

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

Tribunus



Plebis

RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume VI, Number 10

January/February 2016

Tug-of-War Between WiredWest and MBI

AROUND TOWN HALL

By Alice Boyd, Select Board Chairman

Sandisfield's battle for Broadband came to a head recently as the grant that was to cover over 30 percent of the fiber installation costs to Sandisfield homes was hijacked by MBI Broadband in an effort to take control away from WiredWest, a non-profit organization, and restructure how town's will work with MBI.

So who are the players and what's at stake here? MBI Broadband is the Massachusetts Broadband Institute, and their mission is to expand affordable high-speed internet across the state. While much of the Commonwealth already has high-speed broadband service, our western Massachusetts towns remain underserved and disadvantaged.

MBI was established by former Governor Deval Patrick in 2008 and given control over the funding. Their charge is to work closely with municipalities, broadband service providers and key stakeholders to expand economic opportunities in Massachusetts through high speed connectivity.

The relatively new Director of MBI, Eric Nakajima, is a planner with a credible public service background. He has, however, fixed opinions and while he is from western Massachusetts (Amherst) he has little knowledge of our rural Berkshire communities. And he doesn't relate to the very small towns in our region.

Mr. Nakajima embraces the "public/private partnership" mandate of the MassTech Collaborative. He wants to see for-profit companies take the lead and take the profit. And this is where Sandisfield and WiredWest are at odds with MBI.

Cont'd p.8

A Generous Offer

COULD LAND DONATION JUMP-START TOWN CENTER?

By Bill Price

Thanks to the generosity of Sandisfield residents Judi and Lou Friedman, the town may soon have eight acres of land on which to build a proposed town administrative center. The land, behind Firehouse #2 on Route 57, is very close to Sandisfield's historic town center.

Said Select Board chairman Alice Boyd, "There are so many people in Sandisfield who love this community. The Friedman's have demonstrated their commitment to our town

in a very special way."

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE?

First, the town needs to conduct a survey and site analysis to identify whether the land is suitable for building and whether a parking area would be feasible. Existing wetlands and streams will need to be considered, along with drainage requirements.

With the only apparent access to the property

Cont'd p.6



A Wreath for the Rowley House

An unknown person tied a holiday wreath and ribbon to the front door of the abandoned Rowley farmhouse on Cold Spring Road sometime before Christmas.

Unoccupied since the family matriarch Ruth Snow Rowley died in 2004 at age 93, this farmhouse near Spectacle Pond patiently waits to learn its fate from the Commonwealth, which now owns the property. Generations of Rowleys, Hawleys, and even Adamses called this home.

While the building's time may be short, our anonymous friend reminded passers-by that this unpretentious former home, legacy both to that grand family and to Sandisfield's agricultural tradition, is much loved.

Photo: Ron Bernard

From the Office of the Town Clerk

ATTENTION VOTERS:

Your enrollment as a voter will affect the party primary in which you can vote at the **March 1, 2016** Presidential Primary.

There are four political parties in Massachusetts. If you are enrolled in one of these political parties, when you come to vote you will find the following letter codes next to your name in the column marked "PARTY":

D - Democratic Party

R - Republican Party

J - Green - Rainbow

CC - United Independent Party

When voting on March 1, 2016, voters who are enrolled in one of the above parties can only vote on the ballot for that party.

Voters who are unenrolled in a party (commonly known as "Independent") will be listed with the party code "U" in the PARTY column. Unenrolled voters and voters who are members of Political Designations (indicated by other letter codes) can choose which party's ballot they would like to receive.

If you wish to change your party enrollment for the Presidential Primary, you must do so on or before **February 10, 2016**. You may change your party enrollment by completing a new voter registration form in person, by mail, or online at www.RegisterToVoteMA.com.

2016 Election Dates

Presidential Preference Primaries

Last Day to Register:
Wednesday, February 10, 2016

Election:
Tuesday, March 1, 2016

State Primaries

Last Day to Register:
Friday, August 18, 2016

Election:
Thursday, September 8, 2016

Presidential and State Election

Last Day to Register:
Wednesday, October 19, 2016

Election:
Tuesday, November 8, 2016

If you would like further clarification of your party status or have any other questions relative to the upcoming election please call Dolores at the Town Clerk's Office at (413) 258-4711.



Ceremony to Remember Five Young Lives

Last month at the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) monument at Sandisfield State Park on Sandy Brook Turnpike, Kevin Titus of the DEOA Historical Association lead several State Department of Conservation & Recreation employees, a few reenactors, and a handful of local residents in a commemoration of the 81st anniversary of a traffic accident that took the lives of five young CCC employees. The men, all aged 18 or 19 and members of the CCC's 196th Company which was constructing York Lake, were on their way to church services in Great Barrington on December 16, 1934, when the truck in which they were riding lost its steering on the hill near Ski Butternut. Mr. Titus, of Falls Village, Connecticut, has long striven to honor the legacy of the CCC and has particularly worked to refurbish and draw attention to the CCC monument. The accident was the subject of an article in the Jan/Feb 2015 issue of The Times.

Photo: Ron Bernard

Electricity Made Simple and Less Expensive...But Not Yet

By Tom Christopher

The title of a new effort to save on electricity bills – Sandisfield's Community Choice Power Supply Program – may sound complicated but the concept is, actually, very simple: by joining together to buy electricity collectively, Sandisfield residents will be able to secure the kilowatts they need at a bargain rate.

The Select Board has been working to set up such a program for a year or more, and now, having selected a consultant, Colonial Power Group, to handle the power purchasing and having submitted the necessary paperwork to the Department of Public Utilities, all that remains is approval from the state to set this program in motion.

Unfortunately, because of recent cuts in the state work force, this approval may not be forthcoming until next winter. But it is in the works.


Securing the savings will be easy. Once the town has signed a contract with a power supplier, residents who get their power from the local utility company, Eversource, will receive a letter of notification. If they have already contracted on their own with a "competitive power supplier" they will not receive the notification.

What you have to do when you receive the letter is exactly nothing – you will be enrolled automatically in the aggregation program.

If, for any reason, you do not wish to enroll in the program, you may sign and date the "opt-out return card" that will come with the notification letter and drop it in the mail, or you may fill out an opt-out form on-line or call Colonial Power Group at (866)485-5858. If you already have a contract with a competitive power supplier and

you still wish to join the aggregation program, you will be able to do so by filling out an on-line opt-in form or by calling the same telephone number.

Whichever option you select, the local utility (Eversource) will continue to deliver your electricity, and you will experience no change in service. If you have chosen to opt in, you will, however, notice a drop in the charge per kilowatt-hour on your bill which should translate into less money being paid for your electricity.

The Times will outline this plan again as the state draws closer to approving the proposal. For the time being, this report is to let readers know what to expect when – and if – the plan goes into effect. 

ConCom Issues Pipeline Construction Permit

BUT NOT SO FAST...

By Times Reporters

The Sandisfield Conservation Commission, after much scrutiny and an open hearing that ran for months, issued a permit in late December to Kinder Morgan’s subsidiary, Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company, for expansion of four miles of new pipeline through the Beech Plain section. But the approval is contingent on the company agreeing to an “Order of Conditions,” a detailed litany of 124 special requirements.

The conditions range from fairly straightforward stipulations such as work cannot begin until all permits are issued to complex problems such as remediation of streams and wetlands and prevention and removal of invasive species. If the work is done negligently Sandisfield could face environmental repercussions for years to come.

Select Board Chairman Alice Boyd said, “I’ve been very impressed with the commission and their exceptional project consultant, Emily Stockman. This has been a long and arduous process.”

The company is allowed to appeal the Town’s Order until January 15 to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, which

could effectively sideline the town’s Order. In this event that agency could either agree with the Sandisfield conditions or it could issue a different or modified set of conditions. The timetable for this is not clear.

(The Sandisfield Conservation Commission’s Order of Conditions can be viewed at www.sandisfield.info/boards-committees/conservation-commission/).

Additionally, several more permitting hurdles have to be cleared before construction can begin. These include a water quality permit and a construction permit from the state Department of Conservation and Recreation. Also, the Army Corps of Engineers has yet to issue its approval. The most problematic of all however is an exemption from state constitution Article 97 that protects conservation land at Spectacle Pond. At press time there is no sign that the Legislature will grant the exemption which requires a two-thirds vote in both houses. Failing this the company might have to pursue an eminent domain action against the Commonwealth.

Once all these issues are resolved, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), the ultimate approval authority, which has yet to complete its own independent review, will have to issue the final permit.

With decisions yet to come, this process seems to be far from over. And the clock is ticking. The project is already significantly behind schedule, particularly for tree removal which was originally planned for last November. Cutting should occur before spring nesting begins, probably by the end of March. The trees, the wintering beavers and the wetlands are safe – for now. 🍷

A Late Afternoon in January

I have been much involved
In recent days
With a gang of poets
Girdled round my afternoons
Making splendid songs
To accompany a winter sun
That makes a courtly bow before it’s gone.

It’s a blessing
To be drunk with words
And staggered rhymes
That fill my cup
With something other than molasses
At Christmas time.

When I was very young
I spent my winter afternoons
Alone with Sherlock Holmes
Reviewing English crimes,
Finding arrowheads, and Mayan temples,
And a berry tree I couldn’t climb.

But now it’s poems
And other things
I read and sing and play.
The instruments of folly
In an old man’s
January
Day.

Val Coleman
Town Hill Road

Road Boss Decision Approaching

The Advisory Committee considering applications for Highway Superintendent is moving toward interview- and decision-time.

Applications were received from as far away as Burlington, Mass., and as close as right here in town. The application from one potentially strong candidate was received after the deadline and could not be considered. Current acting superintendent Bob O’Brien applied and will be interviewed in a public session scheduled for the January 18 Select Board meeting.

As committee member Bogart Muller said, “Bobby is currently our all-purpose foreman who is repairing and clearing snow off the roads and culverts where he once played as a kid.”

During a December meeting, the committee discussed, Bogart said, whether “hiring someone new in the face of Old Man Winter was a good idea – to take in someone who might have no knowledge of our roads and their locations? Should we launch this newbie into the throes of snowstorm after snowstorm while training them at the same time? Is he/she going to understand the equipment and its quirks?” It was decided, by a majority vote of the committee, to move toward hiring and not to continue with a temporary superintendent.

The Advisory Committee consists of Select Board members Alice Boyd, Jeff Gray, and John Skrip. Others on the committee are Barbara Cormier, Sonja Gray, Tom Jacobs, Ralph Morrison, and Bogart Muller. 🍷



On the Dotted Line . . .

In December, Select Board Chairman Alice Boyd signed the Community Compact agreement for Sandisfield, witnessed by Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. Community Compact is an agreement between the Commonwealth and individual towns intended to help regionalize services, share resources, and save taxpayer money.

Cultural Council

By John Skrip

Of 26 grant applications received for the year 2016, the Sandisfield Cultural Council awarded grants to eleven groups or individuals. They are:

Sandisfield Arts Center:

Andy Wrba & The Rotten Apples \$500

Adam Brown, Music of a Bygone Era \$325

Sandisfield Free Public Library:

Cultural Experience Thru the Eyes of a Child \$500

FRRSD: Berkshire Theatre Group \$700

FRRSD: CT Science Center \$280

FRRSD: CT Science Center \$320

FRRSD: Great Colonial Encampment \$400

Edward Cope: Reading is Magic \$450

Flying Cloud Institute,

The River Runs Through School: Ecology \$400

Roberta Sarnacki:

Kops and Kids Camp, Blue Man Group \$500


Sandisfield Arts Center:

Our Town U.K. performance, Summer 2016 \$250

The 26 application requests totaled \$14,250. However, the Council had only \$4,625 available for awards – \$4,400 from the Massachusetts Cultural Council and \$225 from the Sandisfield Cultural Council Town Account.

Council members met in mid-November to discuss each application. The Massachusetts guidelines for funding decisions by local councils were followed. The criteria used were: Arts, Humanities, and Interpretive Sciences; Public Benefit – activities that contribute to the vitality of the community; No substitution – meaning that award funds cannot be used for salaries or stipends or capital expenses; Non-discrimination. All of the criteria were equally important and were used to guide our discussions.

The Sandisfield Cultural Council membership consists of co-chairs Connie Canty and John Skrip, secretary Rosanne Carinci-Hoekstra, treasurer Peter Levine, and members Nina Carr, Clare English, Rosanne Skrip, and Theresa Sponholtz. As always, new members are welcome and interested persons can call John Skrip at 258-4788 or Connie Canty at 258-4912 for more information.

Local chairpersons from the Otis, Tolland, and Sandisfield Cultural Councils have discussed the possibility of a joint program to be held in 2016. This is an exciting collaboration, and we look forward to more information for readers in future Times articles. 



TOWN NEWS

By Bill Price

RUMORS FASTER THAN FISTS

Did you hear about the fist fight at the Select Board meeting early this month? Didn't happen. There were loud words and maybe some of this/that, but that's all. Residents who thrive on bad news happening to good people may be disappointed, but turns out it was just another Sandisfield rumor.

THAT BRIDGE

The program manager of MassWorks examined the Rt. 57 bridge in December and is determining contract and timeline details with the Select Board. Engineering bids may be requested in January with construction bidding to begin in May, work to begin early July, with completion by January 2017.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Interviews for a part-time Town Administrator may begin in January. Select Board Chairman Alice Boyd said, "We have some excellent candidates, but we're moving slowly. The goal is to find a person with strong fiscal skills and the ability to work well with staff. We expect to have someone hired by May."

TOWN WEBSITE

The Select Board has voted to work with Virtual Town Hall, a service provider that builds websites for municipal associations and towns. This spring, VTH will begin construction of a new Sandisfield.info. The site should be available late summer. Town staff will receive site training, and cost will be spread over three years at \$1,500 per year.

UPDATE RE KINDER MORGAN

Select Board Chairman Alice Boyd is communicating directly with the president of Tennessee Gas Pipeline/Kinder Morgan in order to complete the Community Benefits Agreement and Easements. "I'm pleased with this development," she said. "Sandisfield should be treated fairly." (See also report on page 3.)


BRIDGE BY THE SILVERBROOK. OOPS.

All who use the Beech Plain Road Bridge across the Clam River know the bridge was in bad shape. Acting Highway Superintendent Bob O'Brien instructed his crew to jack-hammer the surface in order to repave it with asphalt so it would be smooth enough for winter snow plowing. Bob neglected to go through the Conservation Commission; the bridge, which is over a river, of course, falls within the commission's bailiwick. The commission issued a stop-work order, mid-bridge. Select Board member Jeff Gray stepped in to work things out, and the bridge repair was allowed to proceed. On-the-job training.

POLICE REPORT

According to Select Board minutes from the December 21 working session, Police Chief Michael Morrison will level-fund expenses during FY2017 but asked to increase salaries by 2 percent. He asked for a computer operating system via capitol expense which would cost \$18,000 for software, with a \$1,300 annual service fee. Select Board member John Skrip asked how paperwork is done now, Morrison said, "By hand." (Editor's note: maybe one reason police activities are seldom reported to this newspaper.) Regarding the expense, the chief said half could be done in FY17 and half in FY18. The Board agreed to that schedule.

CAR FIRE

Asked about what appeared to be fire-blackened trees at the sharp turn on New Hartford Road just beyond the Rt. 57 junction, Mike said there had been a vehicle fire, without injuries. An investigation by The Times revealed that neighbors, awakened by their dog, witnessed the fire and called 911. The car "was engulfed in flames, up the trees and into the woods," by the time the neighbors got to the car. "No sign of anyone. It would have been too late were they inside." Apparently there had been no accident, and the driver, picked up by a friend, had already left the scene. The driver, from out of town, was identified through papers found in the glove compartment. 

To the Big City

FROM THE SMALL TOWN

By Teresa Della Giustina

Our trip to New York City was a lot of fun, and it was easy – easy to plan, easy to go, and easy to come home.

We planned it similarly to trips scheduled by other towns, particularly Tolland. The Recreation Committee wanted to provide anyone who wanted to go with the opportunity not to drive themselves or have to catch the train from Waterbury or a bus from Winsted. And we wanted to do something for the entire family, rather than focusing on younger children as we usually do.


Although a few who signed up decided not to go due to concerns about recent shooting incidents, a good number of neighbors met one mid-December

morning at the American Legion at 7 a.m. Peter Pan provided the bus. We were at Rockefeller Center by 10, which gave us almost a full day in the Big City.

We spent the day taking in the sights. Some went downtown to Freedom Towers, Chinatown, or Greenwich Village. We strolled along Fifth Avenue and walked through Times Square. We all checked out the Christmas Tree.

Peter Pan picked us up promptly at 6:30 and off to home we came. Most of us slept on the ride back, one of the benefits of not having to drive.

The cost was only \$10 per person. We kept the price low so families with children could find it affordable. Money raised from the trip will help contribute to our Easter Egg Hunt in the spring. We want to plan similar trips in the spring or summer, either to New York again or maybe Boston.

The Recreation Committee is trying to provide different activities for all ages, and we are always open to suggestions. Please call me (258-2821), Robbin Campetti (258-4615), or Bethany Perry (413-374-0772) with ideas or if you'd like to help out. 

New Boston Community Center Capital Campaign Underway

By Ron Bernard



SANDISFIELD FIRE DEPARTMENT, INC.
POB 22
SANDISFIELD, MA 01255
413-258-4742



Dear Neighbor,

Your Fire Department has been very busy during past year providing Fire and Emergency services to the Town. We also have held annual fund raisers to purchase equipment to better serve the town and to enable us to make purchases such as Fire Station #1 and the Legion Hall on Route. 8 from the American Legion Post #456. The station is presently used to house multiple pieces of emergency equipment.

We have started to update the bathrooms, kitchen, heating system and the meeting hall for the benefit of the department as well as the Community.

And, we will continue the tradition of the American Legion by making the hall available to residents and organizations to hold functions. Also, the hall will be available as a temporary shelter in case of a local emergency situation.

The majority of the labor is being provided by the volunteer fire and EMT personnel. Anyone who would like to volunteer to assist with the renovations, please call 413-258-4742 and ask for Ralph. More important, we are looking to raise \$50,000 to help bear the cost of the materials needed for the renovations. And this is where we come to the residents and businesses of our town asking for a monetary donation to make this possible.

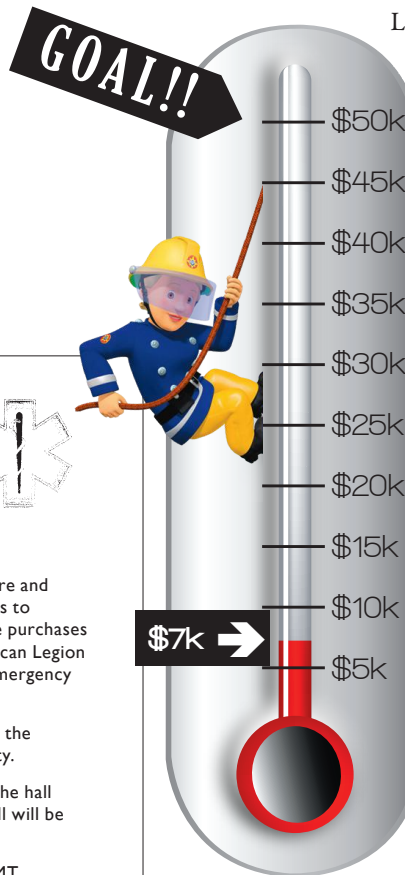
Please make your check payable to The Sandisfield Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. Your donations are tax deductible since we are a nonprofit organization. Our Tax ID# is 22-2757394.

Thank you in advance for your contributions.

Respectfully,

Ralph E. Morrison

Sandisfield Fire department, Inc.




Last month the Fire Department launched a formal appeal for financial support to renovate the former headquarters of Sandisfield's American Legion Post 456. The one-story building, essentially a spacious room, was annexed to the department's original garage (1949) when that facility was expanded in 1983. Long before that, from about 1840 until 1950 when Sandisfield grammar schools consolidated, it was the East New Boston schoolhouse.

Planning the building's future began soon after the department took title from the Legion in 2014. It was decided to upgrade the structure in practically every aspect to create a year-round multi-purpose center for fire fighter and emergency responder training and for meetings and social events for Sandisfield organizations and residents. Should the need arise the center could be a gathering point during emergencies.

This fall plans were presented by a steering committee. By Christmas department members and other volunteers had cleared the interior and braced the walls. But that's about as far as the group can go right now with available resources. They hope to start the next phase which includes more carpentry and roughing in some utilities later this month.

Project leader, Fire Chief Ralph Morrison estimates that at least \$50,000 will be needed to purchase construction materials, including a new roof and windows, as well as basic appliances and fixtures. He hopes to have an open house event following Memorial Day.

The campaign is off to a good start. "I'm glad to report that we have raised about \$7,000 so far," Ralph told the Times early this month. "Our appeal to residents and property owners has also generated a lot of interest. For example already two more contractors have volunteered their services," he said. He's confident that a generous community will come through soon with contributions. Donations are tax-deductible. 

A Generous Offer

Cont'd from p.1

through the Fire Department driveway, Fire Chief Ralph Morrison has said that emergency vehicles must not be obstructed. If access can be determined, the town will prepare a Memorandum of Understanding between the town and the Friedmans.



Judi and Lou Friedman

"The bottom line is that we're very grateful to the Friedmans and will actively investigate the viability of using this land for a future town hall." Alice Boyd said.

THE ATWATER POND PROPERTY

Judi and Lou Friedman bought the original Atwater Pond property in 1970. Over the years, they added to it, growing it into an irregularly shaped section of a little over 300 acres. The property includes a man-made 32-acre pond. The acreage they offered to the town is on the eastern side of the property.

While their primary home is in Canton, Connecticut, west of Hartford, the Friedmans or their grown children and their families are often at Atwater Pond.

Judi, a noted author of children's books, is chairperson of PACE, "People's Action for Clean Energy," a volunteer organization formed to promote alternative sources of energy and conservation among Connecticut residents. She created the self-teaching series, "Jelly Jam, the People Preserver," which has been used with elementary school children of all ages and as the subject of foreign language study with high school students in foreign countries.

Lou, along with Judi, has worked since the early 1980s to help prevent nuclear disasters, whether

through war or by accidents at nuclear power plants. With international grants, they worked in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan and other former Soviet Union countries to promote world peace. (In fact, Lou says, they have worked in "most of the 'stan' countries.") During fifteen trips to the Soviet Union, they made many friendships, including an individual who facilitated the translation of the "Jelly Jam" series into Russian. The series now is printed in many of the world's languages.

Lou has been a master teacher and was the founding director of Westledge School. He now functions as Chairman of the Board of Beyond Nuclear, a national antinuclear organization.

Horses led the Friedmans to Sandisfield. "We kept horses in Canton," Lou said. "Our farrier was Dave Kelly, who at the time was First Selectman in Sandisfield. When I complained to Dave that riding trails were getting closed in because of property development around Canton, he said, 'Come up to where I live. It's God's country.'"

Judi, who grew up in Milwaukee, was ready to have a second home in a place more rural than Canton. "We had two daughters and a son and the horses, and we wanted somewhere with more space," she said.

In the late 1960s, the Friedmans came to Sandisfield to look around. "We drove up in a motor home," Lou explained, "and sat in Dave's kitchen and went over geological maps of Sandisfield. When we saw Atwater Pond on the map, Judi said, 'That's the place.' David told us to forget it, that it'd been owned by the same family for years and they'll never sell."

The Friedmans continued to look at Sandisfield and began staying at the New Boston Inn. They brought their horses, which they kept at the Vogellus Farm. Lou said, "We came up half a dozen times. We rode our horses all over town. When we visited Atwater Pond we loved the place."

Back home in Canton, the Friedmans eventually received a call from their real estate broker, Robinson Leach, who said he had a new listing they might be interested in. He described Atwater Pond.

At the time, the land was owned by Bruce and Elena Doty Angus. The property had been in Elena's family since the 1890s. Her grandfather, John Doty, a brother-in-law and partner of Edward Atwater, had helped Atwater build the dam and the pond. The Atwater/Dotys, from New York State, were full summer residents; an overnight guest in 1904 was family friend and former President Grover Cleveland. The Friedmans bought the property.

According to Sandisfield Then and Now, Ron Bernard's sester-centennial history of the town, the Anguses "were pleased that the new owners proved to be exceptional caretakers of the place. The

environmentally conscious Friedmans acquired and integrated more land near the pond. Today it is a nature preserve and a precious asset for Sandisfield."

The land still reminds Judi of Wisconsin. Their daughters and son grew up playing in the pond and in the woods surrounding it. "We're private people," Lou said. "We thought no place could give us the kind of privacy Atwater Pond has. It's a beloved place, and it gave our children, our friends, and fellow environmental renters a special love of the environment and the country." 🍷

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Lauren Paul, Dipl. Ac

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Let's Re-Establish the Town Center

By Sandy Parisky

The need for replacing Sandisfield's obsolete and deteriorating Town Hall and Annex and Public Works Garage presents a once-in-a-century opportunity for the town to plan for and phase these long overdue civic improvements to meet today's needs and those of future generations



Road sign pointing to town center of Granby, Connecticut, Rt. 20.

Although these buildings are currently functioning, there are significant risks should the town fail to take positive action to meet 21st century public health, building, and safety codes. Existing violations are well documented in all three structures. Two years ago the Select Board appointed a Strategic Planning Committee tasked with looking for potential building sites and determining future space requirements in order to accommodate these civic functions.

Determining a building program and potential building site(s) is the first component in this multi-phased project. A financial plan is essential to enable the town to undertake a project of this magnitude in phased increments.


While this initiative will be challenging, given Sandisfield's grand list and limited resources, the need to replace these buildings provides the unique opportunity to centralize the town's administrative functions and presents future possibilities to incorporate the library, the Council on Aging, and other services in one central location.

The underlying goal over time is to re-establish a Sandisfield town center.

Siting a new town administrative building on a parcel of land beyond where Sandisfield Road turns sharply west (at South Sandisfield Road) has historical precedence. Early settlers of the town chose this location to build the first meeting house (Congregational Church, est. 1756). The area where the town's original center once stood, in fact, is relatively central to the town's boundaries and also included several commercial enterprises, including the popular Hull General Store. Townspeople chose to erect a meeting house here on three separate occasions. (See *Sandisfield: Then and Now, 1762-2012*.) Land parcels along this segment of Sandisfield Road could be considered for a town center, following more detailed land-use feasibility analysis. Placing a new town administrative building and related ancillary facilities, such as the Council on Aging, within close proximity to Fire Station #2, would certainly reinforce the goal to re-establish a town center.

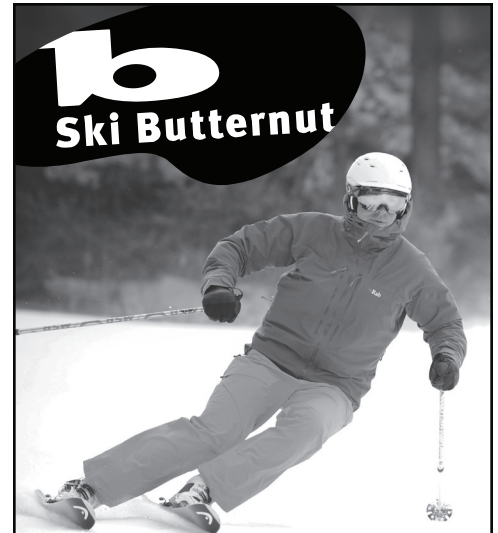
One potential site currently under consideration by the Board of Selectmen is part of a larger acreage owned by Judi and Lou Friedman: Atwater Pond.

The acreage now under consideration by the town abuts the rear portion of Fire Station No. 2, property owned by the Sandisfield Volunteer Fire Department. Access to this potential site from Sandisfield Road could, if granted, be achieved by an easement through the Fire Department's property and/or additional access through part of the Friedman-owned property on the east side of the fire station.

Clearly, with further study and by working collaboratively with both the Fire Department and the Friedmans, this may well prove to be a viable site and a central location for the phased construction of a new town facility. It's a beginning and a positive step that gives the Select Board and townspeople an opportunity to consider re-establishing the town center. 

Out on a Limb: an op-ed

Subjects should be interesting to most of us and have a strong link to Sandisfield, written by and for Town residents. Address either PO Box 584, Sandisfield, or email editor@sandisfieldtimes.org



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2 Terrain Parks | 8 Tubing Chutes

Around Town Hall: WiredWest and MBI Tug-of-War

Cont'd from p.1

Because WiredWest is a cooperative of western Massachusetts towns we've cut out the "for-profit middle man" so we can save our towns and our taxpayers millions. The WiredWest cooperative has done all of the legwork and has helped 22 towns pass the necessary bonding to pay for fiber installation.

They have also established a cooperative owned solely by participating towns for participating towns. It's a "one town/one vote" model. And in my opinion the WiredWest board has done a spectacular job. WiredWest is a model for effective regionalization, as prioritized by the Baker/Polito administration, and it is the only fiscally viable way for Sandisfield to get high-speed broadband service.

Some towns, like Otis, are choosing to leave WiredWest, install their own fiber network then use a "third party" for-profit provider. This may work for Otis where the Selectmen feel that the town can afford the long-term bonding to install fiber and there also may be some advantages with clear town ownership of the network hardware.

But Sandisfield is a different story. We need the WiredWest model because the co-op's profits are slated to repay a large proportion of our bonding. And we want to keep the monthly service costs down for our residents.

WiredWest's subscription fees are expected to run 35 percent less than most "for profit" providers and will provide phone, Internet, and television services.

Another critical concern is do we really want to own and maintain this sophisticated hardware? MBI insists that we must and is seeking a middle road so that Sandisfield owns the hardware but a potential cooperative could assist small towns in managing the project.

This is critical because here in Sandisfield we struggle to maintain our trucks, roads, and buildings. Do we now want to be responsible for maintaining a multi-million dollar network? I don't believe that we have the funding or the capacity to do this. For Sandisfield, a regional solution is critical.

Sandisfield's experience working with the MBI through the Middle Mile project (where MBI Broadband has already brought high-speed Internet to our town hall, fire department, and the school) was lackluster.

Sandisfield has five Community Anchor Institutions (CAI's) with very expensive equipment in them. Three of these locations sit idle because connection to the MBI middle mile is too expensive. Our town budget can't afford to connect all of our buildings. And the MBI's middle mile is currently losing money due to poor design and unrealistic projections for the number of customers and the amount of bandwidth these customers would purchase.

We are now at a crossroads. Many towns, including Sandisfield, have written to MBI Broadband voicing

our concerns and copied our State Representative, State Senator, and Governor. And progress has been made.

However, the future of WiredWest is questionable. A recent public hearing held in Greenfield by MBI Broadband was overrun with over 100 western Massachusetts residents who could not get into the hearing room to state their concerns. And a second meeting in Great Barrington and one in Mt. Washington were cancelled at the last minute. Our frustration is mounting.


And so Mr. Nakajima and MBI Broadband have been told to start negotiating with WiredWest. This is good news.

WiredWest has put together a negotiating team and the talks have begun. However, it is now clear from copies of MBI memo's to Speaker Stan Rosenberg that the WiredWest solution for our town will not be acceptable as it is different from what was presented at the May 2015 Sandisfield Annual Town Meeting where the bonding was approved. MBI is willing to include WiredWest in some diminished capacity, but they will not own the equipment and will have a greatly scaled back role, if any role at all.

The talks between MBI and our legislators are at a critical stage. We may not get the high-speed broadband services that many third-world countries already have. We may be forced to go with "wireless." And the costs will be much higher than we had hoped.

It is critical that MBI and our legislators recognize that very small and geographically challenged towns like Sandisfield need more help than larger communities. This is why the WiredWest co-op worked so well for us. We cannot install and operate a fiber network without staffing and money. A high-speed fiber network is the most important economic catalyst that we have for the financial future of Sandisfield. The success of these negotiations will impact your property value and your tax rate. It will impact job opportunities and the future of our young people.

Please call Governor Charlie Baker, 617-725-4005, as well as your legislators, and tell them how important broadband is to our community's future and that our town needs their help make this a reality.

Let's hope that MBI has the impetus to work with us on terms that are viable for a community our size with financial limitations. 

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A New Judy?

By Val Coleman

On a Saturday night last November, I sat down in the back row at the Arts Center with no idea what was happening. A feisty soprano named Linda Mironti started singing ... no, telling and singing.


Suddenly, I sat upright ... I was back in the Palace Theatre on Broadway, maybe 60 years ago, listening to Judy Garland and having my heart broken.

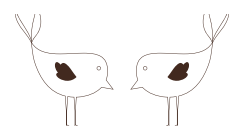
Now, nobody upstages Judy in my life ... but Linda Mironti came damn close.

A middle-age belter with a sassy smile and one of those penetrating lyric voices that reach out and snuggle an audience, the lady owned us with twelve songs bumped with the story of her life. Ms. Mironti has been singing jazz, rhythm and blues most everywhere, especially in Italy where she has organized creative workshops for the past twenty years.



Powerful was a high-octane "All That Jazz" followed by a gentle and lonely "Perfect Strangers," a duet with her excellent pianist Bobby Peato.

Linda Mironti, a Sandisfield resident, has found a sweet mix of story and song that includes a disarming candor in songs such as "Middle-Aged Woman" and "Forever Young" which, when married to a glamorous voice, made for a wonderful evening. 



Magical and Enchanting

HANSEL AND GRETEL AT THE ARTS CENTER

By Barbara Penn Photos: Richard Migot

Performed twice before packed houses in mid-December, *Hansel & Gretel* was a first for the Sandisfield Players: A full production (sound effects, lighting, music, set changes, costume design) with a cast mainly of seven children from Sandisfield, Great Barrington, and North Egremont.

And what a first it was! Sheer magic and enchantment.

Director Ben Luxon, in collaboration with Susie Crofut, adapted and combined the Grimm fairy tale with Englebert Humperdinck's famous 1893 opera "Hansel and Gretel."



Bradley Danyluk as Hansel and Chloe Whyte as Gretel were on stage for the entire production. They were remarkable. Their performances were natural and so warmly pure that they were a joy to watch. They were not "child-actory" at all. Their duet at the end of the first act, sung a capella and in harmony and lighted only with a spotlight, was a heart-breaking show stopper.

The five other youngsters in the production played neighboring children, forest sprites, and angels. Bleeker Coyne, Waverly Coyne, Eden Kammeyer, Gabriel Lassar, and Logan Pease brought a charming innocence and delight to their performances. All the children, most of whom had never been on stage before, were uniformly good. Bravo to all of them!

As the curtain drew open to begin Act II, the audience burst into applause in amazed delight at a spectacular and entirely new set: witch's house, candy house, oven, chicken coop, and a gingerbread fence.

Susie Crofut's set became yet another character

in the play. Made from cardboard (as the program noted, "courtesy of Bike and Blade Dumpster"), the sets were a work of creative genius that transported the audience to utterly believe they were in a fantasy place of candy houses and gingerbread fences that turn into children and where innocence and good triumphs over the darker elements in the forest of life.

The Pecking Birds by Erika Crofut were dazzling with simplicity and ingenuity.

Mary Anne Grammer played the Witch, giving the audience another of her remarkable performances. Hunched over and with a squeaky, high-pitched voice, she was witch-perfect in every nuance of her behavior.

As the woodcutter's wife and wicked stepmother, Jean Atwater-Williams was so convincing and believable that one parent had to take their frightened child out of the theater!

Evers Whyte as the father and woodcutter was, as usual, a wonderful presence.

Praise as well to Samatha Swartz for children's masks, Abbie Whiten for lighting, Jerry Herman and Anni Crofut for sound effects, and a standing ovation to the remarkable collaboration of director Benjamin Luxon and set/costume designer Susie Crofut. ♡



Freedom From Fear

A JOURNEY OF REMEMBRANCE

By Setsuko Winchester

This past December, I traveled across the United States with my husband Simon and one hundred and twenty brightly-glazed yellow tea bowls.

We had a plan – to visit as many as possible of the ten infamous World War II Japanese internment camps and to take photographs of the bowls placed inside them.

The camps span states from Arkansas to Arizona, California to Wyoming. Until a few years ago, I didn't even know the names of most of them. Yes, there were Manzanar and Heart Mountain. Tule Lake I had heard of, too. But Amache? Minidoka? Topaz? It was going to be quite an adventure into my unknown history.

The Bowls

At the heart of the project were the bowls. They seemed to offer a way for me to examine a part of American history which I, as a Japanese American, had avoided most of my life, even during the decade I was at NPR.

Being married to a man who loves history and loves America, (and who became a US citizen in 2011), I kept bumping into the question of “Who is American?” and “What does citizenship mean?” and “How long do you have to be here to be considered a bona fide member of this mongrel group?” Because these interned Japanese – most of them US citizens, after all – were clearly not considered full members.

And as a ceramicist, I wanted to explore these questions through clay.

For the Japanese, ceramic pots are part of the architecture of life – there's a pot for every occasion, from the mundane to the celebratory and the solemn. I chose the simple tea bowl because the philosophy of tea is all about celebrating humanity. A bowl fits in the palm of your hand, is human in scale, is an attempt to find beauty in the everyday. A handmade tea bowl may not be perfect, but it has soul. It seemed the most natural way to bring together, art, history, and a personal journey.

So on November 30 we filled a large box with 120 tea bowls, each to represent a thousand of the inmates. I had glazed them various shades of bright yellow to signify that the make-up of ‘yellow peril’ they represented was far from monochrome. The sizes were different too: the larger ones symbolized parents and grandparents, the smaller the camps' teenagers or young adults, children, infants.



On the Road

Starting from Sandisfield, on our first day we got as far as Marion, Virginia, home of Mountain Dew. The next day we reached Memphis where we stayed at the Peabody Hotel with its famous flock of ducks in the lobby. By the third day we reached the first of our camps.

Two of them, in Arkansas, in the pancake flat southeastern flood plains of the Mississippi Delta.

Just 27 miles separate Rohwer in the north from Jerome in the south. Miserable places, hot and wet with clouds of mosquitoes and mud like glue. Cotton, milo, and soybean fields stretch to the watery horizon. Little remains of the camps. Some smokestacks and water tanks and small cemeteries of those who died while incarcerated. There is also a memorial at each location commemorating those Japanese American boys who served in our military and died for their country. Our country, that is. Some 14,000 eventually served in the US Armed Forces. But when they returned they had no homes to come back to – only the camps. When they died, and many did, their bodies were returned to the camps.

I set the bowls down among the furrows, a smokestack in the far background. I took picture after picture, maybe fifty images or so. It took hours. The mud took even longer to remove from our boots.

There is a museum – a modest collection of papers and pictures and artifacts - in tiny McGehee, a town halfway between the camps. The sign indicating where to turn is damaged. The elderly white lady who curates explained that someone tried to take it out with a shotgun. Quite a few visitors complain that what she's doing is wrong, a disservice to the memory of American veterans. Others come in and ask about the Japanese – like me – who stop by. “Aren't you afraid of all these foreigners coming around?” She says she takes it all in stride. I ask her why she's doing this when she doesn't have to. What happened was wrong, she says; folks need to know.

The Camps

In 1942, at the beginning of World War II, as many as 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry who lived in California, Oregon, and Washington states were forcibly relocated to internment camps away from the Pacific coast. Allowed to take only a few possessions, many of the Japanese Americans lost businesses, farms, homes, and property. In 1988, the Civil Liberties Act, signed into law by President Reagan, officially apologized for the internment on behalf of the U.S. government, admitting that the internment was based on “race prejudice, war hysteria, and a failure of political leadership” rather than evidence of Japanese disloyalty. Here, Sandisfield resident Setsuko Winchester writes of her recent visits to the camps.



In the Desert

It takes a few days to get through the rest of Arkansas, to cross all of Texas and New Mexico. But finally we reach our next destination, the western Arizona camps formally known as Poston, 1, 2, and 3, but which the internees sardonically renamed Roastin, Toastin, and Dustin.

The desert here in the Colorado River Valley is searing, grit perpetually hanging in the gusts of hot air. Poston was huge: with over 17,800 people, for a while the camp was the third largest city in Arizona.

A small clutch of original buildings and their cement footprints remain, enclosed behind a wire fence. Two local girls show us a hole in the fence where we were able to crawl through and take in the tea bowls, a stack at a time, in order to take my photos. A water tower also remains from that time.

Today, Poston is distinguished for being the most studied of the camps. A Navy Medical Corps psychiatrist named Alexander Leighton made Poston the subject of a 1945 "The Governing of Men." Time magazine reported at the time that "After 15 months ... Commander Leighton concluded that many an American simply fails to remember that U.S. Japanese are human beings."

The next camp we visit, Manzanar, in California is located north of the Mojave Desert. The high peaks of the eastern Sierras offer a dramatic backdrop. This camp is probably the best known, thanks to the 1973 children's book *Farewell to Manzanar*. Over 10,000 people were incarcerated there.

Today it is the Manzanar National Historic Site, run by the National Park Service, with a staff of rangers and full-blown interpretive center. With the help of the former Manzanar internee community, the rangers work to preserve what is left and to recreate some of the buildings that were there. Today you can see the footprints of the camp and a replica of some of the buildings – most notably a guard tower – and the original stone entrance gates.

But budget cuts limit the opening hours, and there are frequent power outages and internet failures due to the remoteness. And there is local hostility here, as well.

Rose, one of the rangers, told us to look at the plaque at the foot of the flag pole by the parking area. It is pockmarked with gunshot wounds. People come by at night and let loose with guns, as a reminder.

The rangers at Manzanar were a brave crew, youngsters who wanted to learn and face this period of American history rather than forget and erase it. We left with promises to keep in touch.



Then it was back to Arizona to visit camp number five on our list, Gila River. This camp, southwest of Phoenix, is on sovereign Indian land belonging to the Gila River Indian Community. We needed permission to visit, a permit normally taking months to arrange. But the tribal government liked the photographic project – after all, Americans Indians were treated as poorly as the Japanese, and so there is much sympathy – and we received our permission in days.

The Indian community are trying to turn this desert land into a productive agricultural area with irrigation canals, grazing cattle, citrus and olive groves and other crops in production. The community has respectfully kept undisturbed a portion of the area where the original camps were located.

Today there are the tell-tale cement footprints of where the barracks, koi ponds, and other community buildings once stood: ideal backdrops for my pictures.

Paul Shorthair, the Indian liaison, offered helpful suggestions as to how I might arrange the bowls. His sympathies, his respect, were evident.

Heading Home

Finally, with the western winter coming in fast, we decide to chance one more camp on the way home. This one, Amache in southeastern Colorado, required us to cross the infamous Wolf Creek Pass in the aftermath of a snowstorm. But we made it, and at Amache it was a warm and sunny day.

John Hopper, the local school principal, has worked with the help of the Colorado and Amache Historical Societies to restore some of the sprawling camp. He oversees a museum, small but fascinating, and he proudly opened it up for us, showing us some of his painstakingly assembled trove of memorabilia, artifacts, letters, books, and glass cases with personal items from former internees. He tells us that while he supervises, his students are the ones who keep this place running and provide tours and explanations. Eighty percent of the students are Latino, children of immigrant fieldworkers.

To them, he said, the lessons of what happened to the Japanese Americans is very real.

And then we came home, by way of Kansas, Illinois, Indiana, with three hundred pictures to edit, all of the bowls unbroken and safely back in their carton.

With six of the ten camps down ... four more to go, when the weather warms up this spring. The adventure continues ...

With six of the ten camps down ... four more to go, when the weather warms up this spring. The adventure continues ...

Playground Equipment Dedicated to Cora Barrett

Family members, friends, faculty, and School Committee members gathered at the FRRSD Preschool Playground in November to dedicate a new climbing structure to Cora Campbell Barrett, a Sandisfield student who died last September. Cora would have turned 6 in December.

At the dedication, Cora's Preschool Teacher, Teri Scott, said, "What an honor to have this dedication today to celebrate the life of Cora Campbell Barrett, an amazing preschooler who touched so many lives with her warmth, her joyfulness, her determination, and her resilient spirit."

Jo Ann Austin, FRRSD Superintendent, said that Cora "spread enthusiasm everywhere she went, living her life with style and zest while displaying tremendous courage. Cora loved school and everyone at Farmington River loved Cora."

Cora's mother, Hannah Barrett, spoke about her daughter's passion for life and her love of the Farmington River School. Cora's father, Patrick Barrett, her sisters Kathryn and Alice, and her maternal grandparents Paul and Susan Van Sickle, attended the dedication and the following reception.

The new climbing structure was purchased through donations from the FRRSD Teachers' Association, PTA, School Committee members, and building staff. 🇺🇸



Hannah Barrett encourages preschoolers climbing on a structure dedicated to her daughter Cora.

Sandisfield Resident Wins Big Show

By a Proud Guardian



Tobey receiving his Best of Winners ribbon. From left, the judge, Gail Bodisch of Deja Blu Kennels, and guardian/owner Barbara Penn.

Sandisfield's own Tobey Penn, a three-year-old Old English Sheepdog, won Best of Winners at the Thanksgiving Day Classic Dog Show in West Springfield. The Classic was only his second show.

Tobey (registered name: Deja Blu's "Time In A Bottle") lives with his guardian/owner Barbara and his "brother" Tai, an English Labrador

retriever. He was bred by Gail Bodisch of Deja Blu OES in Connecticut and is in the line of Emma, who won many best-of-breed contests and finished in the top five at the Westminster Dog Show.

At home, Tobey loves walking the many roads in Sandisfield and particularly the trails around Spectacle Pond and the Clam River Dam. When not showing, he enjoys a simple life of hanging out (mainly on soft couches), daydreaming (flocks of sheep), eating carrots (no, he's not a

rabbit), getting hugs (from all), and running with his buddies in the yard (when it is cool).

In addition to the conformation ring, Tobey loves the Agility category and is a student in North Carolina at the Bon-Clyde Learning Center. At his next big show, in January in Fredericksburg, Virginia, he hopes to gather more points toward the 15 needed for his championship. After that, he hopes to dazzle the ladies and be a dad.

Way to go, Tobey! 🇺🇸

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The Librarian's Corner

By Terry Spohnholz

As I write this in mid-December, the temperature is a balmy 60 degrees and the white stuff still has not been sighted. All I can think is "Halleluiah!!" and wonder when the snowshoe is going to go plop on my head in the form of a severe Nor'easter.

So, was exercise on your list of New Year's Resolutions? It is always on mine, like an old friend waving gamely at me – hey you, over here, no don't look the other way, I am right here, on the top of your list. Do not ignore me.

Here is my five-step recommendation to help you fulfill your exercise resolution.

- Walk to the library or park in the back lot and walk up the hill.
- Saunter around the aisles and bend deep to see what is hiding on the bottom shelf. (Deep knee bends!!!).
- Pick up a book and lift to view, turn it over; add two or three more. (Bicep curls!).
- Check out the restrooms on the lower floor after a cup of coffee or tea in the library. (Stairmaster).
- Proceed to the librarian's station and check out the books for several evenings of reading. (Both brain exercise and cool down from all that heavy lifting).

NEW ADDITIONS to the Sandisfield Library Treasure Trove!!

- James Patterson, *Cross Justice*
- Sally Goldenbaum, *Trimmed With Murder*
- David Baldacci, *The Guilty*

- Dana Chamblee Carpenter, *Bohemian Gospel*
- Karine Tuil, *The Age Of Reinvention*



Here's a tip to working with your local library.

If you want to look for a book but don't want to drive, walk, or slide your way to the library, here is the solution. How to Access the Sandisfield Free Public Library from the comfort of your home while you watch the snow pile up (we know it will happen, contrary to current weather).

You can order books, DVDs, and audiobooks that we don't have in our library but will be sent to us to hold for you.

First, you have to have internet (I'm still working on my mental telepathy so don't try that. My telepathy connection is weak and intermittent, at best).

Log in to sandisfieldlibrary.masscat.org

Log in by entering your card number – yes, you'll need one of those. If you don't or have misplaced it or filed it under M for Miscellaneous in a file cabinet somewhere come to the library and we'll fix you up with one.


Back to the tip. Log in in the box marked "login." Enter your password in the box marked Password. If you did not create one for yourself we created one for you (it is the last four digits of your library card number).

You can also do a search first, and when you find the book, DVD, or audiobook you wish to spend time with (on-line dating with books is encouraged) just click "place on hold." You will then be prompted for your user name and password. The books, DVDs or audiobooks will find their way to OUR library – some quickly, some not so much – depends on popularity and number of copies available. When your item has arrived at the library my friendly voice will leave you a phone message that it is here.

Then find your snowshoes, boots, or magic sleigh

and come pick them up, sip some coffee (cocoa or tea) and while away some time in our cozy haven of books!

So the evening sky is darkening, and a good movie might cheer things up. Pop on down to the library and check out our DVD collection. We are always adding to our collection. And keep in mind that if you have DVDs that you've watched and aren't going to watch again, we love and appreciate donations!

Clark Museum Pass. Thinking about exploring the world of art? A visit to Williamstown might be in order. The collection of the Clark features European and American paintings, sculpture, prints, drawings, photographs, and decorative arts from the Renaissance to the early twentieth century. The collection is especially rich in French Impressionist and Academic paintings, British oil sketches, drawings, and silver, and the work of American artists Winslow Homer, George Inness, and John Singer Sargent. The Sandisfield Library has a free admission pass for the 2016 season. 

"Libraries are the ultimate restaurants for brain food. I sleep better knowing there are libraries. I would take a bullet for a librarian."

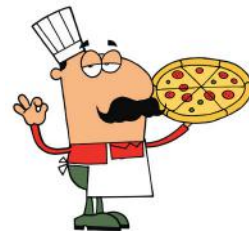
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Council on Aging



By Susan Galik

LOTS GOING ON THIS WINTER, MORE PLANNED FOR SPRING

Our holiday events are over. The Council is pleased that our apple pie sales and Christmas basket earned \$317 for the Alzheimer's Association. We thank all who cooked, held down tables, filled the basket, donated money, and bought pies and raffle tickets.

Sixteen people made beautiful center pieces at our flower arrangement class. Because the prices for the flowers is escalating the charge for our spring class will be raised to \$10. The class will be March 21 from 2-4 p.m. at the basement in the Town Hall Annex. That is the Monday before Easter.

Five people attended our first Foot Clinic, and four of them have already signed up for our April clinic. We have room for 12 patients. We will do these clinics three times a year, one every 4 months. A licensed practitioner will assess your foot health and clip and file your nails. The next clinic is April 5 from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the basement of the town Hall Annex. Please call 258-4215 if you would like to make an appointment. Leave your name and phone number.

Mea Culpa

If you wish to be part of the senior tax work-off program, you do not need to go to Tolland for a

training session, as I reported last month. The program begins on January 15.

I also need to apologize for the mixup regarding our blood pressure date. It was held December 23. Starting in January we should be back to our normal fourth Wednesday of each month.

We are busy planning for coming year.

At some point in the spring, we will resume our Qi-Gong classes on Mondays at 11 a.m. at Old Town Hall. We hope to add a second class on another day of the week. If you have a preference as to day and time for the second class, please leave a message at 258-4215. We have received a partial grant for these twice-a-week classes. The classes are focused on fall prevention and cost \$2 per person.

We would like to repeat our Line Dancing classes at Old Town Hall. There is a possibility of holding these classes during the day instead of the evening. Please phone us at 258-4215 if you would like to attend and if you have a preference on day or night and time. The classes have been speeded up from the first sessions last spring, but the cost is still \$2 per person.

In April we plan to hold a Meet the Candidates session and in May we hope to hear from an attorney specializing in Laws for the Elderly. At some point, we hope to have a fireman give us a quick lesson on fire extinguisher safety. We also hope to have someone speak to us on Salt and Its Effects and what we need to watch out for. And we hope to find someone to give us instructions on hand-held electronics such as notebooks and ipads.

For now and through the winter, the Council on Aging meets every Wednesday at Town Hall Annex, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. We have a pot luck lunch at noon followed by Bingo. The cost to play is not a lot, a quarter for two cards. Please call Linda Riiska for further information 258-4816.

However, on the third Wednesday of each month COA meets at the Sandisfield Library at 2 p.m. So once a month join us at the library for a pot luck lunch, and Bingo, then pick up a book or two, drop your stuff at the dump, and head home.


We have a paper shredder available for anyone who needs to shred documents. Please bring them to a Wednesday meeting between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.

We offer rides to doctors, shopping, personal visits – whatever is needed – on Tuesdays. Please call 258-4215 at least a week in advance. Remember, we are only here on Wednesdays, so you must call at least the Tuesday before you need the ride.

Once someone sets up our new computer our old one will be available for use during our Wednesday meeting times. We hope to eventually add a printer.

The Colebrook Senior Center is sponsoring a trip to Philadelphia in May. Please call 860-738-9521 for more information. We hope to have more information about the trip in our next Times report.


AARP is offering a free Fraud-Watch service. Please call 855-800-9260 to sign up and learn more.

An Ask-the-Pharmacist outreach number, 866-633-1617, is available for Massachusetts residents. It is sponsored by the MCPHS University in Worcester. 

Bob and the Trees:

THE SHOW GOES ON

Diego Ongaro's film, "Bob and the Trees," produced, cast, and filmed in Sandisfield, was shown at New York City's Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) in December in an exhibition of the five best films of the 2015 festival circuit that had yet to find a theatrical distribution.

"Bob and the Trees" will be released soon digitally on iTunes, Amazon, and GooglePlay, and will be screened at particular theatres throughout the winter. So far it is scheduled to play at the Images Cinema in Williamstown on February 1, Portsmouth, NH on January 22, and Seattle, Washington on February 27-28. 

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Sandisfield, Mon Amour

“FARE-THEE-WELL, BUT NOT GOODBYE”

A local author shares how much Sandisfield has meant to her and to her husband, filmmaker Diego Ongaro.

By Courtney Maum

When we moved to 10 Tannery Road on April Fools day of 2007, it snowed – an appropriate introduction to the unique benefits and challenges of life in our new town.

We’d probably only gotten three boxes out of our U-Haul and were sliding all over the mildewed patio trying to get them into the house when our neighbor, Richard, showed up with a snow shovel. “I thought you might not have one yet,” he said with the quiet smile we would come to love.

No, there’s not a main street, or a coffee shop, or a fancy yoga studio, but the lack of urban comforts keeps us Sandisfielders sharp. We have to work harder than other people to come together. We have to be creative. We have to be intrepid.

In fact, I think it’s the towns’ very lack of amenities that attracts so many nonconformists. Sandisfield isn’t going to do the hard work for you – it’s a place that forces you to rely upon yourself and to develop great reserves of energy and strength to get you through both the literal and metaphorical darkness.

Because there aren’t urban distractions to run off to, living here keeps the imagination alive. I love that about Sandisfield. I also love that your neighbors can’t be strangers – they are people whose help and presence you really need. Rosemary and Richard have been like grandparents to us. Almost every day I take our daughter to see Mike and Barbara’s menagerie of animals up the road. A couple times a month we walk even further so that Ralph can spoil Gabriela with a Tootsie Pop.



Last summer: Gabriela and her mother walking down Tannery Road to see the animals.

We came to Sandisfield (via Brooklyn and Paris) not knowing a single person in the Berkshires nor how, exactly, we were going to make ends meet in our fixer-upper house. We had no idea that we should have ordered the winters’ wood in April, or that we needed to factor snow plowing into our budget, or that we’d never see Take-Out *pad Thai* again.

Those were the negative surprises. Thank goodness we left room for the positive ones because our eight years in Sandisfield have filled our lives and hearts with some of the most interesting, generous, and kind people we’ve ever met.

No one in Sandisfield is any one thing. Our townspeople wear a lot of different hats to maintain the life they cherish. Masons are massage therapists, mothers are bartenders, artists are farmers: that which we call a rose is probably five other things as well.

This is a fare-thee-well but it isn’t a goodbye. We’re heading a bit further down the road to Norfolk but if all works out as planned, our house is being passed along to friends in creative lines of work who also have a toddler, so we’ll be back quite a lot.

We’re hoping Ralph will save us lollipops, and Rosemary some hugs. We hope to see Sue warm and happy in the newest iteration of the general store where we bought the deer head that hangs above our fireplace, its noble countenance watching the comings and goings of our beloved road. 🍷



Our Thanks to *All of You*

The generous response by our readers to The Times' annual appeal is gratifying to all of us who produce your community newspaper with, we feel, serious-but-local content and a high-quality format. Your response this year is the most generous in our 5-year life span and is, to us, a good barometer of your appreciation of our work. All of Sandisfield – and you, particularly—are a big part of our success.

Below are listed donors who responded during the month of December. Those who contributed in November were listed in our previous issue. If you have not had a chance to send your (tax-deductible) donation, please consider doing so soon. We accept donations from January to December All Year-Every Year. PO Box 584, Sandisfield, MA 01255, or on our website: www.sandisfieldtimes.org.

<i>Anonymous</i>	<i>Thelma Esteves</i>	<i>Margaret O'Clair</i>
<i>Paul Adams</i>	<i>Jeffrey & Laura Friedman</i>	<i>Suzanne O'Connell</i>
<i>Axel Aldred</i>	<i>Judi & Lou Friedman</i>	<i>Mr. & Mrs. Steven Pincus</i>
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<i>Gordon Chapman</i>	<i>Stephen & Audrey Kurtz</i>	<i>Roxanne Suprina & Ulric Gelinis</i>
<i>Ralph & Joan D'Amato</i>	<i>Irving & Marion Levine</i>	<i>Liana Toscanini</i>
<i>Barbara & Nick Elton</i>	<i>Adam Manacher</i>	<i>Fred & Janet Van Horn</i>
<i>Ruth Dec-Friedman</i>	<i>Ken Mayer</i>	<i>Peter Wool</i>
<i>Peter Ebstein</i>	<i>Peter & Alicia Moore</i>	
	<i>Marvin & Judith Nierenberg</i>	

❖ Comings & Goings ❖



HERMAN W. CARDILLO

1931-2016

Herman Cardillo, formerly of Sandisfield, died on January 1 at Berkshire Medical Center in Pittsfield. He was 84.

Born in Great Barrington on June 30, 1931, Herman was one of six surviving siblings of the Dominick and Laura DeRienzo Cardillo family. The Cardillos were the largest known family in Berkshire County, with seventeen children, all of whom attended school in Sandisfield.

Herman's parents had acquired a still-working farm on Hubbard Road in Sandisfield in 1926. The purchase agreement included: "... 4 cows, 2 calves, a horse and a harness, a wagon, a carriage, a buggy, between 15 and 20 chickens, 1 goose, 2 coal and kerosene stoves and all the hay in the barn."

They operated the farm, with the help of their sons and daughters, until 1948 when they moved to Stockbridge where they operated a dairy farm. Herman worked on the family farm and later for the Lee Lime Corporation in Lee.

At the time of his death he was a resident of the Laurel Lake Assisted Living facility.

He leaves two brothers: Gerald Cardillo of Stockbridge and Frank Cardillo of Ohio; three sisters, Jenny Carilli of Mount Vernon, NY, Julia Drummond of Oceanside, CA, and Phyllis Cardillo of Lee; and many nieces and nephews.

Mr. Cardillo was predeceased by six brothers: Arlando, Vincent, Nicholas, Anthony, John, Richard, and Ernest "Chuck"; two sisters, Marion Cardillo and Carmella Nardi, and a step-brother, Joseph Fraince.

The funeral for Herman was held January 7 in Lee with burial in St. Peter's Cemetery in Great Barrington.

Donations in his memory to the American Cancer Society, c/o Kelly Funeral Home, 3 Main Street, Lee, MA 01238.

CHARLES BARRON INNES

1919-2015

Charles Innes, husband of Lila K. Innes, died on December 16 surrounded by his family. He was 96.

The son of Charles and Bertha (Warnick) Innes, Charles was born in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and was a graduate of Liberty High School and Lehigh University. He furthered his education by completing a technical degree from the Spartan School of Aeronautics in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

He began his career in aeronautical design and engineering at Chance Vought, later Vought-Sikorski. He later worked for Kaman Aircraft and Combustion Engineering.

Mechanically inclined, during his leisure time Charles tackled numerous projects at home, including the construction of his beloved "camp" in Sandisfield. Together with his loving wife Lila and four small children, Charles began this project in 1957 and continued to improve the structure ever since.

He preferred being outdoors whether he was building, hunting, fishing, canoeing, or kayaking. He spent a lot of enjoyable time as well in a separate cabin in Maine.

Charles volunteered time with the Granby 4H group as a photography project leader, and he was a talented gardener.

The funeral for Charles was held in the Granby Cemetery. The family asks that memorial donations be sent to the Granby Ambulance Association, PO Box 617 Granby, CT 06035 or the Salmon Brook Historical Society, 208 Salmon Brook St., Granby, CT 06035.



Re “Run it Like a Business?”

While there are many who contribute to making an entity run successfully, Sandisfield is especially fortunate to have Alice Boyd involved in managing your affairs. Our world may often look simple, but it is incredibly complex today with impossible choices. And, as Alice so well described, the complexity extends to Sandisfield, as well.

For her to just take the time to write the article to advise constituents about the *business* of running a town was a contribution to communication that many towns very likely lack. All of Sandisfield should be grateful to have Alice involved in their *business*.

Allen Liberman
Tolland



A Really Nice Note

Very happy to double our annual contribution. You are a terrific community newspaper and your work is just great. Congratulations.

Irving and Marion Levine
Hammertown Road



HUH?

I really enjoy reading The Sandisfield Times and think you and your contributors are doing a great job and community service. However, there is one thing that bothers me and that is the use of unexplained acronyms.

When I was in the Army Engineers, acronyms were rife. Depending on context, CO could mean Commanding Officer, COmpany, or Clean Out on a plumbing diagram.

In the December issue of the Times I find STRAP (Stringers to Replace Aging Parts?) and RFP in the story “Around Town Hall.” I thought RFP might mean (Really Fun Project) until I saw it defined as Request For Proposal in the Broadband article. That article also included the unexplained acronyms MBI (Many Busy Individuals?) and RFQ (Really Fine Quality?). Then there is EMT

(Emergency Medical Technician?) in the article about the old schoolhouse and WAC (Women’s Army Corps?) in the Historical Society story. At least the Council On Aging article provided a clue for what COA stands for.

I believe acronyms should be used sparingly and/or defined, if one is trying to inform or educate the reader. Otherwise, it seems like an elitist’s insider’s secret language.

Gordon Chapman
Lower West Street

Editor’s note: Gordon, we hate spelling things out, especially things we think our friends and neighbors should know. This month we spelled out neither FRRSD nor NPR. But you do have a point, so for obscure stuff and government bureaucracies we’ll try to do better. Even I didn’t know what STRAP meant until I read it in Alice’s column.



OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

The New Boston Congregational Church sends a “Thank You card to everyone for all of your support during 2015. Our next services will be Easter Sunday. We wish you a happy and healthy 2016.”



The Annual Christmas Open House at the **Berkshire Rehabilitation & Skilled Care Center** was held December 11, with families, friends, and former employees visiting throughout the day. The Veterans of American Navy Seabees Association, including Dave Bonaguide, Dave Grohs, and George Sabolcik, visited veterans and presented a generous donation for the vets. The association was formed in the 1940s during WWII and now has over 100 surviving members.



Sandisfield Treasurer **Teresa Della-Giustina** has accepted a new position as Assistant to the Superintendent at FRRSD, while continuing as Treasurer on Monday afternoons plus one evening and often at home on the internet. She says the transition has been “a little rocky,” but she loves “being back to work full-time and the people at the district are amazing.” She is unsure if she will run for another term as Sandisfield Treasurer. “It’s manageable so far, but long-term it may become a real stretch.”



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NOW HEAR THIS!

Edited by Laura Rogers-Castro.

Please send notices for Now Hear This! to calendar@sandisfieldtimes.org.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY EVENTS

Blood Pressure and Health Counseling Clinic sponsored by the Porchlight Visiting Nurse Association and the Sandisfield Board of Health on Wednesday, January 27, from 11:00 a.m. to noon at the Sandisfield Senior Center, Town Hall Annex.

Cemetery Committee Meeting on Monday, February 8, at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Hall Annex. The Cemetery Committee meets every second Monday of the month. All interested residents are invited.

Valentine's Day, on Sunday February 14. Support our local restaurants and take your sweetheart to dinner!

Blood Pressure and Health Counseling Clinic sponsored by the Porchlight Visiting Nurse Association and the Sandisfield Board of Health on Wednesday, February 24, from 11:00 a.m. to noon at the Sandisfield Senior Center, Town Hall Annex.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY EVENTS IN SURROUNDING TOWNS

Live Music Every Friday from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. at Gedney Farm in New Marlborough, 34 Hartsville-New Marlboro Road. \$5 cover to support our local musicians. For more information, call 413-229-3131.

Snowshoe Sundays on Sundays through March 13, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Bartholomew's Cobble in Ashley Falls. Snowshoe rentals available. For more information, call 413-229-8600.

Full Moon Hike & Pizza on Saturday, February 20, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Bartholomew's Cobble in Ashley Falls. Trustees of the Reservation Members, \$5. Non-members, \$10.

Chili Cook-Off sponsored by the Farmington River Regional School P.T.A. and the Otis Cultural Council on Friday, January 22, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Knox Tail Inn in East Otis. Come sample chili entries and vote for your favorite. Live music by David Reed & the Trio Traumatica will follow. \$5 per person for the tasting.

Harney & Sons Tea Talk & Tasting on Wednesday, January 27, at 6:30 p.m. at the First Congregational Church, 4 Main Street in Stockbridge. The Stockbridge Library's Museum & Archives welcomes Michael Harney, Vice President of Harney & Sons Master Tea Blenders for a talk and tea tasting. \$5.00 suggested donation.

ONGOING EVENTS

Select Board, The Select Board meets at the Town Hall Annex on Mondays. Regular meetings are held at 7 p.m. and working sessions at 2:30 p.m. See posted agendas for meeting schedules.

Farmington River Regional School District, first Monday of the month, 7 p.m., Farmington River Regional School, Rt. 8, Otis.

Planning Board, second Tuesday 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 Monday of the month, 6 p.m., Old Town Hall. Chair is Kim Spring, 413-717-7034.

Cemetery Committee, second Monday of each month, 6 p.m., Town Hall Annex.

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 Saturday of the month, 9:30 a.m., Sandisfield Library.

Strategic Planning Committee, third Wednesday of the month, 7 p.m., Fire Station #2 on Sandisfield Rd.

Sandisfield Public Library Hours: Monday/Tuesday: 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Wednesday: 5 p.m.-7 p.m., Thursday: 2 p.m.-5 p.m., Saturday: 9 a.m.-noon.

Historical Commission: First Wednesday of the month, 7 p.m., Rt. 57 Firehouse.

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We acknowledge donations from our readers with gratitude. Those who responded to our year-end appeal during the month of December are listed on page 16. Those who responded in November were listed in our previous issue. Thank you all, very much.



The Sandisfield Times is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization staffed by volunteers from the Sandisfield community and funded by individual and business sponsors. Its mission is to connect the community through reliable, regular, and relevant information. The paper is published 11 times each year, with a joint January-February issue and monthly issues thereafter.

Donations of all sizes are needed to ensure the continuation of this newspaper. Please send checks to: *The Sandisfield Times*, P.O. Box 584, Sandisfield, MA 01255 or donate online at our website: www.sandisfieldtimes.org.

Copies of *The Sandisfield Times* are available in Sandisfield at A&M Auto, the Arts Center (in season), the Transfer Station, Post Office, the New Boston Inn, New Boston Sleds, Villa Mia, MJ Tuckers, When Pigs Fly Farm and Town Hall. Copies are also available in Otis at Berkshire Bank, Bruce's Hardware, Katie's Market, Papa's Fuel, Otis Library, Farmington River Diner, and Otis Poultry Farm. Locations in

Monterey include the Library, the Store, and the Roadside Cafe. Available also at the Southfield Store in New Marlborough. Back issues are available for purchase.

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

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

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