

SPENCER NEW LEADER

©2025, Issue #43 Free by request to residents of
East Brookfield, West Brookfield, North Brookfield, Brookfield, Leicester and Spencer

SEND YOUR NEWS AND PICS TO NEWS@STONEBRIDGEPRESS.NEWS Friday, October 24, 2025



Students at David Prouty High School observe the blanket race held as part of this year's Homecoming celebration. Photo courtesy of the high school's Facebook page.

Leicester Women's Club hosting Holiday Auction

LEICESTER — The Leicester Women's Club will host their annual Holiday Auction at Pine Ridge Country Club on Wednesday, Nov. 19 at 6 p.m. The event is both a social gathering for members, guests and friends, as well as a fundraiser for local charities, including Hearts for Heat, McAuley Nazareth, Inc. and the Leicester Food Pantry. Donated items include food & wine, homemade baked goods, holiday décor, bas-

kets and gifts. Purchases with cash or checks only, please. Women's Club members and non-members are welcome, but reservations are required. 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, Nov. 12. 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.

Trunk or Treat event planned in North Brookfield

NORTH BROOKFIELD — North Brookfield Parks and Recreation, along with NBEMA, will sponsor a Halloween Trunk or Treat event Friday, Oct. 31 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. on the Town Common. Anyone wishing to set up a trunk is asked to arrive by 4:45 p.m. Snacks, including hot dogs and cady, will also be available at the Senior Center.

Spencer Pavement Management Plan report now available

SPENCER — The Town of Spencer retained BETA Group, Inc. (BETA) in 2024 to update its Pavement Management Program (PMP) and provide services to better maintain the town's roadway network. This project included a pavement condition assessment along all town-maintained roadways. This comprehensive study was undertaken with the goal of establishing an extensive database to reflect current pavement conditions to facilitate planning efforts.

The PMP is a planning tool intended to provide the foundation to manage the town's roadway resources in conjunction with local institutional knowledge. Ultimately, these efforts will assist in the development of a dynamic Capital Improvement Plan for the town's roadway network. The town is committed to maintaining the PMP and improving its roadway network. This will be achieved by preserving and maintaining the existing infra-

structure to the greatest extent possible. The roadway survey in Spencer, consisting of paved, town maintained roadways, was completed in the Fall of 2024. A total of 97 and a half centerline miles were inspected, serving as the basis for this report. The required field inspections were performed autonomously utilizing a lidar sensor mounted on a vehicle. As the vehicle traveled each roadway, a 3D digital point cloud was developed

and all roadway assets within a 50-foot radius of the lidar sensor were scanned and populated. As part of the data collection, images were captured, georeferenced and timestamped every 20-foot section of roadway. Upon completion of the field data collection, proprietary algorithms and AI machine learning technology were run to identify pavement surface distresses such as cracks, potholes, seals,

Turn To PLAN page A7

DOT to hold virtual public hearing on Route 9 project

SPENCER — A Virtual Design Public Hearing will be hosted on the MassDOT Web site Tuesday, Nov. 18 at 5:30 p.m. to present the design for the proposed project in Spencer - East Brookfield.

The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed project. All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

The proposed project consists of improvements along Route 9 and at the intersection of Route 9 and Route 49 in the Towns of East Brookfield and Spencer. The work involves construction of a cement concrete roundabout, improved bike and pedestrian accommodations, lighting, and upgrades to pavement, drainage, pavement markings, and signage. The proposed pedestrian accommodations consist of five-foot-wide sidewalks along Route 9 and a shared use path at the roundabout. The proposed bicycle accommodations consist of five-foot buffered bicycle lanes along Route 9 and a shared use path at the roundabout. Pedestrian and bicycle accommodations have been provided in accordance with applicable design guides.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT's policy concerning land acquisitions will be presented in the hearing.

Project inquiries, written statements and other exhibits regarding the proposed undertaking may be submitted to Carrie E. Lavallee, P.E., Chief Engineer, via e-mail to MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us or via US Mail to Suite 7550, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Project Management, Project File No. 613097. Statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than 10 business days (14 calendar days) after the hearing is hosted.

This hearing is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (e.g., interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, live captioning, videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), TTD/TTY at (857) 266-0603, fax (857) 368-0602 or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible and prior to the hearing, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the hearing.

This hearing will be hosted, or a cancellation announcement posted, on the Internet at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>.



Students at Knox Trail Middle School listen raptly as Spencer School Resource Officer Todd Laporte and Caroline from the Outreach Team of the Worcester District Attorney's deliver a presentation on vaping last week. Photo courtesy of the police department's Facebook page.

Safe boating certificate course scheduled at Milford High School

MILFORD — The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary Tri-State Flotilla, Massachusetts will be instructing a boating safety class Saturday, Nov. 8 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. that meets current state mandated educational requirements.

The Boat America Course is offered in a one-day format developed to provide the skills and confidence needed to explore the coast and inland waters by boat. Basic knowledge and skills are needed to have safe and enjoyable boating experiences.

This course is perfect for families that have just purchased any type of boat or are planning to in the future, and for the boater keeping up with changes to boating regulations and laws. Basic marlinespike seamanship (knots etc.) will also be included.

Successful completion of the course will certify any minor, from 12 to 16 years of age, to operate a powerboat, including a Personal Water Craft / Jet Ski (for 16 & 17-year-old operators), on all Massachusetts waters; in conjunction with the Mass. Environmental Police. Approved by National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) it will also cover the requirements to operate a vessel in most other states & many countries where boating safety education is mandatory including Rhode Island and Connecticut.

The Hanson-Milone Boater Safety Act, signed into Mass. Law January 8, will now require ALL Mass. motorboat operators to complete an approved Safe Boating Certificate course before April 1, 2026 for anyone born

after Jan. 1, 1998, and by April 1, 2028 for boaters born before Jan. 1, 1998. Enforcement of the new law will begin on Sept. 1, 2026. This course meets the future Mass. requirement. Most boating insurance companies offer a discount on premiums for successful completion of this course.

Participants 16 years old and under must be accompanied, in person, by a registered parent/guardian. Space is limited, so register soon:

Milford High School courses offered at 31 West Fountain St., Milford.

Registration is managed through the Milford Community School Use Program, https://milfordcommunityprogram.activityreg.com/selectactivity_t2.wcs

Adult-Fall-2025 - Boat America Certificate Class or call Laura Farrell (508) 478-1119, email lfarrell@milfordma.com;

The registration deadline is Oct. 25

For additional USCGAux. information: phil.uscgaux@verizon.net or (508) 478-3778.

To locate these and other USCG Auxiliary courses (BA and BS&S) that will meet certification requirements go to: https://www.cgaux.org/boatinged/class_finder/index.php

The Coast Guard Auxiliary is the uniformed civilian component of the U.S. Coast Guard and supports the Coast Guard in nearly all mission areas. The Auxiliary was created by Congress in 1939. For more information, please visit www.cgaux.org.

News Publications, Local Cable Access Channels, and Organizations:

We would appreciate coverage in your next issues covering ALL locations or posting as soon as possible on your website, channel, or bulletin board!

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT
Phil Kubat - Public Education

Officer – USCGAux. 10-2

The following is for copy/paste use by Cable Access Channels to ensure the print is legible as posted in your system....

If posting the full press release body, please adjust font size or split on two pages/screens...

also, the artwork could be used in posting...

The following pages can also be printed and used for posting at your location to help us reach the local boating community.

BOAT AMERICA

One-Day Boating Safety Course for State Certifications

Milford High School

BOAT AMERICA

One-Day Boating Safety Course for State Certifications

Milford High School

Saturday November 8, 2025

31 West Fountain Street, Milford, MA.....9 AM to 5 PM

The Hanson-Milone Boater Safety Act, signed into Mass. Law January 8, will now require ALL motorboat operators to complete an approved Safe Boating Certificate course before April 1, 2026 for anyone born after 1/1/1998, and by April 1, 2028 for boaters born before 1/1/1998. Enforcement of the new law will begin on September 1, 2026. This course meets requirement.

Course offered by your local

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Tri-State Flotilla, Massachusetts

Registration is managed through the Milford Community School Use Program, Adult-Educational https://milfordcommunityprogram.activityreg.com/selectactivity_t2.wcs# or Laura Farrell (508) 478-1119 email lfarrell@milfordma.com; keeping in mind that availability is limited. The registration deadline is Oct. 25. Participants 16 years of age and under must be accompanied, in person, by a registered parent/guardian.

For additional USCGAux. information: phil.uscgaux@verizon.net or (508) 478-3778

NOTICE HYDRANT FLUSHING TOWN OF SPENCER

The Town of Spencer Water Department will be flushing fire hydrants throughout the eastern part of the distribution system starting October 1st thru October 24th 2025.

Flushing removes sediment from the water mains to help maintain water quality. When the Water Department staff is in the immediate area, residents could experience loss of pressure and short periods of rusty water. We are sorry for any inconvenience this may cause. A daily list of the flushing locations will be posted on the Spencer town website www.spencerma.gov each day by 8:00AM (click on Departments, then click Water Department, then click Hydrant Flushing 2025). If you have any concerns, please feel free to contact the Spencer Water Department office at 508-885-7525. Thank you.

SPENCER ALMANAC — REAL ESTATE —

BROOKFIELD

\$175,000, 109 Webber Rd, Rogers, William P, to Lamoureux, Steven.
\$50,000, S Maple St, Pisiakowski, Joseph, to Chaffee 3rd, Richard.

EAST BROOKFIELD

None

LEICESTER

\$800,000, 6 Brickyard Rd, Mendes, Belmira, and Qs Lending T, to Qs Lending T, and Ross, Steven A.
\$550,000, 28 Leela Ln, Burnett, Karen J, to Oneill, Joel, and Oneill, Jennifer.
\$526,000, 74 Virginia Dr #74, Rene L Daoust Jr Irt, and Daoust Jr, Rene L, to Porcaro, Patricia, and Porcaro, Richard.
\$470,000, 171 White Birch St, Peduzzi, Robert J, to Lucier, Adam R, and Marois, Madison R.
\$390,000, 1669 Main St, Hanna J Joseph Trust-2009, and Joseph, Maria H, to Delacruz, Koroshe.
\$190,000, Pine St #3R2, Pmz Development LLC, to Boulder Park Realty LLC.
\$190,000, Pine St #9, Pmz Development LLC, to Boulder Park Realty LLC.

NORTH BROOKFIELD

\$260,000, 229 N Main St, Tyler, Ann G, to North Brkfield Liquor LLC.

SPENCER

\$480,000, 10 Sampson St, Jette Janet E Est, and Jette Jr, Ronald J, to Spencer, Jessica.
\$419,000, 16 Bay Path Rd, Kennen Irt, and Sanders, Christin, to Mascroft, Carol A.
\$380,000, 31 Mcdonald St, Rivera, Lourdes, to Santana, Jose A, and Blanco, Damaris.

WARREN

None

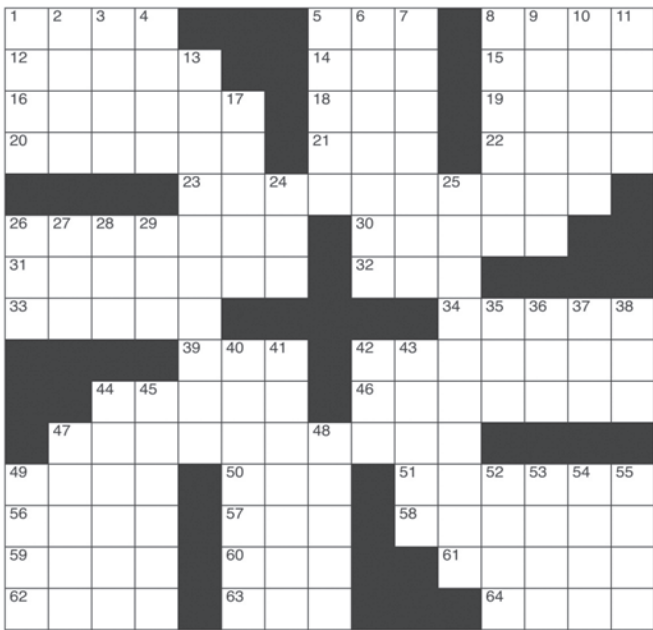
WEST BROOKFIELD

\$650,000, 52 Wickaboag Valley Rd, Martin, Katherine N, to Burnett, Karen J.
\$365,000, 9 Wickaboag Valley Rd, Merry, Ann, to Phaneuf, Haran.
\$107,000, 39 Foster Hill Rd, Nac Ventures LLC, to Wb 39 Foster Hill Rd RET, and Roach, Edward G.
\$20,000, 69 Lyon Rd, Rivers, Neil F, and Rivers, Susan J, to Henrishon, David, and Henrishon, Barbara.

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CLUES ACROSS

1. Remark

5. Upper body part

8. Expression of dismissiveness

12. Alternate name

14. Popular beverage

15. Swiss river

16. Step-shaped recess

18. Rocker Stewart

19. Bright shade of color

20. Popular "street"

21. Wrath

22. Heat units

23. Nocturnal omnivorous mammals

26. Fall back into

30. Remove from the record

31. Sound a splash made

32. Popular Dodge pickup model

33. Jamaican river
34. Notable event in Texas history

39. Cool!

42. Subset of Judaism

44. Newly entered cadet

46. Duct in urinary system

47. Exterminator

49. Snatch quickly

50. Have already done

51. Less healthy

56. Therefore

57. What couples say on the altar

58. Mysteriously

59. Look angry or sullen

60. Bird's beak

61. Taco ingredient

62. Square measures

63. Google certification (abbr.)

64. Singer Hansard

CLUES DOWN

1. Pubs

2. Wings

3. Popular BBQ dish

4. Small sponge cake

5. Open-roofed entrance halls

6. Organize anew

7. Type of wine

8. Forums

9. North Atlantic islands (alt. sp.)

10. Pond dwellers

11. Large integers

13. Signaled

17. Brief

24. Type of student

25. Tibetan monasteries

26. Revolutions per minute

27. NY Giants great Manning

28. Local area network
29. Residue from burning

35. Illuminated

36. Vasopressin

37. Notable space station

38. Wood sorrel

40. Adhering to laws

41. Chose

42. Hovel

43. Stood up

44. European city

45. Works ceaselessly

47. Mistake

48. Sun-dried brick

49. Sicilian city

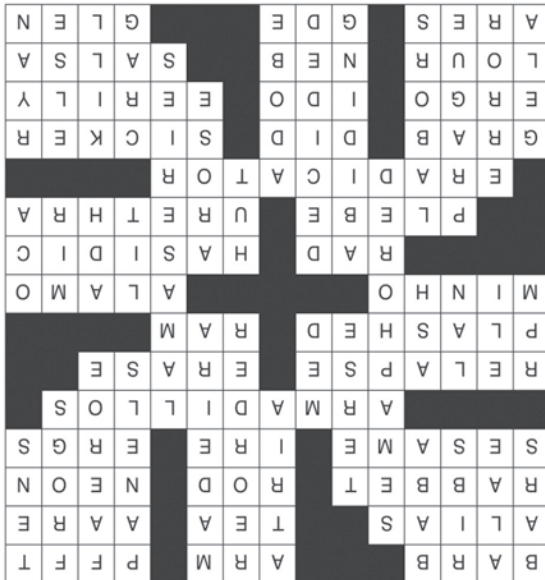
52. A steep rugged rock or cliff

53. Murder

54. Other

55. "Deadpool" actor Reynolds

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OR send to Spencer New Leader
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State officials confirm spotted lanternfly infestation in Spencer

SPENCER — The Mass. Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) recently confirmed an infestation of the invasive insect known as spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula* or “SLF”) in Spencer. A survey team was following up on a report that came in to us at the end of September, and confirmed that the insects were present. MDAR does

not yet know the full extent of the infestation - only a preliminary survey has been done so far. Spotted lanternfly is a pest that attacks tree-of-heaven, grapevines, maple trees, hop vines, and many other types of plants. This pest is known to impact grape/wine producers and other agricultural commodities, and can also interfere

with outdoor recreation if infestations reach high levels, due to the swarming behavior of adult SLF in late summer and fall. That said, the insects themselves do not bite or sting - they are a nuisance because they gather in large numbers in areas where people are, and cover anything they are on with a sticky, sugary waste product known as honey-

dew. Residents may see surveys (MDAR and/or USDA staff) periodically through the fall and winter, checking trees in the area to determine the extent of the infestation. If

you can report any sightings of this pest please do so by linking to SLF web page and by printing and displaying our poster (in English, Portuguese, or Spanish). We also now have a

series of animated Public Service Announcements about spotted lanternfly that are on our YouTube channel, or you can download them off of SLF website for airing on your own access channels.

WEEKLY POLICE BLOTTER

Spencer
The Spencer Police Department reported no arrests during the week of Oct. 8-15.

Leicester
The Leicester Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of Oct. 9-15.

Mary Jane Foley, age 71, of Leicester was arrested on Oct. 10 for Operating Under the Influence (Liquor-second offense) and Negligent Operation of a Motor Vehicle.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 11 for Unlicensed Operation of a Motor Vehicle and operating a motor vehicle with No Inspection or Registration Sticker.

Christopher R. Thompson, age 29, of Oxford was arrested on Oct. 14 for Failure to Appear Upon Recognizance.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 15 for operating an Uninsured Motor Vehicle, operating a motor vehicle with No Inspection or Registration Sticker, and operating a motor vehicle after suspension of registration.

Jason Timothy Johnson, age 37, of Worcester was arrested on Oct. 15 for Shoplifting By Concealing Merchandise.

Berthiaume announces office hours

REGION — State Rep. Donnie Berthiaume and Chief of Staff, Donna, and Sen. Peter Durant’s office invite constituents and town officials to meet them to express any concerns, ideas, or issues that they may need assistance with. Please feel free to contact Donna if you would like a private meeting at 774-402-4742.

Wednesday, Nov. 5 – In the Town of West Brookfield, at the Senior Center 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 5 – In the Town of Brookfield at the Town Hall, 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

Thursday, Nov. 6 – Town of North Brookfield – Town Hall 11 a.m.-noon

Wednesday, Nov. 19 – in the Town of Leicester at the Senior Center, 9 – 9:45 a.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 19 – In the Town of Spencer, at Senior Center, 10- 11 a.m., with Tammy Ruda from Rep Marsi’s Office.

Wednesday, Nov. 19 – In the Town of East Brookfield at the Senior Center, 11:15 a.m. – noon

Fire Cider workshop at the Leicester Library

LEICESTER — On Tuesday, Nov. 4 at 6 p.m., the Leicester Public Library will host a program on Fire Cider.

Fire Cider is a classic folk remedy that herbalists and “kitchen witches” have been making for generations. It boosts the immune system, wards off colds and flu, and is an overall tonic for the body. Fire Cider is a wonderful remedy to make on your own, but even more fun to make with friends!

Join Nora Toomey, Clinical Herbalist of True Bloom Apothecary, for an evening of community medicine making! As we chop up our ingredients, we will learn all about this delightfully spicy and sweet remedy, including the history, the primary herbal actions and applications, and the myriad of recipe variations you can try at home! Each participant will leave with a jar full of Fire Cider! Sponsored by the Friends of the Leicester Public Library, this program is for adults, and registration is required.

To register, click the link in the calendar at www.leicesterlibrary.org.

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Spencer Veterans Day Parade kicks off at 6 p.m.

SPENCER — The Spencer Veterans Day Parade will take place on Tuesday, Nov. 11 at 6 p.m.

The traditional parade route will start and end at the American Legion. We welcome all groups and organizations to attend this year's services.

For more information, please contact Peggy Sullivan, Senior Vice Commander, Gaudette-Kirk Post #138, Spencer, at (478) 951-9094.

Monday final day to register for Spencer Special Town Meeting

SPENCER — The last day to register to vote in the Special Town Meeting being held on Thursday, Nov. 6, will be Monday, Oct. 27 at 5 p.m. at the Town Clerk's Office.

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LEGALS

LEGAL ADVERTISEMENT TOWN OF SPENCER VALLEY & MILL STREETS INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

The Town of Spencer invites sealed Bids for the Valley & Mill Streets Infrastructure Improvement Project. The project includes drainage, sewer main lining, sidewalk and street surface improvements on Valley and Mill Streets. This project is being administered by the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) and funded by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities FY22/23 Spencer Community Development Block Grant Program. The estimated total project cost is \$999,000.

Electronic bids for the Valley & Mill Streets Infrastructure Improvement Project shall be submitted to BidDocs Online, Inc. until November 20, 2025 at 2:00 PM EST, at which time they will be publicly opened online. Complete instructions for filing bids are included in the project manual.

Contract Documents, including plans and specifications, may be viewed electronically October 22, 2025 at www.BidDocs.com and hard copies requested at Nashoba Blue, Inc., 433 Main Street, Hudson, MA 01749 (978-568-1167). There is a refundable deposit of \$50.00 per set payable to BidDocs Online, Inc. Deposits may be electronically paid or must be a certified or cashier's check. Bidders requesting Contract Documents to be mailed to them shall include a separate check for \$40.00 per set for UPS Ground (or \$65.00 per set for UPS overnight), payable to the BidDocs Online, Inc., to cover mailing costs.

Bids shall be accompanied by a bid deposit in the amount of five (5%) of the greatest possible bid amount, considering all alternates, and made payable to the Town of Spencer. MassDOT prequalification of contractors with the class of work as, Highway Construction, for the project with an estimated value of \$999,000 will be required.

All bids for this project are subject to the provisions and minimum wage rates required by M.G.L. c.30, §39M as amended, and M.G.L. c.149, §26 to 27H, inclusive. All applicable Federal minimum wage rates and applicable Federal labor standards shall also apply pursuant to the Davis-Bacon Act. When both State and Federal wage rates are applicable, the higher rate

must be paid.

The Awarding Authority encourages, to the extent feasible, the use of minority-, women- and disadvantaged-owned businesses for work under this contract and likewise encourages, to the greatest extent possible, that all bidders take affirmative steps to ensure training and employment for lower-income project area residents and award of subcontracts to HUD-defined Section 3 businesses. Bidders on the work shall make a good faith effort to achieve the goals of the Federal Minority and Women's Business Enterprise (MBE/WBE) policy regarding utilization of MBEs and WBEs in order to be deemed a responsible bidder. Bids may be changed or withdrawn prior to the bid opening, but not within the sixty (60) days subsequent to the bid opening, by submission of such a change in writing in a sealed envelope, identifying the submitting party and indicating that it contains a correction of the bid for the Valley and Mill Streets Infrastructure Improvement Project, Spencer, Massachusetts.

The lowest qualified responsible bidder shall be awarded the contract subject to availability of funds under the Massachusetts CDBG program. The Town of Spencer, the Awarding and Contracting Authority, may cancel this Invitation for Bid (IFB), in whole or in part, at any time that such an act is deemed in its best interest, reserves the right to waive any informality in the bidding or to reject any and all bids in total or in part as may be deemed to serve the best interest of the Town, and will not be responsible for any costs incurred by a bidder in preparing and submitting a bid in response to this IFB.

A pre-bid conference will not be held for this project. Questions regarding the bid specifications should be directed in writing to Corey Brodeur at Haley Ward, Inc. at cbrodeur@haleyward.com no later than November 10, 2025 10 days before bid opening at 4:00 PM. Questions regarding bid procedures should be directed in writing to Erica Johnson at PVPC at ejohnson@pvpc.org no later than November 10, 2025 at 4:00 PM.

October 24, 2025

Zoning Board of Adjustment Notice of Decision - GRANTED

Case Number: 2025-001-431

You are hereby notified that the appeal of Timothy Dinges of Map 43 Lot 1 for

a variance from Brookfield Ordinance, Article II – 2 (c) & (g) regarding a shed/tiny cabin placed on the noted property has been GRANTED, subject to the conditions listed below, by the affirmative vote of five members of the Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Findings of Fact:

•Granting this variance is not against the public interest because it is difficult to reach the private property and the shed/tiny cabin is not visible or generally accessible by the public. Additionally, the lot has over 900 feet of frontage on Class VI roads and the cabin is not intended for long term human occupancy, but instead is meant as a hunting/camping cabin where people sleep no more than occasionally. The variance therefore does not harm the public health, safety or welfare, nor does it alter the essential character of the neighborhood, which is low density and rural.

•Allowing the tiny cabin/shed to stay on the property does not go against the spirit of *Brookfield Ordinance, Article II – 2 (c) & (g)* because the structure is not permanent and will be used recreationally-only, despite it having no frontage on a Class V road or better. The Class VI road the property and structure are on allow for access to the property by its owners and emergency services, when necessary.

•Granting the requested variance allows for substantial justice to the property owners, allowing them to use and enjoy their property, and without the variance, the lot cannot be used for any purpose without expending significant funds to upgrade the road to Class V standards. Granting this variance would do no injustice to the Town, because Brookfield is a largely rural and low-density town.

•There is no risk to abutters or nearby property owners that granting of the variance diminishes nearby property values, given that the property in question is remote, largely inaccessible by the public, and the shed/tiny cabin is not visible from the property line, will not increase traffic or noise in the area, and complies with all other zoning requirements.

•Lastly, the Board finds that unnecessary hardship would result from the denial of the variance. The lot is uniquely situated in its environment with a significant amount of frontage on Class VI roads but no frontage on Class V roads, the use of the property for hunting and camping is reasonable, and there is no fair and substantial

relationship between the ordinance's frontage requirement and the use of the property for a hunting and camping cabin. Additionally, failure to grant this variance would result in undue hardship for the property owner because it would prohibit the intended recreational use of the property.

Conditions:

1. The applicant has represented that the outhouse on the sketch included with the application has been removed. It is a condition of this approval that that outhouse shall not be brought back onto the property without obtaining the proper permits.
2. Applicant shall execute and record a Notice of the Limits of Municipal Liability.
3. No heating source shall be installed without the proper permits.
4. No changes shall be made to the shed/cabin, nor shall additional structures be brought onto the property without further approval from this Board.

**Signed,
Doug Stefano**

Chair, Zoning Board of Adjustment
October 24, 2025

LEICESTER HOUSING AUTHORITY ADVERTISEMENT TO BID

The Leicester Housing Authority, the Awarding Authority, invites online bids from Contractors for Community Room HVAC Upgrades at 1075 Main Street, Rainbow Terrace (667-3) in Leicester MA, in accordance with documents prepared by BLW Engineers, Inc. The work is estimated to cost \$235,758.

This Project is being Bid electronically and hard copy bids will not be accepted. Bid Forms and Contract Documents will be available for review at www.biddocs.com beginning on October 8, 2025.

Sealed bids for the General Contract will be received online at biddocs.com prior to 2:00 P.M. on October 8, 2025. General bidders must be DCAMM certified in the category of HVAC.

A Pre-Bid Conference to be held at Rainbow Terrace (667-3), located at 1075 Main St, Leicester, MA 01524 on October 15, 2025 at 11:00 A.M.

Bids are subject to M.G.L. c.149 §44A-J & to minimum wage rates as required by M.G.L. c.149 §26 to 27H inclusive. The Leicester Housing Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids, wholly or in part in accordance with M.G.L. Ch149.

October 24, 2025

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BAY PATH LPN SHARES HOW RIGOROUS PROGRAM PAVED THE WAY FOR A THRIVING CAREER



Chali Desrosiers

CHARLTON — For many aspiring nurses, the path to a license can feel long and daunting. But for Chali Desrosiers, LPN, a recent graduate of the Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy in Charlton, the accelerated nature of the program was its greatest asset, providing the intense, focused training needed to launch her career.

“If you can graduate from this program, you can do everything else!” Desrosiers said of the Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy.

She credits the program’s rigor and “guidance” and “rules to help us stay in line” with instilling the discipline and comprehensive skill set required to excel in the demanding field of nursing.

The journey has been one of continuous dedication and learning for Desrosiers, who earned her Practical Nursing Certificate in June 2025. Her commitment is evident in her extensive certifications, which include Dementia Care, Mental Health First Aid, and Stop The Bleed, highlighting a holistic approach to patient well-being that goes beyond basic medical skills. She was inducted to the National Technical Honor Society. She is also an active community volunteer, donating her time to the Blood Pressure Clinic at the Charlton Senior Center and supporting the JAK-L Foundation Strides for Mental Health.

A diverse and driven career trajectory

Desrosiers brings a uniquely broad perspective to her new role as a Licensed Practical Nurse. Before and during her nursing studies, she developed significant experience in multiple areas of healthcare.

Her clinical experience spans a variety of settings, including medical-surgical units at UMass Harrington Hospital and Quaboag Rehabilitation, where she honed advanced nursing skills. She is proficient in essential clinical procedures like IV care, tracheostomy care, ostomy care, and head-to-toe assessments.

In addition to her clinical skills, Desrosiers possesses a strong background in administrative and management roles. She has served as an Office Manager for a local healthcare training institution, where she handled everything from admissions and student compliance to securing externships and job placements for graduates. Prior to this, she worked as a Medical Assistant at both UMass Harrington Hospital (Cardiology) and Reliant Medical (Cancer Center, OBGYN), where she was responsible for complex tasks like telephone triage, medication reconciliation, and assisting with in-office procedures.

Passion for mentorship and the future of nursing

Despite the demanding schedule of a working nurse, Desrosiers is eager to share her experiences with those considering a career in the field. She remains passionate about mentorship and connecting with future nurses, often reflecting on her time in the rigorous program at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy.

Her advice to prospective students: embrace the structure and the accelerated pace. The discipline learned in the program is the same discipline needed to succeed in a fast-paced hospital environment.

With her dedication to patient care, continuous learning, and community involvement, Chali Desrosiers, LPN stands as a testament to the powerful foundation provided by the Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy and the promising future of the region’s newest generation of nurses.

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Bay Path's Bolandrina appointed to The Nurses Magazine Editorial Board



Dr. Gretheline Bolandrina

CHARLTON — Dr. Gretheline Ramos Bolandrina, DHA, MSN/Ed, RN, CRRN, has been appointed to the Editorial Board of The Nurses Magazine, a national publication dedicated to advancing nursing leadership, education, and professional excellence.

In an official announcement, The Nurses Magazine welcomed Dr. Bolandrina to its distinguished board of nursing scholars, writers, and thought leaders who help shape the publication's direction and uphold its commitment to high-quality, inspiring, and educational content for nurses worldwide.

"We are honored to have Dr. Bolandrina join our Editorial Board," said Mehrab Hossain, IT Director of The Nurses Magazine. "Her depth of experience, academic leadership, and passion for the nursing profession will bring tremendous value to our readers and contributors."

Dr. Bolandrina served as Academy Director (2015-2025) of the Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy in Charlton. With more than three decades of experi-

ence in nursing education and healthcare leadership, she is recognized for her commitment to developing compassionate and competent nurses who lead with integrity and skill.

She holds a Doctor of Health Administration and a Master of Science in Nursing Education from the University of Phoenix, and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing from the University of Santo Tomas in Manila, Philippines. Dr. Bolandrina is a member of several professional and civic organizations, including the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing, Upsilon Phi Delta Society, Pan Mass Challenge, and P.E.O. International.

In addition to her academic and administrative work, Dr. Bolandrina is a published author, journalist, and community advocate, known for her books *Tenacious Nurse I, II, & III*, and her editorial contributions to *Planet Philippines New England* and other health and lifestyle publications.

Her appointment to The Nurses

Magazine Editorial Board reflects her continued dedication to advancing the profession through scholarship, mentorship, and the power of storytelling.

For more information, visit www.thenursesmagazine.com.

PLAN

continued from page A1

patches, and pavement oxidation to generate Road Surface Ratings (RSR)s at the segment level. BETA then conducted a thorough review to ensure the quality of the data for analysis and reporting.

Based on the inspections completed in the Fall of 2024, the overall RSR for

Spencer's Town-maintained roadway network was 70.11. This represents a significant improvement from the 57 RSR previously calculated during the 2020 assessment. The roughly 13-point increase can be attributed to the bond secured by the Town. The overall RSR indicates a benchmark for performance measuring of the Town's PMP moving forward. If the overall RSR were to drop in the years to come, this would be a sign that the program may need to be

adjusted or funding for the program may need to be re-evaluated.

The full report can be found in PDF form on the town Web site.

Residents can access the Town's Dashboard that displays the data collected by clicking <http://beta-inc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/7f55977513104dd99b6c0f99b95c19f7>

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FRANK G. CHILINSKI
PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

EDITORIAL

Harvest season
and the art of
slowing down

There’s a rhythm to late October that you can feel even with your eyes closed — a soft percussion of leaves underfoot, the low thrum of tractors wrapping up their season, the scent of wood smoke curling through the evening air. In Spencer, Leicester, and the Brookfields, it’s the season when daylight shortens but our gratitude grows long. Harvest time has arrived again, quietly reminding us that growth — whether in fields or in people — takes time, patience, and a bit of faith in the weather.

Every road seems to pass a small miracle this time of year. The local farm stand stacks pumpkins like little suns, the orchards of East Brookfield still offer cider so fresh it tastes like October itself, and hay wagons lumber toward barns that have seen a hundred seasons come and go. The work is steady and often unseen, yet it sustains more than tables. It feeds the character of these towns — the notion that honest labor and shared reward are still the best harvests of all.

But harvest isn’t just for farmers. Every household has its own version of gathering in the year’s yield. It might be a student who pushed through a hard semester, a volunteer who kept the local food pantry stocked, or a small business owner who survived another unpredictable summer. These too are harvests — the quiet victories that deserve their own celebration before winter draws the curtain.

Our communities have long understood that the best way to honor a season of abundance is to share it. You see it in the church suppers that fill fellowship halls with the smell of stew and laughter. You see it at the library craft tables where children glue paper leaves and learn that creativity, like crops, grows best when tended. You see it at the senior center, where apple pie is as much about conversation as dessert. These moments knit the region together tighter than any budget line ever could.

Harvest time also teaches humility. The farmer who watches the skies knows control is an illusion — too much rain, not enough sun, and the whole balance shifts. Maybe that’s a lesson for the rest of us. In a world that prizes speed and certainty, it’s worth remembering that good things often ripen slowly, and not everything is meant to be hurried. Some seasons are meant to be savored.

So, take a walk this week before the frost steals the last color from the hills. Wave to the neighbor stacking wood, thank the farmhands closing their stands, stop at a local diner for a bowl of chowder and the gossip of the day. The harvest season is a kind of townwide exhale, a pause before the deep breath of winter.

We spend most of the year racing ahead — to meet deadlines, to check boxes, to get somewhere faster. The fields around us are whispering a gentler instruction: slow down. Notice. Gather what’s good. In the end, the harvest isn’t measured by bushels or dollars, but by how much gratitude we manage to bring home.

Letter submission
policy

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

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

VIEWPOINT
OPINION AND COMMENTARY FROM SPENCER, LEICESTER AND THE BROOKFIELDS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Let’s be clear

To the Editor:
In response to the letter of Oct. 3 entitled “Crosseyed,” let me be clear in saying that I am only doing so because I feel sorry for you, because when all Hell breaks loose — and it will — you will have no one to blame but yourself and the rest of the MAGA cult.
We are all on the threshold of Hell right

now, and with Trump as President, the flames will only get hotter.
I must say that I do thank you for including me with the likes of “other regular contributors,” such as Kevin Kane, Ken Kimball, David Brown and others. I consider that an honor.
Noreen Fernandes
West Brookfield

Covert vs. legal

To the Editor:
Back when Nixon resigned, it was largely because of his involvement in a covert operation to break into DNC headquarters to glean information about their campaign plans to use against him. Although he did win the next election, it was the discovery of this illegal activity, that led to his downfall.
Fast forward to the present. A POTUS who has both immunity from prosecution and pardon power not only does not do all of his law breaking covertly, but gets little actual pushback, when he announces them in advance.
Kristen Welker asked him if he would adhere to the Constitution that he swore to protect and defend. He responded, “I will have to check with my lawyers.”
Having arm twisted many major law firms and using DOJ as his personal hit squad, the same man who filed over 60 frivolous lawsuits over losing an election, is now penalizing his detractors, with more expensive a frivolous suits. He actually publicly announces his illegal and immoral acts, often in advance, as orders to his faithful minions. Going after people from other party is SOP for this guy. He does the same with press and talk show hosts not singing his praise. John Bolton, a former WH chief of staff, said it best. This “moron” president reduced his hour-long morning briefing to 10-15 minutes, which he only paid attention to, if there were pictures or graphs, so he could focus on his “executive time” (watching TV to see what is said about him).
Do you remember Jan. 6, 2021? Trump recruited his most radical followers to DC, whipped up their fervor and dispatched them to the Capital. What followed was an insurrection designed to change the election outcome. Not only did the then president, not only fail to dispatch troops to defend the capital,

he subsequently pardoned the convicted of insurrection. Section #3 of the 14th Amendment specifically bans any participants or those who act in support of insurrection, from ever holding federal office, unless that ban is lifted by a two thirds vote of both houses of congress. Because that never happened, one state elected to keep him off of their ballots. A packed Supreme Court, rather than support enforcement of existing law, said it was up to Congress. What they failed miserably at, was clarifying the law was already in force until the ban was lifted. It never was, and he is illegally in office still.
If the guy who already abuses his office, by regularly ignoring laws, then pardon his minions when they do, he is trying to improve his dictatorship with more powers. He already does as he wishes, unfettered by laws; now, he wants to step up to control of all others. His actions resemble the arsonist who embellishes his importance by putting out fires he started. It old you before that deploying guard is intended to recreate Kent State. Apparently, troops and public are just too civilized, so the new tactic is sending actors, camera crews, and agitators, to secure enough evidence of the insurrection he creates, to justify invoking the Insurrection act (essentially, martial law) I am sure he hopes to have it all in place and us tolerating it, before the 2026 elections, so he can invoke the Stalin plan. It makes no difference who votes, or how. Only who counts the votes.
Kudos to fellow lefties Kane and Brown. It appears that just like GOP Congress, seeing the virtual opposite of anything defensible, only the truth is getting published these days. Surprising — if we can keep it.
KEN KIMBALL
BROOKFIELD

Why is Leicester having a special election?

To the Editor:
Simply put, If a majority votes yes at the Oct. 28 Special Election, the Leicester Police Department will be able to continue to hire and promote as they have done with great success for the last three years.
If, however, a majority votes No, a lot of dangerous and expensive actions could take place.
To the best of my ability and as a private citizen, and not speaking for any town board or committee, let me give you a brief summary of why Leicester is having this Special Election and how the Town got here:
After years of suffering the inefficiencies and cumbersome process of trying to fill vacant police officer positions, and the even slower and more antiquated rules of promotions through the Civil Service process, Leicester Town Meeting overwhelmingly voted to withdraw as participants in the Massachusetts Civil Service program.

Since that time, LPD has saved tens of thousands of dollars, and more importantly were able to re-build the complete and effective department that we have today. Additionally, by finally being fully staffed, the stressful and often morale busting practice of working forced overtime is no longer needed.
Recently however, the Civil Service Administration notified the Leicester Police Department that they consider the Town still under the Civil Service Administration, including its expensive, antiquated and inefficient hiring and promotion rules and regulations.
They cite the fact that Leicester came into the program through a town-wide ballot vote, and referencing an even more antiquated Massachusetts rule, that basically says, you can only leave the way you came in. Thus, the Town has been advised that a Town-wide election, ratifying the previous Town Meeting Vote to

withdraw from Civil Service is required.
In conclusion:
As I indicated in my opening, if the town votes Yes, the town and police administrations have been advised that the Police Department will continue with the fair, efficient, and cost-effective process of hiring and promotions that they have been following for the past three years.
If, however, the town votes No, the Police Department would be required to follow the antiquated Massachusetts Civil Service rules, hiring and promoting off of State-wide list.
Finally, it needs to be noted that almost half of the department’s hiring and promotions have been done through the current procedure agreed upon by the Police Union, the Chief and the town, but not civil service.
Without being hamstrung by the civil service process, many previously trained officers from other communities as well as successful Local applicants were able to become part of Leicester’s current department and/or be promoted from Leicester’s own ranks.

What would happen to all of those current officers would be up to a bureaucratic, State Agency, possibly causing law suites and a dangerous reduction of our police department, jeopardizing the great Department that Leicester has built together.
Please take a few minutes to vote Yes on Oct. 28. Polls are open at the Town Hall from noon to 8 p.m.

DOUG BELANGER
LEICESTER

The real meaning
of diversification
in investing



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In the world of investing, we’ve all heard the phrase, “Don’t put all your eggs in one basket.” It’s solid advice that emphasizes the importance of diversifying your investments. Unfortunately, some people misinterpret this wisdom to mean they should avoid consolidating their investment accounts and keep their money spread across multiple financial institutions, often working with several different financial advisors.

However, when financial professionals talk about diversification, they’re referring to diversifying your investment assets, not your accounts. There’s a big difference between the two, and confusing them could hurt your financial future.
Scattered accounts may affect costs, paperwork and advice. When your assets are spread among multiple financial institutions, you could face several drawbacks. First, you’re likely paying more in fees than necessary. Multiple providers often mean multiple account fees, transaction costs and mutual fund expenses that can add up quickly. Generally, the more assets you have with one financial provider, the more opportunities you have for reducing or eliminating these costs.

Managing scattered accounts also could create a paperwork nightmare. You’ll receive multiple monthly statements and numerous tax forms, making it much harder to see the big picture of your financial health. This complexity can lead to missed opportunities and poor decision-making.
Perhaps most important, working with multiple financial advisors may result in conflicting advice and duplicated investment strategies. Without a comprehensive view of your entire portfolio, each financial advisor may recommend investments that don’t work well together, potentially delaying your progress toward reaching financial goals.

There’s strength in consolidation. Consolidating your accounts with a single financial advisor offers numerous benefits. You’ll have opportunities to develop a closer, more comprehensive relationship with someone who understands your complete financial picture. This financial advisor can provide informed guidance and help eliminate the conflicting advice that may come from working with multiple professionals.

Consolidation also makes it easier to implement a well-diversified portfolio that fits your level of risk tolerance. When all your investments are in one place, you can see exactly how your assets are allocated and make strategic adjustments as needed. It becomes simpler to gauge aggregate investment returns, assess your portfolio assets and rebalance when necessary.

For retirement planning, consolidation can be especially valuable. IRAs at different providers can be consolidated at any time without tax consequences when assets are transferred directly between providers. When you retire, your 401(k) can typically be rolled over into an IRA, streamlining your retirement income strategy.
True diversification still matters. While consolidating accounts makes sense, diversifying your actual investments remains crucial. A good financial advisor will help you carefully build a balanced mix of stocks and bonds appropriate for your age and goals. As you approach retirement, this typically means shifting toward a more balanced portfolio that still provides growth to combat inflation while offering stability and income.

Diversification goes beyond just stocks and bonds. Take bonds, for instance: You can diversify by bond type (municipal, corporate and government), bond maturity (through a strategy called “laddering”) and bond sector to spread risk across different parts of the economy.
How to get started. If your retirement savings and investment accounts are scattered among various financial institutions, consider consolidating everything with one trusted financial advisor. The streamlined record-keeping, potential for reduced fees and comprehensive financial guidance can help improve your wealth-building potential while making your financial life simpler to manage.

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 trevornielSEN@edward-jones.com.

Mark the location of late emerging perennials



Melinda Myers
Butterfly weed (Asclepias tuberosa) has red, orange, or yellow flowers and can be late to emerge in spring.

As you prepare your gardens for winter, consider marking the location of late emerging perennials to avoid accidentally weeding them out next spring. Use bulbs, commercial or DIY plant labels, stones or simply leave their stems intact to help guide your cleanup efforts next spring.

These late emerging perennials may have you worried they died overwinter. Linger winter weather and cooler than normal spring temperatures can further delay their appearance. Be patient and know this adaptation allows them to avoid damage from late spring frosts as they wait for the soil to warm and begin growing.

Hardy hibiscus, balloon flower (Platycodon), leadwort (Ceratostigma), Crocosmia, Red-hot poker (Kniphofia), whirling butterfly (Gaura lindheimeri), Butterfly bush (Buddleia), Russian sage (Perovskia atriplicifolia), and blue spirea



GARDEN
MOMENTS
.....
**MELINDA
MYERS**

(Caryopteris x clandonensis) are a few you may have growing in your garden. Many native plants like butterfly weed (Asclepias tuberosa), swamp milkweed (Asclepias incarnata), black-eyed Susan (Rudbeckia), Culver's root (Veronicastrum), Indian pink (Spigelia marilandica), Joe-pye weed (Eutrochium spp. formerly Eupatorium), asters, liatris, and goldenrods can also be late to emerge. It's easy to accidentally weed these out during spring clean-

up. These plants are worth the wait since they add extra color to our mid and late season gardens. They extend the beauty, pollinator appeal and food source for many insects, and songbirds visiting your gardens.

Try leaving the stems or a portion of the stems of these plants intact until the new growth emerges. Unfortunately, many of us have accidentally removed these, too.

Plant tags will identify the plant and mark their location but can be unsightly. Try placing a colorful dowel rod, golf tee or short bamboo stake at the base of these plants. Number each and mark them on your garden plans to help track the plant's identity.

Stones or shells, where they are abundant, can be placed next to or surrounding these plants to mark the location. These tend to stay put and may be less obtrusive

than plant tags. Just be sure to alert anyone helping in the garden of their purpose and that they need to stay put.

Or mark their spot with bulbs. Plant spring flowering bulbs like daffodils, hyacinths and alliums next to these plants to extend your garden's bloom time and help prevent damage to the perennial plants.

Avoid tulips, crocus and other bulbs that animals love. Squirrels, chipmunks, rabbits and deer may move or eat your marker.

Consider using a mix of early, mid and late spring flowering bulbs to further extend the color in your garden. Or skirt these late emerging plants with early spring blooming perennials like woodland and creeping phlox, candytuft or rockcress. You'll enjoy the added color as you wait for the other plants to make their appearance later in the spring.

When spring arrives, exercise patience as you wait for the return of beautiful, late emerging perennials.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the "Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition" and "Small Space Gardening." She hosts The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" streaming courses and the nationally syndicated Melinda's Garden Moment radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and her Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

Simulation Theory

During an interview years ago, Elon Musk famously claimed there's a "one in billions" chance that this is base reality. In other words, he believes it's far more likely that we're living in some simulation than in the original, foundational universe.

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That's a powerful idea: that our minds are just beginning to awaken to truths already embedded in nature.

Dr. David Selbie, interpreting the implications of quantum physics, has emphasized: Our choices and behavior as conscious observers—not the accumulation of material goods—are what matter. Those things are transient illusions. True immortality lies in evolving consciousness beyond the physical hologram.

But what kind of simulation? A digital computer program? A spiritual matrix? That idea may sound bizarre—after all, everything feels real, doesn't it?

Yet this isn't just late-night dorm room talk. Some of the world's most respected thinkers are taking the idea seriously. It's not about rejecting science—it's about following it to its farthest, strangest conclusions.

Let's start with String Theory. It's a theoretical framework in physics proposing that the fundamental building blocks of the universe aren't particles, but tiny vibrating strings. These strings, depending on how they vibrate, give rise to all particles and forces—even gravity.

The math checks out, even if we haven't proven it experimentally yet. It's one of the best candidates for a "Theory of Everything" that could unify quantum mechanics with general relativity.

At the 2011 Isaac Asimov Memorial Debate titled "The Theory of Everything," theoretical physicist Sylvester James Gates, Jr. dropped a bombshell. He revealed that he found something astonishing embedded in the equations of string theory: patterns of "error-correcting codes"—the same kind used in computer programming to detect and correct mistakes.

Sitting next to him, astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson reacted with stunned amazement: "You're blowing my mind right now!"

Why would error-correcting codes appear in the fabric of the cosmos? Gates himself admitted he doesn't know the implications yet. But the mere presence of such codes leads to a wild yet serious question: Could the universe itself be structured like a vast, intelligent computation?

That's where the idea of the simulation arises.

On late-night television, when asked if he thought we were living in a simulation, Neil deGrasse Tyson replied, "I wish I had a good argument against it, but I don't..."

And while the science doesn't prove this, it pushes our imagination into territory that philosophers, mystics, and spiritual traditions have been exploring for millennia: that reality is deeper than it appears.

It doesn't mean we live in a video game controlled by aliens.

It might mean that the universe is information-rich, consciousness-infused, and governed by principles far beyond our current understanding.

My friend, physicist and laser pioneer Dr. Mani Bhaumik, wrote about this in his book "Code Name God." He argues that modern physics, far from disproving a creator, points toward a transcendent source of intelligence.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Let's work together to make every Spencer child's Christmas a happy one

To the Editor:
We are getting ready to kick off the 2025 Christmas season, and it is our hope to help make a Spencer child's Christmas a happy one. Last year, more than 200 Spencer children received gifts for Christmas through the efforts of this generous community. We cannot do it without your help. Monetary donations, new toys and family/child sponsors who "adopt" them are what makes our world go around.

We are under the Spencer Exchange Club's Charitable Trust Foundation. Spencer Toys for Tots is now called Spencer Toys for Kids. With this merge we are able to use their 501(C)3 status so we will not have to pay tax on the toys we purchase. This helps us a lot! I've been a proud member of Spencer Exchange Club for more than 25 years, and the generosity of its members is second to none!

Spencer Toys for Kids has been helping Spencer families for more than 50 years. We have our main distribution in the 2nd week of December, but we will fill all needs right up to Christmas. Children 14 years old and younger receive gifts & stocking stuffers. Applications will be available starting the first week of November at the Spencer Post Office & ERA Key Realty (415B) Main St. We have also downloaded them to our Facebook page. Monetary donations can be sent to: Spencer Toys for Kids, P.O. Box 186, Spencer, MA 01562. One hundred percent of these donations go right to the kids. We have no administrative fees! New, unwrapped toys can be dropped off at Cornerstone Bank (Spencer Branch),

Spencer Fire Dept, & ERA Key Realty. If you would like to "adopt" a family, let us know! We will supply you with a child/family "wish list". This part of our program is amazing! It enables us to do a little bit better for the kids that are not sponsored. I wish you could see the wonderful gifts that come in.

My office at ERA Key Realty Services becomes Santa's workshop in November and December where we collect, sort & distribute to the families. We are grateful to the owners for allowing us to take over the building and sometimes the staff to get this done.

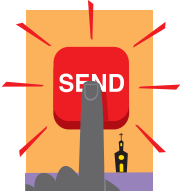
We have a handful of dedicated shoppers who run with the rest of the lists and purchase items with such great care with your monetary donations. They shop the sales, multiple stores and even venture out on Black Friday to get the most bang for your buck. They do this year after year, and we are lucky to have them.

Items like mittens, warm socks, hats, and fuzzy blankets are always great to have also! Follow and like us on Facebook Spencer Toys for Kids. We will keep you updated on our page as to what is going on during the Christmas season with our program. This program runs as well as it does because we are blessed with people who care in this community. Let's work together to help make a Spencer child's Christmas a happy one. Thank you!

DONNA MORIN-FLANNERY
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SPENCER TOYS FOR KIDS

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OBITUARY

William R. Shemeth, III, 59



SPENCER- William R. Shemeth, III, 59 yrs old, of Spencer passed away suddenly on Friday, Sept. 26 at his home. He leaves his mother; Carol T. (Radzinski) Shemeth of Spencer with whom he lived, his brothers; Matthew J. Shemeth & his wife Regina, his brother Jody Shemeth, his sister; Carrie A. Ferreira and her husband Jason all of Spencer, nieces Elizabeth Shemeth, and Jordan Ferreira and nephews Matthew Shemeth, Johnathon Ferreira and James Ferreira. He was born in Worcester, the son of the late William R. Shemeth, Jr. and, he was predeceased by infant sister Holly Shemeth. He graduated from David Prouty high school in 1983, Clark University in 1987, and Suffolk University of law. Bill became a Bar Advocate but then found his true passion and calling as a teacher, and then as an administrator at the Devereux School in Rutland working there for 19 years. He was a true believer of the democratic process and made tremendous sacrifices of his time to serve the community for which he loved. To say he will be missed is an understatement. With his passing there will be a huge void in the community, due to his selfless dedica-

tion. He was also an admirable advocate for the children he worked with, and for anyone who needed help. His devotion to the community started all the way back in high school and it never wavered. In fact, it only became more deeply rooted, making a memorable impact on the lives of many. He served on numerous committees such as Parks and Recreation, Finance Committee, School Committee, Board of Selectmen, Democratic Town and Democratic State committee, Youth Commission and most recently in a position he truly loved as Town Moderator. One of his favorite endeavors in the community was when he was part of the citizens fire academy, where he was able to train with firefighters and get a sense of what they do. At the family's request, no funeral services are planned at this time, however a remembrance ceremony will be planned at a later date. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to the Spencer Rescue Squad, 6 Bixby Rd., Spencer, MA 01562 or to the Spencer Fire Fighters Association, 11 Dewey St., Spencer, MA 01562. for their valiant efforts on the night of his passing. The J. HENRI MORIN & SON FUNERAL HOME, 23 Maple Terr., Spencer is assisting the family with arrangements.

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