

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume XII, Number 2

May 2021

All Eyes on Town Meeting, Testing the Voters' Mood

CANNABIS MOST CONTENTIOUS ISSUE

By Simon Winchester

As the maelstrom of argument and challenge continues to swirl around the plan to build a huge cannabis facility in the town's northern forests, attention is now turning to this month's Town Meeting where, for the first time, we will learn what Sandisfield as a whole feels about the matter.

Just now only the three-man Select Board - which last year promised to 'expedite' matters for SAMA, the group of developers planning the 100,000 square foot plant - has weighed in on the issue, and after due consideration last month granted the start-up firm the first of a series of necessary permits.

But on May 15 all registered voters will be able to decide whether or not to regulate cannabis facilities here more generally - and the battle lines are being drawn in a manner not seen in town since the infamous Wild & Scenic River tumult of thirty years ago. (Editor's note: See Out on a Limb, page 7.)

Cannabis is by no means the only matter on the warrant for this year's Meeting: twenty-seven other issues, most of them quite routine - \$45,000 for a new police cruiser; \$45,000 for a Jaws of Life emergency kit; \$20,000 for new fire hoses - are up for discussion during what will be an in-person and so Covid-protected gathering.

Article 27, currently the penultimate item to be debated (though given public interest it may well be moved up earlier on the roster), concerns the establishment, for the first time ever, of a brand-new by-law written specifically to deal with the growing of cannabis. As with all town by-laws, two-thirds of the assembled voters will need to signify their approval before it passes onto the local statute books.

On the face of it the marijuana issue under discussion at the Meeting is quite straightforward. The proposed by-law, the language of which has been batted back and forth between the Planning and Select Boards for many months past, limits the size of any one growing entity here to what the state mandates as a Tier 3 facility - that is, one with a total area of greenhouses in which the plants will grow to be no greater than 20,000 square feet.

But, crucially, no one plant can be any more substantial. The by-law quite unequivocally prohibits the construction "on any property within the town" of any larger facilities, ranging from the moderately-sized Tier 4 plants right up to the maximum allowed in the state, the enormous 100,000 square foot Tier 11 factories, of which Massachusetts has only three, all in industrial areas. If the by-law passes, this prohibition comes into immediate force.

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Late News: Town Hall to Reopen

At press time The Times learned that Town Buildings will reopen as soon as new State Covid guidelines have been reviewed. Town commissions/committees should be able to meet at Old Town Hall where there is adequate space for social distancing. Contact Town Clerk Dolores Harasyko for details, 258-4711 ext. 2.



Coming Soon!
See page 3.



**WATCH OUT FOR
TURTLES!**

Lock Your Cars and Trucks

The Sandisfield Police Department posted a warning on the Connect Sandisfield Facebook page that “a recent rash of vehicle thefts” had occurred in area towns. A few vehicles have been stolen or came close to it in Sandisfield.

Chief Mike Morrison advised, “Remember to take keys out and lock the doors every time you park your vehicle.” He added, “If you see or hear something, call 911 and report it right away.”

Transfer Station Bulky Waste

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Bulky waste disposal is offered twice a year to residents who purchase an annual transfer station sticker. Sandisfield will hold free bulky waste disposal on the following days during regular transfer station hours:

- Saturday, May 1: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- Sunday, May 2: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- Wednesday, May 5: 12 p.m. - 5 p.m.
- Saturday, May 8: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- Sunday, May 9: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- Wednesday, May 12: 12 p.m. - 5 p.m.

No construction debris, tires or hazardous materials will be accepted.

You must have a current 2021 transfer station sticker to participate. If you need a 2021 transfer station sticker, please obtain an application either at Town Hall Annex or email at www.sandisfieldma.gov.



THE SANDISFIELD MEMORIAL DAY PARADE had just about reached the half-way point when the photographer captured the flag-bearing vanguard just beyond the Community Center on Rt. 57. (Dan Dwyer photo)

Were You There? Sandisfield's Memorial Day Parade, 1981, near the New Boston Inn.

Photo: The Record, Sandisfield Times Archives

Memorial Day Parade, 2021

DRIVE 'N' WAVE

Many Town departments will take part in the parade. Local veterans John Burrows and Gene English will place wreaths and flags on the graves of veterans in all the Sandisfield cemeteries.

Anyone wanting to participate in the parade needs to meet Sunday, May 30, at 10:30 a.m. at the Farmington River Regional School. Check in with the Fire Chief and get in line.

The parade will kick off at **11:00 a.m. Sharp.**

We will stop for brief services at the following locations:

- Rt. 57, West New Boston Cemetery, Sandisfield
- Rt. 57, Berkshire Rehabilitation Facility, Sandisfield
- Rt. 8, American Legion Post #456, Sandisfield
- Rt. 8, First Congregational Church, Otis

FREE ICE CREAM AT MEMORIAL DAY PARADE



This year the Sandisfield Cultural Council will help sponsor the town's annual Memorial Day Parade on Sunday, May 30. In honor of our fallen military personnel, the Council will donate American flags for the posts along the parade route and lay wreaths in the cemetery.

This day also marks the unofficial start of summer. In honor of that, the Council will host a special treat:

PARADE ROUTE:

1. Start on Rt. 8, Farmington River Regional School to
2. Rt. 23 (West) to Town Hill Road to Rt. 57 (East),
3. stopping for a short service at West New Boston Cemetery,
4. continue on Rt. 57 to
5. Berkshire Rehabilitation for a short service before
6. Continuing on Rt. 57 to
7. Rt. 8 (South) to Villa Mia parking lot to return to
8. Rt. 8 (North), stopping at the American Legion Pavilion, then continuing
9. to Reservoir Road to Tolland Road
10. to Pine Road to Reservoir Road to Rt. 23 (East)
11. to L&M to
12. Rt. 23 West to Rt. 8 North ending at the First Congregational Church in Otis, where our parade will conclude for this year.

Ralph Morrison
Fire Chief, Sandisfield
amauto1@verizon.net

Enjoy a free ice cream cone or popsicle from the Mr. Ding-a-Ling Ice Cream Truck, which will be parked in the Sandisfield Library lot on Rt. 57 from approximately 11:30 a.m.

Please limit your treat to one per person and remember to wear a mask and socially distance from your neighbors.

Let us hope for a sunny day and the start of a safe and healthy summer!

If you'd like to join the Sandisfield Cultural Council to plan more cultural events for the residents of our town, please contact us at culturalcouncil@sandisfieldma.gov.

Thank you from the Sandisfield Fire Department

We would like to give a big thank you to **Berkshire Trail Riders Association, Inc.** and **The John G. Martin Foundation** for their generous monetary donations.

Donations are key in a small town like Sandisfield. They help purchase & update much needed Fire & Ambulance Equipment and all donations are tax deductible.

Thank you so very much!

Small Store, Big Expectations

By Ron Bernard

They say, 'You don't know what you have until its gone.'

The venerable New Boston Store, the last of its kind in a continuous tradition dating from the 1750s in this town, was demolished in 2013. It was easy to take for granted that timeless place and its friendly proprietors, Peter and Susan Murray. Its demise was a profound loss for this community and a sad reality that has grown more evident with time.

So when the Times reported in March that a young New Boston couple planned to open a small general store near their South Main Street home many here took heart.

Last month the Times prepared and distributed a survey to help Nick and Megan Smigel assess public interest in the availability of staples and convenience products and services and to gather suggestions.

Public response was immediate and very positive. More than 250 online and mail-in questionnaires were returned in less than two weeks. The Smigels now have many terrific suggestions to consider. Megan said, "We really

appreciate the wonderful response. This is great feedback and will be very helpful. We will definitely use this information to provide the community with what they want, to the best of our ability."

The couple is committed, that is obvious. A neat building – a former lamp shop – on a pleasant lot is also ideally located at the southern end of the village near Fire Station No. 1 for residents and Route 8 travelers alike. Carpenters are busy configuring its 600 square feet for groceries (especially locally grown produce), sundries and as many popular items as possible. Meanwhile, outside, parking spaces and a sign are already installed.

Because of proximity to the Farmington River, gasoline will not be available. The Smigels also have to apply for a liquor license which may take some time. Otherwise plans are on track for an early summer opening, according to Megan. Town zoning has allowed only one relatively modest sign but the Smigels are confident that curb appeal, public awareness and word-of-mouth will send many eager and repeating customers their way.

Residents' suggestions are always valued. If you have not already done so you can still send your survey form to the Sandisfield Times. Or, contact the Smigels directly by writing to Farmington River General Store, 83 South Main St., Sandisfield, MA 01255 or by email to MeganSmigel@aol.com.

New Deadline for Essay Contest

The deadline of this year's Sandisfield Times essay contest has been extended to June 30.

Open to Sandisfield residents of all ages, entries should be a maximum of 600 words long. Please send submissions by June 30 to editor@sandisfieldtimes.org.

The topic of this year's contest: Other than your home, what is your favorite place in Sandisfield, and why? The winner will receive a signed commemorative book and cash prize of \$250. Essays by the winner and runner-up will appear in our August issue.

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

The Colorful Past of a Montville Gateway Property

PART ONE: HEN MANLEY, SANDISFIELD CORRESPONDENT

by Ron Bernard



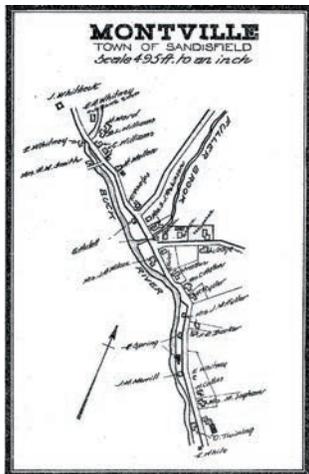
The Beardsley place as it appears today. Photo Sandisfield Times

The property with the colorful past lies at the south end of Montville, at 90 Sandisfield Road.

The house now on the property is familiar to regular passersby – a handsome two-and-half-story Colonial Revival-style house with a distinctive front porch set back from an expansive, always neat lawn. The family of Tara and Dana Beardsley have called this home since about 2005.

A previous house, in Federal-style, may have dated to the early 1800s. Its builder and occupant history before the 1850s are unclear, but the eight-acre lot was originally part of the vast holdings of the Bosworths, founders of Sandisfield Center in the 1750s.

A bit about Montville



Montville village as it was in 1904

Montville emerged in the early 19th century as a separate hamlet in the town of Sandisfield. Located near the foot of Town Hill Road at the Buck River, by the 1830s Montville was a defined neighborhood then called Mechanicsville because of its cluster of wood-working shops, blacksmiths, and mills. The few farms were necessarily small scale because of constriction between hilly topography and the river. However, they proved to be ideal for chicken farming in the 20th century.

The map of 1858 was the first to depict a true village, showing about 30 buildings including 25 residences, a school, and a church. The Montville school was closed in 1950 and the building demolished in 1961. The church, the former c.1840 Baptist meeting house, survives as the Sandisfield Art Center. Its nearby parsonage is a private residence.

Montville extends for about one mile along Rt. 57, which is Sandisfield Road. The name Montville first appears in deeds in 1853. The source of the name, "Montville" has so far eluded this researcher, but we'll keep at it.

Hen Manley – A Sandisfield "Character"

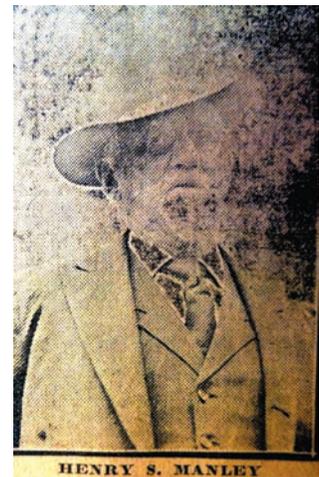
We begin our three-part series on the history of this property in the 1870s, when Henry S. Manley and his wife, Mary Jane Rockwell, moved into the house. Henry, known as "Hen," was a great-grandson of Connecticut settler (1789) William E. Manley and was a son of John Manley, Sr.

Natty, droll, and upbeat, Hen Manley was definitely a Sandisfield "character."

He was a fixture in town, proud of his heritage and his Berkshire community which he served in many capacities. For example, he was auctioneer for the area's important cattle show for nearly 50 years.

Manley knew every Sandisfield family and everything about their lives – their joys, their tribulations, their habits. But he was respectful and never betrayed confidences.

For 33 years starting in 1887, Manley wrote a weekly column for the Berkshire County Eagle, a homey portrayal of everyday life in Sandisfield. As a deputy sheriff he was well aware of human nature but he rarely reported unpleasantness. For Sandisfield's many struggling families his musings about the mundane experiences of friends and neighbors were welcome distractions.



His entertaining column was picked up by newspapers far from the Berkshires and enjoyed a considerable readership among people who hadn't the slightest idea where Sandisfield was. (See sidebar for examples of Hen's witticisms and news reports).

In April 1905, recently widowed, he put the place up for sale but no buyer materialized.

A small farm of eight acres, situated in the village of Montville convenient to the church, post office and store and on the stage route from Montville to Winsted. Property includes a house and a barn, a woodlot, plenty of fruit trees, a good well and a trout stream. Will keep a horse and a cow or two. Apply of H. S. Manley, Montville, Mass.

Henry and Mary Jane had one child, Edward, born 1858. Edward married Mary Louise Merrill in 1880 and they raised a family of eight children, five born in Sandisfield and three in Springfield after 1891. Edward and Mary and some of their children evidently returned to live with his widowed father in about 1906, the estimated date of the DeMars image of "Woody Crest" with Edward and his wife (opposite page).

The following is an unsourced scrapbook news clipping that appeared in or shortly before 1909. It is written in straightforward news style probably by Hen Manley himself, and tells of a near tragedy at this place.

Fire in Montville

About four o'clock on Monday morning the dwelling of Edward Manley, in Montville was discovered to be on fire, and it was with difficulty that Mr. Manley rescued his children from their sleeping room on the second story, the report coming to us that the bed clothes in their room were already on fire when the father reached them. The cause of the fire is not known, but it is regarded as accidental.

Hen Manley's final report in the Eagle was dated December 20, 1920.

Wish you one and all a Merry Christmas. Your Sandisfield correspondent, H. S. Manley was taken suddenly and seriously ill Friday afternoon Dec. 10 and for a time it was which and tuther with him. But with good care and Dr. Ward he is on the gain and thinks he will be all right again in a few days. But he can't write much yet. H. S. Manley.

He died three days later, age 84.

Edward and Mary Merrill and their youngest child, Hazel, moved to Watertown, Conn., where they are listed in the 1910 census. In February 1922, grandson Roy Manley of Hartford sold the (houseless) property to Samuel Toplitzky of Winsted.

Next month, Part Two: The Pinskys, will describe the three-decade tenure of chicken farmer Nathan Pinsky and family who built the existing house and outbuildings. Part Three in July will conclude the series with an extraordinary account of the subsequent owner, poultry farmer Adriel Bidwell.



DeMars image of Manley's "Woody Crest" c.1906, probably with Edward and Mary Manley.

Photo courtesy Great Barrington Historical Society



Hen Manley News Items & Quips: A Sampler

(Titles by the Author)

May 1896, Good to Find

Edward Ingham found a sound apple that had been out doors all winter and Chas. Williams ploughed up a good size potato from last year's planting

July 1897, Doubtful Weather

The great problem with our farmers is, when are we going to have good hay weather, and some of them wear long faces and are doubtful, while others have a smile on their faces and take it cool. Keep up the courage and all will be well.

Circa 1914, "Mr. Manley Talks of Cattle Show"

"The cattle shows of the present time are entirely different from what they were when I began to attend them 48 years ago. There were about as many drunks around the fairgrounds in those early days as there are at times now, only they arrest them now and lock them up. When I first went on duty as an officer at the fair we didn't do that; we used to drag 'em over to the cemetery and lay 'em out in the graveyard and give 'em a chance to sober up."

January 1917, During Great Influenza Pandemic

The grip people, most of them about here, are better, but they are not well yet. M. Waters is better because he has to be, to see to his chores. The last report I had, Mrs. Jane Stratton was taken to the hospital, but was better. Mrs. Beller is a little better. Mrs. Whitbeck is better. Orlo C. Twining is still under the weather. If they don't look out they will all get well before the doctor gets here.

February 1919, Elected to the Whole Thing

A meeting of the republican town committee was held January 29th and voted H. S. Manley chairman, secretary and treasurer, the whole thing, so there now!

Undated, Big Fox Shot

O. C Twining, our popular meat peddler, shot a large fox last week. It weighed thirteen and a half pounds – a nine-pound fox is considered a good one.

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CANNABIS FORUM

Praise for Town Boards

To the Editor:

My letter begins with a huge shout out to our Select Board and Planning Board for all the hard work, thought and care they have given this difficult issue.

The State of Massachusetts has made cannabis legal in our state. Growing, manufacturing, buying and selling it is legal. The opportunities that lay ahead for our town, our landowners, their children and grandchildren could not be more exciting, finally providing a legal crop that can actually make farmers a really good living instead of scraping by, as most farmers have done their entire lives. The state has even made it possible for small farms to start out small, with small tier outdoor grows. It was created to help farmers that do not have the money to compete with large grow facilities.

Whether you own one acre, ten acres, or 100 plus, your property has legal boundaries. These

boundaries identify what you own. There are already laws in place that protect you from illegal activity such as polluting your well and destroying water courses and wetlands. For property owners to think that they can now pass laws in our town that can limit or restrict what we do legally on our property, they can forget it!

Most of us who live here, raise their children and vote here, are the people who should make those decisions. My sense after following this issue for more than a year, is that if laws are passed to restrict what we can do legally on our property will cause an uprising and a petition to force our voters to vote. So far with the care, thoughtfulness, and intelligence of our Town boards I feel pretty confident that we do not yet need to do that.

However, should it happen that if we try and pass laws against what is already legal in our state, I would be honored and proud to lead that charge.

Bob Tarasuk

Snow Farm, South Beech Plain Road

Former Resident Weighs In

To the Editor:

Family legend is that I was conceived in the old sleigh bed at grandfather's house on Silver Brook Road which he lovingly named, "Silver Brook Lodge."

At age 75, I have not forgotten Sandisfield and still regret that I could not see clearly in the 1960s the social destruction that drugs were causing. I say destructive because even pot traps innocents, trumping all claims for individual freedom.

As the aim here is a money-grab by the few, others will most likely walk off with the tax money, and Sandisfield will be left to foot the bill for traffic signals and broken roads. "Development" truly has real costs. Apart from the unfounded claims for riches and honest concern for property values, does Sandisfield really want to become so notorious for hosting this sort of industry? I respectfully urge the Town to reject the Pot Factory.

Richard Ellis Hand
Sanford, Maine

Wants to Preserve Beauty of Rural Community

To the Editor:

The very idea of a cannabis growing business in this community is reprehensible and should never have been considered in the first place much less as subject for debate.

Any proposed undertaking which has the very likely possibility of negatively impacting the environment, the wellbeing and health of residents should be unequivocally eliminated from consideration.

This rural community invites residents who enjoy a lifestyle of peaceful, quiet and respectful existence accompanied by clean and naturally beautiful environs.

Gloria Spector
Town Hill Road

Condemns "Hatchet Job"

To the Editor:

I do not have the time, nor does this paper have the space, to correct the myriad inaccuracies and misleading statements in Mr. Winchester's "report" which comprised the entirety of the Times' online April 6 edition. Mr. Winchester, a signatory on a petition for a total cannabis establishment ban and a member of the SAMA opposition group, has abandoned all pretense of impartiality on this issue—from his first word – "gargantuan"- through his accusations of the Select Board "dismissing [all arguments] wholesale" and imposing "boilerplate regulations" to his scare tactics about "noise, smell [and] siren sounds."

It is a stain on the Times' claim to objectivity in its reporting to have allowed this blatant hatchet job to be published in its name without any disclaimer, thus letting it masquerade as reporting instead of what it is, namely a one-sided attack on the processes of this town.

George Riley
Cronk Road

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CANNABIS FORUM



What's the Point?

QUESTIONING PROCEDURES IN TOWN

By Leslie Garwood

What is the point of towns having general and zoning by-laws if they are not adhered to in the process of making a decision that impacts the entire town? What is the point of restrictions in landowners' deeds if they are not to be respected and taken into consideration by a town's governing boards?

In granting the applicants, SAMA Productions LLC, a special permit for their cannabis cultivation complex, the Select Board evidently gave more emphasis to an informal Facebook poll where 80 or so people said they were in favor of SAMA, than they gave to the 30 or more thoughtful, well researched, factual and emotional letters sent from residents, pleading for denial of the proposed cannabis facility because of its negative impact on their homes, and the community. Sandisfield's Zoning Bylaw requires permits for a commercial greenhouse to be granted by the Special Permit Granting Authority of the Select Board. However, back when this by-law was adopted, marijuana cultivation with all its high-tech security, and highly regulated state oversight, was not even legal and therefore not what this by-law intended.

The Select Board did not hear the townspeople who presented passionate arguments and asked many questions, which were not answered. An example of this occurred at the March 29 Special Permit hearing where John Heck from SAMA was asked about those single-family-homes-only deed restrictions,

and his response was "the permit hearing isn't the place to discuss whatever issues arise about the deed." What other forum might there be to air these "issues"? Another unanswered question: "Why would SAMA purchase this particular piece of property knowing that it, and all the abutters' lots had the same restrictions?" Again, no response. Why would our own Select Board throw property owners and taxpayers under the bus, to accommodate a group of out-of-state businessmen with no connection or commitment to this community? Were there no other suitable parcels of property available in all of Sandisfield?

Mr. Riley did the right thing by asking SAMA to "resolve" the deed issue as part of a requirement to show "Evidence that the Applicant has site control and the right to use the proposed site as a Marijuana Establishment." In response, SAMA produced both their purchase and sale agreement, and their deed, in which the restriction is clearly stated. How is this an acceptable resolution to the deed "issue"?

The Select Board has 90 days from the date the permit was submitted. It was posted March 4 on the Town's website. What was the big rush? That just raises even more questions.

The Wild and Scenic River Episode. A Legacy of Resentment

By Ron Bernard

Thirty years ago an Article at Town Meeting to approve the Farmington River as a government-acknowledged Wild and Scenic River – in order to protect it from development – was unanimously approved by Sandisfield voters. This followed four years of careful groundwork by a committee.

However, opposition emerged from a resident's group called Friends of the Rivers who seeded doubt and confusion about government interference, overreach, and threats to property rights. Strident outsiders raised the noise level.

A Special Town Meeting eight months later – drawing over 50 percent voter turnout – rescinded the earlier approval, 136 to 103. Hard feelings between neighbors and even within extended families ensued and persisted. Wild and Scenic became the most controversial and contentious episode here since the debacle of the failed railroad line in the 1870s.

"Twenty years on, the experience is still raw. A resident who was active in the opposition said, 'It nearly destroyed this town. We still have not recovered. It is not as easy any more to get people to volunteer or to support [community betterment] projects.'" From *Sandisfield Then and Now*, p.135.

Today supporters and opponents of the proposed cannabis facility may view the relevance of Wild and Scenic through their own lenses. But in reality this experience created lasting damage to the social fabric of Sandisfield. The cannabis controversy is levels greater than was river protection. Wild and Scenic should be a lesson and caution to anyone who would pit friends and neighbors against one another.



OUT ON A LIMB: OP-ED:
 Subjects should be enthralling to most of us and have a strong link to Sandisfield, written by and for Town residents. Address either PO Box 584, Sandisfield, or email editor@sandisfieldtimes.org



Special Experience in the Woods

A LUCKY FEW RETRACE THE KNOX TRAIL

By Ron Bernard



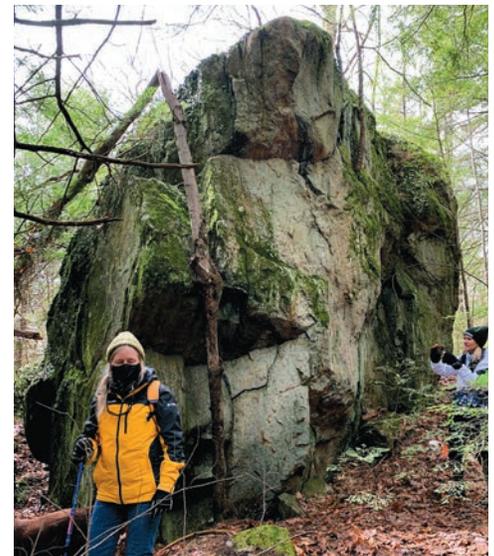
It was a chilly and damp post-snowstorm Saturday morning, April 17.

But 25 curious and eager souls, undeterred by the weather, turned out early for a special experience. They were the lucky few who managed to get on the list in a frantic first-come sign-up for a rare interpretive hike with Knox Trail cartographer-historian Tom Ragusa.

Local interest in the Knox spiked after the announcement earlier this year by the Otis Historical Commission that an application for official recognition for the Sandisfield-Otis section of the Trail had been accepted by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The ultimate goal is nomination and listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

For almost four hours and six miles of challenging, wet conditions, Tom explained to the rapt enthusiasts trailing behind him how his patient and fastidious research plus a couple lucky breaks had eventually led to an accurate record of the road – basically still the one-horse path as it was in the mid-18th century. Today the trail is no longer obvious to the untrained.

Tom Ragusa by a core-dated yellow birch tree on the survey line that is 200 years old. Photos Jack Dennerlein



Abiel's Rock, a two-story high outcropping 150 feet south of the Knox Trail in Sandisfield, takes its name from Abiel Slayton who played on it while travelling the Trail with her father in 1742. For probably centuries before it was documented in 1764 by surveyor Nathaniel Austin, this huge monument would have been a reassuring sight for Native American trail users. Tom Ragusa said that only three large boulders used as references in Austin's survey exist as all other markers have been lost to deterioration or history. For the story of the legend of Abiel's Rock, see *The Sandisfield Times*, August 2013.

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It is in the last undeveloped, virtually untouched section of what was a 300-mile overland passage from Boston to Albany and connected north to Fort Ticonderoga. Tom has meticulously traced the Sandisfield-Otis section on a 14-foot long scroll which undoubtedly will win a place of prominence at the Massachusetts State Library if not in our National Archives.

Tom has conducted this tour only a handful of times, all in recent years, and the April event may be the only one this year. At day's end a weary but well-informed group expressed their appreciation and returned to their homes to recount a fun and interesting experience.

The official recognition of this section of the Trail, the first step in a lengthy process, came about because of Tom's commitment over some 30 years to document the original route of the ancient native trading path and route to seasonal hunting grounds in the Berkshires. In colonial times the trail was important in the fur trade, then as a military road which played vital roles during the French and Indian War (Gen. Amherst, 1758) and by Col. Henry Knox at the outset of the American Revolution, winter of 1775-76. 🇺🇸

A Road of Many Uses, Many Names over Many Years

Earlier in the country's history the few but really vital trails and roads often had numerous names, sometimes concurrently. In the 18th and 19th centuries people did not speak of roads in terms of their entire lengths, of which they may have had no idea, but instead applied colloquial terms for segments of relevance to them. For instance, "the Boston to Albany Road." Early historians and writers were more likely to take a broader but more ambiguous view, hence "The Great Road."

Rudimentary horse-and-rider roads like this went out of general use by the 1820s as proper roads were constructed to link populated areas by stage coach. Portions of original trails and roads were often incorporated into the new roads. For example, much of Massachusetts Rt. 23 lies on the original native/Knox trail

Following are names of this road identified by Berkshire historians Tom Ragusa and Bernard Drew who have thoroughly studied the Knox Trail. And Tom adds, "Don't think of this list as exhaustive. There were probably more."

Suggested reading: Bernard A. Drew, *Henry Knox and the Revolutionary War Trail in Western Massachusetts*; McFarland & Co., Inc., 2012.

- "Indian trail"
- "Indian path"
- Ye Trodden Path (17th century)
- "publik and common poste rode" (early)
- The Great Road (1737)
- Westfield to Sheffield Road (1735)
- County Road (1754)
- The Boston (to/and) Albany Road
- The King's Post Road
- New England Fur Trail
- The New England Road
- The Great Turnpike
- Old Albany Road
- Westfield to Great Barrington Road
- Sheffield Road
- Barrington Road/Stage Road
- General Amherst Road (1760s-1770s)
- Amherst War Road
- Revolutionary War Road/Trail
- "military road"
- Knox Road/Trail (and variants, e.g., Knox Cannon Trail, Knox Heritage Trail, from early-19th century to present)
- Parts of Norton Road & Ext. in Otis
- Parts of Cold Spring Road in Sandisfield & Otis
- Webb Road (discontinued, connects with Cold Spring Road)

Recreation Committee News

Flowers and Flags

A floral decorating event will be held Saturday, May 8, 10:00 a.m., until noon at Fire Station # 2 on Rte. 57. This event will be open to all ages. Sandisfield taxpayers only. Class size is limited, and all work stations will be distanced appropriately.

We will provide petite containers for you to decorate, and then guide you to creating a pretty floral arrangement to take home. (PS: The following day is Mother's Day.)

PREREGISTRATION IS REQUIRED. Please email us at SandisfieldRecComm@outlook.com or call 413-269-7357 before May 4th. We apologize for the short notice.

A few weeks later, for the Memorial Day Drive By Parade on Sunday, May 30, we will distribute small flags prior to the beginning of the parade at The Farmington River School in Otis, and also at the Sandisfield Library parking lot before and during the parade.

We hope you will join us for the floral decorating event and the parade. 🇺🇸





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MEET THE CANDIDATES

Christopher Joyce, Candidate for Select Board

Hello Everyone:

My name is Christopher Joyce, and I am running for Select Board in this month's election



Chris Joyce and his family. From left, Lilian, 13, Kylie, 16, Chris and Cassie, and Michael, 10.

I was a lifelong resident of Sheffield until 2016 when I moved to this great town of Sandisfield. I met my now wife Cassie Stringham, a lifelong Sandisfield resident, in 2015. We rented a house on Sandisfield Road near the intersection with Town Hill Road where our two families could live together. We have three kids between our previous marriages, Kylie, Lillian, and Michael. We moved into our forever home on Dodd Road in December 2019, just before this crazy pandemic hit the country.

I am the owner of C.W. Joyce Services, a painting, drywalling and power washing business with 30 years painting experience. Like others in Sandisfield, I also do snowplowing in the winter.

You might have seen my name in The Times in August 2019, in their report about the ambulance fire on Sandisfield Road near our place where I assisted in moving the two-person crew, the patient, and most of the life-saving gear away from the dangerous fire to safety at our house. I am not afraid to take on small or large tasks to get the job done for the Town of Sandisfield!

Sandisfield is a great place to live and raise a family. If elected to the Select Board, I would be on the most important board in town to help promote growth of tax revenue and to help generate income for people of this town to live on by working at the businesses we hope to bring to Sandisfield.

There are two major routes through Sandisfield – 8 and 57 – and both would be ideal sites for

new businesses like a gas station or a restaurant. Sandisfield as a whole has been doing a good job the last few years of trying to get back on its feet and generate new revenue. It is a slow and tedious task, for sure, but it needs to be done. With broadband Internet coming soon, hopefully more people will want to move to this beautiful town, buy land or a house, and put down family roots and do their part in helping our town.

We need firemen to increase their numbers if we ever have an emergency in or around our community. The police department needs more funding to supply us with on-duty officers to help control speeding, to be seen on the roads to encourage safer driving, and to help keep our growing community safe. The highway department faces an uphill battle in maintaining Sandisfield's roads, both asphalt and dirt. With the paving of Rt. 57 coming soon that road will be a dream to ride on, for sure. Hopefully, we can apply for more grant money to help repair these aging roads.

Lastly the numerous municipal buildings we now have are outdated and in need of repair. These items could all need be addressed with more grant funding and maybe tax revenue from new businesses and residents.

These are just a few ideas I have to help the town. I would be open to other ideas for sure to help the town grow. We are a community, and we all have a voice on how this great town should be run!

CANDIDATES FO

TOWN MODERATOR (1 YEAR)

Dominic Konstam, Jr.

Statement: My family came to Sandisfield in 1998 when I was 2 years old. To this day, this is my favorite place in the world. Growing up, I spent most of my time here doing chores on our farm – taking care of our goats and

chickens, delivering firewood to neighbors, and making hay, maple syrup, and cider. Today, I am a software designer and entrepreneur. I am keen to serve the Town and join the wonderful people contributing their time to keep Sandisfield a beautiful place and guide it towards its best future.

BOARD OF ASSESSORS (3 YEARS)

Kathy Burrows (incumbent)

Kathy, of New Hartford Road, has served on the Board of Assessors since 2010. She is also an incumbent running for reelection as a Library Trustee.

TWO CANDIDATES FOR SCHOOL COMMITTEE (3 YEARS)

Billie Anderson Pachulski (incumbent)

Billie, a resident of Roosterville Road, has served on the School Committee since 2017. If re-elected, this will be her second three-year term.



FOR THE SELECT BOARD

Alex Bowman, Candidate for Select Board



Helen, 6, Alex Bowman, Louis, 4, and Jessica Cofrin

Sandisfield runs on a \$3.6M budget. That’s about \$4,000 per resident.

With that much at stake, we all deserve up-front and transparent government. I strongly believe we

need a better approach: instead of continuously applying Band-Aid solutions, we need to solve problems for the long term.

I grew up in nearby Westhampton (population 1,600). My mom was the town librarian for 25 years and on the school committee. My dad was a member of the finance committee. I learned how cooperation leads to success in a small town.

I have been involved with local governance in Sandisfield since moving here four years ago.

Anyone who has seen me speak at town meetings knows that I stand up for what I believe in. This does not mean I dig in my heels at any slight criticism: I welcome different opinions so we can get to the best solution rather than sit in an echo chamber,

In my career as a consultant and entrepreneur, I have been a successful problem solver. I work to make complex and inefficient business operations easy and streamlined. I hope to apply these same methods to our Town government.

We need to catch up to the digital world where everyone can easily access Town services. Whether it be applying for an open burn permit, paying your taxes, or understanding the issues up for discussion at the next meeting – whatever the task, the process should be simple.

My goal is to help the Select Board refocus on the important issues like capital improvement plans,

modernizing our zoning by-laws, attracting business, and prioritization road improvement. That’s how we can grow and move forward.

MEET, GREET & DISCUSS

Candidate Bowman will be at the DPW parking lot, Silverbrook Road, on Saturday, May 9, from 9:30-11:00 a.m., to discuss the issues and his candidacy for the Select Board.

Imagine a Town government that you don’t have to worry about. That’s what I will strive for, and I hope you’ll put your trust in me to do just that.

Alex Bowman who grew up in Westhampton, earned a Computer Engineering degree at Brown University. As a technology and business consultant, he helped a New York City startup increase its operations 15-fold before acquisition. He co-founded a technology business that now advises Marty’s Local, a Pittsfield-based distributor specializing in locally produced food. He moved full time to Sandisfield with his wife and two children in 2017.

Meet ‘n’ Greet Candidates

COA Event, Thursday, May 7, 6:30 p.m.

Old Town Hall.

See Calendar for details, p. 19.

R TOWN OFFICES

Carl Nett

Statement: The scholastic performance of Farmington River Elementary School (FRES) has dropped by 70 percent since 2014, from an AP score of 60% in 2014 to a score of 18% in 2019 (no testing occurred in 2020 due to COVID), according to the MA Dept of Ed. My first reason for running for School Committee is to drive reversal of this very disturbing trend, by first understanding the root causes of this deterioration and then implementing appropriate corrective actions. Since this deterioration has occurred coincident with FRES having both the smallest class sizes and second highest per pupil expenditures amongst the 11-member peer school group identified for FRES by MA DOE, my second reason for running is to drive improvement in the financial efficiency of FRES. I have been a full-time Sandisfield resident since 2015, and am known to many of you as Carl Nicholas on Connect Sandisfield.

I have a BS in Physics, MS in Electrical Engineering, and PhD in Systems Engineering, and understand full well the importance and value of a quality education for our youth. Having previously been an Associate Professor at Georgia Tech for a number of years, I also have direct, hands-on experience in education. I have also been in numerous corporate executive leadership roles and board positions over the course of my career. Based on my background and past experience, I believe that I can be effective in driving constructive, positive change in both the scholastic performance and financial efficiency of FRES if I am elected to the School Committee.

BOARD OF HEALTH (3 YEARS)

No candidate

Candidates for Town Offices

Con't from p.11

PLANNING BOARD (4 YEARS)

William Taylor

Statement: Born in Connecticut, I moved from rural northern California to Sandisfield in May 2020. When I lived in Boston (1986-2002), I frequently commented on Environmental Impact Reports (EIR's) and transportation plans as a bicycle advocate; I also wrote legislation to improve bicycle facilities and access and lobbied for it. I founded EarthWorks Projects, including an urban orchards program with plantings, adult horticulture classes, and schoolyard outdoor classroom curriculum. I moved to California to farm vegetables and fruit, pursue music (pianist/composer), and cohost a Farm and Garden Show with my artist wife Jaye Alison Moscariello. I plan to do the same things here in Sandisfield.

PLANNING BOARD (5 YEARS)

John Field (incumbent)

A life-long resident of Sandisfield, John is owner/operator of John Field Tree Service. He has served on the Planning Board since 2019. He lives on Rood Hill Road.

LIBRARY TRUSTEE (5 YEARS)

Kathy Burrows

Kathy, of New Hartford Road, has served as a Library Trustee since 2015. She is also an 11-year member of the Board of Assessors, running for another term. ♣



The Librarian's Corner

By Terry Spohnholz

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*A little Madness in the Spring
 Is Wholesome even for the King,
 But God be with Clown-
 Who ponders this tremendous scene-
 This whole Experiment of Green-
 As if it were his own!*

Emily Dickinson

The Library is open to the public once again. We ask that you wear your facemask and observe six feet of social distancing when inside the library.

Check out the newly renovated Children's Section, now located on the second level with books (from A to Z and in between), train sets, puzzles, and games

Upstairs we have restacked the books and expanded the adult section. Check out the fiction and non-fiction sections – escape, dream or while away a spring afternoon in the company of a good book.

Notary Service is available during most library hours. Please call ahead to make appointment. Internet is also available through a public-use computer and printer.

New Arrivals

- The Soul of a Woman* by Isabel Allende
- Machinehood* by S.B. Divya
- Think Again* by Grant Adam
- Reunion Beach* by Elin Hildebrand
- The Tree in Me* by Corinna Luyken
- The Jigsaw Man* by Nadine Matheson
- How Beautiful We Were* by Imbolo Mbue
- The Russian* by James Patterson
- 21st Birthday* by James Patterson
- A Promised Land* by Barack Obama
- The Lost Apothecary* by Sarah Penner

Children's Books

- Little Blue Truck's Springtime* and *Good Night Little Blue Truck* by Alice Schertle
- My Fourth of July* by Jerry Spinelli

The Library doors will once again be open to the spring breezes, conversations are always available, and it's looking green everywhere. (A robin chirped that to me.) ♣

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All Eyes on Town Meeting, Testing the Voters' Mood

Con't from p.1

In normal circumstances this would bring to a halt SAMA's current local ambitions, since their plan for the birch-woods south of Abby Road, off Town Hill Road, calls for fully 100,000 of growing space - rendering it a Tier 11 facility, and thus of a size strictly forbidden if the new law is passed.

However, and for unexplained reasons which have puzzled and angered many, the three-man Select Board has already granted SAMA the special permit needed for preparatory site work to begin. (The company still has to obtain a state license.) The outgoing Select Board chairman, Brian O'Rourke, confirmed in March that the newly-granted permit would be allowed to stand whatever by-law may be passed this month: permission would simply be grandfathered, since it was granted in early April, before any subsequent prohibitive regulation appeared on the books.

Two outcomes are now possible. If the by-lawis not passed then, in theory at least, Sandisfield would be free of all restrictions and could provide a home for as many facilities, large and small, as any future Select Board might permit - and without an overall limit like this By-law's proposed 300,000 square foot cap to restrict the likelihood of our town becoming a dominant player in the cannabis-growing business.

If, however, the by-law were to pass by its two-thirds vote, then Sandisfield's leadership would face something of an ethical dilemma: they would have to justify allowing a Tier 11 facility to be built contrary to the publicly expressed wishes of Town residents.

Opponents of the SAMA plan are currently examining a variety of tactics based on these two scenarios - including legal action - to disrupt or overturn the proposed project. The issues are complex and will be discussed in a later issue of the Times, but to a degree that will be dependent on the outcome of the Town Meeting vote.

Meanwhile, divisions in the town are widening. The divide seems generally to follow what might be loosely called party lines, with those in favor of the facility's construction generally conservative in outlook, and the opponents - many out-of-towners unable to vote - more likely to take a liberal stance. But this is by no means cut and dried: there seems an evident economic component also.

Ironically, cannabis itself seems not to be the issue. The 28th and final item on the meeting warrant is a non-binding citizens' petition calling for a total town ban on all things marijuana. There is considerable doubt that it will pass. Most here, as around the state, seem now to agree that, like it or not, cannabis is here to stay. The question is rather: do we want it grown here in box-store-sized factories? Or, as in the recent past when the drug was much less legal, in dozens of small back yards? 

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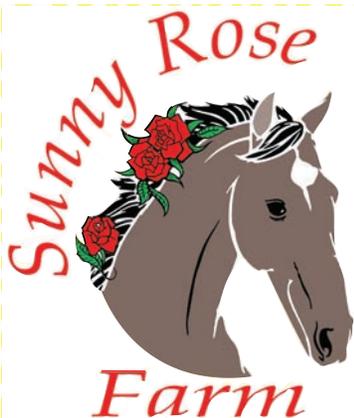
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What Can Be Saved?

AND HOW DO WE SORT IT OUT?

By Times Reporters

For most of us, our family archives are in boxes out in the barn, in an attic, in closets or who knows where.

Sandisfield knows where its archives are.



The auxiliary records storage unit, obtained about 2011 and intended to be temporary, is still there. The search for permanent solution is proving to be complicated.

Photo: Setsuko Winchester

A few steps away from the back door of the Town Hall Annex, in a 60-foot-long shipping container, are certain town records and items – perhaps some from the 19th century but all the archives from the 20th – in plastic bins which have replaced deteriorated cardboard cartons, in file folders, on metal shelves or just loose. For years, the stuff had accumulated in a cramped closet inside the Annex until it all became too bulky, at risk of rodents and, potentially, fire. A shipping container was bought for about \$7,000 and the material moved into it.

The container was intended to be temporary, but the stuff is still there, moldy and rotting along with residue of generations of vermin.

What to do about these records was the main agenda item at the April 19 select board meeting when Selectman O'Rourke acknowledged what many have wondered, "At this point the thing is a health hazard."

Voters in May 2020 approved a warrant for \$25,000 to resolve this problem. It was said at the meeting that ultimately this sum might not be sufficient depending on circumstances.

Basically, the options are:

Purchase or lease a climate-controlled facility, permanent or modular, to safely and securely maintain the records in a convenient location with accommodations for researchers, and digitize selected records.

Selectman Newman reported on the 19th that potential outside suppliers had been contacted and some bids received. He also indicated that the town's options at that point were unattractive and costly. For example, a 10 by 44-foot structure would run about \$55,000 for a three-year lease (a short-term solution). Buying a new trailer (a container-type unit with heat, lights and controls) would be much less expensive (est. \$25,000). However, due to high demand as a result of Covid, there is two-year wait. "Used ones are available but they are really junk," he said.

A question from the floor inquired about digitization which should be significantly less costly.

It was agreed that more information on both approaches was required for discussion at the next regular meeting, April 26.

There Selectman Riley reported on two feasible alternatives, a program by the Massachusetts State Library that assists towns to digitize records at no charge and a formal records retention program through a private company.

King Information Systems of Norwood, Mass., has agreed to evaluate the situation and make a retention proposal.

Town records tend to fall into three categories: operational, compliance and historical. Retention of historical records may not be compulsory.

A big draw back with the Library System's service is the lack of a site visit meaning that records for digitization would have to be selected by others. A site visit ("walk through") is a fundamental first step in King's service in order for them to develop a comprehensive plan. King has an agreement with the Library System to incorporate digitization George Riley said. King has already worked with Huntington, Worthington and Blandford on their records retention.

When contacted, Ron Bernard, who writes about local history for The Times, recalled being inside the container about five years ago while researching material for articles about Sandisfield. He said, "I spent several hours in there over two occasions and happened to take notes. The conditions were bad even then. I counted 115 boxes of papers, big stacks of oversized books of land records and nine boxes or containers of maps and tubes. There are also miscellaneous records on eight units of metal shelving, primarily 20th century origin.

Most of what Bernard managed to access was not particularly relevant to the kind of town history he was doing at the time. He remembers thinking that a lot of what was in there may not be worth saving, whether digitized or preserved, and that some might be more appropriate for safekeeping by the historical society. He added, "This is daunting, grimy work and it would take some time and a lot of careful effort by knowledgeable people. They need to know what they are doing."

Meanwhile, Selectman Newman will seek estimates for smaller trailers. King will make a site visit on May 11 followed by a proposal. The storage situation is not an agenda item for the Town Meeting this year. A special meeting will be required to approve spending, according to Town Clerk, Dolores Harasyko.

The question now: "Is there anything even salvageable?" 🐔

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Historical Society Seeks New Members

The Sandisfield Historical Society was created in 1970 to bring together those people interested in history, and especially in the history of Sandisfield; to discover and collect any material which may help establish or illustrate the history of the area; and to provide for the preservation of such material and for its accessibility, as far as may be feasible.

The Society owns the Meeting House on Sandy Brook Turnpike (Rt. 183) however the building is in need of repairs and updates so that it may be used as a museum for Sandisfield as originally intended. We are currently cataloging the contents of the building and reaching out for more donations of historical significance to the town.

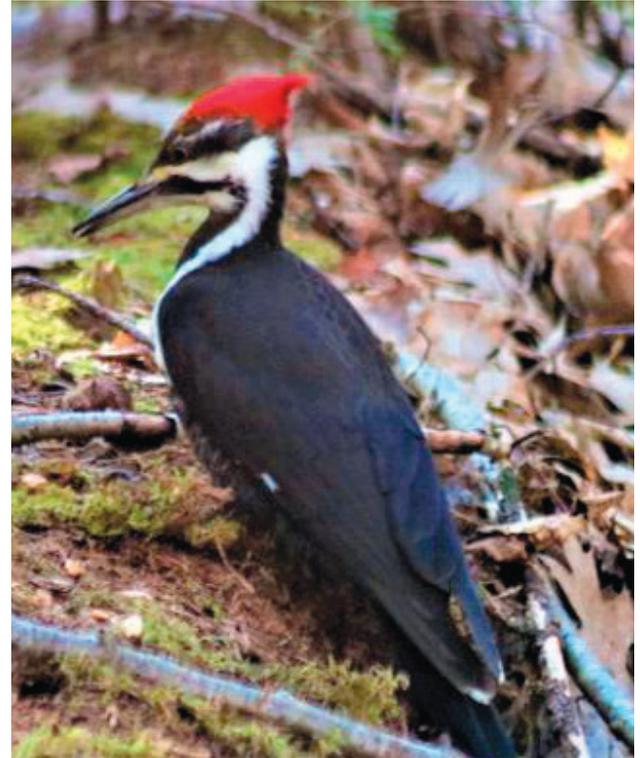
To help in our expansion, we began a drive to increase our membership and

also to build awareness of Sandisfield throughout the area. There are now four levels of membership: Regular \$30, Owners of Historic Homes \$25; Descendants \$20, and business membership \$50. It is the hope of the Society that Sandisfield residents and tax-payers will contribute, not only monetarily, but with volunteering at our many planned functions.

In addition to our annual Christmas Fair which was cancelled last year due to Covid, we have many different functions in the works. Hopefully there will be something for everyone to learn more about our town's history.

The Society is also in talks with the federal and state government to preserve our iron bridge over the Farmington River at Roosterville Road. But we need your help to continue in this endeavor and keep the history of Sandisfield alive for generations to come.

For an application or more information, email Joanne Olson our membership director at joanneo@aol.com, or call 917-686-1985. 



Pileated woodpecker (think "Woody Woodpecker") on the hunt on April 14. Image taken in North Sandisfield by Cindy Ragusa. According to a nature report, these birds are uncannily accurate and are rewarded with a bug on 90% of their pecks.

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CRITTER CORNER

If you would like to send a picture for consideration for Critter Corner, you can email it to editor@sandisfieldtimes.org.



Lauren Paul, of Sandisfield Center, takes a walk at York Lake with her new pooch, Hamish. The three-month-old Golden Retriever is officially the youngest resident of Sandisfield Center. Photo: Barbara Kershner



Lori Wilkinson's new rescue pup, five-month-old Misty, smiles for the camera. Photo: Lori A. Wilkinson

Do-Gooders Do Good

EARTH DAY COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP CLEANS UP

By Bill Price

Many willing participants stopped by the DPW Sunday morning April 25 to pick up oversize biodegradable trash bags provided by the Recreation Committee and then, despite a slightly rainy, windy, chilly day, did the right thing by filling them with winter's accumulated roadside trash. The bags were then delivered to the transfer station. The RecCommittee sends a big "Thank You" to everyone who helped de-litter our roads.



A big shout out to, from left, **Nina Carr**, **Lynn Rubenstein**, and **Connie Kanty** for volunteering to accept and sort the trash and, of course, to our friendly TS attendant, **Keith Larson**.

Question: What's the strangest thing you've ever found on the side of the road? Send the name of your item – or a description – to editor@sandisfield.times or call 413-429-7179 to report it.

Nominees for Town Government

ELECTION TUESDAY, MAY 17

At the Annual Town Caucus held April 8, five residents were nominated for offices, joining four candidates who were previously nominated by taking out papers. Number of registered voters attending the caucus: 27.

If elected, this will be the first time Chris Joyce, Alex Bowman, Carl Nett, and Bill Taylor will have served Sandisfield's town government. Kathy Burrows, Billie Anderson Pachulski, and John Field are incumbents currently serving in the offices.

| OFFICE | NOMINATION PAPERS | CAUCUS NOMINATION |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Moderator (1 year) | No papers | Dominic Konstam |
| Selectmen (3 years) | Christopher Joyce | Alexander Bowman |
| Board of Assessors (3 yrs) | Kathy Burrows | No nominee |
| School Committee (3yrs) | Billie Anderson Pachulski | Carl Nett |
| Board of Health (3 years) | No papers | No nominee |
| Planning Board (4 years) | No papers | William R. Taylor |
| Planning Board (5 years) | No papers | John W. Field |
| Library Trustee (5 years) | Kathy Burrows | No nominee |

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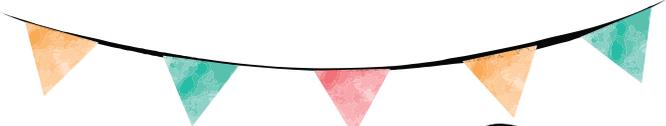
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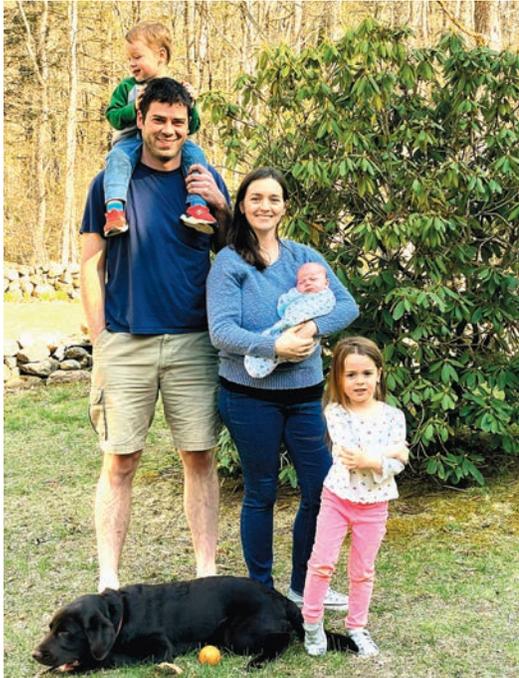
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Comings and Goings



Sara Elaine Rodman

Born March 22, to Emily Melchior and Calvin Rodman, Sara joins older siblings Myrna, 4, and Walter, 2. Sara has moved into the family home on Fox Road. Reclining is Percy, a chocolate lab, 6 months.

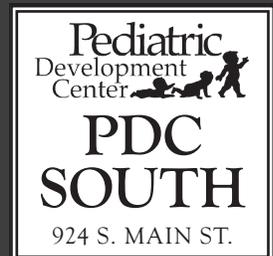


FREE EVENT:

THE SANDISFIELD AMERICAN LEGION WILL BE PUTTING ON A TRACTOR PULL ON MAY 22 WITH A RAIN DATE OF MAY 23. TO BE HELD AT THE LEGION PAVILION ON ROUTE 8. STARTS AT 11 AM UNTIL 4 PM. ADMISSION IS FREE. BRING A LAWN CHAIR. THE OUT DOOR GRILL WILL BE OPEN FOR THE PURCHASE OF DOGS AND BURGERS, PLUS SOFT DRINKS. PLEASE WEAR A MASK AND KEEP THE DISTANCE RULE. EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO ATTEND.

COMMANDER: MARIA DOMATO

Concerned about your infant or toddler's development?



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Letters to the Editor

GRATEFUL FOR THE DPW'S DEDICATION

To the Editor:

All of us living by dirt roads in Sandisfield complain, not surprisingly, when our roads are impassable. We are less prone, perhaps, to express our thanks for the excellent job of maintenance our town crew routinely provides. The crew's dedication was particularly notable during the recent mud season, when it made heroic efforts to keep the unpaved roads passable.

We cannot eliminate all the inconvenience experienced when spring weather turns our dirt roads to soup, but the town crew did everything it could to minimize this problem. For that my wife Suzanne and I want to thank them.

*Tom Christopher
Suzanne O'Connell
Sears Road*

CLASSIFIED ADS

WANTED: Seeking any photograph of Old Town Hall on Silver Brook Road that was taken between June 1956 and May 1960. Contact Ron Bernard, ronbernard@aol.com or 413 269-0012.

HELP WANTED - NEW BOSTON INN

Wait staff. New Boston Inn. 18+ 11:30 a.m. - 9 p.m. Fri. thru Mon. Will train. Tips and hourly wage. Come by or call Barbara, 413-258-4477

Arts Center Season Launches

KICKING OFF WITH HIGHLIGHTS OF SANDISFIELD PLAYERS

By Hilde Weisert

The Sandisfield Arts Center season kicks off May 22 at 7 p.m. with a free YouTube Premiere streaming event featuring excerpts from past favorites of the Sandisfield Players, introduced by Ben Luxon. Gather the whole family to watch and live-chat about highlights from Jack and the Giant Bean Stalk, A Christmas Carol, Our Town, and Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.

Our season continues virtually in June with a talk, a piano recital, and a workshop.

Saturday, June 5 at 10:30 a.m., Suzanne O'Connell, professor in the Department of Earth & Environmental Sciences at Wesleyan University, presents "My Life in the Most Amazing Scientific Program You've Never Heard of: 50 years of Scientific Ocean Drilling." Scientific ocean drilling developed the discipline of paleoceanography and has recovered life in the deepest recesses of Earth's ocean crust. Learn about its origins, contributions to understanding Earth's history and its future plans. Suzanne O'Connell has been involved in scientific ocean drilling since the mid-1970's and has spent 16 months at sea on its ships exploring Earth's history as recorded in ocean floor sediments.

Saturday, June 12 at 7 PM, pianist Fred Moyer presents "June Moonlight Sonata," a one-hour free YouTube Premiere specially produced for the Sandisfield Arts Center community. The streaming concert will be followed by a live online reception and talk with Fred (\$10).

Saturday June 19 at 10:30 AM, join us for a free photography workshop from master photographer Thad Kubis. Thad, a big hit in his series last year (find recordings on our website) will show you how to create "impressionistic photography" on your DSLR or smartphone.

Register for any of these events at our website, www.sandisfieldartscenter.org.

As we wrote last month, we are still planning some outdoor events in the summer and coming back in person to the Arts Center in September. Thanks to our Building and Grounds Committee and other volunteers, we are beginning the work of getting our building ready for your safe return. 🇺🇸



sandisfield
ARTS CENTER

SATURDAY, MAY 22

FREE LIVE STREAMING

VISIT SANDISFIELDARTSCENTER.ORG FOR DETAILS

Remember

Relive

Discover

IRRESISTIBLE EXCERPTS FROM SOME OF THE SANDISFIELD PLAYERS' FAVORITE SHOWS

JACK AND THE BEANSTALK ★ A CHRISTMAS CAROL ★ OUR TOWN ★ CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY

INTRODUCED BY BEN LUXON



Upcoming: more live streaming events and workshops in **June and July**, outdoor events in the summer and then a **full Fall schedule** at the Arts Center

NOW HEAR THIS!

Edited by Laura Rogers-Castro. Please send notices for Now Hear This! to editor@sandisfieldtimes.org.

MAY EVENTS

Please note: Be sure to check to see if the events are still scheduled as listed due to the uncertainty of the Covid-19 pandemic

Please note: Be sure to check to see if the events are still scheduled as listed due to the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sandisfield Select Board and Conservation Commission Meetings are by telephone conference. Please visit sandisfieldma.gov or call 258-4711 for call-in information.

Chair Yoga on Wednesdays at 2:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall on Silverbrook Road, sponsored by the Council on Aging. For more information, contact Nina Carr (258-3314). Free.

COA Business Meeting TBD at the Council on Aging, basement level at the Sandisfield Town Hall Annex on Route 57. For more information, contact Nina Carr (258-3314).

Floral Decorating Event on Saturday, May 8, at 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Sandisfield Fire Station #2 on Route 57. Space limited. The Recreation Committee will provide petite containers for you to decorate, and guide you to create a petite floral arrangement to take home. All work stations distanced appropriately. Pre-registration required BEFORE May 4 at sandisfieldrecomm@outlook.com or 413-269-7357). Free.

New Boston Church Service on Sunday, May 9 at 10:00 a.m. at the New Boston Congregational Church, Route 57. Please wear a mask and socially distance.

Annual Town Meeting on Saturday, May 15 at 10:00 a.m. at the DPW Garage Building on 3 Silverbrook Road.

Annual Town Election on Monday, May 17 from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall on Silverbrook Road.

Tractor Pull, American Legion Pavilion, Saturday, May 22, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Free admission. Burgers and hot dogs (not free). Mask, and keep some distance. All welcome. Rain date: Sunday, May 23.

Memorial Day Drive N' Wave Parade on Sunday, May 30 at 11:00 a.m. leaving from the Farmington River Regional School in Otis to Town Hill Road in Sandisfield and then left (east) on Route 57. Brief services will be held at the West New Boston Cemetery, Berkshire Rehabilitation Facility,

American Legion Post #456. Flags to wave will be distributed by the Sandisfield Recreation Committee prior to and during the parade at the Sandisfield Library parking lot.

At Memorial Drive N' Wave Parade, **Free Mr. Ding-a-Ling Ice Cream** on Sunday, May 30, beginning at 11:30 a.m. sponsored by the Sandisfield Cultural Council during the parade. Free ice cream cone or popsicle per person. Town Library parking lot.

SAVE THE DATE!

Car Show on Saturday, June 12 at the New Boston Inn. Free music. Free Popcorn. Rat Rods Hot Rods Classics. If you are interested in bringing a car, please call 258-4477.

EVENTS/OUTDOOR FUN IN OTHER TOWNS

Explore & Play on Tuesdays, from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. weather permitting at the gazebo behind the Otis Town Hall. Join Nina Carr for this caregiver/child program. Stories and songs followed by creative crafts and play. Face masks and social distancing is required. Free.

Daffodil and Tulip Festival through Sunday, May 16 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. but closed Tuesday and Wednesdays at Naumkaeg in Stockbridge with in-person self-guided tours of the estate's gardens. There are 130,000 daffodil and tulip bulbs planted. This is a ticketed event, please purchase tickets at thetrustees.org.

Lady Slipper Ramble Hike on Saturday, May 29 at 10:30 a.m. at Peoples State Forest in Barkhamsted, Connecticut. Meet at the parking area for the Nature Museum off of Greenwood Road. A 3-mile hike on easy to moderate trails.

Nature Journaling with Nanci Worthington on Saturday, May 29, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at Bartholomew's Cobble in Ashley Falls. Join New Marlborough artist Nanci Worthington as she guides you through nature journaling sessions at Bartholomew's Cobble. Nanci will teach you how to observe nature and your surroundings and capture what you see, hear and feel on paper. Materials provided. Space is limited and registration (aduquette@thetrustees) is required. Free.

Meet 'n' Greet Candidates, COA Event

You are invited to Sandisfield's annual Meet 'n' Greet the Candidates on Thursday, May 6, at 6:30 p.m. at Old Town Hall, next to the DPW Garage.

It will be a moderated in-person chat hosted by the Council on Aging. The candidates will be asked a set of questions by volunteer moderator Barb Cormier. Public Q&A will follow.

All candidates listed on the Town Caucus results are encouraged to attend.

This is a great opportunity to hear the issues and learn where the candidates stand.

An accurate headcount is necessary so the room can be set up appropriately. **PLEASE RSVP BY CONTACTING ONE OF THE FOLLOWING COA MEMBERS:**

Barbara Cormier, 258-4402 or barbcorm@verizon.net
Anina Carr, 258-3314 or aninacarr09@gmail.com
Linda Riiska, 258-4816 or edriskal@verizon.net



Early and Absentee Vote by Mail for the Annual Town Election

Starting April 21 until May 13, Sandisfield voters can Early Vote thru the mail. Applications are available online or call 413-258-4711 x 2, or email: TownClerk@sandisfieldma.gov or AssistantClerk@sandisfieldma.gov.

Fill out the application and send it to: PO Box 163 Sandisfield, MA 01255. Applications can also be dropped off in the black drop box by the back door at the Town Hall Annex. As soon as we receive your application, we will send your ballot to you.

To cast your ballot, either mail it to the above address or drop it off in the black drop box at Town Hall Annex.

Absentee voting is available in person until Monday May 17 at 12:00 noon. Please call ahead of time to let us know you are on your way. No appointment is needed.

The Town Hall Annex office is open Monday through Thursday. We are in the Office Monday-Thursday, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



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www.sandisfieldtimes.org

*The Times is grateful to readers who
contributed in April.*

David Carkeet

Daniel Gerrity

James & Tom Grubbs

Robert & Marion Johnson

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 any amount 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. Donations to The Sandisfield Times are deductible under section 170 of the Federal Income Tax Code. Donations do not include subscriptions. Subscriptions do not qualify as donations.

The Times is distributed free of charge to all Sandisfield postal address and boxes. Free copies are available at the following town locations: The transfer station (Wed/Sat/Sun), the Library, When Pigs Fly Farm, and

in New Boston at A & M Auto and Tucker's Restaurant, and the New Boston Inn. The Times is also available in West Otis at the laundromat, the Farmington River Diner and Fratelli's; in East Otis at Katies, Pappas, and the Knox Trail Inn. Also at the Monterey library (outside box) and in Colebrook at the post office and the general store. Distribution is currently limited due to pandemic restrictions but former and/or new locations will be restored or added to distribution service as soon as restrictions are eased. Back copies are available for purchase.

The Times can be mailed to your home (non-Sandisfield addresses only) by paid subscription (see form at right) or you can read it (free) online as a PDF document at www.sandisfieldtimes.org.

We welcome submissions, comments and suggestions, including letters to the editor by the 15th of the month prior. Maximum 300 words. We may edit for space, style or clarity. We will try to publish Public Service Announcements when we have room, with priority given to Sandisfield organizations. No portion of the The Sandisfield Times may be reproduced without permission.

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