

# THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume V, Number 4

July 2014

## Where is Sandisfield Going?

### BRING IDEAS ON JULY 23.

By Bill Price

In July, an informational town meeting will include after-dinner coffee and cookies. New residents, long-time residents, 2nd-home owners, 3rd-home owners, visitors, neighbors, all are invited. Wednesday evening, July 23, from 7-9 p.m. Firehouse #2 on Rt. 57.

The meeting will be for the audience to contribute ideas about the future of Sandisfield. What has the Strategic Planning Committee been talking about? How to proceed with what needs to be done?

“We want to get to issues people care about,” said Co-chair Kathy Jacobs. “The condition of town buildings has been well reported, so we won’t discuss building issues in detail at this meeting. We’re more interested right now in helping to create a vision of what the town wants itself to look like in ten years and how the town can get there.”

The committee is preparing to draft a master plan for the town. In order to accomplish the task the committee will work closely with the Sandisfield Planning Board, which now has a full complement of members. The Planning Board has ultimate responsibility over town master plans.

The committee’s June 11 meeting was attended by Tom Matuska of Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, a state-sponsored organization that works with Berkshire towns and offers them support in developing master plans and budgeting.

He asked the members what they hoped to get out of a master plan? The answers were: “Structure.” “Vision.” “Workable goals.”

*Cont’d on p.3*



*Pipes, now rusted and crumbling, piled across a pristine stream to serve as a “crossing” within what is now Spectacle Pond Farm. The makeshift bridge is still in place decades after the 1982 construction. Photo: Jean Atwater-Williams*

## A Ray of Sunshine?

### DOES MASSACHUSETTS CONSTITUTION ARTICLE 97 STAND FOR SOMETHING OR NOT?

By Times Reporters

There’s a glimmer of light and hope in the dark bearing down on the Beech Plain section which is in the path of the proposed gas pipeline expansion.

Almost half of the 3.8-mile project runs through a spectacular 900-acre parcel acquired by the State in 2007 and earmarked for permanent protection under the care of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). The property includes most of Lower Spectacle Pond and one of the last stands of old growth hemlock in the state. Because of this permanent protection the Town of Sandisfield agreed to a reduced tax rate on the property.

State Representative Smitty Pignatelli told the Times in June, “The land is protected under Article 97. Overriding it requires a special legislative vote. First a bill to override has to be filed. It is in my district, and I’m not going to file the bill.

I don’t know who would. If it is filed, it has to pass by a two-thirds vote of both the House and the Senate. The town doesn’t want it, and I’m on record that I won’t support it unless the town asks me to.”

Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution states, “As a general rule, EEA and its agencies shall not sell, transfer, lease, relinquish, release, alienate, or change the control or use of any right or interest of the Commonwealth in and to Article 97 land.”

At the Annual Town Meeting on May 20, voters unanimously passed a non-binding resolution calling on the Select Board to oppose the pipeline, and Selectmen assured residents that they would press state politicians to do all they could to prevent the project.

On June 10, a representative from Massachusetts Energy and Environmental Af-

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# REMINDER: What About Our PO? July 2

By Bill Price

A public hearing will be held July 2, Wednesday, at 1 p.m. to share the recent post office survey results and answer questions. Old Town Hall, 3 Silverbrook Road.

As reported last month, the USPS is considering what to do with your post office. It seems they are offering four choices:

1. Keep it open with limited hours?
2. Close it and provide roadside mailbox delivery?
3. Close it and find an alternative location at another local business?
4. Close it and provide PO Box service at a "near-by" post office?

The USPS said they will solicit more input on the options at the meeting, adding that "the Postal Service will not make a final decision regarding this office until after the public meeting."

They've asked postal patrons – you and me – to help them decide. If possible, be there to chip in your two cents. Or make it a dollar. 🗳️

## Meanwhile, at Town Hall ....

At the Select Board, Jeff Gray was re-elected to another 3-year term in May. He passed the role of chairman to Patrick Barrett. Rosario Messina, the third Selectman, will serve as board clerk.

Following questions raised at the Annual Town Meeting, the board discussed whether it might be necessary to repost the position of Town Administrator if the job was changed from part-time to full-time. The town attorney reported that the extra step would not be necessary. It was agreed that Lisa Blackmer was performing solid work and reposting would not attract a better candidate, would cost the town money for advertising, and would delay having a full-time person while numerous items were in the balance.

Negotiations were conducted at closed board meetings on June 9 and again June 23, after which Lisa and the Board signed a 3-year contract beginning at the \$43,000 voted on at the Town Meeting. Patrick Barrett reported that most of the contract follows the highway department contract in terms of vacation and sick time. 🗳️

## ServSafe and Air B&Bs

### NOTICES FROM THE BOARD OF HEALTH

The Sandisfield Board of Health is coordinating a ServSafe Certification/Re-certification course and exam on Monday, July 28, from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. at Old Town Hall on Silverbrook Road. The course is open to anyone in the food service field who is required to have a ServSafe Food Protection Manager Certification.

Melissa Baron, Dietitian and certified ServeSafe instructor, will provide the course and exam. Cost for the training and exam is \$110 (at a special discount rate, available only through this class).

Register now, since space is limited. ServSafe books can be ordered in advance if you would

like to get a head start on studying. For anyone registered, the 6th edition ServSafe Manager book will be available at the student price of \$30.

For questions or to sign up, please contact Kim Spring, 413-258-4450 or kim.spring@ymail.com or Margaret O'Clair, 413-258-440.

And a reminder from the Board of Health: If you advertise a room or vacation rental on the internet, for instance on AirB&B, you are obligated to acquire the same permits and have the same inspections as a traditional bed & breakfast. And don't forget to check with your home owner's insurance company. The Board thanks you for your cooperation. 🗳️

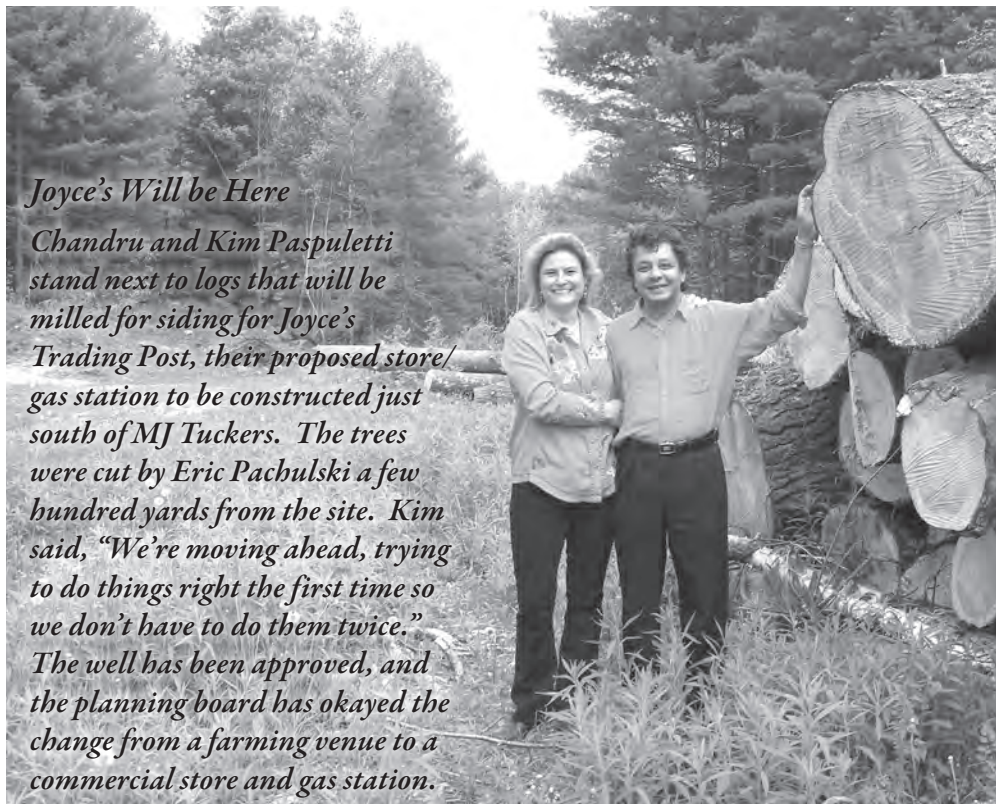
## Words to the Wise

### "NO-NO'S" FROM THE AMERICAN LEGION, POST #456

The Legion thanks the patriotic, loyal residents, and fellow Legion members for participating in the flag burning ceremony on Flag Day on June 14.

"But," adds Commander Maria Domato, "Shame on the person who left their personal trash along with flags in the fire pit. My advice to you: next time, make sure your name isn't on the tracing pad!"

The American Legion and Saint Pauley appreciate your donations at the clothes drop. It is clearly written that you should use tied bags and donate usable clothes and shoes. Maria adds: "But not wrapping paper, old Christmas decorations, broken toys, or other odds and ends. PLEASE do not just throw loose articles in the box." 🗳️



### *Joyce's Will be Here*

*Chandru and Kim Paspuletti stand next to logs that will be milled for siding for Joyce's Trading Post, their proposed store/gas station to be constructed just south of MJ Tuckers. The trees were cut by Eric Pachulski a few hundred yards from the site. Kim said, "We're moving ahead, trying to do things right the first time so we don't have to do them twice." The well has been approved, and the planning board has okayed the change from a farming venue to a commercial store and gas station.*



## WHERE IS SANDISFIELD GOING?

Cont'd from p.1

"Prioritize our building demands."

The committee hopes that ideas will surface at the town meeting to help identify common themes:

"Where is the town center? Where should it be?"

"What do you like in town? What don't you like?"

"What is needed for the town? What would be nice for the town to have?"

The BRPC has the experience and ability to guide towns developing a master plan; currently they are helping Otis redraft theirs. The BRPC would not write the master plan, but would help synthesize information and prepare it for presentation.

"We nearly had a plan about 15 years ago," remembered one committee member, "but it was rejected by the Select Board. The concern then was that the state was going to come in and tell us how to water our lawns and repair our roads. The fact is, the state wouldn't have done anything like that and wouldn't this time either."

The BRPC representative pointed out that

Select Boards advise but do not actually vote on acceptance or rejection of a master plan. In Berkshire County, that authority rests with each town's Planning Board.

Another committee member cautioned that the committee should "do things incrementally. Get some small things done right and show that change isn't so bad in order to build trust."

The committee members agreed that they needed to widen their committee to involve more people. "We want volunteers," said Ralph Morrison, committee co-chair. "We'd like to have department heads tell us what they need, to represent their particular parts of a master plan."

The committee asks that you bring ideas and suggestions to the meeting on July 23 or phone or write to one of the committee co-chairs. Or bring them to one of the committee's monthly meetings. They can also be placed in the Town Suggestion Box that can be found on the Town's website: [www.sandisfield.info](http://www.sandisfield.info).

Follow-up town meetings will be held in early winter and in the spring. "If you can't attend this meeting, but want to," said Kathy, "let us know. We'll be having more informational meetings and can adjust the day and time so more of us can attend." 🗣️

Thoughts on the Fourth of July, 2014

I have wanted for some time  
To write a poem about freedom,  
A boastful word  
That shoulders its way  
Into most everyone's life.

But we don't know how to relish it  
So we grasp it with the tips of our fingers  
As if it were an ancient Etruscan  
Tear jar  
Designed to store our grief.

It *is* a precious vessel, easily broken,  
So we put it on a shelf  
And leave it next to the candied apples.  
And oh we bring it down from time to time  
To use in anthems.

Freedom at its very best  
Can be a mockingbird.  
Until it sings, it will remain  
Nothing but a word.

Val Coleman  
Town Hill Road



## DOES ARTICLE 97 STAND FOR SOMETHING OR NOT?

Cont'd from p.1

fairs (MEPA) moderated an informational meeting about environmental impact of the project. A consultant to pipeline owner Kinder Morgan and its subsidiary Tennessee Gas reviewed issues contained in a technical report of some one thousand pages that had been distributed only about a week before. Abutters and concerned parties were allowed to ask questions and make comments

Nancy Putnam, DCR's Director of Ecology, voiced serious concerns about threats to forest, wildlife, water, and archeological assets on DCR land. She warned about destruction of vegetation and diversity, including the potential loss of old growth oak and ash trees. The DCR, she said, is worried about the spread of invasive species as construction equipment is rotated through the area. Exposed bedrock may require blasting, an inherently dangerous situation due to the proximity of the existing gas pipeline, and they are also alarmed about impact of heavy equipment on the access roads. "There would be loss to historic stone walls," she said, "particularly because boulders that had been pushed into rows during earlier pipeline construction have been mapped as stone walls while actual stone walls have not been mapped."

Perhaps the most contentious issue raised by her and other attendees involved the company's intention to drain away more than a million gallons of water from Spectacle Pond to test the new pipeline's integrity.

Putnam said that the work, such as project boundary markings, was apparently not being governed by "best management practices."

Residents asked about the risk to wildlife species and wetlands. Mark Gardella, environmental consultant to the company responded, "You're finding endangered species there now, you're finding wetlands. We didn't destroy them 30 years ago, we won't destroy them this time. But there will be some mortality for the less mobile creatures."

**"I'm not going to file the bill. I don't know who would."**

**– Rep. Smitty Pignatelli**

Following the meeting there was a group visit to the existing pipeline corridor.

Selectman Patrick Barrett supported the citizens' requests that the comment period be extended so that the parties had more time to review the massive technical document beyond the June 20 deadline. (Later, this request was granted and the comment period

was extended to July 3). According to a notice from MEPA, the required EENF Certificate will be issued on July 11.

The company said that construction will require up to 125 feet including 35 feet for a new permanent right of way and 75 feet of "temporary" workspace that would be allowed to grow back naturally. The total corridor is limited to 75 feet in wetland areas. The pipeline expansion will impact 16 wetlands and 10 streams, crossing four of those. During the site visit company representatives said that large boulders that currently protect streams would be "put back in place" and that "wetlands would be restored."

The company plans to file applications for at least seven state and federal permits by the end of July. These include permits for easements, water quality, construction, rare and endangered species, and other topics. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is expected to grant approval in June 2015. Work would begin in the winter of 2015/16 (tree removal), followed in early spring by construction lasting about nine months to November 2016.

During the walking tour, Selectman Barrett said, "If the state approves this proposal, the conservation program is a joke."

In a letter to the Berkshire Eagle on June 16, he wrote: "If this project is allowed to go through, the state would be setting precedent in which conservation land in Massachusetts really isn't conserved." 🗣️



## What Shall We Show Them, When They Come?

Later this month four of our own will arrive in the small English midlands town of Ombersley to begin a reconnaissance of the community with which we are considering becoming officially "twinned."

The logic behind our choice is simple: Ombersley Court, a pleasantly ancient mansion in a fourteenth-century deer park three miles out of town, has been for the last 300 years the family seat of the Barons Sandys – the family after whom, very loosely, our town of Sandisfield was named.

Our team – Ron Bernard and Jean Atwater-Williams, Ben Luxon and Susie Crofut, traveling at their own expense – will doubtless have a delightful and instructive time. England in the flaming summer is a sight beyond compare. Great gardens, magnificent trees, cricket matches, thatched and half-timbered pubs, elegant tea-rooms, and a suffusing air of comfortable gentility. The well-attended churches will be dark inside, and cool, glinting with brass war memorials recalling Empire and heroism. And what could be more English, as a former prime minister said, than the image of the spinster cycling slowly back from evensong, the bells in the tower chiming her way home through the gathering dusk?

Soon, though, the idyll will be over, and the team will be back on home ground. Then we will need to prepare for a return visit, sometime next year. And the question arises: what will we show to our English visitors to give an impression of Sandisfield as memorable.

They must come across in the fall, of course. Few sights on earth can compare with the polychrome color-wash of our New England forests when the first crispness sets the trees ablaze with scarlet, yellow, and purple.

They must be brought along our dirt roads – no such thing exists in England, all is tarmac and rotaries – and to the oldest of our hundreds of old houses.

They must be reminded that while they accept their history, we positively revere ours, we cherish it and make much of such antiquity as we possess.

So in keeping-rooms and screened-in porches and before the first crackling applewood fires within our granite inglenooks, we must give them home-made cider and honey and maple syrup. We must show them our blue-birds and the cardinals. We must tell them of our bears and moose and bobcats and amaze them with our degree of wildness – of the frontier – that has quite vanished from all-too-pretty, all-too-manufactured England.

But what more shall we show them, when they come? I look to you, dear readers, for suggestions. We have much of which to be proud, hidden away here in our secret corner of America. Let us tease it out next year, if briefly, and show our visitors from the Old Country something of the remarkable wonders of the New. ♣



By Laurie Foulke-Green, Librarian

Eugene English, who served the library on Wednesday evenings for the last 15 years and with a lot of other tasks, has retired from the job. We thank him for his many years with the Library. Our Library Aide, Kathie Burrows, will fill in Wednesday evenings.

However, from next November until May 2015, the Library will be closed Wednesday evenings. Beginning in November, groups wanting to use the downstairs Community Center will need to pick up the key from Dolores Harasyko at Town Hall.

Our next Genealogy Assistant Classes will be July 30 and August 27, Wednesday evenings, at 6:30 p.m. Call for genealogy requests at 258- 4966, Monday and Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, or via e-mail at sandisfieldlibrary@yahoo.com. ♣

### NEW BOOKS:

I Am Having So Much Fun Here Without You/  
Courtney Maum  
Clam Wake/Mary Daheim  
Undiplomatic Murder/Margaret Truman  
The Night Searchers/Sharon McCone  
Remains of Innocence/J.A. Lance  
The City/Dean Koontz  
Coptown/Karen Slaughter  
Cut and Trust/Stuart Woods  
Eden in Winter/Richard North Patterson  
Power Play/Catherine Coulter  
Sight Unseen/Iris Johansen  
Bones of the Lost/Kathy Reichs  
The Promise/Rachelle Friedman



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# Sandisfield Day, Right Here in Town

VISIT A SOLAR HOME,  
SWIM, BOAT, HIKE,  
ENJOY A GOURMET  
DINNER, HEAR OPERA

By Judi Friedman

A beautiful new solar home at 7 New Hartford Road, just off the Rt. 57 intersection, will be open to the public on Saturday, July 12. Tours will be held any time between 12 noon and 3 p.m. The 2700-square-foot passive solar house includes a 5.5 kW solar electric system, solar hot water panels and tank, radiant floor heating and hydronic baseboards, a stunning Tulikivi masonry stove and energy recovery ventilator, LED lighting, Energy Star appliances with condensing clothes dryer, Mitsubishi air-to-air heat pumps, and triple-pane windows.

Great care was taken in the construction. Prefabricated wall panels, double-stud wall construction,



insulated concrete-form foundation, salvaged stone for outside walls, concrete floors with acid-free eco-stain and water-based sealer, and natural materials were used throughout the house.

After the tour visitors are invited to swim in nearby York Lake or bring their canoe or kayak to another uninhabited beautiful lake and/or take a guided hike to a secret small and uninhabited lake.

Non-refundable tickets and maps for the tour and outdoor activities can be purchased by going online to [www.pace-cleanenergy.org](http://www.pace-cleanenergy.org) and click on Events. Tour tickets may also be ordered by sending \$15 per person to PACE, Donna Grant, 128 Melrose Rd., Broad Brook, CT, 06016, or email to [albert\\_grant@sbgcglobal.net](mailto:albert_grant@sbgcglobal.net). Information should include the ticketholder's phone number, postal address, and email address.

At 7 p.m., the Sandisfield Arts Center will be the site of a light gourmet dinner prepared by Adam Manacher, our local well-known chef, and includes wine. Dinner will be followed by a concert showcasing magnificent music and professional voices singing arias, duets, and trios from well-known operas. To order \$25 tickets for the gourmet dinner and live concert go online to [sandisfieldartscenter.org](http://sandisfieldartscenter.org).

*This special Sandisfield Day is sponsored by PACE (People's Action for Clean Energy) and cosponsored by the Sandisfield Arts Center. For more information, contact: Judi Friedman at 860-693-4813.*

## VILLA MIA RESTAURANT & PIZZERIA

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Pasta, Salads, Subs & Calzones  
Sicilian & New York style pizzas

Try one of our  
delicious desserts  
with an espresso or  
cappuccino coffee.

Open 7 Days a Week  
Through Labor Day  
11 a.m. - 9 p.m.

## NEW PAINTINGS TINA SOTIS

July 1 - July 26 at the Whitney Center for the Arts  
42 Wendell Ave, Pittsfield

**TWO ARTIST RECEPTIONS:**  
**THURS, JULY 3, 5-8 PM & SAT, JULY 12, 4-7 PM**

[WWW.TINASOTIS.COM](http://WWW.TINASOTIS.COM)



## Norton Remembers Sandisfield 'Way Back When'...

By Ron Bernard



Bob Ives and Norton, 1960

Norton Fletcher's discussion of his life in Sandisfield was the first of a series of oral histories of Sandisfield's oldest generation to be given at the Historical Society's headquarters in South Sandisfield as part of their regular monthly meetings on Saturdays. More are planned for the 2014 season which runs through November. Norton's presentation was in May; Willard Platt was "on deck" for the late June meeting. Interviews will be recorded and consolidated on a compact disc at the conclusion of the project.

Norton turned 91 this year. His association with Sandisfield began in 1927 as a boy of four when his English-born father, William Fletcher, arrived in the employ of prominent Long Island resident, Ethel Perkins. Mrs. Perkins built a seasonal retreat on South Beech Plain Road and also purchased a rather less regal abode at the foot of Beech Plain Road in West New Boston as a residence for the Fletcher family.

Norton recalled, "The place was in bad shape and needed a lot of work. There were no amenities. When our well went dry we had to get drinking water from a well about a mile up Beech Plain Road. The Clam River was where we got our water for cleaning."

Among the things that impressed Norton as child was the (poor) condition of the roads. He said that in 1927 there were no paved roads at all and none were named.

Electricity wasn't available until about 1934. Norton said, "If families wanted the service they had to chip in to buy the poles."

Another aspect of life back then that impressed him was the use of kerosene lamps. It was all they had, and it was dangerous business. He recalled a story about a Mrs. Twining who lived in the house perpendicular to the New Boston Inn. "She was the organist for the New Boston Church. One day, while lighting her lamp, some kerosene spilled and her clothes caught



Norton Fletcher, Memorial Day, 2014

fire. They said she was saved by Mr. Campetti and another man who happened to pass by who wrapped her in a coat and transported her to a hospital in Winsted but the poor woman died anyway."

He also recounted lighter, even hilarious incidents. "In the '30s, bootlegging was a big activity around here, particular in the northwest part of town. My father was friends with his neighbor, Joseph O'Brien, who was sheriff at the time." O'Brien got a complaint about illicit activity and invited Norton's father to tag along while he closed up the operation. "But things did not go according to plan and the men got pretty drunk," Norton said. "In fact they didn't make it home that night!"



Ivy Strickland, Norton, Mrs. Saunders, 1928

Society interim president John Kuzmech, who served as interviewer, asked Norton what it was like to be a child here then. "We were never bored. We used to pick blueberries and try to sell them on the street. Fifteen cents a quart and business was good. Once, while in the fields, I sat on a nest of red ants and that was awful. We were always barefoot too, except Sundays.

"It was fun to visit farms like Albert's, Campetti's, and Sandler's. There were so many chickens and cows. Local people were basically food self-sufficient but the summer folks were dependent on the meat wagon and the vegetable peddler."

"What was school like?" asked John. Norton said, "I guess all I can say is that kids today have a much better chance to learn. Otherwise I remember that a boy would have the job to light a fire in the stove and warm up the room before school started. There was mischief too. Everybody knew about the peep holes in the outhouses.

"And then there was our teacher, Mrs. Poole, who bought a chance on a Buick car for ten cents and she won! That was something.

"I became best friends with Bob Ives. We used to go up to the Montville Store and buy their wonderful penny candy. Once I found some money in the house and I bought candy for all the kids. A dollar went a long way. Word of this reached my mother and I got a good thrashing. It was deserved too.

"Rabbi Cohen lived in the neighborhood. Every Friday he would walk all the way to the synagogue in Montville. He had a lot of daughters which generated interest among us boys.

"One time my good friend Bob Ives and I decided to go to the movies in Winsted by bicycle. Fifteen cents per show. That day we had only one bicycle but we made the best of it together. On the way back we got a flat tire and it was a bad situation. Luckily someone with a car got us home."

From the audience came the question, "Has the town changed much?" Norton paused long and said, "Fundamentally, no, it has not changed very much. Living is much more expensive, of course, but Sandisfield today is basically the same place I knew." ❧

*Thanks to the Society for embarking on this project to capture stories that otherwise may be lost to us and coming generations. This is no small contribution to Sandisfield's heritage. In June the Society invited Willard Platt for a similar conversation. His daughter, Lois Platt, will report on Willard's talk next month.*



# Sandisfield Scholarships Awarded

By Laura Rogers-Castro

The Sandisfield Scholarship Fund Committee is pleased to announce that Mia Bills, Hunter Cormier, Trae Ezequelle, and Clayton Gaudette were each awarded \$500 scholarships this year.

Mia plans to attend Salem State University and will major in social work. Hunter will attend Quinnipiac University in Connecticut. Trae will major in history at Bridgewater State University. Clay will attend Full Sail University in Florida, majoring in show production.

Each of these four outstanding students received wonderful recommendations from teachers and guidance counselors at Monument Mountain and Mt. Everett High Schools.

A little information about the Sandisfield Scholarship Fund:


The Sandisfield Scholarship Fund awards cash grants to eligible Sandisfield high school seniors to assist with the costs of higher education. Typically, awards are given to students following successful completion of their first semester. Students who are Sandisfield residents qualify by completing an application in April. Anina Carr, Bethany Perry, and Laura Rogers-Castro serve on the Committee.

## Fundraising efforts

The Sandisfield Scholarship Fund Committee is proud to award scholarships to these four recipients this year. The scholarship amount differs from year to year based on annual fundraising efforts and donors. The past two years recipients were provided with funding contributed by the Sandisfield 250th

Birthday Committee with surplus donations from the history project, *Sandisfield Then and Now*, written by Ron Bernard. Two of this year's scholarship recipients, Hunter and Trae, are particularly appropriate choices because Trae will major in history and Hunter volunteered in several capacities during the 250th Celebration. The Scholarship Fund Committee encourages all of Sandisfield's young residents to become involved with town efforts!

The Sandisfield Scholarship Fund Committee's next fundraiser will feature ice cream bars for sale on Saturday, August 9, during the Sandisfield Volunteer Fire Department's Annual Steak Roast. Please show your support by attending this great event and buying some Scholarship Ice Cream!

For additional information on the Sandisfield Scholarship Fund, please contact Laura at 258-4688. The Committee greatly appreciates the generosity of past donors. 

## Some Words by Robert Blass

Life is unpredictable, some things you know and some things you don't. When we are faced with the Unknown we tend to lose hope. But with the support we receive by people that care the mountain we climb seems not so high.

To thank those around me I will reach the top of this mountain I face and prove nothing can keep us down unless we let it. Never give up without a fight because sometimes it is all you have left.

Thank You All for your support and continuing effort to help through these trying times in my life.

Sincerely yours,  
Robert Blass

The Massachusetts Dept. of Conservation and Recreation presented a Loggers' Workshop at the Sandisfield Art Center on June 10 attended by about 40 loggers from Sandisfield and neighboring towns.



# SANDISFIELD ARTS CENTER

5 HAMMERTOWN RD SANDISFIELD, MA  
413-258-4100

INFO & TO BUY TICKETS ONLINE  
[SANDISFIELDARTSCENTER.ORG](http://SANDISFIELDARTSCENTER.ORG)

# JULY

12<sup>TH</sup> Noon-3 PM

## Sandisfield Goes Green

**House Tour** of the award-winning 2700 sq ft 1-story home on New Hartford Rd. in Sandisfield. *Tickets & info available from PACE [www.pace-cleanenergy.org](http://www.pace-cleanenergy.org) 860-693-4813.* **\$15**



12<sup>TH</sup> 7 PM

## An Evening of Grand Opera (with food and wine)

A selection of magnificent music and professional voices performed by **Charles Coleman** (baritone), **Patricia Vital**, (soprano), **Benjamin Sloman**, (tenor), and pianist, **Lloyd Arriola**. Light dinner and wine prepared by our own chef, **Adam Manacher**. **\$25**



19<sup>TH</sup> 10 AM

## Solar Energy and Sandisfield

**Charles Cady** of **Absolute Green Energy**: Presentation about solar energy and the opportunities, cost and technique of installing solar panels in Massachusetts.



Funded in part by the Massachusetts Cultural Council and Local Cultural Councils



# Veterans March Again

Sandisfield veterans carry the colors past another local veteran, the former New Boston Store, at the Memorial Day parade, 2014.

Photo: Tom Jacobs



## wm. brockman real estate the berkshires

You should not list your home or land with us because we have sold 14 properties just in Sandisfield (or almost half of all sales) in the last two years, from \$70,500 to \$3,500,000. Or because we have the Top Selling Broker for 2013 in all of Berkshire County.

You should have us represent you because what we do "best" is custom-tailored every time, to every client, and every experience.

**Achieving your goals is what we do best.**

**Your satisfaction is our only measure of success.**

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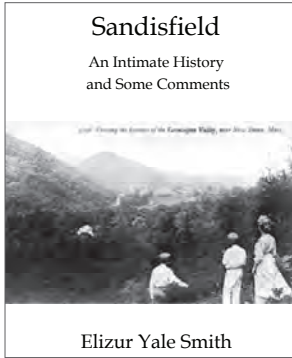


# A Town Treasure Rediscovered

## OUR ADVENTURES IN PUBLISHING

By Bill Price

Four years ago, local historian Ron Bernard was in search of source material for the commemorative history he was preparing for Sandisfield's 250th anniversary.



Former resident Michael Rosenberg suggested that a nearly forgotten, often-overlooked manuscript in the Otis Library

& Museum might be useful. Otis Museum curator Hank Wingate and friendly librarians dusted off the manuscript and handed it to Ron. He knew at once what it was.

Written in 1948 by Berkshire native and professional genealogist, Elizur Yale Smith, a descendant of one of the town's earliest and largest pioneer families, the manuscript was a goldmine of information of old Sandisfield.

Typed on a clunky, unforgiving manual typewriter, the manuscript sprawled across some 350 double-spaced pages, including hand-written corrections. A delightful mixture of Smith's reminiscences, scholarly research, and tales, it was written by a man who understood the heritage of this town better than any other observer, before or since. Smith titled his work: *Sandisfield: An Intimate History and Some Comments*.

Last year the Sandisfield Historical Commission and a few volunteers set out to make this very personal history available to the public. The publication was first announced in our May issue.

### Why Did Elizur Write His History?

Summer, 1947. Smith's friend, George Sokolsky, a part-time resident of North Beech Plain Road and nationally known journalist and broadcaster, asked Smith to address the first annual meeting of The Sandisfield Taxpayers' Association. After hearing Elizur's remarks, Sokolsky encouraged him to write down and expand on what he presented that evening.

Expand Elizur did.

In the coming year he wrote not only about the founding and development of Sandisfield, but how historical and unrelated events and personalities in

the Commonwealth and the nation shaped life here, weaving it all together in a way that is valuable for Berkshire researchers, educators, and genealogists, as well as anyone interested in American history. And he brought it up to date, as of 1948.

He did not live to complete his work, leaving at least one chapter, on schools, incomplete. Elizur Yale Smith died in January 1950, at the age of 65 at the entrance to the Commodore Hotel in New York.

The Taxpayers' Association intended to publish the manuscript but other issues got in the way. Sokolsky held onto the manuscript until, in July 1962 in failing health and only a few months before his own death, he placed it with the Otis Library for safekeeping. A few Sandisfield and Otis residents knew about the manuscript, but there was no systematic attempt to make it available for researchers or readers. It lay there waiting, fortunately in safe hands.

### Recapturing the Manuscript


It was one thing for Ron to pull information for research or extract a few useful quotes for his Sandisfield history, but something else to transform the rough manuscript into form for public distribution.

Luckily, tech-knowledgeable resident Jean Atwater-Williams volunteered to manipulate the raw document into an editable format. This was no small task. She individually scanned the 350 pages into an electronic file, using special software to convert the text into a workable document. The book could not have been made accessible without these initial critical steps.

But even magical software can't decipher and translate cross-outs and stray marks and aberrations like typed words "running downhill" or "flying caps," inevitable by-products of manual typewriters. The result was a mostly legible but sometimes disjointed and unintelligible jumble. But at least now it could be compared with the original and manipulated for word processing.

Ron invited me to help with the next stage – reassembling the sentences, paragraphs and chapters without altering Elizur's style, including his punctuation, occasional antique spelling, and his non-politically correct opinions. Last winter we swapped sections back and forth between our homes in Minneapolis and Sandisfield. After tedious hours and eye strain, we had a final draft.

Members of the Sandisfield Historical Commission proofed the result. Jean designed the final product into two versions, a printed book and a fully searchable compact disc. It was a labor of affection by a local band of volunteers.

Distribution is managed by The Sandisfield Historical Society. See mail order form on this page. For more information, contact Ron Bernard at 413-269-0012 or by email: [Ronbernard@aol.com](mailto:Ronbernard@aol.com). 

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# TOWN BUSINESS

*Submitted by Town Clerk Dolores Harasyko*

*Edited by Bill Price*

*Detailed Select Board minutes and agendas for upcoming meetings are available at the Town website, [www.sandisfield.info](http://www.sandisfield.info). Go to Meetings, then to Board of Selectmen. Minutes can also be reviewed at Town Hall.*

## **Select Board minutes, May 8, 2014**

Meeting was held in conjunction with the presentation by Tennessee Gas Pipeline at Firehouse #2, and was reported in the June Sandisfield Times.

## **Select Board minutes, All Boards Meeting, May 12, 2014**

Questions were asked regarding town job positions and finances. One resident suggested that rather than hiring a Town Administrator the Selectmen increase their work-week to 20 hours and that town government be changed to include a mayor. Another suggested the administrator job be kept part-time, and another asked whether the town needed to re-advertise the position if it changed to full-time. A resident asked for clarity from all boards, regardless of the size of their budgets. Another felt the town needed to be better run as a business. There was a question about the salary increase for the Town Clerk.

Patrick Barrett reviewed items the town administrator has been and will continue to work on, adding that she has already brought in enough money to cover her salary for this past year and part of next year. He said the question of reposting the job had been reviewed by the town's attorney and that the extra step was unnecessary.

Town Clerk Dolores Harasyko reviewed her job description, pointing out that it is not the same as the Town Administrator and added that she has not had a salary increase in two years and will not request one for next year. She explained that she submits a detailed spreadsheet showing all expenditures to the penny, and salaries are broken out by event and by person. She also pointed out that this has been discussed at previous budget meetings.

A resident suggested that the town subcontract more highway work. Another that vehicle monitoring systems be installed on all highway department vehicles.

Dolores responded that these ideas may be worthwhile to look into but questioned why they are being brought up six days before the Annual Town Meeting, after budgets have been completed and the warrant printed and mailed, adding that there had been several budget meetings since January. Bethany Perry of the Board of Assessors shared the same frustration with the timing of the suggestions, that there had been ample time for discussion.

Patrick asked the Finance Committee if they had voted on or agreed with the budget as presented. Chair Kathy Jacobs responded that they do not have to vote to accept the budget, but felt it was a good budget season and that they will let their decision be known at the town meeting. John Burrows, also from the Finance Committee, feels they agreed with the budget.

Highway Superintendent Steve Harasyko asked that of the people making suggestions if any had contacted him to review these issues. Not one. He requested that residents should first approach the department head to discuss problems and suggestions.

Kathy Jacobs from Strategic Planning Committee reviewed and updated the Selectmen on the committee's plans and goals. Patrick reviewed the gas pipeline meeting and that he will continue to stay on top of things regarding the pipeline issue.

## **Select Board Minutes, May 19, 2014**

Steve provided highway department updates. Discussed gravel projects and that he has Chapter 90 money set aside for this. Discussed ditches on New Hartford Road and crack sealing.

Town Administrator Lisa provided updates regarding the State Senate budget action. There was a discussion of emails from the Strategic Planning and Finance committees.

Lisa discussed finalizing the Senior Tax Work-off Program, reporting that the policy has been mailed to all households with seniors. She reviewed the EAD grant. She will attend a meeting on a Hazard Mitigation Grant, and will meet with an Otis Woodlands representative.

## **Select Board minutes, May 27, 2014**

Meeting postponed.

## **Select Board minutes, June 2, 2014**

Jeffrey Gray, re-elected in May, was sworn into office. Patrick Barrett was elected chairman and Rosario Messina clerk.

Reviewed and accepted draft letter prepared by Patrick to the Executive Office of EEA regarding

the gas pipeline. Patrick asked Lisa to reschedule the June 10 MEPA meeting from 10 a.m. to 11 so that he could attend the meeting. The board discussed the assessment of the gas pipeline. Town assessors have been gathering information on this issue and expect to have documentation by early July.

Discussed appointees to committees and subcommittees. All appointees must be appointed by the Select Board. When there is an opening on a board the person interested should submit a letter of request to the Selectmen for appointment. This then needs to be added to the agenda in order for a vote. In case of a resignation, that person also needs to send a letter to the Selectmen so the resignation can be placed on the agenda to vote to accept, which then creates an opening on a board. Creating a subcommittee also must be approved by the Selectmen and appointees to that subcommittee must be voted on by the Board. The only board members the Selectmen do not vote on is the Finance Committee, who are appointed by the Moderator.

Ben Campetti in to discuss the condition of the Sandisfield Center Cemetery. He has reviewed other town's regulations and by-laws regarding what is and is not allowed on plots. Ben reported that trees and shrubs people have planted are disrupting and damaging abutting plots which makes it difficult to prepare for a burial. He recommended that the Town not allow the planting of individual trees and shrubs. He will continue to work with Lisa in gathering rules from surrounding town's and will meet with the Board for approval. Ben's family has been overseeing the cemetery for many years, and the Selectmen thanked him for looking into this.

Discussed the Board's summer schedule. For July, meetings will be held the 7th and 21st. For August, the 11th and 25th. Weekly meeting will resume September 8. Rosario reviewed his new work schedule and said he will be able to attend two meetings, then have to be off for four. If a situation arises that only one Selectman is available the Board will consider rescheduling that week.


## **Select Board minutes, June 9, 2014.**

Not posted as of press time.

## **Select Board minutes, June 16, 2014**

Postponed due to lack of quorum.

## **Select Board minutes, June 23, 2014**

Not posted as of press time. 



# It Might Have Been Real

By Bill Price

A bad accident on Rt. 57 in Tolland. A tanker truck loaded with gasoline rammed the left front of a school bus loaded with kids, blocking the highway. Saturday morning, June 7. A 3-mile detour was required. Over 100 responders from Sandisfield and six surrounding towns answered the call.

It was practice.


Had it been real, foam would have been pumped because code 1203 on tankers means gasoline. Had it been real, responders trained in hazardous material would have been there.

Sandisfield's Volunteer Fire Department was present with tankers and pumpers.

The participating towns took turns spraying the tanker and the front of the bus while their EMTs practiced unloading the kids, all volunteers, from the bus, checking them for injuries. All teams went through a debriefing afterwards. How could they improve, how could they make it closer to perfect in a real situation.

While supervising the practice, Fire Chief Ralph Morrison offered some advice if you're

caught in a house fire.

"The biggest problem," he said, "is that people try to put the fire out. But while they're trying to put the fire out, there's nobody coming to help. When they realize they can't put the fire out, they call 911. By then it's almost always too late. The right order of things is to call 911 first. Get help on the way before you try to put the fire out. Then, if you want, you can try to put the fire out. And while you're trying, help is on the way." 





## A Special Letter to the Community

*From Hannah Barrett in response to the spaghetti dinner/silent auction sponsored by the Council on Aging Saturday night, June 7, at Firehouse #2, attended by more than 200 town residents and friends. Four-year-old Cora Barrett requires a heart transplant, and the COA wanted to help her parents pay for transportation and housing costs of their visits to Boston for her care.*

Dear Friends,

I grew up picking blueberries at Windy Hill Van Sickle, my parents' summer house on Rood Road, long before the advent of uniform street signs and 911 house markers.

The eighteen miles to Great Barrington was a great enough distance that we only ventured to "town" once a week to buy groceries at Price Chopper, to do our laundry at Pag's Coin-op Laundry on Main Street, and eventually to wander over to Melvin's Drug Store for pixie stix or a Charleston Chew. In between these trips, we spent our summer days lazing around the house, shucking peas and sweet corn for dinner, searching for newts in the dirt road after rain storms, and splashing in the waters of York Lake on hot afternoons.

I loved my summers in "the country" and this rubbed off on Patrick in the summer of 1996 when we came to Sandisfield on one of our first dates to celebrate my mother's birthday. When we pulled off the dusty road and into the grassy undulating driveway, he said that the field directly in front of us would be an amazing spot to build a house. I scoffed at his suggestion. Four years later we were married and eventually our house was built on the very spot Patrick had first admired.

Our life here in Sandisfield has been a good one. Our three girls enjoy the freedom to roam our property and to pick berries and hunt for newts with just as much zeal as I once had, and they are very fond of the fact that their grandparents live next door. While the eighteen mile trip to Great Barrington is one that I make far too many times each week to admit, the conveniences of "town" in no way rival the generosity of this community in which we are so fortunate to live.

Our girls are growing up with familiar faces for which we are so thankful: we all rely on Zoe, our bus driver, who lends predictability to our days and her daughter Rose who we are lucky enough to count as a babysitter (on the rare occasion that we venture out as a couple). The kids recognize the scraping sounds of Mr. Nelson's plow truck, and lament the fact that we don't take them to Mr. Morrisson's garage nearly often enough for visits and Tootsie-Pops. They have come to understand the democratic process via election days, some spent sitting in the car while Mr. Zeller keeps an eye out, other times by venturing in to say hello to Dolores and her crew so diligently manning the polls. We wait anxiously through much of August for Eddie Riiska to come and mow the fields, so they can watch his blue tractor move lazily about in the heat, and they delight in catching glimpses of him around New Marlborough as he does mowing for much of the season there. Fall brings much anticipated trips to Riiska Brook Orchard, where we often pick more apples than we can eat just to warrant an excuse for an outing and a cider donut. Our kids are proud of their father the firefighter, despite Patrick's less than stellar attendance in the past few years, and the steak roast is a summer highlight – a close second only to Friday night pizza from Villa Mia and the coveted chocolates given out by Dia to anyone lucky enough to accompany Dad to pick-up. And, last but not least, Sandisfield is home to

the only other Cora our family knows – and the kids think that is pretty special.

It is easy to imagine moving closer to town as a means of facilitating our busy lives. But the bucolic surroundings and verdant landscapes of Sandisfield coupled with the pristine privacy of our property and decades-old memories we've built there would be just some of what we'd miss.

While we have felt the support of friends and neighbors since our move here, the true sense of what it means to be a community was palpable on Saturday night at the fire station, evidenced by the efforts and contributions of everyone who supported our family that night.

We witnessed the coming together of people from all walks of life— pre-schoolers and their parents, former students and their young families, senior citizens, community helpers, civic leaders, educators, friends, neighbors, motorcycle riders, and even some strangers – to show our family that we are part of a bigger entity and that we are not alone in our struggle.

The thoughtfulness and generosity of all of you – who have reached out in myriad ways to offer words of encouragement and financial support – has been a welcome reminder of just how many friends we have cheering us along in this journey with Cora and her special heart.

With much gratitude,

The Barrett Family  
Rood Hill Road



*Cora Barrett, Age 4*



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# New B&B Continues a New Boston Tradition

By Ron Bernard



Some things are meant to be, as the saying goes. In this case, it's a B&B.


Rosanne and Steve Hoekstra of New Boston have opened Hillside Garden Inn in their historic home at the foot of Tolland Road. The Hoekstra's, who arrived in 2004 from northern New Jersey, soon realized that their antique dream house with a Victorian wrap-around porch overlooking the Farmington River was ideal for a small country inn. Little did they know that a hundred years before, another new owner had come to the same conclusion.

Built about 1784 by Elijah Twining, the house was home to several generations of that merchant family until the mid-19th century. At the turn of the 20th century, new-owner Lois Hamlin Burgess opened the place she called Hillside Cottage to paying guests. "First-class Board, by Day or Week," announced a promotional postcard.

The advent of the automobile and improved roads made New Boston attractive as a getaway for weary city dwellers. With the New Boston Inn thriving and usually fully-booked, enterprising home owners like Mrs. Burgess recognized the need and the opportunity. So history is being repeated.

Rosanne said, "When our son ventured off on his own, the house seemed too large and empty. That's when the idea for a bread-and-breakfast began to take shape. I love cooking, gardening, and entertaining so this place is perfect. We offer immaculate accommodations, delicious food, top service and a variety of amenities. We want to make guests feel welcome and eager to return."

After several years of planning, with permits in hand, the Hillside Garden Inn is now open for business year-round. "We're starting with two lovely rooms and a common area, ideal for parties

traveling together," she said. The Hoekstra's hope to expand by converting their studio, a quaint 19th-century former pump house, into a honeymoon suite. Breakfast served in the gazebo! Good luck to the Hoekstras. 

*Hillside Garden Inn, No. 3 Tolland Road. Reservations: (413) 258-4968 or (413) 717-0709. Website: [www.HillsideGardenInn.com](http://www.HillsideGardenInn.com).*





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# Council on Aging



*By Susan Galik*

After our benefit spaghetti dinner for Cora Barrett in early June, Cora's mom brought her in to the COA on our next Wednesday meeting to say thank you. Typical 4 year old. She came in all shy, shared her drawings, got excited, over-excited, tired, and then cranky. Her mom, a pro, circled up and down with her and shared a beautiful thank you note she had written.

Thank you Sandisfield is what we need to take care of this month. Starting with all the volunteers. I will not name names, partly because some do not want their name mentioned. Mostly because I'm afraid I'll forget someone. Shirley Spring, however, needs to be mentioned. She began this whole thing. She saw the article about Cora in the Eagle and brought it to our attention. From ticket printing, auction-item gathering through clean up ... everyone contributed something. Villa Mia, Berkshire Rehab

and Kindred Care helped with the food. The ladies and gentlemen of the COA baked cakes, bought tickets, served food, and helped set up and clean up. The Fire Department donated the firehouse and muscles

The following ... in no particular order ... donated to the Silent Auction, which brought in over \$1000. Diane Dyer, Alice Boyd, Paul Slowatycki, Michael Spring, Lauren Paul, Barbara Morrison, Mary Slater, Shirley Spring, John and Roseanne Skrip, Teresa Bills, Ron Bernard, Wendy Slater, Jean Atwater-Williams, Laura Messina, John Field Tree Service, When Pig's Fly Farm, Trudy's Tweets, Dave Conklin Carving, Martin's Restaurant, Berkshire Music School, Silverbrook Cafe/Store, Deming's Farm Stand, New Boston Crane Service and Sled, Buck River Farm, The Other Brother Darryl's, Red Barn Alpaca's, C.W. Nelson Nursery and Looking Glass Gardens, Papa's/L&M Auto, Otis Poultry Farm, New Boston Inn, A&M Auto Service, Sandisfield Arts Center, Riiska Brook Orchard, Katie's Country Store, MJ Tuckers.

Several of the won items were donated to the Barretts, and the amount of plain cash donations topped the \$1,000 mark as well. Sandisfield ... take a bow ... you showed what this town is made of. 🍷

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## EDIBLE SANDISFIELD

*Adam Manacher*

Whoever says "Don't play with your food" misses out on much of the fun in the kitchen. Mixing and matching what's in the refrigerator often can bring about the most delicious and interesting combinations. Anyone can become a "chef" by exploring and concocting unique recipes!

Here is a family favorite we stumbled upon mixing leftover ingredients that were in our fridge. It's an amazingly tasty veggie burger that can stand on its own and shouldn't be thought of simply as an alternative to meat.

We used black beans, red peppers, scallions, and quinoa. Quinoa is a South American grain that is now all the rage. It has a slightly nutty flavor, is quick to prepare, and is more nutritious than rice or wheat (don't let that scare you off!). It adds a rich, crunchy quality to the cakes. Using dried or canned legumes and grains can be a good alternative for vitamin rich and delicious food.

Prepare the quinoa

½ c. quinoa  
1 c. water  
¼ tsp. salt

In a small dry pot, toast the quinoa over medium heat, for 2 minutes. Shake the pan frequently to prevent burning and to evenly warm and toast the grains. Add the water and the salt. Cover and lower the heat to simmer gently and cook for about 15 minutes. Grains will be swollen and slightly "opaque". They should have a delicate crunch to taste.

Prepare the beans

1 Tbsp. olive oil  
1 large clove garlic crushed & chopped  
¼ c. onion diced fine  
1 15 oz. can Black Beans drained  
1 tsp. cumin  
1 tsp. ground coriander  
¼ tsp. salt  
Dash of cayenne pepper (or more if you like it spicy hot)

Lightly sauté the garlic and onion in the olive oil over medium heat (2 minutes). Add black beans and remaining ingredients. Cook over low to medium heat for 20 minutes. Stir frequently. They will stick to the pan. Just stir and scrape to be sure they don't burn. Cook until the beans become soft, break up and a bit mushy. Use your spoon to mash them. When done turn them into a mixing bowl to cool.

Add to the bowl with the beans:

½ cup of the cooked quinoa (keep the remaining quinoa in the fridge for another meal)  
1 scallion diced: about 1/8th cup  
¼ c. red peppers diced. Preferably roasted and peeled but not required.  
¼ c. fresh basil chopped fine.  
1/8th cup all-purpose flour

Mix thoroughly and add salt to taste.

Add 1 egg beaten into the mixture. Mix thoroughly to fully incorporate.

Line a plate with plastic wrap and lightly oil the surface of the wrap. With your hands (play with your food!) gather up about 1/3rd the mixture and form into a patty. It will be soft. You can lightly add flour to your hands to make handling easier. Place the patty onto the oiled wrap and

make the remaining 2 patties. Keep chilled until ready to cook. Putting them in the fridge or freezer lets them "set-up" for easier handling as well.

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

In your favorite skillet (I use cast iron) over medium heat add 3-4 tablespoons oil (olive or vegetable). When the oil is hot transfer the patties to the pan. Cook until golden brown on each side (about 3 minutes a side). Finish cooking in the oven for 5 minutes (if you are using a non-stick pan transfer them onto something oven safe).

Serve with chopped tomato, avocado and herbs or with your favorite salsa. Or, rummage about in the fridge and surprise yourself with your own combination of toppings!



## OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

**Eugene English**, long-time Aide at the Sandisfield Library, is retiring. His wife, Clare English, reports that Gene, 82, worked there for 15 years but now finds that "too much else is going on." Gene also serves as Financial Officer for the Sandisfield American Legion. "Oh, don't worry," Clare said, "he'll be helping out at the library on an as-needed basis."



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## She's Enormouse!

This image of a plus-sized lady moose was taken at the Minery place on Cold Spring Road on May 30. Just passin' through. Photo credit: Ronald Thomas

# Sandisfield Historical Society



By John Kuzmech, Acting President

At our June meeting we heard the lively stories of Willard Platt, who has lived most of his life in the same home in Roosterville. This valuable town history was recorded, and Willard's daughter, Lois, will write an account for the Times' August issue.

These stories and histories are important to capture now. See page 6 for a report on Norton Fletcher's reminiscences from our May meeting. We're considering future speakers who can impart their stories about a life lived here in town. We've heard from two men so far. Could we soon hear from a Sandisfield-born woman? We hope so.

Elections for Historical Society officers will be held at our regular August meeting. Norton reminds us that he is not standing for president again. If no one comes forward to run for other offices by August 1, the same individuals currently in office will remain in place.

For the month of July we will NOT have our usual meeting, and instead will hold our annual Summer Fair July 5th, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Historical Society on Route 183. Our members make the treats for the bake sale, the burgers and dogs will be tastily prepared by Kathie and John Burrows. Contact Marcia for more detail about the fair or to be a vendor at \$15 per spot (258-2898). Swing by to say hi, buy some stuff, get your face painted, see Revolutionary War re-enactors, and grab lunch.

The Society is handling the sales for Elizur Yale Smith's 1948 book, *Sandisfield: An Intimate History and Some Comments*. See the article on page 9 about how Smith's manuscript was rediscovered and published thanks to local volunteers.

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## Wild & Woolly Animal Tales!

A call for animal stories. Do you have a 2-5 minute true-life tale to tell – funny or scary, touching or hairy? Be part of the "Animals That Made Sandisfield Sandisfield" Storytelling Morning, 10 a.m., Saturday, September 6 at the Arts Center. Contact Barbara Penn, Box 117, Sandisfield 01255, or sarcanimals@gmail.com. Include a few words about your story and how to reach you by phone or email.



# Comings and Goings



*Bob Ratigan at the wheel of his 1930 Ford Model A roadster at the 2007 Memorial Day parade, with passenger Walter Linkovich.*

*Photo: Courtesy of Sandisfield American Legion, Post #456*

## ROBERT E. RATIGAN

Bob Ratigan, 89, a lifelong resident of Sandisfield and a combat veteran of World War Two, was buried with military honors on Monday, June 3, at the Sandisfield Center Cemetery. A solitary trumpet played "Taps," followed by "Off We Go Into the Wild Blue Yonder," the anthem of the Army Air Corps, and then a lonely "Amazing Grace."

An honor guard from the Veteran's Service Office in Torrington and the Maloney Funeral Home of Winsted conducted the ceremony. The American flag that covered Bob's coffin was delivered to his daughter, Mary, by Commander Maria Domato of the Sandisfield American Legion, Post #456.

Bob died February 11 after a brief illness at Charlotte Hungerford Hospital in Torrington. Born in Sandisfield, December 29, 1924, Bob was the son of Edward and Eva (Dearing) Ratigan. He married Adelaide Carnute, who predeceased him. Except for his military service, Bob lived here all his life, working on the roads for Sandisfield, serving as road supervisor for 27 years.

"Bob loved to fish and hunt," said Wicky Spring, who worked with Bob on the roads for two decades. "He loved picking blackberries. And he loved his Model As. He had three or four over the years."

Until recently, drivers passing Bob's home on Rt. 8 in New Boston, across from New Boston Sled, might have seen his latest, a red 1930 Model A, roadster parked outside. For many years, Bob drove that coupe in the Memorial Day parade, dressed in his U.S. Army Air Corps uniform.

His graduation from Lee High School, class of '43, put him into the Air

Corps exactly in time for the invasion of Europe the following year. "He was inducted at the same time as my dad," said Benny Campetti. "Since he was a little guy, he was assigned as a tail gunner in the bombers."

Bob served as an aerial tail-gunner in B-17s with the 132nd AAFBU-ETO (Army Air Force Bomber Unit-European Theater of Operations). His air crew flew in bombing campaigns over the Po Valley in Italy, over Germany, and air combat in the Balkans. For his service, Bob was awarded:

- A&D – Air Medal, with 2 clusters
- Army good conduct medal
- American Theatre campaign medal
- EAME campaign medal, with 3 stars
- Aerial gunner badges, Expert
- Unit citation, WWII Victory Medal

Survivors include his daughter, Mary Crespo and her husband Albert of Melbourne, Florida, two great-granddaughters, Gina Rivera and Amanda Prelli. He was predeceased by his wife and a granddaughter, Deanna Rivera. He was a member of the American Legion and VFW.

Norton Fletcher, a lifelong friend, said, "Bob never talked about the war. In 1945 he had 1930 sedan and a bunch of us were going to a dance. He hit a tree, and I broke my shoulder blade. That was a lucky break for me, because I had just been inducted into the army and was on my way to San Francisco where I probably would have been shipped out to the war in the Pacific. Bob was a good friend, and I miss him a lot."

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## WITH OUR GRATITUDE

Please accept our sincere thanks to the firefighters from Otis, Sandisfield, and other towns for extinguishing the fire at our home in May. The fire was caused from spontaneous combustion from a pile of rags not properly disposed of. Within two hours from using these rags on a home project they burst into flames in an area where I store power equipment and other small engines.

I did not think that the fire could be extinguished in time to save the house due to the ferocity of the flames being fed by gasoline engines exploding in the storage area. But the professionalism displayed by the firefighters from Sandisfield and surrounding towns saved the majority of our house. We cannot be more grateful for your sacred effort to save our home. God bless you and all the Heroes from the Sandisfield Fire Department.

James and Monica Michaels  
West Center Road, East Otis



## TENNESSEE GAS DESECRATES NEW JERSEY STATE PARKS

I have been an all-year-round part-time resident and taxpayer of Sandisfield for 26 years. My permanent residence is Wayne, NJ, where I have come in contact with the work of the Tennessee Gas pipeline as it has run through our beloved state parks and even under our reservoir which provides drinking water for the township of Wayne.

Tennessee Gas Pipeline has desecrated our New Jersey state parks, bringing silt to our lakes, methane to our air, and noise levels from trucks and equipment that is here to stay long after the work is done. The fact that Berkshire terrain is far hillier than most only compounds the noise and contamination that will surely follow the expansion of the line through Sandisfield. The thought of a pipeline through our pristine forests and anywhere near Upper Spectacle Pond is a devastating affront to nature and creation, and an act that I consider to be immoral.

The fact that there were over 5,000 gas leaks from pipelines detected in New York City recently and over 6,000 in DC provides you with the knowledge that over time all pipelines will leak methane into the atmosphere, raising the danger of explosion and warming our fragile planet with no end in sight. As far as monitoring is concerned, it has been painfully learned that the general public are more likely to identify gas leaks than the gas company staff or its monitoring system.

The source of the gas, the Marcellus Shale, is particularly high in naturally occurring radioactive materials including radium. Radon travels through the pipelines and yes into our homes where it can be inhaled, a dangerous health threat to children and a leading cause of lung cancer.

Why is the pipeline coming here in the first place? We used to hear energy independence is the reason this infrastructure must be built. Due to the abundance of natural gas, that mantra has now become LNG export facilities – six approved and more than a dozen proposed in the U.S. While gas and oil companies are reaping the profits from the more lucrative export markets, we will reap the damage for generations to come.

Barbara Stomber  
Tamarack Trail, Sandisfield



*"Coffee ready? Regular. No decaf for me."*

*In mid-June, Rita Kasky's repeat visitor on Silverbrook Road knocked over a bird house, twice, with babies in it. Then the big bully looked in the kitchen window, wanting breakfast.*

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## FIRE AND EMT CALLS MAY 2014

<b>FIRE</b>	
Building Fire, Mutual aid to Otis	1
Power Lines Down	1
Assist EMTs at motor vehicle rollover	1
False alarms	1
<b>EMT</b>	
Medical calls	4
Motor vehicle accidents	3

## Orchid Blossom Healing Arts

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# NOW HEAR THIS!

*Edited by Laura Rogers-Castro.*

*Please send notices for Now Hear This! to [calendar@sandisfieldtimes.org](mailto:calendar@sandisfieldtimes.org).*

## JULY EVENTS

### **New Boston Inn Music in the Back Yard.**

From June 29, the Inn is hosting Music in the Back Yard, 1-4 p.m. Chairs go fast; best to bring your own.

**Post Office Community Meeting** on Wednesday, July 2, at 1:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Old Town Hall to discuss options for Sandisfield's postal service needs.

**New Boston Inn, 4th of July Weekend Music** in the Country Garden, in the Back Yard. July 3-7. Call for times, 258-4577.

**Historical Society Summer Fair** on Saturday, July 5, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Meeting House. Bake sale, vendors, food. Please contact Marcia (258-2898) for more information.

**Save a Life & Birthday Celebration** on Saturday, July 5, from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m., at the Sandisfield Arts Center. Celebrate Karen Luks' 70th birthday with drinks, canapes, and cake. In lieu of gifts, please donate to Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis (PSC) an organization dedicated to finding a cure for a disease that affects the liver. To donate, visit [PSCPartners.org](http://PSCPartners.org) or send a check to PSC Partners, 5237 Kenton Way, Englewood, CO 80111. Checks to PSC Partners will also be welcomed during the birthday celebration.

**Tai Chi** on Mondays through at least July 7, from 7:00-8:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center with Sandisfield resident and Tai Chi Instructor Barbara Penn (269-0233). (\$9 or 6 classes for \$48).

**Sandisfield Goes Green (A House Tour)** on Saturday, July 12 from noon to 3:00 p.m. Tour an amazing award-winning home on New Hartford Road. Tour co-sponsored by People's Action For Clean Energy (PACE) and the Sandisfield Arts Center. (\$15, visit [www.pace-cleanenergy.org](http://www.pace-cleanenergy.org) or 860-693-4813.) Also swim, boat, hike if you want.

**An Evening of Grand Opera** (with food and wine) on Saturday, July 12, at 7:00 p.m. Music performed by Charles Coleman, Patricia Vital, Benjamin Sloman, and Lloyd Arriola. Light dinner and wine prepared by Adam Manacher. (\$25).

**Solar Energy and Sandisfield** on Saturday, July 19, at 10:00 a.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center. Absolute Green Energy provides a presentation on solar energy and installation (\$10).

**Informational town meeting**, Strategic Planning Committee. Wednesday, July 23, 7-9 p.m., Firehouse #2, Rt. 57.

**ServSafe Class** on Monday, July 28, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall The class is for local restaurants and anyone else who needs to renew or obtain certification. The cost is \$140.00 with a new book or \$110.00 if the participant already has the textbook. For more information, please contact Margaret O'Clair (258-4400).

**Genealogy Assistance Class** on Wednesday, July 30, at 6:30 p.m. at the Sandisfield Library. Free.

**Paint Craze**, New Boston Inn on Thursday, July 31, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Marybeth will supply the canvas, paints, everything you need to make your own creation. Your supply the talent. In the barrel-ceiling ballroom. \$35, reservation required. Bar and restaurant will be open. Go to events at [www.newbostoninn.com](http://www.newbostoninn.com).

South Otis. Crafts available. For more information, call 413-269-8928. Sponsored by the Otis Cultural Council.

**Otis Library Fair** on Saturday, July 12, from 10-3:30 p.m. at the Church Village Green on Rt. 8 in Otis Center. 50 artists/craftsmen and vendors. Book and bake sale, cookout. Proceeds have benefited the library for over 15 years.

**Seventh Annual Otis Arts Festival** on Saturday, July 26, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., at the Farmington River Elementary School, Route 8, Otis. Free admission. Musical entertainment by Moonshine Holler from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m.

**Culture Hopping Express** on Saturday, July 26, at 7:30 p.m. at the Knox Trail Inn, Route 23, East Otis. Acoustic music sponsored by the Otis Cultural Council. Buffet available at 6:30 p.m., for reservations call 413-269-4400.

## SAVE THE DATE

**An Outrageous Talk About Poverty.** With Val Coleman. Saturday, August 2, 10:30 a.m. Arts Center.

**Sandisfield Volunteer Fireman Steak Roast** on Saturday, August 9, at the Fire House on Route 57. Show your support for the men and women who generously serve our town! Tickets are available from any of the volunteers, and are not available at the door. Buy ice cream afterwards to benefit the Sandisfield Scholarship Awards.

**Revolutionary War Re-enactment**, New Boston Inn. Saturday and Sunday, August 16-17, 8 a.m.-2 p.m.. See what living in the 1700s was like. Musket firing, kitchen set up, cooking outside.

## JULY EVENTS IN SURROUNDING TOWNS

**Independence Day Celebration** on Friday, July 4 at 11:00 a.m., sponsored by the Colebrook Associates at the Meeting House (Colebrook Congregational Church). "Mark Twain and American Patriotism" talk by Chief Curator of the Mark Twain House in Hartford. The program will include patriotic songs and buffet luncheon, including homemade pies. Children are invited to participate in a bike parade. For more information, call 860-379-1155 or 860-379-9756.

**Native American Music**, Stories, and Dance on Saturday, July 5 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Mountain View Campground, Route 8,

## ONGOING EVENTS

Summer schedule for **Select Board**: July 7 and 21, August 11 and 25 at 7 p.m., Town Hall Annex.

Summer schedule for **Sandisfield Treasurer**: Mon and Tue, 8:30-3:30; Wed 9:00-noon, 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.

**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.

**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. Phone: 258-4966.

# THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



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