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

SEND YOUR NEWS AND PICS TO NEWS@STONEBRIDGEPRESS.NEWS Friday, September 4, 2026

Haughey to depart Spencer-East Brookfield School District

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDANT

SPENCER / EAST BROOKFIELD — The Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District will be seeking a new Superintendent after Dr. Paul Haughey announced his resignation earlier this summer.

Haughey’s resignation was confirmed during the Spencer-East Brookfield School Committee’s Aug. 24 meeting, effective Aug. 30. On June 30, Haughey had confirmed he would not pursue a successor contract once his term ended in 2027. Haughey has since been named the new Superintendent of Killingly Public Schools in Connecticut.

During the School Committee meeting, Haughey acknowledged all of the changes and challenges that have defined the last eight years in the district including a school renovation and the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Over the years it has been a lot. We’ve done a lot - eight years goes quick. It’s quite a window of time, and I just want to say thank you not only to



Dr. Paul Haughey

the School Committee but to the community of Spencer as well as East Brookfield for supporting the education of the children and the work that we’ve done over all this time,” Haughey told the school committee.

Members of the committee credited Haughey for helping the district through a multitude of projects and challenges during his time with the district. Committee Chair Jeffrey Sauvageau spoke positively of Haughey’s leader-

ship and dedication to the students and staff.

“Everything that you have done for this district for eight years is phenomenal, from a new school and you brought us through COVID and so many challenges. I don’t think we could have fared as well as we did if we didn’t have someone with your communication skills, your knowledge, your expertise, in your seat,” said Sauvageau.

Committee Co-Chair Heather Messier added to the compliments in her farewell to Haughey.

“You’ve been a great leader and a great communicator,” she told Haughey. “You’re always advocating for students in the district, and I appreciate all of your heard work over these eight years.”

Gary Suter, the district’s School Business Administrator, was appointed as interim superintendent. Sauvageau acknowledged they have a long road ahead in deciding on new leadership, and they would be consulting with legal counsel to perform a thorough search for their new full-time superintendent.

CTE programs open new paths for Leicester students

LEICESTER — Many cities and towns are struggling with school overcrowding and/or conversely families choosing to opt out of the system. The educational costs for Leicester students who choose to go to another school district are charged directly to, and paid for, by the Town of Leicester.

The recently added CTE (Career and Technical Education) programs are, however, already bringing substantial new revenue to the system.

According to Leicester School Superintendent Dr. Brett Kustigian, the demand is growing.

“Last year, in fact, after having the school budget reduced by over \$500,000, we were able to keep all curriculum by using the funds collected from other towns,” he said.

Turn To PROGRAMS page A14

Quaboag Quacumquasit Lake Association announces 14th Annual Paddle Poker Run

BROOKFIELD — The Quaboag Quacumquasit Lake Association (QLA) will hold its 14th Annual Paddle Poker Run on

Saturday, Sept. 12, at the Lake Quaboag (North Pond) boat ramp on Quaboag Street in Brookfield. Registration begins at 9:30

Brookfield seeks to map out basins, focus on maintenance

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

BROOKFIELD — The Brookfield Select Board is exploring bringing in a third-party contractor to assess and clean the catch basins around town.

Select Board member Beth Coughlin proposed that the town hire a company to examine, clean, and map out their catch basins which are important tools to help prevent flooding resulting from weather events. Improperly maintained basins can create significant issues during heavy rain and serve as a way to redirect water to avoid serious impacts to roadways and residential areas.

Coughlin said the town needs to make up for lost time with maintenance.

“We don’t have a true map of the town where all our catch basins are, and that can be very problematic if we happen to get heavy spring weather,” Coughlin pointed out. “Obviously, we’re very far behind. I don’t think they’ve been done for two or three years at this point.”

Select Board Vice Chair Richard Chaffee said he believed that several basins had been completed last year and suggested that the town consider turning to neighboring East Brookfield to help as well, especially with the GPS mapping.

“East Brookfield purchased all of the equipment to map them and has expressed interest in helping us out so that would be a huge savings,” he said.

He also pointed out that the town uses less sand on the roads in the winter, creating less problems with basin blockages due to winter road treatment.

The Select Board settled on the possibility of getting the basins assessed by the end of the year, identifying ones that really need to be addressed and focusing on them, and possibly working with East Brookfield to take advantage of their existing technology for the mapping.

a.m., with paddling from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The registration fee is \$20 per hand. Participants may play more than one hand, and more than one person may play from the same watercraft, with each participant registering and playing a separate hand. The event will be held rain or shine.

“Most folks know about poker runs. Usually done on motorcycles, they involve cruising to various points on a map and picking up a poker card at stations along the route. The best hands win prizes,” said event chair Randy Weiss. “We do the same thing, only we do it in kayaks, canoes, rowboats, paddleboards - any watercraft powered by one or more persons with a paddle.”

After registering and

signing a release form, paddlers will receive event information, including the rules, player sheet and course map. Participants paddle the three-and-a-half-mile course and visit four designated stops, which may be completed in any order. At each stop, they receive a playing card.

Upon returning to the North Pond boat ramp, paddlers receive a fifth card to complete their poker hand. Players who want to improve their hand may purchase up to two replacement cards for \$5 each. Winning hands will be announced after the last registered player returns to the North Pond boat ramp and all hands have been ranked.

A \$250 cash grand prize will be awarded for the best

poker hand, with more than \$600 in additional prizes donated by area businesses.

“With these odds, we expect nearly one in three participants to win a prize,” says Weiss. “In addition, every paddler will receive a buy-one-get-one-free ice cream coupon from The Clam Box Restaurant in East Brookfield.”

A special prize of four Worcester Red Sox (WooSox) tickets for a game of the winner’s choice will also be awarded to the participant with the worst poker hand.

Prizes have been donated by area merchants including 308 Lakeside Restaurant, A-1 Parts, Inc., Bogey Lanes, Central Package Store, The Clam Box, Howe Lumber, Ken’s Pit Stop at Country Corner,

Klem’s, Oakholm Brewing Company, Parsons Auto, Teddy G’s Pub & Grille, TipTop Country Store, Tree House Brewing Company, Uncle Sam’s Pizza and the Worcester Red Sox (WooSox).

Proceeds from the 2026 Paddle Poker Run benefit the Quaboag Quacumquasit Lake Association’s mission to preserve and protect the quality of Quaboag and Quacumquasit lakes - better known as North and South ponds - and the surrounding watershed through the promotion of responsible and effective environmental policies.

For additional information, visit qqla.org, email QQLakeAssociation@gmail.com, or email event chair Randy Weiss at RanWiz@aol.com.



Richard Sugden Library offers support group for widows

SPENCER — The Richard Sugden Library invites widows to an informal conversational group. “Every ending has a beginning.” “He’s in a better place.” We’ve heard it all. But, we have experienced a loss that was unique, equal to no other. We’ve also experienced love like no other. The Widows Group (WG) intends to build a community of love, support, patience, and understanding. Please join us Wednesdays (the first and third of each month) beginning Sept. 2 from 1 - 2 p.m. Lifting hearts, one-at-a-time. September get-togethers will be Sept. 2 and 16 at the Richard Sugden Library, Spencer.

A Haunted Story Swap will be held at the Richard Sugden Library on Sept. 10 from 6 – 7:30 p.m. Share your eerie experience. We’re gathering a record of otherworldly experiences that have occurred in Spencer and want to hear from you! Our main goal is to collect cemetery-based

accounts, but other stories will also be noted afterwards. Please join us for this exchange of tales of trepidation and haunted happenings! Sponsor: Spencer Historical Commission and hosted by Prof. Garret D. Langlois, Ph.D.

Grow Happiness with Wendy O’Leary at the Richard Sugden Library, Spencer. Adult Happiness Club kicks off Sept. 17 from 1 - 2 p.m.

Monthly schedule: Oct. 29, Nov. 19, Dec. 17, Jan. 21, Feb. 18, March 18, April 15, May 13, and June 17. The in-person group will have an optional activity following the session from 2-2:30 p.m. Sign up with Wendy O’Leary at woleary25@gmail.com. Sponsor: Friends of the Library.

Traditional Folk Music in the 21st Century will be

held at the Richard Sugden Library on Thursday, Sept. 17 from 6 – 7 p.m. Music is an essential part of connection. Derek Piotr, folklorist, performer, and composer shares his Fieldwork Archive, featuring more than 2,000 recordings of “non-singers” poems, hymns & songs. Sponsor: Friends of the Library.

Sound Healing experience at the Richard Sugden

Library, Spencer. Immerse yourself in therapeutic sounds that calm the mind, heal the body, and uplift the spirit. Adults are invited to join us as Allison, from Friendly Ass Farm, leads this time of relaxation. Join us on Sept. 23 from 6-7 p.m. Tune into wellness. Vibrate with Harmony. Sponsor: Friends of the Library.

Spencer American Legion Charity Golf Tournament set for Sept. 26

SPENCER — The Gaudette Kirk Post 138 American Legion Spencer invites golfers, sponsors, and community members to participate in its Annual Charity Golf Tournament on Saturday, Sept. 26, at Heritage Country Club. This annual event combines a day of golf, fellowship, and giving back, with all proceeds supporting veterans in need.

The mission of the Gaudette Kirk Post 138 Charity Golf Tournament is to help veterans by preventing hunger, homelessness, and the lack of life’s basic necessities. Funds raised through the tournament provide direct assistance to local veterans and their families, ensuring those who have served our country receive support during difficult times.

Golfers of all skill levels are welcome to participate in the 18-hole scramble. The tournament fee is \$115

per golfer, which includes 18 holes of golf with a cart, a light lunch at Heritage Country Club, and dinner at the Gaudette Kirk Post 138 American Legion following the tournament. The day will also feature on-course contests, raffles, prizes, and awards.

Businesses and organizations are encouraged to become sponsors, while individuals and foursomes are invited to register early and help make a difference in the lives of local veterans.

For registration, sponsorship opportunities, or additional information, please contact Carol by phone at 774-454-0366 or e-mail post138spencerma@gmail.com.

About Gaudette Kirk Post 138 American Legion

Gaudette Kirk Post 138 American Legion is committed to serving veterans, supporting military families, promoting patriotism, and strengthening the local community. Through its annual charity golf tournament and other fundraising efforts, the Post provides direct assistance to veterans by helping prevent hunger, homelessness, and the lack of basic necessities, honoring the service and sacrifice of those who have served our nation.

WEEKLY POLICE BLOTTER

Spencer
The Spencer Police Department reported no arrests during the week of Aug. 19-25.

Leicester
The Leicester Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of Aug. 20-26.

Kaitlyn Vancott, age 33, of Worcester was arrested on Aug. 20 for Failure to Appear Upon Recognizance. Tyler R. Auger, age 33, of Rutland was arrested during the same incident for Nighttime Felony Breaking & Entering into a Vehicle or Boat, Larceny, and Conspiracy. A third individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest for Felony Nighttime Breaking & Entering into a Vehicle or Boat, Larceny, Conspiracy, and Intentionally Misleading a Police Officer.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on Aug. 21 for Unlicensed Operation of a Motor Vehicle and operating an Unregistered Motor Vehicle.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on Aug. 22 for Operating a Motor Vehicle after suspension of registration and operating an Uninsured Motor Vehicle.

Mainza Tonga, age 31, of Spencer was arrested on Aug. 23 in connection with a warrant issued by East Brookfield District Court.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on Aug. 23 for Shoplifting By Asportation.

Jose Delgado, age 52, of Worcester was arrested on Aug. 25 for Larceny and in connection with a Default Warrant Docket.

Seth M. Cardinale, age 34, of Leicester was arrested on Aug. 25 for Intimidation of a Witness, Juror, Police officer, or Court Official and Threatening to Commit a Crime.

Geneva Yvette Hobbs, age 40, of Revere was arrested on Aug. 26 as an administrative booking for the Tewksbury Police Department.



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PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER
FRANK G. CHILINSKI
frank@salmonpress.news

BUSINESS MANAGER
RYAN CORNEAU
860-928-1818 EXT. 102
ryan@salmonpress.news

OPERATIONS DIRECTOR
JIM DINICOLA
508-764-6102
jim@stonebridgepress.news

EDITOR
BRENDAN BERUBE
508-909-4101
news@stonebridgepress.news

PRODUCTION MANAGER
JULIE CLARKE
508-909-4105
julie@villagernewspapers.com

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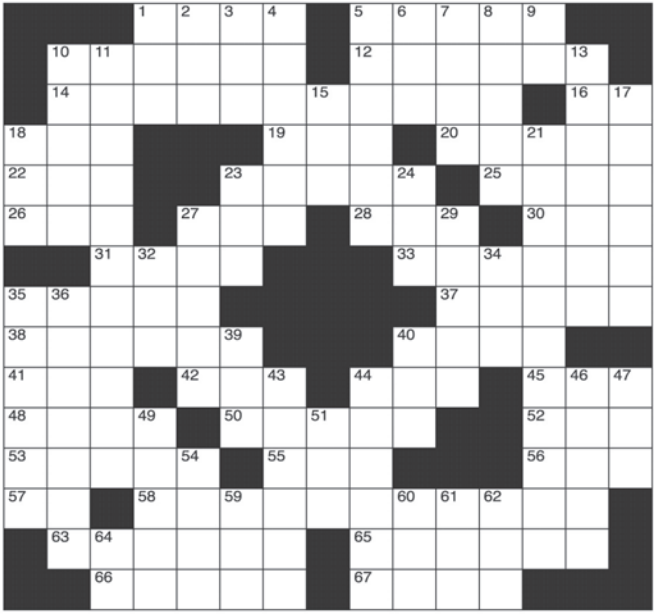
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CLUES ACROSS

1. Longtime *Vogue* editor Wintour
5. A Spanish title of respect
10. A way of looking
12. Properly
14. Rolled steel
16. Not down
18. Law degree
19. Consume food
20. Intermediate ecological stage
22. Old world, new
23. Dispense justice
25. Stiff hair-like structure
26. Ethiopia
27. Cool!
28. Father
30. An enthusiastic devotee of sports
31. Holm oak
33. Be united
35. Rattling breaths
37. Supermarket chain

38. Provided with a quality
40. Samoan monetary unit
41. Swiss river
42. Hill (Celtic)
44. Have already done
45. ATM company
48. Syngman __, Korean president
50. Very willing
52. Arctic explorers (abbr.)
53. Food listings
55. Bachelor's place to crash
56. Big Blue
57. Sports magazine
58. Relating to a place north of south of the equator
63. Female follower of Bacchus
65. A type of laugh
66. Slovenly women
67. Large jug

CLUES DOWN

1. Boxing's GOAT
2. Zero
3. Midway between north and northeast
4. Concurred
5. Added flavor
6. Amount of time
7. Eggs of parasitic insects
8. S-shaped moldings
9. Atomic #45
10. __ d'art: small artistic item
11. A godparent's "kids"
13. Nocturnal burrowing lizard
15. Hit lightly
17. Aircrafts
18. Witness
21. Alluding to something
23. Take to the limit
24. Baglike structure in a plant or animal

27. Start over
29. Administered
32. Romanian monetary unit
34. Unit of liquid capacity
35. Equips with weapons again
36. Disney town
39. Female deer
40. Title of respect
43. A place to go rafting
44. A way to conclude
46. Type of television
47. Georgia rockers
49. Leonhard __, Swiss mathematician
51. Slang for gun
54. River in Bosnia and Herzegovina
59. Bar bill
60. Small, gray-headed crow
61. Frozen water
62. Norwegian krone
64. Commercial

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SPENCER ALMANAC REAL ESTATE

BROOKFIELD
\$55,000, 54-56 Quaboag St, Degray, Abigail E, and Degray, Kyle R, to G Kady Builders Inc.

EAST BROOKFIELD
\$211,000, 117 Lashaway Dr, Hayes, Michael R, and Kelly, Terri Shea, to Premier Rc Properties LLC.

LEICESTER
\$350,000, 9 Warren Ave, Huard, William A, and Buduski, Jamie Ann-R, to Rothera 3rd, James.

NORTH BROOKFIELD
\$430,000, 98 Walnut St, Paradis, Christopher R, to Hernandez, Natalie, and Perez, Juan P Hernandez.

\$410,000, 10 Mill Rd, Vuong, Haley H, to Dasilva, Nilo, and Lanord, Richard.

\$400,000, 101 School St, Equity Trust Co, and Jubinville-Ira, Michael, to Tweneboah, Joleyn.

\$370,000, 75 Elm St, Farrell, Marc, and Farrell, Jennifer, to Gebhardt, Christopher.

SPENCER
\$806,000, 4 Eagleton St, Desouza Development Inc, to Miller, Monica.

\$550,000, 1 Sherry Ln, Howard, Robert W, and Howard, Emily S, to Mensah, Michael, and Mensah, Jennifer.

\$544,900, 2 Sherwood Dr, Thurston, Casey E, to Varella, Ricardo Justin.

\$120,000, 6 Woodland Ln, Friedberg, David F, and Costagliola, Thomas J, to Alas Renovation LLC.

\$10,000, 65 Donnelly Rd, Bovenzi, Kevin P, to Simonis, Jeffrey M.

WARREN
\$273,000, 124 Burbank Ave, Johnson, Tracy M, to Corriveau Jr, Bernard R.

WEST BROOKFIELD
None

Leicester High School welcomes freshmen to career exploration



LEICESTER — Leicester High School has kicked off the new school year by giving ninth-grade students an exciting opportunity to explore a wide range of career and technical education (CTE) and Innovation Pathway programs through the school's annual exploratory rotation.

The exploratory program gives freshmen hands-on introductions to different fields, allowing them to discover new interests, learn about career possibilities and gain a better understanding of the pathways available to them before deciding on a program for further study.

This year's CTE exploratory offerings include Culinary, taught by Andrew Aucoin

and Steve Dahlgren; Early Education and Care, taught by Nina Ryan and Amanda Hart; Health Assisting, taught by Melissa Ledbetter and Meghan Grant; Building and Property Maintenance, taught by Joe Richardson and Jim Stephens; and Electrical, taught by James Burgess and Jeff Romano.

A new program has been added to the rotation this year: Hospitality, taught by Natalie Rodriguez. The addition expands opportunities for students interested in careers in hospitality, tourism, food service and other service-related industries.

Also participating in the exploratory experience are two Innovation Career

Pathway programs: Business and Finance, taught by Drew Lauer, and Engineering & Advanced Manufacturing, taught by Tracy Arsenault and Ray Boucher.

This year's program began with a new twist. Rather than immediately sending students into their individual rotations, Leicester High School held opening ceremonies in the auditorium, followed by a fun Bingo competition in the gym.

Students visited eight CTE stations, where they completed challenges associated with different programs. Once a challenge was completed, the appropriate instructor initialed or stamped the corresponding square on the student's Bingo card.

Students could choose which station to visit next and the goal was to complete their Bingo card while obtaining valuable information. Students who had their completed cards verified at the central check in were named winners and received Leicester High School T shirts.

According to CTE Director William May, the goal was to create an experience where students could meet instructors and classmates while getting an overview of the opportunities available at Leicester High School.

"We wanted to provide an opportunity for students and staff to meet in a fun, social environment to get an idea of what is offered, career paths, curriculum and see everyone all at once before the official exploratory rotation begins," May said.

The activity provided an opportunity for students and staff to meet in a relaxed and social setting while introducing freshmen to the programs they will be exploring throughout the year.

The exploratory rotation will run from late August through January. During that time, freshmen will be introduced to the skills, coursework and career possibilities connected to each program.

By experiencing multiple areas, students can begin identifying their interests and considering which educational pathway best matches their goals and strengths.

At the conclusion of the exploratory period, students will have the opportunity to choose a CTE program, an Innovation Pathway or an academic route to pursue during their high school careers.

With established programs joined by new opportunities in Hospitality, Leicester High School is giving its freshmen more ways than ever to explore potential careers.

The program emphasizes learning by doing and encourages students to think about their futures well before graduation. For Leicester's newest high school students, the exploratory experience offers an early chance to discover what interests them, learn new skills and begin building a vision for life after high school.

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Plan ahead for 26th Annual Leicester Harvest Fair

LEICESTER — The Leicester Harvest Fair committee welcomes exhibits from residents of Leicester and surrounding towns to enrich the Harvest Fair and display local handiwork. Entries will be exhibited and judged in two departments: Adults older than 18, and Youth — boys and girls under 18 as of Jan. 1, 2026.

Plan now to enter vegetables and flowers from your gardens and eggs laid by your backyard hens. Food artisans are invited to bring your home-baked pies, breads, muffins and cookies, as well as canned pickles, jams and jellies. Adults 21 and older can enter home-brewed beer, wine, cider/perry or mead. Artists and crafters are encouraged to display their photography and their fiber arts including quilting, sewing, knitting and crocheting, spinning and weaving, rug hooking, embroidery and tatting work.

More information with class lists, exhibit entry rules and helpful hints for a skilled display can be found on the Leicester Harvest Fair Facebook page

and in Premium booklets available at the Leicester Town Hall, Senior Center, Public Library and at local businesses. Exhibitors should plan to bring their entries to the Town Hall on Friday, Sept. 18, from 4 to 7 p.m. Ribbons will be awarded the best three entries in each class.

The Massachusetts Master Gardeners will offer garden advice and free soil tests. Plan to gather a soil sample from your garden in advance and bring it to the Fair for pH analysis and recommendations. Instructions for collecting a soil sample can be found on the Harvest Fair Facebook page, or by clicking "gather your soil sample" at <https://massmastergardeners.org/educational-resources/soil-testing>.

Fair activities on and

around the Town Common will entertain Fair-goers of all ages, rain or shine. Skilled artisans will demonstrate historic crafts, and local crafters will sell their wares. Food booths will offer a tasty selection of lunch choices, beverages and sweets. The Leicester High School CTE students will host booths, the Tri-M school band will perform, and there will be games and activities for children. Traditional folk music performances at the band stand will feature Yankee Notions, The Doolin Lads, and Slo-Grass. There will be a guided tour of historic buildings, and the Swan Tavern will be open to visitors.

Mark your calendar now and plan to join the festivities on the Leicester Common, in the Town Hall and nearby buildings!



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putting them back together. He is currently in the process of fixing his scooter, which is one of his favorite activities. If Jacob could ride his scooter every day, he absolutely would! When he's not out riding, Jacob enjoys a variety of activities that keep him entertained and active. He loves playing video games, listening to rap and hip-hop, playing sports, and going hiking. Jacob enjoys being on the move and having opportunities to explore and try new things. His determination and hands-on nature shine through in the way he approaches projects and hobbies that interest him. With his resilience, sense of humor, and wide range of interests, Jacob is a unique and engaging young man who brings plenty of personality to everything he does.

<https://www.mareinc.org/child/54938075946>

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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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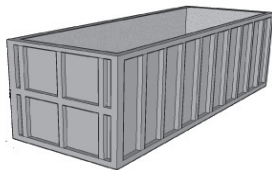


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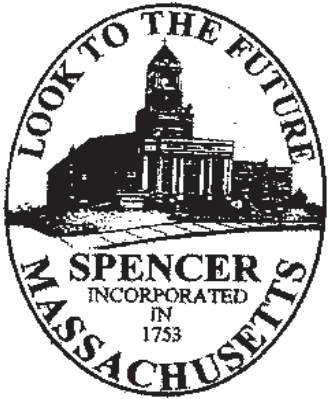
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Lucinda Puchalski: **MEMBER**
Frank White: **VICE-CHAIR**
Meg Letendre: **MEMBER**
DIRECTOR: April Caruso
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The Friends of The Spencer Seniors
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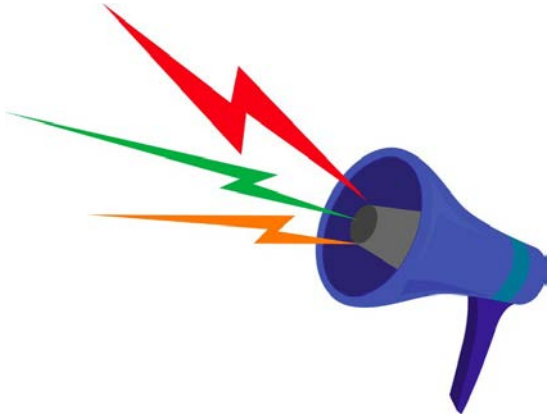


Mixed Bag Dance Class Returns
Monday September 7th 12:00-12:45

Instructor: Laurie Connors

Reminder New Time: Every Monday 12:00-12:45

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Knight Of Columbus Bingo
Cancelled
Thursday September 10th



Monday Matinee

September 14th 12:00
(YOU PICK)
Snacks & Refreshments available



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September Menu

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- 9/8-Chicken Stir Fry**, Steamed Rice, Rst. Broccoli. Fresh Fruit, Pumpernickel Bread
- 9/10-Hot Dog Bar**, Chili, Cheese, Mustard, Ketchup, Relish, Baked Cinnamon Pears, Hot Dog Bun
- 9/15-Ziti w/ Meat Sauce**, Mozzarella Cheese, Broccoli & Red Peppers, Fresh Fruit, Italian Bread
- 9/17-Garlic Brown Sugar Chicken**, Mashed Potatoes, Country Blend Veg., Chocolate Pudding, Pumpernickel Bread
- 9/22-Chicken Fajitas**, Spanish Rice, Black Beans & Corn, Pineapple, Sour Cream, Pita Bread
- 9/24-Beef w/ Onions & Peppers**, Gemelli Pasta, Broccoli, Birthday Cake, Marble Rye Bread
- 9/29-Beef Stew**, Steamed Rice, Corn, Peach Crisp, Biscuit

*** Indicates High Sodium Meal**

If you would like to eat please call 48 hours in advance 508-885-7546

A suggested donation of \$3 per meal (or any amount you are able to give) helps offset a small portion of meal preparation and delivery cost.

Senior Fraud Skits

Presenter: Les Holmes

Thursday September 24th

11:45-12:30

“FALLS” The Hidden Side



Tina Bemis Class

Wednesday September 30th

10:00-11:00

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PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

EDITORIAL

A leadership search that deserves careful consideration

Leadership changes are inevitable in any school district, but the departure of a superintendent is different from most personnel transitions.

A superintendent sits at the intersection of nearly every major issue facing a public school system. Budgets, curriculum, staffing, facilities, student achievement, transportation and communication with families all eventually reach that office. In a regional district such as Spencer-East Brookfield, there is the additional responsibility of balancing the needs and expectations of two communities.

That is why the departure of Dr. Paul Haughey after eight years should be viewed as both the end of an important chapter and the beginning of a consequential decision for the district.

Haughey’s tenure included circumstances that would have tested any school administrator. There was a major school project, the unprecedented disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic and the continuing challenges facing public education in its aftermath.

Those eight years also required the district to navigate the ordinary but no less important responsibilities of educating children while managing taxpayer dollars and communicating with two communities.

School Committee members appropriately recognized that work as Haughey departed. Their comments particularly emphasized communication, leadership and advocacy for students. Those same qualities should figure prominently in the search for his successor.

For now, School Business Administrator Gary Suter has been appointed interim superintendent, providing the district with leadership while the School Committee determines how to conduct its search.

There should be no reason to rush that process. Finding a superintendent is not simply a matter of filling an administrative vacancy. Spencer and East Brookfield should be looking for someone capable of establishing a productive relationship with teachers, staff, parents, students, municipal officials and taxpayers. The next superintendent must understand the financial realities of a regional school district while never losing sight of its educational mission.

Communication should be especially important. Residents may disagree about budgets, programs, policies or priorities, but they should never have to wonder why a major decision was made. A superintendent who can clearly explain the district’s needs, acknowledge legitimate concerns and provide residents with the information necessary to understand difficult decisions can build trust even when agreement is impossible.

The search also presents an opportunity for the School Committee to consider what Spencer-East Brookfield needs from its leadership during the next several years.

The person best suited to guide a district through a building project or a public health emergency is not necessarily being hired to confront those same challenges again. The committee should consider the issues ahead and identify the experience and leadership qualities necessary to address them.

Community participation can be valuable as that discussion develops. Parents and educators will naturally have strong opinions, but students, taxpayers and residents without children currently enrolled in the schools also have a stake in the district’s success. A superintendent ultimately serves a public institution supported by the entire community.

Haughey’s departure deserves recognition for eight years spent leading the district through a particularly eventful period. The best way to follow that tenure is not to find someone exactly like the departing superintendent. It is to determine what the district needs next.

Spencer and East Brookfield now have an opportunity to choose the leader who will help shape their schools for years to come. That decision deserves time, transparency and careful consideration.

VIEWPOINT

OPINION AND COMMENTARY FROM SPENCER, LEICESTER AND THE BROOKFIELDS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Shocking

To the Editor:

Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers may soon be outfitted with gloves that can deliver a painful electric shock intended to gain compliance from “combative individuals.”

ICE plans to spend up to \$20 million of our taxpayer dollars to purchase thousands of these of these so called “conductive distraction and de-escalation devices” for ICE officers and agents by March of next year, this according to a notice published by the Department of Homeland Security.

ICE has already deported, brutalized and killed American citizens, all without just cause!

What is next? Will we all have to wear shock collars so that ICE won’t have to wear clumsy uncomfortable gloves? Then all they have to do is push a button and bring their prey to the ground.

Maybe that is what some of you need! Maybe you need to be shocked to your senses so that you can see that our country is crumbling and our citizens are being victimized, all due to Donald Trump.

ICE out!

NOREEN FERNANDES
WEST BROOKFIELD

Think

To the Editor:

Since I only write on weeks that this administration aggravates me, I have to explain my computer being in for its annual tune up is why I was silent. So glad the Kevin Kane stepped in to fill the breach.

Is it fair to assume that Amerigo Vespucci, the Italian explorer who did not discover anything, had the better press agent. I am at a loss as to why two continents and one nation are named for him. That said, why would we name a gulf and great lake after him? Wouldn’t the United States of Trump, Gulf of Trump and Lake Trump, be more rational and accurate? Maybe he would not feel as much need to impose his name on the Kennedy Center.

While there are plenty of reasons to address the variety of clowns, in this show, from RFK getting rid of food inspections and vaccines, to the GOP official concerned that wind turbines may use up or stop wind, to Hassett claiming that citizens maxing out their credit cards is a sign of confidence in the economy, as opposed to absolute necessity.

Please think through Trumps joy in higher gas prices, even though the same wells are feeding the same refineries, unimpacted by the Strait of Hormuz, and the stock market and tariff collections all rising. Why? Because we are funding all of these, not Canada, or anyone else. With the average savings account, under \$400, I suspect actual income drawn from market investments, does not cover increased costs for most of us. Trump has increased the debt a third, while tripling his net worth. Buying stock in the morning and issuing purchase orders in the afternoon, is not insider trading, it is grand theft.

Today, I want to feature Pete Hegseth, the formerly, often inebriated Fox News Host, made Secretary of War. This poor excuse for a cabinet secretary, has decided that we need an all white male force of macho GI Joes, and that has clearly been his focus and priority. He envisions himself as Spartacus, so instead of doing what an actual secretary of defense would do, by fortifying our middle east bases, an integral part of the regional support and supply chain, virtually all have been destroyed and are where the most loss of lives occurred. This toy soldier has expended extremely expensive munitions leaving our inventory dangerously low and the cost and recovery time high.

Instead of seizing those little wooden boats in the Caribbean, we destroyed them with million-dollar shells. The Patriots and Cruise missiles are much more expensive and have been depleted in the thousands of units. Pete did adopt a trait from his leader and blame subordinates for the low inventory. Before you start feeling hopeful the war is nearly over, their leader, whose father, wife and child died in the first attack has said it will not end with Trump in office.

If the blue wave is not large enough to actually impeach and remove, he will call it exoneration, which sickens me.

KEN KIMBALL
BROOKFIELD

The weakening of our American hard and soft powers

To the Editor:

In many areas where we need the United States to be at least very strong or the best, President Trump and his administration have weakened or “hollowed out” these needed strengths. This creates many problems and leaves our United States open to loss of power or more.

Two connected examples follow.

Military Power — Military Power ranks as very important asset both to maintain international order and protect our country and people. Here, the Trump administration has profoundly weakened us in many ways.

First Secretary of Defense Hegseth has removed some of our best military leaders because he did not see them as loyal enough - not too our country - but to him and President Trump. Likewise, other well regarded military leaders found themselves sidelined or dismissed because of their skin color or sex.

Also, among military leaders that have remained, many have officially warded the Department of Defense and the White House that to continue Trump’s Middle East “War of (Bad) Choice” against Iran not only now weakens us around the rest of the world, but also in our “homeland” the United States. Some of these highest military leaders went so far as to “non-concur” meaning that they disagree with some of the Defense Secretary’s orders, but as loyal soldiers, will execute them.

So we have been warned by those who want to protect and defend us.

“Soft” Power — Great countries influence other countries in many ways. The good use of “Soft Power” provides a number of excellent ways.

For example, the use of diplomacy in international relations and situations where a powerful United States discusses, finds agreements and manages difficult situations makes for “Soft Power” One concerns Iran where two of our not only qualified, but great American negotiators John Kerry and Wendy Sherman, reached a global agreement both to limit and police Iran’s nuclear power development and in that context, keep Middle East oil flowing.

USAID, the United States Agency for International Development stood out as another of our important “Soft Powers.” For about three tenths of a percent of the United States national budget, we helped to not only build countries, but assist them in times of need.

As someone who worked in developing countries for many years, I know for how much appreciation existed for these American efforts – for example the PEPFAR anti-HIV Aids program developed by President Bush and Dr. Fauci.

Now this “Soft Power” tool no longer exists having been “Put into the wood chipper” by near trillionaire Elon Musk.

So, what do we have? First, the old saying That “Two wrongs don’t make a right” Then the critical need to vote for change in the November elections and in this instance restore both our military “Hard” and diplomatic and development “Soft” powers – before it becomes too late.

KEVIN KANE
SPENCER

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.

How can you plan for incapacity?



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TREVOR NIELSEN

We all hope to enjoy long, healthy lives, retaining the ability to think clearly and make our own decisions. But life doesn’t always work out that way — which is why you need to prepare for a potential incapacity that could affect your independence and possibly create financial problems for your family.

So, in thinking about incapacity planning, you may want to consider the following arrangements:

Health care power of attorney – When you establish a health care power of attorney, you name someone, such as a spouse or adult child, to make medical decisions on your behalf, should you become incapable of making them on your own due to disability or illness. These decisions include choosing doctors, treatments, and care facilities.

Financial power of attorney – With a financial power of attorney, you designate someone to assume a variety of duties for you in case you become incapacitated. These tasks include investing, selling property, paying bills and debts, collecting Social Security benefits, and adding or changing insurance policies.

When establishing a health care or financial power of attorney, you may need to decide whether it’s “durable” or “springing.” A durable power of attorney typically takes effect immediately after you sign it, have it notarized and witnessed. So, the person you’ve chosen to have power of attorney — sometimes called an “agent” — can act on your behalf whenever you choose. On the other hand, you could select a power of attorney that “springs” into effect only when you become incapacitated — hence, the “springing” designation.

One issue affecting a springing power of attorney involves the speed with which it can be enacted. Generally, it won’t go into effect until a licensed physician declares in writing that the person granting the power of attorney is indeed incapacitated. This could cause a problem if your chosen agent needs to act quickly on your behalf. It’s because of this potential delay that a durable power of attorney is often favored over a springing power of attorney. However, everyone’s circumstances are different, so if you have a choice between a durable or springing power of attorney, you may want to consult with an estate-planning professional for guidance.

Apart from the health care and financial powers of attorney, you may also want to consider one other incapacity-related legal document — a living will. When you establish a living will, you describe the steps you would or wouldn’t want taken to keep you alive, along with other medical decisions, including pain management and organ donation. Obviously, the decision to create a living will is highly personal, involving your feelings about self-sufficiency and the circumstances that define the quality of life you wish to have. But the mere fact of having a living will can relieve your loved ones of having to make potentially agonizing decisions.

Planning for an incapacity may not be the most pleasant task — but it’s an important one. Of course, you may never become incapacitated at all, but by making the proper arrangements, you can make things easier for yourself and your family — just in case.

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. Edward Jones, Member SIPC

The disappearing art of knowing how to get there

I have reached the age when I occasionally give directions that are completely useless to anyone under 40.

“Go down past where the old hardware store used to be, take a right at the building that was the bank, and if you get to the old gas station, you’ve gone too far.”

LANTERNS
ALONG
MAIN
STREET
By CHARLES

Perfectly clear. At least to me.

The problem is that the hardware store has been gone for 15 years, the bank became a dentist’s office and the gas station is now an empty lot. This

is how directions used to work in small towns. Nobody needed a street address. You needed landmarks. Turn by the white church. Go past the cemetery. Take the second left after the school. If you see the pond, you missed it.

Some directions required an advanced understanding of local history. “Take the road behind Johnson’s.” Johnson’s had closed in 1987, but everybody still called the building Johnson’s because nobody could remember what had replaced it.

Today, of course, we have GPS. You type an address into your phone and a pleasant voice tells you exactly where to go. Usually.

I have developed a complicated relationship with this woman. I appreciate her assistance, but I question some of her decisions. She occasionally attempts to send me down roads that no sensible Massachusetts resident would voluntarily travel. I have looked at certain suggested turns and thought, “You clearly aren’t from around here.”

There are roads in New England that technically qualify as roads but should not be treated as such. They might appear on a map as perfectly reasonable shortcuts. What the map does not explain is that the pavement ends halfway through, there is a bridge that looks as though Calvin Coolidge personally inspected it, and the final mile is wide enough for approximately three-quarters of a Subaru.

A local knows better. The GPS does not.

What fascinates me most is how quickly I have surrendered my own sense of direction. There are places I have driven to several times, yet I could not find them again

without my phone. That bothers me.

Years ago, if I drove somewhere once, I paid attention. I remembered the turns. I noticed the landmarks. I built a little map in my head. Now I follow the blue line. Turn left in 500 feet. Turn right at the light. Continue for 2.3 miles. I obey without learning anything.

Sometimes, I wonder what would happen if the satellites disappeared tomorrow. I suspect millions of Americans would simply remain wherever they happened to be. There would be people stranded at supermarkets three miles from their houses. “Do you know how to get home?”

“No, but I think I live northeast of here.”

My generation likes to complain that younger people cannot get anywhere without GPS, but we should probably be careful with that accusation. We are becoming equally dependent. The difference is that we remember when getting lost was part of going somewhere. You could make a wrong turn and drive five miles before admitting something wasn’t right.

This inevitably led to one person in the car saying, “I thought you knew where you were going.” That sentence has probably ended more pleasant Sunday drives than flat tires. Naturally, nobody wanted to stop and ask for directions. That would have required admitting defeat. Instead, we drove around confidently while having absolutely no idea where we were. Eventually, you found a convenience store, a police station or somebody standing beside a mailbox. The directions you received might include three roads that had changed names, a barn that had burned down and somebody named Earl. Yet somehow, you got there.

I don’t want to give up GPS. It is one of those inventions that is undeniably useful, and I have no desire to return to unfolding a road map across the steering wheel while traveling 55 miles per hour. But every once in a while, when I am heading somewhere familiar, I leave the phone alone. I make myself remember. Past the church. Left at the common. Over the little bridge. Right where the old store used to be.

Somewhere along the way, I usually realize that I still know where I am. And I rather like that feeling.

North Brookfield Senior Center announces September programs

NORTH BROOKFIELD — The North Brookfield Senior Center will offer a full schedule of activities, health services, informational programs and entertainment throughout September.

The month will include opportunities ranging from technology assistance and health clinics to exercise, arts and crafts, bingo and live musical entertainment.

Tech Help with Alex will be offered Tuesday, Sept. 8, at 10 a.m., providing an opportunity for seniors to get assistance with technology questions.

Health-related offerings begin Wednesday, Sept. 9, when a SHINE counselor will be available by appointment from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. A blood pressure clinic will follow from 11 a.m. to noon.

Strength and Flexibility sessions are scheduled for Monday, Sept. 14, and Monday, Sept. 28, from 10 to 11 a.m.

On Wednesday, Sept. 16, the center will host two programs. The veterans agent will be available from 10 to 11 a.m., followed by an Accessible Home Health information session at 11 a.m.

Bingo Night is planned for Friday, Sept. 18, from 6 to 7:30 p.m., while Music Bingo will be held Monday, Sept. 21, at 11 a.m.

Musical entertainment will continue Wednesday, Sept. 23, when the Greendale Friends Retiree Chorus performs at 1 p.m.

Medicare counselor Ed Spater will be available by appointment Thursday, Sept. 24, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. An art class will also

be held at 11 a.m. that day. Another art class is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 3, at 11 a.m.

Coffee and Craft will be held Saturday, Sept. 26, at 11 a.m. Advance signup is required.

Representatives from the Registry of Deeds will visit the center Tuesday, Sept. 29, at 1 p.m. A blood pressure and glucose clinic will round out the month’s special programs Wednesday, Sept. 30, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Interactive Games are also offered every Tuesday at 10:30 a.m.

Residents interested in programs requiring appointments or advance registration should contact the North Brookfield Senior Center for availability and additional information.

Open poetry reading series coming to Merriam-Gilbert Library

WEST BROOKFIELD — Local poets, readers and lovers of the written word will have a new opportunity to share their favorites when the Merriam-Gilbert Public Library hosts “One Poem,” an open poetry reading series beginning in September.

The program is designed to provide a welcoming venue for writers to share their own poetry while introducing participants to the work of other published poets.

For each original poem a participant reads, organizers ask that the reader complement it with a poem by an established, published writer. Selections can range widely, from Shakespeare and Anne Bradstreet to Charles Bukowski, William Butler

Yeats, Rumi, Adrienne Rich and contemporary poets.

Participants do not need to be poets themselves. Those without original work are welcome to read favorite poems by published writers, while community members who would rather listen are equally encouraged to attend.

Readings will take place in round-robin fashion, with participants sharing no more than two poems during each turn. The number of opportunities each person has to read will depend upon attendance. Organizers ask participants to avoid particularly lengthy selections so everyone has an opportunity to take part.

The series is intended to foster a creative community

of writers and readers while exposing participants to poets and styles they might not otherwise encounter.

“One Poem” will run from September through May, generally on the third Thursday of each month from 4 to 6 p.m. Some dates may be adjusted because of holidays.

Programs will be held in the upstairs meeting room at the Merriam-Gilbert Public Library on Main Street in West Brookfield. The meeting room is accessible by elevator.

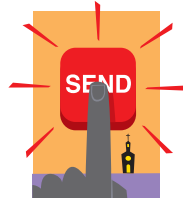
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Maggie Lavelle

LEICESTER — Leicester Elementary School is ready for a great start! Principal Tracy Steiger and Assistant Principal Katie Ford are excited to continue leading the way into what promises to be a wonderful year.

Steiger, a Leicester graduate and member of the Leicester Hall of Fame, brings 30 years of experience serving the Leicester community. Ford, a recipient of the WooSox Most Valuable Teacher Award, brings 20 years of experience serving the students and families of Leicester Elementary School. Together, they bring 50 years of experience to support students, staff, and families and make this school year a successful and memorable one.

Leicester Elementary School is also excited to welcome three new teachers and one special staff member to

the Wolverine community. LES is thrilled to announce a new librarian!

After 15 years of teaching English at Leicester High School, Maggie Lavelle is transitioning into her new role as the librarian at LES. Lavelle looks forward to bringing her passion for reading and learning to the school's youngest Wolverines and hopes to ignite a lifelong love of reading and thinking in students across the school. In her free time, Lavelle enjoys spending time with her dogs, traveling as much as possible, and - of course - reading!

As the preschool population continues to grow, LES is excited to open two additional preschool classrooms for its youngest learners. One of the new Pre-K teachers is Andrea Pizzotti. Ms. Pizzotti attended Framingham State University, and has been working in classrooms since she was 14 years old, beginning as a student at Worcester Technical High School. Outside of the classroom, she enjoys line dancing and curling up with a good book.

The second new Pre-K teacher, Kristin Milauskas, brings approximately 13 years of experience working with preschool-aged children, including three years at Leicester Elementary School. Her time as a Wolverine has been filled with laughter, learning, and fun. Kristin and Andrea look forward to all that the 2026-2027 school year has in store and are excited to continue working with the youngest members of the Wolverine community.

LES also has a special staff member to highlight! Jim Ferdella has joined the Before School Program. A longtime Leicester resident, He is also the father of Kim Ferdella, a middle school ELA teacher. Jim brings an impressive educational background, including more than 30 years of experience teaching Algebra and Social Studies, as well as serving as an assistant principal and varsity basketball coach. He is also a veteran of the United States Marine Corps. Ferdella is excited to return to a school setting and looks forward to working with the students of Leicester Elementary School.

With experienced leadership, new faces, and a growing team dedicated to students, the 2026-2027 school year is shaping up to be an exciting one at Leicester Elementary School. The LES community looks forward to another year of learning, growth, laughter, and memorable moments as everyone continues working together to make this a successful year for all Wolverines!

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LEGALS
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
Docket No. WO26P2344GD
CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIAN FOR INCAPACITATED PERSON PURSUANT TO G. L.c. 190B, § 5-304
In the matter of:
Alexander Jordan Charron
Of: East Brookfield, MA
RESPONDENT

Alleged Incapacitated Person
To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by **Paul R Visneau of East Brookfield, MA** in the above captioned matter alleging that **Alexander Jordan Charron** is in need of a Guardian and requesting that **Paul R Visneau of East Brookfield, MA** (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve **Without Surety** on the bond. The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the appointment of a Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court.
You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of **09/22/2026**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.
IMPORTANT NOTICE
The outcome of this proceeding

may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.
WITNESS, Hon. Kathryn M. Bailey, First Justice of this Court.
Date: August 18, 2026
Stephanie K. Fattman
Register of Probate
September 4, 2026

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE
By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Emmanuel G. Matias to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC, dated February 22, 2021 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 64608, Page 299, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, by assignment from:
Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC, its successors and assigns to Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC, recorded on February 5, 2026, in Book No. 73164, at Page 297
for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at 12:00 PM on September 23, 2026, on the mortgaged premises located at 26 Donnelly Cross Road, Spencer, Worcester County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, TO WIT:
The land in Spencer, Worcester County, Massachusetts, on the east side of Donnelly Cross Road, being shown as Lot 1 on a plan of land entitled "Plan of Valley View Lots in Spencer, Massachusetts. Harvey Goldstein, owner", October 12, 1967, Theodore P. Drazek, R.L.S. bounded and described as follows: See Plan

Book 539, Plan No. 111, Beginning at a point in the Easterly line of Donnelly Cross Road, said point being the southwest corner of the lot herein described, as shown on said plan;
Thence S. 63 degrees 23' E., 448.30 feet to a point at land of Charles Zablow;
Thence N. 8 degrees 56' E., 148.25 feet along said Zablow land to a point at Lot 2;
Thence N. 62 degrees 19' 20" W., 465.85 feet along said Lot 2 to a point in the Easterly line of Donnelly Cross Road;
Thence S. 41 degrees 19' 30" W. 49.26 feet to a point; and S. 25 degrees 24' W. 103.84 feet to the point of beginning; the last courses being along the Easterly line of Donnelly Cross Road. Containing 68,400 square feet of land, more or less.
The exact quantity of land or number of acres and/or square feet contained within the property described herein is not guaranteed by this company.
For mortgagor's(s') title see deed recorded with Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 61259, Page 12.
These premises will be sold and conveyed subject to and with the benefit of all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, covenants, liens or claims in the nature of liens, improvements, public assessments, any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, tax liens, water and sewer liens and any other municipal assessments or liens or existing encumbrances of record which are in force and are applicable, having priority over said mortgage, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the deed.
TERMS OF SALE:
A deposit of Ten Thousand (\$10,000.00) Dollars by certified or bank check will be required to be paid by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. The balance is to be paid by certified or bank check at Harmon Law Offices, P.C., 150 California St., Newton, Massachusetts 02458, or by mail to P.O. Box 610389, Newton Highlands, Massachusetts 02461-

0389, within thirty (30) days from the date of sale. Deed will be provided to purchaser for recording upon receipt in full of the purchase price. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication.
Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.
LAKEVIEW LOAN SERVICING, LLC
Present holder of said mortgage
By its Attorneys,
HARMON LAW OFFICES, P.C.
150 California St.
Newton, MA 02458
(617)558-0500
29037
August 28, 2026
September 4, 2026
September 11, 2026

Notice of Public Hearing– Planning Board
The Spencer Planning Board will be holding a Public Hearing on Tuesday, September 15, 2026, in McCourt Social Hall of Memorial Town Hall, , 157 Main Street, Spencer, MA, and the hearing will be conducted in person and remotely on the following items starting at 6:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter as can be heard:
Public Hearing Site Plan Review/ Special Permit/ Stormwater Permit- Applicant: New England Power Company and Massachusetts Electric Company; Owner: New England Power Company: 7.5 & 9 Meadow Road, Spencer, MA, Assessor's Map U11-9 & 10. The applicant is seeking a Site Plan Review/ Special Permit/ Stormwater Permit under section 7.4 (Site Plan Review), 3.4.2.H (Special Permit for structures within floodplain), and the Spencer Stormwater Management Bylaw (Article 14 of the Spencer General Bylaws). Proposed construction and installation of certain substation-related equipment and facilities at its existing electric substation. The property is located within the Rural Residential (RR) and Commercial (C) zoning districts.
August 28, 2026
September 4, 2026

LIST OF PARCELS TO BE TAKEN			
Assessed To 613 LOWER ROAD LLC A parcel of land with any buildings thereon, approximately 0.406 Acres located and known as 30 QUABOAG ST shown on the Town of Brookfield Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 006.D-0000-0059.0 and being part of the premises recorded in book 67961 on page 393 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds.			
Tax Year 2024	Type of Liability	Assessed Amount	Unpaid Balance
\$2,346.88	Tax	\$2,346.88	\$1,149.98
Assessed To BEACON REALTY PARTNERS LLC A parcel of land with any buildings thereon, approximately 0.057 Acres located and known as 3 LAKEVIEW AVE shown on the Town of Brookfield Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 005.E-0000-0111.0 and being part of the premises recorded in book 69548 on page 107 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds.			
Tax Year 2024	Type of Liability	Assessed Amount	Unpaid Balance
	Tax	\$51.68	\$51.68
Assessed To CASE BARBARA A parcel of land with any buildings thereon, approximately 29.87 Acres located and known as 97 TOWN FARM RD shown on the Town of Brookfield Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 004.A-0000-0015.0 and being part of the premises recorded in book 46071 on page 40 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds.			
Tax Year 2024	Type of Liability	Assessed Amount	Unpaid Balance
	Tax	\$49.04	\$20.40
Assessed To CHAFFEE RICHARD A parcel of land with any buildings thereon, approximately 2.77 Acres located and known as 9 LAKE RD shown on the Town of Brookfield Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 005.B-0000-0022.0 and being part of the premises recorded in book 60982 on page 146 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds.			
Tax Year 2025	Type of Liability	Assessed Amount	Unpaid Balance
	Tax	\$6,927.30	\$5,495.08
Assessed To CHAFFEE RICHARD A parcel of land with any buildings thereon, approximately 0.344 Acres located and known as 60 TOWN FARM RD shown on the Town of Brookfield Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 004.B-0000-0003.0 and being part of the premises recorded in book 69333 on page 243 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds.			
Tax Year 2025	Type of Liability	Assessed Amount	Unpaid Balance
	Tax	\$630.04	\$160.36
Assessed To CHOQUET DEBRA R ET AL A parcel of land with any buildings thereon, approximately 0.25 Acres located and known as 31 KIMBALL ST shown on the Town of Brookfield Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 006.C-0002-0049.0 and being part of the premises recorded in book 38282 on page 262 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds.			
Tax Year 2025	Type of Liability	Assessed Amount	Unpaid Balance
	Tax	\$2,453.58	\$1,964.24
Assessed to CURTIS JR MARC And CURTIS LAUREN A parcel of land with any buildings thereon, approximately 3.927 Acres located and known as 101 WEBBER RD shown on the Town of Brookfield Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 002.A-0000-0060.A and being part of the premises recorded in book 68229 on page 71 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds			
Tax Year 2025	Type of Liability	Assessed Amount	Unpaid Balance
	Tax	\$1,123 85	\$715.25
Assessed To ESTATE OF WALKER GEORGE L A parcel of land with any buildings thereon, approximately 1.75 Acres located and known as 43 SOUTH MAPLE ST shown on the Town of Brookfield Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 006.C-0000-0052.0 and being part of the premises recorded in book 2888 on page 424 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds.			
Tax Year 2014	Type of Liability	Assessed Amount	Unpaid Balance
	Tax	\$244.97	\$244.97
Assessed To FARRELL MARK R A parcel of land with any buildings thereon, approximately 14.763 Acres located and known as 80 TOWN FARM RD shown on the Town of Brookfield Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 004.A-0000-0004.0 and being part of the premises recorded in book 29350 on page 326 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds.			

Tax Year 2025	Type of Liability	Assessed Amount	Unpaid Balance
	Tax	\$1,419.52	\$1,071 06
Assessed To HAMMOND MARK D A parcel of land with any buildings thereon, approximately 0.162 Acres located and known as 6 LINCOLN ST EXT shown on the Town of Brookfield Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 006.C-0001-0086.0 and being part of the premises recorded in book 52070 on page 212 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds			
Tax Year 2023	Type of Liability	Assessed Amount	Unpaid Balance
	Tax		\$1,369.49
Assessed To HAMMOND MARK D A parcel of land with any buildings thereon, approximately 0.48 Acres located and known as 30 RICE CORNER RD shown on the Town of Brookfield Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 004.C-0000-0023.0 and being part of the premises recorded in book 47352 on page 320 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds			
Tax Year 2023	Type of Liability	Assessed Amount	Unpaid Balance
	Tax		\$3,311.06
Assessed to HASSETT MELISSA And COSTA COREY A parcel of land with any buildings thereon, approximately 0.343 Acres located and known as 10 DRAPER ST shown on the Town of Brookfield Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 006.C-0001-0131.0 and being part of the premises recorded in book 60401 on page 123 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds.			
Tax Year 2025	Type of Liability	Assessed Amount	Unpaid Balance
	Tax	\$2,435.00	\$2,435.00
Assessed To LAPOINTE DOLLARD H & BERNADETTE O A parcel of land with any buildings thereon, approximately 0.51 Acres located and known as 4 SOUTH MAPLE ST shown on the Town of Brookfield Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 006.C-0001-0134.0 and being part of the premises recorded in book 2881 on page 62 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds.			
Supposed Present Owner ESTATE OF LAPOINTE, DOLLARD H			
Tax Year 2017	Type of Liability	Assessed Amount	Unpaid Balance
	Tax	\$1,447.96	\$367.61
Assessed to SWANSON ARTHUR And SWANSON CAROL A parcel of land with any buildings thereon. approximately 3.14 Acres located and known as 23 QUABOAG ST A shown on the Town of Brookfield Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 006.D-0000-0005.B and being part of the premises recorded in book 59468 on page 114 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds.			
Tax Year 2022	Type of Liability	Assessed Amount	Unpaid Balance
	Tax	\$1,05316	\$1,05316
Assessed To TOTO EUGENE A parcel of land with any buildings thereon, approximately 7.5 Acres located and known as 15 FOREST ST shown on the Town of Brookfield Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 006.D-0000-0030.0 and being part of the premises recorded in book 63832 on page 297 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds.			
Tax Year 2024	Type of Liability	Assessed Amount	Unpaid Balance
	Tax	\$1,18408	\$1,184.08
Assessed to TOTO EUGENE A And TOTO MARISSA A A parcel of land with any buildings thereon, approximately 0.55 Acres located and known as 8 BOYES AVE shown on the Town of Brookfield Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 006.D-0000-0026.0 and being part of the premises recorded in book 59889 on page 192 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds.			
Tax Year 2023	Type of Liability	Assessed Amount	Unpaid Balance
	Tax	\$3,820.82	\$1,635.07
Assessed to WENTWORTH EDWARDS And WENTWORTH TINA M A parcel of land with any buildings thereon, approximately 0.449 Acres located and known as 64 QUABOAG ST shown on the Town of Brookfield Assessors Records as Parcel Identifier 005.E-0000-0004.0 and being part of the premises recorded in book 10753 on page 160 in the Worcester Registry of Deeds.			
Tax Year 2024	Type of Liability	Assessed Amount	Unpaid Balance
	Tax	\$1,042 72	\$1,042.72
Brenda Parish Collector of Taxes Friday, September 4th, 2026 Town of Brookfield Name of City or Town STF 6053 September 4, 2026			

East Brookfield library announces fall programs and activities

EAST BROOKFIELD — The East Brookfield library is heading into fall with a busy schedule of programs for children and adults, including a new story time, a fall reading program, movies, a tag sale and opportunities to learn cribbage and American mahjongg.

A new Story-Time program will be held Mondays at 10:30 a.m. for children ages six months to six years. Children will play games, listen to stories and create art projects to take home.

Caregivers are required to remain with children during the program, with at least one adult caregiver required for every two children.

The library is also extending its summer reading activities with a Fall Reading Program beginning Sept. 1. Participants can pick up a reading log and bag at the library and complete reading activities to qualify for two tickets to a Springfield Thunderbirds game in January 2027.

Books recorded on the reading log must be checked out from the East Brookfield library. The game tickets are not transferable and will be available for pickup on game day at the MassMutual Center in Springfield. The program will also offer opportunities to ride on the Fanboni and meet the Thunderbirds mascot. Additional game tickets may be purchased at a reduced price.

The library's annual Tag Sale is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 26, with a rain date of Saturday, Oct. 3. Setup will begin at 9 a.m., with the sale running from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Anyone interested in reserving a spot should visit the library in person for information about setup requirements. Participants

are asked not to call to reserve a space, and all unsold items must be removed following the sale.

Movie Time will also return this fall, giving residents an opportunity to bring a snack, watch a movie and meet other members of the community. "Project Hail Mary" is scheduled for Tuesday, Sept. 15, at 1 p.m., followed by "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" on Tuesday, Oct. 13, at 1 p.m. and "The Librarian" on Tuesday, Nov. 10, at 1 p.m.

Two special children's movie events are also planned.

"It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown" will be shown Thursday, Oct. 29, at 3:30 p.m. Children are encouraged to wear costumes and can "haunt" Town Hall following the movie.

A "Charlie Brown Thanksgiving" will be shown Thursday, Nov. 19, at 3:30 p.m., accompanied by a Charlie Brown-themed feast.

Adults interested in card and tabletop games will have several opportunities to participate throughout the fall.

Cribbage Club welcomes experienced players as well as those interested in learning the game. Meetings will be held at 4 p.m. Sept. 21, Oct. 5 and 26, and Nov. 2, 16 and 30.

The library will also host American mahjongg sessions for residents who want to learn the game or share their knowledge with other players. Sessions will be held at 2 p.m. Sept. 8 and 22, Oct. 6 and 20, Nov. 3 and 17, and Dec. 1.

Additional information about the programs and registration requirements is available by visiting the East Brookfield library.

Ware Comedy Show returns to Workshop13

WARE — Workshop13 is excited to announce the return of Ware Comedy Show, a Colorblindguy comedy event. This 21+ show takes place at 13 Church St., Ware, on Saturday, Sept. 26. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the performance begins at 7 p.m. Tickets are available for \$20 thanks to the support of the Ware Cultural Council and can be purchased in advance at www.workshop13.org. Comedy fans can expect a night filled with original material, quick wit, and memorable performances.

Returning as host is Boston Comedy Festival winner Dan Boulger. Dan headlined last year's Ware Comedy Show and left audiences thoroughly impressed with his relaxed delivery, sharp observations, and polished stage presence. His ability to make comedy look effortless is a testament to his skill and experience.

Headlining this year's show is Jake Silberman, a nationally touring comedian whose sharp wit, unique perspective, and exceptional crowd work have made him a favorite with audiences across the country. Jake's ability to find humor in everyday life and connect with a crowd ensures a performance that is both intelligent and hilarious.

The opening acts are equally impressive. Avery Quinn has headlined venues

throughout New England and regularly performs at the Comix stage at Mohegan Sun. His animated style and commanding presence immediately capture an audience's attention. Joining him is Hilary Price, known for her offbeat sense of humor, originality, and relatable storytelling. Her thoughtful, clever material consistently earns big laughs while giving audiences something to think about.

Together, these perform-

ers create a lineup loaded with talent, originality, and the creative material that defines great stand-up comedy.

About Workshop13

Workshop13 is a dynamic center where arts, culture, and community converge—expanding access to the arts and nurturing creativity and self-expression in our rural region. For more information visit workshop13.org, or call 413-277-6072.

Leicester KOC hosting family dinner

LEICESTER — The Leicester Knights of Columbus, 91 Manville St., will have a Family Dinner on Wednesday, Sept. 9 at 6 p.m. Menu is choice of Chicken Parmesan or Baked Fish. Cost is \$15, and includes salad, entree, dessert and coffee.

Call Don at 508-615-8434 or email at ohn7g7@yahoo.com by Monday, Sept. 7 for reservations. All are welcome.

Correction

BROOKFIELD — A reporting error led to an inadvertent misspelling of newly hired Brookfield Town Administrator Ryan Egan's last name as "Eagan" in our front page profile last week.

The Spencer New Leader deeply regrets any confusion that may have resulted from this unintentional error.



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Alex Cordy Memorial Golf Tournament set for Sept. 12

OAKHAM — St. Carlo Acutis Parish, Brookfield/West Brookfield/Warren, is having their Ninth Annual Alex Cordy Memorial Charity Golf Tournament at Quail Hollow Golf and Country Club, 1822 Old Turnpike Road, Oakham, Massachusetts on Saturday, Sept. 12. Registration begins at 7:15 a.m., with a Shotgun Start at 8 a.m.

As many of you are aware, Alex Cordy was an integral part of our West Brookfield Community for many years. In memory

of his outstanding service to his community, his parish, and being a founding member of our Knights of Columbus Council 11080, this tournament will once again benefit our Youth Activities Fund to support the youth in our local community, a cause that was very important to Alex. We were able to award two \$1,000.00 scholarships this past year from the proceeds of this event to two local high school seniors, as well as fund many other youth activities. We ask that you

please consider supporting our event by sponsoring or participating in the tournament individually or with a foursome. Tournament Raffle Items and General Donations to this event are always welcomed and appreciated!

Registration and sponsorships are now available for this tournament. To register, and for more information, please call (413) 813-8100 or email wallyconnor122@gmail.com.

North Brookfield Cultural Council seeks funding proposals

NORTH BROOKFIELD — Proposals for community-oriented arts, humanities, and science programs are due Oct. 15.

The North Brookfield Cultural Council has set an Oct. 15 deadline for organizations, schools, and individuals to apply for grants supporting community cultural activities.

According to LCC spokesperson Nancy Waldron these grants can support a variety of artistic projects and activities in or around North Brookfield, including exhibits, festivals, field trips, short-term artist residencies, performances in schools, workshops, and

lectures.

The North Brookfield Cultural Council is part of a network of 329 Local Cultural Councils (LCCs) serving all 351 cities and towns in the Commonwealth. The LCC Program is the nation’s largest grassroots cultural funding network, supporting thousands of community-based projects in the arts, humanities, and sciences every year. The state legislature provides an annual appropriation to Mass Cultural Council, a state agency that allocates funds to each community.

This year, the North Brookfield Cultural Council

will distribute about \$7,200 in grants. Previously funded projects include: production of “Legally Blonde 2,” “programs “Birds of Prey,” “Watercolor Painting” at the Haston Library; Hip Hop Square Dance at the Senior Center.

For local guidelines and complete information on the North Brookfield Cultural Council, contact Nancy Waldron at nancy.rachel@comcast.net. Application forms and more information about the Local Cultural Council Program are available online at www.mass-culturalcouncil.org.

Spencer Town Moderator launches new community television show, “The Brewster Call”

SPENCER — Jason Brewster, the newly elected Town Moderator of Spencer, is announcing the launch of “The Brewster Call,” a new community television show on Spencer Cable Access, Channel 192.

The show airs Fridays from 6 to 6:30 p.m. and focuses on informed civic participation and respectful dialogue.

Special thanks to Spencer Cable Access for making this program possible and for its continued commitment to local programming and community engagement.

“The Brewster Call” is produced by Jason Brewster in his capacity as a private citizen. The views expressed are his own and should not be construed as official statements or positions of the Spencer Town Moderator or the Town of Spencer.

For questions or episode suggestions, email thebrewster-call@gmail.com.

Haven Hubacz of Brookfield graduates from University of Rhode Island

KINGSTON, R.I. — The University of Rhode Island celebrated more than 4,000 of its newest alumni during the University’s 2026 Commencement. Approximately 3,800 undergraduate degrees and 900 graduate degrees were conveyed to students during the ceremonies which took place May 15-17.

Haven Hubacz of Brookfield was among the graduates, receiving a Bachelor of Arts, Elementary Education.

About the University of Rhode Island

The University of Rhode Island is a diverse and dynamic community whose members are connected by a common quest for knowledge. As a global education leader and the state of Rhode Island’s flagship public research institution, URI offers distinctive opportunities designed to meet the global challenges of today’s world and the rapidly evolving needs of tomorrow. Founded in 1892, URI now enrolls more than 18,000 students and offers more than 200 degree programs across nine schools and colleges. As a land- and sea-grant institution, URI is a key driver of economic development in Rhode Island and contributes significantly to the health and vitality of the state, the New England region, and the nation. To learn more, visit: uri.edu.

Ecumenical service to be held on West Brookfield Common

WEST BROOKFIELD — The First Congregational Church of W. Brookfield, UCC, and the George Whitefield United Methodist Church will hold an ecumenical Sunday morning worship service on the West Brookfield town common on Sunday, Sept. 20 at 10 a.m. The public is warmly invited to attend. Extra chairs will be available but bringing your own is encouraged. Instead of a collection, it is asked that items for the Sharing Cupboard Food Pantry be brought for donation.

In case of rain, the service will be inside the church at 36 N. Main St.

Please call the Congregational Church for more information at 508-867-7078.

Annual Family Fall Fest open to all!

NORTH BROOKFIELD — The First Congregational Church of North Brookfield will be holding its annual Family Fall Festival Saturday, Oct. 3 from noon to 2:30 p.m., with activities for all members of your family.

The many activities include free hamburgers/cheeseburgers, chips, lemonade, and apple cider (hot and cold) for all. There will be a silent auction and cake/pie sale. A bouncy house, cotton candy machine, popcorn and games galore for the whole family, including the infamous {or famous} tug of war between the adults and the children. Other activities include horse rides, corn hole, Zumba with Melanie, and the North Brookfield Fire Department Fire Prevention team.

Come have fun with us! This event is free to all who attend! Call the church office with any questions at 508-867-8428.

Girl Scout Troop welcomes new members

SPENCER — Girls entering grades Kindergarten and 1 in the fall are invited to join Troop 65501. The troop meets in Spencer every other Sunday, 4:30-5:45 p.m. Girl membership registration fee is \$111, and is active until September 30, 2027. Financial Assistance is available.

Girl Scouts is the premier organization for girls to learn about leadership, financial literacy, life skills, the outdoors, community service, science and technology. Girl Scout programming is customizable for all types of learners! Previous Girl Scout experience is not necessary.

You can register for a spot in the troop at <https://go.gscwm.org/troop65501>. Questions? E-mail info@gscwm.org or call 508-365-0115.

About Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts

Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts serves nearly 6,000 girls in grades K through 12 with the strong support of over 2,500 adult volunteers in 186 towns and cities in central and western Massachusetts. The Girl Scout program allows girls to discover the fun, friendship, and power of girls together while building their personal leadership qualities. GSCWM supports girls by giving them extraordinary opportunities to explore, experience, and learn about their world and helps girls recognize that they are vital members of their communities.

East Brookfield seeks public input for Open Space and Recreation Plan update

EASTBROOKFIELD — The Town of East Brookfield, with assistance from the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC), is updating its 2006 Open Space and Recreation Plan and is seeking input from residents.

Community members are encouraged to participate in a survey to share their thoughts on open space, recreational opportunities, and priorities for the future. Public feedback will help guide the development of the updated plan, which is required to maintain the Town’s eligibility for State grant funding for conservation and recreation projects.

Residents can complete the survey online at <https://tinyurl.com/yv7b23fy>. Hard copies are also available at Town Hall, the East Brookfield Public Library, and the Senior Center.

The Town encourages all residents to take part and help shape the future of East Brookfield’s parks, recreation resources, and open spaces.

Vendors wanted for flea market on W. Brookfield Common

WEST BROOKFIELD — The First Congregational Church 36 N. Main St., W. Brookfield, UCC has been hosting their Flea Market on the town Common for more than 50 years. This year the Flea Market will be held on Saturday, Sept. 12 from 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. (vendor check-in 6:30 - 8:30 a.m.).

Sellers of all kinds are welcome - flea folk, antique dealers, crafters, product vendors, and those emptying out basements and attics! No food vendors, please. Spaces are available for \$40 for a 20-by-20-foot grassy spot. Vendors must bring their own tables and tents. The church will sponsor a food tent with grilled food, cold drinks and sweet treats. Email to fcocfwbfleamarket@gmail.com for an application or call Karen at 508-801-7692.

Mark your calendars; the tradition continues!

Leicester Women’s Club meets Sept. 16

LEICESTER — The Leicester Women’s Club’s September Dinner & Meeting will be Pine Ridge Country Club on Wednesday, Sept. 16 at 6 p.m. The event is both a social gathering for members, prospective members and guests. The dinner, which includes salad, entrée, bread, dessert, coffee and tea, is \$28, payable at the door. A cash bar is available. For reservations, contact Linda Monahan at 508-330-9250 before Wednesday, Sept. 9.

The Leicester Women’s Club, founded in 1962, is both a community service organization and a social club. It is open to women who are residents of Leicester and surrounding towns. Annual dues are \$20, and meetings are monthly from September through April. Members hold a basket raffle at the Leicester Harvest Fair in September to raise money for local scholarships, and a holiday auction in November to raise money for local charities. For information about membership, please call Renee McCue-Hall at 508-892-0186.

Brookfield Council on Aging to host vaccine clinic Sept. 14

BROOKFIELD — The Brookfield Council on Aging will host a community vaccine clinic Monday, Sept. 14, at the Brookfield Congregational Church, 8 Common St.

A variety of vaccines will be available during the clinic, including COVID-19, influenza, RSV, pneumococcal, shingles, TDaP, MMR and hepatitis vaccines. Both regular and stronger-dose influenza vaccines will be available.

Other vaccines may also be made available upon request. Advance registration is required for anyone wishing to receive a vaccine. Those interested should email seniors@brookfieldma.us and provide their name, telephone number and the vaccine or vaccines they would like to receive.

Residents may also register by calling Darlene Dean at 774-200-0778.

The clinic is being sponsored by the Leicester Regional Public Health Coalition.

Residents interested in receiving one or more vaccinations are encouraged to sign up in advance and specify each vaccine they are requesting so organizers can prepare for the clinic.

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Award-winning Puerto Rican film “Esta Isla” coming to Worcester

WORCESTER — “Esta Isla” (This Island), the award-winning feature film by Puerto Rican filmmakers Lorraine Jones Molina and Cristian Carretero, will screen in Worcester on Sept. 26, bringing the acclaimed Puerto Rican film to audiences across Central Massachusetts.

BoriCorridor, in collaboration with Experimento Lúdico and Vejigantes Restaurant, presents the screening as part of the BoriCorridor Screening Tour, an initiative that brings Puerto Rican artists and cultural productions to communities across the United States.

“Esta Isla” premiered at the 2025 Tribeca Film Festival, where it won Best New Director and Best Cinematography and received a Special Jury Mention for Best U.S. Narrative Feature. In 2026, the film received the John Cassavetes Award at the Film Independent Spirit Awards, further establish-



ing “Esta Isla” as one of the most recognized Puerto Rican films in recent years.

Set against the backdrop of Puerto Rico’s coastlines and mountains, the film follows Bebo, a teenager trying to survive amid economic hardship. After a violent incident alters his life, he flees with Lola, a young woman determined to escape her circumstanc-

es. Their journey explores identity, belonging, and redemption in a Puerto Rico that is as beautiful as it is complex.

More than a chase thriller, “Esta Isla” offers a deeply human and contemporary portrait of Puerto Rican life, exploring inequality, resilience, and the island’s historical legacy.

“This film was born in Puerto Rico—from its landscapes, its contradictions, and its people. Being able to share it now with Puerto Rican communities across the United States is a very special opportunity for us,” said Lorraine Jones Molina, who, along with Cristian Carretero, directed and produced the film. The screening in Worcester will include a post-screening

discussion, giving audiences an opportunity to engage directly with the filmmakers and explore the film’s themes and creative process.

“‘Esta Isla’ represents the kind of stories that BoriCorridor seeks to bring to our communities: deeply Puerto Rican, honest, and contemporary narratives that invite us to reflect on

who we are and how we relate to our country, our history, and our diaspora,” said Elsa Mosquera, founder of BoriCorridor.

The Worcester screening is part of a broader nine-city BoriCorridor Screening Tour that will bring “Esta Isla” to communities in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Colorado, and Texas, as well as New York City.

The tour marks the first time BoriCorridor has incorporated film into its programming, expanding the range of Puerto Rican artistic and cultural productions it brings to the diaspora. Supported by the Mellon Foundation, the BoriCorridor Tour has spent the past three years connecting Puerto Rican artists and cultural productions with communities throughout the United States.

Tickets and additional information are available at boricorridor.com.

Key to the City awarded to QCC employee Rocky Knight



Courtesy

From left: QCC President Dr. Luis Pedraja, Director of the Auxilium Center for Entrepreneurship at QCC Rocky Knight and Mayor Joseph Petty.

WORCESTER — Rocky Knight, a business leader, nonprofit founder and advocate for youth education, was presented with the Key to the City of Worcester during a ceremony held Thursday, Aug. 27 at Quinsigamond Community College in recognition of her commitment

to empowering and educating communities locally and abroad.

The honor continues a Worcester tradition that began in 1924 under Mayor Michael O’Hara and has been maintained by successive administrations. Mayor Joseph Petty presented Knight with the city’s sym-

bolic honor in recognition of her leadership, community service and educational impact.

“Rocky’s energy and commitment can be felt across every corner of Worcester,” said Petty. “Through her educational initiatives and her steadfast support for our small busi-

ness community, she has continually opened doors for students and aspiring entrepreneurs alike. Presenting Rocky Knight with the Key to the City is our way of saying thank you for her extraordinary leadership and heart for our community.”

Knight is the founder of the For One Child Foundation, a nonprofit that has impacted over 1,500 students across Massachusetts and rural Jamaica through educational resources and infrastructure development.

Through the foundation, Knight also runs the SATE program, a weeklong summer camp focused on science, art, technology and entrepreneurship. The program equips teenagers with skills in business planning, marketing, artificial intelligence awareness and public speaking. Program leaders said many students arrive shy and reserved but leave the camp with newfound confidence and leadership skills.

“I believe business and education can build com-

munity, solve problems, create opportunities and leave something behind,” Knight said. “This is a community story. Everyone in this room, this key to the city has your fingerprints on it too.”

In addition to her nonprofit work, Knight is the director of the Auxilium Center for Entrepreneurship at QCC, which provides mentoring and resources to students who are launching or growing a business. She has also served as Director of the CWE-Central MA Women’s Business Center and Founder/CEO of Own Your Legacy Ventures LLC, an organization that helps entrepreneurs establish sustainable businesses through branding, consulting and strategic planning.

QCC President Dr. Luis Pedraja praised Knight’s commitment to service and community development.

“Rocky brings so much energy to everything she does,” Pedraja said. “Her entrepreneurial spirit has served the community for so long and we are fortu-

nate that she now brings that spirit to our students through the Auxilium Center at QCC.”

Knight was nominated by Maria Lawson, a teacher, clinician, and advocate who serves on the board of the For One Child Foundation. Lawson described Knight as a tireless community leader whose presence can be felt throughout Worcester.

“Seeing how far she’s come is an inspiration to us all,” Lawson said. “She constantly lifts up others, and this community is blessed to have her. She’s a powerhouse.”

Her commitment to community empowerment has earned her numerous accolades, including the Worcester Business Journal’s 40 Under 40 Award (2024), Worcester Magazine’s Woman to Watch (2025) and recognition as a Massachusetts Commonwealth Heroine (2025).

Cleaner parks and stronger connections come from QCC Community Service Day

WORCESTER — QCC employees recently rolled up their sleeves for the College’s Community Service Day, a collaborative volunteer initiative designed to strengthen community connections through hands-on service.

Participants from departments across the College donned gloves and grabbed trash bags to clean up

four Worcester parks: Burncoat, Elm, Institute and University. Together, the volunteers collected and removed more than 150 pounds of litter.

“This event is a first step of many,” said Mendrick Banzuela, program administrator for the Office of Access, Opportunity, and Institutional Compliance (AOIC). “With our inten-

tions in the right place, we can take action to have a positive impact on our community together. We have already received encouragement from our neighbors who saw us and appreciated what we did.”

The Community Service Day event resulted from a collaboration between the Office of AOIC and QCC’s Healthcare Simulation

Support Technician Paul Ledoux, who is the founder of Worcester Litter Incorporated.

“The idea is to build camaraderie amongst the QCC community and allow us to connect even deeper into the area Quinsig serves,” Ledoux said.

Ledoux started Worcester Litter Incorporated as a volunteer-driven environ-

mental initiative focused on improving public spaces through grassroots litter removal, environmental education and creative community engagement.

What began as a personal effort, picking up litter while walking his dog, quickly grew into a community movement. As friends and community members asked to join him, Ledoux began organizing group cleanup events and sharing their impact on social

media, attracting even more volunteers and support.

Ledoux’s cleanup expertise proved invaluable for QCC’s Community Service Day, which garnered positive feedback from employees who reported feeling accomplished and engaged with the people and environment around them. QCC is also exploring other opportunities to provide service through hands-on volunteering with other organizations.

Bay Path Continuing Education’s fall catalog available

CHARLTON — We are excited to announce that the Fall 2026 catalog is now available at www.baypath.net/bpce. There is something for everyone, featuring offerings in trades exam preparations, continuing education, professional development, health & wellness, art, food & entertaining, financial wellness, and much more.

Here are some of the new classes available:

Basket Weaving
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Registration Opens on July 20 – Make sure to sign up early for the classes that catch your interest so you don’t miss this opportunity! You can reach us at www.baypath.net/bpce or call 508-248-5971, ext. 1715. Bay Path has been providing engaging adult continuing education classes for the past 30 years, conveniently located at 57 Old Muggett Hill Rd., Charlton.

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PROGRAMS

continued from page A1

The goal of CTE programs is to blend standard academics with technical and trade training so students can earn industry certifications, prepare for college, or enter the workforce directly after graduating from High School.

Leicester winning formula starting with the fortuitous purchase of the former Becker College's Leicester campus with the support of more than 80 percent of the voting residents.

As promised, after some unfortunate delays, the investment is beginning to pay off. The college campus atmosphere and the added CTE programs are not only popular with parents and students but are drawing tuition paying students from area towns.

Kustigian points to the success of the ongoing Pre-nursing, Electrical, Building & Property Maintenance, Early Education & Care, Hospitality, Advanced Manufacturing, Business and & Finance, and Culinary Arts programs as just a beginning.

"The enthusiasm and excitement of those classes has also benefited the basic curriculum through added focus and discipline to task," he stated.

Committee member and Select Board Chair Doug Belanger has been referring residents to an article in the online national newspaper The Guardian titled "the Jobs AI Can't Do; And The Young People Who Are Doing Them!" It reports on the rapidly growing demand for hands-on job training like CTE programs.

The article emphasizes that the lack of skilled labor is driving salary and benefits to unprecedented heights for the young people that have participated in training programs.

Belanger connected the article to what Leicester High School is doing with our growing CTE programs, commenting, "Instead of being burdened with tens of thousands of dollars in College debt, some of our kids will graduate and immediately earn a very comfortable living."

He often adds with a smile, "Our kids and grandkids will be able to move out of their parents' house before they turn 40."

Selectman Kevin Menard, owner/operator of KM Kelly Electric and Building Committee Chair, pointed out that this project group is one of the strongest this town has ever put together.

Menard, with 45 years of experience in the Building Trades, states, "Nationally there is a serious shortage of electricians, HVAC Techs, and plumbers. The current and newly planned CTE programs offer an excellent career path for the Leicester and surrounding towns students."

Committee Member Jim Reinke runs Trust Built Restoration inc., a large Building and Contracting Company and also serves as Chair of the School Committee and a member of the Planning Board.

Reinke has coined the phrase that became the guiding light for project: "We'll keep cost down by making decisions based on "gritty not pretty!"

He further explains that mantra by stating that, "We want to build with quality and functionality in mind, but frills are not necessarily either of those things."

DPW Director Kris Luzon contributes his expertise to practical designs that consider upkeep and maintenance of buildings and grounds.

The Director stated, "The town representatives on this Building Committee have continually made suggestions to Terva, the Project Management company, Raymond Design, the Architectural firm, and the award-winning General Contractors, Commodore Builders."

Supporting Menard's sentiments, Luzon added, "The collective experience and expertise on this Committee has actually reduced cost by millions and millions of dollars without sacrificing the quality or mission of the project."

In addition to those listed above, the committee has the benefit of getting input from a diverse and talented group of Leicester professionals including School Committee member John Higgins, Assistant Superintendent Rich Lind, High School Principal Ted Zawada, Director of Finance and Business Nick Packard, and Town Administrator David Genereux.

The town has been approved to receive up to 64 percent, with incentives, of covered costs through the Massachusetts School Building Assistance Program (MSBA). The Committee will continue working with the Designers, Engineers, Contractors, and the State, right up to Town

Meeting to keep costs down while providing the facilities required to include the proposed new Trade Programs.

However, to be completely transparent with taxpayers, they have release preliminary estimates, with the intent to produce final figures well in advance of asking taxpayers to vote for a "Debt Exclusion."

A debt exclusion is not an override, as it is a temporary increase is taxation

which only lasts until the debt is paid, where an override is a permanent increase in taxation.

After factoring in the projected share from the state for eligible costs, the cost of the debt is expected to add approximately fifty-six cents per thousand dollars of property value to annual tax bills. The average Leicester home is valued by the Town Accessor at \$453,231, which would mean an additional \$256 per year until the debt is

paid off.

With a positive vote at Town Meeting on Oct. 27 and a majority vote on the town ballot question in the Massachusetts General Election on Nov. 3, renovations of some of the older buildings would begin with the intent to offer training in the additional Trades of Plumbing, HVAC (Heating, Ventilations, and Cooling), and Veterinarian Services.

Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts names new Director of Strategic Initiatives



Courtney Pelley

WORCESTER — The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts has announced the appointment of Courtney Pelley as the organization's first director of strategic initiatives.

In this role, Pelley will support the organization's advocacy, capacity building, communications, and community engagement activities, building on The Health Foundation's position as a trusted leader on issues affecting the health and wellbeing of Central Massachusetts residents.

"Courtney has spent her career working to advance health equity and address social determinants of health, which are core to The Health Foundation's mission to improve health in the region," said Amie Shei, president and CEO of The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts. "Her expertise will be invaluable as we leverage our full suite of philanthropic tools to respond to critical health challenges and implement a new strategic plan aimed at deepening our impact."

Pelley previously served as senior vice president of external affairs at the

Edward M. Kennedy Community Health Center where she supported board governance and led strategic partnerships, government relations, and advocacy efforts. She served as an administrative fellow in the Mass General Brigham system, where she worked closely with the Center for Community Health and Health Equity at Brigham and Women's Hospital, and is also a Teach for America alumna.

"Born in Worcester and raised in Leicester, I am proud to call Central Massachusetts home," said Pelley. "It is an honor to join The Health Foundation team and a privilege to contribute to its mission. I look forward to working alongside our partners and communities to strengthen connections, navigate evolving needs, and advance special initiatives that create meaningful, lasting impact across the region."

Pelley earned a Bachelor's degree in neuroscience from Wellesley College and a master's degree in interpreting and translation studies with a focus in intercultural services in health care from Wake Forest University.

She was the recipient of Worcester Academy's Young Alumni Award in 2019 and was named one of the Worcester Business Journal's 40 Under Forty in 2018.

About The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts

The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts is dedicated to improving the health of those who live or work in Central Massachusetts, with particular emphasis on vulnerable populations and unmet needs. Through its unique and impactful approach to grantmaking, The Health Foundation supports community-identified health issues, with health defined broadly to include social determinants of health and with a focus on promoting health equity. As a health conversion foundation launched in 1999 following the sale of the not-for-profit HMO Central Massachusetts Health Care Inc., The Health Foundation's grants have totaled over \$62 million to 250 unique organizations over its history. For more information, visit www.thfcm.org.

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New school year off to a successful start at All Saints Academy



WEBSTER — All Saints Academy is off to a wonderful start! The first week of the 2026–2027 school year was a huge success, filled with excitement, friendship, faith, learning, and new beginnings.

The week began with students and families gathering for a special evening of reconnecting and catching up on summer adventures while enjoying ice cream and delicious treats from a food truck and the 8th grade class. It was a wonderful opportunity for our school



community to come together before the start of another exciting year. The following day, students in Grades 1–8 returned to the classrooms, eager and ready to learn, grow, and make new memories. Teachers welcomed students into engaging learning environments as they began building classroom communities, establishing routines, and preparing for a year filled with academic challenges and opportunities. On Wednesday, our youngest learners in

Preschool and Kindergarten officially joined the ASA family, bringing even more excitement and energy to our hallways. These early years are an important foundation for a lifelong love of learning, and our youngest students are already beginning to explore, discover, create, and develop the social and academic skills that will help them flourish. Faith was also at the heart of our opening week. Fr. Javier warmly welcomed students back to school, and Fr. Lucas LaRoche visited All Saints Academy to bless



our school as we begin a new academic year. During this beautiful liturgical rite, Fr. LaRoche sprinkled the school with holy water and offered prayers to sanctify our educational environment. The prayers invoked Christ to grant peace, assign guardian angels to watch over our school, inspire teachers with wisdom and knowledge, and guide students in virtuous work. In addition to blessing the school building, Fr. LaRoche blessed each classroom, as well as the

gym, nurse’s office, and playground, praying for a year filled with faith, learning, friendship, joy, and God’s blessings. What a beautiful way to begin the 2026–2027 school year! We are incredibly grateful to Fr. LaRoche and Fr. Javier for their continued prayers and support of our school community, and to the families who entrust their children to our care each day. Together, we look forward to a wonderful year filled with faith, learning, growth, and friendship.

Ten adults, 200 hours, one new career path



Courtesy Seated, left to right: R. Zhou (Grafton), L. Pena (Southbridge), D. Raczka (Spencer), A. Vasquez (Worcester). From left to right, standing: Y. Mao (Grafton), W. Vega (Worcester), J. Wickens (Worcester), S. Shankara (Shrewsbury), J. Sweet (Worcester), and J. Watler (Worcester).

BAY PATH’S CAREER TECHNICAL INITIATIVE GRADUATES THIRD BUILDING MAINTENANCE COHORT

CHARLTON — Bay Path’s Career Technical Initiative (CTI) celebrated its third graduating class of adult learners on Aug. 12, honoring 10 students who completed the 200-hour Building Maintenance certificate program. The graduation luncheon, held on Bay Path’s campus, brings the program’s total number of graduates to 30 since its launch in September 2024. This cohort traveled to Charlton from Worcester, Spencer, South Grafton, Southbridge, Oxford, Shrewsbury and ranged from 22 to 50 years old. Each will leave the program with supports that can lead to job placement, OSHA 10, Bloodborne Pathogens, Asbestos Awareness, Ladder Safety, Scaffolding Safety and Fall Protection certifications; a year of access to Interplay’s virtual reality trades training simulations and a fully stocked toolbox of the trade, presented at the ceremony in front of family and friends. “The goal of this program is really to help people get into good-paying, in-demand careers by removing the barriers that often keep adults from going back to school or getting the training they need,” said Jibrael Younis, Operations Manager for Mass Hire, the state agency working with Bay Path to facilitate the CTI program. “We partner with vocational schools like Bay Path to provide industry-focused training that leads directly

to employment in fields where employers are actively hiring for jobs that provide sustainable, livable wages.” Demand for the program continues to grow. Bay Path has scheduled cohorts through 2028, and applications for the next Building Maintenance cohort are open now, closing once the program receives 24 applications or by Aug. 26, whichever comes first. The program is open to all Massachusetts residents 18 and older who qualify. Among this cohort’s graduates are adult students charting distinct paths into the trades. One graduate is using the certificate as a springboard toward a career in building inspection. “I was previously working in the IT field and that field is shrinking because of AI technology. I needed to develop a different skill set,” said Jeff from Worcester. “I feel good, I feel like I accomplished something, taking a first step down a path for a new skill set. Job hunting is my next step; I’m not sure if I’ll go back to the IT field or if I’m going to commit to switching over to facilities maintenance. Regardless, having the skillset will be valuable and even if I don’t do it for a job, I’ll save me thousands if not tens of thousands in the future with home repair and maintenance.” “I wanted to further my education and knowledge,” said Anne from Worcester. “I liked being in the program; it helped me learn more things. I do renovations. I’m proud. It doesn’t hurt to do it; you get the knowledge, the experience, and you can go out and further your job opportunities and your resume. My plans after this are to find a job, find a house, and try to find something in this career field. Ultimately, I want to join the military but the things I’ve learned here I can take with me.” Bay Path’s CTI Building Maintenance program prepares adult learners for entry-level careers in building and property maintenance through hands-on and classroom instruction. Since launching in September 2024, the program has graduated 30 adult learners and built a growing pipeline of skilled tradespeople for the state. In addition to Building Maintenance, Bay Path’s CTI offers additional programs in Diesel Technology, HVAC, Electrical, Welding, Automotive Collision Repair, Automotive Technology, Culinary, and Manufacturing. “Bay Path has been such a great partner because they provide excellent hands-on training that’s aligned with what local employers are looking for, giving graduates in-demand skills and credentials that make them immediately employable for local jobs that offer great wages,” Younis said. “Beyond the classroom, participants also receive support throughout the process including job readiness, career coaching and connecting directly to employers. Through Bay Path and MassHire, we can often help with supportive services, providing free tools and equipment, and funding for transportation and even childcare, so people can focus on completing their training instead of worrying about those barriers.”

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About Bay Path Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School prepares students for both college and careers through a rigorous blend of academic coursework and hands-on technical training. Accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Bay Path serves ten Southern Worcester County communities: Auburn, Charlton, Dudley, North Brookfield, Oxford, Paxton, Rutland, Southbridge, Spencer, and Webster. Opening in 1972 atop Muggett Hill, the school has spent more than five decades offering 23 career areas alongside its academic program.