

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume VII, Number 9 December 2016

Neighbor Helping Neighbor

WHAT'S YOUR WATER LEVEL?

By Bill Price

The drought this summer and fall has been described as the worst since 1965.

A few hand-dug wells dried up. Water levels in the wells, usually several feet deep, was measured in inches or less. Drilled wells are deeper and were still pumping, but Charlie Pease, whose well went dry Labor Day weekend, said he had heard of artesian wells going dry. "And some drilled wells," he said, "200 feet deep, were having trouble."

The snowstorm of November 20-21 may ease the drought a bit. Water levels in springs and wells that were dry or nearly so were already slowly beginning to rise before the snowstorm. If the snow can get into the water tables the drought may be on the way to recovery. For the time being.

This little relief is not to forget that several Sandisfield neighbors have had a hard time of it.

This translates locally to neighbors helping neighbors.

The well at Doug and Katy Rocco's place on Rood Hill Road, which is 8 feet deep, normally holds 6 feet of water. This fall it was as low as 2 inches. With no water for their house, the Roccas needed water for their five horses which can each require up to 5 to 10 gallons per day.

An 80-year-old friend in Granby told Katy that the drought this year was the worst she'd ever experienced. Katy said, "It was terrifying to see how low the lake at the Colebrook Reservoir was and still is."

Cont'd p.7



Oncoming Winter

By Brigitte Ruthman

Photo: Tom Jacobs

The quickening has begun. Trumpeting geese point south, flying over the half-laid wood pile, reminding even in the balmy warmth of an Indian summer day – hurry, hurry, hurry.

The leaves are gone. A rising bitter wind whips the last of them away. In the shortest of days, the faint glimmer of dawn fades only into a short afternoon light. Stars pierce cold skies.

Bucks move about in rut, their rustling footfalls in the leaves stirring hunters. Their necks swell. Their graceful antlered headdresses swim through the boney trees.

The hunter, mistaken as blood driven, submits to a November wind, pelted by acorns, in exchange to go unseen and watch the buck from a distance.

There is time spent waiting, to say nothing to anyone, and become part of the rituals of the forest.

In the garden, the day is over.

Oh, there is the missing trowel, and over there the digging fork I couldn't find when a tangle of green took it from me, then stitched its many

fingers around the tines to claim it, the green just now killed by frost.

A century ago – before global warming – the rush to harvest root crops would already be done, and the ice would have sealed the waterways. A bin in the basement filled with potatoes, the crushings of apples in barrels fermenting, and dry hay in the barn were bank accounts.

Late fall is a time the cows love best. They blissfully find a place to sleep far out in the pasture, unbothered by biting flies or humid heat.

And as the first blizzard stretches its milky waves in a moaning wind, there is satisfaction in knowing that the curtain has been drawn on the rush to collect and tuck and finish. Winter is here.

The solemn stillness triggers an inward spirituality no other season can give, a time to reflect.

The wild revelry of Spring is next, resurging as it will in sap buckets and unclothing the pregnant ground. The witchhazel will bear its yellow stars first, then the wild onions and dandelions, and work begins all over again. ♡

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Tolland Town Garage Destroyed



Photo MGN-Online

On the afternoon of the first day of the fall snowstorm, Sunday, November 20, the Tolland town garage was totally destroyed by fire. Tolland's Fire Department responded as soon as the alarm sounded, as did departments from Sandisfield and a dozen other towns. It took more than two hours to extinguish the fire. All of Tolland's dump trucks, snow plows, and road repair equipment, parked inside the garage, were destroyed, with a loss of possibly \$1.5 million.

Tolland Fire Chief Eric Munson said, "This is probably the biggest loss we've ever had."

The fire, believed to have started from an electrical malfunction of the heating system, is under investigation by the Massachusetts State Fire Marshal's office.

After the fire, Sandisfield's Highway Department helped plow and sand Rt. 57 as well as other roads in Tolland, as did neighboring Granville and Otis.

Annual Open House at Berkshire Rehabilitation Center

Berkshire Rehabilitation & Skilled Care Center will hold their Annual Open House on Friday, December 9, from 1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m. The event is open to our resident families and the community.

We will have refreshments, entertainment, a Penny Auction Table and displays of gingerbread houses made by residents and staff. Entertainment will include guitarist Peter Poirier and a saxophone playing Santa.

We are especially excited to announce the Berkshire Bachelors Chorus Group will be back. This group is comprised of patients residing at Berkshire Rehabilitation & Skilled Care Center. They will sing holiday songs for all to enjoy.

Money raised from the Penny Auction will be used for the residents' holiday fund.

Please come and enjoy what is sure to be a festive day. Please RSVP to Cindy Faggioni at the Center, 413-258-4731. The Center is at 7 Sandisfield Road.

Holiday Fair

By Nina Carr



The annual Sandisfield Holiday Fair will be better than ever this year!

We are keeping the "old favorites." Santa and Mrs. Claus will be back, the Penny Auction, yummy food from the New Boston Church, and baked goods from the Council on Aging.

Thanks especially to the Berkshire Rehabilitation & Skilled Care Center for their generous donation of a beautiful Night Before Christmas basket, the proceeds of which will go to the Scholarship Committee.

We will have a few new additions to the fun: a visit from a friendly pair of miniature horses, some new vendors. We can always make room for a couple more vendors. If you're interested call Nina Carr at 258-3314.

As usual everyone will leave the fair with a big smile, especially the little ones. So save the date: December 3 at Firehouse #2 on Rt. 57. 10 a.m. until 2 in the afternoon.

Voting Results: November 8

Town Clerk Delores Harasyko reported 488 voters in the November 8 election, out of 603 registered voters. "A great turnout," she said.

Seventy-five voters took advantage of the early voting system, which was instituted this year for the first time in Massachusetts. Delores described the program as a success. "We were staffed and prepared," she said. "I would like to say 'thank you' to all our election workers. They are a great team. They were focused, professional, and spot-on accurate throughout the entire process."

President/Vice President

Clinton/Kane	254
Trump/Pence	190
Johnson/Weld	22
Stein/Baraka	12
All others/blanks	10

Representative in Congress

Richard Neal	284
Frederick Mayock	100
Thomas Simmons	49

Senator in General Court

Christine Canning	187
Adam Hinds	257

UNOPPOSED

Councillor Mary Hurley
Representative William "Smitty" Pignatelli
Sheriff Thomas Bowler

QUESTION 1: Expand Slot-Machine Gaming

(Rejected Statewide: 61%)

Yes	174
No	273

QUESTION 2: Expand Charter Schools

(Rejected Statewide: 62%)

Yes	156
No	289

QUESTION 3: Minimum Space Requirement for Farm Animals

(Accepted Statewide: 78%)

Yes	339
No	114

QUESTION 4: Allow Limited Marijuana Use

(Accepted Statewide: 54%)

Yes	299
No	155

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

A HEALING GIFT

After the roughest Presidential election in my lifetime, it seems important to find something good to do.

I don't remember any past election where voters wondered about each other, after the votes were counted, *did he vote for that one, did she, how could he, what was she thinking?* I don't recall such a strong post-election feeling of, on one hand, get over it and, on the other, look what you've done.

It can render a country in half, and small towns, too.

The Times has worked hard over the past several years to help ease a division that existed in Sandisfield between fulltime residents and part-timers, vacation home owners and those of us still making a living right here. This sense of division, I believe, hadn't disappeared but was easing. This election can throw a new wrinkle into those old patterns and get in the way of our work.

Let's not let it. We're in this small boat together. The boat is in a rocky sea for which there are few, if any, charts.

One small good thing you can do is a big thing to The Times. Our annual appeal drive continues, and we need your help. We're grateful to donors who have responded so far, but if you haven't yet, please send your tax-deductible donation before the end of the year. The Times, available in print and online, reports news of our town. We are here to provide a service, one that we hope creates community. We need your help to do that.

To all of our readers, online and in print, we wish you a wonderful holiday season and an excellent 2017. Good luck to all of us.

— Bill Price
West New Boston

Of An Age

There is a little left.
People bow instead of clapping,
The sweet guess of a surprise
Is gone
And the days are like passing showers
Soon forgotten, dry.

And my words they disappear
Like Christmas candy,
Hello, and then goodbye.

Val Coleman
New Boston



TOWN NEWS

By Bill Price

Special Town Meeting, January Maybe

A Special Town Meeting will be called, possibly in January but watch for announcements from Town Hall, to discuss and vote on funding related to getting the town's financial office in order, as well as Yanner Park funds and expenses.

Snowstorm


A pre-Thanksgiving storm on November 20-21 blanketed the town with, on higher elevations, at least 14 inches of snow. The first couple inches of snow were wet and heavy but it soon turned light and powdery. Tree damage was not severe although the lower part of Sears Road was closed for a time

due to a tree down across power lines. The early snowfall might hint at a wet, snowy winter that will help ease the drought of last summer and fall.

Electric Aggregation

The Board signed a 6-month contract in November with Verde, an energy company. Board Chair Alice Boyd said, "The price is significantly lower than the current Eversource price." Colonial Power Group notified the Board, "We'll start pulling together all the required mailing materials and public notices and be in touch soon with an update."

Transfer Station

The 2017 stickers will include resident's license plate numbers. Beginning in January, Master Garbologist Tony Melloni will intermittently compare stickers with plates. Individuals with no sticker or the wrong plate number will be turned away. A camera has been installed. A sign prohibits dumping trash except when the station is open for business. Fines for each violation will be \$100. 

Is Sandisfield Winter Ready?

By Tom Christopher

This was the question asked by former selectman Patrick Barrett at the Select Board Meeting on the evening of November 21.

Barrett expressed concern at the state of the town's snow plowing equipment and at the reduced number of highway crew personnel, which is down from 5 full-time employees and 2 part-time to just three full-time employees and one part-timer. As a parent of two daughters, Barrett worries, he says, about their safety on our roads.


Speaking for the current Select Board, Chair Alice Boyd noted that she shared Barrett's concern for safety and directed the question about equipment readiness to Road Superintendent Bobby O'Brien, who was in attendance.

O'Brien replied that two of the town's three large trucks are currently in

good working order, although the third, the newest, is currently undergoing repair for a recurring problem.

Barrett asked what would happen should a second truck need repair, and Selectman Boyd replied that the town has on hand bids from private plowing contractors who could fill in during an emergency.

Barrett expressed regret that the purchase of a new truck, which had been recommended during his tenure, had not come to pass. Selectman Boyd agreed that an additional truck would be welcome but that its purchase would have required raising the town's property tax rate, and that such an expenditure could not be considered until the town government completes the task of "putting its fiscal house in order."

Road Superintendent O'Brien also addressed Barrett's concerns about the size of the highway crew, noting that Town Accountant Dawn Lemon, hired in September 2016, had taken over much of his paperwork, freeing him to assist in the actual work of the crew. He expressed confidence that the crew, as presently constituted, could adequately manage all of its responsibilities. 



Whatever Happened to WiredWest?

By Jean Atwater-Williams

It was – and is – a noble idea: small towns coming together to try to solve a mutual problem – lack of quality internet service.

The joint effort began in 2008 when Sandisfield joined ten other towns to form the Southern Berkshire Technology Committee. Their work and the work of similar groups in western Massachusetts led three years later to the formation of WiredWest, an all-volunteer municipal cooperative of towns with a board consisting of delegates from each of the 44 towns. The goal was to “build it ourselves” because no for-profit company found it profitable enough to make the investment.

WiredWest’s dedicated citizen volunteers got to work with market surveys and cost estimates. They pursued a number of financing strategies in an attempt to fund the network without town investment (i.e., a subscriber-funded network). But after every financing option had been thoroughly investigated and exhausted it was determined that local tax dollars plus subsidies from the state would be required to make a fiber-optic broadband network a reality.

About the same time, the state created the Massachusetts Broadband Institute (MBI), an agency comprised of highly paid staff and consultants. In 2008 the MBI was granted \$40 million by the state legislature and charged with the mission to “Connect the Unconnected.” With that funding in hand, the MBI added some \$32 million in Federal grant money in 2010 and in July 2011 kicked off – right here in Sandisfield – construction of the “MassBroadband123” middle mile.

By February 2014 the middle mile was completed, a network serving 124 communities (many of which were already well served by cable broadband.) However, this service did not reach citizens’ homes and businesses. It served Community Anchor Institutions (CAIs) such as schools, libraries, fire stations, and town halls.

If we build it ...

The MBI mistakenly believed that “if we build it, they will come,” meaning that private providers would show up to build and serve the last mile – to reach homes and businesses. But that never happened. It had always been about money and the state taxpayer funded middle mile had some of the highest wholesale costs in the country. There were no takers for the last mile.

All along, WiredWest kept the pressure on MBI to fulfill its mission to get broadband to the citizens, not to just a few locations in each town. Eventually, the state legislature allocated an additional \$50 million for last mile.

At first, MBI worked cooperatively on last mile with WiredWest. During the 2015 town meeting season, the MBI made joint presentations to towns with WiredWest (Sandisfield included) indicating MBI would build the network and turn it over to the WiredWest Cooperative (owned by the towns) for operations. But in December 2015, MBI advised towns not to sign the Operating Agreement with WiredWest. One may ask: Had MBI just used WiredWest to get the towns’ borrowing authorizations and debt exclusions passed?

MBI’s move blindsided WiredWest (and the towns). It threw the project into chaos and caused even more delay. The official MBI “Last Mile Policy” was now insisting that towns OWN and OPERATE their INDIVIDUAL networks. This would have made it more expensive for towns and place an administrative burden on the towns for which most of them simply have no capacity.

What is a small town to do?

As you have read in The Times, Sandisfield has recently come full circle and is once again in discussions with several other southern Berkshire towns. We have formed a new Broadband Committee. Our goal is to bring fiber-optic broadband to every resident as quickly as possible.

Several very different approaches being considered. Nothing is off the table just yet.

The solution for Sandisfield may involve a small region served by a known cable or telecommunications company. In fact, an RFP (Request for Proposal) for just that model is currently being developed. MBI has also issued an RFP for a regional approach hoping to attract a large entity. WiredWest will be issuing its own RFP to partner with a known provider as well. So once again (and it pains me to say it), we will have to “wait and see” for a while longer.

A final decision will likely be in place by late winter or early spring, but no matter which way Sandisfield goes, it will take time. There are pole surveys and make-ready work (which can take a year or more) and then construction. We will be lucky to have service by the end of 2018.

Although MBI did its best to cut them out of this process, WiredWest’s all-volunteer board and committees continue to work for the benefit of member towns. They advocate for towns and act as a forum for sharing information between towns across western Massachusetts. We are all hungry for broadband and are all having to deal with MBI in gaining access to funds allocated for us by our legislature.

And though it is increasingly unlikely that WiredWest’s original plan of owning and operating a regional network will ever come to pass, WiredWest may yet emerge as a regional service provider. And depending on how Sandisfield ultimately gets cabled, the town may (or may not) choose to engage WiredWest as a provider. The final chapter simply hasn’t been written.

WiredWest holds all service deposits in a secure escrow account and issues refunds upon written request. Simply send a letter including the name and service address used when your \$49 deposit was originally made, sign it, and mail to WiredWest, Old Courthouse, 99 Main Street, Northampton, MA 01060. Refunds are sent with interest within 2-3 weeks.

But I, for one, am planning to leave my deposit in escrow with WiredWest until there is a definitive plan for Sandisfield. 🍷

Jean has worked on bringing broadband to Sandisfield since 2008. She served on the Sandisfield Technology Committee and the Southern Berkshire Technology Committee, and subsequently, WiredWest, beginning in 2011. She continues to serve on the Sandisfield Technology Committee and has been appointed to the newly formed Sandisfield Broadband Committee.

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.

A Bad News Bear

A hungry, brazen bear paid a visit to the Ragusa residence in Otis in October. He was convinced that the family cars contained food, which they did not. Nevertheless, he caused considerable damage. A convertible was "totaled" while another car suffered several thousand dollars of damage. This bear also attempted, unsuccessfully, to enter the house via a doorway.

Always hungry, bears are still hanging around. Be bear aware!

Photo credit: Cindy Flint Ragusa



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View from the Arts Center

By Marcella Smith, President

The 2016 season at the Sandisfield Arts Center is finished, and what a season it was.

- Two performances of “Our Town” on the same day by the Sandisfield Players, followed by their amazing trip to Cornwall, and success on the stage at the Minack Theatre. We were able to enjoy it vicariously via Facebook, and it was recapped in the pages of The Sandisfield Times this past summer;
- George Wheeler’s amazing lecture on the Fall of Adam;
- Chris Brubeck’s music group Triple Play returned to the stage;
- Val Coleman and Bill Cohn prompted a vigorous discussion on the impending election one Saturday afternoon in October.
- Val also shared with us his appreciation of the legacy poetry provides.


All of this was made possible by a combination of ticket sales and the ongoing generosity of those who enjoy knowing the Arts Center will continue to provide quality entertainment and information at affordable prices.

We are in the middle of the year-end fund raising campaign, and as those tax deductible donations land in our mailbox, we take that response as a vote to keep building on our successful programs.

This is my last month on duty as the president of the board. It’s been a remarkable two years with many changes for the Arts Center – hiring staff – a house manager and a bookkeeper; expanded parking; clearing the grounds; adding additional lighting; musicians new to our stage performing to great applause; beautiful exhibits on the walls of the gallery, including Joe Baker’s paintings and Teresa Bills’ handmade quilts.

New members were elected to the board at our annual meeting in November – Ed Brozman, Bogart Muller, Rosanne Skrip, Terry Spohnholz, and Susan Van Sickle. Rosanne was selected as the new Vice-President. Sandy Parisky and Susie Crofut take over the helm as co-presidents of the board.

And I look forward to continuing my service as a member of the board and participating in the activities of the town and the Arts Center.

Happy Holidays to all of you from all of us at the Center. 

Rural Jewish History Draws Large Crowd

And Offers of Support for Book Project

By Flora Parisky

The local group working on a book on Sandisfield’s Jewish history felt heartened by the turnout last month at the Arts Center that was designed to help launch their volunteer project, the collection, writing, and publication of *A Century of Jewish Life in Sandisfield*.



Michael Hoberman

On November 12, a sunny Saturday morning, nearly 75 people streamed in to hear Michael Hoberman lecture on and discuss rural Jewish life. A professor of American literature at Fitchburg State

University, Hoberman is the author of three books on immigrant history, with a fourth underway.

In the audience were long-time Sandisfield families – like the Pinsky, Linder, and Lazarowitz families – whose relatives attended from New York City, South Jersey, and Boston. Others were interested town residents as well as many families and individuals from neighboring towns.


The topics of Hoberman’s books are New England folklore and early Jewish American history. As an undergraduate, he became interested in oral history as a means of presenting historically accurate literature as source material, going beyond

folklore and legends. A reviewer of his first book, *Yankee Moderns* published in 2000, wrote that Hoberman found “folklife of apparently isolated rural communities is far more dynamic and adaptable to change than is popularly supposed.”

His lecture focused attention on his second book, *How Strange It Is: A History of Jews in Rural New England*, published in 2008. Researching the book, Hoberman conducted sixty filmed and taped interviews, beginning with a few subjects known to colleagues, each of whom led him to other subjects in a widening circle of information.

For the interviews, Hoberman related that would ask a series of questions to jog his subjects’ memories of stories they had been told by parents and grandparents. He listened carefully, he said. When one of his subjects mentioned cattle farming, Hoberman said he discovered a previously unknown occupation carried out in and around Sandisfield by Jewish farmers.


The audience was enthusiastic and asked many questions, which Hoberman said greatly informs his research. “The questions reflect new angles of research and interests,” he said.

Many in the audience offered to supply information or family stories for Sandisfield’s Jewish history book, as well as offering financial support for the project. The anticipated publication of the book is early 2018. For more information, contact Joanne Olson at 718-227-6427 or Sandy Parisky 860-798-1091. 

Help Us Help You

The Fire/EMS Department is encouraging uniform residence signs at town addresses.

The department asks that homeowners purchase and post an “official 911 number sign.” The announcement reads: “When an emergency arises, time is often critical. Your use of a standard 911 house number sign is essential to our finding you as quickly as possible.”


Residents can stop at A&M Auto, 7 Tolland Road, for paperwork or call 258-4742 for more information. The signs cost \$15. 

Medical Waste Pickup a Success

By John Skrip

The first annual Sandisfield medical waste program was completed on October 9. We collected a total of 56 pounds of assorted medical waste that were made ready to be picked up by Medical Waste Disposal.

The select board plans to continue this annual pick-up of medical waste and sharps. We will get back to the Sandisfield taxpayer’s in late spring with more information. The only suggestion that was mentioned by a resident was to have the pick-up at Fire House # 2 because of the convenience of parking.

Please start saving your sharps in a closed container and store your extra medicines in a safe place until our next pick-up. We again want to thank the Fire Department for sponsoring this activity. 

Neighbor Helping Neighbor

Cont'd from p.1

At home, she said they'd never seen their well so low.

Neither had Charlie and Lauren Pease on Rt. 8 in New Boston.

They don't have a well, but use a natural spring for water. Living in their home 35 years, they'd never had a problem with the spring. "A friend who grew up in this house," Charlie said, "doesn't remember the spring ever going dry."

They did have a heads-up warning. A neighbor's well had gone dry four weeks before, and the neighbor was using water provided by the New Boston Inn.

Charlie said, "The spring is only 30 inches deep, and there's always been water in it. Even when we couldn't pump in the fall a little water would be there, but it just wouldn't accumulate. It dispersed into the surrounding ground because the water table is so low."

Just before the big snowfall, Charlie thought his spring was beginning to recover, and he hoped to have it turned on and pumping by Thanksgiving. If it didn't, he was ready to fall back on more improvisation to get through it again. Charlie is good at improvisation.

So are the Roccas. Katy said, "People with livestock are really concerned. Horses require huge amounts of water."

Improvising, Doug hauled 55-gallon drums from a boat dock in Connecticut, filled them from the operating wells of neighbors and friends, and hoisted the drums into the barn hay loft in order to use gravity feed to water the animals.

"We're grateful to have friends with deep wells," Katy said.

One of those friends, John Skrip, allowed them to fill the water tank in their motor home from his well, which the Roccas are using for showers. "If our well doesn't come back before winter," Katy said, "we'll have to drain the tank in the motor home or somehow winterize it. It could get rough."

Katy added, "We've been making it up as we go along. I fill water bottles where I work in Connecticut. That's what we use for drinking. When we visit our daughter in Connecticut, we take our laundry."

Like Charlie Pease's spring, their well was slowly coming back to life. Before the snowfall, it had recovered to about 5 or 6 inches. Not enough, but encouraging.

The Peases were lucky that their son, Chuck, was building a house two miles south on Rt. 8. Charlie said, "He'd drilled a well just before our spring went dry."

Improvising, Charlie and Chuck loaded a 400-gallon tank on the back of a truck, filled it from his son's new well and hauled it back to the house where Charlie rigged up a pump to get the water into the house's plumbing system. "We had to haul 500-600 gallons a week," Charlie explained. Using about 75 gallons of water a day, they were able to continue with showers and using the dishwasher and clothes washer.

Drinking water was carried in 5-gallon jugs. "You wouldn't want to drink out of those tanks after they've been sitting in the sun a few days," said Charlie.

"We improvised a system to overcome the problem."

In some ways, except for hauling the water, it might have been easier to use the water tanks than the spring. "We've always made an issue of going easy on the water. July and August are usually pretty tender. But if the spring got low, it would always replenish itself in an hour or so."

Both families are hoping not to have to drill a well next spring. Katy estimated a deep well could cost several thousand dollars, and Charlie and Lauren didn't want to drill one either. Not surprisingly, Lauren was more in favor of drilling than Charlie, who had gotten into the rhythm of hauling water. He said, "I don't want to drill unless I have to. If the spring only goes dry every 35 years, I'm not going to worry about it."

But if the drought continues next spring, they may have to. Both families improvised and adapted during the crisis, but long-term – and if the drought continues into freezing weather – they could face bigger problems. Water tanks and outdoor pipes freeze.

The EEA estimates that between 9-12 inches of rain will be needed for the affected areas to get back to normal water levels. Tropical weather systems, which can include hurricanes, usually bring plenty of rain but did not arrive last fall. The most severe drought in modern times occurred in the 1960s, and the current drought could continue. The late November snowfall may offer temporary relief, but unless there is rain or a lot more snow following it, the drought may deepen.

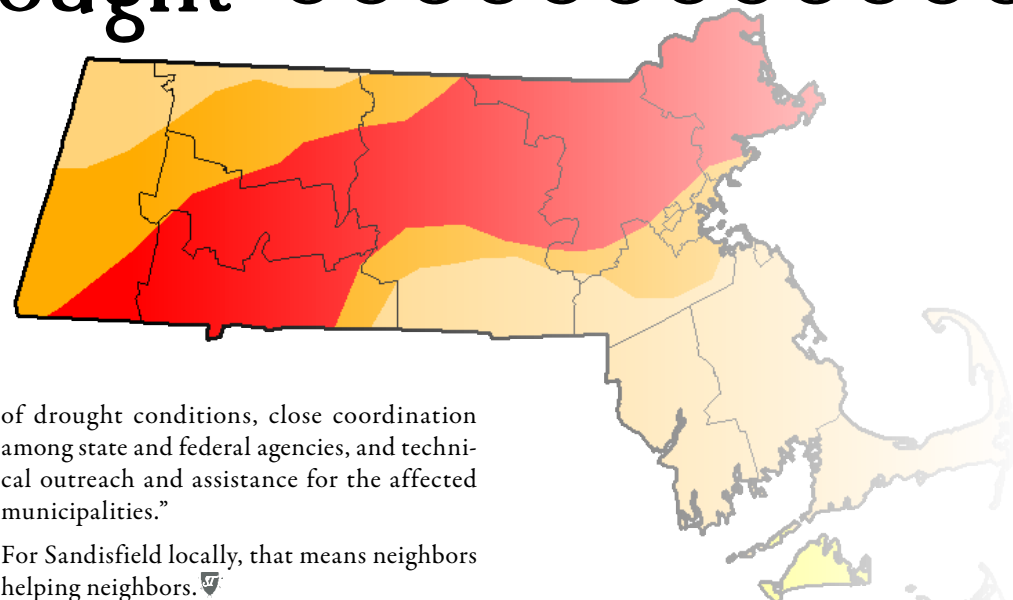
The EEA recommends that "homeowners with their own wells conserve water as much as possible."

Katy Rocco said, "Water is everything in life. If you start to see that going away, it puts things in perspective. Right now we're praying. Maybe we can invent a Sandisfield rain dance." 🙏

Extreme Drought

A map published by the U.S. Drought Monitor on November 15 marked Sandisfield in full red, meaning "extreme drought." The full red stretched through the center of the state all the way to the southeast Berkshires. The full red turned to orange, merely "severe," roughly between New Marlborough and Monterey.

Late last summer the category for the drought in western Massachusetts was elevated in stages from "Advisory" to "Watch" and, on November 2, to "Warning." This translates to "extremely low groundwater and streamflow levels resulting from prolonged periods of precipitation deficit, including a lack of winter snowfall." The category triggers the Massachusetts Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) to require "detailed monitoring



of drought conditions, close coordination among state and federal agencies, and technical outreach and assistance for the affected municipalities."

For Sandisfield locally, that means neighbors helping neighbors. 🙏



Snow, November 2016

The first snowfall, November 20 and 21, left as much as 14 inches of snow on the higher elevations of town. Possibly a precursor for a wet, snowy winter.

Photos by Setsuko Winchester

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A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud.

STARRING THE SILVERBROOK CAFÉ

By Ron Bernard

What is it about this remote place inspires Berkshire-based film makers to shoot here?

Maybe it's that Sandisfield's old-time, unrushed yet beautiful, rugged character provides useful and interesting backdrops. The little-changed old farmhouses, barns, silos, and shacks that dot some of our unpaved roads confer instant nostalgia. Films set in this rural atmosphere contrast with and offer relief from frenetic everyday reality of urban life where most moviegoers reside. Perhaps that's part of it.

For the second time in as many years, a professional film based in Sandisfield has been produced.

Set in 1947 at the only slightly modified interior of the former Silverbrook Café in West New Boston, "A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud." involves a boy and an old man, "a world weary traveler who talks about the nature of love." Directed by the Great Barrington-based film actress, Karen Allen, the film is based on a short story of the same title by Carson McCullers.

The Times ran a center-spread about the film's production and its cast and crew in its June 2016 issue. It is worth revisiting this article on the Times' website: SandisfieldTimes.org, June issue, "The Silverbrook Stars in a Movie."

Several hundred people attended a preview showing on November 6 at Bard College at Simons Rock, Great Barrington. Sandisfield was well represented and applauded as Ms. Allen praised the cooperation and hospitality extended to her company by the Town.

Select Board Chairman Alice Boyd was recognized as a representative of Town Hall. Midori Baiamonte, who assisted in the film's direction, as was her husband, Peter, for his behind-the-scenes photography. The Baiamonte's also housed some of the crew and hosted the post-shooting party at their Sandisfield Center residence. Former Silverbrook Café owner-proprietor Connie D'Andrea received special mention for her contributions. Constable John Burrows controlled traffic to prevent modern cars being caught on film as scenes were being shot inside the café.

Responding to a question from the audience Ms. Allen said, "I am frequently



A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud

Based on the short story by Carson McCullers



The cast and crew are introduced on stage.

Photo: Ron Bernard

asked why we chose Sandisfield, especially the Silverbrook. I have passed by that building many times. There is something about the place ... something mysterious, something magical. I love Carson McCullers' story and for a long time wanted to adapt it for film. One day it hit me. The Silverbrook looks exactly the way it should ... it became part of the story."

Diane Pearlman, Executive Director of the Berkshire Film Collaborative, helped produce the film. She told the Times that it was "tougher than expected" to locate authentic circa 1940s vehicles as props. But they did find five, including two vintage pick-up trucks, an early-1940s Chevy owned by restorer John Schreiber of New Marlborough and Peter Baiamonte's classic 5 window-style Chevy 3100.

Thirty of the nearly 40 members of the original cast, crew and technical support attended the showing. Ms. Allen mentioned the important contributions made by each as they were introduced.


What's next for the group? The objective is to capture at least one "best film" award among the 29 U.S. film festivals in 2017 to earn a spot for "A Tree" on the short list for an Academy Award nomination. This is a daunting challenge even for such an intriguing film and respected director.

Professional film production is not shoe-string-budget stuff. Original funds for "A Tree," a non-profit venture, are virtually exhausted. Fresh financial support is badly needed for post-production work and to assure participation in the competitions next year.

Sandisfield seems to have a special allure, not only for films but also for fashion and catalog shoots. After the preview an attendee with experience in the field said, "It is not easy to find a good locale, especially where residents and town officials welcome production crews and help with things like traffic control."

Sandisfield seems to be just such a place. Who knows, maybe this could be leveraged for economic benefit. Maybe word will reach Hollywood and New York studios that there is a friendly little jewel in the Berkshire Hills that they should check out.

Meanwhile, film enthusiasts can consider becoming a kind of producer for "A Tree." Finishing a film and duplicating copies for submissions is expensive and the small, independent film could still use some help. Send tax deductible donations by check made to **A Tree. A Rock. A Cloud. the Film** to Diane Pearlman, 66 Allen St., Pittsfield, MA 01201. For more information about the project or to contribute, visit web site: www.atreearockacloudthefilm.com.

Hopefully there will be a showing in town this spring. 

A Search for a Missing Airman

COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION COMES TO SANDISFIELD

By Bill Price

Charles Dixon was a teenager in 1931 when his mother and father bought Stone Bridge Farm on Rt. 57, near Silverbrook Road. The house was also known as the c.1846 Charles & Jane Tracy house.

Eleven years later, young Charles was killed in Africa during World War II, while serving with the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF). At the family's request, his body was returned to Sandisfield and buried in the yard at the Farm.

Last summer, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Canadian Agency came looking for him.

The duties of the CWGC, which was established by Royal Charter in 1917, are to mark and maintain the graves of British Commonwealth forces who died in both world wars, to build and maintain memorials to the dead whose graves are unknown, and to keep records and registers. The Canadian Agency, responsible for fulfilling the Charter tasks in the Americas, includes the care of more than 20,000 war dead commemorated in 3,400 cemeteries and on ten memorials.

Going to War as Soon as Possible

As a teenager, Charles worked for a time at the New Boston Inn, when Fred Searing was manager. He graduated from Rutgers University with a degree in Education, and began teaching in California.

When the war began in Europe in 1939, he wanted to be in it and he wanted to fly. He enrolled in the U.S. Army Air Corps, but the United States was not yet in the war. He didn't want to wait. Canada, already fully engaged in the war, presented an opportunity. Tens of thousands of Americans joined the Canadians during both world wars and Charles became one of them.

He resigned from the Air Corps to join the Black Watch Regiment of Canada, serving as a private from 1940 until early 1941. He married Jessie Tallman of Mount Vernon, New York.

But he still wanted in the war as a pilot. Having learned to fly in the Air Corps, he enlisted in the Royal Canadian Air Force. Fred Searing wrote a letter of recommendation. By 1942, he was overseas where he wanted to be, in the war.

There is contradictory information regarding his rank. The RCAF and Rutgers refer to him as Warrant Officer; a plaque in Sandisfield refers to him as Flight Sergeant.

Assigned with the RCAF and attached to the Royal Air Force (RAF) in Sudan, on March 10, 1943, Warrant Officer or Flight Sergeant Dixon was taxiing down a runway in a Gloster Gladiator biplane when the airplane caught fire. Charles suffered extensive burns and died several hours later at a British military hospital in Khartoum. He was buried there, in the British Military Cemetery.

His family asked that his body be brought home to the United States and, after the war he was reburied in the yard at the family home.

To Honor the Fallen

Last April, Dominique Boulais, on official business from the CWGC, phoned Ben Campetti, Sandisfield's cemetery superintendent. Did Ben know of a grave in a yard in Sandisfield?

"No," Ben said, he didn't.

Commemorations and Public Relations Manager for the CWGC's Canadian Agency, Dominique was planning to travel in New England to inspect its 116 war graves in 72 cemeteries. During the upcoming trip, he planned time to try to confirm the possible burial location of one of its War Dead from the Maidenhead register, a list of 35 Americans who died in military service with the British Commonwealth during World War II whose remains were repatriated to the U.S. after the war. The Commonwealth wanted to provide, at least, a headstone for each of the fallen. Of the 35 gravesites, the Commission had found 33.

The grave site of Charles Righter Dixon of Sandisfield was one of the two missing.

Contact Dixon's family, Dominique learned that a niece believed that the family had not removed her uncle's remains from Stone Bridge Farm when they sold the property in 1953 and moved to Galway, New York.

Possibly, Dominique considered, the body had been reburied in one of Sandisfield's five cemeteries?

Ben searched his files and those of his

father, Jappy, the cemetery superintendent before him, and reported that there was only one Dixon grave recorded in Sandisfield cemeteries. It was dated in the 1970s and was not Charles.

Then it might be true, Dominique surmised to Ben, that Dixon's body was still at Stone Bridge Farm.

Dominique's Commission business would bring him to New England in mid-June. He asked Ben that, if he came up to Sandisfield, would Ben facilitate a visit to Stone Bridge Farm and, perhaps, a visit to the possible gravesite? Was there anyone he could talk to who might have known the Dixons?

Ben said, "Yes, to both questions."

CWGC Comes to Town

In mid-June, Mr. Dominique Boulais arrived. Ben had notified three town senior citizens who were willing to share any memories they had of the Dixons.

Ben led Dominique to Norton Fletcher's home in West New Boston. Although he also worked for many years at the New Boston Inn, Norton, now 93, did not recall young Charles as an employee there. He did recall Fred Searing, the manager at the Inn who had written a letter on Charles' behalf to the RCAF.

Norton also remembered Charles' parents. "Both of them were Sunday School teachers at the New Boston Church," he said. "Once I was kidding around with a young lady whose last name was Rattigan and I got into a smiling fit. Mr. Dixon could be rather stern and he stopped what he was teaching and said, 'I'll continue when Mr. Fletcher and Ms. Rattigan can contain themselves.' We did, and he continued."

Ben took Dominique to the New Boston Church to meet two town residents with long memories.

Willard Platt, 87, recalled the family slightly, but without much detail. He was able to provide information about Sandisfield to Dominique and discussed the choices for wartime service at the beginning and during World War II.



At the New Boston Congregational Church, Cora Spring Roraback and Willard Platt (left) reminisce about the Dixon family with Dominique Boulais (second right) of the Canadian War Graves Commission and Ben Campetti, Sandisfield's cemetery superintendent.

Cora Spring Roraback, 94, remembered the Dixons well. She worked for them, although it was after the war and she had never met the son. "It was known as Stone Bridge Farm," she said, "but it had not been a working farm for many years."

She was often in the Dixon home and described the father as a tall man, pleasant to work for. She liked the family very much.

She recalled the son's grave on the property, and believed it was at the front of the house, between the house and the road. She also believed the family disinterred their son and took the body with them when they moved to Galway, New York. "That is what I understood at the time."

This is contradictory to the Dixon's niece's memory, but ...

Dominique wasn't certain the family would have removed their son's body in 1953 when they sold the property. He did think they moved to New York, where their daughter lived, because the father was ill. He died the following year. The family continued to reside in Galway, at least until the mother's death in 1970. Dominique, who had researched the property deed at Galway, said, "It mentions nothing about the son or a burial on the property."

It was a pleasant group at the New Boston Church that warm, sunny afternoon. Along with Cora, Willard, Dominique, Ben, and this reporter, Sandy Morrison, Cora's daughter, was there and provided helpful memory reminders.

Cora presented a card she received from Mrs. Dixon long after the family had moved to Galway. It read, in part, "It seems only yesterday that you and I were down on our knees working in the flowers."

Both Cora and Sandy recalled a church flag that had embroidered gold stars for members lost in the war. "One of them," Cora said, "was for Righter Dixon."

Moving to the Site

The small group of investigators then adjourned to Stone Bridge Farm.

Current owners George Wheeler and Michele Marincola gave the visitors a tour of the yard, focusing on the area between the house and a stone wall that parallels Rt. 57. They have owned the property for two years. The previous owner had said nothing about a possible burial site.

Which, if it is there, is not discernible. There is one rough patch, but Michele explained that "a tree man told me he removed a huge sugar maple there for a previous owner. At any rate, it is difficult to grow things on that patch."

Ben thought the rock wall on the edge of Rt. 57 had been moved closer to the house during a past widening of the highway.



A Gloster Gladiator biplane, the type flown by Warrant Officer Dixon early in World War II.

Photo: Wikipedia Commons



Baptismal font at the church, dedicated to Charles Righter Dixon



At Stone Bridge Farm, from left, Ben Campetti, Dominique Boulais, and Willard Platt

Photos: Bill Price

The group discussed a series of possibilities, none of which solved anything.

George, a faculty member at Columbia University, said that colleagues of his operate a diagnostic services company which can provide GPR, ground penetrating radar. He offered to ask them to conduct a search for a buried coffin or body under the yard, which if it takes place will now have to wait for spring.

If the GPR does locate the body, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission will consider the appropriate manner to commemorate R/22817 Warrant Officer Class II Charles Righter Dixon. Dominique Boulais may return to acknowledge the debt of the CWGC to a young American lost in the war.

One Remaining Reminder

There is one remaining reminder of Dixon's life in Sandisfield and his ultimate sacrifice.

His parents, active in the New Boston Church

during the '30s and '40s, contributed a 3-foot-high oak baptismal font that currently stands on the altar of the church, near the pulpit. It has been used for every baptism in the church for over 60 years.

A plaque on the font reads:

*Presented by
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Righter Dixon
In memory of their son
Flight Sergeant
Charles Righter Dixon, Jr. RCAF
Died March 10, 1943
on active duty with RAF in Africa*





The Librarian's Corner

By Terry Spohnholz

"One can never have enough socks," said Dumbledore. "Another Christmas has come and gone and I didn't get a single pair. People will insist on giving me books."

— J.K. Rowling, Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone

Unlike Professor Dumbledore, I will take the books and not complain. Although colorful socks are always nice, especially as the frost gets thicker each morning and I sense that slip from fall into winter.

And as always I look forward to long, nights curled on the sofa, watching fat, dancing flakes begin their winter accumulation beneath the windows, fresh and white. By March I can't wait for the grey tinted snow banks to disappear beneath a bright sun.

But those first snow falls are always magical.

Of course, curled up on the sofa means there is a book involved, propped on my knees to keep the cats from curling up in front of or on top of the pages, as if to say "pay attention to me." They end up nestled at my feet, so everyone is pleased. Except when reaching for that cup of hot chocolate or eggnog laced

with nutmeg that always seems just ever so slightly out of reach.

So, if you are looking for evening entertainment this winter we have new arrivals:

- Heather Graham's *Darkest Journey*
- M.C. Beaton's *Pushing up Daisies*
- William Kent Krueger's *Manitou Canyon*
- Richard Paul Evans' *The Mistletoe Secret*
- Dori Katz's *Looking for Strangers*
- Kelly Luce's *Pull Me Under*

As well as well-loved favorites (titles and authors), games to rent for a week, such as Sorry, Scrabble, Monopoly and Scattergories, DVDs, and Audio-books.

So pick your pleasure! We even have a pass to the Clark Museum in Williamstown if a day with Monet, Rubin, and Homer entices you.

Library Happenings

Card Making with Vicki – bring your creativity, smiles, and \$10 for supplies (and a plate of snacks to share if you wish). You will leave having caught up with friends and created six awesome cards. Contact Kathie Burrows at 258-4943.

Cookies, hot chocolate, and coffee are available at the library while you look for that perfect read.

I used to stare up at the sky to see where snowflakes were born. I could do it for hours, well, minutes. But it was always the waiting that was the most fun.

– Anonymous

I still do that, look for where snowflakes are born. Enjoy a wonderful, magical December. ❄️

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Whatever Position Planet?

By Simon Winchester

I spent a frustrating hour last month looking for a small blue cylinder at a location here in Sandisfield known as Tractor Ambushed Foreign.

My son Rupert, who was here on holiday, was just fifty feet away from me, engaged in a similarly fruitless search in a place identified by the three words Reimbursed Fend Courier.

The two of us joined forces and walked over to a third place, called Frill Guilt Crush, looking around and under every rock and fallen log. Eventually we harrumphed our failure, and abandoned the quest. We drove home to where I am now writing this in the place now known to me and my son – and in theory to the whole of the rest of the world – as Spilt Obstinate Scatter.

I will come to the small matter of my frustration and the missing blue cylinder in a moment. But first, these three-word place-names.

I am not, as some may suspect, losing the plot. For bizarre though these lexical trinities may seem, it turns out that they, their invention, and their use radiate logic and good sense. Soon, I suspect, everyone will be employing them as a failsafe way of identifying, in an instantly understandable way, any location on the planet.

Anywhere on earth

What its creators have done – they are mostly young British mathematicians and geographers and mapmakers – is to divide the world into a series of 3-meter squares (for the benefit of citizens of the world's three remaining nonmetric countries – Liberia, Burma, and our dear old USA – that is squares of roughly 100 square feet).

There are 57 trillion such squares in the world. In Sandisfield alone there are 15 million of them. And using a clever algorithm that employs 40,000 of the English language's most commonly used words, the mathematician/creators have assigned a unique three-word

identifier to every single one of these squares, wherever in the world or out at sea each of them may be.

There is an app: what3words. It is free. And using it you can either have fun – finding out the three word identifier for the Statue of Liberty (it is Planet Inches Most) or the Sandisfield Library (Cheerily Implied Cornfield – a designation which I feel sure will delight Theresa Spohnholz, who runs the place); or else you can take it all more seriously, as its creators hope and expect, and realize the efficiency and elegance of the system.

For by using w3w there is no further need for home addresses and street numbers. No need for zip codes. No need for country names, nor county names, nor town or village names. Nor for those cumbersome latitude and longitude numbers, nor for knowing whether we are west of Greenwich or north of the equator. All of that is now, in theory, history.

Once postal services and delivery companies and GPS designers – and yes, drone navigators – cotton on, then everything and everywhere will fall into place, literally.

There is only one location in the entire planet, for instance, that is called Cheerily Implied Cornfield. It is a location far easier for any machine-based system to find than it is to divine where the fourteen-locator code 23 Sandisfield Road, Sandisfield, Massachusetts, 01255, USA might be. And it is a location that will eventually be a great deal easier for Theresa and all her clients to remember, to boot.

The blue cylinder?

And what of Tractor Ambushed Foreign; and Reimbursed Fend Courier, and our missing blue bottle?


Both of these locations are on Route 57, at the point just north of the Post Office where it crosses the Buck River. The first location marks the guardrail on the north side of the bridge, the other the rail on the south side. And somewhere very near to one or other of the rails is supposed to be, hidden well but not impossibly so is a small blue plastic cylinder with a screw-top. Inside it there is a logbook, to be signed by whoever finds it. And I very much want to sign it.

Because I have lately become a fan of the outdoor sport of geocaching – in which people leave small containers dotted around the world and offer clues as to how to find them. There are a number of geocaches here in Sandisfield – one on Hammertown Road, for example. But thus far, search we might, we haven't found them.

When we do, I will return to the topic and argue that geocaching is a wonderful new sport,

an activity which encourages people who might normally sit inside watching TV, to get out there, exploring. But that'll be for later.

For now, all I know is that the pesky Buck River cylinder is somewhere inside a three-meter square at Tractor Ambushed Foreign, or perhaps next door at Spires Elevates Monitor or Solid Enables Ambient or – only fifteen million more squares to go.

Sandisfield is a much, much bigger place than I first thought. 

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Council on Aging



A mistake was made last month in listing members who baked pies for sale at the Apple Fest in October. We should have included Shirley Spring and Norton Fletcher. Thanks, Shirley and Norton.

Reminder: Visit the Dinner Basket and Baked Goods at the COA table during the Holiday Fair, December 3 at Firehouse #2.

Reminder: Wreath making is scheduled for December 5. Call 258-4816 for information.

Reminder: Foot care clinic, December 6 at the Council on Aging Meeting Room, downstairs at the Town Hall Annex.

Note: As of press time, the December COA board meeting is scheduled for December 14.

Reminder: Voluntary transportation is available on Tuesdays.

Our library has a lot of Zane Greys westerns and a variety of large-print paperbacks.

A computer and a shredder are available for community use at the COA Meeting Room.

Blood pressure clinic is open to all on the 4th Wednesday of each month at the COA Meeting Room.

Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah. ♡

Rec Committee Went to the Movies

By Maria Domato

The Sandisfield Recreation Committee has come up with some great ideas and residents could have a lot of fun if they attended. Movie Night was November 5, a Saturday, at the American Legion Pavilion. Attendance could have been better. Seriously, there was free popcorn, roasted hot dogs, smores, hot chocolate, and warmed cider. Admission was free, too.

We hope to see more people involved with youth and family programs. Most of the events are at the Pavilion. The Rec Committee has full use of the buildings and grounds. The committee will plan events over the winter and be back in business in the spring, when things warm up again. ♡



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Comings and Goings



Finley Braun

Finley was born November 4 at Fairview Hospital, Great Barrington. She was 7 pounds, 4.9 ounces.

Finley was welcomed into the family by her parents, Chelsea and Charles Braun, who recently moved to Tolland from Sandisfield Road.

By her big brother: Bridger.

By her maternal grandparents: Paul & Catherine Ferreira of Sandisfield

By her paternal grandparents: Clifford & Valerie Braun of Chautauqua, New York.



Luke Michael Carriveau

Luke was born November 11 at 10:37 p.m., at Mercy Hospital, Springfield. His weight at birth was 7 pounds, 1 ounce.

Parents: Amy and Michael Carriveau who reside in Becket.

Amy has been Sandisfield's postal clerk since December 2014. Geoff Coelho is serving as the lead temporary postal clerk until she returns in mid-January.



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To the Editor and Staff of the Sandisfield Times

After 12 years of spending at least 6-10 days a month at our weekend home in Sandisfield, I finally did what I've wanted to do for some time. That is to show my appreciation for the work you all do – with a note of thanks, and a contribution. I just made the donation via your website and Paypal – (thanks for making that so easy ... I can't remember where my checkbook is, because I can't remember the last time I actually wrote a check.)

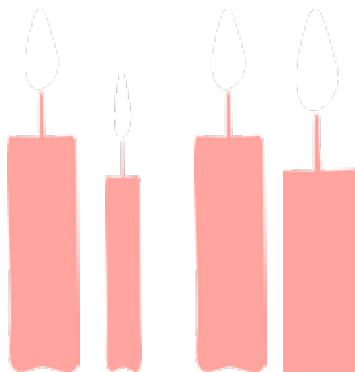
And, thanks for providing a very enjoyable monthly review of the local news – through each issue of the Times. Our house is on Route 57, right next door to the Sandisfield Library – and we get our free monthly issue either at the Library or at the Trash Dump, further up the road.

We take turns reading it while relaxing at Umpachene Falls (during warmer weather) or save it for a cover-to-cover read on the Sunday evening drive back to Boston. One of us drives, and the other will read it out loud – which is surprisingly entertaining and informative and sparks some fun conversations after each article.

Even though we've met other weekenders – and many full-time Sandisfield residents here and there over the years – reading about the people who make up this unique community through the stories in the Times has made us feel like we know many more as a result.

Thanks again – and keep up the great work.

*Tim Brooks & Ed Swiech
Sandisfield Road*



A Memorial Service for the CCC

The DEOA Historical Association and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation will hold a ceremony to memorialize the deaths of five young Civilian Conservation Corps members in a traffic accident in December 1933 at Great Barrington. The young men were members of Sandisfield Camp #196.

Wreath-laying, remembrances, and a historical display will be held Friday, December 16, at 2:30 pm at the entrance to Sandisfield State Forest, Route 183, New Marlborough near the Sandisfield town line. Open to the public, especially anyone interested in the history and legacy of the CCC. Area schools are encouraged to attend.

Contact: Kevin Titus at 413 426-7890 or by email at kvntitus5@gmail.com or Massachusetts DCR at www.mass.gov/dcr.

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NOW HEAR THIS!

Edited by Laura Rogers-Castro.

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

DECEMBER EVENTS

Sandisfield Holiday Fair on Saturday, December 3, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Firehouse #2, Route 57. Penny Auction to benefit the Sandisfield Scholarship Fund, crafts, bake sale, miniature horses, children's craft table, lunch, Santa and Mrs. Claus, raffles, new vendors, and more.

Foot Care Clinic on Tuesday, December 6, at the Council on Aging Meeting Room, downstairs at the Town Hall Annex, Route 57.

Annual Open House on Friday, December 9, from 1:30-3 p.m., Berkshire Rehabilitation & Skilled Care Center, 7 Sandisfield Road. Open to resident families and the community. Refreshments, entertainment, Penny Auction table, three Berkshire Bachelors Chorus Group. RSVP to Cindy Faggioni, 413-258-4731.

Church Service on Sunday, December 11, at 10:00 a.m. at the New Boston Congregational Church, 4 Sandisfield Road (Rt. 57). This will be the last church service of the year. Hope to see everyone in Spring 2017.

CCC Wreath Laying and Remembrance on Friday, December 16, at 2:30 p.m. at the CCC monument at the entrance to Sandisfield State Forest, Rt. 183, New Marlborough near the Sandisfield town line. To honor the deaths of five young CCC members killed in a traffic accident, December 1933. Open to the public. Area schools encouraged to attend. Contact: Kevin Titus at 413-426-7890 or email at kvntitus5@gmail.com or Mass DCR at www.mass.gov/dcr.

SAVE THE DATE

Special Town Meeting, January date and time to be announced, to discuss and vote on expenses related to financial office and Yanner Park.

EVENTS IN SURROUNDING TOWNS

Pearl Harbor 75th Anniversary Program on Wednesday, December 7, at 7:00 p.m. at the Claire Teague Senior Center, 917 South Main Street in Great Barrington. Local historian David Rutstein will present "America Enters the Second World War: The Empire of Japan Attacks the United States at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii." The program is free and light refreshments will be served.

Search for Santa on Sunday, December 11, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Bartholomew's Cobble in Sheffield. Oh no! Santa is lost at the Cobble. Participants will hear the story of how Santa got lost and be given a set of tools to help try to find where he is. Members of the Trustees of the Reservation, \$5; non-members, \$10. For more information, call 413-298-3239, ext. 3013.

Colonial Concoctions on Wednesday, December 28, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Mission House in Stockbridge. Colonists and Native Americans did not have a pharmacy just down the road. Learn how to concoct simple herbal remedies and teas that can ease your winter blues. Best for ages 14 and above. Members of the Trustees of the Reservation, \$16; non-members, \$20.

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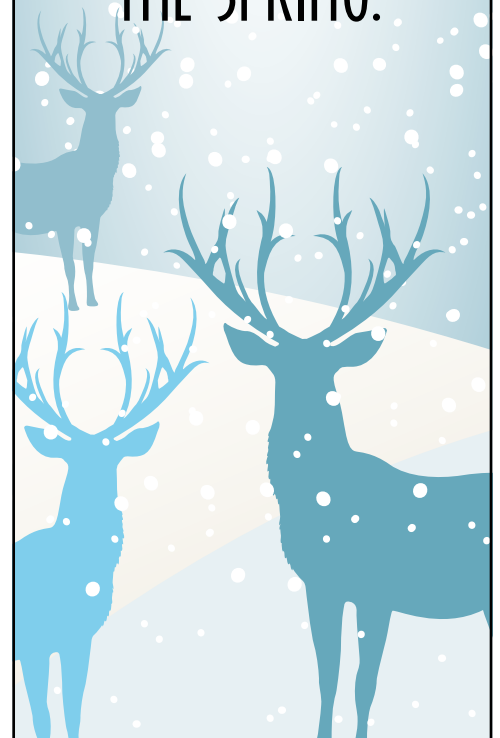
INFO/TICKETS:

SANDISFIELDARTSCENTER.ORG

Happy Holidays!

THANK YOU FOR A GREAT SEASON.

SEE YOU IN THE SPRING.



Our Thanks to *All of You*

The Times is grateful to donors who have responded so far to our 2016 appeal.

If you haven't yet but plan to, please send your tax-deductible donation before the end of the year.

Donations can be mailed to

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or made online at our website: www.sandisfieldtimes.org

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TOWN WEBSITE: WWW.SANDISFIELDMA.GOV

AMBULANCE: 911. Non-Emergency: 258-4742

AMERICAN LEGION Post 456: Maria Domato, Commander:
258-4578 (April-October) or rainbow2498@embarqmail.com

ANIMAL WARDEN/DOG OFFICER:

Kim Spring: 258-4450

ASSESSORS OFFICE: 258-4701

Office Hours: Tues, Wed, Thurs. 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
Meets 2nd Tues: 5 p.m.

BOARD OF HEALTH: Victor Hyrckvich: 258-4053

Meets 1st Mon: 6 p.m., Old Town Hall.

BROADBAND COMMITTEE: Jeff Bye: 258-4711

Meets as needed. Check for schedule.

BUILDING INSPECTOR: Eric Munson Jr.: 258-4590

CONSERVATION COMMISSION: Meets 3rd Tues: 7 p.m.

CONSTABLES:

Nazario Sanchez: 258-4705 John Burrows: 258-4943

COUNCIL ON AGING: Linda Riiska: 258-4816

Wed: 11 a.m.-2 p.m., Senior Center/Town Hall Annex
Business Meeting 1st and 3rd Wed: 10 a.m.

FARMINGTON RIVER REGIONAL SCHOOL:

North Main Street, Otis, 413 269-4466
Thomas Nadolny, Principal

FRRSD SCHOOL COMMITTEES meets 1st Mon: 7 p.m.

FINANCE COMMITTEE: Kathy Jacobs: 258-4535

Meets as needed. Check for schedule.

FIRE DEPARTMENT: Emergency: 911

Ralph Morrison, Fire Chief: 258-4742

HISTORICAL COMMISSION: Ron Bernard: 269-0012 or

ronbernard@aol.com. Meets 1st Wed: 7 p.m. at Fire Station No. 2, Rt. 57.

JUSTICE OF THE PEACE:

John Skrip: 258-4788

LIBRARY: Librarian: Theresa Spohnholz: 258-4966

Email address: sandisfieldlibrary@gmail.com

Mon/Tues: 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Wed: 2-5 p.m.

Thurs: 5-7 p.m. / Sat: 9 a.m.-noon

NOTARY: John Skrip: 258-4788

Theresa Spohnholz: 258-4966 or 258-4712

PLANNING BOARD: Gary Bottom, Sr.: 258-4053

Meets 2nd Tues: 6 p.m., Old Town Hall

POLICE-LOCAL: Emergency: 911

Michael Morrison, Chief: 258-4742

POLICE-STATE: Lee Barracks: 413 243-0600

POST OFFICE: Amy Carriveau, Clerk, 258-4940

Window Hours: Mon-Fri: 9 a.m.-noon & 1-4 p.m. Sat: 8-11:30 a.m.

Delivery boxes in both lobbies accessible 24 hours.

RECREATION COMMITTEE: Robbin Campetti: 258-4096

ROAD SUPERINTENDENT: Bobby O'Brien, 258-4979

SANDISFIELD ARTS CENTER: (May-December)

5 Hammertown Road

PO Box 31 258-4100 www.sandisfieldartscenter.org

SANDISFIELD TIMES: Bill Price, editor: 413 429-7179

Published monthly (Jan/Feb combined)

PO Box 584, Sandisfield or editor@sandisfieldtimes.org

SELECT BOARD: 258-4711

Meets Monday with working session at 2:30 p.m. or regular meeting,
7 p.m. Town Hall Annex. See posted agenda for time.

STATE OFFICIALS:

Smitty Pignatelli, State Representative.: 413 637-0631

Email: rep.smittypignatelli@hou.state.ma.us

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE: to be announced

TAX COLLECTOR: Lisa Leavenworth: 258-4977

Mon-Wed: 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE:

Paul Jacoby, 258-4682 or pauljacoby53@gmail.com

Town computers and technology.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR: Willie Morales

Mon-Thurs or by appointment. 258-4711

Email: sandisfieldtownadm@verizon.net

TOWN CLERK: Dolores Harasyko

PO Box 163 or sandisfieldtownclerk@verizon.net

Town Hall Annex: 258-4075

Mon-Thurs: 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Mon: 6 p.m.-7 p.m. by appt.

TOWN HALL: At Town Hall Annex, 66 Sandisfield Road, PO Box 90,

01255. Open Mon-Thurs: 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. Mon: 6-7 p.m. by appt.

TOWN TREASURER: Theresa Spohnholz: 258-4712 or

sandisfieldtreasurer@verizon.net.

Hours: Mon/Tues, 1-4 p.m.; Wed, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.;

Thurs, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.; or by appointment.

TRANSFER STATION: Tony Melloni: Wed: 2 p.m.-5 p.m.

Sat/Sun: 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

VETERANS SERVICES: Laurie Hills

Great Barrington Town Hall: 528-1580

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

P.O. Box 584

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We acknowledge donors who responded in November to our annual appeal on page 18.



**The next issue of
The Sandisfield Times
will be our annual combined
January/February issue,
due about January 20.**

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

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

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Now Hear This!: Laura Rogers-Castro

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