

# Local yokel

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

West  
Stockbridge

May  
2021

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY SINCE 2005



Mother's  
Day

Annual Town Meeting  
&  
Election – Details Inside!

Memorial  
Day

*Crocuses in a West Stockbridge garden. Photo by John Parker*



# West Stockbridge Grange Plans Award Presentation

By Stuart Shapiro, President,  
West Stockbridge Grange #246

The West Stockbridge Grange #246 will present the National Grange Community Award to Lisa Parker at the Stockbridge Grange Hall, located at 51 Church Street, Stockbridge, on May 10 at 6:30 p.m.

The grange is grateful to her for many years of service to the town of West Stockbridge. She is responsible for planting and caring for the beautiful gardens and planters in public spaces around town, making it an inviting place to visit.

The short ceremony is open to the public; all her friends are welcome to honor her.



Route 41 planting.  
Photo by Lisa Parker



Old Town Hall containers.  
Photo by John Parker



Post Office container.  
Photo by John Parker

## May Art Calendar

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

2021

**May - Sept, Summer Online Art Show:**  
More details coming soon on our site.  
Visit [www.berkshireartists.org](http://www.berkshireartists.org) for more info.

**May 3 & 17, Procrastinator's Challenge!**  
10-11am. GBA members can join Diane Firtell for a jumpstart on their creative productivity via Zoom.

**May 10, Collage & Mixed Media Workshop,**  
1-3 p.m. Join Marion Grant for Collage & Mixed Media online using Zoom.

**May 11 & 25, Positive Critique, 7:30-8:30 p.m.** Join Michele Caplan for a positive critique session for Guild members via Zoom.

**May 23, Berkshire Photo Gathering, 2-4pm.** Online. See following webpage for more information: [berkshirephotogathering.com/online-meetings](http://berkshirephotogathering.com/online-meetings)

**May 27, Art Book Gathering, 9:30-11am.** Share a favorite book: artist, or process. RSVP: [berkshireartists@gmail.com](mailto:berkshireartists@gmail.com)

**TUESDAYS, Snapseed Workshop,**  
1:30-2:30pm. Work on mobile photo editing with others via Zoom.

**TUESDAYS, Demo or Seminar, 3pm.** Watch an artist demonstrate their creative process each week via Zoom.

**Art Together:** Join GBA artists together online using Zoom.

**WEDNESDAYS, 9 - 11:30am**

**WEDNESDAYS, 6:30 - 8:30pm**

**FRIDAYS, 2 - 4:45pm**

**FRIDAYS, Meet the Artist, 5 - 6pm.** Join a different artist each week to gain an insight into their processes and art.

### Procrastinator's Challenge!



Join Diane Firtell for a jumpstart on your week's productivity! Discuss projects and ask for help taking that next step.

First & Third Mondays 10-11am

See website for more details.

Don't miss out on some of our inspiring weekly programs and special presentations this month!

### Artist Seminar



Marion Grant  
100 Years of  
Collage & Mixed  
Media

Tues, May 11  
@ 3:00pm  
in collaboration  
with the Lenox  
Library

See our website  
for details.

## THE WEST STOCKBRIDGE CHAMBER PLAYERS Spring Concert

TurnPark Art Space, West Stockbridge  
Sunday, May 30, 2021 at 5 pm

(Rain date Monday, May 31, 2021 at 4 pm)

Catherine Hudgins, clarinet • Sheila Fiekowsky, violin  
Lisa Crockett, violin • Daniel Getz, viola • Oliver Aldort, cello

Glazunov: *Rêverie orientale* for Clarinet and String Quartet

Dohnányi: *Serenade in C major* for String Trio, Op. 10

Weber: *Clarinet Quintet in B-flat major*, Op. 34

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[www.weststockbridgehistory.org](http://www.weststockbridgehistory.org)  
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# 2021 Annual Town Meeting and Town Election: What You Need to Know



There will be a special town meeting before the annual town meeting this year.

Both the special town meeting and the annual town meeting will take place at the Town Offices on May 3, rain or shine. The meeting will be outdoors, and voters will remain in their cars. Only registered voters can attend (it is OK if parents bring along their children in the car). As voters arrive, workers will check people in and hand them their Town Report and warrant and a bright-colored card for voting. Voters will receive instructions on how to listen to the meeting on an FM station on their car radio. Police will direct parking in the lot facing the gym, where there will be a platform with the clerk, Select Board members, moderator, and town administrator. The meeting can be heard via a microphone as well as the broadcast on car radios. To vote, participants will display their card outside their car window.

The special town meeting has one article: to allow the 2020 annual town meeting article for \$6,000 gear racks for the Fire Department to be used as part of its general equipment.

The annual town meeting will begin right after that vote on the equipment. Copies of both warrants are available on the town website, <https://www.weststockbridge-ma.gov/home/news/2021-annual-town-meeting-and-annual-town-election-information>. Town reports will be handed out to voters as they arrive at the meeting. They will also be available a week later at the town election and at the Transfer Station.

The annual town election will be held in the Town Offices in the gym on Monday, May 10, from 10 a.m. until 7 p.m. Early voting ballots for the election will be available by mail. If you would like a ballot mailed to you, please visit the Town Clerk page of the town website and print an Early Voting ballot application, located in the blue tabs on the left-hand side. Complete the application, and mail to the town clerk or place in the drop box to the left of the main door at the Town Offices. The town clerk will then mail the ballot to you. The ballot can be returned by placing it in the drop box or mailing it back to the clerk.

If you have any questions, please contact Town Clerk Ronni Barrett at 232-0300, ext. 300, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:30 to 4 p.m.

<b>COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS TOWN OF WEST STOCKBRIDGE ANNUAL TOWN CAUCUS</b>		
<b>MARCH 23, 2021, 7:00 PM, Village School Town Offices, 21 State Line Rd.</b>		
<u>Elected Office</u>	<u>Term Length</u>	<u>Incumbent</u>
Moderator	1-year	Eugene Dellea
Select Board	3-years	Roger Kavanagh
Board of Assessors	3-years	Susan Lupo
Finance Committee	3-years	Daniel Buchler
Finance Committee	3-years	Frank Landsberger (Appointed)
Planning Board	5-years	Sue Coxon
Board of Health	1-year	Earl Moffatt (Appointed)
Board of Health	3-years	Luci Leonard
Library Trustees	1-year	Gail Garrick (Appointed)
Library Trustees	3-years	Beth Sack
Cemetery Commission	3-years	Earl Moffatt
<i>As of the time of publication, no additional candidates had come forward.</i>		



# Annual Town Budget & Warrant Highlights FY 2022

## To the Townspeople of West Stockbridge:

The best news about the FY22 budget you are being asked to approve is that it is only 0.9% higher than the FY21 budget. This reflects the work done by all town departments to try to hold their budgets flat to FY21, plus the very uncommon occurrence of a 3.2% decrease in the town's required contribution to the FY22 Berkshire Hills Regional School District budget. This decrease has helped offset increases in nondiscretionary budget items, such as retirement plan contributions, solid waste transfer, health insurance, and contracted services, as well as discretionary budget increases that will expand and improve town services.

I believe this budget strikes a reasonable balance between fiscal restraint in a challenging economic environment and responsible incremental spending necessary to ensure the continuity of services we all expect the town to provide.

As you review the articles in the town meeting warrant, you may find a few that aren't exactly self-explanatory. I selected three that I think fall into that category and have provided an explanation in the notes below. I hope this helps.

Roger Kavanagh, Select Board Chair

## Article 11:

This article asks the townspeople to add a new bylaw that governs the creation and operation of a Community Preservation Committee. This committee will administer the West Stockbridge Community Preservation Fund.

## Article 12:

This article asks the townspeople to amend the current general bylaws covering the issuance and renewal of class I, II, III (new/used/junk) vehicle business licenses. The amendment adds language about compliance with, and enforcement of, the bylaw.

## Article 14:

This article asks the townspeople to authorize the Select Board to request special legislation that will permit Fire Chief Steve Traver to work as the West Stockbridge Fire Chief past the mandatory retirement age of 65. Approval will enable the Select Board to request the same special legislation that has already been approved for Chief Traver in the town of Richmond.



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# 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 are on Zoom and may be viewed by clicking on the link in the meeting agenda posted on the town website calendar. Residents can receive e-mail notification of town events and meeting agendas by subscribing at <http://weststockbridgema.virtualltownhall.net/subscriber>].

## Select Board Special Meeting Minutes Meeting via Zoom March 1, 2021

Open Meeting

**Quorum present:** Roger Kavanagh, Select Board Chair, Eric Shimelonis and Kathleen Keresey, Select Board Members, and Marie Ryan, Town Administrator.

**Other Attendees:** Police Chief Marc Portieri, Police Officer Brandon Messina and Public Works Director Curt Wilton

Roger called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.

Eric made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 27, 2021, February 1, 2021 and February 16, 2021, seconded by Kathleen.

Roll call vote:

**Eric, Yes Roger, Yes Kathleen, Yes**

Motion Passed.

### Town Administrator Updates:

- No further responses have been received for the request for community input in regards to the draft Host Community Agreement that is posted on the website.
- The draft of the amended Town bylaw Chapter 240 Vehicles and Traffic has been submitted to Town Counsel for review.

### Appointment of Brandon Messina as Full-Time Officer:

Eric made a motion to appoint Brandon Messina as a full-time Police Officer, seconded by Kathleen.

Roll call vote:

**Eric, Yes Roger, Yes Kathleen, Yes**

Motion Passed.

### Card Lake Inn Parking Lot:

Roger stated that a resident submitted a complaint to the Board about residents of the Card Lake Inn apartments using the Town owned parking lot on Main Street instead of their own upper parking lot behind the building.

After discussion, the Board asked Marie to write a letter to remind the residents that there is Winter Parking Ban in which they may use the municipal parking lot but need to remove their vehicles in a timely manner for plowing to be completed. Marie will respond to the complainant as well.

### Select Board Speak:

Roger informed the board that the Regional School District Planning Board was notified that they have been awarded the full \$125,000 grant they applied for. This award will decrease the requested amount from each member town. The Town will receive a letter stating the new requested amount.

Eric stated that the USDA Rural Development grant he has been working on, if awarded, will be 15% of the purchase price for the new Fire Chief vehicle and the DPW large plow truck. The Town must first officially commit the funds via town vote in the annual then is eligible to receive the grant money.

### Citizen Speak:

No comments.

Kathleen made a motion to adjourn at 6:41 PM, Eric seconded.

Roll call vote:

**Eric, Yes Roger, Yes Kathleen, Yes**

Motion Passed.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

*Marie Y. Ryan*

Town Administrator

Documents:

Brandon Messina Offer Letter to Full-Time Police Officer

## Select Board and Finance Committee Joint Meeting Minutes Meeting via Zoom March 8, 2021

Open Meeting

**Quorum present:** Roger Kavanagh, Select Board Chair, Eric Shimelonis and Kathleen Keresey, Select Board Members, and Marie Ryan, Town Administrator.

Finance Committee: Bob Salerno, Frank Landsberger, Andrew Krouss and Dan Buehler.

**Others Present:** Curt Wilton, Public Works Director, Marc Portieri Police Chief and Building Inspector Brian DuVal.

Roger called the meeting to order at 6:03 PM.

Roger stated all who were in attendance.

Approval of Minutes from the March 3, 2021 Select Board and Finance Committee joint Budget meeting:

SB: Roger made a motion to approve the minutes, Kathleen seconded.

Roll Call vote:

**Eric, Yes Roger, Yes Kathleen, Yes**

FC: Bob made a motion to approve the minutes, Andy seconded.

Roll Call vote:

**Bob, Yes Andrew, Yes Frank, Yes Dan, Yes**

**Local Yoke!** Continuing a discussion from an earlier budget meeting about paying the Local Yoke! to publish Select Board meeting minutes, Bob Salerno stated the Local Yoke! fee for publishing is \$120 per page and suggested that the Select Board add to the FY22 Budget \$4000 to pay for the publishing of the Select Board minutes. After discussion, the Finance Committee and the Select Board both agreed to add \$4000 to the Select Board expense line item to pay per invoice to the Local Yoke! for publishing the Select Board minutes.

...continued on page 9



**WEST STOCKBRIDGE  
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# Wisdom Masonic Lodge Cites Charitable Efforts

Wisdom Masonic Lodge A.F. & A.M. was chartered in 1803 and has served as a charitable entity in West Stockbridge for 218 years. Membership has ebbed and flowed, ranging from nearly 90 active members at its peak to a total of 44 today. Several notable residents have been on its rolls.

But our purpose today is not to revisit local history but to call public attention to our recent charitable endeavors.

For the past five years, Wisdom Lodge has sponsored a local golf tournament for the purpose of contributing to the needs of others, and 2020 was indeed a challenge. The traditional June tournament was delayed until August because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the results were fruitful through the generosity of many and the lineup of teams participating.



*Santa and friends.*

We donated 100% of the proceeds to help those locally in a time of need and social isolation.

Berkshire County Emergency Management and the Western Mass Food Pantry each received \$2,000 donations. Soldier On received \$500, with another \$500 in matching funds contributed by the Grand Lodge of Masons in Massachusetts. A \$500 contribution was awarded to the Richmond/West Stockbridge Community Summer Lunch Program for those isolated because of the pandemic. Helping Hands, sponsored by the West Stockbridge Police, received \$500 plus incidentals for underprivileged families and kids in Central and South Berkshire at the holidays. When the West Stockbridge Congregational Church pastor reached out to help an elderly couple in need of assistance, Lodge members responded with financial and hands-on support, funding and constructing a new front-access deck and disability ramp for their mobile home.

We welcome good men 18 years of age or older interested in helping their community and their fellow citizens. For more information, call (413) 232-8553 or (413) 446-3096.



*Helping to build a deck and ramp.*



*The Masons' annual golf tournament is held at Donny Brook Country Club in Lanesborough. Shown (left to right) are Peter Culbertson, Chris Lyndsay, Richard Maggio (Master of Masons in MA), and Chris Tonini.*

*Photos courtesy of Wisdom Masonic Lodge*



# Monterey Softball



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**Alternate Building Inspector:** Building Inspector Brian DuVal requested to add \$250 to his FY22 Budget to give the Alternate Building Inspector Paul Greene a stipend once a year for covering the Building Inspector position in his absence. The Finance Committee and the Select Board both approved adding this amount to the Building Inspector's FY22 Budget.

At this point, Select Board member Eric Shimelonis had to leave the meeting at 6:30 PM.

**Human Resource consulting services:** Roger requested \$5000 to be added to the Select Board expense line item to pay for a Human Resource consultant to help create some structure and provide guidance on several Human Resource management topics, including

- job descriptions
- position classifications (salaried exempt, salaried non-exempt and hourly)
- salary ranges for full-time and part-time positions
- salary increases
- employment agreements / contracts for leadership positions

After discussion, the Finance Committee recommended this to the Select Board, who then approved as well.

**Winterizing Public Restroom:** Kathleen inquired about the status of winterizing the public restroom. Curt stated that he is currently waiting to hear back from two contractors with an estimate. Curt suggested holding off on this project until next season and see what the Master Plan Committee has in mind, they may want to move the building to a better location in Town.

Andrew Krouss made a motion to adjourn at 7:15 PM, Bob seconded.

Roll call vote:

**Bob, Yes      Andrew, Yes      Frank, Yes      Dan, Yes**

Roger made a motion to adjourn, Kathleen seconded.

Roll call vote:

**Roger, Yes      Kathleen, Yes**

Motion Passed.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

*Marie Y. Ryan*

Town Administrator

**Select Board Special Meeting Minutes  
Meeting via Zoom  
March 15, 2021**

Open Meeting

**Quorum present:** Roger Kavanagh, Select Board Chair, Eric Shimelonis and Kathleen Keresey, Select Board Members, and Marie Ryan, Town Administrator.

Roger called the meeting to order at 5:01 PM.

The prior meeting minutes have not been finalized so they will be approved at the next meeting.

**Town Administrator Updates:**

- The Town Warrant for Town Meeting has been sent to Town Counsel for review.
- The Town Report is being prepared to be sent to the printers.
- Town Administrator Marie Ryan will be on vacation Wednesday, March 24-26<sup>th</sup>.

**Host Community Agreement Policy:**

There have been only three responses to the request for public input in regards to the draft Host Community Agreement Policy posted on the website.

All three Select Board Members agree that the draft is comprehensive and that they had done their due diligence in creating this policy.

Roger asked Marie to get more information on two items that need to be completed in the policy. The items in question are; the number of copies needed to be submitted with the application and the other item is the approximate cost for submission review. Marie will get this information and report back to the Board at the next meeting on March 29.

**Select Board Speak:**

Roger brought up the Winter Parking Ban issue that was discussed at the March 1 Select Board meeting. A resident had complained that residents living in the Card Lake Inn Apartments are parking in the municipal parking lot instead of utilizing the parking lot behind their building. Roger pointed out that nothing has been done to verify who owns the cars parked in the lot overnight. He suggested writing a letter to the owner of the property asking him to remind his tenants that they have a parking lot behind the building for their use, that there is a Winter Parking Ban still in effect and, if they are using the lot for overnight parking, they need to move their cars by 8AM in the morning. Eric and Kathleen agreed. Roger asked Marie to draft a letter for the Board to review.

Roger suggested inviting Earl Moffatt to an upcoming meeting to provide an update on the Hazardous Mitigation Plan status and to have an executive session to discuss the continuing legal issues being taken by the Board of Health. Marie said Earl is already on the agenda for the March 29 meeting and she will let him know about the topics we would like him to cover.

Kathleen said the Town's submission for the Winter Shared Streets Grant had a few issues that are being addressed. She created a wrap up power point presentation with assistance of the businesses that benefited from the awarded Shared Streets and Spaces Grant to be sent to Mass DOT. This presentation will be shared in the future.

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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](mailto:info@thelocalyokel.org), or visit [www.thelocalyokel.org](http://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](mailto:john.j.parker53@gmail.com); **Vicki Grayson**, 232-6131, [vicki.grayson@rocketmail.com](mailto:vicki.grayson@rocketmail.com); **Susan Fisher**, 232-4443, [suefish12@gmail.com](mailto:suefish12@gmail.com); **Anne Lesser**, 717-0277, [anne@annelessercommunications.com](mailto:anne@annelessercommunications.com); Designer: **Kim Bradway**, [kim@bloominarts.com](mailto: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.

# Kick Off the Summer Musical Season with the Acclaimed West Stockbridge Chamber Players' Memorial Day Benefit Concert at TurnPark Art Space

Continuing their hugely popular series of open-air concerts from last summer, the West Stockbridge Chamber Players will perform outdoors at TurnPark Art Space in West Stockbridge on Sunday, May 30, 2021, at 5 p.m. (rain date: May 31, 2021, at 4 p.m.). The program includes Alexander Glazunov's *Réverie orientale for Clarinet Quintet*, Ernő Dohnányi's *Serenade for string trio in C major, Op. 10*, and Carl Maria von Weber's *Clarinet Quintet in B-flat major, Op. 34*.

Led by clarinetist and artistic director Catherine Hudgins, the Chamber Players are a world-class ensemble of Boston and Berkshire-based musicians. Along with Hudgins, the concert will feature violinists Sheila Fiekowsky and Lisa Crockett, violist Daniel Getz, and cellist Oliver Aldort. With the generous help of the Chamber Players and the loyal audiences who flock to their concerts, the West Stockbridge Historical Society has been able to make tremendous strides over the past few years in turning the Old Town Hall—an iconic building that anchors West Stockbridge's downtown—into a community center, history museum, and acoustically perfect home for the West Stockbridge Chamber Players.

Tickets (\$35) can be reserved at [weststockbridgehistory.org](http://weststockbridgehistory.org). Attendance is limited: first come, first served. Strict social distancing protocols will be in place. Bring your own chairs. Ushers will be on hand to assist. Concert venue: TurnPark Art Space, 2 Moscow Road, West Stockbridge.

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## Select Board Meeting Minutes ...continued from page 9

Eric contacted Dana Bixby, Planning Board Chair and shared with her the most recent plans sent to the Board in regards to the Moscow Road purchase. Dana will review the plans from National Grid and compare to the plans the Master Plan Committee is working on and analyze how the two plans can be incorporated.

Eric mentioned that Fire Chief Steve Traver has been trying to retrieve Town owned Fire Department equipment from some past members. Eric and Steve will create a friendly letter encouraging the return of the equipment and have the letter delivered by the Police Chief.

### **Citizen Speak:**

No comments.

Kathleen made a motion to adjourn at 5:54 PM, Eric seconded.

Roll call vote:

**Eric, Yes      Roger, Yes      Kathleen, Yes**

Motion Passed.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

*Marie Y. Ryan*

Town Administrator

## Select Board Special Meeting Minutes Meeting via Zoom March 29, 2021

Open Meeting

**Quorum present:** Roger Kavanagh, Select Board Chair, Eric Shimelonis and Kathleen Keresey, Select Board Members, and Marie Ryan, Town Administrator.

**Others in Attendance:** Police Chief Marc Portieri, Board of Health Agent Earl Moffatt, Jeremy Kenny (Rouge Restaurant Manager) and Citizen Joe Roy, Jr.

Roger called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM.

Eric made a motion to approve the minutes from March 1, March 4, March 8 and March 15, 2021, seconded by Kathleen.

Roll call vote:

**Eric, Yes      Roger, Yes      Kathleen, Yes**

Motion Passed.

**Board of Health and Water and Sewer Commissioners updates:** Earl Moffatt, BOH Agent

Garbage dumped near the Pond on Swamp Road – Earl reported that he has sent a certified letter to the McGrath Family in regards to trash that was dumped near the edge of the pond behind their residence on Swamp Road. He has not received a response back from them to date. Earl suggests that the Board ask the Conservation Commission to investigate since this is not a hazardous waste issue and they would have jurisdiction over trash dumped near a waterway. Eric suggested that on Earth Day, he may be able to involve community volunteers to assist in the clean up of the trash. Eric will contact the McGraths and see if they will be willing to allow assistance. He will report back to the Board at the next meeting. The Board asked Marie to contact the Conservation Commission to get them involved,

Water & Sewer Commissioners – Earl reported the Commissioners have been meeting on a regular basis. They have much work to catch up on but are moving in the right direction.

Hazardous Mitigation Plan – The plan is being created by Foresight Land Services and the deadline to complete the plan is December 2021.

Board of Health Litigation status – The Board of Health had 10 violations in the past two years which resulted in litigation. All the cases are now settled.

### **Town Administrator Updates:**

Marie informed the Board, per Town Counsel, they may not have an executive session meeting in regards to the property that an owner is interested in either leasing or selling to the Town. They may go into executive session once the owner has an actual offer for the Board to consider.

After research from other Towns on their Host Community Agreement application, Marie reported that most do not ask for additional copies in their application process, they make copies themselves to send to other departments. The other Towns also do not charge a fee for this application.

Marie notified the Board that an attorney for a local business has requested a copy of the Town Meeting Warrant article to update Chapter 240, Vehicles & Traffic (Class 2 and Class 3 License renewals). The business has some concerns and Eric stated he would be happy to have a meeting with the business owner to review and discuss this updated bylaw. Marie will arrange a time with Eric to have an informational meeting.

### **Extend Temporary Outdoor Dining Operations at Rouge:**

Roger made the following motion, seconded by Eric:

Vote to approve and extend the Temporary Outdoor Dining Operations for Rouge Restaurant until the expiration date of the special legislation authorizing outside dining in Massachusetts.

Roll call vote:

**Eric, Yes      Roger, Yes      Kathleen, Yes**

Motion Passed.

**Host Community Agreement (HCA) Policy:** Roger stated he would like to set a fee of \$300 for the HCA application, Eric and Kathleen agreed. There was no further discussion on requesting additional copies in the agreement. Marie will update the agreement to include a \$300 fee and to request only one original hardcopy as well as an electronic copy of the application. The Board asked Marie to post the HCA application procedure on the website.

**Massachusetts Municipal Association Public Management Certificate Program:** Marie explained this course is a graduate level course that covers the following areas: Leadership, Financial Management, Human Resources and Public Policy. It is held over 25 Fridays from September 2021 through May 2022. These classes will assist her to improve her skill development and professional presentation and communication for the Town.

Roger is in support of her attending this course, Eric and Kathleen agreed.

**Select Board Speak:** Roger notified the Board that the Regional School District Planning Board has received a grant award which has enabled them to change their request of \$15,000 for financial assistance to \$8,000 per Town.

**Citizen Speak:** Joe Roy thanked Marie for having the Town Caucus on Zoom so that he was able to watch it.

Roger stated that the Board will not go into executive session as all the Board of Health litigation, per Earl, has been settled.

Eric made a motion to adjourn at 7:05 PM, Kathleen seconded.

Roll call vote:

**Eric, Yes      Roger, Yes      Kathleen, Yes**

Motion Passed.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

*Marie Y. Ryan*

Town Administrator

Documents:

Host Community Agreement Policy Draft

## 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](mailto:Emilie@charws.com).

### The Stockbridge Grange Dinner Returns!

On Sunday, May 16, the Stockbridge Grange will serve a takeout-only dinner at the Grange Hall at 51 Church Street, Stockbridge. The dinner will be stuffed breast of chicken and lemon meringue or chocolate cream pie. Pickup time is 12 to 1:30 p.m. Cost is \$12. To place an order, call (413) 243-1298 or (413) 443-4352. The deadline for ordering is May 12.

### Council on Aging

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

*Send your notices for Community News & Events to The Local Yoke!, P.O. Box 238, West Stockbridge, MA 01266, e-mail [info@thelocalyokel.org](mailto:info@thelocalyokel.org), or visit [thelocalyokel.org](http://thelocalyokel.org).*

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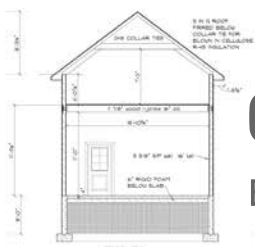
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# On the Home Front

By Thom Lipiczky

## The Airbnb Effect

As both of my readers know, there's a housing shortage out there. This is especially true here in the Ber(serk)shires, where housing sales have been greatly accelerated by people fleeing the effects of the pandemic in New York, Boston, and other urban areas. A seeming response to this squeeze in housing supply is evidenced by another increasing trend: short-term rentals.

Airbnb, VRBO (pronounced "verb-oh," or Vacation Rentals by Owner), and the like, have become a source of income for many homeowners in our neck of the woods, pandemic or not. Folks with a room (or several) to spare are offering the space for a short-term rental. For instance, this revenue can often help people on fixed incomes stay in their homes and pay for taxes and upkeep.

But short-term rental has another side. Some people are buying up one- and two-family houses in residential neighborhoods and then converting them into Airbnbs. If six or more rooms are being rented out, these become *hotels*. If unregulated, what's it like to have a hotel next to your house in a residential district? Brian Duval, our town's building commissioner, thinks such a move would entail a "change of use," and these would no longer be one- or two-family houses, but rather *commercial* buildings, not legal in residential zones. (Also, they'd require sprinkler systems and other code upgrades.) Towns across the country are looking at the impact of these businesses on their residential neighborhoods.

As a newish member of the West Stockbridge Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), I'm becoming aware of how the short-term rental practice can affect residentially zoned districts. Homeowners in these areas should reasonably be able to expect that traffic, noise, sanitation, density, and other factors are conducive to residential living (i.e., relative quiet). Zoning regulations in towns are in place—at least in part—to protect noncommercial neighborhoods from becoming overdeveloped.

In our town, the Planning Board, the Building Department, Master Plan Committee, and ZBA are considering changes in the town's bylaws to regulate short-term rentals more closely. In nearby towns, such as Lenox, new regulations attempt to clarify vague or incomplete wording. For instance, Lenoxian homeowners *who occupy their homes* can, for a period of not more than 70 days per year, rent space in their homes to people on a short-term basis. Other towns such as Monterey are taking a proactive approach to these regulations by proposing to limit the number of rental rooms to no more than two. West Stockbridge currently requires that houses with short-term rentals be owner occupied. Most towns allow a "bed and breakfast" rental of some number of rooms in an owner-occupied home.

Another related topic is accessory dwelling units (ADUs). I referred to this briefly in my groundbreaking award-winning (just seeing if you're paying attention) article on tiny houses for the March 2020 *Local Yokel*. Some towns and cities are encouraging "granny pods" and tiny houses as a way to ease the housing shortage and increase the amount of affordable housing. Whether these solutions can be rented on a short-term basis (i.e., as an Airbnb/VRBO) is unclear, and each town needs to consider the impact on residential zoning districts. West Stockbridge also allows a second dwelling with a special permit, only if it is actually in the primary residence, not a separate building (e.g., apartment over a garage, barn, etc.).

Gary Barker writes in *Forbes Magazine* (February 21, 2020), "The influence of the so-called 'Airbnb effect' on local housing markets has grown into a significant cause for concern, particularly when looking at its impacts on housing stock, prices and communities."

How all this affects our town's residential zones is still uncertain. More shall be revealed!

*Please send your comments, questions, and rants to [info@localyokel.org](mailto:info@localyokel.org).*



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### May History Quiz Question:

The West Stockbridge of today is not seen as a major retail shopping center for regular household purchases. West Stockbridge residents generally travel to Pittsfield or Great Barrington for grocery, clothing, major household goods, appliances, cars, and furniture. But what we do have is unique and special art venues, antiques and gift shopping, historic and unusual shops, fine wines and coffees, a seasonal farmers market, and, of course, the Public Market. You can even get free advice and counsel on any number of subjects, wanted or not.

Main Street West Stockbridge was not always like that. From the late 1800s up until World War II, we were our own commercial center. What was retail life in our town actually like back then?

(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](mailto:info@weststockbridgehistory.org) or call 232-4270.



**West Stockbridge  
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Incorporated in 1994





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Patterson, *Sooley*  
Pearse, *Sanatorium*  
Skieslien Charles, *The Paris Library*  
Wilson, *Seed Keeper*

## NEW ADULT NONFICTION

Grant, *Think Again: The Power of Knowing*  
*What You Don't Know*  
Solomon, ed., *Notes from the Bathroom Line*

## NEW ADULT DVDs

*A Hidden Life*; *Miss Scarlet (TV)*

## NEW YOUNG ADULT AND CHILDREN'S BOOKS

Lindstrom, *We Are Water Protectors*



## Scrapbook May 2021: TEST YOUR TRIVIA KNOWLEDGE!

1. The Public Market was being sold by Randy Burkhart to whom as planned before the fire?
2. Students and parents learned the skill of what kind of riding at Muddy Brook Elementary School?
3. What purchase of \$8,310 was made on Oak Street?
4. What was Mud Day at Muddy Brook Elementary School?

1. Timothy Walsh of Richmond 2. Unicorn  
3. The discontinued Old Town Landfill  
4. It was a fundraiser organized by the PTO

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# **"We Remember When . . ."**

## **Growing Up in West Stockbridge in the 1950s**

*A Series of Recollections by John Bormolini and Friends*

### **The Great Barrington Fairgrounds – Part 2**

**By John Bormolini**

John Masiero remembers:

*It was fun to think back on the Great Barrington Fair. The fair was an important annual event in South County ("Fair Week" was another season of the calendar, like "mud season").*

*During the 1950s, the fair was already about 140 years old. It was held in September after school had started. The days were usually sunny with cool nights (so-called Carroll weather, after the fair's owner). People came from all over the region to bet on the horse races. For several years, my father was a uniformed guard at the jockey dressing room. The first year he was given betting "tips" by the jockeys; at the end of the week, he was ten dollars behind. He never bet again, figuring if the jockeys had no inside information, he had no chance. My aunt Aggie took my mother to the races one day, and my mother (first-time bettor) won the Daily Double for \$21!*

*The fair was still an agricultural fair in those days. By law there could not be racing without a few vegetables and livestock on display. One year my grandfather and uncle from Vermont brought a truckload of dairy cows to Great Barrington for the week and then went on to the Big E (Eastern States Exposition) in West Springfield, which opened in 1917 and is still going strong.*

*There were many ways you could spend your money at the fair. Inside one shed was a trout pool. For a fee, you could entice a real trout to go home for dinner with you. A fishing pole was provided and baited for the customer. If you were lucky enough to go in when the fish had not been fed, you might have some luck. The midway had various rides and attractions. Amazing sights, sleazy freak shows, food vendors, and beer concessions rounded out an exciting afternoon for us kids.*

Louise Faggioni remembers:

*Those were wonderful and exciting times, full of anticipation of going to the fair. I loved the midway with its games and rides and just seeing so many people who were all having fun. I loved the exhibits from 4H, Boy and Girl Scouts, and Future Farmers of America (FFA). Gardeners and farmers from the region exhibited their vegetables, fruits, and livestock. Williams High School had an FFA curriculum, and we knew several students who proudly entered exhibits at the fair.*

*The food section with the corn dogs, hot dogs, and burgers was always mouthwatering, and I couldn't wait to enjoy a burger, fries, and a drink with my parents. Life was good then. I felt like I was in a large city with all of the attractions and the sound of the fair, especially when the racing starter announced, "They're off!"*

Jackie Moffatt remembers:

*My husband Earl tells me that Charles H. Baldwin & Sons sold drink mix to the GB Fair concession: fruit punch, pink and regular lemonade, and grape drinks. Dick Moffatt could always make the best of a business opportunity!*

Helen Zanonato (Nolan) remembers:

*Helen's dad Vosco was an avid gardener who loved to enter vegetables from one of his "five weed-free gardens." He always took home a couple of first-place ribbons, a hidden benefit because Vosco entered the veggies so the family got in free!*

From a friend who shall remain anonymous:

*Let me preface this account of guys from West Stockbridge betting on the horses at the fair by saying these were not "penny ante" gamblers. They were always looking for a "sure thing." No names will be revealed.*

*The only story I recall is when four guys from West Stockbridge—all so-called serious gamblers—paid a handful of jockeys to hold back their horses and let a long, long-shot horse win. To cinch the transaction, they paid the long-shot*

*...continued on page 17*

horse's jockey a lot too. The horses came around the final turn with the long shot nicely in the lead, but the horse tripped and down it went. The jockey bounced on the track, landed on his feet, jumped over the side fence, ran full speed through the building, up the rear exit pathway, across Route 7, and through the cemetery with the wagerers in hot pursuit. I don't think they ever caught him, but I am certain this was not the final episode in their gambling history.

Postscript:

In Part 1, there was brief mention of the tornado that hit the fairgrounds in 1995. John Masiero has provided the following account of the tornado and the damage that it caused:

"The tornado struck the Great Barrington Fair in the late afternoon of Memorial Day, 1995. It touched down near the New York State border and skipped into Great Barrington, where it tore through the cemetery across from the fairgrounds.

The fair was a direct hit, with most of the buildings, including the grandstand, damaged or destroyed. The storm then hit East Mountain and bounced into eastern Great Barrington, killing three persons. The fair's owner spent a few million dollars rebuilding, and the fair was held without racing for a couple of years, but it never attracted the crowds as in the old days after horse racing was discontinued in the late 1970s or early 1980s." John notes that the Great Barrington Historical Society and Museum has videotape footage of the Massachusetts State Police helicopter flyover of the damages, along with a ground-level tour of the area.



May 30, 1995. Destruction of the Great Barrington fairgrounds from a rare tornado. Photo from John Masiero

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](mailto:johnbormo@aol.com).

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## History Quiz Answer:

West Stockbridge from the 1880s through the early 1920s was a busy industrial center, and Main Street was very active. Lime quarries and kilns were still in operation, and the ore beds on Route 102 continued to provide iron for Richmond Furnace. Raising dairy cattle and other animals was a major farming activity. Irish immigration had slowed and families settled down; Italian immigration was growing. The two railroads had major hubs at State Line with two rail yards, a turntable, and engine house. Population had eased off its high of 1,900 people in 1880 down to 1,200 in 1920, but the town was generally more prosperous.

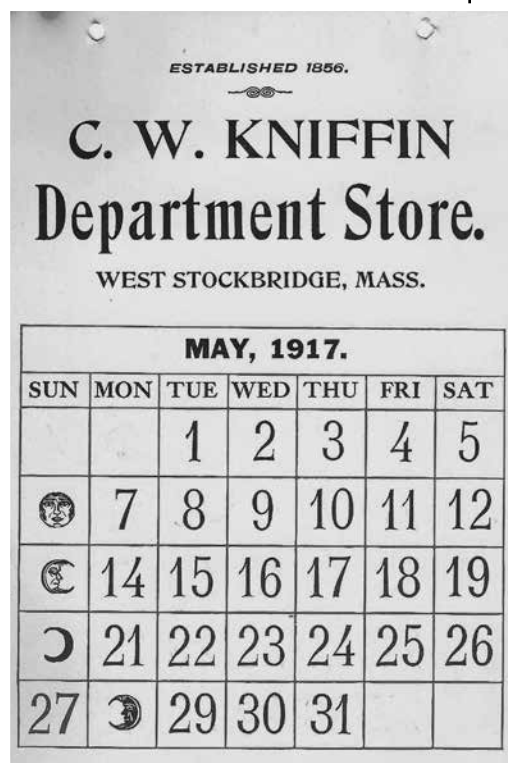
Main Street had a different character, with two multistory buildings as the anchors. On the west side of Main Street, in the present Queensboro Wine & Spirits, stood the Kniffin Block that included the C.W. Kniffin Department Store. Founded in 1856, it was listed in a 1916 business directory as offering clothing, furniture, and household needs. Next to it was the three-story Zanconato building. It housed a shoe store, and the upper floor had meeting spaces. It burned down in 1935.

Across the street in what is now the town parking lot stood another large three-story building with the Battastoni Furniture store. The business later expanded across the street to the Kniffin space in the mid-1930s. By 1938, this large building was destroyed by fire.

The 1916 directory shows the breadth of businesses in the village center. On Main Street were two physicians, two butchers, dress and shoe stores, two barber shops, a drugstore, saloon, hotel, and two grocery stores. Off Main Street, in addition to Baldwin's Extracts and Baldwin's Hardware, we had a plumber/tinsmith who also sold metal roofs (still seen on many buildings in town including the Old Town Hall).

Probably the most fascinating businesses listed in 1916 were the two auto dealerships. Garrett Troy had started his dealership in the current Troy's Garage building. He also sold real estate and stabled horses. The other ambitious entrepreneur was George F. Callahan. He advertised real estate and insurance as his primary business but also listed as a dealer in automobiles and coal to cover all possibilities. Callahan was located across from the train station occupied today by Shaker Mill Books and the adjacent parking space.

Both men were so successful in auto sales that they contributed to the demise of the commercial district (along with paved roads in the 1930s): residents could now travel further to larger stores with more services, choices of goods, and better prices.



*Kniffin Dept Store Calendar.  
Graphic courtesy of West Stockbridge  
Historical Society*



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Assessors Office	Mary Stodden	232-0300	ext. 303	Tues. 1–5 p.m.; Thurs. 9 a.m.–1 p.m.
Board of Health	Earl Moffatt	232-0300	ext. 314	Fri. 9 a.m.–4 p.m., or by appt.
Select Board	Roger Kavanagh, Kathleen Keresey, Eric Shimelonis	232-0300	ext. 319	Mon.–Thurs. 7 a.m.–3 p.m. Fri. 7 a.m.–11 a.m.
Town Administrator	Marie Ryan			
Building Inspector	Brian Duval	232-0300	ext. 313	Leave Message for Inquiries
Conservation Commission	Jennifer Kujawski, Lori Rose	232-0300	ext. 338	Leave Message for Inquiries
Council on Aging	John Zick	232-0300	ext. 340	Leave Message for Inquiries
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Highway Department	Curt G. Wilton	232-0305		Leave Message for Inquiries
Library	Rachel Alter	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	Marc Portieri	911 or 232-8500 (non-emergency)		24 hours, 7 days/week
Post Office	Colleen A. Wich	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	Michael Buffoni	232-0309		
Town Accountant	Elaine Markham	232-0300	ext. 317	Leave Message for Inquiries
Town Clerk	Ronni Barrett	232-0300	ext. 300	Tues. & Thurs. 1:30–4 p.m.
Town Collector	June A. Biggs	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	Robert Salerno	232-4465		
Town Treasurer	Karen Williams	232-0300	ext. 316	Thurs. 9 a.m.–4 p.m.
Transfer Station	Wayne Cooper	232-0307		Tues. & Thurs. 10 a.m.–6 p.m. and Sat. 8 a.m.–6 p.m.
Tree Warden	Andrew Fudge	232-4322		
Veterans Agency	Laurie Hills	528-1580		
Zoning Board of Appeals	C. Randolph Thunfors	232-0300	ext. 300	

Official Town Government Website: [weststockbridge-ma.gov](http://weststockbridge-ma.gov) • Community and Business Website: [visitweststockbridge.com](http://visitweststockbridge.com)

Mark your calendar and buy your tickets for  
Lauren Henderson *live* at The Foundry

The West Stockbridge Historical Society presents:

# WEST STOCKBRIDGE JAZZ SERIES



LAUREN HENDERSON

Outdoor performance at: **THE FOUNDRY**

Saturday, June 19th, 2021 - 7pm  
rain date: Sunday, June 20th - 2pm

Tickets: \$35 (table) or \$25 (lawn)  
[www.weststockbridgehistory.org](http://www.weststockbridgehistory.org)

To order tickets go to:  
<https://thefoundryws.com/event/>

*This program is supported in part by grants from the Richmond Cultural Council and the West Stockbridge Cultural Council, local agencies which are supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.*



Join Dale Abrams, Education Manager of Mass. Audubon for Western Massachusetts, to learn about our native wildflowers that make spring and summer so special.

Dale will talk about our most prominent local wildflowers, where they are, what environments they like, and then strategies to identify them.



**Friday, May 21, 5:30 p.m.**  
**Virtual Slide Show and Talk**

Participation is free to all.  
To register, send an email to:  
[info@weststockbridgehistory.org](mailto:info@weststockbridgehistory.org)  
A link will be provided the day before the program.



**Presenter: Dale Abrams.** Dale Abrams is the Education Manager for Mass Audubon in Western Massachusetts. He is a life-long naturalist whose specialties include birding, wildlife tracking, and forest and wetland ecosystem studies. He holds a BS in Biology from Humboldt State University in California and an MS in Environmental Studies from Antioch University New England. He has worked as a naturalist for State Parks in California, Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming, the Fish & Wild Service in Puerto Rico, and many environmental education organizations. His home since 2000 has been in the Berkshire Hills of western Massachusetts, from which he explores the diverse ecosystems and rich cultural history of the northeast.



\*Lists are not all-inclusive. Please check [www.massrecycling.org](http://www.massrecycling.org) or call the recycling hotline: 888-888-0784, ext. 52293 or 415-784-1100, ext. 52293.

**Yes** please recycle these paper items:



Clean papers, magazines/catalogs, greeting cards, gift wrap & gift tissue paper (no foils or metallics), paperbacks & phonebooks (covers ok), cardboard, paperboard, clean pizza boxes. Paper clips, staples and metal spirals are ok.

**Yes** please recycle these containers:



Metal cans, foil, milk and juice cartons, glass bottles and jars, plastic bottles/jars/tubs/jugs, clear plastic hinged containers (clamshells), clear plastic egg cartons, clear plastic cups. Labels and caps on bottles are ok.



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

**thelocalyokel.org**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thurs	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					



**May 2021 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 the latest information.			
5/3	Annual Town Meeting	6 p.m.	Town Offices parking lot
5/9	Mother's Day		
5/10	Annual Town Election	10 a.m.–7 p.m.	
5/11	Select Board meeting	6 p.m.	See town website for details
5/12	Eid al-Fitr begins at sundown		Town Offices Gym
5/15	*** Deadline for the next <i>Local Yokel</i> ***		Send to info@thelocalyokel.org
5/15	Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day	9 a.m.–1 p.m.	Lee Wastewater Treatment Plant
5/16	Stockbridge Grange Takeout Dinner (preorder by 5/12)	12–1:30 p.m.	Grange Hall, 51 Church St., Stockbridge
5/16	Shavuot begins at sundown	6 p.m.	See town website for details
5/18	Vision Committee meeting	6 p.m.	See town website for details
5/24	Select Board meeting	6 p.m.	See town website for details
5/27	WS Farmers Market Opening Day	3–6 p.m.	The Foundry Green, Harris Street
5/31	Memorial Day		