

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

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March 2022

Special Town Meeting Turns Special

BIG ISSUES TURN MINOR; MINOR ISSUES TURN BIG

By Simon Winchester

A special end-of-month town meeting called to consider issues certain to have a major impact on Sandisfield's future governance found itself unexpectedly hijacked by two much lesser matters devoted in both cases to the future of a pair of vanishingly small morsels of town land.

Boisterous discussion, which at times became heated enough for the meeting's newly-elected Moderator Dominic Konstam to plead for courtesy, erupted in response to one of these land issues.

The other land issue was tabled for later, since it became evident that someone in government had not done the necessary homework before putting it up to be discussed, at what turned out to be an unusually well-attended Saturday morning meeting.

SERIOUS BUT LITTLE-CONTESTED ISSUES FIRST

The vexed question of whether the position of town clerk should be elected or appointed will now – after the meeting voted to approve the change – be a question formally written onto the election ballot in May. Not on the warrant for May's full Town Meeting, but on the ballot for the election two days later. This means that all town voters will be able to decide whether or not to upend two-and-a-half centuries' worth of tradition, by which the clerk has invariably been elected from within the community.

The present government's view is that since the clerk's job is now so complicated and technically demanding it is unlikely that a suitably qualified candidate can be found from the necessarily

Con't on p.2



Suicide Hill, Downtown New Boston

Rare image of Suicide Hill, c 1936. Berkshire Eagle archives. See pp. 6-7.

A Memoir

MY GRANDFATHER, NICHOLAS HRYCKVICH

By Theresa Hryckvich

Photos courtesy of the Hryckvich family.

Written several years ago from an interview with my grandfather when he was 88 years old.

"Back then everyone knew everybody, your neighbors were your friends, they were there when you needed them, not so much like today." That's what my grandfather said at the beginning of our interview as we sat down in the

living room of his home on South Beech Plain Road, not far south of the intersection with Cold Spring Road.

The rooster crowed from out in the yard and I knew this was going to be a good honest interview. He didn't really filter what he said, he just told it like it is.

Con't on p.10

Important News at Press Time.

Millions for Our Roads: It's Official

Sandisfield will receive a state grant this spring of \$3.2 million for a massive repaving project for our two main highways, Routes 57 and 183. The Select Board planned to formally accept the grant at its February 28 meeting.

Funds should arrive in April – \$1.25 million for Rt. 57 between New Hartford Road and Route 8; and the balance of \$2 million and change for the entirety of Route 183 between Connecticut and the New Marlborough town line. Crews will begin work in late spring.

Highway Superintendent Brad Curry and Select Board member Alex Bowman, who have been working on the application to the state for more than a year, describe themselves as "very pleased." It is "just so good to have such excellent news," said Curry.

Memorial Day Parade Planning

AN ANNUAL COMMUNITY EVENT

By Lynn Rubenstein

Spring is not yet in the air, but we are already making plans for the Sandisfield Memorial Day Parade. The Sandisfield Fire and Police Departments are doing the lead planning, with assistance this year from the Recreation Committee. The parade will be on Sunday, May 29, kicking off at 10:00 a.m.

This year's parade will be a little different. The parade will be held in Sandisfield ONLY. As usual it will begin at Old Town Hall on Sandisfield Road, continue down Rt. 57 stopping at the New Boston Cemetery and later at The Rehab Center, ending at the American Legion Grounds with a Community BBQ at the Pavilion.

If you would like to be a part of the parade with a decorated float (honoring our veterans), contact Chief Ralph Morrison for details.

The Lee High School band will be joining in our parade this year.

Decorated bicycles and non-motorized vehicles (children or adult) can join the parade. Decorations for bicycles are being donated by the Sandisfield Cultural Council.

We need volunteers to help with this community event. Help can be with setting up, serving, grilling, or cleanup or all four. We are also requesting cash donations to help make this a respectful celebratory event. Tax-deductible donations may be made to the Sandisfield Fire Department, Inc.

We are also looking for a few drummers who can keep a beat. We will supply the drums. Contact Tom O'Gara (258-4537) for more information.

The Recreation Committee will organize an Honor Wall this year at the American Legion, where you can place photos of family or friends who were veterans who are no longer with us. We can laminate these photos if you wish (more information coming in April.)

Special Town Meeting

Cont'd from p.1

small pool of talent found in a town as tiny as ours. The voters agreed, overwhelmingly. Only Ron Bernard, our town's principal historian, raised a serious objection, and in a display of impassioned eloquence tried to demonstrate the value of having locally-elected locals with long institutional local memories performing local work. He was a good salesman, but his audience wasn't buying – and the matter will go before the whole town in ten weeks' time, to be settled one way or the other.

Another non-land-related matter which did raise concerns, as well as some eyebrows, was the matter of the budget for the new Treasurer and Tax Collector's salary – which will increase for this year alone by the unusual figure of \$4,565.34.

There is a reason for the number.

In past years, and most informally, Sandisfield's Treasurer has been able to augment his or her salary by being allowed to pocket the proceeds from fees and penalties levied on late tax payments and suchlike by some of our lazier or less tax-inclined citizens. The practice, which in effect turned our Tax Collector into a Berkshire version of TV's Dog the Bounty Hunter, has now been officially ended as a consequence of one of the votes at the Special Meeting. The sum that was raised by this means in the last fiscal year was applied as a one-time "augmentation" to this year's salary, as it seemed only fair.

So it took two separate warrant items to get this job done, but it now is done, and all that remains is for a suitably enticing and market-rate salary to be decided for the next fiscal year, and that will happen at the Town Meeting in May.

NOW TO THE LAND ISSUES

In numerical terms the land issues were minuscule, relating to a total of maybe a third of a single acre in a town of some 34,000 acres.

The first related to the proposed abandonment of a tiny filigree of roadway running north of Cronk Road, and which old maps show to be a northward extension of West Street. The only people to live there, Johanna and Douglas Miner, objected to the town's plan to scrub the road from the town highway rolls – with tax and insurance implications at the very least – and challenged the Select Board's assertion that they really lived on a driveway, not a road.

Nonsense, said the Miners, and dug out maps to show otherwise.

The Town, somewhat red-faced, said it would do more research and cravenly tabled – in normal language, withdrew for later – its plan of abandoning that section of road.

Finally, the matter that had everyone steamed up.

It began more than a year ago when Brad Curry, our Town's widely admired highway superintendent, was planning the Route 57 paving project. While perusing the sophisticated set of large-scale maps showing the exact location of everyone's driveways, he noticed that



St. Patrick's Day Dinner, March 26

WELCOME SPRING WITH CORNED BEEF AND CABBAGE

By Times Reporters

Drive-through only for one more go-round. Take-outs only. Next year, hopefully, we'll sit down together again.

Pick up your St. Patrick's Day dinner at Fire Station #2 on Rt. 57. Saturday, March 26, 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

Corned beef and cabbage, carrots, potatoes, assorted desserts. Buy tickets at the door, \$15 for adults, \$6 for children under 12.

Sponsored by the New Boston Congregational Church.

the land used by Jen and Katie Rudolph, whose splendidly maintained and lovingly landscaped property at the corner of Route 57 and New Hartford Road, extended over the tiniest fragment, a narrow sliver, of property that was actually owned by the town.

Mr. Curry quite properly let the Select Board know this. Whence it was discovered that the Rudolphs, as well as their predecessor-owners, had a legal easement which specifically allowed them to access their house by way of the aforementioned sliver.

There the matter might have rested – except that one member of the Board – no one has fessed up who – decided that the matter needed to be righted, that it had to be formalised and the irritating sliver be sold or gifted or somehow transferred from the Town to the Rudolphs.

But this has turned out not to be so simple.

The result was that everyone involved – not least the Rudolphs, with Jen making a coldly angry speech demanding clarity and criticizing the behavior of certain government officials – started to get heated and prompted the wise and calming remarks from Moderator Konstam.

In the end an amended proposal to transfer the land did pass, though with many loose ends – such as where exactly the unsurveyed sliver actually lies, since no-one really knows for certain – left untied.

One imagines that some members of the Select Board would rather they had never made the suggestion in the first place. All they have really succeeded in doing is to have created, famously, *a solution in search of a problem.* ❧



Former Road Superintendent Charged With Ethics Violations

LOCAL CONTRACTOR FACES ACCUSATIONS FROM 2017-18

By Bill Price

The State Ethics Commission’s Enforcement Division issued a press release in February announcing a Show Cause hearing alleging that former Sandisfield Road Superintendent Robert O’Brien violated conflict of interest laws on several occasions nearly four and five years ago.

Of the current charges, O’Brien told The Times that as of the end of February neither he nor his attorney had heard from the Commission beyond the Show Cause order. In his opinion, he said, he had done nothing while Superintendent without the Select Board’s permission.

The Times reported on these charges, originally brought by the Sandisfield Select Board, in its November and December 2018 issues. The articles can be accessed at the Library and Archives section of the sandisfieldtimes.org website.

O’Brien was “voluntarily terminated” from the Superintendent position in October 2018, in effect fired because, The Times learned after filing a public records request, it was alleged that “he lied about his hours, used town equipment for his own business use, and neglected his duties.”

The press release from the Ethics Commission included further detail:

It read, in part: “According to the [Commission’s] Order, O’Brien, who privately does business as P&R Construction LLC, was appointed Sandisfield’s Highway Road Superintendent . . . on a permanent basis in January 2016. During his time as Highway Road Superintendent, O’Brien participated in the town’s hiring of P&R for snowplowing and equipment rentals 42 times and approved more than \$50,000 in town payments to P&R, including a double payment of \$4,000, according to the Order.

“The Order alleges that, in May 2017, O’Brien, as Highway Road Superintendent, solicited quotes for an excavator rental, read the competing quotes, and then submitted a lower P&R quote. O’Brien, as Highway Road Superintendent, then hired P&R,



Former Road Superintendent Bobby O’Brien, at the DPW garage fire, December 2017.

Photo: Simon Winchester

which the Town paid \$20,000 for excavator rentals, according to the Order.

“The Order also alleges that in 2018, O’Brien charged the town for asphalt P&R used for private paving work and used his town worktime to perform private P&R work.

“According to the Order, in 2018, O’Brien, as Highway Road Superintendent, monitored repairs a private contractor was making to a town road for a utility company [on Cold Spring Road]. During this time, he met with the contractor and suggested P&R could do erosion control work on the project, and a P&R proposal was then submitted to the contractor, the Order alleges. After being awarded the job and performing the work, P&R submitted an invoice for \$16,000 for labor and materials, even though the Sandisfield Highway Department purchased the materials for the project, according to the Order.

“The Order alleges O’Brien violated the conflict of interest law’s prohibitions against municipal employees participating as such in matters in which they know they have a financial interest; using their official position to obtain a valuable unwarranted privilege or benefit; submitting a false or fraudulent claim to their public employer for payment; having a financial interest in a contract made by their municipal employer; and acting as agent for or being compensated by someone other than the municipality in connection with a matter in which the municipality has a direct interest.

“Pursuant to the Commission’s Enforcement Procedures, the Enforcement Division files an Order to Show Cause after the Commission has found reasonable cause to believe the subject of the Order violated the conflict of interest law. Before filing the Order to Show Cause, the Enforcement Division gives the subject an opportunity to resolve the matter through a disposition agreement. The Commission will schedule a public hearing on the allegations against O’Brien within 90 days.”

The Commission added that O’Brien faces civil penalties of up to \$10,000 for each violation. ❧

Family Grateful After House Fire

COMMUNITY HELP IS OFFERED

By Bill Price

Sandisfield showed generosity and compassion to John Armitage and Michaela Bonfiglio and their two children after their rented home on Slater Lane in New Boston was totally destroyed in a fire January 31.

The house was owned by Mary Slater, who was staying next door with her daughter, Susan Galik, while the house was rented. The fire, first reported by a town firefighter at Fire Station #1, located just across Rt. 8 from Slater Lane, is believed to have started in a basement wood stove.

Both John and Michaela were at work, John at Canna Provisions in Lee and Michaela at Wheatleigh Hotel in Stockbridge. The children, daughter Brayden, 5, and son Delainey, 4, were at school and day care. The family lost all of their belongings.

The same day as the fire Michaela's sister organized a Go Fund Me page with a goal of raising \$10,000 to help them recover. By mid-February the fund had raised more than double that amount through nearly 300 donations from Sandisfield neighbors, residents of neighboring towns, and several individuals who knew



John Armitage and Michaela Bonfiglio the day their home was lost to fire.

Photo: Felix Carroll, Berkshire Eagle

neither the town nor the family but had suffered similar losses.

A separate clothing and toy drive held at Fire Station #1 on February 13 resulted in donations of a wide selection of household items. The community is grateful to the Sandisfield Fire Department for the use of the firehouse for the event.

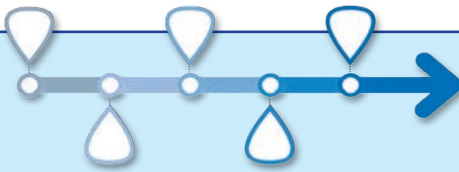
The Red Cross helped the family with immediate needs. They are temporarily living in Pittsfield

with Michaela's mother and the children are, the father said, "doing well," continuing with daycare and school.

THE SLATER HOUSE

Asked about her family's loss in the fire, Susan Galik said, "We try to find something to laugh about. That's the only way to handle it."

All of her mother's hand-crocheting and embroidery were stored in the basement of the house.



THE SHORT TIMELINE OF A FIRE

Susan Galik believes the fire must have been burning in the basement for some time before it broke out. At 1 p.m., the day of the fire, she said, "our Meals on Wheels lunches were delivered. Charlie, who is always on the lookout for problems, saw and smelled no smoke.

"Fifteen or twenty minutes later, a white vehicle flew along the street. I thought it was FedEx and waited for them to come to the door. I looked outside to see who it had been, but looked toward Rt. 8. When I looked the other way, I saw my mother's house was on fire and I started screaming. It was 1:35.

"Just then Ralph Morrison opened the door and asked if anyone was in the house. I said just a cat. The phone rang. It was Danny Margraf, a fireman, and I yelled that the house was on fire. He said, "I know." He was the one who first saw the smoke and called it in. He asked if I had called Michaela. When I said no, he said he'd call her and come over.

"It was now 1:45 and I felt sick. I called the insurance company. I hung up and my stepsister Connie Campetti called to see if we were OK.

"At 2 p.m., I was back in the living room and my folks' house was gone. Just huge rolling clouds of black smoke, with tendrils of fire.

"We heard booms and pops for days as the fire kept smoldering and things exploded. My mother, who suffers from dementia, could see the glow from the remains of the fire at night from her bedroom window. She would ask me, "Is that my house on fire?"

“There were large pieces,” Susan said, “so fine you could turn them over and not know which side was the front. Two large crocks full of her work. German cut-glass crystal, glasses, vases. Marino glassware. My father Fred Slater’s tools. Antique furniture. We were planning a series of tag sales this summer to clean it all out.

“Now,” she said, taking her own advice, “at least we don’t have to worry about selling any of it. We don’t have to put prices on any of it.”

In order to ready the house for renting, old and damaged furniture had been stacked in a nearby burn pile. “Why didn’t we throw that stuff on the fire? Then we wouldn’t have to get a burn permit next month.”

Susan offered serious advice for homeowners. “Make lists of things you have, take pictures, and store the lists and pictures somewhere else. If you lose so many things in one major fire, you won’t remember and can’t prove what you had.”

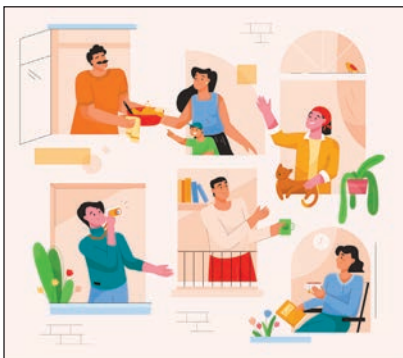
A MESSAGE FROM JOHN AND MICHAELA

In mid-February, John and Michaela wrote to “Friends, Family & Strangers” on the Go Fund Me page:

“Words cannot begin to describe how thankful our family is for the amazing level of love and support we’ve experienced since the loss of our home, the memories made there, and many of our most prized possessions. Even in the most difficult of times, we could have never imagined the reach and overwhelming response our story has received . . .

“Nothing in this world is forever and tomorrow isn’t promised. We hope that this weekend, everybody takes a few moments to appreciate everything and, more importantly, everyone you love. Despite what we have lost, our family considers it an incredible fortune to be able to hold each other another day.

“Though the road ahead will be tough, we see we are not alone.”



Firefighters came from Sandisfield, Tolland, Monterey, New Marlborough and Otis, and from Colebrook and Riverton in Connecticut.

Photo: Courtesy Tolland Volunteer Fire Department



John Armitage with his daughter Brayden at the clothing drive at Fire House #1 in February.

Photo: Lynn Rubenstein

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

Suicide Hill, New Boston

FIRST RATE SKI HILL ATTRACTED WORLD LEADING JUMPERS

By Ron Bernard

Between the world wars of the 20th century, professional boxing, baseball, and college football, established sports, were the most heavily attended spectacles in the U.S. Newspapers gave them many pages of coverage.

But Nordic ski jumping was wildly popular too and earned a large share of sports page content. The sport emerged in the late-19th century in Europe, especially in Norway where the activity became



Suicide Hill under construction, 1935.

a virtual trademark of that country. By about 1916 the sport caught on in Canada and the United States. Ski hills popped up everywhere in the upper mid-west and the northeast, including the Berkshires.

OUR OWN PLACE

For a short period in the 1930s, one of the most popular venues was right here in downtown New Boston. It was nicknamed "Suicide Hill."

The second ski hill in Sandisfield, it opened for winter 1936 by the Winsted-based New England Ski Club. One of the Connecticut investors and a director of the club was Nathra Nader, the father of Winsted's Ralph, who is best known as a five-time candidate for U.S. President.

Promotional material from the club boasted that Suicide Hill at 1,050 ft. was the "largest natural ski jump in the country, if not the world." A big feature was its very high take-off point which allowed for jumps theoretically up to 400 ft. Promoters anticipated that top American and international jumpers would come to try to break distance records. Some did show up.

Construction cost was about \$7,000 (\$136,000 today). Fans were lured by claims like "the best macadam road" from Winsted [Route 8], parking for 10,000 cars and unobstructed viewing for up to 35,000. Admission: \$1.10.

Recently, a very rare, possibly never published photo of the hill was found in the archives of the Berkshire Eagle. To my knowledge this is the best image

of Suicide Hill extant and it is a thrilling discovery.

Berkshires historian Bernard Drew wrote, "Berkshire skiing enthusiasts experienced a giddy high in winter 1936, as the nation struggled to rise from the Great Depression. Instrumental in creating the boom in the Berkshires were ski trains [such as the Snow Clipper] of the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad." (*Sandisfield Then and Now*, 2012, pp. 154-155.)

A SHORT LIFE

The first major competition at Suicide Hill was held January 25-26, 1936.

Bernard Drew wrote: "Some 4,000 visitors turned out to see entrants, men recruited from Michigan and Wisconsin. John Erkkila of the Detroit Ski Club won the contest with a leap of 181 feet, well below expectation, in part because of soft snow. 'The skiers complained about not being able to make the distances they anticipated but they rode the jump in spectacular fashion,' reported The Berkshire Evening Eagle, Jan. 27. To get more distance the group of youthful skiers took about one-half hour off yesterday to chop brush from behind the original run-in so as to make a longer course and bring about a better chance for long distance jumps."

Aficionados were aware that Norwegian Johanne Kolstad, the "Wonder Girl," would also be there to perform. The judges said that she "had the best form of all of the skiers," despite the poor conditions. At that time in Norway,

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women were not allowed to compete so she and others toured in the U. S. She fared better in Suicide Hill jumps a few weeks later but audiences were much smaller.

In addition to long jumps, New Boston spectators could watch acrobatics – dangerous daredevil feats like summersaults. There were many injuries, especially broken ankles. Some falls resulted in jumpers being knocked unconscious.

Suicide Hill had two more seasons, 1937 and 1938, both of which included uncooperative weather conditions. The great tempest of summer 1938 wiped out much of the infrastructure of the hill and ended its life as a winter attraction.

Today two observable legacies of Suicide Hill exist near the former Villa Mia parking lot. The original Nader clubhouse, a utilitarian building, was converted to eateries under various proprietors. In the late-1990s, it was practically enveloped into the now-closed Villa Mia Restaurant but a portion is still recognizable from the street. (See Sandisfield Times, April, 2020. “Where Everyone Knew Your Name.”)

A few hundred feet south of Villa Mia, on the hillside behind trees, the old circular landing zone still rises above Rt. 8, intact and visible especially this month before spring leaves once again hide the evidence. It sits there as a quiet reminder of an ambitious but short-lived venture and exciting days in New Boston.

In an irony not lost on us, the newest possibility of exciting days in New Boston is the recently opened Hanging Mountain. Rapidly gaining fame and interest as a rock-climbing site, it is located just south of the Farmington River Bridge on the west side of Rt. 8. Hanging Mountain is for rock climbers *climbing up*, rather than skiers *jumping down*. We suspect Hanging Mountain will be long-lived as a New Boston attraction. ♡



Villa Mia restaurant with portion of original Nader building still visible, April 2020. Sandisfield Times photo.



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Promotional poster circulated in Winsted, January 1936.



Protecting our Dark Sky

MAYBE A PROPOSED NEW BYLAW?

By Bill Taylor

Those of us who live or spend time in Sandisfield are among the lucky small percentage of people in the world who can enjoy the splendor of the Milky Way, the light of billions of stars that connect us with the cosmos. Most of us can enjoy a restful sleep without light disrupting it. While it is not as dark as it could be or as other places, we have it pretty good here. It could be better.

Additionally, with high-speed internet coming soon, there could be an influx of full-time residents and more chance of light trespass.

I pondered these issues on a foggy night's half-mile walk up the road near where I live in Sandisfield Center.

The first thing I saw was an orange-yellow streetlight with a bulb below the top shield which allowed some light to go up. Such light is energy being sent where it has no use except to degrade our dark sky. However, since the light is orange, it scatters minimally compared with blue or green tones, so not a huge deal.

The good news is that the Sandisfield Green Committee is working on a plan to replace all 39 Sandisfield streetlights that produce light that escapes above the horizontal using cutoff fixtures and warm color bulbs.

On to the second location where yellowish lights on the ground were pointed upwards into some trees. This creates an attractive artistic sculptural scene, but some of that light misses the trees and goes straight up, not as bad as if it were blue or green but still could be better if the lights were mounted up in the trees and pointed downward.

I continued down the road and it appeared a car with high beams was approaching from over the next hill. It wasn't a car. Baffled, I went another quarter mile and was startled by the amount of glare produced by a greenish floodlight. At first, I could not see what it was pointed at. Only when I got closer did I understand: a huge spotlight pointed up at a 45-degree angle at a flagpole. I understand being patriotic, and members of my family have served and continue to serve, but couldn't it be pointed down from the top of the flagpole? Then we in this great country would also know we are in a grand universe.


Pittsburgh, Tucson and many other cities have already energy-saving, dark sky-friendly, and efficient features that can be either used for replacement or for new installations.

I am a member of the Planning Board and it is easy to say "there ought to be a law." While the Planning Board has not advanced a zoning bylaw, we did vote to require that information on dark sky lighting be provided to all applicants for a building permit or special permit. There may yet be a bylaw on the warrant at the Town Meeting in May. The possibility of such a new bylaw will be discussed at the Planning Board meeting scheduled for March 9.

For maximum benefit, I would prefer that we each look at the lighting on our properties or places for which we are responsible, and think about how it impacts neighbors and wildlife and the grandeur of our dark night sky.

White, green, and blue light destroys melatonin that people and wildlife need in order to sleep, and also scatters more off of fog or humid air, making these colors less useful for safety and security. The added glare from these colors makes seeing an intruder more difficult.

By putting shields on our lights, pointing them downward, mounting motion sensitive lighting for security, and using warmer color bulbs, we can get more illumination of what we deem important and use less energy (and thereby save money) while making our neighbors – and ourselves – have less intrusion from misdirected lighting and provide the best possible view of the night sky.

More information is available from the International Dark Sky Association <https://www.darksky.org/> including brochures and examples of dark sky friendly and unfriendly fixtures. 



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

BYLAW PROPOSALS

Planning Board

To Discuss Two Bylaw Proposals

Wednesday, March 9, 7:00 p.m., Old Town Hall


Public Hearing to act on two proposed new bylaws.

To regulate new or replacement lighting to require dark sky-friendly shielding, light color and intensity.

Allow accessory dwelling units with certain size limitations.

One amendment of the Zoning bylaws to allow shared driveways.

The draft bylaws and amendment can be viewed on the Town Website, sandisfieldma.gov. They may also be inspected by "appointment only" in the office of the Town Clerk during regular business hours.

Interested parties who wish to express their views may attend in-person or contact the Planning Board for the video/teleconference ID and password or the dial-in information. 

Down at the Silverbrook (and Tuckers) II

By Bill Price

Labors of love take time. Especially when there are only two of you and you're holding down two full-time jobs. So, Sandisfielders, be patient some more.

The young couple, Seth Fritch and Melissa Gabso who bought the Silverbrook Café three years ago, are still chipping away at it. Both are skilled carpenters and restorers doing much of their own work. Most of their week-ends and nearly every vacation are spent at the Silverbrook.

A new restaurant venue seemed in the offing last fall. Two refugees from the former Tuckers Tavern, which was destroyed by fire last September, entertained the idea of taking over the downstairs portion of the building to create a new Sandisfield bar and restaurant. Renovations and other complications got in the way, however, and the refugees have since decided other avenues would be more rewarding.

The Fritch/Gabsos, back on their own, now have the end of the downstairs renovation "in sight." In an email, Melissa described what they found when they removed the tavern's wood floor. "A big pit where the water wheel from the shingle mill apparently used to be, and probably the milk tanks from the creamery later on. It was a huge pit that we had to fill in."


Seth explained that filling the pit required three full truckloads of dirt, amounting to 66 tons. "Since we couldn't get a backhoe inside the

place, we hauled it inside using wheelbarrow and shovels. The final layer was stone chips and dust. We'll cement over that, extending the front half of the space all the way across the floor."

Their first renovation project was to install a new roof on the 170-year-old building, followed by new doors, windows, and insulation. New kitchen fixtures and floors on the second floor now grace apartments that could soon be rented out monthly or short-term through AirB&B.

Melissa said, "We have an ambitious goal of opening the apartments by this fall, though knowing how projects like this go it'll likely end up getting pushed back more. We hope to rent the downstairs restaurant space to someone who wants to make a go of the Silverbrook, which even though it's temporarily under construction is still "The Best Little Honky Tonk West of the Clam River."

Meanwhile, about a mile south on Rt. 8 where the former Tuckers Tavern and Restaurant was lost to fire, one of the owners, Marty Cormier, reported that there is no move yet to rebuild or refurbish a "new" Tuckers. He said, "We're still in insurance limbo."

So, Sandisfielders, for the time being head up to the Knox Trail Inn when you get thirsty. But don't make a habit of it. You might have your own joint again sometime soon, closer to home. 



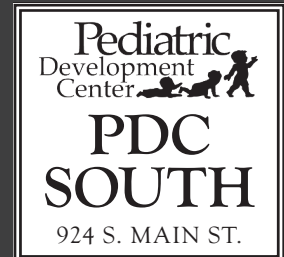
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CONSOLATI

Memoir, Nick Hryckvich*Cont'd from p.1*

My grandfather was born in a farmhouse on South Beech Plain Road in Sandisfield in 1922. Our long-time family friend, Thelma Esteves, lives in that house now.

INTO THE WOODS, SIGHT UNSEEN

My grandpa called Sandisfield a small cow town with no law.

His father and mother, immigrants from Russia, worked in New York City, his father as a tailor in a men's suit factory and his mother at a biscuit company. His father knew he needed to get out of



Nick and Doris Hryckvich in 1953, the year they were married, with their brand-new '53 Chevy Bel Air.

*In Loving Memory***NICHOLAS HRYCKVICH****1922-2021**

Nicholas Hryckvich, 99, passed away peacefully at his home in Sandisfield on November 8, 2021.

Nick lived his entire life in Sandisfield. He was born September 27, 1922 at his family's farmhouse on South Beech Plain Road. At the time of his death, he was Sandisfield's oldest resident and for sure the person who had lived in the town the longest.

Nick graduated from Lee High School, from which he went on to the Oliver Wolcott Trade School. He took on many roles over the years; logger, lumberman, and farmer. He owned Hryckvich Bros. Lumber with his brother, Alexander, which for many years was a highly successful lumber mill. The site is still located on Rt. 8 north of New Boston, though the mill is no longer in operation.

Nick, a well-respected member of the community, will be greatly missed.

He is survived by two sons; Victor and Frank "Bud," Victor's wife Nina and Bud's wife Sharon, and several grandchildren. He was predeceased by his wife of 67 years, Doris, and his brother Alexander. Nick's daughter in law, Nina, an RN, cared for him in his home until his death.

A combined memorial service for Nick and Doris will be announced in the spring.



the city, he just wasn't made for it; he wasn't happy and his health was poor. He bought a 50-acre parcel in Sandisfield on South Beech Plain Road without ever having seen it.

They moved to the country and started a dairy farm. They had two sons born at the farmhouse. They were a strong-backed, dedicated pair and taught my grandfather and his brother, Alexander, how to live off the land.

Winter was dedicated to chopping wood to keep the family warm and haying in the summer for their livestock. My grandfather had many responsibilities at a young age like taking care of their livestock and hunting for a lot of meals. He was taught to shoot at the age of five. They hunted for anything, squirrels, deer, turkey, and even raccoon when food was scarce. Really, they hunted anything that dared leave a track!



Nick was about 20 in this photo of him with his dog.

His father loved raccoon, but my grandpa hated the taste. He told me his father would tell him it was "tougher where there's none!"

They always had a few dogs, including many beagles for hunting. Then, it wasn't just your father teaching you how to shoot, but everyone

had to put their two cents in. of course, but all those guys' inputs made you a better shot, along with practice. Good shots meant good eating and survival during tough times.

They raised cows, horses, pigs, and chickens. Down Beech Plain Road at the junction with Sandisfield Road was a creamery (now The Silverbrook Cafe, "Best Little Honky-Tonk West of the Clam River"). At the creamery their milk would be turned it into butter, milk, and ice cream that was delivered all around Berkshire County.

SCHOOL, AND WORKING TOO

My grandpa attended grammar school at the West New Boston school house. It had, at the most, ten students. He had to walk about two miles both ways to get there. From there they created the South Beech Plain School, which is now a hunting cabin. He moved from New Boston School to there for the 4th to 8th grade. There were only three students there in the winter, all boys.

My grandpa said, "They didn't care if the teacher who was hired knew what they were talking about, they were hired as long as they knew how to start a fire!" The teachers were fairly young and boarded in cabins that were rented out by a tender at Spectacle Pond. My grandpa said he didn't misbehave, nor did the others, because "they would have given you a good smack with whatever was handy!"

My grandpa grew up helping with his father's small sawmill set up in the woods, which many other neighbors worked at. He was about 12 years old when he worked with them, on top of his chores and labor at his own family's farm.

Granpa bought his first sawmill at age 16 with his brother, Alex. The two of them worked

side-by-side in same woods where my family's property is today on North Beech Plain.

His father continued to buy more land next to the farm and later on my grandpa expanded even further. Our land had an old farm house on it where granpa and Alex lived for a while. It had no power, but the land was beautiful.

After grammar school he graduated from Lee High School and then went on the Oliver Walcott Trade School. During that time he worked as a machinist at a factory in Torrington, mostly forging submarine coils and other products that would contribute to the war.

A LONG LIFE, WELL LIVED

"Then, when people fought, they fought it out and were friends the next day, there wasn't no law to stop them!" he said.

Locals knew how to have a good time. As a kid, he and his friends were outdoors all the time. He said he had many friends but he specifically mentioned his closest friends, also local residents, Homer Spring, Charlie Allen, and Willie Broska. They spent summers fishing and swimming in the Clam River and Spectacle Pond.

Going to the movies was a big treat, grandpa and his friends went as often as they could. A ticket cost 10 cents.

He said, "We raised hell wherever it needed raisin'!" just before he told me how old he was when he bought his first vehicle. He purchased a 1927 one-ton Chevy pickup from a guy in East Otis for \$35 when he was just 10 years old! That just goes to show you how different things were then.

Moonshine and bootlegging were common in Sandisfield. Grandpa and many of his friends took part in the drinking and making of it. Every other house was a bootleg joint and some people even concocted it up for the New Boston Inn.

Moonshine was common, but hard apple cider was a Hryckvich specialty. Every fall they would make about 8 barrels of the stuff. The apples were picked right on the farm and brought down to their friend's cider press where my grandpa and his family joined to make the cider, which of course they also helped to drink. Parties were highlighted by the cider supply and friends from all over town would come together and drink and just have a good time. "The amounts consumed were unbelievable," he told me.

After all the experience he gained working in the woods logging and sawing, he and his brother Alex began to build their own official saw mill, Hryckvich Brothers Lumber, which still stands on Route 8 in Sandisfield. They built from the ground up what would be a booming business that supplied lumber to people all around the Berkshires. The trees were logged from woods on their property and from jobs

all around Berkshire County. They had a full operation going and my grandfather had even more responsibility than before. They set up the 52" circular saw and got to sawing. Their lumber built most of the houses in what is now Otis Wood Lands.

My grandpa knew my grandmother, Doris Linkovich, since they were very young. Their families were good friends, but she was four years younger so they were never in school together and most of their friends were different ages. Once they became teenagers, their first date was to the Great Barrington Fair. They ended up falling in love and it was just the beginning. They were married in 1953 and had two sons,



Nick on his 75th birthday, at a party thrown by his family on the family property in Sandisfield.

Victor and Frank, who was known as "Bud." My grandparents were married 67 years when my grandmother died only two years ago, in 2020.

My grandpa said he wouldn't trade growing up in Sandisfield for anywhere else. "It's just ... home."

he would always say. He always seemed to be one with the land and seemed to be rarely indoors.

He and I spent much of my childhood together, and most of my memories are of us in the woods, haying in the field, or taking care of the animals.

One of the things I treasured most about him was how he appreciated the value of time. He was just so calm and patient, at least with me. I love that he took the time to teach me things.

ONE SPECIAL MEMORY

I remember this one day, it was so damn hot and humid. My grandfather, my dad Victor, and I had been cutting grass all day. We were all exhausted, we just needed to drop off the last load, then we'd be done for the day. We were eager to get in front of a fan and in the shade. Grandpa and I were in the truck together and dad was on the tractor. What does my grandpa do? He shuts off the truck. Dad glared over and said something along the lines of "what the heck are you doing!? It's hot and we need to get this done!"

My grandpa smiled and pulled out three perfectly ripe tomatoes he picked earlier from our garden. There was nothing like those fresh homegrown tomatoes. He said "not until we have a snack"

He must've been planning on this earlier because he had a salt shaker that he stole off our kitchen table with him in the truck. He sat down on the tailgate of that old truck, took out his pocket knife and handed us each a piece of tomato sprinkled with salt. We all laughed and sat together on that tailgate and just took it all in.

He taught me to appreciate the little things and to not take any day for granted. I'll never forget the taste of that tomato, how happy we were in that moment and my grandpa saying, "Now don't that taste like heaven?"



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CRITTER CORNER

Cindy Ragusa

Normally in this column we are glad to share with readers the always marvelous nature photos by Cindy Ragusa. Cindy is recovering from a stay in the hospital and is not on the prowl with her cameras right now. We wish her a speedy and full recovery and look forward to more of her amazing photographs.



Another Possum

When Claudette Litchfield of Sandisfield Road posted this photo of a possum visitor on ConnectSandisfield, she wrote that this was "the first one I've seen in our yard in 15 years."

Pauline Bakunis reported that she also "had a photo of a possum in her yard on River Road and it looked just like this one."

See Ron Bernard's adjoining query about the pair of look-alike possums that visited his yard in Beech Plain. Apparently, one possum looks much like another.



Last month two hungry possums established residence near a Beech Plain home to take advantage of scattered bird seed. Are they identical twins? A mother and child? Husband and wife? Hard to tell but these gentle and homeliest of creatures are interesting nonetheless.

Photo Ron Bernard

Recreation Committee Chocolates and Gnomes

By Lynn Rubenstein

Our Sandisfield Chocolatiers had a delicious time melting, dipping, and creating beautiful treats to bring home to share (Were we supposed to share?). We thank the Sandisfield Fire Department for providing a venue for the chocolate making. Many requested we do it again, so your wish is our command, Chocolatiers coming back soon.

This month the Recreation Committee is offering a "Make a Lucky Gnome" class. Join us Saturday, March 19 from 10:00 a.m. until noon at the Old Town Hall on Silverbrook Road. Class size is limited to 20 participants. Please register before March 12 at kowgirlruby@yahoo.com or by phone at 413-269-7357. See you there.

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Council on Aging Soon, But Not Yet ...

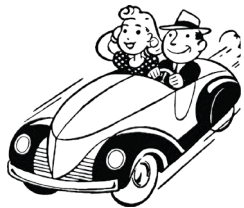


By Nina Carr

We're not doing our Wednesday lunches just yet. Maybe in a month or so. We have begun holding coffee hours on Wednesday mornings from 10 until around 11.

Also, Chair Yoga continues at 2 a.m. on Wednesday afternoons at Old Town Hall.

We're sort of waiting until Berkshire County is no longer considered a "high transmission area" before we start more activities.



New Boston Store with A Great Car

An "antique" postcard found by Ralph Montgomery and posted on ConnectSandisfield last fall shows the New Boston Store sometime in the early 1950s. We suspect the early '50s because reporter Bill Price owned a blue '55 Ford Town Sedan that looked a lot, though not exactly, like the car featured here. He liked that car and remembers it well. So this is most likely a Ford from the '50s. Who remembers this car, who owned it, and who is sitting on the porch?

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WINTER'S ENDING

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The chilling bite of winter's blade is

Broken by spring's light dew.

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While blossoms bloom with brilliant reds

And fragrant flowers make the scene.

Quiet brooks flow ever on

With melted snow as fuel

To quench the thirst of newborn fawn

And haste life's great renewal!

By JR Linson

LIBRARY EVENTS

STORY TELLING

Story Telling hours with crafting fun have been cancelled until further notice due to Covid19. We hope to restart again in April on the second Saturday of each month.

SAVE THE DATE: August 6 – Something's Fishy! A Fun show for AN OCEAN of POSSIBILITIES by nationally recognized story teller, **Mary Jo Maichack** who sings, plays guitar, tells tales and leads the fun in this puppet show with audience participation.

Ed The Wizard will be entertaining at the library this spring or early summer. Date and time to be determined.

Davis Bates will also be at the Sandisfield Library this summer. Date and time to be determined. His performances are a mixture of family, Native American, international and regional songs, and stories. They speak of empowerment, history, spirit, and the environment.

NEW BOOK ARRIVALS

- *Remote Control* by Nnedi Okorafor
- *Violetta* by Isabel Allende
- *Her Hidden Genius* by Marie Benedict
- *The Last House on the Street* by Diane Chamberlain
- *Greenwich Park* by Katherine Faulkner
- *My Monticello* by Jocelyn Johnson
- *Quicksilver* by Dean Koontz
- *Lightening in a Mirror* by Jayne Anne Krentz
- *The Good Son* by J. Mitchard
- *Go Back Where You Came From* by Wajahat Ali
- *Devil House* by John Darnielle
- *The Magnolia Palace* by Fiona Davis
- *The Shadows of Men* by Abir Mukherjee
- *How High We Go in the Dark* by Sequo Nagamatsu
- *Run, Rose, Run* by James Patterson
- *South to America* by Imani Perry
- *The Violin Conspiracy* by Brendan Slocumb

- *The Nameless Ones* by John Connolly
- *Never* by Ken Follett
- *Go Tell the Bees That I am Going* by Diana Gabalson
- *Olga Dies Dreaming* by Xochitl Gonzales
- *Invisible* by Danielle Steel

NEW CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Grandmother's Pigeon by Louise Erdrich

We continue to add new and enlightening books to both the adult section (upstairs) and children's section (downstairs). The children's section is replete with books, games, toys and a train set. We also offer notary service, public computer and printer availability, free wifi and assess to ebooks from the Massachusetts libraries with your Sandisfield Library card.

If you have a particular author or book in mind, and the Sandisfield Library does not have it, we can borrow it from other libraries. It may take a week or two while the book winds its way from one end of Massachusetts to our end.

In an effort to make room for new book acquisitions, we have begun weeding out old but in excellent condition fiction, non-fiction, and children's books. These books are for sale at a nominal fee. \$2.00 for hardcover, \$1.50 for softcover. \$10 dollars gets you six hardcover books!

As for me, the days stretch out a bit longer, the river shrinks under its mantle of broken ice shards, then surges forth over the ice jam. The birds flit about, pecking at store-bought seeds and my friend the squirrel scampers about in the warming air. I smell spring in the morning sunshine, but still winter holds on, lurking in piles of crusty snow, blowing cold-infused winds in my face. I await full spring, armed with gardening books and stories of summer, babbling brooks, and adventures beneath a warm sun. Lucky me. 🍷

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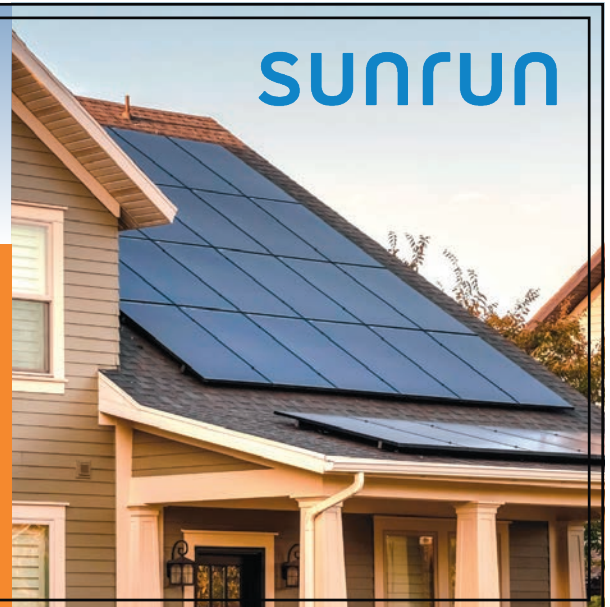
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Nostalgia

Once upon a time Sandisfield was home to numerous small businesses, especially restaurants, bars, and diners.

A reminder of one of these, Cina's Restaurant, was found on-line by Center resident Tom O'Gara. Cina's was a popular watering hole near Sandisfield Center that operated from 1937 to 1964.



Tom is a town booster, enthusiastic about local history, particularly about his neighborhood. He said, "Roaming around the internet, I keep an eye out for town mementos. This matchbook cover came up last month so I grabbed it."

Matchbooks are obsolete and rare enough these days. But this survivor from our own backyard is a legacy item and worthy of mention. We are glad that Tom shared it

If you have similar memorabilia, send us a picture.



Photo: Ruth McCormick

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MEMORY LANE

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Anybody Remember This Bear?

BEAR CARVING

The Times recently received this black-and-white snapshot marked only as "Sandisfield playground 2 col." It appears to be circa 1970s and may have been intended for a local newspaper, such as The Record (defunct). Does anyone remember this very interesting piece of folk art or what happened to it? Let us know.



Cultural Council

Cultural Council Announces New Round of Awards

The Sandisfield Cultural Council is pleased to announce that we have awarded \$6,576 in grants to 19 organizations or individuals to provide cultural programming to the residents of Sandisfield and surrounding areas in fiscal year 2022. The recipients and their programs are as follows:

- Berkshire South Community Center, to support the Berkshire Ukulele Band and Berkshire Sings
- The Bidwell House, to support Early American History Talks
- Blandford Historical Society, for Bad News Jazz & Blues
- Dewey Memorial Hall, for its Young at Heart series
- MUSIC Dance.edu, to support Hip Hop Dance Chair Exercise for Seniors
- Farmington River Elementary, for the following programs: Afterschool Photography, travel to the Amelia Park Children's Museum, a Community Musical production, and a Musical Instrument Enrichment and Loaner Program
- Greenagers, Environmental Education and Stewardship of Yanner Park
- New Marlborough Village Association, for its Meeting House Programs
- Nutshell Playhouse, for Nutshell Playhouse at Ventfort Hall
- Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, for the program "Indigenous Peoples: We are Still Here"
- Sandisfield Arts Center, for Frederick Moyer Jazz and Classical Piano, and "Voices of Poetry" Festival
- Sandisfield Cultural Council, for the Sandisfield Memorial Day Parade
- Sandisfield Recreation Committee, to support the Summer Carnival
- TapRoot Sessions, for its Women in Roots music series
- WAM Theatre, to support its 2022 Season of Events

In keeping with our council priorities, grants were awarded to applicants that best met the following criteria: programming would reach a large group in the community, with priority given to programs intended for school children and senior citizens. The committee also gave priority to local presenters dealing with the arts, humanities and science.

The Sandisfield Cultural Council is supported by an annual grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, as well as funding of \$250 from the Town of Sandisfield. Gifts to a local cultural council are considered donations to a political subdivision of the Commonwealth exclusively for public purposes as defined in Section 170(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of the United States and therefore eligible for tax deduction. To support culture in Sandisfield, please consider making a donation to the "Sandisfield Cultural Council" and mailing it to: PO Box 84, Sandisfield, MA 01255.

You may also donate your time. Our Council consists of the following volunteer members: Connie Canty, Rosanne Carinci-Hoekstra, Ellen Croibier, Jennifer Hibbins, Barbara Kershner, Jennifer Lenzi and John Skrip. New members are always welcome and may contact us at culturalcouncil@sandisfieldma.gov for more information.





Comings and Goings



JAMES I. MARGRAF

1954-2022

James Margraf of Sandisfield died January 31 after a brief illness. He was 67 and was living at the time of his death with his son, Paul, on Sandisfield Road.

Jimmy was born June 9, 1954, in Great Barrington. His mother was Mary (Spring) Margraf of Sandisfield who died in 2010.

Jimmy was a talented painter for many years. He loved fishing and was an avid bird watcher. He loved feeding the birds.

He also loved spending time with his family and bringing food home for everyone to enjoy. Jimmy was always smiling and people felt happy when they were around him. He will be deeply missed.

He is survived by his beloved sons, Paul Margraf and Kevin Margraf, and Kevin's partner, Sue, all of Sandisfield, and Chase Margraf and Casey Margraf, both of Manchester, New Hampshire. He is also survived by his cherished grandchildren, Pauly, Jimmy, and Harley of Massachusetts and Logan and Chloe of New Hampshire. And his close siblings, Barbara Hotchkiss and her husband, Jay, of Sandisfield; Danny Margraf and partner, Sara, of Sandisfield; Allan Margraf and his wife, Frankie, of Pittsfield; Tina Thompson of Vermont; Terry LaCasse and her husband, Tim, of Colebrook; Jody Margraf and his wife, Shannon, of Otis; and Robin Wilcox and her husband, John, of Sandisfield. As well as many nieces, nephews, and extended family.

Jimmy also leaves his beloved dog, Marty McGoogle, fondly known as "Googie."

Funeral services were held February 19 at the New Boston Church, Sandisfield, followed by a reception at the Knox Trail Inn in Otis. Montano-Shea Funeral Home, Winsted, was in care of the arrangements.



LAURA M. SANCHEZ

1945-2022

Laura M. Sanchez, 76, of Sandisfield died January 27 at Springside Nursing Home in Pittsfield. She had lived for many years in her New Boston home on Sandisfield Road at the foot of Tolland Road.

Laura was born in Winsted on May 2, 1945, the daughter of Paul and Carmela (Cardillo) Nardi. She received a Bachelors of Science in Education and was a ESL teacher for many years in Berkshire schools in Great Barrington and Stockbridge.

Her husband, Nazario, predeceased her in 1990.

Laura is survived by two sons, Nazario and his wife Stacy Sanchez III of Pittsfield, and Ricardo "Rico" Sanchez, and one daughter, Dina Sanchez. She is also survived by two brothers, Paul Nardi of Ashley Falls, Massachusetts, and Dominick Nardi of Tennessee and one granddaughter, Larissa Sanchez of Pittsfield.

Funeral services were held February 2 at the Birches-Roy Funeral Home in Great Barrington with Deacon Sean Mulholland officiating. Burial followed in the Sandisfield Center Cemetery. Expressions of sympathy can be made to the Sandisfield Fire and Ambulance in care of the funeral home at 33 South Street, Great Barrington, MA 01230.





Letters to the Editor

PRAISE FOR ARTS CENTER ARTICLE

Thank you for the article in the last issue of The Times on the repointing of the foundation of the Arts Center. George Wheeler's report was extremely well written and the photographs excellent. It is amazing that there is such a vast wealth of expertise and talent residing in so small a town.

Jerry Herman
Sandisfield Center

NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS

It doesn't happen often enough these days that we have the chance to feel the warmth and genuine concern that our neighbors have for us. I feel fortunate today to thank a lot of people for jumping in and offering support with a problem I faced.

On February 5, my 90-year-old partner, Bill Cohn, pulled out of my driveway and swung too wide onto Silverbrook Road, winding up in a ditch. (We were all just recovering from ice and snowstorms so the road was kind of sketchy.) No matter what he or I tried to do, we couldn't get the car. Our town hero, Ralph, came to the rescue. (Mind you, the temperature was only four degrees.)

Ralph towed the car to the shop and I drove Bill home to face another challenge. We got to the top of his driveway, he turned to get out of the car and slipped on the ice. At the same time his outside light went on for about 15 seconds, then it went dark. As I got out of the car to help him, I fell myself. Now we are slipping and sliding, lost because we can't see where we are going. Bill tried to get up and I screamed at him (using a few four-letter words) to stay down and start crawling toward where we think the house is. I said crawl because if we stood up, then we'd surely fall again. Long story short, we made it into the house, scared, angry, and frustrated.

I drove home and had two shots of brandy before I collapsed on the bed. The next morning, I put out a message on the ConnectSandisfield Facebook page asking how to reset his outdoor light so that it would stay on for a while – like maybe 10 minutes each time he drives up. I got some advice and figured I'd go over there in the daylight and get up on the ladder and adjust the light. That's when half the town responded! Everyone offering to help, most of them aware that I'm in my eighties and climbing ladders just ain't the thing to be doing. Zoe Nelson called to say Chuck would go right up and sand, while Barbara Morrison called to say Mike and Alec would come by later and adjust the timer on the light. I gotta tell ya, between the outpouring of calls and responses, I was deeply moved.

And all this after everyone responded so well to the family that lost their home!

These are the important things, the sentiments that make living in a town like Sandisfield so very worthwhile. You are all very special. Thank you.

Rita Kasky
Sandisfield Center

Thanks to Our Generous Readers

The Times cannot succeed without your help.

We appreciate all who donated so generously to our 2021 Appeal.

Donations in 2021, not previously acknowledged

Klaus Metz
Elizabeth Webster
Matthew Schur
David Abramson
Marilyn Scaglione

Donations January and February

Patricia Manion
Leslie Garwood
Candace & George Craig
Bonner McAllester
Richard Hand



WINTER SNOWFALL AND EXTREMES

2021-2022 Snowfall to date as measured/estimated at a Beech Plain back-yard weather station.

November 2021 2.0 inches

December 5.5

January 2022		February 2022	
7	2.5	2	1.0
10	1.0	19	1.5
17	6.0	25	5.0
18	1.0	Season to date	
19	1.0	33.5 inches	
24	1.0	Extreme temp	
26	6.0	to date	
January 18.5 inches		Jan 12 -11 degrees	



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Cell: 413.854.7525

- Forest Management/Stewardship Plans
- Chapter 61/A/B Program
- Timber Sales
- Boundary Marking
- GIS Mapping
- Foresters for the Birds
- Wildlife Habitat Improvement
- Recreational Trail Layout

NOW HEAR THIS!

Edited by Laura Rogers-Castro.

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

MARCH EVENTS



Sandisfield Select Board Meetings are currently through Zoom and in-person. Please visit sandisfieldma.gov or call 258-4711 for information.

Playgroup on Tuesdays from 10:00-11:30 a.m. at the Otis Town Hall. Sponsored by South Berkshire Kids. Weather permitting. No pre-registration is necessary. Led by Nina Carr. Meet outside behind the Otis Town Hall in the gazebo for stories and songs followed by creative crafts. For confirmation, please call Nina at 258-3314. Free!

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.

Make a Lucky Gnome on Saturday, March 19, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall on Silverbrook Road. The Sandisfield Recreation Committee will sponsor this class for 20 lucky participants! This is a free event open to all ages. Please pre-register (413-269-7357 or kowgirl-ruby@yahoo.com) before March 12.

St. Patrick's Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner! on Saturday, March 26 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Fire Station #2 on Route 57 sponsored by the New Boston Congregational Church. Corned beef, cabbage, carrots, potatoes, and assorted desserts. Tickets are available at the door and drive-through only. \$15 for adults; \$6 for children under 12.

EVENTS IN SURROUNDING TOWNS

The Mohicans in Northwest Connecticut, featuring Dr. Lucianne Lavin, Director of Research and Collections at the Institute for American Indian Studies on Wednesday, March 9, at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom, sponsored by the Bidwell House Museum. Early documents show that Mohican tribal homelands extended east and south into what is now Connecticut. The documentary evidence reveals stable, peaceful, social, and political relationships between Mohicans and the Housatonic Valley tribal communities to their south. For more information and to register, email bidwellhousemuseum.org. \$10.

Sheffield Winter Farmer's Market on Saturday, March 12, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Dewey Memorial Hall located on 91 Main Street in Sheffield. There will be local produce, meats,

baked good, and crafts. Live music by local artists is included with this indoor market. Please wear a mask.

Full-Moon Night Hike at Housatonic Flats in Great Barrington on Friday, March 18, from 8:00 to 9:30 p.m. Join the Berkshire Natural Resources Council for a 1-mile beginner-level full-moon hike. A few pairs of snowshoes available to loan for adults and kids. If there is no snow, then it will be a winter hike. For more information and to register, email mauman@bnrc.org. Free.

Berkshire Grown Winter Farmer's Market on Saturday, March 19, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Housy Dome on 1064 Main Street in Housatonic. Featuring locally grown and produced foods, including fruits and vegetables, cheese, meats, breads, and more.

Nature Journaling with Nanci Worthington on Saturday, March 26, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. at Bartholomew's Cobble in Sheffield. Observe the changing seasons in this nature journaling group sponsored by The Trustees of the Reservation. For more information, visit thetrustees.org. Free.

Spring Solstice Meditation Walk on Sunday, March 27, from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Bartholomew's Cobble in Sheffield. All adults are welcome to this informal and pleasurable exploration of awakening the senses and bathing in the natural world. For more information, visit thetrustees.org. \$10 members, \$20 nonmembers.



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Donations of any amount are needed to ensure the continuation of this newspaper. Please send checks to: The Sandisfield

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