

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

Tribunus



Plebis

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Not Just Yet

ROUTE 8 STATION/STORE DELAYED, FOR NOW

by Larry Dwyer

The proposed gas station/convenience store project is currently on hold. Happy Banga, who owns and operates a similar station and a package store in Lee, has said that due to personal circumstances he will not be proceeding with the Sandisfield project at the present time.

The station/store, if it is built, would be located across from MJ Tuckers on Rt. 8, south of New Boston, about 2½ miles north of the Connecticut border. Most local residents in New Boston and Roosterville are said to be in favor of the project, as are many others in Sandisfield. Other residents have expressed concern over the esthetic and environmental impact of a modern, 24-hour gas station/convenience store on the wooded approach to town and the change it would mean for this corner of the Berkshires.

Consultant Ron Fortune of Consulting & Design of Lee, a firm that serves major petroleum companies as well as independent regional operators of gas station/convenience stores, submitted a site plan this spring to the Sandisfield Conservation Commission on behalf of Happy's proposal.

At its regular meeting at the end of May, the Commission ruled that since the proposed work is not within an area subject to protection under the Wetlands Protection *Cont'd on p.2*



Photo: Ron Bernard

Save the Pavilion? Yes!

By Ron Bernard

Can it be? The town is in danger of losing another venerable building?

Maria Domato, commander of American Legion Post 456, conducted a tour of the Legion Pavilion one rainy morning early last month. Located in the lovely riverside park called Hamilton Grove on the west side of Route 8 at the lower east section of New Boston, the Pavilion has been the site of countless social events since it was built by long-time post commander Buster Hamilton and his Sandisfield Legionnaires some 40 years ago.

And we're at risk of losing the building.

"We had to install a cable strap last year across the middle of the building," Maria said. "The weight of incoming electrical cables was pulling over one of the rotting upright posts. It was an emergency and we had to keep that section of the building from falling down under the weight of snow during the winter." Recently more rotted support posts had to be replaced. "Unfortunately, that took all of our available funds," she said.

The Pavilion holds treasured memories for a lot of people in town: retirements and tributes, Memorial Day celebrations, "haunted" Halloweens, weddings and anniversaries, dances, pot-luck suppers, fund-raising lobster dinners, and so much more. Maria said, "I hope with some significant help that we can build it back and provide an even better place to enjoy public and private occasions." *Cont'd on p.2*

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Above, Maria Domato displays a decaying foundation post. Right, the 10-burner gas stove that needs replacing.

Photos: Bill Price

SAVE THE PAVILION

Cont'd from p.1

She pointed out that the structure – never exactly a palace – has stood without updating or necessary repairs for many years. “We’ve made volunteer repairs now and then, but they’ve been stopgap and keep-up kind of work,” she said.

“If we don’t do some serious repairs and upgrades to the whole place now, we could lose it all.” Matters were made even worse last year by Hurricane Irene which damaged the grounds and destabilized the cook-out shed.

This list of immediately needed structural repairs is lengthy and includes replacement of more support posts, roof work, and electrical service upgrading. The kitchen, including the refrigerators, its one sink, and an out-dated gas stove, is obsolete. A respectable kitchen is important for servicing group functions. Rentals for events are a vital source of income for the Post, said Maria, and finances right now are a big worry for the organization.

The main hall and the adjacent cook-out shed are simply worn out. But Maria envisions a born-again pavilion and improved grounds – a more comfortable, secure, attractive, and versatile venue for years to come. She is preparing a plan and capital campaign. The needs are serious, urgent and many. Fixing the needs will not come on the cheap. Details will be announced in The Sandisfield Times in the near future. A sign, made by Maria’s daughter, Tina Ferry, is already on view at the Town dump, asking for volunteer help and donations. A small crew of friends appeared at the pavilion on June 21 for small maintenance and painting, but a lot more needs to be done. Maria is getting estimates for the major structural jobs.

It is easy to take this warm and familiar place for granted and assume that it will always be available to us and our children for good times

to come. But that is a mistake. Hamilton Grove and the Pavilion, although technically private, is functionally Sandisfield’s only public park. It has been very important to the social life of this town, and its loss would be a real shame. And its loss is a very real possibility.

The last time the Town faced a similar crisis was about 20 years ago – the need for a new firehouse. The community, full-time and part-time residents alike, came together to make that happen. We can and must do it again. ♣



WHAT IS ROLLED AT A “TURKEY ROLL?”

At the American Legion Hall, July 19

Is it time to put an end to a Sandisfield legend? The Legionnaires do not roll frozen turkeys across Hamilton Grove for prizes. They don’t even roll fresh turkeys. At one time, more than 15 years ago, they hosted fundraisers where you could bring a rifle and shoot at targets on Carr Field at a cost of \$1 per shot. In a “Turkey Shoot,” the closest to the bull’s-eye won a turkey. Since that event doesn’t happen anymore, the Legionnaires changed the game to rolling dice where they and their guests roll for the highest number. The winner takes home a prize of a ham, a package of shrimp, pork loin, ribs, Cornish hens, or other edibles. The main prize is still a turkey, so the event is called a “Turkey Roll.” And it’s still \$1 a roll. There is a full cash bar and other food. Free coffee, cold beverage, and cookies. A fundraising family event, at the Legion Hall on Rt. 8 next to the old firehouse. Friday, July 19, 7 p.m. – BP

ROUTE 8 STATION/STORE DELAYED, FOR NOW

Cont'd from p.2

Act (including the buffer zone) it does not require the filing of a Notice of Intent and did not fall under commission jurisdiction. The commission did rule, however, that the applicant needed to submit the exact plans as submitted to the commission to all other relevant town boards and if any of the other boards required a change in site or location the applicant would be required to come back to the commission.

All next steps are on hold for now, but the Health and Planning Boards would have been next in line. The consultant has asked that the boards consolidate the hearings and hold a “roundtable” to facilitate the procedures. With Sandisfield counsel Jeremia Pollard disclosing that he would be faced with a conflict of interest since he also represents Consulting & Design of Lee, the Select Board determined that they would hire outside legal counsel when and if the station/store proposal comes before them for a special permit.

If the gas station is eventually completed, it will have a capacity of 30,000 gallons with the ability to be expanded at a later date, depending on sales. The fuel tanks will be double-wall type tanks made of fiberglass or steel. Older fuel tanks were single-walled steel tanks holding as little as 500 gallons which could corrode and leak. The latter type of tanks will not be allowed in Massachusetts in the near future. Underground monitoring systems will be installed to detect leakage and monitoring wells can be installed at the tank corners to check for ground-water contamination.

Lighting for the station would be hooded and directed toward the ground with a margin for safety. ♣

SUGGESTIONS NEEDED!



The Town Suggestion Box is still open. About a dozen suggestions have been received so far, and all have been submitted to the Select Board. They have covered topics such as examining solar power, streamlining burning permits, discussion about the proposed gas station/convenience store, better uses for Yanner Park, and other local topics. The Future Planning Committee is using this method as one way of assessing the Town’s future needs. We welcome all suggestions. Send email to SandisfieldSuggestionBox@gmail.com.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

EDITORS MAKE MISTAKES: CONCOMM, ETC.

There exists a growing list of mistakes made by this editor. Some are errors of hurrying too fast, others from carelessness, some just failing to pay attention.

For instance, not long ago, for the obituary for Vi Hryckvich I was informed (not by family) that she had lived in Roosterville rather than on North Beech Plain Road. When my informant corrected his error, I missed the correction and the wrong location got into the paper. Roberta Myers kindly wrote to correct my error.

Last month I misidentified our new Dump Superintendent. His correct name is Dana Palmer, not "Parsons." Dana corrected that error – in person – the next time I hauled stuff over there. I'll consider it a favor if you don't ask how that happened.

And, last month, I made an assumption that the ConComm had "approved" the gas station/convenience store application when I was informed (correctly), almost at press time, that the ConComm had made a "Negative Determination." I told the person I spoke with, "Thanks, I won't embarrass us," then proceeded to do just that.

Worse, I passed my faulty assumption along to the author of our first "Out on a Limb" feature, who used it in her column as if it was accurate. That author is a reporter/writer, as well as being my wife. The misinformation I provided weakened her environmental argument, which was quite sound. I'd consider it a second favor if you don't ask about that, either.

Within a day of the release of the issue, the paper received a note from Susan Bubenas of the Sandisfield Conservation Commission. Susan's note corrected my "misleading and inaccurate" information. Susan, the floor is yours.

Susan wrote:

As a member of the Commission, I would like to clarify exactly what was ruled upon. No permit was issued as no permit was required for what was submitted.

The Commission did not "approve" anything. It issued a Negative Determination that the work proposed in the request is not within an Area subject to protection under the Wetlands Protection Act (including the Buffer Zone). Therefore, said work does not require the filing of a Notice of Intent unless and until said work alters an Area subject to protection under the Act.

From the plans that were submitted with the location site as shown, the Commission has no jurisdiction under the Wetlands Protection Act. We did inform the applicant, and did issue Special Conditions, that the applicant needed to submit the exact plans we reviewed to all other Boards and if any of the other Boards required a change in site or location, the applicant would have to come back to the Commission.

I hope this clarifies things. Thank you.

So, Susan, thanks very much for the correction, which did clarify things – a lot.

Best regards,

Bill Price, West New Boston

For more on the gas station/convenience store, see Letters to the Editor, page 18.



Turn Off the Lights

By Larry Dwyer

Although the new gas station/convenience store is on hold for now, I'd be in favor of bringing that kind of business to Sandisfield, but with conditions. The biggest impact will be how the gas station appears visually. It's not like we haven't seen a gas station/convenience store complex before, but how it appears at night should be our concern.

Sandisfield is a unique place and one of the last places in the Berkshires that is not brightly lit at night. I get a sense of enjoyment when I turn off the lights at our house and the only lights we see are the stars. It's a far cry from our apartment in the city where at night with the window shades down, light still creeps into our bedroom.

To minimize the visual impact of the new gas station at night, the town should be asking what kind of outdoor lighting will be installed. Poorly designed

lighting will greatly contrast with the surrounding darkness. If the lighting is designed properly, the visual impact will be greatly diminished.

Environmental friendly lighting has been around for years and is not more expensive than conventional lighting — it's just designed differently. The major component is called Full Cutoff Lighting. You probably already have full cutoff lighting in your living room, but you would call it a lamp shade. Full cutoff lighting directs light downwards and not sideways, which causes glare. Full cutoff lighting creates a softer eye-pleasing light that eliminates glare. To see how this works, just take the lamp shade of any table lamp and you'll notice the difference right away.

The town should consider an ordinance requiring all new businesses to install environmental friendly lighting. With so few businesses in town, existing businesses could be grandfathered in and exempt from the new lighting ordinance. Lighting design greatly affects the mood and with proper design, the character of the town can be maintained. We've always known this about indoor lighting, but not outdoor lighting. It's just a matter of raising awareness.

Many of us would like to keep Sandisfield the way it's always been, but we'll never stop progress and competing interests. However, we can minimize the environmental impact. Before it becomes too late, the town should consider creating an outdoor lighting ordinance that will protect our dark skies. 🍷

OUT ON A LIMB An Op-Ed Opportunity

The subjects of "Out on a Limb" should be interesting to many of us, not too scandalous, not too off-the-wall (in the opinion of the editor), well written, and have strong links to Sandisfield. They are written by and for Town residents. Address either PO Box 584, Sandisfield, or email at editor@sandisfieldtimes.org.

Sandisfield for Markey

In the Special Senate Election to replace John Kerry, Town Clerk Dolores Harasyko reported that 142 residents voted (out of 588 registered). Democrat Ed Markey won with 99 votes; Republican Gabriel Gomez received 41; Twelve Visions Party candidate Richard Heos received 2. Dolores expresses thanks to her staff of eight election workers and one constable who were on duty all day. 🍷



Firefly, in the clover

Photo: Brigitte Ruthman

Firefly

By Brigitte Ruthman

The new little roan heifer at Joshua's Farm is loving the pasture. The cows get just one hour in the clover field to sweeten their milk. If you never believed a cow could smile, watch them entering a field of clover.

Born in the wet part of the pond pasture early on the morning of June 4, the little heifer, named Firefly, has a sense of belonging to the nooks and crannies of the bog and keeps going back to it.

The calf hadn't been due for four more days, but the heifer who carried her had gone off alone that night. The next morning, one of those perfect June mornings when the light is soft and suffused by emerald green, I looked out and saw two faces looking back, Smitty and her first calf.

I brought them into the barn, though Smitty objected and, like her own mother, opened the sliding door several times until finally I let them stay outside.

Two days later, the mother came back to the barn without her young calf. I frantically searched, imagining the calf vulnerable and alone in bear-infested woods. I looked for her along the fence line where she secrets herself in the tall grasses, just on the other side of the last strand of barbed wire. I looked for her for hours, and finally

settled my fears with memories of calves not found for weeks on a mountainside in Morgan, Vermont in the 1970s.

I settled my fears, but went back out anyway, and then imagined I saw the little heifer's eyes in the fireflies that burned the darkness in circular patterns just outside the beam of my headlamp. I thought they were the little calf so many times, though no two of the magnetic bugs moved in tandem.

At 4 a.m., I heard the cow bellow for her calf to come out of her hiding place. In the darkness, I heard the deep throated call three, maybe four times, and then not again. And I knew the calf had obliged and come home.

July and August, 2013 YEARLY DATA VERIFICATION PROGRAM/BUILDING PERMITS/SITE VISITS

During the months July and August the Board of Assessors in Sandisfield is continuing with its Data Verification Program/Building Permit site visitations. The mandated Massachusetts Department of Revenue Guidelines require that the Board collect accurate, complete, and current information relative to property attributes.

Ms. Lisa Quackenbush and Mr. Jim King, Field Appraisers for Mayflower Valuation, Ltd., will be working in an official capacity for the Board of Assessors on this project. Field Appraisers carry a letter from our office as well as the property record card.

Your cooperation is appreciated.

If you have any questions, please contact the Board of Assessors at 258-4701 Office hours: 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday.

Board of Assessors
Town of Sandisfield
Bethany Perry, Chairperson

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

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Above, the “upper” lake. Right, Richard Green on top of an 18th-century stone bridge.

Photo: Simon Winchester

For Sale: A Perfect Place *FOR THE RICH OR FOR WRITERS?* By Simon Winchester

A spectacular and isolated rural property, with a scattering of houses and two secluded private lakes, a place such as is seldom seen in today’s New England, has just come onto the real estate market in Sandisfield, with the sellers anticipating keen interest among potential purchasers and investors.

But the sale is also sparking real concerns that mirror this community’s debate about our long-term future. At issue is the question of whether this tiny town is slowly to evolve into a country hideaway for the urban rich; whether it might join the growing phenomenon of rural-based exurban sprawl; or whether Sandisfield might in time become a center for more fulfilling and more public culturally-based endeavors instead.

The property is the 433-acre former Green family residence high up on Sears Road – a one-time children’s recreation center, Camp Woodcrest, which the investment banker Bob Green purchased in the early 1970s. Following his death last year his widow – who lives in Florida – and the four widely-scattered Green children decided with some reluctance to put their beloved and long-cherished estate up for sale.

It is a place of memorable serenity and loveliness. There is a five-bedroom main house of almost six thousand square feet; three other fully habitable cottages, a theater, an ice house, and an assortment of other slightly weatherworn buildings, relics of the fifty years when Camp Woodcrest hosted mainly Jewish children from New York City. There are also two lakes – the lower one an immense and complex confection of coves and inlets held back by a dam, the more remote upper lake created by beavers and requiring some bushwacking and a stiff climb to reach.

Local broker Chapin Fish, of Brockman Real Estate, is handling the sale. The Green family is hoping for offers in the region of \$4 million. The town gets tax revenues of some \$13,000 from the property, which is largely bounded by

conservation forest, though also criss-crossed by ancient Indian and colonial trails and well-worn stone boundary walls.

Given the appetite among today’s New York City plutocracy for high-value estates that offer the magic combination of convenient proximity and total privacy – and on this property all of the many miles of lake shoreline are buried well within the estate, and so are utterly protected from scrutiny – there is every chance the entire parcel will go to one wealthy family who will buy it for their private enjoyment.

There is also the possibility that a property developer may be interested and could purchase the acreage with the intention of creating a housing subdivision along the lines of Otis Woodlands. There would in this case need to be a major town-financed rebuilding of much of Sears Road, part of which has been all-but abandoned and is now impassable by most vehicles where it runs along the property’s eastern and southern boundaries. Were that to become the main access road for driveways to any houses built on a new development, it would have to be brought up to standard.

A third possibility for the property is for the establishment on site of some kind of cultural study center – a writers’ colony, say, created along the lines of the MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire, the Yaddo retreat, near Saratoga Springs or the nearby Millay Colony for the Arts in Austerlitz, both in New York. There is no such well-established artists’ colony in the Berkshires – despite the wealth of cultural energy in the region.

To create such a center on the Green property would require a good deal of money – millions to purchase the property, millions more to establish an endowment that would run the colony, employ staff members, and offer scholarships and residencies to talented and suitable applicants.

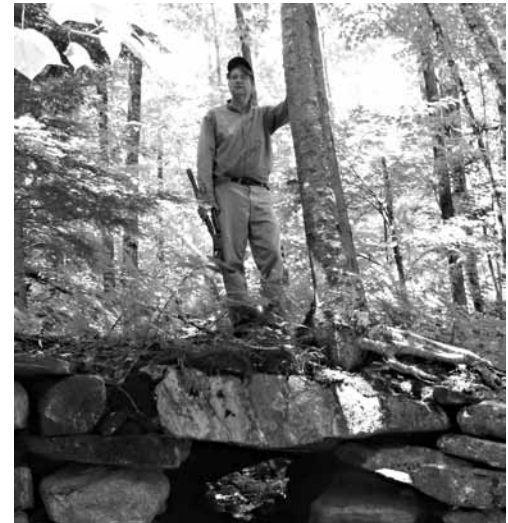


Photo: Bill Price

The benefits, however, would be legion. The creation of The Sandisfield Writers Colony, as it might be called, would bring a welcome jolt to the local economy. A substantial number of jobs would be created. Tax dollars would flow into the town coffers. Outsiders’ spending money would be funneled into local businesses. Growth would be stimulated in every corner of the local economy. And the town would become in double-quick time even better known than it is today, and this time as a center of cultural excellence.

Richard Green, one of Bob Green’s sons, who essentially caretakes the property – in addition to spending time looking after his mother in Florida and his antique business in Ohio – holds out some distant hope that a solution like this might be reached.

“This is so wonderful a place,” he says, gazing out over the lake and into the ranges of green woodlands that rise high to the distant ridgelines, “It is the kind of treasured piece of heaven that should be for many people to enjoy, for peace and solitude and serenity. To have people here just writing and thinking and creating – how great would that be?”

For additional photos and property description, see www.mirrorlake.us



TOWN BUSINESS

Submitted by Dolores Harasyko, Town Clerk

Edited by Bill Price

SELECTMEN'S MEETING

May 6, 2013

Present: Patrick Barrett, Jeffrey Gray,
Administrative Assistant Dolores Harasyko

Discussed culvert on Shade Road.

Dolores reviewed the meeting with FEMA regarding Snow Storm Nemo. We are eligible for reimbursement for expenses caused by this storm.

Reviewed and signed cemetery deed for the Myers.

Reviewed and discussed letter from the Mass. State Lottery Commission regarding a request from MJ Tuckers for a Keno License. The board unanimously supports their application.

Reviewed and signed minutes of meetings.

Connie D'Andrea present from the SilverBrook Café. Jeff asked about hours of operation for the store. She responded that hours would probably be 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Discussed the All-Boards meeting next week.

Reviewed and signed the decision regarding the special permit for the SilverBrook Café. The Town Clerk certified that 20 days have passed with no appeals filed. Permit and decision were signed at 9:13 p.m.

ALL-BOARDS MEETING

May 13, 2013

Present: Patrick Barrett, Jeffrey Gray,
Road Superintendent Stephan Harasyko,
Administrative Assistant Dolores Harasyko

Patrick thanked all the departments for attending the meeting and for their work preparing for the budget and annual town meeting. He opened the floor for discussion. He will go line-by-line from the annual town warrant.

Ralph Morrison asked that the town look into combining articles to streamline the whole process. Kathie Burrows would like to town to look into a budget public hearing and perhaps that would help streamline the process. All discussion and questions would take place at the hearing instead of the annual town meeting.

Discussed the proposal for part-time town administrator. Discussed the treasurer's tax lien expense account. Discussed the technical committee salary. John Burrows explained that it was to cover the cost of a person to keep the town's website updated.

John Skrip would like the highway department articles 3212-27 clarified. He would like a better explanation of the snow and ice account.

Discussed the tree-account line item. Mary Turek and John Skrip asked if the jobs were bid out. Steve explained that he follows the Massachusetts bidding regulations. Usually the tree jobs are done on a day basis and he followed best business practice. Barbara Cormier commented on the good job John Fields has done for the town, pointing out the amount of volunteer work he has also done for the town. Steve commented on the volunteer work John did in helping plow snow during the storm in February and would not submit a bill for it.

Discussed the one-ton pickup truck. The truck to be replaced has 82,000 miles on it. Even though the truck is not that old the town has spent, after warranty, \$23,000 in repairs. This is a vehicle that is used every day, year round, as well as for plowing snow.

Discussed New Hartford Road continuing repairs.

Discussed the custodian of town buildings salary. Barbara Cormier feels the custodian is underpaid and needs more hours. When asked, Bonnie O'Brien, the town's custodian, said she is happy with her hours and salary. John Skrip suggested the town hire a part-time maintenance person.

Discussed the Senior Tax Work-off Program. Patrick to follow up.

Mary Turek asked for a job description for the town custodian.

John Skrip would like all the police/EMT/fire department accounts clarified and simplified.

Discussed fire department/EMT compensation salary. Linda Riiska still feels there is not enough coverage during weekdays. Ralph responded that they have made most of the calls, whether during the week or weekend.

SELECTMEN'S MEETING

May 28, 2013

Present: Patrick Barrett, Jeffrey Gray,
Rosario Messina, Road Superintendent
Stephan Harasyko

First order of business is to welcome our newest Selectman, Rosario Messina.

Vote on Board reorganization. Motion by Patrick, second by Jeff, to nominate Rosario as Clerk of the Selectboard.

Motion by Patrick, second by Rosario, to nominate Jeff as Chair of the Selectboard. Patrick will continue to write the monthly letter for The Sandisfield Times.

Steve provided highway department updates. Grading and roadside mowing continues. Discussed the culvert problem on West Street. Steve explained the funding process for this job, and discussed materials to be used. Discussed Town Hill Road.

Discussed Website Suggestion Box submissions. Patrick would like someone from the website be present to discuss their submissions.

Discussed the gas station/convenience store

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*Dia will be making and
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Otis Library Country Fair
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Rain or shine.*

*At the Church Green
Rt 8 at Otis Center*

proposal. They have been to the Conservation Commission. Patrick proposed that we hire outside legal counsel once the convenience store comes before the Selectmen for a special permit. Our town counsel has disclosed that he has a conflict of interest as he represents the consultants for the convenience store.

Discussed the improved burning permit procedure. Permits are available online on the town's website. John Yeager, through the Suggestion Box, would like the town to charge a small fee for the permits. Per Ralph Morrison there is too much paperwork to submit for the small fee we would charge since all the funds have to be accounted for individually as the money is turned over to the Town Treasurer and deposited into the general fund.

Sue Galik would like the town to look into keeping a penny of gas tax in the town. Patrick responded that this is a state-controlled issue.

Discussed solar power. Rosario will follow up on this.

Discussed marijuana dispensary sites. Patrick had a discussion with Representative Smitty Pignatelli, who did not think Sandisfield had enough traffic for a dispensary site.

Reviewed and signed warrant for the Special State Election June 25. Reviewed FY2014 Cherry Sheets. Reviewed and signed permission slip for Frank Zuidema to hunt at Yanner Park.

SELECTMEN'S MEETING

June 3, 2013

Present: Jeffrey Gray, Patrick Barrett, Rosario Messina, Road Superintendent Stephan Harasyko, Administrative Assistant Dolores Harasyko

Reviewed ethics testing, conflict of interest, and board appointment procedures.

Steve presented highway department updates. He presented Chapter 90 project request forms for replacing a West Street culvert. Discussed the Chapter 90 process and the 3-year equipment bid process.

Steve discussed bridge work that needs to be addressed. He is contacting Mass DOT for advice. The structures are good but guardrails need to be replaced.

Grading and roadside mowing continues. Discussed the mini-excavator the department is using. The company that sells this equipment brought it as a demo for use for one week at no cost to the town. The equipment will be returned Thursday.

Patrick asked if Scott Worcester has obtained his hydraulics license. Steve responded that he has not, but explained that Scott is not operating equipment that requires the license.

Rosario followed up on the legal counsel question, that West Stockbridge and Stockbridge use Koppelman and Paige and McCormick as attorneys. We will discuss this at next week's meeting.

Ron Bernard, Kathie Burrows, and Donald Peet in from the Historical Commission. Ron presented information regarding the signs they have purchased that will mark the five historic areas in town. Funding will be from the donation proceeds of *Sandisfield Then and Now*. The signs will be cast aluminum. Steve will work with Ron on installation. Steve will save the commission a lot of money by ordering the posts and installing them. The Selectmen unanimously agree this is a wonderful idea. Ron is hoping this will help tie the town together and instill a sense of pride in the community. The Selectmen thanks the commission for their work on this project.

Discussed the summer schedule for Selectmen's meetings. We will begin meeting every other week with July 2 as the first off-week and return to the regular weekly schedule the week of Labor Day.

Town Clerk Dolores Harasyko clarified a question Ralph Morrison posed about listing all people who attend meetings. Dolores explained what is required in minutes of meetings by the open meeting law, which is that only members of the Board are listed. For Selectmen, this includes the three Selectmen, the road superintendent, and the administrative assistant.

**FUTURE PLANNING/
STRATEGIC PLANNING
COMMITTEE**

Submitted by Mary Turek, Secretary

Following are committee minutes from the meeting May 9 at Fire House #2. Present were John Skrip, Mary Turek, Kathy Jacobs, David Hubbard, Jeff Grey, Ralph Morrison, Simon Winchester. Absent: Paul Van Sickle, Mike Lutynski

Attending as guests were Gary Bottom, Sr., and Kathleen Segrin, representing the Planning Board and the Health Dept.

New Business

Mary Turek was appointed secretary. Mary will give the minutes of future meetings, after approval, to The Sandisfield Times and will contact Jean Atwater-Williams to post the minutes on the town

website. Dolores will do postings at the town hall.

The committee will invite the Berkshire Regional Planning to a meeting so the group can provide input on Town Master Planning.

The committee discussed the building assessment day. All the buildings have had water testing and each building passed. Several Town buildings are in need of maintenance and the committee discussed the need for maintenance person.

Mary will request assessments from all town boards for future needs. The group will look to examine other town halls and possible grants that are available for future town planning.

David provided the committee with an update on the proposed marijuana dispensary.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m. The next meeting will be at Fire House #2 on June 19.

Tasks assigned for our next meeting:

- Follow up on marijuana dispensary
- Mary to follow up to Town Board for future assessment needs.

Still outstanding – energy audit for Town buildings.



Murmuring, 8x10 Oil on Canvas 2013

TINA SOTIS
NEW PAINTINGS
"SOMETIMES THE LIGHT IS ENOUGH"
August 1 - August 14
CATA STUDIO SPACE
70 Railroad Street
(top of the street around the corner)
Great Barrington, MA
ARTIST RECEPTION
SAT, AUGUST 3 3:30-6:30
info: tinastotis@gmail.com
www.tinasotis.com
*Percentage of proceeds benefit
Community Access to the Arts (CATA)*

Sandisfield Historical Society



By Josephine Freedman

At our June meeting, Ron Bernard from the Historical Commission came to discuss the five historical markers that will be placed around the town of Sandisfield. In particular, one of these markers will be placed in front of the South Sandisfield Meeting House. Everyone agreed that this was a wonderful project and unanimously chose the site of the marker. The inscription will include short histories of South Sandisfield and the meeting house.

Our next event, the "Summer Fair," will take place Saturday, July 13, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Society's meeting house on Route 183. We will have local vendors, great tag sale items (reasonably priced), a 50/50 raffle, our usual delicious hamburgers and hot dogs, as well as homemade baked goods.

Sandisfield Then and Now will be available for purchase from the author, Ron Bernard, and *Sandisfield Eats*, the memoir/ cookbook sponsored by the society, will be on sale by Jo Freedman, who organized the collection. If you have not purchased the books in the past or need additional copies, this will be a good time to buy them. Be sure to also stop by to wish Norton Fletcher a happy birthday. His birthday was in May, and he is now a very young 90-year-old and remains head of the organization. Bravo to Norton for staying active with the community and the society.

Don't forget the cemetery walk on Sunday, July 14, at 2 p.m., conducted by John Kuzmech and Willard Platt. The May walk at Sandisfield Center Cemetery was fun, interesting, and informative. Be sure not to miss this one at New Boston. The meeting place will be the cemetery next to Carr field (to the left of the big red barn on the south side of route 57).

We know there are many events taking place on the 13th and 14th, but we hope you will show your support for Sandisfield's Historical Society by stopping by, even if it has to be for a brief time.

Any questions about these events, call Norton Fletcher at 258-4520, Marcia Ignace at 258-2898, or Jo Freedman at 258-4786 or email at freedmjl@aol.com.

Kindergarten and Early Kindergarten Offered

The Monterey School, a small multi-age school located in Monterey, is enrolling pupils for Fall 2013. The school offers Early Kindergarten for children who are now 4, but who will turn 5 between Sept. 1 and Dec. 31, 2013. They offer Kindergarten for children who will be 5 before Sept. 1. Both programs are free and open to the public. They are also open to children who live in other school districts through the School Choice Program.

Call 413-229-8754 for more information! Or email at lwebster@sbrsd.org.

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SAVE THE DATE

Local Heroes Will be Back, July 27

The Arts Center will hold the second tribute to Sandisfield's first responders on the evening of July 27. This year, for Local Heroes II, the Center will honor not only the responders – firemen, EMT, police officers – but their families as well.

There will be speeches (short) and good cheer and dancing to the music of the BTU's. The BTU's are four veterans of the Northeast music scene who have been keeping dance floors jammed for a long time. They've recorded and toured with notable artists and play great back-beat jazz, R&B, funk and blues dance music. All ages hop up and dance to their music. The chairs will be pushed back, the space in the auditorium opened up, and the Arts Center will host its first evening of dancing and rocking out. Free to all and all welcome. ♪

WHAT IS IT WORTH?

By David LeBeau



Look familiar? Well then, you are as old as I am! This dresser or chest of drawers is an example of one of the styles of furniture now called mid-century modern. That happens to be the title of Cara Greenberg's 1995 book, "Mid-Century Modern: Furniture of the 1950's."



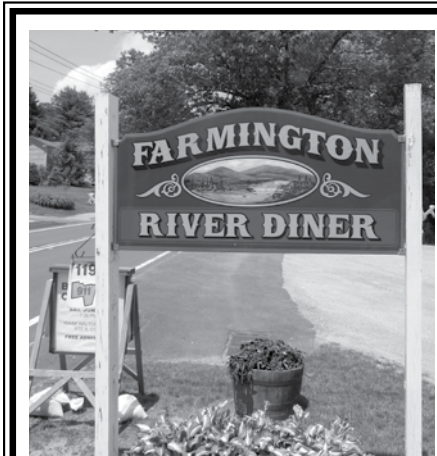
Specifically, this dresser belongs in the category of "Danish Modern." The major characteristics are; simple rectangular form without metal hardware with the surface veneered in teak or occasionally walnut. The drawer pulls are of the same wood and are discreet. Phyllis and I had some Danish Modern after our wedding.

When new, a chest of drawers such as the one in the photograph sold at retail for about \$500.

Today they sell for around \$1,000. Now aren't you sorry you threw yours away? If you did, not to worry, you didn't throw away an "antique," you threw away an expensive "collectible."

Since the 1960s are only fifty or so years in the past, Danish Modern furniture and furnishings are only halfway to being "antiques." What is the definition of an antique? The IRS and the State Department define an antique as a manufactured object made at least 100 years ago. As to value, age is not the only criteria. In order to establish a value, one has to evaluate: origin, period, design, quality, condition, and demand. This is commonly accomplished by researching published sales of similar objects and comparing similar objects sold within a reasonable time frame. This is called "the sales comparison approach to value." ♪

This marks the beginning a new column in the Times. David LeBeau is a licensed antique dealer, a resident of Bosworth Road, and an expert in these things. David, welcome to the Times.



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JULY

SAT, JULY 6TH 3-5 PM
IN THE GALLERY

Teresa Bills
QUILTS: One Piece
at a Time

SAT, JULY 6TH 8 PM

Amber Chand
A HEROINE'S
JOURNEY
(A Dramatic Comedy)

SAT, JULY 13TH 10 AM
SUMMER SALADS

Adam Manacher and
Joe Harasyko

SAT, JULY 27TH 7 PM
LOCAL HEROES II

Honoring the heroes
among us. Music and
dancing follow





Memories from our 250th Celebration July 2012.

Photos by Richard Migot



Sandisfield Scholarship Awarded

By Laura Rogers-Castro

The Sandisfield Scholarship Fund Committee is pleased to announce Evangeline (Eve) Kuzmech, daughter of John and Elizabeth Kuzmech, as this year's scholarship recipient.

Eve intends to major in Women's Studies at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth campus. She is a positive, motivated member of the student body at Mt. Everett High School. Guidance Counselor Katherine Gingras provided a letter of recommendation to the Committee emphasizing Eve's hard work "in a demanding college preparatory curriculum, college level course work, part-time employment, internships, and community service."

Eve earned the Youth Health Corps President's Volunteer Service Award in recognition of the completion of 150 hours of volunteer work in the health care field. She partnered with the school nurse to create and implement a health-related curriculum for both elementary and high school students. Her leadership skills also are evident with her creation of a club in the community for young LBGT people. As Eve stated in her scholarship application, "the most important thing in my life is caring, helping, and making differences in people's lives."

The Sandisfield Scholarship Committee wishes Eve success in achieving her life's goals. 🍀



Eve Kuzmech, graduation day

currently serving as an advisor, was a member of the Committee for many years. Readers may be familiar with the popular penny auction run by Elaine to raise scholarship funds each year at the Christmas Fair. Last year, a Silent Auction was successful at the 250th Birthday Celebration. In the past, proceeds from the rabies clinic also provided funding.

The Sandisfield Scholarship Committee intends to actively raise funds through various efforts this coming year. The Committee greatly appreciates past supporters and welcomes new ones! If you would like to contribute to the fund, checks can be written to the "Sandisfield Scholarship Fund" and mailed to the Committee at PO Box 672. Another way to contribute is through an offer to provide items for future bake sales. If you would like to be included on a list of "Scholarship Fund Bakers," please contact Laura (258-4688). 🍀

*She will swim through the air
this Spring*

She will swim through the air this Spring,
A high cloud dancing,
Did you know that clouds are fogs
And that fogs dance too?
And that she surrounds me
As an Irish early morning mist
Surrounds an old mountain
That has seen its share of things
But nothing quite so wonderful
As the ardor that the turning seasons bring.

*Val Coleman
Town Hill Road*

What is the Sandisfield Scholarship Fund?

The Sandisfield Scholarship Fund awards high school seniors from Sandisfield cash awards to assist them with the costs of higher education. Typically, awards of \$500 are given to students following successful completion of their first semester in college. Students who are Sandisfield residents can complete an application for the scholarship in April of their senior year in high school.

Presently, Anina Carr, Bethany Perry, and Laura Rogers-Castro are serving on the Sandisfield Scholarship Committee. Elaine O'Brien,

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OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

The Sandisfield Council on Aging sends “Thanks and Best Wishes” to **Mary Slater** as she steps down for a much deserved rest after years of dedication as a COA board member, many of those years as chairman or co-chairman.

Farmington River Regional Elementary declares two sixth-grade students as winners of the annual Robert O’Clair Creative Writing Award. Haley Couch and Ali Hiller, both of Otis, each won a \$25 gift certificate to the Book Loft in Great Barrington. The award is for students in grades 3-6 who submit an original written composition: a poem, short story, or any other writing. **Margaret O’Clair** of Sandisfield, who originated the awards in honor of her husband who died in 1989, determined that two winners were appropriate this year.

Shannon Margraf of Otis, who was raised in Sandisfield and is Postmaster Karen Cooley’s daughter, has joined Harvest Moon Realty as a sales agent. She has a background in business and customer service working in her family-owned flooring business for over a decade. “My children are getting older,” Shannon said, “and I wanted to carve out a career for myself. Knowing

the houses here and the neighborhoods as I do will help me help buyers and sellers.” For more information or to search properties, go to www.harvestmoonrealty.com.

Tina Sotis will exhibit her oil paintings in a one-person show between August 1 and August 14 at the CATA Studio Space at 70 Railroad Street in Great Barrington. An Artist Reception will take place on Saturday, August 3, from 3:30 to 6:30. (See ad page 5) Tina, the designer of this newspaper since its beginning, is an accomplished artist. Her confident design skill and artistic sensitivity are crucial to the paper’s readability and acceptance by readers. She makes *The Sandisfield Times* look good.

Our neighbor, the **Colebrook Store**, just south across the border, re-opened July 1 after being closed for a year. The kitchen will open in August, beer and wine sales in the fall. Welcome back.

Riiska Brook Orchards was featured in a lead story in *The Berkshire Eagle* on June 20. Photos, quotes from Bill and Barbara, the whole package. Blueberries should be ripe for the picking, apples this fall. See the story at http://www.berkshireeagle.com/ci_23503263/their-field-riiska-brook-orchards-nurtures-sandisfield-family.

Historic Images to be Permanently Displayed COMING TO A TOWN HALL ANNEX NEAR YOU

By Ron Bernard

Visitors to Town offices will soon be greeted by a display of truly fascinating images of Sandisfield in by-gone days.

The arrangement will feature 20 framed large images including views of New Boston and Montville, the four churches, and other sections of Town. Most of the scenes and buildings are familiar today, but several fascinating images depict historically important structures that are gone forever. The quality of the pictures is remarkable and each will include an expanded caption for historical context.

The mostly turn of the 20th century images are primarily from the acclaimed collection of Winsted post card-maker Frank DeMars. At least a few of the Sandisfield photos may have been taken by a life-long resident and

amateur photographer in his later years, Gilbert Ives (1850-1915). But whoever clicked that old shutter knew what he was doing and was familiar with this town. He realized that this visual record would preserve for all time the most important landmarks and views of unspoiled countryside as it was then.

The photos should be installed by mid-July, so on your trips to the Town Hall Annex later this year allow a little extra time for a nostalgic trip into your town’s past.

The display was created by the Sandisfield Historical Commission and funded by surplus donations from the commemorative 2012 anniversary book project, *Sandisfield Then and Now*.



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A happy family on a pond on Cold Spring Road, May 2013.

Photo: Jean Atwater-Williams



THE SANDISFIELD LIBRARY

By Laurie Foulke-Green, Librarian

Our next genealogy class: Wednesday, August 28, 6:30 p.m

NEW TITLES:

- Death Angel/ Linda Fairstein
- The Highway/ C.J. Box
- First Sight/ Danielle Steel
- Being Esther/ Miriam Karmel
- Time Flies/ Claire Cook
- The Impossible Lives of Greta Wells/ Andrew Greer
- The Ocean at the End of the Lane/ Neil Gaiman
- Original Death/ Eliot Pattison
- Hunting Eve/ Iris Johansen
- Bombshell/ Catherine Coulter

Library hours: Mon-Tues: 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Wed: 6:30-8:30 p.m.; Thurs.2:00-5:00p.m., Sat: 9:00 a.m.-12 noon.

POLICE BLOTTER



Submitted by Police Chief Michael Morrison

FEBRUARY

- 2/1 Wires down, Cronk Rd
- 2/4 Harassment complaint, Sandisfield Rd
- 2/20 Several B&E, OWL area
- 2/21 B&E complaint, Town Hill Rd
- 2/22 Medical call, Beech Plain Rd
- 2/24 Medical call, Sandisfield Rd
- 2/27 Road conditions complaint

MARCH

- 3/3 MVA, South Main St
- 3/4 MVA, Beech Plain Rd
- 3/6 B&E complaint, Sandisfield Rd
- 3/8 MVA, Sandisfield Rd
- 3/13 MVA, Sandisfield Rd
- 3/15 Stolen items, Sandisfield Rd
- 3/17 Alarm, Beech Plain Rd
- 3/17 Alarm, New Hartford Rd
- 3/18 Alarm, Hammertown Rd
- 3/10 Medical assist, Beech Plain Rd
- 3/19 Citizens complaint
- 3/20 House check, Cold Spring Rd
- 3/24 Domestic, Roosterville Rd
- 3/29 Well-being check, Sandisfield Rd

APRIL

- 4/1 Medical assist, Stump Rd
- 4/1 Well-being check, Sandisfield Rd
- 4/3 Citizen complaint
- 4/4 Strange vehicle, Beech Plain Rd
- 4/5 Strange vehicle, Roosterville Rd
- 4/6 Traffic safety issue, Main St
- 4/9 Alarm, Sears Rd
- 4/12 MVA, North Main St
- 4/19 Well-being check, Sandisfield Rd
- 4/28 Tenant complaint, Sandisfield Rd
- 4/30 Traffic safety issue, South Main St

MAY

- 5/1 Citizen complaint, West St
- 5/1 Alarm, Sandisfield Rd
- 5/1 Alarm, New Hartford Rd
- 5/2 Trespass complaint, Sears Rd
- 5/3 Domestic, Sandisfield Rd
- 5/5 Strange vehicle, Sandisfield Rd
- 5/6 B&E, Town Hill Rd
- 5/10 Wires down, Hammertown Rd
- 5/11 Animal complaint, River Rd
- 5/11 Medical assist, Beech Plain Rd
- 5/13 MVA, West St
- 5/19 Strange vehicle, Sandisfield Rd
- 5/28 Alarm, Sandisfield Rd



WHEN PIGS FLY FARM

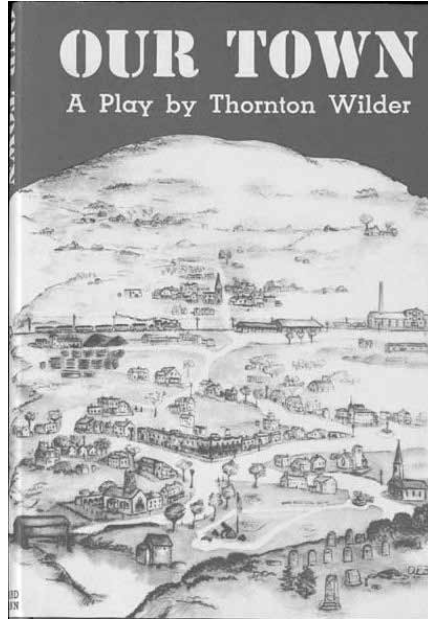
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Our Town, in Production



Ben Luxon is gathering players for the production of “Our Town” that he will produce at the Sandisfield Arts Center in November. If you’d like to take part, give Ben a call at 258-4994 or email: Benjaminluxon@gmail.com.

“Our Town,” written by Thornton Wilder and first produced in 1938, is one of the great American classical dramas. Willa Cather, another great American classic, wrote to Wilder after she had seen the play. “I truly think ‘Our Town,’” she wrote, “is the loveliest thing that has been produced in this country in a long, long time — and the truest. Its great importance is something that everyone feels and nobody can define Something enduring and resigned and gracious lies behind the detail of your play, as the mountain lies behind and

permeates all those little towns and farms, and the lives of all those people. Exiled Americans, living abroad, to whom I have sent the book of the play, write me that it has made them weep with homesickness.”

In Mary and Fred Slater’s front yard, eating the feeder along with the seeds.

Photo: Susan Galik



VOLUNTEER NEEDED!

Some time on your hands? Willing to help out on an interesting, worthy, and fun project? The Sandisfield Times is seeking a volunteer to index our issues from the past three years. When completed, the index will be posted on the Times' web site for the convenience of readers. You will earn the gratitude of many. Contact: editor@SandisfieldTimes.org

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Arts Center "Ups its Game"

NEW FACILITIES DEDICATED

By Bill Price

In dedicating the newly renovated Sandisfield Arts Center at a program in late June, SArC co-chairs Alice Boyd and Susie Crofut honored those who had contributed skill, time, and hard cash to make it all possible.

The rather modest goal of installing a new vestibule and a handicap lift quickly grew over last winter and spring into a major repair program. Anyone who has renovated even a closet knows how that happens. The performance hall floor was rebuilt and refinished, walls painted, the historic but uncomfortable pews removed and renovated, and an open floor space created with movable, comfortable chairs.

Alice said: "The Center is doing more marketing than ever before. We have a new website and more people are volunteering. And our goal is to have more people in the seats, adding a richness to their lives through the unique performances and workshops that take place here."

Alice and Susie singled out a few individuals whose contributions of skill and time were particularly important to the renovation's success: Nick Elton, architect; Val Coleman, "go-to person;" Steve Crump, builder/craftsman; and Abbie Lombard, painter/volunteer. They acknowledged as well the posse of individuals who contributed fundraising skills or who painted, scrubbed, lifted, hauled, drove nails, lugged chairs. These people included, among others, Sandy Parisky, Ben Luxon, Paul Van Sickle, Jeremy Lombard, Ron Bernard, Paul Slowatycki, Patricia Hubbard and her son, Jean Atwater-Williams, Lauren Paul, Jane Hason. There were more.

Alice said, "This is an exciting time here in Sandisfield, and we thank you all for being part of it."


And the cost grew, too, from an estimated \$50,000 to \$85,000. A Massachusetts Cultural Council facilities grant provided a significant kick-off amount, which was added to by local cultural councils, including Sandisfield, Otis, and New Marlborough. Leslie and Jo Garfield donated \$16,000 to launch the project.

The fundraising continues, with another \$18,000 to raise. You can



The dedication ceremonies were informal, like SArC itself.

Photo: Jean Atwater-Williams

still help. SArC has initiated a "Take Your Seat" campaign: for a \$200 donation, you can have your name or a memorial name engraved on a brass plaque on the back of a chair. Earlier donations that provided plaques on the backs of now-removed pews will be displayed prominently on the walls in the performance hall. 



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Comings and Goings



PETER HITCHCOCK
1932-2013

Peter Hitchcock, 81, of South Beech Plain Road, died May 14 after a long battle with Parkinson's Disease. He and his wife, Cecily (Ceci), were summer residents of "Thurtleperk Hill" for 55 years.

At Princeton University, Peter attended Officer Candidate School and at graduation in 1953 he was inducted into the United States Navy during the Korean War. He was released from active duty on Honorable Discharge, having attained the rank of Lieutenant, Senior Grade.

In 1959 he received a Juris Doctor degree from Columbia University School of Law, New York City. While there he met Cecily Kohlsaar, whom he married 55 years ago. He joined Allied Chemical Corp. (now G.E. Honeywell) where he served as counsel for many divisions, eventually becoming assistant general counsel. In 1980 he accepted a position with Conoco Chemical (later DuPont) and did extensive international legal work and later was a founding Executive of Vista Chemical, later acquired by Condea of Germany. He retired in 1994.

Peter served as chairman of the Republican Municipal Committee of Mountain Lakes, N.J., where he was also active at St. Peter's Church. After his retirement, he and Ceci spent several years at Hilton Head Island, S.C. In 2002 they moved to Jackson, N.J., and continued to split their time between Jackson and Sandisfield, living at Thurtleperk Hill. Most recently he was a member of Trinity Church, Princeton, NJ.

According to *Sandisfield Then and Now*, the name Thurtleperk Hill" derived from the combination of three friendly neighbors: Edward Thurston, Charles Tilden, and Ethel Perkins. Tilden, Peter's grandfather, hired local builder Lyman Flint to build a rustic Cape-style cottage as a family retreat in 1923. Peter assumed ownership in 1970, and he and Ceci and their family summered here every year.

Besides his wife, Ceci, Peter is survived by two daughters, Sharon Myers Hitchcock of Brooklyn, N.Y. and Courtney Hitchcock Cole and her husband, Richard, of Bluffton, S.C., and grandson, Nicholas Tilden Cole. He is also survived by his brother, Father Horace Gaylord Hitchcock, Jr. of Hawaii.

Local services will be scheduled later this summer.



PAULINE LINDER SIMSOVIC
1916-2013

Pauline Simsovic, 96, who grew up in her family home in Montville, died June 6 in Dayton, Ohio. She was very proud of having been a First Lieutenant in the Women's Army Corps during World War II, a contributing member of the U.S.'s Greatest Generation.

A daughter of Max and Ida Linder, who came to Sandisfield in the early 1920s, older sister to Rose Petrokofsky and Sylvia German (who still maintains the family home on Town Hill Road), Pauline enjoyed a long and very successful life. In the 1980s, she lived in Sandisfield a second time, on New Hartford Road.

Pauline graduated from Lee High School in 1933. She worked as manager of a dress shop in Winsted before the great flood of 1938 washed half the town away. She accrued one year of college credit not long before the beginning of World War II, when Pauline almost at once joined the Women's Army Corps (WACS). She served at Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma before being re-assigned to England, where she performed the service for which she was most proud.

As a First Lieutenant, Pauline worked side-by-side with Sarah Churchill (Winston's daughter) in the aerial photo map interpretation unit at Medmenham Royal Air Force Station. Her talent prevailed during Operation Torch and again, later, by helping to discover the Peenemunde (Baltic Germany) rocket site used in developing Hitler's potentially disastrous V-2 rocket program in 1944.

While in London, Pauline fell in love with and married Second Lieutenant Albert J.



Vada (US Army) in Marlow, England, in March 1945. She subsequently resided twice in Italy and across the States during Albert's 22-year Army career. Pauline later moved to Israel and served as a tour guide and historian for several years. She returned to Sandisfield with her second husband, Israel Simsovic, during the 1980s before moving to West Palm Beach, Florida.

Her love of oil painting inspired Pauline to produce many canvases of locales where she had lived, ranging from her original home in Montville to Vicenza and Verona, Italy, as well as portraits of family members. A voracious reader, she studied the Hebrew language and the State of Israel during her later years. An active chorus member of the local Congregation Anshei Sholom in West Palm Beach and volunteer at the regional VA medical center, Pauline stayed very sharp and mobile, driving her beloved Toyota until the age of 95.

She was predeceased by husbands Albert Vada in 1988 and Israel Simsovic in 1995, as well as her brother, Sam Linder. She is survived by one son, Jay E. Vada and daughter-in-law, Roxie Vada of Dayton; her grandchildren Laurel and Karissa; four great-grandchildren; her younger twin sisters Rose Petrokofsky and Sylvia German, and seven nieces and nephews.

The Rabbinical graveside service was held June 12 at the Sons of Jacob Cemetery, Torrington, Conn., where the local Veterans Service Office provided a Military Final Honors Service and Tribute for this proud American veteran.



CONCOMM DID ITS JOB

First, I have to tell you that I LOVE the Sandisfield Times, look forward to every issue, and read every word. It keeps getting better and better!

But – and I know you could sense a "but" coming! – someone needs to speak out on behalf of the Conservation Commission. As an ardent conservationist, I knew after reading the author's well-written "Out on a Limb" column that the Conservation Commission members did their jobs.

To be precise, that job (in its entirety) is to enforce the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and its regulations (310 CMR 10). The WPA regulations govern ACTIVITY within a wetland or its buffer zone. Period. So while the commissioners are responsible for evaluating the IMPACT on the wetland of the construction activity associated with installing a septic system and underground tanks, they have no voice in decisions related to whether or not they should be allowed at any given site or their locations on the site (provided that the construction activity can be managed without damage to the wetland).

In issuing a negative determination, the commissioners concurred that the ACTIVITY as proposed will NOT (hence the "negative determination") have a deleterious impact on the wetland, providing the applicant adheres to the conditions imposed by the commission. Those conditions generally include use of erosion and sediment controls, maintaining heavy equipment access as far from the wetland as possible, and reseeded/replanting after the project is completed to stabilize the site.

If the commissioners had acted differently, it is very likely that their decision would have been appealed – successfully – to Mass DEP.

These volunteers devote many hours to their positions, evaluating complex applications, participating in long meetings, and trudging through wetlands on snow shoes in winter and around mosquito-infested swamps in summer to protect areas where sandhill cranes chose to visit! (What a treat!) Thanks for "listening!"

Gail Palmer, Otis

For more on this subject, see Larry Dwyer's article on page 1 and Letter From the Editor on page 3.

IN RESPONSE TO "OUT ON A LIMB"

I find a deficiency in the author's knowledge of the Sandisfield Conservation Commission's role. A site visit was conducted. It was determined no jurisdictional features were present on the proposed site of the potential business. The commission was not to determine if the proposed convenience store/gas station would be beneficial or not to the town.

This newspaper should not be used to direct local boards to fulfill the views of the "Sandisfield Times!" The recent infiltration of elitist views in town is quite disturbing to me.

I find it not unlike missionaries of old being sent to foreign lands to convert the native population. Were they sent here to protect us from ourselves? How did we ever survive the first 251 years without you?

George B. Green, Jr.
Conservation Commission Member
New Hartford Road

For more on this subject, see Larry Dwyer's article on page 1 and Letter From the Editor on page 3.

KEEP PARADISE

After reading Miriam Karmel's appeal entitled "For a Carton of Milk: Paradise Lost," in the June issue, I feel compelled to write in support of what she advocates. I would urge, no, plead, with the residents of Sandisfield not to let a piece of paradise, (so aptly put) fade into oblivion.

I was born and lived my first four years in Colebrook River, now a reservoir. After that, I was in a place where we went to summer camp for most of July and August, close to where I resided as a young lad. One of my fondest memories was of hiking along Route 8, up from where the dam is now, to the General Store in New Boston. We followed the river north, crossed the swinging bridge, and spent the little money we had at the General Store.

After the Navy and after marriage and three kids, whenever I could, I would head up Rt. 8 to Sandisfield. Long ago, I had adopted Hanging Mountain and that section of the Farmington River flowing below it, as my father and mother. The mountain, as my father, gave me strength, and the river, as my mother, gave me a sense of quiet peace.

Like Miriam, when I reached the new section of Rt. 8 by the reservoir it was like entering a new and different world where the MacDonald's, Burger Kings, the Cumberland Farms, etc., could all be left behind.

The little bit of wilderness we have left, where one can find the peace and serenity needed for one's soul, we should cherish and preserve. It is like good music feeding the soul, while bad music fills the soul with unrest. When we introduce glitz into the wilderness, like osmosis, the wilderness disappears.

The responsibility is on us to preserve, for those who come after us, what we love – and should not be so swift to trade away for a carton of milk. Sandisfield, don't let this happen!

Mark Farnham, Town Hill Road

For more on this subject, see Larry Dwyer's article on page 1 and Letter From the Editor on page 3.

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NOW HEAR THIS!

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

JULY EVENTS

Quilt Artist Teresa Bills in the Sandisfield Arts Center Gallery on Saturday, July 6 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

A Heroine's Journey one-woman performance by Amber Chand on Saturday, July 6 at 8:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center. (\$15). Tickets at the door or online at www.sandisfieldartscenter.org

Summer Salads Workshop with Adam Manacher and Joe Harasyko on Saturday, July 13 at 10:00 a.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center (\$15).

Memorial Service for Ron Myers will be held Saturday, July 13. For information, call Roberta at 269-4928.

Historical Society Summer Fair, Saturday, July 13, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at the Meeting House in South Sandisfield, Rt. 183 (Sandy Brook Turnpike). Vendors, tag sale, baked goods, and food.

Cemetery Tour on Sunday, July 14, at 2:00 p.m. at the New Boston Cemetery on Rt 57 next to Carr Field. John Kuzmech and Willard Platt will conduct the tour.

American Legion Turkey Roll, Friday evening, July 19, 7 p.m. Food – Bar – Prizes. Legion Hall, next to the old firehouse, Rt. 8 in New Boston.

Local Heroes II on Saturday, July 27 at 7:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center. Honoring first responders and their families. Music by the BTUs and dancing will follow (Free for Sandisfield residents).

JULY EVENTS IN NEIGHBORING TOWNS

Bidwell House Township #1 Day a community celebration of Tyrringham and Monterey on Saturday, July 6 from 1:00-4:30 p.m. at the Bidwell House in Monterey.

Teen Book Club will meet for the first time on Sunday, July 7, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Otis Library. This is a club to read for fun, not for grades. Participants read a book and then the group talks about it. No homework, no tests, no stress. The first book is "Fight Club" by Chuck Palahniuk and free copies are available at the Otis Library. Contact kaylanscott1993@gmail.com or visit www.facebook.com/nymbookclub for more info.

Otis Library Country Fair on Saturday, July

13, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on the Church Green, Route 8, in the center of Otis. A featured booth will be Villa Mia, with Dia serving bureks and fried dough.

Art Opening featuring 30 regional mixed-media artists on Friday, July 26, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at The Meeting House, 154 Hartsville-New Marlborough Road, New Marlborough. Show runs through August 25.

Otis Arts Festival on Saturday, July 27, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Farmington River Elementary School on Route 8 in Otis.

Tolland Volunteer Fire Department Annual Steak Roast and Dance on Saturday, July 27. Tolland Public Safety Complex, Rt. 57. Dinner 6-8 p.m.; Night Moves Band playing dance music from 8-11 p.m. Steak dinner for \$25 donation; steak and lobster for \$35 donation. Hamburgers and hot dogs for children for \$10 donation. Cash bar. For tickets call 413-258-2859 or leave a message. Tickets will be delivered to your home by the Tolland Fire Department.

SAVE THE DATE

FREE Concert sponsored by Otis Cultural Council, Saturday, August 3, "Trio Candela" 3-piece Latin American and Caribbean band, with special guest musicians, will present a "Spicy Summer Celebration" at Knox Trail Inn, Rte. 23, East Otis. Latin food available 6-7:30 p.m., music 7:45-9:30 p.m. Call to reserve seating: 413-269-4400.

Stars are Falling, meteor shower, August 11, early Sunday morning, midnight to 3 a.m. First annual Sandisfield Perseids party, York Lake. Use Rt. 183 entrance after dark. An astronomer on site to explain details and a storyteller to weave the myths. Bring chairs, blankets, and snacks to share (if you want). For information call Maxene at 258-4030.

ONGOING EVENTS

Selectmen, every Monday at 7:00 p.m., Town Hall Annex.

Farmington River Regional School District, first Monday of the month, 7 p.m., Farmington River Regional School, Rt. 8, JoAnn Austin, Superintendent. Public Welcome.

Planning Board, second Monday of the month, 6 p.m., Old Town Hall.

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

Conservation Commission, third Tuesday of the month, 7 p.m., Town Hall Annex.

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

Boy Scouts, contact Western Mass Council of Boy Scouts for a local troop at 413-418-4002.

Council on Aging, every Wednesday, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Senior Center, Town Hall Annex. Pot luck lunch at noon, bingo at 1 p.m. Free blood pressure screening every fourth Wednesday.

Finance Committee, second Wednesday of the month, 7 p.m., Sandisfield Library. Public welcome.

PTO, second Thursday of the month, 3:15 p.m., Farmington River Regional School. Child Care provided.

The Children's Health Program Play Group, now every Tuesday when school is in session, 9:30-11 a.m., Farmington River Elementary School music room. Led by Laura Messina. For more information call 413-644-0104, Ext. 1159.

Senior Lunch Program, every Tuesday when school is in session, 12:15 p.m., Farmington River Regional School. For more information or reservations call Lynette at 413-269-4466. Cost \$2.00.

Sandisfield Public Library Hours: Monday and Tuesday, 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.; Wednesday, 6:30-8:30 p.m.; Thursday, 2-5 p.m., Saturday, 9 a.m.-12 noon. Call ahead at 258-4966.

Historical Commission on second Wednesday of every month, 7:00 p.m., at Sandisfield Public Library. Public welcome. Next meeting, July 10.

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SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

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