

THE TIMES TURNS SIX!

# THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

*Tribunus*



*Plebis*

RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

*Volume VII, Number 1*

*April 2016*

## Group Formed to Record Local Jewish History

*By Ron Bernard*

“Somebody should do the history of the Jews in Sandisfield.”

This sentiment has long been a common refrain and one heard more frequently since *Sandisfield Then and Now* commemorated the Town’s 250th anniversary in 2012. But even that 500-page volume could not recount the many civic contributions and the legacy of largest ethnic group to establish roots in Sandisfield. So, yes, *somebody* should tell this important story. But who?

That question has been finally resolved with the formation of a group of mostly descendants of eastern European Jewish families that settled here between the late-1890s up to about WW II. The committee also includes amateur historians, researchers, and writers with an interest in this topic.

With a working title of “A Century of Jewish Life in Sandisfield,” the book is expected to run about 300 pages and to be published by late 2017.

*Cont’d p.13*

## An End Run Attempt Leads to Court

**PUSH COMES TO SHOVE**

*By Bill Price*

In the beginning, it seemed like Tennessee Gas Pipeline Co., like its parent Kinder Morgan, the energy giant from Texas, would push its way through the Sandisfield woods like a big bear, going wherever and doing whatever it wanted.

A lot of experienced Sandisfield residents thought that was exactly what would happen when TGP proposed a “loop” pipeline to parallel two lines already existing through 3.8 miles of the northeast corner of Town. That was exactly what had happened in 1951 and 1981 when TGP pushed through the first two lines.

But now the bear more closely resembles a wounded giant making its awkward way through our forest, tripping over downed trees, bumping into 400-year-old Hemlocks, and stumbling over ancient stone walls hidden in the underbrush

TGP didn’t reckon on the Commonwealth of Massachusetts taking its constitution seriously. Nor on Sandisfield voters unanimously passing an early Resolution opposing the pipeline, nor the efforts of a determined group of neighbors and other residents forming a group called Sandisfield Taxpayers Opposed to the Pipeline (STOP), nor the efforts of this newspaper which has printed stories against the proposal in almost every issue since the gas company showed up with its expansion plan in August 2013. Nor did it reckon on the Sandisfield Conservation Commission imposing over 100 conditions in granting permission to proceed.

So, late last month, attempting an end run around all of the obstacles set in opposition to its proposal, TGP asked the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to cut through the objections – whether from town, state, federal agency, environmental or other regulatory body, or any and everybody else – and allow it to proceed, regardless of complaint.

As expected, FERC said, “Yes.”

But they added a very big “...but...”

*Cont’d p.8*

### INSIDE

page

The Election So Far	2
Choices at Town Meeting	3
Town News	5
How Do We Lower Taxes?	7
Early Families, Local Descendants	10-11
A Modest Proposal, Simon Winchester	12

# The Election So Far

At press time, these are the candidates who have taken out papers for offices that will be open this year. Other candidates can be nominated at the Town Caucus on Monday, April 4, 7 p.m., at Old Town Hall.

**MODERATOR (1 YEAR):**

Jean Atwater-Williams (incumbent)

**SELECT BOARD (3 YEARS):**

Alice Boyd (incumbent)

Bethany Perry

**TAX COLLECTOR (3 YEARS):**

Lisa Leavenworth

**AUDITOR (1 YEAR):**

No candidate (currently held by Ralph Morrison)

**BOARD OF ASSESSORS (3 YEARS):**

Bethany Perry (incumbent)

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE (3 YEARS):**

No candidate (currently held by John Skrip)

**BOARD OF HEALTH (3 YEARS):**

No candidate (currently held by Kim Spring)

**PLANNING BOARD (5 YEARS):**

No candidate (currently held by Robert O'Brien, Jr.)

**LIBRARY TRUSTEE (5 YEARS):**

Kathie Burrows (incumbent)

# Voting, in Person or Absentee

Registered voters wanting to cast a ballot in the coming Town election can do so either in person at Old Town Hall, Monday, May 16, from 10 a.m.-8 p.m., or absentee.

Town Clerk Dolores Harasyko reports that there are three reasons to vote absentee:

1. Absence from Town during normal polling hours
2. Physical disability preventing you from going to the polling place
3. Religious belief.

Absentee ballots will be available three weeks before the election.

In order to vote absentee, you need to fill out an absentee ballot application which can be obtained by writing or calling the Town Clerk's office at 258-4711. The deadline for requesting the ballot is noon, May 12, 2016.

Once you have filled out the application you can request the ballot be mailed to you and you can return it by mail or you can vote in person at the Clerk's office. Leave plenty of time in case you need to use US mail. 🇺🇸

# How Sandisfield Voted in the Presidential Primary, March 1

## DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Bernie Sanders	94
Hillary Clinton	90

## REPUBLICAN PARTY

Donald Trump	37
Marco Rubio	10
Ted Cruz	8
John Kasich	5
Ben Carson	0

## TOWN OF SANDISFIELD HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

The Town of Sandisfield is accepting applications for the position of Equipment Operator/Laborer. The applicant must be able to lift a minimum of 50 pounds, have construction and mechanical knowledge. The applicant must be willing to do labor work, drive truck, and plow snow. Must be able to follow written and verbal instructions and have knowledge of various types of construction equipment. A CDL Class B license, Hydraulic Class 2A and a 4G Mowing License are required within 90 days of hire date. Please submit resume and three references to the Town Hall Annex, 66 Sandisfield Rd., P. O. Box 90, Sandisfield, MA 01255. Phone 413-258-4711 or email to sandisfieldtownclerk@verizon.net. Review of resumes will begin April 4, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. and continue until position is filled. The town of Sandisfield is an EEO/AA employer.

Board of Selectmen: Alice Boyd, Jeffrey Gray, John Skrip

# Energy Committee Gets in Gear

By John Skrip, Selectman

The Town's Energy Committee, dormant for the last 10 years, has been started up again, thanks to the efforts of three residents interested in what Sandisfield can do regarding sources of alternative energy for town buildings and possibly extending to town residents.

The Select Board appointed the three volunteers to the reconstituted Energy Committee: Peter Levine, Mike Lutynski, and David Hubbard. The liaison between the committee and the Select Board is Selectman John Skrip.

The committee is seeking additional members. If you'd like to be considered for appointment please send a letter of interest to the Sandisfield Town Clerk with a brief resume.

For now the committee is considered

exploratory. All information will be presented to town residents at Select Board meetings.

The committee has three short-term goals: Find companies that may be interested in leasing and locating an alternative energy farm in Sandisfield.

Determine if there is a financial advantage in this company providing electricity to the town buildings (Town Hall, DPW, etc.)

Decide if there is a financial advantage in this company providing electricity to town residents.

The next meeting of the Energy Committee will be Wednesday, April 13, at 6 p.m. at Old Town Hall, 3 Silverbrook Road. All residents are invited. 🇺🇸

# To Be Voted On at Town Meeting

## TWO POSITIONS MAY CHANGE FROM ELECTED TO APPOINTED

By Tom Christopher

In at least one corner of the American political landscape, feelings run high but civility still rules, so far – and that corner is Sandisfield.

On March 10, a Special Town Meeting convened at Old Town Hall. Interest was intense: 59 registered voters attended and virtually every seat in the meeting room was filled. The three Select Board members attended as well as Town Clerk Dolores Harasyko, Treasurer Teresa DellaGiustina, and Town Counsel, Carolyn Murray of Kopelman & Paige.

Eight “articles” were up for consideration. Essentially each article comprised a proposal that a particular question be put up for a vote at the Annual Town Election, coming up May 14.

The two articles that stirred the greatest interest were whether the Town should convert the positions of Treasurer and Tax Collector from elected positions to posts to be appointed by a vote of the Select Board.

The impetus for making this change, as explained by Select Board Chairman Alice Boyd is that the town budget will run to an impressive \$4-5 million in the up-coming fiscal year, and there is a need for an individual with previous professional experience to manage a sum of this size. An elected treasurer wouldn't necessarily come to the position with this experience.

Boyd and fellow Selectman John Skrip stated that the change would also allow Sandisfield to economize by “regionalization.” That is, Sandisfield could combine with one or more neighboring towns in hiring a single experienced individual to serve as Treasurer across communities so that each town would pay only a part of the individual's salary. The state government is encouraging such a move, and the pattern is becoming more prevalent among small towns across the state. It allows qualified people to share towns, while elected officials are limited to residents of the town who may not have equivalent experience.

When current Treasurer DellaGiustina was asked if she planned to run for reelection when her term was up next year, she said, “I might. I haven't decided yet. I'll let you know.”

A further economy that was discussed would be to appoint the same individual to serve as both Treasurer and Tax Collector. The office of Tax Collector is open this election, with the

resignation of long-term office-holder Edna Leavenworth. When it was pointed out that Edna was still using floppy discs for filing, a groan crossed through sympathetic residents.

The reaction of the crowd to the proposals was mixed.

Several voters spoke in approval of the need for experience and professionalism in the Treasurer's position. Others, however, including Selectman Jeff Gray, spoke strongly about Sandisfield's tradition of democratic local government and the need to preserve that.

What was notable about this discussion, given the current political climate, was the willingness of all parties to listen to opposing points of view, and the courtesy with which all parties treated each other.

When put to a vote, the articles regarding changing the positions from election to appointed passed by majority vote. Both will be presented to Town residents at the Annual Town Election.

In addition, five more articles were passed:


An article that, if approved by a general vote of the registered voters, would make available \$873 as payment to the town clerk for extra work she has done filling in for the town administrator.

An article that would set the stage for a vote on whether to close a \$29,000 shortfall in the funds for Highway Department salaries.

An article proposing that the Town vote on payment of \$4,677 in additional legal fees incurred in negotiations with Kinder Morgan with reference to the proposed gas pipeline that would run through the town.

A proposal that the Town should vote on whether to authorize the Selectmen to dispose of a parcel of 2.835 acres of town land.

And an article to see if the Town would allow the amendment of the Library Account to correct the allocation of funds without changing the final budget.

The only article voted down was one which would have proposed for the Town's consideration an allocation of \$12,000 to enable hiring a Town Administrator to serve the remainder of this fiscal year. Filling this position, vacant since the resignation of Lisa Blackmer in November, will have to wait at least until the beginning of fiscal year 2016-2017. 

## Railroad Days

I want to spend some time with time itself  
As it narrows not so far ahead,  
Like train tracks vanishing.

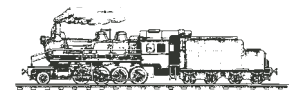
When I was very young  
I loved the aching sound of trains  
Each evening.

And I loved monumental railroad stations  
Where the locomotives stopped  
In clouds of steam.

It was Lincoln country ... the Illinois Central  
Split the state  
With the New York Central and the Nickel Plate.

So when I'm gone, remember me  
As a train receding  
And prairie free.

Val Coleman  
Town Hill Road



## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

This month marks the sixth anniversary of when a small handful of friends and neighbors created The Sandisfield Times in 2010. The paper's current writers, editors, designers, distributors, and web managers – some of whom were present at the beginning – are still turning out what has become a truly significant monthly report and record of Our Town.

An important Select Board election will be held May 18 between incumbent Board Chairman Alice Boyd and candidate Bethany Perry. See page 2 for names of residents who have so far taken out papers to run for other Town offices. In order to vote, be sure to register by April 27 at Town Hall. Also see page 2 for rules for those who need to vote absentee.

On page 12, The Times' founding editor Simon Winchester presents a modest proposal. During a recent trip to New Zealand, he observed something charming, something we might replicate at Select Board, Arts Center, and other Town gatherings. Simon acknowledges that if we try this idea we might feel a bit foolish at first. He writes: “Down Under, they say, they once felt the gesture somewhat cringe-worthy. But before long, with persistence, it became a custom, a ritual...” Hard to believe, but after you think on it a bit and we practice a few times, such an idea might become a custom, a ritual here, too, something like the monthly task of putting together The Times, which in six short years already feels like an established custom, a ritual even.

Bill Price  
West New Boston



# Results Of The Special Town Meeting

## THURSDAY, MARCH 10, 2016

The meeting was called to order by Town Clerk Dolores Harasyko at 7:00 p.m., adjourned at 8:25 pm. There were 59 registered voters present along with Town Council. Results are as follows:

**ARTICLE 1:** The Town voted by majority pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 41, sec. 1B to change the position of elected Town Treasurer to an appointed positions; provided, however, that before such a change will take effect, it must be approved by the voters at the 2016 Annual Town Election; [provided further, however, that if this change is approved at the Annual Town Election, any person elected at that election will hold office only until such time as an appointment is made in accordance with G.L. c.41, sec 1B OR the elected incumbent in such position shall hold office until the expiration of their elected term or sooner vacating of office].

**ARTICLE 2:** The Town voted by majority pursuant to the provisions of G.L. c. 41, sec. 1B to change to position of elected Tax Collector to an appointed positions; provided, however, that before such a change will take effect, it must be approved by the voters at the 2016 Annual Town Election; [provided further, however, that if this change is approved at the Annual Town Election, any person elected at that election will hold office only until such time as an appointment is made in accordance with G.L. c.41, sec. 1B OR the elected incumbent in such position shall hold office until the expiration of their elected term or sooner vacating of office].

**ARTICLE 3:** The Town voted by majority to transfer from Free Cash a total of

\$873 for the Administrative Assistant to the Selectmen's Salary account.

**ARTICLE 4:** The Town voted by majority to transfer from Free Cash \$29,000 for Highways and Bridges Salaries.

**ARTICLE 5:** The Town failed by majority to transfer from Free Cash \$12,000 for the Town Administrator's Salary Account.

**ARTICLE 6:** The Town voted by majority to transfer from Free Cash \$4,677 for Kinder Morgan Legal Fees Account.

**ARTICLE 7:** The Town voted by 2/3 to transfer the care, custody, control and management of the parcel of land located at Sandisfield Road, map and parcel 202-39, consisting of a total of 2.835 acres to the Board of Selectmen to be held for the purpose of sale or lease, and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to sell or lease said parcel of land owned by the Town upon such terms and conditions as the Board deems to be in the best interest of the Town, and to authorize the Board to enter into any agreements in connection with the above purpose, and to act fully thereon.

**ARTICLE 8:** The Town voted unanimously to amend the FY2016 Library Account to read as follows: The Library Account \$13,749: \$11,174 for Salaries and \$2,575 for Expenses and to meet that appropriation raise and appropriate \$11,892 for Salaries and transfer \$1,857 from Library Grants for expenses.

This is to correct the allocation of funds only. No change in the final budget. ♣

# TOWN OF SANDISFIELD OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK YEAR 2016 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Apr. 4, 2016 Town Caucus – Old Town Hall 7 p.m.
- Apr. 7, 2016 Last day to object or withdraw nomination papers.
- Apr. 25, 2016 Last day to register to vote for the Annual Town Meeting and the Annual Town Election. This will be held at the Town Hall Annex from 2 to 4 and 7 to 8 p.m.
- May 14, 2016 Annual Town Meeting at the Fire Station #2, Route 57 at 10 a.m.
- May 16, 2016 Annual Town Election – Old Town Hall 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- Aug. 19, 2016 Last day to register to vote and change party enrollment for the State Primary. Town Hall Annex from 2 to 4 and 7 to 8 p.m.
- Sept. 8, 2016 State Primary – Old Town Hall from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.
- Oct. 19, 2016 Last day to register to vote for the Presidential and State Election.
- Nov. 8, 2016 Presidential and State Election – Old Town Hall from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

## Dispose of Sharps Correctly

*By John Skrip, Selectman*

The Select Board has recently entered into an agreement with Med Waste Disposal of Pembroke, Mass. The COA brought to the attention of the Select Board that sharps (used needles) and expired medication are difficult to dispose of properly. The agreement with Med Waste will allow for the annual disposal of medication and sharps at our Fire House #2.

We anticipate a two-day disposal period in June. The days have yet to be determined. Basically residents would drive to the fire house and dispose of sharps (must be in a small plastic container) and outdated medicine including liquids (properly sealed) to the fire house. The full disposal containers would then be picked up by Med Waste and disposed of properly.

Any residents who would like to buy proper sharps containers can do so prior the disposal date through the COA (more details to follow). The containers range in price from \$3 to \$6, based on the size of the container.

The Select Board thanks the Sandisfield Fire/Ambulance Service for funding this program and for the COA members for bringing this need forward. More information will follow with specific dates and times. ♣

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# TOWN NEWS

By Bill Price

## MASTER PLAN MEETING

The Town will host a public meeting Wednesday, April 13, at 7 p.m. at Old Town Hall to review the draft of the proposed Master Plan and seek public comment and help setting priorities for implementation.

The 70-page draft, prepared by the Master Plan Steering Committee and the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, is available for viewing either online at [berkshireplanning.org/projects/sandisfield-master-plan](http://berkshireplanning.org/projects/sandisfield-master-plan) or in hardcopy at four locations in Town: Town Hall Annex, Old Town Hall, the Library, and When Pigs Fly Farm.

## YOUR MONEY AND MINE

The Select Board passed the Town budget at their March 28 meeting. The Fiscal Year 2017 budget is nearly \$200,000 less than last year's budget and \$117,344 under Prop. 2½. Residents can take a look at the budget at Town Hall Annex. In our May issue, The Sandisfield Times will report on the pluses and minuses of the budget. Residents will be asked to vote on each item at Town Meeting, May 14.

Chairman Alice Boyd said, "We were able to cut enough so taxpayers would not see a tax increase, despite the significantly increased school budget, up by about \$56,000. We remain hopeful that the school budget will be decreased before Town Meeting."

The Board is still looking for budget items that could be lowered. Alice added, "We'll need additional income to lower taxes but that's in the works with grants and supplemental income."

We're working on a sustained income from logging and a few other sources."

"Bottom line," Alice said, "is that we need to get the school budget down and deal with inconsistencies in employee benefits – revisiting the health insurance percentage and other insurances. Our goal is to continue cost savings so that we can get a firm handle on what our Town actually needs and where we can offset costs."

The Selectmen are meeting with the Teamsters Union on April 11 to open the Highway Department contract. Said Alice, "Our goal is to provide flexibility to cut costs by reorganizing staffing and procedures."

## GIFT TO THE TOWN GROWS SMALLER

The land gift announced in February of eight acres near Firehouse #2 for a potential town administrative center has been reduced to about one acre. Judi and Lou Friedman, who were gifting the property, report that "after further investigation and consultations we discovered that the grade and slope and rock would not be a wise choice" for the Town.

"We are sad to change our gift," Judi said in an email. "But the land we are willing to give is flat and directly adjacent to the firehouse and would be less costly for the Town and result in minimal destruction of Prospect Hill." She added, "We want to help, but wisely and in an environmentally sound way."



# SANDISFIELD ARTS CENTER



5 Hammertown Rd, Sandisfield, MA  
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INFO/TIX:

[SANDISFIELDARTSCENTER.ORG](http://SANDISFIELDARTSCENTER.ORG)

april

*In the Gallery*

**APRIL 30 - MAY 29**

*Nick Hawvermale:*

*Photos that Bring the Wild into a Closer View*

*Opening Reception:*

**SAT, APRIL 30, 2-4 PM**



**SAT, APRIL 30 4 PM**

**\$10**

*Poetry Opens the Doors:*  
*The Poetry of Spring*

Poets:

*Hannah Fries*

*Zach Finch*

*Emily Pulfer-Terino*

*Hilde Weisert*

Poets read their own poems as well as classic poems of spring.



## HOMEIMPROVEMENTS

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# Fresh Flowers All Summer Long

## A NEW OFFERING FROM SNOW FARM

*As told to The Times by Snow Farm Gardeners*

This summer subscribers to a new Flower Share program at Snow Farm can enjoy fresh-cut flowers every week.



*Sue Tarasuk tending her flower garden last summer.*

Sue Tarasuk has teamed up with her long-time friend (and niece-in-law) Lindsey Smith to offer shareholders one specialty cut-flower bouquet per week.

“All the floral arrangements,” Sue said, “will feature a seasonal blend of our farm’s best blooms. There will be a mix of colors and textures to create unique and elegant bouquets.”

Lindsey, who has 12 years’ experience in interior design, said that what excited her about the new venture was the idea of blending her talents with Sue’s skill growing and nurturing plants. “Sue is a very experienced horticulturist,” she said. “She’s been a professional for 28 years. Plants are part of her blood.”

“For me,” Lindsey added, “I am passionate about design, beauty, nature, and color. By working together Sue and I can bring our customers a superior product grown with passion and expertise and executed with top-notch design.”

For eight years Lindsey ran the silk flower department for Wingate, Ltd., the interior design firm in Great Barrington. Making in-house and client arrangements was how she learned plant names and colors and gained expertise in

floral design. “I have always planted a personal cut-flower garden every season and created bouquets for my own enjoyment, but I’m so excited to share this kind of fresh beauty with my community.” She has executed fresh floral installations for several weddings and other events.

Sue said that they are also expanding their vegetable gardens at Snow Farm with a new farm stand opening this summer. Additionally she said, “we’ll re-open our retail greenhouses offering a variety of annuals, perennials, trees and shrubs.”

She continued, “The seeds are underway, and we’ve plotted many unique shades and styles of zinnias, dahlias, cosmos, sunflowers, sweet peas, celosias and so much more. We plan to incorporate herbs, textural grasses and possibly foraged items to add textural interest.”

The Snow Farm Flower Share program will also offer “bucket shares” for customers interested in a larger quantity of loose blooms which can fill a home with many smaller arrangements or several larger installations.

“We think,” Lindsey said, “that we could change people’s experience with flowers. Locally sourced fresh flowers will be a very different experience from imported grocery store varieties. These will naturally smell better, last longer, will be better for the environment, and you can help support a local farm. What could be better?”

And, are you hosting an Event? Lindsey and Sue can custom design weddings and special events with seasonal and locally sourced flowers, ranging from comprehensive event design to DIY bulk flowers. Lindsey and Sue emphasize: “Our primary focus is on beauty, color and freshness!”

### FLOWER SHARE PROGRAM INFORMATION

- Start Date: 10-week share runs from July to September. Pick-up is at Snow Farm, South Beech Plain Road on Saturdays, 8 a.m.-noon.
- Bouquet Share - \$250
- Bucket Share - \$400

Cut-flower bouquets will also be available for purchase at the stand at Snow Farm (open daily) and at the Norfolk, Conn., Farmers Market, Saturdays, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Please email at [snowfarmcuts@gmail.com](mailto:snowfarmcuts@gmail.com) by June 1 to secure your participation. Limited shares available!

Follow them on Instagram: [@snowfarmcuts](https://www.instagram.com/snowfarmcuts). 📷



*Snow Farm Sunflowers, last year.*



# How Do We Lower Our Taxes?

## AROUND TOWN HALL

By Alice Boyd, Select Board Chairman

No one wants to see taxes rise and yet everyone wants good schools, roads, and community services. Here in Sandisfield many residents, particularly seniors, struggle to get along on fixed incomes. Yet our property taxes continue to rise as the town faces increases in school expenses, salaries, and unfunded mandates.

Sandisfield has a \$3 million annual budget, an increase of 71.5% over the past ten years. Forty-seven percent of our tax dollars go to educate children, 18% to plow and maintain our roads and bridges, and 9% to support administrative functions. That's about 74% of our tax dollars and does not include capital expenses such as trucks, equipment, or buildings.

For the past ten months the Select Board has been focused on finding innovative ways to keep your taxes down while maintaining services. This has been quite a challenge.

We know that to be successful we must do four things: 1) keep expenses down; 2) seek new sources of revenue; 3) secure grants and donations; 4) build our tax base.

### KEEPING EXPENSES DOWN:

The Highway Department is doing more work in-house, saving us the cost of private contractors. We're opening up the union contract to make some changes that will allow us to control costs. We'll be hiring a part-time Town Administrator instead of a full-time person, and we've asked each department to cut their budget by 10% where possible. Town offices and residents will soon be eligible for lower cost electricity through the town's new Municipal Aggregation Program (more information on this soon) and the Senior Tax Work-off Program is underway. In May, the Massachusetts Department of Revenue will be sending a team to Town Hall to evaluate our financial systems and make recommendations to help us become more efficient and cost effective. Most important, perhaps, is our goal of working regionally to share resources by focusing specifically on equipment and staff.

### NEW SOURCES OF REVENUE:


The Selectmen are investigating the construction of a solar farm to generate income. We've authorized the completion of a Forestry Plan and will be logging town-owned land so that we can have healthy forests and additional revenue. We've also just initiated a Road Crossing Permit with fees based upon the project size that will be paid by

companies like Tennessee Gas if they place pipe under our roads. And a less popular decision was to increase the dump sticker fee with the intent of improving services.

### GRANTS:

During the past months the town has been awarded just under \$1 million in grants, saving taxpayers money on critical projects. The reconstruction of the Rugg Bridge on Route 57 is one project where a grant has saved each taxpayer an average of \$1,800. We were awarded a Forestry Stewardship Grant for Yanner Park and are now applying for a small bridge repair grant, a grant to help fund Broadband installation and smaller grants for the playground and technology upgrades. We've identified funding sources to offset the cost of a new Town Hall and Senior Center, should voters decide to move forward on this project. We're searching for additional funding daily. The Planning Board and Strategic Planning Committee have done a tremendous job working on our new Master Plan to provide us with the documentation to apply for larger grants.

### BUILDING OUR TAX BASE:

The most important strategy for building our tax base is the installation of Broadband high-speed Internet for all homes and businesses in Sandisfield. It has been consistently demonstrated that the availability of a high-speed fiber network makes a town more attractive to homebuyers and businesses and encourages home-based businesses. There are many other "quality of life" improvements that can be made to attract new residents and increase the value of our property. 



## A GREAT SEASON ON TAP

By Marcella Smith, President


Thanks to the creative ideas and hard work of Barbara Penn, Mary Anne Grammer, and other members of the Arts Centers' programming committee, our 2016 season promises to deliver something for everyone.

A jazz quintet and vocalist in June. Documentary films in August and September. A matinee and evening performance of "Our Town" by the Sandisfield Players on June 18, preparatory to their performances later that month at Cornwall, England. And in April a celebration of National Poetry Month.

In October, we'll put on the comedy by Alison Larkin. In August, an evening of American song. Lectures on politics. A review of historic homes. Dance from Jacob's Pillow. And in December, a Yuletide Celebratory Extravaganza.

Our 8-month season will be highlighted in a full-color brochure with a cover by Monterey artist Joe Baker, one of the artists who will be exhibited monthly in our changing art gallery. Events described in the brochure can also be seen online at sandisfieldartscenter.org. If you are not already on our mailing list, please send your address to us at info@sandisfieldartscenter.org.

The fact that we can print such a quality brochure is thanks to local businesses and individuals who support the Arts Center with their ads. We'd like to acknowledge with gratitude: A&M Auto, Hillside Garden Inn, Villa Mia, Bruce's Hardware, Red Barn Alpacas, Looking Glass Gardens, Brockman Real Estate, Mahaiwe Tent, Riiska Brook Orchard, Orchid Blossom Healing Arts, Gedney Farm, Whiting Mills, John Skrip, the Town of Otis Recreation Commission, John Grammer, SS Home Improvements, Agway, Wheeler & Taylor, Guido's, Il Chiostro, Leslie J. Garfield & Co, KwikPrint, Salisbury Bank, Peter Greenwood's Glass Blowing Workshops, and Dr. C. Evers Whyte.

The Arts Center's board of directors appreciates their vote of confidence and asks you to let these businesses know you saw their ad in this season's brochure. 

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## End Run Attempt Leads to Court

Cont'd from p.1

### THE BIG "... BUT..."

Acknowledging the opposition to the proposal in Sandisfield and the state of Massachusetts, the commission conceded that if state or local laws or regulations conflicted with the approval that "parties are free to bring the matter before a federal court for resolution."

Within days of receiving the FERC approval, TGP filed an injunction in Berkshire Superior Court for immediate access to the state forest in order to begin tree clearing. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Sandisfield Board of Assessors, and various private land owners were listed as defendants. TGP insisted that the U.S. Natural Gas Act gave FERC the power to override state laws, including state constitutions.

TGP was under serious time constraints. In order to protect migratory birds, the Endangered Species Act limits tree-clearing in state-protected land to a period ending March 31 (TGP has asked the US Fish and Wildlife

Service to extend the time it be allowed to cut trees to May 1). In order to finish the expansion by November 2016, TGP says it has to begin work by the first of June.

A hearing was scheduled in Massachusetts Superior Court in Pittsfield for March 31.

### AND THEN ...

A few day earlier, TGP received a 4-page follow-up letter from FERC that must have caused them significant grief.

TGP needed, wrote FERC, to provide a lot more specifics before gassing up the chain saws.

Among other things, they needed to obtain actual easements for any properties they would cross, including Article 97 land. They needed to provide an actual plan for the work, list access roads to be used, contact landowners, obtain #404 Water Quality Certificates (WQCs) from New York and New England offices, confirm that Massachusetts and Connecticut #401 WQCs were unnecessary (as TGP claimed), and identify wetland setbacks. And would TGP provide assurances regarding the safety of eagles and 23 Connecticut-listed species and provide a plan ensuring that historic farm stone walls

through the Sandisfield forest would not be affected.

If that wasn't enough, came now Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey, representing the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, with an emergency motion to extend the March 31 date of the hearing. And Mass Audubon, a signatory to the preservation of the Otis State Forest land, asked to file a "friend of the court" brief and needed time to prepare it.

The result was that on March 29, Associate Justice John A. Agostini granted the motion to delay by at least two weeks.

He wrote: "It is obvious that this litigation presents very complex and significant issues within the confluence of federal, state and regulatory law," adding that holding a preliminary injunction hearing "on such short notice, particularly with all the outstanding issues, is neither feasible nor wise."

The Court did not cancel the March 31 hearing, but asked the parties to suggest a date for the preliminary injunction hearing, whether it would require an evidentiary hearing, whether the dispute involves only matters of law, and the significance of FERC's information request. The new Court date was set for Friday, April 15 at 1 p.m.

### BIGGER THAN SANDISFIELD

The Sandisfield pipeline fight has resonance across the state because of the much larger Northeast Energy Direct (NED) pipeline project, also proposed by Kinder Morgan, that stretches from upstate New York to northeast Massachusetts.

As Times readers know well, the project in Sandisfield includes a section through Otis State Forest that is permanently protected under Article 97 of the Mass. State Constitution.

U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren said that she was deeply troubled that "Kinder Morgan is demanding a right to bypass the Massachusetts constitution and destroy portions of the Otis State Forest. ... It's long past time for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to stop enabling Kinder Morgan's reckless behavior – and start pushing back."

Representative Smitty Pignatelli was quoted in the March 17 *Berkshire Eagle* that there was no doubt in his mind that "if there's no way to stop a little loop in southern Berkshire County that has no benefit to anybody in Massachusetts, how the hell are we going to stop this bigger pipeline through state-owned and Mass Audubon land?"

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# Conservation Workshop in May

## FORESTRY FOUNDATION TEAMS WITH NATURE CONSERVANCY

By Times Reporters

Last month Bob Tarasuk, the local forester who writes our Conservation column, announced that a workshop on conservation and management options for landowners would be conducted in our area by The New England Forestry Foundation (NEFF). NEFF, founded in 1956, is the oldest non-profit organization in New England focused on the protection and management of working forests.



Autumn path at Spectacle Pond.  
Photo: Geoffrey Coelbo

The workshop is designed for landowners interested in learning more about land stewardship and conservation options. Learn more about achieving your goals as a landowner while benefiting your local and regional community.

- **EVENT:** Your Land, Your Community
- **LOCATION:** Sandisfield Arts Center
- **DATE/TIME:** Saturday, May 7 at 10 a.m. until noon
- **HOST:** New England Forestry Foundation, The Nature Conservancy

Bob wrote, "It will be a great chance to listen to the experts on this topic, and see if conservation is something that fits you and the stewardship of your land."

# School Hiking Club Heads for the Woods

By Christopher Keller

A Hiking Club at Farmington River Regional School took off on their first hike at the end of February. The club, organized by 5th grade teacher Christopher Keller, will continue to take Monday hikes until the end of school. "The club's goal," said Mr. Keller, "is to peek student's curiosity about the natural world, breathe some fresh air, and get some exercise." Paraprofessional Terry Ferrara and parent volunteers joined the group as they walked trails behind the school. "The students couldn't be more excited when we find animal tracks or learn about how the trees are taking back an abandoned farm field," Mr. Keller added. "They ask such terrific questions, and they have keen eyes when it comes to discovering hidden treasures along the way." Conner Fennelly of the 4th grade signed up for the Hiking Club because he thought it would be fun. He wrote in a report on the hike, "... We found coyote poop. We stopped and looked at it. Someone volunteered to dissect it to see if there were bones inside. ... I can't wait for next

Monday!" Donny Scaglione of the 4th grade took photos with his iPad. Readers can see his photos of ferns and fungi in the *Otis Observer*, April. Five third-grade students reported on their adventures in the woods: James Adams couldn't believe they'd "found so much stuff! We found something that looked like scat (animal poo)." Megan DeCelle liked learning about "different foot prints of animals and different types of mushrooms." Catalina Burdick wrote that the club members found tracks and fungi. "We played a game. I liked the game Lava. Someone has to say Lava, then you have to go find a rock and stand on it." Lily Brancato wrote that the hikers "learned about trees, footprints, and mushrooms that grow on trees and plants. I want to look for caves and dens and look for animals, too." Brodie McNair liked "walking through streams and seeing cool plants. I liked looking at the cool bracken mushrooms and looking at bones. I want to find living creatures and learn more cool facts. That's why I love Hiking Club."

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historia (Greek) - "Inquiry, knowledge acquired by investigation" The discovery, collection, organization and presentation of information about past events.

## Early Families, Local Descendants

### AND SOME COMMENTS

By Ron Bernard

Are any direct descendants of original Sandisfield families still residing in town?

As the editor/author of the 2012 town history, *Sandisfield: Then and Now*, I am often asked that interesting question. I've been meaning to get around to finding out the answer.

#### "AROUND TO" HAS FINALLY COME AROUND.

Determination of which of our neighbors can trace roots to an original family is not exactly straightforward. Two-hundred-sixty-five years is a long time. Genealogically speaking it comprises at least ten generations. The families were often large and some inter-married over many decades. It is virtually certain that there are distant cousins or in-law connections to the founding families living in the area. Perhaps many. This article addresses only direct descendants.

While researching *Sandisfield Then and Now* I was surprised to discover that there are no living direct descendants in Sandisfield among the major founding families of **Brown, Smith, Sears, Sage, Bosworth, Kilborn, Hubbard, Parsons, and Wilcox**. In fact, for the most part, these particular surnames were gone from the Town rolls well before 1900. They left seeking better pastures, literally, typically in New York, Ohio, and Michigan before and after the Civil War. In the 1870s many left what had become marginal farms here for factory work and life in cities.

#### BUT SPRINGS ARE STILL HERE

The only family name that can claim a first-period settler pedigree with a continuous presence in Sandisfield since colonial times is the line of **Henry Spring Jr.** (1733-1803) and his wives, Hannah Whitney (1736-66) and Mercy Hamilton (1739-?).

Henry's father, Captain Henry Spring (1712-62) of Weston, Mass., was awarded land in Sandisfield as a result of meritorious service in the colonial militia. It's unlikely that he ever visited his property. Rather, in about 1762, Henry Spring Jr., became the proprietor of an existing tavern on the old Boston-Albany "Great Road" (now called the Knox Trail) near the "nose" between the two Spectacle Ponds. Spring at first was not accompanied by his family which remained behind in Brookfield. Spring's inn, also known as the Continental Tavern, had a notable moment at the outset of the Revolutionary War in January 1776 when Col. Knox's teamsters, hauling captured British cannons to Boston, sojourned at the tavern.

By 1780, the whole Spring family was operating the inn. They were also farming to survive, just like everyone else. Son, Henry 3rd, then about 20, would have been quite involved. According to historian George Shepard in 1883, "The tavern could accommodate 20 horses and was full most of the time."

Family matriarch, Cora Spring Roraback, 93, living now in New Boston, is a 2nd great-granddaughter of Henry Spring 3rd, the progenitor of the Sandisfield Springs.



Cora Spring Roraback, 2015

#### AND NEARBY ...

An original Sandisfield family direct descendant resides in Tolland. Born in Sandisfield, Francis Deming, 81, is the 4th great-grandson of **Elijah Deming** (1725-1821) and his wife, Lucy Sage of Wethersfield, Conn. The early Demings established a major farm in what is today the



Roosterville section of New Boston. His descendants, especially through sons Thomas and Ozias, were numerous, perhaps second overall only to the enormous Smith clan. Demings were very important in the founding and development of Sandisfield for nearly two centuries.



Francis Deming, 2011

Two later-arriving families have descendants in town.

**Abriam Ives** (1820-1900) and his wife, Lucy Root, of Colebrook, Conn., settled here in 1844. Their three sons, Truman W., Albert and Gilbert were active in farming and real estate. In his later years, Gilbert became an accomplished photographer. I believe he took many of the images that Frank DeMars included in his collection of local photographs which we tapped for *Sandisfield Then and Now*.



Gilbert Ives, c. 1890.

Photo: Courtesy of Kathy Ives.

I am aware of two direct descendants of Abriam Ives here today, both 2nd great-granddaughters. They are Katherine Ives Wilcox, granddaughter of Henry Jarvis Ives and Ethel Wilber Millard, age 90, who is a member of this family through her mother, Nellie Ives (1889-1964). The women are related as 3rd cousins.


The Kimberly family on upper Town Hill Road lives on the longest continuously operating farm in Sandisfield. Otis-born patriarch **Henderson Kimberley** (1836-93) acquired the former Heman Dowd farm in 1870. He and his brother, Austin, came to the Spectacle Pond area in 1862. Today Henderson's great-grandsons Fred, Ronald and Robert Kimberly continue the family's agricultural tradition in forest products.

**Henry Chandler Pease** (1736-1811) and his wife, Ruth Chapin of Enfield, Conn., arrived before 1766. He was followed in about 1772 by his first cousin, Jehiel Pease, also from Enfield. Four Pease generations would live here and in significant numbers. It is highly likely that Town Founder Daniel Brown, who resided in Enfield before establishing New Boston, would have recruited this family to immigrate here. By about 1840 a large branch had moved to New York State. The Pease name in Sandisfield ended after more than 130 years when Helen Pease Olds died in 1899. She was the daughter of the highly respected Montville blacksmith and early builder, Levi Pease (1806-82). The Pease name was reestablished in the 20th century when other descendants of the Enfield Peases located in the area. Sandisfield residents, brothers Charles and Gary Pease, who descend from them, are distant cousins of Henry Chandler Pease, an original Sandisfield settler.

**Lt. Ichabod Crittenden** (1721-97) arrived in 1767 from Guilford, Conn. He established an important farm on North Beech Plain Road, close to the Knox Trail and the West Otis line.

He also operated a tavern there which probably welcomed Col. Knox's men in January 1776. William Crittenden sold the family's Sandisfield interests in 1859 to Lyman Waters (1828-1924). Around 1900 his son, farmer Frank Waters, a deeply spiritual person, inscribed religious aphorisms all over the place which became a peculiar attraction known as the Amen Farm or the Scripture Farm. Crittenden's daughters married into the earliest families in the Beech Plain, including Adams, Hawley, Waters, Strickland, and Whitney. Today Crittenden descendants reside mainly in the Otis area.

We find **Peter Strickland** (1742-1810) of New London, Conn., here in the 1780s on the vital and busy Beech Plain-West Otis Road (Knox Trail portion). He was a cobbler. His son, Daniel was a blacksmith.

Otis-born Edman H. Strickland (1846-1927), great-grandson of Peter, in 1873 reestablished the family's presence in Sandisfield when he acquired the old Adams-Belden place on North Beech Plain Road near the original homestead. Over the next 50 years Edman was a prominent farmer and town booster. He served as Selectman and Town Clerk and was Assessor for 40 years. Strickland also bought the New Boston Store in 1901 and operated it with his son, Alfred for the next 20 years. The Strickland family is thus deeply imbedded in the fabric of Town history. Members of this family moved in the early 1800s to nearby Otis where the Strickland name is widespread. 





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## The Act of Remembering

I have a modest proposal – one which, if ever taken up and were I a dreamer of great dreams, might just turn into something rather grand.

It all stems from a month-long visit I have just completed to Australia and New Zealand. Bear with me: Down Under comes first in this peroration. Sandisfield will emerge in only a moment.

So: it is stating the historically obvious to note that both of these faraway Antipodean countries, just like our own, are the artificial creations of colonizing immigrants. Also: before modern times, the lands which we and our forebears colonized and settled, there and here, were already inhabited by indigenous peoples who sported on them fully-fledged civilizations and cultures.

In Australia these people were, and still are today, the Aboriginals – members of well over 400 ancient and distinct groups, each group separate in language and dialect and cultural affect. Aborigines form the literal bedrock of modern Australian society – but they are a people who for most of their post-colonial existence have been brutally and unkindly separated from it, on exclusively racial grounds, and have suffered all the social ills you would imagine – impoverishment, alcoholism, violence – from their decades of marginalization.

New Zealand's original inhabitants, the Maoris, are Polynesians. Compared to the Australian indigenes, the Maoris were better treated by the colonists (who, unlike the first Australians, were not convicts transported from England). There was even a treaty signed, though for many years more honored in the breach than in observance. Come the 1970s and '80s, though, much the same miasma of social ills were being suffered in New Zealand, from Auckland to Dunedin, just as they were across the Tasman Sea, from Melbourne to Darwin and beyond.

Both countries gradually enacted laws to better the situation. Some of them worked, some not. But come the 1990s a curious small social phenomenon got started, a grass-roots attempt, nothing to do with government, that tried to



*"Sergeant & Konkapot." Depiction of a meeting between Reverend John Sergeant and Mahican Chief Konkapot, by Norman Rockwell. From the permanent collection of the Norman Rockwell Museum.*

show that ordinary people in both nations knew full well they had indigenous neighbors and that their neighbors had not been treated well.

The movement did one simple thing.

Before any public meeting, one of the organizers would stand and publicly offer respect "to the original settlers of this land" – to whatever tribe or family had been there first, and to their ancestors and spirits and deities. It was meant simply as a reminder, a courtesy, a small symbolic repayment of a long unsettled debt.

So in Perth, while I waited to go on, I would listen as my introducer spoke reverently of the Noongar people. In Adelaide I waited patiently as respect was paid to the Nunga, and across in Melbourne while honor was given to the Koori. Then in Wellington, New Zealand's capital, they spoke of the Ngati Toa – the half-minute-long address having a name, the mihi, by which we incoming colonists and visitors paid due to those who lived here before.

I found it all truly moving – and entirely worthy.

And then, on my long and much delayed and diverted plane-ride home, I thought: why not try to institute such a simple practice here at home?

After all, we in the Berkshires had Native American antecedents, long forgotten, still widely overlooked.

So why don't we in Sandisfield agree that before every Selectmen's gathering, before each Town Meeting, before the Arts Center starts another admirable performance – why don't we honor these forgotten ones by paying our dues, thirty seconds at a time, to in this case the Mahican people who lived and loved and hunted and

foraged here, hundreds of years ago, and who we are so tempted otherwise utterly to forget?

An acknowledgement, of sorts, to Chief Konkapot who negotiated with Reverend John Sergeant and other colonists for Berkshire land, including Hausatonic Plantation No. 3 which became Sandisfield.

At first I daresay we'd feel a bit foolish – Down Under, they say, they once felt the gesture somewhat cringeworthy. But before long, with persistence, it became a custom, a ritual – and as down there, so too I think it might become a commonplace, and then perhaps spread outward from Sandisfield.

We might before long find our comrades in Lee doing it, then in Lenox and Stockbridge. The good people of Boston might start speaking about the Wampanoag, those in Albany of the Mohawk, then respect might be paid far away to the Choctaw and the Blackfoot, the Seminole, and the Apache, the Sioux, the Shoshone, and the Cree.

It could go on and on, until in time all America embraced the same warming relationship with her Indian predecessors as today's New Zealanders have with their Maori.

And yes – though a dream indeed – if it ever did happen, it could all be said to have begun here, in dear little Sandisfield. Where we villagers remembered just who we really were, and what our true place was, in the overall scheme of things. ♣





## Group Formed to Record Local Jewish History

Cont'd from p.1

The work will explore the lives and times of about three dozen major families who established here in roughly three phases. About a third arrived in the 1890s to practice traditional farming. They were followed in the 1920s and 1930s by a larger wave of newcomers attracted to town initially as a summer refuge from hard lives in New York. Another general group includes later arrivals together with a considerable number of descendants who have retired here. Although they lived in different times and circumstances over more than a century, all share common heritage and culture. But most of all they claim intimate ties to Sandisfield.

Lorraine German, a major contributor to *Sandisfield Then and Now*, will be principal author. She and her husband, Steve, live in near-by North Granby, Conn., where they have an antiques business.

Lorraine said, "I am very interested in this story, especially because I was so close to my late mother-in-law, Sylvia (Linder) German. The Linders kept diaries and preserved recollections about life in Sandisfield in the early years. I've also been collecting historical information and have a surprising number of newspaper articles about the Sandisfield Jewish community. I'm ready to get started!"

What will readers discover? First, there is the fascinating and improbable saga of the original "colony" of very poor Russian immigrants who were sponsored to Sandisfield – of all places – by a European philanthropist, Baron Maurice DeHirsch. Did the experiment work? What is its legacy? We'll find out. Then, we'll learn what drew several dozen other families to town between the world wars and how they fared.

The overall story will be covered in chapters about cultural assimilation, the chicken farms, the summer resorts, religious and social life including the role of the marvelous synagogue and Rabbi Cohen. Other subjects include schooling, work patterns, languages, the hard times, the happier times.



Book committee members, from left, Ron Bernard, Nina Dryansky Carr, Cindy Pinsky-Jennings, Sandy and Flora Parisky, Lorraine and Steve German. Members not photographed are Charlotte Westhead, Joanne Lazarowitz Olson, and Sharon Sandler Lewis.

Photo: Ron Bernard

Finally, there will be individual chapters for as many families as possible. Material will include historical profiles of their houses and farms, biographies of the heads of family and/or prominent personalities, genealogies, recollections and oral histories, and early photographs. This large section will complement and build on the late Anne Hoffman's approach in her poignant, *Sandisfield: Biography of A Town* (1998).

The Jewish families who came to Sandisfield following or during some of the worst economic times helped spare this town from probable irreversible physical and social deterioration. And while this project is an ambitious undertaking, the book will be a fitting and lasting tribute to these Jewish families, to their community, and to their contributions that have enriched the heritage of Sandisfield.

Because the book will be printed locally as orders are received, the committee does not expect to have to raise funds in advance. However, support from a grant or a benefactor or two would assure both highest quality and fast order fulfillment and would be much appreciated. ♡

## Jewish Surnames of Sandisfield

The following Jewish surnames were found in the Sandisfield births register, 1910-1940 US Census records, and from land records in the Berkshire County deeds office. Not all of these names were Sandisfield resident owners/renters. Some may have been absentee landowners, mortgage holders, trustees, or executors, for example. On the other hand, some surnames include multiple family units that live here or lived here at one time.

Are you a member of or knowledgeable about one or more of these Jewish families with known historical residential ties to Sandisfield? Or do you know other Jewish families we overlooked?

Aber	Immerman	Pinkava
Ackerman	Jacobs	Pinsky
Albert	Jensky	Plotkin
Baranoff	Kahn	Pollack
Basem	Kalman	Rich
Beller	Kaplan	Rolnick
Biarski	Kaufman	Rosenberg
Binin	Kessler	Rosengarten
Brickman	Kieretz	Rosner
Cavolow	Klein	Ross
Charney	Kliener	Rothman
Cheske	Kossberg	Saligman
Cohen	Kravitz	Samstein
Diamond	Krigsman	Sandler
Einbinder	Krowitz	Schutak
Epstein	Kupperman	Seitz
Fenner	Lazarowitz	Shaks
Fradenbert	Levin	Shapes
Frankel	Levine	Shenkman
Freeman	Lieberman	Simons
Galaske	Lifschitz	Skiprie
Gaynor	Lipsetz	Sneiderman
Gelber	Linder	Stein
Gerstenhaber	Marcus	Steinbach
Golden	Melomet	Tannack
Goldstein	Meltzer	Tannenbaum
Goodman	Mesnikovich	Toplitz
Greenwald	Moskowitz	Walpiansky
Handler	Nager	Waltzer
Held	Neidorf	Weinstein
Hetman	Orenstein	Weir
Hills	Penziner	Weiss
Hoffman	Perlstein	Zager

## Seeking Family Histories

The book committee needs to hear from members of the families (see table), especially those from out of town. They seek family history information such as genealogies, photographs, and any sort of written memorabilia including relevant news articles. The primary contact coordinator is Joanne Lazarowitz Olson, at 718-227-6427, email Joanneo@aol.com. You may also contact Lorraine or Steve German at 860-653-5733; madriverantiques@aol.com, or this writer at 413-269-0012, Ronbernard@aol.com



# Sandisfield Historical Society



By John Kuzmech, President

## SEASON BEGINS

Our season will begin Saturday, April 9, with a business meeting at 11, followed by some outdoor activities and a potluck lunch.

The Society is a great group to get involved with because you can set your own limits of how much you'd like to participate. You can attend the meetings and partake in the potluck meals afterward. You can bake for the bake sales at our fairs. You can help us with tag sales, cook for customers at our fairs, help us set up and take down equipment. There is a place for everyone who would like to be a part of the Historical Society.

Following the business meeting, we have some outside cleaning to do. Bring lawn tools. Also, I am seeking volunteers to arrange our interesting historical items in a display case. We have a lot of items in storage, and we'd like to bring them to light.

A special "Thank You" goes to a good person who has been generous with his time and labor. I don't know Gary Bottum well, but our VP Marcia Ignace reported that he came by with his equipment and cleaned up the lawn and branches and other messes left by the winter. Gary also took care of our lawns on a volunteer basis last fall. Thank you, Gary.

Come over on April 9, join our business meeting at 11, stay to help us in the yard or on the displays, and join us for a potluck lunch. Our meeting is at the Meeting House on the corner of Rt. 183/Sandy Brook Turnpike and South Sandisfield Road. Any questions, call me at 413-258-4906.

# Fire Station No. 1 Building Rehabilitation Drive

MISCONCEPTION: "SOMEBODY ELSE WILL DONATE"

By Ron Bernard

Fund raising to renovate the former American Legion headquarters building as an emergency rendezvous point and community center is progressing but is behind schedule, according to project leader Fire Chief Ralph Morrison.

He told the Times that as of mid-March receipts and pledges were somewhat short of half-way to the ultimate goal of \$50,000. "We are at a critical point for donations because unless we raise another \$25,000 very soon we'll not be able to open in time for summer," he said.

Money is urgently needed to complete three major components – electrical, plumbing, and heating. Ralph called them the "big ticket items" that cannot be installed gradually. "We are stalled and need sponsors right now for these important things. As with past building drives, I'm counting on the whole community to come through," he said.

Ralph explained that this is a badly needed facility in a town that is woefully short of indoor civic space and may be years away, if ever, from a proper municipal complex. "Here is something that can be done right now without a lot of red tape or any impact on the town's budget or taxes, with labor from the Fire Department members, local contractors and other volunteers."

It is easy to take our fire and emergency services volunteers for granted. These are

neighbors and friends who unselfishly donate time and place themselves in danger to respond day or night, regardless of conditions. They are there for us; now let's be there for them. Remember, when everyone thinks that others will donate so they don't have to, nothing will happen.

Tax deductible donations in any amount are important. For a private tour or to learn more call Chief Morrison at 413-258-4742.



## Winter 2015-16 Snowfall

As measured/estimated at a Beech Plain back yard weather station

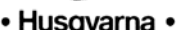
December 2015 . . . . .	1 inch
January . . . . .	5 inches
February . . . . .	17 inches
March . . . . .	1 inch

**Total season inches . . . . . 24**

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# The Librarian's Corner

By Terry Spohnholz

*April showers bring mayflowers....*

*What do mayflowers bring?*

If you are from New England or reside in New England you know the answer. Pilgrims!

Well, neither pilgrims nor mayflowers are arriving at the library but some really fun reads have (as well as a few enlightening ones).

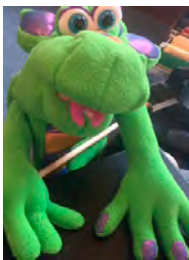
- *All the Light We Cannot See*, by Anthony Doerr
- *Fates and Furies*, by Lauren Groff
- *Girl on the Train*, by Paula Hawkins
- *NYPD Red 4*, by James Patterson
- *See Me*, by Nicholas Sparks
- *Blue*, by Danielle Steel
- *Guest Room*, by Chris Bohjalian
- *In Other Words*, by Jhumpa Lahiri
- *The Steel Kiss*, by Jeffrey Deaver
- *Clawback*, by J.A. Jance
- *Dark Money: The Hidden History of Billionaires Behind the Rise of the Radical Right*, by Jane Mayer

## HAPPENINGS AT THE LIBRARY

Yes, more than just books are going on here. We are all about FUN.

Saturday, April 9 – **Card-making class with Vicki MacDonald** from 1-4 p.m. Supplies cost \$10 for six cards. Call by April 4 to register to make sure we have enough supplies for everyone (Kathie Burrows, 258-4943). Put your creative mind to work and make someone happy!

Saturday, April 23 – More **ARTS and CRAFTS** and storytelling with Finn (the library's special dragon). This will be a gardening and flower theme because we think **SPRING** is a happening thing.



**EBOOKS** – for those of you patiently awaiting the key to that kingdom, the application has been submitted and we are awaiting the contract. Hopefully very soon. So patience, Grasshopper. At least that is what I remind myself!

**DVDs** – We keep adding films with donations from our gracious patrons. Old favorites and recent contributions are on the shelves. That includes the final season of “Downton Abbey.” We have the first five seasons as well, so if you haven’t gotten hooked like the rest of us, you can be!

If we don’t have what you’d like on the shelves, we can request it from other libraries. If you don’t want to drive to the movies or shell out \$20 for a movie you will watch only once, come on down – the most recent Academy Award winners, blockbusters, and yes, a few movies that got that a one-star rating can be requested. AND for children of all ages – “Minions,” “Back to the Beginning,” and “Inside Out” – are on our shelves. I love Disney and Pixel movies.

Happiness is ... reading a phenomenal book and having another great one to move onto.

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*Young readers Aiden O’Neil, Aedan Cannamela, and Grayson Holland with librarian Terry Spohnholz.*

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# Council on Aging



By Susan Galik

The Council meets every Wednesday from 11-2 at the basement of the Town Hall Annex. We have a luncheon at noon. Please join us.

We've started line dancing again. It looks as if the two separate classes are merging into one super class. We start at 3:30 p.m. on Thursdays at Old Town Hall with a beginner class ... and then the speed ramps up. The class ends at 5 p.m. Join in the class any time you want. \$2 suggested donation.

Qi-Gong classes ... a sitting form of Tai Chi has also begun. We meet on Mondays and Fridays at 11 a.m. in Old Town Hall. These classes are perfect for those who have a hard time moving around. If you can get into Old Town Hall, you are set for an hour. The exercises are slow movements of almost all of your body parts and do not put a great strain on you. You should be able to

return to your car with no problems. Please join us. \$2 suggested donation.

This issue of the paper is being printed too late for us to announce the "Aging in Place" conversation at the Great Barrington Senior Center. If there are future conversations on the same theme, we will try to get advance notice.

We will hold a Foot Care Clinic on Tuesday, April 5, from 9 a.m. until 1 p.m. Senior Center, Town Hall Annex basement. An appointment is required. Please call Linda Riiska to schedule a time. Linda's phone is 258-4816.

### MEET THE CANDIDATES, MAY 4


Early next month will be our third annual Meet the Candidates forum. May 4, Thursday. 11 a.m. at the basement in the Town Hall Annex. Luncheon follows.

### IF WE GET FUNDING ...

The following may happen if there is interest, and we get the funding:


**Memory Café.** This is a structured time when caregivers and patients will be giving instructions

for increasing memory ... or not losing what memory you still have. We would meet once a month at the COA Center in the basement of Town Hall Annex. Planned activities and a light snack. Please call me, Susan Galik, at 258-4113 and leave a message if interested. You can also call 258-4215.

**Falls Prevention Class.** A one-hour class, twice a week for 12 weeks. The first class of the week would be on Wednesdays at 11 a.m. and the second on whatever day and time is decided by the group. Maybe a Saturday or some evening? Call me at 258-4113 or 258-4215 and leave a message. 



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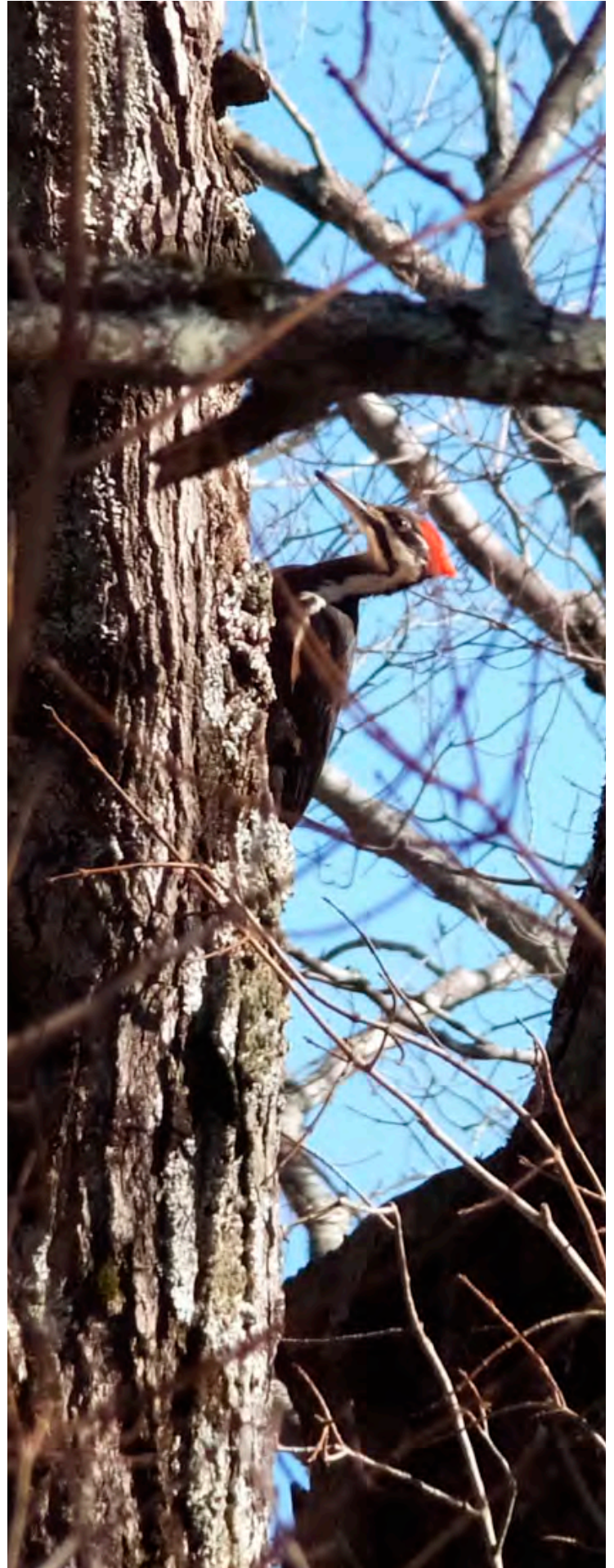
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# SOME BIRDS OF SANDISFIELD



*A barred owl and a pileated woodpecker, both captured on film by Emily Melchior and Calvin Rodman of Fox Road early Spring, 2016.*





## A GREAT, LOVELY STORY

“Freedom from Fear” by Setsuko Winchester (in Jan/Feb issue) is a great, a lovely story. Congratulations to her and to The Sandisfield Times.

Alicia Moore  
Ipswich, Mass.



## Walter Victorious

By Val Coleman

I have this old crock of a lamp with a battered shade and suspicious wiring that sits next to my bed allowing me to read my Sherlock Holmes late at night.

On Sunday, March 27, the lamp died with a terrible electrical noise blowing some fuse somewhere in my mad scramble of wires. I couldn't for the life of me figure out what was wrong so I called my usual electrician who wasn't around.

Then I made a selfish, outrageous decision. I called my old pal Walter Linkovich who used to be my electric-fix man but has long since retired to his blue chair and his iconic white jeep. “I'll be right over,” he said and he was ... walking slowly but gamely up my porch ramp.

“What's the problem?” Walter asked.

“Lights are blown in my bedroom, Walter. Can you fix it.?”



Walter Linkovich Photo: Setsuko Winchester

Now remember, Walter is 89 and hates stairs.

Ten minutes later, after he handed me his cane so he could walk down the cellar stairs holding onto the railing with both hands, his diagnosis was complete.

“Push the reset button on the electrical strip, Val,” he decreed without a trace of scorn ... and sure enough, the lights went on, and I've been reading my big fat Sherlock Holmes book happily ever after.

Bravo, Walter! 🍷



## Our New Boston Park

Volunteers cleaned and tidied up the New Boston Park in early March, attracting a passing couple to stop and enjoy the river and the trees just beginning to bud. In the background is a new private residence still under construction, on the site of the former New Boston Store.

Photo: Ron Bernard



## The Woods Bus

By Gary Leveille

An odd connection between southern Connecticut and the Berkshires: While hiking with my brother-in-law David Moulthrop in the Sandisfield woods, we discovered this city bus. Faded advertising on the side promoted the old Stars Department Store in Wallingford, Conn.

The bus's last stop was in South Sandisfield, obviously when there were fewer trees than now. It can only be seen when the leaves are down. It might have been used as a hunting cabin many years ago; an old stove is installed inside. I climbed into the driver's seat, and David took a picture.





# NOW HEAR THIS!

*Edited by Laura Rogers-Castro.*

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

## APRIL EVENTS

**Qi Gong Classes** on Mondays, from 11 to noon at the Senior Center, basement of the Town Hall Annex on Route 57. Suggested donation \$2.

**Line Dancing Classes** on Thursdays, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. leading into more advanced at 5 to 6 p.m., at Old Town Hall on Silverbrook Road. Suggested donation \$2.

**Town Caucus** on Monday, April 4, at 7 p.m., at Old Town Hall.

**Foot Care Clinic** on Tuesday, April 5, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Senior Center, basement of the Town Hall Annex on Route 57. An appointment is required, please call Linda (258-4816). \$25.

**Card Making Class** on Saturday, April 9, from 1-4 p.m., Library lower level. Supplies \$10 for six greeting cards. Register by April 4. Vicki MacDonald, 258-4943.

**Church service** on Sunday, April 10 at 10 a.m., at the New Boston Congregational Church, 4 Sandisfield Road, Rt. 57.

**Public Meeting, Sandisfield Master Plan** on Wednesday, April 13, at 7 p.m. at the Old Town Hall. Review a draft of the Master Plan. There will be an opportunity for public comment on the working document that addresses factors that will shape Sandisfield and its future.

**Wired West regular board meeting** for April will be held Saturday, April 23 at 9:30 a.m., at the Sandisfield Arts Center. All interested parties are welcome.

**Last Day to Register to Vote** at Annual Town Meeting and Town Election, April 25. Town Hall Annex, 2-4 p.m. and from 7-8 p.m.

**Opening Reception: Nick Hawvermale Photography** on Saturday, April 30, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Road. Photos that bring the wild into a closer view.

**The Poetry of Spring** on Saturday, April 30, at 4 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center. A poetry reading with music. \$10.

## MAY: SAVE THE DATES

**Meet the Candidates** on May 4, Wednesday, 11 a.m., at Council on Aging, basement of Town Hall Annex. Luncheon to follow.

**Workshop on Land Conservation Options** on May 7, 10 a.m. to noon at the Sandisfield Arts Center. Achieve your goals as a landowner while benefiting your regional community. Sponsored by the New England Forestry Foundation and The Nature Conservancy.

**Annual Town Meeting** on May 14, Saturday, 10 a.m., Fire Station #2, Route 57.

**Annual Town Election** on May 16, Monday, 10 a.m.-8 p.m., at Old Town Hall.

## APRIL EVENTS IN SURROUNDING TOWNS

**Bird Walk in Monterey** sponsored by the Hoffman Bird Club on Saturday, April 9, beginning at 7:30 a.m. Meet at the Price Chopper parking lot in Great Barrington. A half-day trip, includes Bob's Way and Diane's Trail to find early spring migrants. Contact Leader Kate Ryan (528-4355 or [divinducky@aol.com](mailto:divinducky@aol.com)) to let her know you are attending and last-minute updates.

**Wildflower Festival** Saturday, April 16 until Friday, May 6, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., at Bartholomew's Cobble in Ashley Falls. Tour guides will provide three walks a day to explore this unique National Natural Landmark. \$5, members. \$10, nonmembers. For information, call 413-298-3239, ext. 3013 or [cpetrikhuff@thetrustees.org](mailto:cpetrikhuff@thetrustees.org).

**Woodland Connections for Women** on Thursday, April 21 from 10 a.m.-12 p.m., at the Bidwell House in Monterey. Women are welcome to attend a guided walk outdoors, followed by a light lunch and informal exchange of questions, problems, and strategies for planning, owning, and managing land. Free, but space is limited. Please register at 413-625-9151, ext. 111 or [wferris@franklinlandtrust.org](mailto:wferris@franklinlandtrust.org).

## 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.; All Wednesdays: 2-5 p.m.; Thursday: 5-7 p.m.

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

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We welcome submissions, comments and suggestions, including letters to the editor **BY THE 15<sup>TH</sup> 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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