

# Local yokel

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

West  
Stockbridge  
August

2023

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY SINCE 2005

## West Stockbridge Zucchini Festival 20 Festival 23

It's  
Back!



**August 12th, 10am to 10pm**  
**Downtown WS at Depot St. & Center St.**



# Art on Main Gallery August 2023

August at ART on MAIN Gallery will feature three distinct shows from small groups of members of the Guild of Berkshire Artists. Pat Hogan, Amy Pressman, and Margie Skaggs will open “Earth, Wind & Fire” on July 27 and host a reception on Saturday, July 29, from 2 to 4 pm. That show continues through August 6, open Thursdays through Sundays, 12 noon to 5 pm.

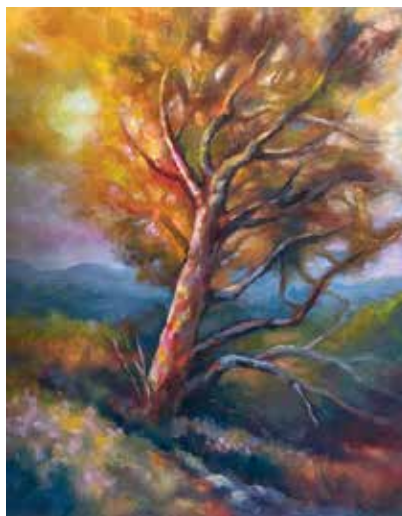
Pat and Amy, both inspired by the natural world of the Berkshires, produce works in various mixed media, including encaustics created with hot wax, and bring the textures of nature into their work. Amy delights in adding bits of natural and ephemeral material to

her work, such as interesting shadows created by leaves or branches. Pat is passionate about watercolor and the illusions created through the transparency of the medium.

Margie works in clay by fashioning works through wheel throwing and hand building with pinching, coils, and slabs. She often mixes techniques together to build larger pieces, such as in her Sentinel series and smoke-fired pieces.

Lori Bradley and Karen Carmean will open “Arborvital” at ART on MAIN on Thursday, August 10, with a reception on Saturday, August 12, running through Sunday, August 20, open Thursdays through Sundays, 11 am to 4 pm.

Mike Coyne and Bruce Shickmanter will follow with “Oil, Water, Clay,” opening on Thursday, August 24, and closing on September 4, open Thursdays through Sundays and Monday, September 4, 11 am to 4 pm. Two retired physicians have found inspiration in the outdoors through vigorous exercise and travel.



*Photos top left to right:  
Big Top by Pat Hogan  
Sentina by Margie Skaggs*

*Photos bottom left to right:  
Smokey Tree by Lori Bradley  
Winter Grasses by Amy Pressman*

*Courtesy of the artists*

# 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 email notification of town events and meeting agendas by subscribing at <http://weststockbridgema.virtualltownhall.net/subscriber>].

## Select Board Meeting Minutes June 5, 2023

**Quorum present:** Select Board Members Kathleen Keresey, Chair and Andrew Krouss, Andrew Potter was absent and Town Administrator Marie Ryan.

**Others Present:** State Representative Smitty Pignatelli

Kathleen called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

Kathleen made a motion, seconded by Andy to approve the minutes from May 10 and May 17, 2023. All in favor – minutes approved.

### Citizen Speak:

Baker Street resident Joanna Yurman raised her concerns about the increase in truck traffic, speeding and illegal parking on Baker Street. She would like more Police patrol in the area. Kathleen asked her to send her statement to Marie, who will forward to the Police Chief.

**TurnPark One Day Liquor License:** Manager Jared Gelemino  
Jared requested approval for a One Day Liquor License for TurnPark for their event on June 10, 2023. He informed the Board that he has a parking plan which will include a parking attendant and will use the Wastewater Treatment Plant. He has worked with DPW Director Curt Wilton on this parking plan. He has also arranged for a Police Detail on site through Police Chief Portieri. He assured the Board that he and another staff person has received TIPS training required to control alcohol use.

Kathleen made a motion, seconded by Andy, to approve the One Day Liquor License for TurnPark for June 10, 2023. All in favor – motion approved.

**National Grid Austerlitz Road Joint Pole Location:** Donald Taggart, National Grid Representative

Don Taggart requested that the Board approve a joint pole location for National Grid and Verizon on Austerlitz Road. This new pole would be to provide services to a new home on that road and the location of the pole will be between 9 and 10 Austerlitz Road.

...continued on page 5

WANDERING JEWS  
WONDERING JEWS  
CULTURAL JEWS  
MIXED MARRIAGE JEWS  
MIXED UP JEWS  
NON-JEWS  
LGBT JEWS  
CREATIVE JEWS

Please check our website [www.ahavathsholom.com](http://www.ahavathsholom.com) for information about our Zoom services, events and updates.

See our new Marketplace section featuring a selection of books, craft items and art works by our members. A portion of each purchase will be donated by the synagogue to the Southern Berkshire area People's Pantry.

SEARCHING JEWS  
OBSERVANT JEWS  
NON-HEBREW-READING JEWS  
PASSIONATE JEWS  
HIGH-HOLY-DAY JEWS  
ARTISTIC JEWS  
AGNOSTIC JEWS  
HAVEN'T-BEEN-IN-SHUL-SINCE-MY-BAR-MITZVAH-JEWS

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# Special Election Breaks Tie in Select Board Race

By John Parker

In a special election brought about by a 202–202 tie in the initial contest back on May 8 and confirmed by a recount on May 19, incumbent Kathleen Keresey was reelected to another term on the Select Board.

Turnout seems to have been a deciding factor. In the May vote, only 406 of the town's 1,218 registered voters (33%) cast ballots. In the special election on July 17, turnout rose to 48%, giving Keresey the win by 324 to 236.

A number of issues have sparked divisions in town over recent years including changing demographics, so-called gentrification, and the ongoing dispute between owners of Truc Orient Express, a longtime fixture in town, and The Foundry, a relative newcomer and live entertainment venue. Despite some heated exchanges at some Select Board meetings after the initial tie vote, both candidates called for civility.

As a *Berkshire Eagle* July 19 editorial column concluded, “West Stockbridge’s tie and ensuing special election prove two things that are still true and that always should be: Every vote counts, and civility still matters.”



*Kathleen Keresey*

## Timmons Landscaping & Tree

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- Lawn & Field Mowing
- Fall & Spring Cleanups
- Building & Maintaining Gardens
- Firewood

...continued from page 3

Kathleen made a motion, seconded by Andy, to approve the joint pole location. All in favor – motion approved.

**Open Discussion with Representative Smitty Pignatelli:**

Representative Pignatelli gave an update on the priorities he is currently working on. The three main agenda items he is supporting are regional equity, housing and broadband and technology. He informed the Board that the Governor recently hired Ann Gobi as the new Rural Director. This is an important step towards helping the small towns with regional equity. He has met with Ann to discuss the issues that small towns deal with so she is aware and can assist in the effort to help small towns with equity of funding for housing and broadband and technology.

Kathleen informed Smitty that the Town is already working on housing issues with an updated Master Plan that is almost completed. Andy Krouss also stated that he has been working with Wylie Goodman from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission on improving broadband in the Town. Wylie will be addressing the Board and citizens at the next Select Board meeting on June 20.

Smitty also discussed shared services which are important and will allow towns to receive more funding. Currently West Stockbridge has shared services with Richmond for the Fire Chief, Ambulance and EMTs. The Town Highway Department also has a few pieces of equipment they share with Richmond as well.

Smitty is attempting to have a process in place which a tiered approach for funding by the State of multiple criteria levels, each being eligible for funding and competing with other towns and cities of similar size and structure. This gives the small towns a better opportunity to receive funds without competing against larger cities and towns.

Kathleen and Andy thanked Smitty for attending and coming to meet with them.

**Special Town Meeting:**

Marie requested that the Board vote to hold a Special Town Meeting to approve transfers for year end balances to pay final Fiscal year bills, if necessary.

Kathleen made a motion, seconded by Andy, to hold a Special Town Meeting on Monday, June 26, if necessary. All in favor – motion approved.

**Select Board Speak:**

None

Kathleen made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Andy at 6:51 PM.

All were in favor, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

*Marie Y. Ryan*

Marie Y. Ryan

Town Administrator

**Select Board Meeting Minutes**

**June 20, 2023**

**Quorum present:** Select Board Members Kathleen Kersey, Chair and Andrew Krouss, Andrew Potter, and Town Administrator Marie Ryan.

**Others Present:** Wylie Goodman, Berkshire Regional Planning

Kathleen called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

**Broadband Discussion and Update – Wylie Goodman, Berkshire Regional Planning**

Kathleen introduced Wylie Goodman from Berkshire Regional Planning Commission. She has been working on the Broadband Digital Equity issues in Berkshire County. Wylie gave a brief presentation and explained that there are two grant programs that assist with these issues; BEAD (Broadband Equity, Assess, and Deployment) and the Digital Equity Act. Berkshire Regional Planning Commission is helping municipalities identify and address internet affordability, device access and digital skills gaps. They are working to produce a Digital Equity Plan for several towns in Berkshire County that have partnered up to apply for grants. The Plan will include results of an online survey and asset mapping. Wylie will keep the Board updated as the process continues.

**Auto Class II and III and Taxi License for William Kie**

Kathleen asked Bill Kie if he has any updates for the Board in regards to the condition of his property. He informed the Board of all he has done in regards to cleanup for his property in the past few months which included removal of several vehicles and demo materials. He said this is all part of his Master Plan to clean up the property and he is continuing to work on this.

Andy Potter made a motion, seconded by Kathleen, to approve an Auto Class II & III License for WBK Construction and a Taxi License for William Kie until December 31, 2023.

All were in favor.

Licenses all approved.

**Parks Commissioners Update: Cait Graham, Parks Commissioner**

Cait informed the Board that the Parks Commissioners are happy to say they will have the same life guard as last year for 4 days per week at Card Pond. They also hired Dominic Calautti to be a groundskeeper for 3 days a week. He is a young man that lives across the street from Card Pond and will go there in the morning and evening to set up umbrellas, rake the beach, clean the dock and pick up garbage to keep the beach area clean.

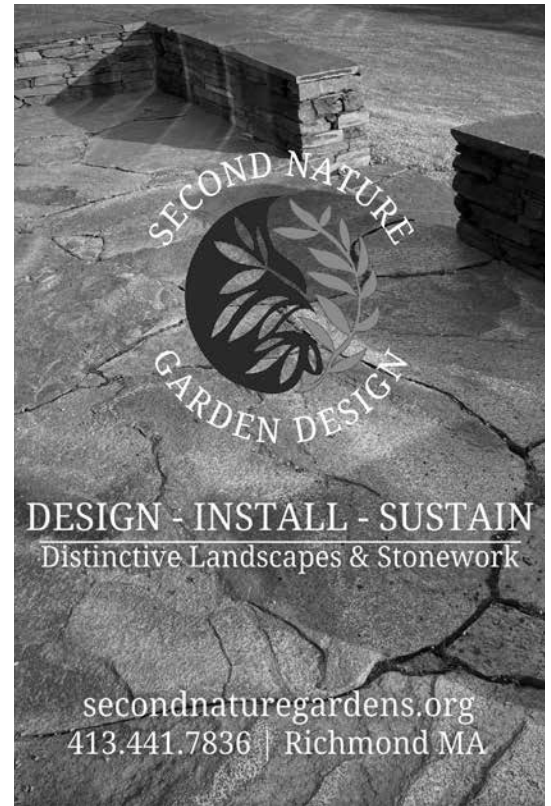
Marie informed the Board that this groundskeeper position as well two positions to work for the Cemetery Commissioners to repair cemetery stones were all advertised in the Shoppers Guide.

Cait discussed with the Board that a group of residents would like to form a subcommittee to investigate and get information on a

...continued on page 7

# Town Seeks Members for New Affordable Housing Board

The West Stockbridge Select Board is looking for volunteers to become members of the new Affordable Housing Board of Trustees. The Select Board will appoint four voting members to this board. All members must be full-time residents of West Stockbridge. If you are interested, send a letter of interest to Marie Ryan, Town Administrator, by mail at 21 State Line Road, West Stockbridge, MA 01266 or by email to [admin@weststockbridge-ma.gov](mailto:admin@weststockbridge-ma.gov). All letters of interest must be received by August 1, 2023. For more information on the Affordable Housing Trust, visit the town website and read Article 41 in the 2023 annual town meeting warrant that provides information about this board at ATM 2023 WARRANT ([weststockbridge-ma.gov](http://weststockbridge-ma.gov)).



## SUMMER 2023 TAKE OUT MENU

**Truc Orient Express Restaurant**  
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SOUPS		MAINS	
Canh Chua Tom ~ Hot & Sour Shrimp Soup (gf)	\$7.50	Banh Hoi Thit Nuong ~ BBQ Pork on Rice Noodles w/ crushed peanuts (gf)	\$25.00
Vegetable Soup (v)	\$6.00	Ga Xao Hot Dieu ~ Stir Fry Chicken, Mix Vegetables w/ cashews (gf)	\$25.00
Sup Chua Cay ~ Hot & Sour Vegetable Soup (gf, v)	\$6.50	Tom Xao Rau ~ Shrimp w/ Stir Fry Vegetables (gf)	\$28.00
STARTERS		Banh Xeo ~ Happy Pancake (choice of pork, or chicken) (gf)	\$25.00
Cha Gio ~ Vietnamese Egg Rolls (2 rolls, gf)	\$12.50	Banh Xeo ~ Happy Pancake with shrimp (gf)	\$28.00
Cha Gio Truc ~ Truc's Special Shrimp Rolls (2 rolls, gf)	\$13.50	Tom Chua Ngot ~ Sweet & Sour Shrimp	\$28.00
Cha Gio Chay ~ Vegetarian Spring Rolls (3 rolls) (gf, v)	\$11.50	Ga Chua Ngot ~ Sweet & Sour Chicken	\$25.00
Ga Nuong ~ Grilled Lemon Chicken (gf) (2 skewers)	\$12.50	Ga Xoi Mo ~ 5 Spiced Whole Cornish Hen (gf)	\$28.00
SALADS		VEGETARIAN MAINS	
Goi Bui ~ Grapefruit Salad w/toasted sesame seeds (gf, v)	\$9.00	Tofu Sa Ot ~ Tofu with Lemongrass w/crushed peanuts (gf, v)	\$22.00
		Tofu Xao Hot Dieu ~ Stir Fry Tofu, Mix Vegetables w/ cashews (gf, v)	\$22.00
		Rau Xao Chay ~ Stir Fry Mixed Vegetables (gf, v)	\$20.00
		Banh Xeo Chay ~ Vegetarian Happy Pancake (gf, v)	\$22.00
		Banh Hoi Chay ~ Marinated Tofu on Rice Noodles (gf, v)	\$22.00
SPECIAL FOR SAT. and SUN. ONLY (order before 3pm)		RICE	
Goi Cuon Tom ~ Shrimp Summer Rolls (2 rolls, gf)	\$13.00	Com Chien Heo ~ Truc Special Pork Fried Rice (gf)	\$18.00
Goi Cuon Chay ~ Vegetarian Summer Rolls (2 rolls, gf, v)	\$11.50	Com Chien Chay ~ Vegetarian Fried Rice (gf, v)	\$13.00
gf - gluten free			
v - vegan		DESSERT ~ Frozen Lemon Mousse (gf)	
			\$12.00

**No Substitutions. Please let us know of any food allergies.**

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...continued from page 5

dog park in town. Cait said the Parks Commissioners do not want to be involved in this project. The Board requested that Cait inform the interested residents to come before the Select Board for this discussion.

Cait announced that the Card Pond Annual Opening Party will be Sunday, June 25<sup>th</sup> and invited everyone to attend.

The Board thanked her for her update.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Kathleen made a motion seconded by Andy Krouss to approve the minutes from June 5, 2023. Andy Potter abstained, Kathleen and Andy Krouss approved. Minutes approved.

Andy Krouss made a motion, seconded by Kathleen to approve the revised minutes from April 24, 2023. All were in favor, revised minutes approved.

**Citizen Speak:** None

**Complete Streets Advisory Committee Appointment:**

Kathleen requested that the Board appoint the current members of the Complete Streets Advisory Committee and requested that they comply with the Open meeting Law with agendas and minutes. She also responded to Andy Potter's request of a reply from Town Counsel as to the legality of a person involved in litigation with the Town being involved with the Committee. She stated that, per Town Counsel, there is no legal reason that would not allow that person to be involved. Kathleen would like to appoint the members and allow them to meet and decide the next steps for community input on the 15 eligible projects as to which ones to submit for funding.

Andy Potter made a motion, seconded by Kathleen, to appoint the current members listed below to the Complete Streets Advisory Committee. All were in favor, motion passed.

Current Members of the Committee:

- Curt Wilton, Sr.    Andy Potter
- Dana Bixby        Joe Roy, Jr.
- Doane Perry       Frank Landsberger

**Select Board Speak:**

Andy Potter would like the Board to look into how the Vision Committee was created and make sure they are compliant with appointments like all the other committees. Kathleen and Andy Krouss agreed and Marie will gather some information in regards to the creation of that Committee.

Andy Potter also informed the Board that there is an update from the 8 Town Regional School District Planning Board on the Town website. He stated that the Planning Board hopes to complete their plans to be presented to the 8 Towns for a Special Town Meeting in the fall.

Kathleen made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Andy Potter at 7:31 PM.

All were in favor, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

*Marie Y. Ryan*  
Marie Y. Ryan  
Town Administrator

**Change is in the air.**




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<b>Local Yokel</b>	Pick up a copy <b>FREE</b> AS ALWAYS at these loca- tions around town:	➔	<b>Berkshire Bank Charles H. Baldwin &amp; Sons Flourish Market Gallery on Main Library Public Market Town Offices</b>	Or you can choose to have the <i>Local Yokel</i> mailed to you for a minimum annual contribution of \$25.
<b>Outdoor distribution boxes: Visitors' Booth, Baldwin Hardware, Shaker Mill Books, The Floor Store, &amp; the Transfer Station</b>				





<https://www.facebook.com/wsvcc/photos>

# What's Going On at the Congregational Church?

By Joanne Wodecki

Many folks have been asking this question of late, so we'd like to address the status of our little village church.

Yes, we have been having discussions about the possible closing of the church. At this point, however, we have renewed hope that we can keep our small but mighty congregation moving forward, using unique creative opportunities in our worship services. We certainly do not know what the future holds, but we are working hard to make our presence in the community steadfast.

We invite you join us for worship most Sunday mornings at 10 am at our 45 Main Street location or at our beautiful outdoor chapel located at 141 West Center Road. Call us at (413) 232-4256 for more information.

We'd love to see you!

## Welcome to Our New Volunteer

We're very pleased to announce that

→ **John Miner** ←

has joined us to help  
with administrative tasks  
at the *Local Yokel*.



Thanks  
John!

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# Remembering the West Stockbridge Tornado: 50 Years Ago on August 28, 1973

Fifty years ago, on a typical sultry summer day about 1:15 pm, West Stockbridge was hit by a Force 4 tornado. The weather that day was forecast as “isolated thunderstorms, high 82; evening, mostly cloudy 54”—not much different than this summer. The tornado ran northeast to southwest, from Route 22 in Canaan over Dean Hill, from Richmond, across the Mass Pike and Route 102, up Maple Hill and dissipated south toward Williamsville. The truck stop (now the solar array) and a building on the Kie farm were flattened. Four people died and 36 were injured in the strongest and most devastating tornado ever to hit Berkshire Country.

*Photos clockwise from top:  
State Police helicopter surveys the damage  
Kie family  
Truck stop flattened  
Truck destroyed  
The tornado left a wake of destruction  
Tornado rescue team  
Photos from the Berkshire Eagle*





# Proposed School District Merger: Impact on Student Travel

By Andy Potter, RSDPB Representative

As the potential merger of Southern Berkshire Regional School District and Berkshire Hills Regional School District is being considered, a study was conducted to evaluate how it would affect the travel times for students and the associated transportation expenses. The main questions were whether students would spend more time on buses and if the costs would significantly rise. Rich LaBrie from Alliance Education Associates

stated that the financial and route/ride time impacts were found to be minimal, indicating that transportation should not be the primary factor in deciding the best educational options for students.

The study determined that travel times for elementary and middle school students would either remain the same or decrease if the merger occurs. By implementing a common bell schedule, the 8 Town district could adopt a two-tier system for all students, eliminating the need for elementary school children to share buses with high school students. By adding a few vehicles and optimizing the use of vans, most students could experience reduced bus time. Furthermore, the maximum travel time for all students, including high school students, could be decreased from one hour to 45 minutes.

Regarding cost impact, the estimated expense of acquiring the necessary vehicles would be around \$55,000 per year. This calculation assumes an 80% state transportation reimbursement, which is currently more than 95%. A unified fleet of appropriately sized vehicles will improve efficiency and utilization if the merger occurs. The overall bus capacity would remain relatively low, at approximately 60% in the morning and 40% in the afternoon.

In the BHRSD, the average bus ride time is currently about 20 minutes, with the longest ride around 40 minutes. In the SBRSD, the average ride time is approximately 30 minutes, with the longest close to 60 minutes. Many students already travel long distances to attend their preferred schools. However, with a reasonable investment, the merged district could ensure that no student spends more than 45 minutes on a bus or van, and most students would have fewer than 30-minute rides. Elementary and middle school students who choose to continue attending their current schools would have the same bus ride times; those who select schools closer to their homes would experience shorter travel times.

Overall, the findings suggest that the proposed merger would have minimal impact on student travel times and transportation costs. It emphasizes the importance of considering other factors in the decision-making process to determine the best educational outcomes for students.



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# Multi-Town Project Maps Green Infrastructure and Climate Resilience

By Alison Dixon, Housatonic Valley Association

Every time it rains, stormwater runs off hard surfaces like roads and rooftops, picking up pollutants along the way to the nearest body of water, whether that is a lake, river, or wetland. Instead of directing stormwater to the rivers and lakes or onto roads and properties where it ponds or causes erosion, communities in Berkshire County are working on soaking up that stormwater into the ground. Green infrastructure (GI), such as rain gardens and porous asphalt, supports the infiltration of stormwater runoff, reducing both the volume of water and the quantity of pollutants entering our rivers and lakes.

GI projects are popping up all over Berkshire County! To date, there are more than a dozen examples of green infrastructure in the Berkshires. Where are they located? Check out the StoryMap and learn about some of these sites and how they work. To view the map, visit <https://tinyurl.com/GIBerks>.

This GI StoryMap was completed as part of Richmond and West Stockbridge's one-year collaborative project to reduce flooding, improve climate readiness, and address stormwater impacts proactively.

Another outcome of the climate resiliency project is the "Resilient Stormwater Action and Implementation Plan," a set of short- and long-term recommendations for stormwater management on roads and public and private property in the towns of Richmond and West Stockbridge. Solutions were selected for their costs and benefits, community priorities, and ways to improve climate readiness. This plan will support both communities as they pursue grant funding to support implementation of priority projects. To view the plan, visit [https://www.richmondma.org/departments/departments\\_of\\_public\\_works/index.php](https://www.richmondma.org/departments/departments_of_public_works/index.php) or <https://www.weststockbridge-ma.gov/highway-department>.

This project was generously funded by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs' Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) grant program that provides support for cities and towns to plan for climate change and to implement projects to build local resiliency. For more information about the MVP program, visit <https://resilientma.mass.gov/mvp/>.



*North Street Rain Garden. Photo courtesy of Housatonic Valley Association*



# 2023 Zucchini Festival

News & Details on FB & Insta  
[@wszucchinifestival](#)

The West Stockbridge Zucchini Festival is an all-day, inclusive and kid-friendly event that celebrates our unique Berkshire community and of course everyone's favorite staple summer squash! The day is sponsored by the W.S. Cultural Council and organized by volunteers, neighbors and friends. **Come One, Come All!**

**When?** August 12th, 2023, 10am to 10pm **Where?** Downtown W.S. on Depot & Center Street

## Detailed Event Schedule Available Online

fb & insta [@wszucchinifestival](#)  
web [weststockbridge-ma.gov/cultural-council](http://weststockbridge-ma.gov/cultural-council)

For any questions, send a message on social media or email  
[wszucchinifestival2023@gmail.com](mailto:wszucchinifestival2023@gmail.com)

### Day Happenings | 10am to 5pm

**10am** Festival Kickoff w/ WSZF Pet Parade

*9:30am Pet Parade Registration\**

**10am-4:30pm** Fanfare, Vendors, Music & Games

**ALL DAY!** Vendors Artists Craftspeople  
Performers Goods Community Orgs Zic Zac Zoe  
Zuck River Races Dunking Booth Bounce Slide  
Rock Climbing Wall Zucchini Compost Catapult  
Zucchini Ring Toss Zucchini Decorating  
Zuke Cornhole Zuke Car Races and more!

**LIVE MUSIC ALL DAY!** Shut Up & Dance

FIRE PITT Berkshire Bateria and more!

**10am-11:30am** Baking Contest Submissions Open\*

**10:45am** Pet Parade Awards!\*

**11am FOOD COURT OPENS** (Closes 9:30pm)

Local Berkshire food vendors with a variety of good eats  
and all of WS's wonderful local food spots

**11am-3pm** Zucchini Weigh-Off Submissions Open\*

**12pm-5pm** Zuck Races (on the hour, every hour - 6 total)

**12pm** Zucchini Baking Contest Awards!\*

**3:30pm** Zucchini Weigh-Off Awards!\*

**4:15pm** Zucchini Decorating Awards!

**5pm** Grand Finale Zuck Race

### Night Happenings | 5pm to 10pm

**'till 10pm LIVE MUSIC!**

**4:30pm** BERKSHIRE BATERIA

**6:45pm** ROCK STEADY

**8:45pm** MISTY BLUES

*All evening shows hosted in front of Baldwin Hardware,  
dancing in the street 'till 10pm.*

**'till 9:30pm FOOD COURT**

**9:30pm FIREWORKS!**

**10pm** All done! See ya next year!

*\* See Special Events & Competitions  
page for event details!*

**Follow along on fb & insta  
for the most current  
festival news, vendor info,  
event details and more!**

# 2023 Zucchini Festival

## Special Events & Competitions

### **Pet Parade**

Calling all Zucchini Beasts! Start practicing your strut with Fido, Garfield or Polly to kick off the festival with the **WSZF Pet Parade!** All species welcome and zucchini costumes very highly encouraged. Former parade participants include dogs, gerbils, llamas and pigs. Who will you bring?

#### **How to Enter?**

Day-of registration or pre-register by emailing Julie at [jdmede@hotmail.com](mailto:jdmede@hotmail.com). Please provide your pet's name, breed and any special talents.

#### **Where?**

Parade starts between Berkshire Bank & Amici, travels down Depot Street and then back for the Awards Ceremony.

#### **When?**

Day-of Festival - August 12th

**9:30am** Registration & Check-in

**10am** Pet Parade

**10:45am** Awards Ceremony

**Questions?** Contact Julie at [jdmede@hotmail.com](mailto:jdmede@hotmail.com)

### **Zucchini Weigh-Off Competition**

Get out there in the garden to start sizing up the bounty to find your most worthy zucchini to enter in the homegrown **WSZF Zucchini Weigh-Off Competition!** Homegrown zucchinis of all shapes and sizes welcome.

#### **How to Enter?**

Enter your zucchini day-of festival, including your name and phone number with submission.

#### **Where?**

Weigh-Off Contest booth located across from the W.S. Post Office.

#### **When?**

Day-of Festival - August 12th

**11am-3pm** Zucchini Submissions Open

**3:30pm** Weighing & Awards Ceremony

### **Zucchini Baking Competition**

Tell Paul Hollywood to take a hike and preheat that oven to start baking your next Michelin-Star zucchini delicacy for the **WSZF Zucchini Baking Contest!** Gluten-free, glutenous or gluttonous, sweet or savory-- so long as its got zucchini, all baked edibles are welcome.

#### **How to Enter?**

Enter your baked good and recipe day-of festival at the Baking Contest booth at the corner of Depot St. & Center St. Recipe submissions must be written clearly or typed and must include your name, address and phone number.

#### **Where?**

Baking Contest booth located at the corner of Center Street & Depot Street.

#### **When?**

Day-of Festival - August 12th

**11:30am** Baking Submissions must be in!

**12pm** Judging & Awards Ceremony

**Questions?** Contact Lynn Ryan at 413-854-4121

### **Call for WSZF Volunteers!**

#### **VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED FOR ALL ASPECTS OF THE FESTIVAL!**

Hang out with friends, neighbors and meet some new folks too by pitching in to help run this year's festival! This is what it's all about. The festival is only made possible when you and all of the great folks in our community come together.

Any time you can give is welcome!

- Set up tents & games the night before festival
- Day-of: booth & game attendants, helpers & runners, traffic direction, cleanup crew, etc.

**To volunteer, please contact**  
**[wszucchinifestival2023@gmail.com](mailto:wszucchinifestival2023@gmail.com)**



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*When you drink, plan ahead and do not drive !!*

## August Donor Roll Call

Jane & John Angelini

Peter Angelini in memory of Lila Angelini

John & Barbara Bormolini

Arthur & Mary Ann Siskind

Wayne & Lisa Tenney

Anonymous: 3



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



**Dana Bixby ■ Architecture**

danabixby.com

413-232-7834

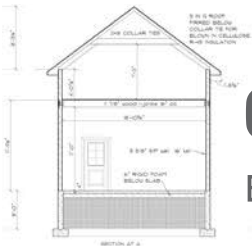
## Do you enjoy writing or photography?

The Local Yokel needs regular and occasional contributors.

Please call John Parker at (413) 394-4368,  
email [info@thelocalyokel.org](mailto:info@thelocalyokel.org),  
or visit [www.thelocalyokel.org](http://www.thelocalyokel.org) for  
more information.







# On the Home Front

By Thom Lipiczky

## Let There Be Power!

About two years ago, after having had several power outages that made our all-electric home less functional, we decided to buy a generator for those occasional times when weather events or accidents knock out the electricity. It was one of those gasoline-powered machines that had to be started occasionally to make sure everything was “go” when the time came for it to be called into action. We even had a transfer switch panel installed next to our breaker panel so several designated circuits would automatically go on when the generator took over—circuits for the water pump, part of our mini-split system that provides heat (and AC), and a few kitchen and office circuits. All well and good.

But over last winter, the generator (which had never been actually used to provide power for the house during an outage) became increasingly difficult to start. Finally, it just stopped working. This was shortly *before* the snowstorm in March that left us without electricity (i.e., no heat, power for our induction cooktop, or water) for 36 hours. Hmmm. What can we learn here?

Although outages longer than a few hours are uncommon, we decided to go for an automatic stand-alone generator. The name evokes the rugged individualism of our valiant pioneer foremothers, I know. What it means is the generator starts automatically as soon as there’s an interruption in power from National Grid. It has a supply of fuel from our propane tank (which previously only provided fuel for the heater in my shop and on-demand domestic hot water), so funky gasoline is not an issue.

But it’s not cheap! Our new one is a Generac that provides about 10 kW during an outage. The cost of the unit, installed with the interface to our breaker panel, was about \$6,500. Then we needed a plumber to hook up the line from our propane tank to the generator. Another \$1,100.

So, is it worth it? We figure that because we’re getting the electricity for our house/heat/AC/electric car charger for “free” with our solar panels, it was cheap insurance. And—spoiler alert—I’m not getting any younger, and I’m happy not to have to start up a gasoline generator in the middle of a snowstorm or a torrential rain event. Back in the days (daze!) when I was a contractor (lo these many weeks ago), I had systems twice as expensive (or more) installed for clients. We’re happy not to worry about losing power. Especially given the increasing likelihood of bizarre weather events.

How does it work? The unit senses a loss in utility power and starts up automatically, producing a certain rated amount of current into the transfer switch. This powers the circuits chosen ahead of time to operate. It’s magic.

Since our unit has been operational, we’ve not had any interruption in utility power. It did startle us the first week when it went on at a designated time to be exercised. If the machine is not run for long periods, its power capacity can diminish over time.

I guess it works great. (It also deters alien abduction, and that hasn’t happened in a long time, so—see?—it works!)

Send questions, comments, and rants to [info@thelocalyokel.org](mailto:info@thelocalyokel.org).



*Photo courtesy of Generac Power Systems*

# Talk on Vanishing Birds Draws Big Turnout at Old Town Hall

By Liza Bennett

The heat and humidity didn't keep the crowd away from Old Town Hall on Thursday evening, July 6, to hear Anders and Beverly Gyllenhaal discuss their new book *A Wing and a Prayer: The Race to Save Our Vanishing Birds*. Illustrating their story with a slide show of Anders's stunning bird photographs, the two veteran journalists recounted how, at the beginning of the pandemic, they set off on an odyssey in their 23-foot Airstream to investigate why birds across the globe are disappearing from our skies in staggering numbers.

They described a journey that encompassed nearly 25,000 miles: by road across the country, by air to Hawai'i and South America, and far more than they'd anticipated on foot as they tramped through forests and across fields, looking for answers. They talked about the people they interviewed on the front lines of bird conservation—scientists and foresters, researchers and farmers—and discussed some of the age-old practices and exciting new technologies that are being used to try to reverse the bird die-off crisis.

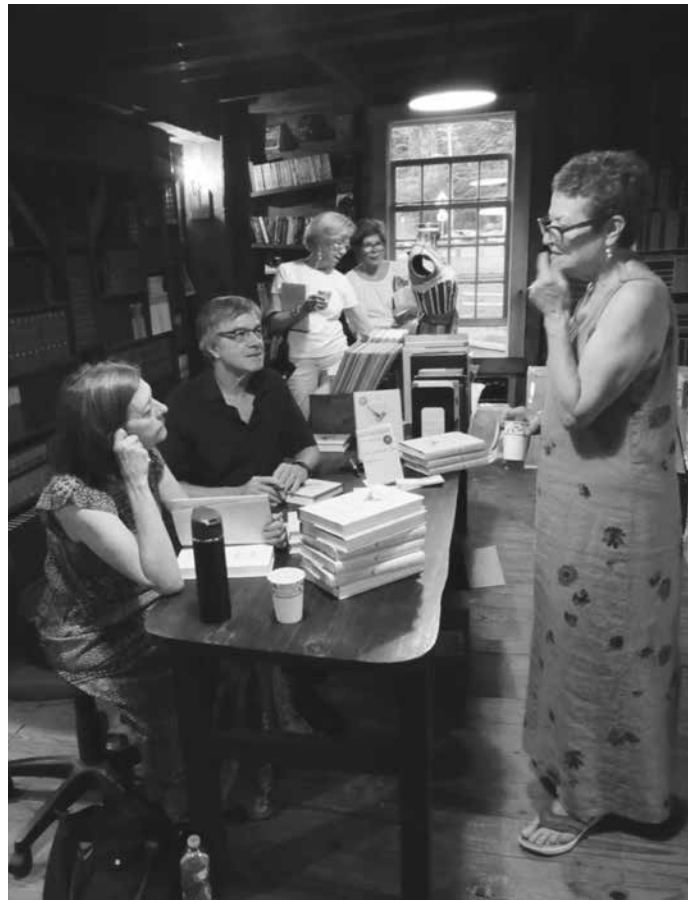
An appreciative and well-informed audience made for a lively question-and-answer period that included ideas and suggestions for practical ways we can all help restore and protect avian life. After the official talk ended, the discussion continued around the corner at the well-attended reception and book signing at Shaker Mill Books.

The event was hosted by the West Stockbridge Historical Society and co-sponsored by the Friends of the West Stockbridge Library and Shaker Mill Books.

*Photos by John Parker*



*West Stockbridge Historical Society President Robert Salerno welcomes the crowd*



*Book signing at Shaker Mill Books reception*



*Anders and Beverly Gyllenhaal, co-authors of *A Wing and a Prayer**



# WEST STOCKBRIDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY

21 State Line Rd | West Stockbridge, MA 01266 | In the Town Offices  
weststockbridgelibrary.org | 413-232-0300 ext. 308

Mon., Wed., Thurs., and Sat. 10 am–3 pm | Tues. and Fri. 2–6 pm | Sun. Closed

## August greetings to all!

Please join us in congratulating our highly respected former staff member Brad Havill as he embarks on his first library directorship at the Otis Public Library. Brad remains interested in working with the West Stockbridge Library community, so you may see him substituting from time to time. We wish him the very best.

If you haven't been by the outside of the library recently, come take a look at a very special pollinator garden. Brad learned about the idea for the garden in a library publication. The good people of the Berkshire Botanist installed it for us, and you may see them soon tidying away the weeds and adding mulch. The board of the library trustees provided the funding. There have been some very busy bees and butterflies having fun out there already!

We're excited about the August 5 Friends of the Library Free Book Day in the Community Room. Come into the library and say hello after choosing some free books. We would love to see you!

*Vicky, Rachel, and introducing Sarah, our new assistant librarian!*

\*\*\*\*\*

### NEW ADULT FICTION

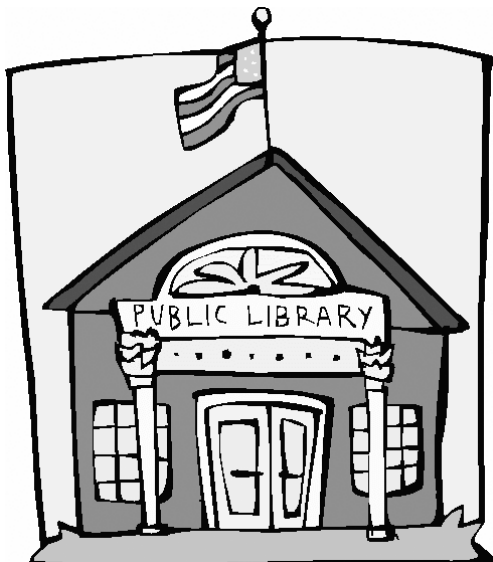
- Allende, *The wind knows my name*
- Bentley, *Tom Clancy flash point*
- Comey, *Central Park West*
- Harding, *This other Eden*
- Heard, *You can trust me*
- Henry, *Happy place*
- James, *Loot*
- Lehane, *Small mercies*
- Roberts, *Identity*
- Sandford, *Dark angel*
- Simpson, *Commitment*
- Wolff, *Man in the corduroy suit*

### NEW ADULT NONFICTION

- Attia, *Outlive: The Science and art of longevity*
- Totenberg, *Dinners with Ruth: A Memoir on the power of friendships*

### DVDS

- Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret*
- Succession, Season 3*



## Scrapbook Questions/created by Paula Farrell TEST YOUR TRIVIA KNOWLEDGE!

1. Who directed the Monument Mountain Regional High School Band and Jazz Ensemble?
2. The Pops Concert in March 2014 was part of the music department's celebration of what national event?
3. Where was the performance held?
4. What were the proceeds from the performance used for?

1. Jeffrey Stevens  
2. Music in Our Schools Month  
3. Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center  
4. To help support music in the schools



This program 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.



# WEST STOCKBRIDGE FARMERS MARKET

ON THE FOUNDRY GREEN

THURSDAYS  
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[WestStockbridgeFarmersMarket.org](http://WestStockbridgeFarmersMarket.org)

# 8 Town Board Votes “Yes” on School Merger: Community to Vote This Fall

By Mary Nash, Community Outreach Consultant

On July 18, the 8 Town Regional School District Planning Board voted 16–2 (with two abstentions) to recommend the merger of the Berkshire Hills Regional School District and Southern Berkshire Regional School District.

The 24-member board (with three appointed representatives from each of the eight towns) was formed in March 2020 to study a possible merger in the face of declining enrollment and rising operating costs. In April 2021, the board voted to develop the merger model recommended by its expert research team, which was to keep the elementary and middle schools in place as they are, and construct a new merged 9–12 high school, with new vocational facilities, on the Great Barrington campus. Since that vote, the board has been developing and testing the assumptions supporting that recommended model.

“After three years of careful research, our board has concluded that the proposed merger presents the best path forward for our students and our community,” said Lucy Prashker, chair of the 8 Town Board.

Prashker added that the board’s recommendation identifies important educational benefits and opportunities as well as significant cost savings that could be realized from the two districts pooling resources and achieving economies of scale. Its decision was also informed by broad community outreach, including surveys, student forums, focus groups, forums, and open community gatherings.

“South Berkshire, like other parts of Berkshire County, has experienced staggering declines in student enrollment over the last two decades, a trend that is expected to continue,” explained Prashker. “Those declining enrollments put a tremendous strain on our ability to just maintain what we have, much less to expand those offerings. By joining together, we will be able to provide the educational enhancements our children need and deserve in a way that is sustainable and our 8 towns can afford.”

According to the findings of its educational quality subcommittee, a merged high school would allow for new and expanded vocational opportunities as well as expanded academic choices for college-bound students, more electives and extracurricular activities, optimized class sizes, and a more inclusive and diverse school population. For all grades, a merger would result in broader access to resources for English language learners, special education, and social-emotional support, and for more professional development and other opportunities for teachers.

Although transportation was identified as a potential concern of a proposed merger, an independent study demonstrated that the time most students would spend on a bus would either stay the same or decrease. Assuming a relatively modest investment in additional vans, the maximum bus time is expected to decrease from 1 hour to 45 minutes. The merger would also allow a two-tier transportation system for the students in all towns, allowing elementary school students to ride separately from high schoolers. (Currently only BHRSD has a two-tier system.)

“Building a state-of-the-art high school will be a huge win for the students of all 8 towns,” said Deb Phillips, chair of the board’s educational quality subcommittee. “Merger would also allow us to increase the salaries of the Southern Berkshire Regional School District faculty to achieve parity with those at Berkshire Hills.”

The Board’s July 18 vote included approval of a draft regional agreement, which the board has been working on for close to a year. Following some expected additional input from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and legal counsel, the board expects to vote on a final version of that agreement in late August, together with a written statement of the reasons for the merger, to be presented to the Select Boards of the 8 towns. The board will announce additional public forums where community members can learn more about the benefits. The voters of the 8 towns will decide whether to merge at special town meetings, which are expected to be held in October.

Visit [8towns.org](http://8towns.org) for more information about the RSDPB and the benefits of merging districts.



The *Local Yokel* is published monthly. Please mail submissions to: **The Local Yokel, P.O. Box 238, West Stockbridge, MA 01266**, email [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.

## Community News & Events

### Not Happening in August:

- Stockbridge Grange public dinners
- COA meeting
- West Stockbridge Plant Exchange

### **The Knitters Group**

The Knitters Group meets every Wednesday from 2 to 4 pm in the Community Room at the Town Offices. All crafts are welcome.

### **Friends of the Library**

The Friends of the Library Committee meets every second Wednesday of the month from 3:30 to 4:30 pm in the Community Room at the Town Offices. All are welcome.

*Send your notices for Community News & Events to the Local Yokel,*

*P.O. Box 238, West Stockbridge, MA 01266,  
email [info@thelocalyokel.org](mailto:info@thelocalyokel.org), or visit [thelocalyokel.org](http://thelocalyokel.org).*

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## August Art Calendar

Guild of Berkshire Artists | [BerkshireArtists.org](http://BerkshireArtists.org) | [infoberkshireartists@gmail.com](mailto:infoberkshireartists@gmail.com)

2023

**July 27 - August 6, "Earth, Wax, Fire"**  
Art Show featuring Amy Pressman, Pat Hogan, and Margie Skaggs. Art on Main Gallery, 38 Main Street, West Stockbridge, MA.

**August 5, Urban Sketching Meetup, 9-11am.** Create and socialize around Pittsfield's downtown. See website for how to register.

**August 9 - August 22, "Arborvital"** Art Show featuring Lori Bradley, Karen Carmean, and Mark Millstein. Art on Main Gallery, 38 Main Street, West Stockbridge, MA.

**August 24 - September 4, "Oil, Water, Clay"** Art Show featuring Mike Coyne and Bruce Shickmanter. Art on Main Gallery, 38 Main Street, West Stockbridge, MA.

**August 25, Art Book Gathering, 10-11am.** Share a favorite book, artist, or process.

**August 27, Berkshire Photo Gathering.** See web: [berkshirephotogathering.com/online-meetings](http://berkshirephotogathering.com/online-meetings)

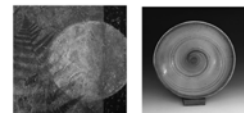
**August 29, Meet the Artist, 3pm.** TBD.

**Mon-Sat, 10am-1pm, Berkshire Plein Air.** See website for days and locations.

**Wednesdays, Art Together.** Join GBA artists together online

See [www.berkshireartists.org](http://www.berkshireartists.org) for all the in-person and online events offered by the Guild of Berkshire Artists!

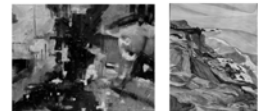
**Art on Main**



*Earth, Wax, Fire*



*Arborvital*



*Oil, Water, Clay*

**3 August Art Shows**  
**Featuring 8 Local Artists**  
**at Art on Main Gallery**  
38 Main Street, West Stockbridge

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[www.the-floorstore.com](http://www.the-floorstore.com)

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

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Address (location you would like the *Local Yokel* and/or bumper sticker sent)

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City State Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

**Check any that apply:**

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- Thanks, but don't mail the *Local Yokel* to me. Save the postage; I'll pick it up myself.
- Yes, please do send me a YKL Bumper Sticker for my donation of \$35 or more.



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## The *Local Yokel* meets the 21st Century!

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Visit [thelocalyokel.org](http://thelocalyokel.org) for our rates or email Vicki for more information at [info@thelocalyokel.org](mailto:info@thelocalyokel.org).

## Town Government Boards and Commissions, Phone Directory, and Office Hours

Town Offices Main Number (413) 232-0300 • Fax 232-7195

Animal Control	<i>John Drake</i>	464-2148		As Needed
Assessors Office	<i>Mary Stodden</i>	232-0300	ext. 303	Tues. 1-5 pm; Thurs. 9 am-1 pm
Board of Health	<i>Earl Moffatt</i>	232-0300	ext. 314	Fri. 9 am-4 pm, or by appt.
Select Board	<i>Kathleen Keresey Andy Krouss Andy Potter</i>	232-0300	ext. 319	
Town Administrator	<i>Marie Ryan</i>			Mon.-Thurs. 7 am-3 pm Fri. 7-11 am
Building Inspector	<i>Brian Duval</i>	232-0300	ext. 313	Leave Message for Inquiries
Conservation Commission	<i>John Masiero</i>	232-7063		Leave Message for Inquiries
Council on Aging	<i>John Zick</i>	232-0300	ext. 340	Leave Message for Inquiries
Emergency Management	<i>Louis Oggiani</i>	528-2175		
Fire Department	<i>Steve Traver</i>	911 or 329-7153 (non-emergency)		Mon. 6:30-9 pm
Highway Department	<i>Curt G. Wilton</i>	232-0305		Leave Message for Inquiries
Library	<i>Rachel Alter</i>	232-0300	ext. 308	Mon., Wed., Thurs., and Sat. 10 am-3 pm; Tues. and Fri. 2-6 pm; closed Sun.
Police Department	<i>Marc Portieri</i>	911 or 232-8500 (non-emergency)		24 hours, 7 days/week
Post Office	<i>Colleen A. Wich</i>	232-8544		Lobby: 7 am-7 pm; 7 days/week; Window: Mon.-Fri. 9 am-4:30 pm; Sat. 9 am-12 noon
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. 1:30-3:30 pm
Town Collector	<i>Kelli Bradbury</i>	232-0300	ext. 302	Tues. 1-5 pm; Wed. 7 am-12 pm; Thurs. 1-6 pm
Town Historian	<i>Robert Salerno</i>	232-4465		
Town Treasurer	<i>Karen Williams</i>	232-0300	ext. 316	Thurs. 9 am-4 pm
Transfer Station	<i>Wayne Cooper</i>	232-0307		Tues. & Thurs. 10 am-6 pm and Sat. 8 am-6 pm
Tree Warden	<i>Andrew Fudge</i>	212-9206		
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](http://weststockbridge-ma.gov) • Community and Business Website: [visitweststockbridge.com](http://visitweststockbridge.com)



# Party Celebrates Opening of Card Pond

By Cait Graham



The annual Card Pond Opening Party, rain delayed from its original June date, went off without a hitch on a beautiful Sunday, July 23, with about 75 West Stockbridge friends and neighbors in attendance! The beach was filled with the sounds of music provided by Evan Campbell and his fantastic band, laughter from children frolicking in and out of the water, and chatter from adults enjoying shady spots at picnic tables and under umbrellas. Everyone enjoyed a full picnic lunch of hot dogs, chips, watermelon, cookies (fresh from our friend Bernie Fallon at Loeb's Food Town), and ice cream. Our lifeguard Max Lindner, back for his second season, kept careful watch over all the swimmers and made sure the kids played safely, while our new groundskeeper, Dom Calautti, raked the beach and

helped folks get to and from the parking area. We are certainly lucky to have those two. If you weren't able to make it to the Card Pond Party, be sure you stop by to see the beautiful beach this summer. It's never looked better, and there's no time like the present to enjoy it!



*Photos from top and left to right:  
Alex Roy and Zac Roy with their watermelon "slices."  
Photo by Joe Roy  
Steve Graham grilling hot dogs. Photo by Cait Graham  
Max Daigle, Zac Roy, Brady Graham, and  
Alex Roy jumping off the dock. Photo by Joe Roy  
Lifeguard Max Lindner. Photo by Joe Roy  
Groundskeeper Dom Calautti. Photo by Cait Graham  
Evan Campbell and his fantastic band performing beachside.  
Photo by Joe Roy  
Townsfolk enjoying the party. Photo by Joe Roy*

West Stockbridge  
**Local Yokel**  
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S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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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		

August Calendar of Events	Date	Event	Time	Location
	8/3	WS Farmers Market	3–6 pm	The Foundry Green, Harris St.
	8/4	Conservation Commission meeting	7 pm	Town Offices, 21 State Line Rd.
	8/7	Select Board meeting	6 pm	Town Offices, 21 State Line Rd.
	8/9	Friends of the Library committee meeting	3:30 pm	Community Room, Town Offices
	8/10	WS Farmers Market	3–6 pm	The Foundry Green, Harris St.
	8/12	Zucchini Festival	10 am–10 pm	Downtown at Center & Depot Streets
	8/15	*** Deadline for the next <i>Local Yokel</i> ***		Send to <a href="mailto:info@thelocalyokel.org">info@thelocalyokel.org</a>
	8/17	WS Farmers Market	3–6 pm	The Foundry Green, Harris St.
	8/21	Select Board meeting	6 pm	Town Offices, 21 State Line Rd.
	8/24	WS Farmers Market	3–6 pm	The Foundry Green, Harris St.
	8/31	WS Farmers Market	3–6 pm	The Foundry Green, Harris St.

