

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume X, Number 7

October 2019

DUDE! The Lost Wilderness Ranch

PART ONE, REALLY FUN.

By Ron Bernard

No one has ever called Sandisfield the fun capital of the world. But maybe, for a while, we came close and didn't know it.

You see, there used to be a dude ranch called The Lost Wilderness that was spread over about a thousand acres with a lake on Tolland Mountain. Opened in 1946, the ranch operated for about 30 years, coinciding with the continuing popularity of western movies and television.

Located entirely in Tolland, the ranch extended down Tolland Mountain to near the town line at New Boston, part of land originally owned by Elijah Twining from Eastham, Mass. The Twinings were also early settlers of New Boston. The ranch was identified as a Sandisfield institution and its business address was listed as New Boston. The ranch owners found great workers in Sandisfield and made use of the mail service when the post office was located in Steve Campetti's New Boston Store, which was considered an oasis by the ranch employees.

Who Built the Ranch?

The venture was the improbable brainchild of Elliott Cavellier and his wife, the former Gladys Jacques. Born in Brooklyn in 1907, one of six children, for some reason she and several siblings came to live in the Westfield-Springfield area which likely influenced her choice of the nearby Berkshires as a location for a vacation ranch.



Second Pot Farm Site Resisted

PROPERTY PURCHASED, OPPOSITION GROWS

By Bill Price

The site of the proposed pot farm has moved, but is still in Sandisfield.

Jennifer Pilbin, now living in South Carolina but who plans soon to move to Sandisfield, has bought 72 acres of wooded property on West Hubbard Road near its intersection with West Street where she intends to build a marijuana-growing facility.

After formerly considering property on Town Hill Road, which she relinquished because of objections from neighbors, Ms. Pilbin found a new property for sale about the same acreage. Like the former proposal, the facility on West Hubbard would require a large building, lights, and fencing.

Pilbin told The Times that she has met several neighbors who "were supportive of what I wanted to do. When I was looking at the property a few stopped and introduced themselves. I've been treated very well."

Despite Ms. Pilbin's comment, several potential neighbors on West Hubbard feel differently.

Vinnie and Michele Mauro, who live in the only home that directly abuts the property, are adamantly opposed. Michele said, "I'm not sure who the lady spoke with who said neighbors are OK with this, but we certainly are not. And most of the neighbors I've spoken with aren't either. I don't know if they need our permission as abutters, but they will never have it. We'll do everything and anything in our power to prevent this."

She added, "We bought this property 40 years ago and Vinnie built the house himself. We never expected to have a pot farm next to us."

Nearby, Leslie and John Garwood, who have a weekend home 300 feet from the property, are also opposed. "Some of our neighbors, some who've lived here all their lives, are very upset," said Leslie Garwood. "Many people are against this idea and ready to hire a lawyer. We don't want to let something like this happen that would change the tranquility of the woods where we would like to retire."

Neighbors mentioned concerns about noise, light pollution, wear and tear on a quiet country road, and increased visibility of their homes due to curious onlookers.

Ms. Pilbin said that the Select Board is aware of what she is planning, "though I haven't formally met with them or filled out any of the permitting applications. I have not started working with the state, either."

In a report in The Berkshire Eagle in July, the Select Board responded that whatever happens, the approval process will be slow. The Board added, "It will be a good two years before anything starts."

After selling her home in South Carolina, Pilbin plans to build a home on the West Hubbard property. "The property needs a lot of work," she said.

Originally from Norfolk, Conn., she first worked in horticulture at Hillside Gardens and later for her family's business which became a landscaping and excavation firm

Cont'd p.10

Cont'd p.2

FALL IS HERE, LOTS TO DO AND ENJOY

Fire Department Open House

Sunday, October 13, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

All are invited.

See our new quarters and training center.

Station #1, Rt 8, near the American Legion Pavilion.

Free hot dogs, hamburgers, water.

At the same time, the

Sandisfield Fire Department hosts its Annual Fund-Raising Road Block

Sunday, Oct 13, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Station #1, Rt. 8

Stop when signaled, chat with our volunteers, be generous.

Harvest Dinner

TURKEY AND ALL THE FIXIN'S

Saturday, October 26

5:00-7:00 p.m.

Fire Station #2

Take-out available.

Tickets at the door.

\$12 adults,

\$6 kids under 12.

Sponsored by the

New Boston Congregational Church.

HALLOWEEN TRUNK OR TREAT

Hosted by the Recreation Committee

For Halloween, Thursday, October 31, it's TRUNK OR TREAT time at the American Legion Pavilion on Rt. 8 in New Boston, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

It's safe, slightly spooky, and spectacularly fun.

Bring your little goblins, ghosts, princesses, and pirates to the field where neighbors and friends will be parked with decorated cars and candy.

Cars (the trunk part with the treats) should arrive at the Pavilion by 5:00 p.m. for set up. Please contact the Rec Committee at our email address sandisfieldrecommittee@gmail or Billie Pachulski at 413-652-0252 to confirm you'll be there so we can accommodate all the decorated cars.



AMERICAN LEGION FLEA MARKET

October 12, Legion Pavilion, Rt. 8 • 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

Raindate: October 13, same time

Vendors wanted: \$ 20.00 per vender. No limit on space outside. Limited indoor space, first come, first served.

Open to anything for sale. Auto, crafts, food, vegetables, and lots more.

FREE TRACTOR PULLS ALL DAY: COMPLIMENTS OF CARROLL MOTOR SPORTS.

For vendor reservations, call Maria at 413-258-4578 or Maggie at 860-309-6166. Or just show up the day of the Market.

Celebrate the Apple ANNUAL APPLE FEST

The Sandisfield Historical Society

Saturday, October 12, 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

At the Meeting House, Rt. 183 at the intersection with South Sandisfield Road. Apple cider making, local seniors selling homemade apple pies and more baked goods.

New selection of tag sale items. Hamburgers, hot dogs, cold drinks.




Second Pot Farm Proposal Registered

Cont'd from p. 1

known as Jennifer Pilbin Enterprises. "We did a lot of work in Norfolk," she said, "including property maintenance and everything related to that." When she sold the business, she moved south where she is currently employed as a manager for a retail chain corporation.

As outlined in The Times in July, the facility would require a 12,000 sq.ft. building with an additional canopy for growing marijuana. She said the buildings will be shielded from the road, secure and gated, and comply with all state regulations. There are currently no restrictions in Sandisfield bylaws that refer to this type of facility.

In the 2017 state referendum, Sandisfield voted 2 to 1 in favor of the initiative to legalize marijuana while regulating it similarly to alcoholic beverages. 



COA Senior Outreach Project


By Tina deManbey, RN



Did you know that 184 of Sandisfield's 827 residents are age 65 or older? That's over 22% of our population, and yet just a handful take advantage of the social and health programs offered by the Council on Aging, (COA).

In coming weeks, I will work with the Council on Aging to conduct a senior outreach project. The goal is to educate the citizens on what activities and services COA, Sandisfield, and Berkshire County offers, with the aim of providing services to improve the health of our population as well as a sense of community and socialization. As a fellow resident of Sandisfield, I will contact residents by phone and mail to provide information on available services. Revisions to the COA website will be made that will provide helpful information and links to area services.

Flu clinic on October 2 at COA at Town Hall Annex, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

In addition to their weekly social gathering in the Town Hall Annex on Wednesdays from 11:30-2:00, COA also offers Chair Yoga after our Wednesday meeting, 2:00 p.m. and Qigong on Mondays at 11:00 a.m. at Old Town Hall. COA also provides monthly blood pressure clinics, volunteer drivers to doctor's appointments and errands, as well as foot care clinics. And more. 

LATE NEWS: Life-long resident Walter Linkovich died on September 28. A report of his 93rd birthday celebration is on page 8. Obituary in November.



LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Thanks to our Neighbors

VOLUNTEERS DO A LOT TO KEEP THIS TOWN RUNNING.

One big step: At its regular meeting September 30, the Town's Select Board was to have signed the Town's agreement with Charter Communications to bring Broadband to Sandisfield.

That particular long, steep, and winding road has reached a levelling-off point, despite a lot of bumps and potholes along the way. You'll remember these names: Wired West, MBI, Frontier, Crocker, now Charter.

The Town owes a lot to the volunteer residents who over the past decade spent hours of their time and energy to get us to this point. We owe a lot to many – particularly to Jean Atwater-Williams in the beginning and to Jeff Bye at this point

– who over time brought their expertise and knowledge of the internet to help bring high-speed communications to our town. And the process is ongoing. Now the work of wiring the Town begins.

On a second front, the Recreation Committee deserves a big "thank you."

By organizing activities for families with young children, like Touch-a-Truck and Trunk-or-Treat, the committee volunteers do a valuable service for Sandisfield parents. The Annual 5K Run, another of their projects, brings a fun and lively event to the Town and raises our visibility in South Berkshire. They organize bus trips and other activities through the year. Our thanks to them and to all our Town's volunteers.

*Seth Kershner, Sandisfield Center
Bill Price, West New Boston*



Sandisfield's 5K Run

Too late for our October press deadline, the Town's second Annual 5K Run was planned for September 29 on Cold Spring Road near Spectacle Pond. We will have photos and reports of winners in our November issue. We hope the weather is as good as last year and that there were new runners in every category, including walkers.

Tax Bills Coming Your Way

SIGNIFICANT TAX DELINQUENCY IN TOWN

By Bill Price

The first real estate tax bills for FY2020 will be mailed the week of October 8, with a due date of November 7.

Town Treasurer/Collector Terry Spohnholz, said, "At least this year there is no Thanksgiving or Christmas TAX surprise."

But, also no surprise, the tax rate for FY2020 has gone up. The increase is \$1.27, up from \$12.03. The new rate of \$13.30 per thousand dollars of assessed value returns the rate to only a penny more from the \$13.29 it was in FY17 and FY18.

The tax rate is the same for everyone who owns property in town, whether a place is worth a million or \$10,000.

Assessed value, on the other hand, varies greatly between properties, based on similar real estate sales, size of the property, and other state-mandated criteria, and is dictated by the economic needs of the Town. Apparently FY20 assessed value is averaging lower than FY19.

It remains to be seen what your tax bill later this month will look like. With some budgets, like

education, increasing and new property being moved into Chapter 61, it seems likely that tax bills will increase.

The amount of tax payments outstanding for FY2019 is significant. Although the collection reins are being held tighter at Town Hall than in the past, the Town is still owed \$142,937 out of its total FY19 tax levy of \$2,639,388. And the outstanding amount is accruing interest.



TAX BILLS SENT TWICE A YEAR

Property owners are billed on a semi-annual basis for real estate taxes. The first is mailed after tax rates are set, usually in the fall (due this year on November 7) and the second is always due May 1.

Bills need to be paid by the due date, no exceptions, even if you don't receive it in the mail. Once the

bill is mailed by the Town Treasurer, it's yours. If the post office loses it or it's dropped in the snow or accidentally thrown out with junk mail, the tax bill is still considered yours.

Property owners need to anticipate the bill's arrival ahead of time and if it isn't delivered – this year by mid- to late October – ask why. The Town is required to charge interest if the payment is not paid or postmarked by the due date.

INTEREST CAN BE SIGNIFICANT

If you're at risk of paying late or falling into tax arrears, call the Town Treasurer/Collector at 413-258-4711, ext. 9. She wants to work with you.

"Come see me in the office if you're in danger of missing the tax date or if you are already in arrears," Treasurer Spohnholz said. "If you miss the date, I'm required by state law to charge interest, which is 14 percent a year. Everybody is treated the same."

That's when the job gets worse for Terry. "Collecting taxes by itself is not an easy job," she says. "But once interest starts getting levied on your bill, it gets harder for people to pay." The Massachusetts General Law that requires interest to begin accruing at the due date allows no exceptions

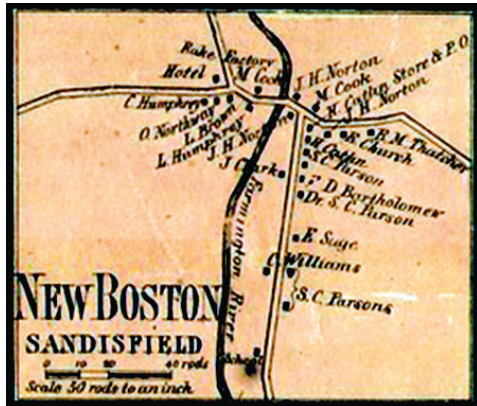
What happens if you don't – or can't – pay?

Cont'd p.8

New Boston in Line for National Historic District Designation

STATE OFFICIALS TO HOLD INFORMATIONAL MEETING

By Ron Bernard



Walling Map, 1858

The village of New Boston, within the Town of Sandisfield, is in the process of being nominated by the Commonwealth for listing as a historic district on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

At the September 9 Select Board meeting, a consultant to the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), Bonnie Parsons, reported that “New Boston qualifies because it meets all of the necessary criteria” for designation. She said that the New Boston dossier has been submitted to the MHC, which has 30 days in which to review and approve the nomination. If approved, an informational meeting will be held in Town.

The nomination has been in the works since 2015 after the Sandisfield Historical Commission submitted a formal survey of the town’s historical assets, particularly its old houses. (See The Times, September 2017.) Massachusetts statutes require that towns conduct this assessment periodically. Such up-to-date “inventory” is also a requirement by the MHC before district and individual applications can be considered.

Established by Sandisfield founders the Daniel Brown family in the early 1750s, New Boston has retained much of its historic character over more than 200 years. Other national historic districts in this area include sections in Adams, Becket, Cheshire, Dalton, Egremont, Great Barrington, New Marlborough, North Adams, Pittsfield and Washington. Otis (center) has been nominated for district status, which is in process.

CONFIGURATION OF THE PROPOSED HISTORIC DISTRICT

- North Main Street (Rte. 8) – Nos. 97 through 101;
- South Main Street (Rte. 8) – Nos. 79 through 110 and Wilber Park
- Sandisfield Road (Rte. 57) – Nos. 3 through 25 to the Rugg Bridge
- Tolland Road (Rte. 57) – Nos 2 through 4
- River Road – No. 2
- Cannon Mountain Lane – No. 4
- Willow Lane – Nos. 3 & 5

Note: Certain properties, historic and otherwise, traditionally considered part of “New Boston,” e.g., Roosterville, may not be included because they are too distant from the “cluster” that comprises the district. NRHP eligible properties (per survey) outside of the boundaries may qualify for independent listings.

WHAT ABOUT HOMEOWNER RESTRICTIONS, OBLIGATIONS, COST?

A listing as a National Register historic district is strictly honorary. Property owners in NRHP districts are not obligated to do anything. Their properties are also not subject to restrictions of any kind, inside or out. There are no costs to property owners who are within a district.

Inclusion of a neighborhood or individual house on the National Register is prestigious, fosters community pride, sets an example for preservation, and may over time increase interest in the town for tourism or attraction of potential buyers of historic homes. A listing on the NRHP can trigger extra reviews and protections in cases of proposed construction, often involving new or expanded roads or bridges.

A different type of designation is that of a local historic district, which is empowered to approve exterior modifications to structures as defined by a town’s bylaws. There are no local historic districts in Sandisfield.



Early 1900’s postcard image of New Boston.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Once the MHC approves the nomination, a team from that Commission will schedule a public information meeting in Town, likely this November or December. All property owners within the district boundaries will receive an announcement letter from the MHC, and the meeting will be open to all town residents. Announcements will also be placed in local newspapers. The Times will report on developments and the meeting in more detail.

The last steps are publication in the Massachusetts Register of Historic Places and finally in the Federal Register by the National Park Service. Ms. Parsons estimated that this process could take up to about another year, depending on the workload at the MHC.

Sections of town that have clusters of historic houses and which could potentially become separate NRHP districts include West New Boston, Montville, Sandisfield Center, and South Sandisfield. The official survey designating NRHP eligible houses includes about 15 properties well outside of any cluster, which may be eligible for individual listings on the Register. The survey is on file with the Town Clerk. Interested home owners may also contact the chairman of the Sandisfield Historical Commission, Ron Bernard (413-269-0012), for information and assistance. 🏠

CURRENT NRHP LISTINGS IN TOWN

Sandisfield already has three individual historic listings: The New Boston Inn (1988), the Montville Baptist Church (1999, now home of the Arts Center), and, in South Sandisfield, the Philomen Sage House (1982). About 80 properties in town are eligible as part of honorary districts such as and including New Boston.

Public Safety Officer Wears Three Hats

IS THE JOB WORKING OUT?

Story and photo by Bill Price

Two thumbs up, from the Police Chief and the Fire Chief.

Police Chief Mike Morrison said that creating the position of public safety officer and hiring Mike Johnson to fill it were both “very positive moves for the town.”

His brother, Fire Chief Ralph Morrison, said, “The community did a great thing in stepping up to support and pay for this. I think we have a safer community because of it.”

Working under the cooperating direction of both chiefs, Mike Johnson serves a unique role as police officer, firefighter, and emergency medical technician, certified to serve in all three. Sandisfield is very likely the first Massachusetts community to create such a job.

During a state DOT meeting, reported Selectman Brian O’Rourke, State Representative Smitty Pignatelli gave the Town credit for its innovation in creating a position that clearly benefits Town residents.

“In a way,” said Office Johnson of his bosses, “Ralph and Mike pioneered this role and have been doing it for many years. Both are firemen and policemen and Ralph is an EMT.” Johnson seems comfortable with his three roles.

Appointed in mid-July, he serves a long day, from 6 a.m. until 6 p.m. every weekday. His working hours are 8 a.m. until 4 p.m., but he is “on call” from 6 to 8 in the morning and 4 to 6 in the evening. He is not paid during the on-call hours, but does receive overtime if a response is necessary then.



PSO Mike Johnson

Both chiefs said that the public safety officer has taken much of the pressure off volunteer first responders and response time has improved. For police calls, it can often take the state police an hour or more to arrive. “In every kind of response,” said Police Chief Morrison, “Mike can drop everything and go.”

Police cruising has become more visible. “Mike is out and about a lot,” said the Police Chief. “I think it makes a difference when out-of-towners and even local people see someone available and present.”

With a background in computers, Johnson has been upgrading the electronic systems for each of the departments. Reports that were formerly handwritten are now completed on a computer and emergency vehicles are being linked electronically.

“We now have the capability to apply for state and federal grants,” said the Fire Chief. Johnson has won one grant and has applied for at least four more, including one for emergency services in small towns.

Having served as a part-time Sandisfield police officer since 2016, Johnson knew the community well when he began his new role. Fire Chief Morrison said there is “always a learning curve,”

and added that if people have concerns about the PSO, they should notify him as Fire Chief or Mike Morrison as Police Chief “and we’ll address them.”

PSO Johnson works out of the police office at Old Town Hall and both fire stations, as well as his Sandisfield police vehicle which contains his fire and medical equipment. For general questions for the PSO, residents can call the Town’s non-emergency number, 258-4742. For emergencies, call 911, which will be relayed to Johnson and other necessary services.

SPECIAL Letter to the Editors

I am happy that Officer Mike Johnson has been named Public Safety Officer. I hope he can continue in this position. He has been very helpful, tactful, and discrete in several emergencies we have had over the past couple of years. As I am growing older (now 90), it is good to know there is someone reliable available to help with emergencies when needed.

Gertrud Michelson
Sandisfield Road

Is your mind in the gutter?

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Income Limits Increased for Housing Grants

ADDITIONAL FUNDS AVAILABLE

By Times Reporters

A local non-profit agency has earmarked an additional \$1.3 million to assist low-to-moderate income residents of three towns to make critical repairs to their homes.

Since the beginning of February, The Resource for Community and Economic Development, Inc. (TRI) has successfully reviewed more than 30 projects in Sandisfield, Monterey, and Egremont to make sure that they meet both program and income guidelines. Twenty-eight projects are currently under construction and applications are being accepted for an additional 22.

Income limits for this round of grants have increased by approximately \$4,000-\$8,000, depending on household size. For example, for a two-person dwelling the limit has been increased to \$56,800; for a four-person dwelling, to \$70,950.

Each income-eligible applicant will qualify for up to \$40,000 worth of moderate repairs, including but not limited to roofing, siding, heating systems and hot water heater replacement, as well as doors and windows.

TRI, a Cape Cod based non-profit, community development corporation, has local offices in Great Barrington. TRI has been working for the Town of Monterey to manage their FY18 Housing Rehabilitation Program using Community Development Block Grant funds.

For questions about the program or income limits, please contact Dawn Odell Lemon, Assistant Program Manager as soon as you can. Telephone at 413-645-3448 or email at dawn@theresource.org.

School Committee Update

By Jennifer Hibbins, School Committee member

Over the summer, the School Committee discussed creating an Early K program for 4- to 5-year-olds to replace some of the funds that have been lost as the state ends the Community Partnerships for Children (CPC) grant. Under an Early K program, we would not charge tuition for full-day Pre-K and instead receive more Chapter 70 funds from the state. However, to receive these funds we would need to provide transportation for all in-district students who, due to their age, would be required to ride in safety harnesses on vans. Unfortunately, we do not have enough van seats available to meet such a requirement this year and so the committee unanimously voted to put the new program on hold.

In other news, Sandisfield will most likely have another assessment increase by 3-4 percent due to increased enrollment. The assessment is based on the 3-year-rolling average of enrollment outlined in the current regional agreement. The towns of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District recently voted to amend their agreement to include a 5-year-rolling-average assessment, and the committee has suggested that the Select Boards of Sandisfield and Otis do the same. This would minimize significant shifts in enrollment assessments to allow for better budget planning for both towns.

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The Meadow Pasture

By *Brigitte Ruthman*

The sun is leaving now, its departure hardly noticed. Darkness falls as quickly as a walk across the pasture, requiring vigilance to gather tools in time.

The steady hum of broad-winged tree crickets, katydids, and song birds sing while cows trample raspy pigweed, milkweed, thistle, and buckhorn plantain growing in the wet ground.

The cows' milk has a nutty flavor made of mature timothy and fescue grasses, perfect for cheesemaking. It's richer even than the sweet tang of legume clover in late Spring.

You wouldn't know the magic of a pasture unless you tended one. The invasive multiflora rose must be stopped from spreading. Its September seeds are loved by deer and durable enough to last decades in the soil. These intruders can turn any untended opening into a thorny, impenetrable mass within a couple of years. Leave the door open long enough and the roses will find a way in.

The cows will eat the blue chicory and dandelion flowers and the occasional Indian Paint Brush too, but not the more toxic buttercups. They leave enough Queen Anne's Lace to create a thin fog-like layer two or three feet off the ground.

There is the ritual too of New England rock harvesting every Spring. Never walk across a pasture without picking up at least what rocks you can carry and toss them into a pile at the other end.

The Amish and Mennonite farmers I know in Pennsylvania rotate fields when the grasses are a lush 18 inches from April until November. Here, on high ground, we are lucky to have mid-May until September, a few rotating tours on shorter grasses.

The topsoil is a miraculous place where zillions of beneficial microbes and bacteria thrive that don't live so well in shaded ground. They fix nitrogen, turning cow manure, sulfur, and phosphorus into the carbon that gives life to grass and nutrient-dense milk and other things. Straw into gold.

The best of surplus grasses are harvested from June through September as they have been for centuries, dried and baled or just piled in barns for the winter. It's worth the price of a barn to smell in January the sweet reminder and promise of the sun's coming return.

It takes five years at least to restore soil sterilized by the chemicals of larger commercial farms. Atrazine keeps grasses from filling in between rows of corn, leaving lifeless moon dust.



A meadow pasture at Joshua's Farm, Dodd Road.

Photo: Bill Price

Nurture an uneven New England rocky pasture long enough, its dips and swales cleared by oxen and known to every farmer thereafter, and you are left to wonder passing by a perfect lawn hemmed in by fences just how many cows could live there instead.

What is left, after all, if the houses and buildings were to disappear? The sun, if we are lucky, and its life sustaining crop of grass. 🌱

Transfer Station

BULKY WASTE AND TWO REMINDERS

1. Do not dispose of construction debris disguised as household garbage.
2. For electronic discards, from lightbulbs to refrigerators, stop at Town Hall, pay the small fee, bring the slip to the station attendant, and dispose of your stuff in the electronics dumpster.
3. Bulky waste dates are set for this month.

October 16, October 19-20

October 23, October 26-27

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All photos shown are the actual work of C.W.Nelson

A NOTE FROM BERKSHIRE REHABILITATION Happy Birthday, Walter



Walter Linkovich celebrated his 93rd birthday surrounded by good friends from the Sandisfield community here at Berkshire Rehabilitation where Walter currently resides.

Born and raised in Sandisfield, Walter lived his whole life in the family home on Sandisfield Road. He was an electrician for approximately 25 years and states that he wired most of the houses in town. He even worked on some of the wiring when Berkshire Rehabilitation was built. He also worked on many of the local chicken farms. His hobbies were hunting, fishing, and square dancing. Walter was always that person who liked to help everyone.



Tax Bills in the Mail

Cont'd from p.3

If you fall into arrears, you'll receive a demand letter which, in fact, "is rather nicely written," says Spohnholz. "In it the Treasurer offers to help you set up a payment plan."

If you don't respond by a certain date, you'll get a more insistent letter from the Treasurer's attorney warning that the property could be moved into "tax title." You are still the owner under tax title and can sell the property, but the Town will have imposed a lien so it can recover unpaid taxes, plus interest. And the interest rate increases during tax title.

The next step is "tax taking," a process that usually takes about a year during which the Town will work with the taxpayer to determine a payment plan so the owner can keep the property.

If that fails, what follows are the regretful steps toward land court and foreclosure. In reality, the Town does not want to own your property. There are costs involved that the Town does not want, such as maintenance, liability, a loss of tax income (the Town doesn't pay itself taxes), costs to assess and to tear down that old barn or to save it.

Tax abatements are available for disabled veterans, blind residents, and elderly who meet income requirements. Check with the tax assessor's office at Town Hall Annex or call 413-258-4711, ext. 6.

In Need of a Little Pruning

At the foot of Tolland Road, just after the turn off Rt. 8, is a state regulated 20 mph sign. It's in there under the overgrown lilacs.

Trying to locate it, a Times photographer was peering through the brush. Fire Chief Ralph Morrison drove by. "You lost?" he asked. "There's a 20 mph sign in here somewhere." "There is?" Ralph asked. Like many of the rest of us, he's been driving up that road for 50 years or so and if he ever saw the speed limit sign it was 40 years ago.

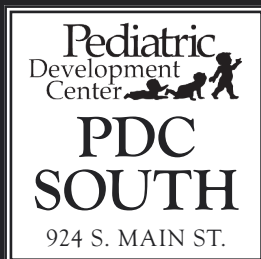
The 20 mph sign, in there somewhere.

Photos: Joanne Olsen



The lilac hedge in which the 20 mph sign hides out.

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Old Route 8 Bridge to Be Demolished

BUT COULD IT BE SAVED AND REPURPOSED?

By Ron Bernard

In August, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers quietly announced that a new access road and entrance to Colebrook River Lake is planned at the upper end of the lake south of New Boston, off of Route 8.

Christopher Way, Operations Manager for the Corps' Naugatuck River Area office which is coordinating the project, wrote in an email that construction will most likely start in the spring of 2020. While not mentioned specifically, the implication was that the current bridge that spans the west branch of the Farmington River will come down.

Reached by the Times for clarification, Mr. Way responded that the bridge will in fact be removed next summer or fall once the new road is constructed. "Some years ago we spent around \$400,000 on bridge repairs and were unable to perform all of the recommended items due to the cost," he said. "We are now facing further repairs to the tune of another \$400,000."

In a later email, he wrote that the intent of the project is to avoid bridges entirely due to the extraordinary maintenance costs.

Built in 1927 by the Berlin Iron Bridge Co., of Berlin, Conn., the bridge is described in the town's historical asset inventory as being "Truss Pure Pratt, arch style." According to the Massachusetts Historical Commission register, this is the oldest active bridge in Sandisfield. It is also the last in a long series of bridges at this location dating to early in the town's history. They were vital links between New Boston and the once thriving Colebrook River community, about seven miles south, before that area and the town were flooded under the Colebrook reservoir in 1965.

The bridge is definitely iconic and would be missed. Eric Pachulski, who resides at the former Campetti farmstead at Roosterville directly across Rt. 8 and the Farmington River leading into the lake basin, told The Times, "It's a shame to see this bridge go. It's been part of the landscape and our lives for so long. They built it to last. After all, it survived the floods of '38 and '55 when many others did not. Is there a chance it could be saved and used for foot traffic or as part of a trail or a bikeway?"

Mr. Way indicated that the Corps is open to relocation of the bridge by interested parties, and they are willing to advertise for this.

Hopefully there is also room for consideration to keep the old bridge open for recreational use. According to



the Corps' web page about Colebrook River Lake, "Nearly 158,000 visitors enjoy the recreational pursuits at Colebrook River Lake each year. Visitors spend an estimated \$1.86 million within 30 miles of the lake. And, an estimated 52 jobs in the local community are supported by visitors to Colebrook Lake."

Indeed, if those numbers are even close to accurate, why not take advantage of this asset and link New Boston with a bikeway or a trail to connect the park, the lake, and points beyond? It's an idea worth pursuing so that this old bridge which can no longer support vehicles could be a delight to bikers and hikers and a Sandisfield attraction for another 92 years. 🇺🇸

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DUDE!**The Lost Wilderness Ranch***Cont'd from p.1*

Her husband and partner, Elliott, was born in 1907 at Oswego, NY. Following school, he worked as a “chainman” (surveyor’s assistant) before a stint as a guard at Sing Sing prison in 1934. Apparently the work did not agree with him and after several suspensions and fines he resigned in 1936. Cavellier found his calling in sales as a recruiter (“head hunter”) for salesmen. In the 1950s, he was National Sales Manager for the “Famous Artist Schools,” a chain owned by a partnership of 12 leading American artists, including Norman Rockwell. In the 1960s, he was the sales executive for an aviation school. He continued in this profession while running the dude ranch.

The Cavelliers had good business sense. They knew their audience – well-to-do, probably bored young women and some men from cities between Boston and New York. Ads were placed in major newspapers, even in the New York Daily News which in August 1962 ran a full-page feature story of a reporter’s experience at the “Dude Ranch in the Berkshires.” The Eagle and the Boston Globe and others also covered the ranch. The Cavelliers regularly sent press releases to newspapers across the country and Canada. They knew what their product line was – fun! – and they knew how to promote it. In 1961, Elliott was elected president of the Eastern Dude Ranch Association which had 15 members, mostly in New York state. Lost Wilderness was a charter member (1956).

SO WHAT'S A DUDE?

The word “dude” was coined by authentic cowboys to unfavorably refer to city dwellers. The term later became associated with western guest ranches that catered to urbanites seeking a more rural experience such as “the cowboy life,” including costumes. Dude ranches began to appear in the American West in the early 20th century. After World War II at least 15, including Lost Wilderness Ranch, opened in the Northeast and were successful. Later, dude was also adopted as jargon by the California surfing culture.

Working for the Dudes

As ranch manager, Gladys ran a tight ship, not always appreciated by the sun-up/sun-down overworked cowhands in charge of two dozen horses.

Francis Deming, then a young man whose family’s property abutted the ranch (now state land), applied for work. “The pay was lousy,” he told The Times. “Thirty cents an hour. I lasted a week then found a job picking fruit for 20 bucks a day.” Francis still lives in Tolland.

While the ranch was a busy place, the employees made it look easy so guests could relax and enjoy a unique “western” experience *close to home*. With the 1953 construction of a barn the ranch was turned into a replica of a western town, although with a swimming pool.

In the 1950s, New Yorkers could take direct limos daily from Columbus Circle, round trip: \$10 (about \$85 in today’s money). A Greyhound



on Sundays deposited new guests at the New Boston Store at noon and returned at 2:30 to take other happy campers home. The cowboy staff met buses at Springfield, Great Barrington, Winsted, and elsewhere in the ranch’s fancy 9-passenger, ‘64 Ford Country Squire “woody.” They met trains too and flights landing at Bradley Airport.

Lodging options included full board and ranch amenities. In the early ‘50s, prices for a weekly stay for adults ranged from \$50 (\$425 now) in a bunk room to \$65 (\$600) for a double/twin with private bath. About 80 guests could be accommodated. The ranch operated year round with different activities in winter, with four hundred acres reserved for hunting.

In summer, it was non-stop recreation. Trail riding was offered two or three hours a day, and guests could bring their own horses. Boating, fishing,

What's To Do

swimming at the lake or the pool, sometimes serenaded by a singing cowboy, a game room, lawn activities. Evenings, after the family-style meal in the “chuck house,” campfires with more singing.



Sometimes guests wandered off premises. In September 1948 the Eagle reported, “Some of the guests from the Lost Wilderness Ranch in Tolland were lost so the Sandisfield Fire engine was taken to Tolland to try to locate them using the siren.”

Once a group of young guests was taken at night to the Tolland cemetery, possibly around Halloween, for a “tour.” Cowhands, lying in wait behind grave stones, popped up and “scared the wits out of them,” according to an eyewitness.

Weekends were special. Everyone of a certain age around here remembers square dancing at the Golden Nugget pavilion with top callers like Sammy Spring and Bill Osborne. The Messenger sisters of Tolland appeared as singing cowgirls, the “Three D’s.” The bar was famous, or perhaps infamous, sometimes rough, a consequence of serious libation flow. More than one cowboy fell in love here.



The Messenger sisters performed as the Three D's.

Photo: Adrienne Prince

There were many Sandisfield patrons at the Golden Nugget. “The place was hopping,” one New Boston woman told us. Adrienne Prince of Tolland, daughter of Eunice Messenger, now 94, one of the Three D’s, grew up near the ranch. She recalled how much she enjoyed the rodeos and

daytime activities with her father. "It was a blast," she said.

Another New Boston resident recalled those days. She said, "Seems like we all had first jobs at the ranch such as in housekeeping. I have fond memories of going to the dance hall. It was really a great spot. Arthur Jabs put on water ballet shows at the ranch's pool. We practiced at his beach in Roosterville with acrobats and did our routines for audiences at the pool."

Cowgirl "Gem" Mahoney of Bridgeport, representing the ranch, competed for the title of "Rodeo Queen of the East" at Madison Square Garden in September 1954. She was runner-up the year before.

All kinds of functions were held. On December 29, 1960 the Hartford Courant reported that the Winsted Kiwanis club organized a sleigh ride for about 25 local youngsters.

There were times that were not fun however. Reportedly there were two accidental deaths. One incident was carried in the Courant in its July 16, 1964 edition.

"TOLLAND, Mass. (UPI) – Gordon C. Booth, 33, of Hallstead, Pa., was killed Wednesday when he fell from his third story bedroom window at the Lost Wilderness Dude Ranch where he was employed as a bartender. Booth's roommate, David Hornemann of Fredonia, N.Y., said he awoke early and saw Booth tumble out of the window. Medical Examiner Arthur Logie said death was caused by a broken neck." Some at the time wondered if this had really been an accident.

It Comes to an End



Sandisfield Times photo

The ranch closed in the late 1970s when the Cavelliers retired in their early 70s. Speculators who subsequently bought the ranch did nothing with the property which gradually deteriorated. The shallow lake was expanded from 20 to 81 acres. In 2011, the Commonwealth acquired 843 acres for conservation as an extension to Tolland State Forest. Where the ranch stood is now a pleasant but largely unknown public park called "Twining Pond." It is however considered a good place to fish by some who know. Shhhh.

The buildings and rodeo compound, bucking chutes and all, are gone and the pool is filled in. There is scarcely a trace of the ranch other than roads a parking

lot. Some boulders that appear in photos taken during the ranch's life remain. We imagine the place is visited occasionally by former workers and guests who make a wistful visit to recall the good times here. But the Lost Wilderness Dude Ranch has vanished. Except for the memories.

Next month the Times will present Part Two, "The Cowboys," the story of the wranglers at Lost Wilderness who made it all happen. Featured will be legendary trick-rider and horseman Dan Civitello.

Fortunately, Mr. Civitello compiled home movies of his performances at Lost Wilderness in the early '50s into a 15-minute video. You can visit Lost Wilderness Ranch on You Tube. 📺

Illustrations courtesy of Gary Leveille/BerkshireArchives.com, except as noted.

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The Librarian's Corner

By Terry Spohnholz

Library Hours:

- Monday and Tuesday, 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.;
- Wednesday, 2:00-5:00 p.m.; Thursday, 5:00-7:00 p.m.;
- Saturday, 10:00 a.m.-1 p.m. Phone: 258-4966.

Please note that the Library will be closed for Columbus Day, October 14.

Happenings at the Library


Saturday, October 12 from 1 to 2:30 pm is Arts and Crafts with Kids (every second Saturday of the month). This month will feature spooky pumpkins, paint, and plenty of glitter!

New Books in the Library

- *Killer Instinct* by James Patterson and Howard Roughan – The second in a series featuring Dr. Dylan Reinhart and Detective Elizabeth Needham. A sociopath is loose in the heart of NYC. Can the doctor and the detective save the day?
- *Land of Wolves* by Craig Johnson – The latest in the bestselling Longmire series, also a Netflix original series. Sheriff Walt Longmire returns to Absaroka County, Wyoming, to lick his wounds, only to find himself facing both a killer and a wolf on the loose.
- *Night Boat to Tangiers* by Kevin Barry – A striking and gorgeous novel of two aging criminals at the ends of their damage-filled careers. A melancholic melody of a novel full of beautiful phrases and terrible men.

- *The Testaments* by Margaret Atwood – Her dystopian masterpiece, *The Handmaid's Tale*, has become a modern classic. This is the stunning sequel to that iconic story and its dramatic conclusion.
- *The Ventriloquists* by E. R. Ramzipoor – In this triumphant debut novel inspired by true events, a ragtag gang of journalists and resistance fighters risk everything for an elaborate scheme to undermine the Third Reich. The Nazis stole their voices, but they would not be silenced. Inspired by a true story of courage and resistance.

Remember that the library has several family passes for various museums around the area – Springfield Art Museum, Dr. Seuss Museum, the Clark, MASS MOCA, and more. Stop by the library and inquire.

Please note that the library does not take donations of books, magazines, or games. We appreciate your wishing to donate to our small library, but we simply do not have the capacity. 



*Three Sandhill Cranes
In early September, these three Sandhill Cranes seemed to be dancing as they searched the grass for bugs near the corner of Fox Road and New Hartford Road.
Photo: Emily Melchoir*

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Carpenter Sought

Our company will have a project in Sandisfield this October-November.

We are seeking one or two local carpenters/roofers/laborers to work for us in this project near Spectacle Pond. Please contact Chris V. Pocoli, Chief Engineer, The Aulson Company, LLC, Methuen, MA.

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Garrison and Simon, Live in Person, in New Marlborough

By Tim Brooks

Best known for his classic radio show, *A Prairie Home Companion*, humorist and storyteller Garrison Keillor will sit for an Author's Talk with his personal friend, Sandisfield's own Simon Winchester, at Music & More at the Meeting House in New Marlborough, Saturday, October 5, at 4:30 p.m.

Keillor will share his thoughts on a variety of current topics for a friendly chat that is sure to be both homespun and humorous and possibly bittersweet.

For those who have wondered about Keillor's whereabouts since "Prairie" went off the air a few years ago, "there has been no sabbatical!" Since then, he has written a musical called "The Lives of the Cowboys," a memoir entitled "So Far So Good," and stacks of limericks. This original quote sums up Keillor's philosophy nicely: "Beauty isn't worth thinking about; what's important is your mind. You don't want a fifty-dollar haircut on a fifty-cent head."

Tickets are \$25 (or \$20 for members; 18 and under free) and can be purchased online. Tickets may still be available for this program, so check their website today:



Keillor

Winchester

www.newmarlborough.org. A reception will follow in the Meeting House Art Gallery.

Plans are being made for next year's Music & More series, which will again run on Saturday afternoons from late August through early October. How lucky we are to live in the Berkshires, and have such a wide variety of community organizations that make it their goal to bring high quality cultural offerings for all of us to see and hear throughout the year. ♡

Sandisfield Historical Society



By Ann Wald, President

At our September meeting, Marie Mastroni spoke of her recent trip to Kenya. She has been making humanitarian visits for quite a few years. She spoke of the children, their education, and their daily lives. It was very eye-opening to understand how these children and families live.

Joanne Olson also spoke about our next endeavor. We are hoping to have residents,

children especially, speak to their elders about their individual history. And we have copies of a genealogy tree that families can use to fill out their family histories. Our hope is to get people tracing their family histories and for the children to discover their heritage.

Our next meeting, October 12, will be our annual Apple Fest, held at the Meeting House on Rt. 183 from 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. We hope to have a demonstration on making apple cider. Our local seniors will be selling homemade apple pies; other baked items will be for sale. Also a whole new selection of tag sale items. Hamburger's and hot dogs will be available for sale, along with cold drinks.

On Saturday, November 9, we will honor our nation's veterans with a talk by local historian, Ron Bernard, who will speak about Sandisfield's native son, Revolutionary War hero, Col. John Brown. Following the discussion, please join us for our traditional wine & cheese social period.

Our December 7 meeting will be our annual Christmas Fair. We'll be at Firehouse #2 on Rt.57 from 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. If you would like to rent a table, please call Ann Wald at 258-4415. The cost per table is \$20. Please join us. These events are our fund raisers. Since we had to use money we'd saved for our new bathroom to have the roof repaired, we now need to replace the bathroom money so we can continue with the project. ♡

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Until November 1, new customers receive a 15% discount on selected perennials and organic compost. Our Fall/Winter services include:

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Police/Fire/EMS Logs

NOTE: North Main Street is Rt. 8 north of New Boston Bridge; South Main Street is south of the bridge.



POLICE

August 2019 Incidents

- Aug. 1 Well-being check, Harvey Mtn, Tolland
- Aug. 2 Larceny, Hammertown Road
- Aug. 3 Assist citizen, Sandisfield Road
- Aug. 3 Medical, Tamarack Trail, OWL
- Aug. 4 Medical, Sandisfield Road
- Aug. 6 Tree on wires, Clark Road
- Aug. 6 911 hang up, Beech Plain Road
- Aug. 6 911 hang up, Bosworth Road
- Aug. 6 Assist citizen, Sandisfield Road
- Aug. 7 Medical, Sandisfield Road
- Aug. 7 Fire alarm, Lake Shore Road, OWL
- Aug. 8 Assist citizen, Sandisfield Road
- Aug. 8 Tree down, Clark Road
- Aug. 8 Medical, Sandisfield Road
- Aug. 10 Possible attempted suicide, Dodd Road
- Aug. 12 Suspicious activity, South Main Street
- Aug. 12 Medical, Sandisfield Road
- Aug. 12 Fire alarm, Viets Road
- Aug. 13 Medical, Sandisfield Road
- Aug. 14 Medical, Wood Lands Way, OWL
- Aug. 17 Fire alarm, Tolland
- Aug. 17 Medical, Shadow Lane, OWL
- Aug. 19 Fire alarm, Sandisfield Road
- Aug. 21 Assist citizen, Town Hill Road
- Aug. 22 Assist citizen, Tannery Road
- Aug. 22 Traffic complaint, South Main Street
- Aug. 23 Motor vehicle accident, North Main Street
- Aug. 27 Fire alarm, Tamarack Trail, OWL
- Aug. 28 Burglar alarm, Sandisfield Road
- Aug. 29 CO detector alarm, Sandisfield Road
- Aug. 30 Animal complaint, Tannery Road
- Aug. 30 Hazard road condition, Sandisfield Road
- Aug. 31 Keep the peace, Dodd Road
- Aug. 31 Debris in road, South Main Street



FIRE

August 2019 Incidents

- Aug. 6 Tree and wires down
- Aug. 7 Smoke detector activation, investigate, no fire
- Aug. 12 Fire alarm activation, investigate, no fire
- Aug. 17 Standby for Tolland Fire Department
- Aug. 19 Standby at nursing home, fire alarm malfunction
- Aug. 23 Motor vehicle accident, Route 8
- Aug. 27 Fire alarm activation, burnt food
- Aug. 29 Carbon monoxide, investigate, faulty detector



EMS

August 2019 Incidents

- Aug. 3 Medical, only one Sandisfield EMT available, Becket responded
- Aug. 4 Medical, transport to Fairview Hospital, Great Barrington
- Aug. 4 Second medical call, transport to Fairview Hospital
- Aug. 7 Medical, only one Sandisfield EMT available, Otis responded
- Aug. 8 Medical, transport to Berkshire Medical Center, Pittsfield
- Aug. 11 Medical, no Sandisfield EMTs available, Granville responded
- Aug. 12 Medical, transport to Fairview Hospital
- Aug. 13 Medical, transport to Fairview Hospital
- Aug. 14 Medical, call originated in part of Otis Woodlands covered by Otis
- Aug. 21 Medical, Tolland, motor vehicle accident, call cancelled en route

Correction

On the Town Directory published in the Times in August, the email for the local American Legion was incorrect. The correct address is American Legion Post 456, Maria Domato, Commander: 258-4578 (April-October) or yankeefruitloop@gmail.com.



Soon to Sleep Through the Winter

A Cecropia Moth caterpillar, photographed by Setsuko Winchester in Emily Melchoir's garden on Fox Road at the end of August. Seen here in its final green stage, the caterpillar, 4 or 5 inches long, will seal itself into a cocoon to emerge in the spring to join the family of the largest moths in North America, with a wingspan for five to seven inches. Since adult moths cannot eat, they die after two weeks.

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Easy Pickin' at Riiska's

APPLES ARE RIPE AND READY

By Tom Christopher

The apple shed at Riiska Brook Orchard at 101 New Hartford Road is open for apples, apple cider, cider donuts, and pumpkins.



A harvest of Galas, ready to be picked.

You can pick your own apples from the orchard's semi-dwarf Macs, Cortlands, Honeycrisps, Empires, and Ida Reds. By early October the Galas, Macouns, Spencers, Fujis, and Braeburns will be ready.

But the 2019 apple crop, according to Bill Riiska, is just "okay."

His trees this year did not bear the bounty of better years. He blames the weather. It was a very wet, cold spring so the bees didn't pollinate as well as they usually do. The result is an uneven harvest.

"It was hit and miss," said Bill. "The tree right there has all kinds of apples and the next one doesn't have a doggone apple. I've never had it that way."

Along with the bees having problems, because the spring and summer rains were abnormally hard it was difficult to spray the trees. Indeed, the rains so soaked the soil that driving his 4-wheel-drive tractor through the soggy orchard left ruts more than a foot deep. Even when he did manage to spray, the pounding rain as often as not washed the material off the trees, obliging him to spray again lest the growing fruit be left unprotected.

But he has fruit for all his customers, and no one goes home without a load of apples.

All in all, this is one of the more challenging years Bill has faced in the orchard he began planting in 1989. He's philosophical about that: "Mother Nature does what she wants. And you've got to go along with it."

Touch a Truck

Photos: Bill Price

Kids and everyone else had the opportunity on a perfect mid-September Sunday to climb aboard, blow the horn, turn the wheels (if they could) of two of the Town's new DPW trucks, sit in the front of a police car, climb into a fire engine wearing a bright red plastic helmet or hold onto a blasting firehose, and visit the back of an ambulance and see the equipment used by EMT volunteers to respond.

Twice word passed through the crowd that the LIFE STAR critical care helicopter was "on the way," but both times the chopper was diverted to an emergency and didn't make it to Sandisfield.

Sponsored by the Recreation Committee, the event took place at the American Legion Pavilion at Hamilton Grove on Rt. 8.





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For Love of an Old House, Part 4

A BRIGHTER ENTRY

By Lorraine German



Photos:
Right: Before
Left: After

Someone once compared walking into the hall of our house at Town Hill Road – with its paneled walls, brown carpeting, and dark-stained stairway – to walking into a dungeon. It certainly didn't feel warm and friendly.

I envisioned a welcoming entry with light walls and wainscoting. It wasn't hard to achieve.

The rustic paneling had random-width spacing, so I spackled the spaces in the upper part of the paneling and painted it the same cream as the other walls in the house. Thin wood strips nailed between the upper and lower parts created a chair rail that completed the wainscoted look. The wainscoting was painted to match the woodwork.

While I thought I was done, last summer the house spoke again, telling me that the old wood floor in the hall was unacceptable.

It had about four layers of paint on it, ending with a worn-out red. The front parlor had once been highly decorated and the entry to the house would have been as well. I accepted the challenge and, in keeping with the style of the period, painted the floor in light and dark squares on point. The house had been right – the new floor was just what the front hall needed.

It's been a four-year labor of love, and we're not done. I still have to dry-scrape a wall in the back parlor to expose the original coral-pink plaster. As for the stenciling in the front parlor, we've already spoken to experts about removing the blue paint to preserve as much of the stenciling as possible.

We're proud that we've achieved our goal of turning our old house into a home that not only respects those who came before, but reflects the love of those who now own it.

And who knows what the house has yet to tell us? 🏡



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Family-Friendly Open House and Barbecue

AT THE ARTS CENTER, OCTOBER 5

By Hilde Weisert

On October 5 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. (or later), the Arts Center will host a family-friendly open house and barbecue for people in Sandisfield and surrounding towns.

Meet neighbors, make new friends, see the paintings and sculpture of Mark Farnum and Alan Papskun (Gallery reception at 2:00-4:00 p.m., before the open house), play games, listen to music, and eat hamburgers and hotdogs cooked by Sandisfield barbecue master Bogart Muller. We'll also be honoring our wonderful current volunteers and sharing information about volunteer opportunities.



Ed Arron and Jeewon Park

The next afternoon **Sunday, October 6 at 4:00 p.m.**, things settle down with a concert by world-class musicians **Ed Arron (cellist) and Jeewon Park (piano)**.

A week later, on **Saturday, October 12, Val Coleman** will speak at 4:00 p.m. on a topic most of us don't know enough about, "The Constitution Alive."

Back by popular demand on **Saturday, October 19 at 4:00 p.m.**, **Tom Christopher** will present "Hard Cider Tasting" – educational and delicious. **The Easy Ridin' Papas** will provide the perfect musical accompaniment.



The Easy Ridin' Papas




Sandisfield Arts Center

5 Hammertown Rd, Sandisfield, MA
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Sat, Oct 5 4:30-6:30 PM

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Sat, Oct 12 4 PM \$10

VAL COLEMAN
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Neighbors Welcome

For information please visit www.noticeotis.com or contact the Rec Center Office.

Office: Tuesday—Friday, 8:00AM-4:00PM
70 North Main Road • PO Box 237 • Otis, MA 01253
413/269-4541 • otisrec@verizon.net

Recreation Commission: Kathy Carroll, Bill Dyer, Dana Pustinger, Jen Catalane
Program Supervisor, Patricia Richard





Letters to the Editors

GOOD VEGGIES

We shopped at the Carbon's Farm Stand per the article in the current issue of The Sandisfield Times – excellent veggies as promised! I mentioned to Jim Carbon that we were there because of the article. He said he seems to be seeing a lot more people from Sandisfield.

We enjoyed your focus on Winsted in this issue, as that's our route to and from Stamford, Conn. We've been to many of the places mentioned and were happy to hear about others that we will have to try.

*Peter and Michelle Ebstein
New Hartford Road*

THANKS, BUT NOT MY GRANDFATHER

It was a delight to get the Sandisfield Times with all the articles about Winsted since Frank DeMars was my grandfather and I am the one who organized and shared all the images from his glass plate negatives. One correction: the wonderful picture of the man driving the horse and buggy in front of my grandfather's store on Main Street – I am sure the fellow in the wagon is not my grandfather. But thanks very much for the Winsted stories.

*Peg Giles
Granby, Conn.*

TRAPPED BY THE ROAD

For the fifteen years I've been living in the home I built on Silverbrook Road, at the top of the hill near the intersection with Rt. 57, I have had to deal with the evil that is the section of Silverbrook leading from the intersection to my driveway.

The road is in disrepair and has never been adequately attended to. Fill in the potholes with gravel – is that the answer? No, it washes away in a few days. I am sure our Highway Superintendent means well when he consistently tells me (as I call and call and call) that he intends to do something about it.

I'm running out of patience. Much as I love my home – because I built it and it's the only house I've ever owned – I find myself worried to death that there will be a time when I'm not going to be able to drive around here.

I have had four back operations and a shoulder replacement over the last several years and the jolts that I get when I drive from the corner to my house (or from the foot of my driveway up to the corner) constantly aggravate my pain. I try to weave in and around the potholes but just as I weave around one, another is front of me.

I have had to make major repairs on my car and at great expense had to put in a culvert to drain away water that runs into my driveway from what is apparently a spring under the ground.

I belong to a Friday morning discussion group that meets at various members' homes and when it's my turn to be the hostess, the participants say, "Let's wait, Rita, until they fix 57 and Silverbrook." They just don't want to take a chance with their cars. At one point one of their family members was considering buying property in Sandisfield and after

hearing from me, she and her husband decided to look elsewhere.

I never thought that in my later years I would have to face these issues. There are times I feel trapped by the road and that just really hurts, deep down in my soul.

I'm not sure how long I will be able to endure this mess. My fear is that I would have to sell the house and find a town with better roads. And that is not something I can easily afford, nor do I wish to move away from the town I have loved all these years.

I feel ignored by the town and my spirits are deeply damaged by all this.

Advice, anyone?

*Rita Kasky
Silverbrook Road*



Artwork: Michelle Arnot

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NOW HEAR THIS!

Edited by Laura Rogers-Castro

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

OCTOBER EVENTS

Playgroup on Mondays from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. at the Sandisfield Library Community Room (library basement). No pre-registration necessary. The playgroup features a story time. Led by Nina Carr. Free!

COA Wednesday Weekly Gatherings from 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Council on Aging, basement level at Sandisfield Town Hall Annex on Route 57.

Chair Yoga on Wednesdays at 2:00 p.m. at the Council on Aging, basement level at Sandisfield Town Hall Annex on Route 57. Free.

Flu Shot Clinic on Wednesday, October 2, from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. at the Town Hall Annex conducted by the Porch Light VNA. Please bring your insurance card.

Foxwoods Casino Bus Trip on Saturday, October 5. Bus boarding time is 7:30 a.m. from the Sandisfield Library. Tickets are \$20 for Sandisfield seniors; \$25 for Sandisfield adults, and \$30/35 for non-residents. Tickets include transportation, \$10 food voucher or free buffet, and \$10 slot-play. Bus seats only sold until October 4. For additional information, contact the Sandisfieldreccommittee@gmail.com.

Opening Reception: Mark Farnum and Alan Papsun on Saturday, October 5, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center at 5 Hammertown Road. Paintings and sculpture. Private showings available by appointment with the artists. The exhibition will be on display in the Gallery through October 31.

Open House and Barbecue, Sandisfield Arts Center, on Saturday, October 5, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the Arts Center at 5 Hammertown Road. Family friendly. Come one, come all. Meet neighbors, have fun, eat barbecue, and find out about volunteer opportunities.

Ed Arron, Cello, and Jeewon Park, Piano on Sunday, October 6 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center at 5 Hammertown Road. Mr. Arron is artistic director and host of the acclaimed Musical Masterworks concert series in Old Lyme, Conn. Ms. Park has garnered the attention of audiences for her dazzling piano technique and poetic lyricism. \$20.

Sandisfield Historical Society's Apple Festival on Saturday, October 12 at the Old Meeting House on Rt. 183 at South Sandisfield Road. Vendors, tag sale, hot dogs, hamburgers, apple pies for sale.

Flea Market on Saturday, October 12, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the American Legion Pavilion on 81 South Main Street (Route 8). Vendor space for \$20. Contact Maria, (413) 258-4578; or Maggie, (860) 309-6166; or just show up! No limit on outdoor space. Limited indoor space, first come, first serve. Free tractor pulls all day compliments of Carroll Motor Sports.

Val Coleman presents "The Constitution Alive" on Saturday, October 12, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center at 5 Hammertown Road. Val will argue that the American constitution is alive and well, despite the assaults on its tenets throughout the history of this country. For more information, visit www.sandisfieldartscenter.org. \$10.

New Boston Church Service on Sunday, October 13, at 10:00 a.m. at the New Boston Congregational Church, Route 57. All are welcome!

Fire Department Open House on Sunday, October 13, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Station #1, Rt. 8, near the American Legion Pavilion. See our new quarters and training center. Free hot dogs, hamburgers, water. All are invited.

Hard Cider Tasting conducted by Tom Christopher with **Music by the Easy Ridin' Papas** on Saturday, October 19, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center at 5 Hammertown Road. Long-time cider maker Tom Christopher will speak about the history of cider making in our region and invite the audience to taste ciders from a variety of makers. The Easy Ridin' Papas will provide musical interludes with Depression-era country blues and jazz. For tickets and information visit www.sandisfieldartscenter.org. \$20.

Harvest Dinner on Saturday, October 26, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Fire Station #2 on Route 57. Sponsored by the New Boston Church. Turkey and all the fixin's! Take out available and tickets available at the door. Tickets are \$12 for adults, \$6 for children under 12.

Halloween Trunk or Treat on Thursday, October 31 from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. at the American Legion Field on Route 8. Sponsored by the Sandisfield Recreational Committee. Bring your little goblins, ghosts, princesses, and pirates to the field where neighbors and friends

will be parked with decorated cars and candy! If you would like to decorate your car and give out goodies, please call Billie at (413) 258-4025 or email to sandisfieldreccommittee@gmail.com.

OTHER EVENTS IN NEARBY TOWNS

Open House on I-90 Interchange Study on Thursday, October 10 from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. on 1 Russell Stage Road in Blandford. Join MassDOT to learn about the interchange alternatives (Becket, Blandford) and draft study recommendations. For more information, contact MassDOT Project Manager Cassandra Gascon Bligh at cassandra.gascon@state.ma.us or (857) 368-8852.

Otis Fire Department Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, October 13 from 7:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the Otis Town Hall.

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who have donated this month.*



Amy Rosen & Arthur Wiesberg



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Copies are also available in Otis at Berkshire Bank, Katie's Market, Papa's Fuel, Otis Library, Otis Rec Center, Farmington River Diner, Otis Poultry Farm, Otis Woodlands (May-September), Knox Trail Inn, and the Laundromat. Locations in Monterey include the Library and the Roadside Café. Also available at the Southfield Store in New Marlborough, at the general store and post office in Colebrook, and at the library of NW Connecticut Community College in Winsted. Back issues are available for purchase.

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