

Local yokel

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

West
Stockbridge
July
2026



Inside:
More **Pets of**
West Stockbridge,
Zucchini Festival
Update

SERVING OUR COMMUNITY SINCE 2004

*Ella May's Ice Cream, a summer treat.
Photo by PappasBland*

Pets of West Stockbridge



A serene Shih Tzu and “My Little Buddhist” buddy, who loves all people and four-legged friends, never reacts, just observes, keeps me Zen.

From Renee McCormick

Our two dogs Milo and Ginger watching their friend Bramble walk up the road.

From Kathryn Korte



We adopted Miss Daisy from the Berkshire Humane Society. She is 10 years old and has more moxie than some young pups! Loves “sniffaris,” cuddling, and we love “driving Miss Daisy.”

From Jackie Moffatt

⇒ Calling All Pets! ⇐

If you would like your pet to be featured in a future issue of the *Local Yokel*, please email us at info@thelocalyokel.org. Include a color photo of your pet, your pet's name, your name, and something you'd like to share about your pet for a short caption: 25 words or less, a Word document or in the body of your email.



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 April 27, 2026

The quorum was present, consisting of Select Board members Andy Krouss, Chair, Kathleen Keresey, and Toby Casey, as well as Town Administrator Marie Ryan.

Andy opened the meeting at 5:30 PM.

Toby made a motion, seconded by Kathleen, to approve the April 13, 2026, minutes.

All approved, and the motion was approved.

One Stop Grant application by Berkshire Regional Planning Commission (BRPC):

Brett Roberts, Principal Planner for Housing with the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, discussed the One Stop for Growth grant application. BRPC would like to submit an application on behalf of the Town regarding a grant to fund a feasibility study for housing in West Stockbridge. There will be no cost to the Town; BRPC will do the work and submit the application. If the Town receives the funding, BRPC will manage the grant funds and conduct a feasibility study to identify potential housing sites on Town properties. This grant would support the creation of a pre-development package, including site exploration, infrastructure plans, schematics, and a bid packet for site design. BRPC will include the Planning Board and the Affordable Housing Trust in the conversation if the Town receives the grant funding.

Kathleen made a motion, seconded by Andy, to allow BRPC to proceed with submitting an application for the One Stop for Growth grant on behalf of the Town.

All were in favor, and the motion was approved.

One-Day Liquor Licenses for TurnPark: Jared Gelormino, Manager

TurnPark Manager, Jared Gelormino requested three one-day liquor licenses for events to be held at TurnPark. The first event will be held on May 16th. This event is a concert of a Russian musician for a two-person show. He will discuss parking with the Director of Public Works, Curt Wilton, for parking to include the parking lot at the Water and Sewer plant on Moscow Road. Jared will also speak with Acting Police Chief Mike Renton about having an officer on duty. Only wine and beer will be served at this event.

The second event will be a festival on June 13 from 3 PM until 10 PM. He stated that this is a yearly event and that mixed drinks will be available. The final event will be held on October 10th, the Fairy Festival, an annual event primarily for children, but people of all ages attend. This event will also feature mixed drinks.

Toby made a motion, seconded by Kathleen, to approve three one-day liquor licenses for TurnPark on May 16, June 13, and October 10, 2026.

All were in favor, and the motion was approved.

Select Board Speak:

None.

Kathleen motioned to adjourn, seconded by Toby, at 5:44 PM.

All approved, and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Y. Ryan

Marie Y. Ryan

Town Administrator



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Reflecting on Massachusetts: A Song of Itself

A "Riveting" Performance by
Poet Laureate Reggie Gibson

By Liza Bennett

"This was the most exciting performance I've seen in the Berkshires in a long time," said one of the audience members, as she mingled with other attendees after the performance of *Massachusetts: A Song of Itself* on Saturday, April 18, at the First Congregational Church in Stockbridge. This was just one of many glowing testimonials heard during the reception following the performance.

Regie Gibson proved himself worthy of the title of Massachusetts' first poet laureate. Playing to an audience of more than 125 people, he delivered a moving and riveting 75-minute performance of his poignant creation to an enthusiastic crowd. By the conclusion of the show, people were literally standing on their feet and clapping their hands in time to Regie's gospel-like delivery and the rousing music of the eight-piece group of musicians backing him up, their sound echoing throughout the church.

The show casts a critical eye on some of the most cherished illusions about the Massachusetts creation story and asks the audience to rethink these myths to form a more historically accurate picture of how we came to be who we are. The beautifully written program gives voice to a number of forgotten or overlooked historical characters by bringing their aspirations, hopes, and struggles to life. Gibson led the audience on a journey from the early days of the English settlers' interaction with the indigenous peoples, to the introduction of slavery, the formation of the Commonwealth, and ultimately the revolution itself.

The issues brought to life through the voices of the people in the program couldn't be more relevant to the issues of race, inclusion, democracy, and rule of law that our state and country are facing today, as we grapple with the attack of long-held beliefs of what it means to be an American and the resilience of the foundational elements of our state and country that our ancestors worked hard to create more than 250 years ago.

Photos by John Parker



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What the Declaration Means to Me— Views and Voices Across Our 250 Years

What the Declaration Means to Me

Views and Voices Across Our 250 Years

★ ★ ★

Public Reading

Hosted by:

The West Stockbridge Historical Society
TurnPark Art Space

Join us for the community reading of the words written or spoken over the past 250 years on the meaning of the Declaration of Independence.

For some, The Declaration is a document whose aspirations have been fulfilled. For others, The Declaration is still a work in progress.

Come read, listen, reflect, and join the conversation about our shared journey.

Admission is Free – All are Welcome!

July 4th, 2026, 11AM

TurnPark Amphitheater

WS
West Stockbridge Historical Society

TURNPARK

July 4, 11 am
at TurnPark
Art Space

On July 4 at 11 am, the West Stockbridge Historical Society and TurnPark Art Space will host a community reading of *The Declaration of Independence – Views and Viewpoints*.

Over the past 250 years, this important document has experienced many meanings and interpretations, from the original drafters to women, slaves and slave holders, abolitionists, suffragists, secessionists, civil rights leaders, up to current politicians.

The first words, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal,” have been examined, discussed, argued, and widely interpreted over the past 250 years. Looking at the various perspectives, these questions arise:

- What did these words mean to people over the past 250 years?
- Have we fulfilled the promise of the Declaration? Is there work to be done?
- What do these words mean to you?

Come participate in this different and enlightening reading of our most famous founding statement.

Community News & Events

Stockbridge Grange Dinner

There will be no Grange dinners for July and August. See you in September!

Council on Aging

We will be making favor Gift Boxes on Tuesday, July 7, at 9:30 am in the Richmond Town Library. Pre-register to reserve your space and materials by calling Heather at Richmond Town Hall, (413) 553-7793. The class is free to COA residents of Richmond and West Stockbridge. It's a fun time—hope to see you there!

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.



Soldier On Transportation provides rides for veterans living within Soldier On's housing communities AND veterans living within the surrounding communities.

All at no cost to the veteran!

- **Veterans Affairs medical appointments** (including both single and recurring visits)
- **Private sector medical appointments** (including both single and recurring visits)
- **Legal appointments** (such as meetings with counsel and scheduled court dates)

Who is eligible?

All U.S. Military Veterans*

*Must provide Form **DD-214** as proof of eligibility.

Reservations for rides are required to be made between 48 hours and two weeks in advance.

Once the DD-214 has been submitted, details including the times and addresses for appointments (specifying arrival time rather than appointment time), as well as a valid phone number for the veteran, are required to book reservations.



Soldier On Veterans and Families Transportation Call Center

1 Columbus Ave, Pittsfield MA 01201

413-418-4300 or 855-483-8743



Soldier On Transportation services are available to veterans throughout Western Massachusetts

Transportation services are available exclusively for veterans residing within Soldier On's housing communities, including:

- **Access to food pantries**
- **Scheduled grocery shopping trips**
- **General merchandise shopping excursions (e.g., Walmart)**
- **Attendance at special events such as live performances, sporting events, fishing trips and parades**
- **Meal delivery services**
- **Distribution of frozen meals to residents in permanent housing**
- **Daily delivery of hot meals to veterans in transitional housing**
- **Provision of daily hot meals to day care centers, prepared by veterans in Soldier On's kitchen**

For more information about Soldier On Transportation services, visit: wesoldieron.org/transportation

SOLDIER ON

TRANSPORTATION



Non-veteran passengers who are MassHealth or Medicaid members can receive rides to medical appointments.



Revenue from these rides helps cover veterans' free transportation.

Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART)

Phone: **866-834-9991**



MART online portal:
cp-mart.qryde.com/cp



MART website:
hstrides.mrta.us/marts-brokerage/



Montachusett Regional Transit Authority serves Western, Central, Metro Boston, and Northeastern Massachusetts.

How do you book a ride?

Non-veterans need a PT-1 form from their doctor to receive transportation benefits through MassHealth/Medicaid.



The MassHealth transportation brokerage is the **Montachusett Regional Transit Authority (MART)**.

When booking a ride (must call in, not book online), the passenger can request the transportation provider of their choice.

By choosing **Soldier On**, you secure your ride AND support **free rides for veterans**.

Reservations for rides are required to be made between 48 hours and two weeks in advance.

Soldier On Veterans and Families Transportation Call Center

1 Columbus Ave, Pittsfield MA 01201
413-418-4300 or 855-483-8743

For more information about Soldier On Transportation services, visit: wesoldieron.org/transportation

Schedule a Ride with the **SOUTH COUNTY CONNECTOR**

The South County Connector (SCC) has a new app. You can now book, manage, and track your rides in one easy place. Download the South County Connector app for iOS or Android from the App Store or Google Play.

The South County Connector is an on-demand and FLEX route transit service for everyone. It operates 7 days a week, 6 am to 9 pm daily, within the towns of Egremont, Great Barrington, Monterey, Sheffield, Stockbridge, and West Stockbridge. There is also limited service to Pittsfield, Canaan, CT, and, for seniors and persons with disabilities only, to New Marlboro.

You can schedule your ride for any time during the hours of operation (6 am–9 pm daily), but you may only call to schedule it from 8 am to 4 pm, 7 days a week. Rides may be scheduled 24/7 via the South County Connector app.

As of January 4, 2026, the South County Connector's Pittsfield Shuttle now operates as Pittsfield FLEX, offering expanded access and greater flexibility. Key changes include reduced fares, availability for non-seniors/disabled, and non-medical trips on a space-available basis, expanded eligibility to all SCC communities, and new one-seat ride options for Stockbridge and West Stockbridge residents. Departures will run approximately every two hours (Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 4 pm) and coordinate with BRTA Route 921 Express service.

Riders interested in non-medical trips should call SCC the day before or day of travel to request a ride. Just call us at (413) 591-3826!

For more information or to request a reasonable accommodation and/or language services, please email amervis@townofgbma.gov.

Source: <https://www.socoride.org/>.

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



Greetings from the library and Happy 250th Birthday to the USA!

We are joining libraries all over the state to present this year's summer reading challenge, "Plant a Seed, Read!"

May at a glance:

- 669 hardcopy items were borrowed and renewed
- \$10,800 saved by borrowing instead of buying
- 476 eBooks, eMagazines, and streaming audiobooks borrowed
- 590 visitors to the library

We look forward to seeing you @ the library! Vicky, Rachel, Brad, and Francesca

NEW ADULT FICTION

Crum, *This story might save your life*
Haig, *The midnight train*
Higuera, *Firesnake: Volume 3*
Lavery, *Meeting new people*
Levi, *Theo of golden*
Mosley, *Ghalen: a romance in black*
Naylor, *Palaces of the crow*
O'Farrell, *Land*
Ozeki, *The typing lady*
Patchett, *Whistler*
Powers, *Children of the wild*
Roy, *Sisters of a halved heart*
Vaughan, *Based on a true story*
Waldman, *A perfect hand*

NEW ADULT NONFICTION

Ackerman, *The planets: a cosmic pastoral*
Brunell, *Bitcoin is for everyone*
Ferrer, *Keeper of my kin*
Karp, *The lesbian bar chronicles*
Romano, *An inconvenient widow*
van der Leun, *Unreasonable women*
Walters, *Mighty real*
Ward, *On witness and despair*

NEW DVDs

Bugonia; F1; Wuthering Heights; Zootopia 2

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ALL GOOD DOGS WELCOME!



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

1. In 2015, Berkshire Attorney David Capeless thought the problem in Massachusetts wasn't incarceration, but rather what?
2. What did Baldwin Farm sell in the 1940s?
3. When was the district agreement between Great Barrington, Stockbridge, and West Stockbridge formed?
4. What new business opened up on the second floor of the Shaker Mill Tavern (Amici today) in December 2015?



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.

1. Recidivism and its driving forces
2. Turkeys
3. 1969
4. Boundless

July History Quiz Question:

The period from 1774 through 1782 were major years in the birth of America and our Commonwealth. Many New Englanders supported the rebellion, but others retained their loyalty to the Crown. Most people were just concerned with day-to-day living. The view today centers around the birth of the new country, states being formed, constitutions written and debated, and all while a guerrilla war was going on. What's lost is we were still just a developing society moving out of a subsistence agrarian economy.

West Stockbridge at that time was probably a good example of the rest of the country. We were a remote area, with all the "action" happening in Boston, New York, or Philadelphia. Rebellion, independence, and resistance were hot topics there. Looking at our town's early records offers a view of what was important to our townspeople then. What issues were being addressed, and how might they resemble those we face today?

(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
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Incorporated in 1994

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July Donor Roll Call

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Alice Frelinghuysen
Hal & Jill Gaffin
Joel & Carol Kaufman
Pat & Ron Kujawski
Nanci McConnell
Kathy Rehm
John & Elizabeth Whitehead
Anonymous: 4

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

Class of 2026



Monument Mountain Regional High School

West Stockbridge Graduates
Congratulations!

Mason Buffoni
Dominic Calautti
Tyler Campbell
Avanti Fudge
Owen Heck
David Parker
Ember Raifstanger
Dana Sanchez
Francesca Stanmeyer

BAA

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PRESENTS:

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embracing the incomplete

JULY 11-25

OPENING RECEPTION
JULY 11, 3-5PM

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WORK THAT IS FINISHED YET INCOMPLETE;
A MEANS BUT NOT AN END.

A black and white photograph of a stone wall with a circular logo overlaid. The logo features a stylized leaf design and the text "SECOND NATURE GARDEN DESIGN".

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*We are pleased to award
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Francesca Stanmeyer CONGRATULATIONS and BEST WISHES!!

We'd like to extend continued Best Wishes to past West Stockbridge Recipients:

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Ali Viola
Anthony Dellea
Dawn Costerisan
Jason Scibek
Claudia Masiero
Nathan Guss
Shane Miner
Emma Wolfe
Peter Thunfors
Andrea Sartori
Matthew Lopez
Sarah Guss

Kerry Biggs
Francesca Anderegg
Peter Anderegg
Jennifer Losaw
Amanda Hanley
Joshua Kohler
Kristin Kruszyna
Joseph Barrett
Kelly Susan Allen
Whitney Shook
Sam Gaulty
Ethan Oberwager
John Kruszyna
Brian Webber
Corey Baldwin

Riley Baldwin
Anna Lucia Lister
Tara Korte
Lily Michaels
Shawna Norton
Keegan Baldwin
Anna Campetti
Dylan Cole-Kink
Candice Slosek
Peter Oggiani
Juri Kiin
Brianna Davis
Hannah Korte
Tristan Alston
Robert Baldwin

Aubrey Blanchard
Adam Boscarino
Charles Medeiros
Sophia Tenuta
Olivia Thiemann
Gabriella Thierling
Liam O'Gara
Madison Mullen
Brian Cella
Marcella Tenuta
Isabella Viola
Benjamin Gross
Hunter Curletti
Bronly Boyd

The Stone House Properties LLC scholarship is awarded to a West Stockbridge graduate continuing onto college who has maintained a consistent high academic record and has made significant contributions in sports, the arts, leadership, volunteering, internships, or work.

Andrea Paul

PATHWAY TO THE TRADES SCHOLARSHIP

Awarded to a Chatham High School graduate who is continuing their education and training in the trades.

Eric Goodrich

PATHWAY TO THE TRADES SCHOLARSHIP

Awarded to a Monument Mountain Regional High School graduate who is continuing their education and training in the trades.



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Peter Dillon, photo courtesy of M.A.S.S. and the Berkshire Hills Regional School District

Dr. Peter Dillon Receives 2026 M.A.S.S. President's Award

By Hannah Van Sickel, Communications Consultant, BHRSD

The Berkshire Hills Regional School District leader is among four recognized for service to their communities and the profession statewide

President Karen Crebase, Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (M.A.S.S.) during the current school year, recently honored four colleagues with 2026 M.A.S.S. President's Awards. Among this year's recipients is Peter Dillon, Ed.D., Superintendent, Berkshire Hills Regional School District.

"These four district leaders consistently demonstrate the integrity, courage, creativity, skill, and commitment to students and families that are essential to success as a superintendent," said Crebase at the M.A.S.S. Spring Meeting on May 21. "They hold themselves to the highest standards and devote time and expertise to support their colleagues across the Commonwealth." Crebase went on to deliver the following remarks about Dillon:

Dr. Peter Dillon has served as superintendent of the Berkshire Hills Regional School District since 2009. From 2016 to 2023, he also served as part-time superintendent for the Shaker Mountain School Union and the Richmond Public Schools. Prior to his 17-year tenure in Berkshire Hills, Peter served as executive

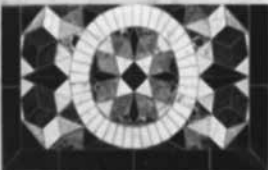
director of policy for the New York City Department of Education and principal of the Heritage School, a collaboration between the New York City Public Schools and Teachers College, Columbia University.

Peter's career reflects a deep and consistent commitment to service, leadership, and educational equity. A former Peace Corps Volunteer and current National Peace Corps Association board member, he has dedicated himself to supporting both local communities and broader educational initiatives. Within M.A.S.S., Peter served for three years as president of the Berkshire County Superintendent Roundtable, has been a member of the M.A.S.S. Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (REDI) Standing Committee since its inception in 2020, and has also served as a mentor and facilitator for the M.A.S.S. Superintendent Support Network (MSSN).

Peter is widely regarded as a transformative and student-centered leader. Among his many accomplishments, he successfully led a community effort that resulted in a 78% approval vote for a \$152 million new high school. He also championed the de-leveling of 9th and 10th grade courses to replace traditional tracking systems and significantly expanded student participation and success in Advanced Placement coursework, increasing AP pass rates to 95%.

Throughout his career, Peter has provided thoughtful leadership and steadfast support to colleagues across the Commonwealth. His humility, intellect, strong core values, and unwavering belief in the importance of belonging and inclusivity for every student serve as a model for educational leaders everywhere.

Originating in 1973, M.A.S.S. is the only statewide organization in Massachusetts dedicated to the unique professional and advocacy concerns of school superintendents and assistant superintendents.



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The Thistles Plus One in Concert

Sunday, July 19, 5-7 pm

West Stockbridge Village Congregational Church, 45 Main Street



The Thistles Plus One

Bill Taylor, piano; Terry Keevil, oboe and duduk; Gerold Mohn, clarinet; Lesley Rosenthal, electric violin; and singer Jaye Alison Moscariello will perform. Program includes selections of Bill's compositions from his three albums arranged for duo or trio, and a solo or two including Terry's composition on duduk (Armenian oboe). Come and enjoy contemporary classical, influenced by jazz and show tunes, inspired by nature, love, current goings-on, and a standard or two. There will be a 15-minute intermission and brief reception afterward. A portion of all sales will go to the West Stockbridge food pantry. Music CDs will be available. Tickets are \$25 at the door (opens at 4:30 pm). Or reserve in advance (Venmo, PayPal, or check) and pick up at Will Call. Contact: (707) 272-1688.

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community service,
and
fostering future leaders.**

**The Grange meets the
1st or 3rd Monday at 6:30 PM
Call to verify the day/date**



*West Stockbridge Grange
51 Church St.
Stockbridge, MA 01262*

Donald McClelland
413-356-4870

Zucchini Festival is taking a break for 2026!



Dear WSZF Voluntinis, West Stockie Folks, & Zucchini Devotinis:

The festival committee has decided to cancel this year's Zucchini Festival (originally scheduled for August 8th), as we did not hit our volunteer recruitment goal of 100 commitments by June 1st. We are so grateful to all those who had already signed up to volunteer this year and appreciate your willingness and understanding.

In the interest of all our volunteers and our community as a whole, we unanimously agreed the best path forward is to hit pause, relax a bit, dream big and focus on long-term planning for future events. The WSZF committee's collective heart is still set on growing our community together through collaboration and fun!

We will be holding planning meetings to strategize and brainstorm starting this summer. Keep your eyes peeled for more info and dates--we'd love for you to stay in touch and get involved!

We are so grateful for the support and dedication from all our wonderful volunteers and everyone in the West Stockbridge community! Thank you so much for your warmth, joy and commitment to each other.

Sincerely,
Marjorie Powell, Chris Powell & WSZF Committee

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE PART OF ORGANIZING
OR VOLUNTEERING DAY OF FOR THE 2027 FESTIVAL,
PLEASE EMAIL US AT: wszucchinifest@gmail.com**



Source of image:
<https://www.visitweststockbridge.com/churches-library>

News from the Pews

St. Patrick's Church

Well everyone, once again we have entered "Ordinary Time" in the church liturgical year. The last month has been pretty quiet. The word *gospel* means "good news." No news is good news, and the good news for "yous" in the pews is that there is no news! Enjoy your summer, and remember, even in Ordinary Time, we look forward to seeing you in the pews!



Leslie Klein

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Dog Park Update

The West Stockbridge Dog Park Committee is thankful for the volunteers who helped get the park ready for warmer weather at our spring cleanup. The pups and their owners now are enjoying beautiful days, meeting new friends, and having fun running and playing. Come and visit! No dogs are required if you would like to just sit and enjoy the view.

Please visit us at the Farmers Market throughout the season and meet some of our members who will be happy to answer any questions you may have. We will bring sample bricks available to buy online, along with T-shirts with our logo. We are scheduled for July 2, July 16, August 20, and September 3. The Public Market on Main Street has been very generous in helping us by selling our shirts at the store. If you would like more information about the park and our group, you can visit friendsofwsdogpark.org.

Photos courtesy of West Stockbridge Dog Park Committee:



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



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• Hosted by Rep. Leigh Davis •

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History Quiz Answer:

The first six years of West Stockbridge's existence was an important time in U.S. history. In 1774, when we separated from the "other Stockbridge," the Commonwealth was the target of King George and Lord Germain's ire, the Boston Port Act, the Intolerable Acts, the quartering of British troops, and restricted trade for the colonies. A lot was going on. In West Stockbridge, we were getting organized and establishing ourselves as a functioning town.

Town governance was very different then. Town meetings were held monthly (or every other month during planting and harvesting seasons) instead of annually. The population was more than 1,200, but unlike today, only free white male landowners could vote. The actual decision-makers for town affairs numbered less than 200. A moderator was elected at every meeting instead of annually, and it was often a different person. Selectmen were also elected every year and sometimes even more frequently. There were no bylaws or town employees. Much time was taken up appointing men to various positions.

The big issues addressed were not much different than today: the cost of education, the police, and public works. There were debates and votes to pay for a Congregational preacher with firewood and grain. His role was to preach on Sunday and teach children the Bible. There was no church building, so the preacher worked out of private homes and taverns.

The town meetings were also held in taverns or private residences. In January 1776, the town voted to build a "meeting hall where Augustus Drake had wheat last year, the same size as the Richmond meetinghouse." A committee was then appointed for three months, and subsequently the town voted to reconsider the meetinghouse and abandoned the idea. (We're not sure if it was cost or Augustus Drake who killed the plan.) In the following years, other attempts were made to form a committee for the meetinghouse, but the church/meetinghouse wasn't built until 10 years later in 1786.

Public works were more complex than today. Roads had to be accepted or formalized, usually old farm paths and Indian trails. The descriptions include accepting a road from someone's barn to the oak tree on someone else's property. Being designated a town road didn't mean much because the person who owned the land was still obliged to maintain it. The town had eight "highway surveyors." (There was no Highway Department, and a formal superintendent wasn't appointed until 1932.)

The intriguing part of the minutes is reading the appointments of men to fill town positions. They indicate what mattered to the functioning of our new town.

The constable role was key, essentially, essentially an early form of police responsible for "keeping order and resolving disputes." Most constables had a short tenure. Every other town meeting has a new set of appointments of three or four constables. We're not sure what level of crime existed, and we had no idea why turnover in these positions was so high.

Another recurring issue was large farm animals who had wandered off. A key appointed position was the "hog reeve." The town had men responsible for chasing down and capturing errant hogs and sows, determining their rightful owner, imposing a fine on them for losing track of their animals, and then charging them for any damage. We also had appointed "fence viewers" whose job was to inspect the farm fences. They resolved disputes over land possession and were held responsible for loose animals and damages. We must have had an epidemic of rampaging hogs because at any one time six or more hog reeves plus four or more fence viewers were kept busy.

The bulk of the minutes describes issues like roads and hogs. As the Revolution intensified, the town voted to appoint men to join the militia in Stockbridge and raised funds for arms and ammunition. We sent a representative to the state's constitutional convention. However, a committee of four was also appointed to tell him how to vote. Hogs, highways, and preaching took up most of the time during those early days. How we were involved in the quest for independence and how we voted must wait for another history question.



Let's Give Hog Reeves Their Due, *The Panorama*

July Art Calendar

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

2026

July 1-26, "Pixels & Glass: Abstractions on Color, Form, & Texture" Art show featuring works by Jeff Nestel-Patt and Steven Landes. Art on Main Gallery, West Stockbridge, MA.
Reception: Saturday July 4, 2-4PM
Artist Talk: Saturday July 11, 1pm

July 9, 6-8pm, Urban Sketching Meetup.
 Hosted by Jill McLean. See Update Board for more details: <https://tinyurl.com/5n9ymf93>

July 10-12, Paint Out at Hancock Shaker Village. Join other Plein air artists to create work on site. Wet Paint Sale to occur Sunday the 12th. Hancock Shaker Village, Rt 20, Hancock, MA.
 See more info and link to sign up on website.

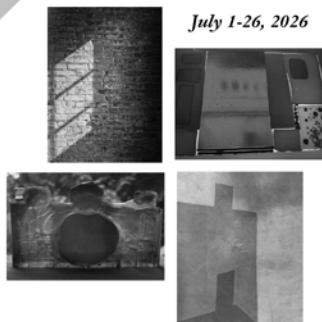
July 19, Berkshire Photo Gathering.
 See web: berkshirephotogathering.com/online-meetings

Daily, 10am-1pm, Plein Air. Join other Plein air artists to create work on site. Various locations. See more info and link to sign up on website.

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

Pixels & Glass *Abstractions on Color, Form, & Texture*

July 1-26, 2026



Jeff Nestel-Patt & Steven Landes

West Stockbridge-based photographer Jeff Nestel-Patt and Norfolk, CT, glass artist Steven Landes, explore the relationship between color, form, and texture in this mixed media exhibition showcasing their recent work. Landes' three-dimensional glass forms complement Nestel-Patt's richly textured and colorful abstract photographs creating a show that will inspire and stimulate viewers.

Reception: July 4, 2-4pm

Artist Talk: July 11, 1pm



38 Main Street, West Stockbridge



Do you enjoy writing or photography?

The *Local Yoke!* needs regular and occasional contributors.

Please call John Parker

at (413) 394-4368,

email info@thelocalyokel.org,

or visit www.thelocalyokel.org
 for more information.



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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	Hours by appt. using website contact email
Select Board	<i>Kathleen Keresey Andy Krouss Tobias Casey</i>	232-0300	ext. 319	Mon.-Thurs. 7 am-3 pm Fri. 7-11 am
Town Administrator	<i>Marie Ryan</i>			
Building Inspector	<i>Brian Duval</i>	232-0300	ext. 313	Leave Message for Inquiries
Conservation Commission	<i>David Evans</i>	232-0300	ext. 300	Leave Message for Inquiries
Council on Aging	<i>John Zick</i>	232-0300	ext. 340	Leave Message for Inquiries
Emergency Management	<i>Mike Renton</i>	528-2175		
Fire Department	<i>Vincent Garofoli</i>	911 or 717-2751 (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>Mike Renton</i>	911 or 232-8500 (non-emergency)		24 hours, 7 days/week
Post Office	<i>Randy Bates</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>Benjamin Gelb</i>	232-0300	ext. 316	Tues. 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>Tom Beasley</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

Pixels & Glass

Abstractions on Color, Form, & Texture

July 1-26, 2026

on display at **Art on Main** | Gallery

Show Hours: Thur - Sun, 11am - 4pm

38 Main Street, West Stockbridge, MA

Reception: Saturday July 4, 2 - 4pm

Artist Talk: Saturday, July 11, 1 pm

Jeff Nestel-Patt



Steven Landes



West Stockbridge-based photographer Jeff Nestel-Patt and Norfolk, CT, glass artist Steven Landes, explore the relationship between color, form, and texture in this mixed media exhibition showcasing their recent work.

Landes' three-dimensional glass forms complement Nestel-Patt's richly textured and colorful abstract photographs creating a show that will inspire and stimulate viewers.



July						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
28	29	30	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	1

July Calendar of Events

7/1	Knitters Group	2-4 pm	Community Room
7/1	Conservation Commission meeting	6 pm	Town Offices
7/2	Farmers Market	3-6 pm	Foundry Green, Harris Street
7/3	Independence Day observed: Town Offices closed		
7/4	Independence Day		
7/4	What the Declaration Means to Me: Public reading	11 am	TurnPark Art Space Amphitheatre
7/6	Select Board meeting	6 pm	Town Offices and on Zoom
7/7	Council on Aging Craft Group meeting	9:30 am	Richmond Town Library
7/7	Plant a Seed, Read!	3 pm	West Stockbridge Public Library
7/8	Knitters Group	2-4 pm	Community Room
7/8	Friends of the Library Committee meeting	3:30 pm	Community Room
7/9	Farmers Market	3-6 pm	Foundry Green, Harris Street
7/14	Plant a Seed, Read!	3 pm	West Stockbridge Public Library
7/15	*** Deadline for the next <i>Local Yokel</i> ***		Send to info@thelocalyokel.org
7/15	Knitters Group	2-4 pm	Community Room
7/16	Farmers Market	3-6 pm	Foundry Green, Harris Street
7/19	The Thistles Plus One Concert	5-7 pm	WS Congregational Church, 45 Main St.
7/20	Select Board meeting	6 pm	Town Offices and on Zoom
7/21	Plant a Seed, Read!	3 pm	West Stockbridge Public Library
7/22	Knitters Group	2-4 pm	Community Room
7/23	Farmers Market	3-6 pm	Foundry Green, Harris Street
7/28	Plant a Seed, Read!	3 pm	West Stockbridge Public Library
7/29	Knitters Group	2-4 pm	Community Room
7/30	Farmers Market	3-6 pm	Foundry Green, Harris Street
Note: Town Offices (including Community Room and Library) are located at 21 State Line Road, West Stockbridge			