

Local yokel

West
Stockbridge
**January
2020**

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



*Happy
New Year!*

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY SINCE 2005

Canada geese wintering on the Shaker Mill Pond. Photo by John Parker

West Stockbridge Sparkles!

The West Stockbridge Congregational Church thanks the Police Department, Fire Department, and the Village Association for their assistance with the Sparkles event.

Also, special thanks to The Floor Store for helping us to fully clear our driveway and pathways in preparation for the event, after the surprise two feet of snow we received earlier that week!



The Congregational Church hosted holiday festivities. Back row: Abby Hallock, Joanne Wodecki, Cait Graham; middle row: Joe Roy, Jenni Hallock, Krysta Kaehn, Lisa Parker; front row: Maddie Lapara, Brady Graham. Photo by Caitlin Graham



Santa arrives by fire truck undeterred by snow and sleet! Photo by John Parker



Members of the WSFD and Santa's "sleigh" Photo by Caitlin Graham



Members of the WSPD (with Santa!) Photo by Caitlin Graham



The Singing Elves. Photo by John Parker



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 November 6, 2019

6:00 PM: Open Meeting
Quorum present: Select Board Members:
Bernie Fallon, Chair; Doane Perry, Eric
Shimeloni and Town Administrator Marie
Ryan.
Board reviews and approves warrants; payroll
and vendor.

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

Library Signage- Bernie stated that Jayne was unable to attend this meeting so she will present her discussion at a meeting in the future.

Appointments to Parks & Rec Committee- Bernie stated that the Parks & Rec Committee would like to have Joe Roy, Jr. and JP Boscarino. He then made a motion to appoint them and Eric seconded, all were in favour.

Building Use for Dog Training – Mariday Geyer, owner of Shaker Paws LLC presented that she would like to use the room at the end of Town Hall for dog training on Fridays. She stated this would

be open to the public and there is no fee and she has insurance. She is trying to find a location inside for the cold winter months. Eric stated that he was concerned of allowing people using the Town Hall for non-community service functions. Bernie asked Mariday if the Board could further think about it and get back to her. He asked her to keep in contact with Marie and the Board would get back to her. Mariday thanked the Board for their time and consideration.

Bernie then introduced Dan Bailly, representative from the Next Steps Committee. Dan then gave a brief power point presentation on the issues, findings and recommendations of the Next Steps Committee in regards to the high school. The recommendation was for a new or renovated high school. They believe that repairs are not an option.

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:06 PM.

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


...continued on page 5

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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@annelesserscommunications.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.

January Donor Roll Call

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Thanks to everyone who has donated to WSLY.
 We couldn't do it without your support!
 Keep the *Local Yokel* coming. Please send your gift today!
 (See response form on page 21.)



Fire Department Report

By Peter Skorput, Fire Chief

NOVEMBER 2019

Calls:

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Medical | 1 |
| Water in Basement | 1 |
| Automatic Alarms | 5 |

Training:

| | |
|-------|--------------------------------|
| 11/4 | Pump practice/ Hydrant testing |
| 11/11 | Station Maintenance |
| 11/18 | Pump practice/ Hydrant testing |

Chief Skorput and Lieutenant Filiault have completed Nims 300 Course.

Equipment:

No new equipment was purchased

Engine One was serviced and a regulator that was leaking and patched was replaced. All three apparatus have had the pumps tested on 11/7 and passed.

Membership:

Membership has stayed at eighteen

Work Details:

The hydrant at West Center was dug out on 11/16 with the help of Bill Harrington and seven of the department members.

January History Quiz Question:

Early settlements formed around geographic features that supported industry or farming. Neighborhoods such as Williamsville and Rockdale had the river to provide waterpower, as did the town center. West Center was a flatland and offered good soil for farming. State Line, in contrast, had none of those advantages.

However, State Line became one of the most prominent and economically vibrant areas in the town. By the early 1900s, it boasted more than 20% of the town's population. State Line today is a drive-through on your way to Albany or the nearest Subway and Dunkin Donuts at the truck stop. Now there are only about a dozen occupied houses, with the bridges of the Mass Pike the most prominent feature. What made State Line so important an area?

(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.



**West Stockbridge
 Historical Society**
 Incorporated in 1994

**Select Board Meeting Minutes
November 20, 2019**

6:00 PM: Open Meeting
Quorum present: Select Board Members: Bernie Fallon, Chair; Doane Perry, Eric Shimeloni and Town Administrator Marie Ryan.
Board reviews and approves warrants; payroll and vendor.

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

Library Signage- Bernie stated that Jayne was unable to attend this meeting so she will present her discussion at a meeting in the future.

Facilities Use Request- Kathy Korte request using the end room at Town Hall for Dog Training. This would be what Mariday Geyer had requested the previous meeting. Mariday is training Kathy's service dog. This training use would be on Fridays and will be open to the public at no charge. This was approved by the Board for a trail use for December, January and February.

Police Chief Marc Portierri – The Chief reported that he had Part Time Police Officer resign due to family obligations. He would like the Select Board to appoint David Lupiani as a new Part Time Police Officer. David has already completed the Part Time Police Academy and will continue training.

The Chief also report that the police cruiser is currently being repaired and should be back on the road soon.

The Chief then stated that the five people left that have not complied with the junk car bylaw had a court date on November 19 but no one showed up. The next step is that they are going to be brought up on a criminal complaint for a court date in front of a judge and that date should be on December 10. The Judge will then state the deadline date for the people to remove the vehicles.

Helping Hands is a program that the Police have been doing for years. The Chief explained that they are currently underway with this project for donations from the community. He said they are collecting to support 7 families in the community with gifts, a visit from Santa as well as a complete Christmas dinner. There are boxes around town for people to contribute.

Eric Wilska – Transfer Station- Bernie welcomed Eric. Eric stated that he is a business owner in town and uses the transfer station frequently. He explained that the signage there is not helpful. He said there is a safety concern as well as a lack of communication due to numerous signs all over. He would like to see more efficient signage and education for the public. He also would like to include the local teenagers with education in regards to recycling. Bernie explained that the Transfer Station is under the control of the Board of Health. Bernie asked Marie to work with Eric and the Board of Health to discuss possible positive changes. Marie said she will connect Eric with Curt Wilton, Public Works Director and the Board of Health to work on possible improvements.

I AM Responding – Fire Chief Peter Skorput told the Select Board he is planning on including the purchase of the I AM Responding program in his FY21 budget. He feels it will be helpful to the Fire Department. Eric Shimeloni said he would like to see this purchased now and not wait. He said the first two months will be free and that the sooner the Department gets the database built into the program the better to help with logistics.

Eric made a motion to purchase the I AM Responding software as well as a large monitor screen and computer for the Fire Station. Doane seconded the motion. After discussion, all were in favour.

Chief Peter Skorput also stated that the Police Department had recently started using a tablet with a database they got from Verizon. He will be talking with them and see how that is going as well to see if it would be beneficial to the Fire Department as well.

Fire Chief Peter Skorput, Monthly Report – Chief Skorput presented his monthly report to each Board member. (see attached)

Chief Skorput also reported that he has been purchasing some new equipment for the Fire Station that is being required by OSHA. Some of these things include individual cubbies for each department member at a cost of (\$1200) and a new cabinet for combustibles. He also has been discussing with other Fire Chiefs in the area on what types of equipment he should purchase in the future to comply with OSHA.

Miscellaneous Items:

Marie reported that the Town Hall has changed their internet provider to Spectrum. The speed was only at 5 mps and is now 100 mps. She also told the Board that west Stockbridge will be included in the Holiday Tour this year that is usually just in Stockbridge.

Eric Shimeloni showed the Board a draft of a new sign for the entrance to Town Hall. This sign was just a mock up and was a simple town seal, and the lettering of Town Hall, Library and Police. The Board would like to see all signs in the Town be of the same font and style.

Karen Carmean told the Board that the Vision Committee will be hosting an Art Festival. This will include anyone who would like to audition in Dec and January. It will include all types of arts, singing, poetry, art, etc.. They have a need for many volunteers and hope to be a huge success.

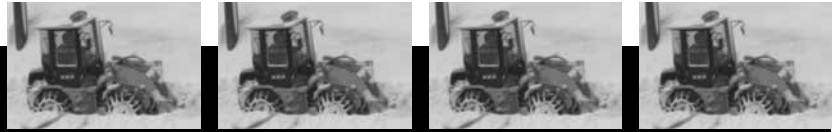
Bernie stated that he thought the presentation by The Next Steps Committee member Daniel Bailly at the last meeting on Nov 6, was great. He said he appreciated their presentation.

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 PM.

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

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.

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thelocalyokel.org



West Stockbridge Volunteers Offer Mediation Services Through Dispute Resolution Center

By John Parker

For more than 28 years, the Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority (BCRHA) Dispute Resolution Center has made available a wide range of dispute resolution services to all Berkshire County residents. The center provides free court-connected mediation for many types of disputes, such as landlord/tenant, small claims, neighbor, trespass, nuisance, property/real estate, and other civil disputes. Mediation services are offered to parties in small claims court in Pittsfield, North Adams, and Great Barrington.

The center also offers free community-based services for matters such as neighbor issues, noise complaints, and interpersonal conflicts that individuals would like to resolve out of court. A Family/School Mediation Program is available to students, teachers, and parents at Conte Elementary and Reid Middle School, and an Agricultural Mediation Program serves the Massachusetts farming community. In addition, the center administers a fee-based Real Estate Dispute Resolution System endorsed by the Berkshire County Board of Realtors for disputes between buyers, sellers, and brokers.

The BCRHA website describes mediation as “a voluntary and confidential dispute resolution process in which a neutral third party assists the disputing parties to identify and discuss issues of mutual concern, explore solutions, and develop mutually acceptable settlements.” The process is entirely voluntary: both parties must agree to participate. If the mediation is successful, the court magistrate finalizes the agreement.

Mediation services are provided by volunteers who must complete a five-day, 35-hour Basic Mediation Training course, and they are also required to receive six hours of continuing education each year. The center is currently seeking volunteers to participate in the Annual Basic Mediation Training offered in March 2020 (see details at the end of this article). Volunteers in the court-connected mediation program attend court a minimum of four hours per month and are available to mediate if referred by the judge and the parties agree to participate in the process.

Two West Stockbridge residents, Lori Rose and Kathleen Keresey, currently volunteer as mediators with the center. Lori Rose is a real estate agent with Stone House Properties. Asked about her motivation to participate in the program, Lori said that the mediation skills she has learned through the program are complementary to the negotiating and problem-solving skills she uses in her business and everyday life. She finds the work of helping others to be life affirming.

Kathleen Keresey, an independent video producer who works in the non-profit sector, says she has always been interested in mediation and even considered doing it professionally. Kathleen also finds the skill set needed for successful mediation has applicability to other aspects of her life and business. She finds it especially rewarding when both parties to a dispute can walk out of mediation with some degree of satisfaction and finality.

What kinds of disputes do they get involved with? Kathleen and Lori described some of the more frequently referred cases as including disputes involving landscapers, construction and roofing contractors, and used car sales. There was even a case involving a dating service.

Following the training program, a prospective volunteer observes mediations for several months before taking on a case on their own. Kathleen described the training program as “comprehensive,” and Lori added the center staff and other volunteers are “very good.”

What traits or characteristics make for an effective mediator? Lori and Kathleen encourage anyone with the interest, ability to listen, curiosity, even-handedness, and the time to be involved to consider taking the training and volunteering for the Dispute Resolution Center program.

Annual Basic Mediation Training

Dates and times: March 6, 7, 13, 14, and 20, 9:00 a.m.–4:30 p.m.

Location: 1 Fenn St., Pittsfield, MA 01201

Cost of the training is \$400, if, after the training, you can commit to one year of voluntary mediation services with the center. The cost is \$750 if you only want the basic training and do not want to volunteer. For more information, contact Kayla Wendling at (413) 443-7138, ext. 212, or KaylaW@BCRHA.com.



Kathleen Keresey. Photo courtesy of Kathleen Keresey



Lori Rose. Photo courtesy of Lori Rose

Collector's Note

The fiscal year 2020 actual real estate and personal property bills were mailed just after Christmas. If you have not received yours yet, be on the lookout! And if for some reason it does not arrive soon, you can find your tax amount at www.weststockbridge-ma.gov by using the Online Payment Center link.

The Department of Revenue approved a tax rate of \$13.12 for the 2020 tax year. Please review your new assessments carefully. If you wish to challenge your bill, the window of opportunity runs until February 1, 2020. Bills must be **paid in full**, and the **abatement request must be received by the assessors no later than February 1** for consideration. Forms are available online and at the assessors' office.

For those on the water/sewer system, past due water/sewer bills appear as a special assessment on your bill because they have been liened to your real estate.

When paying bills, receipt at the collector's office, not the postmark, determines when a payment is considered complete. If your prior quarter payments were not received or arrived after the due date, a past due amount will appear on your bill. You are responsible for the amount following these words: "*Total due 2/1/2020.*" Please remit that amount with the *top portion* of your bill.

I have included detailed instructions on the reverse side of the bills for anyone interested in receiving future bills electronically. Just follow the steps listed there, and begin enjoying the benefits of having your bill delivered to your inbox. If you receive more than a single bill each quarter, you will need to go through the registration process with each one.

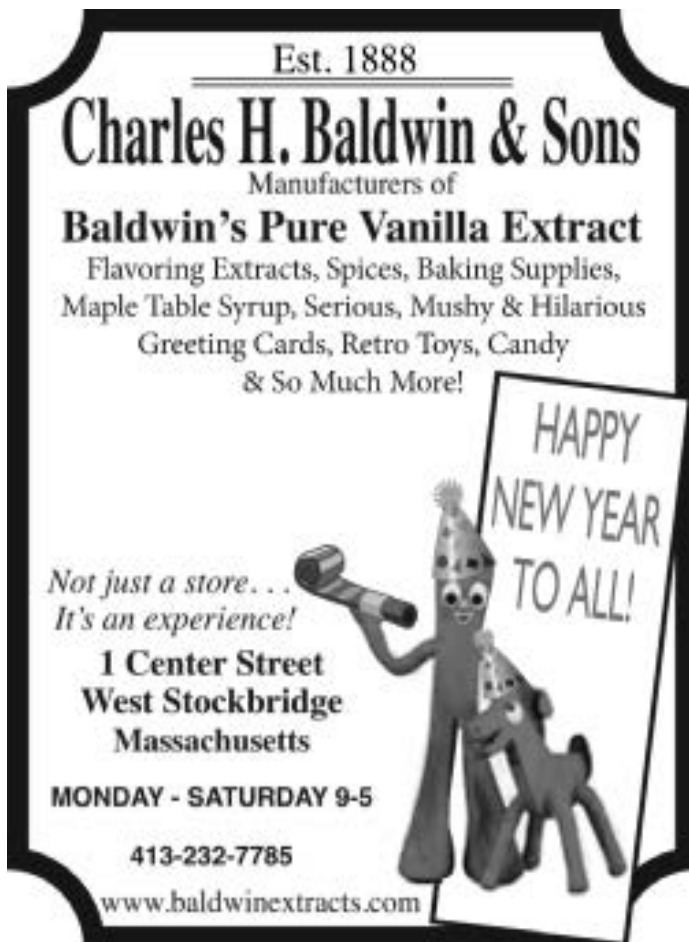
Have a happy, healthy, and peace-filled new year!

June Biggs, Collector

Tel.: 232-0300, ext. 302

E-mail: collector@weststockbridge-ma.gov

Office hours: Wednesday: 3–6 p.m.; Thursday and Friday: 10 a.m.–2 p.m.; Saturday: 10 a.m.–1 p.m.



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The West Stockbridge Chamber Players Present An Intimate Evening of Soaring Music and Serendipitous Improvisation

By Liza Bennett

Despite the treacherous weather and ice-slicked roads, eighty or so intrepid souls filled the Congregational Church in West Stockbridge on the last Monday night of the year for what has become a musical highlight of the holiday season, the Chamber Players' Winter Concert. A benefit for the Old Town Hall Restoration Campaign, the evening featured the Chamber Players' artistic director and clarinetist Catherine Hudgins, violinist Sheila Fiekowsky, violist Daniel Getz, and pianist Deborah DeWolf Emery. Cellist Oliver Aldort was unable to attend, forcing the Chamber Players to quickly improvise a new program. The evening started as planned with Max Bruch's lovely *Eight Pieces for Clarinet, Viola, and Piano*, followed by Aram Khachaturian's arresting Trio.

The audience was then treated to a wonderful, unbilled surprise: Hudgins and her husband William Hudgins performing a duet written especially for them by Daniel Crozier. They played the second movement, *Intermezzo*, of the *Concerto for Two Clarinets and Orchestra*. Another substitution—and another delight—followed: the *Allegro*, *Adagio Molto Espressivo*, *Scherzo*, and *Rondo* movements of Beethoven's *Sonata for Violin and Piano*, Op. 24, performed by Sheila Fiekowsky and Deborah DeWolf Emery.

A reception at Connie Eagan's beautiful home followed the concert where the audience was able to mingle with the musicians and thank them for another inspiring evening, and year, of exciting and superbly performed chamber music.

The concert was sponsored by Jaylyn Olivo and Dale Flecker.



Clarinetists Catherine Hudgins and William Hudgins perform a duet written for them by Daniel Crozier



WSHS President Bob Salerno greets the audience at the West Stockbridge Congregational Church



Pianist Deborah DeWolf Emery, assisted by page turner Katie Rumin, a student of Daniel Getz



Violinist Sheila Fiekowsky



Violist Daniel Getz and clarinetist Catherine Hudgins
All photos by John Parker



HAPPY
New Year

from the
West Stockbridge Farmers Market



See you on The Green on
May 28, 2020 for Opening Day

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WONDERING JEWS
CULTURAL JEWS
MIXED MARRIAGE JEWS
MIXED UP JEWS
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LGBT JEWS
CREATIVE JEWS
SPIRITUAL JEWS
JEW BL'S
JEW TALKING JEWS
POLITICAL JEWS
POLITICAL JEWS
YIDDISH SPEAKING JEWS
INTELLECTUAL JEWS
SEARCHING JEWS
OBSERVANT JEWS
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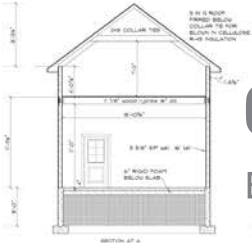
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On the Home Front

By Thom Lipiczky

It's been a while since I've posted an "On the Home Front" column—I missed last month just to see if anyone noticed. (Both readers said, "Huh?") Actually, my absence was because I was back at work doing some remodeling projects for clients in Monterey. "Retirement" is elusive, a shimmering mirage before my tired eyes. (*Cue sad music.*)

Since the last column, we closed on our old house, so we own "only" one house now. Which is way more than many, many, many people have, so let's keep perspective. In upcoming months I plan to discuss the subject of affordable housing in our town and beyond. But for today, I want to talk about the impact of climate change on our building codes in Massachusetts.

The State Board of Building Regulations and Standards (BBRS) is made up of building officials from all over the state and is responsible for overseeing our building codes including energy conservation. About 75% of the state's municipalities (although not West Stockbridge) have voluntarily adopted the "stretch code" that increases the energy savings requirements for new construction. Generally, the idea is to reduce the overall carbon footprint in construction so as to mitigate the effects of climate change for us all.



A group called the Massachusetts Climate Action Network has recently asked the BBRS to adopt an updated "net-zero" expansion of the energy code. This initiative seeks to require that by 2030, new construction in the state would not use more energy than it can produce. Much more efficient insulation, techniques, and materials in addition to photovoltaic panels or ground-source heat pumps would ideally completely offset the amount of energy to heat and cool and run new houses, for example. A bill has been filed in the state legislature that would create a net-zero stretch code statewide.

As well intentioned as the goals of the Climate Action Network are, many builders and building officials are hesitant to make net-zero a *requirement* in our energy codes. "For a new building to be considered net-zero, it would need to generate renewable energy equal to its overall electricity consumption. But that requirement alone will not necessarily cut down the amount of energy a building uses," wrote Sarah Shemkus in *Energy News Network* last spring.

Paul Eldrenkamp, a Newton, Massachusetts, builder and advocate of sustainability points out, "One of the unintended consequences of net-zero would be that you could build worse buildings and put more [solar] on them," he said. "I am not a big fan of zero net energy as a building standard." The net-zero initiative doesn't look at the carbon footprint of materials used in construction or the prospect of utility-scale solar installations.

The BBRS has not made a ruling on net-zero yet, and much more discussion will be forthcoming about the details of the proposal. Watch this space for more news on this and how it affects new house construction right here in town.

Comments, questions, and rants can be addressed to info@locallyokel.org.

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January Art Calendar

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

2020

Jan 5, Members' Potluck. Sun. Jan. 5. 4-7pm West Stockbridge. 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

Jan 8, Monthly art seminar and Guild business meeting (first Wednesday of month). Wed. Jan. 8, **4pm** Introductions, bring a recent work to share or ask feedback, and a group discussion on goals in the new year. **Business Meeting 5-6pm** Plan upcoming shows and activities. Community Room Town Hall, 21 Stateline Road (Route 102) West Stockbridge (WS)

Jan 9, Meet the Artist: Jill Gustavis. Gallery Talk. Watercolor & Acrylics. Thurs. Jan. 9, 4-5pm, TKG Real Estate, 137 North Street, Pittsfield.

Jan 10, Collage Group. Friday Jan. 10, 12-30-3pm Richmond. For info and availability inquire at: BerkshireArtists@gmail.com

Jan 15, Shaker Mill Inn Art Exhibit Reception: Wed. Jan 15, 4-6:30pm. More than 50 works by local artists. A rare chance to see the works and some of the nine beautiful rooms. Light refreshments served. Artists bring a plate of hors d'oeuvres. 2 Oak St. near 7 Albany Rd. (Rt. 41 and 102) West Stockbridge.

Jan 17, Photo Explorers: Taft Farm. 119 Park Street Great Barrington. Join Carole Quinn on Fri. Jan. 17, 8:30am for coffee/breakfast. Explore the area.

Jan 26, Berkshire Photo Gathering. Sun. Jan. 26, 2-4 pm \$5. Berkshire South Regional Comm. Center, 15 Crissey Road, Great Barrington, MA 01230 Put Photos on website to share.

Jan 31, Art Book Gathering Friday, Jan. 31, 2-4 pm. Share a favorite book: artist, process. Shaker Mill Books, West Stockbridge.



Katherine Ludington



Walt Pasko



Bruce Panock



Joel Hotchkiss

*A selection of art on display at
Shaker Mill Inn. (Reception Jan 15)*

JANUARY, TKG Pittsfield Work of our new GBA officers and Rose Tannenbaum will remain on display at TKG Real Estate, 137 North St., Pittsfield for the month of January. There is no Artswalk this month.

MONDAYS, Classic Drawing, Still life, and Watercolor. Bring paper, pencil, charcoal, watercolor. Still Life set up. Free and open to the public. RSVP required. 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.

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



All-hazard Preparedness Checklist

Before the Storm

- Listen to local news and National Weather Service for continued storm updates.
- Gather a disaster supply kit or replace/restock items as needed.
- Locate the evacuation routes in your local community if applicable and be sure family members know the routes.
- Store important documents (insurance papers, home inventory, etc.) in a waterproof container.
- Have cash on hand in small denominations.
- Make sure vehicle gas tanks are full.
- Make sure you have sufficient amounts of prescription medications.
- If you have a generator, test it and make sure you have sufficient fuel.
- Have a portable battery powered radio (with sufficient batteries) or weather radio on hand.
- Secure your home by trimming trees; clearing clogged downspouts/gutters; securing or removing items that could become airborne (plants, furniture, grills, etc.).
- Turn off propane tanks.
- Fill bathtubs and large containers with water to use for sanitary reasons.
- Turn freezer and refrigerator to the coldest settings in case the power goes out.
- Charge cell phones, laptops and other portable electronic devices.
- If you or your family member has special medical needs, register with your local community and utility provider to obtain any available resources (i.e. transportation to shelter, priority electrical restoration, etc.).
- Make plans for pets in the event you need to evacuate.

During the Storm

- Listen to the TV or radio for weather information and updates.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed.
- Avoid using corded phones except for emergencies.
- Stay indoors and away from windows.

After the Storm

- Continue to tune in to local news and weather for post-storm updates.
- Carefully inspect your home for any exterior damage or safety issues.
- Watch for downed power lines and do not go near them.
- Do not venture out on roads until you know it is safe to do so.
- If you had to evacuate your home, inspect it upon your return and if there are any safety issues (flood waters; odor of gas, structural damage, etc.) do not enter.
- DO NOT** run generators, grills or other gas operated devices indoors.
- If there was an extended power outage check frozen and refrigerated food for spoilage. If you are in doubt, throw it out.
- Watch pets carefully to make sure they don't wander in damaged areas.

Thank You!



...for your gifts to these
local organizations through
Santa's Wish List:

- ❖ Community Health Association
- ❖ Friends of the West Stockbridge Library
- ❖ The *Local Yokel*
- ❖ Pet Partners of the Tri-State Berkshires
- ❖ West Stockbridge Beautification
- ❖ West Stockbridge Farmers Market
- ❖ West Stockbridge Fire and Rescue Services
- ❖ West Stockbridge Historical Society

*Gift totals will be reported in
our February issue!*

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, January 12, the Stockbridge Grange will serve a baked bean and ham 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

Please come and join us for the Council on Aging Potluck Luncheon at noon on Tuesday, January 14, in the Community Room at the Town Offices. Start the year off right by participating in our monthly luncheons!

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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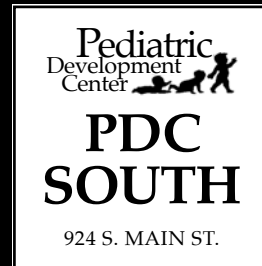
Cost: \$50 - pre-registration required at
[413-822-7394](mailto:info@Bound-less.com) or info@Bound-less.com



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weststockbridgelibrary.org | 413-232-0300 ext. 308

TUESDAY 10am-5pm | WEDNESDAY-FRIDAY 2-6pm | SATURDAY 10am-2pm

Happy New Year to all!

Library staff and trustees are looking forward to welcoming you; we do our best to provide personalized help and find the information you need.

Microsoft Classes: Please contact the library or come in to sign up for classes.

Microsoft Excel: Classes on February 6, 13, 20, and 27, beginning at 1 p.m., with Bill Biggs, our expert volunteer teacher.

Microsoft Word: We are very fortunate that Bill Barth is offering classes to help you improve your skills in Microsoft Word. The dates will be determined between you and the instructor once you sign up.

NEW DVDs

The Goldfinch, The Lion King, Once Upon a Time in Hollywood, The Public

NEW ADULT NONFICTION

Frenkel, *Bookshop in Berlin*
Haley, *With All Due Respect: Defending America*

NEW ADULT FICTION

Baldacci, *Minute to Midnight*
Box, *Bitterroots*
Child, *Blue Moon: A Jack Reacher Novel*
Clinch, *Marley*
DeMille, *Deserter*
Lerner, *Topeka School*
McDermid, *How the Dead Speak*
Pullman, *Book of Dust: The Secret Commonwealth*
Smith, *Peppermint Tea Chronicles*

NEW BOOKS FOR CHILDREN/LOVERS OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Rosen, *Elijah's Angel, A Story for Chanukah and Christmas*

Rachel Alter, Vicky Cooper, and Brad Havill



Scrapbook January 2020: TEST YOUR TRIVIA KNOWLEDGE!

1. Larry Vaber was noted for many accomplishments. What did he do for the blind?
2. Who was the resident who went from directing a TV show to becoming a nurse at Berkshire Medical Center?
3. What company did Gary Quadrozzi work for before they closed their doors and he became a robotics specialist?
4. What store in West Stockbridge was condemned after a "fatigued driver" drove into it?

Answers: 1. For over 55 years he volunteered as a reader of recorded student textbooks. 2. Tory Street. 3. Sheaffer Eaton. 4. Sawyer Antiques.

Jill Gustavis

*Jill
Gustavis*

Watercolorist

*"inspired by my
everyday immersion in
the nature around"*

*"Equally interested in
the science of art,
experiments and
sketches to study the
nature of colors"*

Th. January 9
4-5pm Gallery Walk
and discussion

TKG Real Estate
137 North Street
Pittsfield

Guild of Berkshire Artists
www.BerkshireArtists.org and
GoBASocial@gmail.com



Join Jill Gustavis on Thurs. Jan. 9 at TKG Real Estate, 137 North Street Pittsfield 4-5pm for a talk and informal discussion of her art. You will be able to ask her questions. RSVP: BerkshireArtists@gmail.com.

Jill is an artist originally from Pittsfield, Massachusetts who now resides in Stephentown, NY. Focusing on watercolors, she enjoys working on natural subjects such as flowers and landscapes, as well as still life and architectural pieces.

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“We Remember When . . .” Growing Up in West Stockbridge in the 1950s

A Series of Recollections by John Bormolini and Friends

West Stockbridge “Social Clubs”

Throughout history there always has been a desire to socialize with other people. West Stockbridge was no exception as it grew from an Indian settlement into a vibrant community. Growth was initially fueled by agriculture and later by industries such as iron ore mining, sawmills, gristmills, stone mills, a fulling mill, the extraction of marble, tanneries, and a nail factory.

Today we don’t think of a tavern as part of the cultural life of a town, but it was then. In taverns people came together, local news was exchanged, clubs were formed, and meetings were held. Taverns hosted celebrations such as weddings, birthdays, and galas at Christmas and New Year’s. Many early social clubs were religious based. As time passed, other nonreligious social clubs came into being. This article features two West Stockbridge social clubs that thrived in the 1950s.

The Italian American Club

The Italian American Club was formed about 1930 to help those in need, mainly in the Italian community. It remained active into the mid-1930s until the meeting hall burned down. A building was then bought on the west side of the river. It became known as the Italian American Social Club and later the Social Club. It thrived through the 1950s because it was a fun place to go. In those days, people were not accustomed to driving long distances from home to socialize. It was a perfect fit!

The Social Club’s glory years were the 1950s. It truly was a “go to” venue throughout the year but especially in the summer. One of the club’s main attractions was the three lighted bocce alleys. During the summers, especially on Sundays, crowds gathered at the alleys behind the club to socialize, observe the players, or participate as players.

Numerous teams formed bocce leagues. This was not your everyday bocce league because it was extremely competitive.

Many of us kids would go to watch and hear the players, mostly Italians, shouting encouragement to their partners at the other end of the alley. One of the Italian words that I recall sounded like “teera,” which translated to “knock the crap out” of the bocce ball being pointed to, moving it out of contention.

Also in the summer, the club held a clambake. People came from miles around to eat, play cards, socialize, drink and enjoy the camaraderie, and, of course, play or watch bocce. The clambakes were open to all. It was a festive town event that people looked forward to every summer. Tables and chairs and a bar were set up in the adjacent Pericolosi Grove in the rear of the club.

Another attraction were the dances every Saturday night with a live band composed of talented local musicians. There was always an accordion accompanied by other instruments: trumpet, sax, clarinet, banjo, guitar, drums, and a vocalist. The club was always jam packed. The bar, grill, and dance hall provided a swinging good time for all. And you could always find a card game going on in the bar area; pitch and gin rummy were the favorites. More than a few dollars changed hands over time. Boys will be boys!

The Social Club also had a restaurant that served burgers, hot dogs, and homemade Italian sausage. Gallon jars of pickled hard-boiled eggs and pig’s feet were on the bar. Heartburn aside, they were so good at the time, especially with a bottle of ice-cold beer—Schlitz or Pabst Blue Ribbon.



Opening event of the Italian American Club, 1930. Eventually it became the Social Club in the late 1940s through the 1950s. Photo from Edna Bailey Garnett, West Stockbridge Massachusetts 1774–1974

...continued on page 19



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Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 12/26 50th Wedding Anniversary for Pam and Phil Lockenwitz
- 1/12 Anne Roy
- 1/13 Jim Hallock
- 1/13 Abby Hallock
- 1/19 Emma Seward
- 1/24 John Parker

Did we miss your birthday or anniversary? To be sure your listing gets in the *Local Yokel*, please send it in by the 15th of the month before the desired issue each year.

The *Local Yokel*, P.O. Box 238,
West Stockbridge MA 01266,
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or visit www.thelocalyokel.org



Exhibit

OPEN HOUSE: Shaker Mill Inn

More than 90
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by Local Artists

Wed. Jan. 15

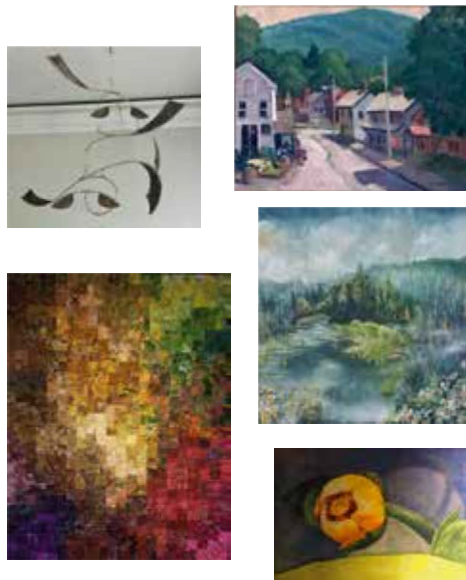
4-6:30 pm
Light Refreshments

Shaker Mill Inn
2 Oak Street
West Stockbridge



Guild of Berkshire Artists

www.BerkshireArtists.org
GoBASocial@gmail.com



Join us Wednesday January 15, 4 – 6:30pm for a rare opportunity to see some of the nine rooms decorated with art by local artists and enjoy light refreshments at the Shaker Mill Inn. This exhibit rotates and other artists will be added for our new show. From top left clockwise: Joel Hotchkiss, Walt Pasko, Laurie Rando, Amy Pressman, and Katherine Ludington. To RSVP and for more information contact BerkshireArtists@gmail.com. Check website to confirm date and time.



Do you enjoy writing or photography?

The *Local Yokel* needs regular and occasional contributors.

Please call John Parker at (413) 394-4368, e-mail info@thelocalyokel.org, or visit www.thelocalyokel.org for more information.



"We Remember When . . ." ...continued from page 17

The club even sponsored a yearly circus in the field just to the south. The club was closed in the early 1960s due to waning membership. People had become much more mobile, often driving to Pittsfield, the so-called big city, for entertainment. The building was sold and became the Orient Express, a far cry from the Italian American Club of old but reflecting the demographic changes in West Stockbridge, my hometown.

The Hide-a-Way

The second venue was the Hide-a-Way, about 4 miles south of the town center on Great Barrington Road. Louis and Edith Raspuzzi owned and operated the business in the 1950s. In addition to a bar and grill, there was a small gas station.

Edith provided lunches for workers at Rockwool, a business close by. I've heard that she served the best burgers in Berkshire County. Her BLTs were also quite tasty. Small parties were hosted at the Hide-a-Way. Most of the time those who were hosting the party made the food. Edith, a wonderful host, would prepare the tables beautifully.

With a jukebox playing popular songs, people would dance even if it was a bridal or baby shower with all women because back then women always danced with each other. Edith loved to dance and was full of fun, and Louis was full of conversation while bartending. They complemented each other over the 10 years they owned and operated the Hide-a-Way. Being away from the town center it was sort of a diamond in the rough. Thanks for the memories!

The February article will feature the Card Lake Hotel and the Stateline Bar and Restaurant. Be well, and thanks for reading our articles.

Watch for future installments of "We Remember When..." in the Local Yokel. John Bormolini is a West Stockbridge "ex-pat," now residing in Leavenworth, Kansas. Readers who would like to share their stories of 1950s West Stockbridge are invited to e-mail John at johnbormo@aol.com.

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History Quiz Answer:



State Line train station. Photos courtesy of Bob Salerno

State Line Road itself goes back to the 1700s when the path was a major route for native Americans and Dutch traders to move between the Hudson and Housatonic watersheds. State Line is the only break in the Taconic range for many miles (Green River to the south and the Hoosick River to the north). The first dam in town was built in the 1760s on Flat Brook, and farmers started to settle in the area.

That low break in the mountains was ideal to lay tracks for the railroad to carry the marble and lime to Hudson. (Railroads don't like hills, especially rail technology in the 1840s.) State Line was the perfect route, and it was a natural junction for the Western Railroad from Boston and Pittsfield to Albany and points west. By the 1860s, State Line had transformed from a small farming center to a major rail hub.

Immigrants came from Ireland and Italy to support the railroads and also the two large open-pit iron quarries down the road. The railroads built a marshalling yard with steam engine service pit, roundhouse, and warehouses. There was also a passenger station, switch tower, and crew bunking facilities. The railroad was the major employer, and as workers arrived, families settled there and the community grew.

At its peak, State Line had a post office/general store, chapel, elementary school, debating society, civic and social club, brewery, and hotel. A 1924 business directory lists two general merchants, livery and carriage trade. Also, the remoteness of the area and its location on the border of two states didn't hurt during the 1900s with an illegal boxing match. The area allegedly was active during Prohibition and even later because the legal drinking age was lower in New York than in Massachusetts.

By the 1950s, fortunes had turned. The New Haven Railroad eliminated the branch line from State Line through West Stockbridge to Van Deusenville, pulled up the tracks, and closed the passenger station and railyard. Trains now went straight through between Albany and Pittsfield, no longer stopping. The Mass Pike chopped up the neighborhood. The post office closed in 1972, and State Line became the quiet area it is today.

Local yokel

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Every issue costs us about \$1,300 to print and distribute! Please help us keep the *Local Yokel* coming!

With increased printing and postage costs, we need your help more than ever. To get the latest town news, please contribute to the *Local Yokel*. For your donation of at least \$25.00 per year we will mail each issue to you (unless you prefer otherwise). The *Local Yokel* will continue to be available free at selected locations as long as possible, but we hope you will contribute anything you can. The West Stockbridge Local Yokel, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) organization, and all contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Please check with your employer, or former employer if retired, for matching gift programs.

Yes! I want to support the *Local Yokel*.
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| Town Government Boards and Commissions, Phone Directory, and Office Hours | | | | |
|--|--|--------------------------|-----------------------|--|
| Town Offices Main Number 413-232-0300 • Fax 232-7195 | | | | |
| Animal Control | <i>Brian Hoskeer</i> | 232-0300 | ext. 335 | As Needed |
| Assessors Office | <i>Mary Stodden</i> | 232-0300 | ext. 303 | Tues. 1–5 p.m.; Thurs. 9 a.m.–1 p.m. |
| Board of Health | <i>Earl Moffatt</i> | 232-0300 | ext. 314 | Fri. 9 a.m.–4 p.m., or by appt. |
| Select Board | <i>Bernie Fallon, Doane Perry, Eric Shimelonis</i> | | | |
| Administrative Assistant | <i>Marie Ryan</i> | 232-0300 | ext. 319 | Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri. 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m. |
| Building Inspector | <i>Brian Duval</i> | 232-0300 | ext. 313 | Leave Message for Inquiries |
| 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> | 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> | 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 | |

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| January 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 | 30 | 31 | |



| January 2020 Calendar of Events | 1/1 | New Year's Day | | |
|---------------------------------|------|---|-----------|--|
| | 1/2 | Board of Health meeting | 6:30 p.m. | Town Offices |
| | 1/8 | Knitters & More | 2-4 p.m. | Town Offices Community Room |
| | 1/8 | Select Board meeting | 6 p.m. | Town Offices |
| | 1/12 | Grange Dinner | 1-2 p.m. | Grange Hall, 51 Church St., Stockbridge |
| | 1/14 | Council on Aging Potluck Luncheon | 12 noon | Town Offices Community Room |
| | 1/14 | American Legion meeting | 7 p.m. | Town Offices |
| | 1/15 | *** Deadline for the next Local Yokel *** | | Send to info@thelocalyokel.org |
| | 1/15 | Knitters & More | 2-4 p.m. | Town Offices Community Room |
| | 1/20 | Martin Luther King, Jr. Day | | |
| | 1/22 | Knitters & More | 2-4 p.m. | Town Offices Community Room |
| | 1/22 | Select Board meeting | 6 p.m. | Town Offices |
| | 1/25 | Lunar New Year | | |