

SPENCER NEW LEADER

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Free by request to residents of

East Brookfield, West Brookfield, North Brookfield, Brookfield, Leicester and Spencer

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Friday, December 6, 2024

NBCFC works to address local food insecurity

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

NORTH BROOKFIELD — With help from volunteers and a generous business supporter, the North Brookfield Community Food Collaborative (NBCFC) continues to assist residents dealing with food insecurity.

A week before Thanksgiving, C&S Wholesale Grocers, of Westfield, donated 160 turkeys with fixings. Representatives of the business visited North Brookfield on Nov. 20 to help NBCFC members distribute the meals.

"It was an amazing day. We have been blessed to be able to meet so many amazing people along our journey to put an end to food insecurity in our town," said NBCFC board member Karen Farrington.

Operating under the umbrella of the Coalition for a Healthy North Brookfield, the NBCFC was established to support local food pantries and help combat food insecurity.

"We started with sending out a survey to see what the needs were, and it took off from there," Farrington said.

After its launch in July of this year, the organization worked closely with the school department and received approval to move its food hub to the



Courtesy

A new organization in North Brookfield is partnering with local volunteers and businesses to combat food insecurity.

high school. This created more space for non-perishables, and program leaders quickly expanded their services to assist even more residents in need.

"As surveys were coming back, we saw that there was a need to somehow provide already made meals for our seniors, which is when

we partnered with local restaurants and were able to secure enough meals that we could provide these weekly," Farrington said.

As the number of people seeking assistance grew, the NBCFC partnered with C&S Wholesale Grocers, which has donated two pallets of frozen food weekly.

Also partnering with local farms that donated fresh vegetables weekly, the organization has been able to keep costs low while helping more community members.

"We operate in a unique way. Tuesdays are fresh produce, which is set up in the two senior housing complexes' community rooms. On Wednesdays,

we pass out approximately 70 meals to our seniors in town, and on Thursdays we unload the frozen food at the high school, where the students help with the stocking of a freezer that a member of the community donated," Farrington said.

Students also help break down all the boxes.

North Brookfield residents then line up behind the school to get a bag of frozen food and nonperishables.

"North Brookfield Public Schools has partnered with the NB Food Collaborative to strengthen our community's fight against hunger and improve food security," said Superintendent Tim McCormick. "Through this collaboration and with the leadership of Karen, NBHS has opened its food pantry as a shared space to support these efforts. Additionally, a freezer has been installed to facilitate weekly food deliveries, ensuring resources are consistently available for families in need."

Moreover, NBCFC members deliver food to over 30 families that are unable to visit the school. "We have partnered with Wellstorm (food pantry) of Southbridge and share the wealth with them," Farrington said. "We are always in need of monetary donations to continue with our mission."

If you would like to support the mission of combating hunger this holiday season, checks can be made out to: Coalition for a Healthy North Brookfield, PO Box 98, North Brookfield, MA 01535.

Holiday events planned in Leicester

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

LEICESTER — Local residents and families are invited to enjoy several holiday festivities this year, including traditional favorites and an exciting lineup of new programs.

"One of the new holiday events is already underway," read a statement released by community leaders and organizers. "The Leicester Parks and Recreation Committee wanted to transform the Leicester Common into a festive wonderland with the first annual Christmas Tree Decorating Contest. They invited townspeople to use their creativity and

festive flair to make this event special. The family or business with the winning tree will take home a prize. It's a wonderful way for everyone to get into the holiday spirit."

Guests of all ages will enjoy a packed day of family fun on Dec. 7, starting with the 20th annual holiday season craft fair hosted by the Leicester High School Music Department. This year, the fair will be held at Leicester Middle School from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

"It is a great opportunity to purchase Christmas gifts, take chances on raffles, enjoy some delicious treats, and take a photo with Santa Claus," the

promotional statement read.

After the fair, the fun will continue at 4 p.m. when the Leicester Tree Lighting Committee hosts several activities. Cornerstone Bank will offer crafts and face painting at Town Hall, and the annual Elf Hunt will take place outside on the Town Common.

Meanwhile, the Leicester High School Chorus will perform holiday tunes.

"Since this event happens at dinner time, families can enjoy pizza donated by the Leicester Community Access Channel (LCAC) and cookies from the Leicester Police Alliance," the informational statement read. "Anyone in attendance will have the oppor-

tunity to vote for the best tree in the tree decorating contest."

At 6 p.m., the event will culminate with Leicester's annual tree lighting ceremony.

For guests wishing to step inside to warm up, the Swan Tavern Leicester Historical Museum will be open from 4-8 p.m. Guests can enjoy cookies, baked goods, punch, and hot chocolate.

If you aren't able to watch the LHS Chorus at the tree lighting event, the group will also perform at Swan Tavern.

The following day, Dec. 8, Care Leicester will bring more holiday cheer to town by hosting "An Afternoon of Holiday Harmony."

Turn To **LEICESTER** page **A14**

Quaboag School Committee rejects regionalization proposal

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION — A rejection from the Quaboag Regional School Committee marks the end of the line for a proposed regionalization between North Brookfield Public Schools and the QRSD.

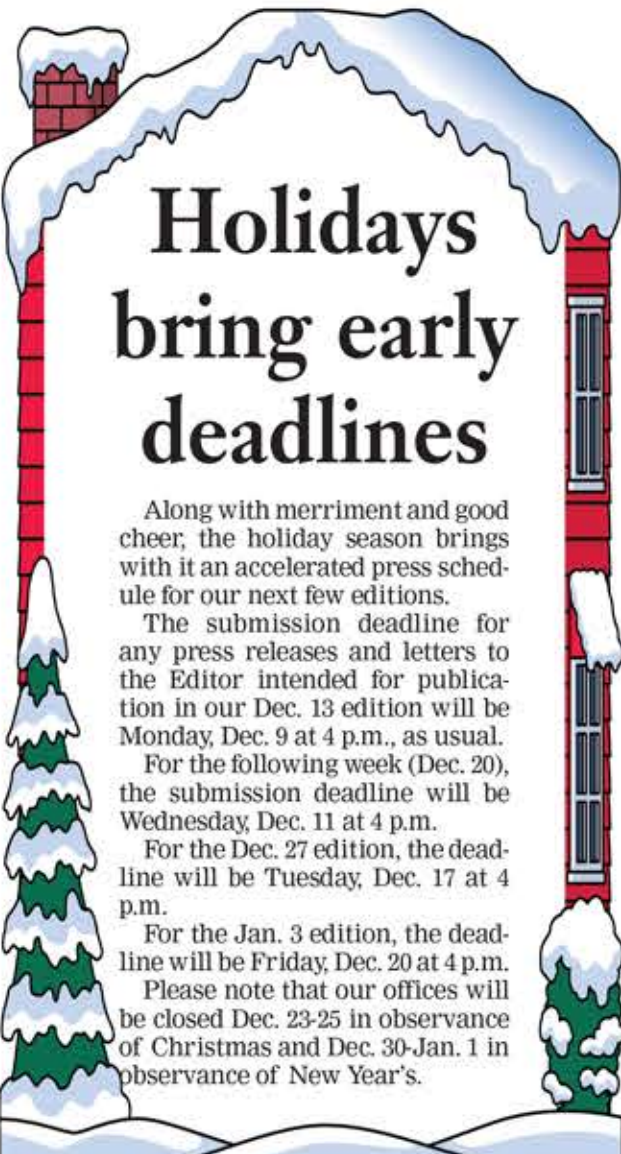
At the Nov. 18 School Committee meeting, a motion was made to reject the proposed regionalization. Six QRSC members voted in favor of the motion, with three members opposed and two abstentions.

In order to have moved forward, the proposal required approval from both the QRSC and the North Brookfield School Committee.

"The view was that it was financially inconclusive as [to] if it would benefit the current Quaboag District," said QRSC Chairman Andrew Schwenker.

The QRSD currently serves students in Warren and

Turn To **QUABOAG** page **A14**



Holidays bring early deadlines

Along with merriment and good cheer, the holiday season brings with it an accelerated press schedule for our next few editions.

The submission deadline for any press releases and letters to the Editor intended for publication in our Dec. 13 edition will be Monday, Dec. 9 at 4 p.m., as usual.

For the following week (Dec. 20), the submission deadline will be Wednesday, Dec. 11 at 4 p.m.

For the Dec. 27 edition, the deadline will be Tuesday, Dec. 17 at 4 p.m.

For the Jan. 3 edition, the deadline will be Friday, Dec. 20 at 4 p.m.

Please note that our offices will be closed Dec. 23-25 in observance of Christmas and Dec. 30-Jan. 1 in observance of New Year's.

Luminary event returns to Brookfield Common Christmas Eve

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

BROOKFIELD — Thanks to the hard work of several volunteers, the Town Common will once again be transformed into a luminous wonderland this Christmas Eve.

As part of the popular annual tradition, members of the Brookfield Luminaries Committee will place 1,700 luminaries around the Common. Additional installations will be featured on Lincoln Street, down Route 9, and partway down Route 148 (as far as Lewis Field).

"Since 2002, the town of Brookfield has lit up the night on Christmas Eve with the beautiful tradition of luminaries lining the Town Common and Route 9, and this year is no exception," read a statement released by



Courtesy

Turn To **LUMINARY** page **A14**

A beloved Brookfield tradition will once again light up the night on Christmas Eve.

Bay Path Academy Director attends 60th Anniversary Civil Rights Celebration

Courtesy
Joseph and Gretheline Bolandrina at The Embrace Boston.

BOSTON — Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSNEd, RN, CRRN of Athol (formerly of Dudley and Douglas), Academy Director at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy in Charlton, was joined by her husband, Joseph Bolandrina, at the “We Still CARE- 60th Anniversary Civil Rights Celebration at the Embrace Monument, Boston Common. The mission of the

Embrace Boston is “to dismantle structural racism through our work at the intersection of arts and culture, community, and research and policy” and the vision is “a radically inclusive and equitable Boston where everyone belongs and Black people prosper; grounded in joy, love, and well-being.” <https://www.embrace-boston.org/>

At the 60th Anniversary Civil Rights Celebration members of the academic community came together to honor

the legacy of the Civil Rights Movement and celebrate the progress made. The in-person event featured inspiring speakers, live music, and community activities such as mural painting. Attendees brought pairs of slightly used shoes for the symbolic Civil Rights march. The event allowed for opportunity to reflect on history and continue the fight for equality and justice.

The Coalition for Anti-Racism and Equity (CARE) hosted the 60th Anniversary Civil Rights Celebration.

According to Bolandrina, “It was inspiring and an honor to attend and reflect.”

It is worth acknowledging the work that still lies ahead.

She adds, “I am grateful to have met State Representative Tara Hong and Jasmin Rivas, CARE Program Director in person. She invited us to CARE.”

CARE - the Coalition for Anti-racism and Equity is a 501(c)(3) state member-driven nonprofit in the state of Massachusetts <https://www.care4equity.org/>. CARE is committed to fostering social justice and equity in education. CARE works to empower students, educators, and communities by advocating for systemic change, promoting diversity, and creating opportunities for underrepresented voices to lead and thrive. CARE supports “educators of all forms—teachers, guidance counselors, and administrators—in uniting across the commonwealth to share experiences that will inform the legislative process around anti-racism in the education system.” CARE values



the voice of education professionals and believes engaging in statewide conversations are vital in decision-making.

Massachusetts State Representative Tara Thorn Hong of the 18th Middlesex District who spoke at the event shared that he is “grateful for

the uplifting speakers especially from all of the young people that are part of team who put all of this together!”

He added, “Let us keep the work going to build better and safer future for all!”

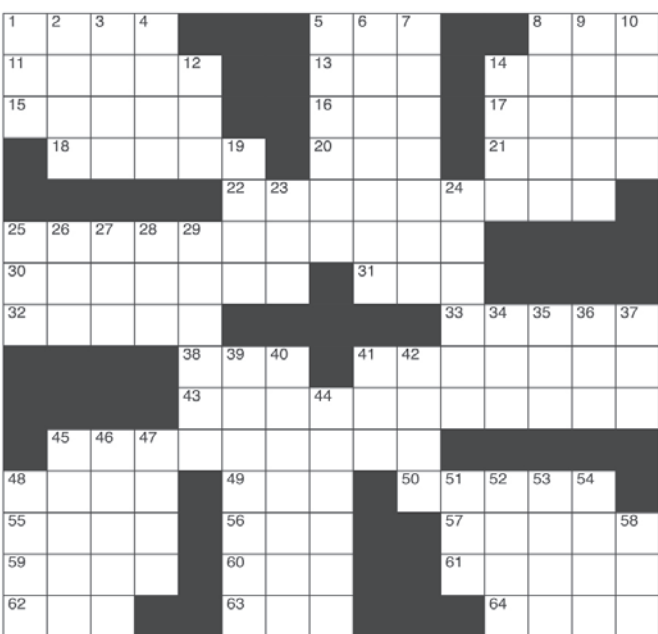
Clarification

It has been brought to our attention that there were two local veterans’ groups that should have been credited with organizing this year’s Veterans Day ceremony, which was recapped in last week’s edition, Cherry Valley American Legion Post 443 and Rochdale VFW Post 7556. Leicester Selectmen Dianna Provencher and Doug Belanger were also on hand for the ceremony.

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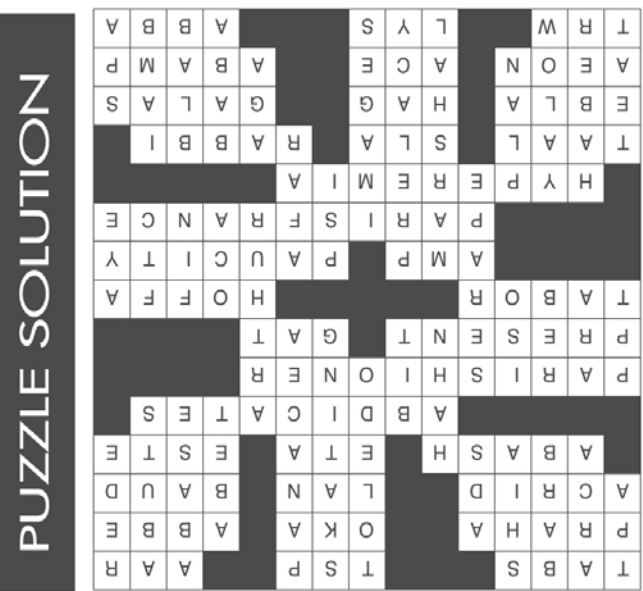


CLUES ACROSS

- Bar bills
- Recipe measurement (abbr.)
- Swiss river
- Czech Republic capital
- “Officially known as”
- A French abbot
- Having a strong sharp smell or taste
- Local area network
- Data transmission speed measure
- Embarrass
- When you hope to get there
- This (Spanish)
- Gives up
- Churchgoer
- Current
- Slang for gun
- Small drum
- Vanished union bigwig
- Rocker’s tool of the trade
- Dearth
- 2024 Olympics host
- Excess blood in the vessels
- Afrikaans
- Agreement between provider and customer
- Spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation
- Ancient Syrian city
- Witch
- Celebrations
- Long period of time
- A team’s best pitcher
- Current unit
- One-time aerospace company
- French/Belgian river
- Swedish rock group

CLUES DOWN

- Yearly tonnage (abbr.)
- Genus of clams
- Remark
- Actor LaBeouf
- Ohio town
- Olympic sport
- Cure
- Behave in a way that belittles
- Shares a boundary with
- Give advice
- Promotional materials
- Assist or encourage, usually in some wrongdoing
- “Agatha All Along” actress Kathryn
- Small piece
- King of Camelot
- Parts per thousand (abbr.)
- Small Milky Way constellation
- One who challenges authority (abbr.)
- Equal (prefix)
- Shawl
- S. American wood sorrel relative
- The end
- Supervises interstate commerce
- Yes vote
- Officer of high rank
- Church office
- Tire pressure measurement
- From a distance
- Photographs
- Industrial process
- Nobel Prize-winning physicist
- Map out
- Mammary gland part of female mammal
- Honorable title (Turkish)
- Spongelike cake leavened with yeast
- Speak incessantly
- Poetry term
- Relaxing space



Donations as of 12/2/2024

11/23/2024	In memory of Uncle Eddie	\$100.00
11/23/2024	Jihn & Mary Hurley	\$75.00
11/23/2024	Carol & Robert Banks	\$25.00
11/24/2024	In memory of Eddie Beauchamp	\$25.00
11/24/2024	In memory of Eddie Beauchamp	\$30.00
11/25/2024	In memory of Eddie Beauchamp	\$30.00
11/25/2024	Glen Stevens	\$100.00
11/25/2024	The Cole Victor Memorial Foundation	\$500.00
11/26/2024	Lawrence & Sylvia Little	\$50.00
11/27/2024	Guaranty Glass & Mirror	\$1,000.00
11/28/2024	memory of Eddie Beauchamp	\$100.00
11/28/2024	Joseph Charpentier	\$100.00
11/28/2024	Campus Services, Inc.	\$100.00
11/28/2024	Robert & Deborah McNamara	\$50.00
11/29/2024	Valerie Morin	\$100.00
11/29/2024	Robert & Donna Anderson Jr.	\$100.00
11/29/2024	Stanley & Mary Kulesza	\$100.00
11/30/2024	Knights of Columbus	\$500.00
11/30/2024	Paradigm Home Energy Audits/Richard Barrel	\$200.00
11/30/2024	Steven & Carol Crozier	\$50.00

Monetary Donations may be sent to: Spencer Toys for Kids, P.O. Box 186, Spencer, MA 01562.

New, unwrapped toys can be dropped off at: Spencer Fire Dept, Cornerstone Bank (Spencer office), ERA Key Realty Services (415B Main St). If you would like to sponsor a child, please contact Donna at donnaflannery@erakey.net or call 508-885-6336. If you are in need of assistance, applications can be picked up at: Spencer Post Office, Mary Queen of the Rosary Food Pantry, Town clerk’s office in the town hall, or ERA Key Realty Services (outside mailbox). You can see updates on Facebook at Spencer Toys for Kids.



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TO SUBMIT A LETTER

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SPENCER ALMANAC

REAL ESTATE

BROOKFIELD

\$536,500, 133 Rice Corner Rd, Knox, Andrea L, to Starratt, Brian E, and Starratt, Charlene M.
 \$372,500, 13 Maple St, Brookmaple LLC, to Tasse Properties LLC.

EAST BROOKFIELD

None

LEICESTER

\$700,000, 11 Mayflower Cir, Bonner, Derek J, to Cook, Courtney, and Cook, David.

\$650,000, 1606 Main St, Carey, Phyllis A, to Salvation, Army.
 \$650,000, 1666 Main St, Carey, Phyllis A, to Salvation, Army.

\$572,000, 835 Pleasant St, Galilee Rt, and Wambolt, Cody D, to Hernandez, Mauricio A, and Martinez, Karla J.

\$468,000, 60 Pine Ave, Mark S Wood RET, and Wood, Mark S, to Opendoor Property J LLC.

\$430,000, 257 Pine St, Property Inv Soln LLC, to Marfurte, Eduardo S, and Pardinho, Izabella F.

\$350,000, 1117 Main St, Wells, Timothy D, and Wells, Denise J, to Recalde Jr, George R, and Recalde, Ruth A.

NORTH BROOKFIELD

\$730,000, 7 Brickyard Rd, Lashaway Homes LLC, to Masse Lt, and Masse, Paulette.

\$535,000, 57 Old East Brookfield Rd, Shipman, Peter F, to Witz, Christine G, and Levasseur, Ethan A.

\$50,000, 165 Summer St, Papierski, Ronald P, and Papierski, Sandra M, to Sheen, Lynda E.

SPENCER

\$538,750, 57 Chestnut St, Parker, William R, to Nogueira, Norberto, and Grecchi, Greta F.

\$330,000, 9 Donnelly Rd, Garcia, Rudy A, to Seward, Michelle, and Burke, Connor.

WARREN

\$60,000, 2172 Main St, Mendez, Lori A, to M & Z Rt, and Martin, Zachary.

WEST BROOKFIELD

None



Bay Path Nursing students show gratitude

CHARLTON—General education focuses on academic success measures such as grade point average and graduation rates. For nursing education this includes licensure examination first time pass rate. Indeed, these outcomes are important, but they are the traditional measures of success. The outcomes fail to capture the complexities of nursing student success, the integration of psychological and cognitive aspects of the learning experience, the nursing students' grit and grace, the tenacity of spirit, the joys, appreciation, and gratitude.

As nursing students, it is nice to show appreciation and gratitude towards the faculty and staff who supports and guides your training and education. Eight members of the Practical Nursing Class of 2025 did just that. Not with a simple thank you note,

but with an impromptu and yet thoughtful way to express their appreciation for the faculty and staff's hard work and dedication, a group photo holding signs that reads, "Thank you for all that you do!"

Collectively known as "Team Webster," the eight nursing students are Elizabeth Achayo of Worcester, Cynthia Agyeman of Worcester, Celestine Akagbo of Worcester, Rachel Anane of Worcester, Tamara Lidonde of Spencer, Ashley Rincon of Southbridge, Giselle Rosario of Southbridge, and Katelyn Smith of Charlton. All are under the leadership and guidance of Dr. Adelina Healy of Dudley and attend their fundamentals of practical nursing clinical rotation at the Webster Manor Rehabilitation & Health Care Center <https://webstermanorrehab.com/> in Webster. The Webster

Manor offers skilled nursing and rehabilitative care. They are devoted to providing residents with quality care with an individualized touch, designed to improve residents' quality of life. As part of Athena Health Care Systems' continuum of care, residents can "age in place" knowing that they do not have to move as their care needs change.

According to Dr. Healy, Team Webster is great, "they are all attentive, they enjoy clinicals, and I love them all." Dr. Healy joined Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy as adjunct faculty in 2017. She positively praised the education and training the nursing students received. "As faculty, I see firsthand how the staff and faculty interacted with nursing students and the true concern for their success," she said. Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy has

a small clinical faculty to student ratio of 1:8, less than the maximum ratio established by the Board of Registration in Nursing of 1:10.

Both faculty and staff at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy create a positive learning experience and help in understanding how theory related directly to patient care at specially selected clinical sites such as the Webster Manor. Hands on education and the ability to practice in a safe learning environment allows students to become confident. With only three weeks remaining before the end of Term one and progression to Term two, Team Webster is mastering their clinical skills. As the demand for qualified nurses increases, their training, education, preparation, expression of appreciation and gratitude is surely leading them to a great path to success.



White Christmas brings holiday season to West Brookfield

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

WEST BROOKFIELD—Guests are invited to experience a holiday tradition unlike any other, as the 32nd annual White Christmas in West Brookfield program brings community members together in celebration of the season.

This year's event is set for Sunday, Dec. 8, from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Thousands of guests from throughout the area are expected to take part in the celebration, with special activities planned for families and guests of all ages.

One of the major pro-

grams is a craft and vendor fair at West Brookfield Elementary School (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.). Come to WBES and do some Christmas shopping while supporting local crafters.

Pictures with Santa will be available from 10 a.m. to noon in the Great Hall. Meanwhile, the Senior Center will host gingerbread decorating activities from noon to 3 p.m.

The event will return its always popular elf hunt at several venues. Additionally, open houses will be set up at multiple businesses, town departments, churches, and

other locations across the center of town. These include the library and WBES.

On the Common, guests will once again find an array of outdoor activities. These include horse and carriage rides; ice carving demonstrations; cocoa with the Boy Scouts; and strolling with Frosty.

Several food trucks will be available, in addition to volunteers providing refreshments and entertainment at town departments and local churches.

The event will culminate with a tree lighting on the Common at 5:45

p.m. Later, don't miss a 6:15 p.m. concert featuring a concert band delivering your favorite Christmas songs.

For those seeking to give back and help brighten the holiday season for local youngsters, the WB Rescue Squad will host a toy collection program.

Shuttle services will also be available at the event.

This year's White Christmas program is dedicated to Bill Jenkins. Community leaders thank him for decades of service to multiple groups

and organizations, including the Volunteer Rescue Squad, Quaboag Historical Society, the Rotary Club, the Lake Wickaboag Boat Club, the School Committee, and Little League baseball.

"Bill is 100 percent West Brookfield," read a statement featured in the event guide booklet. "Whether it's having breakfast with his buddies, chatting with friends as he makes his daily run to get the mail, or visiting with others as he sits on his porch, Bill truly loves the town of West Brookfield and its

history, but most of all, he loves its people."

Special thanks are offered to members of the White Christmas in West Brookfield Committee for their hard work in putting the program together.

"Additional thanks to Jimmy Rust for making sure our beautiful tree always shines brightly," the promotional statement read.

To learn more about activities, locations, and times related to the event, visit www.wbrookfield.com.

Country Bank partners with Wonderfund with \$10,000 donation during Season of Difference campaign

REGION—Country Bank, a full-service financial institution serving Central and Western Massachusetts, partnered with the Wonderfund of Massachusetts, with a \$10,000 donation. This collaboration will make a difference in the lives of kids and teens served by the Department of Children and Families (DCF), allowing them to experience the magic of childhood during the holiday season. The Wonderfund, an extraordinary group of people on a mission, is dedicated to bringing the joy and meaning of childhood to children who have been impacted by trauma, abuse, and neglect.

You, too, can be a part of this magical initiative. Join the Wonderfund and Country Bank in making this holiday season special for kids in foster care by donating a new, unwrapped gift at any of its banking centers until Dec. 14. Your contribution, no matter how small, will make a difference. Country Bank's team will shop for gifts to join in the efforts, and donations will be delivered to DCF Offices in Springfield and Worcester to be distributed throughout western and central Massachusetts.

"We are excited to partner with the Wonderfund again this year and the opportunity for our team and the communities we serve help us make a difference for children by putting a smile on so many faces this holiday season," said Shelley Regin, Chief Marketing and Community Relations Officer at Country Bank. "Last year, we had such overwhelming support and collectively, we donated over a thousand toys to local DCF offices who shared with us, without your donations most children would have only received one toy."

If you're ready to help make some magic this holiday season, please visit <https://wonderfundma.org>. Your support is invaluable and will bring joy to children in foster care.

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Spencer police give back



SPENCER — The Spencer Police Officers Union recently announced the donation of more than 50 turkeys to the Mary Queen of the Rosary Food Pantry.

“At the heart of our department is the belief in community enhancement—building stronger connections with the people we serve,” read a statement released by the SPD. “This donation is just one example of the many ways we aim to give back and support our community.”

The donation represents the latest effort on a long list of SPD community building programs this year. Additional programs and initiatives include assisting local homeless populations and providing services to seniors and families.

“We are grateful for the opportunity to make a difference, and we hope these turkeys bring warmth and comfort to families in need,” the SPD statement read.

Courtesy

Members of the Spencer Police Department give back to the community.

A visit from Santa!

EAST BROOKFIELD — Santa will be paying a visit to the East Brookfield Public Library on his way to the North Pole on Thursday, Dec. 19 at 10:30 a.m. Please drop by and have a picture taken with your own camera. Well behaved pets are welcomed.

While you are visiting us, feel free to drop off any donations to our Mitten Tree or if you need, take from our Mitten Tree and food shelves.

Parade of Lights returns Dec. 14

SPENCER — Residents are invited to once again enjoy the magic of the holiday season at the annual Christmas Parade of Lights.

This year’s parade is set for Saturday, Dec. 14, at 7 p.m. The parade will start at David Prouty High School before running west down Main Street toward Old Main Street, con-

cluding at the Spencer Highway Barn.

“Please join us for a night of beautiful twinkling lights, wonderful lighted floats, and lighted fire trucks to celebrate this festive Christmas season,” read a statement released by event organizers.

If you would like to enter a float in the event, all required forms must

be filled out prior to the event and turned in at the parade lineup.

Forms and additional information can be obtained by visiting www.spencerma.gov.

To learn more about the parade, please send an email to: spenclights@gmail.com.

The snow date is Sunday, Dec. 15, at 7 p.m.

East Brookfield library collecting winter clothing

EAST BROOKFIELD — Once again, the East Brookfield Public Library will be collecting new mittens, hats, gloves and scarfs along with non-perishable food and personal items. Please bring in new unexpired items to the library during our regular hours. Personal items can include items such as shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, laundry detergent, toilet paper, diapers, wipes, deodorant, barrettes, hair ties, socks, reusable plastic containers for food, aluminum foil, plastic wrap, trash bags, dish soap, and more.

The collected items will be distributed to local families and individuals in need.

And as a reminder, the story time friends would like you to come on in and purchase your “stuff your own bear/animal.” The kit includes stuffing, animal skin and house for \$12. A portion of the proceeds will go to our playground fund. Cash or check only.

Notable events that occurred on December 25

December 25 is Christmas Day, when billions of Christians across the globe celebrate

the birth of Jesus Christ. Though Christmas is likely the first thing people think of when December

Constantine elevates his youngest son, Constans, to the rank of Caesar. This designation establishes Constans as Constantine’s heir apparent.

- 1000: Hungary is established as a Christian kingdom by Stephen I of Hungary.

- 1046: Pope Clement crowns Henry III of Germany as Holy Roman Emperor. This decision on the part of Pope Clement frees the Vatican from dependence on the Roman nobility and lays the foundation for its authority across the empire.

- 1261: Eleven-year-old John IV Doukas Laskaris, who would be the last emperor from the prom-

inent Laskarid dynasty that ruled the Empire of Nicaea, is intentionally blinded on the orders of Michael VIII, making John IV ineligible for the throne.

- 1492: The merchant ship Santa Maria, commanded by Christopher Columbus, runs onto a reef off the coast of Haiti.

- 1758: German astronomer Johann Georg Palitzsch sights Halley’s Comet, which confirms Edmund Halley’s prediction of the comet’s passage. The sighting marks the first passage of a comet that was predicted ahead of time.

- 1776: George Washington and the Continental Army cross the Delaware River at night. The crossing enables the army’s attack on Hessian forces serving Great Britain in Trenton, New Jersey, the following day.

- 1809: American physician and pioneering surgeon Ephraim McDowell performs the first surgical removal of an ovary or ovaries. McDowell performed the surgery at his home in Danville, Kentucky, removing a 22.5-pound tumor without the use of anesthesia. McDowell’s patient, Jane Todd Crawford, made an uncomplicated recovery and lived another 32 years.

- 1826: A drunken riot at the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York, concludes a day after it began. Known as the “eggnog riot,” the conflict began a day earlier and 70 cadets were implicated, with 20 of them being court-martialed. Jefferson Davis, future Confederate States President, was among the implicated cadets.

- 1831: One-fifth of Jamaica’s slaves mobilize in an ultimately unsuccessful fight for freedom. The Great Jamaican Slave Revolt lasts for 11 days and involves up to 60,000 enslaved individuals.

- 1868: United States President Andrew Johnson grants unconditional pardons to all Confederate veterans



the United States Military Academy in West Point, New York, concludes a day after it began. Known as the “eggnog riot,” the conflict began a day earlier and 70 cadets were implicated, with 20 of them being court-martialed. Jefferson Davis, future Confederate States President, was among the implicated cadets.

in the aftermath of the American Civil War.

- 1932: Nearly 300 people are killed when a magnitude 7.6 earthquake strikes Gansu, China.

- 1950: Scottish nationalist students take the Stone of Scone from Westminster Abbey. The coronation stone of British monarchs is eventually found in Scotland in April 1951.

- 1951: Harry T. Moore is killed instantly and his wife, Harriette, is fatally wounded when a bomb explodes at the home of the Civil Rights Movement leaders in Mims, Florida. No one was ever prosecuted for the bombing and murders.

- 1986: Sixty-three people are killed when the hijacked Iraqi Airways Flight 163 crashes in Arar, Saudi Arabia. Forty passengers aboard the plane survive the ordeal, and pro-Iranian group Islamic Jihad Organization claims responsibility for the hijacking.

- 1991: Mikhail Gorbachev resigns as President of the Soviet Union. The union itself is dissolved the following day.

- 1996: The body of six-year-old American child beauty queen JonBenét Ramsey is found in her family home in Boulder, Colorado. Her death is ruled a homicide and the case remains unsolved. TF24C508

SOCIAL MEDIA TEXT: Though Christmas is likely the first thing people think of when December 25 comes around, over the years many additional memorable and even infamous events unrelated to the holiday have taken place on this unique day on the calendar.

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Friday's Child

Hi! Our names are Jalen and Jaren and we want to be adopted together!

Jalen and Jaren are twin boys, they have similar interests, and they both enjoy moon sand and other sensory items. Jalen and Jaren love playing Temple Run and watching sports on their iPad. The twins also enjoy spending time outside and playing on the swings.

Jalen and Jaren are currently enrolled in a special school where they are doing well with the services and support put in place for their overall development. Their social worker stated that Jalen and Jalen can bond very well with staff and caretakers who have been consistent in their lives. They have great smiles and get along with people they encounter!

<https://adopt.mareinc.org/waiting-child-profiles#gallery/children/8657-8659>

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If you're at least 18 years old, have a stable source of income, and room in your heart, you may be a perfect match to adopt a waiting child. Adoptive parents can be single, married, or partnered; experienced or not; renters or homeowners; LGBTQ+ singles and couples. As an adoptive parent, you won't have to pay any fees, adoption from foster care is completely free in Massachusetts.

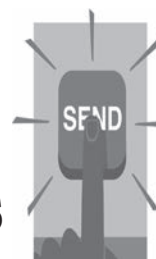
The process to adopt a child from foster care includes training, interviews, and home visits to determine if adoption is right for you. These steps will help match you with a child or sibling group that your family will fit well with.

To learn more about adoption from foster care visit www.mareinc.org. Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) can give you guidance and information on the adoption process. Reach out today to find out all the ways you can help children and teens in foster care.

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Repurposing Everyday Items

In today's economy it's important to get the most use out of the products you buy. Thanks to some creative repurposing, many ordinary items can do double duty all around the house. Read on for some unusual uses for everyday things.

And remember readers, send in your best tips and you'll be in the running to win Dinner for Two at the Publick House!

Bamboo Skewers: Not just for shish kabob or fruit arrangements, a package of inexpensive wooden skewers come in handy! Use them to test the doneness of cakes; to easily turn doughnuts and other foods when deep frying.

Insert wooden skewers into cake layers to invisibly stabilize a crooked confection. (Just be sure to remove them when cutting the cake!)

Wooden skewers are also in the workshop. To camouflage a narrow

nail hole, dip the end of a skewer in white glue, push it into the wall, break it off and paint over.

Aluminum Foil: Hate to iron? Here's a generations old tip that stands the test of time: Place a sheet of tinfoil under the ironing board cover (above the foam but below the cloth) to boost the heat of the iron and get the job done more efficiently and quickly!

Run out of steel wool pads? Crumple up a ball of tinfoil and use to clean non stick pans and even the barbecue grates, just toss when done - no mess! If you are struggling to move heavy furniture over a rug, place pieces of aluminum foil under the legs and it the furniture will glide much easier.

Vodka: Is your potpourri losing its scent? Toss in a capful of vodka and mix it up to renew fragrance in the dried

flower mix.

Want your fresh flowers to last a bit longer? Simply add a few drops of vodka along with a teaspoon of sugar to the water in the vase. The vodka kills bacteria, extending the life of the blooms.

And you can whip up an effective air freshener with vodka. To do: In a spray bottle, mix together six ounces water (distilled if possible), one ounce of vodka, and your choice of essential oil (about 20-30 drops). Shake up and spray!

Dental Floss: Hanging a picture and don't have any wire? Doubled up dental floss is strong enough to substitute on lightweight pictures.

Are photos stuck together? Instead of pulling apart, lessen the risk of damage by gently shimmying the floss between the photos to pry them off.

Swaging holiday greenery? Green mint dental



TAKE THE HINT
KAREN TRAINOR

floss serves as a strong (and invisible) tie to wind around garlands to hang down stairways or along a mantle.

And unflavored dental floss can also be used to truss a turkey.

Dental floss even works as a quick fix to restringing beaded jewelry.

Here are some additional multipurpose ideas:

Have extra roof shingles? Stow a few in your trunk during winter weather. If you get stuck, wedge the shingle under the tire for traction.

Need to clean a grout stain? Saturate a cotton ball in bleach and place it on the stain until it fades out.

Save plastic newspaper sleeves. The long bags protect shoes from other clothing when packing a suitcase.

Wet boots from winter weather? Stuff newspaper inside your shoes and they'll dry out faster.

Newspaper also works to prevent odors in thermos bottles between uses. Just pack crumpled newspaper into the bottle before closing to store.

Stuff Styrofoam packing peanuts into a bean bag chair to puff it back up without spending a dime!

Spray some no stick cooking spray on your snow shovel to help heavy, wet snow from sticking to it.

**

Win Dinner for Two at the Publick House

Your tips can win you a great dinner for two at the historic Publick House Historic Inn in Sturbridge! Simply send in a hint to be entered

into a random drawing. One winner per month will win a fabulous three course dinner for two at the renown restaurant, located on Route 131 across the town common in historic Sturbridge. Because I'm in the business of dispensing tips, not inventing them (although I can take credit for some), I'm counting on you readers out there to share your best helpful hints!

Do you have a helpful hint or handy tip that has worked for you? Do you have a question regarding household or garden matters? If so, why not share them with readers of Stonebridge Press newspapers? Send questions and/or hints to: Take the Hint!, C/o the Southbridge Evening News, PO Box 90; Southbridge, MA 01550. Or E-mail KDRR@aol.com. Hints are entered into a drawing for dinner for two at the historic Publick House Inn.

Selection and care of living holiday trees

Dress up a potted dwarf spruce, Norfolk Island pine, lemon cypress or topiary Rosemary or lavender plant for the holidays and enjoy its beauty all year. Add a bit of garland and a few small ornaments for a festive effect.



GARDEN MOMENTS
MELINDA MYERS

few inches are dry to the touch. Those who garden in zones seven to ten can move them into their landscape or add them to their outdoor containers after the danger of frost has passed. This dwarf variety can eventually reach six feet tall and three to four feet wide.

Enjoy the beauty, fragrance, and flavor of a topiary Rosemary tree. Grow it in a brightly lit location and water thoroughly when the top few inches of soil begin to dry. Regularly trim the branches to maintain the upright tree shape. Use clippings to season your favorite holiday dishes.

Consider growing a tree-shaped lavender plant this holiday season for its attractive foliage and calming fragrance. Grow your lavender in a south-facing or other sunny window. Find a cool spot in your home away from hot and cold air drafts. The cooler air helps increase your

indoor growing success. Water it thoroughly when the top inch of soil is dry to the touch. Pour off any excess water that collects in the saucer.

If you want a tree that can be moved outdoors into the landscape or a container in hardiness zones two to six, consider growing a tabletop dwarf Alberta spruce tree (*Picea glauca* 'Conica'). Grow it in a very cool bright location indoors. Water thoroughly as needed pouring off any excess water that collects in the saucer.

If the buds break and new growth appears, wait until the danger of frost has passed to move it outdoors. Just change out the seasonal decorations and enjoy it on Valentine's Day, Easter, and any spring holiday celebrations. Grow it outside in a sunny location protected from winter wind and sun to prevent the needles from drying. Watch for spider mites which are a common pest on this landscape plant.



Melinda Myers

Lemon cypress trees add interest and texture to this poinsettia display.

These plants also make great gifts for the holidays and for the host or hostess. You and your gift recipients will enjoy the beauty of these plants throughout the holidays and beyond.

Melinda Myers has written over 20 gardening books, including *Midwest Gardener's Handbook*, 2nd Edition and *Small Space*

Gardening. She hosts The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" instant video and DVD series and the nationally syndicated Melinda's Garden Moment radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine. Myers' Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

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FRANK G. CHILINSKI
PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

EDITORIAL

Finding your holiday spirit

It happens every year. November fades into December, and suddenly, the world expects you to transform into a holiday fanatic overnight. The lights go up, the carols start playing, and every ad you see insists it's "the most wonderful time of the year." But what if you're just not feeling it yet? Or, worse, you're feeling the pressure to feel it?

Here's a little secret: the holiday spirit isn't something you have to force. It sneaks up on you when you least expect it—like when you hear a kid giggling in a Santa hat, or when the smell of cookies baking fills the house. It's in those little moments, not in the perfectly decorated tree or the over-the-top gift list.

So, how do you find it? Start small. Pour yourself a mug of hot cocoa (marshmallows optional but highly recommended) and sit by the window for five minutes. Listen to your favorite holiday song—the silly ones count too. Drive around to check out the lights in your neighborhood. You don't have to deck the halls in a single day; sometimes, just hanging one strand of twinkle lights can do the trick.

And if the holidays feel like more of a chore this year, that's okay too. Give yourself permission to celebrate in your own way. Skip the big party if it stresses you out and invite a few close friends for a movie night instead. Or spend a quiet evening wrapping gifts (even if they're just for yourself). It's about finding joy where you are, not where you think you're supposed to be.

Remember, holiday spirit isn't one-size-fits-all. It's not about how much you spend or how perfectly you decorate; it's about making the season your own. So whether you're going full Buddy the Elf or keeping it low-key, let the magic find you. It always does.

Letter submission policy

Letters to the Editor must include the author's name, address, and a daytime phone number for purposes of verification in order to be considered for publication. Only the author's name and the town in which they reside will be published. Letters submitted without all of the required information will not be accepted.

It is the sole prerogative of the Editor to determine whether a submission satisfies our requirements and decency standards, and any submission may be rejected at any time for any reason he or she might deem appropriate.

VIEWPOINT

OPINION AND COMMENTARY FROM SPENCER, LEICESTER AND THE BROOKFIELDS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Every Christian must stand firm against the opposition

To the Editor:

I am sharing with you a conviction a family member wants to share with the people:

"Before the relieving news this morning, my husband and I were reflecting on a pressing concern that I believe every Christian conservative must confront. We cannot allow fear to silence us or prevent us from sharing the hope that dwells in the depths of our soul. As children of God, we hold strong and holy convictions, and it is our duty to stand firm in our faith.

We are not garbage, despite what they may say.

We are not uneducated, despite their claims.

We are not unintelligent, regardless of their accusations.

We are not racists or bigots simply because they choose to label us as such.

We are God's people — those who believe that our Heavenly Father knew and loved us even in our mother's womb. We believe life is precious, and that every breath is to be lived for the glory of God.

If standing firm in our faith means losing friends, loved ones, or even the very shirts on our backs, so be it. Never deny God in front of the world. Have confidence in the Lord Almighty, and stand unwavering in His truth. Above all else, pray without ceasing. The battle may be over, but the war has merely begun.

For regardless of who may reign in earthly power, our King of Kings and Lord of Lords rein forevermore? Fall for Jesus; He will never leave you.

Dwell in peace!" (From Nadia Grenon in Woonsocket, R.I.)

ROLAND BLAIS
BROOKFIELD

Paved with your gold!

To the Editor:

Our socialist dictator Gov. Queen Healy has decreed Massachusetts to be a "Sanctuary State" for the Biden/Harris invasion hordes of illegal migrants. She has instructed our state police not to aid our newly elected President Trump and ICE to send home those that illegally entered our country home. Indeed, she sends messages to the illegals that Massachusetts welcomes you with roads "paved with gold!" The only problem is that it's your gold she's using to pave their roads with! She provides free housing, free education, and free food. None of this was available to US citizens, but if you're an illegal alien, she and the progressive Dems in Boston want to give them everything free. All at your expense.

Remember when the state tax collections exceeded the state budget? We all got a rebate. Well, say goodbye to that. Queen Healy and here court of jesters has erased that. Our state used to have a healthy "rainy day" fund to help out in emergencies. Well, her idea of a rainy day was to give everything free to the illegals. So that's now gone too. In fact, she and her cohorts will be pushing for a state income tax increase to fund their new budget.

With the Queen's exclamation we can count on a multitude of illegals fleeing Red states who are working with ICE making their way to

Massachusetts. These will inundate your schools and affordable housing. There is only one way to fight this out of control socialist. The towns of Spencer, Leicester, Oxford, North Brookfield, and East/West Brookfield voted red in the election in support of Trump and his policies. It's time for the selectmen in these towns to declare the towns as "Non-Sanctuary Towns" and instruct their local police forces to work with ICE. When you see a selectman in your town insist that they represent the will of the people and support ICE. The mayors of Boston, Somerville, and Revere all have the guts to support their socialist voters and declare their towns "Sanctuary" cities. They all can take in the illegals in their towns. We want our town to have services used by our citizens and legal migrants, not lawbreakers. Let's see if our selectmen have the guts and will to do the same for their town folks by making a declaration. I think you'll find that many are from the school system and their only allegiance is to the school unions who support Healy and Harris. Remember that at voting time or when they ask for a Prop 2 ½ override. Vote them all down if they don't back you! Let's all work together to fix what Biden/Healy broke and "Make Our Towns Great Again!"

MARK ROBILLARD
SPENCER

Bigly trouble

To the Editor:

With his re-election to the presidency, Donald Trump has an opportunity to do something for the country and the people. Will he rise to the occasion? I wonder. On the Republican debate stage in 2015, he had nothing of substance to say. He called those onstage names and made fun of them. He was the bully in the sandbox who called everyone names. Wonder of wonders, he became the Republican nominee. Fast forward to 2024, when he again won the presidency, and "little Marco Rubio" is his nominee for Secretary of State. What a game they play!

What was more surprising was that Trump was voted in as president in 2016. Of course, it was the Electoral College that did it. He called his 306 votes a landslide. I looked it up, and there were many presidential candidates who had counts in the high 300's or 400's, and Ronald Reagan and Lyndon Johnson eked over 500! (Out of 538.) There was a banner in my town that had the slogan of "make votes count again." I wanted those three million votes for Hillary to count, but the Electoral College took precedence. Hillary did the honorable thing by calling Trump to congratulate him and conceded the next day. It is time to do away with the Electoral College.

Fast forward to 2020, when Joe Biden got the same Electoral College vote of 306 and seven million more popular votes. Did Trump do the honorable thing? We all know he did not. He tried his darndest to find votes by going to more than 50 lower courts and even twice to the Supreme Court. All said he had no case. With no evi-

dence he just came out and said he won and has steadfastly said the vote was rigged and stolen. He has pushed that false notion ever since and a lot of people have believed him probably including the one who displayed the banner mentioned above. They continued to support him after three convictions of civil court cases for which he has been fined a half a billion dollars. And he has been convicted of a criminal case on 34 felony counts that could bring a jail sentence. But in the face of all these convictions he still was elected President.

I never thought that in my lifetime I would see a criminal elected to occupy the White House. Trump has no respect for the rule of law. He is following the "rule of Trump" which he has done all his life. According to his warped standards he has done nothing wrong. And don't respond with "What about President Biden pardoning his son?" Hunter Biden has shown remorse and his "crimes" pale in light of those for which Donald Trump has been convicted. I hope Trump is held responsible for the damages assessed and that the "jail time" is put on hold for him to face when his term is over.

The ultimate travesty will be when Trump wants to pardon those who trashed the Capitol on Jan. 6, causing millions of dollars in damages as they acted on his urging to go there and fight. When his VP was threatened, he did nothing to protect him. I really think the mob would have harmed Mike Pence, if not attempted to kill him if they had found him.

Oh my, we are in bigly trouble!

PATRICIA JACKMAN
NORTH BROOKFIELD

Consider tax-smart charitable gifts



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As we enter the annual season of giving, you might be thinking of charities you wish to support. But you also might be wondering how to gain some tax benefits from your gifts.

It used to be pretty straightforward: You wrote a check to a charity and then deducted the amount of the gift, within limits, from your taxes. But a few years ago, as part of tax law changes, the standard deduction was raised significantly, so fewer people were able to itemize deductions. Consequently, there was less financial incentive to make charitable gifts.

Of course, this didn't entirely stop people from making them. And it's still possible to gain some tax advantages, too.

Here are a few tax-smart charitable giving strategies:

Bunch your charitable gifts into one year. If you combine a few years' worth of charitable gifts in a single year, you could surpass the standard deduction amount and then itemize deductions for that year. In the years following, you could revert to taking the standard deduction.

Make qualified charitable distributions. Once you turn 73 (or 75 if you were born in 1960 or later), you must start taking withdrawals from your traditional or inherited IRA. These withdrawals — technically called required minimum distributions, or RMDs — are taxable at your personal income tax rate, so, if the amounts are large enough, they could push you into a higher tax bracket or cause you to pay larger Medicare premiums.

But if you donate these RMDs directly to a qualified charity, you can avoid the taxes. And because these donations, known as qualified charitable distributions (QCDs), will reduce the balance on your IRA, you may have lower RMDs in the future.

Of course, if you need some or all your RMDs to help sustain yourself in retirement, the use of QCDs may not be of interest to you. Keep in mind, though, that you can start making QCDs at 70 and a half, even before you must start taking RMDs. QCDs up to \$105,000 can be taken in 2024.

Consider a donor-advised fund. If you're interested in a long-term charitable giving arrangement, you might want to consider establishing a donor-advised fund. You can put many types of assets into this fund, and then direct it to make grants periodically to the charities you've chosen. You get an immediate tax deduction for your contribution, and, if you donate appreciated assets, such as stocks, you'll avoid the capital gains taxes you would have incurred if you simply sold the stocks and then gave the money to the charities. One note of caution, though — your contributions to a donor-advised fund are irrevocable, and once the assets are in the fund, you can't use them for anything except charitable giving.

These strategies — QCDs and donor-advised funds in particular — can be complex and involve several issues of which you should be aware. So, you should consult your tax advisor before taking action. But if any of these techniques are appropriate for your situation, give them some thought — because helping a charitable group and getting tax benefits for doing so is a "win" for everyone.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Please contact Trevor Nielsen, your local Edward Jones Advisor in Sturbridge at 508-347-1420 or trevor.nielsen@edwardjones.com.

www.StonebridgePress.com

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

“Thanks Giving” to all these Americans

To the Editor:

Native Americans, who preserved and protected our beautiful country.

Immigrants, European, African, and Asian, who came to America and built and enriched our country's society, economy, and democratic institutions.

Our “Founding Fathers,” whose Constitution, democracy and values have served us so well for 250 years.

All those who served in the military and defended our country against those who thought to divide or defeat us and our allies. This includes those from Revolutionary, Civil, and World Wars against Hitler/Fascists and the “Cold War” against Putin's Russia/Soviet Union, etc. (and the diplomats and others who try to maintain and improve our the world order).

Those who fought for civil, women's and other human rights, and now will need to double their efforts.

The Presidents and governments during my lifetime who tried in their own way to make our country a better place — Roosevelt, Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy Johnson, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Regan, HW & GW Bush, Obama, and Biden.

Public and other educators.

Health care givers from doctors to nurses to home providers.

Those who try, for our children and grandchildren, to protect and preserve our environment and planet.

Public servants at local, state, and national levels who run our institutions and provide us with so many of the services — we and our communities rely on.

Engineers, scientists, writers researchers, writers, and technicians of all kinds who try to develop and improve move our country and world.

And last, but far from least, the hardworking parents, family providers, entrepreneurs and business people who produce, provide and constantly try to improve the goods and services we need.

With all this in hand, why should we worry during this time of Thanks Giving?

Because our next President and so many of the people around him rather than “Giving Thanks” show disrespect and try stoke anger against so many Americans who have made and could continue to make our country “Great.” Rather, they try to divide and pretend that he and they “alone” are needed to save us from the very country we have developed.

To borrow some words, we, “a good country,” have made “a bad choice.” Let us hope, like other challenges, we can overcome this one too.

KEVIN KANE
SPENCER

Padre Pio

reflecting both skepticism and respect.

Ultimately, the Church ruled the stigmata as genuine and beyond natural explanation, contributing to his canonization in 2002.

His mystical gifts didn't stop there. Padre Pio was said to possess the ability to bilocate—appearing in two places at once—and to read souls, revealing private details during confessions that penitents hadn't disclosed.

These accounts, while widely believed by his devotees, are based on anecdotal evidence and lack independent verification, leading skeptics to question their authenticity. Padre Pio humbly attributed all his gifts to God, famously saying, “I only want to be a poor friar who prays.”

For all the awe he inspired, skepticism followed him, too. Was the stigmata self-inflicted? Were the stories exaggerated by adoring followers? In the 1920s, the Church temporarily restricted Padre Pio's public ministry, citing concerns about the authenticity of his wounds and the intensity of his following. These questions persist but don't diminish the enduring allure of his legacy.

Of all the mysteries tied to Padre Pio, none are as dramatic—or as spine-tingling—as the stories from World War II. San Giovanni Rotondo, where Padre Pio lived, was under threat from Allied bombing campaigns. Intelligence reports indicated German munitions near the town, making it a likely target.

But according to eyewitness accounts, strange things happened whenever Allied planes flew near the area. Pilots reported seeing a figure in the sky—a monk with outstretched arms—forcing them to veer off course. Bombs either dropped harmlessly into nearby fields, or missions were abandoned altogether due to unexplained mechanical failures. These stories, while captivating, lack corroboration in wartime records and are primarily based on post-war testimonies.

One American pilot, shaken by what he described as a vision of a monk in the air, visited San Giovanni Rotondo after the war. When he saw Padre Pio, he recognized him immediately as the figure who had appeared before his plane.

This account and others like it were popularized by author Frank Rega in “Padre Pio and America.” While these stories border on the unbelievable, they come from multiple sources. Even skeptics wonder: How was the town spared when so many others weren't? Could these be tales of coincidence and wartime imagination, or were they miraculous interventions?

Stories like these invite both awe and doubt. How much of what we hear is faith-driven embellishment, and how much points to something beyond human understanding?

He once remarked: “In books we seek God; in prayer we find him...”

Perhaps it is that unwavering belief in prayer and divine intervention that makes stories of Padre Pio so compelling.

Whether or not Padre Pio truly appeared as a “flying monk” to Allied pilots, the fact remains: his life continues to captivate millions.

As we consider these extraordinary tales, we don't have to decide whether they are fact or fiction. Instead, we can marvel at their ability to inspire and remind us of the mysteries that surround the human experience.

During our time of division and uncertainty, perhaps the most valuable takeaway from Padre Pio's life is his simple yet profound message: “Pray, hope, and don't worry.”

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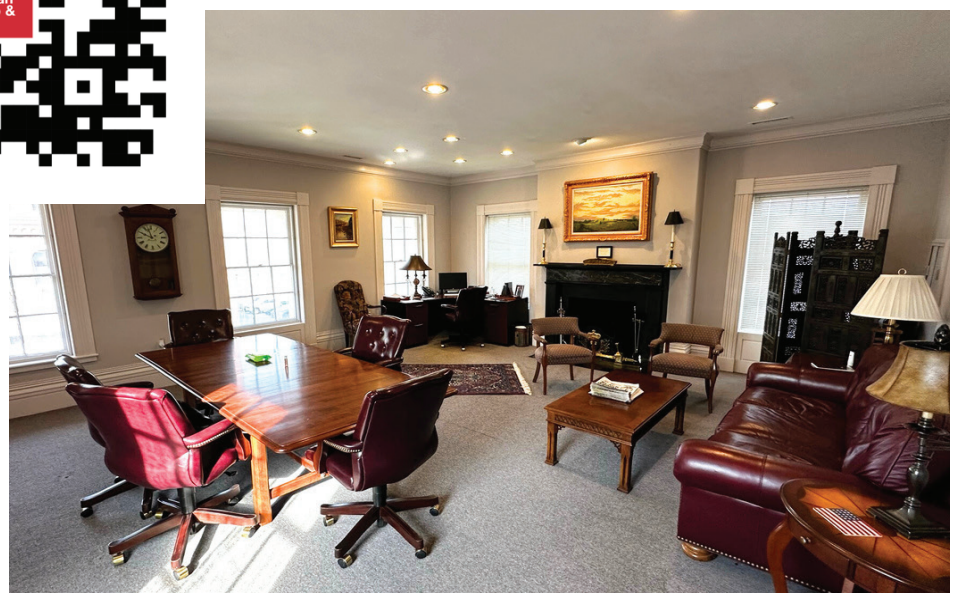


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Principal

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jglickman@glickmankovago.com



JONAH D. GLICKMAN
Vice President

508-868-3765

jdglickman@glickmankovago.com



Courtesy
Students at East Brookfield Elementary School enjoyed several activities ahead of the Thanksgiving break.

EBES students and staff celebrate Thanksgiving

EAST BROOKFIELD—Students, staff, and families got their Thanksgiving celebrations underway early with several special programs at East Brookfield Elementary School.

On the day before Thanksgiving, Nov. 27, students and families attended a pageant featuring an array of activities. Students in each grade delivered a Thanksgiving-related performance, including songs, jokes, statements of thanks, and historical pieces.

"We had a full house in the gymnasium with families in attendance for the pageant. We love to see how much our community supports our school events," said EBES Principal Christine Lavin.

A pre-Thanksgiving feast was also held at the school. Students enjoyed opportunities to connect with classmates and students in other grades.

Staff members thank everyone who contributed to the event, furthering a tradition that began 25 years ago.

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closets & view of the lake, another bedroom & full bath. The finished walk-out lower level has brand new flooring, family room or 2nd living room, third bedroom, half bath & laundry. There are doors leading out to a private patio area. Off the patio you will find brand new stairs leading down to your private 150' beach area with 50' aluminum dock & ramps & 1998 Mastercraft boat INCLUDED. This home has gone through a modernized restoration in the past 5 years



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7 CU. FT. CHEST FREEZER \$199.99 WAS \$299.99	DELUXE WASHER OR DRYER \$399.99 WAS \$599.99	MAYTAG DRYER OR WASHER \$549.99 WAS \$699.99
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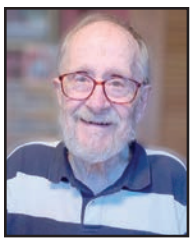
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OBITUARIES

Paul Armand Lamothe, 91



SPENCER: Paul Armand Lamothe of Spencer, 91, passed away peacefully on November 29, 2024, after living with dementia for several years.

He is survived by his brother Robert Lamothe and his wife Elaine of Epping, NH, Andre's wife Shirlye Lamothe of Raymond, NH, Catherine's daughter Melissa Hopkins Walsh of Spencer, and daughter Emily Colson of Fayetteville, NC and Marilyn Shriver of Walpole, NH, as well as fourteen grandchildren and seventeen great grandchildren. Paul is predeceased by his beloved wife of 42 years, Catherine Lamothe, and her sons John, Stephen, and Thomas Hopkins, and his brother Andre Lamothe.

He was born March 31, 1933 in Leominster, son of Albert Armand Lamothe and Florence Tellier Lamothe. He had two younger brothers Andre and Robert. They were raised in Newport, NH. He graduated from the University of New Hampshire, where he met his first wife, Anne Kirk Lamothe. They settled in Walpole, NH and had two daughters, Emily and Marilyn. He taught at the North Walpole, NH Elementary School for several years before becoming a traveling salesman for the Lippincott Company, which published schoolbooks. In the mid 1970's he transferred to Singer S.V.E., which sold filmstrips to schools. He had the luxury of summers off and was the go-to-dad in the neighborhood for rides to the swimming hole, canoe outings, picnics and camping trips. In Walpole, he was a member of the First Congregational Church, where he was active in the choir and in Men's Fellowship. He also served in the Volunteer Fire Department and was a member of the Lion's Club.

Paul and Anne divorced in 1980, and he married Catherine Mayo Hopkins later that same year, settling in Gardner. He became "Pepe" to Catherine's children; John, Stephen, Thomas and Melissa, and grandchildren and was beloved for his warmth and kindness. Their growing collection of grandchildren became the beneficiaries of the camping and canoe trips and the creation of memories that fondly endure to this day.

He returned to school in 1981, earning a master's degree in psychology from Assumption College. He enjoyed a second career as a psychologist, working in many group settings, including schools and nursing homes. He retired in 1998.

In 2007, Paul and Catherine moved to Spencer where they were lovingly cared for by Thomas, Thomas' wife Linda, and most notably by Catherine's daughter, Melissa. Family was important to Paul and Catherine and their home in Spencer was often the Hub for family gatherings. In late 2022, the progression of Paul's dementia necessitated a move to Christopher House in Worcester.

Music was always a part of Paul's Life. He played baritone horn in high school and college, sang in the a cappella group "The Salamanders" at UNH, and performed with numerous choirs and choruses for most of his adult life. Even as his dementia progressed, he could still remember and hum the tunes of many of his favorite songs.

A Memorial service will be held on Saturday, December 28th at 1:00 P.M. in the J. HENRI MORIN & SON FUNERAL HOME, 23 Maple St., Spencer. Calling hours will precede from 11:00-1:00 P.M. In lieu of flowers, family requests that donations be made to the Worcester County Food Bank 474 Boston Turnpike, Shrewsbury, MA 01545.

www.morinfuneralhomes.com

Florence V. Hickey, 89



Brookfield – Florence V. Hickey, 89, of Brookfield, died on Thursday, November 28, 2024, at her home.

She leaves her children, Nancy A. Bowren and her husband, George, Sr. of Troy, New Hampshire, Richard N. Hickey of North Brookfield, Susan V. Hickey of Spencer, and Brian S. Hickey and his wife Roxanne of New Braunfels, Texas along with four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. She also leaves her sisters, Dorothy Hamstra and her husband Marvin of Oxford, New York, and Laura Parker. She was predeceased by her husband, Norman E. Hickey in 2009, as well as a granddaughter. She was born in Ware, daughter of the late Reuben Hough and Grace (Parker) Hebert.

Florence worked in the office at the former Manpower Temporary Agency in Worcester as well as a bookkeeper

at Worcester County National Bank. She and Norman enjoyed traveling and cruises together as well as camping. After Norman passed away, Florence would continue her love of camping in their travel trailer for several years into her 80's.

A Funeral Service for Florence will be held on Thursday, December 5, 2024, at 10:30am in the First Congregational Church of North Brookfield, 144 North Main St. in North Brookfield. A calling hour will be held in the church from 9:30 to 10:30 prior to the service. Burial will be in Worcester County Memorial Park following the church service.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to a charity of your choice.

Varnum Funeral Home, 43 East Main St., in West Brookfield is assisting her family with arrangements. An online tribute book is available at varnumfuneralhome.com.

Senior Citizens Club hosting holiday dinner

LEICESTER — The Christmas Festival Dinner for the Senior Citizens Club of Leicester will assemble at Barbers Crossing on Dec. 17.

The meeting will take place at 10 a.m., followed by the installation of officers for 2025.

This program will be followed by the dinner, where those gathered will enjoy a meal and socializing.

"When time allows, we often enjoy a sing-along such as 'On the First Day of Christmas', where each table plays a role," read a statement released by organizers. "There are always new friendships, new and exciting moments for all."

If you are interested in the club, please attend one of its meetings at the Senior Center on the first and third of each month, except when there are special functions on holidays.

Send all obituary notices to Stonebridge Press, PO Box 90, Southbridge, MA 01550, or by e-mail to obits@stonebridgepress.news

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LEGALS

Town of Spencer Conservation Commission PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

In accordance with the requirements of the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act, MGL c. 131, s. 40 and the Spencer Wetlands By-Law:

Jimmy Georges has filed an NOI with the Spencer Conservation Commission for an addition, septic system and a walkway located at **19 Whittemore Cove**, Spencer, MA.

Jimmy Georges has filed an NOI with the Spencer Conservation Commission for an addition, septic system and a walkway located at **20 Whittemore Cove**, Spencer, MA.

The Town of **Spencer Utilities & Facilities** have filed an NOI with the Spencer Conservation Commission to remove a beaver dam located at **South Spencer Road at Cranberry River**, Spencer, MA.

Mathew Beaugard has filed an NOI with the Spencer Conservation Commission to add a beach and boat launch located at **U28-135 Spencer-Leicester**, Spencer, MA.

ELA Living Trust has filed an NOI with the Spencer Conservation Commission to install a septic system at **8 Pine Avenue**, Spencer, MA.

Applications can be reviewed at the Office of Development and Inspectional Services, Town Hall. A public hearing regarding these filings will be held by the Spencer Conservation Commission in McCourt Social Hall at Town Hall, 157 Main Street, on Wednesday, December 18, 2024 at which time all persons having an interest may be present or call in remotely to participate. Conservation Commission meetings open at 6:15 p.m.

Mary McLaughlin
Mary McLaughlin, Chairwoman
December 6, 2024

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING BOARD OF HEALTH LEICESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

In accordance with MGL Chapter 111, § 31, The Board of Health will hold a Public Hearing at the Leicester Town Hall, Meeting Rooms #3, 3 Washburn Square, Leicester, MA 01524 on Monday, December 16, 2024 at 6:00 PM to consider adopting *Body Works regulations*, in the Town of Leicester. The regulation would establish

permitting, inspection and enforcement language for all places of business in the town offering Body Works services. A copy of the proposed regulation is available in the Town Clerk's Office at 3 Washburn Square, Leicester, MA. All interested parties are invited to attend the hearing.

Christopher Montiverdi
Chairperson
Leicester Board of Health
November 29, 2024
December 6, 2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Worcester Probate and Family Court

225 Main Street Worcester, MA 01608

Docket No. WO243D2160DR

DIVORCE SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION AND MAILING

Danitza Lebron vs. David Belhomme

To the Defendant:
The Plaintiff has filed a Complaint for Divorce requesting that the Court grant a divorce for Irretrievable Breakdown. The Complaint is on file at the Court. An Automatic Restraining Order has been entered in this matter preventing you from taking any action which would negatively impact the current financial status of either party. **SEE Supplemental Probate Court Rule 411.**

You are hereby summoned and required to serve upon:
Danitza Lebron
1122 Water Street
Apartment 2
Fitchburg, MA 04120

your answer, if any, on or before **02/18/2025**. If you fail to do so, the court will proceed to the hearing and adjudication of this action. You are also required to file a copy of your answer, if any, in the office of the Register of this Court.

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.
Date: November 18, 2024

Stephanie K. Fattman
Register of Probate
December 6, 2024
December 13, 2024
December 20, 2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Worcester Probate and Family Court

225 Main Street Worcester, MA 01608

(508) 831-2200

Docket No. WO24P4018EA

CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

Estate Of:
Diane Elizabeth Nolan

Also known as: Diane E Nolan

Date of Death: 08/20/2024

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **David C Nolan of Millbury MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that:
David C Nolan of Millbury MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration.**

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 12/24/2024.**

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets

and expenses of administration.
WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.

Date: November 22, 2024
Stephanie K. Fattman,
Register of Probate
December 6, 2024

Commonwealth of Massachusetts Worcester Probate and Family Court

225 Main Street Worcester, MA 01608

(508)831-2200

Docket No. WO24E008PP

A. C. 92A

Petition to Partition

To: Amy Gerstel and to all other persons interested.

A petition has been presented to said Court by Richard Herman Henry III of West Brookfield in the County of Worcester representing that he hold as tennant in common part or share of certain land lying in Warren in said County of Worcester and briefly as follows:
Setting for that he/she desire all the aforesaid described part of said land may be sold at private sale not less than three hundred twenty thousand (\$320,000.00) dollars, and praying that partition may be made of all the land aforesaid according to law, and to that end that a commissioner be appointed to make such partition and be ordered to same make sale and conveyance of all, or any part of said land which the Court finds cannot be advantageously divided either at private sale or public auction, and be ordered to distribute the new proceeds thereof.

If you desire to object thereto you or your attorney shall file a written appearance in said court at Worcester before ten o'clock in the forenoon on the seventeenth day of December 2024 the return date of this citation.

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A Keamy, Esq., First Justice of this Court, this first day of November 2024.
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
November 22, 2024
November 29, 2024
December 6, 2024



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The numbers in each column add up to the totals on the bottom.

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	5		22
6		15	22
18	20	30	

5	1	9
7	5	10
8	14	2

Solution

THIS DAY IN HISTORY



1492: After exploring Cuba for gold, Christopher Columbus lands on an island he names Hispaniola.

1790: The U.S. Congress moves from New York City to Philadelphia.

2006: NASA reveals photos that suggest liquid water is present on Mars.

Fun FACT:

This popular party decoration was created in 1824 by Michael Faraday during experiments with various gases.

Answer: Balloon

Get Scrambled

Unscramble the words to determine the phrase.
H R T W O A R Y A T P

Answer: Throw a party

NEW WORD

BASH
a party or social event

How they say that in...

English: Surprise
Spanish: Sorprender
Italian: Sorprendere
French: Surprendre
German: Jmdn eiskalt erwischen

Did You Know?

In 1796, Amelia Simmons invented the cupcake and also wrote the first published American cookbook. Cupcakes have been a staple of many celebrations ever since.



Get the PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Pigata



CRYPTO FUN



Solve the code to discover words related to senior safety.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 4 = I)

A. 8 10 17 9 5 12

Clue: Caution

B. 8 9 26 4 22 24 8

Clue: Older adults

C. 10 11 4 26 11

Clue: Growing older

D. 19 22 7 4 17 12

Clue: Change or adapt

Answers: A. safety B. seniors C. aging D. modify

SUDOKU

				1	5			
4			8					3
				9		6		8
		7	6	2			4	
1		4						
		2	5		9			
	5		1	7				
3								9
2						8	5	

Level: Advanced

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

2	7	1	9	3	4	8	5	6
3	4	8	2	5	6	1	7	9
9	5	6	1	8	7	3	2	4
6	3	2	5	4	9	7	8	1
1	9	4	3	7	8	2	6	5
5	8	7	6	2	1	9	4	3
7	2	5	4	9	3	6	1	8
4	1	9	8	6	2	5	3	7
8	6	3	7	1	5	4	9	2

ANSWER:

POLICE REPORTS

Leicester Police Log

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29
 3:35 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 5:31 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), written warning; 5:55 a.m.: investigation (Dale Court), report taken; 6:05 a.m.: ambulance (Soojians Drive), transported; 9:16 a.m.: investigation (Dale Court), report taken; 10:07 a.m.: debris in road (Huntoon Memorial Highway), unfounded; 10:39 a.m.: mv stop (Paxton Street), verbal warning; 10:46 a.m.: ambulance (Bauer Street, Worcester), transported; 10:47 a.m.: debris in road (Main Street), removed; 11:47 a.m.: hazardous condition (Main Street), resolved; 11:55 a.m.: erratic operator (Main Street), unfounded; 1:23 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 2:19 p.m.: suspicious activity (Main Street), services rendered; 3:31 p.m.: ambulance (Swanson Road, Auburn), transported; 4:38 p.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 5:28 p.m.: fraud (South Main Street), report taken; 7:21 p.m.: suspicious activity (Sabina Circle), resolved; 8:35 p.m.: welfare check (South Main Street), assisted; 10:00 p.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), call canceled; 10:55 p.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), false alarm.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22
 12:44 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 1:30 a.m.: welfare check (Stafford Street), resolved; 3:42 a.m.: assist other PD (Pleasant Street), unable to locate; 10:32 a.m.: ambulance (May Street, Worcester), transported; 12:54 p.m.: ambulance (Stafford Street), transported; 3:21 p.m.: assist citizen (Huntoon Memorial Highway); 4:10 p.m.: welfare check (Tobin Road), transported to hospital; 4:34 p.m.: restraining order service (Main Street), served; 4:49 p.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), spoken to; 4:56 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 5:50 p.m.: erratic operator (Main Street), unfounded; 6:14 p.m.: accident (Pine Street), mv towed; 7:47 p.m.: ambulance (White Birch Street), transported; 11:32 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23
 12:24 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), written warning; 12:36 a.m.: disturbance (Flint Way), report taken; 3:08 a.m.: ambulance (King Street), transported; 3:40 a.m.: shoplifting (Main Street), report taken; 6:38 a.m.: debris in road (Marshall Street), referred; 8:45 a.m.: malicious mischief (Chapel Street), report taken; 11:04 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 11:14 a.m.: larceny (River Street), report taken; 1:17 p.m.: welfare check (Pine Street), assisted; 1:28 p.m.: ambulance (Pleasant Street), transported; 2:01 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 2:04 p.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 2:09 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 2:09 p.m.: mv stop (Auburn Street), verbal warning; 4:14 p.m.: hit/run accident (Stafford Street), assisted; 4:50 p.m.: keep the peace (Main Street), Nicholas P. Hackett, 27, 595 Main Street, Leicester, intimidation of a witness/juror/police/court official, arrest; 7:58 p.m.: suspicious mv (Mannville Street), resolved; 8:39 p.m.: ambulance (Towtad Street), transported; 9:02 p.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), spoken to; 11:25 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), spoken to; 11:40 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24
 1:24 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 3:04 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), Kymberly Lynn Calamare, 51, 7 Harding Street, Cherry Valley, OUI liquor, arrest; 4:59 a.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), call canceled; 7:29 a.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 8:52 a.m.: assist other agency (Dale Street), resolved; 9:24 a.m.: mv stop (Huntoon Memorial Highway), verbal warning; 9:36 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), written warning; 10:03 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 10:10 a.m.: investigation (Winslow Avenue), report taken; 10:11 mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 10:26 a.m.: assist other agency (Dale Street), report taken; 10:31 a.m.: disturbance (Main Street), report taken; 10:43 a.m.: ambulance (Collier Avenue), transported; 11:37 a.m.: investigation (Main Street), report taken; 12:15 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 12:20 p.m.: assist citizen (South Main Street); 1:30 p.m.: assist other agency (Spencer PD, no location noted), resolved; 1:34 p.m.: ambulance (Pleasant Street), transported; 3:46 p.m.: welfare check (Pleasant Street), assisted; 4:57 p.m.: accident (Stafford Street), report taken; 6:44 p.m.: assist other agency (Stafford Street), unable to locate; 8:57 p.m.: assist other PD (South Main Street), message delivered; 9:16 p.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 9:35 p.m.: suspicious mv (Washburn Square), resolved; 11:33 p.m.: welfare check (Town Beach Road), spoken to.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25
 12:05 p.m.: ambulance (Virginia Drive), transported; 8:44 a.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 10:21 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), written warning; 10:39 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 11:12 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), violations omitted

from police log, criminal application issued; 1:05 p.m.: residential alarm (Marshall Street), call canceled; 1:11 p.m.: ambulance (Virginia Drive), transported; 1:50 p.m.: debris in road (Washburn Street), referred; 1:53 p.m.: erratic operator (Main Street), gone on arrival; 2:40 p.m.: investigation (Dale Street), report taken; 5:18 p.m.: summons service (Peter Salem Road), served; 5:33 p.m.: ambulance (Lake Avenue, Spencer), transported; 7:12 p.m.: ambulance (Mechanic Street), transported; 8:29 p.m.: fraud (Soojians Drive), report taken; 9:05 p.m.: welfare check (Pleasant Street), assisted; 9:33 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26
 12:14 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 12:29 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 1:04 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 1:45 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 4:55 a.m.: mv stop (Paxton Street), citation issued; 5:44 a.m.: parking complaint (Pleasant Street), citation issued; 5:46 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 5:53 a.m.: mv stop (Paxton Street), verbal warning; 9:06 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 9:13 a.m.: animal complaint (Pleasant Street), referred; 9:47 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), spoken to; 10:03 a.m.: assist other agency (Stafford Street), services rendered; 10:13 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 10:18 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), citation issued; 10:53 a.m.: fraud (Main Street), report taken; 12:40 p.m.: summons service (South Main Street), served; 6:01 p.m.: shoplifting (Soojians Drive), report taken; 6:33 p.m.: ambulance (Lincoln Street, Spencer), transported; 7:00 p.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), verbal warning; 8:11 p.m.: abandoned 911 call (Brook Street), resolved; 10:45 p.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), Harshith Reddy Demada, 21, 6 Shawmut Street, #2, Worcester, unlicensed operation, failure to stop for police, failure to stop/yield, arrest.

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Spencer Police Log

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20
 12:05-12:34 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 12:14 a.m.: suspicious mv (Main Street), investigated; 5:46 a.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; 6:43 a.m.: parking complaint (Church Street), truck too close to intersection; 8:40 a.m.: commercial alarm (Water Street), accidental; 8:54 a.m.: fire alarm (Ash Street), fire drill; 9:05 a.m.: intelligence/criminal (West Main Street), info taken; 9:08 a.m.: disturbance (North Brookfield Road), spoken to; 9:50 a.m.: suspicious persons (Cranberry Meadow Road), services rendered; 9:52 a.m.: officer wanted (Mechanic Street), re: lead in pipes; 10:55 a.m.: medical/general (Church Street); 11:08 a.m.: restraining order service (West Main Street); 11:38 a.m.: medical/general (Richland Avenue); 12:27 p.m.: 911 call (Church Street), resolved; 12:47 p.m.: abandoned 911 call (Ash Street), resolved; 12:50 p.m.: medical/general (Chestnut Street); 1:00 p.m. fire alarm (Chestnut Street), referred; 1:53 p.m.: restraining order service (West Main Street); 2:08 p.m.: fire alarm (West Main Street), system test; 2:27 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), erratic operator; 2:50 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), LTC change of address; 2:56 p.m.: disturbance (Wilson Street), noise complaint; 3:14 p.m.: suspicious mv (Temple Street), erratic operator; 3:25 p.m.: officer wanted (Wilson Street), c/o being harassed by neighbors; 4:40 p.m.: suspicious mv (Donnelly Road), investigated; 5:31 p.m.: fire alarm (McDonald Road), referred; 7:00 p.m.: 911 call (Paula Bay), accidental; 7:27 p.m.: fire alarm (Howe Village), referred; 7:42 p.m.: officer wanted (Chestnut Street),

req. welfare check; 9:32 p.m.: fire/woods/grass (Ash Street), referred; (total daily mv stops - 4).

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21
 12:17-12:29 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 12:38 a.m.: suspicious mv (Main Street), investigated; 4:19 a.m.: 911 call (Browning Pond Road), accidental; 5:32 a.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; 7:13 a.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 9:57 a.m.: suspicious mv (Olde Main Street), investigated; 12:45 p.m.: medical/general (Mechanic Street); 1:27 p.m.: officer wanted (Church Street), spoken to; 2:38 p.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), services rendered; 2:44 p.m.: medical/general (Ash Street); 3:09 p.m.: fraud (Thompson Pond Road), report taken; 3:26 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), LTC change of address; 3:38 p.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 4:24 p.m.: medical/general (Treadwell Drive); 5:22 p.m.: suspicious mv (Route 49), investigated; 5:58 p.m.: 911 call (Chestnut Street), accidental; 7:09 p.m.: mv complaint (Greenville Street), erratic operator; 10:38 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); (total daily mv stops - 1).

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22
 12:23-1:04 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 2:49 a.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; 5:41 a.m.: disturbance (Chestnut Street), mental health crisis; 10:07 a.m.: accident (Cranberry Meadow Road), report taken; 11:26 a.m.: medical/general (Dale Street); 2:24 p.m.: officer wanted (South Spencer Road), tree creating road hazard; 4:41 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), spoken to; 5:48 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), LTC change of address; 8:19 p.m.: medical/general (Fourth Avenue); 8:38 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 9:32 p.m.: abandoned 911 call (Chestnut Street), status not recorded on police log; (total daily mv stops - 3).

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23
 12:29-2:51 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 2:18-2:51 a.m.: parking violations/3 (Cherry, Chestnut, Main streets), tickets issued; 4:54 a.m.: domestic assault (South Spencer Road), services rendered; 10:31 a.m.: officer wanted (Browning Pond Road), branch in roadway; 10:41 a.m.: medical/general (West Main Street); 10:42 a.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 10:50 a.m.: disturbance (McDonald Street), issue w/landlord; 11:12 a.m.: residential alarm (Clark Road), services rendered; 12:20 p.m.: animal complaint (McDonald Street), loose dog; 3:18 p.m.: lost/found (Main Street), c/c found; 3:39 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), erratic operator; 4:53 a.m.: fire/woods/grass (G.H. Wilson Road), referred; 5:07 p.m.: officer wanted (Fourth Avenue), residential lockout; 5:12 p.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), Camerin Paul Velasquez, 29, 27 Elm Street, Spencer, OUI liquor, arrest; 5:19 p.m.: medical/general (Crown Street), lift assist; 7:07 p.m.: 911 call (Route 49), open line; 8:44 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 9:34 p.m.: animal complaint (Pleasant Street), c/o barking dog; 10:01 p.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), services rendered; 10:08 p.m.: medical/general (Lincoln Street); (total daily mv stops - 8).

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 24
 12:34-2:24 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 1:12 a.m.: medical/general (Ash Street); 1:33-2:52 a.m.: parking violations/8 (Cherry, Main, Elm, Prospect, Adams, Greenville, Grant streets), tickets issued; 3:15 a.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 3:31 a.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), assist Leicester PD w/booking; 7:30 a.m.: juvenile matter (South Spencer Road), DA referral; 7:47 a.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), assist Holden PD; 10:35 a.m.: commercial alarm (Water Street), services rendered; 10:45 a.m.: medical/general (Elm Street); 11:02 a.m.: tree in roadway (Charlton Road), removed; 1:27 p.m.: fire/woods/

grass (Meadow Road), referred; 1:43 p.m.: DPW call (Browning Pond Road), tree across road; 2:07 p.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), power out; 3:23 p.m.: officer wanted (Donnelly Cross Road), tree on wires; 4:30 p.m.: DPW call (McCormick Road), power out; 4:34 p.m.: missing person/juvenile (Ash Street), report taken; 5:11 p.m.: hit/run accident (Bixby Road), report taken; 5:46 p.m.: fire/woods/grass (Wilson Road), referred; 5:46 p.m.: mv repossessed (Pleasant View Road), info rec'd; 6:27 p.m.: building checked, secure; 6:27 p.m.: medical/general (North Brookfield Road); 7:44 p.m.: mv complaint (West Main Street), erratic operator; 9:27 p.m.: medical/general (Whittemore Court); (total daily mv stops - 3).

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25
 12:08-1:05 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 3:47 a.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), services rendered; 6:06 a.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; 7:16 a.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 7:37 a.m.: mv complaint (West Main Street), info taken; 7:51 a.m.: medical/general (Chestnut Street); 8:24 a.m.: medical/general (Charlton Road); 9:35 a.m.: fraud (Valley Street), report taken; 11:36 a.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), spoken to; 12:08 p.m.: mv repossessed (Maple Street), info rec'd; 12:42 p.m.: animal complaint (Bond Street), loose dogs; 12:49 p.m.: larceny (Hastings Road), report taken; 1:45 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), erratic operator; 1:48 p.m.: medical/general (Paxton Road); 2:25 p.m.: sex offender registration (West Main Street), assisted; 2:26 p.m.: DPW call (Thompson Pond Road), low-hanging wire/hit bus; 2:52 p.m.: medical/general (Duggan Street); 3:45 p.m.: fire/woods/grass (Lincoln Street), illegal burn; 4:08 p.m.: medical/general (Pleasant Street); 4:32 p.m.: 911 call (Ash Street), hang-up; 5:28 p.m.: medical/general (Lake Avenue); 6:27 p.m.: medical/general (Cherry Street); 6:59 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), spoken to; 8:55 p.m.: buildings checked, secure; 9:59 p.m.: 911 call (Blueberry Hill Road), accidental; 10:00 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), c/o loitering in lobby; 11:21 p.m.: threats (Valley Street), report taken; (total daily mv stops - 2).

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 26
 12:25 a.m.: disturbance (Main Street), noise complaint; 12:54 a.m.: building checked, secure; 3:42 a.m.: disturbance (Main Street), noise complaint; 6:06 a.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; 6:31 a.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 7:13 a.m.: officer wanted (Meadow Road), rep. multiple sale pistols/revolvers; 7:26 a.m.: officer wanted (Mechanic Street), req. welfare check; 7:41 a.m.: abandoned 911 call (Ash Street), no contact; 7:52 a.m.: suspicious mv (Debbie Drive), investigated; 9:40 a.m.: medical/general (Chestnut Street); 10:00 a.m.: abandoned 911 call (Howe Village), accidental; 10:40 a.m.: fire alarm (Main Street), referred; 12:18 p.m.: vandalism (West Main Street), report taken/mv keyed; 1:03 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 2:06 p.m.: medical/general (Ashview Drive); 2:33 p.m.: fire/woods/grass (Smithville Road), services rendered; 2:41 p.m.: officer wanted (Sherwood Drive), spoken to; 3:05 p.m.: restraining order service (Paxton Road); 4:21 p.m.: officer wanted (Northwest Road), att. theft; 4:50 p.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 4:55 p.m.: fraud (Pope Street), report taken; 5:06 p.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), assist Charlton PD; 5:19 p.m.: medical/general (Maple Street); 5:31 p.m.: medical/general (Grove Street); 6:30 p.m.: medical/general (Lincoln Street); 7:01 p.m.: accident (Kittredge Road), report taken; 11:33 p.m.: missing person/adult (Maple Street), report taken; (total daily mv stops - 2).

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LEICESTER

continued from page A1

From 2-4 p.m., the Worcester Men of Song and the LHS Chorus will perform at the Leicester Middle School Fine Arts Center.

"This is a brand new event and one that is a must-see," the informational statement read. "The opening number, 'It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas', is bound to escalate the holiday vibes. Many familiar tunes will be sung, and a unique and funny rendition of the 'Twelve Days of Christmas' will happen after the intermission."

Attendees can enjoy cookies and brownies baked by LHS students in the new Culinary Arts program. Guests can also take a chance on door prizes donated by a town resident.

Additionally, the show will include a sing-along session, ending with "Santa Claus is Coming to Town."

To cover the costs of this event, tickets are on sale at \$10 for adults, \$5 for students and senior citizens, and free for children under age six. Tickets are available at schools in Leicester, Deja New (100 South Main St.), and online at Eventbrite. Enter the words "An Afternoon of Holiday Harmony."

On Dec. 10, Leicester Public Library will host a Holiday Craft Night to create chocolate ornaments and recycled Christmas card crafts. Interested parties can register for this event at the library's website.

On Dec. 14, Santa is

coming to town yet again to greet children and families before his big night. This time around, the Leicester Fire/EMS Department will bring Santa on a whirlwind tour around Leicester.

The tour will begin at 11 a.m. and finish at 5 p.m. Check out the route and schedule on the fire department's Facebook page.

Finally, the Parks and Recreation Committee invites all Leicester residents to join in the Light Up Leicester Home Decorating Contest.

"They want to make Leicester shine for all the world to see," the promotional statement read. "Anyone who wants to participate must register by Dec. 14 on the Parks and Recreation Facebook page. On Dec. 22, the contest winner will receive a prize, the perfect gift for the ending of a perfect season of holiday cheer."

Organizers thank all volunteers, town departments, local officials, and organizations for their help in bringing holiday season joy to Leicester through multiple events.

"None of this can be accomplished without the great teamwork between town departments and the slew of volunteers who step up every day to make Leicester a better place to live, work, and play," the promotional statement read. "Special thanks to the Leicester Fire/EMS, Police, and Public Works Departments, who keep Leicester safe while joining the fun. Thanks to the Leicester School Department for constantly sharing its staff and students' skills and knowledge."

QUABOAG

continued from page A1

West Brookfield.

In October, North Brookfield's Regionalization Committee approved a draft regional agreement. Approvals were also secured from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE).

Last month, North Brookfield Public Schools Superintendent Tim McCormick sent a letter to faculty and staff members to update them on the process. He highlight-

ed several topics related to the proposed regionalization, including operational costs, budgeting, debt responsibilities, and building locations, among several others.

The regionalization proposal called for middle school classes to be held in North Brookfield (grades 6-8). High school classes were slated to take place at the current facility serving QRHS in Warren, officials said.

The three K-5 elementary schools were projected to continue operating in their respective towns. Moreover, a new nine-member school committee would have needed

to be elected, with three members representing each town.

If all three towns had passed the agreement, the full transition to a regional district including North Brookfield, West Brookfield, and Warren would have taken effect at the beginning of the 2027-28 school year, officials said.

"The agreement would have had to pass through both school committees and then be voted at each town during a Town Meeting," Schwenker said. "With it being voted down by the QRSC, the process is over."

The New Leader was

not able to confirm whether the North Brookfield School Committee voted on the proposed regionalization, or if news of the QRSC result precluded the vote.

Following the QRSC rejection, North Brookfield school leaders are back to the drawing board on which opportunities to examine moving forward.

Superintendent McCormick could not be reached for comment by press time on the situation and whether the district plans to explore regionalization opportunities with other districts.

LUMINARY

continued from page A1

organizers.

Setup activities for this year's program will begin at noontime, with the placements of bags, sand, and candles. Volunteers will work until approximately 2 p.m.

Staging areas for volunteers are 18 Common St. (the Library Annex) and 15 River St. (the Masuzo & Rector household).

Hot chocolate will be available for volunteers during the setup.

"Anyone is welcome to volunteer at any stage of this simple yet beautiful tradition. Just show up on the Common any time after 12 p.m. on Christmas Eve," read the statement

released by organizers.

Additionally, the Luminaries Memorial Board will once again be available. Donations may be sent to: Friends of the Merrick Public Library, PO Box 528, Brookfield, MA 01506. You may also drop off your donation at the library.

Meanwhile, Oakholm Farm will offer free hayrides at Brookfield Congregational Church, starting at 4:30 p.m.

Brookfield Congregational Church will be open at 4 p.m. for anyone wishing to warm up. Hot chocolate and cookies will be made available for volunteers.

Caroling will be performed on the Common at 6:30 p.m., and an indoor service will begin at

7 p.m. The church will remain open after the service for hot chocolate and cookies. As in the past, a free-will donation basket will be available, and all proceeds will help fund next year's luminaries.

For those unable to attend the festivities in person, there are plenty of ways to still enjoy the magic of the season.

"You can bring this tradition home with you—and help fund this event—by purchasing your own luminaries for display," read the statement released by organizers. "Luminaries are for sale at the Brookfield Merrick Public Library and Tip Top Country Store, and are \$5 for a set of six bags and six candles."

The luminaries are funded by the Cultural Council, the Friends of the Library, Brookfield Community Club, and private donors.

If you would like to make a donation supporting the tradition, please mail your contribution to: Friends of the Merrick Public Library, PO Box 528, Brookfield, MA 01506.

Cleanup activities will take place on Dec. 25 at 9 a.m.

In the event of inclement weather, a locally automated call and social media notifications will go out to the community. The rain/snow date will be New Year's Eve (Dec. 31).

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WEBSTER - 22 COOPER RD
FEATURED NEW CONSTRUCTION



Imagine Yourself in a New Craftsman Style Home ~* Tucked away on Cooper Rd, near Webster Lake w/Access at Lakeside Beach/Boat Ramp . Offers 2,250 SF+/- of Living Area, 7 Rms, 4 BRs, 2-1/2 Baths! 2 car garage! **\$599,000**

STURBRIDGE - 66 WESTWOOD DR
WATERFRONT LAND!



1640' direct waterfront on Cedar Lake! Secluded 11.61 Acres - Pristine, Undeveloped, Private & Serene! Preliminary Plan suggests the potential for up to 5 house lots! 119' road front w/Gravel Drive Access to Land & Lake! 183 ac+- Cedar Lake is full recreational - A Once in a Lifetime Opportunity! **\$949,000**

Featured New Listing!!!

WEBSTER - 10 GODDARD STREET



This two family is centrally located, convenient access to major routes. Owner occupied with a first floor tenant lease. Roof replaced two years ago, basement windows are new and several new windows throughout the home. Rents are currently below market. **\$330,000**

OXFORD 25 SUTTON AVE



LOCATION! LOCATION! LOCATION! What's YOUR Vision?! ... Move-in ready Commercial Office &/or Retail Space!! Quickly set up Operations - you can be ready to GO in no time! 2 Level Free Standing Building is located on a Corner Lot - Second Floor is at "Grade Level" w/Rear Access & Parking! Zoned General Business - .71 ACRE - 26 Parking Spots on 2 Levels. 10 Units! *** Call Today! *** **\$1,150,000**

On the shores of Lake Chargoggagogmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg



Featured Waterfront Listing!

WEBSTER LAKE WATERFRONT LIVING AT IT'S FINEST! THIS 4000+/- SF ** THE VILLA'S at SNUG HARBOR! ** END UNIT** IS TRULY A RARE FIND! ONE OF ONLY 6 UNITS > Custom Built w/Special Features & Upgrades. Offers 4 BRs - 3 are Primary BR Suites w/private baths, 4-1/2 Baths Total!! The Outstanding direct lakefront location provides exceptional Southern panoramic views across Middle Pond, a boat dock, & full recreation activities like swimming, fishing, kayaking, paddle boarding - - whatever Floats Your Boat :-)! Perfect setup for entertaining family, friends & guests! Enjoy All 4 Spectacular Seasons! It's more than a home - it's a Life Style! **\$1,250,000**



WEBSTER LAKE WATERFRONT 92 BIRCH ISLAND

WEBSTER LAKE WATERFRONT Level landscape from house to the waters edge. Middle Pond offers expansive views! 6 rooms, 3 bed, 1 Bath. Walk out Lower Level! Fire up the grill & Let the Good Times Roll! **\$669,900!**



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Courtesy

Pictured on the right is QQLA President Bill Seabourne making turkey and local grocery store gift card donations to East Brookfield Food Pantry, accepting is Allison Hansgate Administrator at the East Baptist Church on the left is Don Taft the QQLA Turkey Drive coordinator.

Happy Holidays

Hearthstone Market & Catering

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Local lake residents hold Thanksgiving Turkey Drive

REGION — For the 15th consecutive year, the Quaboag Quaquumquasit Lake Association (QQLA) has run a community wide Thanksgiving Turkey Drive to collect frozen turkeys and grocery store gift cards to help some of the residents who live in the communities surrounding the lakes that need some assistance to putting food on their Thanksgiving tables. With the high price of food this year the need was greater than ever.

Through the donations made by 29 friends and neighbors, the QQLA 2024 Thanksgiving Turkey Drive managed to collect and deliver a total of 27 turkeys and over \$1,835 in gift cards to local grocery stores including: Big Bunny, Big Y, Hannaford's, Shaw's, and Stop and Shop. All donations went to help the food pantries in Brookfield and East Brookfield, the Burgess Elementary School in Sturbridge, the East Brookfield Elementary School, the Sturbridge Senior Center and the West Brookfield Senior Center.

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