

Local yokel

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

West
Stockbridge

**October
2020**



**November 3 Election
Information Inside!**

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY SINCE 2005

*Leafy path winds through Steven's Glen.
Photo by Emily Weiland*

Important Information on Vote by Mail and Voting In-Person for the November 2020 Election

Vote By Mail In Massachusetts (Absentee and Early Voting)

A new law allows any voter in Massachusetts to cast their ballot by mail in the fall. The new legislation is intended to allow voters to safely exercise their right to vote without risking illness as the coronavirus pandemic remains a threat heading into election season. But if you are used to voting in person, you might have questions about how all this will work, especially given the next statewide election. Here's what you need to know about vote-by-mail.

First things first: Can I still vote in person?

Yes. Universal vote-by-mail does not mean mandatory vote-by-mail. It simply means any voter can now vote absentee if they want. The bill also aims to give voters plenty of options to avoid crowds at polling places on Election Day, including early voting periods for the general election: The early voting period for the general election is Oct. 17 to Oct. 30. Additionally, new social distancing requirements will be in place to ensure enough space between people at polling places.

If I wish to vote by mail, how does it work?

Every registered voter in the Commonwealth—about 4.6 million people—will be mailed an application to request a ballot for both the Sept. 1 state primary and the Nov. 3 general election.

If you decide to vote by mail, simply fill out the application and mail it to your city or town clerk's office. No postage is required.

Once the application is accepted, the clerk's office will send you a ballot and an affidavit you'll need to sign that states you're following all applicable laws and regulations. You can pick your candidates and then return the forms to the clerk's office. You can track your ballot using a tool on the Secretary of State's website.

What are the deadlines?

Voters must submit their applications to get a ballot to their city or town clerk by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 28, for the general election.

For the November general election if you are mailing the ballot from within the United States, it must be postmarked by Nov. 3 (Election Day) and received by 5 p.m. on Nov. 6.

O'Malley advises voters to return their ballots as early as they can. If you wait until Election Day to mail out your ballot, "you're taking a risk that it won't reach your election office on Nov. 6," she said. **[Editor's note: Town Administrator Marie Ryan tells us that voters can also bring their filled-out ballots to the Town Offices and put them in the box outside the front door or the box by the town clerk's window.]**

Source: <https://www.weststockbridge-ma.gov/home/news/important-information-vote-mail-and-voting-person-november-2020-election>



November 3rd Election In-Person Early Voting Information:

In-Person Early Voting will be available at the Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, 21 State Line Road on the following dates and times:

Saturday, October 17	11 AM- 1 PM
Sunday, October 18	11 AM – 1 PM
Tuesday, October 20	1:30 PM – 4 PM
Thursday, October 22	1:30 PM – 4 PM
Saturday, October 24	2 PM – 4 PM
Sunday, October 25	11 AM – 1 PM
Tuesday, October 27	1:30 PM – 4 PM
Thursday, October 29	1:30 PM – 4 PM

The **last day to register** to vote for the November Election is Saturday, October 24th from 2 PM – 4 PM and 7 PM – 8 PM.

The **last day to request a Vote by Mail ballot** is on Wednesday, October 28th at 5 PM.

Presidential Election Day is on Tuesday, November 3, 2020 and polls are open at the Town Hall Gymnasium from 7 AM until 8 PM.

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 August 12, 2020 21 State Line Road, Town Hall

Open Meeting

Quorum present: Roger Kavanagh, Select Board Chair, Kathleen Keresey, Select Board Member, Eric Shimeloni, Select Board Member, Marie Ryan, Town Administrator

Also present:

DPW Director Curt Wilton
Police Chief Marc Portieri
Acting Fire Chief Steve Traver

Review and sign warrants (payroll and vendor)

Sign Election Warrant for State Primary Election for Sept. 1, 2020

Approved Meeting Minutes from meetings on:

July 22, 2020
July 27, 2020
July 30, 2020

Roger opened the meeting at 6:01 PM. He reviewed the agenda, noting that the Board had reviewed and signed warrants (payroll and vendor) before the meeting. Eric then made a motion to approve the above noted minutes, Kathleen seconded and all were in favor.

Queensboro Package Store Parking Spots:

At the June 30 Board meeting, informal approval was granted to Queensboro Package store to reserve 2 parking spots in front of the store on nights when Center Street is closed for outdoor dining. Kathleen proposed giving the same authorization to all merchants on Main Street.

Eric made a motion to allow all Main Street merchants that are still open during the hours that Center Street is closed for outdoor dining to mark two parking spots in front of their businesses as "reserved". Kathleen seconded and all were in favor.

Cost/Benefit of additional Police Patrol when Center Street closed:

Per the Board's request, Marie asked Amy Brentano, owner of the Foundry and Maggie Merrell, owner of Rouge restaurant to provide feedback on the extra downtown police patrol on the weekend of Jul 30 – Aug 1 and the next weekend when there was no extra patrol. Amy said she didn't see a difference, positive or negative. Maggie said she thought the police patrol made her patrons uneasy.

Chief Portieri reported some negative feedback from people who walk downtown about the street closure but there was generally positive feedback from people in the area on both nights. He added that there were no incidents / issues either weekend.

There was a brief discussion about Rouge's plan to start closing Center Street on Thursday nights and the need to ensure that Rouge is coordinating the closure with the Farmer's Market which operates on Thursdays until 6PM. Marie will follow up with both parties.

The Board concluded and the Chief agreed that going forward he would make decisions about the need for extra downtown patrols and manage that as part of normal operations.

Management of the Public Restroom facility:

Since several issues had surfaced in the past two weeks about the management of the public restrooms, the Board wanted to find out who has the overall responsibility for the day-to-day operation of this facility.

Curt Wilton provided the history of the facility and the challenges numerous Boards have faced trying to come up with a permanent

...continued on page 5



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Halloween 2020: A Most Unusual Year!

By Caitlin Graham



HALLOWEEN IN WEST STOCKBRIDGE

SATURDAY
OCT 31

THESE ARE ALL
FREE
COMMUNITY EVENTS

COSTUME & "CAR"STUME WAVE PARADE. 2PM

THE PARADE STARTS AND ENDS AT THE TOWN HALL - LINE UP BEHIND THE EMERGENCY VEHICLES, WEAR YOUR FAVORITE COSTUME AND/OR DRESS UP YOUR CAR... OR GRAB A SEAT ON YOUR LAWN AND WAVE AS THEY GO BY! CONTACTLESS PHOTO BOOTH AND "CAR"STUME JUDGING TO FOLLOW.

TRICK-OR-TREAT?? MAYBE 4-6PM

TRICK-OR-TREAT IS AT THE DISCRETION OF GOV. BAKER. IF ALLOWED UNDER COVID-19 SAFETY RULES, IT WILL OCCUR 4-6PM, AS IN YEARS PAST.

DRIVE-THRU HAUNTED CHURCH. 7-9PM

GET READY TO BE SPOOKED AS YOU DRIVE AROUND THE WEST STOCKBRIDGE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH. ADDRESS IS 45 MAIN STREET, WEST STOCKBRIDGE - ENTER FROM HOTEL STREET. WSPD WILL DIRECT YOU.

Brought to you by the West Stockbridge Congregational Church UCC, sponsored by West Stockbridge Parks & Recreation, with invaluable help from the West Stockbridge Police Association.

At present, I'm sure that everyone reading this is aware that 2020 is a most unusual year! Just because it's different, however, doesn't mean that we're throwing in the decorative autumn towel and canceling Halloween. Rather, the West Stockbridge Congregational Church has been meeting with West Stockbridge Parks & Recreation and the West Stockbridge Police Department to put together a safe, fun, and contactless Halloween celebration.


Because October 31 falls on a Saturday this year, the festivities will begin at 2 p.m. with a wave parade in which everyone is invited to participate. The parade starts and ends at the Town Offices (line up your car behind the emergency vehicles), and you're encouraged to either dress up your own vehicle in a Halloween CARstume or dress up yourself and wave out your car windows (or both). If you'd rather spectate, find a comfy spot on your own front lawn to watch and wave from a safe distance. Following the parade, have your photo taken in our contactless photo booth (to be shared on West Stockbridge social media accounts), and make sure the judges see your CARstume. Winners of the CARstume Contest will be posted on West Stockbridge social media accounts as well.

You're probably most curious about trick-or-treat. In an effort to comply with all Massachusetts COVID safety guidelines, trick-or-treat will be at the discretion of Governor Charlie Baker. In the event that the governor allows trick-or-treat in the commonwealth, West Stockbridge will observe it 4 to 6 p.m. as in years past. We appreciate your patience on this one.

Finally, West Stockbridge will be capping off the Halloween celebration with a Haunted Drive-Through at the West Stockbridge Congregational Church from 7 to 9 p.m. Access to this event will be up Hotel Street, across from Queensboro Package Store. The Haunted Drive-Through is sure to deliver spooks and scares, and it will end Halloween on an exciting note!



As always, these are *free* community events, and we look forward to seeing everyone from a (scarily) safe distance. Happy haunting!

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solution for its day-to-day operations. He then offered a solution that will meet the needs of the Town for this summer and suggested that a more permanent solution will be presented during the development of the FY22 Town budget.

His near term solution was:

- Wayne Cooper will open and clean the restrooms on Monday-Friday.
- The recently hired cleaning company will clean and open on Saturday and Sunday.
- The Police will lock them every evening

Curt will serve as the emergency contact for issues that come up after 3PM and will provide signage at the facility with emergency contact numbers.

False Fire Alarms Fees:

The current West Stockbridge bylaws refer to fines that can be levied for repeated false fire alarm incidents, but the bylaw did not specify when the fine would be levied and how much the fine would be.

Fire Chief Traver suggested that the Board consider adopting the fees charged for repeated false fire alarms in Richmond and outlined what they are. After Board discussion, Eric made a motion to set the fines for false alarms as follows:

- A fine of \$100 will be levied for the 3rd false alarm in a calendar year.
- After the 3rd false alarm in a calendar year, a fine of \$300 will be levied for all subsequent false alarms

Kathleen seconded and all were in favor.

GB Transportation Advisory Committee:

Tate Coleman, a member of the Great Barrington Transportation Advisory Committee, told the Board that the committee is looking for a West Stockbridge representative to participate in their ongoing effort to coordinate and help increase public transportation in south county. The person would need to devote 1-2 hours per month to this effort and would provide the Select Board with updates on committee activities. Kathleen said that Bill Barth, one of the members of the Vision Committee, is very interested in public transportation and would be an ideal candidate for this position. She asked Joe Roy to contact Bill and get back to Marie with his answer.

Bike Share Feasibility Study Advisory Committee:

Since two of the Board members did not get the information needed to discuss this item, it was tabled for discussion at the next meeting.

Strategy for hiring Fire Chief:

Since the Board has received questions from residents about who the Fire Chief is currently, Roger stated that Steve Traver, who has been Acting Fire Chief since March 2020, is the Fire Chief. He added that while the term of Steve's appointment was not specified back in March, the Richmond Select Board Chair and Chief Traver have both assured him that this appointment will be ongoing as needed.

Steve said he has some ideas about the leadership of the Fire Department that he would like to share with both the Richmond and West Stockbridge Select Boards in a joint meeting. Marie will set that meeting up with the Richmond Town Administrator.

Steve provided a brief update on the state of the WSFD:

- Every member has completed first responder class.
- Run sheets have been updated and members were trained on how to fill them out correctly and completely.

...continued on page 7

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"Citizenship is the chance to make a difference to the place where you belong."

—Charles Handy

Volunteers Needed in Town Government

- ❖ The School Committee is looking for a member. One of the current representatives is not running for reelection, but no one has yet taken out papers to run. Because it's too late to get on the printed ballot, a write-in candidate is needed. The School Committee typically meets every two weeks on Thursday nights and has responsibility for (1) hiring and evaluating the superintendent and business administrator, (2) setting school policy, and (3) working on and approving the budget. For more information, contact Town Administrator Marie Ryan at 232-0300, ext. 319.
- ❖ The Conservation Commission is also looking to add a new member. Meetings are the first Thursday of the month. Some meetings, if nothing is pending, are handled by the chair alone. For more information, contact Chair John Masiero at 232-7063.

Food Pantry Needs Support

The Food Pantry at the Town Offices is still in operation for anyone who needs food assistance. Residents can drop by the Police Station to pick up supplies. Donations of food and/or money are needed to keep this program going and may be brought to the Police Station or to Town Administrator Marie Ryan.

The Community Health Association of Richmond and West Stockbridge

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OCTOBER FLU CLINIC SCHEDULE

Safety precautions will be in place due to the pandemic. Please remember to wear a short-sleeve shirt and face covering. Home visits are available for those residents who are homebound; contact Emilie Jarrett for an appointment.

The Community Health Association is offering free flu shots for Richmond and West Stockbridge eligible residents aged 19 and older. For information about influenza, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website: www.cdc.gov/flu.

RICHMOND CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, State Rd., Richmond
Monday, October 5, noon–2 p.m.
Every Thursday, 10 a.m.–11 a.m.

WEST STOCKBRIDGE TOWN OFFICES GYM,
21 State Line Rd., West Stockbridge
Tuesday, October 6, noon–2 p.m.
Every Monday and Wednesday, 9–10 a.m.
No clinic on Monday, October 12, due to the holiday

For more information, contact Emilie Jarrett, RN, BSN
Tel. 232-0122; e-mail: Emilie@charws.com

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WONDERING JEWS
CULTURAL JEWS
MIXED MARRIAGE JEWS
MIXED UP JEWS
NON-JEWS
LGBT JEWS
CREATIVE JEWS
SPIRITUAL JEWS
JEW BU'S
JUSTICING JEWS
POLITICAL JEWS
POLITICAL JEWS
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INTELLECTUAL JEWS
SEARCHING JEWS
OBSERVANT JEWS
NON-HEBREW-READING JEWS
PASSIONATE JEWS
HIGH-HOLY-DAY JEWS
ARTISTIC JEWS
AGNOSTIC JEWS
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- Foam that meets current environmental guidelines has been loaded on the trucks.
- The department now has 25 members.
- There has been a lot of training done to date, including EMT training.
- Helmets have been replaced
- CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) checks are now required for everyone before they can join the department.
- Standard Operating Guidelines (SOG) are being updated

He added that budget for training and updated equipment is an issue. He said that the Town approved \$6,000 at the Annual Town Meeting to purchase gear racks for the Fire Department but these racks are not needed. He will be asking for a change in that appropriation at a future Town meeting so that those funds can be used for equipment that is really needed.

Town Equipment and Zoom Account for meetings:

Since Zoom meetings have become a standard approach to conducting Select Board and other committee meetings due to COVID-19, Roger proposed that the Town get its own unlimited Zoom account and put together a set of specifications for other equipment (laptop computer, microphones, etc.) needed to conduct Zoom meetings.

Marie will get an account set up and work with Eric (who has been enabling our Zoom meetings with his business account and equipment) to put together an estimate of the costs to purchase the required equipment and bring that to the Board for review.

Moving Meetings to Monday nights:

The Board and Marie discussed moving Select Board meetings to Monday versus Wednesday nights, which would make it easier for members to plan business travel and other commitments. No one had a conflict with Monday nights so it was agreed to move Board meetings to Monday, starting Sept 21, 2020. Marie will update the calendar on the Town website.

List of Agenda Items:

Roger proposed that each Board member and Marie put together a list of items he or she would like to see on future Board agendas, in order of preference if possible, and all agreed. Marie will create a combined list to be reviewed at a future meeting.

Extra Truck Traffic on Great Barrington Road:

At the July 30 meeting there was a discussion about a substantial increase in heavy truck traffic on Great Barrington Road (Route 41). Based on information from the Director of Public Works and the Police Chief, the Board learned that the increased truck traffic is associated with Formel Auto Salvage in Housatonic, which has changed hands in the recent past and has apparently now become a major hub for recycling wrecked cars.

The Board discussed sending a letter to Formel, notifying them of resident concerns and asking for a meeting to discuss the changes in their business model and the potential long-term impact of the increased truck traffic. Roger and Marie will craft a letter to send to them.

Kathleen also asked if the Board could write a letter to trucking companies, including Irish Trucking, Daley Trucking, and Gary O'Brien that addressed the quality of life issues their trucks are creating in West Stockbridge, particularly related to trucks going over the speed limit and the excessive noise caused by J-braking down the hills as they enter town from all arteries. The Board agreed. Roger and Marie will draft a letter.

Other Business:

Police Chief Marc Portieri told the Board that he was bringing on Matthew Sutton as a new part-time police officer. Matt is a veteran officer with all the necessary training and has worked for West Stockbridge in the past. The Board told agreed with this appointment.

Select Board Speak:

Eric spoke about people not putting their trash and recycling in the proper containers at the Transfer station and that better signage would help ease the burden this creates for Wayne Cooper, the Transfer Station attendant. Curt Wilton reported that new signs have been ordered.

Steve Traver asked to add one more item to his verbal update about the Fire Dept. He wanted the Board to know that the Fire Department and the DPW are working together on the hydrants serving Main Street to inventory, inspect and clean them over the next few weeks.

Citizen Speak:

Joe Roy mentioned that the Vision Committee had looked into "NO J braking" signs and the possibility of a noise ordinance by-law to include the noise that those trucks make. He said he would be willing to have the Vision Committee work on that if the Board wants to pursue this.

Frank Landsberger suggested that the Board might want to look into self-cleaning toilets as an answer to the public restroom management problems. Eric said there have been discussions in the past about looking for grants that might make something like this possible. Kathleen asked Frank if he had information on costs and, if he does, would he send it to the Board.

With no other citizens wishing to speak, Eric made a motion to adjourn. Kathleen seconded. All were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 7:59 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Y. Ryan
Town Administrator

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

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

Grist from the Mill

by Kelt Wilska

Musings on Books and Writing

Banned Books Week, September 27–October 3

Despite the ever-changing expectations and guidelines around COVID-19 and the reopening of our schools, here's one thing that won't change: any day now, students will be assigned their first big book of the year. It's appropriate, then, that during the last week of September we highlight Banned Books Week, a way to cherish good books and promote awareness about the efforts to remove them from bookshelves.

Censorship has existed as long as the printed page, with countless motives but always with the intent of restricting access to information (see *Common Sense* by Thomas Paine). Banned Books Week was founded in 1982 by First Amendment activist Judith Krug as a response to a particularly dramatic spike in challenges to schools, libraries, and other literary institutions for carrying books deemed inappropriate for or even "dangerous" for young minds. Thus in the spirit of literary freedom, let's consider some books that have been challenged, and yes, even banned, over the years.

- *Charlotte's Web* by E.B. White (1952). You're probably thinking, "How in the world could someone challenge such a sweet book?" A group of parents in Kansas objected to the theme of death (sorry, spoiler alert!) and especially the idea of talking animals, because they found it blasphemous.
- *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee (1960). One of the most cherished and commonly-taught books in the country has been challenged and banned for scenes of violence and its use of the N-word.
- *A Light in the Attic* by Shel Silverstein (1981). A classic collection of the renowned author's poems, this children's book was banned in some Florida schools due to concerns that it promotes violence and disrespect.
- *Captain Underpants* by Dav Pilkey (1997–2015). Any millennial will fondly recall these stories of mayhem and toilet humor from their childhood reading. It was challenged for promoting disruptive behavior and same-sex couple characters.
- *The Kite Runner* by Khaled Hosseini (2003). Published two years after 9/11, this acclaimed book was challenged and banned for sexual violence and because it was thought to "promote terrorism" and "lead to Islam."
- *The Hate U Give* by Angie Thomas (2017). A #1 *New York Times* best-seller that brilliantly encapsulates the current struggle for racial justice in our country, this young adult book was vigorously challenged and banned for allegedly being "anti-cop" and for its profanity, drug use, and sexual references.

Concerned about books being challenged or banned in your area? For further resources and additional banned titles, visit bannedbooksweek.org.

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Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts 2020 Census Liaison

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Select Board Meeting Minutes
August 26, 2020
21 State Line Road, Town Hall

Open Meeting

Quorum present: Roger Kavanagh, Select Board Chair, Kathleen Keresev, Select Board Member, Eric Shimeloni, Select Board Member, Marie Ryan, Town Administrator

Also present:

DPW Director Curt Wilton,
Police Sergeant Rosario Messina

Review and sign warrants (payroll and vendor)

Approved Meeting Minutes from meetings on:

August 10, 2020 Executive Session
August 12, 2020

Roger opened the meeting at 6:01 PM. He reviewed the agenda, noting that the Board had reviewed and signed warrants (payroll and vendor) before the meeting. Kathleen then made a motion to approve the above noted minutes, Eric seconded and all were in favor.

Police Update:

Sergeant Messina gave an update about the unregistered vehicles at the property owned by Ricky Klein on Great Barrington Road. These vehicles were the property of Alan Becker, Mr. Klein's former tenant, who ran a business selling and repairing cars. The vehicles are now involved in a dispute between Mr. Klein and Mr. Becker which is working its way through the court system. Until the court case is resolved, the cars can't be moved. The Police will provide updates as new information becomes available.

Sergeant Messina also informed the Board that on Monday (August 24th) the Department got a tip about 20 plus marijuana plants growing illegally on a property on West Center Road. On Tuesday, the Department went to that property, found 408 plants which were cut down and destroyed.

Town Administrator Update:

Marie gave the Board the following updates:

1. Stockbridge Sportsmen Club – This property is currently in Land Court for Tax Taking by the Town, which may take several months to complete.
2. Moscow Road/National Grid Property – The sale of this property to the Town of West Stockbridge is still pending. National Grid has a new attorney who is currently reviewing all the paperwork. He is trying to define the "reserved" easement area for National Grid, which he proposed could be 30 feet on each side of the property.
3. Baldwin Property- This property was cut off by the Turnpike Authority years ago and is inaccessible. Taxes are owed and ownership is in question. Discussion of this items will be on the Sept 9th agenda.
4. Community Preservation Act (CPA) – The Town has previously voted to approve the adoption of the CPA. The next step in the process is to vote for the CPA by-law (wording provided by the State CPA Committee) at a Town Meeting or at a Special Town Meeting and the

creation of the Community Preservation Committee (specific membership is required)

- 1 Conservation Commission Member
- 1 Planning Board Member
- 1 Housing Authority Member
- 1 Historic Commission Member
- 1 Parks Commission Member

Members at Large- can be up to 4 more Members

5. Community Health Play Group – This group had used the Gym for play group but hasn't been able to since COVID19. They came up with an outdoor play group plan which the Board of Health has approved. They will be meeting outside at Town Hall through November (weather permitting).
6. Center Street closure on Thursday nights – Coordination between Rouge Restaurant and the Farmers Market has been working out well. Everyone worked together to get signs posted and no issues have come up.
7. Reserved Parking Spaces on Main Street when Center Street is closed – The Board expressed their desire at the last meeting to allow any business open during the time that Center Street is closed to reserve two parking spots on Main Street in front of their businesses. I went to the only other businesses that are normally open during that time period, besides Queensboro Package Store, which were R&R and the Public Market and offered them the same opportunity that had already been approved for Queensboro. Both businesses were very appreciative and R&R (which is open until 6 PM) will be taking that opportunity. Tim at the Public Market will if he needs to at any point.
8. Update on GB Transportation Advisory Committee – I have heard back from Bill Barth who is excited to be the West Stockbridge Representative on this Committee. He will let me know when he needs to be on an agenda in the future to give updates to the Board as this Committee gets started.
9. False Alarm Fees - I have updated the fees in the Town Code which can be found on the website. (no Town Meeting required)
10. Letter to Formel Salvage has been delivered and they will come in and discuss with the Board at the September 9th meeting.
11. Playground Equipment – Has been installed for a cost of \$43,798. The funding for this was from the P&R Playground Account \$24,046, Gifts/Donations \$7,966.47, Youth Services \$5,263 and FY20 Carryover \$5,500. This left a shortfall of \$1,022.53 which will come out of the P&R FY21 operations/Maintenance budget.
12. Animal Control Officer (ACO) – The last Town ACO resigned. Danielle Fillio, Town Administrator in Richmond and I have created an ad that is to be published in the Berkshire Eagle for a shared ACO. Town Meeting approved the salary to be \$5000 from West Stockbridge and Richmond did the same for a total salary of \$10,000.

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13. Library Trustees Vacancy – Jayne Benjulian has resigned as an elected Library Trustee. The remaining Trustees are searching for a candidate to fill the opening and will bring their recommendations to the Board for approval.

Up Coming Meetings:

Thursday, August 27 @ 5 PM – Open Meeting Law Training – Town Counsel Lauren Goldberg

Thursday, September 9 @ 6 PM- Regular Meeting

Monday, September 14 @ 6 PM – WS Town Hall meeting with Richmond SB (Fire Chief)

Wednesday, September 16 @ 6 PM – with Finance Com & Tom Scanlon, Auditor

Monday, September 21 @ 6 PM – Regular Meeting

West Center Road and Shared Paver with Richmond:

Shared Paver – Curt Wilton, DPW Director reported that he has taken possession of the paver to be shared with Richmond and asked the Board to sign the agreement covering the financial, operational and administrative details of this shared equipment. The Board members signed the agreement which will be finalized when it is signed by the Richmond Select Board.

West Center Road Paving Project – Curt informed the Board that 4 bids were received for the West Center Road Project. The bidders were: Delsignore, Palmer Paving, LB Corporation and Northeast. The lowest bid was DelSignore and Curt recommended awarding the contract to this company. He noted that the bid is \$70,000 below the initial estimate which means the Town will not have to borrow the full amount approved at the Annual Town Meeting.

Eric made a motion to award the bid to Delsignore, Kathleen seconded and all were in favor.

Berkshire County Bike Share Feasibility Advisory Committee:

Eammon Coughlin, Representative for the Bike Share program, briefed the Board on the Berkshire County Bike Share Feasibility Study, a study that the Board (prior to July 2020) had agreed to participate in.

He asked the Board to approve a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that provides the details of the Bike Share Feasibility Study. The MOU includes a contribution by each town (\$3000 each from Lenox, Great Barrington and West Stockbridge and \$6000 from Pittsfield) that adds \$15K to the \$60K grant the committee has already received. The total amount will be used to hire a consultant to do the study.

After deliberating on the potential value of this study to West Stockbridge and the fact that this item was not included in the FY21 Budget, the issue was tabled until a meeting with the Planning Board to discuss whether this study could be considered part of the Master Plan process and funded from the grant that is funding the development of the Master Plan.

Zoom Meetings:

Marie told the Board that she has purchased a Zoom account for the Town as well as a new computer with a large screen to be used at Zoom meetings. She asked Eric if the Town should purchase microphones or if he is comfortable with continuing to bring the microphones that he has been providing for the Board meetings. Eric said he is very comfortable with using his equipment for the time being and the situation can be reviewed in the future.

Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program:

Kathleen updated the Board on the work she has been doing to prepare the Shared Streets and Spaces grant application. She has been working with local restaurants and venues to gather details about equipment they could use to facilitate outdoor activities and with Curt Wilton, DPW Director, on equipment that would support traffic flow and traffic calming. The grant application includes plans to add picnic tables and seating for outdoor dining on Town owned and privately owned properties. She added that the grant application is very close to completion and the intent, when funds are received, is to purchase as much of the equipment as possible from local vendors. Roger, Curt and Eric all thanked Kathleen for her hard work on this grant application.

...continued on page 11

October History Quiz Question:

Although West Stockbridge was first settled along the waterways of Alford Brook, Flat Brook, and the Williams River, the town is really defined by its physical features and the attractiveness of our hills and mountains. Our hills are usually named by their features or geography, like Maple Hill or West Stockbridge Mountain, or after the family that owned the property in the 18th century, such as Pixley Hill, Cone Hill, Dean Hill, and Harvey Mountain. All seem quite apparent where the names came from and why.

But one of the mountains has a mystery attached to its name. Who was Tom Ball, and why is the mountain named after him?

(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

Town Planting/Gardening:

Kathleen asked Lisa Parker, who creates and maintains the seasonal flower displays around West Stockbridge, to give the Board an update on the work she has been doing. Lisa told the Board that she has been planting and gardening all over the Town since 2003. She has been using donations to cover the costs for the materials and has been donating her labor. The Board told Lisa that there is \$8,000 in the current budget to cover costs for materials and labor for Town Beautification and that she should create invoices for materials and labor and submit them to Marie for payment.

Lisa thanked Curt and his crew for assisting her in the clean-up in the fall. Curt thanked her for all her hard work and amazing job she has done over the years for the Town.

Rail Trail:

A new resident, Kevin Sullivan, asked the Board about the possibility of clearing the rail trail from Pixley Hill Road to the center of Town. Kathleen told Kevin that the Vision Committee has a subcommittee, led by Peter Thorne, that is focused on exploring opportunities to develop the rail trail and that Marie could provide him with Peter's contact information.

Putting this topic on the agenda attracted the attention of several residents whose properties abut the rail trail who were in attendance in the audience and on the Zoom call. They gave the Board an education on the history of the former railroad bed, and posited that the "rail trail" is actually private property which belongs to National Grid (NG) and that people who have been clearing the track bed are actually trespassers. They shared stories of people walking through private property to access the NG property and of people gathering at a former quarry site which is also private property next to the NG property. They expressed concerns that the subject of the "rail trail" continues to be a discussion item as Board membership changes and they made it clear that they are all adamantly opposed to the idea of converting the RR bed into a trail that is open to the public.

Roger told the residents that the "rail trail" is not something the Board is taking action on, that it was only a topic being considered by the Vision committee. He said this topic was on the agenda because a resident asked if there was something he could do to help make the old RR bed more suitable for hiking and biking. Kathleen told the residents that this is part of a bigger process and that no decision is being made at this time. There was no further discussion on this item.

Press Release: Center Street Dining

The Board discussed the draft press release Eric had prepared about outdoor dining on Center Street. They agreed that this topic had already been covered by the local press and that a press release which spoke about the activities of all downtown restaurants and venues would be great information to share. Eric will draft a new press release for Board review.

Master Plan and Berkshire Regional Planning:

Eric handed out a document, prepared by the Planning Board, that outlined the structure of committees that would be formed to guide and support the development of the Master Plan for West Stockbridge.

Kathleen pointed out that the proposed structure of a four -person steering committee and another larger committee focused on outreach activities was not in line with the steering committee structure in the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC) consulting agreement or, based on her research, the steering committees set up by other towns that have developed Master Plans.

After deliberating on the proposed structure of the committees the Board agreed to table the discussion and not sign the BRPC consulting agreement until they had an opportunity to meet with Dana Bixby, Chair of the Planning Board, and get her insight on the Master Plan committee structure. The Board asked Marie to set that meeting up.

Select Board Speak:

Roger asked Kathleen to speak about the changes she would like to make to the first draft of the letter that the Board wants to send to trucking companies about the excessive noise created by "j-braking". She said that the letter should include information about speeding, the noise ordinance bylaw and should point out that the issue exists on all arteries into the Town. She agreed to do an update to the first draft.

Eric showed the Board a copy of a utilities report he generated from the Green Communities website. He told the Board that these types of reports are part of the process outlined in the Green Communities Grant and that the town is still on track to qualify as a Green Community.

Citizen Speak:

Frank Landsberger told the Board he liked the way the Board's table is set up and that it seems like the Board is able to communicate better that way. He also suggested in the future that the Board could conditionally approve signing documents instead of tabling issues as this may save time in the long run.

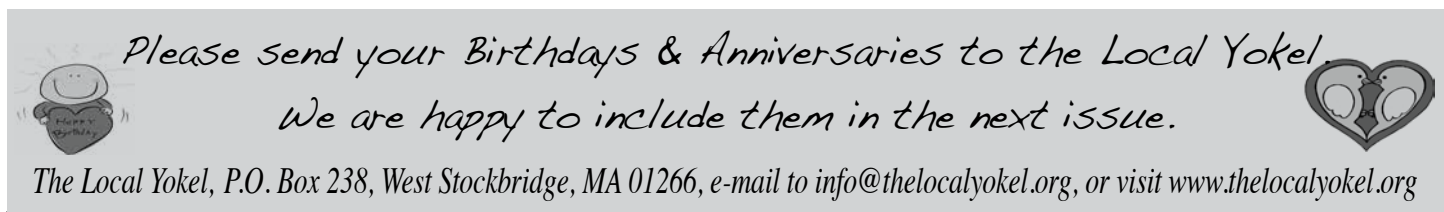
Joe Roy expressed his pleasure with the Board supporting all the work that Lisa Parker has done for the Town. He also stated that the Vision Committee has never recommended clearing the "rail trail". He suggested that whenever someone in the audience speaks, it would be best if they used the podium so the microphone can pick up what they are saying, since he could not understand anyone that spoke from the floor.

With no other participants asking to speak, Kathleen made a motion to adjourn, Eric seconded and all were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 8:57 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Y. Ryan
Town Administrator



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

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

Guild of Berkshire Artists & TurnPark Collaborate on New Outdoor Art Show

By Margie Skaggs

Because the presentation of art in galleries and other venues has been on hold for more than six months and this may well continue, the members of the Guild of Berkshire Artists (GBA) put their heads together and came up with a new outdoor exhibit idea: "Six Feet Apart: Zero Degrees of Separation." This show opens in TurnPark on Saturday, October 10, from 4 to 6 p.m. (rain date, Sunday, Oct. 11, 4 to 6).

Igor and Katya Gomberg of TurnPark were immediately interested. They liked the idea of showing large multimedia works that address the impact of the pandemic on artists and the public. Guild artists were equally thrilled with the opportunity to put their creative minds to work and show their art in this beautiful venue.

"This exhibit is a celebration of art that creates an echo of the boundaries that social distancing has placed upon us," said GBA member M.L. Kammel.

The works of art will be placed at least 15 feet apart on the Great Meadow of TurnPark so that visitors will be able to interact and enjoy the pieces at a safe distance. Masks and social distancing will be required.

The participating artists are Amy Pressman, Margie Skaggs, M.L. Kammel, Jared Gelormino, Marcelene Isaacson, Karen Dolmanisth, Natalie Tyler, Adam Zamberletti, and Tim Sleeper.

"Six Feet Apart: Zero Degrees of Separation" will run through Saturday, October 24. It is open to the public daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.



The Guild of Berkshire Artists
in cooperation with TurnPark
Presents



Six Feet Apart, Zero Degrees of Separation
October 10-24, 2020
TurnPark Great Meadow, 2 Moscow Rd
West Stockbridge, Mass

Multi media exhibit influenced by the pandemic
Opening on Saturday, October 10, 2020, 4-6PM
Rain Date on Sunday, October 11
The park is open daily from 10am to 6pm

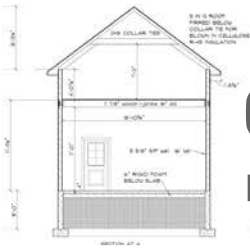


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- Building & Maintaining Gardens
- Firewood



On the Home Front

By Thom Lipiczky

Kitchen Design

One of the positive developments of pandemic cocooning is that people are spending more time in the kitchen, actually *cooking for themselves!* We've been doing this for years, and having a kitchen that serves our needs has been a big requirement for us. We probably remodeled the kitchen in our old house at least three times. And when we were designing and building our new house ("Anne and Thom's Excellent Adventure," chronicled in this column ad nauseum), we spent a good bit of time thinking about what works for us.

Of course, any design project is a study in compromise. Concern about cost certainly throws its wet blanket over many burning desires. But compromise can also be a spur to creativity. Instead of totally redoing an existing layout that has many good features, why not think about refacing (i.e., new doors/drawer fronts) the existing cabinets? Often the carcasses (boxes) that are there already can be retrofitted with new rollout shelves or drawers. Storage hardware and systems Grandma never thought of are now easily available.

New countertops need not be the same throughout. Contrasting colors and textures can add real interest and highlight different culinary functions. Think butcher block for cutting meat and vegetables, stone for rolling out pastry, solid surface (one brand is Corian) for general storage and ease of cleanup. (I discussed countertop choices way back in pre-COVID times in the November 2017 issue, available online! And for that matter, I talked about kitchen design back in March 2019! Sheesh! Is there *nothing* new in the universe? See upcoming columns!) OK, back to the kitchen.

If you're starting anew, plan the kitchen layout around the appliances you want. Sink/stove/fridge layout is where to start. And usually the dishwasher is next to the sink. A U-design can make access easier, but if there are two of you cooking, you need to plan on space for this. You don't want to be an annoyance to someone with a sharp knife.

Other things the cool kids are doing:

- Handleless cabinets: for a sleeker look: the handles are either integrated into the door/drawer fronts or use push-latch technology (push the door and it opens!)
- Open shelving (Yeah, yeah, I know. Grandma had this. But believe me, it's *hot* right now.)
- "Unfitted" kitchens, wherein eclecticism rules. Different cabinet styles are mixed, and cabinets are more like free-standing furniture
- Big pantry cabinets including storage on the back side of the doors; or pantry closets
- LED lighting (see March 2018 column) and under-cabinet lighting
- New flooring options (see April 2018 column)

Some great websites can offer valuable information and ideas. But it's important to take a deep breath before looking at these, and perhaps view with another person able to rein in your wild-eyed enthusiasm. Houzz.com is one such site. Great ideas, but can be overwhelming. It's best to first take stock of your needs.

For instance, how much space do you need for your favorite pots and pans, and are they nice enough to hang on a rack or on the wall, or do they need to be hidden in a drawer until ready for use? It's very handy to have a separate place for pot lids. How much countertop space do you need for your appliances? Do you keep your stand mixer out, ready for use? Food processor? Microwave?

What about cooking tools you use regularly (e.g., spatulas, wooden spoons, whisks, measuring cups and spoons)? Do all your spices need to be displayed close at hand, or can you pull out just what you need from a cabinet to set up your *mise en place* (restaurant talk for where you assemble the ingredients for a recipe)?

And where do you put your garbage, recycling, and maybe your compost bucket?

Remember: a well-organized kitchen is a *happy* kitchen. Or at least it will produce results that will make those cocooning with you happy. Bon appétit!

Send comments and questions to info@localyokel.org.



*Kitchen design is a study in compromise.
Image by Melanie Reiders, thekitchn.com*

A Spectacular Setting and Beautiful Day for the Final Two West Stockbridge Chamber Players Open-Air Concerts

By Liza Bennett

Under a grove of shimmering birch trees on the property of a lovely private home with stunning views of the West Center valley below, the acclaimed West Stockbridge Chamber Players took up their instruments for the final two open-air benefit concerts of the season. For the first of the performances on this breezy early September Saturday afternoon, the socially distanced audience basked in the sunlight as clarinetist Catherine Hudgins, the Chamber Players artistic director, violinist Lisa Ji Eun Kim, violist Daniel Getz, and cellist Oliver Aldort offered a nuanced interpretation of Rezső Kókai's eclectic *Quartettino for Clarinet, Violin, Viola and Cello*.



Photo by John Parker

Catherine Hudgins addressed the audience before the next selection: two movements from Olivier Messiaen's *Quartet for the End of Time*. "Messiaen wrote this piece for his fellow inmates when he was a prisoner of war in a German camp during World War II," Hudgins explained. Comparing his situation to our current pandemic, she said, "He, too, must have faced depression, loneliness, and fear. He must have asked himself, 'Will I ever get out of this alive?' You can hear all of these emotions and then you hear what he heard outside the prison window: the sound of bird song." Along with Sheila Fiekowsky on violin and Oliver Aldort on cello, Hudgins gave a deeply moving performance of what is considered to be one of the masterpieces of 20th-century chamber music.

The final selection, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *String Quartet No. 20 in D major, K.499, "Hoffmeister,"* was introduced by Sheila Fiekowsky, who noted before her first performance with Kim, Getz, and Aldort that "it's a very optimistic piece—which hopefully means something at this point in time." The breeze, which played havoc with the sheet music during the first concert, turned chilly during the second performance. By then, the lawn had slipped into late afternoon shadow, prompting Fiekowsky to recount how, one year that Tanglewood extended its season to 10 weeks, the temperature dropped to 46 degrees during a performance of *Fidelio* and the musicians were told to wear anything and everything they could to keep warm. That was the last of the 10-week seasons. As the temperature dropped that afternoon, it became clear that this would also have to be the last of the West Stockbridge Chamber Players Open-Air concerts. The series of sold-out performances, played at three different iconic West Stockbridge locations, was certainly a musical high note of this strangest of summers in the Berkshires.

The West Stockbridge Historical Society is grateful to Berkshire Bank for generously underwriting this concert.

Community News & Events

Due to the coronavirus health emergency, many meetings and events are being cancelled or postponed. We are including all information available to us up until publication, but with the likelihood of changes, readers should check with the office, department, or organization for the latest information.

Community Health Association

Weekly blood pressure clinics are by appointment only: 9 to 10 a.m. every Wednesday and Thursday, at the Town Offices, 21 State Line Road, West Stockbridge. Info: Emilie Jarrett, RN, 232-0122 or Emilie@charws.com.

CHA offers free flu shots for Richmond and West Stockbridge eligible residents older than age 19. See schedule and details elsewhere in this issue.

Stockbridge Grange Dinner

The dinners at the Grange have been suspended indefinitely due to the health crisis.

Council on Aging

Council on Aging meetings have been suspended indefinitely due to the health crisis.

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.



WEST STOCKBRIDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY

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

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

Greetings to all from all of us here at the library!

Our status remains the same: we are following town and state guidelines regarding public and staff safety by providing books and DVDs for pickup. We look forward to the day we may welcome you back inside!

Because so many of you enjoyed the summer story walk, we are holding a Halloween story walk for the week of Saturday, October 24, through Saturday, October 31. The story will be *The Little Old Lady Who Was Not Afraid of Anything*. The path will be entirely in the village area, using the map of historic properties very kindly shared with us by the good people at the Historical Society. Please join us for this self-led outdoor family fun. We will be posting the map soon, and there will be printed maps available for pickup at the library, too!

Have a happy and safe Halloween, and enjoy a scary book that has nothing to do with current events!

Rachel Alter, Vicky Cooper, and Brad Havill

NEW DVDs

Booksmart, Camp X-Ray, Peanut Butter Falcon, Yellowstone Seasons 1 and 2

NEW ADULT FICTION

Coulter, *Deadlock*
Giordano, *Heaven and Earth*
Jewell, *Then She Was Gone*
Lindsey, *Some Go Home*
Patterson, *1st Case*
Persaud, *Love After Love*
Poissant, *Lake Life*
Schwarz, *Bonnie*
Yanagihara, *Little Life*

NEW ADULT NONFICTION

Dyson, *Analogia: The Emergence of Technology Beyond Programmable Control*
Hill, *Vapors: A Southern Family, The New York Mob, and the Rise and Fall of Hot Springs, America's Hidden Capital of Vice*
Shapiro, *How to Destroy America in Three Easy Steps*

NEW YOUNG ADULT AND CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Dernavich, *Elvin Link, Please Report to the Principal's Office*
Page, *Montague Twins: The Witch's Hand*

NEW YOUNG ADULT AND CHILDREN'S DVDS

Paperclips, Super Silly Fiesta



Scrapbook October 2020:

TEST YOUR TRIVIA KNOWLEDGE!

1. What is the mentoring program at Monument Valley [now W.E.B. Du Bois] Regional Middle School?
2. Being a mentor means becoming what?
3. What is part of their pledge?
4. What is Purple Plume's owner Judie Culver's secret to success?

Answers: 1. A program that strives to reinforce good behavior and is about students helping each other by raising awareness about the consequences of one's actions through conversations and goodwill. 2. A leader. 3. "Striving to be honest and truthful all times." 4. She says her store stands for something: carving out a distinctive niche and developing a large loyal and local clientele.

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New Online Virtual Art Shows by the Guild of Berkshire Artists

By Margie Skaggs



St. Paul's Chapel, by John Mancina

How do artists cope with a pandemic? Well, even though cooped up in their homes, local artists are actively seeking more ways to ramp up their creative juices, remain active, and keep producing art work.

“The corona virus may cramp our style, but it hasn’t slowed our creative impulses,” says the 125-member Guild of Berkshire Artists. “Although we can’t mount indoor shows, such as the annual late August and very popular Old Town Hall show, we can still make art, enjoy sharing our methods with fellow artists, and organize shows for public enjoyment.”

Since mid-summer 2020, the guild has responded to the pandemic by using technology: online virtual displays of members’ art works and explanations of their methods. Artists are using Zoom to discuss their work with fellow artists and to demonstrate their methods, such as how to create an imaginary landscape in oil paint, how to render the details of an exotic tulip in watercolor, how to manipulate hot wax on a flat surface, and how a photographic image emerged.

Guild members are also using technology in the absence of their typical indoor/gallery shows. Currently the online “Summer Celebration” show, featuring more than 45 works by 25 artists, is on the website. After that, plans include a holiday online show featuring works more appropriate as gifts. To see the current show, visit www.berkshireartists.com. Click “View Online Summer Celebration Here.”

These virtual shows are curated by an independent juror who reviews and selects from works submitted by our members. All sales include at least a 25% donation by the artist to Berkshire United Way’s COVID-19 Emergency Fund.

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Sunday Noon - 6:00 p.m.

When you drink plan ahead and do not drive !!

Notes from the Collector

By June Biggs

Second-quarter preliminary real estate and personal property tax bills for FY2020 will be mailed at the end of September and are due November 2, 2020. Interest begins accruing on unpaid bills on November 3. Note: There is no grace period.

To ensure that your payment arrives on time, please:

- Mail several days ahead of the due date.
- Remit payments to P.O. Box 365, West Stockbridge, MA 01266 (a misdirected letter is still late).
- If you deliver payments to the Town Offices when the office is closed, be sure to place it in the drop box to the right of the collector's window or in the new multipurpose drop box on the exterior of the building to the left of the main doors.
- Pay online using your checking account, debit card, or credit card. The site is available 24/7. There are fees for this service. Paying from your checking account is \$0.25 per transaction, a bargain in the age of \$0.55 postage. Use of a credit or debit card has a different fee schedule depending on the size of the transaction.
- If you use your bank's online service, note there is usually a five to seven business day delay until delivery to my office.

Many of you discovered the advantage of electronic billing during the disruptions caused by COVID. Having real estate and personal property bills delivered to your inbox is an efficient way to receive those bills in the case of sudden relocation. Directions for signing up are on the town's website: www.weststockbridge-ma.gov.

As a second reminder to customers of the water/sewer system, accounts that are in arrears after December 10 will be liened to real estate.


To all, my appreciation and thanks for your cooperation and understanding of the delays caused by the pandemic and your compliance with the safety guidelines in place at the Town Offices. Stay well!

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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“We Remember When . . .”

Growing Up in West Stockbridge in the 1950s

A Series of Recollections by John Bormolini and Friends

Mooney’s Chicken Farm and More

Mooney’s Chicken Farm, owned by Francis Mooney, was about a mile north of the town center on Route 41. It was humming in the 1950s: whenever a new “cycle” began, 65,000 chicks arrived and were offloaded at the two two-story buildings about three-quarters the size of a football field. This would be their home for the next 3 months.



Mooney’s Poultry Farm after 60+ years. Mother Nature at work. Photo courtesy of Bab Salerno

By the time the chicks arrived, the floors had been thoroughly cleaned. After 3 months, the floors had a thick layer of dried poop and straw that had to be removed before the next batch of chicks arrived 2 to 3 weeks later. I was hired along with other workers to help clean out the buildings.

The second floor was the easiest to clean. A manure spreader was driven into the building and positioned under an opening in the floor, so we just had to push the poop and straw into the opening. Cleaning the first floor was twice as much work because we had to pitch the poop and straw into the manure spreader. The spreader was then offloaded into the fields behind the buildings.

There were at least two manure spreaders working continuously to reduce the cleaning time. I don’t recall ever wearing a mask. It usually took about a week to clean all of the buildings. I needed several showers to get all of the gunk and dust off. The pay was good, but the working conditions stunk and the dust was nasty. Aaaaachu! I never returned for an encore performance.

Peter Angelini, a frequent contributor to the *Local Yokel*, had the pleasure of loading the grown chickens. This is his story: “Billy Pixley, who worked at the chicken farm, used to recruit me and others to work whenever the semi-trucks came to take the birds to market. Not being sure exactly the time that the trucks would arrive, we had to be ready early in the morning. We sometimes waited well into the afternoon until the trucks appeared. We would drive the chickens into the closest room to the truck door and then grab four of them each by one leg and put them into wooden cages, two in each section of the cage. Then we loaded the cages on the truck, grabbed another empty cage off the truck, and repeated the process until all the chickens were loaded. Keep in mind that the grown chickens did not want to be caught and played a game of “Avoid the Catchers.” It was a boring and filthy job, but the pay was good for kids our age.”

Peter Brogan, who worked at Mooney’s in the early 1960s, told me that the farm was converted to an egg operation in the early 1960s. The feeding and watering processes were streamlined requiring less manual labor. Of course, the eggs had to be gathered each day and the poop removed about every 10 to 12 months. Fortunately, I was long gone by then at Boston College.

I often went up to Mooney’s to help Billy feed the chickens. Afterward, we would do some target shooting with our BB guns. I kept my BB gun at the chicken farm so my mother would not know I had saved up and bought it. Billy and I would target shoot until it got dark and was time to go home. I finally told my mother that I bought the BB gun before I went off to college in 1960.

There’s another story about Billy and the chicken farm. Somehow, he was able to buy an old car before he got his driver’s license at age 16. It was a boxy Ford, a stick shift on the floor and four doors. Mr. Mooney gave him permission to drive in the fields behind the chicken farm, and I rode with him a few times. What a thrill watching the dirt and dust trail behind us!

I remember the house that the Mooney family lived in. It was not your ordinary house in West Stockbridge; it was more of a mansion. After being sold years later, sadly it was destroyed by fire.

Barbershops

For the longest time there was only one barbershop in town, owned and operated by Sam Baldassare. He had two sons, Joe and Ernie, who also worked in the shop. Most customers asked for Joe or Ernie to cut their hair. The joke was that if Sam cut your hair, he would put a bowl on your head and cut around it. Judging from some of the haircuts I have seen on kids recently, Sam was way ahead of his time! I felt embarrassed when Sam called out “Next” and nobody jumped up, but I always waited for one of his sons to cut my hair.

The other barbershop was a latecomer, owned and operated by Robert (Bob) Korte. It was located in the same building as Masiero’s Market. He was definitely the “outsider” competing with Baldassare’s. It didn’t take long for him to develop a steady clientele. Sadly, Bob passed away in 2019. Over time, both barbershops maintained an amiable relationship.

The building where the Baldassare's barbershop was located was sold for "big money" to Gordon Rose around 1973. Rose was a New York City entrepreneur who moved to town. He converted it to the first ever new residential building on Main Street. This started the frenzy of selling property in West Stockbridge to Mr. Rose and Associates for well over appraised value!

The Telephone Office

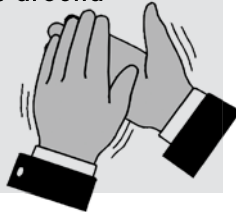
Not a business in the strictest sense, but the Telephone Office had an impact on everyone who had a telephone. Established in 1916, it lasted until 1956 when a new community dial operations system was installed that allowed patrons to make and receive a call without the assistance of an operator. During those 40 years of operation, one family "manned" the office 24/7/365 days a year! Just for fun, sometimes people listened in on the "party line." It was the best rumor mill in town!

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:

Tom Ball Mountain is shared by three towns, West Stockbridge, Great Barrington, and Alford. West Stockbridge has the largest share, and the town actually owns the property on the top. Although largely forested, Tom Ball does have sweeping views to the west and Harvey Mountain. In the 19th century, it also had a view to the east over the Williams River to Pixley Hill. During that period, most of the mountain was logged for charcoal. Once the forests were cut down and the upper parts were too steep for farming, the forests grew back. The only clear part is the large rock outcropping on the north end overlooking West Center/Four Corners and Harvey Mountain.

So who was Tom Ball? With the help of Rick Wilcox, Bernie Drew, and Gary Leveille, we searched through the U.S. Census, town records, and early deeds. We found no one named Tom Ball. Instead, what we did find is an early (1794) town map with the mountain listed as "Tom's Ball Mountain." (This map is in the Massachusetts Archives and is the earliest known survey of West Stockbridge.)

Was the northern clear rocky end viewed as a ball, or did the surveyor mean "bald"? And who was "Tom"? These are open questions.

A local rumor speculates that the name came from a local Stockbridge Indian. It is a possibility. Williamsville and Alford areas were "bought" from the Stockbridge tribe in the 1750s by various white settlers including Elijah Williams, first developer in West Stockbridge. Looking at the early deeds, no Indian was named "Tom." The name is definitely European and possibly a nickname. At this time, we haven't found a paper trail of that theory. So far, the mystery of the name and "Ball or Bald" remains. We'll keep digging.

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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.)

Birthdays & Anniversaries

10/9 Emilie Tremblay Wilber
10/25 Mary Alpert
10/25 Rozann Kraus and
Daniel Epstein
50th wedding anniversary

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,
e-mail info@thelocalyokel.org, or visit www.thelocalyokel.org



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.

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For Residents of:

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Otis Richmond Sandisfield Sheffield Stockbridge Tyringham Washington West Stockbridge

When: Saturday, October 24: 9 AM – 1:00 PM

Where: Great Barrington Recycling Center
601 Stockbridge Road, Great Barrington

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Lead & Oil-Based Paint
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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>Roger Kavanagh, Kathleen Kersey, Eric Shimelonis</i>	232-0300	ext. 319	Mon.–Thurs. 7 a.m.–3 p.m. Fri. 7 a.m.–11 a.m.
Town Administrator	<i>Marie Ryan</i>			
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>Steve Traver</i>	911 or 232-4200 (non-emergency)		Mon. 6:30–9 p.m.
Highway Department	<i>Curt G. Wilton</i>	232-0305		Leave Message for Inquiries
Library	<i>Rachel Alter</i>	232-0300	ext. 308	Tues. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; Wed., Thurs, and Fri. 2–6 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m.–2 p.m.; closed Sun. & Mon.
Police Department	<i>Marc Portieri</i>	911 or 232-8500 (non-emergency)		24 hours, 7 days/week
Post Office	<i>Colleen A. Wich</i>	232-8544		Lobby: 7 a.m.–7 p.m.; 7 days/week; Window: Mon.–Fri. 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; Sat. 9 a.m.–12 noon
Seasonal Lifeguard		232-0315		
Sewer & Water Commission	<i>Michael Buffoni</i>	232-0309		
Town Accountant	<i>Elaine Markham</i>	232-0300	ext. 317	Leave Message for Inquiries
Town Clerk	<i>Ronni Barrett</i>	232-0300	ext. 300	Tues. & Thurs. 1:30–4 p.m.
Town Collector	<i>June A. Biggs</i>	232-0300	ext. 302	Wed. 3–6 p.m.; Thurs. and Fri. 10 a.m.– 2 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
Town Historian	<i>Robert Salerno</i>	232-4465		
Town Treasurer	<i>Karen Williams</i>	232-0300	ext. 316	Thurs. 9 a.m.–4 p.m.
Transfer Station	<i>Wayne Cooper</i>	232-0307		Tues. & Thurs. 10 a.m.–6 p.m. and Sat. 8 a.m.–6 p.m.
Tree Warden	<i>Andrew Fudge</i>	232-4322		
Veterans Agency	<i>Laurie Hills</i>	528-1580		
Zoning Board of Appeals	<i>C. Randolph Thunfors</i>	232-0300	ext. 300	

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

Local Yokel West Stockbridge 2020

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An Invitation from the West Stockbridge Vision Committee

Thank you for the beautiful gardens you have created this year! Submit your best photos of your favorite VEGETABLE GARDEN and your favorite FLOWER GARDEN in West Stockbridge to wstockvision@gmail.com. The best photos submitted will be shown on our website and submitted to the *Local Yokel*.

Many of us have been spending time providing nourishing food for our tables and beautifying our gardens this year.

This is your chance to share what you and your friends have accomplished! And this is the time to celebrate the beauty of our town!



Photo by John Parker

October Art Calendar

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

2020

Summer Celebration an Online Art Show

www.berkshireartists.org/august20show

On Display Online:
August 12 - October 10, 2020

OUTDOOR ART SHOW

Six Feet Apart: Zero Degrees of Separation

Saturday October 10 - Saturday October 24
Open daily 10:00am to 6:00pm.

Opening Reception October 10, 4 - 6pm.

The Guild Of Berkshire Artists in collaboration with TurnPark Art Space presents a celebration of art that creates an echo of the boundaries that social distancing has placed upon us. The sculptures (uniformed in size and shape) invite the visitors to embrace both our unusual circumstance and the art it conjures. Each work of art will be placed in TurnPark's Great Meadow inside its own delineated 12 foot circle. This will maintain social distancing by indicating the space to be occupied by a single person or family of visitors. Six Feet Apart will allow us to engage, interact and enjoy art at a safe distance. Masks and social distancing as described above will be required. TurnPark Great Meadow, 2 Moscow Road, West Stockbridge.

TUESDAYS, Demonstration: Variable time with many at 3pm. Watch an artist demonstrate various mediums and techniques each week via Zoom. Details on how to watch are posted on our homepage and Classes & Seminars.

FRIDAYS, Art Together: 2 - 4:45pm. Join Eva Schuster and other Guild of Berkshire Artists making Art Together online using the Zoom platform. Details on how to watch are posted on our homepage and Classes & Seminars.

FRIDAYS, Meet the Artist: Zoom Edition: 5 - 6pm. Join a different artist each week to gain an insight into their processes and art. Every Friday evening at 5pm. Featured artists and details on how to watch are posted on our homepage and events page.

Oct 10, Six Feet Apart: Zero Degrees of Separation; Art Show, Opening Reception: Saturday October 10, 4 - 6pm. Show on display October 10 - October 24, located in the Great Meadow at TurnPark. Premises open daily 10:00am to 6:00pm. TurnPark is located at 2 Moscow Road, West Stockbridge.

Oct 25, Berkshire Photo Gathering: Sunday October 25, 2-4pm. Online. See webpage below for more information. <http://berkshirephotogathering.com/online-meetings>

Oct 26, Art Book Gathering: Monday October 26, 11:30 - 1:30pm. Share a favorite book: artist, or process. RSVP: berkshireartists@gmail.com

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October 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

October 2020 Calendar of Events

Due to the coronavirus health emergency, many meetings and events are being canceled, postponed, or held online. We are including all information available to us up until publication, but with the likelihood of changes, readers should check with the office, department, or organization for latest information.

10/1	Last Farmers Market of the season	3–6 p.m.	The Foundry Green, Harris Street
10/5	Fall flu shot clinic	9–10 a.m.	Town Offices in the Gym
10/5	Select Board meeting	6 p.m.	See agenda on town website for details
10/6	Fall flu shot clinic	12–2 p.m.	Town Offices in the Gym
10/7	Fall flu shot clinic	9–10 a.m.	Town Offices in the Gym
10/10–24	“Six Feet Apart” Art Show	10 a.m.– 6 p.m.	TurnPark, 2 Moscow Road
10/12	Columbus Day / Indigenous Peoples’ Day		
10/12	Parks & Recreation Committee meeting	5:30 p.m.	See agenda on town website for details
10/14	Fall flu shot clinic	9–10 a.m.	Town Offices in the Gym
10/15	*** Deadline for the next Local Yokel ***		Send to info@thelocalyokel.org
10/18	Annual Harvest Dinner	4:30–6 p.m.	West Stockbridge Congregational Church
10/19	Fall flu shot clinic	9–10 a.m.	Town Offices in the Gym
10/19	Select Board meeting	6 p.m.	See agenda on town website for details
10/20	Vision Committee meeting	6 p.m.	See agenda on town website for details
10/21	Fall flu shot clinic	9–10 a.m.	Town Offices in the Gym
10/24	Household hazardous waste collection	9 a.m.–1 p.m.	601 Stockbridge Rd., GB Recycling Center
10/26	Fall flu shot clinic	9–10 a.m.	Town Offices in the Gym
10/28	Fall flu shot clinic	9–10 a.m.	Town Offices in the Gym
10/31	Halloween: See details inside this issue		