

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume XIV, Number 7

October 2023

The Charter Committee's Response

THANKS, LARRY, FOR STARTING A DIALOGUE

By the Town Charter Committee

The Town Charter Committee extends our gratitude to Larry Dwyer for his recent opinion piece in The Sandisfield Times. His contribution to our local discourse is precisely the type of community engagement that our town desperately needs. In a community where active participation can sometimes be a challenge, he is a great example of what it means to be a devoted Sandisfield resident.

However, as we express our gratitude, we must also address a few clarifications and corrections regarding the content of the opinion piece.

Mr. Dwyer relies on quotes and findings from "Dispelling the Home Rule Myth: Local Power in Greater Boston 2004". The 20-page document he links to is actually the first part of a 120-page research paper from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard from 2004. The Home Rule Myth is the myth that after the state passed the Home Rule Amendment and Home Rule Procedures Act in 1966 that towns and cities now had autonomy from the state.

Attend the Town Charter Committee/Select Board joint meeting on Tuesday, October 10, 6:30 p.m., at Town Hall. Zoom information will be posted online.

This is not true. Towns and Cities can do whatever they like as long as it is not in conflict with state law. For instance, state regulations govern crucial aspects like taxation, election regulations, land use, public schooling, and more. It's vital to emphasize that creating a charter does not impose any new state restrictions beyond those already enforced.

The research paper actually stands out as the most compelling evidence we have encountered thus far in support of the Special Act Charter. It goes into great detail about the pitfalls of Home Rule Charters and why Special Act Charters (the route we are taking) are easier to implement and make more sense for small towns like ours. Let us take this opportunity to ensure that we have a comprehensive understanding of this vital issue.

The Out on a Limb piece suggests that a charter would add complexity to the adoption or amendment of local bylaws. While it's true that bylaws must align with the charter, it's important to clarify that the process for adopting or amending bylaws remains unchanged. Furthermore, none of current or proposed by-laws are in conflict with the Special Act Charter. Therefore, this should not be a concern.

It is important to know the two different ways towns can adopt charters and even more important to not mix them up! The two ways: one is called a HOME RULE CHARTER, and the other is a SPECIAL ACT CHARTER.

In a HOME RULE CHARTER, a Charter Commission is nominated and elected to create the charter, and they follow a specific set of steps and rules. The new charter is reviewed by the attorney general and voted on by the local community. If they want to change it, they follow a similar strict process or use a special act. Note: many of the issues raised in the 120-page research paper relate to HOME RULE CHARTERS.

A SPECIAL ACT CHARTER, which is what we're doing in Sandisfield, is created by an appointed Charter Committee. The community approves it in a town meeting, then it goes to the state legislature, and the governor signs it. It's then often confirmed

Cont'd on p.4



The Differences Between Our Bylaws and a Town Charter

By Larry Dwyer

At the August 11 Charter Committee meeting, the Collins Center, which has been advising the Charter Committee, said more towns are moving towards adopting charters to govern themselves. A charter is a foundation document, similar to a constitution, and for a town to govern itself by charter is considered best practice.

It seems to me that the Collins Center presented good information and guidance for the Committee during the August 11 meeting. If the Center's suggestions are followed, I feel that a well-written charter would not present a problem for Sandisfield.

A second draft is in the process of being created by the Charter Committee, which will be presented

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Assessed Valuation up 10%

Notice of Public Disclosure


REVALUATION OF REAL AND PERSONAL PROPERTY

From the Sandisfield Board of Assessors, Roger Brown, Chairman

In compliance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, Section 56, the Board of Assessors have completed a revaluation of all real and personal property in the Town of Sandisfield. Sandisfield has received Preliminary Certification from the Massachusetts Department of Revenue for all properties for Fiscal Year 2024.

Analysis of real estate transactions from January 2021 through December 2022, as well as regional data, were reviewed during the revaluation. The values were adjusted to reflect full and fair cash value as of January 1, 2023. Overall, compared to Fiscal Year 2022, real estate and personal property values have increased 10%. Note the actual percentage change on individual tax bills will differ as the tax rate has not yet been set.

The values will be available for public viewing beginning 9/25/2023 for five business days ending 9/29/2023. Public Disclosure is available for public review by going to the Town of Sandisfield website: sandisfieldma.gov, and clicking on the link provided showing "FY24 Assessed Values".

A list of the assessed values will also be available at the Assessor's Office at the 66 Sandisfield Rd, Town Hall, and the Assessors will be available Monday - Friday, 9:00am to 2:00 p.m.. If taxpayers or the general public have any questions or comments, the Assessors can also be contacted in the following ways: email assessors@sandisfieldma.gov, by phone at 413-258-4711 during business hours. The values will be available in the Assessor's Office and at the Town Library for viewing. 

Farmington River Store Adds Delivery Service

By Times Reporters


Nick and Megan Smigel, proprietors of the Farmington River General Store in New Boston, have announced new hours and new services.

Everything in stock is now available for home delivery during hours of operation (see below). Hot dogs are included from 11:00 a.m. till 6:00 p.m. Tobacco, liquor, wine, and beer will require valid identification that the purchaser is 21 or over. The minimum order is \$10 and there is a \$5 delivery charge per order.

Lottery tickets are not available for delivery.


Nick said, "We encourage customers to state a preferred delivery time, and we will do our best to accommodate it. Otherwise, all orders will be delivered by the end of the day."

He said that the best way to order is via the store's web site at www.farmingtonrivergs.square.site. Orders can be also be placed by phone at 413-462-1104.

The store is open for business Monday through Wednesday from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Thursday through Sunday from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. 

Building Inspector Office Hours

The Building Inspector will hold Office Hours at the Old Town Hall every Wednesday from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. by appointment beginning October 18.

To schedule an appointment, call or text Paul Greene at 413-446-0964. 



ATV Drawing Winners

By Ann Wald

The Sandisfield Historical Society thanks everyone who helped make our raffle a success.


- Our special thanks go to Billy and Hattie of New Boston Crane and Sleds for all their help with organizing, promoting, and selling tickets for us.
- The Farmington River General Store
- A & M Auto
- The New Boston Inn for their kindness in selling tickets

- And The Inn for sharing their dining room for the drawing.
- Special thanks also to Steve Seddon, John Field, and Douglas Miner for going up and beyond in ticket sales.

The winners are:

First prize, the ATV:
Mitch Birkett
Second prize, \$500:
Donovan Brown
Third prize, \$250:
Connie D'Andrea

Congratulations to them all!!!

And a BIG THANK YOU to everyone who purchased a ticket. 

ANNUAL SANDISFIELD FLU CLINIC

October 4 from 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Council on Aging, Downstairs at Town Hall

- PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED
- Register at sandisfieldma.gov, go to Sandisfield Vaccination Clinic.
- Need Help Pre-Registering? Call Jill Sweet at 413-717-7209


Updated COVID boosters will be added as they become available at the end of September.

FLU: All vaccine clinics will have regular dose flu vaccine, senior dose flu vaccine and a limited supply of egg-free flu vaccine available for those 6 months old or older. Individuals must pre-register to allow for planning of clinic staff levels and vaccine.

COVID: Once the updated COVID booster is available, appointments for the Pfizer COVID vaccine for ages 12+ will be added as an option to the registration

page for this clinic. Individuals who have already scheduled a flu vaccine can easily add a COVID booster to their existing appointment before or at the clinic.

All vaccines are provided at no out-of-pocket cost to individuals, however we ask that individuals bring their insurance card and COVID card, when applicable, to the clinic. We are asking that you wear a short-sleeved shirt. Pre-registration is required, and walk-ins will only be accepted as time and vaccine supplies allow.

More information, including **The Fall 2023 Vaccination Clinic Schedule** can be found on the SBPHC website- www.sb-phc.org. 



Our Culvert: A Foot Too Far

By Simon Winchester

A twelve-inch “survey error” has been discovered following the completion of the \$550,000 culvert replacement that resulted in the recent month-long closure of Route 57.

Eastbound motorists hugging the highway’s right-side white line now risk colliding with the massive and freshly-made concrete abutments, since the entire new structure has been inadvertently sited a foot south of where it should have been.

As to who made the error, there was much initial and completely amiable disagreement.

The contractor, Middlesex Corporation of Littleton, Massachusetts, insisted that an old survey pin had been wrongly sited.

The Town of Sandisfield, whose DPW Chief Brad Curry discovered the error, insists the foot-thick abutment was built on the wrong side of the pin.

In the end the contractor accepted responsibility and has agreed to pay any extra costs involved in righting the gaffe.

But according to a senior Town Hall official involved in the matter, the state-financed and “coming soon” re-paving of Rt. 57 will handily solve the problem. After the new asphalt and paint are fully finished there will just be a “slight kink” in the highway center line leading up to and over the bridge – a kink that most passing motorists “will not even notice.”

Household Hazardous Waste Disposal October 14, 2023

Household Hazardous Waste Disposal will be available Saturday, October 14, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Great Barrington Recycling Center, 601 Stockbridge Rd, Great Barrington, MA 01230.

For the many types of hazardous waste materials eligible for disposal, please see the list at the Town website, sandisfieldma.gov., “Household Hazardous Waste Disposal.” Also see the list for items not eligible.

Do NOT bring hazardous waste materials to the Sandisfield Transfer Station.



Maintenance Deferred is Not Maintenance BAND-AIDS INSTEAD OF SOLUTIONS

By George Riley

A quote from the Monterey News, Sept. 2023, Highway News: “Going back fifteen years to when Maynard Forbes was our highway superintendent, and then through Shawn Tryon’s time and now Jim Hunt’s, the town has been fortunate that these individuals saw beyond just putting down gravel. They actively worked to create better ditches, catch basins and cross-road culverts. Controlling the flow of water is so important to the maintenance of our gravel roads. Jim feels that we are benefiting from this forward thinking now. There is less road-edge gravel washing out as the new culverts and catch basins are able to handle the flow and direct it away from the road surface.”



Meanwhile back in Sandisfield, we can’t even get gravel thrown at our potholes and washouts .

(Note to DPW: putting cones next to washouts does not constitute fixing the road).

Maybe the DPW figures there’s no point in just putting down gravel, since it will just wash away in the next storm – and they are right in this, for without

a crown on the road to shed water and ditches to carry it away, puddles turn to potholes and stormwater has no choice but to run down the road and wash it out, over and over again.

The choice is simple: we can have crowns and ditches, catch basins and culverts, or we can have potholes and repeated washouts.

For many years the DPW has apparently chosen the latter, and now our roads have deteriorated to the point where even the most basic repairs, much less improvements, are beyond the capacity of the road crew. Putting a crown on a gravel road requires active management, rather than simply letting the grader do what it prefers, which is to flatten the road and fill in the ditches.

As a former Selectman, I’m well aware how difficult it is to bring about any change in ingrained behavior, but the current Select Board, allegedly the supervisors of the DPW, seems to be content with the present situation.

With the announcement of two departures from the DPW road crew (Sandisfield Times, August 2023), will Superintendent Curry and the Select Board be willing and able to actively work to teach the new dogs new tricks, or will they simply succumb to the old habits that have resulted in our current road conditions?

It’s been suggested several times by citizens that the Town should bring in road superintendents from neighboring towns or from MassDOT to teach our road crew how to properly maintain our gravel roads, but without an active commitment by the Select Board and DPW personnel, that’s just wishful thinking.

Even the basic requirement, made a few Town Meetings ago by the former Select Board, to train the DPW crew in the proper operation of its fancy new adjustable-pitch grader as a condition of its purchase, has been ignored.

So, to paraphrase the Monterey News, “we are suffering from this backward thinking now.”

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



The Charter Committee's Response

Cont'd from p.1

by a final town vote for ratification. If we want to make changes to this type of charter, we will do it through another special act. The 120-page research paper mentions that SPECIAL ACT CHARTERS recently have become a much better way to adopt charters and can solve a lot of the headache involved with HOME RULE CHARTERS.

Please note. It is true that it is not a very quick process to make amendments to the charter. BUT THAT IS THE POINT. The items in the Charter are big picture items and we don't want the fundamentals of our town to be changed willy-nilly by whoever happens to be on the selectboard.

The Harvard research paper covers many issues with Home Rule Petition process. Mr. Dwyer mentions some of these instances in The Sandisfield Times. If you look a little deeper, it turns out the towns having these issues are attempting to pass petitions through the legislature that are in conflict with state law. These petitions are all related to taxation, land use and public schools. Understandably A LOT of these petitions fail to pass through the legislature. However, it would be a mistake to assume that submitting petitions in general is difficult or even rare. The majority of laws passed each year in the Commonwealth are adopted through the Home Rule Petition process. Sandisfield has successfully submitted petitions in the past with the help of Representative Smitty Pignatelli and we anticipate continuing to do so. The research paper concludes the Petition section by stating that as long as the petition does not conflict with state law the petition process is quite simple and smooth.

In summary. We are pursuing a Special Act Charter – not a Home Rule Charter. This will not change our by-law adoption process in any way. Our town business will not be more complicated. The Research paper Mr. Dwyer quoted agrees that a Special Act Charter is a superior route for towns and makes the process simpler. The disadvantages regarding Home Rule automatically apply to all towns and cities with or without charters. We do not anticipate submitting any petitions that conflict with state law so the section in the research paper regarding the pitfalls of Home Rule Petition do not apply to us.

We hope this clarifies the issue. We invite all residents, taking a cue from Mr. Dwyer, to engage actively. We urge you to participate in our public meetings, share your thoughts through letters/emails, and engage in meaningful discussions. Our goal is to create a document that reflects our entire community's ideas and values, emphasizing the collective will of the people. ♡



Letters to the Editor

Charter Proposal

AN OPINION PIECE

Dear Editor:

It should be clear to readers that "Out on a Limb" columns in The Times are opinion. Last month's front page "Out on a Limb" article by Larry Dwyer regarding the town charter was not factually based and will be corrected elsewhere in this publication. Please take the time to understand the facts about a document needed to protect public participation and control, not limit it.

*Brigitte Ruthman
Dodd Road*

Why Voters Should Support the Charter

Dear Editor:

In last month's issue of The Times, you requested letters sharing opinions regarding the proposed town charter. This letter is in response to that request.

Full disclosure, I am a member of the committee that's responsible for drafting the charter. I, like my fellow committee members, would not be spending considerable time, energy, and effort working on this crucial document if we didn't feel it was important and necessary for Sandisfield's future.

What will a charter do? As a statement from the Collin's Center clearly conveys, it will "consolidate the current collection of state law, special act adoptions and bylaws under which the town operates." This consolidation will result in "clarity and transparency," provide critical continuity, and ensure that leaders in our town's government act ethically, legally, and don't engage in overreach.

For example, during a previous administration, we witnessed a Select Board that approved the appointment of one of their own to a lucrative temporary position. While the reasoning behind that action may have been well intentioned, ultimately it wasn't in the best interest of the town. Indeed, decisions were made under the above circumstances

that resulted in negative outcomes. The charter helps ensure that such over-reach won't happen again.

Another example was the appointment of an individual by the Select Board to a paying town position – an individual who originally served in the position as an unpaid volunteer. Again, while the volunteer and Select Board may have had good intentions, the Select Board was not following best practices when the decision was made to begin paying a volunteer a substantial stipend without first publicly advertising the position so that other interested and qualified individuals could apply.

All of the members of the committee (a fairly diverse body, it must be noted) are committed to drafting a charter that will not significantly change the way our town is governed. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that the possibility of the aforementioned examples of questionable decisions made and actions taken by town leadership happening again is significantly less under the provisions of the charter.

The committee only wants what's best for our town. And I feel fortunate that I have an opportunity to work with an organization as respected and with the depth of knowledge and experience as the Collin's Center to guide the committee through this transparent process so that the best possible outcome can be achieved.

So, take a moment to familiarize yourself with what is in essence our town's constitution, written by the people, for the people. Then, when voting day arrives to approve the charter, I urge you to vote your conscience. But base your vote on your own knowledge and understanding of the issue, not on hearsay and misinformation from folks who don't have a complete picture of what the charter truly is. Always keep in mind, because a charter effectively defines and limits governance, our town's leadership won't be able to work behind the scenes – something I'm sure every Sandisfield resident would agree is the way our town should be run.

*Melissa Bye
New Hartford Road*

Out on a Limb: The Differences Between Our Bylaws and a Town Charter

Cont'd from p.1

to the Select Board soon and then to the town's voters at a special meeting in November.

However, the town charter created for Sandisfield by the Charter Committee is not yet ready to be presented to the voters. Or even to the Select Board. Many more details need to be worked out, as I'm sure the Committee acknowledges.

So far there has been one public meeting and no additional public meetings are yet scheduled. It seems the draft will be presented without further discussion. Only nine voters attended the public meeting held in early August.

If the charter draft is approved by the town in November, it would then be required to become a ballot measure, which the Charter Committee says it hopes to present at the next annual town meeting in May 2024.

However, before becoming a ballot measure the charter would have to be reviewed and approved by the state legislature. The office of State Senator Paul Marks, who represents Berkshire County, reported that it can take up to two years for the legislature to approve a charter.

The timing makes it unlikely that the charter could be returned in time for our annual meeting in May.

The charter, as currently written, would present several differences in the way the town would be run.

Currently, Finance Committee members are appointed by the Moderator. In the town charter, Finance Committee members would be appointed by a group consisting of the Moderator, a Finance Committee member, and the Planning Committee. The Collins Center advised the Committee to add wording that a member of the Select Board could not be a member of the Finance Committee.

In the charter draft, Town Meetings would be changed from one annual meeting to two bi-annual town meetings. The reasoning is that two annual meetings allow citizens to petition for a warrant article with only 10 votes instead of the 100 required for a special meeting.

In the draft, the Select Board would be restricted in the town's day-to-day operations. The town manager would have authority over the Board in the daily operations of the town. This wording was already passed in the Special Act passed last November and would be copied into the charter.

In the draft, a Selectman could no longer serve as an interim town manager. When Kevin Flynn abruptly resigned in March 2022, George Riley served as the interim town manager until a replacement was found. The Collins Center felt that in certain circumstances a select board member might be the logical choice to serve as a temporary town manager. The Collins Center advised that allowing a Selectman to be an interim town manager because it can take many months to find a town manager replacement.

The Collins Center recommended not putting much detail in the charter since a charter is hard to change.

As an example, the Historical Commission currently has no limit on the number of members. The charter would limit the membership to seven. The Collins Center suggested leaving this detail out of the charter. If interest were to increase in the history of the town, it may be good to add more members. The Center said that a committee could be defined in the charter, but the number of members should be in a bylaw to provide flexibility.

The Zoning Board of Appeals is an important committee and defining the number of members in the charter was not recommended by the Collins Center. If you wanted to make a change then you would have to go through the whole charter approval process.

Currently, the Town Clerk and Board of Assessors, which are elected positions, can hire employees without the approval of the town manager. In the charter, if the Town Clerk were to hire an assistant Town Clerk and Board of Assessors were to hire an assessor and assessor clerk, they would need approval of the town manager before they could hire any employee for their respective departments.

The Collins Center approach is to capture how Sandisfield is currently operating and the town charter should reflect this. The charter would be reviewed every ten years and amendments made as the town's needs change.

The Charter could be a plus for the town, but it definitely needs more work and additional opportunities for public comment. There is still plenty of time to refine the charter, so that installing it does not adversely impact the operation of the town. 🍷

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

Rec Committee Leadership Change
 Lynn Rubenstein submitted her resignation from the Recreation Committee in September. The new Chair of the committee will be Laurie Seddon, who worked very closely with Lynn on the committee's projects over the last two years.

**HARVEST
DINNER**

**SATURDAY
OCTOBER 28**

5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

**FIRE STATION #2
on Route 57**

Turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy,
green beans, cranberry sauce, roll,
and pumpkin pie.
\$15/adults, \$6/children 12 and under.
Dine in an Take-out available.

Benefit event for the New Boston Congregational Church.



Riiska Brook Orchard Featured in *Edible Berkshires*

ON NEW HARTFORD ROAD, APPLES FOR THE PICKING

By Bill Price, quotes and photos used with permission from *Edible Berkshires*, September 2023.

Earlier this fall Sandisfield’s Hannah Van Sickle took a short drive from her home on Rood Hill Road over to Riiska Brook Orchard on New Hartford Road to visit Emily Melchior and Calvin Rodman as they celebrated their first year as proprietors of Bill Riiska’s apple orchard.

Hannah is a writer for *The Berkshire Edge* and other publications, including *The Sandisfield Times*.

Her visit to Riiska Brook Orchard became a feature article in the September issue of *Edible Berkshires*, a local publication that covers the culinary culture of the Berkshires. The magazine can be found, without charge, at many locations through the Berkshires, including Riiska Brook Orchard, or it can be read online at www.edibleberkshires.com.

In the article, Emily and Calvin acknowledged that their first year as orchardists had not been particularly easy. While an unusually warm spring brought thick and beautiful apple blossoms, several weeks later the brutal cold snap of May 17 cost them as much as 75 percent of this fall’s crop.



Sara Rodman,
future orchardist.

There are enough pockets of apple trees loaded with fruit on the sloping hillsides that visiting the orchard for a day is still a wonderful opportunity for family fun. Because of the freeze, there just aren’t as many varieties as in past years.

That bothers the Melchior-Rodmans, but, according to the article they are focusing on “their ability to preserve the orchard’s sprawling open space from development while prioritizing the painstaking process of local food production.”

As reported in *The Sandisfield Times* in September 2022 when the sale of the orchard was announced, Bill Riiska



Emily Melchior and Calvin Rodman with their children, Sara, Walter, and Myrna.

Photos: Christina Rahr Lane

who created and developed the orchard with his family said, “I could not bear to have sold it to a developer, to someone who would build tract housing or who would quite change the character of the place.”

Emily and Calvin are attempting to keep the place just that way. To quote Hannah’s article, they are trying to keep “one of their community’s amenities open to the public for the sake of posterity.”

Emily told *Edible Berkshires*: “We think of [the orchard] as a park-like destination and we try to create a relaxed atmosphere where people can just be here and enjoy the space.”

For a two-part profile of Bill and Barbara Riiska and the Riiska Brook Orchard, see *The Sandisfield Times*, September and October 2015. Go to www.SandisfieldTimes.org and to [Library//Archives](#).



Pick Your Own Apples

Open Saturdays and Sundays from 9am – 4pm

101 New Hartford Road, Sandisfield

Check out our Facebook page and website for more info
www.riiskabrookorchard.com



Letters to the Editor

Select Board Complaint

Dear Sandisfield Times:

As a member of the Select Board for the town of Sandisfield, I feel compelled to respond to an article you recently published in your September edition. The article states, "But those in Town Hall charged with protecting all and any part of Sandisfield deemed to be wetland forbade such a plan on environmental grounds. No wet grass could be trampled, no mud disturbed. Only a total closure of the route was acceptable."

That statement is not only incorrect, but incendiary. The state of Massachusetts under the Wetlands Protection Act (Massachusetts General Laws (MGL) Chapter 131, Section 40) protects all wetlands, "trivial" or otherwise (www.mass.gov). The members of the Sandisfield Selectboard have no authority to make wetland designations; wetlands specialists determine the extent of the resource area and how to protect it during any construction and/or remediation project. What we are responsible for is replacing, not repairing, the collapsed culvert with a conventional concrete bridge structure. It is clear the wetlands specialist felt the "nameless tributary" is clearly not "trivial".

The Select Board did not close the road to inconvenience townspeople, aggravate those on the "little traveled dirt lane", or encourage "savvy drivers" to explore alternate routes. Road closures are, unfortunately, necessary, and much consideration was taken to the timing. Not impacting, or disrupting bus routes, was of highest priority. Had the Select Board opted to use a temporary bridge and "traffic lights," instead of the detour, the town would have incurred an additional \$300,000 in cost, not to mention at least 18 months of permitting.

It seems unfortunate that The Sandisfield Times continues to print opinions disguised as facts. Doing so does nothing but further divide our town with misinformation so easily vetted. I have to wonder, why?

– John W. Field Jr., Select Board Member

Editor's Reply

The article that prompted Select Board member John Field's complaint may be read at SandisfieldTimes.org, September 2023 issue, page 10.

Driving a wedge between Sandisfielders has never been the intention of The Times, not in any of the 150-or-so issues we've published since 2010. At times we may write in what we think is an entertaining manner and sometimes our humor can offend. It clearly did here.

We never meant to imply that the Board was in charge of conservation. Nor did we mean to imply that the road closure was meant to "inconvenience townspeople," "aggravate residents" of Silverbrook Road, or "encourage savvy drivers" to find alternate routes. By nature, road closures cause inconvenience to drivers, and we understand that no one did this particularly long and circuitous detour on purpose.

Finally, we regret the inclusion of Mr. Field's last paragraph, which turned an otherwise thoughtful rebuttal to the Times article into an unkind jab at the paper, which we hope does, for the most part, get things right.

– Bill Price, Editor, The Sandisfield Times



sandisfield
ARTS CENTER

★ 5 HAMMERTOWN ROAD, SANDISFIELD, MA ★



**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14
7:00 PM**

ARI AND MIA IN CONCERT

Music that honor Appalachian cottages, rural dance floors and urban concert halls. Their original compositions cross paths with older traditions resulting in a captivating sound.

\$20

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22, 2 PM
FORAGING FOR MUSHROOMS**

Join mushroom expert **Matt Glushien** for gathering, then continue for a cooking demonstration and optional natural wine tasting. Limit 10. **\$30**

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1 THROUGH OCTOBER 22
ANDRE LAMBERSTON DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY**

OPENING RECEPTION 4-6 pm. TALK 5 pm. Andre Lamberston is a photographer, filmmaker and teacher documenting the inspirational lives of resilient people around the globe. (Gallery open during events and by appointment.)



**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28, 10 AM
SANDISFIELD WITHOUT THE TREES**

What would Sandisfield look like if all the trees were magically removed? See for yourself and learn about LIDAR (light detection and ranging) with **Prof. Will Ouimet**, UCONN. Followed by apples, cider and donuts. **\$5**

FOR DETAILS VISIT SANDISFIELDARTSCENTER.ORG



The Librarian's Corner

By Terry Spohnholz

Library hours:

Mon., Tues., and Wed. 9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Wednesday evening 5:00–7:00 p.m.

Saturday, 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Closed Thursday, Friday and Sunday

Phone: 258-4966

Email: sandisfieldlibrary@gmail.com

BOOK CLUB

Sandisfield Woman's Book Club meets at 6:30 p.m. on the 4th Thursday of each month (except as noted below due to the holidays). The club reads a variety of books suggested by members and is always looking for new members. Selections for the next few months are:

- **October** – *The Elephant Whisperer* by Lawrence Anthony with Graham Spenser
- **November** – *Haven* by Ruth Gruber
- **December** (December 2) - *Heidi* by Johanna Spyri

PINOCHLE ANYONE?

The Library is hosting a pinochle group at the library that meets at least once a month; sometimes twice a month. Knowledge of pinochle is

not required – we learn as we go. We will meet next on **Wednesday, October 11 and Wednesday October 25 at 6:30 p.m.**, at the Library. Registration unnecessary. The only prerequisite is a sense of humor.

NEW BOOK ARRIVALS

ADULT FICTION AND NON-FICTION

- *The Art of Desire* by Stacey Abrams
- *Normal Rules Don't Apply* by Kate Atkinson
- *Clive Cussler Condor's Fury* by Graham Brown
- *The Land of Lost Things* by John Connolly
- *The Armor of Light* by Ken Follett
- *The Vaster Lands* by Lauren Groff
- *All the Dead Shall Weep*
- *Reykjavik* by Ragner Jonasson
- *Holly* by Stephen King
- *The River We Remember* by William Kent Kreuger
- *The Unsettled* by Ayana Mathis
- *The Last Devil to Die* by Richard Osman
- *23½ Lies* by James Patterson
- *12 Months to Live* by James Patterson
- *Chalice of the Gods* by Rick Riordan
- *Payback in Death* by J. D. Robb
- *The Fragile Threads of Power* by V. E. Schwab
- *To Infinity and Beyond* by Neil deGrasse Tyson
- *Land of Milk and Honey* by Pam Zhang

- *Vampires of El Norte* by Isabel Canas
- *Dead on Target* by M.C. Beaton
- *The Door to Door Bookstore* by Carsten Henn
- *The Secret Hours* by Mike Herron

NEW TO THE OLDER CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULT SECTION

- *Time of the Turtle King* by Mary Osborne
- *Wrecker* by Carl Hiassen
- *Spy School Goes North* by Stuart Gibbs
- *How the Grinch Lost Christmas*
- *Construction Site* by Sherri Rinker

NEW BOOKS IN THE CHILDREN'S SECTION

- *Pete the Cat and the Space Chase* by Kimberly Dean
- *Dr. Suess's How the Grinch Lost*

Story Time (In the Gazebo if the weather cooperates, in the Children's Section when it doesn't.) Every Saturday at noon and treats too!

OTHER LIBRARY SERVICES

The Children's section is replete with books, games, toys, Brio trains, and lots of arts and crafts supplies. We also offer 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.

SPOOKY READINGS AND COOKIES!!

Story Hour October 30 at NOON we will be reading gentle ghost and Halloween stories followed by cookie decorating. Come join us for some fun!!!

The Library will also be part of the **Recreational Committee's Halloween Trail on Tuesday October 31 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.** Stop by for treats!


BOOKS FOR SALE

Check out our Gently Used Books!!! Curl up this fall with some old favorites or discover a new author. \$1 a book (hard cover) or six for \$5. Fiction, non-fiction and biography.

NOTARY SERVICES

Available when the library is open or by appointment. Please call 907-244-6466 for an appointment.

BOOKS FOR SALE

Check out our Gently Used Books!!! Curl up this season with some old favorites or discover a new author. \$1 a book (hard cover) or six for \$5. Fiction, non-fiction and biography. 

TRICK OR TREAT?

Do you want to see Trick-Or-Treaters on Halloween? RSVP by 10/21/23 to join the map. We will provide house markers prior to Halloween. Trick-Or-Treating will be on Tuesday, October 31st from 5pm to 7pm.

(413) 269-7357
sandisfieldevents@recreationcommittee.info

FREE EVENT
RECREATION COMMITTEE
SANDISFIELD
ALL AGES WELCOME

With 96 miles of road, there's no reason NOT to be on the map!

Sandisfield Halloween Trail



**Sandisfield
Historical
Society**

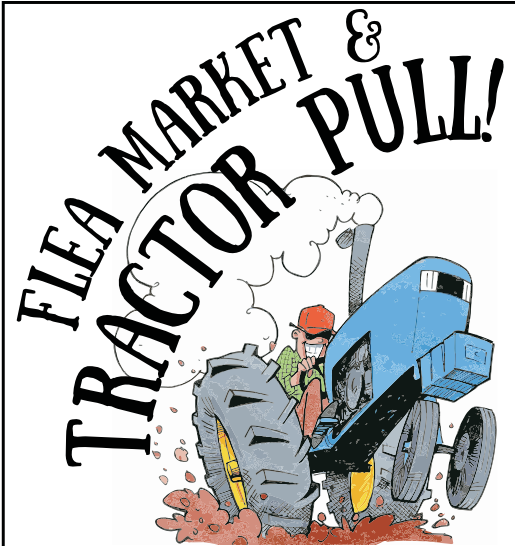
Christmas Fair is Coming December 2!!

By Ann Wald, President

In September, we welcomed Lorraine German, Society member and local historian, who gave an excellent presentation about the history of maple “sugaring” and its importance to Sandisfield’s economy in the 19th century. Charlie Adams, a long-time maple syrup enthusiast, displayed old molds and a variety of antique tools and equipment used to harvest and process the syrup years ago.

Thanks to everyone who participated in the benefit raffle, including all who bought tickets, the businesses in town and the individuals who supported our efforts (see “ATV Winners” on page 2 to see who you are.)

Also, our Christmas Fair comes early this year, on Saturday, December 2. As usual, it will be in Fire House # 2. Interested vendors should contact me at 413-258-4415.



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★ **UPCOMING EVENTS** ★

Oct 1st, 8th, 22nd, 29th - Musical Bingo 2pm
Knox Trail Trivia Night-Thursdays @7pm

Oct 7th The Rattletones 8pm

Oct 14th Barons of Becket 8pm

Oct 15th Hilltown Blues Jam

Oct 21st TBD

No Cover Charge!



recreation COMMITTEE

How to Throw a Community Pig Roast

By the Recreation Committee

Photos: Mary Bredenfoerder and
Ron Bernard

First, you hire a professional Pig Roaster. We were very happy with Ormsbee Gas Co., Mill River (413-229-2800) who brought their big pig cookers.

Then everything else will fall into place. Well, sort of.

After the Town voted to give the Recreation Committee funds specifically for this endeavor, we got to work. We found an excellent venue, the American Legion Pavilion and booked it.

Shopping needed to be done, calls had to be made, food to be ordered, then even more food needed to be ordered. We anticipated approximately 200, but boy were we surprised and delighted that once word spread, responses did not stop.

We even had a call the morning of the roast. Unfortunately, we had to close our RSVP (due to the volume of responses) and inform those that did not contact us by the RSVP date that they were more than welcome to join their neighbors and friends, listen to the band (Harm's Way), watch their kiddos in the bounce house (both funded by The Sandisfield Cultural Council), and then join in at the end of the line.



Tents were raised (some were kindly loaned to us from the COA, some families brought their own), beverages flowed, (beer was anonymously donated), The Roast Pig and all the trimmings were served, dessert was wolfed down, and couples were two-stepping all afternoon.

Friends were reacquainted, some townsfolk met for the first time, and yes, a good time was had by all.

Several days earlier we sent out a plea for volunteers for serving, helping, clean-up, to which many answered the call. We sincerely thank ALL of you. We couldn't have done it without you.

We also want to thank the 180+ attendees for joining us for this Great Community Event

Would you like to see the Pig Roast as an annual event? Let your Select Board know, and next year sign up early to help with the planning and to volunteer your services.

All of the attendees had a good time, and the members of the Recreation Committee – and all our volunteers – did too.

Hope to see you next year. 🇺🇸



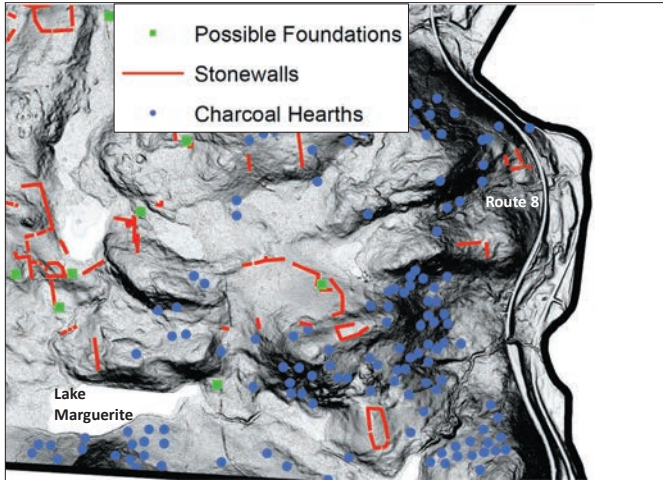
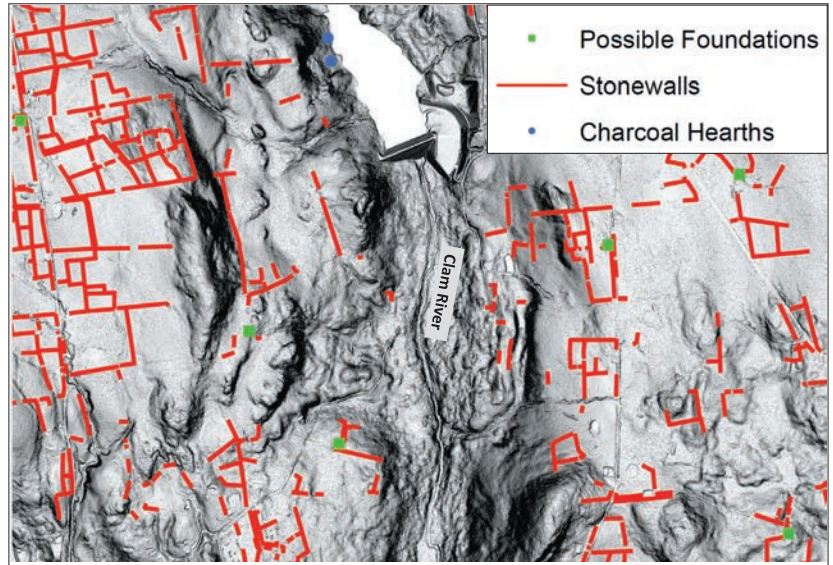


Sandisfield Without the Trees

By Suzanne O'Connell, Sears Road

It's difficult to imagine what it was like to walk around Sandisfield 100 or 150 years ago. But you can find out at the Sandisfield Arts Center on Saturday, October 28.

Professor Will Ouimet, University of Connecticut, will describe his and his student's work in Sandisfield using LIDAR, a light detection and ranging technology.



That long ago, Sandisfield was mostly open fields, forests having been cut for timber and charcoal. Sheep stayed inside extensive stone wall enclosures. Maple trees made us the sugaring capital of the state. We don't have a time machine to return to that landscape, but we do have LIDAR.

LIDAR data are collected by small aircraft outfitted with a laser scanner, a Global Positioning System (GPS), and an Inertial Navigation System (INS). The laser scanner transmits brief pulses of light to the ground surface, which are reflected or scattered back to the airplane. Their travel time is recorded and used to calculate the distance between the laser scanner and the ground and hence the elevation. This technology allows the vegetation to be stripped away and detailed models of ground elevation with a vertical accuracy of about 4 inches can be created.



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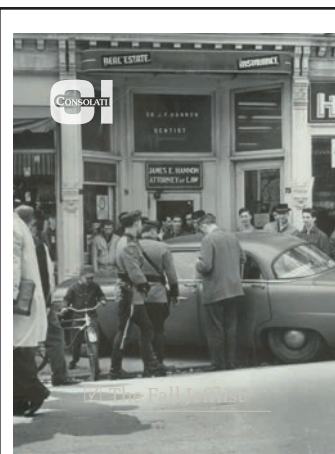
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Council on Aging



COA Perspectives

By Nina Carr

We'd just like to remind all seniors that we are still hosting our weekly "Coffee Hour" on Wednesday mornings at 10 at Council on Aging, Town Hall basement. Join us!

We are also offering a special lunch once a month at noon on the third Wednesday of the month. This month that will be on Oct 18.

Most importantly is the Flu Shot Clinic on October 4. The Senior Dose will be available.

And the COA will host a Wellness Fair on October 14 from 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. at the VFW Pavilion on Rt 8. The CHP Mobile Van will be there along with Elder Services and more.

AMERICAN LEGION PAVILION AVAILABLE FOR GROUPS

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A Matter of Balance

HELP FOR YOUR FEAR OF FALLING

Contacts: Beth Hoffman, Kay Purcell, Linda Riiska

The Sandisfield and Monterey Councils on Aging will repeat the Matter of Balance program in Monterey in October. There is no charge for the series.

To register call (413) 528-1443 x 112.

OCTOBER SCHEDULE

Classes will be at the Monterey Community Center, 468 Main Road (Rt. 23).

On Monday, October 2 and Thursday, October 5.

The Sandisfield Recreation Committee

INVITES YOU TO A

HALLOWEEN

WITH DJ JONNY JAMS

Dance

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SUNDAY, OCT 22ND | 5PM - 8PM

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The Sandisfield Arts Center

Photos, Music, Mushrooms, LIDAR

By Hilde Weisert

October at the Arts Center is a feast for the senses, starting with the world through the eyes of award-winning documentary photojournalist/filmmaker Andre Lambertson. Opening reception in the Gallery from 4 to 6 p.m., with a 5 p.m. slide-show and talk by the photographer.. Lambertson documents stories of resilient people around the globe. He received a Pulitzer Center grant in 2010 for a yearlong project in Haiti. The show runs until October 22.



On Saturday October 14 at 7:30 pm, is New England's Americana sister act, folk duo Ari and Mia, the sounds of Appalachian cottages, rural dance floors, and urban concert halls. SingOut magazine wrote: "Their works are soothing and fresh, tasteful and accomplished." This will be a popular show so get your tickets soon.

Earlier on the 14th, at 1:30 p.m., we will hold an opening ceremony for our Memorial Garden which will honor the late Val Coleman, longtime volunteer, Board member, and speaker.

On Saturday October 22, from 2:00-4:00 P.M., we bring back last-year's sold-out "Foraging for Mushrooms" with mushroom expert Matt Glushien leading a walk to gather mushrooms and help us learn what is and isn't good to eat. Followed by a delight for taste and smell with a cooking demonstration and optional natural-wine tasting.

We round out October's sensory events on the 28th with a fascinating look at "Sandisfield Without the Trees. See Suzanne O'Connell's report about LIDAR and what you'll experience at this fascinating presentation on page 12.

For more information, go to www.sandisfieldartscenter.org.



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Looking Glass Gardens and the Sandisfield Recreation Committee
19 Dodd Road, Sandisfield

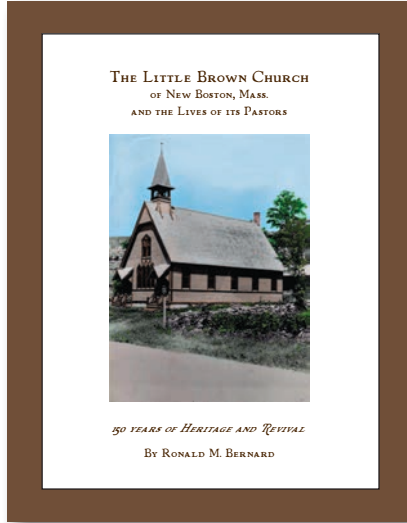
RSVP by 9/24/23 to (413) 269-7357 or sandisfieldevents@recreationcommittee.info



Autumnal Crafting Baking Contest
\$2 Pony Rides
Hayrides

New Boston Church History Book

PRE-PUBLICATION ORDERS BEING TAKEN



Sandisfield history writer, Ron Bernard is taking orders for his latest book, *The Little Brown Church of New Boston, Mass., and the Lives of Its Pastors: 150 Years of Heritage and Revival*, which was announced in last month's issue.

The 400-plus page book tells the story of the Congregational churches in Sandisfield from 1754 through today and particularly the definitive history of the venerable New Boston church and its congregation since inception in 1874.

Besides biographies of all 45 pastors (including some "native sons") who

presided at the historic "Little Brown Church," there are also many new (and expanded) general historical accounts that were not included in the history of the town, *Sandisfield Then & Now* published in 2012. Anyone interested in the history of Sandisfield will find much to enjoy in this book.

A special pre-publication price of \$25 is available for orders received before November 15. This *limited* edition book should be available by December 2nd, in time for the annual Christmas Fair at Fire House 2. Net proceeds from the sale will go to the New Boston Church. See order form below.

PRE-PUBLICATION ORDER FORM

The Little Brown Church of New Boston, Mass.

Please reserve ___ copy(s) at special pre-publication price of \$25 each plus \$6 each for shipping if necessary. *

I'll save the shipping charge and pick up my book(s) in Sandisfield.

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Ronald Bernard, P.O. Box 91, Sandisfield, MA 01255

Net proceeds to benefit the New Boston Congregational Church

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Email: _____

Phone: _____

Enclosed is my check No. _____ for \$ _____

For more information, contact, Ronbernard@aol.com

Note: This is a limited edition book. Don't wait. Order now!

*Pre-publication price good through November 15, 2023 ST10/23

↑ Name That Weed

THE INVASIVE AT OUR DOORSTEP SWEET CLOVER SOUNDS TOO NICE

By Tom Christopher, Sears Road

Last month The Times reported how Bonner McAllister of Monterey identified the apparently new invasive weed that is appearing along the sunny sections of many of our paved roads.

Apparently it is not a new invasive, just one that seems to have gotten a jump on our roadside mowing.

Bonner explained that this invader is Sweet Clover. And yes, it does spread rapidly, encroaching two or three feet over the road edges and reaching, in some cases seven feet in height.

It is a nuisance and threatens to become a danger to drivers and those few of us on bicycles because we can't see around the stuff to practice our defensive driving.

Bonner convinced our correspondent that despite the fact that this species' flowers don't resemble the pom-pom-like blossoms of white clover (*Trifolium repens*), the familiar feature of healthy lawns, sweet clovers do belong to the same botanical tribe. Bonner also pushed back – gently – on our characterization of white sweet clover as a weed. "I'd just call it a plant, myself" was her response.

In fact, white sweet clover is a plant not without virtues. Brought to North America from Europe as a forage crop for colonists' cattle and horses in the 17th century, white sweet clover is, like all true clovers, a legume, which means that its roots partner with a soil bacteria to convert nitrogen from the atmosphere into a form that serves the plant as a natural fertilizer. This makes it especially competitive on poor soils such as might be found along roadsides.

However, white sweet clover thrives on a wide range of soil types, and is salt resistant (another plus for a roadside plant), and because of deep roots is able to find sufficient moisture even during times of drought. It is also exceptionally cold hardy, growing as a biennial and over-wintering successfully as far north as Alaska. White sweet clover is also a prolific seeder and the nectar of its flowers are a favorite of honeybees.

SO WHAT'S NOT TO LIKE ABOUT THIS PLANT?

Unfortunately, those same qualities which make it so successful as a forage crop also give white sweet clover the ability to invade native grasslands and meadows, and displace native wildflowers and grasses.

This doesn't bother honeybees (another introduction from Europe) as they are able to feed on a wide variety of flowers. Our native bees and other native insects, however, tend to be much more specific in their tastes, more typically relying on a select group of native plants, or even in some cases just one, for their food. The native wildflowers in turn commonly depend on these native insects for their pollination and often cannot reproduce successfully without them. By interrupting this interaction between the native insects and native plants, introduced plants such as white sweet clover degrades local ecosystems, making them more vulnerable to invasion.

White sweet clover is far from the only invasive introduced plant you'll find along Sandisfield's roadsides.

In fact, because disturbed soils are easy prey for invasives, roadsides are

something of a nursery for such species. These plants arrived in New England in a number of ways. Common burdock (*Arctium minus*) another common roadside plant, was a 16th century introduction from Europe, probably crossing the Atlantic as hitchhiker in farm seeds. Coltsfoot (*Tussilago farfara*) which is also ubiquitous on our roadsides was probably transplanted from Europe deliberately because it was valued as an herbal cough remedy.

Common reed (*Phragmites australis*) which has overrun many of our roadside ditches, belongs to a species that is actually native to North America as well as Europe and Asia. The aggressive form that too often chokes New England wetlands is believed to be European in origin and is thought to have been introduced to North America through seeds unwittingly included in the sand or soil used as ballast in 19th century sailing ships; the ballast was often dumped at American ports to make room for cargo.

A new and particularly unlovable invader of Sandisfield's roadsides is the giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), which looks a bit like a Queen Anne's lace on steroids, growing to a height of 14 feet or more with similarly outsized leaves and white flowerheads as much as 2.5 feet in diameter. This seems to have been introduced to eastern North America as a garden curiosity in the early 20th century. Contact with its sap, followed by exposure to sunlight, causes painful blistering and in the eyes may lead to blindness. This reporter has found it to be resistant to herbicides.



Aside from the pleasure this brings to Sandisfield's inhabitants, scenic beauty is, arguably, our town's chief economic asset. It's too late to keep invasive plants out of our roadsides. But watching the shoulders and ditches and beating back any invasive plants as they infiltrate from there can help to protect the ecological health of our woods, wetlands, and meadows.

That's essential not only to the local economy but also to our pleasure in our homes. 🏡

WHY DOES ALL THIS MATTER?

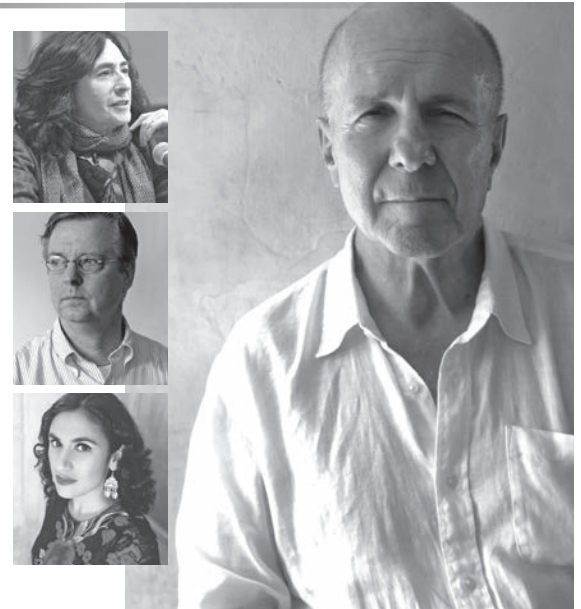
Sandisfield, despite its history of land clearance and the introduction of non-native plants as farm crops, retains many remarkably intact native plant habitats. A springtime walk in our woods is rewarded with sightings of many wildflowers such as native orchids that are rare in much of New England. The survival of these native plants have much to do with the local abundance of native wildlife.



**A WRITER AND A ROBOT WALK INTO A BAR:
Writing in the Age of Artificial Intelligence
SIMON WINCHESTER**

**October 7
4:30 p.m.**

Simon Winchester returns to The Meeting House to lead a discussion on the future of writing in the age of AI with three distinguished figures in the world of letters: Francine Prose, writer of fiction and nonfiction and critic, is the author of twenty-one novels, including *Blue Angel*, which was a finalist for the National Book Award; Timothy Bent, Executive Editor of Trade Books for Oxford University Press; and author Chandra Prasad, whose forthcoming novel focuses on the intersection between artificial intelligence, identity and environmental ethics.



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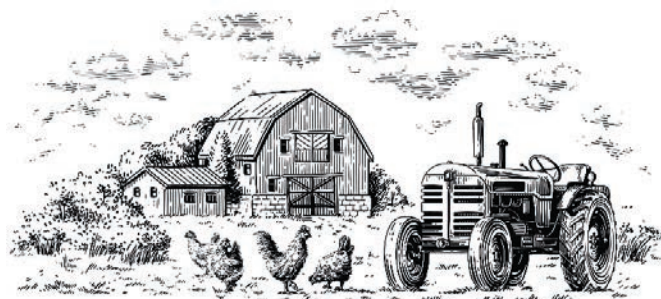
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ODE TO A CHANGING SEASON

Photo and text by *Brigitte Ruthman,*
 Joshua's Farm, Dodd Road

The sun is setting on another growing season. Twelve hours and seven minutes of daylight, a loss of a couple of minutes every day.

Joshua Smith, who farmed this land centuries ago, must have had a hand in gifting the most beautiful four days of sunlight and gentle drying breezes this week, following what has been one of the most disastrous hay seasons in memory. Yes, climate change.

For the first time in many, many years, the two big fields at the top of Dodd Road – brought back from neglect – were partially cut to give a limited harvest of soft grasses that will become haylage through the winter.



I moved the round bales, formed by Joe Burkhart's expert touch on machinery, until midnight Friday as the cold air seeped in and a white cloud of exhaled breath blurred the tractor lights.

Joe's older tractor had no lights. He did it by feel, in the dark, turning windrows set there by my nephew Michael.

And, with minutes to spare as the fringe of a tropical storm moved in the following morning, the last of the bales were wrapped and set safe along the side of the field. Twenty-six in all, including the bale I missed in the dark. They weren't perfectly dry but round baling is easier than the old way of raking it by hand and putting it on an ox-drawn wagon.

Thanks to Evan, Michael, Joe and Anna (who, as I did more than a half century ago, learned to drive with a clutch on a tractor – a skill transferable to cars.)



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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 in-person and via Zoom at 6:30 p.m. on Mondays unless otherwise posted. 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. No pre-registration necessary. Led by Nina Carr. This fun program includes free play, crafts, stories, and songs! A great time to meet up with friends and meet new friends! 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. Snacks and conversation! For more information, contact Nina Carr (258-3314). Free.

Chair Yoga with Wendy Larsen 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.

New Boston Church Service on select Sundays at 10:00 a.m. at the New Boston Congregational Church, Route 57. All are welcome.

Apple Festival and Bake Contest on Sunday, October 1 at 2:00 p.m. at Riiska Brook Orchard on New Hartford Road sponsored by the Sandisfield Historical Society. For more information, contact Ann (258-4415).

Flu Vaccine Clinic on Wednesday, October 4, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Town Hall, Council on Aging, Basement Level. Regular and senior dose flu shots will be available, in addition to the new Covid vaccine if they are available. Pre-registration is required at www.home.color.com/vaccine/register/tritown. To register by phone, please call Jill Sweet (413-717-7209). No charge, but please bring your insurance card, COVID card if applicable, and wear a short-sleeved shirt.

Tractor Pull & Flea Market on Sunday, October 8, 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., at the American Legion Pavilion. No entry fee, all welcome, free to spectators.

Oktoberfest on Sunday, October 8 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Looking Glass Gardens on 19 Dodd Road. Drink, food, and beer available for purchase. Music, crafts, baking contest, \$2 pony rides with Sunny Rose Farm, and hayrides. RSVP at 413-269-7357 or sandisfieldevents@

recreationcommittee.info. **Town Charter Committee/Select Board joint meeting** on Tuesday, October 10, at 6:30 p.m., at Town Hall. Zoom information will be posted online.

Wellness Fair on Saturday, October 14, from 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. at the VFW Pavilion on Rt. 8. The CHP Mobile Van will be there along with Elder Services and others. Sponsored by Sandisfield COA.

Folk Duo Ari and Mia in Concert on Saturday, October 14 from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center on 5 Hammertown Road. Come hear New England's Americana sister act, folk duo Ari and Mia, perform music that honors the sounds of Appalachian cottages, rural dance floors, and urban concert halls. Their own compositions cross paths with older traditions making for a captivating sound. Visit sandisfieldartscenter.org for tickets or at the door. \$20.

Autumn Appreciation Hike at Bob's Way on Friday, October 20 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Route 57 in Monterey/Sandisfield. Enjoy the crisp air and beautiful colors of peak fall foliage. Enjoy a special fall treat by the beaver pond and appreciate the spectacular view of the colors reflecting on the water. Please pre-register at www.bnrc.org.

New Boston Church Service on Sunday, October 22, at 10:00 a.m. at the New Boston Congregational Church, Route 57. All are welcome.

Foraging for Mushrooms on Sunday, October 22 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at the Sandisfield Arts Center on 5 Hammertown Road. Join mushroom expert Matt Glushien for a walk to gather mushrooms, then continue for a cooking demonstration and optional natural wine tasting. Visit sandisfieldartscenter.org for tickets \$30.

Halloween Dance on Sunday, October 22 from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m. at Fire House #2. DJ Johnny Jams is back! Sponsored by the Sandisfield Recreational Committee. RSVP by October 7 at sandisfieldevents@recreationcommittee.info or call 413-269-7357.

Sandisfield Woman's Book Club on Thursday, October 26 at 6:30 p.m. at the Sandisfield Public Library. The book selection for October is *The Elephant Whisperer* by Lawrence Anthony and Graham Spenser.

Harvest Dinner sponsored by the New Boston Congregational Church on Saturday, October 28, 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. \$15/adults, \$6/children 12 and under. Take-out available.

Sandisfield without the Trees on Saturday, October 28 from 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. at the Sandisfield Arts

Center on 5 Hammertown Road. What would Sandisfield look like if all the trees were magically removed? What did it look like when it was more farms than forests? See for yourself and learn about LIDAR (light detection and ranging) with Professor Will Ouimet from the University of Connecticut. Followed by cider, donuts, and Riiska Brook Orchard apples. Visit sandisfieldartscenter.org for tickets. \$5.

Town-Wide Trick or Treat on Tuesday, October 31 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. If you would like to welcome trick-or-treaters and be included on the Sandisfield Halloween Trail Map, please contact the Sandisfield Recreational Committee at 413-269-7357 or sandisfieldevents@recreationcommittee.info. Driveway markers will be provided prior to Halloween.

ONLINE EVENTS

A Farm and Garden Show with Sandisfield Residents Bill Taylor and Jaye Alison Moscardiello streamed every Monday, from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. at berkshireradio.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. No pre-registration necessary. Meet for stories and songs followed by creative crafts. For information, please call Nina Carr (258-3314). Free!

Transformational Breathwork with Sandisfield residents Antonia and Roger Vanoro on the last Friday of every month from 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. at the Monterey Community Center. A combination of deep rhythmic breathing, vocalization, self-massage, and energetic movement. Suggested fee is \$30. For more information, visit ccmonterey.org.

Great Barrington Farmers 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.

A Matter of Balance program on Monday, October 2, and Thursday, October 5 from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the Monterey Community Center on 468 Main Street. To register, please call 413-528-1443, ext. 112. Free.

Ed the Wizard's Pirate Party will hoist sails on Wednesday, October 4, at 5:00 p.m. at the Otis Library. Enjoy this fun, family-friendly Piriatical Party with games and a treasure hunt. This program is sponsored, in part, by a grant from the Otis Cultural Council.

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

P.O. Box 584
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Editorial Staff

Editor: Bill Price

email: 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

How to Contact Us

Mail can be directed to

The Sandisfield Times, PO Box 584, Sandisfield, MA 01255.

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