

Local yokel

(n.) a country folk living in a quaint neighborhood community

West
Stockbridge
February
2020



SERVING OUR COMMUNITY SINCE 2005

*Icy waterfall along Lenox Mountain Brook,
Stevens Glen. Photo by Emily Weiland*

Brochure Design Receives Special Recognition

By Kim Bradway

The West Stockbridge Village Association (WSVA) was recognized by Visitor International, the International Association of Visitor Information Providers, for their printed 2019-20 Guide and Map. You may have seen this bright yellow brochure in the Visitor Center or the hands of visitors around town and beyond. It was submitted on behalf of John Hart of Berkshire Brochure Display, who distributed over 23,000 of these brochures throughout the Berkshires; the greater Capital Region; through all of Columbia County, NY; northwest Connecticut; and Saratoga County, NY.

Narrowed down to a list of 72 from a possible field of more than 19,000 from across the United States, Mexico, Canada, Europe, and South Africa, the WSVA brochure was honored as a "Regional Nominee" in the 2019 International Best Brochure Competition.

The brochure was organized by Joe Roy, Jr. of The Floor Store and designed by Jennifer Knopf of Flourish Market, with the assistance of association members Karden Rabin of Boundless and Truc Nguyen of Truc Orient Express Restaurant. Member categories include Dining, Shopping & Galleries, Lodging, Design & Home, Cultural Adventures, Community Resources, Health & Wellness, and Gourmet & Specialty encompassing a total of 43 businesses, each with a logo or photo, a brief description, and their contact information. Inside the brochure, a colorful illustrated map is featured. Designed by mapartist.com, the establishments are located in and around West Stockbridge.

The brochure was laid out and printed by The Studley Press in Dalton, MA. Copies of the brochure are available in the Visitor Center, a box outside The Floor Store, and it can be viewed at www.visitweststockbridge.com. Congratulations on a job well done and for presenting West Stockbridge to the world!



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ShakerMillBooks.com

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View the stunning photography of National Geographic photographer John Stanmeyer, chat with proprietor Kim Hubbard, former Nat Geo and White House photo editor, and enjoy delicious Counter Culture coffee, artisanal wine and beer, and tasty snacks while relaxing at this cozy cove alongside the Williams River.
413-232-7707 • 2 Main Street • ShakerDam.com

Select Board Meeting Minutes

[Editor's note: At the town administrator's request, the Select Board minutes here are reprinted verbatim with no editing of text. Official board minutes are available at the West Stockbridge Public Library and on the town website, <https://www.weststockbridge-ma.gov/>. Select Board meetings may be viewed on Spectrum cable local access channel 190. Residents can receive e-mail notification of town events and meeting agendas by subscribing at <http://weststockbridgema.virtualltownhall.net/subscriber>].

Select Board Meeting Minutes December 4, 2019

6:00 PM: Open Meeting

Quorum present: Select Board Members: Bernie Fallon, Chair; Doane Perry, Eric Shimelonis and Town Administrator Marie Ryan.

Bernie Opened Public Hearing for Tax Classification.

Jeff Reynolds from the Assessors' Office gave a brief explanation of the Tax Rate report. He stated that the tax levy has been established and the town has had new growth. He suggested that the town adopt the single tax rate. He stated that the new tax rate will be \$13.12 per \$1000 of value. This is an increase of an average of \$360.00/year.

Bernie then read a motion and it was seconded by Doane to accept this tax rate. Vote was unanimous.

Board reviews and approves warrants; payroll and vendor.

Rouge
Tap House at Shaker Mill
The Foundry
WS Public Market

3 Center Street
5 Albany Road
2 Harris Street
8 Main Street

Bernie then made a motion to approve all the licenses for 2020, Doane seconded. Bernie asked if there was any further discussion, seeing none, all were approved unanimously.

2020 Auto Class II and Class II and Taxi License renewals-

Bernie told the audience that he would like the audience to allow the Select Board to discuss the licenses prior to any input from them. He stated these are renewals that are approved by the Select Board. Doane stated that he is in favor of renewing all of the licenses as long as they are in compliance with the town bylaws. He would like to hear any concerns that the audience may have because he feels it is important for them to be aware of any issues to help make the town better. Eric stated that he was not inclined to approve any license to a business that is not in compliance. Eric said he feels that it is the Boards responsibility to make sure everyone is in compliance.

Agenda Items/Action/Discussion Items: Meeting Opened at 6:00PM

2020 Liquor License renewals-

Bernie read the list of establishments that have applied for a liquor license renewal license for 2020. They were:

Queensboro Wine & Spirits	26 Main Street
Truc Orient Express	Harris Street

Bernie explained that in the past all licenses had one line written on them and that last year the Board decided to change them and add verbiage to include some compliance so they had something to measure compliance on the property. Eric stated that the Board needs to have something to

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The *Local Yokel* is published monthly. Please mail submissions to: *The Local Yokel*, P.O. Box 238, West Stockbridge, MA 01266, e-mail info@thelocalyokel.org, or visit www.thelocalyokel.org. Copy deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the publication. Editors: John Parker, 394-4368, john.j.parker53@gmail.com; Vicki Grayson, 232-6131, vicki.grayson@rocketmail.com; Susan Fisher, 232-4443, suefish12@gmail.com; Anne Lesser, 717-0277, anne@annelessercommunications.com; Designer: Kim Bradway, kim@bloominarts.com.

The *Local Yokel* is supported in part by a grant from the West Stockbridge Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



*Thank You,
West Stockbridge!*

Santa's Wish List Donations

In our December issue, we included an appeal for donations to eight West Stockbridge organizations. The total received was \$6,625. We thank all those who gave so generously to these important community groups that work very hard to make West Stockbridge such a special place to live. Here are the totals by organization:

Community Health Association: \$485

Friends of the Library: \$690

Local Yoke!: \$1,695

Pet Partners of the Tri-State Berkshires: \$110

West Stockbridge Beautification: \$830

West Stockbridge Farmers Market: \$600

West Stockbridge Fire & Rescue: \$1,990

West Stockbridge Historical Society: \$225

Total: \$6,625

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- Fall & Spring Cleanups
- Building & Maintaining Gardens
- Firewood

measure if they are in compliance. As Bernie explained, as for the Troy's Garage Licenses, that as he reads the conditions attached to the license, he believes they are in compliance. He then asked Eric what exactly does he think that they are not in compliance with. Eric stated that he wanted some objective and expert testimony about compliance, and that he did not want the board to have to make a subjective judgement call. Eric wanted the Board's decision to be based on objective facts and not opinions.

Bernie then read a letter from Virginia McGarrity, a resident, who sent in a letter to be read at the meeting as a matter of record as well as the e-mail chain she supplied. (see attached) This letter was in support of the renewal for Troy' Garage License as well as her concern in regards to an e-mail that Eric had sent out to certain people in town, which suggested he wanted to exert pressure in not renewing the license. Again, Bernie asked Eric what was not in compliance. Eric stated nothing specific, he noted that over the summer he commented on the fact that when renewing the licenses the Board needs to be clear that the applicants are in compliance will all the bylaws and conditions set forth. Bernie asked Eric what he meant in his e-mail sent to the list serve as to "let's show some resolve". Bernie then stated that Eric said the Select Board, at that time, did not do anything, no enforcement in regards to junk cars. However, Bernie responded that the Board did have Troy's Garage comply with their requests and that a lot has been done by the Board as well as the D'Aniello's. There has been a lot accomplished over the past year. Bernie also stated that the previous year, our Select Board reduced the number of cars from 95 to below 25, in addition to major improvements on both sides of the street. Currently, they are well within the conditions on their licenses.

Eric then stated he was going to recuse himself from the auto license renewals. He will not sign any of them at this time and will not comment any further.

Then there was a lengthy discussion by the audience mostly in support of the D'Aniello family and what they have done for the community.

Bernie then stated that he had spoken with Town Counsel during the day and that they cautioned the Select Board in regards to not renewing Troy's Garage license unless there is a major reason that is not in compliance because the Town could be sued. He stated that the D'Aniello's and the Town are working together and things are getting accomplished and moving in a positive direction. Since things are in compliance, Bernie asked, then why are we going through all this? The Audience then had a discussion about compliance and their concern about the e-mail that Eric had sent out against renewing the licenses.

Alex Glover, Attorney for the D'Aniello family stated that she has never seen anything like the e-mail that Eric sent out. She handed a copy of the e-mail to the Board to be put into the record. She asked if there were any violations and no one the Board commented. Eric again said he reused himself and that he only sent the e-mail to the community to have the discussion on compliance. Again, Attorney Glover asked what was the violation or compliance issue. Eric did not respond. Bernie then read the conditions that were attached to the Troy's Garage license as per Town Counsel. Tim Walsh commented that he came to the meeting because of his concern that the Board might not approve his Liquor License for the Public Market. Doane then stated that the Board should approve all the licenses and focus on the conditions and compliance.

The audience then had a discussion on compliance and Troy's Garage. Bernie then made a motion to approve all the licenses. There was no second as Doane asked if everyone was in compliance. Dawn Korte

told the D'Aniello's that if there is anything not in compliance to let the community know and they will all help to get it fixed for them. Attorney Glover stated she had a concern about the "conditions" attached to the license since it is something that the D'Aniello's have never signed. She said they are happy to come before the Board in the future to discuss any issues or concerns that they have.

Bernie again made a motion to approve all the Auto Class II, Class II and taxi Licenses for 2020. Doane seconded and two were in favor with Eric abstaining.

Attorney Alex Glover asked for permission from the board to discuss this issue with Town Council, all three Board members approved.

Eric then apologized about his poorly written e-mail. He stated that he just wanted to have a turnout for the meeting for a voice of the community on the renewal of the licenses. He said he wants to have town businesses thrive but he wants compliance as well.

Mark Scoco – Request for Special Town Meeting for Silver Mine Road to be Town Road-

Mark presented a diagram of the layout of Silver Mine Road to the Board. He stated that he has created the road to all Town specs and wants to have the road become a Town road. Bernie stated that this would be a positive for the town and could possibly affect Chapter 90 money slightly with an increase in funds for the Town. He said he would like to wait to present this at the Annual Town Meeting not a Special Town Meeting. He said if there becomes a need for a Special Town Meeting, they could put it on the warrant but if not, they would like to do it at the Annual Meeting. The Board thanked Mark.

Permission for Planning Board to work with Town Council on Cell Tower Special Permit-

Planning Board Member Dana Bixby requested permission from the Select Board to work with Town Council on a special permit for a cell tower renewal. All the Board members approved.

Miscellaneous Items:

Doane suggested to the Board that possibly the applicants who received their renewals could come in quarterly to update the Board.

Someone asked Bernie who is responsible for enforcement when there are violations with these licenses. Bernie stated that the Board would deal with the issues if people come to the Board with the information on a violation.

Karden Rabin asked the Board if the conditions were signed for Troy's Garage. Bernie asked Marie to look into this.

Bernie then made a motion to adjourn, Doane Seconded, all in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie Y. Ryan
Marie Y. Ryan
Town Administrator

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February History Quiz Question:

In the 19th century, West Stockbridge was built on three minerals: marble, limestone, and iron. Of the three, marble was the most prominent to the outside world in defining the town. Many of the town quarries were originally created to extract marble. West Stockbridge marble was shipped all over including the Boston State House, New York City Hall, and Girard College in Philadelphia. We became known as the source for a hard, clear marble. But the marble industry was short lived, ending just after the Civil War. Vermont had better quality and easier to work product. The marble quarries became sources for lime. Although marble had a better brand image, lime was more profitable, easier to ship, and was a major component in building materials.

Iron, the least glamorous of the three, had the most impact on the town and its future. When did iron mining develop, where was it mined, and what was the impact of this industry on West Stockbridge?

(Find the answer somewhere in this issue!)

When friends, neighbors, or relatives move, downsize, or just clean house, *please* ask them to think of the West Stockbridge Historical Society before they discard any old books, pictures, postcards, letters, or memorabilia of the Town of West Stockbridge. E-mail info@weststockbridgehistory.org or call 232-4270.



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**Select Board Meeting Minutes
Special Meeting with Finance Committee
December 12, 2019**

1:00 PM: Open Meeting

Quorum present: Select Board Members: Bernie Fallon, Chair; Doane Perry, Eric Shimelonis and Town Administrator Marie Ryan as well as the Finance Committee, Public Works Director Curt Wilton and Jamie Boyer.

Marie asked the Board for a motion to support the formation of the Berkshire Regional School Planning Board per the request of the 8 Town School Consolidation Committee. Eric made the motion and Doane seconded, all approved. Motion passed.

The Finance Committee went over the 5-year capital plan with the Select Board. There was a lengthy discussion in regards to the budget planning for the DPW (roads) as well as the water and sewer.

Discussion included mention of the 40 year old boiler at the DPW/Fire Department. Curt said it has a leak of steam and that the cost to fix it would be almost the cost of a new boiler. Bo Salerno, Finance Committee Chair asked Curt if going to propane may be better. Curt said he would get an energy audit and look into it.

Eric mentioned that town needs to only complete one thing to be a green community and that would be to adopt the Stretch Code for the Buildings in town. Marie said she could include that as an article at the Annual Town Meeting where it needs to be adopted.

There was discussion with Bernie about the Card Lake Inn parking lot. For now, it will kept as a parking lot and possibly get spruced up. Bernie asked Curt if the maintenance of this lot was making Curt's budget go up and Curt responded not really.

There was mention about other town owned properties and Bernie stated that the Vision Committee and the Master Plan Committee are working on some plans and ideas.

Doane then made a motion to adjourn, Eric Seconded, all in favor.

The Select Board adjourned at 2:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie Y. Ryan
Marie Y. Ryan
Town Administrator

**Select Board Meeting Minutes
December 18, 2019**

6:00 PM: Open Meeting

Quorum present: Select Board Members: Bernie Fallon, Chair; Doane Perry, Eric Shimelonis and Town Administrator Marie Ryan.

Review and act on previous meeting minutes.
Sign State House Notes and related documents.
Review and sign warrants (payroll and vendor)

Agenda Items/Action/Discussion Items: Meeting Opened at 6:10PM

Bernie opened the meeting with a statement in regards to the Board Members trusting each other. He stated that at the last meeting there were no reasons found at that time to not renew all the licenses. He said that if the Eric's e-mail had not gone out, the Board would have been able to get through the license renewals with out all the emotional outbursts and drama that happened at the last meeting. The e-mail mad people scared about not getting their license renewed so they showed up with support from the community. Bernie also stated that the blanket statement that the Board and the licensees have gotten nothing done is not accurate. Troy's garage for instance went from 93 cars down to 25 and cleaned up a lot of the area.

Bernie also stated that he would like to have the Board discuss the issues and then have a citizen speak time at the end of the meeting so the Board can get their business completed. He feels this way the Board can move forward.


Eric said that he was not singling out any particular business. He wanted to have a fair discussion in regards to compliance. He respects the process of the license renewals and wanted the Board to have a fair and comprehensive process and is not anti-any specific person or business.

Auto Class II and Class III License to Rte. 41 LLC – Alan Becker

Bernie began by stating that this license was a new application by Alan Becker and was submitted correctly but that after the meeting that approved this license, the Board learned of an eviction notice for this business was in process. Bernie also noted that this needs to be voted by Doane and himself. Eric recused himself from the original vote so he does not need to vote on this issue. He then read the following motion:

I make the motion to revoke the two 2020 licenses, on the grounds that Mr. Becker does not a suitable place of business to exercise the licenses, which is a mandatory condition to either license. Doane seconded.

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 Please send your Birthdays & Anniversaries to the Local Yokel
We are happy to include them in the next issue. 

The Local Yokel, P.O. Box 238, West Stockbridge, MA 01266, e-mail to info@thelocalyokel.org, or visit www.thelocalyokel.org



Fire Department Report

By Peter Skorput, Fire Chief

DECEMBER 2019

Calls:

Medical	9
False Alarms	2
Motor Vehicle Accident	1
Trailer Truck Accident	1

Training:

12/2	Pump practice/ Hydrant testing
12/9	Tanker Training with Richmond
12/16	Station Maintenance/Went over Medical Equipment

Equipment:

Rack for the self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA)

Membership:

One member quit because of personal obligations. We gained a new member bringing us back up to 18

Fire Department Calls, December 2019

By Fire Chief Peter Skorput

Date	Time	Nature of Call
12/1	1:54 p.m.	Medical
12/6	7:46 a.m.	Furnace blowback
12/9	4:50 p.m.	Medical
12/10	9:18 a.m.	Medical
12/12	8:43 p.m.	Medical
12/12	9:45 p.m.	Auto alarm
12/14	1:28 a.m.	Medical
12/14	7:51 a.m.	Medical
12/17	2:32 p.m.	Motor vehicle accident
12/20	1:14 p.m.	Medical
12/22	1:31 p.m.	Medical
12/28	1:45 a.m.	Medical



Winter Parking Ban



The winter parking ban is in effect from November 15, 2019, to April 30, 2020, between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. for all streets in West Stockbridge. Violations of this ban may result in a \$25 fine for parking in prohibited areas or a \$50 fine for impeding snow removal. In addition, if the vehicle is impeding snow removal, it may be towed at the owner's expense.

The municipal parking lot across from the Public Market and the parking area on Moscow Road near the public bathrooms may be used for overnight off-street parking. However, vehicles in those lots must be moved by 8 a.m. to allow the Department of Public Works to manage snow and ice removal. For any concerns about off-street parking or the winter off-street parking ban, contact Chief of Police Marc Portieri at 232-8500.

WEST STOCKBRIDGE POLICE DEPARTMENT • 21 State Line Road, West Stockbridge, MA 01266 • (413) 232-8500

Mr. Becker stated that currently he is not over the car limit and welcomed the Board to go to the site and see for themselves. Bernie then asked if all the cars were in the rented area and Mr. Becker said yes. Ricky Klein, property owner, spoke and gave evidence (pictures and court documents) that show all the cars and that they are not on the area rented to Mr. Becker. A discussion ensued by Mr. Becker and Mr. Klein. Bernie then interrupted them and read the motion again. He then told Mr. Becker that if the eviction is reversed, he could apply again for the license. Doane agreed and the vote was unanimous to revoke the license for 2020.

Ricky Klein asked the Board to require Mr. Becker to remove the vehicles that are blocking the tenant's area to park. Mr. Becker stated that he can move some but it will be hard to move others. Bernie asked Mr. Becker to try to get this completed.

Council on Aging Agreement with Richmond

John Zick, Council on Aging Chair presented to the Board and stated that the COA in West Stockbridge is combining with the COA in Richmond. They have a Memorandum of Understanding for the Board to sign that would combine the two COAs. He stated that they financial accounts would remain separate which will help with grants. He stated that Phyllis LeBeau from Richmond would be the Director and West Stockbridge would pay her for approximately 1-2 hours per week. He said that all parties and trips would be paid for by splitting the costs and would encourage more seniors to participate. The Board all agreed this was a good idea and Marie had them sign the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Fire Department update – Fire Chief Peter Skorput

Fire Chief presented an update to the Select Board of the Fire Department. (see attached) He discussed events and training updates as well as membership status.

Bernie asked Peter what the status of EMTs was. Peter stated that there is an upcoming training and the 4 people plan on attending.

Eric asked Peter what the status was for the I Am Responding software. Peter stated that his lieutenant was getting this up and running hopefully by end of the week. Eric also asked about the large screen for the Fire House. Peter said that they are working with the company to get that as well. Marie said that she could assist if the cost is high from the company. The Board thanked Peter for his report.

Police Department update – Chief Marc Portieri

Junk Cars – Chief Portieri reported the courts are still dealing with only 4 people on the junk car issue in town. The location of the cars is on State Line Rd., Cobb Rd. and two at Great Barrington Rd.

Christmas Gifts – Marc stated that the donations and gifts that the Department have are all ready for delivery to the seven families which they are supporting this year. The Department and Fire Chief Peter Skorput (Santa) will be delivering the gifts and the meals to these families on Friday.

Training – The Chief and Sergeant Messina have recently completed a 4-day training on handling evidence. He stated that this training is going to be mandatory in the future. This training helps them to secure evidence.

Calls – Marc reported that the Department has had 3 domestic calls in November all for the same people.

Chief Portieri also stated that the Department has had a total of 4 overdose deaths in the past several years He said that in two of the four they were able to identify the dealer who has been arrested and is currently going to be charged with two of the deaths of West Stockbridge residents.

The Chief also reported that at the Stockbridge Sportsmen's Club there has been issues of trespassing on to the property near the shooting range which is very dangerous. The Department is going to assist them with more signs.

Doane asked the Chief if he would be willing to help the Board and give an update of the compliance of the Auto Licensees properties prior to the renewal process. Marc agreed that he could do that. Doane also then told the Board he would like them to agree with him for a possible quarterly or every 6 months to review of the License holders. He thought possibly asking them to come in and have a continued discussion on the how things are going would help in the long run when it is time to renew.

Bernie said he has also been asking around other towns to see how they handle renewals. Eric said that when renewals come up that the Board has to have some weight to the conditions that they give each license. He wants to have a fair procedure to keep them all in compliance. The Chief agreed that it would help with communication and bonding with the community. He thought this may help with getting things worked out prior to any issues coming up as opposed to only meeting once a year at renewal time. Marie agreed to put on future agendas a periodic review of the licenses.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Liz DiGrigoli asked the Board if they know why there is a large pile of snow near the cars parked at Troy's near the water instead of being brought to the area near the cemetery where the rest of the snow gets put. Curt Wilton, Public Works Director was not in attendance so Marie will contact and ask about that.

Peter Skorput asked the Board if Curt can please plow the Card Pond parking lot. Marie will ask Curt to do this for the Fire Department.

Joe Roy asked if the Board could approve finding some monies for advertising the Art Show, they plan on having in the spring. They are trying to promote West Stockbridge and they need to advertise for this event as well as advertise for people to come audition for the event after the holidays. Marie will talk with Elaine Markham, Town Accountant, about possibly where some money could come from. Also, Karen Carmean asked what would happen to any possibly monies they may get donated and what fund that could go into. Marie will also talk to Elaine about that as well.

Bernie then made a motion to adjourn, Doane Seconded, all in favor.

The Select Board adjourned at 7:30PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie Y. Ryan
Marie Y. Ryan
Town Administrator

Collector's Note

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4. Complete each screen to process your payment (you may enter a \$1 payment at this point and just not complete the "payment" portion after registering).
5. Once the bill is added to the cart, click on the icon to the left that says **Electronic Billing Available** to begin the enrollment.
6. You will be prompted to **either log in to your existing Unipay account or to create a new Unipay account**.
7. Next, the **E-bill wizard** will ask you to choose whether to **enroll in a system that allows you to receive both paperless and the paper bill or paperless billing**. (Through 2020 I will continue to send both to everyone; after that you will receive only the e-bill if that is what you opted for.) Then, click **Next**.
8. You will be asked to **review and accept terms and conditions**. You *must check the acceptance box* (below the Terms... info) and then click **Next**.
9. Your account info will then be populated, so your bill can be identified. If it's correct, click **Next**.
10. You will be asked to **verify** that the information displayed is correct. If it is, click **Next**.
11. After you click **Finished**, you will receive an e-mail from Unibank with a **link you must click to complete the enrollment**.
12. Your registration is now complete. At the next billing cycle (end of March 2020), you will receive an e-mail telling you your bill is available. That e-mail will contain a replica of your paper bill. Save it for your records, print, and submit the top portion with payment, or use the online payment portal to pay your bill with a debit from your checking account (the bank charges \$0.25 per transaction) or with a credit/debit card (other fees apply, but you will be notified what those are before completing payment).
13. Please note: If you normally receive more than one bill, you must complete this process for *each* bill.

June Biggs, Collector

Tel.: 232-0300, ext. 302

E-mail: collector@weststockbridge-ma.gov

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Happy February from all of us at your neighborhood library. We look forward to helping you find all kinds of information, whether it's online or in print. To celebrate Black History Month and Valentine's Day, we invite you to stop in and pick an African American history and/or a picture book to read to your favorite little one to celebrate love!



There are still openings for our Microsoft classes!

Microsoft Excel: The dates are set for classes on February 6, 13, 20, and 27, beginning at 1 p.m., with our expert volunteer teacher, Bill Biggs.

Microsoft Word: The library is very fortunate to have Bill Barth offering classes to help you improve your skills in Microsoft Word. The dates will be determined between you and Bill once you sign up!

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 Rachel Alter, Vicky Cooper, and Brad Havill



Scrapbook February 2020: TEST YOUR TRIVIA KNOWLEDGE!

1. Amy Springstube went to Western New England College in 2010. What was she inducted into?
2. Which West Stockbridge resident was part of the core of the Berkshire Dance Collective in 2011?
3. John Whalen made what changes after the dramatic rise in the cost of gas in March 2011?

Answers: 1. The Alpha Lambda Delta national academic honor society. 2. Maddie Elling. 3. He drove around less with a Prius and replaced his old Volvo station wagon with a smaller and more fuel-efficient vehicle.

Free Playgroup Offered Mondays at the Town Offices Gymnasium

By John Parker

Is cabin fever setting in for you and your child under age 5? Are you looking for something fun and active? Community Health Program (CHP) is offering “WS Gym Fun,” a free weekly playgroup at the Town Offices Gymnasium on Mondays from 10 a.m. to noon.

According to CHP, playgroups are beneficial for both children and parents. As children play and interact with other children, they learn language, empathy, creativity, and physical coordination. Parents can informally socialize, share the experiences of being a parent, and learn ways to help their children build the skills they will need to grow and succeed.

WS Gym Fun is scheduled to run weekly on Mondays through May. For more information, visit the CHP website, <https://www.chpberkshires.org/family/playgroups/>, or call playgroup coordinator Kim Waterman Spitzer at (413) 528-0457.



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“We Remember When . . .”

Growing Up in West Stockbridge in the 1950s

A Series of Recollections by John Bormolini and Friends

More Town Social Clubs: Card Lake Hotel, Square Rigger, and Stateline Bar and Restaurant

By Louise Faggioni and John Bormolini

In this issue, we continue last month’s article about how the desire to socialize was exemplified in West Stockbridge by the Social Club and the Hide-a-Way. This month, the Square Rigger, Card Lake Hotel, and the Stateline Bar and Restaurant are featured. These were the “Big Five” socializing establishments in West Stockbridge in the 1950s.

Card Lake Hotel and Restaurant

Card Lake was owned from the late 1930s into the early 1970s by Tarcisio and Diletta Marzotto, known as Cisio and Tedla to all. They were highly regarded by everyone in town, often lending a hand when the need arose.

The hotel had about 15 rooms that were rented long and short term; breakfast, lunch, and dinner could be included. When the Mass Pike was being built, many workers lived there, and Tedla would make them lunches. Other people lived at the hotel when they couldn’t manage their homes any longer or didn’t own one. Some lived there for many years. Meals were plentiful and tasty.

In the summer, many employees of the Hancock race track stayed at the hotel for the duration of the races, a popular event in the Berkshires. Weekends were peak social times. People loved to catch up on the week’s news. The bar was a gathering place and did a good business, staying open daily until 1 a.m., when Cisio would drive a patron home if needed.

Dinners were served in a large dining room plus an overflow room. With a seating capacity of 100, many weddings, anniversaries, and baby showers were held there. Nearly everyone in town wanted to attend these events. Of course, a live band and dancing were always a big hit, and what fun it was! Stag parties for grooms were held, with folks coming from as far away as Lee. Card games were played for substantial amounts of money with the groom receiving a percentage of the taking. It made for a wonderful start for the new couple.

The hotel owned the first television in the area, and people would come from miles around to watch. Friday nights were most popular with the Friday Night Fights emceed by Howard Cosell. Every chair was taken; people even sat on the floor to watch. The first pizzas, new to the area, were made and served at these games. It was a great place and brought much enjoyment to the patrons.

The Square Rigger

The Square Rigger was more of an after-work venue. I recall that it was very compact. As you walked in through the front door, there was a jukebox. In about 10 short steps, the bar was on the left. On the way to the bar were booths that seated four people somewhat comfortably. In each booth was a Wurlitzer wall box. I think you could get five plays for a quarter.

At some point in the 1950s, a spacious room was added that increased the seating capacity, and a pinball machine and pool table were installed. The only cooking apparatus was a flat grill behind the bar. Lena Frana, the mother of one of our classmates, bartended there. Nobody messed with her!

After I started high school in 1956, the Square Rigger played a part in my life. Unlike today, where most high school students are driven to school and sporting events, we took the bus to and from school in Stockbridge. The bus stopped in the middle of town and at the Square Rigger. Most of us got off at the Square Rigger where we went in to eat possibly the best grilled burger I’ve ever had, with

...continued on page 15



Card Lake Hotel (From West Stockbridge, Massachusetts 1774-1974 by Edna Garnett)



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"We Remember When . . ." ...continued from page 13

just the right amount of grease and topped with a slice of onion. Add a Nehi orange soda: the best! Total cost about 50 cents. With the leftover money from the dollar my mother gave me, I had 50 cents left to play the 5-cent pinball machine. It couldn't get any better than that!

Stateline Bar and Restaurant

State Line was a hamlet along Route 102 bordering Canaan, New York. West Stockbridgians fondly remember the State Line Café and bar, whose bar actually spanned the border of Massachusetts and New York. Louie Costi and Eddie Tognini owned the State Line from the 1940s to the late 1950s. The original State Line was an old Victorian mansion. It burned down in 1956, and a new one-story cinderblock building was built the same year.

One of the reasons that the Stateline Bar and Restaurant ("The Line") was very popular among the under-21 crowd is that it was the closest bar to West Stockbridge and just over the line in New York State where the legal drinking age was 18. That did not change until 1982.

Many festive events like weddings, anniversaries, or birthdays were held there. Louie's wife was noted for her delicious cooking, and Eddie was a good chef who served large portions. It was a hangout for meeting people, with bands and dancing on weekends. One story goes that if you were younger than 21 and in the bar, you had to make certain you were in the right state.

Remembrance from Bruce M.: "One thing I can remember about 'The Line,' there was a lot of 'to go' beer, of course, bought by someone of legal age. I had to lay low because I was 17, and my father owned the business. I waited in the car for the guys to come out, kind of funny when you think about it."

I hope our readers have enjoyed reading about the Big Five venues for socializing in the 1950s. Stay tuned for our March article, a work in progress.



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Community News & Events

Community Health Association

Blood pressure clinics are held Mondays and Wednesdays, 9–10 a.m., at the CHA office at the West Stockbridge Town Offices. For more information about additional free skilled nursing services, such as home visits for residents, contact Emilie Jarrett, RN, at 232-0122, or visit our website, www.rwstcomhealth.com.

Stockbridge Grange Dinner

On Sunday, February 9, the Stockbridge Grange will serve a stuffed breast of chicken dinner in the Grange Hall at 51 Church Street, Stockbridge, from 1 to 2 p.m. Cost: \$12 adults, \$6 under 12, and under 5 free. Takeouts are available. If inclement weather, call 298-3185 ahead to see if dinner is postponed one week.

Council on Aging

The next Council on Aging potluck luncheon will take place in the Community Room on Tuesday, February 11, at noon. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank our friend Craig from the Pleasant & Main Café for the excellent meal he provided for our holiday party with Richmond. It was outstanding, and we wish him well in the New Year. That's it for now, so please plan on attending our next get-together.

Send your notices for Community News & Events to The Local Yokel, P.O. Box 238, West Stockbridge, MA 01266, e-mail info@thelocalyokel.org, or visit thelocalyokel.org.

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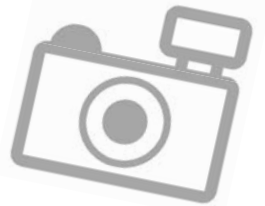


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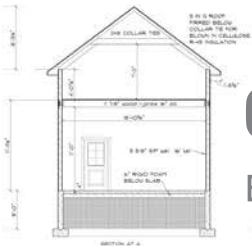


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On the Home Front

By Thom Lipiczky

February means Groundhog Day! February means Groundhog Day! February means Groundhog Day! February means Groundhog Day!

All right, all right. You get the reference.

The real meaning of the day, February 2, is that it is a celestial cross-quarter day. It falls midway between the winter solstice and the vernal equinox, so it means we're halfway to the beginning of spring! But of course all of us who live in New England know the vernal equinox usually just means that we're a few weeks from mud season. And as T.S. Eliot said, "April is the cruellest month."

Also it's in February that we usually notice the days are actually getting longer. "When the days begin to lengthen, the cold begins to strengthen," a friend fond of *Farmers' Almanac* wisdom used to remind me.

So what does all this rambling have to do with the care and feeding of your house (the purported reason I bother you with this column each month)? One thing that comes to mind is that the seasonal changes—hot, muggy Augusts to dry, frigid Februarys—take a toll on our buildings, especially buildings made of wood.

Dave Barry says, "Wood has been the preferred building material for thousands of years because it is one of the few materials that will rot as well as burn." Wood also *moves*! Ask any furniture maker (several excellent ones live right here in town). The relative humidity in the air causes a solid wood tabletop or a wood floorboard to expand and contract sometimes 1/8" per linear foot. That means a 48" tabletop jointed up in August could shrink by as much as 1/2" across the grain in February. And your beautiful wide-board oak floor laid and finished in September will show lots of spaces between boards in the middle of the heating season.

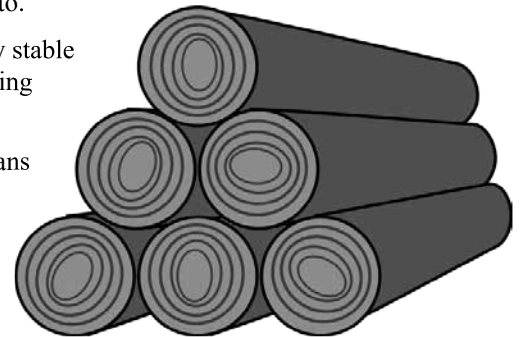
Different species absorb and expel moisture at different rates, though. And where the board comes from the log also affects its movement. The most dimensionally stable woods are *quarter sawn*, with their grain running perpendicular to the face of the board. And the way the board was dried after cutting or milling also affects its movement. Kiln-dried lumber for cabinetwork is usually gently heated in an enclosed space over time so its moisture content is about 8%.

Framing lumber (*two-by* material like 2 x 6 for studs, etc.) is usually cut from hemlock or fir, and when it comes from the mill to the lumberyard, it may have a moisture content of 18%. That's why in new houses after the first heating season, there's often cracks and nail pops in the sheetrock, due to the shrinkage of the framing lumber the sheetrock is screwed to.

Plywood, especially *cabinet grade* with more than seven plies, is much more dimensionally stable than individual boards of the same width. And *engineered* lumber, used in prefinished flooring or in structural members like LVLs (laminated veneer lumber) don't move much at all.

So the coming of spring for a piece of wood means a time of equalization. For others it means the beginning of baseball season. Baseball bats, by the way, are traditionally made from ash, a tree species now threatened by the emerald ash borer.

Before I become another kind of borer, I'll stop my rambling and invite you to send questions, comments, complaints, and recipes to info@localyokel.org.



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History Quiz Answer:



Leete Iron Mine. Photo courtesy of Bob Salerno

Iron was the first mineral discovered in West Stockbridge. In the early 1800s, surface iron ore and soil heavy in iron oxide were found in the farm field on Maple Hill. In that era, finding iron on your property was a big deal. Iron was important, necessary to build farming tools and other implements in the early industrial age. It was easy to smelt your own ore into simple pig iron and make some basic farm tools. A local source was twice as important, given the difficulty of transportation at the time.

The first quarry was developed in 1826, north of Route 102 near Baker Street on the property of Nathaniel Leete. Owned by the Stockbridge Iron Company, it became the largest open mine in the area, producing 40 tons of iron ore per day. The pit was 200 feet deep with tunnels branching off. Filled with water now, you can see the scope of the pit in the accompanying photo. A second major pit is hidden in the woods on the south side of Route 102. Known as the Hudson Ore Bed, it was also a major open pit, now filled with water. There was also an open pit mine just over the border in Richmond on Cone Hill.

West Stockbridge was a perfect spot for the iron industry. We had the iron ore, wood in the hills to make charcoal, and lime to use in the smelting process. Those three ingredients were necessary to smelt iron ore into usable cast iron. Early on, three blast furnaces operated in the town center, but Richmond had a larger one. It was fed by West Stockbridge iron ore, lime from the old marble quarries, and charcoal from all the trees on our hills. The Richmond furnace closed in 1923.

Iron had a major impact on the town's population. Iron mining and making lime for iron required labor. During the heyday, Irish and Italian immigration fed the quarries' need for workers. Baker Street was lined with worker housing, primarily Irish immigrants in the mid-1800s. Italian immigrants supplied much of the workers for the Cone Ore Bed and the Richmond furnace. Iron and quarry work was the reason they came to settle here.

West Stockbridge's big claim to fame is having the first railroad in western Massachusetts. According to legend, the railroad was built to carry marble to the Hudson for export. That might be partially true, but the first line went from Hudson and stopped at the Leete Ore Bed. A branch line to the open pit mine was built before the line was extended into town and the marble quarries. The first cargo was iron, not marble.

The iron industry closed down by the early 1900s. Charcoal, made from denuding the hills of trees, had played out. Now charcoal had to be shipped in to support the furnace, raising the cost. Pittsburgh was closer to the industrial needs out west, and the city had coal for fuel and a better smelting process. Italian immigrants continued to work in the lime quarries. The open pits became popular (but dangerous) swimming holes. West Stockbridge and Richmond were no longer iron centers, but the impact of iron quarrying on the town remains.

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Conservation Commission	<i>Jennifer Kujawski, Lori Rose</i>	232-0300	ext. 338	Leave Message for Inquiries
Council on Aging	<i>John Zick</i>	232-0300	ext. 340	Leave Message for Inquiries
Emergency Management	<i>Louis Oggiani</i>	528-2175		
Fire Department	<i>Peter Skorput</i>	911 or 232-4200 (non-emergency)		Mon. 6:30–9 p.m.
Highway Department	<i>Curt G. Wilton</i>	232-0305		Leave Message for Inquiries
Library	<i>Rachel Alter</i>	232-0300	ext. 308	Tues. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; Wed., Thurs., and Fri. 2–6 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m.–2 p.m.; closed Sun. & Mon.
Police Department	<i>Marc Portieri</i>	911 or 232-8500 (non-emergency)		24 hours, 7 days/week
Post Office	<i>Colleen A. Wich</i>	232-8544		Lobby: 7 a.m.–7 p.m.; 7 days/week; Window: Mon.–Fri. 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; Sat. 9 a.m.–12 noon
Seasonal Lifeguard		232-0315		
Sewer & Water Commission	<i>Michael Buffoni</i>	232-0309		
Town Accountant	<i>Elaine Markham</i>	232-0300	ext. 317	Leave Message for Inquiries
Town Clerk	<i>Ronni Barrett</i>	232-0300	ext. 300	Tues. & Thurs. 1:30–4 p.m.
Town Collector	<i>June A. Biggs</i>	232-0300	ext. 302	Wed. 3–6 p.m.; Thurs. and Fri. 10 a.m.– 2 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
Town Historian	<i>Robert Salerno</i>	232-4465		
Town Treasurer	<i>Karen Williams</i>	232-0300	ext. 316	Thurs. 9 a.m.–4 p.m.
Transfer Station	<i>Wayne Cooper</i>	232-0307		Tues. & Thurs. 10 a.m.–6 p.m. and Sat. 8 a.m.–6 p.m.
Tree Warden	<i>Andrew Fudge</i>	232-4322		
Veterans Agency	<i>Laurie Hills</i>	528-1580		
Zoning Board of Appeals	<i>C. Randolph Thunfors</i>	232-0300	ext. 300	

Official Town Government Website: weststockbridge-ma.gov • Community and Business Website: visitweststockbridge.com

February Art Calendar

Guild of Berkshire Artists | BerkshireArtists.org | gobasocial@gmail.com

2020

Feb 2, First Sunday Free at the Clark. Sun. Feb. 2. 10am-5pm. The first Sundays of the month are free Oct. to May. Connect with other members to carpool.

Feb 7, Collage Group. Friday Feb. 7, 12-30-3pm Richmond. For info and availability inquire at: berkshireartists@gmail.com

Feb 7, First Fridays Artswalk. Fri. Feb. 7, 5-8pm Pittsfield, North and South Streets. www.firstfridaysartwalk.com.

Feb 9, Members' Potluck. Sun. Feb. 9. 5-8pm Richmond. Bring main dish, hors d'oeuvres or dessert for ten and what YOU want to drink. Partners welcome. For location, RSVP: ftsegal@nycap.rr.com

Feb 15, Encaustic Mini Workshop Sat. Feb 15, Members interested in attending an encaustics workshop at R&F are encouraged to sign up on www.rfpaints.com. Space is limited. Cost is \$65. Arrange to carpool w/other members by connecting in the Guild's Facebook Member group or email berkshireartists@gmail.com.

Feb 21, Photo Explorers: Main Street Cafe. 40 Main Street, Stockbridge. Join Carole Quinn on Fri. Feb. 21, 8:30am for coffee/breakfast. Explore the area.

Feb 23, Berkshire Photo Gathering. Sun. Feb. 23, 2-4 pm \$5. Berkshire South Regional Comm. Center, 15 Crissey Road, Great Barrington, MA 01230 Put photos on website to share.

Feb 28, Art Book Gathering Friday, Feb. 28, 2-4 pm. Share a favorite book: artist, process. Shaker Mill Books, West Stockbridge.

Feb 5, Monthly art seminar and Guild business meeting (first Wed of month). Wed. Feb. 5, 4-6pm. Community Room Town Hall, 21 Stateline Road (Route 102) West Stockbridge.

4-5pm "Art Valentine".

Share your favorite artwork, artist, art book, tool, color, or favorite brand or variety of art supply!

5-6pm Business Meeting. Calendar review. Plan upcoming shows and activities.

MONDAYS, Classic Drawing, Still life, and Watercolor. Bring paper, pencil, charcoal, watercolor. Still Life set up. Free and open to the public. RSVP required via berkshireartists@gmail.com. West Stockbridge Community Room, 21 Stateline Road, Rt. 102. Mondays 12:30-3:30pm.

TUESDAYS, Figure Painting, Open Studio Tuesdays 1-4pm. IS 183, Stockbridge. \$30 Drop in. Bring your supplies. RSVP 413-298-5252x100.

Creating Art Outdoors. If the weather is lovely, post time and place you want to meet others on Facebook Berkshire Plein Air.

April 1, CALL FOR ART: Berkshire Humane Society. Wed. April 1, will be the drop off date for work submitting to the Spring show at Berkshire Humane Society. Visit www.berkshireartists.org/show-forms for details once available.

Stay up to date on any calendar updates via our homepage at www.berkshireartists.org!

West Stockbridge
Local Yokel
 P.O. Box 238
 West Stockbridge, MA
 01266

thelocalyokel.org

February 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29



February 2020 Calendar of Events

2/2	Groundhog Day		
2/5	Knitters & More	2-4 p.m.	Town Offices Community Room
2/5	Select Board meeting	6 p.m.	Town Offices
2/6	Board of Health meeting	6:30 p.m.	Town Offices
2/7	Select Board joint meeting with Finance Committee	1 p.m.	Town Offices
2/9	Grange Dinner	1-2 p.m.	Grange Hall, 51 Church St., Stockbridge
2/11	Council on Aging Potluck Luncheon	12 noon	Town Offices Community Room
2/11	American Legion meeting	7 p.m.	Town Offices
2/12	Knitters & More	2-4 p.m.	Town Offices Community Room
2/14	Valentine's Day		
2/15	*** Deadline for the next Local Yokel ***		Send to info@thelocalyokel.org
2/17	Presidents' Day		
2/19	Knitters & More	2-4 p.m.	Town Offices Community Room
2/19	Select Board meeting	6 p.m.	Town Offices
2/26	Ash Wednesday		
2/26	Knitters & More	2-4 p.m.	Town Offices Community Room