th Wednesday of every month, 11AM-2PM, Council on Aging, Town Hall Annex. Free blood pressure screening.

3rd Saturday of the month through December, Noon-12:45, Story Hour for Children pre-school to Age 8. Sandisfield Library. Info: Laurie Greene at 258-4966.

Photo by Setsuko Winchester



THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



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Farmington Elementary School (during the school year) and Terranova's. Other locations include the Monterey General Store, the Southfield Store Wild Birds Country Store and Bizational's French Cafe.

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