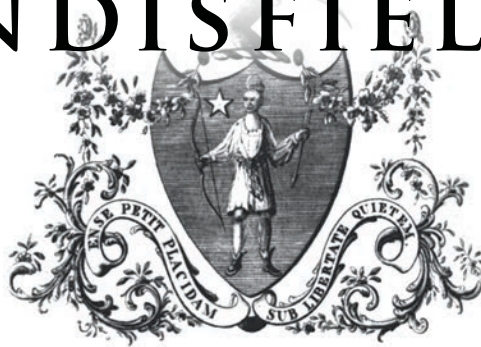


# THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

Tribunus



Plebis

RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume XIII, Number 7

October 2022

## New Boston Gets Its Due

### NOT JUST ANOTHER HISTORIC MASSACHUSETTS TOWN

By Hannah Van Sickle

Denizens of New Boston — and by extension all of Sandisfield — have new bragging rights after the village was approved by the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the U.S. Department of the Interior for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

“Now they don’t give these away [easily],” said Sandisfield Historical Commission Chair Ron Bernard in a nod to the ten-year process whose culmination came on Saturday, September 17 when an interpretive sign was unveiled during a dedication ceremony at Wilber Park. The sign, designed by artist and former resident Tina Sotis, was fabricated by Fossil Industries of Deer Park, New York atop a stand fashioned and donated by John Harney.”

*Cont'd on p.3*

*Right: Town resident and Historical Commission Chairman Ron Bernard, who drove the local campaign to name New Boston to the Historic Register, unveils the marker that explains the significance of the designation to the Town.*

*Top Photo: Hannah Van Sickle  
Bottom Right Photo: Richard Migot*

*Below: Town residents gathered in Wilber Park in September to witness the unveiling of a historic marker designating New Boston’s listing on the National Register of Historic Places.*

*Photo: Richard Migot*





# recreation COMMITTEE

## No Rest for the RecComm

Story and photo by Laurie Seddon

When August brought on the heat, the Recreation Committee brought on the free ice cream.

Every Saturday that month we invited all ages to join us at the Community Center on the first floor of the Sandisfield Library for free ice cream from noon to 1:00 p.m. Each Saturday brought a different crowd all varying ages and different flavors. Thank you to everyone who stopped by for a cool treat (or two). It's always fun to see all of you.

We have a lot of fun activities lined up for fall, so save the dates!

**Sample Sandisfield, Saturday, October 8, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.** Visit local farms, farmstands, crafters, goods makers, artists and studios. Buy fresh produce, eggs, maple syrup, fruit, crafts, art, and more! Do this all while driving through the bucolic autumnal scenery of our quaint Berkshire community. Maps of places to buy goods are available at several locations: Post Office, Transfer Station, Farmington River General Store, A&M Auto, and posted on our Facebook Page, Connect Sandisfield, and the Town Website. (or scan QR code bottom right for a map.)



Sharing free ice cream on an August Saturday. At the table, Ava, Hadley, and Ella Smigel, Grayson and McKinley Holland (Leavenworths), with Grandmother Lorie Smigel.

The next day, **Sunday, October 9, is Oktoberfest at Looking Glass Gardens, from 11:00-3:00.** Free admission. Sure to be a fun day with hayrides, \$2 pony rides, pumpkin painting, dessert baking contest, German and Big Band music performed by local musicians. Bubs Beans & The Dogs will be there selling bratwurst and German potato salad in addition to their usual menu items. Refreshments and seasonal beer available for purchase.

The Recreation Committee will have two events at Oktoberfest. One is the **Dessert Baking Contest**, time TBD. One MAJOR RULE, you must use local Sandisfield ingredients (and provide a receipt or a farmstand selfie for the ingredients that were bought in Sandisfield). You can gather local ingredients such as eggs, fruits, maple syrup, veggies the day before during **The Sample Sandisfield Tour** (see QR code below to scan for a map). We have lined up surprise judges. After judging, the desserts may be shared with everyone.

At Oktoberfest, the Recreation Committee will also be hosting **Pumpkin Decorating**. Join us for glow-in-the-dark pumpkin decorating. Pumpkins, stickers, and paints all provided. We send a special thank you to Wards Nursery and Taft Farms for donating pumpkins for the event.

Halloween is near! It's time to register for the townwide trick-or-treat map. Contact us by October 23rd to join in on the fun. 🍷



Scan me!

Scan QR Code for sample Sandisfield map

For more information or to RSVP re Halloween, please contact us at sandisfieldevents@recreationcommittee.info or call us at 413-269-7357.

## Looking Glass Gardens and the Sandisfield Recreation Committee

present

food & beer for purchase!



pony rides!

baking contest!

# OKTO BER FEST

hayrides!

live music!



pumpkin painting!

Sun. Oct. 9th, 11am - 3pm

19 Dodd Rd, Sandisfield

**Bub's Beans & the Dogs,**  
Oktoberfest beer,  
& refreshments  
for purchase

**German and Big Band**  
music provided  
by local musicians

**\*\*FREE ADMISSION**

# New Boston Gets Its Due

Cont'd from p.1

"[This occasion] is the result of 260 years, [and] nine or ten generations of people that lived in this village," said Bernard, speaking to a group of about 30 town leaders and spectators who gathered at the compact Wilber Park in downtown New Boston to witness the event.

Bernard said that along with the founding Brown family was a burgeoning group of merchants, mill workers, doctors, artisans, and shop owners — all farmers — who had "great cohesive feelings for their village" as evidenced by the marker's inscription:

*The town of Sandisfield, incorporated in 1762, was settled at this place by the Daniel Brown family of Boston in 1750-1751. The district retains considerable architectural fabric from the mid-18th century to about 1880 including Federal, Greek Revival and Gothic Revival styles. As farms were established throughout Sandisfield, New Boston in the 19th century became the town's commercial center, at one point boasting three general stores, several mills and a variety of shops. For a time in the 1930s, patrons included crowds of ski-jumping enthusiasts who flocked here to see professional jumpers perform at Suicide Hill in the heart of the district. The New Boston Inn's restaurant and tavern offers such hospitality to this day.*

"I'm gratified that we had a good crowd of people representing all parts of the town — on a beautiful day when they could be doing something else, like gardening — who understand something like this is important and [want] to be part of it," said Bernard who remains hopeful that another opportunity for Historic District nomination exists in town.

Preservationist and architectural historian Bonnie Parsons was instrumental in identifying, researching and describing both the architecture (spanning pre-Revolutionary, Federal, Greek and Gothic Revival styles) as well as the landscape (including parks, bridges and stone walls) of the district — culling what she calls evidence of how, "people [at that time] contributed to this community."

She also took a moment to point out that the designation of an honorary Historic District comes without strings attached. "There are no restrictions," Parsons underscored, dismissing common misperceptions about not being able to paint buildings certain colors or tear them down.

"This is a celebration," she said, "an honor to be listed in the National Register."


Sandisfield Town Manager Jonathan Sylbert addressed the crowd, calling the dedication not only a day to celebrate but also to consider planning for the future.

"Historically, what you're looking at are efforts made over 200 years to keep this town alive, to keep it relevant... and to struggle with the changes that have occurred over the last two centuries and will occur again in the next two centuries," he said pointing to the Town's biggest assets: "good people" and "committed local government."

State Representative William "Smitty" Pignatelli — a decades long friend of Sandisfield — took to the podium to sing Sandisfield's praises.

## NEW BOSTON VILLAGE

### NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT



**THE TOWN OF SANDISFIELD**, incorporated in 1762, was settled at this place by the Daniel Brown family of Boston in 1750-51. Brown was "an educated man" and an officer in the colonial militia. The first building, Thomas Brown's log cabin, probably stood to your right on the opposite side of the road before the bridge. The family of five sons and three daughters operated the five mills here on the Farmington River, an inn and a tavern/store which evolved as the New Boston store. They established

government based on English tradition. Initially families were recruited from eastern Massachusetts, including the Smiths, followed later by settlers mainly from Connecticut.

The district retains considerable architectural fabric from the mid-18th century to about 1880 including Federal, Greek Revival and Gothic Revival styles. Of the 75 buildings or structures in the district, 49 are contributing elements to the character of the district which retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

As farms were established throughout Sandisfield, New Boston in the 19th century became the town's commercial center, at one point boasting three general stores, several mills and a variety of shops. In the early 20th century with the advent of automobiles and improved roads, New Boston was a gateway destination. Many city dwellers found scenery and lodging and hospitality at the Inn as well as private homes.

The 1840s was Sandisfield's golden age of growth including for population. After the Civil War, a much-

heralded railway was supposed to connect New Boston to the regional system but the venture collapsed in the great depression of the 1970s. Many residents invested in the scheme and lost everything. Farms were abandoned, the population decreased significantly and has not recovered. However, the vital Hull tannery (1840) and nearby saw mills and the "Old Red Shop" factory continued to employees of New Boston residents into the 20th century.

After Prohibition and WWII New Boston was the location of a number of eateries enjoyed by local patrons and travelers along busy Route 8. For a time in the 1930s, patrons included crowds of ski-jumping enthusiasts who flocked here to see professional jumpers perform

at Suicide Hill in the heart of the district. The New Boston Inn's restaurant and tavern offers such hospitality to this day.

The New Boston Village Historic District was approved by the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the U.S. Department of the Interior for listing on the National Register, April 2022.

The New Boston Village takes from the Inn includes the New Boston store, the bridge and Emory Road (center left). The village center has changed very little since the mid-19th century.

The New Boston Inn's restaurant and tavern offers such hospitality to this day.

The New Boston Village Historic District was approved by the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the U.S. Department of the Interior for listing on the National Register, April 2022.

The New Boston Village takes from the Inn includes the New Boston store, the bridge and Emory Road (center left). The village center has changed very little since the mid-19th century.

SANDISFIELD HISTORICAL COMMISSION, SEPTEMBER 2022

The explanatory plaque, designed by Tina Sotis, will grace Wilber Park very near the exact spot where New Boston was founded.



At the ceremony from left, Town Manager Jon Sylbert, Select Board Chairman Steve Seddon, Selectman Alex Bowman, State Representative Smitty Pignatelli.

Photo: Richard Migot

"Every building is a living, breathing history book ... and that's really quite special. This is a beautiful town; it's a well-run town; it's a destination town — and the highway is not bad getting here anymore," he joked before invoking a former long-time member of the Sandisfield Select Board, Dave Kelly, and Pignatelli's own late father, two old friends who not only believed in their respective communities but fought each and every day to make them special.

"I'm telling you the sun is out today because Dave Kelly and John Pignatelli are looking down saying, 'Good for you Sandisfield. Congratulations on a job well done, and good luck going forward in the future.'"

National Historic Districts serve to promote the benefits of preservation and are prestigious. "Of the 75 buildings or structures in the New Boston Village, 49 are contributing elements to the character of the district," said Bernard whose explanation provides more than ample fodder for any resident on the receiving end of the age-old rhetorical question — that's graced everything from t-shirts to bumper stickers throughout the years — "Where the H\_\_L is Sandisfield?"

Why, it's on the National Register of Historic Places, that's where. Bah-dum-tss. 🇺🇸





Photo: Brad Curry

## Our New Roads Under Assault

By Ron Bernard

Sandisfield Highway Superintendent Brad Curry asked The Times to alert residents about irresponsible, dangerous, and destructive activities taking place on town roads.

“Someone is ‘burning out’ or spinning tires on our new roads,” Brad said. He submitted photographic evidence of a recent incident at Sandy Brook Tpke. and Norfolk Road. “They create divots, water seeps in, and that’s one way pot holes start,” he said.

He added, “Destruction of town roads affects public safety. And it costs the taxpayer.”

Another example occurred last month on Cold Spring Road when an operator repeatedly slammed brakes, making long deep skids in the pavement and creating ruts on the opposite side of the road at several points. “It is lucky no was approaching from the other way,” said a worried resident who reported the damage. “Someone could have been killed.”

And Brad reported other harmful behaviors on the rise. “My crews have had to clean up trash and garbage dumped on Hammertown Road, along with paint cans. Guard rails were damaged in two places on Rt.183 and another point on New Hartford Road by hit-and-run drivers.”

Whether these are the actions of thrill-seekers or drunk or irresponsible drivers, the behaviors are unacceptable. “If you see something, say something,” Brad said. He urged residents to notify local police or the DPW. 🗉

## Former Head of School Receives Retirement Package

By Heather Bellow

*Adapted from a report published in The Berkshire Eagle, September 27, 2022. Used with permission.*

The former head of the Farmington River Regional School District will receive his full annual salary plus a payout for benefits as part of a separation agreement. The former Superintendent/Principal Thomas Nadolny will receive his full salary through June 30, 2023, when his working contract would have ended. The amount, plus unused sick leave and vacation time, amounts to nearly \$150,000.

The agreement between the district’s School Committee and Nadolny, who resigned effective Sept. 1, also indemnifies Nadolny from any legal action related to his “official duties” while employed there, including from civil rights claims filed against him. He cannot sue the district, nor can he or the district through a public records request.

Nadolny’s departure followed unrest in the school community caused by the release of a teachers’ union survey over the summer that accused Nadolny and other administrator’s of driving a gossip-filled, hostile workplace. Nadolny has denied the allegations and said the survey was flawed.

Both the School Committee and Nadolny agreed it was in their respective best interests to settle any and all disputes between them and terminate their employment relationship. This would avoid expenses, including legal costs, as well as a disruption to the district, according to the contract.

The district quickly hired longtime educator Robert Putnam as interim principal and superintendent. Putnam, who began working at the district after the agreement had been drafted, said that he believes the school is off to a good start.

“Students and teachers are settling into productive patterns of teaching and learning,” he said. “I would say that the school community is focused on the future and working together to make this a great school year.” 🗉



# Community Outreach Meeting

## INFORMATION GATHERING, NOT SOLUTIONS GIVEN

By Bill Price

The idea that nearly 60 Sandisfielders would spend a splendid Friday evening in a crowded room talking about their Town seems preposterous. Until it happens.

The joint Planning Board and Board of Selectmen meeting held Friday, September 23, drew nearly 50 people to Old Town Hall and another 18 tuned in on Zoom.

The topic was “What do you want us to focus our energies on?”

Long-time residents, part-timers, people who make a living from the soil here, people who haven't worked since retirement, and many others spoke up, gave opinions on subjects clearly announced by the Chair.

Barbara Cormier of the Planning Board, who chaired the meeting, made an early request for civility, that people address comments to the panel without talking person-to-person, and that they be respectful of other's opinion. For the most part her appeal worked. She said later that she was “pleased by the turnout, by everyone's suggestions, by the way people talked to the panels. There was even a lot of humor, with people laughing. Everyone helped to keep things light.”



*At a Community Outreach meeting held September 23 at the Old Town Hall, about 40 residents attended in person with nearly 20 joining on Zoom. Jointly sponsored by the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Committee, the meeting, chaired by Barbara Cormier, discussed issues and concerns that have been raised the last few months.*

Barbara added that she was also pleased that people thought the format worked and that it would be helpful to hold a follow-up meeting. A second Community Outreach has been scheduled for Friday, October 21 also at Old Town Hall and available on Zoom.

At this information-gathering meeting, Town residents, in general, did not favor creating a restrictive bylaw on the use of fossil fuels to heat new homes or another to ensure dark skies at night. Several attendees, however, spoke in favor of solar panels while others encouraged common sense for night lighting. Most residents, it appeared, like to see the stars, but don't want the Planning and Select Boards spending months coming up with rules that would very likely be voted down at Town Meeting.

There was consensus that Town boards examine short-term rentals and come up with uncomplicated but comprehensive rules. Members of the Planning Board are already comparing regulations on short-term rentals from other towns and thinking about what might work in Sandisfield.

## Next Community Outreach Meeting

To discuss village and business zoning, camping, and what type of developments does the Town want.

Friday, October 21,  
7:00 p.m.  
Old Town Hall

The fact that two recently enacted Sandisfield bylaws regarding cannabis regulations and solar fields took months of preparation, redrafting, compromise, and hard work to complete suggests that drafting short-term rental bylaws may be just as difficult.

The audience did want the Planning and Select Boards to review the Town's Strategic Planning reports from 2016, which was the result of the work of a couple dozen residents in cooperation with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. To see the published report, visit Town Hall where a copy is available. Or readers could review Sandisfield Times back issues. See Sandisfieldtimes.org., Library and then Archives, for Times issues from 2015 to 2016, particularly July, October, and November 2016.

Despite the best of planning for the meeting, the Zoom audience was at a disadvantage because the audio was often intermittent and difficult to follow. Although the Town has installed new computers and a system to allow all boards to use Zoom, the system is still lacking. The cause of that, apparently, is the fact that Spectrum has not yet wired town buildings onto its broadband system that is available to homeowners. The Town is operating on MBI equipment installed about 2010. Town Manager Jon Sylbert has several times requested Spectrum get its act together, as yet to no avail. 🙄



# Murphy's Law Prevails Again

## RIGHT HERE IN SANDISFIELD

By Larry Dwyer

When Sandisfield received a \$128,805 Green Communities grant from the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) in 2018, the Town agreed to reduce its energy consumption by 20 percent over five years.

We used the grant to insulate Town Hall, install solar panels on Town Hall and the DPW Garage and use LED lighting in the Town Hall and Library.

The plan was to reduce our energy consumption, save money, and reduce our carbon footprint.

Then we ran up against Murphy's Law. Murphy's Law requires that "anything that can go wrong will."

### MURPHY'S LAW AT WORK

In June, I received an email from our coordinator, Mark Rabinsky, who is our contact for the DOER from where we received our grant. He informed us that the Transfer Station was using as much electricity as the Town Hall. I opened the Mass Energy Insight (MEI) program that we use to file our annual report and looked at the Transfer Station electric usage. In FY2019, our annual electric cost was \$865; in FY2022 it increased to \$2,447. During the same period, the kilo Watt hours (kWh) rose from 1,154 kWh to 11,556 kWh.

Coincidentally, the new Cardboard Compactor was installed at the Transfer Station about the same time that the electric cost soared.

Assuming the compactor was the problem, I spoke with Ken Seavros at the International Container Co. Ken is the engineer who designs the compactors and he agreed to investigate. Alex Psillas, our Transfer Station attendant, met with Ken and took notes. He reported that Ken found that the problem was most likely not the compactor, but the hydraulic oil heater. Normally the heater should operate only during the winter, but apparently the heater appeared to be running all year round. The heater was disconnected to evaluate its electric usage and we're hoping this will solve the problem until a permanent correction is made.

Alex also mentioned that upgrades could be incorporated into the compactors and when I spoke with Highway Superintendent Brad Curry he said if we do upgrades, we can increase our cardboard loads from 7 to 9 tons.

### MURPHY RETURNS

While investigating the Transfer Station issue, I was also evaluating the solar panels output and billing.

The solar panels have been in operation for more than three months so I figured the energy credits should start showing up on the billing statements. I called Eversource

customer service for the latest statements and when I looked at the DPW Garage bill, it showed minus \$75. I said to myself, "That looks good," but when I looked at the Town Hall bill, it was for \$330.

I asked customer service why there was such a difference, and she said that the Town Hall was charged a different rate. When I asked why, she couldn't give me an answer.

After gathering all the statements going back to January, I found out that the rate had changed for the Town Hall in July. The rates schedule policy is so complicated that even Eversource customer service has trouble explaining it. The biggest change was that the Customer Charge was changed from \$30/month to \$353/month. This negated any savings we would get from the solar panels. When I asked customer service why the rate was changed, they again couldn't answer.

I was so angry.

The Green Committee spent four years of hard work to get to this point and now it seemed to be a complete waste of time. I called Mark Rabinsky from the DOER and told him you have to help us on this. Mark called his technical contact at Eversource who referred him to an account executive at Eversource and in a matter of hours, the rate was changed back.

I wondered, if they can change it back to the old rate so fast, why did they change it in the first place? Was it because they could and usually no one is watching?

This year I accidentally became the Finance Committee Chairman.

This event reinforces my corollary to Murphy, that "If you do good work, you get rewarded with more work."

I participated on the budget process last year and when compared to the entire budget these electric bills might seem like peanuts, but if it was your electric bill at home, you wouldn't stand for it.

When I work on these projects, I act as if the invoices were coming into my own home. I treat the budget the same way. In the end, these small amounts can add up to where they really impact the budget.

### OUT ON A LIMB: OP-ED:

Subjects should be of interest 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. Opinions in Out on a Limb articles are those of the authors and do not represent The Sandisfield Times.

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# Yanner Park: Better and Better

By Adam Brown,  
Yanner Park Committee

The first leg of the hiking trail at Yanner Park is mostly complete. This is the path that by the end of next summer will link Town Hill Road with Hammertown Road where it can hook into the Hammertown Trail and the Clam River Loop.

The Greenagers did a fantastic job this summer. The crew of local youth and leaders worked from July 5 to mid-August crafting a treadway that starts at the parking area off Town Hill Road, heads east past the kiosk and across a short stretch of meadow, follows a logging trail, and then enters the woods after crossing a unique stone culvert from the 1800's that bridges a small stream.

The trail then encircles a ridge along the high point of the property and rejoins the main trail, forming a "lollipop" loop of about one mile. Building a trail like this is hard, physical labor that involves moving soil and rocks, crushing rocks for "fill," and cutting vegetation. Both strength and finesse are required. The finished product belies the amount of sweat involved.

Visitors are welcome to use the trail as it is now, although the paint markings, known as blazes, will not be installed until mid-late October. Just pay attention, use common sense, and look for occasional pink flags that show where the trail is – or will be. The markings are fairly obvious.

Also keep in mind that the terrain goes up and down and footing is generally uneven.

The Greenagers crew will return this month to button up the work as well as paint the blazes to make the trail more official. We look forward to having the crew back next summer to complete the trail down to Hammertown Road. Funding for the trail construction is provided for entirely by a generous grant from MA DCR through their Recreational Trails Grant Program.

The Yanner Park Committee also thanks Matt McCuin of McCuin Landscaping for the excellent mowing/trimming job done at the park last month. The place really looks nice and we have received several positive comments on it. 🍷



Amos Brown, 5, and his brother, Oscar, 1, on their first hike of the new Yanner Park trail.  
Photo: Adam Brown



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# Board of Health Report

## Harm Reduction Unit to Make Regular Visits

By Steve Rubenstein, Member, BOH

The Berkshire Harm Reduction Unit paid its first visit to Sandisfield on a Monday in early September at the Town Hall parking lot. Its goal, said a spokesman for the Berkshire Medical Center program, "is to keep people safe and alive."

Sponsored by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the unit, which began visiting sites in the county in April, will provide monthly visits to Sandisfield with a variety of preventive medical services, including vaccination for Flu and Covid 19 (bivalent vaccine).




The schedule for Sandisfield is the third Monday of every month. The van will set up again in the Town Hall parking lot, in the COA area, on Monday, October 17, from 10:00 a.m. until noon.

The Sandisfield Board of Health encourages residents to stop by the van, take a tour and ask questions about the services they provide. Our town is fortunate to have this service since we are quite a distance from any medical location.


When we visited the van in September, we found an excellent facility that was comparable to brick-and-mortar health care centers. The staff of two were welcoming, friendly, and enthusiastic. The orderliness and cleanliness were impressive, with a place for everything and everything in its place. We were comfortably seated in a private area where interviews and data collection could be done before entering the treatment/blood collection room. The van is equipped for Telehealth capability.

### A FEW OF THE SERVICES PROVIDED ARE:

- Overdose education and nalaxone (Narcan®) distribution, recognition of overdose and proper use of nalaxone to reverse the overdose. Distribution of nalaxone is provided.
- Testing for sexually transmitted diseases (STD), HIV and Hepatitis C for those over the age of 13. Pre- and Post-test counseling as well as referral to support services if necessary.
- A syringe service program offers harm reduction, infection prevention, and safe injection education. Clean equipment and syringes are provided to those with substance abuse disorder to minimize the spread of infection.
- Hepatitis C treatment and management via telehealth over a 8-12 week period.
- HIV health and prevention including pre-exposure prophylaxis.

There is a sharps disposal program for syringes, needles, lancets, etc. Sharps May be brought to the unit in puncture proof containers for disposal at no charge. 

## Flu Clinic

A Flu Clinic will be held at the Old Town Hall on Wednesday, November 2 from 10:00 a.m. until noon. Sponsored by the Sandisfield Council on Aging. 




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# The Minutes: A Scathing New Comedy

## LET'S BRING IT HERE

By Simon Winchester

Last April, a TV actor whom I knew slightly, Richard Kind, came up to my wife and me at a dinner in New York and made us swear a solemn oath. Swear to me, he said, that you will sometime very soon go and see *The Minutes*. A play you'll never forget.



*The Minutes, a new comedy about small-town politics and real-world power, was written by Tracy Letts, the author of August: Osage County. Its close look at some of our cherished narratives can seem uncomfortably close to home.*

Photo: 2022 Broadway Production (Jeremy Daniel)

Well, we did, at the off-Broadway theater, Studio 54. And not only have we not forgotten it, as Mr. Kind had promised, but as we walked home that evening we agreed: this is a play so relevant to Sandisfield, and more generally the entire Berkshires, that it absolutely must be performed here.

So, for the benefit of our very own company of Sandisfield Players – and in time, for the benefit and entertainment of all who like live theatre in our community: enough of Thornton Wilder's admirable old chestnut *Our Town*. Instead, bring us up to date with a horror-comedy that is clever, incisive, and instantly recognizable to anyone who has ever gone to Town Hall in these parts.

Stage *The Minutes* to villagers who have ample reason to wonder what on earth really goes on behind the scenes of all those interminable meetings of what we like to call our local government.

For that is what the play is all about.

Outwardly, dull as ditchwater. A Town Council meeting in a small midwestern town named Big Cherry. An absent council member. A misplaced set of minutes. And then a slowly unfolding horror show of laughable ineptitude, petty corruption, and a town origin-myth that turns out to be built on wantonly distorted history.

Naturally, no such shortcomings have ever attended the workings of Sandisfield, nor of neighboring Otis or Becket or Monterey – well, maybe Monterey, in recent times, has been a

less-than-shining example of municipal rectitude. Generally, the parallels are inexact.

But still. Over the years we in the Berkshires have endured our share of minor miscreancy.

Remember the Case of the Stolen Laptop? Or the guy who sold town asphalt for a driveway project, billed the town for it, and pocketed the profit? Selectmen who would never attend their meetings? Lawsuits upon lawsuits. Trucks condemned, replaced by the taxpayers and then sold privately in miraculously good shape? A fellow who quit us here because he couldn't deal with the commute, tossed his keys on the desk with a scribbled list of computer passwords, and drove off in a huff? Not much worse than any average small town, perhaps, the stuff of amiable gossip and newspaper chatter.

In Big Cherry—a “wet sock of a town” someone on stage calls it—it seemed much that way too, early on in the performance. Tracy Letts, who both wrote the play and acts as one of the councilmen, brings out the more sinister aspects of the story slowly and deftly.

There's a fuss over confiscated bicycles being resold – and who gets the money? Is an accessibility ramp for a local monument solely for the afflicted offspring of one of the nine councilors? Is the Big Cherry festival's planned Lincoln Smackdown cage-fight necessary or tasteful – the sole Black councilor makes his case.

But then – did I say nine councilors? Only eight are present. The supposedly voluble and volatile Mr. Carp is missing. No-one knows why. The minutes that might tell us have been lost, redacted, altered, destroyed – but why, and what chicanery is afoot?

Mr. Peel, the Council's newest member, a dentist who naively assumes all is well in this Brigadoon of a community, starts to try to unravel all this – and his tenacity eventually splits Big Cherry's entire mannered tidiness asunder, in dramatic and shocking fashion.

To tell you why, and how, and what then transpires would be to spoil the fun of this rather extraordinary play. And so I urge you to go down to NYC to see it and then consider, as my wife and I did, why Sandisfield should get hold of the rights and stage it here. To amuse and entertain us, of course, and to further test the skills and talents of our well-seasoned group of excellent actors who live in our woods.

But also to remind us of the value of truth and probity and transparency in government. A lesson eager to be learned by us all, in front of the footlights, up on the rickety stage. 🍷



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

## The Pine Crest Inn of New Boston

By Ron Bernard

This is the story of a once popular restaurant and dance hall in New Boston. The Pine Crest Inn – which grew out of the Silverbrook Café – was for many years a favorite haunt for so many.

### IN THE BEGINNING ...

Sebastian Orso's family arrived at Springfield from Italy when he was a boy of 15 in 1898. Known as both James and Jim, as a young man Sebastian lived and worked as a barber and had a candy store in the vibrant Italian community along Main Street. In 1909, he married a local girl, Louise Traggio, 25, a native of Fall River. Their only child, Newton Alfred Orso, was born the next year. Although he registered for the WWI draft, Orso apparently was not called to duty.

The Orsos probably met fellow Italian immigrants, Rose and Antoino (Anthony) Fiori in 1933 about the time they learned of Rose's plans for a dance hall in the former creamery/mill building in West New Boston. The Fioris had been married in 1914 in Otis and resided there at least until 1930 before moving to Pittsfield. Anthony had worked for Harvard Law School Professor Edward Thurston at his West New Boston estate on South Beech Plain Road, a property within eyeshot of the dormant creamery building.

In October 1933, Rose Calabrese Firoi closed the sale on the c.1850 building. The Orsos agreed to work for her. The era of Prohibition was near its inglorious end. In December, the 21st Amendment to the U.S. Constitution repealed 13 years of alcohol prohibition. Americans were eager for return to a "normal" social life and Rose's Silverbrook Café which soon opened was an immediate hit.

The Orsos continued to reside in Springfield. Jim applied for the Silverbrook's liquor license which was granted by the Town on December 18, 1934. He and Louise organized the dance events at the Silverbrook and gained practical experience.

### THE PINE CREST INN

By 1935, the Orsos were busy building their own dance hall a short way south on South Main Street in New Boston Village. Called the Pine Crest Inn, the building included a restaurant and bar, a dance floor, a few guest rooms and the family living quarters.

The Pine Crest opened concurrently with the Suicide Hill ski jump perpendicular from them on South Main (now Rt. 8), just in time to accommodate professional jumpers and to serve large enthusiastic crowds of spectators. The hill closed in 1938 after only three seasons but by then the Pine Crest had secured a following and public awareness of New Boston was much increased, especially down in Connecticut.



*Ad appeared in The Berkshire Eagle, November 7, 1958*

The family moved to New Boston where Jim and his son Newton managed the property while Louise cooked and probably oversaw daily operations. In her December 1944 liquor license renewal application, she described the business as "a premises (consisting) of 3 rooms on the ground floor, a ballroom, kitchen and barroom."

Besides entertainment, for years many local groups and organizations held functions there. In the 1940s, the building was remodeled as a motel/restaurant, but reportedly retained a dance floor. Popular among locals, the Pine Crest also attracted groups like hunters from Springfield and Connecticut. The restaurant gladly welcomed Connecticut patrons on Sundays especially because of the 17th century 'blue law' there which prohibited Sunday alcohol sales.

Newton married Virginia Filipowicz of Hartford in 1941. The couple had two children, Patricia and Jeffrey, born in Springfield, 1942 and 1944, respectively. The children attended the New Boston grammar school a few doors south of their home. While he was assuming a larger role in managing the Pine Crest, Newton served as Selectman (1950-52) and won a seat on the school committee.

Following Jim Orso's death in September 1953, the Orsos carried on for a few more years before

moving to Hartford, Virginia's hometown where Newton became an investment broker with the Hartford firm, Hornblower, Weeks-Hemple & Noyes. His mother, Louise died in 1963 in Hartford. Newton died in 1976 and Virginia Orso in 2011, age 91. Their son, Jeffrey married and resides in Kentucky while Patricia, now widowed and remarried, still lives in the Hartford area.

### ENTER NEW PROPRIETORS FOR THE PINE CREST

Ludwick Tluszc, Sr., was born in Gorsko, Poland in 1887. He arrived at Ellis Island in the spring of 1904 and went to Chicopee, Mass. In 1915, he married another Polish immigrant from Chicopee, Julia Tenczar. The couple had four children between 1916 and 1929, Edward, Wanda, Caroline and his namesake, Ludwick Stanislaus ("Stanley"). All of the children's given names were later anglicized. Mr. Tluszc was a "painter-designer" by occupation. He died in 1966 in Springfield.

In November 1958, the Pine Crest Inn was purchased by Roman Teczar, brother of Julia, and his nephew, Stanley and his older sister, Wanda Tluszc. The extended family moved to New Boston and they wisely ran the business much the way it had been under the Orsos.



*Tiny Tluszc 1999*

Nephew Stanley (better known to everyone as "Tiny" because of his large size) was appointed Sandisfield Fire Chief on April 29, 1963, succeeding Steve Campetti, Sandisfield's first fire chief who retired.

Tiny was very active in the community in the 42 years he lived here. Besides heading the fire department, he served as Selectman (1980-88),





*Pine Crest Inn & Motel, 1961*

civil defense director, forest warden, and assessor. Tiny retired from the fire department on June 4, 1979 and was honored at a memorable dinner at the Hamilton Pavilion (American Legion) attended by an estimated 200 well-wishers. Numerous dignitaries spoke of his character and contributions to the community.

In 1983, Tiny closed the Pine Crest in favor of his passion, gardening, and a new venture, "Tiny's Greenhouse." Four years later, a fire badly damaged the former Pine Crest building. (See article below about the fire.)



*Tiny's stand and sign, 1961.*

Tiny continued to sell home-grown produce from a stand out front and from his distinctive van. A life-long bachelor, Tiny died in Sandisfield in July 2000, age 71. He rests in the family plot in Fairview Cemetery, Chicopee.

The charming little stand is gone but Tiny's sign remains as a reminder of a special place and a respected citizen.

The Pine Crest Inn is fondly remembered by residents of a certain age as a social center and a great place to have a hearty meal, libations, and gatherings. The surviving building, now a humble equipment storage facility, is shrouded from the road by a wall of trees standing behind an open turn-off on the west side of Rt. 8, not far north of New Boston Crane Service & Sleds. A newcomer could not imagine what it had once been.



**Former inn heavily damaged by Saturday fire**

SANDISFIELD — A Saturday afternoon blaze destroyed most of the interior of the former Pine Crest Inn off Route 8. Police Chief Michael D. Morrison reported. Morrison said the fire was reported shortly after 4 by a neighbor, Charles Pease, who saw flames coming out of the building's windows. Morrison said fire officials believe the fire started in a wall behind a wood stove. Nobody was in the house at the time of the fire. The former inn was owned and occupied by Selectman Ludwik Tluszczy. The building was engulfed in flames by the time firemen arrived at the scene, Morrison said. It took about five hours to put the fire out, he said. Responding to the fire were volunteer firemen from Sandisfield, Otis, Tolland, Monterey and Colebrook, Conn., he said. No injuries were reported. More than half of the inside of the house was badly damaged by flames, he said.

Edgar K. Zukauskas  
FORMER PINE CREST INN off Route 8 in Sandisfield was badly damaged by a Saturday afternoon fire. The building belongs to Selectman Ludwik Tluszczy.

*Berkshire Eagle, February 9, 1987*

# Locals Remember the Pine Crest Inn

By Christine Nadelman

**Barbara Cormier** of South Sandisfield was a waitress at the Pine Crest during the mid-1970s. Barbara said the place was very busy, especially during hunting season. The Pine Crest benefited from Connecticut's 'blue laws' which then prohibited sale of alcohol on Sundays and some holidays. "Sometimes there were wall-to-wall crowds," she said. "Servers could barely get through." The restaurant was known for its huge portions and signature dinners, spaghetti with meatballs and pork chops. "The owners were really big people who loved food and serving it, especially "Tiny" and Roman who together could put away a dozen pork chops," she said. "They made delicious pierogis, in batches, which were shared with everyone. And they had the best pizzas. I remember their dog, 'Bosha,' a St. Bernard, who roamed all around the restaurant." Tiny was also fire chief. He encouraged Barbara and Mary Cohutt Carr to take EMT instructions in Great Barrington and they became Sandisfield's first female EMTs. "But, of course," Barbara said, "back then requirements were far different than today."

**Eric Pachulski** of Roosterville frequented the Pine Crest or as he referred to it, "the Inn." The meal portions were generous, "at least a pound of spaghetti with meatballs," he recalled. The pizzas were really good, too. He said owners Tiny, his sister Wanda and their uncle Roman, worked and lived at the property. "I remember that Enis Radigan tended bar on weekends and that they rented rooms to hunters when Cina's in Sandisfield Center was full. Tiny built a little red brick house which is still there. "It's a reminder of those good times."

As a young man, **Ralph Morrison** of New Boston worked as dishwasher, bused tables and cleaned up. He recalled that Tiny was a music teacher at the high school and worked afternoons and evenings cooking at the restaurant. He also vividly remembers the huge portions, "a whole pound of spaghetti and meatballs or sausage." Tiny was Ralph's predecessor as fire chief. "He would get calls while working the restaurant and had to drop everything and run out on the call," Ralph said. He also credits Tiny for instilling interest in him to join the fire department.

**Connie Canty** of Bosworth Road said, "The Pine Crest restaurant and bar was *the* place to go in town. I can't forget their big dog that was always there, lugging around and drooling! He was definitely part of the family *and* the dining experience," she said wryly.



# At the Primary

## FIRST TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

Story and photos: Bill Price

The election staff was ready for Sandisfield voters who cast ballots in the State Primary Election. From left, Town Clerk Doug Miner, Registrars Brenda Larson, Laura Rogers-Castro, Nina Carr, and Barbara Cormier. Police Officer Mary Bredenfoerder kept order through the day.

The electronic gadget in the second photo is a poll pad. It operates on a tablet and has the most current voter list. It will be used for all future elections and town meetings.

Town Clerk Miner said that the machine “eliminates the need for extra poll workers. It doesn’t make mistakes. It keeps a running tab and makes it impossible for folks to vote twice.”

Paper ballots and pencils are still in use, and the crank box, but for most other chores for the election, Miner said, “we’ve gone digital and we’re already seeing the results. Running the elections is easier and so far I’ve received no complaints from any election workers or voters.”

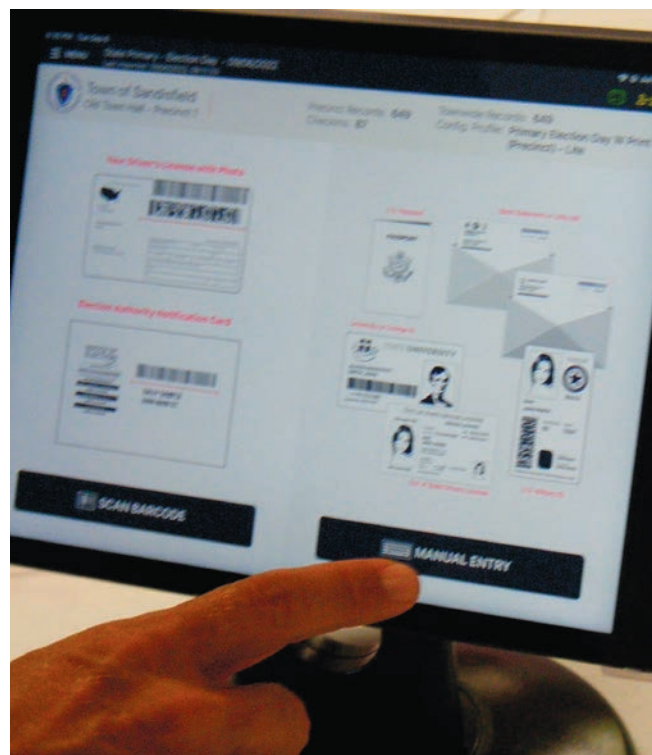


### The results of the 111 ballots (94 Democrats and 17 Republicans) were:

In the Republican race, Doughty received 10 votes for Governor and Diehl 7. All other Republican candidates were unopposed.

The Democrats ranged far and wide:

- Governor . . . . . Change-Diaz 18, Healy 72
- Lt. Governor . . . . . Driscoll 28, Gouivela 15, Lesser 40
- State Attorney General . . . . . Campbell 49, Riordan, 21, Palfrey, 16
- Secretary of State. . . . . Galvin, 64, Sullivan, 24
- Treasurer . . . . . Goldberg, 80
- Auditor . . . . . Dempsey, 39, Dizoglio, 43
- Rep. in Congress. . . . . Neal, 82
- Counselor . . . . . Allyn. 12 Fenton, 23, Jacobs, 38, Morneau, 6
- Senator in General Court . . . . . Mark, 78, Templeton III, 8
- Rep. in General Court . . . . . Pignatelli, 84
- District Attorney . . . . . Harrington, 55, Shugrue, 38
- Sheriff . . . . . Bowler, 63, Barbalunga, 28



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# A Times Memory

Val Coleman contributed poems and a lot more to The Times from our beginning in 2010 until his death in 2020. When he died, The Times and all of Sandisfield lost not only our poet laureate but a good and loyal friend. We happily reprint this poem that Val wrote for The Times in 2019, dedicated to his friend Bill Cohn.

## WORDS

By Val Coleman

Fourteen years ago  
 Bill Cohn and Socrates  
 Told me to spin some words  
 With them on weekend afternoons  
 At the Arts Center.

It's been a gas!  
 World War II, Poetry,  
 Democracy, Dissent,  
 Free Speech, Socialism,  
 The Elections.  
 Even Norman Rockwell  
 Got a taste.

One of us talked about Rebels  
 While the other sweet-talked  
 Abraham Lincoln.

We talked Pacifism and Why We Fight.  
 One talked about War and Music  
 And the other about War and Poetry.

And we both talked  
 From time to time  
 About Our Town,  
 This little beautiful place  
 Where words still matter.



# October 1-2 Events

Several items mentioned in our October issue take place October 1 and 2, shortly after distribution of this issue of The Times.

## OCTOBER 1

- **Cannabis Explained**, Arts Center, 3-4:00 p.m.
- **"Down With the King,"** Arts Center, 7:30
- **Oktoberfest**, Colebrook Town Hall, 2nd floor, 4-6:00 p.m.

## OCTOBER 2

- **Historic Walking Tour of Lee**, Town Gazebo, 10-11:30 a.m.
- **Flu Clinic**, Old Town Hall, 10 a.m-noon

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## Items Still for Sale

By Ann Wald

At a recent meeting the membership decided to concentrate on the coming Christmas Fair, December 3 at Firehouse #2 on Rt. 57. Our next meeting is Saturday, October 8 at 11:00 a.m. at the Meeting House on Sandybrook Turnpike. We hope to see you there.

We still have items for sale at the Meeting House. An antique ice box, chair, and a large wood stove.

We also have a painting for sale that has been around a long time. We now know that the lady in the painting is Gladys Mason Hartshorn. The painting is signed by "Hartshorn," dated 1918. We received the painting from Dartmouth College. It was cleaned by Dave Kimball of the Stagecoach Gallery in Granby, Conn. Thank you, Dave, for your contribution.

We would like to find a relative of Walter Linkovich as we have items we would like to give to them that had belonged to Walter. Please contact me, Ann Wald, at 258-4415. 

# HARVEST DINNER

SATURDAY  
OCTOBER 22

5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

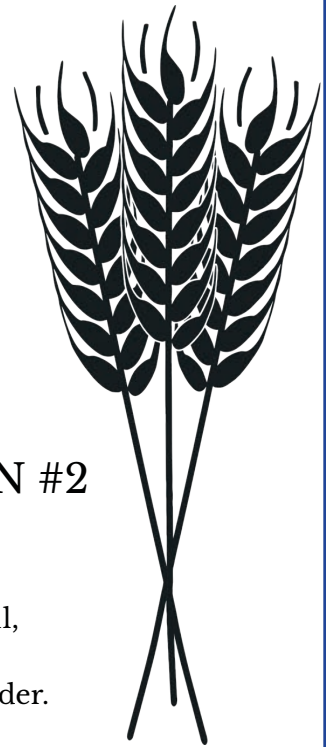
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By Terry Spohnholz, Librarian

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Saturday, 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

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## AUTUMN

by Emily Dickinson

The morns are meeker than they were,  
 The nuts are getting brown;  
 The berry's cheek is plumper,  
 The rose is out of town.  
 The maple wears a gayer scarf,  
 The field a scarlet gown.  
 Lest I should be old-fashioned,  
 I'll put a trinket on.



## NEW BOOK ARRIVALS

### Adult Fiction and Non Fiction

- *Next in Line* by Jeffrey Archer
- *Shrines of Gaiety* by Kate Atkinson
- *Treasure State* by C.J. Box
- *Captive* by Iris Johansen
- *Fairy Tale* by Stephen King
- *Blowback* by James Patterson
- *A Truth to Lie For* by Anne Perry

## Children's section

- *Hello Lighthouse* by Sophie Blackall
- *Rescue Bunnies* by Doreen Cronin and Scott Menchin
- *Kitten's First Full Moon* by Kevin Henkes

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 access to e-books 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.

## BOOKS FOR SALE

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! 📖

# All Those Chestnuts



By Bill Price

Barbara Pelissier wrote to ask how those chestnut seedlings planted last spring on the new chestnut farm on upper West Street fared during the dry, hot weather of last summer.

Doug Miner, owner of the orchard, said, "Some trees didn't make it, which is to be expected with seedling transplants." He added that he didn't know if it was at a higher rate than normal because of the weather." During the worst part of the heat spell, Doug watered the trees by hand with a hose. He says, "But not often."

"Most of them are flourishing," he said. "We will organize a fall cleanup at the end of October. Once again, we will bring people from surrounding communities together to celebrate the American chestnut."

Since the cleanup work will be less rewarding than planting the seedlings last spring and it will likely be cold out in the open field, Doug said "We will compensate by having even more delicious food and drink than last time."

He added that he is looking to hire an orchard assistant (experience unnecessary) to help on the place, ten hours a week, \$20 per hour, until winter. You can reach Doug at 413-258-4711, ext. 2. 📞

# Oktoberfest Comes to Colebrook

## NEIGHBORING TOWN HOSTS INAUGURAL EVENT

Note: **Oktoberfest in Colebrook is October 1, soon after the publication of this issue of The Times.**

The nonprofit Colebrook Associates, Inc. is holding its **first annual Oktoberfest tasting event Saturday, October 1 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.** in the second-floor meeting room of Colebrook Town Hall. Guests will be able to partake of beer, wine, and gin from local vendors. Hors d'oeuvres and light snacks will also be available. Valid photo ID required for entry. Tickets are \$30 for individuals and \$50 for couples. For tickets and more information, call 860-469-2208 or email ColebrookAssociates@gmail.com.

# Bereavement Support Group

A newly formed Living with Loss Bereavement Support Group will meet in the parlor of Lee Congregational Church for eight weeks from 4:00-5:00 p.m., beginning Wednesday, September 28. Rev. David Poole, spiritual counselor for Hospice Care of the Berkshires, will facilitate this weekly support group for anyone grieving a significant loss.

The group is open to all members of the community, regardless of faith (or lack thereof) or involvement with Hospice.

It is possible to join the group even though you don't attend the initial meeting. Call 413-243-1033 for further information.



# The Sandisfield Arts Center

## October at the Arts Center

### FILM, MUSIC, ART

By Hilde Weisert

**Note: Three events occur on October 1, very soon after this issue of The Times is printed.**

October kicks off with a talk on “Cannabis (with or without the high) Explained.” Bring your questions on how to use cannabis to alleviate chronic pain and other health issues. A Theory Wellness representative will provide expert information. Saturday, October 1, 4-5:30 p.m.



Then at 7:30 p.m., we offer a free showing of “Down with the King,” Diego Ongaro’s award-winning film starring Sandisfield’s own Bob Tarasuk. For making this possible, our thanks to Diego and especially Board member Peter Baiamonte who negotiated complex arrangements to bring the movie home to Sandisfield. October 1, 7:30 p.m.. Reservations required.

October 8 we open our doors 9 to 3 p.m., to visitors as a stop on the “Sample Sandisfield” tour of our Town’s hidden gems, From 2-4 p.m. neighbor Jaye Alison Moscariello will show and discuss her 30-minute film, “From

the Ashes.” The film documents how a small California community responded to the 2017 Redwood Complex Fire with aid to those affected and gave voice to their experiences of shock, loss, and grief through the creative arts.

Fans of pianist Fred Moyer and his MoyerCam will be happy to know he returns in person on Sunday, October 16, 4 p.m., for a program of classical music and jazz. Moyer



is equally at home with Bach, Rachmaninoff, and Schoenberg as well as Ellington and Peterson. His recitals are engaging and generally include time-honored favorites. His MoyerCam is a projection system that allows the audience to see his hands as he plays. Audience members at his 2018 Arts Center recital raved about how much this brought them into the music as he played and garnered some converts to classical music.

Multi-talented Sandisfield resident Matt Glushien appears twice this month, as artist and mushroom foraging expert. On October 15 at 4 p.m., he’ll be at the opening reception for his Gallery show (show runs through November 12), and on October 22 he’ll offer his second mushroom foraging workshop and walk (10 a.m.–1 p.m.).

Check out our website [www.sandisfieldartscenter.org](http://www.sandisfieldartscenter.org) for event details, tickets, and reservations for “Down With the King.”

Volunteers are what make all this possible. If you’d like to get involved in the Arts Center in one of our many volunteer roles, please email us at [community@sandisfieldartscenter.org](mailto:community@sandisfieldartscenter.org).



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RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

**SAT., OCTOBER 8 AT 2 PM \$10**

**FROM THE ASHES** LECTURE AND FILM BY JAYE MOSCARIELLO

**SAT., OCTOBER 15 FROM 4 - 6 PM FREE**

**GALLERY OPENING - RECEPTION WITH ARTIST MATT GLUSHIEN**  
EXHIBIT ON DISPLAY THROUGH NOVEMBER 12

**SUN., OCTOBER 16 AT 4 PM \$20**

**FRED MOYER PIANO RECITAL**

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**SAT., OCTOBER 22 AT 10 AM \$10**

**MUSHROOM FORAGING** WITH MATT GLUSHIEN

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# Comings and Goings



**TED GOLDSMITH**  
1937-2022

Theodore Goldsmith of Sandisfield and Plandome Manor, New York, died September 4 in his 84th year.

Ted and his wife Judy shared a summer home on North Beech Plain Road for many years. A local tribute to Ted will appear in next month's Sandisfield Times.

Ted and his brother Howard were the CEOs of Bromley Coats in New York, founded by their father, Irving. Following his retirement, he dedicated his life to teaching ESOL writing at the Flushing and Port Washington public libraries. He was adored by his students for his knowledge and humor.

Ted was the beloved husband of Judy, brother of Ellen Danziger and Howard Goldsmith, devoted father of Kenneth and Margie, and cherished grandfather of Max, Izzie, Finnegan, and Cassius.

Donations can be made in his name to the Port Washington Library Foundation.



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## Letters to the Editor

### MORE TO MY LIKING

I'm sure I'm not the only reader who noticed the overall uplifting tone of September's Sandisfield Times.

While I've submitted letters more than once taking The Times to task when I felt it necessary, I am not so naive that I fail to understand the importance of reporting on shortcomings and problems in our little town when they occur.

That said, Hannah Van Sickle's profile of Mary Bredenfoerder and Tom Christopher's reporting on Sandisfield being featured in "Berkshire Magazine" should give us all reasons to smile. But the two most heartwarming features were Simon's stories about the recent sale of the beloved Riiska orchard (I'm biased, as Bill is my neighbor and friend) and the extraordinary effort and hospitality that some of our town's people showed Ramya Sampath when she was in a real bind.

Simon's two stories reveal that this type of reporting is every bit as important as articles that point out our town's faults and flaws. Maybe during these ever increasingly fraught times, even more so.

Indeed, what could be more "relevant" (one of the words in the paper's motto) than not one, but two stories about town's people, some long-time residents, others newer, who pulled together to do the right thing? Perfect examples

of folks in Sandisfield whose goal was to be part of a solution rather than just complain about a problem.

Friends know I have deep Berkshire roots. Indeed, while I spent decades in the South, I was born here and many of my ancestors came here ages ago. Hulett Hill in Sheffield is named after my Grandpa Freddy's family, and my great-grandfather Joseph Tinker and his progeny had a significant presence in New Marlborough for over 120 years. From a young age, I was schooled by my elders to respect what a truly special place the Berkshires are. Like Charles Adams, Jaye Moscardiello, Calvin Rodman, and Emily Melchior, I know the importance of doing what you can for your neighbors and visitors to the area, so that this little pocket of rural western Massachusetts remains a destination known not only for its natural beauty, but also its important history and culture.

I look forward to reading more such stories in The Times.

— *Melissa Bye*  
*New Hartford Road*



## Help Wanted: Principal Assessor

*By Times Reporters*


With the retirement of Sandisfield's long-time Principal Assessor Jacqui Bitso, the Town is in need of a person to fill that important role at Town Hall.


The Principal Assessor reports to an elected three-member Board of Assessors and the Town Manager. Compensation depends on experience.

Requirements include an Associate degree or significant post-secondary training and education in real estate appraisal and public or business administration, three-to-five years of experience in a related field; or any equivalent combination of educational training, and experience. Must maintain annual Mass GIS Certification.

Principal Assessor is a 20-hour-per-week position. Candidates must be proficient in Personal Property and Real Estate Values, Assessor Administration, Point Software, and Permit Eyes. Must maintain Mass GIS Certification annually. Additional requirements include computer literacy, proficiency with Patriot Property software and Gateway, and handling of day-to-day functions.

Some job responsibilities include close work with Berkshire Registry of Deeds, cyclical property inspection, processing all recorded plot plans, adjusting the annual tax levy and setting of the tax rate, participation in the preparation of the Tax Recap Sheet (MGL c59 s21, 23), assessing motor vehicle, farm, and repair Department committals, and processing and acting on real estate and personal property abatement and exemption applications (MGL c 59 s59).

For complete job description and how to apply, visit [sandisfieldma.gov](http://sandisfieldma.gov) and go to Employment Opportunities. 



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# NOW HEAR THIS!

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

## OCTOBER EVENTS

**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 to 11:30 a.m. at the Otis Town Hall. Sponsored by South Berkshire Kids. Weather permitting. No pre-registration 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 Carr (258-3314). Free!

**Coffee Hour** on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. at the Council on Aging, Town Hall Annex. For information, contact Nina Carr (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.

**Cannabis (with or without the high) Explained** with Theory Wellness on Saturday, October 1 at 4:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center on 5 Hammertown Road. Bring your questions on how to use cannabis to alleviate chronic pain and other health issues. At this time, masks are optional but recommended. Social distancing and attendance is capped at 60 percent. This program is open to those over age 21. \$10.

**Down with the King, award-winning film by Diego Ongaro with Bob Tarasuk** on Saturday, October 1 at 7:30 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center on 5 Hammertown Road. Special Sandisfield screening. A famous rapper, disillusioned with the music industry and the pressures of being a celebrity, leaves the city and his career to find himself in a small-town farming community, Sandisfield! Visit sandisfieldartscenter.org for free tickets. At this time, masks are not required. Social distancing and attendance is capped at 60 percent. Free.

**Sample Sandisfield**, sponsored by the Recreation Committee, on Saturday, October 8 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Visit local farms, farmsteads, crafters, artists, and studios. Buy fresh produce, eggs, maple syrup, crafts, art and more while driving through the town of Sandisfield. Maps available at many locations. For information, email sandisfieldevents@ecreationcommittee.info.

**From the Ashes: Lecture and Film by Jane Alison Moscardello** on Saturday, October 8 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Neighbor Jane Alison Moscardello will show her 30-minute film and talk about how their small California town had an arts project

after wildfires swept through the area. Limited seating. \$10.

**New Boston Church Service** on Sunday, October 9 at 10:00 a.m. at the New Boston Congregational Church, Route 57. All are welcome!

**Oktoberfest at Looking Glass Gardens** on 19 Dodd Road, sponsored by Looking Glass Gardens and the Sandisfield Recreation Committee, on Sunday, October 9 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Free hayrides and \$2 pony rides. Beer for purchase and music provided. Food available. Dessert Baking Contest and Pumpkin Decorating. For information, email sandisfieldevents@ecreationcommittee.info.

**Gallery Reception and Show: Matt Glushien Paintings** on Saturday, October 15 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center on 5 Hammertown Road. Matt Glushien is a Sandisfield resident who studied painting at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design. The show runs through November 12 and can be viewed before other events or contact gallery@sandisfieldartscenter.org to arrange a viewing. Free.

**Frederick Moyer on a Sunday Afternoon Piano Recital** on Sunday, October 16 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. Moyer's recitals are engaging and include time-honored favorites. His MoyerCam is a projection system that allows the audience to see his hands as he plays. Visit sandisfieldartscenter.org for tickets. At this time, masks are not required. Social distancing and attendance is capped at 60 percent. \$20.

**Berkshire Public Health Alliance Public Health Nurse** on Wednesday, October 19 at 10:00 a.m. at the Sandisfield Council on Aging, basement level of the Town Hall. The nurse will provide an assessment, including a blood pressure check and wellness update. All are welcome. Free.

**Mushroom Foraging Workshop and Walk with Matt Glushien** on Saturday, October 22 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center on 5 Hammertown Road. Please bring knives for cutting mushrooms and baskets to use for the mushrooms collected. \$10.

**Harvest Dinner** sponsored by the New Boston Congregational Church on Saturday, October 22, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Firehouse Station #2 on Route 57. Turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, green beans, cranberry sauce, roll, and pumpkin pie. \$14/adults, \$6/children 12 and under. Take-out available.

**New Boston Church Service** on Sunday, October 30 at 10:00 a.m. at the New Boston Congregational Church, Route 57. All are welcome!

### EVENTS IN SURROUNDING TOWNS

**Playgroup** on Thursdays from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the Monterey Library. Sponsored by South Berkshire Kids. Weather permitting. No pre-registration necessary. Meet for stories and songs followed by creative crafts. For information, please call Nina Carr (258-3314). Free!

**Great Barrington Farmer's Market** on Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on 18 Church Street in Great Barrington. Featuring locally grown and produced foods, including fruits and vegetables, cheese, meats, breads, and more.

**Historic Walking Tour of Lee** on Sunday, October 2 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Join Tracie Etheredge from the Lee Historical Society for a walking tour of Lee's Main Street to learn about the important buildings, people, and historic events that occurred in town. To register, please email ethere@gmail.com. Meet at the town picnic gazebo next to the post office on Frank Consolati Way. Free.

**Riverton Fair** on Friday, October 7 (4:00 to 9:00 p.m.), Saturday, October 8 (8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.), and Sunday, October 9 (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.). Exhibits, amusement rides, competitions, and food).

**Granville Harvest Fair** on Saturday, October 8 (10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.), Sunday, October 9 (12:00 to 5:00 p.m.), and Monday, October 10 (10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.). Features crafts, food, music, books, and demonstrations.

**Berkshire Botanical Gardens Harvest Festival** on Saturday, October 8 and Sunday, October 9 from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on 5 West Stockbridge Road in Stockbridge. Live music, entertainment, food, plant sale, vendors, farmer's market, pony and hayrides, hay jump, haunted house, and more. \$12/adults, free/children under 12.

**Finding Your Way** on Saturday, October 29, at 2:00 p.m. at Peoples State Forest in Riverton, CT. Meet at the Pavilion in Matthies Grove to learn from hiker Mat Jobin how to find your way outdoors without GPS! Mat will go over compass and map skills and then lead a demonstration hike in Peoples State Forest. Free and open to all.

# THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

P.O. Box 584  
Sandisfield, MA 01255  
www.sandisfieldtimes.org



*The Times is grateful to readers who donate all through the year and at our Year-End Fundraiser.*



**T**HE 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

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Boston at A&M Auto, the Farmington River General Store, and the New Boston Inn. The Times is also available in West Otis at the laundromat, library, 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), in Colebrook at the post office and the general store, and at the New Marlborough General Store and the Mill River General Store. Back copies are available for purchase.

The Times can be mailed to your home (non-Sandisfield addresses only) by paid subscription (see form at left) or you can read it (free) online as a PDF document at [www.sandisfieldtimes.org](http://www.sandisfieldtimes.org). Classified ads, 30 words or less, are free.

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.

## **Editorial Staff**

*Editor: Bill Price*

*email: [editor@sandisfieldtimes.org](mailto:editor@sandisfieldtimes.org)*

*Advertising/Subscriptions: Ron Bernard*

*Graphic Design: Tina Sotis*

*Website: Jean Atwater-Williams*

*Now Hear This!: Laura Rogers-Castro*

*Founding Editor: Simon Winchester*

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*If internet accessible, all letters, news events and tips, ideas, obituary and family announcements, photos (600 dpi if possible) and advertisement queries to [editor@SandisfieldTimes.org](mailto:editor@SandisfieldTimes.org).*