

Local yokel

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

West
Stockbridge
May
2026

Annual Town Meeting May 4 & Election May 11
Details Inside!

S E R V I N G O U R C O M M U N I T Y S I N C E 2 0 0 4

Raindrops on leaf. Photo by Colby Parker



Memorial Day

Monday, May 25th

Bike decoration in the West Stockbridge Village Congregational Church driveway beginning at 8:30am.
Parade begins in front of the church at 9am and proceeds to the war memorial at the town offices, with stops for prayers and wreath laying at the bridge and the cannon.
Ceremony immediately to follow.



SAVE THE DATE!

Sat. August 8th

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Help plan, organize and coordinate this year's festival!

To volunteer, send an email to wszucchiniest@gmail.com

The Zucchini Festival is 100% volunteer run and organized by great folks in the West Stockbridge community. Hang out with old pals, new neighbors and every zucchini in between and volunteer for this year's festival - this is what it's all about!



Sponsored by the West Stockbridge Cultural Council & organized by volunteers, neighbors and friends



WEST STOCKBRIDGE DOG PARK

SPRING CLEANUP

MAY 9TH | 10 - 12PM

OUR PARK IS MAINTAINED BY VOLUNTEERS, AND **WE NEED YOUR HELP** TO GET IT READY FOR SUMMER.

BRING GLOVES, RAKES & GARDEN TOOLS
DOGS WELCOME AFTER CLEANUP

QUESTIONS? INFO@FRIENDSOFWSDOGPARK.ORG

May Art Calendar

Guild of Berkshire Artists | BerkshireArtists.org | infoberkshireartists@gmail.com 2026

April 30 - May 31, "Form + Substance" Art show featuring works by David Goldstein & Sherri Greenbach. Art on Main Gallery, West Stockbridge, MA.
Reception: Saturday May 2, 2-4PM
Artist Talk: May 24, 2pm

May 7, 5:30-7pm, "The Gifts of Nature" Art reception featuring nature artworks by local artists. Berkshire Humane Society, Pittsfield, MA.

May 15-17, Paint Out at Balderdash. Join other Plein air artists to create work on site. Wet Paint Sale to occur Sunday the 17th. Balderdash Cellars, Richmond, MA. See more info and link to sign up on website.

May 17, Berkshire Photo Gathering. See web: berkshirephotogathering.com/online-meetings

Upcoming Workshops:

May 4-June 1, "Explorations in Cold Wax" with Carolyn Abrams at Berkshire South. See Guild website for all details and sign up link.

June 19-21, Plein Air workshop with Chris Morel. West Stockbridge. See Guild website for all details and sign up link.

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

Form + Substance
April 30 - May 31, 2026

David Goldstein & Sherri Greenbach

Reception: May 2, 2-4pm
Artist Talk: May 24, 2pm

Art on Main
38 Main Street, West Stockbridge

"Meet the Candidates" Event a Success

By Joe Roy, Jr.

A "Meet the Candidates" event was held on April 9, where candidates for town offices were given the opportunity to address voters about their candidacy for election on May 11. The event was not a debate. Candidates had five minutes to explain the duties of the offices they sought and why they hoped to serve the town in that position. Audience members attended in person (the room was filled to capacity) and also by Zoom, with all having the opportunity to ask questions after each presentation.

The event was sponsored by the *Local Yokel* and interested citizens. *Local Yokel* managing editor John Parker moderated the event. He explained the simple rules of the program and thanked the town for the use of the venue.

The whole program lasted a little less than an hour. Six candidates spoke, and many people lingered afterward for light refreshments and to chat with candidates and friends. West Stockbridge hasn't had a "Meet the Candidates" program in many years, but the return of this event was well received and hopefully will continue in the future.

Photos by Anne Roy



The Meeting Room was filled to capacity.



Mary Korte Kinmond is seeking reelection to the Cemetery Commission. "We're the last to let you down," she said, getting a laugh from the audience.



Wayne Cooper, one of four candidates running for reelection as constable, explained what the post involves.



Moderator John Parker listens to Kathleen Keresey, who is seeking reelection to the Select Board.

Attending but not pictured: Joe Roy, Jr., candidate for moderator; Peg Korte and Carol Kuller, both candidates for one seat as library trustee.

Annual Town Budget and Warrant Highlights FY 2027

By Andrew Krouss, Select Board Chair

West Stockbridge FY27 Budget and FY26 Highlights

The West Stockbridge Select Board is pleased to present the proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 operating budget and reflect on major accomplishments from the past year as we prepare for the Annual Town Meeting.

FY27 Budget Overview

The proposed FY27 budget totals \$8,058,543, a 10% increase from FY26. This growth reflects the town's ongoing commitment to public safety, infrastructure, and efficient municipal services.

These are the key budget drivers:

- Town insurance, which includes health and commercial insurance
- General government increases, tied to contractual personnel adjustments and administrative capacity building
- Modest growth in human services, improving support for senior services, public health, and veterans
- Joining a Shared Animal Control Department
- Building for shared EMS and Fire Services including two additional EMS/Fire Staff
- Increase in veterans' benefits
- Increased cost for town counsel

The town continues to use free cash funds prudently for capital investments, including highway equipment, emergency services tools, and facility improvements. Several articles on the FY27 warrant support this fiscal strategy. These include capital appropriations, minor bylaw clarifications, and one key governance update.

FY26 Accomplishments

FY26 marked another productive year for West Stockbridge town government.

The town has added:

Two pavilions; one at Card Lake and one at the Town Offices

The Dog Park (opened October 5, 2025)

Special Financial Articles

Special financial articles ask for funding for necessary maintenance of roads, vehicles, and equipment across various departments.

The town meeting warrant articles include items such as the following;

- Purchase of software to manage the Short-Term Rental Bylaw
- Town match for a grant to purchase a new handicapped-accessible van
- Town's assessment to pay for repairs at the Lee Animal Control dog kennel
- Purchase of hose nozzles for the Fire Department
- Purchase of a new truck for the Department of Public Works
- Purchase of new SCBA [Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus] replacements for the Fire Department
- Purchase of a new Rescue 3 Mini-Pumper truck for the Fire Department

Forging Ahead

As always, the Select Board invites all residents to review the budget, study the warrant, and participate in the town meeting. Your involvement and interest in the town ensures that West Stockbridge continues to thrive and remain fiscally sound, vibrant, and well prepared for the future.

An Invitation to Veterans

Since November 2023, the *Local Yoke!* has produced a series of profiles of local veterans to honor their service. We invite all West Stockbridge veterans and their families to share their stories. We will continue sharing these profiles as they become available. If interested, please contact Renee McCormick at drreneemccormick@gmail.com or text her at (914) 629-6314. We look forward to hearing from you and telling your story!

THANK YOU
FOR YOUR
SERVICE!



Town Election 2026

The Candidates: In Their Own Words

The *Local Yokel* invited each candidate for a contested or vacant town office, and new candidates in uncontested races, to provide a written statement limited to 300 words and a photograph. These are all the statements received by the deadline for publication.

Julia Erickson

Candidate for Library Trustee (1-year term)

My name is Julia Erickson. I've been a West Stockbridge resident since 1998. I live at one of the furthest edges of town, abutting Housatonic, and a short walk to the Ramsdell Library. The Ramsdell was my go-to when my child was young; it was a nice outing.

I love libraries and always have. I loved getting a stack of novels to read over winter and summer breaks when I lived in Denver, Colorado, my hometown. Books are a gateway to far-off lands, microscopic worlds, poetry, theater, biographies, tall tales, short stories, histories, and hot-off-the-press fiction and nonfiction. Within the past 25 years, libraries have offered even more than shelves of books, with the advent of CDs, DVDs, and downloadable audiobooks. They also serve our communities with in-house computers and, at some locations, free Wi-Fi 24 hours a day.

Public libraries have served me well for over 60 years; it is now my turn to give back. West Stockbridge library, with Rachel Alter at the helm, is a lovely place to browse and get the latest recommendations on what to read next. I want to serve, and I want to support my community library and ensure that it is a place for everyone—young and old, first-timers and old-timers alike.



Margaret "Peg" Korte

Candidate for Library Trustee (3-year term)

I am honored to be a candidate for the board of Library Trustees, and I am currently serving on the board of Library Trustees. I am a West Stockbridge native, and I have always loved our West Stockbridge Library. I am familiar with all the elements of our library. I enjoy helping people in our town by keeping our library running efficiently. I have been involved with several West Stockbridge activities over the years: a volunteer with town voting, on the Historical Commission, town cleanup, and the Zucchini Festival. I will do everything possible for our West Stockbridge Library. I humbly ask for your vote for library trustee on Monday, May 11, 10 am–7 pm. Thank you for your time and consideration. Peace.

Carol Kuller

Candidate for Library Trustee (3-year term)

I would like to see our community working together to offer quality programs to benefit the library. If elected as a West Stockbridge Library Trustee, I would encourage a vital collaboration of our terrific town volunteers, the library, and the Library Trustees.

I have a background in finance and have been a Friend of the West Stockbridge Library for almost 30 years. I have served as its president. Currently I am the secretary, although I will resign if elected as Trustee. In our town I have been on the Finance Committee and School Committee. I was on the Cultural Council and one of the original founders of the Zucchini Festival.

Please consider voting for me as Library Trustee. I would appreciate your support.



New Principal Named at W.E.B. Du Bois Regional Middle School

Hannah Van Sickle, Communications Consultant

Berkshire Hills Regional School District

Dedicated PK-12 education leader brings over two decades of experience to BHRSD

After a search committee including staff, parents, and administrators conducted two rounds of interviews, Seth Lewis Levin has been named the next principal at W.E.B. Du Bois Regional Middle School. The dedicated PK-12 education leader brings more than two decades of experience building inclusive, high-quality school systems to the position, succeeding Principal Jake McCandless who will retire at the close of the academic year.

“Seth’s references reflect a thoughtful instructional leader who listens well and is deeply committed to supporting students, families, and staff,” said Berkshire Hills Regional School District Superintendent Peter Dillon. From leading the PK-8 Tobin Montessori School in Cambridge to expanding secondary schools in New York City, Lewis Levin’s career has been defined by a rigorous commitment to equity and research-based frameworks. He currently serves as the Senior Director of Education at Temple Judea in Miami.

Lewis Levin holds a Master of Library and Information Science from Long Island University; a Master of Public Administration from Baruch College; a Master of Arts in Teaching from New York University; and a Bachelor of Arts from Wesleyan University. Throughout his career, Lewis Levin has consistently prioritized “children first.”

“As someone who is constantly mesmerized by the curiosity and goofiness of tweens, I am thrilled to join W.E.B. Du Bois Regional Middle School—a place where I look forward to collaborating with a dedicated staff and partnering with every family and the community,” said Lewis Levin who resides in Canaan, New York. Outside of school, he enjoys various Sunday traditions including hiking Monument Mountain, skiing Butternut, and devouring new fiction at Lakeville Books with his family.

The District plans to schedule a public meet and greet with Lewis Levin prior to his official July 1 start date.



New Principal Seth Lewis Levin



Community News & Events

Stockbridge Grange Dinner

The Grange dinner will be on May 17; see the ad elsewhere in this issue for details.

Council on Aging

We will be making three-dimensional cards and envelopes on Tuesday, May 5, 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.



2026 Annual Town Meeting and Town Election: What You Need to Know

The Annual Town Meeting will take place at the Town Offices Gymnasium this year on Monday, May 4, at 6 pm. Copies of the warrant, a sample ballot for the town election, and the *Town Report* will be available on the town website, weststockbridge-ma.gov. The reports will also be available at the Transfer Station, at the Library, and at the Town Offices.

The Annual Town Election will be held in the Town Offices Gymnasium on Monday, May 11, from 10 am until 7 pm.

SPECIMEN BALLOT

Penalty for willfully defacing, tearing down, removing or
destroying a list of candidates or specimen ballot.

FINE NOT TO EXCEED ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS.

OFFICIAL BALLOT
ANNUAL TOWN ELECTION
WEST STOCKBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAY 11, 2026

Monica Bennett
TOWN CLERK

INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTERS

- A. TO VOTE, completely fill in the OVAL to the RIGHT of your choice(s) like this: ●
- B. Follow directions as to the number of candidates to be marked for each office.
- C. To vote for a person whose name is not printed on the ballot, write the candidate's name and address on the line provided and completely fill in the OVAL.

MODERATOR For One Year Vote for One JOSEPH ROY, JR. ☐ (Write-in) ☐	PLANNING BOARD For Five Years Vote for One JARED GELORMINO ☐ (Write-in) ☐	CEMETERY COMMISSION For Three Years Vote for One MARY KORTE KINMOND ☐ (Write-in) ☐
SELECT BOARD MEMBER For Three Years Vote for One KATHLEEN KERESSEY ☐ (Write-in) ☐	BOARD OF HEALTH For Three Years Vote for One DAVID FINCK ☐ (Write-in) ☐	TREE WARDEN For Three Years Vote for One ANDREW FUDGE ☐ (Write-in) ☐
BOARD OF ASSESSORS For Three Years Vote for One MICHELLE LARAMEE-JENNY ☐ (Write-in) ☐	LIBRARY TRUSTEE For One Year Vote for One JULIA L. ERICKSON ☐ (Write-in) ☐	CONSTABLE For Three Years Vote for Four KARL G. COOPER ☐ WAYNE COOPER ☐ ELIZABETH DIGRIGOLI ☐ PAUL FAGGIONI ☐ (Write-in) ☐ (Write-in) ☐ (Write-in) ☐ (Write-in) ☐
FINANCE COMMITTEE For Three Years Vote for Two ROBERT SALERNO ☐ STEVE SAUTMAN ☐ (Write-in) ☐ (Write-in) ☐	LIBRARY TRUSTEES For Three Years Vote for One MARGARET KORTE ☐ CAROL KULLER ☐ (Write-in) ☐	



New Roadside Garden Planned

Garden designer Lisa Parker is working to prepare a new garden in an island bed near the center of town (along Route 102 in front of the Village Congregational Church). It will be planted mostly with shrubs and perennials funded by donations to West Stockbridge Plants & Gardens. Having cleaned out the bed with the help of Curt Wilton and Frank Alfonso of the Public Works Department, Lisa says planting will begin soon and continue through the summer.



*Lisa Parker and Public Works Director Curt Wilton at the site of the new garden bed.
Photo by Frank Alfonso*

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

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 March 2, 2026

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

Andy Krouss, Chair was absent.

Kathleen opened the meeting at 6 PM.

Kathleen moved, seconded by Toby, to approve the minutes from March 2, 2026.

All were in favor, and the motion passed.

Town Administrator Update:

Marie stated that the Town has been awarded a Transit grant through the Tri-Town Connector for a new van. Tate Coleman, Tri-Town Connector Director, informed Marie that the grant was for a 2026 E-Transit vehicle, which is no longer available. Due to this change, MassDOT will provide two new 2023 E-Transit electric vehicles for every single vehicle awarded. The Town will still be subject to the local match contribution of \$18,205 which will be on the FY27 Annual Town Meeting warrant for voter approval.

Marie requested the Board's approval to pay the final invoice for BBE Company for the Police Station Renovations. Toby and Kathleen both agreed.

Marie updated the Board regarding the Open Gym held by the Parks & Recreation Commission. It was held on Sunday night, March 15th. They had four children, and several adults attended. They hope more will come next Sunday for their second Open Gym.

Appointment of Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coalition Representative:

Marie shared that the Board of Health has been asked to provide a primary and secondary representative from West Stockbridge to the Public Health Emergency Preparedness Coalition. The Board of Health requests that the Board appoint Scott Muir, the Emergency Management Director, as the primary representative and the Board of Health Chair as the secondary representative.

Kathleen made a motion, seconded by Toby, to appoint Scott Muir as the primary and David Finck as the secondary representatives to the Public Health Emergency Preparedness coalition.

All were in favor, and the motion was approved.

Discussion of Richmond Shared Ambulance Contract: James Hallock

Jim raised his concerns with the Board about the service gap caused by the Richmond Ambulance. He understands that it is difficult at this time to hire enough people to cover all shifts; however, the contract between the Towns suggests coverage that is not being honored currently. He has concerns and would like the Board to assist with additional communications to help the Town gain coverage until the Town joins with Stockbridge next year.

Fire Chief Vinny Garofoli stated that he would like to provide factual information on this subject and noted that, due to a conflict of interest, he would discuss only facts, not his opinion, regarding coverage. He stated that the Town had 60 EMS calls in FY26 to date, of which 45 were during 7 AM to 11 PM, 7 days a week. Of these calls, 35 were responded to by Richmond, and the remaining 10 were handled by mutual aid (it is not certain whether this was due to the Ambulance already on another call at the time). There were 15 calls from 11 PM to 7 AM, covered by volunteers: 2 by Richmond and 13 by mutual aid. Vinny suggested to the Board that they hold a meeting with both Towns, including the Town Administrators, Fire Chiefs, EMS Director Brian Schultz, and a representative of the Select Board, to further communication and finalize an agreement that may address the issues and concerns.

Kathleen and Toby agreed, and Marie will set up a meeting soon.

Seasonal Communities Designation:

Kathleen suggested that it could be extremely beneficial for the Town to adopt the Seasonal Designation awarded to the Town by the State. This designation must be voted on at the Town Meeting to be adopted. Kathleen stated that this designation will assist the Town in providing affordable housing for residents and will allow the Town to apply for grants and funding through the State to support the process. She feels this is a good step for the Town to take in addressing housing issues.

...continued on page 11

Stockbridge Grange Dinner Sunday, May 17

Stuffed breast of chicken, lemon and chocolate pies
Take out only/pick up - 12-1:30pm - Cost \$17
Grange Hall, 51 Church Street, Stockbridge

To place an order please call:
(413) 243-1298



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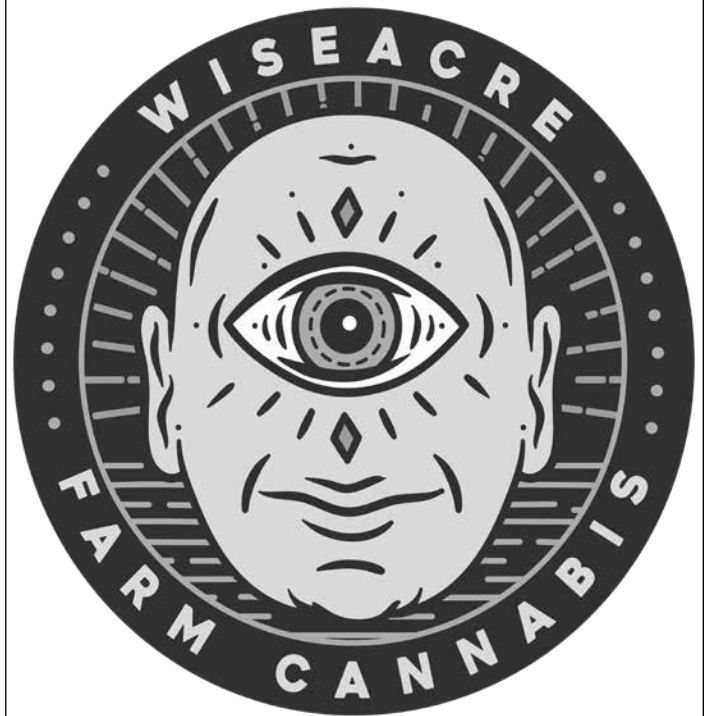
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**Friday, May 8th
at 7pm**

**Michael and Brian Lupario,
Of Hill Town Hemp farm,
in Chesterfield MA
will talk about growing
and processing hemp.
And the beneficial healthful
products they produce.**

Stockbridge Grange Hall, 51 Church St., Stockbridge
Open to the public ~ Lite refreshments will be served
For information call (413) 443-4352

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...continued from page 9

Toby also agreed that this was a good direction for the Town to assist with local residents' housing issues. He is also in favor of this designation.

Toby made a motion, seconded by Kathleen, to place seasonal Designation adoption on the 2026 Annual Town Meeting warrant.

All were in favor, and the motion was approved.

Select Board Speak:

Kathleen mentioned that several Boards and Committees still have open positions. She would like the Board to review that list in the near future and work to fill all the open positions. Marie will provide that list to the Board.

Toby motioned to adjourn, seconded by Kathleen, at 6:26 PM.

All approved, and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Y. Ryan

Marie Y. Ryan

Town Administrator

Select Board Meeting Minutes March 30, 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 6 PM.

Kathleen moved, seconded by Toby, to approve the minutes from March 16, 2026.

All were in favor, and the motion passed.

Town Administrator Update:

Marie updated the Board regarding the Open Gym held by the Parks & Recreation Commission. It was the second time it was held on Sunday night, March 29th. They had sixteen children, and several adults attended. The Commissioners are very optimistic about continuing to hold open gym nights. They will return to the Board in the near future to discuss making this a permanent event.

Marie requested that Cait Graham approach the Board to explain a request from the local youth cheerleading group. Caitlin explained that the kids are marching in whichever Memorial Day parade that the veterans march in. The veterans rotate around each South County town to march because they are getting older and cannot be in every parade. The kids would like permission to have the Town's seal put on their t-shirts they will wear when. The Board thought this was a good idea and agreed that it was Ok to do that. Cait noted this would not cost the Town any money.

Appointment of Kathy Korte as the Conservation Commission Representative on the Community Preservation Commission:

Marie explained that the Conservation Commission's previous representative, Shayne O'Bryan, no longer wants to do this so Kathy Korte has volunteered to be the new representative. Marie requested the Board approve her appointment.

Kathleen made a motion, seconded by Toby to appoint Kathy Korte as the Conservation Commission representative on the Community Preservation Commission.

All were in favor and the motion passed.

Berkshire Backroad Gravel Grinder Bike Ride: Phil Gentile

Phil has come before the Board every year to request permission to use the Moscow Road Wastewater Sewer Plant parking lot as a home base for his club's annual bike ride. He stated he has an attendant who assists with parking and oversees the parking lot. He also contacts the Police in advance. In

the past, Curt Wilton, Director of Public Works, has mentioned what a great job this group does with the parking and leaves everything cleaned up when they are finished.

The Board approved the Bike group's use of the parking lot.

Farmer's Market Annual Entertainment License: Terri Jo Dixon

Terri mentioned to the Board that this is the 15th year of the Farmer's Market in West Stockbridge. She has worked hard to keep it going, and it has benefited the community. They would like to request an Annual entertainment License for live music on Thursdays from 3 PM until 6 PM from May 21st through October 1st.

Toby made a motion, seconded by Kathleen, to approve the Annual Entertainment License for the Farmer's Market.

All approved, and the motion passed.

Public Hearing for the CDBG grant through Berkshire Regional Planning: Brett Roberts

Andy opened the Public Hearing and asked Brett to come forward. Brett stated that a requirement of the grant application is to hold a public hearing. This grant, if awarded, will assist in funding 10 housing units for rehabilitation and give additional funding for the public transit in West Stockbridge. If the grant is awarded, he will return to the Board for additional information on the process.

There were no additional comments or questions. Andy closed the Public Hearing and Brett thanked the Board for their time.

Director of Public Works Update: Curt Wilton

Highway Funding News

Municipal Pavement Program

As mentioned in a previous report, this MassDOT grant has been awarded to the Town. All costs for engineering, materials, and workmanship will be funded 100% from State-Aid. Marie and I attended the meeting on 2/3/2026 and gathered information on the process and timing of the Great Barrington Road resurfacing project. Within the next several weeks, we anticipate an on-site field evaluation to develop a strategy and help determine the best repair for certain segments. Once this is complete, we will better understand the project's timeline and potential delays.

Unpaved Roads Grant Program: The MassDOT Unpaved Roads Grant Program is relatively new, beginning in June 2025. This Grant can support a wide range of maintenance and repair activities to improve our Town-owned dirt and gravel roads. Funding can also support equipment purchases directly associated with the maintenance of said roads. Stephen and I intend to pursue this grant in hopes of funding for a new front-end loader to remove this burden from the taxpayers. The FY27 applications will begin this week, on April 1.

Complete Streets (Awarded \$112,611.60)

Project #1: Swamp Road/Main Street Pedestrian and Intersection Improvements

Project #7: Swamp Road/Main Street Geometry Improvements

Project #15: Depot Street municipal parking lot pedestrian improvements

We are in the final stages of securing the awards for these projects. Bids are to be opened this week, on April 2. Once this process is complete and all documents are in order, we will schedule a start time.

PLANTS AND GARDENS

Lisa Parker has been busy all winter planning her ideas for this year's Downtown Beautification. She is seeking permission from the Board to redo the town-owned island on Main Street, directly across from the Congregational Church. With the board's permission, the DPW will assist Lisa in fulfilling her vision.

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Ping Pong Tournament Returns!

Get Ready for Some Family Fun!

Richmond Recreation Committee's 15th Community Ping Pong Tournament

Friday, May 1, 2026, Richmond Consolidated School Gym, State Road

Entry fee: \$5 per player, \$15 family cap

Registration at the door begins at 5 pm; play begins at 6 pm

Refreshments will be available

Three Divisions of Play

Champions division: For the best players and those looking to challenge the best!

Recreational division: For pingers and pongers who just want to have a good time!

Kids 13 and under division: Young 'uns!



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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.

...continued from page 11

This concludes the DPW Report.

Thank You,

Curt Wilton, Director

3/30/2026

Community Preservation Commission Bylaw changes for the Town Meeting Warrant: Jared Gelormino, Chair

Jared stated that the Community Preservation Commission (CPC) has requested that two articles regarding bylaw changes be added to the Annual Town Meeting warrant. One change is to replace the language regarding the member with housing expertise with that of a member from the Affordable Housing Trust Committee. The second change would be in paragraph 6 of section 8-1 (Establishment). The Commission would like to delete the words "or appointed" from this paragraph.

The Board agreed to the first bylaw change of replacing the language of a member with housing expertise with a member of the Affordable Housing Trust and decided not to include the second change that was requested to delete the words "or appointed" in section 8-1 paragraph 6.

Kathleen made a motion, seconded by Toby, to place the CPC's request for the change in the bylaw to include language of a member of the Affordable Housing Trust on the Annual Town Meeting warrant.

All were in favor, and the motion passed.

Article regarding approval for the Select Board to sign a 10-year contract with Stockbridge for shared EMS and Fire Services on the Warrant:

The Select Board decided to take additional time to review the contract and discuss it at a special meeting next week, prior to placing it on the Town Meeting warrant. They will also hold off on approving the final warrant until next week.

The Board also requests that Jared Gelormino, Chair of the Community Preservation Commission, return to the Board with a report regarding the projects they have requested to be approved at Town Meeting.

Attendance Policy for Board and Committee Members: Kathleen

It has come to Kathleen's attention that several Boards and Committees have absent members. She feels this takes up a space where another resident could be attending the meetings and adding to the purpose of the Board or Committee. She has seen that several Towns have an attendance policy. The Board discussed and requested that Marie develop language that all Town Boards and Committees could use as a policy and guideline. Marie will bring the language of this policy to the Board at their meeting in April.

Select Board Speak:

Toby noted that he would be interested in serving on a sub-committee to review the IT systems in place for the Town. He has already asked one person interested in assisting and has another in mind. He feels that three people would be the ideal number for this project and will bring it up at a future meeting for Board discussion. Kathleen mentioned that she is working on One-Stop grants with consultant Jennifer Tabakin and believes there may also be IT grants available to help fund such a project. She will look into that as well.

Toby motioned to adjourn, seconded by Kathleen, at 6:48 PM.

All approved, and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Y. Ryan

Marie Y. Ryan

Town Administrator

...continued on page 15



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

News from the Pews

St. Patrick's Church

Happy Spring all!

I'm back from "the ole sod" to our own sod! Hope that you all had a happy and joyous Easter. Holy Week went very well in our tri-parish community, with most of the services held at St. Ann's in Lenox. Each separate church had something of its own, like Stations of the Cross during Holy Week, and each had at least one service for Easter itself. The largest gathering was of course the Easter Vigil at St. Ann's, where we welcomed

a cadre of new members to our Catholic community. Apparently, there is a growth across the nation of people either returning to or joining the Catholic Church. This is great to see, and there's plenty of room for more.

A few events are coming up. The winter took a toll on our grounds, so we are having a cleanup day on Saturday, April 25, at 8 am, weather permitting. If Mother Nature doesn't cooperate, we have a rain date of Saturday, May 16. May 3, following Mass, will be our annual Celebrate Spring Breakfast. As in the past, it's a potluck event. There will be plenty of sweet and savory dishes from breakfast casseroles to pastries and donuts. Come one, come all, and bring your favorite morning goodies! No, gentlemen, this will not take the place of treating your ladies to a special Mother's Day meal on Sunday, May 10!

Enjoy spring! We live in such a beautiful part of the world. We are truly blessed. Hope to see you in the pews!

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HOME MODIFICATION LOAN PROGRAM

Are you or a loved looking for ways to make your home accessible as you age-in-place? Are you a person living with disabilities looking for ways to remain in your home? The Home Modification Loan Program (HMLP) may be for you!

HMLP is a 0% interest, deferred payment loan program that provides modifications for home accessibility improvements that could help you or a loved one live more independently. Possible modifications include bathroom and kitchen modifications, ramps, stair lifts, accessory dwelling units, and more.

Berkshire Regional Planning Commission at
HMLP@berkshireplanning.org

Select Board Special Meeting Minutes

April 6, 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 6 PM.

Town Administrator Update:

Marie stated that the final check has been mailed to BBE Office Interiors for the Police Department furniture. She requested that the Board allow her to have the chairs delivered now, and the Board agreed. Marie also mentioned that at the Board's next meeting, she and Interim Police Chief Mike Renton will discuss a procedure for paying the remaining Fiscal 26 Police Department bills. This process will include having the Board sign off on all payments through the end of Fiscal 26. However, in the meantime, Marie requested the Board's sign-off on two small invoices for Pittsfield Communications and WEB Mason, which the Board agreed to.

Discussion regarding the Intermunicipal Agreement (IMA) with Stockbridge for Fire and EMS:

Marie explained that Town Counsel informed her and the Board that this IMA need not be part of the Annual Town Meeting Warrant. The Board agreed not to include it in the warrant.

The Board then discussed its concerns about different parts of the IMA. They also noted that they are on board with moving forward with the IMA once the language is made a bit more specific.

Andy asked who covers the insurance. Marie explained that each Town will cover the insurance for their own stations, vehicles, and any incidents that happen within its town.

Toby has concerns regarding Article 6. He felt that annual performance evaluations should be conducted jointly by the Town Administrators rather than independently. As for Article 9 regarding the timeframe for withdrawing from the IMA, two years is generally acceptable to unwind; however, he had concerns about what would happen if there are egregious events and the Town does not want to hold on for the two years. He would like this article to be more specific.

Kathleen brought up the idea of adding additional members to the Oversight Board. She wondered whether the Board would agree to adding an additional member-at-large from each Town to the

Oversight Board. She felt this could bring in an outsider's view of the Department.

After some discussion, it was decided that Toby would reach out to Tim Zessin, Town Counsel, to discuss his concerns and possibly obtain additional language for the IMA. They also agreed with Kathleen's recommendation of an additional Oversight Board member at large appointed by the Select Board. Marie will discuss the additional Oversight Board member with Stockbridge Town Administrator Mike Canales.

Approval of Town Meeting Warrant:

Marie informed the Board that she received an email from the Lee Town Administrator stating there was a decrease in the funds needed by West Stockbridge for the Shared Animal Control Department. West Stockbridge's cost went from \$15,500 to \$13,100. She has corrected it in the warrant. She also removed the article pertaining to the Police Body Cameras because the grant will now send payment, then we can purchase them, instead of the Town paying upfront. That article is no longer needed.

She then asked the Board to approve and sign the Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

Kathleen made a motion, seconded by Toby, to approve the Annual Town Meeting Warrant as written with the amendments mentioned.

All were in favor, and the motion passed.

Attendance Policy for Board and Committee Members:

Marie presented a rough draft of an attendance policy for all Board and Committee members. The Board discussed it and decided to have Marie send her draft to all Board and Committee chairs for their comments. Once Marie receives their comments, she will put together a policy that takes into account everyone's suggestions and bring it back to the Board for final approval.

Select Board Speak:

None.

Toby motioned to adjourn, seconded by Kathleen, at 6:38 PM.

All approved, and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Marie Y. Ryan

Marie Y. Ryan

Town Administrator



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YOUR WEST STOCKBRIDGE EXPERTS

West Stockbridge Chamber Players Spring Concert

Sunday, May 24, 3 pm
Old Town Hall
9 Main St., West Stockbridge

The concert features the West Stockbridge Chamber Players: artistic director and clarinetist Catherine Hudgins, oboist Amanda Hardy, violinist Sheila Fiekowsky, violist Daniel Getz, and double bassist Edwin Barker.

The program will include Michael Haydn's Divertimento in C major, MH 179; Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Duo for Violin and Viola in G major, K. 423; Ema Quiñones Núñez's *Haiku: Three Miniatures for Clarinet & Contrabass*; and Sergei Prokofiev's Quintet in G minor for Oboe, Clarinet, Violin, Viola, and Double Bass, Op. 39.

These concerts, which benefit the West Stockbridge Historical Society, routinely sell out, so order your tickets today! Tickets (\$35 for members, \$40 for non-members) can be reserved at www.weststockbridgehistory.org. Seating is limited: first-come, first-served. This concert is supported by the West Stockbridge Cultural Council.



GRANGE For the Whole Family

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

Friends & Neighbors

Come Celebrate with us!



8:30 Sunday Mass
followed by
Coffee Hour

St. Patrick Church
30 Albany Road
West Stockbridge



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

Happy May to all from West Stockbridge PL!



Join us on May 2, at 6 pm, when **Eric and Tim Vogel of the Cobble Mountain Critter Project will share their research on Bigfoot and mountain lions.** The event is free and will be held at the West Stockbridge Historical Society, with our sincere thanks for hosting the evening in their great performance space! Our very own Friends of the WS Library are also helping by staffing the event. We could not do it without them! We are also grateful to the Nature Talk Series for co-sponsoring the event. The Nature Talk Series is funded in part by grants from the Alford-Egremont, Richmond, and West Stockbridge cultural councils, local agencies supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency. **Please visit the events page on WestStockbridgeHistory.org to reserve your free tickets!**

Watch for posts about our May meeting of the Kids Craft Crew!

On **Saturday, May 23, at 11 am**, we welcome **Wildlife on Wheels** to launch our summer reading celebration. The Zoo in Forest Park and Education Center is sending a selection of animals with a zoo educator to introduce the animals and tell us their stories.

March at a glance:

- 608 hardcopy items were borrowed and renewed
- \$10,000 saved by library borrowers instead of buying
- 505 eBooks, eMagazines, and streaming audiobooks borrowed
- 3,367 visitors to the library from July 1 through March 31

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

NEW ADULT FICTION

Baldacci, *Hope rises*
French, *The keeper*
Harper, *Last one out*
Lin, *The dead can't make a living (A Taipei Night Market Novel)*
Nezhukumathil, *Night owl: poems*
Semple, *Go gentle*
Toibin, *The news from Dublin*

NEW ADULT NONFICTION

Afsari, *Labor: one woman's work*

NEW TITLES FOR ALL AGES

Atkins, *When twilight comes*



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

1. When did Father CJ Waitekus from St. Patrick's Church transfer to St. Mary's Church in Longmeadow?
2. What celebration was held on November 13, 2015?
3. When was the Congregational Church built?
4. What did the church have renovated?



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. The end of November 2015.
2. A four-year celebration of the
establishment of the "Friends of the West
Stockbridge Library."
3. 1881
4. Its social room and kitchen in 2015.



Let's talk Bigfoot

Saturday, May 2, 6pm

at the West Stockbridge Historical Society



Tim and Eric Vogel
The Cobble Mountain Critter Project
will present their research on
Bigfoot & Mountain Lions / Cougars / and
Eastern Ghost Cats, some of the
most enduring and enigmatic folkloric
figures in New England



**Go to the West Stockbridge Historical Society
events page to reserve your free tickets:**

<https://www.weststockbridgehistory.org>

A presentation of the West Stockbridge Public Library
Co-sponsored by The Friends of the West Stockbridge Library,
the West Stockbridge Historical Society,
and **The Nature Talks Series** which is funded in part by grants
from the Alford-Egremont, Richmond, and West Stockbridge
cultural councils, local agencies which are supported by
the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.





Form + Substance April 30–May 31

Gallery hours: Thursday–Sunday, 11 am–4 pm

Opening Reception: Saturday, May 2, 2–4 pm

Artist Talk: Sunday, May 24, 2 pm

West Stockbridge artists David Goldstein and Sherri Greenbach have an upcoming exhibit at the Art on Main Gallery at 38 Main Street, sponsored by the Guild of Berkshire Artists, from April 30 to May 31, called **Form + Substance**.

Form + Substance highlights the artwork of this husband-and-wife team. David is a ceramic artist and Sherri is a painter working in mixed media. This is the first time that they have shown their work together. This exhibit will contrast the natural forms of David's ceramics against Sherri's paintings, challenging the viewer to think about generations of immigration.

David is known for his tactile pieces and sculptures inspired by the natural environment. His pieces are meant to be engaged with on a sensory level, inviting the viewer to appreciate not just the visual aesthetic but the texture and form. Surface texture is an important element of David's work that takes the viewer on a tactile journey from the roughness of the clay to smooth undulating surfaces.

Sherri will be showing her mixed media series "Be Miep" that sits at the intersection of color, narrative, and texture. Layered with paint, paper, and raw canvas, her work engages the viewer in today's conversation about immigration and issues a call to action. The title of the series was inspired by Miep Gies, who hid Anne Frank and her family and neighbors from the Germans during World War II.

A few years ago Sherri began volunteering at a food pantry. As ICE raids started to feel more likely, the pantry volunteers realized that some families were afraid to wait in the line that requires them to be outside and vulnerable. A group was quickly organized to shop for these families and deliver food to them weekly. Soon after, it became Sherri's weekly volunteer responsibility, along with a few other people. One volunteer created an order form in Spanish so families still had some agency over their food choices. These order forms became the start of Sherri's "Be Miep" series.

The paintings reflect what immigrants to our country, and their neighbors, may be feeling during these scary times. Our responsibility is to care for our immigrant neighbors. We must take action, like Miep Gies.

West Stockbridge residents are invited to come to the gallery and explore the forms of David's pottery and the substance of Sherri's paintings.

Images courtesy of the artists. From top left: David Goldstein, Whispers of Antiquity; David Goldstein, Pathway to Blue; From top right: Sherri Greenbach, Be Miep (Teal 2); Sherri Greenbach, Be Miep (Purple1)


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West Stockbridge Parks & Recreation is looking for volunteers

Youth readers for Memorial Day (roughly age 7-11)
to perform Flander's Fields, America's Answer, and
The Gettysburg Address.

Classic car owners, to give a few veterans a
ride during the Memorial Day parade.
Convertables are ideal.

Two youth vocalists (roughly age 15-20) to
perform the National Anthem and God Bless
America on Memorial Day.

New adult volunteers to join
Parks & Recreation, bringing fresh ideas
and enthusiasm!

If interested, please email
wstockhelpinghands@gmail.com or speak to any
current member of Parks & Recreation

Next up in the *Berkshire Nature Talk Series*

FORMS & TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE BUTTERFLY WORLD

with Ryan Shea,
including a slide show and video

Friday, May 15th
at 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Old Town Hall, 9 Main Street, West Stockbridge



Ryan Shea, a researcher and
educator at The Nature Institute
in Ghent, New York, invites us
to slow down and truly observe
butterflies: to notice how
their shapes and colors shift
and transform, and to help us
discover a "living understanding
of nature."



Free for West Stockbridge
Historical Society members;
\$10 suggested donation for nonmembers.
Please register at
weststockbridgehistory.org

The Berkshire Nature Talk Series is funded in part by grants from the Alford-Egremont, Richmond, and West
Stockbridge cultural councils, local agencies which are supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

May Donor Roll Call

Bob & Mary Edwards
Guild of Berkshire Artists

Paula & Jimmy Law

Kate & Chris Meyer

Judy Nevins

Helen Nolan

John Tremblay & Eileen Quinn

Richard Ziter

Anonymous: 2

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)

Every issue costs us about \$1,500 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.

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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>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>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



Village Scavenger Hunt: A Great Day!

By Cait Graham

On April 12, a beautiful Sunday, our Parks & Recreation Committee came together with 12 local merchants to offer a free and fun family afternoon. About 35 total participants traversed the town, solving hints and enjoying little treats. Do you know where you could find fresh-made sandwiches at the deli? How about a cheerful gift shop on Albany Road, or which merchant has a name that means “friends” in Italian? Or where you’d go to find helpers with blue cars and bright badges? The lively scavenger hunt participants knew every clue, and they made their way from one end of town to the other, ending at the West Stockbridge Public Library with crafts, native flower seeds, and fun!

A special thank you to all who helped make this a great day: Lisa Parker, West Stockbridge Village Congregational Church, Art on Main, The Foundry, SALA Boutique, Acqua al 2, West Stockbridge Historical Society, Public Market, Shaker Mill Books, Amici, Flourish Market, West Stockbridge Police Department, and West Stockbridge Public Library.

Photo by Rachael Armstrong

Calling All Pets!

The *Local Yokel* is planning a cover or a color photo spread in the coming months to show off some of our favorite West Stockbridge companion animals.

If you would like your pet to be featured, please email us at info@thelocalyokel.org:

- ⇒ A color photo of your pet
- ⇒ Your pet’s name
- ⇒ Your name
- ⇒ 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



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 P.O. Box 238
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May						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
26	27	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	2	3	4	5	6

May Calendar of Events

5/1	Ping Pong Tournament; see details in this issue	5 pm	Richmond Consolidated School Gym, State Road
5/2	"Let's Talk Bigfoot"	6 pm	Old Town Hall, 9 Main Street
5/4	Annual Town Meeting	6 pm	Town Offices Gymnasium
5/5	Cinco de Mayo		
5/5	Council on Aging Craft Group meeting	9:30 am	Richmond Town Library
5/5	Planning Board meeting	7 pm	Town Offices
5/6	Knitters Group	2-4 pm	Community Room
5/6	Conservation Commission meeting	6 pm	Town Offices
5/9	Dog Park Spring Cleanup	10 am-noon	Dog Park, Town Offices grounds
5/10	Mother's Day		
5/11	Annual Town Election	10 am-7 pm	Town Offices Gymnasium
5/13	Knitters Group	2-4 pm	Community Room
5/13	Friends of the Library Committee meeting	3:30 pm	Community Room
5/13	Affordable Housing Trust meeting	5 pm	Town Offices
5/13	Select Board meeting	6 pm	Town Offices and on Zoom
5/15	*** Deadline for the next <i>Local Yoke!</i> ***		Send to info@thelocalyokel.org
5/15	WSHS Nature Series: Butterfly Talk	7 pm	Old Town Hall, 9 Main Street
5/16	Armed Forces Day		
5/17	Stockbridge Grange Dinner; see ad in this issue for details	12-1:30 pm	Grange Hall, 51 Church St., Stockbridge
5/19	Planning Board meeting	7 pm	Town Offices
5/20	Knitters Group	2-4 pm	Community Room
5/21	Farmers Market	3-6 pm	Foundry Green, Harris Street
5/24	WS Chamber Players Spring Concert	3 pm	Old Town Hall, 9 Main Street
5/25	Memorial Day; see details in this issue		
5/27	Knitters Group	2-4 pm	Community Room
5/27	Select Board meeting	6 pm	Town Offices and on Zoom
5/28	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.			