



## June 2023

### **Classes**

Chair Yoga Mondays 11:00 AM

Yoga Tuesdays at 9:00 AM

Osteoporosis Thursdays at 9:00 AM

Ti-Chi/QiGong Fridays at 10:00 AM

Pot Luck Dinner

Friday June 16 5:30 Steve will be making spare ribs. All seniors are welcome, come visit and share a meal. Bring a dish to share if you can.

Questions, comments, or need assistance? Call 413-394-0003 or email [washingtoncoa@gmail.com](mailto:washingtoncoa@gmail.com)

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### **Stand Out – October Mountain State Forest**

Please join in the Stand Out to protest the proposed DCR logging project on West Branch Road and the Four Corners on Saturday, June 17th 11:00 – 1pm. The location for the event is at the intersection of Washington Mt Road and West Branch Road at the entrance to October Mountain State Forest. It will feature various speakers and a tour of previous logging sites. Come and show support for the preservation of our beloved forest.

Susan Purser

Preserve October Mountain State Forest

[susanbythesea6696@hotmail.com](mailto:susanbythesea6696@hotmail.com)



*This view is north, looking toward Muddy Pond. The building on the left is the station, the one on the right is the station house, where track workers kept their tools and track cars.*

### **June Community Walk: Saturday, June 17th at 9:00 am**

Several times each day the familiar sound of a train's warning can be heard throughout the Town of Washington as it approaches railroad crossings in the valley. Have you ever wondered how the track came into being? What engineering challenges were encountered and how they were met? Who were the workers and what tools were available to them?

David Pierce of the Chester Railway Station Museum will answer these questions and provide other fascinating facts as he leads our June Community Walk: **"The Secrets of Muddy Pond & the Building of the First U.S. Railroad Mountain Crossing: Designated a National Historic Landmark in 2020."**

This walk will take participants to Muddy Pond, on the watershed divide of the Berkshires, and to the highest point between Boston and Chicago along the rail line. Learn of the unique challenges presented to Whistler's father as he engineered the world's first mountain railroad up and over the Berkshire plateau. This area is wonderfully scenic, has abundant wildlife and has an amazing history. Learn why this five-acre Housatonic River headwaters has earned the title of "most deceptive body of water in Mass." and the additional challenges it posed. This is a level walk on the traprock on the side of the railroad tracks. Approximately 2 hours--4 miles. Heavy rain will cancel.

Meet at the intersection of Summit Hill Road and Upper Valley Road, just before the bridge which spans the railroad. From the bridge participants will have a view of the track, 90 feet below, and begin to gain an appreciation for the tremendous effort necessary to cut through the rock ledge by hand, without the use of dynamite or modern equipment.

A tour of the Chester Railway Station Museum, designated a National Historic Landmark in 2021, can be arranged after the free community walk. Donations to the Chester Railway Station Museum are welcomed and will be designated for the Keystone Arch Trail fund.

## JAN GREENE

1951 - 2023

It is with great sadness we announce the death of our beloved Jan Maxine Greene. Jan faced her cancer diagnosis two and a half years ago with courage, strength and grace. She will be sadly missed.

Jan was born on July 20, 1951 in Brooklyn, New York. She graduated from New Utrecht High School in Brooklyn, continued her education at Sargent College / Boston University, and graduated with a degree in Physical Therapy.

After graduating, Jan located to The Berkshires, devoting the next 47 years practicing Physical Therapy and helping numerous patients throughout the County. Jan started out at St. Luke's Hospital and Berkshire Medical Center, and in time, opened a private practice on South Street.

In 1992, Jan suffered a brain tumor. After surgery in NY, she was in rehab for a year, before starting back up with local VNA's treating patients in the Hill Towns and South County.

In 2004, Jan had the opportunity to reopen her practice: Jan Greene Physical Therapy on South St. and Henry Ave in Pittsfield. She practiced until forced to retire due to her health in 2021. Jan's devotion, professionalism, skills and empathy, were appreciated by her patients over the years.

In the early years, Jan lived in several cabins in Stephentown, Windsor, and Glendale. All lacking one or

more amenities, like electricity or plumbing. Happy in her surroundings, she would occasionally take

advantage of the nurse's showers at BMC. Jan eventually bought a small cabin in her beloved town of Washington. After growing up in Brooklyn, Jan appreciated the solitude and comfort of living in the woods. Jan stayed at the cabin right up till the time of her death, almost forty years.

Over her life, she had adventures and loved traveling. Starting out in Brooklyn on her weekly trip from Bensonhurst to Coney Island on her bike with a girlfriend to get her favorite meal: Nathan's hotdogs and fries.

In August of '69, a friend asked her to help man a concession stand for the Woodstock Festival in Bethel, NY. To this day, we still haven't heard the stories.... She did gain a love for Arlo Guthrie's performances, attending his concerts whenever she could. Jan spent a few months living in Alaska, some time in New Zealand, enjoyed hiking in the Southwest U.S., and all throughout New England.

Jan met her husband Joe, of 25 years, in 1990. She was called up by a local surgeon for a favor. Joe had just had hip surgery, and lived in a cabin in the woods. Two VNA Physical Therapists



had come out a few days apart, saw the long driveway, could not see the cabin, got nervous and turned away. It was early January with plenty of snow. The doctor had asked Jan to do the visit. Jan donned crampons, ski poles, and a cute hat, and made the trek to the cabin. Joe greeted her at the door, they both started talking and Brooklyn accents flowed. Joe was from Brooklyn as well. She continued to come to the cabin for the duration of Joe's therapy. A great connection had been made. A beautiful friendship followed, leading to a wonderful marriage. Over her life, Jan opened up her heart and home to over twenty five rescue dogs. Giving them her love and forever home.

Jan is predeceased by her parents, Sheldon and Irene Greene and her brother Jerry J Greene.

She is survived by her husband, Joe Coates, of 25 years, a stepdaughter, Jennifer (Ludo) Coatanroch and a stepson, Michael (Lisa) Coates. Three grandchildren: Olivier, Lily, and Isla, all of Connecticut. A sister in law, Ellen (John ) Clinton and their family of Southern California. She also leaves some very special people she called her friends. Jan was a true friend.

The family would like to thank Doctor Sean Mullally, Jan's advocate, doctor and friend, his staff at Hillcrest Oncology, in addition to the fourth floor nurses, ( Earthly Angels ) who helped

take care of Jan. We will be forever grateful for their kindness, compassion and outstanding care. They helped make a very difficult time, manageable. Our many thanks to Dr. Sara Slater at Dana-Farber in Boston, and the Doctors at Memorial Sloan Kettering in NYC. We'd also like to thank Dr. Rebecca Caine, Jan's primary care physician, for her support over the years, and her guidance and continued support after Jan's diagnosis. Lastly, we are thankful for Hospice Care in the Berkshires, for supporting us in our home with their nursing and support staff, and making it possible for Jan to stay in her home in her final days.

Jan will be laid to rest at The Old Town Hall Cemetery, 473 Washington Mountain Road, Washington, MA, where there will be a graveside service for family and her friends on Friday, May 26th at 11:30 AM.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Jan's name to That Newfoundland Place, 554 Pucker Street, Coventry, CT 06238. [www.thatnewfoundlandplace.org](http://www.thatnewfoundlandplace.org).

If you would like to leave a message of condolence or share pictures or stories please visit our website at [www.kellyfuneralhome.net](http://www.kellyfuneralhome.net)

MJ  
**KELLY**  
Funeral Home

Dear Washington Friends & Neighbors:

June 2023

As the weather warms, this year is shaping up to be another big tick year. The little buggers are already out in force. So take appropriate precautions to guard against tick bites.

A belated welcome to Zach Handerek, the newest member of the Highway crew, who started at the beginning of May. While the crew takes care of regular summer projects, we'll also have several grant-funded projects under contract. The last round of paving on Upper Valley Rd from Route 8 to Summit Hill Rd should be done by the end of June. Replacement of the collapsed culvert at the top of Frost Rd should finally get tackled later in the summer.

On May 11, the Land Court entered a Finding in the Bucksteep tax-title case certifying the amount of \$216,498, plus interest, to be paid in order to avoid foreclosure. The owner now has until January 2, 2024. The Court granted the unusual delay since the pending sale is contingent on the buyers being granted the necessary special use permit, which will take time to play out.

Representatives from Arcana, the interested buyer for Bucksteep, came before the last Planning Board meeting to share their intentions for developing a "nature-immersive lodging destination" with a number of modern cabins distributed around the property to allow guests to experience a "return to the wild". Select Board and Board of Health members plus a handful of interested residents were in attendance. Once the official application is submitted, the Planning Board will schedule a Public Hearing as part of their process in considering the proposal.

The Select Board is still looking for someone to take over responsibility for keeping our meeting minutes. This paid position is estimated to require about 5–7 hours per week. Attendance at all Monday night meetings is required, but the remaining hours to compile and edit the minutes can be flexible and remote. See [washington-ma.gov/job-opportunities](https://washington-ma.gov/job-opportunities) for more information.

The Joint Screening Committee met three times to sift through twelve applications for the Shared Town Administrator position. Following preliminary interviews with the top candidates, the Committee has forwarded three recommended finalists to the Washington & Middlefield Select Boards. Together the Boards will now interview the finalists in open meeting on Saturday, June 3. We hope to select one of these candidates to enter into negotiations with, and with luck we will have a new Town Administrator on board soon after the start of the new fiscal year in July.

Nine intrepid nature-lovers came out on a drizzly Saturday for last month's Town Bird Walk. This month's Community Walk will be a stroll along the tracks in town with David Pierce of the Chester Railway Station Museum. We hope to see folks there (and hope the weather cooperates!)

Kent Lew  
Select Board chair

David Ellis  
Select Board

John Fish  
Select Board clerk



# A New Resting Place in Washington

by Carol Lew

Cemeteries are not something people tend to think about until the need arises, but cemetery space has been a recurring conversation in Washington for the past 30 to 40 years. The current Select Board has begun to tackle this growing concern; We're almost out of available plots.

In a recent Select Board meeting, the Board toured the Old Town Hall Cemetery as well as three potential spots for a new cemetery.

Walking the grounds of behind the Old Town Hall Cemetery, Select Board members and others who attended were relieved to see that there's still space for a few new plots there. That will buy the town some time to work out a longer-term plan.

## **New Potential Cemetery Locations**

The first potential site visited was at the corner of Washington Mountain Road and West Branch Road; our Town Common. This was the location of the old Congregational Church, which stood there from the late 1700s until around 1900. The section of that field north of the church footprint, bordering Washington Mountain Road, is the area under consideration for a cemetery. The plus sides of this location are that the town already owns the land, it's clear, and there's some logic to a cemetery being in what was once a churchyard. One of the concerns about this spot is the long-standing use of the field by snowmobilers. Without differentiating the graveyard space from the rest of the field, this could be an issue. A stone wall would be the most fitting boundary marker, but it could be costly.

The second site visited was a 5- acre parcel that was had been part of the Pittsfield watershed. The town negotiated to acquire that lot from the City of Pittsfield in the 1980s, but the deed transfer was only finalized recently. It's a beautiful lot of forestland on Washington Mountain Road near the Appalachian Trail. Lovely though it is, the site would require a great deal of clearing and leveling. There also seems to be wetland plants growing there, so research will need to be done on whether it's a suitable graveyard location.

The third site under consideration is right next to the Stonehouse Cemetery. It's land that was owned by Robert Deubel, who died in 2020. Deubel did not have a will, and had no heirs. Other parcels of his land, along with the Stonehouse, are subject to a mortgage and will eventually be auctioned by the mortgage-holders to satisfy the lien. This particular lot was owned by Deubel outright, and there's a path by which the town could acquire the land through a tax foreclosure. The property is quite tranquil. It has trees, but they are not old trees, and the land is flat; it would not be difficult to prepare it for a cemetery.

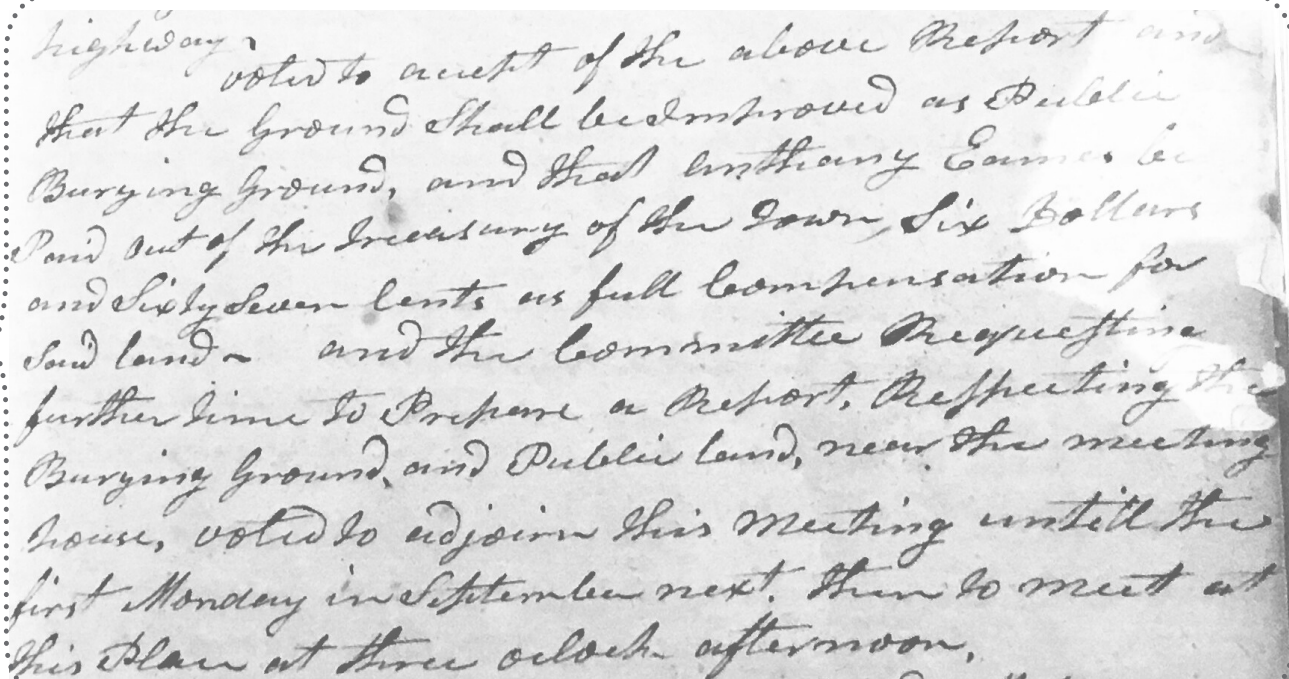
The next steps involve reaching out to the Environment Protection Agency and the Board of Health to understand any oversight and regulations involved in establishing a new cemetery space. Then the Select Board will need to create more complete proposals with cost estimates for the most promising

site or sites. After these steps, there will be a meeting where townspeople can hear the proposals and offer their thoughts and opinions.

Looking back at the minutes of old Select Board meetings, cemetery space has been a point of discussion for centuries. In two April 1805 meetings, town leaders raised concerns that the cemetery behind the Old Town Hall was not going to meet the town's needs. They assigned a committee to look into whether the town could purchase more land nearby the current "Meetinghouse Cemetery," but that did not happen. The next point of discussion was about purchasing land for a burying burial ground from Anthony Eames for \$6.67. The town purchased this parcel, known today as the Stonehouse cemetery. Now, almost 250 years later, our current town officials are looking into some of the same ideas as the early settlers had.

Though space is the most pressing issue, there are other questions and policies to be addressed. The Select Board is considering the formation of a committee to work on these issues. It has been a Washington tradition that residents can be buried in a town cemetery and do not have to pay for a plot, but those plots cannot be reserved in advance. It may be that residents would rather pay to reserve space. Former residents who have moved away have expressed interest in being buried in Washington. Some residents have expressed an interest in having their remains interred in a columbarium wall. When we do establish a new cemetery, we'll want to map out a plot plan, and thought must be given to how to get excavation equipment to grave sites. These kinds of issues need some serious thought; the kind that a group of interested residents could take on as a project.

### Town of Washington, April 26, 1805



Highway voted to accept of the above Report and that the ground shall be improved as Public Burying Ground, and that Anthony Eames be paid out of the Treasury of the Town, Six Dollars and Sixty Seven Cents as full compensation for said land - and the Committee requesting further time to prepare a Report, Respecting the Burying Ground, and Public Land, near the meeting house, voted to adjourn this meeting untill the first Monday in September next. Then to meet at this place at three o'clock afternoon.

**Becket Athenaeum 3367 Main St, Becket**

[BecketAthenaeum.org](http://BecketAthenaeum.org)

- Thursdays, June 1 & 8, 7-8:30pm  
Start Your Memoir with Lara Tupper. Registration required: [bit.ly/BA-memoir](http://bit.ly/BA-memoir)
- Saturdays, June 3, 17, 24, 10:30-11:30am  
Library Storytime
- Tuesday, June 6, 1:30pm  
Book Club: This Time Tomorrow by Emma Straub
- Saturday, June 10, 10:30-11:30am  
Creative Movement & Storytime with Laurel Lenski
- Monday, June 12, 6pm  
Cookbook Club: Colombiana by Mariana Velasquez
- Tuesday, June 13, 6:30-9:30pm, movie starts at 7pm  
Movie Night for Adults
- Thursday, June 15, 7pm  
Dark Sky: Defending the Dark Film Screening, with Presentation & Night Sky Gazing with Destin Heilman
- Saturday, June 17, 10am-4pm  
Book Sale Fundraiser. By donation (cash or check). All proceeds support the services & programs at the Becket Athenaeum!
- Saturday, June 17, 11am-12pm  
Buildwave: A hands-on building game! Registration required: [BecketAthenaeum.org/events](http://BecketAthenaeum.org/events)
- Saturday, June 17, 2pm  
Poetry Reading & Book Launch with David Giannini & Judy Katz



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