

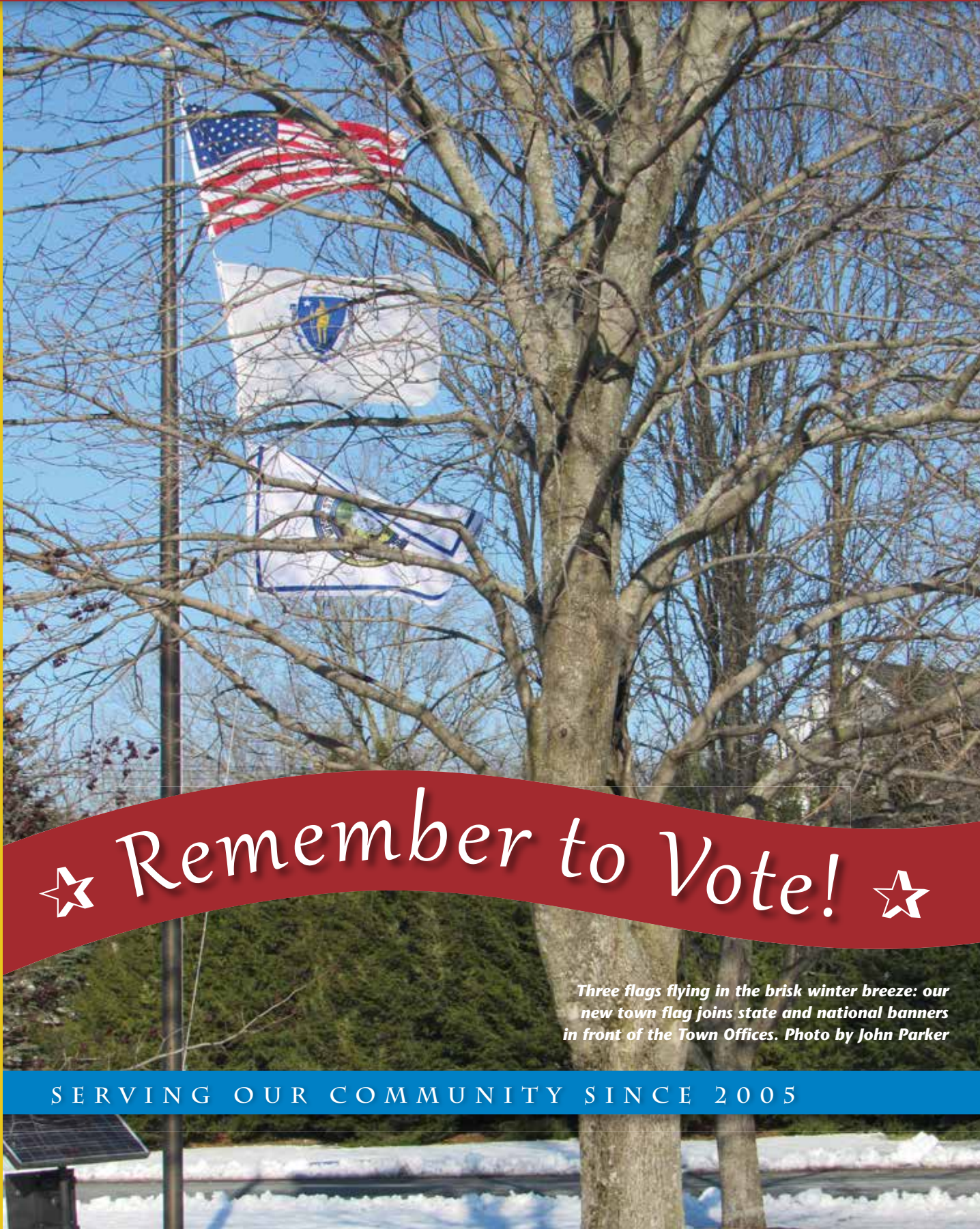
Local yokel

West
Stockbridge

March
2020

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

Mass. Primary Election is Tuesday, March 3, polls open 7am- 8pm, in Town Offices Gym



★ Remember to Vote! ★

Three flags flying in the brisk winter breeze: our new town flag joins state and national banners in front of the Town Offices. Photo by John Parker

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY SINCE 2005

Discover the Unlimited Resources at Your Local Library

By Rachel Alter, Library Director

The West Stockbridge Public Library has been serving our town since 1891. Like libraries everywhere, it has evolved from just lending books to offering nearly endless information and services. Having started in cozy quarters in the Old Town Hall, in 2006 the library moved with the town offices to the former Village School, into a beautiful space highlighted by stunning and colorful mobiles gifted by local artist Joel Hotchkiss. Visitors have different opinions about which two grades once had their classrooms right here, but everyone agrees about the cheerful spirit of the place.

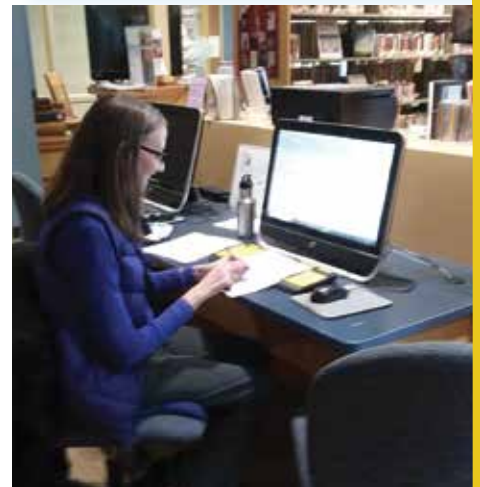
The library offers free high-speed WiFi, public computers, and a printer and scanner for your use. Visitors can get one-on-one help finding things online. Some recent examples include return labels for packages, documents attached to e-mail messages that have been tricky to open, and tax forms. Librarians also can help you find books, DVDs, and articles in newspapers and magazines.

Borrowing from far and wide, the library is connected to every other library in the Massachusetts system through the Commonwealth Catalog that expands on our Western Massachusetts network to lend you pretty much everything libraries can loan. And if the item you need is not in our state, our staff can search for it in every type of library, anywhere in the United States.

Our library can connect you to tens of thousands of eBooks, magazines, and streaming audiobooks. You only need your library card number and a computer, tablet, or phone to get started. And there's even more: everyone with a library card can sign up for an eCard with the Boston Public Library (BPL). Besides offering its own enormous collection of online books and audiobooks, the BPL also loans streaming movies and television shows. If you need to do research for your work, for a class, or as a writer, the BPL databases include all types of academic journals including some that are highly specialized. As an example, we recently helped one of our library users get an article from a small journal called *Small Axe*.

To help you make sense of all of this, the library offers free computer classes on a regular basis. Topics include MS Excel, MS Word, Google Docs, and Internet search skills.

Remember, too, that through the generosity of our Friends of the Library, you can pick up museum and park passes to enjoy free or discounted admission. Our neighboring libraries will also loan these to you. And did we mention our great children's books and movies? We love to welcome curious minds of all ages, and we look forward to seeing you soon.



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 January 8, 2020

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 MOU for Council on Aging
Sign Letter of Support for Historical Society Grant Application
Sign form for Grant for research support from Berkshire Regional Planning for the Master Plan Committee
Sign agreement for MERF recycling
Review and sign warrants (payroll and vendor)

Agenda Items/Action/Discussion Items: Meeting Opened at 6:06 PM
Bernie opened the meeting with a sentiment about the passing of Ann Burke. She was the wife of longtime Select Board Member Bob Burke in West Stockbridge. He stated that the Select Board sends their thoughts and prayers to the family.

Bernie then let the audience know that one of the items that the Select Board signed was a letter of support for a grant that the Historical Society is applying for. Bernie then read a portion of a letter that had background information about the Historical Society submitted by Bob Salerno. (see attached)

Police Department Update – Chief Marc Portieri

Chief Portieri reported:
-The Police Department supported seven families at Christmas time with gifts and food.
The project went very well.
-Depot Six is having issues with parking and the Police are keeping an eye on it.
-The Police cruiser should be back into service hopefully next week.

Doane asked the Chief if he has been checking in on the places with Auto Licenses. The Chief responded that Troy's Garage is in compliance and he is going to meet with John on Thursday. The Chief also stated that he is keeping an eye on Rte. 41 Auto (Alan Becker's business) since they have

...continued on page 5

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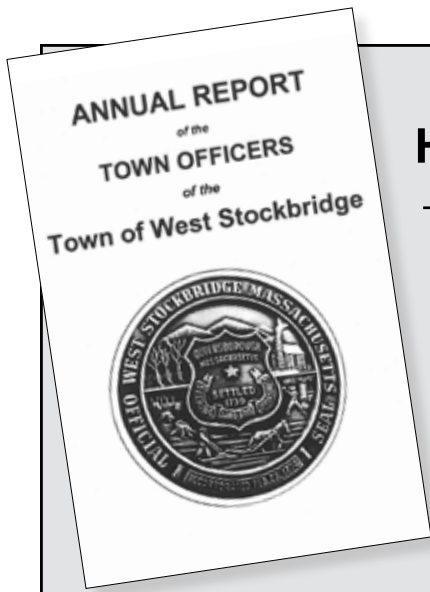
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How to Get a Copy of the Town Report

Town Reports, as a cost savings for the Town of West Stockbridge, will not be mailed to every household this year. Copies will be available at the post office, Public Market, Town Offices, and on the website. The reports will also be available at the annual town meeting and annual town election. If for some reason you absolutely need to have it mailed to you, please feel free to contact Town Administrator Marie Ryan, 232-0300, ext. 319, and it can be arranged. Thank you for understanding, and if you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Town Offices.

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March History Quiz Question:

One of the more attractive features of West Stockbridge is our surrounding mountains and hills. Wherever you stand, in any neighborhood, you can look up and see forested and (sometimes snow-covered) Berkshire hills. Harvey Mountain is the tallest; Maple Hill and Dean Hill are developed but still wooded. Tom Ball is being protected by the Berkshire Natural Resources Council (BNRC). All of them have their own character and look.

We take the names of all our hills for granted, being known by their current labels from the early to mid-19th century through current times. One of the hills, however, went by a number of different names and really didn't settle on its current label until fairly recently. Which one would that be, and what were its former names?

(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



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.

no license, he has not seen any activity there recently. There still are cars on premises but they need time to move them and the Chief said he will keep on top of that.

Doane also asked about William Kie's auto business. The Chief said he feels that the Select Board, himself and William Kie, at some point, should meet and possibly go to the site to see what is there. Bernie suggested speaking with Mark Webber and Curt who both know the history and back up information on this property and license. Chief Portieri agreed.

Doane asked about the fencing across from Troy's Garage. The Chief stated that he could get information on that when he meets with John D'Aniello. Then Doane thanked the Chief for all his hard work.

The Chief then reported that there are still issues with trespassers at the Stockbridge Sportsmen Club and they are trying to resolve that and keep an eye on it.

Public Workers Director – Curt Wilton

Public Works Director, Curt Wilton gave an updated report on the following boards/committees: Highway, Cemetery Commission, Parks and Recreation Committee and the Transfer Station recycling. (see attached)

Vision Committee update – Joe Roy

Joe Roy gave an updated report of the Vision Committee. (see attached) Joe also noted the main topics that the Committee is working on are:

- Affordable, low cost and elderly housing
- Event Planning
- CPA preparation
- Beautification Sub-Committee
- Website should be up and running soon
- Financial support – possible small budget in FY21
- Sub-Committees

Joe stated that the Vision Committee would like to see the Select Board assist on getting two items worked on; one being the Senior Abatement Work Off Program and the other being a type of process for being able to put up flags and signs on the utility poles on Main Street.

Bernie asked Joe to look into the Senior Work Off Program. Joe asked Curt to see if he could get any information on the using the utility poles.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Jay Elling asked the Select Board for permission to hold an Ice Bike Race on Card Pond on Sunday, February 9th. He stated they did this event last year and it went very well and was a lot of fun. He also commented that he has insurance for the event. Jay will send flyers to Marie and Joe Roy for advertising on the website and around town. Bernie said he was in favor of this and asked the Select Board for their vote, Doane and Eric both agreed.

Marie stated that she got an official Town Flag and is waiting to hear from Senator Hinds and Representative Pignatelli for a date to have the flag hung in the State House Hall of Flags.

Eric presented an application for a grant from the State through Berkshire Regional Planning Commission that the Master Plan Committee is submitting. This would be to help pay for research and technical assistance involving regional housing needs assessment, senior housing research, and zoning bylaws related to accessory dwellings. The Select Board thought this was a great idea and Bernie signed as the Chair. Eric stated that he would like the Master Plan Committee, Vision Committee, and the Beautification Committee to all sync together.

Roger Kavanaugh told the Select Board that the State denied the request for funds to the Berkshire Hills Regional School District for the High School Project. He stated that this will put the project off for at least one more year.

Roger asked the Select Board to look into saving money and working with possibly, Richmond. He noted that Richmond is looking into building a new Town Hall or renovations to the one they have as well as a new library. Roger thinks maybe West Stockbridge could work with Richmond and do some synergy. Bernie said he would talk with the Richmond Select Board and possibly have the two Boards meet and have this type of discussion.

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

The Select Board adjourned at 7:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Y. Ryan

Marie Y. Ryan

Town Administrator

Select Board Meeting Minutes

January 22, 2020

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 Caucus Papers to be posted

Sign Warrant for Presidential Primary Election

Review and sign warrants (payroll and vendor)

Agenda Items/Action/Discussion Items: Meeting Opened at 6:05 PM

Bernie opened the meeting stating that the Board signed all the payroll and vendor warrants and the other documents for the election and caucus.

Library Signage – Library Trustee Member Jayne Benjulian

Jayne discussed with the Board that the Trustees would love to see more signs for the Library. She stated she spoke with Joe Roy of the Village Association who said he could add information for the Library location to a sign near Berkshire Bank. She also would like to see a bigger sign in front of Town Hall. Eric then showed everyone a picture of a mock up of a new sign for Town Hall. This had a large wooden Town Seal on top and a sign for each office below it (Town Hall, Police and Library). He stated this would be simple and larger. He mentioned that the Board in the past has discussed having all the signs in West Stockbridge be the same lettering, starting with a welcome sign at the turnpike area. Jayne said she had contacted the state about putting more signs on their property but they denied her stating that would have them getting requests from Libraries for all over the state. Bernie agreed they need to have more signs that are all consistent in lettering and size, but he cautioned they do not want too many signs then no one would read them.

Jayne and Andrew Potter (Library Trustee) stated they really would love people to take advantage of all the Library has to offer. They stated they need to attract people to the Library so they can see all that they have to

...continued on page 7

Letter from the Parks & Recreation Committee

Hello everyone,

This is Joe Roy (the younger one), and I am one of the members of the newly revived West Stockbridge Parks and Recreation Committee. We have these returning members: Helen Nolan, Cait Graham, and Nora Calautti. Along with me, we also have JP Boscarino, who is new to the board. We are all very excited to get Parks and Rec back up and running and serving the town under the leadership of the Public Works Committee and Curt Wilton.

We welcome any suggestions and feedback. The best way to reach us is by e-mail at weststockbridgeparks@gmail.com. We also meet the first Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Offices and welcome anyone to join us at that time. Agendas and minutes for each meeting will be posted on a regular basis on the town's website.

We have had two meetings so far, and one of our first priorities is the condition of the playground behind the Town Offices. Sadly, the playground has outlived its functionality and has become a safety hazard. Over the next few weeks you will notice caution tape around the playground as it is being dismantled by Public Works. We ask that everyone please refrain from using the playground area during this time for your own safety. Meanwhile Parks and Rec is hard at work at designing a new playground to be built later this year.

Joe P. Roy

weststockbridgeparks@gmail.com



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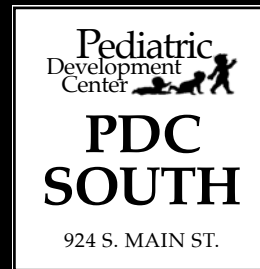
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offer. Eric then asked if the Trustees would be interested in a “shoehorn” library in the center of town. Jayne said that is something the Trustees have already discussed and may do something like that. This would be a small cabinet type structure with books in it that people can just take and return or add to. Jayne thinks this may have people want more so they will be attracted to go to the Library.

Library Financial Issue – Library Trustee Member Jayne Benjulia

Jayne also notified the Board about the financial issues the Trustees are dealing with currently. She explained that recently over the past few months, it has come to the Trustees attention that the Library has donations that have not been handled legally. The money has been in an account using the Town Tax ID number and has not had the Town Accountants name on the account. Jayne spoke with Town Treasurer Karen Williams, Town Accountant Elaine Markham and Town Council Joel Bard about this. Town Council is guiding the Trustees on two different ways to correct this issue. One is to have the monies put in to the Town accounts and have the Treasurer handle the donations. The other is to create a new Tax ID for the Trustees and open all new accounts. Jayne let the Board know that she is working on this and will have it decided on in the near future.

Bernie stated he feels that having the money with the Town would seem the best way and Jayne agreed but will let the Board know what the Trustees decide.

Fire Department Update – Peter Skorput

Peter Skorput handed the Board a copy of his monthly update. He explained that he has 4 members that want to attend EMT training. He said that there is a class at Southern Berkshire Ambulance that is free but that the members would be committed to working for them for a year after that at no pay. They also have a class that can just be paid for by that is costs \$1,100 per person. Petr said they are looking into what time commitment that would require and that the cost is something they are trying to figure out.

Peter told the Board that the IAM Responding program is up and running. Bernie asked if they have information in the program such as information on where hydrants are and lengths of driveways, etc. Peter said that this is something they plan on doing when the weather gets warm, they will be able to go out and measure.

Peter asked the Board for permission to have a Boot Drive for the Auxiliary fund raiser on Saturday, February 15 on Main Street. Peter explained that they use these donations for things like buying water and food for the members when they are at a fire. The Board agreed to this and Peter thanked them.

Eric then asked Peter what the current budget and spending priorities were for the Association. Peter stated that they meet every three months and go over what they need to spend money on and has an accountant that keeps their books up to date. Eric asked if this could include training costs. Peter said that he likes to pay for training in his budget. Eric asked what the balance was in the Association and Peter said it was about \$23,000. Bernie said he thinks it would benefit the Association to help pay for the training. Peter said they like to keep that money for things that come up that they need to purchase like gloves, etc. Eric proposed that Peter and the Association look into paying for the EMT training, and possibly sending out fund raising letters, it may benefit the Town and the members. Eric said he thinks they could raise enough money to get this important training paid for. The trained EMTs could work with Richmond and get paid when working in both towns. Peter said he really wants to get this going but that he thinks this is not just about the money but the time commitment as well. He feels they will get in done one way or another.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Marie stated that she has a date for to have the Town flag hung in the State House Hall of Flags. The date for this will be Thursday, February 13 at 12:30 at the State House. She will attend and invited the Select Board if they wanted to go as well.


Eric asked Marie about a possibly security plan for the Town Hall. Marie told the Board she and the Police Chief Marc Portieri are in the process of getting quotes for security cameras and monitors at Town Hall. Marie expects to have this item as an article in the Town warrant this year.

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

The Select Board adjourned at 7:02 PM.

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

...continued on page 9




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West Stockbridge Has a Town Flag

The Town of West Stockbridge recently had its first town flag created. The flag was hung in the Hall of Flags at the Massachusetts State House this past month. Town Administrator Marie Ryan, Select Board Member Eric Shimelonis, and Senator Adam Hinds all attended.



Photo courtesy of Town of West Stockbridge

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Select Board Meeting Minutes
February 5, 2020

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.
Review and sign warrants (payroll and vendor)
Sign letter to Town Clerk to request Community Preservation Act to be on 2020
Annual Town election Ballot

Agenda Items/Action/Discussion Items: Meeting Opened at 6:01 PM
Bernie started the meeting and stated that the first item on the agenda, the Library Trustees, will not be here tonight but will come in at a future date.

Director of Public Works update – Curt Wilton
Curt handed the Board his update report (see attached). He went over each item in his report.

Curt discussed with the Board that there is a slight issue at the Card Lake Inn Parking Lot. Curt stated that it is difficult to remove snow from that parking lot because the residents of Card Lake Inn are parking in there instead of their own parking lot. He suggested that possibly the Board should think about rules for that lot or a policy and they can create signs.

Liz Digrigoli asked Curt who is responsible for cleaning headstones in the cemeteries and Curt responded it is up to the families.

Karen Carmean asked about if there had been any thought about placing the playground in another location on the property due to possibly expansion of the Town Hall building in the future. Caitlyn Graham, Parks and Rec Committee Member stated that they did not think about that but the Committee can discuss it and look into that.

Car Show for Helping Hands – Santi Messina
Santi Messina, Police Officer, explained to the Board he and his Committee for Helping Hands would like to hold a Car Show in August to raise money for the Helping Hands. He told the Board that this program helps support families in the community and they would like to be able to reach out and help more. They would like to hold a Car Show in the downtown area with plans for parking and maybe a shuttle from Town Hall for people. It would be from 6-9 PM on a Monday evening. They would raise money but entry fees, possibly vendor fees if they could invite vendors/ food trucks. The Committee feels this would be a great community event win/win for everyone. Eric said he thought the restaurants may want to open for business and good exposure for them to customers who might not normally go to their establishments.

Bernie asked the Board for a vote, all agreed and were in favor.
Police Chief Marc Portieri was not able to attend so there was no update given on the Police Department.

OTHER BUSINESS:
Eric mentioned to remember and give a condolence to the family of a longtime local resident, Chris Williams who passed away this past week.

Bernie reported to the Board that he had spoken with Neal Pilson, Chair of the Richmond Select Board about possibly sharing Town Hall space. Bernie said that Neal stated that their plan was that they are going to go ahead with building their own new Town Hall at this time. Eric stated he still would like to meet with them in the future to possibly brainstorm on some shared services.
Bernie then made a motion to adjourn, Eric Seconded, all in favor.

The Select Board adjourned at 6:48 PM.

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

March Donor Roll Call

Bill Barth
Hillary & Jay Cohen
Paul & Louise Faggioni
Friends of the Library
Kathryn & Henry Gallitano
Suzanne Hatch
Eric Reimer
Anonymous: 1

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.)



Collector's Note

Motor Vehicle Excise Taxes

The first batch, or "commitment," of motor vehicle excise taxes for fiscal year 2020 and the eighth batch, or commitment, for fiscal 2019 were mailed on February 6, 2020. These bills are due on March 9, 2020. Be sure to include the current bill number and tax year in the memo line if paying through a bill pay service or by check. Bill numbers on excise may change each year. Interest and late charges accrue quickly on excise, and nonpayment can jeopardize your right to register/reregister a vehicle or renew a license.

Because the state issues these bills in batches, you may not have received all the bills you were expecting this time around. Contact my office at the end of April if you still have vehicles for which you have not received a bill. At that point, commitment, or batch, two should be available.

If the mailing address on your excise bill is not correct, *you* must contact the registry to initiate a change. The town *does not* have the ability to correct it. If you no longer own the vehicle, complete the excise abatement form found on the town's website and return it to us with the required documentation. The assessors will determine if you still owe any portion of the bill. If you ignore the bill because you had sold/traded the vehicle but did owe a portion, fees that accrue will not be waived through the abatement process.

In late April, I will begin collection of delinquent real estate taxes for 2019, a heads-up to those of you who have not yet paid and would prefer not to see your parcel advertised and formally liened. Please contact me for a payoff on these delinquencies because interest accrues daily.

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.



*Please send your Birthdays & Anniversaries to the Local Yokel
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Grist from the Mill

by Kelt Wilska

If you asked a Berkshire native who Josh Billings was, odds are that they would respond with, “You mean the race?” After all, the eponymous runaround triathlon is a beloved late-summer fixture here, crossing multiple towns in South County by foot and bike and paddle. But, again, would they know who Josh Billings was? And for that matter, would anyone outside of our small and strangely literary corner of the state even recognize the name? The answer is as wild and unexpected as a race that now lets you traverse the Stockbridge Bowl on a standup paddleboard.

Josh Billings (born Henry Wheeler Shaw, in 1818) was many things, but a cautious homebody he was not. Adventure and mischief called to him from an early age, much to the chagrin of his congressman father, congressman grandfather, and congressman uncle. Shaw tramped the woods and fields of his hometown, Lanesboro and beyond, causing mayhem for neighborhood dogs and churchgoers alike. When the time came for secondary education, his—albeit brief—alma mater was Hamilton College in central New York, where he quickly soured his reputation among professors by stealing the clapper from the historic chapel bell. What happened next lends to the mystery of Shaw’s story. Some say he was expelled. Some say he fully intended to return the next year but was sidetracked on his way back to school by two St. Louis-bound adventurers who he met on an Erie canal boat. Regardless, off to the Midwest it was, where he spent years as a showman, teacher, rancher, and shopkeeper among other occupations.

This jack-of-all trades habit did not stop even when Shaw settled down in Poughkeepsie, New York, with his new bride. Coal miner, farmer, auctioneer.... Only after exploring seemingly every other career did he settle on writing, a craft in which he quickly developed a distinct rhythm and style. His signature creation was a folksy take on the aphorism, that short and pithy piece of wit once distributed in phrasebooks (when phrasebooks were a thing). Ever heard the saying “Love is like measles...the later in life it occurs, the tougher it gets”? This is attributed to Shaw. His sudden rise to fame, though, came from an odd linguistic experiment. “Humin natur is the same all over the world, cept in New England, and that its akordin to sarkumstances.” “Truth is mitey and will prevail; so iz cider mitey, but yu hav got tew tap the barrel before it will prevale.”

Misspelling almost every word, combining country slang with worldly wisdom acquired through his many adventures, Shaw had created a name for himself, and in more ways than one. In choosing the pseudonym Josh Billings, he was joining the ranks of his American humorist contemporaries, among whom it was popular to embrace another name.

While Billings’ work was said to have brought a chuckle to Abraham Lincoln, he never did reach the heights of his peer, Mark Twain. Why is this? Why did Billings fade into the past? Was Twain just...funnier? Was his humor more timeless? Perhaps by leaning heavily into the language gimmicks, Billings lost his chance at leaving a more significant mark on the American literary consciousness. Maybe, though, lasting fame was never his intention. A quick laugh, and on to the next joke, on to the next phrase. The motto of the Josh Billings runaround race embodies this sentiment by reusing an apt Billings quote: “to finish is to win.” To write and make someone smile is to succeed.

Fire Department Report

By Peter Skorput, Fire Chief

JANUARY 2020

Calls:

Medical	9
Auto Alarms	4
Medical Alarms	1
Tree on Wires	1
Car Fires	1

Training:

1/6	Station Maintenance
1/3	In-House Search and Rescue
1/13	In-House Fire Terms
1/27	Drill with Richmond Ladder's (Scheduled)

Equipment:

IamResponding is up and running

Membership:

We have gained two new members bringing us up to 20 fire fighters



We're counting down and gearing up for our 9th season!

ANY VOLUNTEERS?

We can always use some help at the Market, so if you have a little time & want to have some fun, please email us at

WSFarmMarket@gmail.com

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PREPARING FOR EMERGENCIES

On Monday March 30th the combined Richmond and West Stockbridge COA's are hosting a special Emergency Preparedness Training Session 12:00 Noon at the St. Patrick's Church Parish Hall Route 41 in West Stockbridge.

You will learn about the personal steps to take to prepare for different emergency situations and "Emergency Go Packs" will be provided.

A federal report on the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina found that up to HALF of all deaths were a Result of the failure to adequately plan ahead.

Please call Phyllis at 413-553-7793 or email her to reserve your seat at COA@richmondma.org.

Training is free and light refreshments Will be served.



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, March 8, the Stockbridge Grange will serve a corned beef and cabbage 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 March COA potluck will be held at noon on Tuesday, March 10, in the Town Offices Community Room. Come and see what exciting activities Phyllis Lebeau from the Richmond COA has in store for us.

Shaker Medicinal and Culinary Herbs

The West Stockbridge Historical Society will offer a slide-illustrated talk on Shaker Medicinal and Culinary Herbs presented by Hancock Shaker Village Interpreter John Parker. The program will be at the Old Town Hall, 9 Main Street, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Friday, April 3. There is no fee, but donations to support the Old Town Hall renovation are welcome. Refreshments will be served after the program.

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

A Series of Recollections by John Bormolini and Friends

Gardens of West Stockbridge

As the old saying goes, “It was a lot different back then.”

For many families, gardening and canning were key to a family’s year-round well-being. During early spring and early fall, the family garden provided fresh vegetables and produce that was canned or frozen and “put up” for the winter. Virtually every family planted a garden and harvested food for immediate consumption or to be preserved for the winter months. Home gardening was still a common occupation in the 1950s. After having survived immigration to a new land, the Great Depression, and rationing during World War II, it was just part of everyday life and one of the blessings of freedom.

One family in West Stockbridge that epitomized this lifestyle was the Vasco Zanconato family: Grandfather Angelo, Father Vasco, his wife, and four daughters. Vasco drew great satisfaction from his garden. Preparing the garden for planting after it was tilled was essential. The Zanconatos were fortunate to have enough acreage to graze two cows for 8 months a year and to gather hay in the summer to feed them in the winter. The cows also provided high-grade fertilizer that was placed in a compost pile throughout the year and used to enrich the garden after it was tilled. Lime was added to provide additional nutrients. The amended soil produced a beautiful garden with the best vegetables.

Mrs. Zanconato was a very accomplished canner and later switched to freezer storage. After satisfying his family’s requirement for vegetables, Vasco loved to share excess produce with other families. Potatoes, carrots, and beets were kept in a root/cold cellar. Fruit trees on his property produced apples that were perfect for pies.

The cows had to be shepherded to and from the pasture daily and milked twice a day. Milk was mostly consumed, and the excess was used to make cheese and butter. The cream was also used to make whipped cream for desserts. The family had chickens for eggs and meat. Like others in town, Vasco raised a pig that would be processed in October or early November. Wine was made in mid-fall for the winter. Just about every family had a garden and were quick to give away the excess. In those days people were more apt to help each other.

We Bormolinis had a sizable garden and were fortunate to have enough property to rotate the garden each year. Potatoes were the primary vegetable because they could be easily stored in our cellar. Sadly, after my father passed away in 1951, the land lay fallow. My mother Anna did not wait for our garden to mature and would gather young dandelion greens, usually alongside a road in very early spring. They made a tender salad when sprinkled with olive oil and vinegar. Back then, that was the only salad dressing available, unlike the gazillion varieties today.



*Donato Pericolosi’s yearly harvest of vegetables.
Photo courtesy of Louise Faggioni*

The Walker family had a farm on what is now East Alford Road, called “Far Away Farm.” Randall and Mary Walker and their children Randall Jr., John, and Kathy were the “farmers.” In addition to growing a variety of vegetables, Mary sold excellent baked goods at the

...continued on page 17

Julia Schor

Julia Schor

Painter

"theme of life and death"

Friday March 6
4-5pm Gallery talk

TKG Real Estate

137 North Street
Pittsfield

Guild of Berkshire Artists

www.BerkshireArtists.org
gobasocial@gmail.com



Join Julia Schor on Friday, March 6, 4-5 p.m. at TKG Real Estate for a gallery walk and talk. You will be able to ask her questions. RSVP: BerkshireArtists@gmail.com.

Julia Schor was born in Amsterdam, the Netherlands before World War II. Her parents were German immigrants. During the occupation of The Netherlands by the Germans, Julia's mother hid and saved the lives of numerous persecuted Jews, exposing herself and young Julia to continuous life-threatening danger..

Shortly after the War, painter Peter Zwart taught Julia, age ten, how to draw and paint. After high school, fashion design at the *Vogue Studio* and fashion and model drawing in Amsterdam, she moved to Paris to get an art education. Later, back in Amsterdam, Julia followed an art teacher's training and built an art portfolio sizable enough to be accepted by the *Royal Academy of Arts* in Amsterdam.

A high level of energy and comradery characterized the painters' community in Amsterdam in the fifties. Her social circle included painters such as Jaap Wagemakers, Jan Mijer, Ernst Vijlbrief, Melle, Jan Sierhuis, Peter van Straaten and others. In 1957, attracted by its beauty, low cost of living and freedom, she went to Ibiza, Spain, for two weeks and stayed until 1965. Here she met painters including Karel Appel, Carlos Sansegundo, Erwin Bechtold, Douglas Portway, Jan Cremer and others. She spent a year painting in Florence, Italy during this period. In the eighties Julia trained with Arthur Getz in Connecticut.

After 1982 her paintings contain the recurring theme of life and death, (mainly in relation to World War Two) and the symbols of the church of Blaricum (=house of God), the live tree (= the Christians/Goyim), the dead tree laying over the wandering path near its end (= the Dutch Jews), the whitish colored female body/moon/bread dough/ (= female, as is the plowed earth), the sun (= male), the stars in the Heavens (= children who have died), the tulips (= new growth/hope), the Amsterdam canal houses (= Heavenly Amsterdam where Julia hopes to go after her death). She lives and paints in New York City and New Lebanon, Upstate New York.

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farm stand by the road. Each item had a price tag. Buyers were trusted to put their money in the box. I recall that I had a conversation with Mrs. Walker, asking if there were buyers who did not pay. She said, "there's always more money in the box than required." Honesty was a respected virtue back then.


Donato and Rose Pericolosi had a huge vegetable garden with one area specifically for asparagus bordered by raspberries. Once the family had its fill, asparagus was bundled along with raspberries and taken to Frana's grocery store in town and sold. One thing is for sure, though, they were always ready to share with those who did not have a garden. Rose's cold cellar was packed with fresh canned and pickled veggies, hanging homemade salami, and fruit jams to enjoy all winter.

Another frequent contributor to our articles, Maryann Hamlin (Raspuzzi), wrote, "John, I have many fond memories of living at the Angelini homestead" (a stucco home located on Great Barrington Road across from Card Pond), "milking the cow, gardening, and shoveling manure up from the lawn so we could play ball." Now that's dedication!

And then there was "Bucky" Viola, a town legend, and his Ford tractor. He was the go-to guy when you needed your garden tilled, field mowed for hay, or your driveway plowed in the winter. There was a lot more snow in those days, and it usually did not melt until late March.

Reflecting back to the 1950s, at times they seem like yesterday and other times like a distant hazy dream. And so it is with the memories of gardens in West Stockbridge that have been buzzing in my head. Some I have conjured up on my own; others were vividly described by contributors to these 1950s articles. Especially when chatting on the phone or exchanging an e-mail, one thing leads to another. I believe that 98% of the residents of "My Hometown" raised a garden that supplemented their daily diets. The other 2% also benefited. As stated earlier, "In those days, people were more apt to help each other." Be well!

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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March Art Calendar

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2020

Mar 1, First Sunday Free at the Clark. Sun. Mar. 1. 10am-5pm. The first Sundays of the month are free Oct. to May. Connect w/others to carpool.

Mar 4, Monthly art seminar and Guild business meeting. Wed. Mar. 4, **4-5pm** Lear Levin will discuss how he makes prints including Platinum and Palladium processes. **5-6pm Business Meeting.** Plan upcoming shows and activities. Community Room Town Hall, 21 Stateline Road (Route 102) West Stockbridge.

Mar 6, Collage Group. Friday Mar. 6, 12-30-3pm Richmond. For info and availability inquire at: berkshireartists@gmail.com

Mar 6, Meet the Artist: Julia Schor. Fri. Mar. 6, 4-5pm. Gallery Talk, Painter. TKG Real Estate, 137 North Street, Pittsfield

Mar 6, First Fridays Artswalk. Fri. Mar. 6, 5-8pm Pittsfield, North and South Streets. www.firstfridaysartswalk.com. Susan Pette and Julia Schor displaying at TKG Real Estate, 137 North street.

Mar 8, Members' Potluck. Sun. Mar. 8. 4-7pm Pittsfield. 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

Mar 20, Photo Explorers: On a Roll Cafe. 55 Pittsfield Road, Lenox. Join Carole Quinn on Fri. Mar. 20, 8:30am for coffee/breakfast. Explore the area.

Mar 27, Art Book Gathering Friday, Mar. 27, 2-4 pm. Share a favorite book: artist, process. Shaker Mill Books, West Stockbridge.

Mar 29, Berkshire Photo Gathering. Sun. Mar. 29, 2-4 pm \$5. Berkshire South Regional Comm. Center, 15 Crissey Road, Great Barrington, MA 01230 Put photos on website to share.



Examples of photographic printing processes Lear Levin will be discussing Wednesday March 4, at 4pm.

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. 1-4pm. IS 183, Stockbridge. \$100 for GBA/IS183 members for all 5 sessions via class registration (413-298-5252x100) or \$30 drop in. 5-class sessions run Feb 11 - Mar 10 and March 17 - April 14. Bring your supplies. Check IS183 for any class updates.

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!



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

Welcome to March at the library, where you can enjoy sitting and reading, and find entertainment and information in print or on DVDs or online. Bring your questions, and if we will either help you find the answer or find where to look it up.



Free Computer Classes

Would you like to have help keeping up to date with the ever-changing ways to use Microsoft Word? Call or come in to sign up for classes on Saturday, March 7, and Saturday, March 14, with Bill Barth. All are welcome.

Kids' Event During Town Meeting

We are planning to offer some supervised fun time for kids during this year's annual town meeting. Stand by for details in the April *Local Yoke!*

NEW DVDs

A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood, The Good Liar, Harriet, Motherless Brooklyn, Parasite

NEW ADULT FICTION

Armstrong, *Alone in the Wild: A Rockton Novel*

Lasdun, *Afternoon of a Faun*

Reid, *Such a Fun Age*

Sapkowski, *Lady of the Lake; Last Wish: Introducing the Witcher; Sword of Destiny; and Tower of Swallows*

Williams, *Genesis Begins Again*

Woods, *Treason*

NEW ADULT NONFICTION

Diamandis, *The Future Is Faster Than You Think: How Converging Technologies Are Transforming Business, Industries, and Our Lives*

Farrow, *Catch and Kill: Lies, Spies, and a Conspiracy to Protect Predators*

Rucker and Leonning, *A Very Stable Genius: Donald J. Trump's Testing of America*

CHILDREN'S AND YOUNG ADULT BOOKS

Alexander, *Undefeated*

Craft, *New Kid*

Morris, *Bear Came Along*

Rachel Alter, Vicky Cooper, and Brad Havill

History Quiz Answer:

West Stockbridge Mountain, our largest hill in terms of its area, had the most names of any of our hills. The mountain started out owned by Stockbridge when the first land grants and post-1774 town lines were set. A large portion of the northwest side, down to Lenox Road and Swamp Road abutting Richmond, was part of Stockbridge. At that time, the mountain was noted on the deeds as "Stockbridge" Mountain. In 1830, the boundary between the two towns was adjusted. The top of the mountain was made the dividing line. However, even after the division, some 19th-century maps still showed it as Stockbridge Mountain, if they listed it at all.

Naming and maps got creative in the mid to late 1800s. The first detailed map of the area, the 1855 Clark Map in the Old Town Hall, doesn't even give the mountain a name. Then the 1858 Walling Map still has the old boundary with the mountain in Stockbridge instead of West Stockbridge. The 1876 Beers Atlas lists it as "Pleasant Hill."

The accompanying undated postcard is titled "Northwest from Cole's Hill." Given the view across the Shaker Mill Pond, and the Catholic church and creamery in the background, this was likely taken from West Stockbridge Mountain sometime between 1890 and 1910. Cole was a local merchant who lived on Swamp Road (aka Pittsfield Road then) and owned property up the side of the mountain. It was named after him. Finally, it was the 1904 map where the mountain was properly listed as "West Stockbridge Mountain." Fortunately, the state formally lists it as West Stockbridge Mountain, and the U.S. Geological Survey markers on the top of the ridge identify it as such.

Even now, West Stockbridge Mountain doesn't get due respect. The main road up the mountain from town is called Lenox Road and Richmond Mountain Road coming from Lenox. Even the BNRC calls the area "Yokun Ridge" on their trail maps. Perhaps it would have fared better if it had remained Cole's Hill.



Cole's Hill. Photo courtesy of Bob Salerno

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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.

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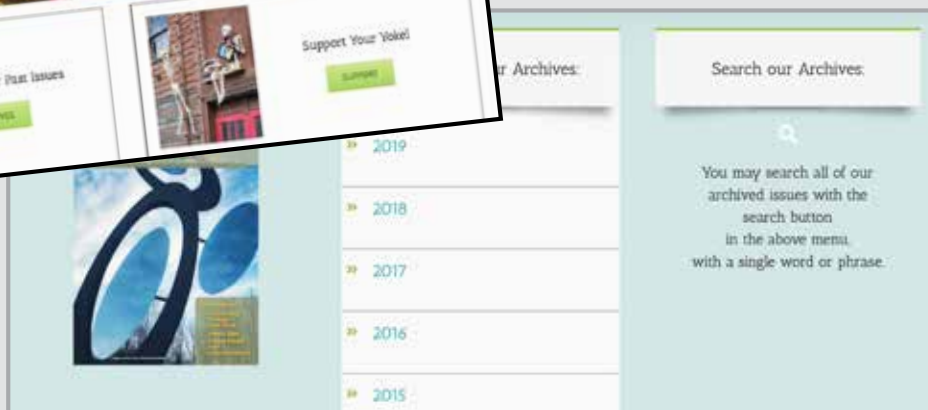


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Assessors Office	<i>Mary Stodden</i>	232-0300	ext. 303	Tues. 1–5 p.m.; Thurs. 9 a.m.–1 p.m.
Board of Health	<i>Earl Moffatt</i>	232-0300	ext. 314	Fri. 9 a.m.–4 p.m., or by appt.
Select Board	<i>Bernie Fallon, Doane Perry, Eric Shimelonis</i>			
Town Administrator	<i>Marie Ryan</i>	232-0300	ext. 319	Mon.–Thurs. 7 a.m.–3 p.m. Fri. 7 a.m.–11 a.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>	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.
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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

Ice Cycle Racing Returns!



The winners!

“Bring your skates, bring your kids, bring the dog, we got ourselves an ice race!”

Ice cycle racing returned to Card Pond on Sunday, February 9, for the second incarnation of what organizers say promises to become an annual winter event—dare we say tradition?—in West Stockbridge.

A large crowd of kids and dogs, as well as grown-ups, gathered on the ice to cheer as they watched 24 hardy bikers race with tires studded to grip the ice as they rocketed around the track. Four racers competed at a time in two- to three-lap heats in this “bracket”-style race. Hot beverages and grilled hot dogs helped keep contestants and audience fueled up through the event.

And this year’s winners were (drum roll, please):

❖ Jason Candee (first place)

❖ Jaryn Pierson (second place)

❖ Jay Elling (third place)

The event was organized by Andy Clark and the Wheel Benders Cycling Club with support from Berkshire Bike & Board, Berkshire Mountain Biking Training Series, and Six Depot Coffee Roasters. Watch for a return in early February 2021. For more information, see <https://z-m-www.facebook.com/events/840264373095910/>. Photos by John Parker.

The West Stockbridge Historical Society presents:

WEST STOCKBRIDGE JAZZ SERIES

YOKO MIWA TRIO

Saturday, 18 April 2020, 8pm
The Old Town Hall at 9 Main Street
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March 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				

March 2020 Calendar of Events		Date	Event	Time	Location
		3/2	Parks & Recreation Committee meeting	5:30 p.m.	Town Offices
3/3	Massachusetts Primary Election	7 a.m.–8 p.m.	Town Offices Gym		
3/4	Knitters & More	2–4 p.m.	Town Offices Community Room		
3/4	Select Board meeting	6 p.m.	Town Offices		
3/5	Board of Health meeting	6:30 p.m.	Town Offices		
3/8	Daylight Savings Time begins: set clocks ahead 1 hour				
3/8	Grange Dinner	1–2 p.m.	Grange Hall, 51 Church St., Stockbridge		
3/9	Purim begins at sundown				
3/10	Council on Aging (COA) Potluck Luncheon	12 noon	Town Offices Community Room		
3/10	American Legion meeting	7 p.m.	Town Offices		
3/11	Knitters & More	2–4 p.m.	Town Offices Community Room		
3/15	*** Deadline for the next Local Yokel ***			Send to info@thelocalyokel.org	
3/17	St. Patrick's Day				
3/18	Knitters & More	2–4 p.m.	Town Offices Community Room		
3/18	Select Board meeting	6 p.m.	Town Offices		
3/19	First Day of Spring				
3/25	Knitters & More	2–4 p.m.	Town Offices Community Room		
3/30	COA Emergency Preparedness program	12 noon	St. Patrick's Church Parish Hall		