

# THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

*Tribunus*



*Plebis*

RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume XIV, Number 10

January/February 2024

## Ralph's Side of the Story

By Larry Dwyer

*Editor's note: Fire Chief Ralph Morrison had not told his side of the story of what led to his resignation until he sat down with Times reporter Larry Dwyer in December.*

*The resignation followed a two-month investigation into the September crash of a Sandisfield fire truck and subsequent events by the Town's three-member Select Board, the Town attorney, and the Town Manager. Investigation results were published following an Executive Session of the Select Board, November 13, minutes of which were made available on the Town website at the end of November. The Sandisfield Times summarized the minutes in its December issue.*

*Throughout the investigation, the Chief was invited to comment or provide information to reporters from The Berkshire Eagle and The Sandisfield Times. Each time, he declined.*

*Now, following the completion of the Town investigation, Ralph agreed to speak with Larry, whose report follows:*

Ralph said, "On the night of the tanker accident, none of the selectmen or town manager came out to the scene of the accident. I called Steven Seddon and informed him of what happened, and Steven told me to do what I thought was best. At the time, I felt that the best thing to do was to secure the truck because of the equipment that was still onboard. I spoke with the State Police, and they said it was okay to move the truck since nobody was injured. They also told me that the state would not inspect the truck, because it was a municipal vehicle."

When working with the insurance company, Ralph was requested to submit a bill for storage. Ralph said, "They [insurance adjuster] said I had to write a bill for storage, but I never submitted a bill to the town for storage. It was R&W Towing in Lee that towed the truck."

Ralph has now resigned, he said, because he feels that he cannot work with the current Select Board and Town Manager. 🍷



Jennifer Pilbin closes her gate following a Board of Health inspection last July. Photo: Jane Kaufman, The Berkshire Eagle. Used with permission.

## "Cityiots" Win a Round

### PILBIN ORDERED NOT TO LIVE ON HER PROPERTY

*Editor's Note: The drama is continuing out there in Sandisfield's Northwest corner. It even garnered a feature article by Jane Kaufman in The Berkshire Eagle this month*

*Jennifer Pilbin, who had purchased 52 acres on West Hubbard, purportedly to build a cannabis farm, had lived on the property in a trailer, possibly sometimes in an automobile, without building anything beyond the enmity of her neighbors, the Sandisfield Board of Health, and several generations of Select Board members.*

*Now a judge has ordered her – and her animals and chickens – not to live on the uninhabitable property.*

*The story and photographs, published January 13, are republished here with permission from The Eagle.*

– Bill Price, Editor

**Story by Jane Kaufman, The Eagle's Community Voices Editor. January 13, 2023**

SANDISFIELD — Jennifer M. Pilbin has kept three dogs, chickens and ducks on property she owns at 12 West Hubbard Road.

But she is now facing a court order barring her — and the animals — from living on the property, which the Board of Health has ruled is not fit for human habitation.

The town's Board of Health has won a preliminary injunction against Pilbin and her mother, MaryAlice O'Connor, ordering them to vacate the trailer on the property and to "relocate to suitable alternative housing" by Friday [January 19].

Pilbin has been the subject of neighbors' complaints since she bought the property in 2019 for \$99,900. At the time she took a mortgage of \$74,925.

*Cont'd on p.6*



## Sandisfield Seasonal Employment Opportunity: Plowing and Snow Maintenance

### BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

- Library/Community Center,  
23 Sandisfield Road
- Old Town Hall,  
3 Silverbrook Road
- Highway Garage,  
5 Silverbrook Road
- Town Hall Annex,  
66 Sandisfield Road
- Transfer Station,  
144 Sandisfield Road
- Wilbur Park, Route 8

- Fire Station #1,  
79 South Main Street, Route 8
- Fire Station #2,  
207 Sandisfield Road
- Yanner Park, Town Hill Road

### CEMETERIES

- Route 57 Cemeteries:
- Center Cemetery, across from the  
Town Transfer Station, Sandisfield Rd.
- West New Boston Cemetery,  
near Carr Field
- Roberts Cemetery on Roberts Road
- South Sandisfield Cemetery,  
Route 183

Primary duties include plowing out all above listed Town Buildings and Cemeteries, shoveling out all entryways/walkways, and sanding/salting the areas. Frequency will vary due to weather, but plowing/shoveling will preferably be done immediately after snowfall, but must be done no later than 7:00am the following day. Bidders must utilize their own trucks, tailgate salt/sand spreaders, and any other necessary tools. Salt and sand material can be obtained from the DPW Garage. Submit price per storm proposals via email to [jbeardsley@sandisfieldma.gov](mailto:jbeardsley@sandisfieldma.gov).



## Public Hearing 1/29/24

### OPTING OUT OF OFFERING VOTE BY MAIL FOR THE LOCAL ELECTION, MAY 2024

In accordance with the requirements of Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40A, Section 11, and the Votes Act, the Sandisfield Select Board will hold a public hearing on Monday, January 29, 2024 at 6:30pm at the Town Hall, 66 Sandisfield Rd., to opt out of offering vote by mail for the Local Election in May 2024.

The process of sending out Vote by Mail ballots requires the Town Clerk to mail out ballots to all requesters. These requesters must then fill out the ballot, send it back to Town Hall where the Town Clerk processes the ballot. In 2024 the Town Clerk will conduct this process for three separate elections, the Presidential Primary, the State Primary and the General Election.

The Vote by Mail process is time consuming, expensive and unnecessary for Sandisfield's small upcoming Local Election in May. Please note, this will not affect absentee voting and residents will still have the option for absentee early voting.

In order for a Town with 1,500 or less voters to opt out of offering Vote by Mail for early voting, Massachusetts General Law requires a Public Hearing and public roll call vote by the Select Board. If you would like to voice your opinion on the matter, please attend the Public Hearing on Monday, January 29 at 6:30pm in person or via Zoom.

Vote by Mail ballots will still be available for the Presidential Primary in March, the State Primary in September and the General Election in November. Absentee voting will not be impacted.

Opting out of Vote by Mail will be an annual process, so should the Town dislike not having this option, the Select Board can choose not to opt out for the next Local Election.

## Online Voter Registration Update

### NEWS FROM TOWN CLERK DOUG MINER'S OFFICE

As the 2024 election season approaches, we want to make sure everyone is ready to exercise their right to vote. There is now a convenient way for you to check your voter registration status online.

Simply visit our Town Clerk's webpage and look for the shiny new button that says "ONLINE VOTER REGISTRATION."

Once you are on the STATE'S VOTER REGISTRATION PAGE you can do 4 things -

1. Register to Vote
2. Update Address /Party affiliation
3. Update Name
4. Check Registration Info

By using this online feature, you can quickly verify your voter registration details, ensuring that everything is in order for the upcoming elections. We understand how busy everyone is, so we've made this process as simple and convenient as possible.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact the Town Clerk's Office at [townclerk@sandisfieldma.gov](mailto:townclerk@sandisfieldma.gov) or 413-258-4711 Ext. 2.

Thank you for being an active and engaged member of our community. Let's make this election season a great one!



# Messages for Ralph and the Team

## FOR THE FIREHOUSE AT THE CHRISTMAS FAIR

To everyone who helped us at the Christmas Fair, we send a huge THANK YOU. Not only for putting the tables down and then coming back to put them away, but also taking care of the sign at the Firehouse. Also, thanks for letting us use the building.

*From everyone at the Historical Society*

## A GIFT FOR THE TEAM

Your ambulance team, Mike, Alex, and Sherry, were terrific! They attended to my husband, Richard Friedman. We were very impressed and grateful. Please divide up the chocolates in the little bags and give one to each of them. Please keep one to yourself as EMT chief. We are so thankful to all of you.

*Sincerely, Ruth Dec-Friedman*

## A SIMPLE THANK YOU CARD

Ralph, Thank you for all your years of service. I am sorry it is ending this way. You will be remembered for all you have done for the Fire Department's keeping our town safe.

The steak roast, Sandisfield fairs, Memorial Day parades, the new firehouse itself, would not have been done without your leadership.

Tony and I thank you!!

*Pat Creem  
New Hartford Road*



# Non Emergency Communications Update

Sandisfield has joined dozens of other towns now using the Berkshire County Sheriff's 9-1-1 Regional Dispatch Center for non-emergency communications.

When you call the local non-emergency number, (413) 258-4742, it will ring at the Dispatch Center and, depending on the nature of the call, then be forwarded to our local public safety officials.

The Berkshire County Sheriff's 9-1-1 Regional Dispatch Center, located at the Sheriff's Office headquarters at 467 Cheshire Road in Pittsfield, provides Police, Fire and EMS emergency and non-emergency communications for (26) twenty-six communities in Berkshire, Hampden, and Hampshire counties.

# Ralph Morrison, a Dedicated Leader

*By Larry Dwyer*

I, for one, am sorry to see Ralph Morrison resign as Fire Chief, a position he held for the last 42 years. His tenure as a volunteer is even longer, counting the time he joined the firehouse at the age of fifteen, when Ludwik (Tiny) Pluszcz was fire chief.

I know Ralph to be an outstanding leader, one who is highly respected by the Fire and EMT volunteers. Throughout the years he has made hundreds of calls at all times of the day, nights, weekends, and holidays in order to keep the Town safe.

He has been available for almost every Town emergency. For example, during the ice storm of 2008, when the Massachusetts National Guard was called out for assistance, Ralph spent eleven days at the firehouse.

Ralph has resigned, he said, because he feels that he cannot work with the current Town leaders.

An opening for Fire Chief has been posted on the Town website. The job requires extensive training and certifications. The current compensation is \$11,037.60 as an annual stipend plus \$25 per hour for calls.

Ralph will continue to serve with the Sandisfield Fire Department in a reduced capacity. He said he will be available to assist the future Fire Chief.

**The Sandisfield Recreation Committee**  
INVITES YOU TO JOIN US FOR  
**Valentine Themed Crafting + Refreshments**

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**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10TH | 10AM - 12PM**  
**FIRE STATION #1 RTE. 8**

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Decorate, paint and bedazzle mini keepsake boxes for your Valentine. Light refreshments will be served as well. Please join us for this free event, all are welcome.

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[SANDISFIELDEVENTS@RECREATIONCOMMITTEE.INFO](mailto:SANDISFIELDEVENTS@RECREATIONCOMMITTEE.INFO)



# A Zoom Event to Celebrate the Roadside Café Reopening Soon

## WHAT'S HAPPENING AT GOULD FARM: THE ROADSIDE CAFÉ AND MORE

Gould Farm's Roadside Store and Cafe has been a fixture of Monterey, Massachusetts since 1978. Over the years, Roadside has been featured in magazines such as Bon Appetit, the New York Times, Esquire, and Edible Berkshires. People came for the pancakes and stayed for the warm atmosphere.

Roadside served up farm fresh food for the community and provided a healing work environment for people with mental health challenges. Recently the structure that formerly housed the Roadside reached its century mark and was no longer meeting the needs of Gould Farm's guests. After several months of careful planning and thanks to the generosity of many donors, the brand new and improved Roadside Store and Cafe is on track to reopen in 2024.

Established in 1913, Gould Farm was the first residential community in the nation devoted to helping adults surmount mental health challenges and progress toward recovery, wellness, and greater independence through a combination of community living, meaningful work, and clinical support.

The Otis Historical Commission and Otis Preservation Trust is hosting its second Notice Otis event on February 15, Thursday, at 7:00 p.m. over Zoom. "What's Happening at Gould Farm: the Roadside Café and More." To register or for more information, visits [otispreservationtrust.com](http://otispreservationtrust.com) or [townofotis.com](http://townofotis.com). There is no charge for the event. Donations are welcome.

The program is supported in part by a grant from the Otis Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, an agency of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.



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## Development's Hidden Cost

### A HUGE BURDEN UNLESS PLANNED FOR

By Alex Bowman

The Highway Department's former superintendent recently estimated that the cost to recondition approximately 800 feet of the unmaintained portion of Dodd Road could be up to 20 percent of the annual maintenance budget, about \$20,000.

That estimate only covered getting the road passable by construction vehicles, and did not include the additional time and resources needed for annual maintenance of grading, plowing, gritting, mowing, and ditching.

The failure to maintain or discontinue roads is leaving current taxpayers exposed. New owners are buying cheap, large and remote parcels and requiring that unmaintained roads be brought up to standard – essentially getting a private benefit at taxpayer expense.

There are about 11 miles of unmaintained roads in Sandisfield. Most are in remote areas and abutters have not requested they be maintained. However, requests are accelerating as the best real estate deals are found in the most remote spots. If the \$20,000 per 800 feet estimate is about right, it would take more than 16 years of the full maintenance budget just to make these roads passable.

In July 2020, at a regular Select Board meeting Dan Garrity requested better four-season access to his structure at 36 Roberts Road. The Select Board, seeing that the town was legally obligated to do so, made it happen.

Brian O'Rourke was the Chair of that Select Board. Less than three months earlier he had purchased 159 acres for a little more than \$1,000/acre that lay beyond the maintained portion of Dodd Road. The parcel has 2600 feet of frontage on Dodd Road, and over 2300 feet of frontage on a long-unmaintained portion of Sullivan Road. The estimate of \$20,000 for the approximately 800-feet of unmaintained Dodd Road was in order for equipment to reach that property.

Sandisfield has been seeing increased demand on remote roads and will likely see more because of an uptick in "Approval Not Required" or Form A divisions. Franklin Woods Investments, an LLC which appears to be based in Bennington Vermont, has bought large parcels throughout town. In each instance, a large parcel has been divided into multiple and resold. The only requirement for division is that each parcel meet the town's dimensional requirements: 1 acre and 100 feet of road frontage. Unmaintained roads count for frontage.

Sandisfield has an excessive number of road miles under its care, considering its small population and absence of business activity. Every new driveway on an unmaintained road diverts an outsized portion of time and resources from the town's long list of repair and maintenance projects. It will take years and years of new taxes just to repay the initial costs – and that does not account for added maintenance requirements.

To prevent further exploitation of public funds, we need to call on the Select Board and Planning Board to determine the best course of action for all sections of unmaintained roads. 🇺🇸

### 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.*



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## "Cityiots" Win a Round

Cont'd from p.1

Sandisfield town staff have tried repeatedly to work with her to stop her from living on the property due to its poor condition. In response to a complaint filed in Western Housing Court in Springfield, a judge issued a ruling Jan. 2 in the town's favor.

In addition, "no animals or birds may be kept in the trailer," according to the order from Judge Jeffrey Winik. The order also gives the town permission to inspect the property for compliance at 11 a.m. Wednesday. [January 17]

At a July 6 Board of Health inspection of her property, Pilbin told The Eagle she had sworn in court that she was not living on the premises. She said she was staying at her uncle's house in Windsor, Conn.

"You can mind your ... business," Pilbin said following a Board of Health inspection of her property. "I'm not living here."

"The dogs have air conditioning," she said at the time. "The chickens have their light at night when it's cool."

However, on Sept. 25, the same day she filed for bankruptcy, Pilbin filed a declaration of homestead. In doing so, she named the West Hubbard Road address as her principal residence, apparently in an effort to protect it from attachment, seizure, execution on judgment, levy or sale for the payment of debts.

One of her eight creditors, States Resources Corp. of Omaha, has set a date of Feb. 28 to auction her property. Her bankruptcy filing will block that auction from taking place.

The town filed a civil complaint in Western Housing Court on Nov. 17 against Pilbin. She is representing herself in that matter.

On behalf of the town's Board of Health, registered sanitarian Jayne Smith of Southern Berkshire Public Health Collaborative, filed an affidavit.

At the July 6 inspection, Smith noted the following: "rubbish and trash, bagged and unbagged, on the property; a burn barrel, propane tanks along the trailer for cooking and heating, a running generator and a chicken coop and run with about 40 animals (chickens and ducks) with soggy bedding and associated strong odors," according to Sandisfield Board of Health minutes from July 12.

At that same meeting, Pilbin told the Board of Health, she "cooks outside, uses paper plates, utensils and they put the utensils in garbage bags and bring them to Windsor," according to the minutes.



*Jennifer Pilbin met with health officials in a July inspection of her property. From left, Pilbin, registered sanitarian Jayne Smith of Southern Berkshire Public Health Collaborative, a town health official, and Police Chief Mike Morrison.*

She also told the Board of Health she would be sleeping in her car on the property for the following 10 days and that she was going to grow her own food on the property.

Pilbin said her neighbors have their "own issues."

"It's just all these New Yorkers; they're the classic cityiots," she said, defining the term as "a city person who moves here and wants to change the world." 🇺🇸

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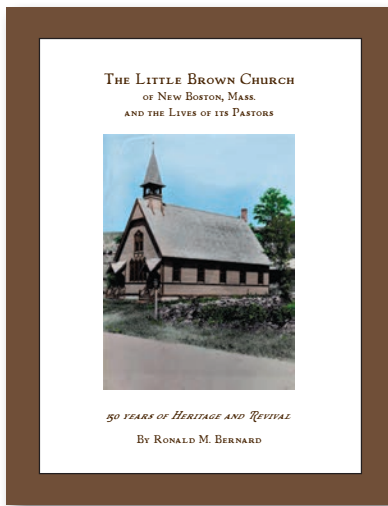


## Book Review

# "The Little Brown Church of New Boston, Mass."

By Gary Leveille

A book about a church? Before you start to yawn, please stay with me. This is not your average church tome. Far from it.



Author and local historian/detective Ron Bernard has discovered fascinating tales of Sandisfield history that go well beyond the doors of a small church. With painstaking research, the author details 150 years of heritage, survival and revival. The front cover features a handsome old photograph of the church, beautifully colorized by Jean Atwater-Williams.

Best known as the "Little Brown Church," the charming Congregational Church on Route 57 was erected in 1879. Like many small, rural churches, membership eventually dwindled, and closure threatened. But in recent years, a miracle has manifested.

A handful of faithful, hardworking parishioners teamed up with popular Reverend Eric Kriebel from Torrington, Conn., to breathe new life into the once-struggling church. Talk about a spiritual reawakening. Presently, folks even venture from surrounding towns once a month to attend this church. As Pastor Eric states toward the end of the book, "... we hope and pray that the church will continue as an unconditionally welcoming place of fellowship and community for many years to come."

The Little Brown Church was born out of a failed railroad enterprise and resultant economic misfortune. It's a fascinating, yet little-known Berkshire story. You'll discover how this important aspect of Sandisfield's heritage influenced much of the town's history. Readers will find captivating accounts of local folks – tales never before published.

A sizable chunk of the book includes an anthology of the lives and times of the ministers (and their families) who held the pulpit since the 1870s. The stories are enlightening.


The experiences and challenges of the Little Brown Church offer an insight into contemporary social issues, and the challenges faced by small, rural churches nationwide. The author adds some excitement and drama when he reveals a past controversy starting on page 319. You'll have to read that chapter to find out more.

The book is easy— dare I say FUN—to read, and is loaded with remarkable details and surprises. It also offers some heady thoughts and ponderings. For example, Reverend Michael Gantt, a former pastor of this church writes in the introduction, "... concepts like representative government and governance by the consent of the governed are Biblical concepts embraced by the founders as worthy ideas by which a nation might be justly governed ... and these roots are inexorably tied to the roots of the congregationalist forms of church governance ... In a season where so many rural churches are home to cobwebs and rodents or have been converted to dance halls or craft stores, the Little Brown Church of Sandisfield has persisted as a beacon of faith and community."

Organist Chris Park discusses the church's 1894 Estey pump organ in a narrative that is almost poetic.

"The organ," he writes, brings "...to contemporary ears the timeless tones from days past. It is the living sound of yesteryear that connects today's parishioners to earlier generations... Like the steeple bell, 'its tones so sweetly are calling. Oh, come to the little brown church in the vale.'"

There are also many examples of "beyond this church" surprises found in the book. Following is just one: Sandisfield native Edmund Sears (1810-1876). This prominent Unitarian theologian wrote the lyrics to the beloved Christmas carol, "It Came Upon The Midnight Clear."

With each turn of the page, the reader is continually invited to peer through a revealing sanctuary window that offers insights into the past, present, and future. It is filled with eye-openers and inspiration. Yes, this is a good book about a church. But it is so much more. 

Gary Leveille of Great Barrington and Lee is a well-known Berkshire historian, writer, and newspaper columnist. He is the author of numerous articles and books about South County historical topics including *Old Route 7 – Along the Berkshire Highway* and *Legendary Locals of the Southern Berkshire* and *Southern Berkshires Through Time*.

*The Little Brown Church* is available for sale at the Farmington River General Store in New Boston or contact the author 413-269-0012 /Ronbernard@aol.com.

All net proceeds to benefit the Church building fund.

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# recreation COMMITTEE

## A Great Christmas Fair

By Laurie Seddon

Hello everyone. Happy New Year! We hope everybody had a wonderful Holiday Fair. First, let's look back at December. We joined the Sandisfield Historical Society at their Annual Holiday Fair hosted at Fire Station #2 on Rt. 57.

What a great turnout again. Over 40 vendors with lots of variety to look at, buy, talk about. Jean Atwater-Williams sang holiday favorites with her soothing soprano to provide the right ambiance. The Recreation Committee provided keep-sake mugs for children to personalize and color while everyone patiently awaited the arrival of Santa Claus.

A special thank you to Jacob Blass who volunteered as Santa Claus, his first year, and his festive elf helper, Rose Nelson.

Thank you to Ann Wald and the entire Sandisfield Historical Society for organizing such a wonderful event.

Thank you to all the Fire Station volunteers who set up, took down, and cleaned up afterwards.

We look forward to next year!

What's next for the Recreation Committee? Join us on Saturday, February 10, for Valentine Crafting and light refreshments. We will be hosting Valentine's Day themed crafting at Fire Station #1 on Rt. 8 in New Boston from 10:00 a.m. until noon. This is a free event and all ages are welcome.

We have confirmed that Berkshire Bunnies will be back in March. Watch for details.

Last, we are still short on members. The Recreation Committee plays a very fun role in our community. We meet once a month on average and hold about nine to ten events per year.

We are currently at four active members; however, we should be a committee of seven. We invite any full-time Sandisfield resident to join us! If you join us, we promise not to give you all the hard work – we spread it around. Plenty for all!

For more information or to RSVP to events above, please contact us at sandisfeldevents@recreationcommittee.info.



Santa Claus came to Sandisfield again. In his first year in the role, Jacob Blass assumed the job and the outfit. His daughter, Maxine Blass, seems a little unsure of who is holding her.

Photo: Rose Nelson, Maxine's mother.



*New Winter Menu*

### DINE IN OR TAKEOUT

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*Stop in and meet the new owner of the Knox... Brooke Tame!*

★ UPCOMING EVENTS ★

Jan 6th Brett & Steve Potter 6-9pm

Jan 13th Liquid Courage Band 8-11pm

Jan 20th The Monday Project Band 8-11pm

Jan 21st The Hilltown Blues Jam 2pm

Jan 27th Hard Knox Band 8-11pm

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Feb 3rd Generation X Rock 8-11pm

Feb 10th Shyne Band 8-11pm

Feb 17th ROCK 201 Band 8-11pm

Feb 18th The Hilltown Blues Jam 2-5pm

Feb 24th Full Burn Band 8-11pm

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# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

By Bill Price, Editor, The Sandisfield Times

I enjoyed the laudatory article in the January 13 Berkshire Eagle about the success of four local monthly newspapers: the Becket Beat, the Otis Observer, the Monterey News, and indeed The Sandisfield Times.

In the section about The Times, founding editor Simon Winchester referred to the page 1 story in our very first issue, a report about the proposed demolition of the dilapidated Wilbur houses, as a testament to “the power of the press. We can actually get things moving.” The implication clear that the paper’s reporting was what got the job done in the subsequent six months.

I have always appreciated the power of the press when it is exercised to good purpose.

But our Vol. 1, No. 1, March 2010 story, rather than leading the charge to demolish the buildings, more simply “reported” on the already long and arduous two-decade journey the Town had undertaken to reach the point where the buildings actually could be demolished. Simon’s story, in fact, clearly written, paid homage to that previous hard and current work that was in process.

By reporting the story and getting it more widely known, we might have pushed the demolition along. But there were already many residents pushing much harder and longer than we did. And our story acknowledged that. We should continue to acknowledge that we were not standing alone.

If you’re curious, our original story is available, as are the contents of all 13 years of Sandisfield Times issues, on the paper’s website, sandisfieldtimes.org/library/archives. You can read it there again, if you’d like.

In the story, we reported on the years of work by Select Boards to get rid of the buildings, led in 2010 by Chair Patrick Barrett and members Richard Campetti and Jeff Gray. We mentioned the work of the Town’s Board of Health, which initially condemned the buildings in 1990. The 2010 Board of Health, led by Margaret O’Clair, was still pushing hard for demolition.

Simon’s story reported that none of these efforts had succeeded because of the Town’s lack of zoning and property regulations. And that the efforts had begun to succeed only when the owners gave up their hopes for a State condemnation, which might have paid them handsomely for the properties, and abandoned their legal fight which allowed the houses to be condemned as “uninhabitable and constituting a public and environmental danger,” which the Town had done forthwith.

We reported that the next step was for residents to vote at the upcoming Town Meeting on a proposal to allocate funds to demolish the houses and turn the property into a small park. The paper reported all this with a favorable slant, but it was a foregone conclusion that the proposal would pass, since there was hardly a resident, even our scant historians, who wanted to save the eyesores. It was hard to drive past the houses without imagining at least one of them with a privy extending over the river.

The ultimate proviso was that after demolition, the property owners could either pay the Town the costs of demolition and keep the vacant property or allow the Town to foreclose and build its park. The outcome was never in doubt. The buildings were gone, and we had our little park.

So, here’s a tribute to good, solid “reporting.” That is what we did then, authored in person by Simon himself, and that is what we hope to continue doing into the future. Spreading the news. That is the real “power of the press.”



# Salame Properties to be Sold

By Bill Price

Former Sandisfield resident, Ryan Salame, who succeeded incredibly until he failed spectacularly in the FTX cryptocurrency explosion, has lost most of his local properties to court-ordered liquidation.

Ordered to pay restitution and damages of more than \$10 million, Salame has forfeited his Porsche automobile and many if not all of his Lenox properties, including the Olde Heritage Tavern. It’s possible the liquidation will include his family’s property in South Sandisfield.

According to a report in The Berkshire Eagle, Salame, 30, “pleaded guilty September 7 in U.S. District Court in Manhattan to one count of conspiracy to operate an unlicensed money transmitting business and one count of conspiracy to make unlawful political contributions and defraud the Federal Election Commission. The charges were linked to the sweeping fraud case against FTX’s founder, Sam Bankman-Fried, who was convicted last November of all seven criminal counts against him.”

Salame is scheduled to be sentenced March 6. He is currently free on bond of \$1.2 million. The charges against him could bring sentencing of as much as a decade in federal prison, but because Salame is viewed somewhat as a cooperative witness it is unlikely he will face the maximum time.

One of his most recent purchases, the North Canaan, Connecticut, airfield, bought only 14 months ago for \$1.2 million, is on the market for \$2 million.

*This article is based on information provided in a Berkshire Eagle article, January 4, 2024, by Clarence Fanto. Used with permission.*



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

# Historia

## The Cina Tragedy at Sandisfield Center

by Ron Bernard

The worst human tragedy in town history occurred 75 years ago. What happened at a Sandisfield Center residence early in the morning of October 20, 1949, was horrific, shocking – incomprehensible. Five people including a young widowed mother, her three children and a valiant family friend together with their two dogs were found dead of asphyxiation by her father who lived next door.



It was front page, banner-headline news across the state including in the Boston Globe. Newswires versions appeared in papers around the country.

Then, within days, all went quiet. Other than a report of an inquest a few months later, not another word about it was printed. A stunned community quietly coped and tried to forget. They left the family to grieve.

Today, except possibly for a few of our most senior residents, the incident is virtually unknown.



### FROM SWITZERLAND TO SANDISFIELD

Following his brother to New York, in 1927, Robert Cina and his wife, Leonie left their ancestral home, the village of Salgesch, Switzerland, for better prospects in America. Their daughters, Agnes and Anita, ages eight and six, rejoined the family in November, 1930. A fellow Swiss immigrant introduced Robert to Sandisfield in 1932 where he bought 15 acres west of the Center on Sandisfield Road in the neighborhood called "Germantown."



**THREE VICTIMS:** Pictured last winter outside the Cina Cafe in Sandisfield, are Mrs. Agnes Kornish and two of her three children, Barbara and Carol, who perished in their home yesterday.

In spite of the deep economic depression, while also working part-time, over the coming years Cina managed to build a large house. By 1942, the couple opened a family-style restaurant on their ground floor, as "Cina's," which for 22 years was a popular eatery. Cina's became Daffer's Mountside Inn in 1964, also a popular watering hole, until 1989. Under other proprietors, but still known as Daffer's, the restaurant operated until the early-2000s when it returned to being a private residence.

Cina also built a smaller house next door for his daughter, Agnes and her husband, Saul Kornich and their Sandisfield-born children, Barbara (1943), Carol (1944) and Kenneth (1948). Saul died in October 1947 when a plane he was piloting crashed (see sidebar).

### THE FATEFUL OCTOBER DAY IN 1949

At about 10:30 on the morning of October 20, Mr. Cina went to his daughter's place next door intending to do some carpentry. The Holyoke Transcript



wrote: "He found the door locked but saw a light in an upstairs bathroom. (He) got a ladder and entered through a first floor window when he saw the family's two dogs dead on the kitchen floor. Rushing upstairs he found Mrs. Cornish's (sic) body slumped on the bath room floor."

The two girls were found in their bed with the body of a family friend, Italian immigrant Charles D'Allesio, 45, on top of them. He was a well-known family man from Westfield who was staying the night to go pheasant hunting. State police surmised that he passed out while attempting to rescue the girls. Baby Kenneth died in his crib.

Mr. Cina notified state police who worked for hours trying to resuscitate the victims to no avail. Medical examiner Dr. P. Albano from Great Barrington who later performed autopsies on the bodies, attended the scene. Carbon monoxide poisoning was blamed.

**THE INQUEST**


An inquest was conducted at Lee District Court. Eight witnesses testified. The Berkshire Eagle on April 25, 1950 reported that the Lynn Gas Company of New Hartford, Conn., failed to obtain a fire permit to install bottled gas in the basement. In addition, the Head Plumbing Company from Winsted shortly before the incident also neglected to pull a permit from the town to make alterations to the gas lines. Mr. Cina had contacted the company to complain that a heater was not working properly. The plumber said that he later realized that the alteration he made to a valve, "caused a dangerous situation, but he said he warned Mr. Cina and his daughter not to open the valve too far."

The Cina family had close family ties in New Marlboro. Mother and children were buried in the Mill



Cina's Restaurant as it appeared in 1961. Photo Sandisfield Historical Society

River cemetery in that town and their Sandisfield house was removed soon after. Robert and Leonie Cina continued to run the inn and restaurant until 1964 when they retired to Florida where Robert died in 1976. Leonie remarried and returned to the Berkshires. She died in 1990 at Pittsfield and rests next to Robert.

The experience must have been so painful for all concerned that it has never been an ongoing topic in town or anywhere else. In 2011 when I was interviewing old timers for stories in *Sandisfield Then and Now*, I spent time with Agnes's sister, Anita Cina Ormsbee (1924-2015), the last surviving member of the family. No mention of the tragedy passed her lips. 

**THE FAMILY ALREADY KNEW TRAGEDY AND PROFOUND SADNESS**

A three-year Army-Air Force veteran of WWII, Saul Kornich worked as a commercial pilot for newly formed Pittsfield-based Strato-Freight, Inc. He was killed along with two crew members when their Curtis DC-3 crashed in a remote part of North Carolina in October 1947, just months before his son was born. They were carrying 40,000 baby chicks and were reportedly off course when they crashed high onto a mountainside. Investigators determined that they had run out of fuel. Kornich's remains were returned for burial in Beth Israel cemetery, Torrington, Conn. He was 24. The deaths of his wife and children would occur only four days short of two years later.



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## The Librarian's Corner

### 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](mailto:sandisfieldlibrary@gmail.com)

Our new website: [sandisfieldlibrary.org](http://sandisfieldlibrary.org)

Once upon a time, in the year 1807, in a little town called Sandisfield nestled in the Berkshire Mountains, a few early residents formed an association establishing two small libraries. One remained open for three decades, the second closing 16 years later in 1853.

In 1907 the town library was reestablished at the former James Merrill Store located at 147 Sandisfield Road in Montville. Coincidentally, the current library director makes her home at the former Merrill store and library.

That library closed in 1923 when the town established a small library on Route 8. This tiny building housed the library until 1977.

In 1975, Flora Rhodes, the town clerk, led a funding drive to establish a new, bigger, better library. Land was donated by Angelo and Carol Campetti, grants were awarded, and with hard work and community spirit the Sandisfield Free Public Library was opened in its present location October, 1977.

Adapted from *Sandisfield Then & Now, 1762-2012*.

That is the story of Sandisfield's Public Library. Today it proudly wears a new hat (a new roof, courtesy of taxpayers and the Town Select Board) and I invite you in for a visit.

Sometimes people have preconceived notions of what is in this little building – such as it only includes books for those who remember the Beatles on the Ed Sullivan show – old, small, shabby. Those folks should think again.

Our library may be smaller than many but if you haven't visited recently you may be surprised by what's inside. There are over 3,000 books in our library – from romance, mystery, the philosophical, the comic.

There is a selection of historical papers and books on Sandisfield and our corner of Berkshire County, how-to books on many subjects repair, non-fiction

from recent bestsellers (*The Wager* and *The Ghosts of Honolulu*) to classic authors such as David McCullough and Tom Brokaw. Fiction is updated with monthly selections from both the Times bestsellers list, NPR reports, and other book review websites. We do carry many mysteries, but Sandisfield has many mystery readers.

And that's just on the top floor.

On the ground floor is "The Children's Area." Here is cornucopia of books – picture books for the youngest of readers to older readers who enjoy the adventures of Harry Potter, the Babysitter's Club, and the Wimpy Kid Diaries. And it is not just a place to find a book to cozy up to. There are puzzles, Lincoln logs, Brio train sets, and more. Entertainment deluxe, with a back door that opens to the playground for more fun.

The library also hosts artists, musicians, magicians and yes, story tellers throughout the year.

We, at the library, invite you to visit YOUR library. Tell us what interests you, what you would like to see at the library that you don't see there already!

Check out our webpage at [Sandisfieldlibrary.org](http://Sandisfieldlibrary.org) for more information on upcoming events

### LATEST ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY SHELVES (ADULT FICTION AND NON-FICTION)

- *Hidden roots of White Supremacy and the Path to a Shared American Future* by Robert P. Jones
- *The Little Liar* by Mitch Albom
- *Resurrection Walk* by Michael Connelly
- *Uhtred's Feast* by Bernard Cornwell
- *4th Wing* by Rebecca Yarros
- *The Ball at Versailles* by Danielle Steel
- *A City on Mars: Can we settle space, should we settle space, and have we really thought this through?* by Kelly Weinersmith and Zach Weinersmith
- *The Girl in the Eagle's Talons* by Karin Smirnoff
- *Isaac's Storm: A Man, a Time, and the Deadliest Hurricane in History* by Erik Larson
- *The Mystery Guest* by Nita Prose
- *Pretty Boys Are Poisonous: Poems* by Megan Fox
- *Robert B. Parker's Broken Trust* by Mike Lupica
- *So Late in the Day: Stories of Women and Men* by Claire Keegan
- *Iron Flame* by Rebecca Yarros

### YOUNG ADULT / OLDER CHILDREN

- *Diary of a Wimpy Kid No Brainer* by Jeff Kinney
- *Cat Kid Comic Club #5: Influencers* by Dav Pilkey
- *I Survived the American Revolution, 1776* by Lauren Tarshis
- *I Survived the Great Alaska Earthquake, 1964* by Lauren Tarshis
- *I Survived the Wellington Avalanche, 1910* by Lauren Tarshis

### CHILDREN'S BOOKS

- *The Big Cheese* by John Jory
- *Bunny with a Big Heart* by Zoe Waring

### LIBRARIAN'S PICK OF THE MONTH

*Isaac's Storm* by Erik Larson. I enjoy reading Erik Larson's books. And this book gets 5 stars from me.

This is the true story of the devastating hurricane of September 8, 1900, that destroyed the growing city of Galveston, Texas, and Isaac Cline, at the time the resident meteorologist for the U.S. Weather Bureau who failed to grasp the true nature of the deep-sea swells and peculiar winds that greeted the city that morning.

Hours later, Galveston (a city in competition to be bigger and better than Houston) found itself submerged in a monster hurricane that destroyed the town and killed over six thousand people in the greatest natural disaster in American history.

Erik Larson writes of Isaac Cline's heroic struggle and his fatal miscalculation in the face of a storm of unimaginable magnitude and the devastation and personal tragedy faced by Galveston's residents.

Another of Larson's brilliant histories, *Isaac's Storm* is a riveting story of what can happen when human arrogance meets the uncontrollable force of nature. 📖





# The Future of Local Municipalities

## RECRUITMENT CHALLENGES FACING BERKSHIRE COMMUNITIES

### Is This Our Future, Too?

By Bill Price

The Town website features a provocative discussion paper titled "The Future of Local Municipalities."

As the website reports: "The future of our local government is vulnerable and in the balance."

Authored by the Berkshire County Municipal Managers, working with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, the paper

spells out the challenges facing Berkshire communities in recruitment of certain critical paid positions. Included in the list are Town Administrators/Managers, Accountants, Assessors, Building Inspectors/Assistant Building Inspectors and staff, DPW staff, fire fighters, police officers/constables, tax collectors and treasurers, and ambulance staff.

Sandisfield participated in the survey, along with many of our neighboring South County towns.

In the preface to the article, the Town website wrote: "This Discussion Paper outlines recruitment challenges facing Berkshire Communities for certain critical paid positions, and offers options to address those challenges and action steps to further positive outcomes.

"Compensation including benefits was mentioned most often as a barrier to hiring and retaining qualified people. Secondly, a significant minority of communities noted skills/licenses and training to be a challenge in obtaining and retaining qualified staff.

"The survey also addresses difficulties filling volunteer board and committee positions."

These are some of the exact problems facing our current Select Board as it seeks to fill the important positions of Fire Chief and the head of Department of Public Works, as well as several lesser but no less crucial jobs throughout Town governance.

Residents are urged to read the Discussion paper and the survey data at [sandisfieldma.gov/Town News/The Future of Local Municipalities](http://sandisfieldma.gov/Town News/The Future of Local Municipalities).



## WINTER SNOWFALL AND EXTREMES

2023-2024 Snowfall to date as measured/estimated at a Beech Plain back-yard weather station.

### November 2023

November 1 1.0 inches  
November 21 2.0

### December 2023

December 11 1.0

### January 2024

January 7-9 11.5  
January 16 3.5

Season to date 19 inches

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# Comings and Goings



**CHERYL (PLANK) BICE**  
1956-2023

Cheryl Bice, 67, formerly of Roosterville Road, passed away on Saturday, December 23, 2023, at Berkshire Medical due to pulmonary health complications.

Born June 23, 1956, in Winsted to her mother Irene (Kent) Plank and her late father, Dewey Plank, Jr., Cheryl was raised in the Sandisfield section known as Roosterville.

Throughout her life, Cheryl held various jobs, including her notable positions at Capital Products in Winsted and The New Boston Nursing Home in Sandisfield. She is survived by her son, Edward James Harris, and his wife, April, as well as her brother, Bruce Plank, and her beloved cat, Cali. Cheryl also leaves behind Brianna Herdan, a family member

and long-time caregiver, and close family friends, Chrissy and Bonnie O'Brien.

Her caring and open heart made her a friend and mother figure to all. She will be deeply missed by many other family members and friends.

Cheryl is predeceased by her husband, Brian Bice, her brother, Dewey Plank, and granddaughter, Shea Isabella Harris. The family would like to extend a special thank you to her adoring friends Barbara Hotchkiss and Carol Riiska for their unwavering support and care for Cheryl during her time of need. Please join us in remembering and honoring Cheryl's life. Memorial arrangements will be shared in a separate communication.





# CRITTER CORNER ● ● ●




## *A Great View, but What For?*

*Last October, a bear climbed high into one of the tall trees at Peter Baiamonte's place at the intersection of New Hartford and Sandisfield Roads in Sandisfield Center. Peter said, "I have no idea why it went up there. Maybe something scared it. It was up there a few hours, at least."*

## **SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE**

### **DEADLINE FOR SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS, APRIL 1**

The Scholarship Committee thanks everyone who took the time to donate an item to our Penny Auction Table at the Christmas Fair, and to those who made monetary donations. The day was a great success and will go a long way in helping our college-bound seniors with our scholarship amounts.

If you are a graduating senior this year and are going on to further education, but have not been contacted by us or your high school with information on how to apply for our scholarships, please contact Elaine O'Brien at 413-269-4465 or Anina Carr at 413-258-3314. We will send you an information package. The application deadline is April 1st. 



# FRRSD School Notes Thank You, Parents AND COME ON OUT FOR MATH NIGHT

Dear Farmington River Elementary Families,

As we step into the new year, I wanted to take a moment to express my heartfelt gratitude for the overwhelming support shown at our recent Winter Concert.

Your presence and enthusiasm not only made the event a resounding success but also filled our school community with warmth and joy. Witnessing our students showcase their talents and dedication was truly a testament to the

incredible support they receive from their families. Thank you for being such an integral part of their journey and for making the Winter Concert a memorable evening for all.

Looking ahead, I'm excited to announce our upcoming Math Night scheduled for Thursday, January 18. This event is a fantastic opportunity for students and families to come together and explore the wonders of mathematics through engaging activities, games, and interactive sessions. Math Night promises to be an enjoyable and educational experience for all ages, fostering a love for numbers and problem-solving in a fun, collaborative environment. Save the date, and let's dive into the world of math together!

Thank you once again for your unwavering support and involvement in our school community. Together, we continue to create enriching experiences that empower our students to thrive. 🏡

Sincerely, Laurie Flower, Principal

## Upcoming Events include:

**Musical Auditions**, Thursday, January 25, 3:00-4:30 p.m. For Grades 4-5 who have already signed up for the musical.

**All-School Walk**, Monday, January 29 at 2:10 P.M.

**Winter Dance**, Friday, February 9.

- Grades K-4: 6:00-7:00 p.m. Children must be accompanied by a parent.
- Grades 5-6: 7:00-8:15 p.m.
- Families with children in both grade groups may stay for both dances. Tables will be set up for games and art activities in the cafeteria for the younger children after their dance.
- A 50-50 Raffle will be held at 7:00 p.m.
- Refreshments and prizes will be available.



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# NOW HEAR THIS!

Edited by Laura Rogers-Castro. Please send notices for Now Hear This! to [editor@sandisfieldtimes.org](mailto:editor@sandisfieldtimes.org)

## JANUARY AND FEBRUARY EVENTS

**Sandisfield Select Board Meetings** are currently through Zoom and in-person at 6:30 p.m. on Mondays unless otherwise posted. Please visit [sandisfieldma.gov](http://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 is 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 of dates, 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. Next service Sunday, January 28, 10:00 a.m. For more information, visit [newbostoncongregation-alchurch.org](http://newbostoncongregation-alchurch.org). All are welcome.

**Sandisfield Woman's Book Club** will meet on Thursday, January 25 at 6:30 p.m. at the Sandisfield Library. The book selection for January is *Mercy* by Jodi Picoult. The February meeting will be held Thursday, February 22. The book selection is *Flirting with French* by William Alexander. For more information, please call the Library at 258-4966.

**Recreation Committee VALENTINE-Themed Crafting & Refreshments** on Saturday, February 10, from 10:00 a.m. until Noon at Fire Station #1, Route 8. Decorate, paint, and bedazzle mini keepsake boxes for your Valentine. Light refreshments. Free event, all welcome. RSVP please by Feb. 2 to [Sandisfieldevents@recreationcommittee.info](mailto:Sandisfieldevents@recreationcommittee.info).

### ONLINE EVENTS

**A Farm and Garden Show** with Sandisfield Residents Bill Taylor and Jaye Alison Moscarriello streamed every Monday, from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. at [berkshireradio.org](http://berkshireradio.org).

**The Mount Book Club via Zoom.** Various dates from 4:00 to 5:30 p.m. January 25 will feature a discussion on Edith Wharton's *The Valley of Decision* and February 15 on Ethan Frome. Visit [edithwharton.org/event/](http://edithwharton.org/event/) to register,

**What's Happening at Gould Farm: The New Roadside Cafe and More** on Thursday, February 15 at 7:00 p.m. sponsored by Notice Otis. This is a Zoom event and free to all. To register and receive the zoom link, please visit [www.otispreservation-trust.com/noticeotisevents](http://www.otispreservation-trust.com/noticeotisevents).

### 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 is 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. The suggested fee is \$30. For more information, visit [ccmonterey.org](http://ccmonterey.org).

**Saturday Morning Bird Walks** at 10:00 a.m. on the River Front Trail in Great Barrington. Meet at the Berkshire Co-op Market and join Ben Nickley of Berkshire Bird Observatory. For questions and to register, email Ben at [ben@berkshirebirds.org](mailto:ben@berkshirebirds.org). Beginners welcome! Free.

**60 Years of Butternut Celebration** in Great Barrington on Saturday, January 20. Tom Carroll will play music in the Upper Lodge from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m., Berkshire Bateria at 5:00 p.m., and a torchlight parade at 5:20 p.m. Fireworks will conclude the event at 5:45 p.m.

**Sheffield Winter Market** on Saturday, February 10, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Dewey Hall on 91 Main Street. Local produce and meat, baked goods, crafts, and gifts. Live music.

**Valentines Sip & Shop** on Sunday, February 11 from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Whiting Mills on 100 Whiting Street in Winsted. Several vendors will be selling their wares.

**Great Barrington Winter Farmers Market** on Saturday, February 17 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Housy Dome on 1064 Main Street in Housatonic. Featuring locally grown and produced foods, including cheese, meats, breads, and more. Local musicians performing across a variety of styles and genres will be showcased.

**Free Winter Outdoor Festival** on Monday, February 19, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Clapp Park in Pittsfield sponsored by Signs, Otto's, and Indulgence and hosted by MassAudubon, BEAT, and Berkshire Natural Resources Council. Sled racing, snowshoeing, wildlife tracking, and MORE! Free winter family fun in the outdoors. A warm bonfire with S'mores and Soup.

**Fourth Annual Stockbridge Ice Festival** on Saturday, February 24, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on the lawn of the Stockbridge Library. Features ice sculptures carved by regional artists and an exhibit about the Ice Glen and harvesting business in and around Stockbridge. Also, take and make crafts for children. Free.



## Shire Forestry

**Adam Brown**  
Consulting Forester  
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# SANDISFIELD TOWN DIRECTORY

## JANUARY, 2024

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**TOWN WEBSITE:** www.sandisfieldma.gov.

**AMBULANCE:** 911. Non-Emergency: 258-4742

**AMERICAN LEGION POST 456:** Maria Domato, Commander  
258-4578 (April-October) or yankeefruitloop@gmail.com

**ANIMAL INSPECTOR:** Kim Spring, 258-4450

**ASSESSORS OFFICE:** 258-4711 x 6  
Office Hours: Mon, Wed: 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

**BOARD OF HEALTH:** Meets 2nd Wed: 5:30 p.m., Old Town Hall.

**BUILDING INSPECTORS:**

- Fire: Paul Greene, 413-446-0964
- Plumbing & Gas: Bob Krupski, 413-229-8019
- Wiring: Jay Reynolds, 860-798-2578
- Building: Paul Greene. Office hours, Old Town Hall, Wed: 4-5 p.m.  
Call 413-446-0964 for appointment.

**CEMETERY COMMITTEE:** Meets as needed.

Chair: Lynn Rubenstein  
Email: Cemetery@sandisfieldma.gov. Meets as needed.

**CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF NEW BOSTON**

4 Sandisfield Rd./Rte. 57. Biweekly Sunday services, 10:00 a.m.  
Eric Kriebel, Pastor. www.newbostoncongregationalchurch.org.  
All welcome.

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION:** Meets 3rd Tues: 7 p.m.

Chair: Paul Gaudette  
Email: conservation@sandisfieldma.gov.

**CONSTABLE:**

Dana Beardsley: 258-4958

**CULTURAL COUNCIL:** Chair; Jennifer Hibbins

**COUNCIL ON AGING:** Linda Riiska, Nina Carr: 258-4711 x 8

Wed: 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Senior Center/Town Hall  
Business Meeting: 1st Wed of the month: 11 a.m.

**DPW SUPERINTENDENT:** TBD

Office 258-4711 x 7  
DPW Email: highways@sandisfieldma.gov

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR:**

Jonathan Sylbert, 413-272-9913

**FARMINGTON RIVER GENERAL STORE:**

Nick and Megan Smigel, Proprietors  
83 South Main Street (Rt. 8), 413-462-1104  
Hours: Mon-Tues, 6-8; Wed-Fri, 6-6; Sat-Sun, 7-6

**FARMINGTON RIVER REGIONAL SCHOOL:**

Timothy Lee, Superintendent/Laurie Flower, Principal  
North Main Street, Otis, 413 269-4466  
School Committee: Meets every first Monday at 7 p.m.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE:** Meets as needed. Check for schedule.

**FIRE: CALL 911**

Michael Morrison, Deputy Fire Chief, 413-441-2129  
Eric Pachulski, Deputy Fire Chief, 413-464-6835  
Email: FireChief@sandisfieldma.gov

**HISTORICAL COMMISSION:** Ron Bernard, 413-269-0012;

ronbernard@aol.com. Meets as needed.

**HISTORICAL SOCIETY:** Ann Wald, President

258-4415 or Email sandisfieldhistory@gmail.com  
Meets 2nd Saturday, Apr-Nov. Sandy Brook Turnpike/Rt. 183.

**LIBRARY:** Librarian: Theresa Spohnholz: 258-4966;  
sandisfieldlibrary@gmail.com

**HOURS:** Mon, Tues, Wed: 9:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.,  
Wed eve: 5:00-7:00 p.m., Sat: 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Closed Th, Fr and Sun.

**NOTARY:** Joanne D. Olson, 258-4465 or 917-686-1985

Theresa Spohnholz: 258-4966 at the Town Library

**PLANNING BOARD:** Meets 2nd Tues: 6:30 p.m., Old Town Hall

Chair: Barbara Cormier

**POLICE-LOCAL:** Emergency 911, Non-emergency: 413-258-4724

Chief Michael Morrison: cell 413-441-2129

Email: PoliceChief@sandisfieldma.gov

**POLICE-STATE:** Lee Barracks: 413 243-0600

**POST OFFICE:** Amy Rintoul, Clerk, 258-4940

Window Hours: Mon-Fri: 9 a.m.-noon & 1-4 p.m. Sat: 8-11:30 a.m.

Delivery boxes in both lobbies accessible 24 hours.

**PUBLIC SAFETY OFFICER:** Mary Bredenfoerder: Emergency, 911;

non-emergency, 258-4742

**RECREATION COMMITTEE:** Laurie Seddon:

sandisfeldevents@recreationcommittee.info

**SANDISFIELD ARTS CENTER:** (May-December)

5 Hammertown Road, PO Box 31  
258-4100; www.sandisfieldartscenter.org

**SANDISFIELD TIMES:** Bill Price, editor

editor@sandisfieldtimes.org  
U.S. Mail: PO Box 584, Sandisfield, MA 01255

**SELECT BOARD:** 258-4711 x 3

Meets Monday, regular meeting, 6:30 p.m. Town Hall.

See posted agendas for changes in meeting times.

**Administrative Secretary:** Janey Beardsley, 258-4711, x 3

**STATE OFFICIALS:**

Smitty Pignatelli, State Representative  
413 637-0631; rep.smitty@mahouse.gov  
Paul W. Mark, State Senator; 413-464-5635; Paul.Mark@masenate.gov

**TAX COLLECTOR/TREASURER:** Gina Campbell

258-4711 x 4; Tues & Thurs, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.  
Email: Treasurer@sandisfieldma.gov

**TOWN ACCOUNTANT:** Margaret McClellan

by appointment; 258-4711 x 5 or accountant@sandisfieldma.gov

**TOWN CLERK:** Douglas Miner, 258-4711 x 2

66 Sandisfield Rd, Ste. 2, Sandisfield, MA 01255

Email: townclerk@sandisfieldma.gov

Mon, Tues, Wed: 10 a.m.-1 p.m, or by appointment

**TOWN HALL:**

66 Sandisfield Road, Ste. 1, Sandisfield, MA 01255

Hours differ based on the Office in question.

Website: www.sandisfieldma.gov

**TOWN MANAGER:** Jonathan Sylbert, 258-4711, x 1

**TRANSFER STATION:** Attendant: Keith Larson

Winter Hours: Wed: 2-4 p.m.; Sat: 9 a.m.-2 p.m.; Sun: 11 a.m.-4 p.m.

**VETERANS SERVICES:** Thomas Beasley

413-528-1580, Great Barrington Town Hall

# THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



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### **Editorial Staff**

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*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.*

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