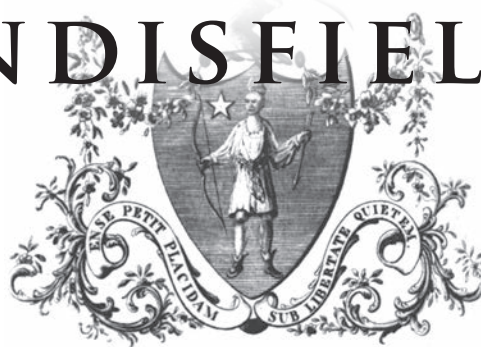




THE SANDISFIELD TIMES



RELIABLE. REGULAR. RELEVANT.

Volume XVI, Number 1

April 2025

Thanks, Otis

WE APPRECIATE YOUR CHOICE

By Larry Dwyer

Additional reporting by Melissa Bye

At the Otis Special Town Meeting, March 25, 117 voters clicked “yes” on the new town voting system. “No” votes totaled 68.

The numbers meant that the Regional District Agreement (RDA) proposal for the Farmington River Regional School District (FRRSD) had passed.

Most of the Otis voters – and the handful of Sandisfield residents in attendance – felt a sense of relief. The next school year would see business as usual for the running of the local two-town school district. Had the vote gone the other way, the school district would have been put in jeopardy as Sandisfield, one of the two towns, had threatened to leave the district if the revised agreement was voted down.

There was tension in the Town Hall, but for the most part the meeting was amicable.

The school committee had worked for more than two years to propose the RDA changes which would shift the apportionment each town pays toward its share of the school budget. For many years, according to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), Sandisfield has been paying significantly more than what it can afford.

The Otis Average Single Family Tax Bill (ASFTB) was projected to increase this year by only \$36, which is just

Cont'd on p.5

A Proposal for Our Two Firehouses

Editor's Note: An ongoing conflict between the Select Board and Sandisfield Fire Department, Inc. (SFDI) may be resolved at the Annual Town Meeting, May 17.

At the end of March, the Select Board posted a notice on the Town website of an item it will list on the Annual Town Meeting warrant. The Times has reprinted the notice on the following pages of this issue, as well as a copy of the lease agreement between the Town and SFDI.

The item details a proposal the Board will make for the Town to assume ownership, through “gift, purchase, or eminent domain” of the two Sandisfield fire stations currently owned and operated by SFDI.

It's possible that many residents are unaware that SFDI is a separate entity from the Sandisfield Fire Department. It was initiated in 1987 as a non-profit organization to oversee the construction of and take title to a new fire station, Fire Station #2 at 207 Sandisfield Road.

SFDI, a 501(c)(3) organization, was proposed in order to receive tax-deductible donations to support the construction of the building, which was to have been given to the Town after completion. It was also proposed that by having a non-profit oversee construction and take initial ownership the Town would avoid having to pay prevailing wages and it could avoid wending its way through state procurement processes.

The proposed Town Meeting item has created a conflict among current Fire Department volunteers, some of whom spoke with The Times, requesting anonymity. They claim there are misleading and erroneous statements in the warrant proposal, and that there had been no issues between Select Boards and SFDI before the current Select Board raised them. Also, in their opinion they have maintained the buildings since construction and the Town might not do as good a job.

Cont'd on p.2

A Proposal for Our Two Firehouses

Cont'd from p.1

One veteran Sandisfield firefighter, however, said that the important thing is to focus on the community and what is its best interests rather than the wishes of a few individuals.

The conflict may be complicated by the fact that Fire Chief Henry Fristik resigned on March 21. He started in October, stepping into the role formerly played by long-time Fire Chief Ralph Morrison, who resigned in 2023. Morrison has been president of SFDI since its inception.

The Berkshire Eagle reported Fristik as having said he “wished he’d known a bit more of Sandisfield’s recent history prior to taking the job,” referring to the conflicts between the department and the Select Board. An interim chief will be selected at a Select Board meeting March 31.

The Times will print one more issue before the Annual Town Meeting. If you have an opinion on the warrant proposal, write to us at w.billprice@gmail.com or at PO Box 584, Sandisfield, MA 01255. We will print as many of them as space allows in our May issue, which will be published at the end of April.

—Bill Price, Editor



A CALL FOR VOTER SUPPORT: The Future of Sandisfield’s Fire Stations

Written by the Sandisfield Select Board

Since its establishment, there has been ongoing confusion regarding the distinction between the Sandisfield Fire Department and Sandisfield Fire Department, Incorporated (SFDI). To clarify, SFDI is a private, non-profit corporation that owns Sandisfield’s two fire stations and leases them to the Town for use by the Sandisfield Fire Department. These leases are paid for by the Town, making SFDI the landlord of our fire stations. However, SFDI has no role in the actual operations or functions of the Sandisfield Fire Department, except for the fact that Ralph Morrison serves as President and Director of SFDI, and previously served as the Fire Chief until his resignation in November of 2023.

WHY THIS MATTERS

The Town of Sandisfield funds nearly every aspect of fire and emergency services, including:

- Insurance and utility costs for both firehouses
- Salaries and training for the Fire Chief, administrative assistant, firefighters and EMTs
- All emergency vehicles, equipment, and maintenance

A VEHICLE FOR THE FIRE CHIEF

Despite this significant financial commitment, the Town does not own the buildings it operates from. Instead, we continue to pay rent and other lease fees to SFDI. Recently, SFDI attempted to refuse to allow the successor Fire Chief to use office space in either fire station or to access the department’s records. These and other events, have made it evident that the current arrangement between the Town and SFDI is not in Sandisfield’s best interest.

COLLINS CENTER EMS STUDY

In June 2024, the Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management completed an EMS Study for the Town, recommending in its report the investigation of “opportunities that would allow ownership of a facility for operations, rather than continue leasing space” as a long-term recommendation for the fire department. The report can be viewed on the Town’s website, www.sandisfieldma.gov.

Section 2.3 of the report emphasizes that the current leases are “triple net”, meaning the Town is responsible for paying for all utility costs, insurance costs, and taxes (where applicable), and underscores the operational risks posed by the lease

agreement, which allows either party to terminate it with just 90 days’ notice. Additionally, the study highlights the potential risks to public safety operations following the resignation of Mr. Morrison after charges were adopted by the Select Board in an executive session on November 13, 2023. Minutes for this meeting are available on the Select Board webpage on the Town website under “Minutes.”

Section 2.3 of the report concludes by warning that “the circumstances surrounding the employee’s [Chief Morrison’s] resignation, combined with the liability and risk to the town by not owning the stations, places the town in a precarious position when it comes to operations.”

SFDI ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION AMENDMENT

SFDI operates by Articles of Incorporation filed with the State which outline a corporation’s basic structure, purpose, and initial operational details. It was recently discovered in a review of SFDI’s corporate filings available online with the Massachusetts Secretary of the Commonwealth, that an amendment was made to the Articles of Incorporation, filed on November 4, 2024.

That amendment revised Article 4 of the Articles, which previously stated in part, “Upon the dissolution of the corporation, the Board of Directors shall, after paying the [debts] of the corporation, dispose of all the assets of the corporation... by transfer to the Town of Sandisfield... to be applied to the achievement of the goal of the corporation – the safety of the general public.”

Article 4 now states in relevant part, “Upon dissolution of the Corporation, the Board of Directors shall, after paying [the debts] of the Corporation, dispose of all the assets of the Corporation exclusively for the purposes of the Corporation, by transfer to other charities with similar missions to the Corporation.”

This amendment is deeply concerning, as it removes the Town of Sandisfield as the designated recipient of the fire stations in the event of SFDI’s dissolution. Given that the Town has funded and maintained these buildings for years, this change in the corporation’s organizational documents undermines our community’s investment in public safety, puts the future of public safety operations at significant risk, and further highlights the urgency of securing direct ownership of these critical facilities.

In addition, since October 2024, the Town of Sandisfield has been actively seeking to clarify the financial standing of SFDI. Multiple requests have been made for tax returns and associated financial records, with the most recent citing 940 CMR 2.03, which obligates nonprofit organizations to disclose such documents upon request. Despite these repeated efforts, the requests remain unfulfilled. Given these ongoing transparency issues, the Town continues to seek full disclosure of SFDI’s financial records to ensure accountability and alignment with municipal and public interest.

THE NEED FOR CHANGE


It has become clear that the Town can no longer justify leasing these fire station buildings from a private entity. To ensure the long-term security, efficiency, and

fiscal responsibility of our Fire Department, Sandisfield must take ownership of its fire stations.

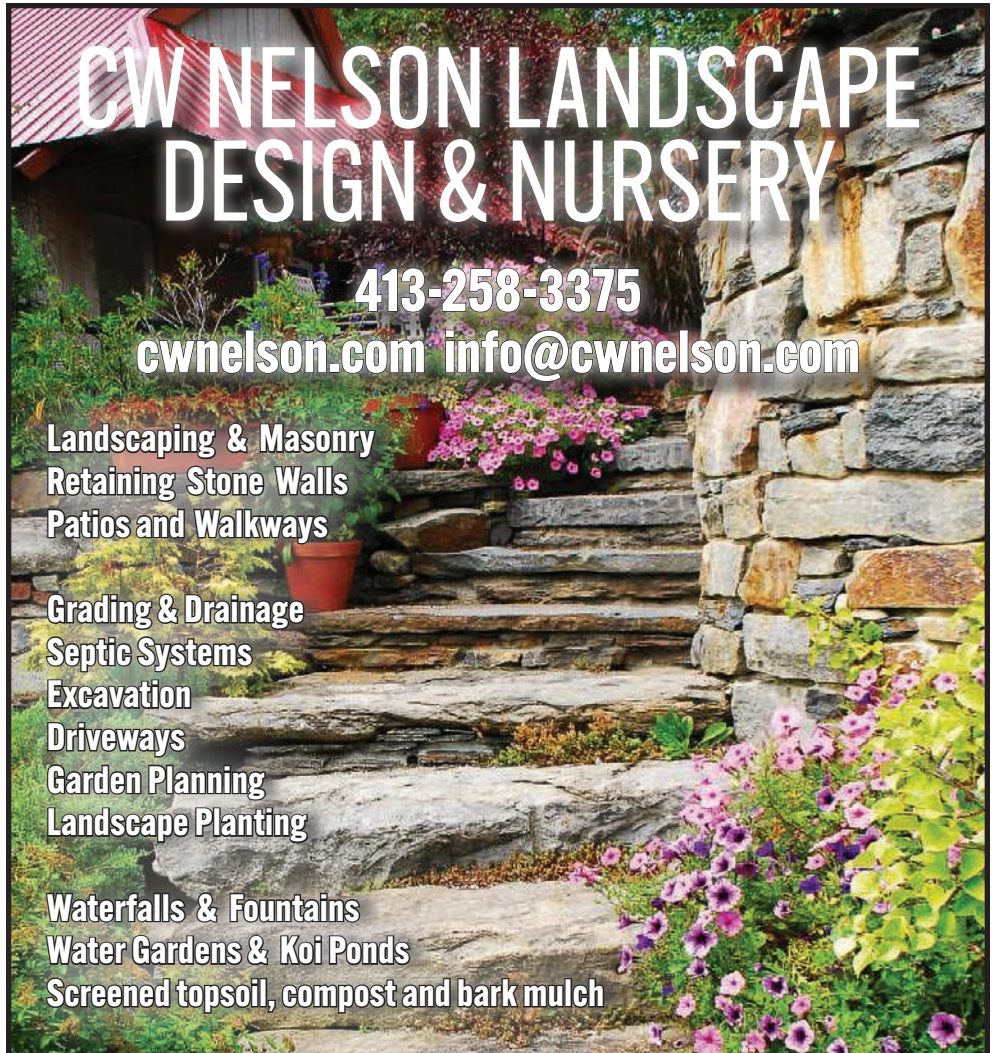
To achieve this, the Select Board will be introducing one or more Warrant Articles at the upcoming Annual Town Meeting to seek voter authorization to assume custody of both fire stations by means of gift, purchase, or eminent domain. This is a necessary step towards gaining full control of the Town’s fire department, financial transparency, responsible governance, and the continued safety of Sandisfield’s residents.

WHY YOUR VOTE MATTERS

Your support is critical in making this transition a reality. By attending and voting at Town Meeting in favor of acquiring the firehouses, we can ensure that taxpayer funds are being used to directly benefit our community rather than paying rent to a private corporation. This is about more than just buildings—it’s about the future of Sandisfield’s emergency services and the safety of our residents.

We urge all residents to attend the Annual Town Meeting on Saturday, May 17, 2025 and vote in favor of securing the future of our Fire Department. If you have any questions or would like more information, please reach out to the Select Board or attend a public discussion session. 

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The report by the Collins Center for Public Management is available at www.collinscenterfinalreport/sandisfieldEMSstudy.



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LEASE AGREEMENT, SANDISFIELD AND SFDI

In an attempt to add clarity to the discussion between the Select Board and SFDI, printed below is the 5-year lease agreement between the Town and SFDI. It was signed in April and May 2021, to be in effect until June 30, 2026. Source: Town website at www.sandisfieldma.gov/sites/pages/fire_dept_lease_agreement.

SANDISFIELD FIRE DEPARTMENT AGREEMENT

This is a 5 year agreement beginning on July 1, 2021 between the Sandisfield Fire Department Inc. {"Landlord"}, and the Town of Sandisfield ("Tenant"). For the use of the buildings at 79 South Main St. and 207 Sandisfield Rd. ("Premises") for the sole purpose of storing/parking of the Towns emergency fire equipment. All other uses and or events at said locations are at the sole discretion of the Sandisfield Fire Department Inc.

Fees for: 79 South Main St.

Fiscal Year 1 (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022): \$3714.23
Fiscal Year 2 (July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023): \$3788.51
Fiscal Year 3 (July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024): \$3864.28
Fiscal Year 4 (July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025): \$3941.57
Fiscal Year 5 (July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026): \$4020.40

Fees for: 207 Sandisfield Rd.

Fiscal Year 1 (July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022): \$6242.40
Fiscal Year 2 (July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023): \$6367.25
Fiscal Year 3 (July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024): \$6494.60
Fiscal Year 4 (July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025): \$6624.49
Fiscal Year 5 (July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026): \$6756.98

The fees outlined herein shall be split into bi-annual payments and shall be due in December (for July 1 through December 31) and June (for January 1 through June 30) of each year.

Before the end of the five (5) years (June 30, 2026) the agreement can be renegotiated.

The itemized list below is funded by the Town in the yearly fire department budget and is separate and not included in this agreement.

- Heating oil
- Lawn mowing
- Phone and Internet bills
- Snow plowing, sanding and shoveling
- Radio Maintenance
- Air system for trucks
- Propane
- Electrical bills
- Septic pumping
- Heating system, Plumbing and Electrical Maintenance
- Garage bay doors (Maintenance and repairs)
- Maintenance of generators

Landlord allows use of the buildings for Town functions, and nonprofit organization fund raisers and events. All events and functions must be approved and scheduled by the Sandisfield Fire Department Inc.

Example: New Boston Congregational Church, Historical Society, Recreation society and Town events are a few of the nonprofit organizations and events permitted to use the buildings. Landlord does not allow the use of the buildings for private parties or for profit events.

The premises are set up as emergency shelters for the Town of Sandisfield.

Landlord shall be responsible for the Premises and Tenant shall be responsible for insuring any and all personal property located on the premises including any vehicles and equipment.



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This agreement can be cancelled at any time by either party with a 90 day written notice.

Signed and sealed on this 20 day of April, 2021

Town of Sandisfield Sandisfield Fire Department, Inc. President, Sandisfield Fire Dept, Inc.

FROM THE TOWN WEBSITE:

2025 Second Half Tax Bills Will be Mailed on 3/28/25

DUE MAY 1, 2025

The 2025 Second Half tax bills will be mailed on March 28, 2025 and should be expected to arrive within the first week of April. Tax payments are due 5/1/25.

Payments can be made four ways:

1. Taxpayers are encouraged to pay online by going to the Town of Sandisfield website at <https://www.sandisfieldma.gov>. On the homepage, navigate to the Citizen Action Center and click the "Pay/Inquire Tax Bills Online" icon. Bills can be paid online via credit card or bank account transfer.
2. You can mail your tax payment by sending a check to Tax Collector, Town of Sandisfield, 66 Sandisfield Road, Suite 3, Sandisfield, MA 01255.
3. You may also put your check in a sealed envelope and place it inside the black drop box located near the rear door of the Town Hall Annex at 66 Sandisfield Road. If you want a receipt, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.
4. You can drop off your payment in-person during Tax Collector hours, Tues & Thurs 9am-3pm.

For questions regarding tax bills, please call the Tax Collector at 413-258-4711 Ext. 4 or email Treasurer@sandisfieldma.gov.

Should you need to complete an abatement please contact the assessors office at 413-258-4711 ext 6. 📞

Thanks, Otis

Cont'd from p.1

\$3 per month. Whereas, the ASFTB for Sandisfield was projected to decline by \$339 for the year.

Sandisfield had already approved the new agreement by a vote of 53-0 in February. Now it was up to the Town of Otis to vote.

While the School Committee and the Teachers/Administrators union publicly favored the RDA proposal, the Otis Select Board had issued a statement in opposition, and a few postings on the Connect Sandisfield Facebook page, most originating from Otis residents, were very much against it. Posts on the Otis and East Otis Friends Facebook page were unavailable.

One Otis voter, who had attended every School Board and Otis Select Board meeting for the last two years to educate herself about the RDA proposals, spoke in favor of passage. She added that the school currently has a "B plus" rating and the teachers are rated "A plus," so "why do we cast shade on them?"

Another voter pointed out that CEY (Combined Effort Yield, a figure that determines a town's wealth) will be used per the new RDA to determine how much each town pays going forward. She described the CEY as an "equalizer."

Some voters complained that they didn't understand the RDA, and others asked that the school committee bring in an independent arbitrator.

However, as more speakers stepped up, most of the speakers appeared in favor of accepting the new agreement. When discussion was finally closed, the vote was called. 📞

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Sandisfield Arts Center

Still More Challenges BUT ON TRACK FOR OUR GRAND OPENING, MAY 30

By Hilde Weisert

Since our beginning 30 years ago, the only things stirring during March at the freezing cold Sandisfield Arts Center have been a few mice and house manager Steve Kopiec periodically checking that our piano is still warm in its heated and humidified cubby.

BUT NOT THIS YEAR! NOT THIS MARCH!

This March has been busy with, among other things, the completion of the HVAC installation, far from simple in a historic building. A major investment in our future, replacing our oil heat with climate-friendly heating and A/C was made possible not just by generous donations and grant funding, but an Eversource rebate for almost one-third the cost. These rebates matter!

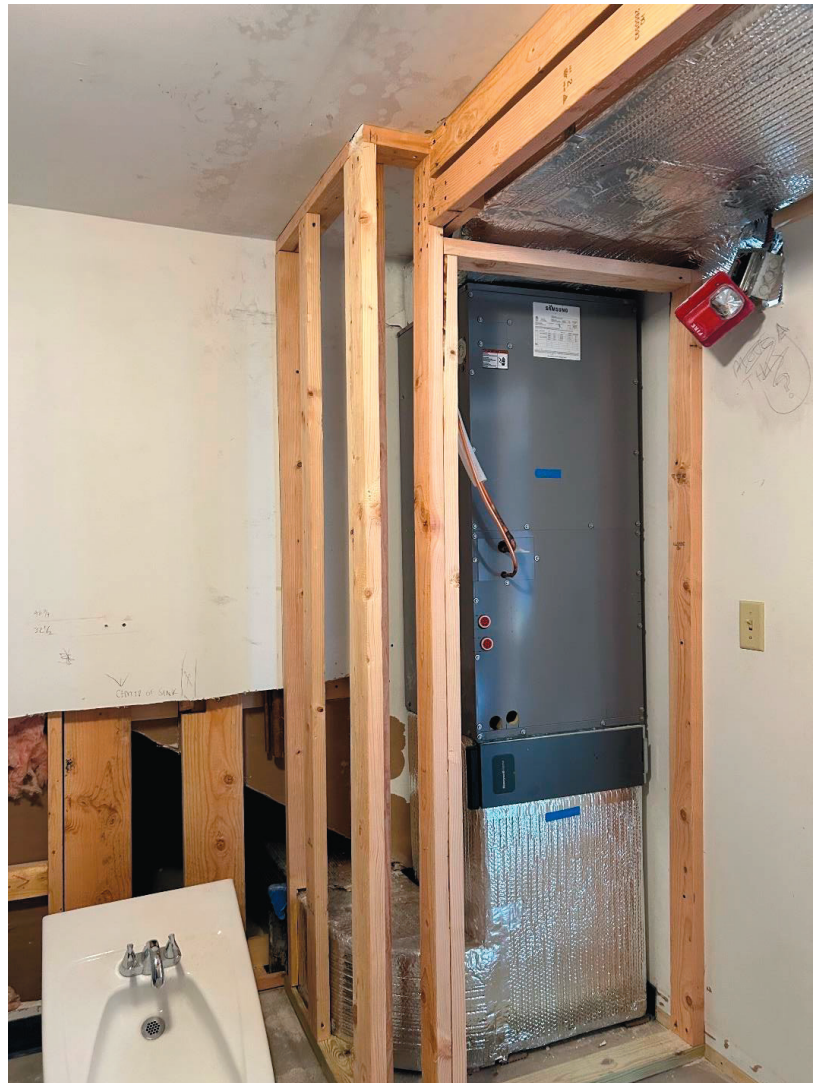


The future kitchen, formerly the oil tank room

Photo: Jerry Herman

Even though heat pumps are energy-efficient, we found out that our old electric service wasn't up to handling four large ones. Eversource paid us a visit and figured we'd need to upgrade to Three-Phase Electric Service, costly now but good for the future. Our electrician has been doing the switchover, wiring, and HVAC connections, and also streamlining the electric outlets in the Gallery as part of the Gallery spiffing-up.

Of course, power was still needed for other work while the electric service was being changed. Craig and Linda Storms came to the rescue, lending the Arts Center their portable generator.



The Men's Room being reconfigured for an indoor unit of the HVAC system

Photo: Jerry Herman

Thanks to the replacement of the oil heating system, we were able to remove the unsightly ductwork in the Gallery. But the Gallery Committee, local artists Jess Cofrin, Josie Miner, and Jaye Moscariello, elected to keep the historic doors to the utility room, with some cleanup. Those doors, we have learned, were the original doors to the church.

Another aging system needing an upgrade was the plumbing. Those upgrades are done, including moving things around in the men's room to make room for the HVAC. The new plumbing and electric service will support a kitchen (where the oil tank used to be). The kitchen is planned for our 2026 season. (Sooner if we get more funding.)

Upstairs, Board member Peter Baiamonte has been working with volunteers and experts to fashion a new light bar for the stage lighting. This was yet another pulled thread where one thing led to another.

First, the light bar had to be moved for the new ductwork. Doing that, Peter learned from the lighting expert that it was perilously mounted and needed a safe, up-to-date replacement. This is one more improvement for our future, thanks to hours of expert pro bono time and anonymous donations.

Coming up in April are most of the remaining Gallery improvements: Putting in drywall for the new back wall for the Gallery and creating more space for art; professional Gallery lighting, fixtures, and a new ceiling.

As we approach our 30th anniversary and our grand opening weekend May 30-June 1, which will focus on Sandisfield and “Celebrating the Landscape We Live In,” we are grateful for the hundreds of hours of “pro bono” work from architects Nick Elton and Jerry Herman, project manager and Treasurer Jean Atwater-Williams, and many others who have kept the place humming with saws, drills, and hard work through a cold, unheated winter.

As co-president Suzanne OConnell says, “We have inherited something priceless from all those who built this community resource over the past 30 years. Now it’s our responsibility to secure its continuation for the next 30 and for all the Sandisfield residents who will carry on its mission and enjoy its offerings in the future.”

For an early preview of the improvements, and to put your own mark on this exciting project, join us in late April or early May for a Painting Party to paint the Gallery. Look for a call for volunteers online at ConnectSandisfield, on our web and social media, and, depending on timing, in *The Times*. 📧

Call for Art

ANNUAL DANIEL MANACHER PRIZE FOR YOUNG ARTISTS

By Times Reporters

The Sandisfield Arts Center has announced the 2025 Call for Art for the 4th Annual Daniel Manacher Prize for Young Artists. The prize is in support of young artists in Berkshire County. Esteemed artist Josephine Halvorsen will return as judge for this year’s award.

Works will be accepted through April 7, 2025. Up to three artists will be selected as finalists, each receiving \$400 to support their art practice as well as participate in a group show of their work at the Sandisfield Arts Center during the 2026 Gallery season. Winners will be notified and announced the first week of June 2025.

Eligible artists are those aged 17-26 years of age, residing or attending school in Berkshire County, and working in painting, drawing, mixed media, and sculpture. There is no fee for the application. All entrants will be judged based solely on the merit of the work presented. Past winners are not eligible to apply. Complete eligibility requirements can be found on the Sandisfield Arts Center website.

The prize was created by Adam Manacher and Carol Birnbaum, parents of Daniel Manacher in memory of their son and his passion for art.

“Daniel worked on different surfaces, always hand-drawn,” said his parents. “He loved interacting with people in their love for art. We hope, with the Daniel Manacher Prize for Young Artists, to inspire other young artists and to assist them as they reach for their dreams.”

Halvorson is Professor of Art and Chair of Graduate Studies in Painting at Boston University. She lives in western Massachusetts and is currently building a studio in Sandisfield.

To apply, visit sandisfieldartscenter.org. For questions or more information, email Jessica Coffrin at galleries@sandisfieldartscenter.org. 📧



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Accessory Dwelling Unit Bylaw Revisions

By Larry Dwyer

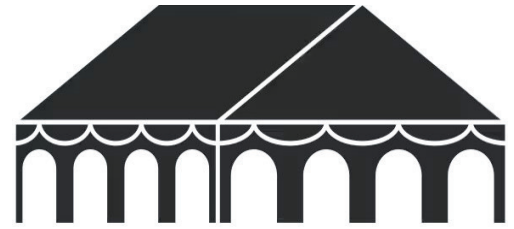
In Mid-March, the Planning Board held a hearing on proposed revisions to the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) bylaws.

Bill Taylor, Planning Board Chairman, said the revisions are being made to comply with the Massachusetts Affordable Homes Act (AHA) of 2024.

The purpose of the ADU bylaw is to add moderately priced housing to Sandisfield's existing housing stock, to provide housing for persons with disabilities, and to allow homeowners to obtain rental income.

The size of an ADU is limited to a maximum of half of the existing primary residence square footage or 900 sq.ft., whichever is larger. The ADU must have a separate entrance and can be part of the primary residence or a separate building. The same building setback rules apply to the ADU, and the owner no longer must be a full-time resident. The AHA permits ADUs to be As-of-Right, meaning that a special building permit will no longer be required.

The bylaw revisions will be voted on at the Annual Town Meeting in May. For specific questions regarding ADUs, please contact the Town's Building Commissioner, Vinny Tirone, at Building@sandisfieldma.gov.



A Pavilion for Yanner Park

By Adam Brown, Chair, Yanner Park Committee

Our committee has been laying groundwork for a project that we believe will have a long-lasting impact on our community.

We plan to include a capital project request for consideration on the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting in May to fund construction of a 30' x 50' pavilion at the park.

Since its inception in 2018, the Yanner Park Committee has been steadily working to make the 275-acre town-owned park a destination for residents and visitors alike. These projects have included installing a driveway and parking area, repairs to the stone sign, construction of the split-rail fence along Town Hill Road, tree and flower plantings, debris disposal, and installation of an informational kiosk and picnic tables.

We've also created a 2.5-mile trail system from Town Hill Road to Hammertown Road that links with the BNRC trails at the Clam River Reserve.

If you haven't had a chance to visit the park, spring is a great time to come by.

We want to build on these successes by constructing a pavilion that will provide a gathering space for larger community events (think pig roast, summer concert, town-wide easter egg hunt, and more) and also a place for individual/family use to get out of the elements, have a picnic, or host your kid's birthday party.

To make this vision come to fruition we need your support and a favorable vote at the Annual Town Meeting in May.

Have questions about the project? The Yanner Park Committee will be holding a public information session to answer questions on Friday, May 2, at 6:30 p.m. at Old Town Hall. There will be cookies.

Burn Permits



You have until May 1 to burn that brush pile out back of the house. Get busy, but be careful. Keep a water hose handy.

Do not burn brush without a burning permit. Permits are available online through the Town or Town Fire Department websites. For residents without computer access, contact Laurie McArthur at Town Hall during business hours (between 8:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.) on the day you intend to burn or by phone at (413) 258-4711 ext 3. Laurie will access the website for you and issue your permit.



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Still Time for Your Ideas


A NEW MASTER PLAN IN THE WORKS

By Jeff Bye

The revised Master Plan for Sandisfield, to be published in 2026, is underway and we need your help. (See below.)


A new survey is being conducted by Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) on behalf of the Town's Planning Board. The survey will collect information from Sandisfield residents in order to assist the Planning Board with development of the Master Plan. The survey can be taken online or via printed copies that will be available for pick up and drop off.

If possible, please use the QR code and the URL (www.Surveymonkey.cmk/r/sandisfieldMP) to respond to the survey via the website BRPC has made available. This will make for easier collection of the data.

This same information has been posted on the Town's website. Paper copies of the survey will be available at Town buildings, the post office, and the transfer station. 



Year of Glaciers' Preservation

The world's glaciers are melting faster than predicted, with potentially dire consequences, including a lack of water for downstream communities and destructive massive floods and avalanches. The United Nations has declared 2025 the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation. Resident Suzanne OConnell attended the first World Day for Glaciers at the UN on March 21. Suzanne is Professor of Earth & Environmental Sciences, Wesleyan University. To read an article she wrote about glaciers, go to bit.ly/4izKozi. 

Take the Master Plan Survey!

The Planning Board invites you to share your opinions and concerns about the town and its future.

Information from this survey will serve as the town's blueprint to achieving its desired future. The survey is open to all community members.


Paper copies are available at the Post Office, Library, Transfer Station, and Town Hall. Drop boxes to return completed paper surveys are located at the library and Town Hall

SANDISFIELD

www.surveymonkey.com/r/SandisfieldMP




NEW LIBRARY HOURS!

Beginning April 1st, 2025 the Sandisfield Library will be closed on Tuesdays. The Library will now be open on Thursday afternoons from 2pm until 6pm to provide more accessibility for our residents and patrons to be able to visit the library. 

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

Reminiscences of South Sandisfield Childhood

PART THREE: THE NAMES ON THE QUILT

By Ron Bernard

This is the last of a three-part series derived from the memoirs of Stella Hyde Morey who lived in South Sandisfield as a precocious young girl in the mid-1910s. Stella's transcribed 3,600-word memoirs include remarkable, detailed impressions of everyday life and people.

At the time, the South Sandisfield Congregational Chapel was the social center of the community. This charming but diminutive building is now home to the Sandisfield Historical Society. It was built in 1909, only a year after the magnificent Sandisfield Center Congregational Church burned in May 1908.

Previous installments of Stella's memoirs in *The Times* include her childhood recollections of farming traditions (Jan/Feb) and colorful anecdotal accounts of life back then (March). This last installment details a commemorative quilt begun by the Ladies Aid Society in 1915 to honor the clergy and lay members of the South Sandisfield Chapel who were active at the church during its formative period. Stella's comments are in italics. For context I added supportive information about selected mentioned personalities.

Stella was in possession of the quilt until 1987 when she decided to send it to an appropriate organization for safekeeping or display. Her pastor at the Congregational Church of Middletown, NY, suggested the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ in Ludlow. They were pleased to receive the historical quilt accompanied by Stella's notes and a chart with keys for the names on the quilt.

TO HONOR THE FOUNDERS.

Stella lists and describes the church's founders. The asterisks indicate ordained ministers.

*Dr. F. E. Emrich** was the head of the church in the state and came from Boston. He was quite tall for the times and had the most beautiful "shock" of snow-white hair. His eyes were blue, and his speaking voice was excellent.

Dr. Silas P. Cook came from Pittsfield, which I believe was then the center for Western Massachusetts. He was of slight build with silver hair and a well-trimmed silver beard. He was a quiet and gentle man. I adored him. (Of course, the fact that he always brought me a package of Dorm. dates probably had some bearing on my "hero worship").

W. W. Mayo, Sexton, was not paid for his job of cleaning, lighting fire, filling lamps, etc. He lived directly across the road from the church and, being the closest one, got "stuck" with the job. [W.W. Mayo's home is the c.1837 Lyman Sanford house which he owned 1909-14. Since 1995, it

has been home to Terry and Marcia Ignace. Marcia performed 'sexton'-type caretaker duties for the Sandisfield Historical Society for many years.]

Mrs. S. A. Smith was a Ladies Aid (Society) member (who) donated the land on which the church was built. The new site was more central at that time. I remember her as very old and quite fragile looking. I also remember looking at her and wondering if I'd look like that. She was then in her late 80's.



Sarah Ann Smith, South Sandisfield, c.1910, at the time the "oldest postmistress in the country."
Photo, Berkshire County Postal History

Mrs. L. A. Hawley, Ladies Aid member, was also Church Society clerk. [Mary "Sarah" Hawley, schoolteacher, was clerk at the Sandisfield Center church when it burned. She saved the original register and (with others) valuable materials and furnishings which were reinstalled in the new church. Mrs. Hawley was instrumental in planning and organizing the society in South Sandisfield].

Howard Raymond Hyde, Organist played during vacations or when he was home from school or whatever. [Stella's older brother was known as "Ray." He married Lempi Riiska in Sandisfield in 1919. See *Times*, Jan/Feb 2025, Part One].

Mrs. Patteringer was a shy little person, yet she played when Ray was away or just unable to play, like the time he jumped over a stone wall into a yellowjacket nest. She was very good, and I liked her very much.

Peter S. Levonian, an Armenian, was brought to this country to study for the Congregational ministry. He fascinated me, because even though his speech was grammatically correct, there was an accent that was delightful. Then he was ordained and went back to teach and preach in his country. Sometime later, word came through that the Turks had beheaded him.

*Harry Kerr** World War I service as chaplain, practical joker, full of fun, with a great sense of humor. A completely delightful young man.

Vera E. Hartshorn, Ladies Aid, was the daughter-in-law of a very well-known New England portrait painter [Sandisfield resident Newton Hartshorn. See Times, March 2025, Part Two, for a good story about Vera.]

Elisha A. Sawyer* This man was a tall gaunt person, clean shaven, deeply devoted to his cause and homely as a picket fence. I remember the first time I saw him behind the pulpit. I stared at him pop eyed. Then I pulled my father's coat sleeve and asked him, "Why did Abraham Lincoln shave off his beard?" I thought my poor father would burst. I also remember the looks I got from all the proper ladies in the congregation: "It's that Hyde child again!"



Circa 1905 photo of Rev. Elisha Sawyer, age 28. Little Brown Church of New Boston, Mass.

[Rev. Sawyer of Maine was called by the New Boston Congregational Church in 1916. Sawyer was the last minister at the Montville Baptist Church when it closed in 1918. Also, in that year he was elected Sandisfield Treasurer and served as Registrar before leaving town in 1920. See *Little Brown Church*, Part III, Chapter 18, "Married a Sea Captain"].

Mrs. Howard J. Hyde. My mother. She was a bundle of energy. Treasurer of the Ladies Aid Society, superintendent of the Sunday School and director of all the little plays and entertainment the young people had. She enjoyed working with young people.

[In 1920, Ethel Gallaher Hyde, widowed, and Stella moved to Springfield where Stella received a teaching certificate. They moved to Shelburne Falls in 1931 when Stella was appointed to the faculty of the Arms Academy. She taught there until her marriage in 1939.]

Asa Stanley Goodrich* He was a most delightful person and an advisor to the young. He served two churches, New Marlboro and South Sandisfield. [See Sandisfield Times, March 2025, Part Two, "Storms"]

S. C. Wong* was a Christian Chinese boy sent or brought here to be educated and ordained as a minister. He was a nice young man, and I enjoyed his friendship very much. He could make "magic" with paper folding and cutting. He was quick, very bright and he (always) had a smile and happy greeting. He returned to China to teach and preach. Later we heard he was killed by one of the war lords for being a Christian and a minister.

Mrs. E. Sawtell, Ladies Aid member, was famous for her parrot. Her husband, a sea-faring man, brought the parrot (home) and left it with her the next time he shipped out. The parrot had a vocabulary that would

set the air on fire. On Sundays she used to cover the cage and shut him in a small room so he wouldn't be heard.

Stella B. Morey I have to say that the signature on the quilt is my very own. To brag a little, I never learned to print. I was taught early at home to read and write.

Wilfred J. LaPoint* as I remember, he was rather "sober-side" – very nice person, but much too serious for his years. I liked and respected him, but from my point of view he wasn't much fun. He was ordained and at the outbreak of World War I (he) volunteered his services as a "Battle Chaplain." He was killed in a very short time.

Hastings Eells* ordained and was sent to the Midwest. I do not recall that he did any war service. We heard that he rose to an important position in the church.

Quilt names

Mary P. Waller L.A.	Lewis H. Spooner*	Mrs. C. B. Smith L.A.	Mary S. Hawley L.A.	
Rev. Taylor P. Merchant*	H. R. Hyde organist	Peter S. Levenion*	Arthur S. Wheelock*	Oscar
Myra D. Mayo L.A.	Stephen A. Caldwell*	Jennie L. Emery L.A.	Mrs. S. E. Hawley L.A.	
Arthur F. Vinta*	Rev. Karl F. Hendrickson*	Tobias White*	Chas. C. Richmond L.A. W. Fernis	Harve
Vera E. Hartshorn L.A.	Rev. Oliver S. Swell	Elisha A. Sawyer*	Mrs. J. B. Hall L.A.	
L. Eva Webster L.A.	Benjamin F. Nye*	F. E. Emrich	Aaron W. Field*	Mrs.
Mrs. H. J. Hyde L.A.	Albert R. Knight*	"Goodie" Stanley Goodrich*	Helena H. Mayo L.A.	
Andrew Sharp*	John Dooly*	March 19, 1915 Ladies Aid Society	John W. MacLain*	H. L. L.
Mrs. C. H. Sage L.A.	Oliver A. Watton*	Fredrick L. Fay*	Mrs. E. N. Sawtell L.A.	
Leon D. Bliss*	W. W. Mayo L.A.	Silas P. Cook*	John VanBuren*	Stella
Mrs. P. Hart L.A.	W. J. Gould*	Mrs. D. B. Pratt L.A.	Mrs. A. Pottinger L.A.	
Wilfred J. LaPoint*	Hastings Eells*	Rui Alexander*	Alex Mahoren*	James
Mrs. Emily A. Hall L.A.	Rev. J. C. Emery*	Marion E. Skilton	Mrs. B. Robute L.A.	
Mrs. A. S. Coules L.A.	Henry G. Warren*	S. C. Wong*	Robert H. Davis*	

Chart keys: * indicates ordained ministers. "L.A." – Ladies Aid Society member. Not listed on the quilt were many young men in training for the ministry who preached there in years.

The following presided at South Sandisfield as well as other churches in town, Sandisfield Center (SC), New Boston (NB), Montville Baptist (MB). They are the reverends Aaron Field (SC & NB); J.C. Emery (SC & NB); John Dooly (NB); Albert Knight (NB); Stephen Caldwell (NB & MB); Henry Warren (NB & MB) and Elisha Sawyer (NB & MB)

Aaron Field wrote a history of Sandisfield in 1893. J. C. Emery, MD, was a surgeon in the Union army in the Civil War. He was the last pastor of the Sandisfield Center Congregational Church when it burned in 1908. John Dooly of Monterey was the first pastor at South Sandisfield, 1909. Their biographies are included in *Little Brown Church of New Boston, Mass.*

The story of the fire and its aftermath and historical significance are found in *Sandisfield Then and Now (2012)* and in more detail in *The Little Brown Church of New Boston, Mass., (2023)*. Copies are available at the Sandisfield Library.



Too many cooks in the kitchen

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Letters to the Editor

The "Dump" Will Provide

I want to share a little story about my recent experience with your wonderful community.

When my cousin, Jeff Bye, took me on a tour of Sandisfield and a run to the transfer station, I got a firsthand glimpse of the amazing spirit of sharing that everyone embodies there. While at the station, someone had left extra boxes of extra-large surgical gloves. Jeff mentioned it was alright if I wanted to take a pair, even though my wife Ana thought I was a bit nuts for doing so.

After our trip, I placed the gloves on a shelf and completely forgot about them.

However, after the Pacific Palisades/Malibu fire was finally under control and we could return to our place in Malibu, we found a fine layer of dust, ash, and soot all over our apartment. That's when I remembered the gloves.

They have been a lifesaver! [In his original email, Marcus shared photos of just how dirty the clean-up was.] I use the gloves all the time and even reuse them by drying them out after each use.

Please extend my heartfelt thanks to your community and let the Transfer Station Manager [at the time, Keith Larson], know how much we appreciate their generosity. We have decided to leave the Malibu apartment for a variety of reasons, but the warmth and kindness we experienced will remain with us.

– Marcus Witte
Burbank, California

The New Guy at the Transfer Station

By Jerry Herman

New Transfer Station attendant Tim Garcia took over from Keith Larsen just before Christmas.

Tim knows a lot about fishing. He and his wife Carol arrived in Town last June, after he retired from his former life of about 35 years as a lobster and shell fisherman out of Wareham at the northern end of Buzzard's Bay on the Cape.

He had moved to Wareham with his family when he was 12 years old. When he was older, he hit the road with a rock band. After a couple of years as a roadie, he figured out he was wasting his time and went to work in construction in Florida.

When Tim was 24, his father called to let him know he had gotten his commercial fishing license and he asked Tim to join him. Tim went to work as a lobsterman. In the late 1970s and early '80s, when the lobster industry was hurt by shell rot disease, his father gave up the boat and retired.

Tim got his own boat and went back into shell fishing again, working on his own for the next 12 years.

When Tim gave up fishing as a livelihood, he and Carol decided they needed a change of environment and more space. Initially, they thought they'd move to Maine, where Carol has family but when she saw an online listing for a house on North Main Street/Route 8, across from the Farmington River, they decided to drive over to see it. Carol initially loved the house, while Tim had misgivings about the traffic on Rt. 8 and worried that his dog Duffy might be hit by a passing truck.

They bought the house, and it turned out that traffic isn't so bad and Duffy is OK so far.

Realizing he had some free time, Tim answered the Town's ad for a Transfer Station attendant he saw in The Sandisfield Times. He applied at Town Hall and was hired. 🇺🇸



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Upcoming Events!

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- APRIL 5TH CHALK DUST 8PM
- APRIL 11TH ADAMS BROTHERS 7PM
- APRIL 12TH KELLIOKE KARAOKE 7PM
- APRIL 18TH JASON & TREV 6PM
- APRIL 19TH THE CONSPIRACY 8PM
- APRIL 20TH HILLTOWN BLUES JAM 2PM
- APRIL 21ST SPINDLE | MUSIC BINGO 6PM
- APRIL 25TH NATE MARTEL 6PM
- APRIL 26TH SOUNDFIELD BAND 8PM
- APRIL 27TH PAINT & SIP PARTY 1PM

INDOOR CORNHOLE EVERY WED THRU 4/30 6PM

TRIVIA NIGHT EVERY THUR 7PM

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Housing Help is Available

REHAB PROGRAM BENEFITS SANDISFIELD

By Times Reporters

We announced last month that the 2018-2020 program of help for rehabilitation of existing housing is open again.

The state-sponsored program provides slightly over \$1 million in funding for qualified Sandisfield residents.

An important update is that pre-applications will be open for the remainder of 2025.

There is no cost to Sandisfield or the homeowner for the program. The funding is provided by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, working with the local Board of Selectmen in conjunction with Berkshire Community Development and Baily Boyd Associates of Boston to provide the program benefits locally.

The program offers Deferred-Payment Loans (DPLs) at 0% interest to finance the rehabilitation of eligible projects., with a maximum DPL of \$60,000 per unit.

The program includes addressing code violations, with an additional \$10,000 per unit when

improvements include removal of lead paint or asbestos, making handicapped access, septic system replacement, or multiple energy-efficiency enhancements.

The DPL is secured by a lien placed on the property for a period of 15 years, which will be forgiven at a rate of 1/15th per year provided the property owner(s) are not in any way in default. The DPLs do not require monthly loan payments. If a property is sold or transferred within the 15-year period after rehabilitation completion, the funds will be recaptured on a prorated basis. After the 15-year recapture period expires, the loan is forgiven.

ELIGIBILITY AND APPLICATION PROCESS

The program is offered to owner-occupied single-family/multi-family and investor-owned units in the Town of Sandisfield. If the structure is a single-family owner-occupied unit, the owner must meet income guidelines of low to moderate income. If the structure contains year-round rental units, at least 51% of all the households including rental units/renters must meet these income limits. The applicant must be the property owner of record for the proposed residential structure.

For more information on the Housing Rehabilitation Program, visit the Sandisfield website or contact Dawn Odell Lemon, Project Manager at dawn@berkcd.com or 413-528-0104.

Candidates for Town Office

The results of the Annual Town Caucus (March 3) were announced too late for inclusion in last month's Times. One candidate was nominated for each of the open seats in Town government. Seventeen registered voters attended.

The candidates nominated at the caucus were:

- Select Board (3 year) John Field (incumbent, 2nd term)
- Board of Assessors (3 year) Jeff Bye
- Moderator (1 year) Dominic Konstam (incumbent, 5th term)
- Board of Health (3 Year) Stephen Rubenstein
- Board of Health (2 year) Ralph Leavenworth
- School Committee (3 year) Douglas Miner
- Planning Board (5 year) Calvin Rodman

The last day to file nomination papers is April 14. The last day to register to vote is May 7. Annual Town Meeting is May 17, with the Town Election held May 19 at Old Town Hall, 12:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.



Do You Want a Say in Town Affairs?

By Joanne Olson

There is a lot going on in town and, once again, most residents have no say.

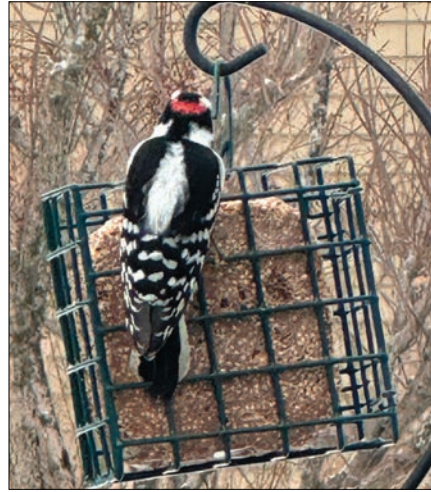
Are there any taxpayers who live full- or part-time in Sandisfield who have legal experience? Any active or retired members of the bar from any state? Attorneys, judges, paralegals?

A few of us would like to start an informal forum where we can get together from time to time to talk about local issues. I already have some interest from a retired attorney and a former paralegal. Both are here full time; only one is a voting resident. I'd like to find more.

Please contact me at JoEsq@aol.com.

Welcome to Spring

Top photos: Jerry Herman's Downy Woodpecker. In the second picture, Jerry got Woody to turn for his profile.



Middle photos: Janey Beardsley Snyder watched a pair of eagles playing and roosting along the Clam River near Town Hall. Let's hope for a nest.

Bottom photo: Two Tom Turkeys took identical poses for Wayne Keller. Wayne wrote that there were in fact three toms in the bunch. They were not fighting each other yet, but it's early spring.





NOTE NEW HOURS:

Monday, 9:00 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

▶▶▶NEW: CLOSED TUESDAY

Wednesday, 1:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m.

▶▶▶NEW: OPEN THURSDAY 2:00 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Saturday, 10:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

Closed Tuesday, Friday and Sunday

Phone: 258-4966

Email: sandisfieldlibrary@gmail.com

Our new website: sandisfieldlibrary.org

We appreciate everyone who came to our fantastic Paint-A-Pot at the Library last month.. We painted, laughed, and enjoyed a fun day. Special thanks to all who helped spread the word about the change of the date due to our not-so-unusual March weather. We appreciate your help always and everyone who brought their kids.



In our efforts to be community oriented we reached out to patrons, fans, and friends to assess if the Library needed to change its hours. You said yes, and so we have changed our hours. **Beginning April 1st (and no this is absolutely NOT an April Fool's joke) we will no longer be open on Tuesdays. INSTEAD, we will be open on Thursdays from 2:00 until 6:00 p.m.**

APRIL EVENTS AT THE LIBRARY

Thursday, April 24, at 6:00 p.m., the **Sandisfield Women's Book Group** will meet to discuss *The Atomic City Girls* by Janet Beard. This historical novel focuses on four women who worked for the Manhattan Project in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, in the 1940s. It explores what everyday life was like at a place where they lived and worked on something so extremely secret that was a question of national security as in never say the word "bomb", but of course, they do. Join us for conversation, review of the book, and pleasant company!

Coming in early May we will host a **Crafting Day**. Turn a plain terra cotta pot into your own art design and or make butterflies, flowers, and bunnies. Celebrate Spring. We provide the paints, the pots, and even smocks for the little ones to borrow while painting. The event will be from 1:00-3:00 p.m. Cookies, juice, and beverages available as well. The DATE is not set yet.

All through April – It is never too late to participate in the **Massachusetts Center for the Book 2025 Reading Challenge**. April's book is a book about books, bookstores, or libraries. Stop by the Library for a postcard for each month's reading challenge and to search for the right book for you.

LATEST ADDITIONS TO THE LIBRARY SHELVES

Blood Moon by Sandra Brown (Fiction), a satisfying thriller with a side order of romance. This is the kind of novel that asks very little of you and, in return, gives you a lot: murder, mystery, steamy moments, wild twists, and the kind of energy (this is not a decaf thriller but fully caffeinated) that makes it feel like a summer blockbuster in paperback form.

Whiskey Tender by Deborah Jackson (Non-fiction). A National Book Award Finalist, *Whiskey Tender* is a memoir of a mixed tribe, indigenous family with one foot in mainstream America and the other in the wisdom of their ancestry. "A great lesson on how we can hold, and even embrace, our divisions and our tensions to create a new mosaic for the future," said Colum McCann, author of *Twist*.

The Life Cycle of the Common Octopus by Emma Knight (Fiction). In this book one can escape into Scotland and a world filled with mystery, intrigue, posh Scots, and academia while learning more about the many ways women become mothers and in this world and how looking back can help us move forward.

Book and Dagger by Elyse Graham (Non-fiction). The true story of how

scholars and librarians became part of the intelligence agency of the United States during WWII. They were spies behind enemy lines, invented modern spy craft, and helped turn the tide of the war.

Twist by Collum McCann (Fiction). "An intriguing story of a journalist sent to report on the complex work of repairing the underwater cables that carry the world's information. McCann skillfully ratchets up the uneasiness on board and later adds a provocative twist, taking the novel in an unexpected direction." – Publisher's Weekly

Looking for a Smoke by K.A. Cobell (Fiction). A gripping debut thriller with dynamic characters who leap off the page and demand to be heard." – Jessica Goodman, NYT bestselling author.

Theft by Abdulraza Gurnah (Fiction). The Nobel Prize winner and master storyteller encapsulates the essence of how you play the cards that life has dealt you. He captures an era of dizzying change – Tanzania in the 1990's.

IN THE CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT SECTION OUR LATEST ADDITIONS INCLUDE:

The Baby-Sitters Club, Mallory, and The Trouble With Twins (#17) by Martin & Nopra

Max Meow, When Pancakes Go Bad (Really Bad) by John Gallagher

I Survived the Great Molasses Flood, 1919 by Lauren Tarshis. A graphic novel of Boston, Italian immigrants and an ugly tank filled with sticky molasses. (Based on true events.)

MUSEUM PASSES

Don't forget the Library has passes to:

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

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NEW BOSTON CHURCH SERVICES

Palm Sunday Worship Service
Sunday, April 13
10:00 - 11:00 a.m.
Followed by
Church Council Meeting
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Easter Sunday Worship Service
Sunday, April 20
10:00 - 11:00 a.m.
All welcome.

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Comings and Goings



RONALD J. BUMSTEAD
1945-2025

Ronald James Bumstead, 79, of Burlington, Conn., and Sandisfield passed away peacefully, March 18, 2025, at home.

Ron was born October 19, 1945, in New Britain, Conn., to Daniel J. and Alma (Demore) Bumstead. He is survived by his wife, Janet Innes Bumstead; and his daughter, Alissa Bullard Bumstead and her husband Kenneth Bullard, of Shelton.

Ron was an electrical engineer at Northeast Utilities for 38 years. He was a dedicated husband and father as well as a talented musician who loved playing the piano, working on engines, machinery

and electronics, and being with his family. He enjoyed being outdoors and looking at the sunset and night sky.

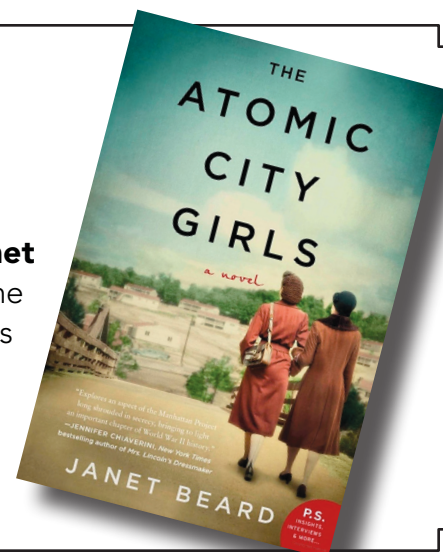
Ron and Janet were frequently at their country retreat on South Beech Plain Road which has been in the family since 1958. They are also long-time parishioners of the New Boston Congregational Church.

Ron will be dearly missed. A private burial was held in Burlington. Memorial donations may be made to the New Boston Congregational Church, P.O. Box 81,



Sandisfield Ladies Book Club

Thursday, April 24, at 6:00 p.m., "The Atomic City Girls" by Janet Beard. This historical novel focuses on four women who worked for the Manhattan Project in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, in the 1940s. It explores what everyday life was like at a place where they lived and worked on something so extremely secret that was a question of national security as in never say the word "bomb", but of course, they do. Join us for conversation, review of the book, and pleasant company!



NOW HEAR THIS!

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

APRIL 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 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 the Old Town Hall on 3 Silverbrook Road, sponsored by the Council on Aging. For more information, contact Nina Carr (258-3314). Free.

Hop into Spring with Berkshire Bunnies on Saturday, April 5 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Old Town Hall. Live bunnies, terrarium making, and light refreshments. Sponsored by the Sandisfield Recreation Committee. Please RSVP (sandisfieldevents@recreationcommittee.info). Free.

New Boston Church Palm Sunday Worship Service on Sunday, April 13 at 10:00 a.m. All are welcome. The New Boston Congregational Church is located on Route 57. There will be a **Church Council Meeting** from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. following the service. For more information and to view the calendar, visit newbostoncongregationalchurch.org.

New Boston Church Easter Sunday Worship Service on Sunday, April 20 at 10:00 a.m. The New Boston Congregational Church is located on Route 57. All are welcome.

Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, April 20 from 10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at the New Boston Congregational Church on Route 57.

ONLINE EVENTS

A Farm and Garden Show with Sandisfield Residents Bill Taylor and Jaye Alison Moscarello streamed every Monday from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. at berkshireradio.org.

Creating History: The Art of First Person Interpretations on Thursday, April 24 from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. via Zoom, sponsored by the Bidwell House Museum. Have you ever wondered how historical interpreters learn how to turn back the clock and live as if it was the 18th century? This Zoom program will feature people that have participated in the Bidwell House Museum living history events in the past. Pre-registration (bidwellhousemuseum.org) is required. Free-\$15.

1775: The Year the War Began on Wednesday, April 30 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. via Zoom, sponsored by the Bidwell House Museum. Learn about the causes of the War for American Independence with Robert Allison as we approach the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution. Pre-registration (bidwellhousemuseum.org) is required. Free-\$15.

SAVE THE DATE

Grand Opening at The Sandisfield Arts Center May 30-June 1. Focus on Sandisfield and "The Landscape We Live In." Our opening events for the 2025 season.

EVENTS IN SURROUNDING TOWNS

Spring Bird Walk every Thursday in April and May at 5:30 p.m. along the Riverfront Trail in Great Barrington. The walks are led by Ben Nickley (ben@berkshirebirds.org) of the Berkshire Bird Observatory. Free and beginners are welcome! Meet at the Great Barrington Co-Op.

Ham Roll on Friday, April 11 at 7:00 p.m. at the Great Barrington VFW. Doors

open at 6:30 p.m. Proceeds to benefit the Kiwanis continued support of community programs and projects. Everyone is welcome. Free admission. \$2 each ticket to spin the wheel.

Fishing Derby on Saturday, April 12 from 9:00 to 10:30 a.m. at the fishing pond of the Berkshire National Fish Hatchery on Hatchery Road in Monterey. Open to children ages 13 and under. Free.

Sourdough Workshop on Monday, April 14 at 9:30 a.m. at the Tolland Public Safety Complex on 204 West Granville Road. RSVP (413-427-5532). Presentation is free and sponsored by the Tolland Council on Aging. Light refreshments will be served.

The Latest in Alzheimer's and Dementia Research with Meghan Lemay, M.S. on Tuesday, April 15 from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. at the Stockbridge Public Library.

Berkshire Grown Winter Farmers Market on Saturday, April 19 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Housy Dome on 1064 Main Street in Housatonic. Featuring locally grown and produced foods, including greens, winter squash, root crops, apples, cheese, meats, honey, maple syrup, baked goods, and more. Local musicians perform.

Wildflower Hike on the Henry Buck Trail on Saturday, April 26 at 10:00 a.m. at American Legion State Forest in Barkhamsted, Connecticut. Join Erik and Helen Ann Landgraf for a spectacular hike to identify spring ephemerals and other amazing flora. Free.

Spring Open Studios on Saturday, April 26 and Sunday, April 27 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Whiting Mills in Winsted. Resident and Guest Artists. Free admission. Free parking.

10th Annual Barkhamsted Earth Day on Sunday, April 27 at 12:30 to 5:00 p.m. at Matthies Grove Pavilion in Peoples State Forest. Fun environmental activities for all ages. Birds of Prey program. Free food and music.

THE SANDISFIELD TIMES

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*The Times appreciates donations
received last month.*

*Dan Platt
Jo & Barry Freedman*



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