

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

Tribunus



Plebis

RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume II, Number 2

May 2011

Up, Up and Away New Budget Calls for 9% Tax Increase

By Debbie Harris

At the Annual Town Meeting on Saturday, May 14, Sandisfield residents will be asked to vote on a town budget that calls for a 9% real property tax increase. The budget has a \$202,000 shortfall, which must be met by the tax increase. The increase amounts to at least \$1.10 per \$1,000 of assessed property valuation.

While much of the shortfall is due to an approximately \$150,000 increase in Sandisfield's portion of the school budget, this does not account for the entire amount. For the past three years the Town of Sandisfield has adopted a level budget in the hopes that the economy would improve. Unfortunately, as we all know only too well, this is not the case. Therefore, this year it is deemed necessary to make some expenditures that were held off in the past. Salaries for Town employees are being raised an average of 2%. A new, automated, library catalog system that will connect the Sandisfield library with other libraries throughout Massachusetts is being planned. State mandated computer equipment for ambulance calls as well as training to use the new programs are also included in the budget. However, it should be noted that most department and committee budgets are being held at current funding levels, or are asking for minimal increases.

One big new expense is compensation for Fire Department and EMS personnel. This is deemed necessary in order to keep our volunteer ambulance service. Because Sandisfield pays for training Fire Department and EMS volunteers, many people who volunteer for these positions let us train them and then *Cont'd p.4*



Owner Kenn Basler and employee Cory Rice at the Monterey General Store

SO WHERE CAN I BUY A QUART OF MILK AROUND HERE?

Photo and Article by Larry Dwyer

Another sign of the hard economic times hit the Berkshires when the Monterey General Store closed its doors on April 3, 2011. Now, the only local shopping alternatives for basic food items for Sandisfield residents are the New Boston General Store, Terranova in Otis and the Mill River General Store.

The Monterey General Store was the only store in Monterey, and it was unique in several ways. It provided fresh baked goods (including French baguettes, croissants, donuts and pastries) on the weekends. Home-cooked soups were always on the menu, and the store featured a full service deli. It also provided free Internet access and live music on Friday evenings.

For local residents, the Monterey General Store served as an oasis; it was a central meeting place where people gathered in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere and bought basic necessities, without having to travel all the way to the *big-box* stores in Great Barrington or Lee.

The history of the Monterey General Store dates back to 1780, and the most recent owner was Kenn Basler, who bought the property in 2004. The reason the store closed is that business steadily decreased in the past two years to the point where Kenn could no longer meet the second of two mortgage payments, and was finally faced with foreclosure. Kenn said, "The first five years here were good and sales were going up and up, but in the last two years there was a steady decline in business. People *Cont'd p.5*



Photo: Connie D'Andrea

The Black Plague

By Dassy Herman

I love to garden, to walk, or to just hang out. Since I am very allergic to the dreaded black fly, I spend the month of May all covered up and wearing a mesh bag over my head – so attractive! When I get a bite I try anything anyone suggests. I've found that the most important thing to limit swelling is to wash the bite with soap and water and take an antihistamine as soon as possible. I've tried using the following with varying degrees of success: anti-itch lotions and gels, a poultice of Adolph's Meat Tenderizer with a bit of water, cortisone cream, witch hazel, spit, very hot

water, or very cold ice. Someone suggested Clorox and water, but I'm afraid I'll burn a hole in my skin. Maybe one of those beanies with a fan on top would help. It really is hit or miss as to how well these things work. I think it depends on the strength of the venom - weak in the beginning and end of the month and strong in the middle. I've been told that dragon flies eat black flies, so I'm rooting for those dragon flies to come and save us.

If you know of any other remedies, please share them in a letter to the editor. All suggestions are welcome.



Will History Repeat Itself in Sandisfield?

Don't let them pass us by (again)!

By Jean Atwater-Williams

It may surprise you to learn that Sandisfield was once a busy, industrious community. Back in the mid-1800's the town had many businesses such as tanneries, sawmills and finished wood product factories, as well as thriving farms that sold their products, especially cheese and maple syrup. In fact, Sandisfield was one of the largest suppliers of these products in the region. During this time, Sandisfield's population was over 1,800 people (contrasted with about 800 today).

But then something didn't happen - the railroad. In 1870 a railroad line was supposed to pass right through Sandisfield. Some townfolk even invested heavily in it and ultimately lost everything. The end result was that other communi-



Sandisfield (New Boston) Circa 1860. Courtesy Ron Bernard/Town Archives

ties that had access to rail to transport their manufactured goods flourished while Sandisfield's factories slowly closed, farms were abandoned and our population dwindled steadily for 70 years until it reached 350 residents around 1945. Then something else didn't happen, at least not for Sandisfield - electricity. It's ironic that in 1886, only a few towns away in Great Barrington, the first American transformer was built for long distance AC power transmission. And, on October 1, 1883 Brockton, Massachusetts became the first place in the world to have a three-wire underground electrical system (Wikipedia). Yet, some streets in Sandisfield (mine among them) did not get electricity until the early 1970's - almost 100 years after the first town in Massachusetts became electrified.

ties that had access to rail to transport their manufactured goods flourished while Sandisfield's factories slowly closed, farms were abandoned and our population dwindled steadily for 70 years until it reached 350 residents around 1945.

Then something else didn't happen, at least not for Sandisfield - electricity. It's ironic that in 1886, only a few towns away in Great Barrington, the first American transformer was built for long distance AC power transmission. And, on October 1, 1883 Brockton, Massachusetts became the first place in the world to have a three-wire underground electrical system (Wikipedia). Yet, some streets in Sandisfield (mine among them) did not get electricity until the early 1970's - almost 100 years after the first town in Massachusetts became electrified.

Because Sandisfield is so large in area with such a small population, commercial utilities have found it unprofitable to provide services to our residents. This is why there is no cable television in our town, only very limited DSL internet service and spotty cell coverage. The only reason we have universal home telephone and electric service at all is because it is federally mandated. There is no such requirement for Internet services.

Our town never recovered economically from being passed by, but in an odd way it has also saved us. The natural beauty and rural character of our town has been preserved. There are no strip malls, no "urban sprawl", and our beautiful historic homes and buildings remain because "progress" didn't come in and tear them down to make way for something "better".

State of the art broadband Internet (aka "Big Broadband") will allow us to fully participate in the 21st century, while still preserving the Sandisfield we know and love. It will provide for unparalleled access to commerce, entertainment, healthcare, education, and many services we haven't yet heard of or even thought of - all while keeping the character of our town the same. Fiber optic lines are either strung on telephone poles or buried underground. There are no towers, no buildings to construct or maintain, and the installation of fiber could actually beautify the town as satellite dishes are taken down when people subscribe to television services over fiber.

If you agree this is something we need, vote in favor of the Municipal Lighting Plant at the upcoming Annual Town Meeting. If you are unsure, join us on May 9th, 2011 at 6:00 pm at the Town Hall Annex where residents' questions surrounding this issue will be answered. In the meantime, for more information you may visit www.wired-west.net or view a brief movie about why "Big Broadband" is important to our region. <http://vimeo.com/22173956>.

Jean is chair of Sandisfield's Technology Committee as well as the town delegate to the MBI (Massachusetts Broadband Initiative) and Wired West. She is responsible for leading the effort to build our town website, which can be viewed at www.sandisfield.info.



NOTICE FROM THE SANDISFIELD TOWN CLERK

Dolores Harasyko

The Annual Town Meeting is Saturday, May 14, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. at the Old Town Hall on Silverbrook Rd. The Annual Town Election is on Monday, May 16, 2011 from 10 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., also at the Old Town Hall. Absentee ballots will be available from April 25, 2011.

There are three reasons to request an absentee ballot:

- (1) absence from your city or town during normal polling hours,
- (2) physical disability preventing you from going to the polling place, or
- (3) religious belief.

To obtain an absentee ballot you need to contact the Town Clerk and request an absentee ballot application. Once the application is filled out I will mail the ballot to you, or you can make an appointment and vote in the office. I am available Monday through Thursdays from 9 - 2, and Monday evening 6 - 7, closed Fridays. Call me at 258-4711.

Reminder : Dogs must be licensed by May 31, 2011. After that there is a late fee of \$25.00 per dog.

Dump stickers are still available for this calendar year. If you want to participate in any of the collections we will be having, you will need a dump sticker. Starting the week of May 23 we will have our bulky waste collection at the transfer station. This year we will also be collecting tires. The electronic collection will continue at the Town Hall Annex.

PERSONNEL FROM THE WESTERN DISTRICT DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE HAVE BEEN BUSY STOCKING RIVERS WITH TROUT FOR THE COMING SEASON. OUR LOCAL FISHERMAN CAN EXPECT TO FIND THESE CRITTERS IN THE FARMINGTON RIVER IN BOTH SANDISFIELD AND OTIS, AS WELL AS MANY OTHER RIVERS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTY.

HAPPY FISHING!



LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Debbie Harris

No Longer the Silent Majority

As Sandisfield's 250th anniversary is rapidly coming upon us, I cannot help but reflect on what was happening in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the 1750's and 1760's. We are not only presently living in historic times here in Western Massachusetts, but we are living in one of the true birth places of our nation.

The Reverend Jonathan Mayhew coined the phrase "no taxation without representation" in a sermon



Image: Florida Center for Instructional Technology

he delivered in Boston in 1750. And, by 1765 Massachusetts politician James Otis was associated with the familiar "taxation without representation is tyranny".

This now famous phrase led to many events that precipitated the American Revolution. Of course, the most famous of these events, the Boston Tea Party (no relation to the Tea Party of this century) took place on December 16, 1773. At that time Massachusetts was a hotbed of political revolution and reform.

Unfortunately, Massachusetts seems to have forgotten its heritage. Today in Massachusetts, part-time residents of a town cannot vote on matters concerning that town. These people pay property taxes the same as permanent residents of the town, but get no vote as to how those taxes are spent. This is truly modern day taxation without representation.

It should be noted that Connecticut does not have such regulations, and part-time residents in that state are allowed to vote in town matters concerning how their property taxes are used. But, Massachusetts, in

its wisdom, does not allow such liberal thinking.


In 2007, two part-time residents of Egremont, Massachusetts brought suit against the town to allow them to at least speak, if not to actually vote at town meetings. Unfortunately, the United States First District Court of Appeals held in favor of the town.

Luckily, Sandisfield, where the population is composed of 60-70% part-time residents, is somewhat more forward-thinking than is Egremont. Although Sandisfield's part-time residents are still barred from voting at town meetings (due to state restrictions), our Selectmen welcome an open discussion from all residents (whether part-time or permanent) at all town meetings.

On Saturday, May 14, 2011 the Sandisfield Annual Town Meeting will convene to discuss and vote on the Fiscal Year 2012 budget, among other issues. This budget includes an approximately 9% property tax increase. Most of this increase is the result of the proposed budget for the Farmington River Regional School District (of which Sandisfield is responsible for 37%).

Of course, most part-time residents do not take advantage of the school district's offerings.

The merits of the FY 2012 town budget are discussed elsewhere in this publication, and we encourage all citizens to make up their own minds; there are pros and cons to every argument. However, we are mindful that the majority of our residents cannot actually vote on the budget, and therefore tend to let annual town meetings pass them by. This year, though, it is especially important that all residents, whether permanent or part-time, attend the town meeting and voice their opinion on the issues being voted upon. This is a matter in which everyone in town has a financial stake. The majority of our residents can no longer be silent on fundamental issues affecting them. They must find their voice and make themselves heard. We must go back to the roots planted in the Massachusetts Bay Colony that there should be no taxation without representation, and the majority cannot be silent any longer.

We implore all residents to come to the May 14th Sandisfield Annual Town Meeting and make your voices (and your vote, if you can) heard. 

I am more and more convinced that, with reference to any public question, it is more important to know what the country thinks of it than what the city thinks. The city does not think much. On any moral question, I would rather have the opinion of Boxboro than of Boston and New York put together. When the former speaks, I feel as if somebody had spoken, as if humanity was yet, and a reasonable being had asserted its rights — as if some unprejudiced men among the country's hills had at length turned their attention to the subject, and by a few sensible words redeemed the reputation of the race. When, in some obscure country town, the farmers come together to a special town meeting, to express their opinion on some subject which is vexing the land, that, I think, is the true Congress, and the most respectable one that is ever assembled in the United States.

- Henry David Thoreau

Up, Up and Away - New Budget Calls for 9% Tax Increase *Cont'd from p.1*

take positions in other nearby towns that pay for their services. The state mandates that each ambulance call has two EMS people assigned to it. If we cannot meet this requirement the alternative is to have no town ambulance service at all. To avoid that, the budget has allocated \$15/hour for Fire and EMS personnel to either be on call or respond to a call. It should be noted that other towns, which do not pay for training, pay their personnel \$25/hour.

The largest increase in the proposed budget is for the school. Sandisfield pays 37% of the budget for the Farmington River Regional School District. This year the District is asking for approximately \$80,000 to maintain and expand its pre-K program to a full day. The expansion portion of the pre-K program is \$40,000, of which Sandisfield's portion is approximately \$13,300. Not only will this program help to identify special needs children as early as possible, it will hopefully bring and keep more children in the district, which will help to keep school choice money within the district. Another major expense in the school budget is for a new HVAC (air conditioning) system. And, of course, reduced state contributions to the school district do not help. When the regional school district was established the state promised to pay 100% of the cost of transporting students to the school; this year it is only offering 59%, with the Sandisfield and Otis taxpayers footing the bill for the remaining 41%.

The Finance Committee, which sees itself as a watchdog for the tax payers, does not approve of the school budget. The Finance Committee has also recommended deferring the first installment of \$25,000 to repay funds borrowed from the Stabilization Fund for the purchase of a town

truck until next year. However, even without the school budget increase and the \$25,000 repayment, taxes will still increase over 2½%, requiring overall approval by the town residents (the Prop 2½ article on the warrant).

Not passing the budget has its own drawbacks and expenses. If the proposed budget is voted down the Selectmen must develop a revised budget to be approved at a special town meeting and a special


The state mandates that each ambulance call has two EMS people assigned to it. If we cannot meet this requirement the alternative is no town ambulance service at all.


election, both of which have costs related to them. This costly process needs to be repeated until a budget is finally passed. And, if the school budget is not ultimately passed, the state will step in and set the budget without the need for voter approval. A state mandated budget may or may not save the town any money.

Another point about the budget needs to be raised. The town maintains two funds from which it can draw additional monies without immediately affecting the budget. These are the Stabilization

Fund and Free Cash. Monies taken from the Stabilization Fund must be repaid over a 10 year period. Free Cash does not have to be paid back, but can quickly become depleted. This year the Highway Department is asking for \$250,000 for a new truck with a wing for pushing back snow banks in winter (an expense that has been looming for years, and was made painfully obvious by the efforts needed to handle this year's heavy snow fall). Because our roads are one of the most important assets of the town, the impaired ability to maintain them was considered an emergency by the Finance Committee, and therefore this hit on the Stabilization Fund was approved. However, it must be emphasized that these two funds have been carefully and painstakingly built up over a long period of time. They are our cushion against emergencies. They should not be taken as a panacea for budget shortfalls.

Two additional items also appear on this year's warrant. The first is the vote to establish a "municipal lighting plant", which will lead to bringing high speed, fiber-optic wiring (and with it broadband phone, internet, and possibly television service) to Sandisfield. This initiative has been, and continues to be, the subject of articles in the Sandisfield Times. The cost to the town is expected to be a one-time charge of \$1,000 and will be covered by the Technology Committee budget, which is being level funded again this year. The second item is a non-binding resolution that would allow farmers in the town to enter into private contracts to sell their products to individuals who wish to buy them.


The Sandisfield Annual Town Meeting will take place at the Old Town Hall on Silverbrook Road on Saturday, May 14, 2011 beginning at 10:00 a.m. Permanent, full-time residents can vote on each and every warrant article. Part-time, second home owners, cannot vote but are welcome to come and voice their opinion. Elections for town officers and the Prop 2½ override will take place at the Old Town Hall on Monday, May 16, 2011. 



wm. BROCKMAN
berkshiresforsale.com real estate

413.528.4859
Offices in Monterey
& Great Barrington

We earn the trust of our clients and customers;
We value and contribute to life in the Berkshires;
We give honest advice honed by our over 35 years of experience.



Chaplin Fish - Broker/Manager, Patricia Bill - Salesperson, Krista LeBaron - Realtor, Timothy Donnelly

Country Homes, Estates & Land
info@wmbrockman.com

Buying or Selling:
Personal, Professional, Outstanding Service.

"Be true to your word and your work and your friend"
Henry David Thoreau

So Where Can I Get A Quart of Milk Around Here? *Cont'd from p.1*

are watching their pennies and the summer shopping season is getting shorter. July and August are the biggest months for sales, and Memorial Day Weekend is big for us, but then the rest of June is dead. These two months are not enough to carry the store for the rest of the year. Also, ski traffic has slowed. Skiers used to buy breakfast and then dinner in the local restaurants. Now skiers just come up to ski and return straight home to save money."

When asked about the local business Kenn said, "There is no construction going on anymore, and we used to make between 70 and 80 sandwiches a day. We lost that business also." Kenn estimated the breakdown of sales from 75% for second-homeowners and 25% for local traffic, but trade was lost from both.

Kenn, who is still making payments on the first mortgage, was unable to meet the second mortgage when he took over the store operation from Helen Boehm in 2006. When asked, Kenn said, "If it wasn't for the mortgage, we could stay in business."

Kenn then gave an example of how general stores try to stay in business. "In Southfield the general store first became a restaurant and general store, and then a restaurant only. Now the store is lost. More local participation is needed if general stores are to survive. A conversation has to take place in the community."


The closing of the Monterey store follows the closing of the Blandford Country Store and the Five Corners General Store in Williamstown, both of which closed in early 2011. Five Corners was billed as the oldest continuous general store operating in America, and the Monterey General Store was second. Regrettably, these establishments might not be the last general stores to close in the Berkshires, as others are said to be struggling in the current poor economic climate.

As for the employees, Cory Rice worked at the store for two years and is a senior at Mt. Everett in Sheffield. When asked about what it was like to work at the store, he described it as "fun and convenient." Cory lives within walking distance of the store, and he worked stocking shelves, making sandwiches and as a cashier.

The loss of the store is a loss to the whole community.

General stores in rural communities can be compared in some ways to anchor stores in shopping malls. Such stores have rents that are heavily discounted, and are the main draw for shoppers: as shoppers walk from Macy's to Bloomingdale's they may visit any number of shops along the way. Without the anchor store, there is no mall. For Monterey, the general store was certainly the anchor store for the town center.

In June 2008, *Berkshire Living* ran an article on general stores. Kenn was interviewed for the article, and, referring to when the Monterey General Store was previously closed before 2004, he said, "The center of town was dead." Now it looks as if history is about to be repeated.

However, there is a plan on the horizon to turn the store into a cooperative, as was successfully done with the Berkshire Co-op in Great Barrington. Creating a co-op is no small undertaking and requires the participation of many members. To get an idea of how the Berkshire Co-op was formed, view its history at www.berkshire.coop/about.html. 

AVIAN NOTES

By Margaret O'Clair

Woodpeckers Take a Licking but Keep on Drilling



Apart from Australia, New Zealand and various islands down under, it is a safe bet to say that where there are trees there are woodpeckers. This large, ancient and diverse family of birds has adapted to a wide range of forest habitats. Here in Sandisfield we have plenty of trees and plenty of woodpeckers. Starting with the smallest we have: the Downy; the Yellow-bellied sapsucker; the Hairy; the Red-Bellied; and the Pileated Woodpeckers. We are a little too far south for the Black-Backed (Maine/Canadian border) and a little too far north for the Red-Headed (although it is on its way up).

All of our woodpeckers are black and white with the males sporting a jaunty red splash on their heads. The Downy and the Hairy are drawn to suet feeders,

and are somewhat hard to identify because size is the main difference between them. I think of the Hairy with an "H" for huge, which it isn't, but it helps to differentiate between the two.


Woodpeckers have developed all sorts of novel ways to make their arboreal (tree) lives easier and more efficient. Their short legs and zygodactyl (two toes pointing forward and two pointing backward) feet, which are combined with large, curved claws, are perfect for a bird that relies on grasping rather than perching.



Woodpeckers don't climb up and down trees, they only go up or spiral around and up. To do this, and to assist in balance when feeding, they rely on their stiff tail feathers. So important are these feathers that when they need to be replaced they grow the new feathers before shedding the old ones.

What really sets woodpeckers apart from other birds is the modifications to their heads. Bristle-like feathers corner their nostrils to prevent them from breathing in sawdust when they drill. The tongue is barbed and sticky and can be four times the length of the beak; it is stored wrapped around the skull, rather like a retractable carpenter's tape measure. The brain is protected by an extra thick skull that prevents much movement during the drilling process. Knowing that still doesn't satisfactorily explain how the woodpecker survives its feeding habits. It must be like going ten rounds with Mohammed Ali before every meal!

Woodpeckers are a benefit to other forest birds which recycle their nest cavities. Sapsuckers drill lines of "wells" in the tree bark that are also used by hummingbirds, warblers and waxwings.

I have neglected to mention the Northern Flicker, which is a member of the woodpecker family and a regular visitor to Sandisfield. As Lily Tomlin used to say, it is "special" and deserves a column of its own. 

*Photos of Downy & Pileated Woodpeckers
Wikimedia Commons*

You are invited to join

THE OTIS COMMUNITY GARDEN

For just \$25 and an hour a week, you can help feed your family (of one to four) & provide others in your community with fresh, healthy produce. Our mission is to grow vegetables as naturally as possible & to give-away at least half of our bounty. Last year, we harvested over a 1,000 pounds of food right here in Otis. Whether you are an experienced gardener or a novice, there are many volunteer opportunities available for our members besides active gardening. Come hear all about our plans for this year!

The deadline for membership is May 15, 2011.

For more information about becoming a member, please email us at:

www.otiscommunitygarden@yahoo.com or call MaryAnn Cicillo at 413-269-7512



The Gardeners' Almanac



Sue Tarasuk

THE ROSE: QUEEN OF PLANTS



Roses are thought to be the queen of plants, or at least that is how I sometimes feel about them. Many times when I suggest planting roses in a client's garden, I hear the sighs of how difficult and time-consuming roses are. They can be, but they are so worth it!

The trouble lies in the thinking that all roses can grow anywhere. Not so! There are three broad categories of roses: 1) The modern bush roses – Hybrid Teas, Floribundas, Polyanthas and the miniatures; 2) The species & shrub roses such as the wild roses, old garden roses (Albas, Damasks and more modern shrub roses); and 3) The climbers and ramblers.

For our area in Berkshire County, and indeed any area with cold and snowy winters, consider the second group of roses your best bet for success. Hybrid teas and floribundas are magnificent roses. These are the roses you find at the supermarket or at the (Heavens No!!) big box stores. Do not be tempted to buy these, as you will be disappointed and will then be reluctant to try a rose that will actually grow and flower with ease in Sandisfield.

The following will guide you on your way to successful planting and growing beautiful roses. The purchase of your rose is the first step. Purchase roses from a reputable supplier and you will be off to a good start. Probably the rose you purchase will be container-grown. If pot-bound, (roots tightly woven), tease out the roots from the root ball so they can easily grow into the soil.

Roses love the sun. In fact, sunlight from dawn to

dusk is ideal, so plant your rose in the sunniest spot in your garden. Sunlight will affect the plant's vigor, flower production and disease susceptibility.

Dig yourself a nice deep hole for your rose. Most roses are budded roses, identified by a "union" of the rootstock at the base of your rose; the rose is attached to a hardier root stock and grown from this. You will see it as a knotty crook. This should be planted at least 4" below the soil surface. The soil will protect the union from severe weather and from suckering from the rootstock. A rose grown on its own roots (not budded) can be grown at the same depth it was growing in the pot.

If your soil is reasonably good, work in some compost or manure. I stay away from peat moss. It is difficult to get peat moss properly wet and, when added to your soil, it can quickly act like a sponge and wick away much moisture from the surrounding soil, which is much needed by your rose. Unless you have dug up a brand new garden and amended it all very well with compost and manure, I find that the best results for planting a single rose (or any other shrub or tree for that matter) is to amend the surface. This is where your feeder roots are. Amending just your planting hole will result in the roots of your newly planted rose staying within that nutritious circle.

Mulch your rose well. Mulch acts as a natural buffer on your garden "floor". You can use anything organic as mulch. I use shredded bark, but old leaves, hay or wood chips will work. Stay away from inorganic mulches like plastic. Adding one more non-renewable oil product to the landfill is unnecessary and unforgivable.

The most important part of establishing a rose is in the watering. A rose will need the equivalent of 1-2" of water a week. This is not just a sprinkling at the end of the day – in fact, watering at night is never a good idea; the water stays on the leaves of the plants and bacteria and fungus can become a problem. I let the end of the hose dribble onto the rose's roots for about twenty minutes. It takes a lot more than you may think to really wet a newly planted rose to its roots. If your soil is mucky or clay-like, you should avoid planting a rose where the soil stays wet for long periods of time. This type of soil lacks adequate oxygen for the plant's roots, and it will eventually die. Be faithful about watering. Roses love to be watered but not to sit in water. If you are careful to keep them well watered, you will be well rewarded. This is especially important the first year they are planted.

Now is the time to prune your newly planted rose. Pruning redirects plant growth. When some of the plant is removed, the plant will put all its energy into what is left to make new growth. If your root system is well nourished and healthy this works fine, but if you have a weak plant severe pruning will often kill your rose. If the rose you purchased was grown well and watered regularly – again, reason to buy your plants from a garden store rather than a hardware store – then your rose will require only moderate pruning. By cutting your rose back, it will concentrate growth into the remaining buds and produce fewer strong shoots

rather than many spindly ones. When pruning, cut just above a bud and look for one that is facing outward, not inward. Inward-facing buds will create criss-crossed branches that will rub and eventually need to be removed. Make your cut so it slopes away from the bud and about 1/8" above it.



Just Right

Too Close


Too Far

We begin maintenance pruning on older, more mature roses in early spring. Prune when buds halfway up strong stems begin to swell. Pruning in fall will encourage sprouting, and these soft shoots can easily die over the winter. First take out dead or diseased branches and any crossed branches. Now is also the time to thin out those long, weaker stems; cut them to the ground. You can cut long laterals by up to one third. This can reduce the height of your rose if it is getting out of control. Remember, most of the modern "shrub roses" that bloom concurrently all summer grow on second-year or older wood and from vigorous new wood produced during the growing season. Relatively light pruning produces the best results. Keep faced flowers removed. Cutting off the flower cluster to the last vegetative bud will encourage more bloom and divert the roses' energy from producing seeds to making new flowers.

Aphids are the most common pest of roses. They are the most prolific insect in existence. Each aphid is capable of producing millions more by the end of its cycle. However, there are many insects and birds who love eating aphids. It is very important that you do nothing when you spot the first aphids on your roses. Spraying at this stage, even with non-toxic or soap sprays, can do great harm to lady bugs' eggs and larvae that have just newly arrived. Hold off for about two weeks and the lady bugs will emerge to reduce the colony of aphids. Watch for ants as they will protect aphids from predators – keep mulch on your rose soil.

Japanese Beetles devour the buds of my roses just as they are about to open. The only answer I have come up with – outside of spraying with noxious chemicals that not only kill the bees, but do not always work – is hand picking. Actually, I hate touching Japanese Beetles, so I have a jar of gasoline or kerosene and gently knock the insect into the jar. If you start early and remove beetles often, you will notice fewer and fewer in years to come.

Enjoy your roses. They bring such joy and the "old fashioned" varieties will scent your property with a most exquisite smell.

If you have any questions, please feel free to come and visit me at the greenhouse at Snow Farm, or email me at suntarasuk@gmail.com. I will be happy to talk to you about roses or any other plants. 

MANAGING THE LAND

The issue of land management in Sandisfield is a complex one. **Susie Crofut**, with the help of **Jackie Bitso** of the Assessors' Office, looks into the various approaches landowners can take. Photo by Larry Dwyer.

There are essentially five different approaches landowners can take with their properties, each with its own tax implications.

For most of us our land's property taxes under standard assessment are based on its "highest and best use." (Mass. General Law Chapter 59). Typically this means land is being assessed for its development potential (i.e., how much road frontage it has for building lots, etc.).

Additionally, there are three "Current Use" tax programs, Chapter 61 (forestry), Chapter 61A (agriculture) and Chapter 61B (recreational land use), which landowners can use to reduce their property taxes. In exchange, landowners must provide the community with many benefits such as clean water, wildlife habitat, rural character and/or local food and wood products.

Chapter 61, the Forestry Chapter, reduces your land's valuation to reflect its value for growing timber (instead of its value as houses), and results in property tax savings while giving landowners the opportunity to produce income from their woods. A requirement of Chapter 61 is a long-term, sustainable timber management plan that must be renewed every ten years. If land is classified under Chapter 61, valuation is based on current timber markets. Landowners receive a substantial tax break but the Town has the right to recover some of the landowner's tax benefits if classification is removed. The Town would also have an option to purchase the property should the land be sold or used for non-forestry uses. There are currently 6,395 acres in Chapter 61 in Sandisfield.

Chapter 61A, the agricultural and horticultural land classification program, is designed to encourage the

preservation of valuable farmland and promote agricultural and horticultural land use. A property owner must have at least 5 contiguous acres "actively" devoted to the production of animals and crops for market. Tax on land classified under 61A is based on the commercial tax rate for the fiscal year, applied to the value of the crop being raised rather than its fair market value. There are currently 504.72 acres of land in Chapter 61A in Sandisfield.

For those who prefer a more passive approach to their land, the Chapter 61B program, run by our local assessor, provides landowners with a 75% reduction in assessed valuation in exchange for agreeing to keep land undeveloped. The land must be kept in a natural, wild or open condition to preserve wildlife and natural resources. Should the land be sold or used for any other purpose the town has an option to purchase the property. There are currently 1,416 acres of land in Chapter 61B in Sandisfield.

Finally, there is a category of land management available to landowners in Sandisfield known as a Conservation Restriction. A Conservation Restriction ensures that one's land will remain in its natural state forever; it is a legal agreement that extinguishes the development rights of the land forever. The agreement is documented and recorded with the deed and is passed along to all future owners. The land remains in private hands and on the tax rolls. At the time of the gift the landowner is eligible for a federal income tax deduction, calculated by how



much the Conservation Restriction has lowered the fair market value of the property. There are currently 1,329.56 acres in Sandisfield with a Conservation Restriction.

The land conservation tax incentives were temporarily extended as part of President Obama's tax package at the end of 2010. The enhanced incentive raises the deduction a donor can take for donating a conservation restriction from 30% of his or her income in any year to 50% and allows qualifying farmers to deduct up to 100% of their income and extends the carry-forward period for a donor to take tax deductions from 5 to 15 years. This is a powerful tool for allowing modest-income donors to receive greater credit for donating a valuable conservation restriction on their property, but it is only good for transactions completed in 2010 and 2011.

All of this information may raise as many questions as it answers. There are several places to turn to find answers. Certainly our tax assessor's office is one. Additionally there are several web sites that might be helpful: www.masswoodlands.net, <http://www.landtrustalliance.org/policy/policy-toolkit> and www.highlandcommunities.org.

WHETHER IT'S A NEW HOME, ADDITION OR COMPLETE REMODEL

TOLLAND MOUNTAIN BUILDERS LLC

HIL #144855

MA LIC #38268

"When Quality and Professionalism Are a Must"

Nick DellaGiustina
413-258-2821

"We Handle All the Details"
Local references available.

Steve DellaGiustina
413-258-4996



TOWN BUSINESS

March & April

Rhee Kasky

Board of Selectmen Meetings

Selectmen's Minutes from Mid-March to Mid-April were not available at press time but will be included in next month's issue



CONSERVATION COMMITTEE NEWS

Meeting of February 15, 2011

Attending: George Green, Mary Turek, Karen Cooley, Susan Bubenas. Absent: Richard Campetti

Public hearing held for the Mass Department of Transportation, represented by Amer Raza regarding their request for a Determination of Applicability. The plans are for work to be done on Route 8 from the Connecticut state line to Otis. A short discussion followed. Susan Bubenas made a motion to grant a negative determination. Carried unanimously. Hearing closed. Meeting closed. ♣



LETTER FROM THE SELECTMEN

Patrick Barrett

The Sandisfield Board of Selectmen and Teamsters Local 104 recently came to agreement on a new three year contract extension for the Sandisfield Highway Department. The Board would like to thank Union Steward Joe Zeller and Teamsters Representative Victor Santiago for the professional, cordial manner in which these negotiations were conducted. We appreciate the good relationship forged over many years between the Board and Local 404, and value the hard work put in by members of the Sandisfield Highway Department.

Sandisfield resident Alice Boyd, president of the highly successful municipal grant writing firm Bailey Boyd Associates, gave a presentation to the Board on the grant writing process. She gave an in-depth overview of this process, answered numerous specific questions and gave suggestions as to how the Town could put itself in a better position to earn much needed grant money. Ms. Boyd has generously offered her time, pro-bono, to help town officials in putting together the strategic planning necessary to be eligible for future grants. We can't thank Ms. Boyd enough for going out of her way to help the Town of Sandisfield in an area of dire need.

We would like to thank Doug Segrin for stepping forward to fill the vacancy on the Sandisfield Board of Health. Doug's presence has not only created a full board, but has also allowed for this department's payroll to be processed.

On a good note, the Town of Sandisfield will be receiving \$12,000 in NEMA reimbursement for this year's major winter blizzard. We appreciate the work put in by Sandisfield Highway Superintendent Steve Harasyko, Sandisfield Emergency Management Director John Burrows and Sandisfield Town Clerk Dolores Harasyko for the hard work they put in to secure this much needed money for the Town.

A special thanks to Dolores Harasyko for the hard work she has put in this month on the Annual Town Report/Budget. Under normal circumstances this project is an enormous undertaking, but it was infinitely more complicated this year because of the Proposition 2½ override. We can't thank her enough for the dedicated service she provides to town officials and residents alike.

The Annual Town Meeting will be held at 10:00 a.m. Saturday, May 14, 2011 at the Old Town Hall on Silverbrook Road. The annual town election will be held on Monday, May 16, 2011 from 10:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall. Please come out to these two extremely important events and make your voice heard. ♣

SARC'S SIXTEENTH SEASON FULL OF SURPRISES

By Jean Atwater-Williams

The Sandisfield Arts Center has always presented quality programming to our community, but this year, as sixteen year olds are wont to do, they are taking a few risks. The program does, of course, feature several exceptional classical performances such as Yevgeny Kutik and the Elektra Ensemble and the Arron Ensemble, as well as community favorites like the Family Cabaret, The Forum and



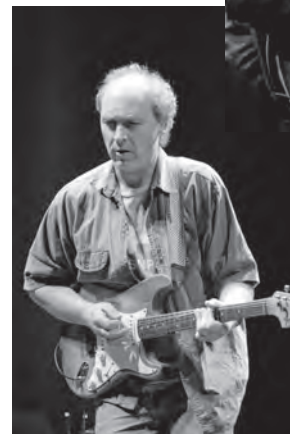
Photo: Richard Migot

The Extravaganza. Very well-known folk artists, The Nields, will perform, and there will also be an original play, world music by 23 extraordinary teen singers, a community sing, a local heroes night and a rock & roll performance to be held at the American Legion. There truly is "something for everyone."

And it will be more affordable than ever. Ticket prices have been held down, and for the first time, "SArC Bucks" (13 \$5 coupons for \$50) will be available by advance purchase.

Watch for the 2011 Season Brochure in your mailbox and around town. You won't want to miss it! ♣

THE BTU
will appear at
the American
Legion Hall
on August 20.



Beautifying homes in the Berkshires

INTERIOR & EXTERIOR PAINTING SERVICES

413-269-8948 Len Mandile

QUALITY PAINTING SERVICES

MASS. REG. #147903
FULLY INSURED

FARMINGTON RIVER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BULLETIN



Tara Beardsley

The 6th grade fundraiser is set to kick-off on May 2nd. Members from WMECO will be holding an assembly for the 2nd thru 6th graders. They will be teaching the children about the importance of energy conservation and the benefits of using fluorescent light bulbs. They will also discuss the fundraiser program.

Attention 3rd - 6th grade parents. Please mark your calendars – the final set of MCAS will take place May 10-17. The math portion will take place for grades 3-6 from May 10-13. May 16-17 will include science, technology and engineering for 5th graders only.

Please be sure that children get adequate sleep and have a good breakfast so that they will be at their best!

Friday, May 6th, has been set aside as “Safety Day” at Farmington River. There are two separate assemblies scheduled for the day. In the morning we will be visited by the Humane Society and an Animal Control Officer who will talk to the children about Pet Safety. In the afternoon, the Otis Kiwanis Club together with the Otis Police Department will hold their annual Bike Safety assembly and there will be an opportunity for kids to get new safety helmets.

I’d also like to congratulate the kids for their valiant effort in raising over \$2,000.00 for the people of Japan. The children participated in “Change for Japan” by bringing in their spare change to help the cause. The 5th grade class held a bake sale during the evening performance of the annual talent show, plus 5th and 6th graders had a Pancake Breakfast.

CONGRATULATIONS to the following students who made Honor Roll in the second trimester:

- GRADE 4: Tessa Albee, Haley Couch, Michael Diskin, Amanda Gadaire, Kyle Hawley, Ali Hiller, Mitchell Monterosso, Hana Pigot and Emily Venne
- GRADE 5: Allyssa Annecharico, Ava Guidette, Ariana Saporito and Richard Stanmeyer
- GRADE 6: Zoe Bean, Janey Beardsley, Mario Castro, Nicholas Gray, Isabelle Morley and Lyssa Richard

Mark your calendars with these important dates:

- May 2 6th Grade Fundraiser Kick-Off
- May 6 Safety Day
- May 10-17 MCAS Testing Grades 3-6
- May 27 Professional Day- **No School**
- May 30 Memorial Day- **No School**
- June 2 6th Grade Berkshire Hills Shadow Day
- June 17 6th Grade Boston Trip
- June 21 Field Day **Rain date: June 22**
- June 22 6th Grade Recognition- Time TBA
- June 23 Last Day of School

You may find additional school information at farmingtonriverelementary.org, or by calling the school directly at 269-4466.

THE OTIS/ SANDISFIELD KIWANIS CLUB

By Roberta Myers

The Otis/Sandisfield Kiwanis Club was chartered by Kiwanis International in the 1970's; it was sponsored by the Lee Kiwanis Club to serve the communities of Otis and Sandisfield. Some original members were Max Pyenson, George Bagnashi, Clifford Clark and Lenny Terranova. Kiwanis Clubs have weekly meetings and engage in various activities that support their communities and Kiwanis International, which concentrates on the welfare of children world wide. Almost all money earned returns to the local community. Members (both men and women) are unified by their desire to improve their community by being involved and caring volunteers.

In addition to donations to worthy local causes - Camp Sunshine (a camp for children with cancer), the annual walk of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, an annual scholarship for a local high school graduate, support for the Southern Berkshire Literacy Network and other Berkshire County organizations, club members engage in many hands-on projects benefiting our community. One example is an annual Bicycle Safety Rodeo, which will be held this year at the Farmington River Elementary School on May 6. Children are given free helmets along with safety training. The Otis/Sandisfield Kiwanis Club hosts an annual Halloween Trick or Treat Party and distributes Toys for Tots at Christmas time. Aided by local folks and the Boy Scouts, they do weekly roadside cleanup in the summer. The club provides local seniors with a Valentine's Day dinner. Last year the club began sponsoring the Otis Community Garden, which provides fresh vegetables not only to Garden members, but also to local food banks and individuals who are in need. Most recently the club purchased two defibrillators, one for the Otis Town Hall and one for the Sandisfield Senior Center located in the Sandisfield Town Hall Annex.

To have fun and raise funds, the Otis/Sandisfield Kiwanis Club sponsors an annual flea market and a craft fair, and has a substantial ongoing recycling program. Barrels are located at the Otis transfer station where people can donate their deposit bottles and cans. Each week members sort the donated containers and use the proceeds to support club activities. In the future the club hopes to have donation barrels at the Sandisfield Transfer Station, but so far manpower for this expansion is lacking.

The Otis/Sandisfield Kiwanis is seeking new members. If you love your community and are into hands-on projects, Kiwanis may be for you. Please call club president Ron Myers at 269-4928 for more information.

THE SANDISFIELD
TIMES IS AVAILABLE
ONLINE!
PLEASE
VISIT
WWW.
SANDISFIELDTIMES.
ORG

Great gardens begin here.



Don't take our word for it. Visit Snow Farm and choose from a variety of healthy, locally-grown annuals, perennials, herbs, and shrubs. Too busy to garden? Snow Farm's professional horticulturists will design, install, and maintain your gardens for you.

Snow Farm
Nursery & Greenhouse
16 Beech Plain Road, Sandisfield, MA
413-258-4929 - snow-farm.com

2011 Sandisfield Town

Election time has come again and there are a number of offices to be filled. Candidates who were nominated at the caucus on April 4th were invited to campaign on their own behalf by providing statements to the Sandisfield Times for consideration by our readers. The following is a list of the open seats, the names of the candidates and statements from the few who chose to make them.

- **MODERATOR: one-year term.**
Candidate: John Skrip
- **TOWN CLERK: three-year term.**
Candidate: Dolores Harasyko
- **SELECTMAN: three-year term.**
Candidates: Jeff Gray and Kathy Jacobs
- **TREASURER: three-year term.**
Candidate: Clare English.
- **AUDITOR: one-year term.**
Candidate: Ralph Morrison
- **BOARD OF ASSESSORS: one-year term.**
Candidates: Kathy Burrows and Michael Fainer
- **BOARD OF ASSESSORS: three-year term.**
Candidate: Teresa DellaGiustina.
- **SCHOOL COMMITTEE: one-year term.**
Candidate: Susan VanSickle
- **SCHOOL COMMITTEE: three-year term.**
Candidate: Nicholas DellaGiustina
- **BOARD OF HEALTH: two-year term.**
Candidate: Doug Segrin
- **BOARD OF HEALTH: three-year term.**
Candidate: Victor Hryckvich
- **PLANNING BOARD: five-year term.**
Candidate: Kathleen Segrin
- **LIBRARY TRUSTEE: five-year term.**
Candidate: Laurie Foulke Green.
- **CONSTABLES: two openings.**
Candidates: Joe Zeller, Dana Beardsley, Nazario Sanchez, John Burrow.



Photo by Setsuko Winchester

Statement from Jeff Gray, Candidate for Selectman:

"I'm Jeff Gray and I've been one of your Selectmen for the past year, filling out the term for Elaine O'Brien who retired from that position after two years. I am now running for a full three-year term and I'd like to tell you about myself and about my year in office.

I live on Stump Road on the Annecharico family farm (Red Barn Alpacas) with my wife Sonja, our 3 children, our 39 alpacas, 3 llamas, 2 sheep, 8 chickens, 4 cats and one dog. In addition to the farm I also run Annecharico Construction with my partner, Allen Annecharico and we specialize in ground work. I earned a BS in Civil Engineering from Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston and that degree has been useful in both my construction work and in my previous job as an engineer for the Commonwealth where I spent 10 years overseeing the construction of roads, bridges and local highways. In fact, I still maintain connections with state personnel.

While so far I have only served one year as your Selectman, I have had perfect attendance at the Select Board meetings and I've enjoyed the work. I've learned a great deal from being involved and have grown into the position. The Select Board has faced difficult and sometimes trying times this year and I have been involved in decision-making on a variety of matters. I

have been involved in the hiring of our Road Superintendent, the demolition of two houses at Rtes 8 & 57 and I have worked with our Road Superintendent and state personnel on the Rte 183 construction project. I have also reviewed and commented on the preliminary plans given to us by the state regarding the bridge construction down in front of the New Boston Store. I have had input on the culvert work on both New Hartford Road and Rte 57, two projects that will be completed by the end of this year. It has often been said that the hardest job in town is taking care of the roads and my experience in that area makes it possible for me to help move things along.

I am pleased that so many of our residents have taken the time to bring me their thoughts, opinions and concerns and look forward to responding to their needs over the next three years as their Selectman. I would appreciate your vote on May 16 so that I may continue working on your behalf to see the scheduled projects completed and to address new challenges as they come along. Thank you very much."



Statement from Kathy Jacobs, Candidate for Selectman:

"Hi Neighbors - Yes, I'm running in the Selectmen Race again this year. I still live on Hammertown Road with my husband Tom of almost 30 years. We have two dogs, Happy and Clancy. I work full time from my home as an Information Technology Consultant and am currently co-chairing the town's 250th Birthday Committee and the History Book Committee.

Election: *The Nominees*

I have served as the Chairman of the Finance Committee for the past three years as an overseer to ensure smart financial spending.

Not only am I a “numbers” person, as a Selectman I will work with the other Departments within the town to add additional information to our new town web site. Also, I think that our priorities should be repairing our roads and keeping our ambulance service. All other new programs should be reviewed so that our taxes remain affordable. In this economy let’s keep what we have without spending money that we don’t have. This is not the time to be putting an extra tax burden on our households.

If elected I will continue to keep an eye on the town’s budget, making sure your tax dollars are spent wisely and in a fiscally responsible manner for the future.

I’m not adverse to change or improvement projects for the town but:

- If there is a cost associated with the project or request it must be funded responsibly. Our town must not resort to a spend and tax budget cycle. There are tough questions that must be asked and steps taken to ensure that our town government is funded at appropriate levels to provide the best services available within responsible levels.
- All new programs and services must be reviewed to ensure that they are adding benefit and that they can be paid for without burdening the taxpayers with large tax bills.

I would appreciate your vote again this year on Election Day.”

Statement from Clare English, Candidate for Treasurer:

“I’ve been assistant treasurer for 18 years and treasurer for 3 years and I’m looking forward to serving for another three years. It is a very rewarding job and I work with a wonderful bunch of people at Town Hall. I really love the job.”



Photo: Larry Dwyer

Statement from Susan VanSickle, Candidate for the School Committee:

“My husband and I bought our house on Rood Hill Road in 1970. We used it as our “home away from home” as we raised three children at The Taft School in Watertown, CT and later at Miss Hall’s School in Pittsfield, MA. I retired from the Lee Public Schools where I taught Spanish for the last 26 years. In the fall of 2010 I was asked to fill a void on the School Committee when my daughter, Hannah Barrett, resigned. I believe that the town of Sandisfield must be adequately represented on the School Committee and it is for this reason that I am seeking a second term. It is my wish to help provide the best possible education for our children.”

Statement from Laurie Foulke Green, Candidate for Library Trustee:

“For 2 ½ years I have been the town Librarian and I have truly enjoyed getting to know the patrons and making friendships. My husband George and I have lived in Sandisfield for 20 years and have two children, Will and Alexandra, both of whom are avid readers. I have an Associate’s Degree in Fine Arts/Science and for 14 years I worked in the offset printing business. My hobbies include genealogy, drawing, reading and birding, and I am a member of the Sandisfield 250th History Book Committee. Through the Massachusetts Library System, our Library Director and I have been taking courses on “Basic Library Techniques.” This course information will allow our library to keep its certification and we will be eligible to receive state grants. On April 4th, at the Town Caucus, I

was unexpectedly nominated for the Library Trustee position and after careful consideration, I decided to accept. I hope to continue to preserve the library and its collection and to help move forward in helping our library become part of Masscat. This will enable us to keep the Interlibrary Loan Service. I believe libraries are still a significant part of a community.”



Statement from Dana Beardsley, Candidate for Constable:

“Hi, my name is Dana Beardsley. I reside at 90 Sandisfield Road with my wife, Tara and our two children, Janey and Joey. We have lived here for about 6 years now and have grown to truly love this town. Our family has been working very hard to re-establish our property to its original grandeur as a working farm, and had great success this past year with our first vegetable stand.

I have been running my own successful carpentry business for over 20 years now, and currently have 3 full-time employees. Being a business owner has given me the opportunity to pursue my interest in law enforcement. I recently graduated from the Massachusetts Intermittent Police Academy. I have also attended special training courses including suicide prevention, and am continuing my education in law enforcement working towards a position as a part-time police officer for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

It is my understanding that a Constable’s position held much more responsibility in years past. If elected, my goal is to work with the town officials to restore the Constable’s duties to days of old in order benefit the community.”

As you can see, we have lots of local people who are interested in participating in town government. It’s up to the voters now to get to Old Town Hall on May 16 and cast the votes that put people to work in areas of interest to them and of great importance to us. 🗳️

Photographs of an April Snowfall

by Larry Dwyer



APRIL SNOW

Snow blankets the ground,
In a windless dawn.
It coats the trees,
In the April morn.

A skidder sits by,
All covered in white.
The ground is soft,
So logging is light

Should I get the mail,
Maybe it can wait.
Drink more coffee,
And I'll hesitate.

A splitter lies near,
No longer needed.
Fire wood is left,
And not depleted.

Ice fishing is done,
The ice has rotted.
A bird's imprint,
On the ground it dotted.

Two bikes by the barn,
They're covered with snow.
Where there is rust,
Some oil will go.

The air is now still,
The sun beckons you.
Snow melts away,
Now winter is through.

Larry Dwyer



Josephine Freedman

Another recipe from the
Sandisfield Historical Society Cookbook

Spring is here and it is now time for the Sandisfield Historical Society Cookbook/Memoir Committee to accelerate its efforts to gather recipes. We are again appealing to you all to send or e-mail a recipe or memoir that could be published in our book. We plan to have it published before March 2012, ready for the 250th Anniversary celebration of the town. We are calling on the community and asking for recipes and/or any interesting note/story. Please send recipes and stories to Josephine Freedman (413-258-4786, freedmj1@aol.com, P.O. Box 138, Sandisfield, MA).

Last month we gave some examples of recipes and notes from the old cookbook. We are including another recipe this month.



Baked Butternut Squash

Submitted by Katharine B. Dirgo

When George and Katharine Dirgo settled on the old Norfolk Road in South Sandisfield, just after World War II, there were no paved roads, no electricity, and no telephones. They built their present house set back from Sandy Brook Turnpike in 1952.

Ingredients:

1 1/2 lbs. Butternut Squash
2 T butter
¼ C dark brown sugar

Directions:

De-stem and wash squash. Cut stem end into 1" circles, scoop seeds out of bulb end and cut in half. Arrange in buttered baking dish with butter and sugar scattered under and over. Bake, uncovered, in a pre-heated, 350 degree oven for 15 minutes. Turn slices and bake uncovered until tender (about 15 minutes more). ♡

MAMA MIA! It's Villa Mia!

Article and Photo by Rhee Kasky

How many readers remember Allan's Restaurant (a.k.a. Grace E. Allan's), Jim's (or was it Sam's, or maybe both) Donut and Deli, Hit and Miss, Brandy's, Peg's Place? Seems there's a truckload of history, maybe even more than we remember, at 90 South Main Street in Sandisfield. I'm talking about the spot where **Dia and Tommy Klenja** run Villa Mia, just around the bend and down the road from the intersection of Rtes. 8 & 57. For those who were around during those earlier incarnations, perhaps you have stories to tell, memories to share, and maybe you'll tell us about them sometime. For now we'll just go back a mere 15 years to tell the story of how the Klenjas came to build their Italian restaurant in Sandisfield. And build it they did. Practically from scratch.

Dia and Tommy are both from Albania but they didn't meet until after they arrived in the U.S almost 30 years ago. Dia came to

the states in 1982 and quickly met Tommy (who had arrived earlier at age 17) whose brother married Dia's sister. Within a year they, too, were married. Tommy went right to work as a bus boy at a restaurant in Torrington. Ambitious and hardworking, he spent a lot of time in the kitchen where he learned the secrets of pizza dough and sauces from a boss who encouraged him. By the time he was 23 Tommy had decided "I can do this myself" and with that determination, opened a restaurant in Danbury. Over the years he became a chef, a pizza maker and his own boss and, for ten years, with Dia by his side, they ran Portofino's, an Italian restaurant in Torrington. While that restaurant was a success, eventually the \$4,000 monthly rent became a killer and thus began the search for a place with a lower overhead.

Tommy loved fishing and often trekked to upstate New York to join his buddies in this sport. The route he took passed right through Sandisfield and he developed a fondness for this area. Returning home after each trip he'd rave to Dia about an idea he had for opening a restaurant in Sandisfield. "This place is really good for business" was his mantra. Dia finally said "Let's take a ride" and they did, pulling up right in front of 90 South Main Street which had, by then, nearly an empty shell of a building on its site. "I took a look at the place," reflects Dia, "and said what are we going to do here?" Tommy was prepared to defend his position, "Do you know how busy this road is? This is a very busy area". But Dia was put off by the condition of the building and she wasn't sure there'd be enough local support



to make the business viable. "You can't just depend on travelers coming through," she said. She really wasn't crazy about the idea but then, in 1996, they were offered a very good deal on the purchase of the property and, acting on advice from Tommy's brother who is a stone mason, considered plans to tear everything down and re-build with "family labor". Dia relented and the five year construction project got underway.

While running the restaurant in Torrington, Dia, Tommy and the rest of the family pitched in on the Sandisfield project and when Villa Mia opened in 2001 it was mortgage free, rent free and all their own - 2200 square feet of restaurant and one acre of land for Dia's fantastic flower gardens. Dia, who has 7 sisters living all over the world, recruited her Waterbury sister, her niece, her daughter and whoever else was around to staff the restaurant.


When asked whether the Klenjas would like to move to Sandisfield from their home in Torrington, Dia said, "Yes. We love it here". However, since their son Etem, a mechanical engineer, and daughter Miranda, who is studying nursing, both live with them, the move isn't likely to happen until they're out on their own. In the meantime, they're thrilled to have a footprint in Sandisfield.

Managing the finances of the business has not been easy, but with careful

planning, the Klenjas are just fine. Business definitely has its ups and downs. In the winter business can be down by as much as 50%. By April that figure comes down to 25% and in May another 25% so that by late spring and summer, as Dia puts it, "Yes! Now I can pay this bill and that bill and then I'm home free!" It's a balancing act. Local suppliers understand their business cycle and are willing to extend credit because they know that once "the season" begins, they'll be paid.

Hours vary, depending on the time of year. After Columbus Day Villa Mia closes on Mondays and Tuesdays and opens from 11:00a.m.-8:00p.m. on the other days. After Memorial Day they are open every day but Tuesday, for lunch and dinner (11:00a.m.-9:00 or 10:00p.m.). The menu runs the gamut from meat to seafood and, of course, as any Italian restaurant must provide, pizza and pasta.

When asked what she'd like readers to know, Dia responded, "Busy or not busy, I really love it up here. Sure, in the winter it gets boring and I read books, but when the weather changes, if I'm not inside here, I'm out there in the garden taking care of my flowers. I love them".

And that's the story of life at 90 South Main Street. Stop in, have a bite to eat, and then tour the gardens. It's all very appealing. 



Can Spring Be Far Behind? (One can only hope!)

We've had more than our fair share of "weather" over the last few months. Science tells us that the interactions of sunlight, the state of the atmosphere including atmospheric gases, and the influence that land and sea masses exert on our atmosphere and wind patterns all combine or interact to create the complex phenomenon we call weather, or weather patterns.


Over this last winter, two weather patterns collided and resulted in a series of heavy storms over the Midwest to the Northeast that dropped up to 400 percent over the average amount of snow in many locations while also causing significantly lower than normal temperatures.

Reverse Arctic Oscillation is a weather condition caused when high pressure over the Arctic and low pressure at mid-latitudes occurs. It makes the Arctic zone relatively warm but spills cold Arctic air southward to places like the Midwest and Northeast U.S. This phenomenon is not new, but it's rare that Arctic air moves so far south, especially since there were several occurrences of this through the winter.

La Nina, the naturally occurring ocean cycle, brought increased precipitation from the Gulf of Mexico. La Nina is well known and like its counterpart, El Nino, occurs regularly.

The consequences of a colder than normal flow of air pushing farther south than normal coinciding with increased moisture in the atmosphere seem to be exactly what we experienced! The rarity of this type of event and the increase in recent years of the variability of abnormal weather patterns have scientists trying to determine if this represents a longer term trend.

It's well documented that the Arctic has been warming much faster than other parts of the world in recent years, and winter temperatures in the Arctic this year were way above normal. Scientists believe increased exposure of the ocean resulting from the disappearance of sea ice also contributes to the above normal temperatures in the Arctic because heat from the ocean escapes to warm the atmosphere in the absence of the ice. This January saw the least amount of sea ice recorded in the Arctic for that month.

Let's hope May is kinder to us than recent months! 

The Ferris-Burtis Foundation

By Herb Burtis

In 1987 the late John Ferris and Herbert Burtis, long-time residents of Sandisfield, set up a Foundation to aid young classical musicians in their education and careers. This was set up through the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation of Sheffield, MA. The Ferris-Burtis Foundation has scholarship help available to graduating high school seniors who are residents of the Berkshire Taconic region and are entering college or music school to further their musical education.

The first winner was a brilliant young violinist, Yevgeny Kutik of Pittsfield. The Foundation helped him through his college education and has been helping him in his very successful professional career. He has performed throughout the U.S. Europe and Japan. This season he is playing at the College of Staten Island, the Phillips Collection in Washington, D.C., Lenox, MA, the *Ludwigsburg Schlossfestspiele* in Germany, and the Dame Myra Hess Series in Chicago.

Recently the Ferris-Burtis Foundation has added the amazing Elektra Ensemble to its roster of young artists. They are Brunlida Myftaraj, violin, from




Albania, Melissa Morgan, cello, from Connecticut, and Igor Lovchinsky, piano, from Russia. They have performed concerts throughout the United States. The Foundation will help them broaden their range of performance to include Europe in the near future.

These four brilliant young artists, plus Timothy Bozarth, pianist, will perform in a Gala Fund Raiser for the Ferris-Burtis Foundation on May 22, 2011 at 4:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center on Hammertown Road. The concert will include works by Shostakovich, Debussy, and Tchaikovsky. Reservations are \$20.00 each.

To give a more generous gift, you may contribute in the following categories and receive two reservations plus mention in the program:

- Friend, \$100.00-\$299.00
- Sponsor, \$300.00-\$499
- Benefactor, \$500.00-\$699.00
- Angel, \$700.00-\$999.00
- Founder, \$1,000.00 or more.

You may send checks made out and mailed to the Ferris-Burtis Foundation, 53 Rood Hill Road, Sandisfield, MA 01255. All gifts over \$20.00 are tax-deductible. 

KWIK^{Color} PRINT
INCORPORATED
EXPERIENCE • SPEED • QUALITY

- Full Color Digital Printing
- Full Color Envelope Printing
- Large Format Printing
- High Speed Copying
- Laminating
- Inline Bookletmaking
- Perfect Binding
- Folding
- Perforating
- Mailing Services
- Graphic Design Services

35 Bridge Street
Great Barrington, MA 01230
Ph: 413.528.2885 Fx: 413.528.9220
typesetting@kwikprintinc.com
www.kwikprintinc.com

THE SANDISFIELD LIBRARY NEWS



Tara Beardsley, Library Trustee

May 2011

The Sandisfield Library was proud to help support Farmington River Elementary School during this year's "Screen-Free Week." This is an annual celebration where students pledge to "turn off their screens and turn on life." The Library hosted a Story/Game Time event on Wednesday, April 13th from 4:00-5:30 p.m. I read stories to the children (and their parents - who seemed to enjoy my rendition of some *Skippy John Jones* books!), and we set out cards and Board Games for the older children and adults. We shared a variety of snacks, which were provided by Sadie O'Rourke and Laurie Green. The turn-out was very successful. Seventeen children along with eleven parents from Sandisfield, Otis and Tolland attended. We even had a few visitors from the park pop in for a visit!

In other news, I am really pleased to inform you that, through a wonderful grant from the Friends of WRMLS, we were able to obtain a set of 12 National Audubon Field Guides. The guides include everything from Birds and Butterflies to Rocks and Fossils, plus every animal, plant and sea creature in between. The guides are on display when you enter the library. Stop by and check them out - literally!

Boy, do we have a great list of other new books!

Silent Mercy No.13 (Alex Cooper), by Linda Fairstein

Learning to Swim, by Sara J. Henry

Snowdrops, by A.D. Miller

The Land of Painted Caves, by Jean M. Auel

The Sick Man, by David Baldacci

The Dry Grass of August, by Anna Jean Mayhew

Home Free, by Fern Michaels

Mobbed, by Carol Higgins Clark

Morning Gloria, by Susan Albert

Chasing Fire, by Nora Roberts

Bel-Air Dead, by Stuart Woods

Eve, by Iris Johansen

I'll Walk Alone, by Mary Higgins Clark

Night Road, by Kristin Hannah

Devious, by Lisa Jackson

Deadly Midnight, by Carolyn Hart

Knock Down, by Sarah Graves

Below you will find our current "Wish List"

VOLUNTEERS... PLEASE!

An "OPEN" flag with pole

Audio Books

A Boot Scraper (to help keep our *new floor* clean!)

Patron Cards \$500.00


As a reminder, once again, our hours are as follows:

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

Reminder: 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! 

Arts Review

Tina Sotis

Robin Crofut-Brittingham "Faces and Myth"

"The eyes are the window to the soul."
- Proverb

Robin Crofut-Brittingham is only 21 years old. Think about this when you gaze at the portraits in this exhibition, the very first showing of her work.

Robin studies poetry at Bard College at Annendale on Hudson. The myths and legends in which she has been immersed for the past 3 1/2 years have had a profound influence on her choice of imagery. She began experimenting in visual media by creating a deck of Tarot Cards which, while never completed, kick-started her interest in representing archetypal roles in human faces, especially older ones. Robin's great strength lies in her innate understanding of human nature and her ability to manipulate the planes of the human face to suggest a powerful inner life of the subject. Her work suggests that, in aging, our dominant inner qualities are etched into our faces, sculpted by time, experience and emotion.

"Wanderer" (upper right), encapsulates the human quality of confusion and disjointedness. The man seems lost in his own world, his hair mussed and blown about by an unseen wind. The deliberate placement in the extreme right of the frame, leaving the rest of the composition empty, lends a feeling of confusion. But the power of the portrait (as tends to be the case in most of her portraits) lies in his gaze. His thick and distorted glasses serve as magnifying lenses, enlarging eyes that stare at us unseeing. The man behind them is incoherent, confused, rambling.

Another painting, as yet untitled, shows a man who stares out at us in an attitude of sympathetic questioning. His simple hat rests on a head that is tilted to one side in a pose of speculative concern. His neck is thin and emerges out of a simple, tidy garment. His glasses, almost the same size as the hat, frame eyes with huge,

dark irises, his furrowed brow and trembling mouth gently asking us to examine and open our hearts. Robin deliberately left parts of the man's face unfinished. It makes him vulnerable, imperfect. And in his imperfection and compassionate gaze, he allows us to be imperfect as well.



From another corner of the human spectrum, "The Emperor" gazes at us impassively and imperiously, threatening in his coldness. His huge head, which takes up almost the entire composition, is placed just slightly off center, cutting off part of his left ear. The eyes, with irises so big that very little white remains, offer nothing but judgement; the chin juts slightly out, just enough to intimidate us. Like the previously mentioned old gentleman, he is assessing us, but there is no compassion in those black eyes.

At this exhibition, there are approximately 12 - 15 human and animal portraits. Each relates to an ancient myth and embodies a different aspect of humanity that we all share. It's quite something to realize that just by slight variations in line, Robin is able to summon massive changes in expression between each of her subjects. She uses no color to aide her - only light, shadow and line. It is also the placement of the eyes of each of her subjects that makes the difference: look how the slight off-centeredness of the "The Emperor's" eyes gives him a hard edge by throwing us off balance, but the central placement of the eyes of the old gentleman in the hat serves to soften his expression. The really fascinating thing I found when looking at this collection is the reversal of roles between painting and viewer. Usually, one looks at a painting and imposes his or her own take on the subject. But what Robin has done is to place that power in the hands of the people in her paintings. It's as if we are not asked to interact with the subject - it is THEY who are interacting with US. They question us, threaten us, appraise us, judge us, impose their will on US.

The paintings, done in black and white water color on paper, are large in scale (22" x 30" before framing) and their size lends a monumentality to images that are already solemnly powerful.

This exhibition begins with an Artist Reception from 3 to 5PM on Saturday, May 7th at the Sandisfield Arts Center Gallery. It will run through June 13. While Gallery hours are limited to performance times, individual viewings may be arranged with the artist by emailing rb937@bard.edu.



The Sandisfield Arts Center
5 Hammertown Rd, Sandisfield, MA
413-258-4100 www.sandisfieldartscenter.org

Saturday, May 7 3-5 PM
OPENING RECEPTION
Exhibiting thru June 13

Robin Crofut-Brittingham
Art Exhibit
"Faces and Myth"



Saturday, May 7 7-9 PM
\$10 Adults / \$5 Under 14



FAMILY CABARET!

Sunday, May 22 4 PM \$20

**YEVGENY KUTIK
& THE ELEKTRA
ENSEMBLE**



(Benefit
for the
Ferris-Burtis
Foundation)

Saturday, May 28 8 PM \$20

**The
Niels**





A Letter to Annie

I always thought that Annie was the heart of the matter - she represented everything I admired - from her own remarkable history as a teacher, writer and humanitarian to her graceful presence anywhere she appeared. Annie (her square name was "Anne") and Phil Hoffman lived out their final years in the grand old white house on Silverbrook Road (rebuilt after a fire three years ago) where Annie was born on July 14, 1922. She grew up in a farmhouse full of boarders, mostly poor families from the slums of New York City who were welcomed each summer by the Pinsky family.

When I got up here in 1989, Annie was just finishing her latest book, *Sandisfield, A Biography of a Town* - a wonderful study of our village, rich with history dating from revolutionary days and peopled with blacksmiths and immigrants, folk songs and families. At the time of her death on Saturday, March 19, she was planning a book about Shay's Rebellion.

Shay's Rebellion, now that was Annie's style. She and Phil spent most of their life together in New York City serving their community and fighting for people's rights. Phil, a bio-chemist, worked in the Hospital for Joint Diseases and Annie taught elementary school in Central Harlem and adults in the South Bronx. She was famous for her "shows", an ingenious teaching method telling the stories of the likes of Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth through little dramatic sketches and projected slides. Probably her most memorable show was "P.S. WE NEED HELP!", which traveled through the school system at a time when public schools in New York were desperate for books and funding.

You were always welcome at Annie's house in Sandisfield. "Come in! Have a cup of tea!" And the house was always filled with flowers and laughter.

The plain fact of the matter is that Anne Hoffman was beautiful, both in fact and in spirit. Goodbye, Annie.

— Val Coleman

(with special thanks to Dan Pinsky for the information about Anne and Phil in and their New York years.)

Comings and Goings



VINCENT MAZZAFERRO 1929 – 2011

Vincent Mazzaferro was 82 years old when he died on March 18, 2011. A 40-year resident of Sandisfield, he and his wife of 31 years, the former Myrtle Nehmer, lived on East Hubbard Road. He was a member of the Sandisfield Historical Society. Vince was born in Springfield, Massachusetts, the son of Vincenzo and Carmella (Veterano) Mazzaferro, on February 2, 1929. He was raised in East Longmeadow and graduated from Springfield Technical High School. Vincent was the proprietor of the Blue Moon Restaurant (started by his parents) in East Longmeadow for many years. He served in the Navy. He was a founding member of St. Paul the Apostle Church in Springfield. In fact, while the church was being built, services were held in the Blue Moon for about two years. He is survived by his wife, Myrtle, and by their large combined family - Thomas, Carl, Robert, and LeAnn Mazzaferro, Mary Jo Baker, Randall, David, Timothy, and Richard Nehmer, and Lorena Kononowitz, 27 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren.



*Please no Fukushima
in Sandisfield*

Like you, I count my blessings for the Berkshires and for Sandisfield (Volume II, No. I, April 2011).

Like you, I am so saddened by the news coming from Japan.

I can accept the natural horrors; I cannot accept the man-made ones – the nuclear horrors. They did not have to be.

Our beloved Sandisfield and the Berkshires are not immune to such a nuclear disaster closer to home; and there are many nuclear reactors within hundreds of miles of us. We can't prevent earthquakes, but we can prevent Fukushimas. We must.

Lou Friedman
Canton, CT



More on the Pet Waxwing

In the Sandisfield Times last month, inspired by Margaret O'Clair's "Avian Notes", I wrote about the beautiful Cedar Waxwing that arrived in our garden a couple of years ago. Fearless of people, he perched on our shoulders, heads and hands and greeted us each morning for several days outside our kitchen door. I also described his sad end; we think he was killed by one of our dogs.

A week after my letter was published I received the following email and so we learned about the origins and adventures of this little bird whose name was "Finster".

"Dear Susie,

I am sad to hear that "Finster" had passed, he/she

was indeed charming and we had rescued him in September of 2008. As my son, Hunter was waiting for his bus after a very vicious storm of thunder, lighting and high winds he noticed that a nest had fallen out of the maple out in front of our house. I unraveled the nest to find a baby bird a day or two old with absolutely no fuzz on his little body. I put him in a lower bush hoping his parents would return. When there was no sign of them we took him in, feeding him dry dog food which had been soaked in water with an eye dropper. We then started to see his features and realized he was a cedar waxwing, which we have a lot of here as we have blueberry bushes. He grew and grew but now it was winter and cold so he lived inside with us freely and our dogs, huskies, which were very good about not eating him. In the spring every day he would go in and out as he pleased and the last morning he flew out with much ambition and did not return. That evening we had another thunderstorm and high winds. Every day for a month thereafter I called for him, but no Finster. It was as if he came in a storm and left in a storm.

His name was Finster because we thought he was a finch before he started to grow out his feathers. I was heartbroken to think the storm made him so scared he flew away in a wrong direction.

The waxwings are back here yet again and we always believed that one of them was him. To hear that he is now passed has deeply saddened my family but we are glad that he had a chance of life and that your family got to enjoy him as well.

I thank you for sharing your story very much.
Crissy Sarci"

Susie Crofut

This and That

Dear Editors:

I would just like to let you know that you are doing a beautiful job with the "Sandisfield Times." Your April 2011 articles were delightful; I loved Mr. Chester Minnows' article "Down in the Woods" -- perfect for April Fool's Day!

Also, a note to Mr. Simon Winchester. I also enjoyed your article, "Letter From The Editor." I hope your wife's family in Japan is doing well after the earthquake(s) and tsunami. You indicated you were a past geologist. Have you heard the light rumble through our Berkshire Mountains? It occurs around 4:00 to 4:15 p.m. day light savings time. Sit/stand in a quiet area and you will hear this slight "oomph." We believe it to be the mountains shifting, although there is no feeling from the ground. It would make an interesting article, if someone would be willing to do some research.

So sad to hear of the passing of the Hoffman's. Such a magnificent couple.

Continue to keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Hannah Mele-Andrews



Where WAS This Picture TAKEN?

An unknown person called us from Tucker's saying he didn't believe the above picture, which appeared in the photo array of snow scenes in our March issue, was taken in Sandisfield. In fact, this picture is of the Hubbard's dog Scout and was taken at their home on Dodd Road in Sandisfield.

**FREE PIZZA
FOR
SENIORS???**
REALLY!!!

By Zsuzsi Galik

The Sandisfield Council on Aging (the PC way to say Senior) has a good time most Wednesdays. Usually, they eat a pot luck lunch and play bingo. But, once a month or so, they go out to a local restaurant to eat - free; it's covered by yearly dues. In March they went to Villa Mia and in April they went to Tuckers. So, they decided they should share this fun. They've invited any and all seniors (60 and over) to have pizza with them on May 11th. You get to see their meeting room - the basement of the Town Hall Annex - and you get to eat free pizza! All you have to do is RSVP to Mary at 258-4778 or Linda at 258-4816. Sugar-free drinks are offered for diabetics (and others who are watching their waistline). What more can you ask for? You really should check out what the COA has to offer. 🍕

SOME WORDS FROM OUR SPONSORS

ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE - BETSY POLATIN

Learn to recognize excess tension and change unproductive patterns of daily life.
Learn more at betsypolatin.com or call 617 277 2224 - 413 258 2820.

A&M AUTO

Complete auto & truck care
Import & domestic
24-hour heavy duty & light towing
258-3381

ANNECHARICO CONSTRUCTION Co.

General Contractors
Site work, septic systems & driveways
Mass licensed, fully insured
24 Stump Rd, Sandisfield 258-4801

BERKSHIRE WOODS REALTY, LLC

158 Sandisfield Rd. Sandisfield, MA 01255
Experience the difference LOCAL Realtors can Make!
Personalized & experienced service for buyers & sellers.
413-258-4430 don@berkshirewoods.net

BIZTECH ASSOCIATES

Your South County Computer Specialist
Networks ~ Data ~ Training ~ Troubleshooting
Jean Atwater-Williams, Owner
Call Toll-Free 877-857-2001

LEDGE FIELD FARM

Vitamins & minerals in their natural casings.
Organically grown without any animal fertilizer in raised beds.
258-4223

MASSWOOD FORESTRY Co., LLC

Sandisfield, MA 01255
Robert Liberman
654 Madison Ave., 1401, NY, NY 10065
Email: rliberman@theadlergroup.net

MEPAL MANOR + SPA

Full Salon + Spa Services
Massage, Facials, Body Treatments, Fitness
Thurs. - Sun. 10-5 413-229-3498
Please visit www.Mepalspa.com

MUNSON SATELLITE TV

TV Antenna & Satellite Systems
DIRECTV/Dish Network
38 W. Hubbard Rd, Sandisfield
Phone/Fax 258-4887

NEW BOSTON INN

Restaurant Tavern B & B
Corner of Routes 8 & 57
Open M - Th: 12 - 8; F, S, S: 12 - 9
413 258-4477 www.newbostoninn.com

NEW BOSTON STORE

110 South Main Street
Grocery, gas, liquor, lottery
Deli, fax service, copies
258-4522

PATHWAYS FARM PERENNIALS

484 New Boston Rd. (Rt. 57), Tolland MA
413-231-2708
Hours: Tu - Sat 9-6 • Sun Noon-5
Excellent selection of Tolland-hardy plants

RED BARN ALPACAS

Jeff and Sonja Gray
24 Stump Rd 258-4905
Alpaca sales, fiber, felt, yarn
Hats, gloves, socks, etc.

SKI BUTTERNUT - A TRUE FAMILY MOUNTAIN

22 Trails, 10 Lifts, 1000ft Vertical, Tubing
Ski Shop, 2 Terrain Parks & We're Affordable!
Season Pass: \$275 Adults \$225 Jr., \$100 Kids
www.SkiButternut.com or 413-528-2000

SNOW FARM

Horticultural Services & Forest Mgmt.
Garden design, maintenance, tree work, firewood
16 S. Beech Plain Road, Sandisfield
(413) 258-4929

TUCKER'S PUB

61 South Main Street
258-4945
Good Food....Great Times

VILLA MIA

Restaurant & New York Style Pizza
Specializing in Italian Cuisine
Open Wed - Mon 11am - 9pm
88 S. Main St., Sandisfield 258-4236

WHEN PIGS FLY FARM

Andy & Sandra Snyder
222 Sandisfield Rd
100% organic plants, produce, flowers, herbs,
berries, eggs, meat and more.

WILD BIRDS COUNTRY STORE

783 Main Street, Great Barrington
www.wild-birdstore.com
413-644-9007
Unique bird and nature store.

WM. BROCKMAN REAL ESTATE

Country Homes, Estates & Land - A preeminent
Berkshire real estate firm with over 35 years of success
www.berkshiresforsale.com
413-528-4859 or 258-4777

To place an AD in
THE SANDISFIELD
TIMES...

Please email
advertising@sandisfieldtimes.org
for info and a copy of our
Ad Rate Sheet!

PLEASE NOTE:

*We are no longer
accepting entries for this
sponsorship page.*

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

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

NOW HEAR THIS!

If you have an event that you would like to see listed here, please email calendar@sandisfieldtimes.org. We reserve space for those events that involve Sandisfield residents or that take place in Sandisfield and neighboring communities.

MAY EVENTS

Sunday, May 1, End of burning season – no open burning permitted after this date.

Wednesday, May 4, 6PM, Otis/Sandisfield Kiwanis Roadside Clearing begins. Meet at the Otis Town Green.

Wednesday, May 4, 7PM, History Book Committee, Sandisfield Library, 269-0012.

Saturday, May 7 through Monday, June 13 Robin Crofut-Bittingham Art Show, in the gallery, Sandisfield Art Center.

Saturday, May 7, 3 to 5PM, Opening Reception, Robin Crofut-Bittingham Art Show, Sandisfield Art Center. Bard College poetry graduate Robin Crofut-Bittingham exhibits her work in water colors and ink.

Saturday, May 7, 7PM, Family Cabaret, Sandisfield Art Center, Theatre, comedy, gymnastics, tap, opera, modern dance, flamenco, folk music and more. Led by the magical Anni Crofut.

Monday, May 9, 6PM, Jean Atwater-Williams talks on Wired West followed by an All Boards Meeting at 7PM to review the warrant before the Town Meeting, Town Hall Annex.

Wednesday, May 11, 7PM, 250th Birthday Committee Meeting, Sandisfield Library. All welcome 258-4535.

Saturday, May 14, 10AM, Annual Town Meeting, Old Town Hall Rte 57 and Silverbrook Road.

Monday, May 16, 10AM – 8PM, Annual Town Election, Old Town Hall.

Wednesday, May 18, 12:30PM, Free Seniors Pizza Party, Senior Center, Council on Aging.

Wednesday, May 18, 7PM, Women's Book Group, Olive Kitteridge by Elizabeth Strout. Sandisfield Library.

Saturday, May 21, 11AM Historical Society meeting and pot luck (postponed from May 14 because of Town Meeting), Historical Society Meeting House Rte 183 (Sandy Brook Turnpike).

Sunday, May 22, 4PM, Yevgeny Kutik & The Electra Ensemble, Sandisfield Art Center, (Benefit for the Ferris-Burtis Foundation). Phone 413 258 4456.

Saturday, May 28, 8PM, The Nields, Sandisfield

Art Center, Sisters Katryna and Nerissa Neild play and sing a mix of country, pop and folk music. They specialize in a wonderful mix of heart-felt folk and pop songs, offbeat banter and storytelling.

Sunday, May 29, 10AM, Memorial Day Parade, Rte 57 and Silverbrook Rd. to the American Legion Pavilion, Sponsored by the Sandisfield Recreation Committee.

Tuesday, May 31, Dog license deadline \$25 fine incurred after this date.

Wednesday, June 1, Last day to register for Design your Own Container Garden Workshop to be held on June 11. The workshop will provide a good understanding of the basics of container design. Materials fee of \$25. To register call Donna Horrigan at 413-717-7429.

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

Lunch for Seniors, Tuesdays through May, Farmington River Elementary School, 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.

Calling All Artists. The Otis Cultural Council is looking for artists and craftspeople for the Fourth Annual Otis Arts Festival to take place on July 23. The entry fee is \$20 for Otis residents and \$25 for non-Otis residents. Applications available online at www.townofotisma.com/culturalcouncil, or at the Otis Town Hall. For information email Otis-cc@hotmail.com.

ONGOING EVENTS

Town Meetings (Info call 258-4711)

Selectmen, every Monday at 7PM, Town Hall Annex

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

Board of Health, first Wednesday of the month, 6PM Old Town Hall.

Boy Scouts Elizabeth Kuzmech, Scoutmaster 258-4906 Meet Wednesdays at 6:30PM at the Otis Town Hall.

Conservation Commission, third Tuesday of the month at 7PM. Town Hall Annex.

Council on Aging, every Wednesday, 11AM Senior Center – Town Hall Annex. Pot Luck Lunch at noon, Bingo at 1PM. Free blood pressure screening every fourth Wednesday.

Farmington River Regional School District, 1st Monday, 7PM, Farmington River Regional School Rte 8 JoAnn Austin, Superintendent. Public Welcome.

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

Planning Board, 2nd Monday of the month, 6PM, Old Town Hall.

Playgroup for kids 5 and under, Tuesdays at 9:30 - 11:00AM, Community Health Program Family Network Toys, music, crafts! Parents must stay. All welcome. Old Town Hall. Laura Messina 258-4834.



THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

Tribunus



Plebis

RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

P.O. Box 584
Sandisfield, MA 01255
www.sandisfieldtimes.org

We acknowledge with gratitude donations from the following kind people:

Susan Diamond

Dolores & Stephan Harasyko

Nancy Flach

The Sandisfield Times is an independent nonprofit organization staffed by volunteers from the Sandisfield community and funded by individual and business sponsors. Its mission is to connect the community through reliable, regular, and relevant information.

The Sandisfield Times does not yet have a 501(c)(3) designation, therefore donations are NOT tax-deductible at this time but **donations of all sizes are needed to ensure the continuation of this newspaper.** Please send checks to: *The Sandisfield Times*, P.O. Box 584, Sandisfield, MA 01255. For more information visit our website www.sandisfieldtimes.org.

Copies of *The Sandisfield Times* are available in Sandisfield at A&M Auto, the Dump, Post Office, Town Hall, Library, the New Boston Store, the New Boston Inn, the Silverbrook Café, Tuckers, and Villa Mia. Copies are also available in Otis at Katie's Market, Papa's Fuel, Southern Berkshire Realty, Otis Library, the Farmington Elementary School (during the school year) and Terranova's. Other

locations include the The Roadstore Cafe in Monterey, Monterey General Store (There is a box affixed to the front of the building containing *The Sandisfield Times*.), the Southfield Store, Wild Birds Country Store and Bizalion's French Cafe.

The Times can be mailed to your home by paid subscription (see form below) or you can read it (free) online as a PDF document at www.sandisfieldtimes.org.

We welcome submissions, comments and suggestions, including letters to the editor **BY THE 15TH OF THE MONTH PRIOR.** We may edit for space, style or clarity. We will try to publish Public Service Announcements when we have room, with priority given to Sandisfield organizations. No portion of the *The Sandisfield Times* may be reproduced without permission.

Editorial Staff for this issue:

Editor: Debbie Harris

Graphic Design: Myrna Carson and Tina Sotis

Contributors: Jean Atwater-Williams, Patrick Barrett,

Herb Burtis, Susie Crofut, Larry Dwyer, Josephine Freedman,

Zsuzsi Galik, Dassy Herman, Dolores Harasyko, Rhee Kasky and Roberta Myers and our regular columnists.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

To have the *The Times* mailed to your home, please complete the information below and send a check for \$25 (annual subscription fee) made out to *The Sandisfield Times* to:

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES
PO BOX 584, SANDISFIELD, MA 01255

Name _____

Address to where *The Times* should be delivered:

City, State, Zip _____

How to Contact Us

Letters to the editor:letters@sandisfieldtimes.org

News, ideas, tips & photoseditor@sandisfieldtimes.org

Advertising questions:advertising@sandisfieldtimes.org

Entries for calendar of events:calendar@sandisfieldtimes.org