



March 2024



Chair Yoga Mondays at 11:00 AM
Yoga Tuesdays at 9:00 AM
Osteoporosis Thursdays at 9:00 AM

Pot Luck Dinner Friday, March 15 at 5:30 PM Join us for corned beef and cabbage! Sean Connors and friends will be providing some lively Irish dinner music.
As always all seniors are welcome with or without a dish to share - we look forward to seeing you!

Not to be missed -

Wednesday March 27 from 2-3pm Rhonda Drafts of Music [Dance.Edu](https://www.dance.edu/) will be presenting a "Hip Hop Dance Chair exercise class" for seniors. This has been funded by the Washington Cultural Council.
Join us for a complete chair, dance, warm-up and hip-hop class that begins and ends in the chairs. We travel through time on the "Soul Train" and chair dance to clean cut Hip Hop and R&B songs.

Questions, comments, or need assistance? Call 413-394-0003 or email washingtoncoa@gmail.com

Upcoming Community Events - The following is a list of the events which the Community Builders group is hoping to pull together in the coming year:

April – Hike led by Tom Hoffman

May – Bird Walk

June 29 – Family Fun Day

July 14 – Town Picnic and Old Town Hall Cemetery Walk

Late September/Early October – Contra Dance

Please note that more outings may be added in the future.

In addition, the Parks Commission will once again host the popular Music in the Park series and The Sons & Daughters of Washington Reunion will be held in early September.

Specific details will appear in future editions of TRACKS. Our hope is that these events will continue to foster a greater sense of community by providing opportunities to meet new people as well as greet old friends and neighbors. We look forward to sharing these experiences with you.

The Washington Community Builders Group and the **Washington Historic Commission** are holding a hike in Washington, on April 13th, at 10AM. We will be visiting the Stumpf sawmill and millpond, as well as the nearby Stumpf Falls.

The hike is about 2 miles in total, on a rocky trail, with some off trail hiking. Sturdy boots are recommended.

We will meet at the parking area at the intersection of Washington Mountain Road and West Branch Road, then drive from there to the trailhead. Rain date will be the following Saturday, April 20th.

NOTES from the TRANSFER STATION

I will try to make a habit of posting reminders here every so often - a few things to pay attention to.

BOTTLES and CANS

- NO BAGS of any kind
- NO car fluid containers - including anti-freeze and windshield washer fluid - ESPECIALLY - NO OIL
- NO BLACK PLASTIC - it melts at a different temperature
- NO planter pots
- NO CERAMICS - coffee cups, dishes etc.
- NO STRAWS and plastic cups should be CLEAR (not colored or opaque)



PAPER and CARDBOARD

- PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE - Break down **your own** small boxes - anything smaller than 20"
- PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE - take out the styrofoam and plastics !!!!!!!
- NO soda or beer cartons - that includes the thin waxy boxes that they come in
- NO pizza boxes - ESPECIALLY with pizza still in them! - yes, that happens
- NO paper towels or tissues

To quote what Cubby used to tell me when I first moved to Washington - "I don't care who did it, YOU are bringing it here, so YOU are responsible" - and that woman could smell a staple, I swear. (By the way, staples are OK now)

As always - We are thankful for your continued efforts and attention to detail.

HAPPY almost springtime everyone! - The Trash Masters



2023 Dog Licenses Expire March 31, 2024

The 2023 licenses and tags will expire March 31, 2024. To get the 2024 license/tag(s) for your dog(s) please see the Town Clerk on Monday evenings with the following:

- [Current rabies certificate](#)
- [Proof of spay or neuter, if applicable](#)
- [Fee: \\$4.00 if spayed/neutered or \\$10 if not](#)

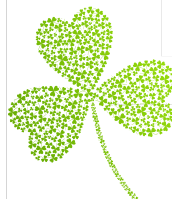
You can also mail the above (checks payable to Town of Washington) to the Town Clerk, 8 Summit Hill Rd, Washington, MA 01223 and a license and tag will be mailed back to you.

Please note that if you received a 2023 late fee invoice, you will have to pay that first before receiving your 2024 license/tag.



Attention high school seniors: If you reside in the Town of Washington and are planning to further your education, you are eligible to apply for a Washington Scholarship. Scholarship applications, due May 1, are available on our town's website: <https://www.washington-ma.gov>, go to the community tab and click on schools.

Linda Levernoch for the Washington Scholarship Committee



Dear Washington Friends & Neighbors:

March 2024

A mostly mild February may have some thinking Spring is practically here. But last year's storm on March 14, with its three feet of heavy wet snow and extended power outage, should be cautionary reminder. Let's hope for the best but remain prepared for more possible winter.

In the face of the increasing severity and frequency of storms, both winter and summer, the need for us to be able to provide a heating/cooling center during emergencies is only increasing. This is one of the projects being developed by the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness planning group. We will be presenting this and other Climate Adaptation Projects to gather input and feedback from the community during a Listening Night on Tuesday, March 19, 6:30–8:00pm at Town Hall. Dinner will be provided by Chester Common Table, so we're hoping for a good turnout!

The regional Wild & Scenic Westfield River Committee is celebrating 30 years. They reached out to the Select Board to offer a presentation to residents about their history, current initiatives, and future projects. Please join us for that on Thursday, March 14, 6:30pm at Town Hall.

Thanks to our Town Administrator, Sean Curran, the Town has finally managed to sell the Virginia Lakeshore Unit 2 property around the North Lake on the border with Middlefield. These largely inaccessible parcels came into Town ownership in the early 1980s for unpaid taxes after the failure of the planned Berkshire Mountain Lakes development. Thanks to Dick Spencer for helping to lay the groundwork for this over the past several years.

The top bidder was The Nature Conservancy, which already owned all the surrounding land. Although this means that the parcels won't go back on the tax rolls, something is better than nothing. And the sale price is roughly equivalent to forty years' worth of property taxes on this undevelopable land. Next, the Board will turn attention to the Unit 1 properties on Middlefield Rd, which will have more potential value for residential development.

Chief Miller was awarded another federal Road Safety Grant last fall to continue extra speed enforcement efforts. She reports that she and backup officer Frank Murphy have unfortunately been seeing a lot of repeat offenders, especially along Washington Mountain Road and Route 8. Since verbal and written warnings are not having the desired deterrent effect, they are going to begin issuing actual fines and citations. Chronic and habitual speeders should consider themselves forewarned.

Kent Lew
Select Board chair

David Ellis
Select Board clerk

Mike Case
Select Board

Dave Drugmand:
*Finance Committee Chair, Green communities Chair
and former Chair of the Parks Committee*

By Susan Colgan

When Yoga class met at the end of January in the Town Hall, the pounding on the roof was hard to ignore. Ladders were propped against the building's east wall: Insulation work in the building's ceilings was finally underway. Ultimately the effort will save the town money and the rooms will be warmer.

Dave Drugmand, chair of Washington's Finance Committee for just over a year, and committee member for the past five, explained that the long-awaited work was being paid for by funds "cobbled together" by the Finance Committee, the Town Administrator and the Select Board: \$40,000 appropriated at the May 2022 town meeting for FY '23 and unspent until now, \$5000 from a grant Town Administrator Sean Curran raised from the Massachusetts Insurance Association, \$2000 from the American Rescue Plan Act, and \$2500 from the FY '24 Town Hall Repair account.

This of course is just a sample of the Finance Committee's responsibilities. "Work is now coming together for this year's Town Budget," Dave explains, "Department heads have been shown what was spent in 2023 and asked how much is requested for fiscal '24; spread sheets are getting filled in."

Dave took over the chairmanship of the Finance Committee from Sean Connors who retired in June 2022 after nearly 30 years on the committee. "I am learning a lot about municipal finance," Dave says. "It's a real balancing act to keep property taxes low. There's always upward pressure. Things cost more, so keeping the burden low for taxpayers and still providing services; it's a tricky thing."

His work with the Finance Committee is not the only job Dave fills for the town. Since 2019 he has served as chairman of the Town's Green Communities Committee. In 2019, then Select Board chair Jim Huber tapped Dave for the job of reworking and resubmitting a second grant application to DOER, Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources., after the first one failed. It required identifying the work that could be done in the town municipal buildings to save energy and money, finding contractors to give estimates to cover the work and then filling out the forms for the state to justify the sum. The goal is to reduce energy use in town buildings and vehicles by 20 percent.

The eventual acceptance of the application Dave and his committee put together resulted in Washington being designated a Green Community; that allows the town to apply for Green Community grants totaling \$126,500. With the help and expertise provided by Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, the Town's application for initial grant funding will be submitted "any day now" according to Dave. With approval, the funds will cover work on energy efficient heating and cooling, and insulation for the Town Hall. The Energy Reduction Plan for the Town of Washington was adopted by the Select Board on July 18, 2022, and is available for perusal on the Town Website.

For many long time residents, Dave, at six-feet-plus with a grey pony tail and blue eyes, is a familiar towering figure with a quiet manner that belies his achievements. In 1979, Dave came to the town to visit his college roommate, Dom Sacco. He was planning a week's vacation after being out west, in Texas and Colorado— an interlude before heading to grad school at U Mass. It was New Years Day 1979. Dom had just finished the Barn renovation at Bucksteep, creating a place for drinks, music and dancing. The opening had taken place on New Years Eve—the night before. Outside, cross country ski trails beckoned. Dave never left.

Dave remembers the early '80s as “big community years.” Initially, work began on the Town Park. It had been an old junk yard acquired by the town. “We had many work parties cleaning up the site. Sybille Baier, a former resident, was the driving force with the vision for the design. She contributed funds and Heartwood Building School built the Gazebo, now a meeting place for musicians on summer afternoons.

Dave met his wife Tricia Drugmand (who more recently served two terms on the Select Board) when they both worked at Bucksteep. The cross country ski rental shop, the maintenance of the extensive grounds, the restaurant in the house serving lunch and dinner and festivities in the barn kept everyone busy. Dave and Tricia also kept a team of horses that would take visitors on haywagon rides in October Mountain State Forest!

But when they were expecting a child and needed more space than their apartment at Bucksteep provided, the Drugmands bought the house at the top of the hill on Washington Mountain Road, a place, Dave says, Tricia had always admired. The horses boarded at first in the barn behind what is now Kent and Carol Lew’s home and would graze in the State Forest meadow. Dave’s construction business, Artisan Kitchen & Bath, grew and Tricia’s property management business, Second Home Solutions, flourished.

Thinking back, Dave remembers, as others in town do: “There was Bucksteep, the Vagabond, Woody’s...People used to come here to listen to music and dance. On weekends the population in Washington would double!” Perhaps our summer “Concerts in the Park”—at a place Dave helped create—is a step toward bringing even more music and community back to our town.

Might You Want To Be On The Finance Committee?

By Carol Lew

Elections are coming up. Interested parties who want to run for town positions must take out nomination papers (Town Clerk Allison has them). You’d need to collect 20 signatures from town residents that are registered to vote and return the completed nomination papers to the Town Clerk by Friday, March 29.

Last month’s Tracks listed the six open positions, but let’s talk about one of them here. A two year unexpired term on the Finance Committee is vacant, and as of this writing, no one has taken out nomination papers for it.

Meg Megas, a member of the committee says this about the committee’s work; “You don’t have to have strong finance background. There’s training available, and a new member can learn from people on the committee. We think it works well to have people with a variety of perspectives in the group. It’s an important committee, especially this time of the year, budget season, when the work is more involved.”

Committee Chair Drugmund agrees with Meg’s assessment and adds: “It requires common sense and the desire to help the town contend with our economic realities. The commitment requires attending one committee meeting a month except during budget season (March and April) when we meet biweekly. There are occasionally other meetings with the Select Board throughout the year also.”

Climate Adaptation Projects Listening Night, Tuesday, March 19

Over the years, Washington residents have faced the trials of severe storms, flooding, and the challenges of winter's snow and ice. In response to these persistent issues, the Town of Washington secured planning funds under the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) program. These funds aim to develop projects that directly address concerns outlined in the town's hazard mitigation plan, specifically focusing on mitigating and adapting to excessive flooding, threats to public safety from fallen trees, and extreme cold and heat events.

The Committee is delighted to invite residents to participate in this planning effort. Mark your calendars for the Community Listening Night on **March 19th, from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm at the Town Hall**. Enjoy a complimentary dinner while the Committee presents three proposed Climate Adaptation projects. It's a unique opportunity to share your thoughts, provide valuable input, and get answers to any questions you may have.

To attend the Community Listening Night, please R.S.V.P by March 9th at <https://bit.ly/washingtonevent>. You can also R.S.V.P. by calling or emailing Britney Danials of Berkshire Regional Planning Commission at bdanials@berkshireplanning.org or (413) 442-1521 ext. 12.

To add your voice, a survey is available, allowing you to learn more about the projects and share your concerns or interests. Your feedback is vital in shaping these initiatives to address community concerns effectively. Please consider reviewing and completing a brief online survey at <https://bit.ly/wasmvpsurvey>. Paper surveys are also available at the Town Hall and the Becket Athenaeum.



MARCH



Becket Arts Center Events

becketartscenter.org/events

Move	Fridays, March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 12pm- Diane Firtell leads Nia Somatic Movement for all abilities. March 1 class is FREE. \$15 (\$10 for BAC members) Class is cancelled if CBRSD is closed.
Yoga	Thursdays, March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, 9:30am- Rima Sala leads yoga for all abilities. \$10 (\$5 for BAC members) Class cancelled if CBRSD is closed.
Craft	Saturday, March 9, 12-2pm- Decorate your own mask. Join us for a free open workshop and decorate your masquerade mask. Materials provided, but feel free to bring your own.
Stories	Friday, March 15, 7pm - "Beware the Ides of March" - Community Storytelling. Have you got a story about being FRIGHTENED... or better yet... a story when you confronted one of your biggest fears? Share your fear and your courage... TELL it. Free.
Music	Saturday, March 23, 4pm - Join Johnny Irion for a songwriting workshop. \$25 per person. Free for students 14-18.
Learn	Saturday, March 23, 7pm - Music is My Story with Johnny Irion. Enjoy an evening of music in the upstairs gallery. (\$10 suggested donation to BAC).
Support	Friday, March 29 (SnowDate: March 30), 7pm - Coffee Bag Art Fundraiser & Masquerade Ball. Come see the coffee bag creations and purchase a raffle ticket. Wear your mask and dance in the gallery. \$25 per person (\$20 for members)..



Purchase your tickets for the coffee bag art creations & dance to some fun tunes!

COFFEE BAG ART & MASQUERADE BALL

UPSTAIRS GALLERY
BECKET ARTS CENTER, 7 BROOKER HILL RD., BECKET
MARCH 29, 2024 | 7 PM



\$25 per person/\$20 for BAC Members
All Proceeds Fund Free Art Programming for Kids at BAC



Coffee Bag Art is Due 3/24/24

becketartscenter.org/coffee-bag-fundraiser



Upcoming Events at the Becket Athenaeum
3367 Main St, Becket BecketAthenaeum.org



- **Library Storytime**
Saturdays, March 2, 16, 23, 30
10:30-11:30am
- **Movie Night for Adults**
Saturday, March 2
6:30-9:30pm, movie starts at 7pm
- **Book Club: The Giver of Stars** by Jojo Moyes
Tuesday, March 5
1:30pm
- **Creative Movement & Storytime with Laurel Lenski**
Saturday, March 9
10:30-11:30am
- **Cookbook Club: Smitten Kitchen Every Day** by Deb Perelman
Monday, March 11
6pm
- **Game Night**
Thursday, March 21
6-8pm
- **Virtual Programs**
Topics include History, Job Hunting Success, Armchair Travel, Healthy Living, and more!
Throughout March
Full details at BecketAthenaeum.org/events



Events for the Yoked Parish of Becket for 2024

March
Friday, Mar 1: Free Pasta Dinner / Becket Federated Church / 5-7pm
Saturday, Mar 2: Food Pantry / Becket Federated Church / 9-11am
Saturday, Mar 16: Food Pantry / Becket Federated Church / 9-11am
Saturday, Mar 30: Breakfast / Becket Federated Church / 8-10:30am / \$8
Sunday, Mar 31: Free Easter Dinner / Becket Federated Church / 1:30-3:30pm
April
Friday, Apr 5: Free Pasta Dinner / Becket Federated Church / 5-7pm
Saturday, Apr 6: Food Pantry / Becket Federated Church / 9-11am
Saturday, Apr 20: Food Pantry / Becket Federated Church / 9-11am
Saturday, Apr 27: Breakfast / Becket Federated Church / 8-10:30am / \$8



Washington Tracks
Town Hall
8 Summit Hill Rd.
Washington, MA 01223

Presorted Standard
US Postage
PAID
Permit 121
Pittsfield MA

www.washington-ma.gov

Support Our Local Businesses

John Fish Piano Service

413-281-6130
johnfishpiano.com
Piano tuning, repair & restoration; 20
years experience

Hilltowns Veterinary Clinic

Dr. Sharon Lynch, MVB
133 South Washington State Rd
Washington, MA 01223
413.623.5329
www.hilltownsvetclinic.com

Lisa M. Peltier, Realtor

Cell: 413-822-1257
Licensed in MA
Roberts & Associates Realty, Inc
48 Housatonic St., Box 25
Lenox, MA 01240
(413) 637-4200
e-fax: (413) 410-2205
www.berkshirehouses.com

Horace Mann Insurance Agency

PO Box 772 Becket Ma. 01223
Phone 413.623.2112
Fax 413.623.5551
Provide all Personal Lines of Insurance
Provide Financial and retirement products too

Pinnacle Painting Company

578 South Washington State Rd
Washington, MA 01223
413.623.8737
Over 35 years experience Painting, wall
covering & light carpentry

Mark F. Roos, Broker Associate ABR

The Kinderhook Group
413.822.6143
markfr909@gmail.com
Helping buyers and sellers achieve their
dreams

Summit Hill Campground

34 Old Middlefield Rd.
Washington, Ma. 01223
413.623.5761
Great Family Camping
Tents, R.V.s Motor Homes
Full Hook Ups
Pet Friendly
Seasonals Welcomed
Events scheduled May through Sept

Tom's Digitizing Service

753 Upper Valley Rd.
Washington, MA 01223
413-441-0784
thomassadin@gmail.com
I will convert your old 8mm movies, VHS
tapes and video cassette tapes to DVDs.
Call or email for pricing.

Email your TRACKS info by the **25th of the month** to get in to next month's
issue to Lisa at: mrsabeski@mac.com
Please put TRACKS in the subject line.