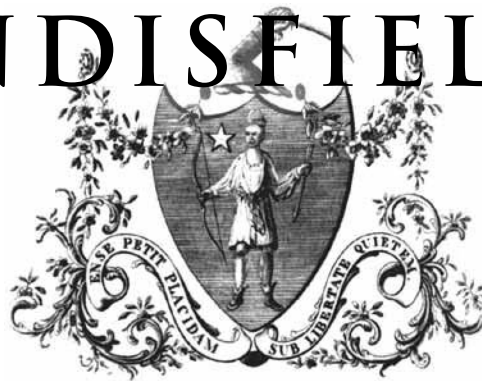


# THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

*Tribunus*



*Plebis*

RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

*Volume I, Number 10*

*January/February 2011*

## A CURIOUS CASE OF HIGHWAY ROBBERY

*By Simon Winchester*



We all know only too well the problems and challenges faced each winter by the sturdy men who labor on our town road crews. This season, over and above the miseries of frost and ice and snowdrifts, they now have an additional problem to deal with – for locked securely away inside a heavy steel safe in Sandisfield’s Town Hall is their six-month old shiny black HP laptop computer that holds all the information they need to do their job.

Or at least, it used to hold it. For just now, the Highway Department’s official work computer is totally, uselessly, hopelessly empty.

It might have been an accident, of course. But the

suspicion is growing that someone has deliberately wiped it clean of all its data. There are dark mutterings of theft, of the willful destruction of town property, of possible charges of criminal damage. Lawyers are now involved – which is why the machine is locked away in the safe. The town says it will cost at least \$5,000 for a computer whiz to find such traces of data as remain, in the hope that something can be salvaged.

“All the work-sheets, the maps, the mathematical calculations of the amounts of salt and sand and other materials that will be needed to keep the town going this winter – everything was on that computer,” said a town official, asking for anonymity because of legal processes under way. “It is a wretched business. Whoever did it has caused us a major headache, believe me.”

*Cont'd p.4*

## Shall We Now Have Dancing on the Village Green?


The urban blight that has for so long besmirched our approach to Sandisfield’s village center is now no more – and where the two forlorn and half-wrecked houses once stood on the bank of the Farmington River there is now a small meadow, an open space, a village green. Covered with snow just now, of course, this tiny patch of land is a resource for all of us. Perhaps in due course



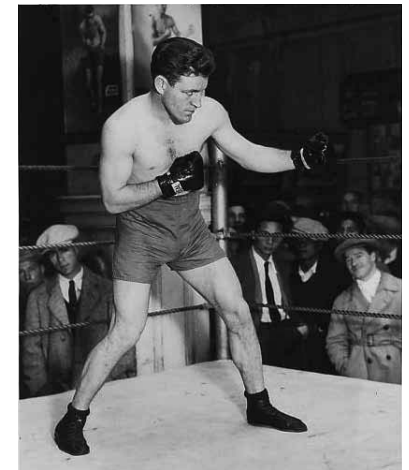
*Before*



*After*

there will be a contest to decide what we place there: a statue, a memorial, a plaque? Perhaps nothing at all. Just somewhere to stand, and watch the cool clear waters rushing by. 

*Photos: Setsuko Winchester*



*Photos: Archives*

## Shade Road Hero Named to Boxing Hall of Fame

*By Larry Dwyer*

When you drive through Sandisfield on Route 57, on top of the hill, near the new Firehouse, there is a little used dirt road headed south, named Shade Road. Few people wander down this road as there are very few residents on this path, but back in the 1920s, Shade Road was a much more active place than it is today. Dave Shade, a famous boxer, ran a boxing camp on Shade Road, and consequently the road was named after him.

Born March 1, 1902, Dave Shade was one of the five top contenders, during the 1920s and 30s, for the Welterweight and Middleweight boxing class. Originally from Vallejo, CA, he began fighting in 1918, at the age of fifteen, and fought 219 recorded fights. He moved to New York shortly thereafter and fought twice for the Welterweight championship, once in 1921 and then again the next year, against the champion Jack Britton. Both fights ended in a draw. He fought again for the Welterweight championship against Mickey Walker in 1925. Shade fought Hall of Famers Jack Britton, Mickey Walker and Maxie Rosenbloom. Early in his career, he fought on the 4-round circuit, in which he developed a deceptive *Cont'd p.2*

# VINTAGE SANDISFIELD IMAGES REDISCOVERED

By Ron Bernard

Who amongst us hasn't marveled at those wonderful turn-of-the-century images of Sandisfield residents, beautiful homes and public buildings, quiet country lanes and pastoral views? Some were postcards sent from this quaint Berkshire town by summer tourists to envious friends and relations. Many of those have found their way back to town complete with messages from 'Aunt Tilly' who is "having a wonderful time." Others are in family scrapbooks or framed on adorning walls. Eventually most of the images made their way into the archives of the Sandisfield Historical Society, albeit in only fair or poor condition. They also turn up in antiques shops and on eBay and the like.

But who was the photographer so intimately familiar with the town? And what about the originals, might they still exist? Maybe there are even more images out there!

The Sandisfield Then And Now history book committee was vexed by this right from the project's beginnings last winter. All we knew was that the images came from a Winsted photo shop, surely long gone. Because a main aim of our book is to depict Sandisfield back in the day, old photographs are very important. Plus they are really fun.



Photos from the DeMars Collection

So when Committee member and Town Librarian Laurie Green recently announced that not only had she discovered the source, but also that a company in Connecticut was offering high quality Sandisfield images as prints, we were elated.

It turns out that they were assembled into a collection by Frank H. DeMars who had an art and picture framing studio on Main St. in Winsted. In 1910 he set out to photograph enchanting and interesting everyday scenes in the towns of northwestern Connecticut and South Berkshire County. And if



Photos from the DeMars Collection

he could not get to a place with his horse and buggy, he sought locals with a good eye and photographic technique or he may even have bought up local collections. According to town native Katherine Ives, her great grandfather Gilbert Ives was behind the camera for many of the Sandisfield images.

After her aunt Martha died in 2009, at age 94, the task of clearing out the old DeMars home in Winsted fell to Frank's granddaughter, Peg Giles. She discovered 5000 fragile glass plate negatives jam-packed in boxes in the attic. Amazingly, most of the plates are still "crystal clear." So with encouragement from her family, last May she put up a website to sell prints on demand. Naturally there were surprises and complications. Time and storage conditions took a toll on the labels and envelopes and some images are not positively identified yet. Plates have deteriorated, requiring patient restoration which is ongoing.

Although Frank DeMars certainly did not grow rich from his photos and postcards, the DeMars collection is now a priceless legacy of the heritages of so many towns in this area. DeMars, who died in 1942, was totally committed to his work. How proud he would be that a grandchild he never knew is carrying on the cause, determined to fulfill his vision by reviving these remarkable images of Berkshire life and times a century ago.

So far there are over 100 high quality images of Sandisfield and more are being restored and posted on the DeMars web site all the time. They date from about 1900 to 1920 and will very much enhance the story of our town. The entire Sandisfield collection will be presented at a slide show at the Arts Center later this year. Meanwhile individual images such as these examples are available for purchase online as prints. Go to [www.demarsimages.com](http://www.demarsimages.com).

## SHADE ROAD HERO

Cont'd from p.1

and difficult offensive style in which he would weave, twist and bob in front of an opponent, presenting a moving target that was hard to hit solidly. In a spectacular upset (Ring Magazine called it the Upset of the Year) against Middleweight Jimmy Slattery who was knocked out in three rounds on July 2, 1925, Slattery said that Shade's "...peculiar crouching and weaving style presented too difficult a problem for him to solve."

His discovery of Sandisfield came about as a result of a near-tragedy. While swimming in the then highly polluted waters of Long Island Shade contracted typhoid fever and a friend suggested he recuperate in the Berkshires. He agreed, and then Henry Dodd sold him a 50-acre plot, the former site of the Sears House – on which, once he was recovered, he established his boxing camp.

Shade was not a big puncher, but he was only stopped twice during his career. In 1930 and 1931, Dave Shade was the top-ranked Middleweight in the world during a time that the belt was vacated, but he was never given a shot at the title. He beat five men who later became world champions, leading to his nickname, "Uncrowned King of the Welterweights."

Shade retired from fighting in 1935 and lived in Pittsfield for a number of years where he was part owner of the East Street Café that later became the Boulevard Café. In 1951 he moved to New Smyrna Beach, Fla., and ran a motel. He died on June 23, 1983 at the age of 81.

In December 2010, Dave Shade was elected to the International Boxing Hall of Fame and the ceremony will take place on June 12, 2011. He will be inducted in the "old-timer" category, one of six posthumous inductees.

**"From beginning to end it was Shade's fight. The Nebraskan found but a fleeting target for his terrible wallops and paid dearly in return for his offering as his opponent stabbed him with left jabs and clipped him with stinging uppercuts."**



– Associated Press (Dave Shade vs Ace Hudkins - Los Angeles, May 27, 1930)

## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

# THE NATURE OF THE NEW

It is now 2011 and as we enter this new calendar year and as I embark on my new role as editor for the coming couple of months, I got to thinking about the word NEW. It seems to me that just adding the word to something lends it a sense of optimism, hope, a hint of something original, fresh or pristine. Consider the phrase "new day." Add new in front of born baby. Think of the feel of new sheets, the smell of a new car, the excitement in a new laptop. That the word new is also part of the word newspaper seems appropriate - and it prompts me to consider what a newspaper like ours means to a community, and to consider some of the changes - changes which are by themselves, new - that we've seen since the Sandisfield Times was born a few months shy of a year ago.

When we started back in the spring of 2010, we had few illusions. We gave the paper the deliberately modest motto "Regular. Reliable. Relevant" rather than something grand and ambitious like "All the News That's Fit to Print" because we knew that one of our biggest challenges - dependent as the paper is on a handful of volunteers drawn from a small population with neither a clear sense of community nor a strong commercial base - would be its long-term survival. Now in 2011, and onto our tenth issue, I'm happy to report, and to my surprise, that we have not only survived, but dare I say, we have thrived.

It might have been quite otherwise. We might have been confronted with the reality of a town that

didn't have much going on, with just a few willing townfolk volunteers whose enthusiasm was flagging because of the grinding needs of their own daily lives, and a new paper that, far from bursting with energy, was fast becoming very old indeed. Instead, it has been quite the opposite.


Going into the process without any expectations, we discovered a treasure trove of stories, a rich wellspring of talent to tell them, and a tremendous amount of enthusiasm and good will in helping spread the tidings around town.

Remembering, of course, that the word 'news' means 'what's new,' I'm proud to introduce in this issue two new columnists. Many of you will know our local horticulturist Susan Tarasuk who has agreed to take over the Gardeners' Almanac. And Tom Ryan, our resident state forester, is going to keep us informed about what may be going on deep in our thousands of acres of forests, which make up more than half of the entity that, for the last 249 years, we and our ancestors have been honored to call Sandisfield.

We can also now see a physical change - a fresh new look - to what we are pleased to call our downtown. Less than a year ago, the two forlorn houses that dominated on Route 8 were continuing their slow decay, and the battle to remove them seemed stuck in negotiations that had been going on for nearly 20 years. Now the houses have gone, and in their place is a clean, virgin parcel of land, brand new and ready

to be the focal point of our village center - a village green, if you like. Whether the paper played a role in bringing about this change is not easy to say - it would be boastful to do so - and yet I feel certain that, simply by providing people with information about the situation, we helped spur action.


So today we have a new downtown and hopes for a public park along the river - and with this small and symbolic change we have also, I feel, helped foster a newly revived sense of community here. Suddenly people say they feel proud to be Sandisfielders, to be citizens of a hidden mountain village that manages to be both very old, and very new at the same time.

It was the Mahatma Gandhi who is supposed to have remarked that without a newspaper one cannot build a community. This, I like to think, is now beginning to happen. The next step is to sustain what we've helped to create, and to build upon it. So we will continue to need your stories, your thoughts and your help, either as writers, editors, designers, photographers, subscribers, donors or advertisers - and not because just a handful of us want it, but because in this process we've discovered that the town of Sandisfield needs us. I truly hope that this remains the case for a long while to come. 

Setsuko Winchester  
Editor



## Farewell to the Gross House

At around 1PM on December 7, 2010, Leigh Tryon and his crew (Shawn Tryon, Bill Carr, Scott Sheridan and Mike Ordyna) arrived with a huge flat bed truck, unloaded a 321 Cat excavator and started clearing brush. When the surrounding debris was removed, Leigh's son Shawn who operates the magnificent "Cat", began gracefully and skillfully smashing then scooping up pieces of the decrepit house into a dumpster. Once they began, the house came down with astonishing speed. The only delay came when the crew paused briefly to make sure that the back of the house, which was precariously hanging over the river, did not collapse into the water. By the end of the day, the remaining house of the two that had been decaying slowly at the foot of the Route 8 bridge for nearly 20 years was but a pile of splinters. 



Photos: Setsuko Winchester



## Weather & Stars

Randy Siddell

### Oh, What a Year!



Photo: Tina Sotis

Does 2010 seem like an unusual weather year? Do the words Snowmageddon or Snowpocalypse sound familiar? How about Octobomb?

Heat: The year 2010 presented the globe's hottest first six months on record: New York experienced its warmest April on record; an all time high of 99 F occurred in Hartford on May 26th; Worcester recorded a high of 94 F; The earliest occurrence of 100 + degrees in the U.S.

was in Albuquerque; Moscow, Russia's hottest summer on record.

Flooding: Catastrophic flooding in Pakistan during the summer of 2010 one-fifth of the country's total land area was underwater directly affecting over 200 million people. Major flooding in the U.S: An unprecedented number of heavy rain events in southern New England in March; two of the top three wettest consecutive days on record resulted in heavy floods in Nashville in early May; deadly flash floods in Oklahoma City and Arkansas; major dam failure on Lake Delhi, Iowa and record flooding in Ames; record late season rains in September and October in the Northeast; unprecedented flooding in Australia resulted in an inland sea larger than the state of Texas!

Snow: The Mid-Atlantic received more than four times its typical winter snowfall, with three major snowstorms in February alone! Record snowfalls occurred in California and Europe in December. Several cities in the South experienced a very rare white Christmas, including Atlanta which hadn't recorded a measurable snowfall since 1881.

Tornadoes: A record of at least 49 tornadoes in the U.S. in October; November tornadoes in Illinois and Wisconsin; A record of eight tornadoes in Arizona on a single day in October; Killer tornadoes in the Big Apple in September; and a U.S. record for the largest hailstone eight inches in diameter weighing 1.9 pounds

found near Vivian, South Dakota in July; and there was a December killer tornado in Arkansas!

Hurricanes: The good news, no hurricanes made landfall in the U.S. in 2010

Natural (and man made) Disasters: Iceland volcano; Haitian earthquake; the Gulf oil spill. Let's hope 2011 is better! 



Blizzard in Prospect Park, NY. Photo Wikipedia Commons

America's top 10 snowiest cities. Below measurements in inches represents average yearly snowfall.

- #10 - Ironwood Michigan – 164.6"
- #9 - Tahoe City, California – 170.8"
- #8 - Red Lodge, Montana – 173.9"
- #7 - Steamboat Springs, Colorado – 175.5"
- #6 - Lead, South Dakota – 187"
- #5 - Truckee, California – 198.3"
- #4 - Crested Butte, Colorado – 217.7"
- #3 - Hancock, Michigan – 218"
- #2 - Boonville, New York – 220.5"
- #1 - Valdez, Alaska – 297.7"

## HIGHWAY ROBBERY

Cont'd from p.1

The problem first came to light in November, after the precipitate and still not fully explained dismissal of the previous head of the Highway Department, Chris Rines. According to the Selectmen's report of 15 November, it appeared that all data on the computer – except for officially-irrelevant material involving its history and bookmarks – had been removed from the computer and apparently placed onto a portable flash drive. Emails sent to the computer printed out, inexplicably, to "Steve Rines" or else to someone called "Rino" [sic].


Mr. Chris Rines, who in recent weeks has taken to attending most meetings of the Town Selectmen as an observer, was asked if he knew anything about the matter. He said nothing, other than that he would offer no comment without his lawyer being in attendance. At press time Mr. Rines offered no comment to *The Times*, either. The man who replaced him as Highway Superintendent, Stephan Harasyko, is known to believe it to be vital for the efficient working of his department that the laptop data be somehow retrieved, and as quickly as possible. After convincing the Selectmen of the importance of the missing information, the town agreed in principle to hire a data technician to see whether it is still possible to retrieve the data which appears to have been wiped.

When material is erased from a computer hard drive it generally remains on the drive, but is no longer protected against being over-written. Providing that no further data has been placed on the drive, most of the material that was erased can

in theory be retrieved - although the procedures to do so can be time-consuming and costly.

After deliberating with nearby computer specialists the Town has discovered that to retrieve the missing data will cost about \$5,000. Since there is no money to pay for such an eventuality – and insurance does not appear to cover the results of the mishap – it appears probable that a special town meeting will have to be called to vote for funds.

And there is still the question of whether the lawyers – who regard the HP machine as evidence in either possible civil or even criminal lawsuits – will allow the computer to be released from the Town Hall safe.

"We have work to do here," said the clearly exasperated Town official "We don't need nonsense like this. If someone did this thing, and we find out who, they're going to be in a great deal of hot water. Believe me. A great deal."





## TOWN BUSINESS

Rhee Kasky

**November 15 - Selectmen attending: Richard Campetti, Patrick Barrett, Jeff Gray. Also attending: Steve Harasyko (Highway Superintendent), Joe Zeller (Acting Road Foreman), Dolores Harasyko (Administrative Assistant)**

Bids for the demolition of the Gross house were opened. Two bids were received, one from Associated Building Wreckers (for \$22,205) and one from Tryon Construction (for \$17,375). Tryon was awarded the contract.

Bids for snow plowing were opened. Two bids were received, one from C.W. Nelson (for \$45 per hour) and one from A&M Auto (for \$45 per hour). A&M Auto was awarded the contract.

Board of Health issues. Board of Health members were asked to attend this meeting to discuss moving to the Old Town Hall. However, the only member present was Margaret O'Clair. Two options were on the table: one was to move to the Old Town Hall; the other was to remain in the Annex and change the Board of Health's secretary's hours to another day so that the Town Clerk, who shares the space with the Board of Health, can meet more privately with people who come in on confidential matters. Based on numerous previous discussions, the Selectmen voted 2 to 1 to move the Board of Health (and the Planning Board as the same secretary serves both boards) to the Old Town Hall with the understanding that the hours will be on Tuesdays, if possible.

Margaret O'Clair handed in her resignation from the Board of Health. The Selectmen thanked Margaret for all of her years of fabulous work for the town and accepted, with regret, her resignation.

Steve Harasyko discussed the job description for the Truck Driver position; the need to replace Joe Zeller's truck which may not pass inspection due to body, rail and undercarriage deterioration; the need to repair the roof of the Town Garage. Steve has scheduled a meeting with Kathy Stevens of the Massachusetts Highway Department and has been in touch with Geri Porter from the Bulk Purchasing Program. In a discussion with Clare English, our treasurer, it was determined that there is enough salary money available to fill the Truck Driver position while Bill O'Brien is still working. In an email from our insurance carrier (MIIA) we found we are eligible for premium discounts if our employees take certain courses. Steve has certification for the bloodborne pathogens course and we will forward a copy of his certificate to MIIA.

Joe Zeller, Acting Road Foreman, reviewed work done by the Highway Department. John Field and

our crew took down 14 trees along Route 57 and Cold Spring Road. The culvert work on Stump Road is done and leaf removal and fall grading continues.

Discussion regarding the Highway Department's laptop computer. When the computer was returned to the town office most of the information had been deleted (although the history and bookmarks remain) and moved to a flash drive. Town Council considers this "willful destruction and theft of town property". Email that comes into the town on the laptop prints out to "Steve Rines" or "Rino" [sic], not to the town's address. The Selectmen voted to hire a data technician to have the data retrieved as it is somewhere in the computer, not easily found. It will be copied and there will be a reconfiguration of the email. Chris Rines was asked if he knew anything about this matter and he responded that he would not comment without his lawyer present. The Finance Committee may be contacted regarding how to pay for this work as it is not in the budget.

Regarding the wood being cut down at Yanner Park, if the volunteers who are doing the work are in any way connected to the town they cannot take the wood in exchange for using their equipment and donating their time. Since the wood is valued at more than \$50.00 the Conflict of Interest Law precludes them from taking it. Further options for the wood will be discussed with the Treasurer.



**November 22 - Selectmen attending: Patrick Barrett, Jeff Gray. Member absent: Richard Campetti. Others: Steve Harasyko (Highway Superintendent), Joe Zeller, (Acting Road Foreman), Dolores Harasyko (Administrative Assistant).**

Clare English, Treasurer, came in to request approval to hire a Treasurer's Assistant. She has selected Theresa DellaGuistina for the position. Approval granted. Clare discussed the outside audit to be done in May which used to be required every four years and is now conducted every three years. She also reported having problems with our satellite connection. She is unable to get on line to do her work and cannot provide direct deposit because the satellite is unreliable. Patrick has contacted Smitty Pignatelli (our state rep) and will follow up with Verizon to get high speed Internet for all town buildings.

Clare discussed a variety of library issues, most of which relate to maintenance and problems with mice. She mentioned the loss of bookmobile services (due to state cuts). One option to the bookmobile is to join CWMARS or MassCat. Startup runs between \$2,300-\$5,000 with an annual fee of \$900 for inter-library loans. The Library Trustees will submit a separate line item to fund this.

Steve Harasyko will look into the potholes on Fox and Sears Roads. He asked if he could have applicants for the Truck Driver position drive a town truck (with Steve in the truck) as a test on the dirt roads. Selectmen approved. Discussed the snow routes for this

winter and will probably keep them the same until a new hire comes on board.

Joe Zeller reported on highway updates. The guard rails by Tuffy Campetti's are done. Discussed problems on Sage Road.

Discussed the move for the Board of Health and the Planning Board. Move needs to be complete by the end of next week. The Highway Department will assist with the move. Gary Bottum volunteered his moving dolly and time to help.



**November 29 - Selectmen attending: Patrick Barrett, Jeff Gray. Others attending: Joe Zeller (Acting Road Foreman), Dolores Harasyko (Administrative Assistant). Absent: Richard Campetti**

Ron Myers and John Burrows reappointed to Finance Committee.

Clare English, Library Trustee, in for approval to replace the tile floor at the library for a cost of \$600. Selectmen approved. Question of having the library windows washed and a decision to look into having a company wash the windows of all town buildings in the spring.

Clare led a discussion on updated expense reports. She is concerned that 50% of the Highways and Bridges budget has already been spent. The projects the money was spent on should have been budgeted out of Chapter 90 funds but they weren't, and they were not itemized in the budget that was voted on at the annual town meeting. These projects include storm drain cleaning and street sweeping. Discussed the Information Systems Support account which is running low. This budget was cut by 25% and the Finance Committee may need to review the need for additional funds if they become necessary.

Discussed expenses related to retrieving the data from the Highway Department laptop. Clare recommends we call a special town meeting to vote on funds to pay for the retrieval as it may cost upwards of \$5,000.

Discussed the account for repair of tanks, furnaces, wells and septic. There is still \$6,170 in the account.

Rosanne Hoekstra in to request a special permit to open a bed and breakfast at her residence on Tolland Road. She presented documents on water testing and Title V. The special permit process was explained and she will need to fill out the permit forms. Once they have been received there will be a public hearing and the notices will go to the abutters.

Joe Zeller reported on conversations with Board of Health members Victor Hryckvich and Kathleen Segrin regarding moving their office to the Old Town Hall. Neither of them will be available for the move. Joe was not comfortable with this. He felt he should not be held responsible for moving everything (including electronic equipment

*Cont'd p.12*



# The Gardeners' Almanac



Sue Tarasuk

## STRICTLY FOR THE BIRDS

We welcome Snow Farm's Sue Tarasuk to this monthly column, who this month tells us how to build a garden that will help our feathered friends all year round.

The presents are all put away, the holiday decorations are taken down, and I don't know about you but soon after the New Year, I begin thinking about my gardens.

And in part because it is winter now, and because the birds need the food we provide for them, a topic that has been on my design radar is the look of the area where I feed my flying friends.

I have collected a number of bird feeders and they hang off my small tree and from some shepherd hooks stuck into the ground. I also have a bird bath to supply fresh water. All told it is not, I have to confess, very attractive: and so, gazing out over the snow one day, it occurred to me I should come up with a garden that was bird-friendly but also beautiful to look at – in summer yes, but also in winter too.

I wanted a garden that would complement and augment my bird feeders. Bird feeders in combination with a beautiful planting can accomplish this objective. (The shape of your garden is not so critical; that will depend on what you prefer.)

I would start by incorporating a small tree already in your garden or by planting a new one. Birds like to fly into a tree before going to the bird feeder. This way, they can check to see if all is safe. Some great small trees for this purpose are: Serviceberry (*Amelanchier*), a tree that flowers in the spring and provides fruit to at least 42 species of native birds in July and August; Dogwoods (*Cornus*), another tree species valuable for attracting birds and they are a beautiful specimen shrub or small tree. Dogwood berries are eaten by 98 species of birds and they also provide secure nesting sites for small birds. They are rated fifth among all woody plants in North America for their food value to wildlife; Hawthorn (*Crataegus*), a small tree or shrub with beautiful abundant flowers and colorful fruits that birds love. They are a favorite food of the cedar waxwing. The foliage provides secure nesting sites for many birds as well, my favorite is the Crab Apple (*Malus*) which is a beautiful small tree, blooming in the spring with many species of crab apple providing valuable food for the birds; Speckled Alder (*Alnus*) a small tree of 15' – 25' is a great plant to grow in wet soil. Birds such as the morning dove, rose-breasted grosbeak and purple finch love the seeds, and they are preferred also by the American goldfinch and pine siskin. These small trees also provide cover to numerous birds like the warbler, blackbird, grosbeak and fox sparrow.



Cedar waxwings in a Crab Apple Tree  
Photo: Setsuko Winchester


Favorite shrubs for our bird garden would include Winterberry or Black Alder (*Ilex*), providing excellent shelter and nesting sites for many birds. Fruits of the Alder are eaten by 49 species including common flicker, gray catbird, brown thrasher, bluebirds, cedar waxwing and robin. Viburnums are a very diverse group of plants. There are literally hundreds of species all very difficult to tell apart. They offer fruits to birds from July through Oct. and are therefore valuable to migrating birds. American Elder or Elderberry (*Sambucus*), is a large and beautiful shrub for our bird garden. It has large umbels of white fragrant flowers in early summer and quickly produces berries that the birds devour. I have tried in vain to get to the berries before the birds, but they seem to know exactly when they are ripe and always beat me to it. Rose (*Rosea*) especially the *Rosa rugosa*, is a beautiful and hardy shrub to add to your garden. They provide a long seasonal show of flowers, foliage and fruits. The fruits are an especially important food to birds in the winter and cover and nesting for numerous birds, especially the gray catbird, brown thrasher and cardinal. Northern Bayberry (*Myrica*) is a beautiful large rounded shrub with small flowers on male plants and berries on females. The fruits are eaten by 86 bird species including tufted titmouse, common flicker, robins, finches, white-eyed vireo, scarlet tanager, woodpeckers, bluebirds, and more.

Now that we have our "bones" of the garden in place with the small tree or trees and a nice variety of shrubs, we should definitely include some perennials and annuals. The first annual we think of is the Sunflower. It is easy to grow, and in fact perpetually gets reseeded from the sunflower seeds I feed the birds. Asters, Echinacea, Rudbeckia (black-eyed Susans), to name just a few, are plants that produce seeds which birds eat in the fall. Hummingbirds will drink the nectar of Bee Balm, Lobelias, Penstemon,

and Columbine. Wild strawberries as a ground cover and a beautiful Ornamental Grass for their seed, will complete the design. If you have the room, put up a trellis and grow a grapevine. Almost 100 species of birds eat grapes and are a preferred food for turkey, grouse, woodpeckers, robin, thrush, bluebirds, cedar waxwing, to name just a few, and if the vine grows in a tangle, it will provide effective shelter and nesting.

Provide your new garden with as much sunlight as possible. Keep your garden well watered and mulch it heavily. Mulching will help keep down the weeds and minimize the need for as much water in-between rainfalls. Also, keep in mind that the plants you put into the garden are very young plants. They will need adequate space to grow, so read the tag and provide enough space in-between the plants. There is nothing worse than having a jumble of shrubs all growing into each other.

Enjoy your gardening experience and watch the birds flock both to your feeders - and to the natural plantings you have provided them. In summer it will look just wonderful; and in winter it'll be an elegant foretaste of the brighter season to come.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at [susantarasuk@gmail.com](mailto:susantarasuk@gmail.com). 

## History's Mysteries



This is the remains of what was a bakery on Lower West Street. What can you tell us about this place? If you can identify this place, contact Ron Bernard at [info@SandisfieldThenAndNow.org](mailto:info@SandisfieldThenAndNow.org) or call 413-269-0012.

# A Walk in the Woods

By Tom Ryan



## PITS THAT ARE NOT PITS

This past fall, I was approached by the *Sandisfield Times* to write a periodic column with a focus on woodlands and I look forward to exploring both broad and specific topics with each article. I welcome your feedback and requests for specific topics. As a state forester for the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), I view the wooded landscape with one eye on the past to understand how a particular forest came to be and the other eye focused on the possibilities of the present. Our forests are an amazing renewable resource that can be crafted to meet the needs of today's society and future generations.

As a resident of Sandisfield, I see this town as falling within a unique location of Massachusetts and New England. The Sandisfield landscape is blessed by scenic beauty of a largely rural character consisting of expanses of woodlands and scattered fields in an otherwise urban part of our country. This landscape has been crafted by our history of land use. From the first European settlers through the early 1900's, Sandisfield and the surrounding countryside were largely converted from forest to farmland. During the peak farming period it is estimated that up to 60 percent of Massachusetts was cleared for agriculture, with lower and higher percentages depending on location. On the steeper hillsides, it was common practice for woodlots to be cleared for the production of charcoal used by iron foundries. Often areas cleared for charcoal would then be used as pasture land for livestock. Much of this pasture land in the Berkshire area was used as sheep pasture for the production of merino wool.


Following the construction of the railroad and the Great depression, most of this open agricultural land was abandoned. The railroads gave promise of greener pastures in the midwestern frontier with deep productive soils and a more moderate climate. Many New England families could



Photo: Tom Ryan

A recently discovered charcoal pit and charcoal fragments.

not resist the temptation to relocate and get away from harsh winters and rocky soils. The abandoned farm land has since re-grown into the forested landscape we know today. Next time you walk in the woods or look around your own properties, take note of the expansive rock walls that formerly edged the fields and pastures and imagine the energy it took to build these walls largely by hand and assistance from draft animals. Also in your travels, if you have a keen eye you may find the remains of old charcoal pits which are particularly apparent on the hillsides. Although, contrary to the name,

there is nothing particularly "pit" like about them. The best way that I can describe them is that if you had to find a place to pitch a tent on a hillside, then you would most likely end up pitching it on an old charcoal pit. Imagine removing the mound in the picture; what you are left with is an area of ground that is perfectly flat and circular, upwards of 40 feet in diameter; and if you dig down in the center of the pit you will find black soil with bits of old charcoal. I have stumbled across many of these "pits" in my travels around Sandisfield and Berkshire County. Keep your eyes open and enjoy the hike. 

*Tom Ryan is a Service Forester for the State of Massachusetts and a resident of Sandisfield. If you have any questions or comments about what lurks in our forests, you can either write to us, or you can contact him directly at his office at 413-784-1828 ext. 123 or email him at Tom.Ryan@state.ma.us*



Colliers tending a charcoal hearth mound from 1800s.

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# TOWN BOARD OF HEALTH? FORGET SEPTIC. TRY TOXIC.

By Simon Winchester

The none-too-exciting official body charged with keeping our cafes clean, our waters pure and our citizens in moderately good shape is now itself ailing, and badly.

The Sandisfield Board of Health, once a vibrant (if a little bit boring) part of our town's government, has lately been diminished, exiled from its customary home, and riven with a peculiar form of strife that has left its members unpaid for almost half a year.

Three months ago the Board was accustomed to meet amidst the bustle of town workers in a large office in the former schoolhouse that serves



Kathleen Segrin at the new Board of Health Office in the old Town Hall. Photo: Simon Winchester

as Sandisfield's seat of government. Today it sits quite alone, its office a mere cluster of secondhand furniture tucked into a corner of the otherwise empty and quite silent old Town Hall, unvisited and overlooked, a shadow of its former self.

It is all down to what is politely described as "a clash of personalities?" Two of the Board's three members, to put it bluntly, cannot stand one another, and one of them, the board's chairman, resigned last November. The fact that a mere two members now remain on duty poses something of a problem for the body's workings: for many weeks the law forbade either to be paid, since ethical considerations prevented either one of them signing paychecks for the other.

The town statutes require that the Board should have three members, all elected: the results of recent elections have shown that the townspeople currently want as their health overseers three well-known Sandisfield figures, Victor Hryckvich,

Kathleen Segrin and the chairman, Margaret O'Clair. Ms. Segrin, a well-known dog trainer and long-time phone company employee (married to a telephone engineer) was elected last year, and is thus a relative newcomer to the committee: it is the poor relationship between her and Ms. O'Clair that has brought about the current crisis.

It would be idle and unenlightening to list the failings that each lady claims to see in the other – these columns are no place for a lengthy chronicle of 'she-said-she-said' accusations. But in summary, one can say this: that one of the pair sees the other as disruptive, tactless, loud and insulting, while the latter views the former as being embittered, untruthful and bent on waging a vendetta.

There are specific charges – including the falsification of expense claims, of secret (though videotaped) late-night visits to the office, where furniture was unnecessarily moved around; of utterances of unnecessary loudness and profanity; of slights made to other members of Town government.

The veracity or otherwise of these charges is uncertain – but the depth of feeling is such that last year the Board was obliged to move itself, lock, stock and barrel out of the Town Hall Annex to its current HQ, behind the Silverbrook Café, and Ms. O'Clair decided to tender her resignation as Chairman to the Selectmen last November. Mr. Hryckvich and Ms. Segrin now soldier on alone as best they can, in their lonely little outpost.

The question of their pay and reimbursement has recently been settled, at least temporarily, after consultations between the Town and the Massachusetts government ethics ombudsman. The so-called "Rule of Necessity" can be invoked each time a check is needed, so that urgent payments can be made without the need for a third person to sign documents, as is customarily required. Victor Hryckvich said "The problem of money has been solved. Our work can go ahead as usual,"

Ms. Segrin remains certain that the efficiency of the Board's work will remain unchanged also. "We work hard, and Victor and I work well together. We will continue to perform our duties, even though I am sorry Margaret felt she had to go."

The next election for the vacant seat will be in May. Ms. O'Clair said she would consider running, though not against Victor Hryckvich, whose work she admires. "In fact I have no complaint either with Kathleen's work for the Board," she added. "It is just a personal matter between the two of us. It is a great shame if it damages the Board's abilities to perform its work for the Town. That would make this small farce into a real tragedy. The Board works away unknown to most – but out here in the country, it is a body of very great importance. This problem has to be solved, and soon." ❦

# Our Representatives - What are They Doing for Us?

By Susie Crofut

As citizens of Sandisfield we have two representatives. Democrat John Olver is our Congressman in the House of Representatives in Washington, DC. He represents the first district of Massachusetts which includes Sandisfield. He has held this office since 1991 and has recently announced that he will run again in 2012.

Sandisfield's other representative is William "Smitty" Pignatelli, also a Democrat. He is our State Representative to the Massachusetts House of Representatives in Boston. (4th District) He was first elected to this office in 2002.

I contacted the offices of each of these men and asked them what programs they have been working on which affect Sandisfield. It was interesting to note that both cited Broadband Expansion.

On a Federal level Congressman Olver has been active on this subject. Massachusetts Broadband Institute's MassBroadband 123 project was awarded \$45 million in federal stimulus funds on June 30, 2010 to expand broadband access across western Massachusetts. The project will connect 123 communities in western MA to broadband, delivering comprehensive economic, educational and public safety benefits.

Representative Pignatelli also, knowing that parts of Sandisfield have limited high speed internet or none at all, has been working with the Wired West Initiative to help bridge the gap between towns and the state with bringing the Internet to everyone, as well as the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, recently awarded a federal grant to begin laying down the groundwork for high speed Internet in western Massachusetts.

Representative Pignatelli cited as one of the most important issues he is concerned with is finding ways to reduce health care costs for towns and residents, the single biggest item in everyone's budget and the costs continue to rise. Last session the MA Legislature passed a bill to try to help contain some of those costs, which included a provision to allow small businesses to form cooperatives with the idea that they would be in a better position to negotiate lower rates with the insurance companies. This program is still in the works and hopefully by the summer it will be up and running.

Another issue he thinks is of particular importance to the Berkshires is raw milk and agriculture in general. Rep Pignatelli has been working with other Legislators and state agencies to come up with language for a bill that would address the current situation with raw milk sales and try to create a better way safely to sell and consume raw milk. He says this is very important because not only does it help the local economy but also helps to preserve open space and supports our local farmers. ❦



# Down by the River, A "Roaring" Success

*Rhee Kasky visits New Boston Crane & Sled.*

While we Sandisfield Times writers are simply volunteers, I've discovered a delightful perk that comes with the "job" - meeting some of the nicest and most interesting people in town. And to prove the point, I will tell you about my visit with the folks at New Boston Crane and Sled on Route 8.

Bonnie and Roger Harbour started the business back in 1987 and, on January 1, 2011, as they entered into the world of retirement, they turned the keys over to their son-in-law, Billy White, who has been part of the operation since 1993. Folks, this is a very busy shop. In the hour or so that I spent talking with Billy, Jill Sweeney (sales), Ron Roux (parts manager) and May (Billy and wife Hattie's lovely yellow lab), I learned about the equipment that excites many outdoor enthusiasts: four wheelers; snowmobiles; off-road vehicles; all-terrain vehicles. I heard mention of Tritons, Polaris, Husqvarna and Timberwolf, brands familiar to those for whom this market was created. I heard the phone ring a thousand times for sales and service information, and I watched as staff and customers came and went. Even in a tough economy, non-essential luxury-type equipment such as I've described still sells, perhaps not as quickly as in the past, but there's definitely a reason to be in the business.

Billy is the go-to guy. He's smart, he's friendly, he loves his work. In addition to the sportsmen he sells to, his customers include farmers, construction companies, water and sewer people and others who make their living working outdoors. Billy and Ron service bikes, motorcycles, generators, chain saws, weed eaters, lawn mowers, personal watercraft and, according to Billy, "if it's got an engine, we can fix it". Billy's interest in things mechanical began after high school (he's originally from Canaan, CT) when he went to work for the John Deere Tractor Company. During a trip to the snowmobile grass drags at the Great Barrington Fairgrounds (yes, that's grass drags) he met his future. It appears that Billy was at the right place at the right time. He met Roger and Bonnie and they were looking to hire someone for New Boston Crane and Sled. A match was made. That match had another match to make - Billy married the Harbour's daughter Hattie (granddaughter of Jappy and Carol Campetti).

A lot of what Billy has learned has been on-the-job. Technical school courses while working, reading the books and service manuals, and heeding Roger's advice that "no matter how long it takes you to do it, do it right, don't worry about time, once




*Ron Roux, Billy White and Jill Sweeney*


*Photo: Rhee Kasky*

you've done it, you can do it again". Now Billy's the pro and he repeats those phrases to the people who work for him.

Sales of this "luxury" outdoor gear are a bit slower, given that the utility vehicles start at around \$10,500, the all-terrains at about \$6,000 and the snowmobiles at about \$8,500, but for those enthusiasts who make it a priority, New Boston Crane and Sled is at your service. On the hand-held equipment side of things, Billy reports that sales have tripled because people are at home more, not travelling as much, and they're taking care of their land. They may not be spending money on hiring landscapers; rather they seem to be buying the equipment to do the work themselves.

While Billy and Hattie live in Tolland, just across our town border, their families and community are just as much in Sandisfield. They love the life they have, the peace and quiet as well as the excitement of seeing youngsters fishing in the Farmington River, the friendships they've developed and the freedom to enjoy the woods and the land that embrace us.

Stop in and say hello to the gang at New Boston Crane and Sled. Maybe you've got some equipment sitting in the garage that needs some work. What have you got to lose? They're terrific folks. 




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From left: Joe Zeller, Scott Worcester, Stephan Harasyko, David McCuin, Bill Perry

Photo: Setsuko Winchester

## KING OF THE ROADS

*Rhee Kasky profiles Stephan Harasyko, our new Highway Superintendent.*

December 13, 2010 – that’s the day Stephan Harasyko was to begin his new job as Sandisfield’s Highway Superintendent. Well, Mother Nature doesn’t care much about sticking to the calendar so two weeks before Steve was to report to work, we had “weather”. And he was up and running. He knows our roads well, having plowed for the town years ago. Not only was there hands-on road work to be done, Steve had already made appointments with the Mass Highway and Department of Revenue reps as well as the Berkshire Regional Purchasing Group in order to be up to speed on Massachusetts budget processes and management as they vary from state to state and his last position was in Connecticut. No time for vacation for this guy.

Born in Hartford, CT and raised in Bloomfield, Steve began his work in the great outdoors at the Avon Old Farms School, joining the grounds crew in 1975. Over the next four years he maintained the school roads, equipment and the athletic field. Next stop was with the Town of Bloomfield’s Parks Department where he further honed his skills. In 1984 he joined his father-in-law (Dolores’ dad) in the construction business and when the business closed in 1989 Steve went back to the Town of Bloomfield as Assistant Foreman for the Highway Department. He remained there until early December, 2010. The retirement policy in the Town of Bloomfield says that if your years of service, added to your age, totals 75, you are eligible to retire. You don’t have to, but you can. And Steve did. And that’s how Sandisfield was able to haul him into the toughest job in town.

Steve views his major responsibilities as Highway Superintendent as two-fold: keep the roads safe and passable; be mindful of the town’s finances. “In a perfect world, we’d have the equipment and materials we need and we wouldn’t have to worry because we’d have the money, too. We don’t have that, so my chief responsibility is to strike a balance between the two.

Use the money I have and make the roads as safe as I possibly can. Everyone in town deserves to be able to get to their job, get to their homes, whether it’s during a snowstorm or any time of year. I only have four guys on the crew and a large area to cover. We have about 43 miles of dirt roads and 43 miles of blacktop.”

Steve’s typical work day (barring any weather-related emergencies) starts at 6:30 am at the town garage. When we have snow, he’s responsible for seeing that each of the town trucks gets to its assigned section. At this time of year, when we have snow and ice, blacktop roads are the main areas to tend to as these arteries have to be kept open. Then come the dirt roads. As for what’s being laid on the roads, basically the same materials as last year, sand and salt plus stone chip and grit. The dirt roads are challenging because too much salt will turn them into mush and then freeze. Then there’s the matter of salt water running into ditches and getting into wells. Steve considers the cost, the runoff and the shape of the road and does some delicate balancing. He’ll be conferring with the highway people in New Marlborough where they pretreat the roads. As anyone who travels on Rte. 57 knows, the roads become much clearer when you leave Sandisfield and crossover into New Marlborough (or Monterey, for that matter). The use of a product called Clearlane will also help. Around 2:30 in the afternoon, after a day of road work, Steve heads over to Town Hall (where Dolores, his wife of 31 years is Town Clerk) to handle paperwork.

Steve talked about what makes Sandisfield special for him. It reminds him of the town where he grew up, friendly people who know each other, enjoy being together for events and look beyond whatever individual differences they may have. He likes the peaceful roads, around Hammertown, Norfolk Hill, Roosterville. When he worked 35 miles away in Bloomfield and Dolores and the children were here he knew that if something happened and they needed help, it would take only one or two phone calls before he would be there in an instant. He’d like it if we had a town center – sort of like our neighboring towns

where the town hall, the library, the store, the post office and a place for a sandwich and coffee are close and people pop in and out. I think many of us feel that way.

I asked Steve what we town residents can do to help him in his work. Very simply he says, “If there’s something someone needs or wants, I would hope they would get in touch with me. The garage number is 258-4979 and my cell phone for emergencies is 413-717-7627. At or before budget time, come and ask questions. I hope people will be patient. The crew is supportive and they’ve got a lot of work to do.”

Steve’s a warm and open guy, personable and friendly. We’re glad he’s here and wish him well. 🍷



Photo from the NCWIT

Samantha accepts the Massachusetts NCWIT award from Ruthe Farmer, Director of Strategic Initiatives.

## Local Teen Wins National Computing Award

Samantha Swartz of Sandisfield has received the National NCWIT Aspirations in Computing Award, as well as the Massachusetts NCWIT award. NCWIT is the National Center for Women & Information Technology, a coalition of 200 corporations, academic institutions, government agencies, and non-profit organizations working to increase women’s participation in information technology. The NCWIT Award honors young women at the high school level for their computing-related achievements.

Samantha, who attends Mt. Everett high school as a junior, has been on the robotics teams for six years and now coaches the robotics team for younger girls. In addition, she has learned programming languages Robot C, C++, HTML, Visual Basic, and Java, and is proficient in nine office, desktop publishing, and robotics software programs.

This past July Samantha was a recipient of the Crofut Simple Gifts Fund, which helped her attend the Smith Summer Science and Engineering course where she took classes in both robotics and DNA. Samantha received the Massachusetts award in Cambridge on November 21st. She will travel to North Carolina to receive the national award in March.

Samantha is the daughter of Diane Barth Swartz and Frederick Swartz, granddaughter of the late Richard and Barbara Barth of New Marlborough. 🍷

**AVIAN NOTES**  
Margaret O'Clair

**THE BIRDS OF FOOTBALL**



Arizona Cardinals

There are five teams in the NFL named after birds. I wrote about the cardinal in the Birds of Baseball column last October, so I won't revisit the Arizona Cardinals this time around. The Atlanta Falcons and Philadelphia Eagles are both named for families of birds, each consisting of several species. Falcons are sometimes called the fighter pilots of the bird world. They are small, fast and flashy fliers catching their prey in midair and snapping the spine with their notched bill. Included in this family is the colorful American kestrel, recently featured on a US Postage stamp.



Philadelphia Eagles

Judging by the white-headed birds on the jerseys of the Philadelphia Eagles they would like to be bald eagles, but the bizarre wings on their helmets are all wrong. The other eagle found in the US is the golden eagle which is more common in the Rocky Mountains and on the west coast.

This leaves us with the Baltimore Ravens and the Seattle Seahawks. The raven is the largest of the jay/crow family, and like all in the family is an extremely intelligent bird. It is very curious and learns from experience, observation and imitation. For example, after watching seagulls pick up shellfish, dropping them on the rocks to smash the shells and eat the contents, ravens will do the same thing. As far as food goes the raven is truly omnivorous, eating insects, carrion, eggs, fruits, berries and everything in between. (Ravens also appear to enjoy flying in strong buffeting winds, turning somersaults and swooping in acrobatic display.) They are quite long-lived: one tame raven lived for more than 24 years. They also mate for life.



Baltimore Ravens

There was a rare partial-albino raven living in the Monterey-New Marlborough area. I spotted it twice – an extraordinary bird, a huge avian 'dalmatian'! Why Baltimore would choose the raven as its mascot is a

bit of a mystery. Edward Allen Poe wrote the famous poem The Raven, and he died in Baltimore under mysterious circumstances, so maybe that is the connection: if this is indeed the case it would be a literary oddity in the sporting world.



Seattle Seahawks

There is no 'seahawk'. It is a west coast nickname for the osprey which is often, and more appropriately nicknamed the 'fishhawk', because its diet is almost exclusively fish, either fresh or saltwater. It is one of the most widely distributed birds in the world and, thanks to the banning of DDT, which concentrates in fish from agricultural runoff, its rapid decline in numbers has been reversed. It is the only species in its family, somewhere between a hawk and a falcon, but for practical purposes it is lumped in with hawks and eagles. The osprey has evolved into the master of the hunt. Its long wings allow it to hover over water and when it spots its prey it folds its wings over its back and plunges feet-first into the water, sometimes submerging completely and then relying on its wings to haul itself completely back out again. Its remarkable feet are perfectly designed to catch slippery fish. It has enormously curved talons with a reversed toe, which means there are two toes forward and two aft. In addition the soles of the feet are padded with little barbed 'spicules' which also help in holding on to the fish. Once airborne the osprey shakes off the water, adjusts the fish head-first to reduce drag, and heads back to land. The osprey on the east coast have access to open water all



Atlanta Falcons

down their winter migratory routes, but some from the Midwest must fly over large tracts of dry land. They sometimes take a fish along on their migration. Birders at hawk watch sites write OPAL on their lists. It stands for 'Osprey Packing a Lunch.' The osprey population of Florida is permanent and for years I have been watching a nesting pair from the stands of the Tampa Bay Rays' spring training facility in downtown St. Petersburg. Apparently the left-field light was the ideal spot and each year their pile of sticks and driftwood gets bigger and more ungainly. It is the perfect spot for me – if the game gets a little dull I can always watch the ospreys.

Happy New Year! 



**FARMINGTON RIVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BULLETIN**



Tara Beardsley

After a nice wintry holiday break, school is back in session. I'm sure most of the kids really enjoyed playing in all the snow over the break, and will continue to do so during their recess time, weather permitting. So as a reminder, don't forget to send in your child's hat and gloves along with snow pants and boots. They will be subject to exile on the blacktop without them!

To parents with younger children: CHP will be starting a playgroup on January 10th. The playgroup will meet in the pre-school room on Mondays from 9:30-11:30. In the event of school closing, or delay due to weather, the group will not meet. If you are unsure please contact the school or CHP directly. The program is starting on a trial basis, and will continue if participation is successful.

Please make note of the following important dates:

- Jan. 3rd School back in session
- Jan. 5th-Feb. 9th Otis Ridge Ski Program – Wednesdays 5:00-10:00 p.m.
- Jan. 10th CHP Playgroup- Pre-school room - Mondays 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- Jan. 17th Martin Luther King Day- No school
- Feb. 21st-25th February Vacation- No School
- Mar. 18th Professional Day- No School


CONGRATULATIONS TO the following students for making the Honor Roll this trimester:

**Grade 4**  
Kyle Hawley

**Grade 5**  
Allyssa Annecharico  
Ariana Saporito  
Richard Stanmeyer

**Grade 6**  
Zoe Bean  
Janey Beardsley  
Mario Castro  
Jeffrey Crandall  
Isabelle Morley  
Lyssa Richard

Great job kids! Keep it up!

You may find additional school information at [farmingtonriverelementary.com](http://farmingtonriverelementary.com). 

# Town Business

Cont'd from p.5

and computers). Victor was called during the meeting and he agreed to be present to help.

Mail reviewed and warrants signed.



**December 6 – Selectmen attending: Richard Campetti, Patrick Barrett, Jeff Gray. Also attending: Steve Haraysko (Road Superintendent), Joe Zeller (Acting Road Foreman), Dolores Harasyko (Administrative Assistant)**

Keith Ross in to represent Robert Liberman of Roberts Road in regard to a request for a Conservation Easement for 1,277.43 acres of his land. New England Forestry Foundation will manage the easement in perpetuity. This land is already in Chapter 61 and 61A programs. The tax revenue will not change. Easement approved.

Steve Haraysko conducted interviews for the Truck Driver position during this open meeting. Interviewees were Scott Worcester, N. Kevin Kennedy and Tim O'Neil. They will all have a driving test on Tuesday.

Thelma Esteves from South Beech Plain Road came in to discuss an event that occurred on property near her home. She reported seeing strange vehicles parked on the property and on the road overnight. They had plaques on their vehicles naming them "28th Massachusetts Reenactor, 4th Regiment, Irish Brigade. Ms. Esteves called Police Chief Mike Morrison and the State Police. The registration plates were run by the police and indicated nothing unusual. Ms. Esteves would like the Selectmen to follow up on who these people were and what they were doing on this property. Ms. Esteves is very concerned about possible terrorism due to the pipeline that runs through this area. Selectmen will contact the Assessor's office to ascertain who owns this land and contact them.

Discussed a concern from Gene Riiska regarding the increased use of GPS systems that send vehicles over dirt roads in town that are not passable. Vehicles are getting stuck. There will be a look at possible signage that says "no thru way" or "road closed" to alert people.

Timeline on demolition of the Gross House. Tryon Construction will be on site this Tuesday to cut brush and the house should be down by 2:30pm. They will haul the debris away on Wednesday and on Thursday the Highway Department will bring in fill for the foundation hole.

Mail reviewed, warrants reviewed and signed.



## SANDISFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING – November 16, 2010

**Present: Richard Campetti, Mary Turek, George Green, Karen Cooley, Susan Bubenas**

Richard Campetti opened the meeting at 7pm. Mail was reviewed, bills paid.

At 7:15 Richard opened the public hearing for the Gross House (204-56). Jeff Gray was present to represent the Board of Selectmen. A discussion followed regarding the comments on the property from Mark Stinson of the Department of Environmental Protection. A motion to grant an Order of Conditions was unanimously approved. Public hearing closed at 7:25pm.

Request for a Certificate of Compliance was received from James and Nancy Remis (419-14). After a brief discussion the commission voted unanimously to grant full certification with on-going condition to be spelled out on the Certificate.

It was agreed that unless something comes into the office, there will be no meeting in December.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35pm



## SANDISFIELD BOARD OF HEALTH MEETING, DECEMBER 1, 2010

**Meeting called to order at 9:15 am. Attending: Victor Hyrckvich and Kathleen Segrin.**

The Committee reviewed correspondence.

### Old Business.

The fall Restaurant/Food Serving Facilities inspections were conducted, paperwork completed and presented to the Town Clerk for licensing purposes.

Upgrade of septic systems for Biderman and Hanachek on Sandisfield Road.

Title V on North Beech Plain Road witnessed by Victor.

Victor working with Hoekstra, 3 Tolland Road re Bed and Breakfast.

Sanitarian (Victor) notified Hoekstra that a Board of Health inspection is required before opening for business.

Well permit given to Carlson on Jamie Lane.

### New Business.

Board of Health Chair position is vacant (since Margaret O'Clair's resignation).

Kathleen nominated Victor for Chair position. Victor accepted.

Discussion re the Board of Health and the Planning Board move to new location at 3 Silverbrook Road, Sandisfield Old Town Hall. Hours will be Mondays from 11am to 3pm. Appointments made as needed.

Board of Health now able to offer monthly meetings in the evening making it possible for day workers to attend without having to take time off from their

work schedules. Monthly meetings will be held on the 3rd Monday of the month at 7pm with the exception of Mondays that fall on holidays. Location at 3 Silverbrook Road, Old Town Hall.

"The Board of Health is pleased now to be in a position to make the office 'User Friendly' for the public to obtain permits required by the Town of Sandisfield."

Meeting adjourned at 1:15 pm.



## MINUTES FROM THE SANDISFIELD LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES ON NOVEMBER 15, 2010.

**In attendance were Clare English, Anita Wirth, Sadie O'Rourke, Tara Beardsley.**

Discussed funds for the 250th town celebration.

Discussed keeping track of the number of children who attend the Community Health Program's story time and crafts program at the library. Program to begin on November 22.

Decided that only Library Trustees can designate where book meetings and other library-related meetings are to be held.

Sadie reported on her attendance at a class held in Lee covering the Code of Conduct appropriate for libraries.

The committee reviewed emergency situations that might occur at the library and will look into policies to address them.

Sadie and Tara will learn the Inter-Library Loan system and they will be certified by Laurie as sub-professional librarians. They are seeking additional volunteers to do the same.

Clare will speak with the Selectmen about some maintenance issues (i.e. tiles by the front door, the front door overhang). The new carpet was discussed as was the procedure for purchasing items for the library.


Expressed need for a new computer chair. Money would have to come from the library gift fund unless a padded chair can be borrowed from Town Hall.

Considered creating a donation box for the library – then decided not to. Tara suggested a Wish List for items the library needs. Trustees voted to acquire Audubon field guides.

Sadie spoke about social gatherings at the library and Tara will place a notice in her column in the Sandisfield Times.

Sadie reported on a 2-hour meeting with Mary King regarding joining CW Mars or MassCat. The trustees voted to join MassCat.

Tara suggested having a variety of magazines and craft books, DVDs for children and acquiring 8"x10" frames for Laurie's owl drawings.

There was no December meeting. 



# EDIBLE SANDISFIELD

Adam Manacher

## Valentine's Day: Candy is Dandy but Rice is So Nice!

Webster's dictionary defines nourish as "to nurture, to raise up, to cherish and keep alive". Food nourishes the body, the mind and the soul. Whether we are alone or with others, nourishing is one of the most caring and loving activities we perform in life. The way we prepare our nourishment can reflect our love and the way we care for life. True love takes time, attention, and patience. There is no better dish that reflects these three qualities than Risotto, the Italian rice specialty.

Risotto is made with a special style of rice called Arborio. Arborio, an Italian rice with a short, roundish grain, cooks to a rich porridge-like texture. The rice is different than other grains in that as it absorbs a lot of liquid it becomes tender, yet al dente without getting mushy. You can find Arborio in most supermarkets and in specialty food stores.



Risotto, like pasta, is a very versatile main course for a

meal. A wide variety of ingredients can be added to the rice to create different dishes: chicken, sausage, shellfish, vegetables, cheese, or herbs. Although the possible variations for risotto are limitless, they are all made from a set of basic steps that require good ingredients, some time, focused attention, and patience. The goal in cooking Arborio rice is to allow the rice to absorb enough hot broth, a little at a time, until the grains swell and create a creamy dish with firm yet tender grains.

Begin your preparation by heating 3 to 3 ½ cups broth or stock (either chicken, beef or fish) for each 1 cup of rice you are preparing. Finely chop some onion or shallot and sauté lightly in butter or olive oil in a heavy 2-quart saucepan over low heat. When the onion is soft and transparent add the rice and sauté for 1 to 2 minutes. Stir to coat all the grains with the fat. Add the hot broth ¼ cup at a time (use a ladle for ease) and stir constantly over a low heat until the rice absorbs all the liquid. Stir, keeping the rice

from sticking to the bottom, and add another ladle of liquid. Continue stirring over a low heat, the liquid at a simmer, with the idea that the rice slowly absorbs the liquid and does not just boil in the broth. Arborio that cooks too quickly (in rapidly boiling broth) will be soft on the outside but chalky tasting inside. Cooking too slowly will make the rice too sticky. After about 15 minutes the rice begins to give up its starch and starts to have a somewhat creamy quality. The entire cooking process takes about 30 minutes. Towards the end of this cooking time it is best to add smaller quantities of stock (¼ cup) incorporating each ladleful entirely. With about 5 minutes remaining add grated parmesan cheese and salt. Be sure to taste the grains at this point. The rice is done and you stop adding liquid when the grains are al dente: "the tooth finds a little resistance when you bite but it isn't hard in the center". The rice should be bound together in a nice creamy consistency.


Risotto must be served as soon as it is made. It should not be reheated as you lose the creamy texture and the grains stick together. You can, however, partially cook the rice in advance and then finish the preparation just before serving. For that process cook the risotto 15 minutes or so to the halfway point, let it dry out while stirring in the pan, and then spread it out very thinly on a cool sheet pan or large platter. 20 minutes or so before serving heat a tablespoon of

olive oil or butter in your saucepan, add the rice, stir and add your hot broth and resume the cooking in the manner described above.

Here is a beet risotto recipe to serve 2, spectacular particularly as a Valentine's Day dinner, yet a loving dish for any special meal.

Heat 3 cups chicken stock. Dice finely 1

medium shallot. Peel and dice 2 medium beets (about 2 cups). Dice ¼ cup fennel (found in any supermarket produce section). Take half the diced beets in an oven-proof pan, coat lightly with olive oil and roast in 400° oven for 15 minutes. Meanwhile prepare the risotto. Sauté in 1 tablespoon butter and 1 tablespoon olive oil the shallot, remaining diced beets and fennel for 2 minutes. Add 1 cup Arborio rice and sauté 2 minutes. Then add ¼ cup dry white wine and cook slowly while stirring until wine is absorbed. Now add the chicken broth one ladle at a time stirring following the above instructions for cooking risotto. When the risotto is just barely tender to the bite add and stir in ¼ cup of cream. Then add 3 to 4 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese. Stir and add salt to taste. Serve immediately topped with the oven roasted beets and a sprinkle of finely chopped parsley. Accompany this with a nice fresh salad of greens.

True love takes time and nourishment. Risotto is love to share. 



*"Whether we are alone, or with others, nourishing is one of the most caring and loving activities we perform in life."*

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# READY? FLAME! FIRE!

By Patricia Hubbard

We have all heard the expression, "Where there's smoke there's fire". Lately the Sandisfield Fire Department has been creating its own smoke and fire to provide training exercises for their firefighters.

In late November twenty-five members of the Sandisfield and Tolland Fire Departments participated in a special session designed to provide training for Interior Structure Fire Attacks. The session took place at a house on Route 57 that was donated for this purpose. In a very organized process fires were set in a variety of locations throughout the building in an attempt to fill the house with smoke. At that point the fire fighters were sent into the building with their self-contained breathing apparatus and fire hoses, and Safety Officers were stationed throughout the building. This exercise provided the firefighters (especially the new ones)



with an important opportunity to experience battling smoke and putting out interior fires in a reasonably controlled environment. This was the second time this year that the Sandisfield Fire Department was able to create a training event of this kind.

The obvious question is "where do the houses come from"? This is not a random act of burning. Homeowners who wanted to have their houses taken down donated


the houses used in the training sessions. The Fire Department had to get permits from the town, verify that no hazardous materials were present, verify that there was no insurance liability, and clear the exercise with the Department of Environmental Protection. The homeowner was responsible for the cleanup after the training exercise.

But it appears to be a win-win situation:

the Fire Department was able to conduct a meaningful training exercise and the homeowner was able to safely eliminate their house.

[Editor's Note: A homeowner offering a building for fire training is generally pressed to make a contribution towards the cost of the burning. Fire Chief Ralph Morrison suggests a sum on the order of \$500, depending on the structure and the owner's circumstances, though he claims that the payment is entirely voluntary.]

The special training events supplement the weekly training sessions held at the Sandisfield Fire House on Wednesday nights. This winter the firefighters are going to be very busy with a wide range of training sessions. They are going to participate in Hazardous Materials Training organized by the Pittsfield Fire Department. This is a 24-hour training session that will be broken into a variety of night sessions. Also, on the schedule are First Responder Training, CPR, Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus Classes, and a Pumps and Hydraulics Class.

The Fire Department has recently added four new personnel, but Chief Morrison continues to make his plea for more new members. So if you have the time and the inclination, give him a call. (And if you have a house that you want to have eliminated, give him a call as well). 



Photos: Sandisfield Fire Department

## THE SANDISFIELD LIBRARY NEWS

Tara Beardsley, Library Trustee



The Library Trustees would like to extend to you our best wishes for a happy, healthy New Year! We hope that the New Year will bring forth many new, positive changes and additions to our library. We are still planning to update our library to the automated MassCat system. We will keep you posted as things progress.

We have also received a partial grant from the Sandisfield Cultural Council, which will guarantee a great summer reading program to which we can look forward. We'd like to send a great, big "thank you" to them for their generosity. Every bit helps!

Unfortunately, I do have to submit a bit of bad news. CHP had offered to sponsor a new story time followed by a craft program at our Library. It was to be held every Monday from 9:30-11:00. Sadly, the program was cut after only 4 sessions. I was told that there was not enough participation to support such a

program. CHP has decided to add a playgroup program (also being run by Laura Messina) at Farmington River Elementary in its place. (Please note that the Town Hall Playgroup will continue on Tuesdays from 9:30-11:00 a.m.)

I would really like to find a way to keep this idea alive for the children of our town, as well as for those in surrounding ones. If you think you may be interested in volunteering some of your time to host a story-time event, please e-mail me at dtbear@ymail.com. Let me know which day(s) and times work best for you, and I will try to come up with a new plan that will work for our community.

The following titles have arrived, or are on order (please call to check availability):

*Chasing the Night* by Iris Johansen  
*First Family* by Joseph Ellis, Abigail & John Adams  
*Busy Body* by M.C. Beaton  
*The Outlaws* by W.E.B Griffin  
*The Red Garden* by Alice Hoffman  
*The Janus Stone* by Elly Griffiths  
*To Have and to Kill No. 1* by Mary Jane Clark  
*The Inner Circle* by Brad Meltzer  
*Strategic Move* by Stuart Woods  
*Tick Tock* by James Patterson

And as always, feel free to let us know what other titles you would like to read.

Below you will find our current "Wish List"

- Computer Task Chair
- Patron Cards \$500.00
- DVD's (new titles can be purchased at Big Lots for as little as \$4.00)
- An "OPEN" flag with pole
- A Boot Scraper (to help keep our new rug clean!)

As a reminder, once again, our hours are:


M & Tu: 9-12:30

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

Th: 2:30-5:30

Sa: 9-12:00

Closed Friday and Sunday

Note: in the event of inclement weather please call the library at 258-4966 to confirm they will be open during normal business hours. Thank you! 



# Comings and Goings



## TERESA LINKOVICH 1957 - 2010

Teresa Linkovich, 53, of 9 Lower West Street, Sandisfield, died Tuesday, December 7, at home.

She was born in Great Barrington on April 6, 1957, daughter of Nelva (Nell) McLaughlin Linkovich Cronin and the late Stanley W. Linkovich. She attended schools in Sandisfield and was a 1975 graduate of Monument Mountain Regional High School. She was a group leader at Kamatics Corp, Bloomfield, Conn.

Teresa enjoyed gardening, cats, working and designing her landscape.

Besides her mother, Nelva (Nell) Linkovich Cronin of Sandisfield, she leaves one brother, Stanley J. and his wife, Kathy, of Kyndonville, Vermont; two aunts, Arlene Finkle and Helen Kokoszka; one uncle, Walter Linkovich; two nieces, Danielle

Stoveland and Allison Linkovich; one nephew, William Linkovich, and many cousins. Besides her father, Teresa was predeceased by one sister, Larinda Stoveland.

A funeral service for Teresa Linkovich was held on Saturday, Dec. 11, at 1 p.m. at the Birches-Roy Funeral Home with the Rev. Bruce N. Teague officiating. Burial was held on Monday, December 13, at 9AM at the Sandisfield Center Cemetery.

Expressions of sympathy in Teresa's memory may be made to the American Cancer Society or to the Berkshire Humane Society both in care of the funeral home at 33 South Street, Great Barrington, MA 01230. Condolences may be made online through birchesroyfh.com.



## PEGGY KAHN 1946 - 2010

Peggy Kahn, 64, of Cedarhurst, NY and 30-year resident of Stump Road, Sandisfield, passed away Tuesday, December 21.

She is survived by her loving husband of 43 years, Steven Kahn, her children Jarrod and Jenna Kahn, Jaymee and Robert Hurvitz, her grandchildren Henry, Ava, Jake and Olivia; her mother Arlyne Mittman; her brother Evan Mittman and his wife Debi; sister-in-law Laurie Kanter and her husband Jeff.

Peggy, a caring friend and loving family member, devoted many years to special education rights.

Services were held Thursday 10:30AM, December 23rd at "The Riverside," 76th Street and Amsterdam Avenue in New York.

Donations may be made in Peggy's memory to either the Sandisfield Arts Center, P.O. Box 31, Sandisfield 01255 or to Gould Farm, P.O. Box 157, Monterey, MA 01245.

## THE DAY THE ALIENIST CAME TO TOWN

By R.F. Royce


*The noted Victorian-era mental health activist Dorothea Dix published her seminal "Memorial to the Legislature of Massachusetts" in 1843, arguing with great passion for the need to improve the conditions of the state's poor and insane.*

*Bob Royce, who now lives in Connecticut, has an abiding interest in the work of Miss Dix, and found that she used as one of her most compelling examples a distressing case in our own small town.*

In the preface to the Memorial, Miss Dix states that "I come to place before the Legislature of Massachusetts the condition of the miserably, the desolate, the outcast. I come as the advocate of helpless, forgotten, insane, and idiotic men and women; of beings sunk to a condition from which the most unconcerned would start with real horror; of beings wretched in our prisons, and more wretched in our almshouses."

Among the cases she lists in her work is one right here in Sandisfield. It is a remarkable story and Miss Dix explains it best in her own words, which I quote verbatim:

*Some may say these things cannot be remedied, these furious maniacs are not to be raised from these base conditions. I know they are. Could give many examples. Let one suffice. A young woman, a pauper, in a distant town, Sandisfield, was for years a raging maniac. A cage, chains, and the whip were the agents for controlling her, united with harsh tones and profane language. Annually, with others (the town's poor), she was put up at auction, and bid off at the lowest price which was declared for her. One year, not long past, an old man came forward in the number of applicants for the poor wretch. He was taunted and ridiculed. "What would he and his old wife do with such a mere beast?" "My wife says yes," replied he, "and I shall take her." She was given to his charge. He conveyed her home. She was washed, neatly dressed, and placed in a decent bedroom, furnished for comfort and opening into the kitchen. How altered her condition! As yet the chains were not off. The first week she was somewhat restless, at times violent, but the quiet, kind ways of the old people wrought a change. She received her food decently, forsook acts of violence, and no longer uttered blasphemies or indecent language. After a week the chain was lengthened, and she was received as a companion into the kitchen. Soon she engaged in trivial employments. "After a fortnight," said the old man, "I knocked off the chains and made her a free woman." She is at times excited, but not violently. They are careful of her diet. They kept her very clean. She calls them "father" and "mother." Go there now, and you will find her "clothed," and, though not perfectly in her "right mind," so far restored as to be a safe and comfortable inmate.*

How would we love to know who these old people were, but their names are lost to history and not likely to be discovered. It is enough that they were from Sandisfield, and from that we may take some small satisfaction. 



*We'd like to thank all of those who responded to our first annual appeal or who have recently donated. Here are a few of the comments we received :*

For one who has been going up to "Thurtilperk Hill" for 53 yrs (Peter 60 yrs) "The Times" is a stunning newspaper: informative, educational, professional and enjoyable. Look for Ron Bernard's "Then and Now" to learn about "Thurtilperk Hill" - our hidden haven. I find myself glued to your articles - Have a good winter and see you in May.

Sincerely,  
Cici and Peter Hitchcock



Thanks for your efforts and a job well done.  
Linda & Dennis Cormier



Thank you for a wonderful newsletter!  
Mary Costigan



LETTER FROM THE SELECTMEN

by Patrick Barrett


On December 31st, Bill O'Brien retired from the Sandisfield Highway Department. The Sandisfield Board of Selectmen would like to thank Bill for his eleven years of dedicated service to the Town and wish him a happy, healthy, well deserved retirement.

We are happy to announce the hiring of Sandisfield resident Scott Worcester to our highway department. Scott has an impressive resume with a solid background in heavy equipment operation as well as an enthusiasm for hard work. Scott is a welcome addition to our team and we wish him a happy and productive tenure with the Sandisfield Highway Department.

We would like to thank the Tryon Construction Company for the wonderful job tearing down the Gross house and cleaning up the property at 95 South Main Street. Leigh Tryon submitted com-

petitive bids on both the Wilber and Gross houses and worked closely with various town officials during this process. We would also like to thank members of the Sandisfield Highway Department for the work they put in on this project as well as various Town officials who together brought this project to fruition. Thanks to everyone involved; how appropriate that our downtown area has gone through a positive transformation on the eve of Sandisfield's 250th celebration.

We would like to thank the organizers and vendors who participated in this year's crafts fair that was held in early December at Fire Station Two. Many attended what proved to be a great showcase for our Town. Special thanks go out Santa Claus for taking time out of his busy schedule to visit with our youngsters.

Please make sure to contact Sandisfield Town Clerk Dolores Harasyko in order to make arrangements for acquiring 2011 Dump Stickers. 

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## A Valentine to Sandisfield

*This is a two-month issue: It comes out mid-January and we didn't want to forget the other month. So in honor of Valentine's Day and the month of February, we decided to ask folks to answer the question, in a sentence or two, "What Do You Love about Sandisfield?" Here are some of the responses:*

"The sense of community - I love how people look after one another in this community". Karen Cooley - Post Master, Sandisfield Post Office.



"The landscape. We're really privileged to live among these trees and streams and mountains." Bogart Muller - Landscaper, South Main Street.



"I like spring, the best of all Sandisfield seasons." Margaret O'Clair - Bird Columnist for the Sandisfield Times.

"I like that the neighbors are close enough to be neighborly but far enough away to allow for privacy." Wendy Pennington - Horse owner .



"The view from the Tarasuk's Farm." Tina Sotis - Painter and pet lover.



"The People, the Quiet, West Lake, The Arts Center, and my garden." - Betsy Polatin.



"I find Sandisfield to be a quiet, safe environment for my children to grow up in. I also like the community events including the parades, Easter egg hunts, steak dinners, Art Center, etc." - Dana Beardsley.



"We love Sandisfield because after years of traveling

internationally and nationally for our work, we were always swept over with gratitude for the unparalleled beauty of Sandisfield in almost every season." - June Keener Wink and Walter Wink, potter and professor.



I love being outside on a clear night and seeing the millions of stars in the sky that I never noticed before I moved to Sandisfield. I also love listening to the "hoots" of the owls, rather than the roar of a highway." - Tara Beardsley.



"I love the area's unchanging rural quality (I'm keeping my fingers crossed on that one!) and the old cemetery on Route 57 where I took the kids to make rubbings—they decorated our walls for years." - Jo Garfield, writer.

## NOW HEAR THIS!

If you have an event that you would like to see listed here, please email Liana Toscanini at [calendar@sandisfieldtimes.org](mailto: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.

### JANUARY AND FEBRUARY EVENTS

**Wednesday, January 5, 7PM, History Book Committee Meeting,** Sandisfield Library. All welcome. 269-0012

**Saturday, January 8, 7:30PM Free Movie "Full Signal,"** a documentary about the fight to regulate cell phone antenna placement. Monterey Fellowship Meeting Hall.

**Thursday, January 20, 7PM, 250th Birthday Committee Meeting,** Town Hall Annex. All welcome.

**Saturday, January 22, 10AM Workshop, 11:30AM Nature Walk** Bullitt Reservation, Ashfield, MA for "Why We Need Winter." Offered free by Trustees of the Reservation. Call 413 628-4475 to preregister.

**Wednesday, February 2, 7PM, History Book Committee Meeting,** Sandisfield Library. All welcome. 269-0012

**Thursday, February 17, 7PM, 250th Birthday Committee Meeting,** Town Hall Annex. All welcome.

### 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. Old Town Hall.

**Planning Board,** second Monday of the month 6PM. Old Town Hall.

**Board of Assessors,** second Tuesday of the month 5PM. Town Hall Annex.

**Finance Committee,** 7PM on December 13, January 18, February 15, March 15, April 19.

**Council on Aging,** every Wednesday 11AM. Town Hall Annex. Potluck Lunch at Noon. Bingo at 1pm. Free Blood Pressure screening every fourth Wednesday.

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

**Monday, Wednesday, Friday 11am-Noon, Aqua Wellness Exercise Program for Seniors and People with Disabilities.** 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](mailto:dcollopy@simons-rock.edu) or General information number 528-7777.

**Every Monday, 9:30-11AM. Story Time followed by a craft.** Farmington River Elementary School. Led by Laura Messina. Sponsored by CHP.

**Tuesdays, 9:30-11:30AM, Community Health Program Family Network Playgroup for Kids 5 and under.** Toys, music, crafts! Parents must stay. All welcome. Old Town Hall. Call Alison Benedict for more information (413) 770-7517.

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

**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!

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

**1st Sunday, 9AM New Boston Congregational Church worship service and communion.**



Photo: Setsuko Winchester

### THE SANDSFIELD WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

Info: Charlene Peet - 258-4166.

The selections for meetings to be held at 7PM at the Sandisfield Library in 2011:

- JAN. 19 *Did My Mama Like to Dance?* by Terry McMillan, Amy Tan, Barbara Kingsolver and others.
- FEB. 16 *Seventh Heaven* by Alice Hoffman
- MAR. 16 *Half the Sky: Turning Oppression into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Sandisfield Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



Massachusetts Cultural Council

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happy to send you one.





# SANDISFIELD TOWN DIRECTORY

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**ANIMAL WARDEN / DOG OFFICER**  
Kim Spring: 258-4450

**ASSESSORS OFFICE:** 258-4701  
Office Hours: Tu-Th 9:30 AM – 1:30 PM  
Meets second Tuesday every month at 5 PM

**BOARD OF HEALTH:** 258-4053  
Office hours Mon 11-3. Meets first Wed at 9 AM  
Meets at the Old Town Hall, 3 Silverbrook Rd.

**BOY SCOUTS (Local):** 258-4460

**BUILDING INSPECTOR** Eric Munson Jr.: 258-4590

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION:** 258-4712  
Meets third Tues, 7pm

**CONSTABLES**  
Nazario Sanchez: 258-4705 Joseph Zeller: 258-4836

**COUNCIL ON AGING**  
Mary Slater 258-4778  
Wed: 11 AM – 2 PM Senior Center/Town Hall Annex

**DUMP HOURS**  
Wed: 1 PM – 4 PM Sat/Sun: 9AM – 3 PM

**FINANCE COMMITTEE** Kathy Jacobs: 258-4487

**FRIENDS OF YANNER PARK** Robbin Campetti: 258-4615

**FIRE DEPARTMENT** Emergency: 911  
Ralph Morrison, Fire Chief: 258-4742

**FARMINGTON RIVER REGIONAL SCHOOL**  
North Main Street, Otis, MA  
JoAnn D. Austin, Superintendent: 413 269-4466  
FRRSD **SCHOOL COMMITTEES** meets first Mon, 7 PM

**GIRL SCOUTS** Tara Beardsley (413) 717-1427

**HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
PO Box 513 Meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of every month  
Norton Fletcher, President: 258-4520

**JUSTICE OF THE PEACE**  
Elaine O'Brien: 258-4701 John Skrip: 258-4788

**LIBRARY:** 258-4966  
Monday & Tuesday: 9-12:30  
Wednesday: 6:30-8:30 p.m.  
Thursday: 2:30-5:30, Saturday: 9-12:00

**MA. POISON CONTROL CENTER** 800 682-9211

**OLD TOWN HALL,** 3 Silverbrook Road - 258-4170

**PLANNING BOARD**  
Meets second Monday every month @ 6 PM  
Meets at the Old Town Hall, 3 Silverbrook Rd.

**POLICE – LOCAL Emergency: 911**  
Michael Morrison, Police Chief  
Non-Emergency: 258-4742  
**POLICE – STATE** Lee Barracks: 413 243-0600

**POST OFFICE:** 258-4940  
Window Hours:  
Mon – Fri: 8 AM – 12:30 PM & 1 PM – 4 PM  
Sat: 9 AM – 11:30 AM  
Lobby Hours: M-F: 8AM – 4:30PM Sat: 8AM – 12 PM

**ROAD SUPERINTENDENT:** 258-4979 Steve Harasyko

**SANDISFIELD ARTS CENTER**  
5 Hammertown Road  
PO Box 31 258-4100 [www.sandisfieldartscenter.org](http://www.sandisfieldartscenter.org)

**SELECTMEN:** 258-4711  
Mon at 7 PM except July & August on alternate Mondays

**STATE OFFICIALS**  
Benjamin B. Downing, State Senator: 413 442-4008  
Email: Benjamin.Downing@state.ma.us  
Smitty Pignatelli, State Representative.: 413 637-0631  
Email: rep.smittypignatelli@hou.state.ma.us

**TAX COLLECTOR:** Edna Leavenworth: 258-4977  
Mon – Wed: 9 AM – 12 AM

**TOWN CLERK:** Dolores Harasyko  
PO Box 163 sandisfieldtownclerk@verizon.net  
Town Hall Annex: 258-4075  
Mon-Thurs: 8AM – 2PM Mon: 6PM – 7pm

**TOWN GARAGE:** 258-4979

**TOWN HALL ANNEX:** Mon – Thurs: 8 AM – 2 PM  
Secretary: 258-4711; Fax: 258-4225

**TOWN TREASURER:** Clare English: 258-4712  
Mon, Wed 9 AM – 3 PM

**VETERANS SERVICES** Laurie Hils  
Great Barrington Town Hall: 413 528-1580  
Mon – Thurs: 7 AM – 3 PM

# THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

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More donations came in just at press time. We will acknowledge our gratitude to the donors in our next issue.

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### Editorial Staff for this issue:

Editor: Setsuko Winchester  
Graphic Design: Tina Sotis  
Contributors: Ron Bernard, Susie Crofut,  
Larry Dwyer, Patricia Hubbard, Rhee Kasky,  
R.F. Royce, Simon Winchester  
and our regular columnists.

### How to Contact Us

Letters to the editor: .....letters@sandisfieldtimes.org

News, ideas, tips & photos .....editor@sandisfieldtimes.org

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