

Local yokel

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

West
Stockbridge
January 2018

Wishing
You All
a Happy
New Year!



West Stockbridge Congregational Church. Photo by John Parker

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY SINCE 2005



Left to right from top:
Sidewalk musicians entertain at the Public Market
A visit from Santa
The Floor Store—Buy Local!
Making ornaments, with help from an elf.
Hotchkiss Mobiles all alight
Decorating gingerbread cookies
O Tannenbaum!
Elves prepare drinks and snacks at the Congregational Church
Old Town Hall lit for the holiday
Making snowflakes
Wreath in C. H. Baldwin's window
Photos by John Parker

WS Sparkles

By Ginna Dudney

On December 1 the villagers of West Stockbridge came together in a warm and wonderful spirit of camaraderie that resulted in the village sparkling once again.

Thanks to the ongoing efforts of Bob Thibeault, the official village lamplighter, Peter Thorne, Alan Thiel, Billy Cooper, Sara Avery, and the amazing Fudge family, our town glowed under the winter sky.

It sparkled with cooperation! Virtually every merchant opened their doors to welcome holiday strollers with liquid libations and nibbles, a wonderful opportunity to introduce all strollers to the bounties of the town.

It sparkled with synergy! A slew of local committees and groups pulled together to make it happen:

- * Parks & Rec spearheaded the event and invited the other groups to join in.
- * Roland Dudney created the posters and mailers. Helen Nolan and Paula Farrell headed up poster distribution to ensure all residents knew the details.
- * The Police Department co-sponsored the night, donated the contents of Santa's goodie bags, were on hand in force to help wherever they could, and provided good cheer wherever they went.
- * The Fire Department's Peter Skorput, Sara Avery, and Billy Cooper erected the tent for Santa and his sleigh.
- * The Fire Department delivered Santa to his sleigh in style.
- * The *Local Yokel* promoted the event and spread the word.
- * John Parker took pictures.
- * The Cultural Council stood by, ready to pitch in if needed.
- * The Historical Society donated the use of the decorated Old Town Hall as a venue for an Artists' Guild exhibit and sale.
- * With great success the Merchants Association encouraged each town business to participate, and they responded with great style.

It sparkled with the energy of neighbors joining neighbors to create magic!

- * Peter Skorput, the star of the event, outdid himself again this year.
- * Helen Nolan was, once again, the best head elf ever.
- * Joanne Wodecki served as Popcorn Elf.
- * Assistant elves ensured progress at Santa's sleigh was as smooth as possible.
- * Joanne Wodecki, Caitlin Graham, and the members of the Congregational Church created and hosted a wonderful craft event for the little ones before their meeting with Santa.
- * Choir mistress Terri Jo Dixon produced the songbooks and led the caroling at the tree with a welcome assist from the talented Elisabeth Petty, Lisa Parker, and Mary Thibeault.
- * Jill Pixley did another wonderful job at the Old Town Hall.
- * Anthony Voudren and James Fudge delivered and removed Santa's sleigh.
- * Elf Peter Cohen diligently took pictures of everything when not tending to some of the heavy lifting that is always so needed at these events.

It sparkled with generosity!

- * Once again, the Merritt Family graciously permitted the use of their green to house Santa's sleigh and the long lines of smiling children happily anticipating their moment with The Man!

A night of magic—memories made and friendships renewed—'twas the season!



“Helping Hands” Bring Gifts and Meals for Needy Families

By Terri Jo Dixon



When needy families in West Stockbridge and Richmond were identified, a call went out looking for a few Santa’s helpers. Thanks to the Police Association Fund of West Stockbridge and a matching monetary gift from A-List Luxury Car Services, toys, warm clothes, and games were purchased for the families. Officers Santi Messina and Frank Murphy shopped for the gifts. Tim Walsh of the Public Market donated complete meals for each family. Paula Farrell sent out a last-minute request for additional helpers. The Wednesday afternoon Knitters and More group of West Stockbridge and others stepped in to wrap and tag the mountain of gifts.

Santa and his helpers want to thank everyone for making this happen. If you would like to help out the overworked “big guy in red” next year, please contact West Stockbridge police chief Marc Portieri or Officer Santi Messina.

Top: Santa’s helpers from the Knitters and More group: Terri Jo Dixon, Mary Thibault, Mary McClelland, Carol Kuller, Paula Farrell, with Jill Pixley in back.

Left: Santa delivered gifts early to West Stockbridge Police Department.

Right: Santa’s helpers Police Chief Marc Portieri, left, and on the right, Officer Santi Messina.

Photos by Terri Jo Dixon

Board of Selectmen Meeting Summaries

By Doane Perry

Note: Copies of official board minutes are available at the West Stockbridge Public Library. Video recordings of town meetings are broadcast on Charter Cable channel 190. Residents can be notified by e-mail of town events and meeting agendas by subscribing at <http://weststockbridgema.virtualltownhall.net/subscriber>.

Open Meeting: December 3, 2017

Annual Hearing on Alcohol and Auto Licenses

Mark Webber advised the selectmen that annual license hearings are good practice but not required. The purpose of the hearing is to gather information on existing licenses. Criteria for renewal include not owing the town money and not being the subject of complaints. Alcoholic beverage licenses are for beer and wine and for all alcoholic beverages. Town businesses have six liquor licenses. Auto licenses are for used and for junk autos. There is no limit on the number. Town businesses have four auto licenses.

Bob Thibeault raised the issue of special permit zoning and class 3 licensing for junkyards and junkyards for auto parts. Bob asked if licensing for 7 Albany Road (Troy's Garage) is for one side of Route 102 for sales and the other side for junk. Bob said he doesn't see many sales. Curt Wilton responded that it is a small operation where autos sit for a long time before sales. Peter Skorput said he has seen some movement involving scrap. Bob said that flat tires indicate junk and suggested screening from view.

Joe Roy commented that in the zoning bylaws as applied to homes, there is no definition of dilapidated. Mark commented that Massachusetts law lacks a definition of junk. A working definition for a used vehicle is start it, inspect it, and drive it.

Curt said a key concept is that autos should be on the owner's property. If the Board of Selectmen don't receive complaints and no money is owed to the town, the licenses are renewed.

Bernie Fallon commented that a business can express itself as it wants. Troy's Garage is successful and was a top dealer. West Stockbridge has character, and Troy's is part of it.

Shared Services

Peter Skorput reported on a meeting with the Richmond selectmen where they discussed shared concerns about ambulance service and are supporting a bill in the state legislature that would allow operation with one emergency medical technician (EMT) and one driver. Of Richmond's four EMTs, one lives in Richmond; three live in Pittsfield. EMTs living in Pittsfield cannot get to West Stockbridge in time.

National Grid Property on Moscow Road

Mark reported that the town is hiring an engineer from Foresight to survey the approximately 3-acre property between the post office and the turnpike that the town is purchasing from National Grid. The electric company's property from the West Stockbridge Post Office to the village of Housatonic consists of about 40 acres in total.

Berkshire Hills Regional School District

The BHRSD Advisory Committee is recruiting 22 representatives from the three member towns to advise the district on its "Next Step" program to improve the physical plant. If you are interested, please contact the school district.

Wambach Property

The selectmen discussed plans for public auction of the Wambach property on Route 41 at the south end of Card Pond. Because \$16,581 is owed to the town in taxes and interest, Peter suggested setting the price at \$17,000.

Fire Chief's Monthly Report

Peter reported six calls in November. One member moved to Becket, and the department roster is now 13 people including two EMTs. Activities have included firehouse maintenance and classes. Curt called Peter's report positive and said the number of members on the roster is not Peter's fault.

Communications Survey

Bernie reported that West Stockbridge residents use the *Local Yokel*, *Berkshire Eagle*, *Berkshire Edge*, Facebook, word of mouth, and e-mail to communicate about town activities and issues. He said a large number of residents prefer e-mail.

The selectmen approved Bernie's proposal to enlarge the town's e-mail list, which is managed by Bill Biggs and has 125 current subscribers. Joe suggested that town boards be asked to notify Bill about their news. Joe said he will put town information on the Merchants Association's Facebook pages.

Other Business:

- Regarding the town's website, Bernie said it is important that all web links work.

...continued on page 7

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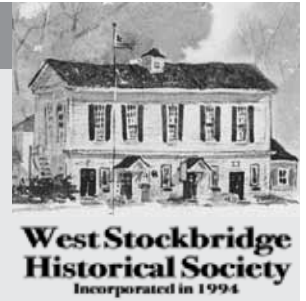
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January History Quiz Question:



As winter starts to reach its full potential and you've shoveled that driveway and sidewalk six times in the past week, take heart that spring is not that far away. Baseball, the Great American Pastime, brings us the first sign of spring less than five weeks away when pitchers and catchers arrive for spring training in Florida on February 15. In the 1920s and 1930s, professional baseball was a big deal in Berkshire County, and particularly in West Stockbridge.

The story of how Connie Mack's Philadelphia A's major-league team played Troy's Garage in July 1935 has been told many times. (Some residents still remember it.) What is more interesting than the Philadelphia A's playing in West Stockbridge is the local entrepreneur Garrett Troy, who arranged for the game.

So who was Garrett Troy, and how did baseball become important in West Stockbridge in the 1930s?

(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.



Fire Department

LOG FOR DECEMBER

Date	Time	Nature of Call
12/8	7:01 p.m.	Medical
12/9	11:57 a.m.	Motor vehicle accident
12/14	8:16 p.m.	Automatic alarm
12/20	7:42 p.m.	Motor vehicle accident
12/22	5:06 p.m.	Well-being check
12/25	8:15 a.m.	Lifting assistance

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 WONDERING JEWS
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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.

- Town accountant Elaine Markham resigned on December 15 and now wants to return to work in West Stockbridge.
- The annual tax classification hearing will be held on December 6 at 6 p.m.

Open Meeting: December 11, 2017

Tax Title Properties

The town will hire an auctioneer to conduct an auction on February 15 for the abandoned Wambach property on Route 41.

The town sent the owner of the property at 16 State Line Road a letter on November 30 saying that he had 30 days to vacate. The selectmen said the owner ignores such letters. The land court issued the judgment, town counsel prepared the letter, and the chief of police served it. The action has taken three years (the town began the process on October 3, 2014). Curt Wilton recused himself from the discussion because he said he might be related to the property owners.

Annual Liquor and Auto License Renewals

There is no debate on renewing the town's liquor licenses, which are the same as last year. The Board of Selectmen will sign the licenses, and tax collector June Biggs will check that all taxes are paid.

Regarding auto licenses (junk and used), the selectmen said John D'Aniello, owner of Troy's Garage at 7 Albany Road, has two auto licenses that are past due and payable by the end of 2017. Curt noted that licenses can be revoked at any time during the year for an infraction.

Curt said that, although he finds the license criteria vague, the most important criterion is that autos be kept on the license holder's property. The selectmen agreed that the criterion will be noted on each license. They also agreed that it is the responsibility of the neighbor on whose property the autos are improperly located to fight the violation of the license criteria. The selectmen said it will not be their responsibility.

The selectmen said they had received a letter from Bob Thibeault about the difficulty of telling where one's own property is and about the lack of setback laws. Curt said that the selectmen had not had complaints about vehicles until last week. License holders have traditionally abided by license criteria and paid their license fees and received their licenses.

Curt urged that license issues be reviewed throughout the year rather than just at license renewal time. He said license holders need to be aware of their property lines; otherwise they might find their vehicles towed away. Curt said that because abutters are upset, and he feels uncomfortable about changing the licensing process or adding conditions, licensing should be on the Board of Selectmen's meeting agenda throughout the year.

Bernie Fallon suggested helping people comply with licensing criteria and limiting the number of vehicles allowed. Asked how far does John D'Aniello own toward the dam, Mark Webber replied, "Less than the length of this selectmen's meeting table" (about 12 feet). Mark advised the selectmen to leave it as is for now and put "stay on your property" on all licenses.


Annual Tax Rate Approval Notification

Mark informed the selectmen that the town's tax rate had been approved and is \$12.13, down 35 cents from \$12.48 last year.

Open Meeting: December 18, 2017

Action on Annual License Renewals

The Board of Selectmen approved all liquor and vehicle licenses, subject to the license holders paying the fees to the town and conforming to the terms of the licenses and with regard to vehicle licenses in particular, keeping all vehicles on the license holder's property. □



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Santa's Wish List:

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

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



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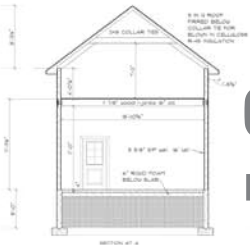
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On the Home Front

By Thom Lipiczky

Grab Bars & Molly Bolts for a Safer New Year

Susan F. from town asked about how to attach a grab bar to a shower. The answer to this follows, but it brings up the whole question of making our houses safer and more user friendly, especially for those of us who are getting older. I'm sure this doesn't pertain to *you*, but you may *know* someone who, like me, is approaching geezerhood. More on this later. If I remember.

So the task at hand is to install a grab bar to a shower—let's assume one with tiled walls. Grab bars come in a wide variety of lengths, thicknesses, weight capacities, and means of attachment. But let's assume Susan wants a safety grab bar 18 to 24 inches long to go on one wall of her shower. And she'd like one either in stainless steel finish or white to match her tub.

A quick look online reveals many possibilities, and most are less than \$25. The model I've installed most is one that screws into the wall studs behind the shower wall for maximum support. This requires finding the framing, and it's not always so easy. If the shower tile does not extend all the way to the ceiling, you can often use a so-called stud finder to locate the framing behind the sheetrock above the tile, and then use a level to determine the studs behind the tile.

Figure out if the bar will be set vertically, horizontally, or diagonally, and use the holes on the bar to mark the location of the holes at either end. A Sharpie makes this easy. Double-check that both ends will hit a stud. Then you'll need a drill with a bit that will cut through ceramic tile. Once you've drilled through the tile, use stainless steel screws to attach the bar. A dab of waterproof caulk around the holes is a good idea.

If studs are impossible to find, you *could* use heavy-duty molly bolts that use a spring-loaded bar to expand behind the tile backerboard, but I'd feel more secure knowing the bar is solidly attached to a framing member. Drill-free models are also available, some of which attach to a smooth surface like ceramic tile or plastic shower surrounds. Some of these use suction cups; some use adhesive.

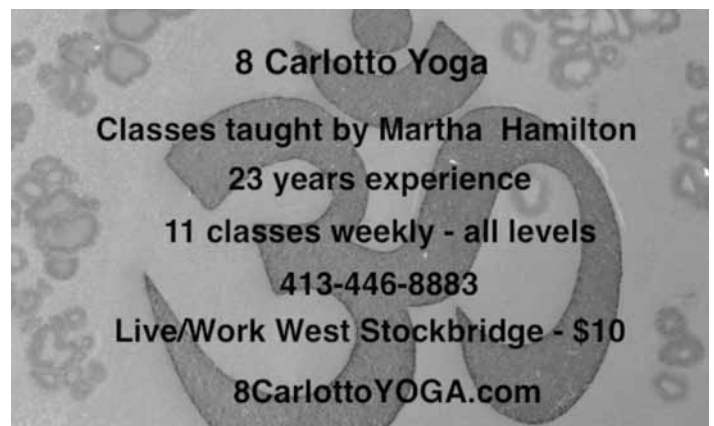
The Americans with Disabilities Act (www.ada.gov) issued guidelines in 2010 for "accessible design." These standards provide information items such as grab bars, wheelchair access, ramps, restrooms, handrails, and so forth, so citizens with limited mobility can get around safely. (Yeah, yeah, I know—more jackbooted government thugs in black helicopters making our lives unbearable.)

Susan also wanted to know who she could get to install a grab bar if she didn't want to do it herself. She said that finding a capable carpenter to do small jobs is difficult. I mentioned Geezers with Skills, a group of semiretired contractors and carpenters who are "looking to get out of the house" and are licensed and insured. They advertise in the *Local Yoke!*

Happy New Year, and feel free to send questions and comments to me at info@thelocalyokel.org.



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January Art Calendar

Art Demonstration and Business Meeting: Wed., Jan. 3. Seminar, 4 p.m., How to make your own website (bring 2-5 images on iPhone or memory stick); 5-6:30 p.m., Business meeting and planning in small groups. Community Room, Town Offices, 21 Stateline Road (Rte. 102), West Stockbridge

Meet the Artist: Michael Bufis, Photographer: Thurs., Jan. 4, 12:15-1:30 p.m., No. Six Depot, West Stockbridge

Shaker Mill Inn Art Exhibit Reception: Thurs., Jan. 4, 4-6 p.m. More than 50 works by local artists. A rare chance to see the works and some of the nine beautiful rooms at the inn. Light refreshments served. 7 Albany Rd., West Stockbridge

First Sunday at Clark Museum: Sun., Jan. 7, 10 a.m. -5 p.m. The first Sundays of the month are free October to May; carpool available

Still Life Painting, Drawing, and Photography, Hancock Shaker Village (HSV): Mondays, Jan. 8, 22, 29 through end of March except holidays, 1-3:30 p.m. You must reserve and bring all your own supplies including drop cloths. Free to guild members with membership in HSV or NARM. RSVP: kcarmean@gmail.com

Member Potluck and Movie Night: Wed., Jan. 10, 5:30 potluck; 7 p.m. movie. Bring main dish, hors d'oeuvres, or dessert for 10 and what you want to drink. Partners welcome. RSVP: aaub@yahoo.com

Meet the Artist: Bill Gaulty, Painter of Oils and Watercolor: Wed., Jan. 17, 12:15-1:30 p.m., at his second-floor studio over lunch, West Stockbridge. RSVP for address and reservation.

Art Book Gathering: Fri., Jan. 26, 3:30-5 p.m. Share a favorite book, artist, process. Shaker Dam Books, West Stockbridge. Host Mark Mellinger. RSVP

Figure Painting, Open Studio: Tuesdays, Feb. 6-May 1, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. IS 183, Stockbridge. \$25; \$20 for members. Bring your own supplies. RSVP (413) 298-5252, ext. 100

Guild of Berkshire Artists

Formerly Richmond-West Stockbridge Artists Guild

RSVP: rwsag.org "Our Programs." See Facebook

Recent Works



Doane Perry



Carol Kelly



Rich Talbert

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See Photos of Work
On Facebook "Berkshire Local Art:
Shaker Mill Inn"

Guild of Berkshire Artists
Formerly Richmond-West Stockbridge Artists
Guild
RSVP: rwsag.org "Our
Programs: Art Around Town" and
Facebook

Join us for a rare opportunity to see some of the nine rooms decorated with art by local artists and enjoy light refreshments at the Shaker Mill Inn. This exhibit rotates and other artists will be added. Representative works by artists in the show, clockwise from top left: Walt Pasko, Susan Sabino, Keith Emerling, Anne Pasko, Joan Sewall, Peg Dotchin, Marilyn Orner and Bill Gaulty. You may see the work, background information and contact the artist on the Facebook page "Berkshire Local Art: Shaker Mill Inn." To RSVP and for more information contact Karen Carmean at kcarmean@gmail.com



A Record Turnout for the Chamber Players' Winter Concert— On One of the Coldest Nights of the Year

By Liza Bennett

As Robert Salerno, president of the West Stockbridge Historical Society, noted in his opening remarks, the West Stockbridge Chamber Players have developed a loyal following not unlike that of rock-star groupies. It was near zero degrees outside, but the West Stockbridge Congregational Church was filled to capacity on the evening of December 28 to hear this world-class ensemble. Salerno thanked the Players for their time and generosity in support of the Campaign to Restore the Old Town Hall. Due to their efforts and those of so many in the audience, the most important and ambitious phase of the restoration (making the building ADA compliant) will begin early in the new year.

The evening's program, curated by the Players' artistic director Catherine Hudgins, began with a lovely rendition of Gustav Mahler's *Des Antonius von Padua*

Fischpredigt performed by soprano Margaret Felice and pianist Sayuri Miyamoto. Cellist William Rounds introduced the next work, Schubert's Arpeggione Sonata, D. 821, explaining that the now virtually extinct arpeggione was invented as a cross between a cello and a guitar in 1823. Though it never took off as an instrument, composers immediately began writing music for it. "This sonata is a real treasure," Rounds said, "you can easily imagine it being played in one of the great Viennese coffeehouses." Accompanied by pianist Sayuri Miyamoto, Rounds then gave an affecting performance of the melodious and moving piece.

After the intermission, clarinetist Catherine Hudgins joined Margaret Felice and Sayuri Miyamoto for Schubert's *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen*, D. 965, a beautiful, occasionally dark showpiece that was written toward the end of the composer's life. Hudgins then introduced the evening's final offering by the little known Austrian composer Alexander von Zemlinsky. She pointed out that each of the composers she chose for the evening's program were born or lived in Vienna—and that city's soaring musical spirit seemed to fill the Congregational Church as Hudgins, Rounds, and Miyamoto performed Zemlinsky's rarely heard Clarinet Trio, Op. 3.

The festivities continued at a reception in Connie Eagan's home next door to the church where the appreciative audience was able to mingle and talk with the musicians.



Top: William Rounds and Sayuri Miyamoto perform Schubert's Sonata

Right above: Margaret Felice accompanied by Ms. Miyamoto sings Mahler

Right below: Catherine Hudgins, Ms. Miyamoto, and Mr. Rounds prepare to play

Photos by Carol Kuller

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Bill Graulty

*Bill
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At his second-
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www.rwsag.org "Our
 Programs: Meet the Artist" and
 Facebook

Join Bill Graulty on Wed., Jan. 17, at his studio in West Stockbridge from 12:15 to 1:30 pm for an informal discussion over lunch. You will be able to ask him questions. RSVP to reserve a spot and get the address:
<http://www.signugenius.com/go/4090544a5a72ca7fa7-meet> or, if necessary, kcarmean@gmail.com. A native of Connecticut, Bill has lived in the Berkshires for over 40 years. He recently entered a new phase of creativity following a career that included broadcast journalism and marketing communications. He has been in more than 15 shows this past year.

Bill Graulty of West Stockbridge, Mass., is a painter of New England landscapes, interiors, and still lifes in oils and watercolors. He is largely self-taught, a process that continues every day. The hills, fields, rivers and ponds, as well as barns, boats, and bridges provide subjects that inspire quiet reflection. "I am also inspired by rural and coastal places and to seasonal changes—the end of winter, for example, or the coming of fall or a late-season storm. These are places and conditions that create a certain tension that I try to convey in my paintings."

Meet the Artist 2018

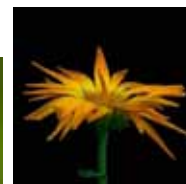
Mike Bufis

*Mike
Bufis*

Photographer

*"I use the art of photography
 as a way to share moments I've
 encountered in the natural and
 man-made world around me."*

*"I invite you to walk with me.
 Explore.
 Examine.
 Enjoy.
 And take a little snippet of
 our world with you."*



Thurs., Jan. 4
 12:15–1:30pm

Six Depot,
 West Stockbridge

Richmond-West Stockbridge
 Artists' Guild/Guild of
 Berkshire Artists
www.rwsag.org "Our
 Programs: Meet the Artist" and
 Facebook

Join Mike Bufis on Thursday, January 4, at Six Depot, West Stockbridge, from 12:15 to 1:30 p.m. for an informal discussion over lunch. You will be able to ask him questions. RSVP: <http://www.signugenius.com/go/4090544a5a72ca7fa7-meet> or, if necessary, kcarmean@gmail.com.

Michael Bufis is an award-winning fine art photographer specializing in landscape and nature photography. Born and raised in the bucolic Berkshire Hills of western Massachusetts, the beauty and artistry of his photographs are a result of the many moods of the glorious scenery that surrounds him. With a keen eye for capturing breathtaking light, color, and gesture, Michael reveals the fine details of that which is often overlooked. His images capture nature's hidden beauty, resulting in works of art that are close to his heart and evocative to the viewer.

Michael began his photography career in the U.S. Navy as a photographer aboard the USS Intrepid and later as a studio and candid photographer for high school and college yearbook layouts.

"Many of my images are serendipitous; the result of a snippet in time that I was fortunate to be a part of. Others are carefully crafted; born from the love and labor of extracting that essential element from a composition that brings to light a beauty otherwise unseen. As a result, I create photographs that transport you to my moment in time or to my vision of nature unveiled through my lens."

SELECTMEN'S CORNER

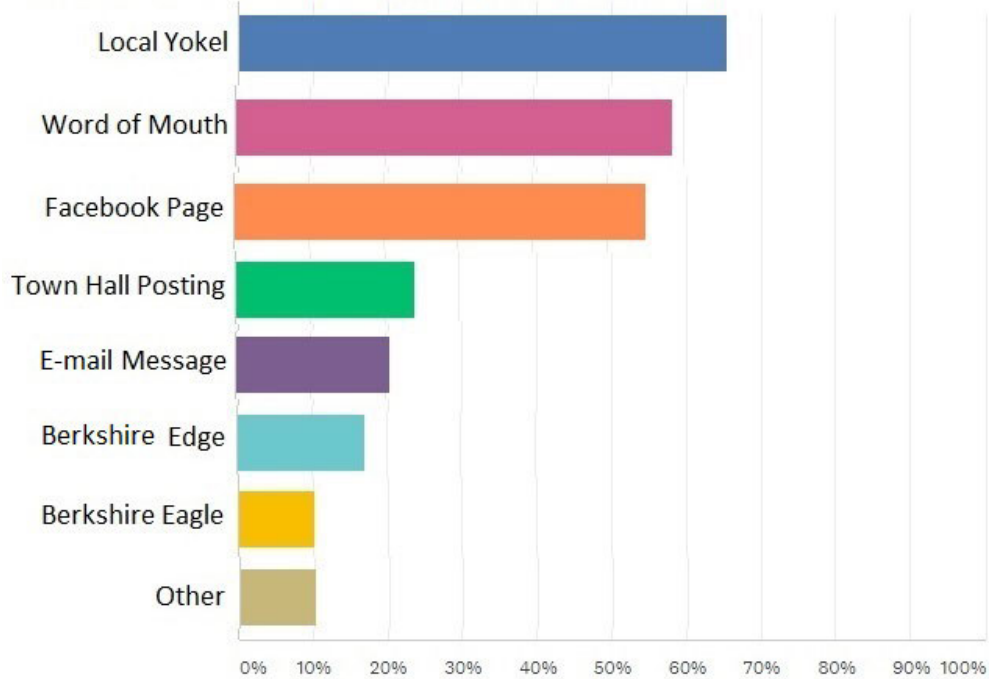
COMMUNICATION SURVEY RESULTS

BY THE WEST STOCKBRIDGE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

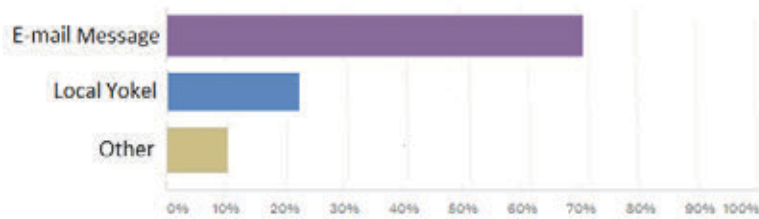
We received a fantastic response to the communication survey, for which just two questions were asked:

1. Which ways do you currently receive information from the town?
2. Which single way would you prefer to receive information from the town?

Current Communication (multiple responses per person)



Preferred Communication (one response per person)



While every form of communication will be respected and utilized, there was a clear preference for increased use of e-mail. As it stands, current communication showed use of e-mail at 20%. The current subscriber number to the West Stockbridge e-mail is around 120. The town welcomes an increase in subscribers to the e-mail list. Here's how:

Visit the town website, www.weststockbridge-ma.gov. On the left side of the home page under On Our Site, click on Subscribe to News. Enter your e-mail address and check the boxes for the information you would like to receive. Then click Send My Request. You will receive an e-mail asking you to confirm your subscription: reply to this message without changing the subject header.

Thank you for participating in the survey. Thank you for reading. We look forward to having you subscribed.

A Thank You From Kathy Young

Endless thanks to the community of West Stockbridge for your thoughts and prayers and cards for Raymond Dorazio. You sustained us through terrible times. Ray really appreciated all your encouragement and never gave up his efforts to return to the town and people he loved so much. Special thanks to John Elling and Clay Hall for their support and to so many others who still enable me to face the day-to-day challenges of life without Ray. I know he is smiling down on all of you.

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

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



Be sure to read about our very own *Podcast Rock Stars*, new West Stockbridge neighbors Rebecca Sheir and Eric Shimelonis, at www.berkshireeagle.com/stories/rock-stars-of-the-childrens-podcast-world.

Rebecca and Eric are the very talented and creative couple responsible for Circle Round, a storytelling podcast for children and the “young at heart.” Each segment at Boston NPR affiliate WBUR features traditional folktales served up in new ways and told by well-known performers.

Our favorite? “Why the Ocean Is Salty” with Lou Diamond Phillips. Find your favorite at www.WBUR.org, go to Programs and Podcasts, then Circle Round. Download the podcasts on iTunes by searching for “Circle Round” in the “Kids & Family” category. (We also love the coloring pages and thoughtful activities for each story.)

- ✱ Many thanks to Thom Lipiczky for designing and creating the classy new custom book supports on our shelves. He promises more to come!

NEW ADDITIONS

DVDs: *Game of Thrones*, season 7; *The Crown*, season 1, *Dunkirk*

FICTION

Berenson, *The Deceivers*
Bracht, *White Chrysanthemum*
Bruen, *Ghosts of Galway*
Burke, *Robicheaux*
Crais, *Wanted*
Elias, *Spring Break*
Harris, *Munich*
Ishiguru, *Buried Giant*

NONFICTION

Brazile, *Hacks*
Brown, *The Vanity Fair Diaries: 1983–1992*

NEW YOUNG ADULT FICTION

Brown, *Iron Gold: Book Four of Red Rising*
Hunter, *Warriors: Darkest Night*
Meyer, *Renegades*
Pullman, *The Book of Dust*

ONGOING

- Set up a C/WMARS online account by going to weststockbridgelibrary.org and clicking on the card catalog picture. Your personal account allows you to keep track of checkouts, requests, overdues and fees, pickup locations, renewals, and more.
- Can’t find what you need in our C/WMARS network? Click on the Commonwealth Catalog to borrow any item statewide.
- As always, we welcome suggestions on just about anything to improve our library.

Lee Appelbaum and Jodi Magner



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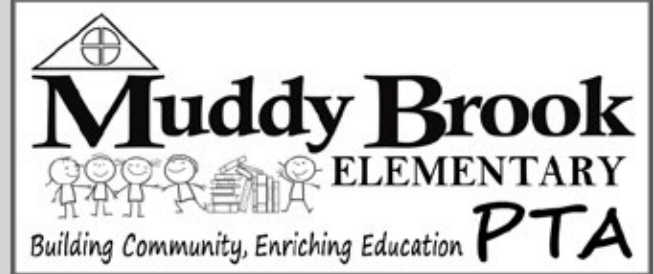


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THANK YOU!

On behalf of the entire Muddy Brook Elementary School community, we would like to thank everyone who donated and participated in our 2017 Online Auction. Thanks to you, we were able to raise \$14,000 for the school, \$2,000 more than last year! This money is key in funding a wide variety of valuable enrichment programming, field trips, in-school residency programs, nature and theater programs, and classroom materials. You have truly made a difference for the children in our community. We hope that your participation in the Muddy Brook PTO Online Auction was a positive experience and that we can continue to count on your support in the future.

Rewards for Muddy Brook

Clip and save Box Tops coupons from more than 330 participating products including Annie's, Nature Valley, Cheerios, Cascadian Farms, Ziploc, Lysol, and more. Each coupon is worth 10 cents when redeemed. Last year we earned over \$1,500 in box tops alone! Mail Box Tops to Muddy Brook Regional Elementary School PTA, 318 Monument Valley Road, Great Barrington, MA 01230.

Please join fellow parents and teachers in making this year very special for the students of Muddy Brook. Share your ideas, start something new, get involved, visit muddybrookpta.com, and like us on Facebook!

Thank you for your continued support.

The Local Yokel Needs You!

Would you enjoy being part of the team that produces this free monthly newsletter serving our community, now in its 10th year of publication?

Do you enjoy writing or photography? We need regular and occasional contributors on subjects of local interest.

Or would you like to lend a hand a few hours each month to help with distribution, mailing, and other projects?

Call John Parker at (413) 394-4368 or e-mail info@thelocalyokel.org for more information.



Poet's Corner

After giving it a good run of several months with diminishing returns, we are discontinuing the Poet's Corner. Many thanks to the contributors who shared their work. Stand by, all you creative folks—who knows what we'll come up with next?

Advertise here, just \$3.00
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and 10 cents for each
additional word



Send ads to *The Local Yokel* at
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West Stockbridge, MA 01266, or info@thelocalyokel.org



Birthdays & Anniversaries

- 1/12 Anne Roy
- 1/13 Abby Hallock
- 1/13 Jim Hallock
- 1/17 Peggy Bartlett
- 1/18 Jan O'Brien
- 1/19 Emma Seward
- 1/24 John Parker
- 1/29 Elizabeth Pietrafesa

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.

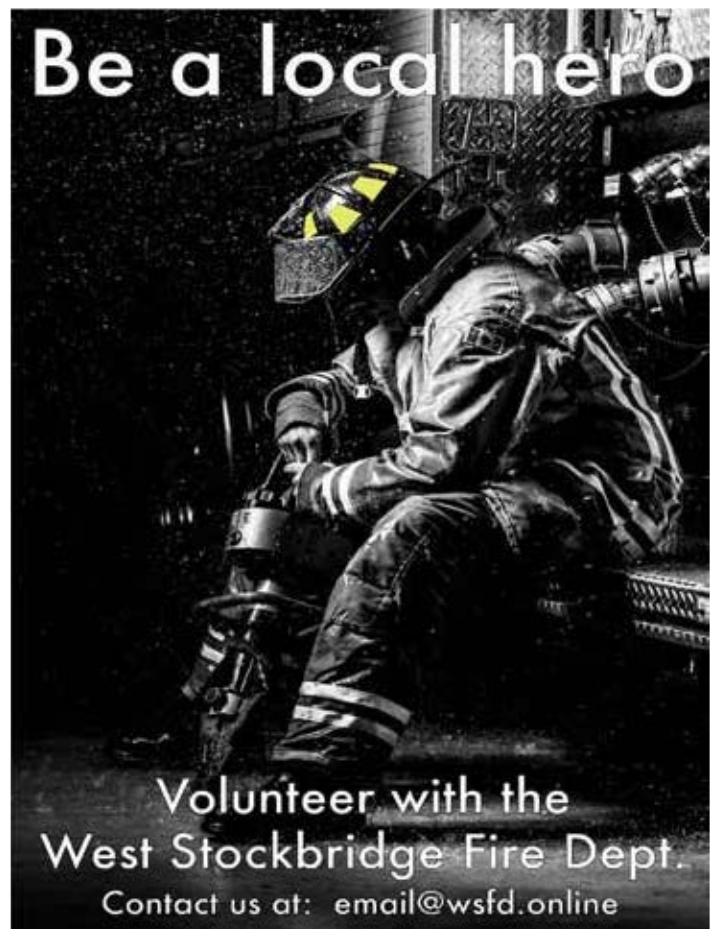
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OFFICE OF
PREPAREDNESS
AND EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT

All-hazard Preparedness Checklist

Before the Storm

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

During the Storm

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

After the Storm

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

Programs 2018

Still Life

Still Life

*Painting,
Photography,
Drawing*

Mondays
1:00–3:30 p.m.

Hancock
Shaker
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Pittsfield

Richmond-West Stockbridge
Artists' Guild/Guild of
Berkshire Artists
www.rwsag.org "Our
Programs: Meet the Artist" and
Facebook



*Works from top right: Bruce Panock, Keith Emerling,
Dana Goedewaagen, Karen Carmean.*

Join members on Mondays, 1–3:30 p.m., at Hancock Shaker Village. Each week Lesley Herzberg, the curator at Hancock Shaker Village, will select different artifacts to inspire us. We can bring flowers, fruits, and paint each other or the beautiful quilts and furnishings in the room. Please be sure to let us know you are coming. RSVP kcarmean@gmail.com or on our website for Still Life.

Free to members of the guild with Hancock Shaker Village or North American Regional Museum (NARM) membership. Bring all your supplies and a drop cloth. If Monday is a holiday, the Still Life Program will not be held.

Local yokel

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& the Shaker Dam Coffeehouse and Stanmeyer Gallery

Winter Parking Ban



The "Winter Parking Ban" is in effect from November 1 to April 30 between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. for all streets in West Stockbridge. Violations of this ban may result in a \$25 fine for parking in prohibited areas, or a \$50 fine for impeding snow removal. In addition, if the vehicle is impeding snow removal, it may be towed at the owner's expense.

The Municipal parking lot across from the Public Market and the parking area on Moscow Road where the public bathrooms are may be used for overnight off street parking. However, vehicles in those lots must be moved by 8:00 a.m. to allow the Department of Public Works to manage snow and ice removal.

Persons having questions about off street parking or the Winter off-street parking ban can call Mark Webber, Town Administrator at 413-232-0300 Extension 319.

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Community News & Events

Community Health Association

Blood pressure clinics are held Mondays and Wednesdays, 9–10 a.m., at the CHA office at the West Stockbridge Town Offices. For more information, contact Emilie Jarrett, RN, at 232-0122.

Stockbridge Grange Dinner

The Stockbridge Grange will host a baked beans and ham dinner in the Grange Hall at 51 Church Street on Sunday, January 14, from 1 to 2 p.m. Cost for adults is \$12; \$6 for children under 12. Takeout is available; call (413) 298-3185. In case of stormy weather, please call first to see if it has been canceled.

Council on Aging Potluck

Start the New Year off on the right foot with the Council on Aging potluck luncheon in the Town Offices Community Room on Tuesday, January 9, at 12 noon.

Send your notices for Community News & Events to the

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

Please send your Birthdays & Anniversaries to the Local Yokel.

We are happy to include them in the next issue.

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West Stockbridge History Quiz Answer:

Garrett (George) Troy had many roles in the life of our town. Born in the federal-style house on Lenox Road in 1884, he became the local Ford dealer, deputy county sheriff, and fire chief, town clerk, and treasurer. He built Troy's Garage (supposedly from bricks left over from the original 1850s railroad engine house.) When the town organized its fire department in 1928, the new fire truck was housed in rented space in George's garage, and he became the fire chief. He had a nose for opportunity and promotion.

Semipro baseball was a popular attraction in the 1920s and 1930s. George sensed an opportunity and formed the Troy's Garage baseball team. At that time, many towns had local teams and played each other and charged admission. Lee, Lenox, and Pittsfield had semipro teams, as did competitors further away in places such as Amenia, Copake, Troy, and Cohoes. Competition became strong, and there was a chance to make some money. When the game's popularity heated up and rivalries (and attendance) got intense, players were no longer local residents. The owners hired college stars and players from other semipro teams. George sensed this trend, and by 1934 he recruited serious semipro players to mount a formidable team. He didn't like to lose.

In July 1935, George arranged (and paid for) an exhibition match with a major-league team, the popular Connie Mack's Philadelphia A's. They were on their way back from Boston during the first ever All-Star break. (The A's were the Yankees or Red Sox of the time, and player contracts and professional pay scales were much different.) Over 3,500 people attended the game at Keresey Field, the space across from the town cemetery on Route 41. Local boys tended to the game, maintaining the scoreboard and lights. It was a huge event. Troy's Garage lost the game 9-5, but the promotion was well worth it. That year and in later years, George arranged other major-league exhibitions with the Cincinnati Reds and the Boston Braves, but the game with the A's was the most famous. (George was one of the largest Ford dealers in the Northeast during those years.)

Semipro ball continued in the area until 1941 when many players went into the service. After World War II, baseball was on its way to becoming the big business it is today. George Troy died in 1946, the garage changed hands, Keresey Field is just grass now, and major-league teams no longer stop in West Stockbridge to play exhibition games with Troy's Garage.



Garrett Troy, photo taken on Main Street at the 1924 150-year town celebration. Photo from the West Stockbridge Historical Society collection.

Every issue costs us about \$1,300 to print and distribute!

Please help us keep the Local Yokel coming!

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

☐ **yes!** I want to support the *Local Yokel*.

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Animal Control	<i>John W. Springstube</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.
Board of Selectmen	<i>Bernie Fallon, Peter Skorput, Curt G. Wilton</i>			
Administrative Assistant	<i>Mark Webber</i>	232-0300	ext. 319	Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri. 8:30 a.m.–4:30 p.m.
Building Inspector	<i>Brian Duval</i>	232-0300	ext. 313	Sat. 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
Conservation Commission	<i>Jennifer Kujawski, Lori Rose</i>	232-0300	ext. 338	Leave Message for Inquiries
Council on Aging	<i>John Zick</i>	232-0300	ext. 340	Leave Message for Inquiries
Emergency Management	<i>Louis Oggiani</i>	528-2175		
Fire Department	<i>Peter Skorput</i>	232-4200 (non-emergency)		Mon. 6:30–9 p.m.
Highway Department	<i>Curt G. Wilton</i>	232-0305		Leave Message for Inquiries
Library	<i>Lee Appelbaum</i>	232-0300	ext. 308	Tues. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; Wed., Thurs., and Fri. 2–6 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m.–2 p.m.; closed Sun. & Mon.
Police Department	<i>Marc Portieri</i>	232-8500 (non-emergency)	24 hours, 7 days/week	
Post Office	<i>Colleen A. Wich</i>	232-8544		Lobby: 7 a.m.–7 p.m.; 7 days/week; Window: Mon.–Fri. 9 a.m.–4:30 p.m.; Sat. 9 a.m.–12 noon
Seasonal Lifeguard		232-0315		
Sewer & Water Commission	<i>Michael Buffoni</i>	232-0309		
Town Accountant	<i>Elaine Markham</i>	232-0300	ext. 317	Leave Message for Inquiries
Town Clerk	<i>Ronni Barrett</i>	232-0300	ext. 300	Tues. & Thurs. 1:30–4 p.m.
Town Collector	<i>June A. Biggs</i>	232-0300	ext. 302	Wed. 3–6 p.m.; Thurs. and Fri. 10 a.m.–2 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m.–1 p.m.
Town Historian	<i>Robert Salerno</i>	232-4465		
Town Treasurer	<i>Karen Williams</i>	232-0300	ext. 316	Thurs. 9 a.m.–4 p.m.
Transfer Station	<i>Wayne Cooper</i>	232-0307		Tues. & Thurs. 10 a.m.–6 p.m. and Sat. 8 a.m.–6 p.m.
Tree Warden	<i>Andrew Fudge</i>	232-4322		
Veterans Agency	<i>Laurie Hills</i>	528-1580		
Zoning Board of Appeals	<i>C. Randolph Thunfors</i>	232-0300	ext. 300	

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

Old Town Hall Construction Update

By Bob Salerno

It seems like it has been a long road, but we're starting to see the light at the end of something Weather permitting, our contractor, Grayhouse Partners, will be starting major construction on the Old Town Hall in early January. This phase of the work is the largest and most important part of the building renovation.

The scope of the project is to construct the service extension to the historic building containing an elevator and two new bathrooms and to provide direct grade-level access (no stairs, no elevator) to the second floor from the upper parking lot. In addition, this will require upgrading the plumbing and electrical infrastructure, some of it dating back over 50 years.

The elevator between the first and second floors and new bathrooms are required to meet ADA accessibility requirements. Anyone who has walked up the stairs or used the old bathrooms on the first floor will appreciate this new extension. The second-floor grade-level entrance is necessary for proper emergency exits. It allows adequate protection without needing to install and maintain an expensive sprinkler system. All this work is part of our master plan to meet building code and accessibility requirements so we can increase the use of the building.

None of this comes free, of course. We have been fortunate in securing matching grants from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the Jane and Jack Fitzpatrick Trust, and the Aegon Transamerica Foundation. Our members and donors have been, and continue to be, generous in supporting this effort for the Historical Society and the town. The funding is almost all in place, and barring any major surprises, we hope to have it all in place this spring.

We are targeting completion for late May or early June, again depending on weather. Once the service extension is completed, we plan to start working on refurbishing the interior—scraping and painting and opening up the old police station space for displays and receptions. But that's all down the road. We're so happy to have gotten to this stage with the support of our members and the West Stockbridge community. This centerpiece of our town is something we should all be proud of.



*The project will add an elevator, two new bathrooms, and provide grade-level access to the second floor from the upper parking lot.
Photo by Bob Salerno*



Wayne Cooper, our Transfer Station Santa. Photo by Doane Perry

West Stockbridge
Local Yokel

P.O. Box 238
 West Stockbridge, MA
 01266



January 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

January 2018 Calendar of Events

1/1	New Year's Day		
1/3	Knitters & More	2-4 p.m.	Town Offices Community Room
1/4	Board of Health meeting	6:30 p.m.	Town Offices
1/8	Board of Selectmen meeting	7 p.m.	Town Offices
1/9	Council on Aging Potluck Luncheon	12 noon	Town Offices Community Room
1/9	American Legion	7 p.m.	Town Offices
1/10	Knitters & More	2-4 p.m.	Town Offices Community Room
1/14	Grange Dinner	1-2 p.m.	Grange Hall, 51 Church Street, Stockbridge
1/15	Martin Luther King Jr. Day		
1/15	*** Deadline for the next Local Yokel ***		send to info@thelocalyokel.org
1/17	Knitters & More	2-4 p.m.	Town Offices Community Room
1/24	Knitters & More	2-4 p.m.	Town Offices Community Room
1/31	Knitters & More	2-4 p.m.	Town Offices Community Room