

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

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Volume XIII, Number 8

November 2022



What Makes Sandisfield Special?

By Emily Melchior

As part of the “Sample Sandisfield Day,” organized by the Recreation Committee, we put out a comment box at Riiska Brook Orchard and asked people “What makes Sandisfield special to you?” We also posted the question on ConnectSandisfield on Facebook and received many wonderful responses. We do not have room to include all of the great comments, but here are a sample that represent the sentiment:

✿ *Sandisfield is special to me because I grew up here. Worked the land and learned many skills through my relatives. This is a place of hard work and great reward. Many could learn from this amazing community.*

Cont'd on p.4



Moonglow and Jupiter

October 10. Two days after a full moon. Moonlight still lights up a cloud-filled night sky. On the right, just seen through the clouds, Jupiter is a small dot riding through space.

Photo: Setsuko Winchester

recreation COMMITTEE

A Busy October: BIRDS OF PREY, SAMPLING SANDISFIELD & OKTOBERFEST

By Laurie Seddon

More than 100 people joined us September 25 at the American Legion Pavilion for Tom Ricardi and his Birds of Prey. Tom enchanted us with several varieties of hunting birds from the smallest owl in all New England to what he referred to as “the most beautiful bird ever,” which in Tom’s opinion is the Turkey Vulture. Tom had us out of our seats on many occasions anticipating the next feathered friend. The Recreation Committee provided seasonal treats such as apple cider donuts, apple cider, coffee, juice and apples from Riiska Brook Orchard.

The Sandisfield Recreation Committee debuted “Sample Sandisfield” on October 8. We invited everyone near and far to visit Sandisfield and explore all that our community has to offer. Our fourteen destinations included farms, farmstands, crafters, artisans, galleries, and more! We were very fortunate to have the quintessential fall day to drive around and enjoy the foliage while shopping truly locally. Maps were made available on-line via the town website, social media, digital scan, and flyer form in several locations. The RecCommittee received lots of positive feedback about this event and we look forward to doing it again next year.

See page 1 for Emily Melchoir’s “What’s Special about Sandisfield?” survey, which was Emily’s contribution to “Sample Sandisfield.”

Oktoberfest at Looking Glass Gardens was a huge hit with over 150 attendees. Held on a Sunday in early October, once again the weather was perfect. A nine-piece Oompah Band played, hayrides and ponies were ridden, firepit enjoyed, along with seasonal beer and refreshments. Bubs Beans & The Dogs had their regular menu items along with bratwurst and German potato salad and sold out of everything! The RecCommittee hosted pumpkin painting. We would like to thank Ward’s Nursery and Taft Farms for donating a combined 70 pumpkins for this event. The left-over pumpkins and decorations were donated to the Veterans Rehab Center for the residents to enjoy.

Also at Oktoberfest we held our first Local Ingredient Baking Contest. The goal was to encourage bakers to use locally grown ingredients whenever possible. Guest judges were Jonathan Sylbert, Alex Bowman,



Tom Ricardi with a large bird of prey at the crowded American Legion Pavilion.

A young bird of prey perches on the arm of a delighted Myna Rodman, 5.

Photos: Laurie Seddon

and Steven Seddon. The second runner up was Hannah Van Sickle with pumpkin bread, first runner up was Lynn Rubenstein with apple raisin cake, and first place went to Karlene Blass with her orange zucchini cake. Desserts were shared after judging.

Our thanks to Riiska Brook Orchard for apples and New Boston Inn and Farmington River General Store for baking contest prizes. A special thank you to Looking Glass Gardens and Sunny Rose Farm for hosting Oktoberfest. We hope to see you next year!

Join us on November 19 from 10:00 a.m. until noon at Fire Station #1 on Rt 8 for Thanksgiving crafts, cupcake decorating, letters to Santa and hot cocoa. Please RSVP to 413-269-7357 or email us at sandisfieldevents@recreationcommittee.info. 🐦



The Oompah Band.

Photo: Jean Atwater-Williams



Drawing on a pumpkin is fun for Will Prewitt, 4, of Bantam Connecticut.

Photo: Zoe Nelson

Letter from the Editor

Let's Vote "No"

GIVE CHANGE A CHANCE

At the Special Town Meeting November 17, Sandisfield voters will be asked to vote yes or no on whether they want to formalize the option to withdraw from the Farmington River Regional School District.

While proponents of the idea acknowledge there is now no intention to leave FRRSD, they believe the Town still needs to attempt to amend the agreement that formed the school district to provide Sandisfield with the option to leave the district. Proponents believe that a vote in favor will provide Sandisfield a "tool" for persuasion. Sandisfield has three members on the School Committee and can always be outvoted by Otis, which has four.

The idea of Sandisfield leaving the district grew out of the School Options Subcommittee, which was organized last spring to recommend alternatives and/or continuing participation in the FRRSD. At the time the school was receiving poor state scholastic reports, financial efficiency was at a low ebb, and anger at the district was at high tide.

Over the summer, there was a fresh start at the school with the forced retirement of the District Superintendent/Principal and resignations of other administrative staff members. A new leadership team was put into place.

Why wasn't an issue of this importance discussed at an open forum after the subcommittee's proposal? And why is it now being proposed as

See the enclosed letter from our founding editor. Please contribute what you can.



an up-or-down vote for the few voters likely to appear at a Special Town Meeting in November?

A new administration is in charge at the school and complaints about the district are being addressed in the direction hoped for by the subcommittee.

If current changes slip and slide away, the Town always has the option of walking away from FRRSD. To insist that the option be put in writing now seems unnecessary, given that many tough issues have been wrestled with and a good-faith effort to improve is underway. Let's see if the recent changes in leadership at FRRSD will continue. Let's offer an open hand toward our Otis neighbors rather than a closed fist.

– Bill Price, Editor

Interim Principal Takes Charge

A CHANGED ENVIRONMENT AT FRRSD

By Bill Price

The Interim Principal at Farmington River Regional School, Robert Putnam, greets children as they arrive at school in the morning, whether they're driven by parents or step out of a school bus, and he often sees them off as they head home at the end of the day.

Putnam, who has been on the job since early September, makes himself available to parents and students as well as teachers and administrators. He is known to answer his own telephone, promptly return emails, and answer questions clearly and succinctly.

In fact, he has two jobs because doubles as FRRSD's part-time superintendent as well as principal.

The search is on for a full-time principal and once that person is selected, Rob will step back, but he may not be lost to the district altogether. He told the Otis Observer that he might "consider the [superintendent] position if other parts of his life fall into place."

That was good news to Sandy Balayan of Otis, who wrote a glowing front-page

profile of Putnam in the November Otis Observer. Balayan wrote that Rob "listens to teachers, staff, and most of all the children ... [He] enjoys chaos and thrives in difficult situations. He is truly the prescription for the FRRSD to aid in the healing after the rough patch the district has just experienced."

That rough patch grew out of a proposal by the Sandisfield School Subcommittee to withdraw from FRRSD based on low statewide test scores, a sense of low morale at the school, and a teacher's union survey that accused the former administration of fostering a "hostile" and "toxic environment" at odds with conducting a successful grade school.

The current administration, which was selected by the FRRSD School Committee (four members from Otis; three from Sandisfield), began leading the school at the beginning of the fall term. Sandisfield provides some 30 pupils out of a total enrollment of about 120, kindergarten through 6th grade.

Of his educational philosophy, Putnam told the Observer: "The principal needs



Principal Rob Putnam with 2nd graders at school breakfast.

Photo: Sadie Cotler

to understand elementary education and understand the unique pressures on the students and parents. There is no perfect straight path. Students learn and develop at different rates and our job is to find a way to teach all students. I like an open-door policy that reflects honesty and true integrity."

Principal Putnam, and FRRSD, have the Help Wanted sign out, not only for a permanent principal. See page 12 for an ad from the district for an administrative assistant, substitute teachers and paraprofessionals, a night custodian, and substitute van drivers. ♣

What Makes Sandisfield Special?

Cont'd from p.1

- ☛ Sandisfield is special to our family for so many reasons. It's where my husband grew up, his parents met, married and grew their family and it's now where we are raising our two children. We feel very fortunate to have settled down here and to be able to give our kids the same "country life" upbringing he experienced
- ☛ It's where my husband and I purchased our first home and made great friends with my neighbors, I grew up in Great Barrington but I wouldn't want to move back, I have grown to love it here. Growing my own garden and sharing my bounty with canning pickles and relish. Love it here.
- ☛ Sandisfield is our HOME. Lots of LOVE with family and friends.
- ☛ Sandisfield is kind and warm and generous of spirit. There is a sense of acceptance here, no matter what, no matter who. I am so grateful to be allowed to be a part of this community since 1984.
- ☛ Sandisfield is special to me because my grandfather was born & raised here, then in the 70s he brought his family back and soon after myself & my brother became part of Sandisfield. ... I too returned as an adult, raised three children here for a few years, found love with another local Sandisfield family ... and it will always be home to me.

- ☛ Sandisfield has been home to three generations of our family. Generations four and five visit often.
- ☛ As two southern New England transplants, we can't imagine a more beautiful place in terms of landscape AND people. Everyone says "the South" is the most friendly - we disagree. Genuine kindness here.
- ☛ My friends, the scenery, the history all make Sandisfield special to me.
- ☛ Kept preservation, open space, farms, historical value, no street lights, distance from metropolitan areas.
- ☛ The people & the woods & the wildlife!
- ☛ The beauty of nature around me.

Several people also commented on their appreciation for the Arts Center, as well as local farms and businesses.

People may have different views on what makes Sandisfield special to them, but we can all agree it is a special place! 🇺🇸



Webmaster Wins One for Our Team

By Bill Price

Remember last month's Out on a Limb column, "Murphy's Law Prevails Again," by Finance Committee Chairman Larry Dwyer?

Larry took after the Eversource billing department for what seemed like excessive charges after the Town had spent time, energy, and significant grant money to install solar panels that should have saved on "our energy consumption, money, and reduced our carbon footprint."



Three months after the solar panels were installed, Larry tracked the expenses. Oops. He discovered that costs had increased at Town Hall but gone down at the DPW garage.

Anyone who has called the phone company or the electric company to inquire about rates knows that Larry was told "Who, Us?"

Eventually he learned that the customer charge for Town Hall had changed from \$30 a month to \$353, which negated any savings from the solar panels. Customer service could not answer why this Error in Their Favor had happened.

Larry wrote, "I was so angry."

Anyone who knows Larry prefers not to be on the receiving end of that.

So Larry and the Town Manager wrote to Eversource with their complaint. They received the following email reply, which did not express contrition but more importantly returned the rates to what they had been.

Sent: Friday, October 21, 2022 12:53 PM
 To: Sylbert, Jonathan
 Cc: WebMaster Dwyer, Larry

Subject: RE: Sandisfield Solar Electric Rate - 66 Sandisfield Rd - BA # 54-942661083

Good afternoon, Jonathan:

I am writing to provide an update to the above referenced account. The account billing rate has been corrected to the G-0 Purchase Power rate and adjustments have been made back to when the net meter was installed in May 2022. The account now has a credit balance of (\$1,445.98). The meter is due to be read again on October 31 and the adjustments will be reflected on the next billing statement. 🇺🇸

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STM CHEAT SHEET

By Jonathan Sylbert, Town Manager

A Special Town Meeting will held at Fire Station #2, Rt. 57, on Thursday, November 17 at 7:00 p.m. We encourage and welcome everyone's attendance.

Of the eight articles on the warrant, one article proposes an amendment of the Farmington River Regional School District agreement to include a provision to allow the Town to withdraw from the district. While there is no intention at this time to do so, we believe the amendment will provide the district towns with more flexibility in the future.

Two articles include money items:


1. \$85,000 for a new highway truck to replace the one currently out of service. This will be funded by the Capital Stabilization fund. Highway Superintendent Brad Curry has sold more than \$90,000 of surplus equipment, and the Select Board intends to use this revenue to replenish the Capital Stabilization Fund at next year's Annual Town Meeting.
2. A \$9,500 transfer from the unused Recruiting Firm account to the Board of Health expenses. Following the untimely death of Victor Hryckvich, the BOH will continue to use the inspection services of the Southern Berkshire Public Health Collaborative. For many years Victor performed many of these services at far lower rates. We hope to receive state grants by FY24 to subsidize some of the increasing costs of running the Health Department. In the meantime, we estimate this financial transfer will carry us through.

The other five articles are all proposed Bylaws:

1. A Town Manager Bylaw. This was on the warrant in 2017 and was tabled to another meeting. The proposed Bylaw provides for explicit definitions of the separate roles of the Select Board and Town Manager. Adopting such a Bylaw codifies these roles and will provide continuity and consistency in the form of an "operating manual" to be followed by persons filling these roles over time. It will also remove some of the inconsistencies and frequent reshuffling of roles and responsibilities of current "policies" (written, revised, and unwritten) that limit town government's ability to maintain structure, discipline, and accountability.
2. The Accessory Dwelling Unit Zoning Bylaw – proposed by the Planning Board – will define and control the creation and use of accessory dwellings in town.
3. The Shared Driveway Zoning Bylaws will allow permitting of a single driveway to serve up to three parcels and regulate such use.

4. The proposed adoption of M.G.L. c. 60, sec. 62 will authorize the Treasurer/Collector to offer payment agreements to properties in tax title under certain conditions. This should encourage compliance.
5. Finally, the proposed adoption of M.G.L. Title 7, Chapter 40U, Section 12, will allow the Town to provide an enforcement mechanism for attaching unpaid violation fines as property liens in order to recover charges and fines.

More information about the two Zoning Bylaws can be found on the Town website, along with a PDF of the warrant.

We encourage residents to stay informed on town business by subscribing to E-Alerts on the town website. The link to the form to subscribe is on the home page in the Citizen Action Center box. 

Special Town Meeting

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 7:00 P.M.

FIRE STATION #2, RT. 57

Town Hall Summer Updates "WHAT WE DID LAST SUMMER"

By Steve Seddon, Select Board Chairman

The Board was busy this summer adopting the Financial Policy Manual that includes financial policies recommended to the Town back in 2017 by the Department of Local Services. The manual, part of the state's Community Compact Cabinet Initiative, contains 15 financial policies and a Municipal Calendar. The policies give our town's financial team guidance while working on benchmark goals in the Municipal Calendar.

The Select Board voted to install GPS tracking devices to all town-owned vehicles. This is very common in other towns and private business and has many benefits.

We have also been working on the Special Town Meeting articles with the Town Manager.

All of this was documented through minutes and coordinated by Select Board Assistant Janey Beardsley who is doing a great job!

The Town Manager has contracted with the town and is no longer "interim." Rumors have spread that Town Hall operations are running smoothly.

A capital plan for the town's vehicle fleet has been created, and a facilities capital plan is in the works, as is a capital road plan. Town Manager Jonathan Sylbert has secured several grants: a \$16,500 grant for the development of a Town Charter, and a \$36,000 grant to assess the feasibility of a regionalized emergency medical services program (shared ambulance services with Tolland). More grants are in the pipeline: a \$25,000 ADA planning grant to assess accessibility on town properties (to be followed next year by an ADA project grant to implement the work), a \$75,000 IT grant to improve the safety and security of town buildings, and a \$10,000 grant for facilities software to create a capital plan and implement a maintenance schedule; this grant will also cover the costs of the GPS system to be installed on town vehicles.

In addition: the town has contracted with Southern Berkshire Health Collaborative to assist our Board of Health, the tax rate recap sheet has been submitted by our excellent financial team and reflects a lower tax levy for the upcoming year,

Cont'd on p.7

A Sentimental Visit

ROSEMARY SAYS "HI" TO SIMBA AND CHAI

By Bill Price

Last summer 97-year-old Rosemary Allan of Tannery Road in New Boston mentioned to Zoe Nelson at a Town event that in her younger days she had loved riding horses and that she missed being around them.

She had grown up with ponies and horses at her grandparent's place in East Lee and "used to love to ride bareback." She had loved the gentleness of horses and missed petting them, kissing them, rubbing their noses, and even the smell of them.

Zoe was the right person to say all that to.

Zoe's daughter, Rose Mary Nelson, owns Sunny Rose Farm at C.W. Nelson's Landscaping Design firm on Dodd Road, and in the barn there dwell several well-trained horses and ponies.

So one fine fall day in October Rich Mercure, Rosemary's partner, drove her from their place in New Boston up to Sunny Rose Farm on Dodd Road for a sentimental visit with Simba and Chai

Rosemary called Zoe the next day to thank her and daughter Rose Mary, adding that visiting the horses was the best present she could have gotten.

Rosemary will turn 98 on November 8 as, she says, "heading for 100." She is Sandisfield's oldest veteran, having been a member of the Women's Army Corps at the end of World War II. She was profiled in the November 2015 Sandisfield Times following a presentation at the Sandisfield Historical Society.



Rose Mary Nelson with Rosemary and Simba, a 27-year-old Haflinger pony who's patience has helped many kids learn to ride.



Rosemary Allan and Rich Mercure greet Chai, an 11-year-old pony used for children's riding lessons.

Photos: Mary Bredenfoerder

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Town Hall Updates

Cont'd from p.5

bids for "No Name" bridge (culvert) on Rte. 57 will be opened next month, and Janey Beardsley continues to shine as the Town Manager's assistant.

Finally, our new Public Safety Officer, Mary Bredenfoeder, has made her presence felt all over town (you know who you are), Police Chief Michael Morrison has hired additional part-time officers, and Fire Chief Ralph Morrison has put our new fire truck into service.

The Town Clerk Doug Miner has purchased a new device to sign in everyone quickly and accurately during voting events. Douglas has also done a great job documenting and reporting with the State to meet our town's legal obligations.

The Tax Collector/Treasurer has been implementing new financial software programs to help streamline how the department functions. This will give the department more time to focus on other business. The town was very

fortunate to find such a capable professional in Gina Campbell.

Under Brad Curry's direction, we are realizing the efforts the DPW made in recent years with the grants for the roads in town. We have seen parts of Rts. 183 and 57 paved, along with Cold Spring and Town Hill Roads, with line painting in process.


The DPW has also been working on a road plan with the Town Manager to come up with proposals to rebuild some of the more problematic dirt roads. The DPW has done a great job selling the town's surplus vehicle and equipment inventory. The current total received is over \$91,000.

Town Accountant Margaret McClellan worked hard this summer to close the financial books for the year and keep the tracking of the Town's activity current. She is also meeting her goals on the Municipal Calendar.

The Assessor's Department had a big change this year when our longtime Principal Assessor Jacki Bitso retired. Jacki was great and agreed to make sure the Town wasn't left hanging and

helped the department meet its state reporting and filing requirements. The Board of Assessors is working hard to find a Principal Assessor to fill the position.

The Building Department has been steadily managing the flow of construction projects. There have been a lot of improvements in the Permit Eyes program. We are also continuing to improve the way it functions. If anyone is having problems with this program feel free to reach out to the Select Board Assistant with correspondence.

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Maria Domato, Commander

“Tea” With Simon AND HE GETS A JOB

By Bill Price

This newspaper’s founding editor, Simon Winchester, will be the honored guest of an “Afternoon Tea” on Saturday, November 19, 3:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center. Simon will discuss his long career as a journalist and best-selling author and what may be next for him.

The format will present Simon in conversation with fellow author André Bernard who for many years was a vice president and publisher at Harcourt Trade Publishers, Bernard is now vice president and secretary of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation in New York.

The audience will be seated at small tables where they will be served assorted teas and refreshments while enjoying the informal exchange between Simon and André.

A native of England, Winchester was awarded an Order of the British Empire (OBE) for his services to journalism and literature. The OBE was presented by Queen Elizabeth II in person with Simon’s mother in attendance. “You can imagine my mother’s pride,” said Simon, who is a naturalized U.S. citizen now living on Silverbrook Road with his wife, Setsuko.

The event is free, but please reserve a space at sandisfieldartscenter.org.

AND SIMON GETS A JOB

After four decades as an author of a wide variety of books and essays, Simon Winchester has been

selected to succeed the renowned Lewis Lapham as editor of Lapham’s *Quarterly*, the journal of historical texts.

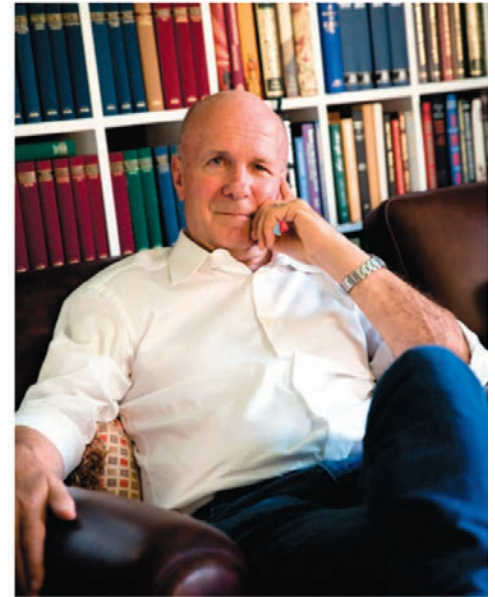
Since its founding in 2008, the journal has published excerpts and short pieces from historical texts and publications. It is widely regarded as the only journal of its kind in the world.

Recently, Lapham, 87, had been considering who could replace him as editor. He approached Simon as someone with similar tastes and love of the English language and a curiosity that will not quit.

“Lewis and I have known each other since 1980, when I wrote for him at *Harper’s Magazine*,” Simon said. “I’ve respected him and his work for more than 40 years. I’m honored to have been selected to succeed him at this wonderful journal.”

Simon does not plan to change the journal’s successful format. The job will require him to be in New York three days a week and oversee a staff of 11 editors and wordsmiths who will help him put out the magazine as they helped Lapham. Current circulation is 42,000, which Simon will strive to double and expand subscriptions even further around the English-speaking world.

The Lapham offices are at Union Square in New York, which on Wednesdays is also home to a large farmer’s market. “I may buy cabbages from the same farmer’s I buy from at the Barrington market,” Simon quipped. 🍷



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Simon Winchester



André Bernard



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Free Time?

SIGN UP AT A NONPROFIT NEAR YOU

By Liana Toscanini


An in-person Volunteer Fair is being held in Pittsfield, noon to 3:00 p.m., on Friday, November 4 at the Berkshire Innovation Center on Woodlawn Avenue.

Hosted by the Berkshire United Way and the Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires and sponsored by Berkshire Bank, this free event features 30 diverse nonprofit organizations sharing information about their mission, programs, and volunteer needs.

The purpose is to introduce potential volunteers to participating nonprofits and increase the number of volunteers throughout the Berkshires.

There are ongoing needs, in particular, at food pantries county-wide, emerging needs in schools to help children with reading proficiency, and to help residents file taxes through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program.

Participating nonprofits include more than two dozen groups, from the Berkshire County Historical Society to the Hospice of Western MA. Volunteers in Medicine and the Berkshire Coalition for Suicide Prevention are two other nonprofits that will be represented at the Fair.

To attend the event, visit npcberkshires.org/volunteer-fairs/. 

CALLING ALL VOLUNTEERS!



Motorcyclist Hurt Near Spectacle Pond

By Ron Bernard

A motorcyclist crashed and was thrown off his bike on a Sunday afternoon, October 16, at a particularly perilous section of Cold Spring Road not far from Spectacle Pond.



The LifeStar helicopter landing at Rowley Farm to transport the victim to Hartford Hospital.


Photo: Mike Loglisci

A passer-by who arrived shortly after the accident told The Times, “He was thrown down the [steep] embankment about thirty feet.” There were two other motorcyclists in the party.

Sandisfield units were apparently first on the scene, near 3:00 p.m., and requested mutual aid from Monterey and Otis who staged vehicles in a field at the former Rowley Farm.

A Life Star helicopter out of Westfield-Barnes Regional Airport landed at the staging area and transported the victim to Hartford Hospital, a Level 1 trauma center. The motorcyclist, 58, from Longmeadow, apparently lost control of his Harley Davidson bike while turning, went over the bank, and, according to Sandisfield Police Chief Michael Morrison, suffered multiple fractures to his pelvis.

“His injuries made it so he couldn’t really move,” Morrison said, according to a report in The Berkshire Eagle. The man is reported in stable condition at this time.

Sandisfield Police Officer Ales Seid is investigating the accident. 




Berkshire Waldorf High School OPEN HOUSE

Stockbridge, MA: A unique high school in the Berkshires, Berkshire Waldorf High School is holding an Open House on Thursday, November 3 at 7:00 p.m. at the school: 14 Pine Street, Stockbridge, MA, on the corner of Pine and Shamrock.

An informative and engaging program will include a scene from our upcoming Shakespeare play, *Much Ado About Nothing*, and a student panel. Guests are welcome to ask questions about the students’ high school experience, the work they’ve done this year, and their plans for the future.

The school offers honors-level, college preparatory academics and is also well-integrated into the larger community, including classes and workshops in renowned artists’ studios, the use of local science labs and gyms, and international travel. They are fully prepared for the most demanding universities and colleges.

A specially-curated presentation of student work will be on view, including math, science, humanities, and technology projects.

Light refreshments will be served. Parents, students, friends, community members, and younger siblings are all welcome. 

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By Terry Spohnholz

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LIBRARY EVENTS

Arts & Craft, Saturday, November 19,
10:00 a.m.-noon. Cider and donuts involved.

NEW BOOK ARRIVALS

Adult Fiction and Non-Fiction

Desperation in Death by J.D. Robb

Long Shadows by David Baldacci

Livid by Patricia Cornwell

Thief of Fate by Jude Deveraux

All Good People Here by Ashley Flowers

Voice of Fear by Heather Graham

The Boys from Biloxi by John Grisham

Endless Summer by Elin Hilderbrand

The Last Chairlift by John Irving

Hell and Back by Craig Johnson

The Christmas Spirit by Debbi Macomber

Hellburner by Clive Cussler

Lessons by Ian McEwan

The Bullet that Missed by Richard Osman

Mad Honey by Jody Picoult

Righteous Prey by John Sandford

The High Notes by Danielle Steel
Distant Thunder by Stuart Woods
Dinners with Ruth by Nina Totenberg

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 wi-fi and access 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.

BOOKS FOR SALE

To make room for new book acquisitions, we are selling our old but in-excellent-condition fiction, non-fiction, and children's books at a nominal fee. \$1.00 for hardcover, 2 for \$1.50 for softcover. \$10 dollars gets you a dozen hardcover books! 📖

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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Council on Aging



Winter's Coming, Get Ready

By Nina Carr

We certainly have had a very colorful and enjoyable month of October. Now we get to prepare for the darker and colder days of late Fall and Winter.

The solution?!

Get out of the house and join the Seniors in the COA room for a "Coffee Hour" every Wednesday morning at 10 o'clock. Snacks and conversation are always available.

On the third Wednesday of the month our new nurse, Jill Sweet, visits for a Blood Pressure and Wellness clinic. She is a great addition to our program.

Also, every Wednesday at 2, the Chair Yoga classes continue in the Old Town Hall with Wendy Larsen.

We are working on finding a new "foot nurse" so we can schedule a clinic every two months or so.

We want to reach out to all Seniors in town, so if you have any questions or issues please contact us. Stop at Town Hall to meet us at 10 a.m. Wednesdays or call me at 258-3314. 🍷



Honoring All Who Served

Sandisfield Historical Society



Christmas Fair, December 3

By Ann Wald, President

At our last meeting we discussed items that we still have for sale and the Christmas Fair.

The Christmas Fair this year will be Saturday, December 3, at Firehouse #2 on Route 57. 10:00 a.m. until about 2:00 p.m.

Santa Claus will arrive about 1:00 p.m., so have your kids there about then.

Many vendors will be there offering a wide variety of items.

Join us and support our neighbors.

On December 10, the Historical Society will join with the Recreation Committee, with hopefully a choir, at the New Boston Nursing Home to sing Christmas carols. The nursing home will supply hot cocoa. The time has not been determined yet. Join us for both activities.

Then we'll take the winter off.

See you in the Spring. Have a safe and warm Winter. 🍷



The Bard of Sandisfield

Another Val Coleman poem from the Times' archives.

"November" was published in the November 2005 issue.

We miss Val and his way with words.

NOVEMBER

For most folks,
There it sits
Like an unopened gift
Wrapped in old roses.
November,
It ain't Christmas
Or the Fourth of July
Or my birthday.
It's just an odd old cold month
Barking elections
On Tuesdays even if it snows.

But then ... again
There was the November
When I met her.
She was beckoning,
She was slinging mistletoe!
Honest, she was slinging mistletoe
In an old bar with red round plastic stools.
And I was there alone
So it had to be me
That got kissed that November.

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ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

DUTIES/DESCRIPTION:

Under the direction of the superintendent and principal performs secretarial/clerical work to ensure the efficient operations of the school and district.

- Fiscal Year Employee.
- Forty hour week
- Salary Range: \$35,000-43,000 and benefits

REQUIRED:

- Minimum of a High School Diploma. Associates or Bachelor Degree preferred.
- Computer literacy in Microsoft Office, Google Suite (GMail, Calendar, Google Forms, Google Sheets, etc)
- Ability to communicate effectively with staff and public in a pleasant manner
- Ability to multitask, establish office priorities and work independently with minimum supervision and direction
- Ability to maintain a high degree of confidentiality

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS AND PARAPROFESSIONALS

DUTIES/DESCRIPTION:

Fill in for FRRSD teachers. Assume all duties of the regular classroom teacher or paraprofessional promptly and in accordance with school rules. This may include lunch, recess/playground, or any other duties assigned by the building principal.

- Substitute teachers or paraprofessionals with licensure from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Education receive \$110 per day with the completion of time sheets.
- Substitute teachers or paraprofessionals without a license receive \$90 per day with the completion of time sheets.
- The school tries to give advance notice, but calls often happen between 6-7 am

REQUIRED:

- Minimum of a High School Diploma. Associates or Bachelor Degree preferred.

PART-TIME NIGHT CUSTODIAN

DUTIES/DESCRIPTION:

Responsibilities include but are not limited to the maintenance of the school buildings and classrooms sweeping, dusting, washing floors, cleaning restrooms, removing trash, and generally assisting in providing a clean and safe school environment. M-F with a total of 19 hours a week any time between 5 pm and 7 am

REQUIRED:

- Must be 21 years of age or older
- Ability to lift 60 pounds
- High School Diploma
- \$18 per hour without benefits.

SUBSTITUTE VAN DRIVERS

DUTIES/DESCRIPTION:

Be prepared to fill in for drivers during one of both shifts: 6:15-8:45 or 2:15-4:00

REQUIRED:

- Ability to operate a 10-passenger van
- Safely transport students
- 21 years or older
- Valid MA Drivers License
- 7D License or CDL Preferred
- CORI and drug Test
- Knowledge of Sandisfield and Otis roads are a plus.
- Minimum high school diploma
- \$18 per hour without benefits

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Send a letter of interest/intent, three current, work-related references, a copy of diploma, transcripts, degrees, etc., and any other materials that will strengthen your candidacy to:

ROBERT PUTNAM
Interim Principal/Superintendent
Farmington River Regional School District
555 North Main Road, Otis, MA, 01253
or rputnam@frrsd.org

Please visit www.frrsd.org for additional information.

FRRSD is an equal opportunity education institution and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, creed, religion, gender, gender-identity, sexual orientation, ancestry, national origin, marital status, pregnancy, visibility, or any other status protected by law in its activities, programs, or employment practices as required by Title VI, Title IX and Section 504.

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NOW HEAR THIS!

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

NOVEMBER 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. Pre-registration not 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 information, contact Nina Carr (258-3314). Free.

Flu and Covid Clinic on Wednesday, November 2 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Old Town Hall on 3 Silverbrook Road, courtesy of Southern Berkshire Public Health. Please register online (southernberkshirepublichealthcollaborative, go to "Upcoming Vaccination Clinics," and find Sandisfield, 11/2.) Walk-ins welcome as time and supplies allow. No out-of-pocket cost but bring your insurance information.

Hosted by the Berkshire United Way and the Nonprofit Center of the **Tractor Pull** on Saturday, November 5 at 10:00 a.m. at the American Legion Post 456 on Route 8. Food and beverages available for purchase. 50/50 raffle. Family fun. Please bring a chair! Free!



Election Day on Tuesday, November 8 from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall on 3 Silverbrook Road.

An Afternoon of Short Stories with the Sandisfield Players on Saturday, November 12 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. Stories read by Ben Luxon, Simon Winchester, Jean

Atwater-Williams, and Mary Anne Grammer. Mostly humorous, sometimes thought provoking, and certainly entertaining! Masks are optional but recommended. \$20.

New Boston Church Service on Sunday, November 13 at 10:00 a.m. at the New Boston Congregational Church, Route 57. All are welcome for this special Veteran's service!

Berkshire Public Health Alliance Public Health Nurse on Wednesday, November 16 at 10:00 a.m. at the Sandisfield Council on Aging, basement level of Town Hall. The nurse will provide an assessment, including a blood pressure check and wellness update. All are welcome. Free.

Special Town Meeting, Thursday, November 17 at 7:00 p.m., Fire Station #2, Rt. 57. Eight articles for discussion and voting. All are invited.

Thanksgiving Crafts and Cupcake Decorating! Saturday, November 19 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at Fire Station #1 on Route 8. Sponsored by the RecCommittee. Letters to Santa and hot cocoa. Please RSVP at 413-269-7357 or sandisfieldevents@recreationcommittee.info. Free!

Afternoon Tea with Simon Winchester on Saturday, November 19 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. What could be more fun than afternoon tea and discussion with author Simon Winchester led by André Bernard of the Guggenheim Foundation about his life, his career as a writer, and a preview of what may be next. Free, but reserve a space at sandisfieldartscenter.org.

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. Pre-registration not necessary. Meet for stories and songs followed by creative crafts. For information, please call Nina Carr (258-3314). Free!

Reading Gravestones of Old New England with Author John Hanson on Thursday, November 3 at 7:00 p.m. via Zoom, sponsored by the Otis Preservation Trust, Inc. To register, please visit optin.today.

An in-person **Volunteer Fair** is being held in Pittsfield, noon to 3:00 p.m. on Friday, November 4 at the Berkshire Innovation Center on Woodlawn Avenue. Hosted by the Berkshire United Way and the Nonprofit Center of the Berkshires.

Great Barrington Farmer's Market on Saturdays, November 5 and 12 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on 18 Church Street in Great Barrington. Locally grown and produced foods, including fruits and vegetables, cheese, meats, breads, and more.

Whales & Trails! A Celebration with BNRC on Sunday, November 6 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Thomas & Palmer Brook Reserve on 305 State Road in Great Barrington. Join Berkshire Natural Resources Council and partners in celebrating the opening of the Whale Rock Trail. Special speaker, crafts games, and autumn-inspired drinks and snacks. Visit bnrc.org for more information. Free but registration is appreciated.

Geology of the Berkshires and Beyond via Zoom on Thursday, November 10 from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. on Zoom. Join this Berkshire Natural Resources Council-hosted online event to learn about the geological pasts of the Hudson Valley, the Taconic Mountains, and the Berkshires from local experts and authors Johanna and Robert Titus. For information, visit bnrc.org. Free, but you must register.

Craft and Vendor Fair on Saturday, November 19 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the VFW Post 296, 114 Colebrook River Road in Winchester, Conn.. Vendors, crafts, raffles, refreshments to benefit veterans.

Holiday Makers Shoppes at Whiting Mills in Winsted on Sundays, November 20 and 27 from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Artists, Crafters, Specialty Shops.

Nature Journaling with Nanci Worthington on Saturday, November 26 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at Bartholomew's Cobble on 105 Weatogue Road in Ashley Falls. This program is for everyone, including naturalists, bird watchers, kids, adults, teens, advanced artists and beginners. No experience necessary, just a love of the outdoors. Materials are provided. Space is limited. For information, email aduquette@thetrustees.org. Free, but registration is required at thetrustees.org.

On Your Ballot

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8

Voting will take place at Old Town Hall, 3 Silverbrook Road, from 7:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. Early voting has been going on since October 22.

Governor and Lieutenant Governor

Geoff Diehl and Leah Allen, Republican
Maura Healey and Kim Driscoll, Democratic
Reed and Everett, Libertarian

Attorney General

Andrea Campbell, Democratic
James McMahon, Republican

Secretary of State

William Galvin, Democratic
Rayla Campbell, Republican
Juan Sanchez, Green-Rainbow Party

Treasurer

Deborah Goldberg, Democratic
Cristina Crawford, Libertarian

Auditor

Anthony Amore, Republican
Diana Dizoglio, Democratoc
Gloria Caballero-Roca, Green-Rainbow Party
Dominic Giannone, Workers Party
Daniel Riek, Libertarian

Representative in Congress, First District

Richard E. Neal, Democrat (incumbent)
Dean Martelli, Republican

Councillor

Joseph Ferreira, Democratic

Senator in General Court

Paul Mark, Democratic
Brendan Phair, Unenrolled

Representative in General Court

William "Smitty" Pignatelli, Democratic
Michael Lavery, Green-Rainbow Party

District Attorney

Timothy Shugrue, Democratic

Sheriff

Thomas Bowler, Democratic

Question 1: Additional Tax on Income Over One Million Dollars

Create a 4% surtax on anyone's income over \$1 million, to be used for education and transportation projects.

Question 2: Regulation of Dental Insurance

Create new regulation on dental insurance, requiring that at least 83 cents of every dollar an insurer receives be spent on patient care rather than administrative expenses.

Question 3: Expanded Availability of Licenses for the Sale of Alcoholic Beverages

Overhaul alcohol licensing by introducing new rules for stores, double the number of liquor licenses a company can hold, change fines for violations, and allow out-of-state identification to purchase alcohol.

Question 4: Eligibility for Driver's Licenses

Allow a new law to take effect that would let immigrants apply for driver's licenses, regardless of whether they are in the country legally.

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

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

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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. 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.

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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.



Fall in Sandisfield

Lower Spectacle Pond, early October, photo by Larry Dwyer with an iPhone 12.



2022 HISTORICAL SOCIETY

CHRISTMAS FAIR



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3
10 AM - 2 PM
FIREHOUSE #2 (ROUTE 57)

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