

# THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

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*Plebis*

RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume XV, Number 8

November 2024

## Secret Sharers

### OTIS AND SANDISFIELD SHARE MORE THAN THEY THINK

By Bill Price

A recent front-page story in The Berkshire Eagle featured Sandisfield and Otis together, in agreement. The agreement was preliminary steps toward a revision in the Regional District Agreement governing the operation of the Farmington River Regional School District (FRRSD).

Usually when both towns are mentioned in the same news story the report is about their viewpoints are in opposition, as if the towns were constantly at odds.

In fact, the towns share more than appearances would suggest.

For instance, in the photo on this page, Hailey Malbaurn and Noah Dvorak, two students who live in Otis, share a ride in a red wagon at Sandisfield's Riiska Brook Orchard. The kids were taking part in the annual apple-picking field trip of Mrs. Hamill's Farmington River Elementary School's Early Kindergarten class,

In fact, the towns share even more than two kids from one town in a wagon from the other.

The towns share a river, the Farmington. They share a highway, Rt. 8.


They share the elementary school. They share a house of worship – the New Boston Congregational Church.

Sandisfield and Otis, both small towns way out in the Massachusetts woods, also share the same cold shoulder from Boston politicians.



Photo: Brittany Mackbach

They share Otis Woodlands, where almost half of the homes are in Sandisfield, although the Woodlands seem far from wherever the center of Sandisfield is located. They share New England weather. When it rains in Otis, it generally rains in Sandisfield, and vice-versa. Their teenagers choose the same few high schools in a small collection of towns. Both towns tend to vote Democratic, with similar vote ratios of Democrat to Republican.

Will these residents who already share so much share a vote to approve the revised Regional District Agreement for FRRSD to ensure the future financial sustainability of the district? A "yes" will increase school costs for one town while lowering them for the other town. A "no" vote could mean one town will seek to withdraw from the district. For more, see our story on page 5. 

## OUR ANNUAL APPEAL ISSUE



## Not Just Another Bird

Janey Snyder of Sandisfield Center, wrote on Connect-Sandisfield-Facebook that this proud grouse was the first one she'd seen in Sandisfield. October 14

## CODE RED

### CodeRED, To Protect Us All

The Town of Sandisfield has implemented CodeRED, an emergency notification system that will send alerts via phone-call/voicemail, email or text message.

Go to sandisfieldma.gov and follow the prompts to register. If you having trouble signing up, please contact Janey Snyder at jbeardsley@sandisfieldma.gov or 413-258-4711 Ext. 1 for assistance.

## A Young Red Maple

A young red maple tree in full display in late October as if proclaiming, "I am the prettiest of all." Transplanted by Ron Bernard and Jean Atwater-Williams near their Beech Plain home about 15 years ago, they named the tree "Claude" after a favorite uncle of Ron's who had originally planted the tree at his home in West Hartford.



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# Meet Our New Road Chief

## WHY OUR DIRT ROADS CREATE SO MUCH TROUBLE

By Tom Christopher

When asked what he faces as the greatest challenge in taking on the job of Sandisfield's new Department of Public Works, Superintendent Dave Waldron replies succinctly, "The roads."

Then he explains. Sandisfield's roads are mostly in good shape, even the gravel roads, which he has evaluated by driving over all of them himself. But, he adds, "The gravel roads in most of the towns in the Berkshires have been here for 200 years." For most of that time, highway superintendents have been repairing – or trying to repair – what was done originally. "Most of the roads back then were just a little trail," he said, cleared by farmers.

Over the years, the trails got bigger and longer. "Pretty much they'd cut the trees out, stump it, and then fill it back in with whatever they had. If it was muddy and soggy, they'd take the trees and lay them down, then drive over them, fill [the roadbed] up with dirt, and the rest is history. And this is what we've got now."

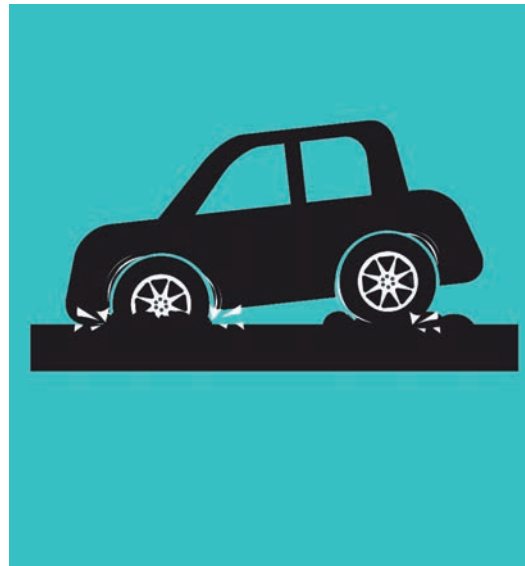
Complicating his job of road maintenance is the ongoing change in the climate. Mud season, until recently the bane of anyone living on Sandisfield's back roads, went from an early spring affliction to a twice-yearly event with an extra thaw late in December as our winters warmed.

The rainstorms, though, tend to be heavier, with more precipitation over a short period of time. "Eight to ten inches sometimes, and our infrastructure cannot support all that."

Because of the age of the roads, the culverts that channel runoff under them are often metal pipes which may have rotted through or collapsed and need periodic replacement. That's a simple job if the culverts are dry, but if there is a constant flow of water through them the town must get permits before undertaking replacement and, with running water, a 4-5 hour job can turn into days of work. Also, chances will be good that existing culverts aren't large enough

to accommodate the heavier bursts of rain and need to be upsized.


Waldron and his crew are determined to make the needed changes, but it will take time, as the DPW budget is limited in a town with a small population and much of the land state- or nonprofit-owned and untaxed.



The DPW tries to secure grants to pay for roadwork, but that's complicated by the fact that the state grant application season coincides with the time of year when town government personnel are putting together the annual budget. Waldron said he will explore hiring a grant writer, perhaps in partnership with two or three other towns.

Overall, the atmosphere at the town garage is "can- and will-do." When asked if the department has priority projects, Waldron replied firmly "All the roads. They're all a priority."

Dave Waldron brings experience to the job. Raised in upstate New York, he enlisted in the U.S. Army two days after graduating high school, served on what was then the border of East and West Germany, and later a tour of duty in Iraq. After the military, he did, he estimates, nearly a million miles of truck driving. He's worked for Berkshire-area public works departments, first in Hinsdale, where he was a driver/loader/operator ("You got to learn from the bottom, right?"), then a similar position in the town of Washington and later in Blandford, where he filled in when his boss retired. He served as Blandford's highway superintendent four and a half years.

The work of a DPW superintendent is interesting, Waldron said – always more to learn and a thrill when a resident says thanks for a job well done and important to listen when someone has a complaint. "I love it. I just love hanging out with people and chit-chatting." You have to wonder, though, when this busy man finds the time for that. 

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**Farmington River Regional Educators Association**

Farmington River Regional School District  
PO Box 679 Otis, MA 01253 • 413-269-4466

October 7, 2024

To the members of the Farmington River Regional School District School Committee,

As representatives of the hardworking professionals in our district, the Farmington River Regional Educators Association strongly supports the recent 7-0 vote by the School Committee to amend the Regional District Agreement. This decision is a significant step toward addressing the continued success of our school.

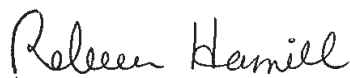
The Committee's vote aligns with our shared commitment to providing students with the highest quality education. By approving measures that ensure the continuation of our school, the School Committee has acknowledged the essential role that BOTH towns play in fostering a positive learning environment. This is not just an investment in our school, but an investment in the future success of every student.

We applaud the School Committee for demonstrating leadership and responding to the voices of those who share in the vision of the continued success of our school. This vote supports our goal of ensuring that our school continues to be a place where students thrive. We look forward to continued collaboration between our member towns to build on this progress, and to making our district a model for educational excellence and fairness.

By standing together, we are taking bold action to support public education, and we will continue to advocate for the well-being of all of our students.

Sincerely,

The Farmington River Regional Educators Association Executive Board



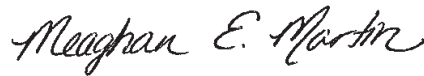
Rebecca Hamill, co-president



Sarah Tracy, co-president



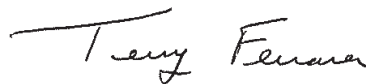
James Foster, vice president



Meaghan Martin, treasurer



Terri Digrigoli, secretary



Terry Ferrara, ESP representative

# FRRSD Union Votes in Favor of Revised Agreement

## DECISION FOLLOWS UNANIMOUS VOTE BY THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

By Bill Price

The revised Regional District Agreement (RDA) between the towns of Otis and Sandisfield regarding their joint operation of the Farmington River Regional School District (FRRSD) may have moved a step closer to acceptance last month when the FRRSD Union (consisting of teachers, administrators, and other employees of the district)

officially endorsed the School Committee's proposed revision of the agreement.

This follows the unanimous vote in September of the seven-member School Committee to approve the same proposal. (See the

Union's letter to the Committee, opposite page.)

The next step in the approval process is for the State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to issue a preliminary approval of the plan. DESE's decision is expected **AS THIS ISSUE OF THE TIMES IS GOING TO PRESS.**

Should that happen, Otis and Sandisfield residents will schedule individual special town meetings to vote on the proposal.

Acceptance of the revision by both towns will avoid a withdrawal of Sandisfield from the two-town school district.

But both towns may not agree on the revision.

Why is Sandisfield – in effect – threatening to “leave town?”

Because Sandisfield, the less wealthy of the two towns and with about 40 percent of the number of students, has been “shouldering more than what they can afford” to pay for the school, while “Otis taxpayers, on the other hand, have been shouldering less than they can afford.” This is according to metrics published by DESE, as reported in *The Berkshire Eagle*.

After laboring over proposed solutions for the last two years, the combined School Committee – four members from Otis and three from Sandisfield – voted unanimously in September to create a more equitable formula. The amended RDA is a

good-faith attempt to address the discrepancy in taxpayer costs.

The *Berkshire Eagle* reported that the new apportionment method, “if approved by state education officials and voters at town meetings, will shift the funding burden from Sandisfield toward Otis for transportation, capital and all other costs.” The latter is known as adjusted operating costs.

The *Eagle* reported that with a total budget of slightly more than \$5 million for this fiscal year, the new apportionment would represent “a shift of \$324,137 from Sandisfield to Otis.”

This puts Otis voters in the awkward position of voting to increase their share of the FRRSD costs.

If, however, Otis votes not to accept the compromise, Sandisfield will very likely follow through on its efforts to withdraw from the district, in effect dissolving the regional school district.

A decision by Sandisfield to withdraw would cause a much greater cost increase to Otis should Otis choose to continue operation of the elementary school as a municipal school district. In this case, Sandisfield would tuition-out its elementary pupils to other districts under a tuition agreement, in much the same way that FRRSD handles its middle- and high-school pupils today. This would lower Sandisfield's education costs significantly. ♡



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## Select Board Dispatches

By Janey Snyder, Town Manager

The Select Board has welcomed more motivated individuals to assist in making Sandisfield a Town that is more efficient, knowledgeable, and safe:

Laurie McArthur has been hired to fill the roles of Administrative Assistant and Assistant Treasurer/Collector. Laurie grew up in Sandisfield, served as Select Board Secretary in Monterey, and is already proving to be a great addition to the Town Hall team.

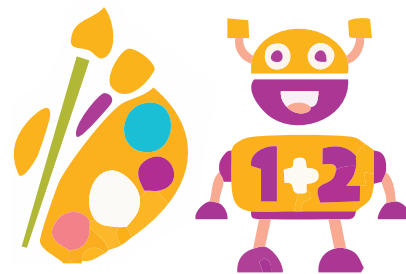
Zach Cochrane Handerek has been hired as Fire/EMT Admin and is set to begin in Town on Monday, November 4th. Zach is a certified EMT and expresses enthusiasm in serving the community.

The Treasurer/Tax Collector will be out of the office from October 30 through November 25. Taxpayers are asked to be patient and mindful of the absence. The new Assistant Treasurer/Collector will be in the office on Thursdays, 9:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. to filter questions.

Currently, 68 residents have signed up for CodeRED. CodeRED sends emergency notifications via phone call/voicemail, text message, and/or email. Visit the "Citizen's Action Center" at [www.sandisfieldma.gov](http://www.sandisfieldma.gov) to register.

The Select Board meets at Town Hall, 66 Sandisfield Road on Mondays at 6:30 p.m. Zoom participation is available. Visit the Town website to confirm the date of the next meeting and/or the Zoom connection codes. To request an agenda item, please contact Janey Snyder at [jbeardsley@sandisfieldma.gov](mailto:jbeardsley@sandisfieldma.gov) no later than the Wednesday before the upcoming Select Board meeting.

Don't forget to subscribe to E-Alerts on the Town website, [www.sandisfieldma.gov](http://www.sandisfieldma.gov) for important updates and announcements.



## Free Class for Kids

By Jane Burke

FREE Science and Art Workshop at Flying Cloud Farm.

November 11, from 9:30 until noon, children in grades 1-6 are invited to Flying Cloud Farm in New Marlborough for creative explorations that can include Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math.

The session is led by ceramicist and science educator Jane Burke.

Pre-registration is required. Contact Jane at [janes-burke@gmail.com](mailto:janes-burke@gmail.com) or text 413-429-6103.

The class is free, thanks to the Cultural Councils of Monterey, New Marlborough, Sandisfield, and Sheffield. The Farm is at SPARKS Science and Art Education, 731 South Sandisfield Road, New Marlborough, MA 01230.



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★ TRIVIA NIGHT EVERY THURSDAY 7PM (closed Nov 28)

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### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### DINE & DONATE

Starting November 1st, you can help those in need in Otis & donate a Thanksgiving meal!

- Nov 2nd Full Burn Band 8pm
- Nov 9th Pick-Up Line Band 8pm
- Nov 11th Movie & Pajama Party 4:30pm  
(ADULTS OVER 18 ONLY)
- Nov 16th Liquid Courage Band 8pm
- Nov 17th Hilltown Blues Jam 2pm
- Nov 23rd ROCK 201 Band 8pm
- Happy Thanksgiving!  
(NOV 28TH - CLOSED)
- Nov 30th SHYNE BAND 8pm

# Meet Our New Fire Chief

## 34 YEARS FIGHTING FIRES

*Unable to interview the new Chief in time for this issue, The Times adapted the following article about the Chief that appeared in The Berkshire Eagle, October 6, written by Jane Kaufman, the Eagle's Community Voice Editor. The ellipses in the following represent material omitted from that article. Adapted with permission.*

Henry Fristik, Sandisfield's new fire chief, has a lot of work ahead of him.

... The town's only ambulance has been in and out of the shop since before Fristik arrived. It's currently in the shop due to electrical issues a mechanic is having a hard time replicating so he can diagnose its cause.

The town also lacks a tanker after a chain of events that led to [former Chief Ralph] Morrison's resignation totaled it. It hasn't been replaced.

The loss of both [the ambulance and the tanker] forces the town to rely on mutual aid for structure fires and medical calls.

...

Fristik also hopes to rebuild the department. It currently has 17 firefighters and five EMTs on its roster, but he hopes to add at least eight more.

Training takes time, though, so even if there is interest and energy among new people, it will take a while before recruits will be ready to conduct an interior attack inside a burning building.

How much will he be paid to sort out these issues? His yearly salary is \$15,000, but he'll also make \$25 an hour when he responds to an emergency — the same pay other town firefighters receive when they're called to an incident.

Fristik said ... he's committed to moving forward and focusing on the future.

Fristik was one of four candidates interviewed for the job and two finalists. Fristik was chosen as the top choice by firefighters in Sandisfield in a blind ballot, 14-2.

The Select Board endorsed the choice unanimously.

"We just went along with the recommendation of the fire department," Select Board Chair Steve Seddon told The Eagle, but he also added his own vote of confidence for Fristik, calling him level-headed. "He seems like a real solid guy, he's experienced [and] has a great understanding of how fire departments should function."

Seddon said Fristik will be able to move the department in a new direction now that he ... has access to computer files and a desk.

Robert Fedell, a Select Board member, Sandisfield firefighter and the Select Board's liaison to the Fire Department, was one of the people who interviewed Fristik.

On paper, Fedell said he didn't expect to be impressed by Fristik, but he was.

"After the interview, he was my choice," he said.

...

Fristik has been fighting fires since he was 16 with the Chester Fire Department, where he rose up through the ranks and became chief.



*Chief Henry Fristik in his office at Fire House #1, New Boston.*

*Photo: Jane Kaufman, The Berkshire Eagle*

He served there for a total of 34 years. He's also been a part-time police officer in both Blandford and Chester.

He was attracted to the Sandisfield position because he knew there was a need for a new chief and because he was attracted to take on a new challenge.

"I'm bringing a new set of skills over my 34 years, and hopefully I can pass that on to the firefighters here and we can rebuild the department."

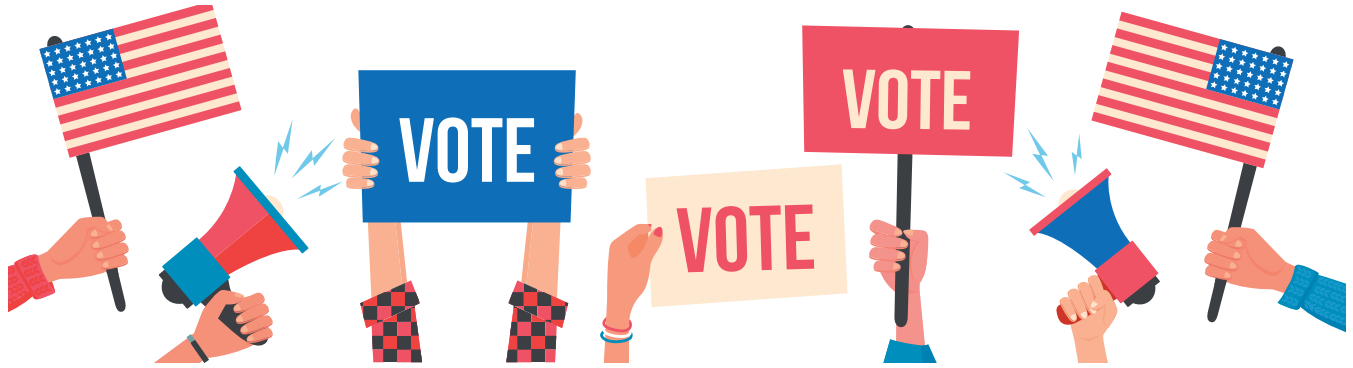
Born in Westfield, Fristik was raised in Chester and graduated from Gateway Regional High School in Huntington. His first job was picking blueberries; his second was at High Meadow Farm doing general labor.

After high school he went to work, first in retail as a gas attendant on the Massachusetts Turnpike, eventually working in aircraft manufacturing doing production management.

He met his wife to be when she joined the Chester Fire Department.

When he's not at work, competing or fishing Lake Champlain or the lakes of New York on his Ranger bass boat, Fristik is the primary parent for his two preschool-age children. ♡





# LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

## Voting 2024

On the first day of early voting, October 19, Town Clerk Doug Miner reported that seventeen people drove to Town Hall to cast their ballot. "Easily a new record," he said.

By the 27th, the number of early voters had swelled to 52. Doug said, "A record for numbers as well as pace."

He added that his office was not only seeing more walk-in early voters, but by the 27th had received 108 absentee ballots out of 175 requested.

"So far, 160 Sandisfield voters have cast ballots," Doug said in an email with only a little more than a week before the actual election.

This is out of 702 registered voters in Sandisfield.

For those who haven't yet voted, there are several options.

Walking in to Old Town Hall at 3 Sandisfield Road on Voting Day, Tuesday, November 5, between 7:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m.

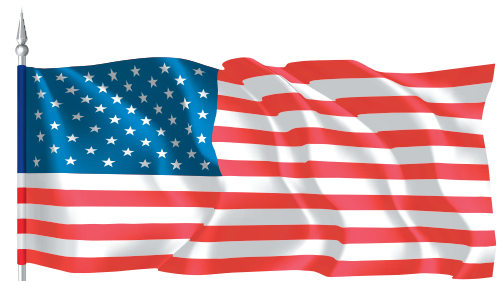
For those with a mail-in ballot not yet mailed, fill it out and get it in the mail now.

And you can still vote early in person at Town Hall on October 29 and 30. Check the Town website for specific hours Town Hall is open.

However you do it, please vote. With so many options, there is little excuse not to.

This election is particularly fraught, with stark differences between the presidential candidates – not only in presentation and demeanor, but in policy proposals and goals. This election has been described as one that can set the country's tenor for decades to come. If you're not among the 160 who have already voted, make a plan to cast your ballot between now and Voting Day, November 5.

- Bill Price  
West New Boston



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# recreation COMMITTEE



## OKTOBERFEST 2024

By Laurie Seddon, Recreation Committee


The forecast looked chilly and possibly wet too, but luckily a pause in the rain for a few hours during the RecCommittee's Oktoberfest gave us all a break.

What we lacked in warm temperatures we matched in the warmth of the 100 or so people who came to Looking Glass Gardens for this annual Sandisfield celebration.

While we enjoyed the usual activities such as hayrides, crafting, pony rides, and the wonderful German music of Tom O'Gara's band of tuba players, trumpeters, and drummers, this year we reveled in new additions like Sunny Rose Farm's mini-petting zoo comprised of sweet-faced donkeys, freshly made Riiska Brook Orchard cider donuts, and 65 pumpkins to decorate. The pumpkins were generously donated by Taft Farms and Ward's Nursery of Great Barrington.

Of course, Bub's Beans and the Dogs were stars with not only their standard delicious menu, but with the addition of bratwurst and German potato salad. Chuck and Zoe Nelson (owners of Looking Glass Gardens) started a warm, welcoming and placed propane heaters about for visitors to warm their fingers and toes while wandering to and from all the activities. Those "warming stations" did the trick! People not only came, they stayed! A little chill can't keep hardy New Englanders away from a good time.

A special thank you to Looking Glass Gardens and Sunny Rose Farm who coordinated most of this event and charge neither the Recreation Committee nor attendees a fee. We look forward to next year!

Save the date of December 7 for the Sandisfield Historical Society and Recreation Committee's Annual Holiday Fair! This year the Fair will be held at Fire Station #2 on Rte. #57 on Saturday, December 7, from 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. More than 40 vendors, Penny Auction, and Santa will visit at 11:00 a.m. Hope to see all of you there. 

*Oompah Band photo by Ron Bernard*



*Above photos of the hay ride and the fire pit: Laurie Seddon*



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## Meet (Again) Our New Town Manager

**JANEY SNYDER IS A  
SANDISFIELD VETERAN ALREADY**

*By Bill Price*

Janey Beardsley Snyder, hired in 2021 as part-time assistant to the Select Board, was promoted in no time to Administrative Assistant to the Select Board as well as part-time Assistant Treasurer/Tax Collector. She has passed the courses to serve as the Town's Certified Public Purchasing Official. In April 2024 she was appointed Acting Town Manager and in September deleted "Acting" from her job title. The Times and Ms. Snyder conducted this interview via email.



*Janey Snyder at the Annual Town Meeting with her father, Town Constable Dana Beardsley.*

*Photo: Jane Kaufman, The Berkshire Eagle*

### **You're in the hot seat now. Have you recognized your biggest challenge yet?**

In any town, it's easy to only see the negative, so my immediate challenge will be to highlight all the good being done within our local government and keep a positive attitude among our taxpayers. Sandisfield does tremendous work for the betterment of the community, and I'd love for that notion to really shine.

### **How do you feel being a Town Manager at age 25?**

I am really fortunate to have the opportunity to serve my community in this capacity so early in my career. I have been surrounded by seasoned professionals thus far and look forward to supporting the next generation of municipal employees.

### **What gives you the idea you can actually be a Town Manager at 25?**

When I was first hired in 2021, I was told "be a sponge," learn everything you possibly can and take every opportunity to better yourself. Since then, I have dabbled in almost every area of municipal government. Thanks to the amazing team in Sandisfield, I have built myself a concrete foundation in public service. Outside of my Sandisfield team, I have created a network of knowledgeable individuals who are more than happy to share their wisdom.

**Do you imagine a future career in public service?**

While it would be an honor to serve in a larger capacity, I don't anticipate moving further than local government. Local government is so fulfilling, and I love being able to witness first-hand the impact I can make.

**You are enrolled at Suffolk University in Boston with Friday classes. Do you have to schlep over to Boston every Friday or can you do them online?**

Each course is five weeks, the first and last class are in-person at the Berkshire Innovation Center in Pittsfield and the three classes in-between are online via Zoom. They do make it possible for students out here in the Berkshires.

I am currently enrolled in a graduate-level program in municipal management directed by the Massachusetts Municipal Association and Suffolk University. Completion of the program will result in a Certificate in Local Government Leadership and Management. Coursework covers such topics as general municipal management, human resource management, budgeting, financial management, and strategic leadership.

**Have you considered that you might make connections at the university that could serve you well in the future?**

The Local Government Leadership and Management Program has already proved to be a beneficial networking tool. There are many Town Administrators/Managers taking this course from all over Berkshire County who I've had the pleasure of meeting and have been encouraged to reach out to with any questions. The Program provides a great environment to bring real-life situations to the classroom and discuss solutions, protocol, and the emotions that come with it all.

**Are you having fun?**

Of course! I have such an amazing team here, it's hard not to. While the job requires a lot of hard work and dedication, the Town employees, Select Board, and residents always make me grateful to both work and live in Sandisfield.



*Janey and Skylar Snyder, who were married in June, live on Sandisfield Road in Sandisfield Center.*



**Penny Auction is Here Again**

The Penny Auction Table will be back again for the Holiday Fair. December 7 at Fire Station #2 on Rt. 57.

The Auction, sponsored by the Sandisfield Scholarship Committee, is an important part of each year's Annual Holiday Fair, which in turn is sponsored by the Historical Society.

Each year the Scholarship Committee chooses an outstanding high school student from Sandisfield who intends to further their education as the recipient of a scholarship. Proceeds from the Penny Auction go directly into the fund used for this purpose.

Also, please consider making a donation to the fund for our youngsters! We accept gift donations, gift certificates, and monetary donations to help build this fund. Contact Elaine O'Brien at (413) 269-4465 or Shannon Chapman at (720) 277-2728 for your donations.

Make sure to mark your calendars for this fun event.

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Wed-Fri 5-9 pm

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»HAPPY«  
**Thanksgiving**



# Sandisfield Arts Center

## A Season of Sweet Success

By Suzanne OConnell

A talk by Mariah Robertson one of the artists, of our current show, "Illuminated: Women in Photography," will be our last event for the season. The Arts Center will close for winter after a rich season of art, music, discussions, and programs that included the film "The Whole Gritty City" by Andre Lambertson and the magician Tomáš Kubinec.

With seventeen events it would be difficult to pick the most impactful. As a geologist, I was delighted that Williams College Professor Paul Karabinos' talk about the 1.2 billion-year rich and complicated history of the Berkshires, so clearly described where we live, providing a new perspective on the town we call home. As an educator, "The Whole Gritty City" showed the transformative power of education. In this film, it was music education, but I believe all education has the power to be transformative.

The many music programs were spiritually uplifting and just fun. They included the jazz trio Triple Play with Chris Brubeck, Joel Brown, and Peter "Madcat" Ruth, the solo selections of romantic piano music performed by Josh Luxon Robinson, Sandisfield's



The stage for the play, "Dick and Jim," starring Marlon Carey (left) as James Baldwin and Geof Newton as Richard Avedon.

Photo: Peter Baiamonte

own Bill Taylor and Friends ensemble, and storyteller and songwriter Bobby Sweet.

With all of these programs it is impossible to pick a favorite, but two linger prominently in my mind. Poet and playwright Neil Silberblatt's play-in-progress, "Dick and Jim," about the imaginary dialogue between the fashion photographer Richard Avedon and essayist/activist James Baldwin, high school friends, as they collaborated on their powerful 1964 book, *Nothing Personal*.

And what became a serious discussion led by Dr. Diane Meier, a McArthur "genius" award winner, about caring for people with serious illness at all stages of life.

The Arts Center has begun some substantial renovations, so the 2025 program may be more limited as we accommodate the changes. Nevertheless, we look forward to a robust season and hope you will join us. 🍷



sandisfield ARTS CENTER  
★ 5 HAMMERTOWN ROAD, SANDISFIELD, MA ★

# Thank You

FOR YOUR SUPPORT THIS SEASON!

FOR DETAILS, RESERVATIONS, AND UPCOMING EVENTS, PLEASE CHECK OUR WEBSITE.  
[SANDISFIELDARTSCENTER.ORG](http://SANDISFIELDARTSCENTER.ORG)

# Church Celebrates 150th Anniversary AND ENJOYS AN UNUSUAL REVIVAL

*Photos and story by Ron Bernard*

Members of the New Boston Congregational Church have much to celebrate this year. In an era when traditional Protestant churches in America are closing at a rate of several thousand per year, the welcoming doors of one of the area's last functioning Congregational churches are wide open.

Coming off historical lows of less than a dozen people at Sunday services a decade ago, today attendance at year-round, bi-weekly Sunday services averages about fifty. This remarkable revival owes in large part to the arrival in 2017 of a charismatic and upbeat pastor, Rev. Eric Kriebel.

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the founding of the New Boston Congregation in 1874. The Little Brown Church, as it is known, was built in 1879 in Gothic Revival-style, entirely of chestnut, and stands in original condition. It is a significant contributing element to the New Boston Village National Register Historic District (2022).

On September 29, the congregation celebrated the occasion with a special guest speaker, Rev. Michael Gantt of Brattleboro, Vermont, who presided as student pastor in 1970-71. Invited to speak in 2018 by Rev. Kriebel, that visit was his first in forty-seven years.

On this occasion Rev. Gantt spoke about the importance of legacies in American society and how traditional values and customs such as community volunteering and church attendance have faded. Forty-five pastors including three women, have presided in New Boston. He delivered a powerful talk about how each had left their mark, legacies, which connected six generations and enabled this church to survive. Long-time members could not recall a more rapt or compelling presentation.

Mr. Gantt is an author and hosts a radio show in Brattleboro. He has extensive missionary experience in Africa and credits his first pastorate at this small church and remote rural community as having influenced his career. 🇺🇸

*A video recording of Rev. Gantt's presentation is available at ([www.newbostoncongregationalchurch.org/news](http://www.newbostoncongregationalchurch.org/news)) 🇺🇸*



*In front of the church, Rev. Kriebel (left) and Rev. Gantt.*



*The congregation listening to Reverend Michael Gantt speak during his return visit.*



## NEW BOSTON CHURCH SERVICES

**Sunday, November 10th at 10 a.m. –** Service to honor our veterans. Please come out and show your gratitude to the men and women who have served our nation. Invite a veteran to join us for this special service at NBCC.

**Sunday, December 1st –** Christmas Church Service at NBCC, 10 a.m.

**Tuesday, December 24th –** Christmas Eve Sing-Along



## ANNOUNCING NEW LIBRARY HOURS:

*Now open on Wednesdays!*

*Monday, 9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.*

*Tuesday, 9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.*

*Wednesday, 1:00 p.m.–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*

*Our new website: sandisfieldlibrary.org*

Please note:

The Library will be closed  
Saturday, November 9 and  
Monday, November 11  
for Veterans Day.

We will also be closed Saturday,  
November 30,  
for the Thanksgiving Holiday.

**THE LIBRARY WISHES TO  
THANK ED THE WIZARD FOR A  
SMASHING PIRATE DAY.**

**CHEERS, MATES!!!**

**SEE YOU SOON AT OUR NEXT  
ADVENTURE!**

## EVENTS AT THE LIBRARY THIS MONTH.

November 21, Thursday at 6:30 p.m., the Sandisfield Women's Book Group will meet to discuss *The Only Woman in the Room* by Marie Benedict. The book is a historical novel focusing on the life story of film actress Hedy Larmar. In her novel, which is based on the famous Hollywood actress of the 1930s and '40s, the author uses the political machinations of World War II and Lamar's experiences to explore performativity, guilt, and sexism. The group's meeting this month will take place at the Sandisfield Library.

November 20, Wednesday, beginning at 6:30 p.m., we will have Games Night at the Library. Join in for the flavor of the month, which is Scrabble! All ages are encouraged. Bring your wits and your smiles. And even all of your two-letter words. Light refreshments provided.

All month long – it is never too late to participate in the **Massachusetts Center for the Book 2024 Reading Challenge**. November's book is a relaxing, soul-soothing book. We all need one of those!

## LATEST ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY SHELVES

(ADULT FICTION AND  
NON-FICTION)

- *Creation Lake* by Rachel Kushner
- *What Have You Done?* by Shari Lapena
- *We Solve Murders* by Richard Osman
- *Playground* by Richard Powers
- *Killing Time* by M.C. Beaton
- *The Message* by Ta-Nehesi Coates
- *The Mighty Red* by Louise Erdrich
- *Framed* by John Grisham
- *A Christmas Duet* by Debbie Macomber
- *The Boyfriend* by Frieda McFadden
- *The Mistletoe Mystery* by Nita Prose
- *The Last One at the Wedding* by Jason Rekulak
- *The More the Terrier* by David Rosenfeld

- *Triangle* by Danielle Steel
- *Upworthy Good People* by Gabrielle Reilich

## OLDER CHILDREN

*Sweet Valley Twins #5* by Francine Pascal

*Tales From a Not-So-Bratty Little Sister* by Rachel Renee Russell

## MUSEUM PASSES

- The Clark
- The Springfield Museums (all Five!)
- Hancock Shaker Village
- Mass Moca
- Herman Melville Museum and Home
- Bidwell House
- Ventfort Hall

## November Poem

### NOTHING GOLD CAN STAY

*By Robert Frost*

Nature's first green is gold,  
Her hardest hue to hold.  
Her early leaf's a flower;  
But only so an hour.  
Then leaf subsides to leaf.  
So Eden sank to grief,  
So dawn goes down to day.  
Nothing gold can stay.



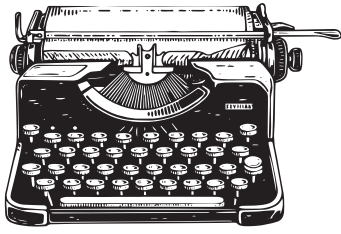
## Planes trains and automobiles

Traveling differently this holiday?



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# Out of the Past

## Illegal Hunting to be Argued in District Court

The Berkshire Eagle, Great Barrington, Nov. 19, 1936

- Jason M. Whitney of Mattapoissett and Alfred A. Carter of Sandisfield are scheduled to appear in district court tomorrow morning on charges of illegal possession of a deer carcass. They were arrested by Game Warden John E. Buckley in Sandisfield.

According to the warden, Commonwealth witnesses heard reports of firing, and, going to the scene, Mr. Buckley came across the two men. He alleges they had a 200-pound buck in their possession, apparently killed by a rifle, and that one of the men had a rifle in his possession. Both are out on \$200 bail.



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# Coming & Going



## TENNEY EMERSON FALES 1948-2024

### *By the Family*

Tenney Emerson Fales passed peacefully, surrounded by family at his home in Egremont on October 4. His boundless energy and welcoming spirit will be greatly missed.

Tenney is survived by his wife of 53 years, Linda Hryckvich Fales; his two children, Alexcia Nicole Adams (Paul) and Alice Laura Davey (Nathan); his grandchild Andrew Tenney Adams; his step-grandchildren, Simon and Oliver Alexander-Adams; and his four siblings, James Fales, Susan Marzi (Marty), Bradford Fales (Lynne), and Mary Beth Webler (Bob). He was predeceased by his son Justin and his sister-in-law Gigi.

Born in Norwood, Mass., on September 14, 1948, to the late James Babcock Fales and Charlotte Alice Fales (Marshall), Tenney graduated from McGill University with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering. He met the love of his life, Linda Hryckvich, through his brother Brad's fiancé, who worked with Linda and needed Tenney out of her hair, so they set up a double date. Tenney and Linda married in Lenox on May 15, 1971.

Tenney began his family and career in Danville, Penn. In 1976, the family moved to Linda's home town of Sandisfield, where

he built his family's first home. He also owned the former "Strickland Farm" on North Beech Plain Road from 1976-1986. In Sandisfield he began and expanded his company, T.E. Fales Construction. He never retired.

Throughout his life, Tenney loved being outdoors and working with wood, beginning with his first multi-story tree house at the age of 10 and proceeding to build over 200 homes in the Berkshires. Tenney loved building and helping others. He believed in doing what was in the power of his hands to help others. To meet Tenney was to meet a friend.

Tenney was an active member in the congregation as one of Jehovah's Witnesses. He served as a pioneer and elder at Great Barrington Kingdom Hall for over 40 years. He enjoyed volunteering in numerous kingdom hall and assembly builds and disaster-relief projects. Hundreds of volunteers could hear his booming voice from one end of the jobsite to the other. And that was without a megaphone.

Working, teaching, volunteering, or playing, Tenney was always busy, although, sometimes his play felt like work to the rest of us.

He loved creating Tenneyland, his own style playground, which brought joy and thrills to many. Tenneyland included a circus-grade trampoline and huge rope swings with high-in-the-air, custom-built launch platforms. Even a regular-style swing became a game of who-can-get-the-highest-without-touching-the-ground.

Tenney loved a good challenge and a good laugh. Always gracious and never a sore loser, he made everyone feel included and at home.

A short graveside service will be held November 9, at 1 p.m., at the Sandisfield Center Cemetery. Family and friends are welcome to a reception and celebration of his life at 2:30 p.m. at Crissey Farm in Great Barrington. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his honor to The Great Barrington Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses and/or HospiceCare in the Berkshires directly or in care of Finnerty & Stevens Funeral Home, 426 Main St., Great Barrington, MA 01230. To send remembrances to his family, please visit the funeral home's website.

In his memory, the family encourages you to read a scripture, go outside and play, build something, or help a neighbor.



# NOW HEAR THIS!

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

## NOVEMBER EVENTS

**Sandisfield Select Board Meetings** are currently in person and through Zoom 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 basement. 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 Old Town Hall on 3 Silverbrook Road, sponsored by the Council on Aging. For more information, contact Nina Carr (258-3314). Free.

**Harvest Dinner** on Saturday, November 2 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. sponsored by the New Boston Congregational Church at 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 and take-out available.

**Presidential and State Election, In-Person Voting on Tuesday, November 5 from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Old Town Hall, 3 Silverbrook Road.**

**New Boston Church Sunday Worship Service** on Sunday, November 10 at 10:00 a.m. to honor our veterans. Please come out and show your gratitude to the men and women who have served our nation. For more information and to view the calendar, visit [newbostoncongregationalchurch.org](http://newbostoncongregationalchurch.org). All are welcome. The New Boston Church is located on Route 57.

**Women in Photography with Amy Arbus** through November 10 at the Sandisfield Arts Center on 5 Hammertown Road. Viewing by special arrangement or when the Arts Center is open for events.

**Holiday Flower Centerpiece Class** on Friday, November 22. Time to be determined at the Council on Aging, Town Hall. For more information, call 258-4816 or 258-4711, ext. 8 to register. There is a \$20 fee for members and \$25 for non-members.

### ONLINE EVENTS

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

### EVENTS IN SURROUNDING TOWNS

**Great Barrington Farmers Market** on Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at 18 Church Street and continuing on Saturdays through November 9. Featuring locally grown and produced foods, including cheese, meats, breads, and more. Local musicians perform.

**Arts & Crafts Festival** on Saturday, November 2 from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Berkshire South Regional Community Center in Great Barrington. An opportunity to find unique gifts for the holidays while supporting the local maker economy. Live music, food, and vendors.

**Holiday Super Prize Party & Bake Sale** on Friday, November 8 beginning at 6:00 p.m. at the Winchester Grange Hall on 100 Newfield Road (Intersection of Route 263 and Newfield Road) in Winchester Center, Connecticut. Penny and Tea Cup Auctions, Country Store, Baked Goods. Free admission and parking.

**Household Hazardous Waste Disposal** for Sandisfield residents and others on Saturday, November 9 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Great Barrington Transfer

Station on 601 Stockbridge Road (Route 7) in Great Barrington. Pre-registration ([www.tritownhealth.org](http://www.tritownhealth.org)) is required.

**The Creation of the Daniel Nimham Sculpture** on Saturday, November 9 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Stockbridge Library. A film screening and talk on Sachem Daniel Nimham, the last official Sachem of the Wappinger People in the Hudson Valley Region of New York. The film features sculptor Michael Keropian narrating the life of Daniel Nimham as he takes the viewer on an informative journey through the complicated and eye-opening process of creating a larger-than-life representational sculpture. Free. Entry admitted on a first-come, first-serve basis.

# HARVEST DINNER

SATURDAY  
NOVEMBER 2

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.

# Disposal of Household Hazardous Waste

Great Barrington Transfer Station, 601 Stockbridge Rd. (Rt. 7), Great Barrington, MA 01230 will be accepting Household Hazardous Waste on Saturday, November 9th, 2024, 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM.

Pre-Registration is required. Please register online at [www.tritownhealth.org](http://www.tritownhealth.org)

See attachment below for details on what types of waste are accepted.

For additional questions, call Tri-Town Health Department at 413-243-5540



## Household Hazardous Waste

For Residents of:

Alford Becket Egremont Great Barrington Lee Lenox Monterey Mt. Washington New Marlborough Dalton Otis Richmond Sandisfield Sheffield Stockbridge Tyringham Washington West Stockbridge

**When:** Saturday, November 9, 2024, 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

**Where:** Great Barrington Transfer Station, 601 Stockbridge Road (Route 7), Great Barrington, MA 01230

### WHAT TO BRING

**From The Yard/Garden**

Pesticides, Fungicides  
Herbicides  
Insect Sprays  
Rodent Killers  
Muratic Acid  
Flea Powder  
No-Pest Strips  
Chemical Fertilizers  
Lighter Fluid  
Moth Balls

**From the Workbench**

Rust Proofers  
Wood Preservatives  
Wood Strippers & Stains  
Paint Thinners  
Lead & Oil-Based Paint  
Varnish  
Full Aerosol Cans  
Sealants  
Adhesives  
Solvents

**From the House**

Drain Cleaners  
Oven Cleaners  
Floor Cleaners  
Metal Polish  
Arts & Crafts Supplies  
Photo Chemicals  
Chemistry Kits  
Rechargeable Batteries

**From the Garage**

Fuels/Gasoline/Kerosene  
Brake & Transmission Fluid  
Car Wax/Polish  
Engine Degreaser/  
Motor Oil  
Swimming Pool Chemicals  
Driveway Sealants  
Antifreeze  
Car=Lead Acid Batteries

**Mercury Products**

Thermometers  
Thermostats  
Other mercury  
Button Batteries

### DO NOT BRING

Latex Paint, Medical Wastes, Asbestos, Fireworks & Explosives, Ammunition, Construction Debris, Gas or Propane Cylinders, Smoke Detectors, Radioactive Material, Fire Extinguishers, Fluorescent Lamps, Electronics, PCB's, Medications, Medical Sharps

### PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.

Please register online at [www.tritownhealth.org](http://www.tritownhealth.org) or scan QR code  
For additional questions, call Tri-Town Health Department at 413-243-5540



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

Donations of any amount are needed to ensure the continuation of this newspaper. Please send checks to: The Sandisfield Times, P.O. Box 584,

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

We welcome submissions, comments and suggestions, including letters to the editor by the 15th of the month prior. Maximum 300 words. We may edit for space, style or clarity. We will try to publish Public Service Announcements when we have room, with priority given to Sandisfield organizations. No portion of the *The Sandisfield Times* may be reproduced without permission.

### Editorial Staff

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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)

# Fighting, or Just Practice?

Photos: Carl Nett

Two white tails seem to be fighting it out in front of one of Carl Nett's cellular trail cams in the early evening, October 9, behind his home on Town Hill Road. Carl submitted the photos to ConnectSandisfield-Facebook and The Times.

Carl wrote: "It's like winning the lottery to get bucks battling in front of a trail cam, especially in daylight. Bucks move mostly at night and it's rare to see them on the cams during the day. They fought for about 30 minutes. I don't know which buck won the battle, but my cam took about fifty pictures of them duking it out."

Fighting? Maybe not.

Brigitte Ruthman wrote on Connect-Sandisfield: "Phenomenal capture on film – but even though it seems like they were fighting- they were not. That won't happen until November. Right about now they will toy with each other . . . clink around a bit . . . not yet to eliminate the other for the dominant right to breed does . . . who won't come into estrus for a few weeks yet. (This one is mostly eyes open practice battle.) Then they'll fight . . . and it's potentially to the death of one. They don't give up. These two have also the potential for locking antlers . . . which then causes both to die. Great capture."



**Please see  
our enclosed  
Annual Appeal  
Letter  
and form.  
Thank you!**

**Annual Holiday Fair!**

**12/7/2024 10AM-2PM**

**SANTA ARRIVES AT 11 AM**

**Fire Station #2 on Rte #57.**  
**Over 40 vendors, seasonal crafting, and a penny auction.**  
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**[sandisfieldevents@recreationcommittee.info](mailto:sandisfieldevents@recreationcommittee.info)**

# THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



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*Anonymous*  
*Marjory Gardella*



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