

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume VII, Number 6

September 2016

Town's Fiscal Affairs In Disorder

**SYSTEMS BREAKDOWN
CAUSES AUDITING DELAYS**

- Select Board Surprised
- IRS Pays a Visit
- Changes Coming, Slowly

Special Around Town Hall report, page 3



Mowing 2016

By Bogart Muller

It's a quarter to five. The morning is dim and still. An iridescent blue sky heading towards Berkshire County looks almost fake as the sun hasn't shown its face quite yet from the East.

The crows won't stop bickering about the fresh roadkill on Rt. 8, annoying everybody in the forest. Wifey's alarm is set to go off in another 45 minutes, so I tiptoe to the Keurig. My Maine Coon meows at my feet. "Can I come with you today?"

Headlights appear at the end of the driveway, men with coffee of their own, able and ready to work. Breakfast gets woofed down as AccuWeather gets uploaded. Prevailing winds 5-7 mph and no rain from here to Michigan. Upper 70s and perfect.

Last check to see if everything is running OK.

Thumbs up, the truck gets turned on, off we go!

We're hitting all over today, from North Beech Plain to 183, from West New Boston to West Street. Municipal properties, cemeteries, and some of the finest estates in New England are on the list for today.

Jokes pass around in the cab about news and our competition. How hysterical three guys can be.

We arrive, unload, and the sound of 36 hp mowers mean business. Soon an old, overgrown park will look like the President is coming to visit, cut just so, in perfect order, every blade of grass where it's supposed to be.

Between jobs, the guys dig into their coolers. If you don't bring food out here, you don't eat. The day goes by without a breakdown. Properly maintained equipment properly maintains your checkbook.

Just one more lawn before knocking off for a day that already feels complete? Save it for tomorrow? Nah, we are here already, and the customer insists we help ourselves to those blueberries growing in abundance out back. Ahh, the perks of loving your job. 🍷

Bogart Muller owns and operates RSE, a Sandisfield grounds-keeping service contracted by more than two dozen local residential homes. RSE also maintains cemeteries and municipal grounds for the Town of Sandisfield.

SIREN CALL FOR FIREMEN/EMTs

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO
STEP UP, HELP OUT.**

See two articles, page 7

INSIDE PAGE

STATE/PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS	2
RT. 57 BRIDGE TIMING	4
HISTORICAL SOCIETY SLEEPS	4
NEW TOWN ADMINISTRATOR	5
NEW LIFE FOR OLD HOUSE	6
TOUGH SUMMER FOR FARMERS	10-11
A DROP JUST SO	15


American Legion's Annual Turkey Roll

By Maria Domato, Commander, American Legion Post 456

The Annual Turkey Roll fund-raiser will be held Friday, September 23, 7 p.m., at the American Legion Pavilion on Rt. 8 at New Boston.

If you're lucky, a \$2 roll of the dice (not turkeys) will win a great prize, which could be a turkey, ham, shrimp, or much more. You can also win at our great raffles or 50/50. Bar and food will be available. Come have some fun and check out the improvements in the Pavilion.

If you can't attend the Turkey Roll, consider sending a cash donation. Donations are always welcome as a lot of work remains to be done on our Pavilion rehabilitation.

And remember that on Saturday, October 15, 1:00-3:00 p.m., we will hold an open house at the Pavilion to honor Sandisfield's World War II veterans: Norton Fletcher, Walter Linkovich, and William Tacy. Save the date. 

Cultural Council Grants Available

DEADLINE: OCTOBER 15


ONLINE SUBMISSION ONLY

The Sandisfield Cultural Council supports programs in the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences. In 2016 the Council awarded eleven grants totaling over \$4,000 to local individuals and organizations.

The next grant cycle begins September 1 and ends October 15, 2016. Applications are available online at www.mass-culture.org. They must be submitted by Oct 15. Paper applications are no longer accepted.

For online access and help with applications, visit the Sandisfield Library.

Co-chairs Connie Canty and Terry Spohnholz will lead the Cultural Council for the coming grant cycle. John Skrip, who served as chairman for six years, will serve as an ex-officio Council member with no voting rights, his term having expired.

At its July meeting, the Council announced that new member Ron Pachulski would serve as secretary. Ron is a very active member of the Sandisfield community. The Council meets three times a year. To learn more, speak to any Council member: Connie Canty, Anina Carr, Clare English, Peter Levine, Ron Pachulski, Terry Spohnholz, or John Skrip. 

From Town of Sandisfield, Dolores Harasyko, Town Clerk State Primary and State and Presidential Election Information

Below is the most updated information available regarding voting this fall in the State Primary and the State and Presidential Election.

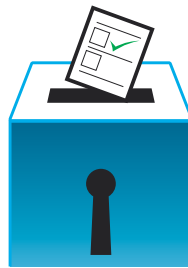
THE STATE PRIMARY

The Primary is on Thursday, September 8, 2016, from 7:00 a.m. till 8:00 p.m. at Old Town Hall, 3 Silverbrook Road. Normally the primary is held on Tuesdays, but this year it has been moved to a Thursday.

Who can vote: All registered voters can vote in the State Primary. Voters enrolled in a party can only vote in that party's primary. Unenrolled voters and voters enrolled in political designations must declare which party ballot they want to receive when they come to the polls.

Absentee Ballots: There are three reasons a voter may vote by absentee ballot:

1. Absence from their town during the hours the polls are open
2. Disability prevents them from going to the polling place
3. A religious belief prevents them from going to their polling place



You can obtain an absentee voting application by calling the Town Clerk's office. Ballots are usually available three weeks before the election.


THE STATE AND PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

The State and Presidential Election is on Tuesday, November 8, 2016, from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall, 3 Silverbrook Rd. The same rules apply for absentee ballots as listed above.

The State has added Early Voting for biennial state elections. This means that you can vote two weeks before the actual election.

Early voting will take place in the Town Clerk's office at the Town Hall Annex, 66 Sandisfield Road. The schedule for early voting is as follows:

- October 24, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- October 25, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- October 26, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- October 27, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- October 28, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- October 31, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- November 1, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- November 2, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- November 3, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- November 4, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

If you have any questions regarding your voting status or about the elections don't wait until the last minute. The Town Clerk would rather answer questions ahead of time. 

A Chance in October to Clean House


By John Skrip, Select Board Member

It's not a bad idea to plan for fall cleaning. Coming in October is a second chance to clean out your medicine cabinets and those drawers where you've stashed old, outdated medications.

Also, used syringes and outdated sharps will be collected.

The Fire Department will host its second medical waste disposal drop-off on October 9, a Sunday, from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. The drop-off site will be Fire House # 1 on Rt. 8 in New Boston, just north of Villa Mia Restaurant.

Protect sharps in some kind of sealed container. A coffee can will do. All medicine must also be in a sealed bag or container.

If for any reason you need your medical waste picked up, please call John Skrip at 258-4788, and John will arrange a pick-up for you. The Select Board thanks the Fire Department again for sponsoring this public service. 

AROUND TOWN HALL

By Alice Boyd, Chairman, Select Board

Turning Chaos into Order

Over the past year your Select Board became increasingly aware that Sandisfield's fiscal house is not in order.

At first, we received numerous complaints from department heads and committees. Then frequent delinquent notices came to our attention and at least one town phone was turned off for nonpayment. The Fire Department phone was scheduled to be disconnected, Staples refused to fill orders, the County Retirement office called about delinquent payments and reports, veteran's checks were late, and vendors were increasingly contacting Town Hall or my home to get paid.

When these problems first became apparent we had called our independent auditor to discuss bringing in an audit team, a good business practice and a requirement for bonding. Bonding is the mechanism used by cities and towns to borrow for equipment, construction, or projects like Broadband.

As Chairman I asked our auditor for advice regarding our growing concerns about the state of our town's bookkeeping. I took copious notes from that conversation, which included the ominous statement of "your town is practically unauditible."

The problem expands ...

Then the IRS arrived flashing badges.

It appears that federal taxes were paid but required paperwork was never submitted. And it appears that other critical documents were never filed. The IRS has now verbally requested a list of town assets including buildings, land, and vehicles.

Finally, a few employees have received notices from the IRS regarding taxes owed that had been withheld when processing the employee's paycheck. All of this is cause for alarm, and we have turned to our attorneys for assistance.

It is clear that Sandisfield lacked the appropriate systems and accountability. This was partially rectified by the creation of a Town Accountant position, though it has yet to be filled.

In the meantime, we have been unable to bring in outside accountants to work on reconstructing our financial books because in most cases the necessary backup documentation is nonexistent. There's nothing to work with.

It seems every day there is a new problem.

Some good news ...

The good news is that there will be a systemic change in the way Sandisfield conducts business that will protect your tax dollars and enforce accountability. We will conduct regular audits so our town can be placed firmly on the path to long-term fiscal stability.

Other good news: At the annual Town Meeting Sandisfield voters took a huge step forward by changing our bylaws, allowing the town to appoint rather than elect our Town Treasurer and Tax Collector. In late June the Selectmen appointed Terry Spohnholz as Treasurer. A former municipal auditor, Terry has begun the work of reconstituting our accounting systems.


But months to go before ...

Correcting our fiscal house will be a larger chore than anyone imagined. It may take a full year, with the help of additional staff, to correct the deficiencies and bring our town into compliance. It will be months before we know where we are for FY2016. And it will take considerable funds, not budgeted, to correct the town's books.

Our ability to bond or borrow has been compromised, which could impact our ability to secure grants.

In the meantime, we are trying to be as transparent as possible and alert residents and taxpayers to these issues. Other news media may become aware of our issues and report them as we work to solve them.

We are working, now, to solve our back accounting issues by installing safeguards and best practices. We want to ensure that Sandisfield does not slip back into fiscal issues of the kind I've outlined.

Bear with us. We have a lot of work to do. 

No New Bridge... Yet

AND START TIME UNCERTAIN

By Miriam Karmel

One-lane bridge. Twelve-ton limit.

For nearly a year, that sign has warned town residents and passersby to prepare to stop before driving over the bridge on Route 57 that spans the Clam River. The bridge, which was resurfaced twenty years ago and has been crumbling and rusting for a number of years, is set for repairs.

But work, which the town expects to begin this winter, may not start until next spring, said Steven Mack, principal engineer for the project.

For now, travelers will continue to cross the bridge single file. Whenever construction does begin, traffic will be rerouted onto narrow River Road, already something of a *de facto* one-way thoroughfare.

Mack, who works with Foresight Land Services in Pittsfield and was hired by the town, cited delays in getting contracts through the state as one reason for

the later-than-anticipated starting date. Reached by phone in mid-August, Mack said he hoped to submit design plans to the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (Mass DOT) by the end of August. Then it could take several months for Mass DOT to sign off on the project, at which point it will go out to bid.

The project, which once started should take six months to complete, includes removing the existing deck and replacing it with a reinforced polymer deck. The existing steel structure and sidewalks will also be repaired, Mack said.

Mack could not say whether stoplights will be installed on River Road, as they were when the bridge was last repaired.

The town has requested that truck traffic be rerouted onto an alternate detour because of the poor condition of River Road and the fact that a second bridge, which will connect traffic back to Rt. 57 near the former Silverbrook Café, is itself in poor condition and cannot bear heavy loads. Mack, however, said that that bridge may be reinforced or repairs made that could allow trucks to pass over it.

For now, the project is at a standstill. "The state has to sign off on this," Mack said. 🗞

Sandisfield Historical Society



By John Kuzmecz, President

After a Half Century, Society Closing Its Door

The Sandisfield Historical Society voted to move into a kind of hibernation at their August 20 meeting.

With no one willing to assume the responsibilities of leadership and with current officers ready to step back from their duties, the Society's board considered the sense of the dozen attendees and voted to move the society into an inactive status.

The choice was to go into an inactive status or dissolve the group altogether. Dissolving a tax-exempt organization can be a complicated matter, and we determined a sort of hibernation was the best way to go forward.

By-laws of the Society, which was founded in 1970, allow it to go into an "inactive status for a period of up to five years." The current president, treasurer, and secretary will stay in place, with their term of office to be the period of inactivity. If the president cannot serve for any reason the secretary or treasurer will assume the role and fill vacancies by appointment. The Society can move to an active status on the decision of the president. Dues will be suspended, though donations and grants may be accepted.

According to the by-laws, during the inactive period the board "will take all actions necessary to maintain and protect the Society's building and grounds and heritage materials."

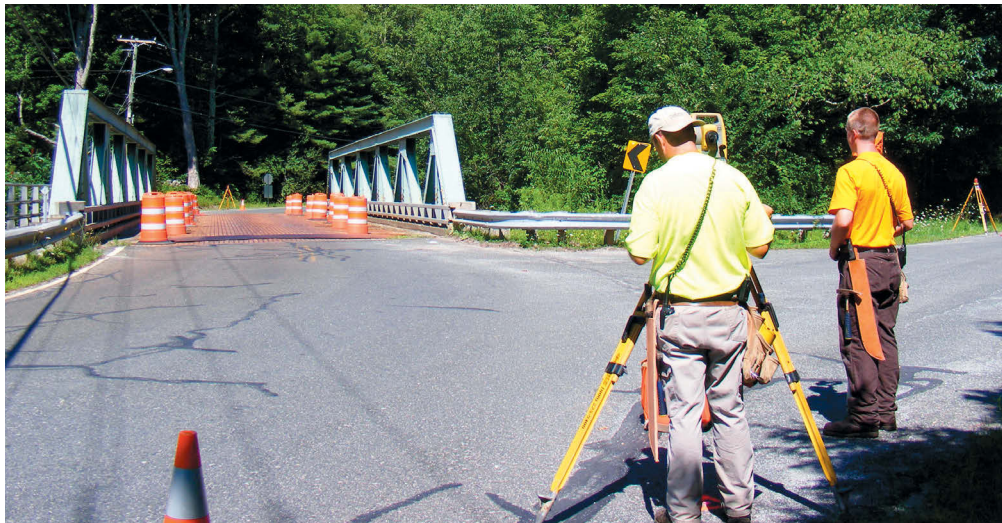
If anyone has questions about the Society, please call me at 413-258-4906.

Despite our inactive status, the Society will hold its Annual Apple Fest on Saturday, October 8, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. The usual booths will be open, hamburgers and hot dogs available, apples and more apples, and pies made by members of the Council on Aging. A huge tag sale will move many items out of the Society's storage and into someone's home.

The Society will also hold its annual Wine & Cheese Party on Sunday, November 6, from 2-4 p.m. Donations will be asked in order to keep the building warm in winter and the lights on.

The Annual Holiday Fair will be sponsored this year by the Scholarship Committee, in a spirit of continuing a Sandisfield tradition and helping a neighbor organization. A tentative date has been set for Saturday, December 3 at Firehouse #2.

There will be no meetings of the Historical Society until further notice. 🗞



Surveyors plotting the angles of the Rt. 57 Bridge at West New Boston.



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TOWN NEWS

By Bill Price

Master Plan Potluck

The Master Plan Potluck Dinner has been rescheduled for early October at Fire Station #2, date to be announced. All Boards and everyone in town (part-time, seasonal, full-time, weekend guests) are invited to bring something to share at a potluck dinner to review and discuss implementation of the Sandisfield Master Plan.

The plan is available for review at the Town Hall Annex and the Library in hardcopy. It is also available online at: berkshireplanning.org (go to Current Projects and find Sandisfield Master Plan).

Select Board Chairman Alice Boyd said, "Master plans are only good if they are implemented."

DCR Meeting

The Select Board and town representatives met with Leo Roy, Department of Conservation and Recreation Commissioner, on August 24 to review co-development of recreational opportunities here. The development of Spectacle Pond was a main discussion point.

Thinking to begin with small steps, DCR offered to provide sand for a beach with the town responsible for spreading it, possibly ready for summer of 2017. In the meantime, planning for larger steps could be taken, including a boat launch, hiking, and snowmobile trails, possibly to open June 2018 when, as Nina Carr pointed out, the mountain laurel is in bloom all around the lake. That idea appealed to the commissioner, although he was careful to point out that both the state and the town are operating with constrained resources.

Pipeline

Judge Agostino is expected to issue a ruling soon on what remuneration – if any – Kinder Morgan/Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company will pay Sandisfield for the "inconvenience" of its 3.8-mile pipeline across the Beech Plain section.

TGP surveyors have installed stakes marking where the pipeline will cross Cold Spring, Hammertown, and Beech Plain roads.


The water quality issue is still being argued in court. And it has been reported that TGP has pushed its tree-cutting schedule back to the second or third quarter of 2017. The line was originally scheduled to be operational by November 2016.

The Sandisfield Conservation Commission is still holding meetings with TGP regarding protocols the commission issued regarding the company's pipeline proposal. Eighteen "monitors" from out of town attended the August meeting, held in the Town Hall Annex basement, having driven all the way from Ashfield, Conway, Plainfield and other towns to witness the monthly reviews. While strongly opposed to the construction of this third pipeline, the monitors are a pleasant and orderly crowd.

Income to the Town

A contract worth \$28,900 was awarded to the high bidder, Bill Riiska, for logging town land behind the Sandisfield Center Cemetery on Rt. 57.

Road Crew

Following the August 13 wind and rainstorm, the road crew cleared three trees down across Beech Plain Road, two on New Hartford Road, one on Rt. 57, and another on Town Hill Road. The crew, when not clearing trees, has skim coated long stretches of Rt. 183, which had begun to resemble an obstacle course. 

Introducing Willie Morales

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR ON THE JOB

By Tom Christopher



When Willie Morales was interviewing for the position of Sandisfield's town administrator, he could tell that the Selectmen were incredulous about one part of his resumé.

Had he really sung opera professionally in Europe from 2001 to 2007? Willie's response was obvious but unexpected: he cut loose with an aria from the second act of Tosca. This made an impression. As Willie notes "an opera singer proper sings pretty loudly, and we were in very close proximity ... the selectmen were surprised, I think, by the sound that comes out of the human voice."

Actually, Morales' operatic experience is not entirely irrelevant to the position to which the

Selectmen subsequently appointed him.

While he was in Europe, he recalls, his colleagues had lots of questions for him during the run-up to the invasion of Iraq in 2005. They wanted to know about American policies, and Willie was embarrassed that he, as a citizen, had so little understanding of the subject.

So when the financial collapse of 2008 reduced his opportunities to sing, Morales went back to school, at the University of Northern Iowa, to pursue a master's degree in public policy. The focus of his university work was the organization of administrative employees, a subject particularly relevant to our town's desire for greater governmental efficiency.

Even before receiving his degree in 2015, Morales was already working for the town of Hudson, Iowa, with a population of 2,300, first as an intern and subsequently as city manager.


His attachment to western Massachusetts drew him back to this area as soon as his studies were complete. Although born in Jamaica, Queens, in New York City and having attended the High

School of Performing Arts in Manhattan, Morales explains that his family would periodically join relatives in Springfield and the Holyoke area. When he returned from Europe, he purchased a house in Springfield, making a return to Massachusetts a foregone conclusion.

When asked about the challenges he may face as Sandisfield's Town Administrator, Morales says that he doesn't see challenges. Rather, he sees opportunities.

One of his first goals, he adds, is to make the community aware of "the great men and women we have working on behalf of the town." Too often, he adds, we are aware of what is happening in public administration only when something is going wrong.

Among the things which Morales sees as going right has been Sandisfield's strong and business-like reaction to the Kinder Morgan/Tennessee Gas pipeline expansion plan. Sandisfield's town government did not let this major corporation drive a third pipeline through the town without going through the process of engaging with the company, going to local legislators, and securing, as best it could, the interests of Sandisfield residents.

"That," says Morales, "shows knowledge of the public policy process and an interest in protecting [the town's] citizens. And that's something I am very passionate about." 

New Owners For Venerable Montville House

A PLACE TO UNWIND

By Ron Bernard

There must be something about the old Newton Phelps House that inspires its families to remain for generations. Since the 1840s, going on two centuries, only three families have called it home.

Now a young couple, Cosmo Pfiel and Betty Gilpin, will be the fourth family to inhabit this Montville icon which proudly overlooks the intersection of Rt. 57 and Town Hill Road.



*Cosmo Pfiel and Betty Gilpin
(Broadway.com)*

Newton Phelps (1803-78) of Granby, Conn., a wheelwright by trade, was most likely the builder of this large house. The family would have needed room because Newton and his wife, Lucy Austin, raised ten children here. Phelps probably ordered the grand French-style windows for the first floor, a significant departure from conventional Greek Revival-style design at the time. Phelps' windows very likely raised a few eyebrows in the neighborhood.

The family in 1906 sold to Charles Whitney who may have added the wrap-around porch. Whitney sold to Max Linder in 1922 who quickly resold to Max and Feige Sandler of New York. The Sandler property passed to their son, Jacob "Jack" and his wife Lena Klein who operated a large chicken farm here until 1965. Jack and Lena were community leaders, especially serving as guardians of the B'Nai Abraham Synagogue before it was converted to today's Arts Center. Jack died in 1990; Lena in 2013 at 96.

The new owners are both professional actors, bringing a new dimension to town. Natives of Vermont and Connecticut, respectively, Cosmo and Betty met while performing. Betty is daughter of veteran actor Jack Gilpin, probably best known for his prominent roles in *Kate & Allie* and *Law & Order*. Her mother is career actress Ann McDonough.

What brought them to Sandisfield?

"We are both from New England," Cosmo said, "and feel very connected to it. We looked around the area for some time. I love the outdoors and to work with my hands."

He added, "Betty is very busy these days, running back and forth between New York and Los Angeles. So the Berkshires seemed to offer what we need – nice old houses, great land and views, and a place to unwind."

"My folks," said Betty, "are good friends with David and Patricia Hubbard [residents on Dodd Road]. They introduced us to town. At first I was not too sure about this place, but it has so much character and I came around. Plus Cosmo is very skilled, so we took the leap."

Betty is a serious, career-minded actress notable for portraying Dr. Carrie Roman in Showtime's

Nurse Jackie. She has also appeared in *Law & Order* and other television dramas, most recently *True Story* (2015). She has also appeared in off-Broadway productions.

The Phelps House is remarkably well preserved. Judging from early 20th century images, the exterior is relatively little changed although an old connected barn is gone. The interior of the main house will benefit from renovation and redecorating and that should keep the new owners busy for some time.

In a ceremony at the house on August 6, Cosmo and Betty were married, a fitting beginning for life at a house which keeps its families for generations.



Above: The Newton Phelps house as it appeared about 1907. (Great Barrington Historical Society/DeMars Images)

Below: Now the Pfiel/Gilpin home, 2016.



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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

By Zoe Nelson

I have served as an EMT for 27 years. Working as an Emergency Medical Technician – or EMT, as many of you know us – has changed over those nearly three decades, and so has my life.


The one thing that has not changed is the dedicated volunteers I have worked with and still do, and all the individuals who came before us that have made our Fire Department the squad it is today.

The hours of schooling and the midnight calls have been rewarded many times over by just knowing that we may have helped one of our neighbors in a time of need.

In the past few years the town has generously voted to pay us a stipend for responding to calls, and at this time I would like to thank the town for this. But many hours are still spent as a volunteer with an organization that keeps small communities like ours going and, truthfully, is what we are built on.

Right now, many of us have served for many years. Our backs and legs are still strong, but have grown older. More volunteers are needed at this time to keep this valuable tradition of volunteering alive in our town.

If you are looking for a way to serve and would appreciate the opportunity to help a neighbor, volunteering as a fireman or an EMT – or both – is a great way to do just that.

(For details of how you can help, see the adjoining article “A Siren Call from the Fire Department and EMS.”) 

A Siren Call from the Fire Department and EMS

VOLUNTEERS WANTED AND NEEDED

By Tom Christopher

“Help Needed” is the message from Ralph Morrison, Sandisfield’s Fire Chief.

He needs more volunteers to come forward to help fulfill the missions of the town’s Fire Department and Emergency Medical Service. “I’m not saying it’s desperate,” he explains, “but it is serious.”

The two departments meet important needs in Sandisfield: the Fire Department answers about 125 calls per year and the EMS ambulance answers an average of 150. Yet the pool of help has been static and aging for some time. Fifty percent of Sandisfield’s volunteer firemen are over 60 years old, and the chief himself is about to turn sixty-two. Ralph has been chief for 37 years.

What is needed is new volunteers, fresh blood, men and women.

Younger volunteers are in particularly short supply, but older ones are welcome, too – there is a job, the chief asserts, suited to everyone.

An older volunteer, for example, may not be up to dragging hoses at a house fire, but could undertake highway safety training and learn to direct traffic at a fire site. Any number of people are needed, and all readers of The Sandisfield Times are potential volunteers.


The Fire Department (which oversees the EMS ambulance service) offers many kinds of training, most of them on-site. You can learn cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, how to deal with hazardous materials, what to do as a first responder, and many other skills, all without leaving Sandisfield. Ambulance volunteers do have to go to state-sponsored class but graduate as certified emergency medical technicians.

Modest stipends may be paid to volunteers as well. Ambulance staff, for example, receive a daily fee for weekend days on which they agree to stay home and be on call. Fire Department volunteers are paid for each call in which they participate.

In addition to the roles they play in Sandisfield, volunteers help surrounding communities with which our town has

mutual aid agreements. One weekend in July, for example, the Sandisfield Fire Department assisted at two calls in Otis. In return for such help, Sandisfield can depend on those other town’s personnel as needed. The Fire Departments and EMS teams here and in neighboring towns often train together.

Volunteerism has been, traditionally, at the core of New England small town life, with civic groups such as the Fire Department and the ambulance service serving as community anchors. This is not only where we safeguard our neighbors, it is where we get to know them, where we form ties to one another.

To volunteer for the Fire Department or as an EMT, please call Fire Chief Ralph Morrison at 258-4742. 

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Out on a Limb: an op-ed

Subject should be interesting to most of us and have a strong link to Sandisfield, written by and for Town residents. The Times does not accept Out on a Limb contributions submitted anonymously, but if the author identifies him or herself to the editor and asks not to be named in the article we may agree to withhold the author’s name on a case-by-case basis.

Send to Editor, Sandisfield Times, P.O. Box 584, Sandisfield, MA 01255 or by email to editor@sandisfieldtimes.org.



The 2016 Presidential Discussion

SANDISFIELD ARTS CENTER

Saturday, October 1, 4 p.m.


Is the country going in the wrong direction? Is it moving in the right direction or standing still?

Can we bring back the old economy and what we thought was a better past?

Is the Republic in danger?

New York Times op-ed writer Timothy Egan thinks so. In July he wrote: "When the Republican convention closed, fear had won the hall. And we should fear – for the Republic, for a democracy facing its greatest peril since the Civil War." ("Make America Hate Again," New York Times, 7/23/2016).


Bill Cohn and Val Coleman are anxious to hear what you think about the prospects facing our country today.

Come to a round-robin discussion at the Arts Center October 1, 4 p.m. Bill and Val will make brief presentations and then hear what you have to say. 

Triple Play Redux

The trio of Triple Play returned to the Sandisfield Arts Center in July and performed their extraordinary blending of jazz, blues, folk, and funk. Here Chris Brubeck gets down on a trombone, Joel Brown hunkers over a guitar, and Peter "Madcat" Ruth contributes sounds not before associated with a harmonica. The trio, which toured and recorded with Sandisfield friends and musicians Ben Luxon and the late Bill Crofut, have performed at the Center for several years. The audience is always glad to see and hear them again.







Photo: Peter Levine



Saturdays at 4:30 pm through October 8

At the historic Meeting House in scenic New Marlborough, Mass

Receptions with the artists after the performances

 <p>September 3 Douglas Trumbull A presentation and demonstration in the Magi Theater Pod where you will see works-in-progress of a revolutionary new movie technology. Advance tickets.</p>	 <p>September 24 The Sebastians A dynamic ensemble specializing in music of the baroque and classical eras. Presenting "Over the Alps", tracing the musical evolution of the Italian style.</p>
 <p>September 10 Simon Shaheen A program of traditional Egyptian and Syrian music, plus improvisations and original compositions by Simon Shaheen. PRE-CONCERT LECTURE AT 3:30 pm</p>	 <p>October 1 Clarinetist Paul Green and combo Paul Green and his Jazz/Jewish fusionband "Two Worlds" with Sephardic Singer Sarah Aroeste in a program of Jazz, Klezmer and Sephardic music.</p>
 <p>September 17 Simone Dinnerstein Harold Lewin Memorial Concert Pianist Simone Dinnerstein performs Schubert and Glass.</p>	 <p>October 8 Award-Winning Authors with Host Simon Winchester Author Simon Winchester with guest Novelist Nicholson Baker, an American award-winning novelist and essayist.</p>

FOR TICKETS & INFORMATION: www.newmarlborough.org (413) 229-2785

Council on Aging

Early October, the smell of apples in the air, home-baked pies. Although the Historical Society is going inactive, it will sponsor its previously scheduled Annual Apple Fest at the Society's building on Rt. 183 at South Sandisfield Road, October 8, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Our members will be there with one of our most popular events of the year: home-baked pies for sale. Please visit the Apple Fest, and take home one or two or three of our excellent pies.


As of now, dates are uncertain for our Qi Gong classes, but watch for posters around town with information updates.

We will again present a Home Modification Program regarding their zero or low percentage loans for home repair, additions, heating replacements, and other home improvements for the elderly. Again, watch for posters around town with dates and times.

The flu clinic is scheduled for September 28 on our regular lunch day.

The COA board meeting is now held only the first Wednesday of each month at 10 a.m. Come for the meeting, and stay for lunch.

We continue to gather each Wednesday for lunch and socialization. Everyone is welcome.

Reminder: Tax-work off positions are available – check at Town Hall. You can save on property tax and help the town at the same time. 



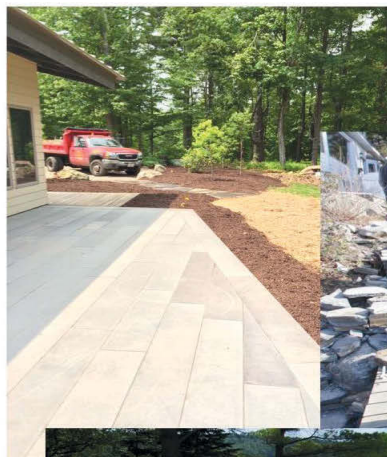
The Way of Sheep

If one sheep starts walking, they all follow. It's no different at Snow Farm on Beech Plain Road. One hot August day, the 25 sheep in Tarasuk's flock stayed out of the heat in the shade of the barn, but when one got up and started ambling back toward the pasture, they all clambered up and followed. Like sheep. Photo: Bill Price



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“You Do the Best You Can”

A TOUGH SUMMER FOR FARMERS

By Bill Price

The Berkshires are not quite in a drought, says Governor Baker, although central and northeastern Massachusetts is. What we’re experiencing here, he declared, is a “drought advisory.”

This summer’s drought “advisory” has been tough for anyone trying to make a living from the land. Three Sandisfield farmers have had similar but varied experiences this summer, but they remain, like farmers everywhere, gamblers on the weather.



July 29. The old Rt. 8 bridge across the Farmington emerges out of the lowering Colebrook Reservoir.



August 23. With the reservoir even lower, the bridge has become a playground.

Riiska Brook Orchard

Because of the lack of rain and a stretch of hot, muggy days in August, the apples on the 2,500 trees at Riiska Brook Orchard on New Hartford Road in South Sandisfield are about half the size they usually are this time of year. “The stress on the trees,” said Barbara Riiska, “has been terrible.”

And not only apples. The summer was too hot for Riiska Brook’s blueberries.

“They cooked on the bushes,” said Billy Riiska. “The first crop of raspberries turned to mush when you tried to pick them. The second crop looks better. So far.”

The year got off to a bad start. Two-to-three days of 20 below temperatures at the end of February “killed all the peach buds,” said Billy. “We had no peaches at all.” Then came the spring bloom, along with another 2-3 days of 20 degree temperatures in late April. “That polished off the Fujis,” said Billy. “Apple varieties react differently to freezes, so some were okay but most weren’t. We’ll still have apples this fall, just not so many. Pears are another story. We might have pears on one side of the tree and nothing on the other, depending on where the wind was blowing during that late freeze.”

Billy added, “It seems that everything we grow is 50 percent this year, or nothing.”

Billy also logs in the Sandisfield woods. He said he has been able to reach places “that are usually swamp. The woods are bone dry. There are more deer lower down. They’re coming for what little water there is.”

“Our pond is the lowest I’ve ever seen it,” said Barbara. “But we’re grateful for what we have. We’ll be fine.”

When Pigs Fly Farm

A few miles away, Sandra Snyder of When Pigs Fly Farm said, “I watched weeds dry up. You know it’s dry when the weeds dry up.”

Andy and Sandra Snyder grow and sell organic vegetables, eggs from free-range chickens, and chemical-free chicken and pork at their Pigs Fly farm stand. They’ve been in operation since 2004.

Sandra said this year their vegetables were smaller than usual. “Cucumbers crack open on the vine. A lot of the cherry tomatoes split when you touch them.”

With a well that reaches down only eight feet, Andy and Sandra were concerned they could run out of water. “We’re careful with our water anyway,” said Sandra. “Animals and chickens get priority. We try not to water the garden, but it’s suffered this summer.”

She said that a drought four or five years ago was worse for them than this year’s “advisory.” “That summer our well did go dry. We have a wonderful neighbor who gave us access to their well, and that got us through all right. They’ve given us permission to use it again if we have to, but we haven’t had to yet.”

Like Barbara Riiska, Sandra was sanguine about the problems facing her and her husband at their farm stand this year. She laughed. “You do the best you can.”

Joshua’s Farm

At the end of Dodd Road, Brigitte Ruthman of Joshua’s Farm raises milk cows, pigs, and chickens. Her fields and pasture lands are drier than normal, but, she said, “just when it seems the green will turn brown we’ve been spared by a brief storm. So pasture lands have not suffered a lot.


“Despite the dryness,” she added, “it’s been a pretty good year for hay. Nice windows of sun. Two years ago we didn’t have three days in a row in June without rain. I’d rather have this.”

But dairy cows, she explained, prefer a perfect temperature at about 40 degrees F. They can stand reasonable cold – even below zero. So this summer of temperatures into the high 80s with a vicious humidity has been rough on her cows and the young calves that were born this spring. She has been trying to extend her pastures to give them more room and particularly some shade.

Breeding cows in the heat is a problem. "That's been a pain in the pocket-book," she said. She explained her cows' fertility cycle. "Cows go into heat once every 21 days or so, and are fertile for just six hours during that time. In this summer heat, they sometimes just don't go into cycle. Thus no calf, thus no milk."

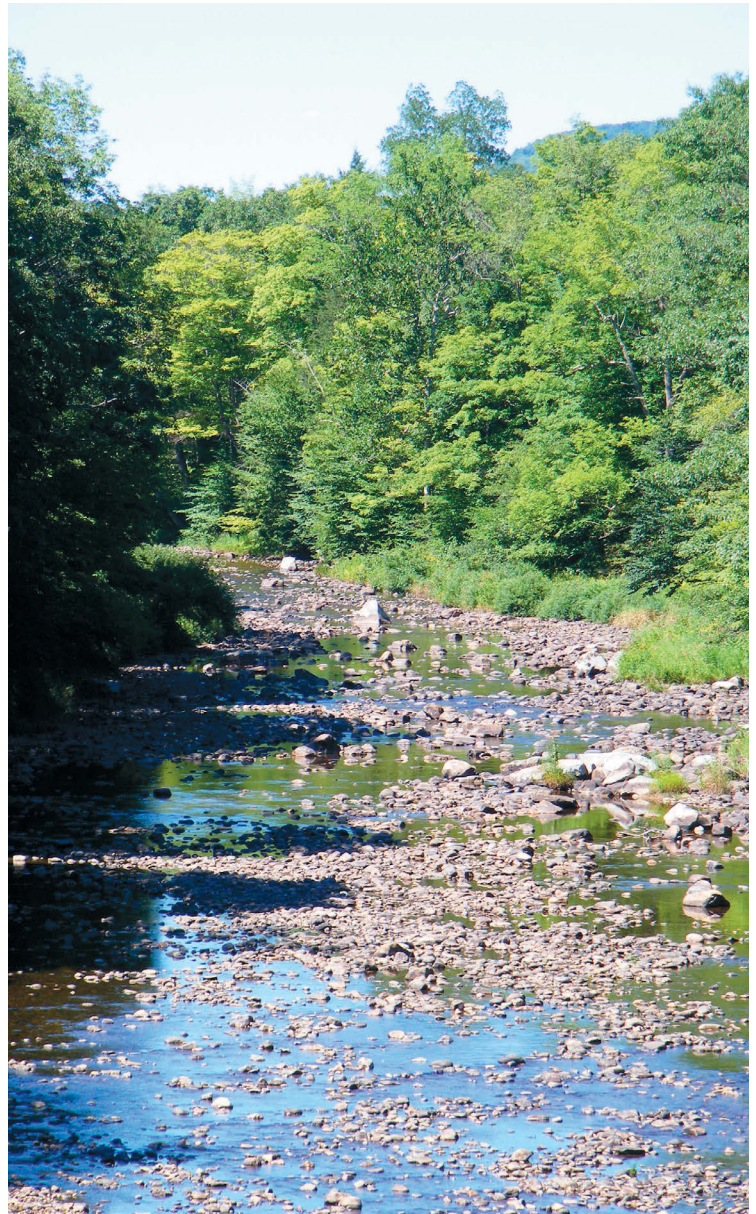
Brigitte bred two cows in mid-July, an expensive process by artificial insemination. "Neither one of them took," she said. "Now I'm back to doing the whole thing all over again."

Good soil management on farms, pastures included, she said, "pays off at times like these. Frequent tilling, chemicals – especially on cropland where weed killers like Atrazine are used – and the burden of heavy machinery can keep soil from retaining moisture. The difference between healthy and unhealthy soil is remarkable. In a dry cornfield where weed killers have been used, the soil can seem like dust."

Brigitte often travels to central Pennsylvania where she has seen this summer's drought much worse than here. "I try to understand the importance of soil, and the Amish have taught me well. Treat the soil well and it will sustain you through droughts." 



A local groundwater-fed pond is down an estimated 85% in late August.




The normally vigorous Farmington River below New Boston is a trickle this late summer. Photos: Bill Price

Community Tag Sale

TOLLAND, MASS.
 On the historic green at Tolland Center, Rte 57,
 Saturday, Sept. 3, 9 am to 4 pm.
 Rain or shine. Booth Space \$15.
 Info Contact: inkoming@netzero.net

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U-Haul Rentals at New Boston Crane & Sleds

By Ron Bernard

New Boston Crane & Sleds on Route 8 in New Boston sells and repairs just about everything with an engine needed by Sandisfield landowners and trail riders, whatever the seasons. Whether you need it or just want it, they have it.

Now they've added a very practical and needed new product line: U-Haul rentals.

Earlier this year a representative of U-Haul stopped by the showroom to see if there was interest in offering the service in Sandisfield. Counterman Eli Holland said, "The rep told us the company saw a need and opportunity for their line between Connecticut locations and Great Barrington."

In March 2015, The Times published a profile of Billy White and his thriving local business. The Times is not surprised that Billy agreed to expand with this new opportunity.

After only several months prospects are looking pretty good. "We already have four or five bookings a week, not bad," according to Eli. So far "advertising" has been limited to U-Haul equipment parked in the front lot on South Main Street. "We are well served by the company's website," he explained.

He produced an enormous chart with the entire U-Haul product line, ranging from hefty trucks down to small trailers. "People can pretty much count on renting what they need here," said Eli. "For the typical rental if we don't have it on the lot, with a little advance notice ... we can have it available in just two or three days. U-Haul traffic central will get it to us."

If you are interested or need information call New Boston Crane Service & Sleds at 413-258-4653, or visit the U-Haul web site.

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FROM THE FARMINGTON RIVER REGIONAL SCHOOL

Because children need healthy meals to learn, our school offers healthy meals every school day. Breakfast costs \$1.30; lunch \$2.50.

Your children may qualify for free or reduced-price meals. Reduced price is \$.30 cents for breakfast and \$.40 cents for lunch. A packet available at the school includes an application for free or reduced-price meal benefits and detailed instructions. Below are some common questions and answers to help you with the application process.

Who can receive free or reduced-price meals?

- All children in households receiving benefits from MA SNAP or MA TANF are eligible for free meals.
- Foster children that are under the legal responsibility of a foster care agency or court are eligible for free meals.
- Children participating in their school's Head Start program are eligible for free meals.
- Children who meet the definition of homeless, runaway, or migrant are eligible for free meals.
- Children may receive free or reduced-price meals if your household's income is within the limits of the Federal Income Eligibility Guidelines. See chart below:

FEDERAL ELIGIBILITY INCOME CHART For School Year 2016 - 2017			
Household Size	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
1	\$21,978	\$1,832	\$423
2	\$29,637	\$2,470	\$570
3	\$37,296	\$3,108	\$718
4	\$44,955	\$3,747	\$865
5	\$52,614	\$4,385	\$1,012
6	\$60,273	\$5,023	\$1,160
7	\$67,931	\$5,663	\$1,307
8	\$75,647	\$6,304	\$1,455
Each add'l person	+ \$7,696	+ \$642	+ \$148

For more information please contact Teresa DellaGiustina, Assistant to the Superintendent, at 413-269-4466, or tdellagiustina@frrsd.org.

Etiquette Dumped

By Bill Price

The garbage piled up. It was Wednesday, August 10. The transfer station was supposed to be open from 2-5. Instead, a cardboard sign explained: "Sorry. Dump closed today. Open tomorrow, 8/11, from 2-5."

Something had come up and attendant Tony Melloni couldn't be there that day. Did residents simply mutter something unintelligible and take their stuff home to bring back when the station was open?

Some did, but not all.

Some hauled their bags and garbage around the fence and dumped it on the compacting machine or left it by the caretaker's cabin. Some left it by the gate. Recyclables were left by the closed bins for somebody else to throw in.

Everyone knows not to leave stuff if the gates are locked, but quite a few did anyway.

Others called Town Hall, but Town Hall had closed at 2. They called here, there. One person even called The Times. Select Board members Alice Boyd and Jeff Gray, not wanting bears and other critters to attack the loose garbage, got the gates open. Road Superintendent Bobby O'Brien figured out how to work the compactor. The place was cleaned up, and Bob manned the site from 4 to 5.

Tony sent his regrets that he was unable to do his work that day. He was grateful for the backup and the help. He cautioned residents that if the station is closed for any reason, a rare event, please don't leave your garbage unattended.

Occasionally people leave garbage during the week, even when the station is closed.

Bears always find it, and Tony has to clean up the mess. For instance, if you want to get rid of the remains of a lobster supper and the transfer station is closed, don't haul it in a bag around the fence and leave it on the trash compactor. Store it in your freezer until dump day.

Now and then Tony's found loose ammunition, .45s, .22s, laying on the ground. Perhaps old ammunition that should have been disposed of properly. He's found needles and all sorts of stuff our readers shouldn't know about, things that should be disposed of properly.

A police presence has been seen at the transfer station watching for people using the dump without a permit, but maybe they should hang around when the place is closed, too.

Someone punched a big hole in the plastic mesh over the new exit gate. Maybe the same person or persons who left an empty whiskey bottle below it. Just another mess for someone else to clean up.

Berkshire Pottery Tour

September 24 & 25 10am-5pm



A self-guided driving tour of 6 Berkshire County pottery studios

www.berkshirepotterytour.com

MEMORY LANE

SANDISFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS



Photo: Times files

On the sultry evening of August 4, 1984, Sandisfield resident and well-known folk musician Bill Crofut (left) teamed up with his friend, British baritone Ben Luxon, for an improbable but memorable benefit performance before a full house at the old Synagogue. This rare image also depicts much of the interior as it appeared before its conversion to the Arts Center about 10 years later.

An audience member recalled the event. "Such was the excitement of the audience expressed in foot stomping and applause that Crofut was compelled to remind everyone to temper enthusiasm, considering the state of the building, lest everyone wind up in the basement!"

Were you there? Do you recognize anyone in the audience? If so, the Times would like to hear from you.

The Times invites you to send us your photos and snapshots of Sandisfield during the 40 years between 1950 and 1990. If you're online, send your photos by email to editor@SandisfieldTimes.org. Include your name and telephone number. If you're not online, send a copy of your photo with a note to us at PO Box 584, Sandisfield, MA 01255. For sure, do not send us your only copy. Include a note with as much detail as possible. Names, dates, locations. We would like to credit whoever took the photo, so if you can, let us know that too.



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What with the changing seasons and closing down of summer, Simon contributes here a London tale that has nothing to do with Sandisfield (not even the fact that we are named for a Brit). A true story (at least the first half; the second half is fiction within a true story), it is submitted to you for your entertainment and reading pleasure.

A Drop Just So

This story involves a cast of two – a once-formidable New York literary agent named Julian Bach, no longer with us, and his most famous client, a writer who, since she is still very much present, I shall call Jane.

A third central figure in the tale is the venerable London hotel named The Connaught, perhaps the grandest in the land, beloved of writers and agents around the world.

Mr. Bach came to stay there one summer's week, and as a favored guest was given a corner suite on what Americans call the second floor, but we Brits call the first. Since he was just off the plane from Kennedy, he decided, quite reasonably, that he would first steep himself in a cleansing and restorative bath.

Now the baths in the Connaught are old and deep and long – unchanged since their installation in Edwardian times. A design quirk has the faucets discharging their hot and cold waters not from on high, like usual plumbing, but through a vent close to the drain plug – with the result, deliberately fashioned, that within moments the rising water covers the inflow and the bath thereupon fills silently and very rapidly.

A waterproof card on the side of the bath announces this fact, and courteously advises residents to keep a close eye on their fast-filling pool lest it overflow and flood the room.

This Julian Bach ignored.

Having laced his bath with ample spoonfuls of Santa Maria Novella bath salts, with their delicious scent of pomegranates, he retired to gossip on the telephone. The bath filled itself unseen, silently, speedily, and within moments steaming water overtopped the sill, and the room itself began to fill.

Fifteen minutes later came a knock on the door. Mr. Bach was greeted by a damp-haired and pleasingly scented waiter from the hotel bar, which happened to be directly beneath his room. Warm

water, said the functionary, was streaming from the ceiling and cascading into the bar – was there perhaps some problem with the plumbing?

Goodness gracious, my most terrible apologies, cried Julian Bach, and opened the bathroom door to a scene of floating chaos and perfumed steam.

Not at all, our fault entirely, returned the waiter, and muscular staff were summoned to heave Mr. Bach's luggages to a new room. Here, much chagrined, he took the briefest of showers and a little late and much distressed went downstairs to meet his client, the aforementioned Jane – in the very bar he had so inadvertently ruined.

The corner table, he noted to his shame, had been cordoned off: a red velvet barrier announcing a temporary problem. Infinite apologies were offered, all was promised to be back to normal on the morrow.

Seeing this Julian had no option but to confess to Jane his role in the sorry and soggy affair – whereupon she, being of creative mind, chortled happily, and said she would write him a story based on *l'affaire de la salle de bain*.

A week later, as he prepared to board his flight home, she handed Mr. Bach an envelope. Opening it during his flight, this is what he read:

A young man from New York, wed this very day, was flying to London with his bride, whom he loved very much. As they soared across the ocean he informed her that their first night would be spent in his all-time favorite hotel, The Connaught, the best hotel in the world. Before dining in The Grill, his all-time best-beloved restaurant, they would toast their marriage with the finest martinis ever made, in the loveliest of all the world's bars. She was thrilled, and smiled happily at the thought.

A uniformed Connaught driver met the couple, a gleaming Rolls-Royce threaded them to Mayfair, welcoming butlers and concierges greeted them like old friends. They took a top-floor suite with a fine view of Berkeley Square, and after showering and changing into dinner clothes went down

to the softly-lit bar and sat in a corner table, cozy and delighted.

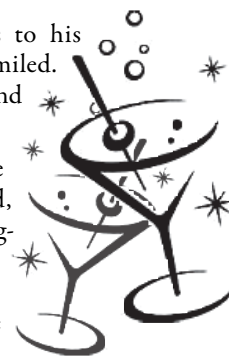
Two martinis, please, said the young man, grinning across at his beloved, who looked especially enchanting in the candle glow. The waiter bowed. Napery was placed on oak, along with a silver dish of almonds and cashews, small items of cutlery, and two squares of Irish linen. Then, with care, two martini glasses were set down, brimming.

The groom raised one of these glasses with great care and delicacy. A pool of lemon zest danced, floating on the surface of the gin. The glass winked and glinted in the light. And so he made his promised speech.

Darling, he said, with this finest cocktail in the finest bar in the best hotel in the world, I vow to you a lifetime of love and all the happiness I can bestow. Or words to that effect.


He touched the glass to his lips, and sipped. He smiled. The lovers' eyes met and locked.

He held the glass before him and pronounced, quietly and with dignity that his drink was almost perfect, almost – but perhaps just the tiniest bit too cold.



And with that, as he held out the glass, as if by magic a single drop of warm and fragrant water fell from the ceiling above and right into the center of his draught.

He put the glass back to his lips, tasted again the newly warmed cocktail and happily exclaimed, as I told you, this really is the best hotel in the world.

So, forty years on, the pair remain happily married. They drink a martini every evening, though each of them declares that none has ever been so good as that which, on their wedding night, was so vastly improved by Mr. Bach's fondness for his restorative bath, intended to be taken that evening, upstairs. 

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The Librarian's Corner

By Terry Spohnholz

Anyone who says they have only one life to live must not know how to read a book.

—Author Unknown

After a hot and humid summer, when even the pages in books became limp with the touch of our fingers, one welcomes the first cooling breezes. Shades of night brushing against us as we recline in our chairs and the last vestige of evening light dissipates into the darkness. Time to consider the gathering in of the harvest of books for the coming fall and winter, a little Dickens and some Thomas Hardy, maybe some Russian drama – Tolstoy. Winter reading seems to require thought dressed out in woolens and boots, light summer reads dance barefoot in the sand, characters flickering in and out, lightly sketched, butterfly footsteps on our heat addled brains.

Deep and sometimes thick books to add to your fall reading list:

Barkskins by Annie Proulx

To the Bright Edge of the World by Eowyn Ivey

Perfume River by Robert Olen Butler

Last Touch of Summer Reads:

Rushing Waters by Danielle Steel

Ryan's Hand by Leila Meachan

Daughters of the Bride by Susan Mallory

Dark Mysteries for Chilly Evenings:

Darkest Journey by Heather Graham

Pirate by Clive Cussler

Manitou Canyon by William Kent Krueger

Debt to Pay by Robert B. Parker

And don't forget the library offers the following:

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So, go on, have several lives, adventures in Egypt, flights to the moon and back, solve mysteries in Victorian England, swashbuckle your way through Persia, whatever lives you want to live – we keep them housed in the library. They're yours to check-out. 📖

Playgroup Welcomes New Members



EVERY TUESDAY MORNING, FREE, FLEXIBLE

By Nina Carr

A Tuesday-morning playgroup is seeking new children and their caregivers to come on and have some fun.

We meet Tuesdays from 9:30 to 11:30 every Tuesday in the gym at the rear of the Otis Town Hall. Our program is free and very flexible. It is sponsored by Community Health Programs of the Berkshires.

Right now our group includes infants, toddlers, and children up to 5 years old. Children, and their caregivers as well, enjoy the varied activities.

Thanks to generous space provided by the town of Otis we are able to run, jump, play ball, and ride our trikes even when the weather doesn't cooperate. There is also singing, reading, and arts and crafts.

We also help caregivers connect to various services that growing families may need.

We will be starting up again on September 13. Stop in and check us out. No pre-registration is necessary. 📖



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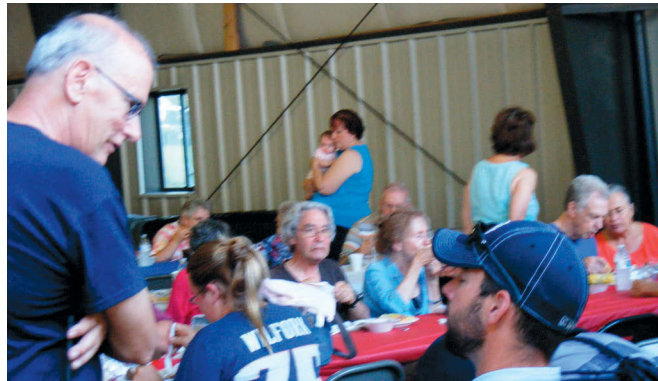
Your Ad Here

Firemen Feed the Town

The annual Sandisfield Volunteer Firemen Steak Roast went off on schedule August 13, serving over 300 dinners of steak, salad, baked potatoes, and corn. Police Chief Mike Morrison cooked the steaks, a hot evening's job during the August heat wave. The popular Harm's Way band entertained, as they did last year, and played until the dancers were danced out. By the end of the evening, the Sandisfield Scholarship Fund sold out of ice cream bars.

Fire Chief Ralph Morrison said, "On behalf of the entire department, I'd like to thank everyone who came for supper as well as those who bought tickets but couldn't attend. And special thanks to firemen and other volunteers who helped get the station ready, served the dinners, and stayed to clean up."

Photos: Bill Price



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Comings and Goings



JUDI AND LOU FRIEDMAN

(c. 1936-2016)

Judi and Lou Friedman, of Sandisfield and Canton, Connecticut, died at their Canton home on July 15. The Hartford Courant reported the following day that longtime friends said the couple, Louis, 81, and Judith, 80, had “struggled with serious medical issues.”

They are survived by daughters, Kim of Vermont, and Dana of California, and their son, Seth of Vermont; their spouses; and four grandchildren.

The Friedmans bought their Sandisfield place, Atwater Pond, in 1970, adding to it over a period of years until it now is a nature reserve of nearly 300 acres. In *The Sandisfield Times*, Jan/Feb 2016, Lou said, “We’re private people. 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.”

They loved Sandisfield and its heritage. The Friedmans quietly supported and encouraged local community benefit causes and institutions including this publication.

Judi and Lou lived full lives characterized by passion, political activism, a commitment to family, and strongly held beliefs about pressing social, economic, and political issues of our time.

A 1992 *New York Times* article said that the couple is “recognized internationally for their work as environmentalists, educators and diplomats for world peace.” They relished lively debates with friends and family on topics ranging from energy policy to the upcoming Presidential election.

Their strong identification as global citizens was reinforced by extensive travel within and outside the United States.

In the late-1960s, Judi (the former Judith E. Cron) began writing children’s books focused on ecological themes, including *The ABCs of a Summer Pond* and *Jelly Jam, the People Preserver*, a curriculum guide which is distributed nationally and was published in numerous countries, including

the former Soviet Union. Her nine non-fiction children’s books drew on her love for children, her love of nature, and her concern for the environment. As chairperson of People’s Action for Clean Energy (PACE), Judi devoted many hours over four decades to educating Connecticut residents about the dangers of nuclear power and promoting solar power as a viable alternative.

Lou founded Westledge School in Simsbury, Connecticut, in 1968, at the time a school on the cutting edge of progressive education which for a decade touched the lives of many students, faculty, and trustees in ways that are still felt today.

After leaving Westledge, Lou and Judi were in the forefront of the citizens’ peace movement in the former Soviet Union. This grassroots effort to end the Cold War and build new relationships between Soviet and U.S. citizens focused on annual exchanges over many years in the former Soviet Union and in the U.S. Still concerned about the threat of nuclear weapons, Judi, Lou, and several colleagues from the peace movement co-founded Beyond Nuclear, a national nonprofit organization that is working for a nuclear-free world.

Judi and Lou’s children and grandchildren will miss their parents and grandparents every day and are grateful for many happy memories and shared experiences.

A memorial service for Judi and Lou was held in Farmington on July 31. An overflow gathering of more than 400 came to eulogize, honor and bid farewell to this gracious, humble couple who made a difference in so many lives. Internationally known musician, composer and family friend, Paul Winter, preformed special music for the service.

In their memory, consider making an online contribution to People’s Action for Clean Energy (www.pacecleanenergy.org) or to Beyond Nuclear (www.beyondnuclear.org).

NOW HEAR THIS!

Edited by Laura Rogers-Castro.

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

SEPTEMBER EVENTS

Gallery Opening Reception on Saturday, September 3, from 2:00-4:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Road. The Gallery will feature "Shodou," the ancient art of Japanese Calligraphy by Michelle Arnot-Brown. The exhibit is on display September 3-25 and during performances.

An Evening of 20th Century American Songs on Friday, September 9, at 7:30 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Road. A stunning medley of ballad, jazz, and popular music sung by the beautiful voices of Laura Danehower Whyte, Linda Mironti, and Brian DeLorenzo. The evening includes a dessert interlude with prosecco. \$40, tickets available online at www.sandisfieldartscenter.org.

Church Service on Sunday, September 11, at 10:00 a.m. at the New Boston Congregational Church, 4 Sandisfield Road (Route 57).

Berkshire Natural Resources Council Clam River Talk and Hike on Saturday, September 17, at 10:00 a.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Road. Meet at the Arts Center for a look at historical photos and wildlife props (skulls, antlers, pelts) then take a 2-mile hike on the Clam River Trail. \$10.

American Legion Annual Turkey Roll on Friday, September 23, at 7 p.m. at the Rt. 8 Legion Pavilion. \$2 a roll will win great prizes: turkeys, hams, shrimp, and more. Great raffles and 50/50. Bar and food available. Come have fun and check out the improvements in the pavilion. If you can't make it, cash donations are always welcome as a lot of work still needs to be done.

The Art of Translations with Patty Crane on Saturday, September 24, at 4:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Road. Berkshire Poet Patty Crane reading and discussing "Bright Scythe: Selected Poems by Tomas Tranströmer." \$10.

Flu Clinic on Wednesday, September 28, at the basement of Town Hall Annex. Get your flu shots early this year. Sponsored by the Council on Aging.

EVENTS IN SURROUNDING TOWNS

Tolland Community Tag Sale on Saturday, September 3, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., at the Center Green, Rt. 57. Rain or shine. See ad on page 11.

Kinderland Arts & Activism Festival on Labor Day Weekend (September 3-5) in Tolland. This family-friendly festival for peace will include over 20 musical guests, visual artists, social justice organizations, local breweries, wineries, and food. Sandisfield residents can receive 50% off on Saturday and Sunday by showing proof of residency. For more info, visit campkinderland.org/festival.

SAVE THE DATE

Annual Apple Fest on Saturday, October 8, from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. at the Sandisfield Historical Society, Rt. 183 at South Sandisfield Road. Vendors, hamburgers and hot dogs, apples and more apples, and pies made by members of the Council on Aging. A huge tag sale.

Monterey Octoberfest on Saturday, October 1, noon-4 p.m., at Monterey Community Center, Rt. 23 at New Marlborough Road. Locally sourced brats from Red Apple Butchers; craft beer from Berkshire Brewing; home-baked goods; live music from area musicians; plus crafts, games, and more.

2016 Presidential Discussion on Saturday, October 1, at 4 p.m., at the Sandisfield Arts Center, 5 Hammertown Road. Bill Cohn and Val Coleman will lead a discussion of the current election.

Honoring World War II veterans on Saturday, October 15, 1-3 p.m., at American Legion Pavilion. Veterans Norton Fletcher, Walter Linkovich, and William Tacy.

Historical Society Wine & Cheese Party on Sunday, November 6, 2-4 p.m. Bring cheese or a bottle of wine. Donations will be requested to continue the Society during its inactive phase. "We need to keep heat in the building," says John Kuzmech, "and the lights on."

Annual Holiday Fair, tentatively Saturday, December 3 at Firehouse #2 on Rt. 57. The Fair will be sponsored this year by the Sandisfield Scholarship Committee. Contact for vendors will be Nina Carr, 258-3314.

SANDISFIELD ARTS CENTER



5 Hammertown Rd, Sandisfield, MA
413-258-4100

INFO/TICKETS:

SANDISFIELDARTSCENTER.ORG

SEPTEMBER

IN THE GALLERY

SEPTEMBER 3 - 25

MICHELLE ARNOT

Shodou: Traveling along the Long Path of Writing: Japanese Calligraphy

RECEPTION: SAT, SEP 3, 2-4PM

FRI, SEP 9, 7:30PM, \$40

AN EVENING OF SONG

Singers Laura Danehower Whyte, Brian De Lorenzo & Linda Mironti with Michael Rheault, piano
Includes prosecco and a dessert table

SAT, SEP 17, 10AM, \$10

Rain date Oct 15

BNRC CLAM RIVER LECTURE & HIKE

SAT, SEP 24, 4PM, \$10

THE ART OF TRANSLATION WITH PATTY CRANE

Berkshire Poet Patty Crane reading and discussing her acclaimed translation of "Bright Scythe: Selected Poems by Tomas Tranströmer"
Reception & book signing follows

These programs are supported in part by a grant from the Sandisfield Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



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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.

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Editorial Staff

Editor: Bill Price

email: w.billprice@gmail.com or cell 413.429.7179

Advertising/Subscriptions: Ron Bernard

Graphic Design: Tina Sotis

Website: Jean Atwater-Williams

Now Hear This!: Laura Rogers-Castro

Founding Editor: Simon Winchester

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Letters to the editor: . . . letters@sandisfieldtimes.org

News, ideas, tips & photos: . . . editor@sandisfieldtimes.org

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Entries for calendar of events: . . . calendar@sandisfieldtimes.org

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