

Local yokel

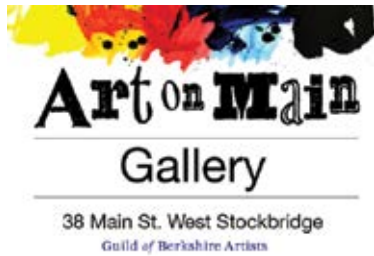
(n.) a country folk living in a quaint neighborhood community

West
Stockbridge
October
2023

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY SINCE 2005



*Spider web on fallen leaves.
Photo by Emily Weiland*



October Openings & New Shows

By Margie Skaggs

ART on MAIN Gallery has now been open for one full year, establishing itself as an intriguing fixture in downtown West Stockbridge. Pedestrians and drivers notice our small but colorful space at 38 Main Street. Visitors often stop by, including bikers, strollers with dogs, moms with babies, and kids on roller skates. Many enjoy a short rest on our bench, and then they come in to have a look at the artwork and a chat with the makers.

Carolyn Abrams, Karen Carmean, and Barbara Patton open “Natural Elements” that celebrates the impact of nature on the work of artists. Carolyn and Karen, painters working in different media, are both inspired by atmosphere and movement in the natural world. Barbara, a ceramic artist, captures the fiery chaos of flame and smoke through her forms and surface technique. Open Thursdays through Sundays from 10/5 through 10/15 and on 10/9, Indigenous Peoples’ Day. Hours: 11–4 daily. Reception: Saturday, 10/7, 2–4 pm.

Larry Frankel, Heidi Katz, and Ronald Maitland open “3 On Main” on Thursday, 10/19, closing on Sunday, 10/29. Larry’s work creates images based on his concept that there is no reality or truth in a photograph. What you see is the image maker’s reality or truth. Heidi begins her pieces with found objects imbued with their own history, placing them in new contexts, to express changed meaning in assemblages and mixed-media pieces. Ronald, a retired dentist, demonstrates a distinctive folk-art style in his colorful oil paintings, done from memory, and featuring favorite places of natural beauty. Open Thursdays through Sundays, 11–4 pm. Reception: Saturday, 10/21, 2–4 pm.

Halloween
in West Stockbridge
Tuesday, October 31st

Trick-or-Treat 4-6pm
Please turn on your porch light
if you will be receiving revelers

**Party to follow, beginning 6pm
with Costume Contest at 6:30pm**
at the Town Hall gym

**Brought to you by
West Stockbridge Parks & Recreation**



Top left to right:
Barbara Patton,
Smoke-fired Ceramic
Carolyn Abrams, Mixed Media

Left:
Ronald Maitland,
“Cote d’Azur” Oil
Heidi Katz, Mixed Media
Karen Carmean,
Works en Plein Air

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 August 21, 2023

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

Others Present: Director of Public Works, Curt Wilton

Approval of Minutes:

Andy Krouss made a motion, seconded by Andy Potter, to approve the minutes from August 7, 2023.

Kathleen Keresey abstained and Andy and Andy were in favor. Minutes approved.

Citizen Speak:

Curt Wilton suggested that the Board allow citizens to speak during the Board discussion of each agenda item if requested. He feels that people may have additional questions during the discussion prior to the Board voting on each agenda item. Kathleen stated that

the Board would like to keep to the citizen speak time but agreed that there may be times that citizens may have additional questions and the Board will try to comply with requests if possible.

David Potter and David Ingles, both residents of Pixley Hill Road stated they have about the Complete Streets project that refers to the trail off of Pixley Hill Road. This is project is to improve the current town-owned cleared area near the crossing of the Housatonic Rail Trail and Pixley Hill Road. Install bicycle parking, seating, and map board on poured concrete pad, placed at-grade. Improvements to the trail itself are not in the scope for this project.

They would like to have community involvement in the discussion when this project is considered. Curt and the Board assured them that this project was not up for consideration for the grant application at this time and that in the future community outreach.

...continued on page 5

Timmons Landscaping & Tree

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- Tree and Brush Removal
- Tree Pruning
- Stump Grinding
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- House Checking/Caretaking
- Drainage & Driveway Repairs
- Lawn & Field Mowing
- Fall & Spring Cleanups
- Building & Maintaining Gardens
- Firewood

West Stockbridge Historical Society Presents . . .

Spirit Circles and Holy Hills: Berkshire Spiritualism in the 19th Century: A Talk by Historian Christian Goodwillie

Friday, October 27, 7 pm at the Old Town Hall

Free admission

During the mid-19th century, some Americans believed they were privileged to receive communications from the spirit world. The goals of the spirits were thought to work through human beings for the betterment of humankind. The Berkshires in western Massachusetts were central to the beginnings of this movement. Christian Goodwillie's talk will explore the origins of the Spiritualist movement among the Shakers and its expansion as a progressive force in line with women's rights, abolitionism, and other causes.

Christian Goodwillie is director and curator of special collections and archives at Hamilton College in Clinton, New York. He served as curator of collections at Hancock Shaker Village from 2001 to 2009. He has published 12 books and numerous articles on the Shakers, Freemasonry, early American decorative arts, music, among other topics.



*Table tipping.
Photo courtesy of West
Stockbridge Historical Society*

School District Merger Informational Meeting

Tuesday, October 10, 2023

West Stockbridge Town Offices

All are welcome to an informational meeting about the regional school district merger at the West Stockbridge Town Offices on Tuesday, October 10, 2023, at 6 pm. The 8 Town Regional School District Planning Board Chair Lucy Prashker, along with Consultant Jake Eberwein, will offer a presentation and answer questions about the possible merger of the Berkshire Hills Regional School District and the Southern Berkshire Regional School District. All 8 towns involved will hold special town meetings to vote on the merger in late October.

Please join us at this community event to learn the facts and ask questions before you vote at the town meeting.

Queensboro Wine & Spirits

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**Carefully curated wines,
unusual spirits and
awesome beers**

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Monday to Saturday 10am to 9pm
Sunday Noon to 6pm

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

Josh Billings Runaround: Abby Chaput, Director

Abby Chaput introduced herself as the new Director of the Josh Billings. She requested approval from the Board for the race to go through the Town as it has in previous years. Director of Public Works, Curt Wilton, assured her that the Town roads are all in great shape to host the race through West Stockbridge.

Andy Potter made a motion, seconded by Kathleen, to approve the use of Town roads for the 2023 Josh Billings Runaround.

All were in favor, motion approved.

Zucchini Festival Resolution: Andy Potter

The Board thanked Marge and all her staff for their hard work on this successful event for the Town. Andy made a motion, seconded by Andy Krouss, to request that the Board acknowledge a resolution in regard to the work done on this event. He then read the attached resolution.

TurnPark One Day Liquor Licenses for two events: Jared Gelformino, Manager

Jared requested the Board approve two One-Day Liquor Licenses. One event is on September 1, 2023 from 7 PM-10 PM for a film screening to serve beer and wine only. The other event is on October 7, 2023 for a craft fair from 3 PM- 10 PM to serve all alcoholic drinks. Both events will use parking at the Wastewater Treatment Plant and will serve snacks and food. Curt Wilton and Police Chief Marc Portieri agree with the parking plan for the event.

Andy Potter made a motion, seconded by Andy Krouss, to approve the two One-Day Liquor Licenses for TurnPark on September 1 and October 7, 2023.

All were in favor, motion approved.

Appointment of Molly Meador as Library Trustee: Andy Potter

Andy Potter, Library Trustee, is requesting the Select Board appoint Molly Meador as a Library Trustee to fill the position left by the resignation of Sarah Scheaffer, until the next Annual Town Election when the position will be on the ballot. Molly will be appointed to fill the position until the election.

Molly introduced herself to the Board and thanked them for their consideration to be a Library Trustee.

Andy Potter made a motion, seconded by Andy Krouss, to appoint Molly Meador as a Library Trustee until the next Annual Town Election.

All were in favor, motion approved.

Complete Streets Projects: Curt Wilton, Chair of Complete Streets Advisory Committee

Curt explained to the Board that the Committee has completed Tier 1 and 2 of the Complete Streets Grant. Tier 2 allowed the Committee to come up with 15 total projects that have since been approved by the State to be eligible for grant funding. The Committee would like to get four of the projects on the list submitted for grant funding for the October 1, 2023 deadline. They are asking the Board for approval. In the spring, the Committee will have community outreach to prioritize which remaining projects to submit for further funding. The four projects they would like to submit now are:

1 – Create traffic calming/gateway treatments at T-intersection of Swamp Rd and Main Street. Remove existing crosswalk pavement markings, add new curbing, and repair the sidewalk. Install 2 new ADA-compliant curb ramps with new granite curbing. Install new painted crosswalk and stop line. Restore brick sidewalk and landscape areas.

3- Installation of 2 pole-mounted digital speed feedback signs along Lenox Road, approaching the thickly settled area toward the village center.

#7 - Based on high reported number of left-turn roadway departures when turning from Main Street in to Swamp Road, additional curb edge indication is proposed in the form of 2 decorative break-away bollards within the existing paver sidewalk. Approximately 250 Ft of centerline extension lines will be installed to better guide turning movements.

15- Based on high reported number of left-turn roadway departures when turning from Main Street in to Swamp Road, additional curb edge indication is proposed in the form of 2 decorative break-away bollards within the existing paver sidewalk. Approximately 250 Ft of centerline extension lines will be installed to better guide turning movements.

Kathleen made a motion, seconded by Andy Potter, to approve the four projects, items numbered 1,3,7 and 15, to be submitted for funding through the Complete Streets Grant.

All were in favor, motion approved.

Affordable Housing Trust: Kathleen

Kathleen brought up the fact that the SB had asked that letters of interest for the Affordable Housing Trustees were to be submitted by August 1st. She had heard from a number of interested people who were not aware of the deadline, and she asked the board if they would be willing to open up the time for people to submit letters of interest. She felt that the time frame and the outreach approach did not allow for qualified people to submit their letter of interest.

After a Board discussion, Frank Landsberger, an applicant, stated he would like to withdraw his letter of interest.

Kathleen made a motion to extend the deadline and open up the time for additional applicants to send in their letter of interest. There was no second, motion failed.

Kathleen stated that the Board will appoint the members at their next meeting.

Housatonic Water Company: Kathleen

The Housatonic Water Company is requesting to increase their rates to the Department of Public Utilities (DPU). They are holding an informational zoom meeting on Wednesday, August 23 at 6 PM and there will also be a Public Hearing about this at the Monument Mountain Regional High School Auditorium on September 26th at 7 PM. Information in regard to both meetings is on the Town website. Kathleen asked Andy Potter if he would be interested in working on this project if needed.

West Stockbridge Vision Committee: Summer Highlights

By Joe Roy, Jr., Chair

The West Stockbridge Vision Committee has been busy lately. Here are some of the topics we've discussed:

- Encouraging attendance at all public town boards and committees (e.g., Select Board, Planning Board, Finance Committee, Board of Health, Conservation Commission, Vision Committee, Board of Appeals, and any board that posts meetings and hearings to the public).
- Knowing our town officials: town administrator, Select Board members, town clerk, town collector, treasurer, building commissioner, assessors, animal control officer, and more.
- Learning about our police, fire, and highway departments and their personnel. Do you know the director of the library? What do constables do? The mission of the Cultural Council? What is a field driver? What about a fence viewer? Who is the town's parking clerk? They are all listed in the Annual Town Report. You can pick up a copy just inside the front door at the Town Offices.

Our Planning Board has regular posted meetings, about every two weeks. They are one of our permit-granting authorities. The board revises and updates the town's zoning bylaws. The Vision Committee attends as many of their meetings as possible and reports back with updates.

The Select Board also posts regular meetings, also about every two weeks, and schedules additional meetings as needed. Many posted meetings are available on Zoom, and residents can both observe and interact in real time. We strongly recommend attending as many scheduled meetings as you can to learn about the activities in town and the current issues.

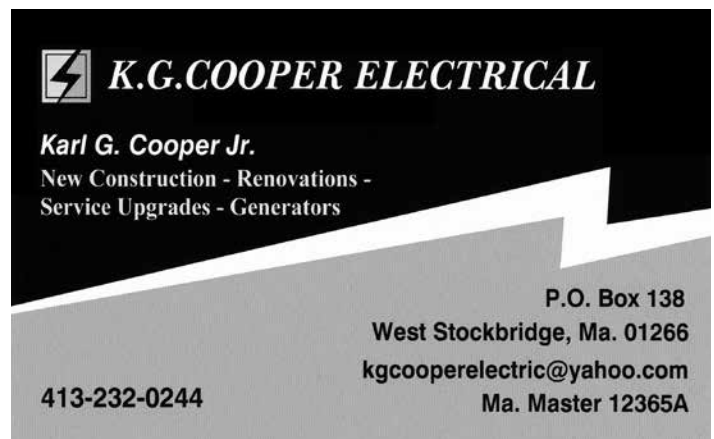
We enjoyed working with the Zucchini Festival Committee that facilitated a renaissance of the all-day event in August. After a hiatus of 10 years, it was both a rewarding and very successful experience. Plans for next year's festival will be underway soon. Consider volunteering and join your friends and neighbors to help make it an annual event again.

The Vision Committee also works closely with other boards and committees, for example, Parks & Recreation, about updating our parks and playgrounds; Complete Streets Committee, obtaining grants that provide improvements for traffic calming and pedestrian safety; and following the 8 Town Regional School District Planning Board as they propose a possible merger to expand our school system (see notice about the October 23 informational meeting at the Town Offices elsewhere in this issue). About half our entire town budget goes to our school system, so it's important to be informed.

The Select Board has authorized us to research funding sources for installing new electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in town. They would provide travelers and visitors an opportunity to spend time in West Stockbridge while they recharge their vehicles. Most residents who own an EV have home chargers. The town charging station would mostly be for people traveling through town and would help make West Stockbridge a destination. People will visit our shops and restaurants, increasing town revenues. EV charging stations also provide power for our town departments. Our police, fire, and highway departments will soon be considering EVs as they upgrade. Our federal and state governments are making funds available right now. Most of our neighboring towns have already done this.

We are dedicated to serving our town. Stop in at one of our meetings and pay us a visit. Our meetings are posted at <https://www.weststockbridge-ma.gov/vision-committee>.

The committee welcomes guests at meetings and possible new participating members. But we're not just a discussion group. There's always work to do. We look for fresh ideas—and we help make them happen!



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Update by Town Administrator: Marie Ryan

Marie updated the Board on the transportation for residents. She noted that the Annual Town Meeting approved money to purchase a new van, which she is in the process of purchasing. This van will be used by the Tri-town Connector. The Town of West Stockbridge has joined this program that provides rides for all residents for a very low fee. All the information about this program is available on the Town website.

Marie provided a copy of an application to be used for any rent increase at the Trailer Park to the Rent Control Board (the Select Board) which Town Counsel created. The owner of the Trailer Park plans to request a rent increase and an application needs to be provided to him. Marie asked the Board to approve the application.

Andy Potter made a motion, seconded by Kathleen, to approve the Rent Control Board Rent Increase Request Application form.

All were in favor, motion approved.

Select Board Speak:

Andy Krouss noted there is a survey on the website to help the Town in gaining hi-speed internet access. He urged everyone to take the survey noting that the more information the State receives back, the better the chances are they will help financially support the Broadband issues in the Berkshires.

Andy Potter gave an update on his record management project. He will be working with Curt and the Highway Department to create a list of which records they have.

He also mentioned that the 8 Town Regional School District Planning Board will be meeting tomorrow to discuss outreach to the Towns on the proposal that the Planning Board passed by a vote of 16-2. There will also be a meeting for all 8 Towns' Select Boards in Sheffield on Monday, August 28th at 7 PM. This meeting will also have a zoom link for people who cannot attend in person.

Andy acknowledged Angelina Korte, who passed away on August 11th.

Kathleen informed the Board that she has spoken with a member of the Select Board in Lee and Stockbridge in regards to the shared Fire Department. She would like the Boards to have a joint meeting to further discuss the possibility of West Stockbridge joining with them. Kathleen stressed that this was not a commitment at this time, but an information sharing opportunity. She has also spoken with Neal Pilson, Richmond Select Board member, about the possibility of several shared services. She asked the Board if they would be willing to have a joint meeting with Lee and Stockbridge to further discuss the possibility of joining in the shared Fire Department, they agreed.

Kathleen made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Andy Potter at 7:26 PM.

All were in favor, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Y. Ryan

Marie Y. Ryan
Town Administrator

Resolution Recognizing the Outstanding Contributions to the West Stockbridge Zucchini Festival

WHEREAS, the West Stockbridge Zucchini Festival has been and has returned as a beloved annual tradition, celebrating community spirit, creativity, and the bountiful zucchini harvest; and

WHEREAS, the success of the West Stockbridge Zucchini Festival is a testament to the hard work, dedication, and enthusiasm of numerous individuals who generously donate their time and effort to ensure its success; and

WHEREAS, the festival's seamless execution and vibrant atmosphere are a direct result of the diligent planning and coordination by the West Stockbridge Cultural Council and the Zucchini Festival Committee; and

WHEREAS, the festival has brought together the residents of West Stockbridge in a spirit of camaraderie, fostering a sense of belonging and unity among community members; and

WHEREAS, the Town of West Stockbridge recognizes the exemplary leadership and dedication of Marjorie Powell, Chair of the West Stockbridge Cultural Council/Zucchini Festival Committee, and Council Members Jacqueline Moffatt, Sue Leo, Scott Sawyer, and Curtis Thierling, for their tireless efforts in organizing and overseeing the festival;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the West Stockbridge Select Board expresses its deepest appreciation and heartfelt gratitude to the many good folks of West Stockbridge who selflessly donated their time and expertise to all aspects of the West Stockbridge Zucchini Festival; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the West Stockbridge Select Board extends its special thanks to the following individuals whose contributions were pivotal in making the Zucchini Festival a resounding success:

- Anne Roy
- Joe Roy Jr.
- Joe Roy Parks & Rec
- Caitlin Graham Parks & Rec
- Jenni Roy - Zucchini Decorating
- Chris Powell - Build/Paint organizer Art design/social media
- Ron & Pat Kujawski - Paint/Build
- Karlene Kantner Build/Paint creative
- Lily Thorne Build/Paint creative
- Jackie Murray
- Les Losaw
- John Korte
- Jason Rosa
- Lauren Rosa
- Amy Butterworth
- Sharon Vidal
- Lynn Ryan - Baking Contest
- Julie Medeiros - Pet Parade
- Dave Medeiros - Pet Parade
- Kathy Wilson - Signage

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the West Stockbridge Select Board expresses its gratitude to all members of Public Works,

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The West Stockbridge Chamber Players Harvest Concert Offers a Beautiful Cornucopia of Classical Music

By Liza Bennett



Members of the West Stockbridge Chamber Players performing at last year's Harvest Concert at the Old Town Hall. Photo by Carol Kuller

On Sunday, October 29, at 4 pm, the Old Town Hall in West Stockbridge will be the setting for an eclectic and deeply felt benefit concert by the West Stockbridge Chamber Players. Among its offerings will be the premiere of esteemed Berkshire-based composer Eric Shimelonis's *For the Love of Music: An Invocation Dedicated to Stuart Kuller*.

The performance will feature an acclaimed group of musicians, including Chamber Players' artistic director Catherine Hudgins, clarinet; William Hudgins, clarinet; Sheila Fiekowsky, violin; Stephanie Fong, violin; and Adam Esbensen, cello. Along with Shimelonis's piece, the program will highlight the rich and varied world of classical music, spanning centuries, starting with Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Divertimento No. 5, K. 439b. The next piece, *The Generation of Hope* by prominent Israeli clarinetist, educator, conductor, and composer Eva Wasserman-Margolis, was composed in 1994 for the solo clarinet. Czech-born Gideon Klein's String Trio, which continues the concert, was written in 1944 in the Terezin concentration camp shortly before the composer was sent to Auschwitz and, ultimately, his end.

The concert will conclude with Czechian Bohuslav Martinů's Serenade for Violin, Viola, Cello, and Two Clarinets—a very unusual instrumentation—composed in 1951.

With the generous help of the Chamber Players and the loyal audiences who flock to these concerts, the West Stockbridge Historical Society has been able to make tremendous strides during 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. Limited attendance: first come, first served.

Girdler Electric

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Barry Girdler

owner

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West Stockbridge MA 01266

413-237-5957

barry@girdlerelectric.com

girdlerelectric.com



Dana Bixby ■ Architecture

danabixby.com

413-232-7834

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Police, Fire, Board of Health, Town Administrator, Town Treasurer, and Town Accountant for their unwavering support and collaboration in ensuring the success of the West Stockbridge Zucchini Festival; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the West Stockbridge Select Board eagerly anticipates the next year's Zucchini Festival and looks forward to the continued involvement of the community-minded individuals who make West Stockbridge a vibrant and united town.

ADOPTED this 21 day of August, 2023.

Select Board Meeting Minutes September 5, 2023

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

Approval of Minutes:

Kathleen Keresey requested to approve the minutes from August 21st at the next meeting.

Citizen Speak:

Bob Salerno believes that the Board should extend the application period for interested parties to submit their letters of interest to serve on the Affordable Housing Trust as Trustees. This committee is responsible for very complex issues and the trustees should include talent in Town that can deal appropriately with these issues.

Dana Bixby has worked on several Affordable Housing Trust projects as an architect and believes the West Stockbridge Affordable Housing Trust could benefit from the guidance of people who have worked in related fields. She encouraged the Town to move toward more professionalism in town management. and urged the Board to extend the application period.

Wayne Cooper showed the Board a thick section of wires that he said is an example of what would need to be in place for electric vehicle (EV) charging stations. He has concerns with possible power failures: He feels the electrical grid will not be able to handle the electrical usage.

Affordable Housing Trust

Kathleen said the applications for the Affordable Housing Trust should have been more inclusive and she would like the Board to extend the time for accepting applications. She also would like the Board to have a discussion on developing a better process to get information out to the residents for agenda items such as this.

Kathleen suggested that one way to increase communications could be to send out to the information to Committee/Board Chairs and then have them disseminate the information to everyone as well as using the website and Local Yokel.

Andy Potter made a motion, seconded by Kathleen, to have this as a discussion item on the next agenda at the end of September.

All were in favor, motion passed.

Andy Potter made a motion, seconded by Andy Krouss, to appoint

Kathleen as the Select Board representative on the Affordable Housing Trust and Frank Landsberger, Christopher Powell, Mark Webber, and Andy Potter and that the Trustees form an Advisory Committee to include professionals with whom the Trustees can consult and gain advice from.

All were in favor, motion passed.

The final Trustee would be the Town Administrator or her designee. Marie stated that she would appoint a designee by the next Select Board meeting.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations - Joe Roy, Vision Committee

Joe Roy, Vision Committee member, explained to the Board that they have been gathering information on EV Stations for the Town. He would like to know if the Board wants the Vision Committee to continue with their research and if they can have the Select Board permission to state they are doing this as representatives of the Town as they gather the information.

The Vision Committee feels that benefits will be a great for the Town to install these charging stations. The Committee has received assistance and information from National Grid and Peter Rothstein, a resident and consultant on clean energy. Joe appreciates that Andy Krouss comes to all their meetings and Andy Potter for offering to assist on this issue as well.

Andy Potter made a motion, seconded by Andy Krouss, to endorse the research phase by the Vision Committee on EV Charging Stations and allow for gathering information with the authority of the Select Board.

All were in favor, motion passed.

Moscow Road Landscape Design – Kathleen

Kathleen explained to the Board that the landscape design for parcel that the Town purchased on Moscow Road has stalled and she would like to get that work completed. She said the Town has yet to spend the \$10,000 set aside as seed money for this project.

Kathleen made a motion, seconded by Andy Potter, to put out a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the initial work on a landscape design for the Moscow Road Town owned property.

All were in favor, motion passed.

Select Board Speak:

Kathleen has had very preliminary discussions with the Towns of Stockbridge and Lee about their progress in creating joint Fire and EMT departments She said that the two towns are looking and feasibility and that it would be prudent to have a discussion about the future of Regionalized Services for our Towns. Kathleen would like to set up a meeting with them and our Board. Andy and Andy agreed.

Andy Potter made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Andy Krouss at 7:15 PM.

All were in favor, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Y. Ryan

Marie Y. Ryan

Town Administrator

October History Quiz Question:

Main Street in West Stockbridge has several classic New England village-style buildings built during the growth of the village center from the 1820s to the 1850s. Their architectural style is Greek revival, and although many have been modified, the elements that remain have made them traditional postcard images. Each of these houses has a history or some significance related to the growth of West Stockbridge.

The history of one house goes beyond our town and region with both national and international significance and even attracts visitors to West Stockbridge every year. Which house has that notoriety, and what is its history that made it famous?

(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. Email info@weststockbridgehistory.org or call (413) 232-4465.



**West Stockbridge
Historical Society**
Incorporated in 1994

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

Please check our website www.ahavathsholom 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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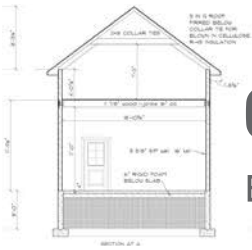
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GRAVEL PRODUCTS



On the Home Front

By Thom Lipiczky

Affordable Housing

I've written about this subject on and off in past columns, as both my readers will recall. It's a critically important topic because the health and vitality of our communities relies on having diverse people from different income levels. The average cost of buying a home in Berkshire County has skyrocketed since I moved here almost 50 years ago. (No, I'm not from around here, not a *real* local yokel.)

According to *The Hill* newsletter, nationwide the median cost of a house has increased 160% since 2000. Our son could not afford to live and raise his family where he was born and grew up and went to school. Hmmm.

Construct is a local nonprofit organization dedicated to "a socially vibrant and economically healthy south Berkshire community with housing for everyone including our most vulnerable neighbors and vital workforce." Their recent newsletter notes that Massachusetts requires every town to have at least 10% of its housing stock "affordable." That's defined as housing that costs the resident no more than 30% of their monthly income. Construct did some analysis and found that a person would have to make at least \$27/hour to pay 30% of their monthly income for what local rents cost. The minimum wage here is \$15/hour.

Furthermore, the Construct newsletter points out that only half of the towns in Berkshire County meet the 10% threshold. There's a list of all the towns across our state with the percentage of affordable housing stock, and—sorry to report, dear friends—West Stockbridge currently has 0%.

Here's the dilemma: Because of the state mandate for at least 10% housing stock to be affordable, a developer could come into our town and buy up some land to build workforce housing (another name for affordable) without having to conform to our local zoning codes. We would lose control of the project because we currently do not have the requisite minimum affordable housing percentage.

Fortunately, the town has formed an Affordable Housing Trust to work on ways to develop plans to "provide for the preservation and creation of affordable and community housing in the Town of West Stockbridge for the benefit of low- and moderate-income households and for the funding of community housing, as defined in and in accordance with the provisions of the Community Preservation Act" (as it reads in the town warrant that we voted on last May). Our Planning Board is also working on this issue.

People are aware of the challenges, and we have some of the smartest people in town working on them. Watch this space. Or you can learn more from going online to the town website and—even better—attending some town meetings and voicing your support for these efforts.

Send comments, questions, and rants to info@thelocalyokel.org.





Cultural Council Invites Grant Proposals for 2023

By West Stockbridge Cultural Council

The West Stockbridge Cultural Council has set an October 17, 2023, postmark deadline for local organizations, schools, and individuals to apply for grants that support cultural activities in our community.

A network of 329 Local Cultural Councils across the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the LCC program is the largest grass-roots cultural funding network in the nation, supporting thousands of community-based projects in the arts, applied sciences, and humanities every year. The state legislature provides an annual appropriation to the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency, which then allocates funds to each community. With this funding, the state acknowledges the importance of cultural activities to the economy of the Berkshires. In West Stockbridge, our priorities are to provide a variety of cultural resources for our diverse community from pre-schoolers to older adults.

Our grants support many kinds of cultural projects and activities, such as performances, lectures, school programs, festivals, concerts, and more. Subsidies may also be available for school-age children to attend cultural field trips to local museums and other cultural sites. The council typically grants around \$5,000 annually. Examples of previously funded projects are the West Stockbridge Public Library, the *Local Yokel*, Shakespeare in the Park, Greenagers, Berkshire Wildlife Sanctuaries, Zucchini Festival, and chamber music concerts at the West Stockbridge Historical Society.

For specific guidelines and complete information on the West Stockbridge Cultural Council, contact Marjorie Powell at (413) 429-7053. Application forms and more information about the LCC program are available online at www.mass-culture.org (click on "application process" and "how to apply"). Please note that all applications must now be made online.

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*October crisp
 Autumn bright
 Short the day
 Long the night*



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

Hi from your small but mighty town library! We hope everyone has a scary fun October!

If you are looking for magazine articles and news that consider all sides of an issue, consider the Opposing Viewpoints database, free on our website and free via this direct link to the statewide databases: https://go.gale.com/ps/start.do?p=OVIC&u=mlln_w_weststock&sid=geolinks



We look forward to seeing you soon! Vicky, Rachel, and Sarah

NEW ADULT FICTION

- Banville, *Lock-up*
- Hoffman, *Invisible hour*
- Lapena, *Everyone here is lying*
- Moreno-Garcia, *Silver nitrate*
- Silva, *Collector*
- Steel, *Happiness*
- Thor, *Dead fall: a thriller*
- Wiggs, *Welcome to beach town*
- Wright, *Harold*

NEW ADULT NONFICTION

- Leipzig, *Honest aging: an insider's guide to the second half of life*
- Winchester, *Knowing what we know: the transmission of knowledge, from ancient wisdom to modern magic*

NEW TITLES FOR YOUNG READERS AND THE YOUNG AT HEART

- Berger, *In the night garden*
- Goodale, *Moon remembers*
- Henkes, *The world and everything in it*
- Klassen, *Skull: a Tyrolean folktale*
- Lai, *Ghost book*
- Mackesy, *The boy, the mole, the fox and the horse*
- Offsay, *Challah day!*
- Pilkey, *Dog man: twenty thousand fleas under the sea*



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

1. The WAM Theater presented a special stage and cast discussion of Jessica Sevale's *Blue Stocking*. Where was it held?
2. In April 2014, what was the subject of the Berkshire Hills Regional School District meeting with school officials in Lenox, Lee, and Richmond?
3. Which West Stockbridge resident ran for selectman in 2014?
4. Who taught the NRA Home Firearm Safety gun class for women in the West Stockbridge Town Office's Community Room in May 2014?

1. No. Six Depot Roostery & Café on April 13, 2014 2. Sharing of services, in particular Superintendent Peter Dillon, with neighboring school districts 3. Steve Cabral 4. Local resident Robert McDermott, an NRA-certified training counselor and instructor



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

WESTSTOCKBRIDGEFARMERSMARKET.ORG

WE WISH TO THANK EVERYONE

for another successful season! We wouldn't be here without you all—our wonderful vendors, shoppers, musicians, donors, supportive neighbors & others.



MANY THANKS TO

the WS Cultural Council & to the Local Yokel Santa's Wish List donations for making Live Music possible. Special thanks to The Foundry for the generous use of The Green and Truc Orient Express for providing parking to our vendors.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

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& TurnPark Art Space

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Harvest Dinner



West Stockbridge Village Congregational
Church to Hold Annual Harvest Dinner
sponsored by
Hand Crafted Catering & Events

Sunday, November 5th

45 Main Street, West Stockbridge
Pre-order, pre-pay Take Out Only!

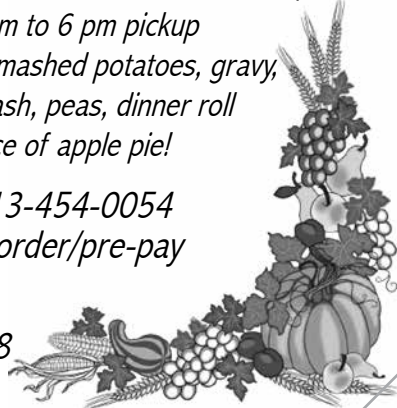
\$20pp cash, check, credit card & venmo accepted

4:30 pm to 6 pm pickup

Turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, gravy,
roasted squash, peas, dinner roll
and slice of apple pie!

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Saturday October 28



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Community News & Events

Stockbridge Grange Dinner

On Sunday, October 8, the Stockbridge Grange will serve a takeout-only dinner at the Grange Hall, 51 Church Street, Stockbridge. The dinner will be stuffed breast of chicken with apple and chocolate cream pies for dessert. Cost is \$15. PLEASE ORDER BY FRIDAY, OCTOBER 5. To place an order, call (413) 243-1298 or (413) 443-4352. Pickup time is 12 to 1:30 pm.

Council on Aging

There will be no COA meeting in October.

West Stockbridge Plant Exchange

The West Stockbridge Plant Exchange meets on the first Sunday each month to exchange seeds, cuttings, plants, and advice. It's a great way to meet people in the community and exchange indoor and outdoor gardening knowledge. We meet in the Community Room at the Town Offices from 2 to 4 pm. For further information, please contact Alisa Desmond at (561) 235-4392.

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, or visit thelocalyokel.org.

History Quiz Answer:

Among the many early 19th-century houses on Main Street is 7 Main Street, on the hill next to the Old Town Hall and currently undergoing restoration. It likely has one of the more important histories in West Stockbridge.

Grove Pomeroy, an early merchant, owned all the land on the east side of Main Street to Lenox Road (including 7 Main Street and the Old Town Hall) and up Lenox Road to the top of West Stockbridge Mountain. (The title history of that property is a story for another time.) When Grove died, his daughter Sophronia inherited some of his land, including the Main Street section. She was a schoolteacher in the house next door on the corner at 5 Main Street.

Sophronia married Daniel Spencer, Jr. in 1823. Eight years later, they built the house on the hill at 7 Main Street. Daniel was also a merchant. His first general store is now the Vivian Outlaw Gallery building. He later built another shop, the current Queensboro Wine & Spirits. Daniel was the chair of the local school board and in 1839 hosted a meeting of a Mormon minister.

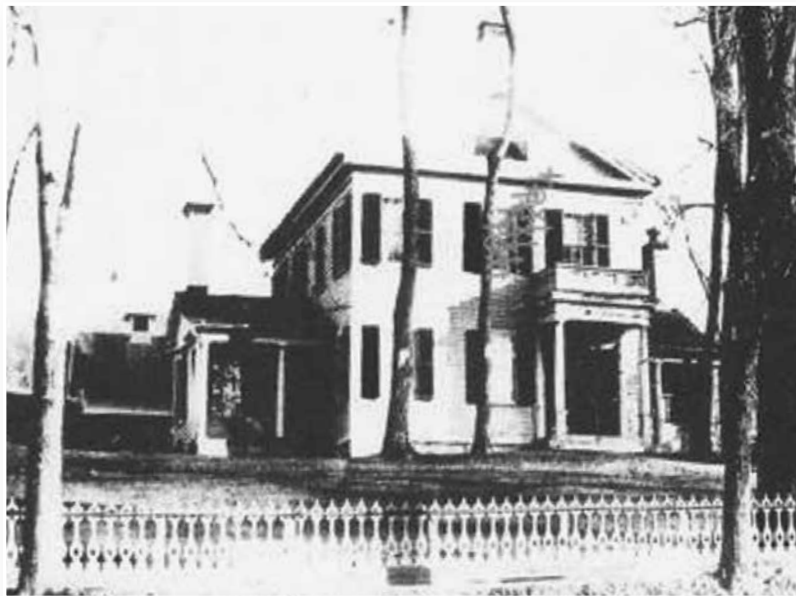


Photo courtesy West Stockbridge Historical Society

Shortly after that meeting, he converted and in the 1840s moved to Nauvoo to join Joseph Smith. Sophronia had died in 1839. Daniel remarried (many times), emigrated to Salt Lake City, and became its first mayor. He served as an elder and major figure in the early Mormon church, also ministering in both England and other parts of Europe. Every year, visitors from both the United States and around the world come here looking for the buildings associated with Daniel's history.

But the story of 7 Main Street does not stop there. The next owner was William Edwards. He also owned a general store on Main Street in a building next to the Waterside Gallery (taken down in the 1970s by Gordon Rose). He served as a selectman and on the school board for many years. His daughter was the librarian and founder of the Shakespeare Club in 1909.

By the mid-20th century, the house was home to the Baldessare family. Sam Baldesarre ran the barber shop in the brick building across the street. The house remained in his family until recently when it was purchased by the current owners.

The property in the back of 7 Main Street also has a unique history. In 1912, the Congregational Church granted permission to the Edwards for access to the house from Hotel Street. The lot was known in town as the "Horseshed lot." The agreement, still in force, allows the church to stable its horses in the barn.

Our thanks to Bill Loeb for his extensive research on the early history of the town and particularly on Daniel Spencer. See the "Spencer the Mormon" monograph at <http://www.weststockbridgehistory.org/spencer-the-mormon.html>.



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, or visit www.thelocalyokel.org. Copy deadline is the 15th of the month prior to the publication. Editors: **John Parker, 394-4368, john.j.parker53@gmail.com; Vicki Grayson, 232-6131, vicki.grayson@rocketmail.com; Susan Fisher, 232-4443, suefish12@gmail.com; Anne Lesser, 717-0277, anne@annelessercommunications.com**; Designer: **Kim Bradway, kim@bloominarts.com**.

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

**Every issue costs us about \$1,300 to print and distribute!
Please help us keep the Local Yokel coming!**

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

Yes! I want to support the Local Yokel.
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City State Zip

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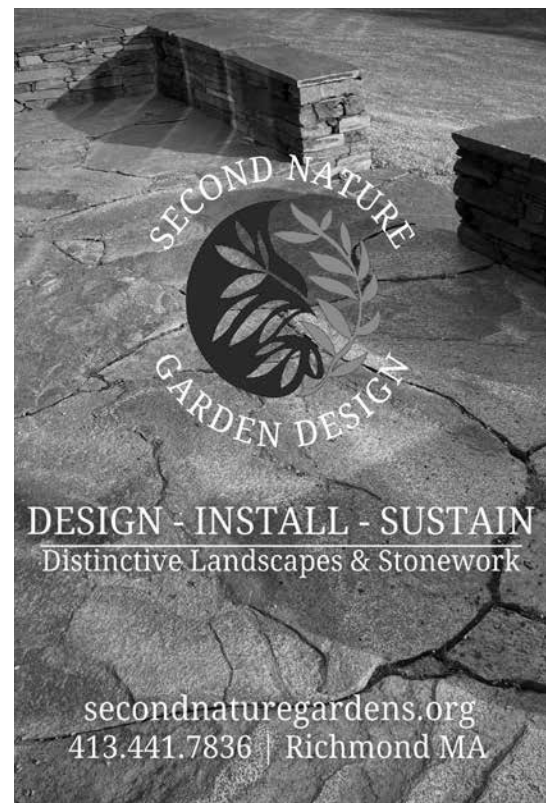
Please mail this form with your check to:

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West Stockbridge, MA 01266

October Donor Roll Call

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- Jim & Rosemary Dellea
- Eric & Lisa Eckland
- John Fülöp Associates, Architects
- Susan Newson
- Brad & Mary Ann Richer
- Molly & Chris Vreeland
- Anonymous: 2

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(See response form on page 17.)



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Town Government Boards and Commissions, Phone Directory, and Office Hours				
Town Offices Main Number (413) 232-0300 • Fax 232-7195				
Animal Control	<i>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 • Community and Business Website: visitweststockbridge.com

Get your free...

Taco Tuesday Dinner Box

Tuesday, October 17th
5-6pm

Drive-thru pick up at the West Stockbridge Village Congregational Church (45 Main Street)



Includes taco shells, meat, veggie fixin's, cheese, seasonings, drink, and dessert.

Generously sponsored by the Great Barrington Co-op's Real Good Giving program and provided by WSVCC.

25 boxes available. First come, first serve.

THE WEST STOCKBRIDGE CHAMBER PLAYERS

Harvest Concert

Sunday, October 29, 2023 at 4 pm

Old Town Hall, Main Street, West Stockbridge

Musicians:

CATHERINE HUDGINS, clarinet · WILLIAM HUDGINS, clarinet
SHEILA FIEKOWSKY, violin · STEPHANIE FONG, viola
ADAM ESBENSEN, cello

Music:

W A Mozart: Divertimento No. 5, K. 439b
Eva Wasserman-Margolis: *The Generation of Hope*
Gideon Klein: String Trio
Eric Shimelonis: *For the Love of Music: An Invocation*
dedicated to Stuart Kuller (premiere)
Bohuslav Martinů: Serenade for Violin,
Viola, Cello, and Two Clarinets

TICKETS \$35

Available at
weststockbridgehistory.org



THIS PROGRAM IS A BENEFIT PERFORMANCE FOR THE WEST STOCKBRIDGE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

October Art Calendar

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

2023

September 21 - October 1, "Petaled Vessels & Painted Papers" featuring Ingrid Raab and Nancy Harrod. Art on Main Gallery, West Stockbridge, MA.

September 19 - December 23, "Near & Far", Art show at the Colonial Theatre. Featuring 10 works from 8 local artists. See Website for hours.

October 2 - 7, 10am-1pm, Berkshire Plein Air. See website for days and locations. End of Season Oct 7.

October 5 - 16, "Natural Elements" featuring Karen Carmean, Barbara Patton, & Carolyn Abrams. Art on Main Gallery, West Stockbridge, MA.

October 19 - 30, "3 on Main" featuring Larry Frankel, Heidi Katz, and Ronald Maitland. Art on Main Gallery, West Stockbridge, MA.

October 19, 5-7pm, Berkshire Humane Society Show Opening, Pittsfield, MA.

October 22, Berkshire Photo Gathering. See web: berkshirephotogathering.com/online-meetings

October 24, Meet the Artist, 3pm. TBD. Link to watch to be shared on website.

October 27, Art Book Gathering, 10-11am. Share a favorite book, artist, or process.

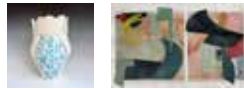
See www.berkshireartists.org for all the in-person and online events offered by the Guild of Berkshire Artists!



38 Main Street, West Stockbridge

Ending October 1st!

Petaled Vessels & Painted Papers



Art Show Featuring
Ingrid Raab, & Nancy Harrod

Natural Elements

October 5th-16th



Art Show
Featuring Karen Carmean,
Barbara Patton, & Carolyn Abrams
Reception October 7th

UNICORN · COLONIAL · PLAYHOUSE
BERKSHIRE
THEATRE GROUP

10/21 • 7:30PM

at The Colonial Theatre
111 South Street, Pittsfield

(413) 997-4444 • www.BerkshireTheatreGroup.org

West Stockbridge
Local Yokel
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 West Stockbridge, MA 01266

thelocalyokel.org



S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

October Calendar of Events			
10/2	Select Board meeting	6 pm	Town Offices, 21 State Line Rd.
10/3	Affordable Housing Trust	5 pm	Town Offices, 21 State Line Rd.
10/4	Select Board Executive Committee meeting	8 am	On Zoom
10/5	WS Farmers Market	3-6 pm	The Foundry Green, Harris St.
10/8	Plant Exchange meeting	2-4 pm	Community Room, Town Offices
10/8	Stockbridge Grange takeout dinner		See Community News for details
10/9	Indigenous Peoples' Day: Town Offices closed		
10/10	8 Town Regional School District Planning Board Informational community meeting	6 pm	Town Offices, 21 State Line Rd.
10/11	Complete Streets Advisory Committee meeting	8:30 am	Town Offices, 21 State Line Rd.
10/11	Friends of the Library meeting	3:30 pm	Community Room, Town Offices
10/11	Master Plan Committee	4:40 pm	On Zoom
10/15	*** Deadline for the next Local Yokel ***		Send to info@thelocalyokel.org
10/16	Select Board meeting	6 pm	Town Offices, 21 State Line Rd.
10/16	Planning Board meeting	7 pm	On Zoom
10/21	WSHS Felipe Salles Jazz Concert	7:30 pm	The Colonial Theatre, Pittsfield
10/27	WSHS History Talk: Spirit Circles and Holy Hills	7 pm	Old Town Hall, 9 Main St.
10/29	WSHS Chamber Players Harvest Concert	4 pm	Old Town Hall, 9 Main St.
10/30	Select Board meeting	6 pm	Town Offices, 21 State Line Rd.
10/31	Halloween:		
	Trick or Treat	4-6 pm	
	Party	6-8 pm	Town Offices Gym
	Costume Contest	6:30 pm	Town Offices Gym