

# SPENCER NEW LEADER

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Friday, November 29, 2024

## Secretary of Education visits local schools

BY KEVIN FLANDERS

STAFF WRITER

**EAST BROOKFIELD** — Local officials joined Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District leaders in welcoming Massachusetts Secretary of Education Patrick Tutwiler.

**S E B R S D** Superintendent Paul Haughey and his team were thrilled to showcase their district to Tutwiler, who directs the state's Executive Office of Education. His office oversees early education programs, K-12 learning, and higher education across the state.

During Tutwiler's Nov. 18 visit to East Brookfield Elementary School, the Secretary toured several preschool classrooms and learned about major strides taken by the district's early education team since the pandemic.

"Our mission is to get these kids ready for Kindergarten," Haughey told the Secretary. "Our team is truly exceptional, and this is a great opportunity to celebrate their hard work every day."

Several SEBRSD leaders and local officials accompanied Tutwiler on his tour of the Cubs' Corner Preschool at



Kevin Flanders

Secretary of Education Patrick Tutwiler greets youngsters at EBES.

EBES. Guests included State Sen. Peter Durant, State Rep. Donald Berthiaume, State Director of Rural Affairs Anne Gobi, and multiple SEBRSD administrators and educators.

"It was a pleasure

to show off one of the schools in our district to Secretary Tutwiler," Durant said. "The preschool program in East Brookfield is always great to visit, and the youngest children in the district enjoyed spending

time with the Secretary." First-year EBES Principal Christine Lavin, who previously spent several years teaching and watching students advance through the ranks, said it was an honor to host

the Secretary and local leaders.

"They had the chance to visit our amazing preschool program and see firsthand how they foster a love of learning through a variety of creative activities, indi-

vidualized attention, and strong social-emotional support, while at the same time fostering each child's unique abilities," Lavin said.

After emerging from a stretch of pandemic-related disruptions that lasted more than a year, the district saw 57 students return to preschool education in the first full year following COVID-19. Since then, a combination of dedicated staff members and strong programs fueled a major resurgence.

"With the due diligence and hard work of Mrs. Stanelun and Mrs. Manske as Directors of Preschool for SEBRSD—and the preschool team of educators—we were fortunate to have our numbers rise to over 118 at the conclusion of last year," Haughey added. "Today, we host about 108 preschoolers in our Cubs' Corner Preschool and expect to top out at 125 by the end of this year with all of the students we know about."

The preschool currently has 13 youngsters on the waitlist.

"The curriculum provides students with

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## Leicester voters approve feasibility study for LHS upgrades

BY KEVIN FLANDERS

STAFF WRITER

**LEICESTER** — All articles passed at last week's Special Town Meeting, including an authorization for a feasibility study that will determine the costs of high school campus upgrades.

At the Nov. 19 Town Meeting, voters appropriated \$1 million for the feasibility study. The final vote was 128-9 in favor of the authorization.

Upgrades are need-

ed at multiple LHS facilities on the former Becker College grounds acquired by the town in 2021. These include the Campus Center Building (964 Main St.), the Borger Building (9 Washburn Square), Swan Library (13 Washburn Sq.), and the Animal Health Center (955 Main St.).

"Some of the buildings acquired from former Becker are not up to code for current standards," said Leicester Public Schools Superintendent

Brett Kustigian, who submitted a statement of interest (SOI) to the Massachusetts School Building Authority early in his tenure. "Fortunately for Leicester, the SOI was accepted by the MSBA."

Kustigian and his team have submitted additional documentation to the MSBA over the past year, as part of the project's eligibility phase.

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## School officials examine regionalization opportunity

BY KEVIN FLANDERS

STAFF WRITER

**NORTH BROOKFIELD** — School officials are evaluating a regionalization opportunity with the Quaboag Regional School District.

North Brookfield Public Schools Superintendent Tim McCormick recently sent a letter to faculty and staff members to update them on the process.

Last month, North Brookfield's Regionalization Committee approved a draft regional agree-

ment. Several addition-

al approvals must take place for the proposal to move forward.

"It's important to clarify that this does not mean North Brookfield is regionalizing with Quaboag at this time," McCormick stated. "This draft agreement represents one step in a larger process, with approval already secured from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)."

During their respec-

tive meetings last week, School Committee members from North Brookfield and the QRSD were slated to discuss and potentially vote on the draft agreement.

The QRSD serves students from Warren and West Brookfield.

"Should both committees approve the agreement, it would then need to be presented at the three town meetings for Warren, North Brookfield, and West Brookfield," McCormick added. "For regionaliza-

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page A10

## Swimming safety programs available for area youth

BY KEVIN FLANDERS

STAFF WRITER

**REGION** — With strong support from community partners and donors, a local organization continues to provide water safety education for youngsters.

Proceeds from recent community fundraisers allowed the WaterWise

Foundation to launch a safety initiative called "Just Get in the Water."

This past March, the program's debut lessons enabled 120 Spencer and East Brookfield third-graders to experience water safety training in the pool and the gym.

"The WaterWise Foundation is on a mis-

sion to ensure that every child has the skills and confidence they need to be safe in and around the water," read a statement released by the organization. "We believe that water safety is a critical life skill, and we're working to provide it to every third-grader in our local schools—without placing the financial or time bur-

den on families."

Funds raised by the Wild Bill Swim event, held at South Pond in Brookfield during recent summers, helped make the safety program possible.

"Through the 'Just Get in the Water' method, we introduce children to water safety in a non-traumatic, supportive environment," the organization's statement read. "This method is designed to ease children into the water, helping them feel comfortable and confident before teaching them essential lifesaving skills."

The safety program includes dryland instruction and in-water lessons held at the YMCA. Youth participants learn basic swim techniques, water safety strategies, and lessons on how to keep other swimmers safe.

"Drowning is the leading cause of death in children under four—and the second-leading cause of death for youth under 14. Drowning is fully preventable," the organization's statement read.

Participants in the water safety program receive several instructional opportunities and

other benefits, including dryland and in-water lessons with certified instructors; a swim bag, goggles, and swimsuit (if needed); access to YMCA facilities for training; and lunch on site.

As part of the water safety program, parents of participants also receive education.

"We are working to remove barriers to swim lessons, making sure that every child—regardless of their background—has the opportunity to learn how to be safe and confident in the water," read the statement released by organizers. "The WaterWise Foundation aims to create a community where every child is comfortable in the water and knows how to stay safe. Our programs are designed to reach local third-graders through the school system, working directly with educators to make sure no child is left behind."

Since 2022, the Wild Bill Swim—an open water swim and paddle board event on South Pond—has raised funds in support of the Just Get in the Water program.

"The support we receive from this event

helps us provide these swimming lessons, safety training, and the necessary equipment for children in need," read the statement released by organizers.

To learn more about the fundraiser, visit [www.WildBillSwim.org](http://www.WildBillSwim.org).

Looking ahead, area residents are invited to continue supporting the fundraiser and help keep kids safe in the water.

Meanwhile, local parents and school officials are urged to learn more about the program and help connect students in their districts to water safety lessons and other opportunities.

"Help us teach water safety and make a difference in the lives of children in our community," the informational statement read. "Talk to your school principal and make them aware of the program. Then get them to contact WaterWise."

The next sessions for the youth water safety program will run in January 2025.

To learn more about the WaterWise Foundation, send an email to [jenn@wildbillswim.org](mailto:jenn@wildbillswim.org).



Courtesy

Thanks to strong community support at local fundraisers, area youngsters are learning about water safety.

# Bay Path Academy Director attends Books for Pinoy Foundation Gala

WARWICK, R.I. — Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN of Athol (formerly of Dudley and Douglas), Academy Director at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy in Charlton was joined by her husband, Joseph Bolandrina in the second annual Books for Pinoy Foundation (BFP) Nov. 9 Foundation Gala at University Ballroom of the Double Tree by Hilton. The mission of Books for Pinoy Foundation (<https://www.booksforpinoys.com/index.php>) is to build a library which will serve as a hub to different provinces in the Philippines. BFP is a 501c nonprofit organization 87-1616616 designed to help educate children in the Philippines. BFP have been sending books to less fortunate children, schools, and libraries across the Philippines. BFP opened eight (8) libraries and have started taking applications to help other schools, libraries across the islands. BFP connects and works with different institutions in the USA including Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy to help facilitate collection of books, eBooks, and computers. BFP continues helping build libraries and explore the wonderful world of books.

Photo shows Joseph and Gretheline Bolandrina with the BFP backdrop. Joseph was the volunteer emcee for the event while Gretheline previously helped with the Authors Alley.

Gretheline stated, "The mission of BFP aligns with my belief in literacy advocacy and I fully support their efforts."

Funds raised at the Nov. 9 Foundation Gala help support BFP's literacy advocacy. Live music, dancing, photo booth, and fabulous prizes from raffles and silent auctions along with delicious food made for a memorable evening.



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## Luminaries to light up Christmas Eve in Brookfield

BROOKFIELD — Since 2002, the town of Brookfield has lit up the night on Christmas Eve with the beautiful tradition of luminaries lining the town common and Route 9, and this year is no exception. The Brookfield Luminaries Committee is gearing up to organize the placing of 1,700 luminaries around the Brookfield common, on Lincoln Street, down Route 9, and part way down Route 148, up to Lewis Field.

Setup this year will begin at noon with placing bags, sand, and candles, and then we will begin lighting all the candles. Everything should be completely done by 2:00 p.m. Staging areas are 18 Common St. (Library Annex) and 15 River St. (Masuzzo & Rector household – they will have hot chocolate available for volunteers during setup).

The Luminaries Memorial Board will again be available for all to have posted on our board for Christmas Eve. Donations may be sent to Friends of the Merrick Public Library, PO Box 528, Brookfield, MA 01506 or dropped off at the library.

Oakholm Farm will offer free hayrides at the Brookfield Congregational Church, starting at 4:30 p.m. Brookfield Congregational Church will be open from 4 p.m. for anyone who wants to warm up, and will have hot chocolate and cookies available for volunteers. Caroling will be performed on the Common at 6:30 p.m., and an indoor service will begin at 7 p.m. The church will be open after the service for a time for hot chocolate and cookies. As in the past a free-will donation basket will be out, and all proceeds will help fund next year's luminaries.

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

The Luminaries are funded by the Cultural Council, the Friends of the Library, Brookfield Community Club, and private donors. To donate, please mail to Friends of the Merrick Public Library, PO Box 528, Brookfield, MA 01506

All new setup schedule!! Anyone is welcome to volunteer at any stage of this simple yet beautiful tradition. Just show up on the common any time after noon on Christmas Eve (Dec. 24). We expect to be done by 2 p.m. Cleanup is Christmas morning (Dec. 25) at 9 a.m.

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

## SPENCER ALMANAC

### REAL ESTATE

#### BROOKFIELD

\$519,900, 31 Lake Rd, Quaboag Vly Prop Mgmt LLC, to Sanders, Alanna.  
\$425,000, 9 Gay Rd, Berthiaume, Blaise P, to Toomey, Bonnie, and Toomey, Timothy J.

#### EAST BROOKFIELD

\$515,000, 124 Haywood Dr, Davis, Ronald J, and Davis, Martha L, to Nichols, Corey, and Nichols, Amanda.  
\$430,000, 118 North St, Markopoulos, Nicholas, to Pantuosco, Nicholas, and Bruynell, Ellen.  
\$87,000, Oakland Dr, Smith, Janice G, to Houghton, Michael A, and Gosselin, Alexis E.

#### LEICESTER

\$650,000, 97 Burncoat Ln, Benton, Richard D, and Benton, Marcia D, to Campion Jr, Thomas.  
\$637,500, 508 Pine St, Add Value LLC, to Watson, Caleeta.  
\$500,000, 875 Stafford St, Berisha, Linda, to Flanders, Terren, and Locantore, Jesse.  
\$435,000, 17 Ferncroft Rd, Rydzewski Paul Est, and Rydzewski, Michelle D, to Diaz, Darshia F, and Diaz, Martha.  
\$382,000, 1505 Main St, Dudley, David O, and Dudley, James A, to Tavares, Sarah, and Tavares, Eric.  
\$330,000, 77 Charles St, Stiles, Kimberly N, to Chorney, Scott, and Dennis, Elizabeth.  
\$200,000, 105 Watson St, Bates Jane G Est, and Laliberte, Heidi J, to Jyringi, Cris A, and Jyringi, Donna M.

#### NORTH BROOKFIELD

\$215,000, 6 Saint Claire Ave, Hilton Jr, Archie E, and Hilton, Cheryl A, to Heintz, Christine.  
\$10,000, 9 Old West Brookfield Rd, Chaffee, Richard, to 123 Kids LLC.

#### SPENCER

\$650,000, 12 Shore Dr, Dichiara, Ralph A, to Stocks, Glenna, and Kennan, Lance.  
\$580,000, 21 Lake Ave, Groleau, David P, to Sjosten, Bradley P, and Sjosten, Maureen R.  
\$520,000, 24 Sherwood Dr, Gonzalez Elizabeth A Est, and Checkoway, Lisa M, to Sasseville, Tracy J.  
\$381,500, 19 Smithville Rd, Wagnac, Florence, and Noel, Mathson, to Mackay, Brandon, and Mackay, Kaitlin.  
\$219,800, 22 Cherry St, Porter, Darcey A, and Kowalski, Robert C, to Cherry Street Nt, and Peloquin, Matthew J.  
\$92,500, 10 Pauls Dr, Boulanger, Nathan S, and Boulanger, Marcia L, to Jahnke Construction LLC.  
\$12,500, Westland Dr, Koliss Frank A Est, and Otoole, Patricia M, to Roche, Michele.

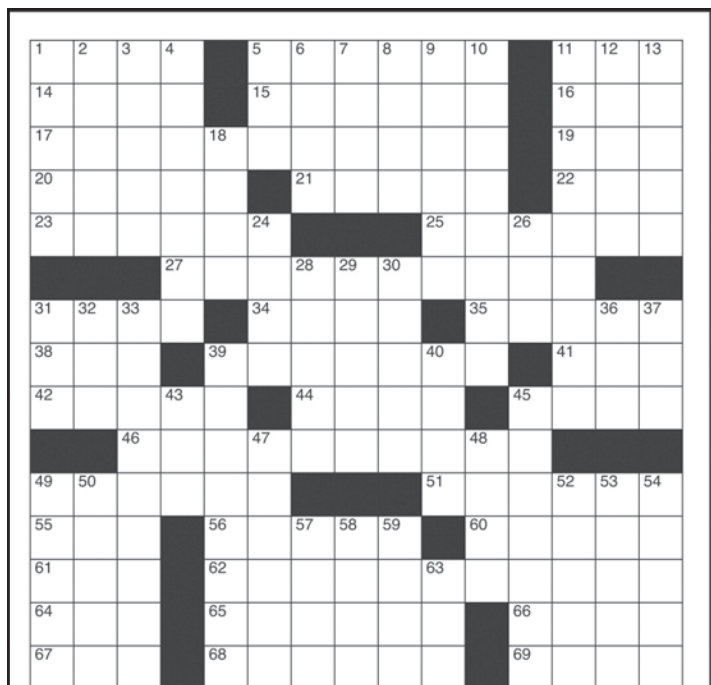
\$455,000, 100 Cutler Rd, Rozzen, Melissa A, and Merrill, Cynthia, to Sjoblom, Matti.  
\$322,000, 7 High St, S Middlesex Non Profit Hs, to Dasilva, Ronaldo.  
\$322,000, 733 Old West Warren Rd, S Middlesex Non Profit Hs, to Dasilva, Ronaldo.  
\$320,000, 185 Bemis Rd, Gonzalez, Aimee L, and Gonzalez, Ruben G, to Danso, Rachel B.  
\$300,000, 91 Quaboag St, Plaza-Garcia, Jessica, to Smith, Patricia M.

#### WARREN

\$455,000, 100 Cutler Rd, Rozzen, Melissa A, and Merrill, Cynthia, to Sjoblom, Matti.  
\$322,000, 7 High St, S Middlesex Non Profit Hs, to Dasilva, Ronaldo.  
\$322,000, 733 Old West Warren Rd, S Middlesex Non Profit Hs, to Dasilva, Ronaldo.  
\$320,000, 185 Bemis Rd, Gonzalez, Aimee L, and Gonzalez, Ruben G, to Danso, Rachel B.  
\$300,000, 91 Quaboag St, Plaza-Garcia, Jessica, to Smith, Patricia M.

#### WEST BROOKFIELD

None



#### CLUES ACROSS

1. Separate with an instrument
5. State clearly
11. One-time MLB speedster Gordon
14. Broad in scope
15. Lacking social polish
16. Amount of time
17. Frame
19. Automobile
20. Caps
21. High school dances
22. Utilize
23. Checked
25. One-sided
27. Having an extreme greed for wealth
31. Potted plants
34. We all have one
35. Lake north of the Kalahari
38. Unidentified flying object
39. Aging persons
41. Small amount
42. Mother of Perseus
44. Ornamental waist box
45. Officials
46. Uncertain
49. A cotton fabric with a satiny finish
51. Extensive, treeless plains
55. Your consciousness of your own identity
56. Consumer advocate Ralph
60. Notable Spanish sports club
61. Body part
62. One's responsiveness
64. Woman (French)
65. Ready and willing to be taught
66. Muslim ruler title
67. Unhappy
68. Gradually disappeared
69. Able to think clearly

#### CLUES DOWN

1. Brushed
2. Water sprite
3. Ones to look up to
4. Monetary units
5. We all have one
6. Marine invertebrate
7. One who institutes a legal proceeding
8. Outer
9. Parallelograms
10. Uncomfortable feelings
11. Cross to form an X
12. Remove
13. Some pages are dog-\_\_
18. Capital of Ukraine
24. A citizen of Denmark
26. Eighth month (abbr.)
28. Hindu queens
29. Acids structurally related to amino acids
30. Rider of Rohan in Tolkien
31. Wet dirt
32. Russian city
33. Observed
36. Irrate
37. Travelers need them
39. Musical composition
40. Auction
43. Form of "to be"
45. Women
47. Inspire with love
48. Think Japanese ankle sock
49. Appears
50. Old World lizard
52. The lead dancer: \_\_ ballerina
53. Protein involved in motion
54. Rosalind Franklin biographer
57. Popular 1920s style art
58. \_\_ Blyton, children's author
59. Abnormal breathing
63. A place to rest

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# Recent rain may help “critical” statewide drought

BY GUS STEEVES  
CORRESPONDENT

REGION — Last Friday, state and local officials started a series of online conferences to address the current drought conditions. Although our region saw some rain straddling that meeting, the amount received hasn't done much more than dent the drought in place since August.

According to mass.gov's Drought Management page, all of Massachusetts but the Cape and Islands was in a Level 3 “critical” drought as of Nov. 19.

“Over the past 30 days, most of the state received less than an inch of rain, which is three to four and a half inches below normal,” it states. “Many areas recorded their lowest rainfall ever for this time of the year. Since August, when dry conditions began, all regions except the Cape and the Islands have seen an eight- to 11-inch rainfall deficit.”

On federal drought maps, that situation has

made the northeast one of the driest parts of the US despite not being hot.

“The onset has been fast, it has moved fast, and it has intensified fast,” Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs' Vandana Rao told the more than 400 people who attended Friday's meeting. She said this drought's “particularly unprecedented” progression “has reshaped our thinking” of how droughts develop and affect the state.

Its most notable impact has been in brush and forest fires. According to Department of Conservation and Recreation Fire Marshal Dave Celino, the total number of 1,226 fires for 2024 is about average, but the 4202 acres burned is “historical,” as is November's total of 2,800-plus acres. He noted November's average for number of fires is 20-21, but we've seen 433 this year.

“The numbers are very impressive for us.

We've never been here in decades,” he said.

Later, he added, “these fires are going to burn deep, they're going to burn long” because of how dry the conditions are. That makes them hard to fight, because “we've had fires break out of containment. ... Every ember can cause a fire to blow out on us.”

On average, Celino said, the state is tracking “10 priority fires a day” and had 21 active fires on Thursday. But he noted some of them were receiving rain and/or snow that would help the effort to control them.

The largest fire was the Butternut Fire in Great Barrington, which had burned 1388 acres and had a two mile perimeter. Its geography was partly responsible – it started on a ridge, burned to the top and then started burning down both sides. But Celino noted Thursday's precipitation included snow in that area, helping to control it.

Besides fire, the drought has had serious effects on water, both in terms of water bodies and drinking supply in some areas. Department of Environmental Protection's Kathleen Baskin said DEP's water withdrawal permits normally just limit “non-essential” water uses from May to September, but in light of this drought, the agency is going to look at making that last all year.

The mass.gov drought page has a fairly long list of “recommendations for communities and individuals living and working within Level 3 – Critical Drought Regions, including those utilizing a private well.” For households, those include checking for water leaks frequently, limiting showers to five minutes or less, stopping “all non-essential water use,” and only running dishwashers and washing machines full. For communities, it encourages keeping people informed about drought conditions, using “increasingly stringent penalties” to enforce restrictions, and “strongly discourage or prohibit” such washing such things as driveways.

Among other things, the list also warns people to “refrain from outdoor cooking and heating” and

“use caution with lawn-mowers, leaf blowers, all-terrain vehicles, and other power equipment.”

Regarding conservation issues, Baskin said certain parts of the Wetlands Protection Act and Rivers Act change in declared droughts. Specifically, land developers cannot use current low- or no-flow conditions in rivers and streams to define them as “intermittent,” nor can they base buffer zone delineations on them, among other things. She urged commissions and others with questions to contact DEP.

Generally, surface water supplies are still good, with the MWRA-run reservoirs holding at least five years' worth, Rao said.

However, some areas are seeing groundwater concerns. The most recent state hydrological report (for October) listed central Mass as having the lowest median streamflow value of any region statewide at just 4 percent, lake levels of about 21 percent, three of the region's eight monitoring wells with water levels below 30 percent of normal, and just 17 percent of average precipitation. By then, our region was already in Level 3 drought, and those levels got worse in November, although the monthly data wasn't yet online by deadline.

October's report is here: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/2024-october-hydrologic-conditions/download>.

Out in the woods, those issue manifest as trails so dry as to be dust or sand, most smaller streams and many wetlands being completely waterless, major brooks being very low, lakes and ponds having notably low shorelines, and all of the leaf

litter, dead plants and other ground material being extremely dry.

Regarding health issues, the Department of Public Health is tracking air quality from smoke, both due to local fires and that drifting from elsewhere in North America. Meg Blanchett said those most at risk are people under age five or over 65, pregnant people, those who may not speak English and don't get messages in their languages, those who work and exercise outdoors, and those with various health concerns. Among the ways to reduce risk

are to create a filtered “clean air room” in the house or to use N95 masks.

Dr Marissa Hauptman said the agency has not yet issued any health alerts for the drought itself, but did have “a lot of extreme heat alerts” this summer and a “wild-fire smoke alert” on Oct. 29. Those went to about 43,000 recipients, including hospitals and Boards of Health.

Gus Steeves can be reached at [gus.steeves2@gmail.com](mailto:gus.steeves2@gmail.com).

## Bay Path nurse educator completes SIM workshop



Shannen Sherman

WORCESTER — Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy full-time faculty Shannen Sherman, BSN, RN of Woodstock Valley, Conn. recently completed the workshop, Simulation Facilitation Training for Health Educators presented by the Massachusetts Rhode Island League for Nursing (MARILN) on Friday, Nov. 8 at the UMass Chan Medical School Tan Chingfen Graduate School of Nursing.

The goal of the Simulation Facilitation Training for Health Educators workshop is “to provide faculty and educators with succinct yet high quality training for faculty and educators before facilitating simulation.”

From the MARILN Web site, the presenter, “Dr. Rose Kronziah-Seme PhD, MSN, RN, CHSE is an Assistant Professor of Nursing and the director of the Simulation and Lab of the Graduate Entry Pathway (GEP) Program at the Tan Chingfen Graduate School of Nursing. Dr. Kronziah-Seme received a B.S. in Nursing from Howard University and an M.S.N and a Ph.D. in Nursing Education from Walden University. She has been involved in Nursing education and simulation since 2009 as a clinical instructor. She trained by the Train the Trainer program series called Maryland Faculty for Simulation Teaching (NSP11) in 2013. She was the simulation coordinator from 2012 to 2018 at Montgomery College and the co-chair of the Simulation Committee. Her dissertation topic is ‘Faculty Competence

in Facilitating Clinical Simulation,’ a quantitative study that she undertook in Maryland. She also served as a Simulation Lab Support Facilitator for the Maryland Clinical Simulation Resource Consortium. She is a Certified Healthcare Simulation Educator. She was a participant of the National League of Nursing Leadership Development for Simulation Educators cohort of 2017. She was an Assistant professor of nursing at Fitchburg State University where she led simulation integration, and faculty development during the COVID 19 period. She helped faculty find clinical simulation to replace clinical. She also led the conversion of the Fitchburg State Student Health Center to a Sim Center in the Spring 2021. As a director of the lab, she has collaborated with faculty and staff to meet student learning needs. She has presented on Simulation locally and internationally.”

Professor Sherman is an accomplished RN leader experienced in complex medical care management, staff education and development, and collaborating with multidisciplinary teams. She completed her associate of science degree in nursing at Central Maine Medical Center College of Nursing and Health Professions in 2013 and her Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree at the University of Texas at Arlington College of Nursing in 2018. She is expected to complete her Master of Science in Nursing degree in 2026 at the Southern New Hampshire University. Professor Sherman is a Board-Certified Holistic Health Counselor and a Reiki Master/Teacher. She is committed to promoting optimal health and improving quality of life.

### Donations as of 11/22/2024

11/16/2024	Barbara Bernard	\$50.00
11/16/2024	Patricia & Raymond Lyons Jr.	\$100.00
11/17/2024	Audettes Towing & Recovery	\$1,500.00
11/17/2024	Jacqueline & Michael Belford	\$150.00
11/18/2024	St. Joseph's Abbey	\$350.00
11/18/2024	Kevin Grace	\$100.00
11/18/2024	Kevin & Donna Lanagan	\$500.00
11/19/2024	Susan Anderson	\$50.00
11/19/2024	Paul & Nancy Lavallee	\$100.00
11/20/2024	Anonymous	\$100.00
11/21/2024	William & Annette Welch	\$200.00
11/21/2024	Tara Smith	\$50.00

Monetary Donations may be sent to: Spencer Toys for Kids, P.O. Box 186, Spencer, MA 01562.  
New, unwrapped toys can be dropped off at: Spencer Fire Dept, Cornerstone Bank (Spencer office), ERA Key Realty Services (415B Main St). If you would like to sponsor a child, please contact Donna at [donnaflanery@erakey.net](mailto:donnaflanery@erakey.net) or call 508-885-6336. If you are in need of assistance, applications can be picked up at: Spencer Post Office, Mary Queen of the Rosary Food Pantry, Town clerk's office in the town hall, or ERA Key Realty Services (outside mailbox). You can see updates on Facebook at Spencer Toys for Kids.

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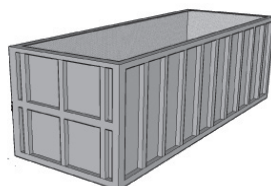
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# National Guard commander helps LMS students honor veterans



Courtesy

Brigadier General Mark Kalin, the Commander of the Massachusetts Army National Guard (pictured second from right), attends an LMS presentation.



Members of the LMS band perform at the event.



Local veterans, family members, and students attend the program.



Brigadier General Mark Kalin addresses guests.

BY KEVIN FLANDERS  
STAFF WRITER

LEICESTER — Students and staff members at Leicester Middle School were honored to host Brigadier General Mark Kalin, the Commander of the Massachusetts Army National Guard, during a ceremony this month.

The Nov. 11 program celebrated all veterans who served their country. LMS Principal Douglas Daponte, Jr., and his team were honored to welcome Kalin for a special presentation to students.

“I have the immense privilege to serve as the Commander of the nearly 6,000 men and women of the Massachusetts

Army National Guard,” Kalin stated. “Last month, I was in Iraq visiting the soldiers of the 181st Infantry, headquartered right down the road in Worcester.”

Kalin was honored to join school officials and students in thanking all veterans.

“On Veterans Day, we honor the men and women who currently serve and have served honorably in the past—those who have sworn an oath to protect and defend the freedoms and liberties we enjoy as American citizens,” Kalin added. “These freedoms and liberties were bought and paid for by the sacrifices of our veterans.”

Kalin also took time to acknowledge the challenges countless veterans face after returning home.

“Veterans have left the comfort of their homes and families to face unknown dangers. They have missed birthdays, holidays, graduations, births, deaths, meaningful events, and precious moments with their loved ones,” Kalin said. “Others have paid with their health and wellbeing, bearing physical and emotional scars that may never fully heal.”

Officials also thanked all local veterans for their service, including family members and neighbors of students and staff.

“Veterans are near you every day, even if you don’t realize it,” Kalin

added. “They can be principals, teachers, counselors, janitors, firefighters, police officers, maintenance workers, grocery store clerks, your parents, your grandparents, uncles and aunts, and so on. Today, as we enjoy the blessings of liberty, let’s take a moment to reflect on the true cost of freedom and celebrate our veterans and their families.”

LMS band students also played a major role in the ceremony. Students were honored to help celebrate veterans.

“I felt great performing for the people that worked hard to fight for their country,” said Emily Hipple, a seventh-grade trumpet player who performed “Taps” during the program. “Being a veteran’s daughter, I felt as if it was a natural thing to do. Playing ‘Taps’ was nerve-wracking, but knowing I’m doing it for the people that deserve it helped me stay calm.”

Added Shelby Grant, a seventh-grade trombone player, “It was such an honor to perform at the Veterans Day assembly. I personally feel that we, as a full band, honored all of the veterans that served. Playing for them, I felt that we showed our appreciation for all veterans that were there and some that couldn’t make it.”

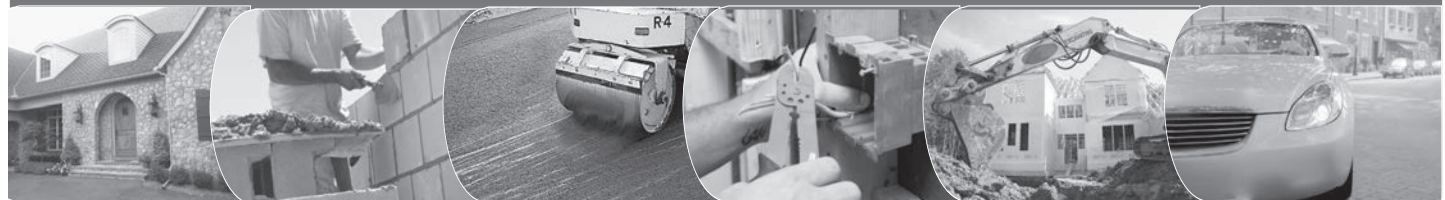
Angelina Faulkner, a seventh-grade percussionist, also enjoyed the opportunity to perform for veterans and their family members. Meanwhile, eighth-grade percussionist Lily Schimke was thrilled to listen to the program’s speakers and learn about those who served.

“Having so many guest speakers was amazing and so inspiring to me. I hope to be able to play for these incredible people again sometime in the future,” Schimke said.

LMS sixth-grader Anna Derrick is thanked for speaking about the history of “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

Officials thank Kalin and all veterans for their involvement in the program.

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# Growing moth orchids for months of beauty

Add exotic long-lasting orchid blossoms to your indoor garden. These living bouquets provide months of beauty with minimal care. Just provide the proper growing conditions and success is sure to follow.



## GARDEN MOMENTS

MELINDA MYERS

The moth or phalaenopsis orchid is the one best adapted to your home environment, making it the easiest to grow. It thrives in the same temperatures as people with night temperatures in the 60s and 70 to 80 degrees during the day. However, avoid hot and cold air drafts that can stress the plants and cause bud and flower drop.

Moth orchids are epiphytes, growing on but not parasitizing trees and other plants. They obtain water and nutrients from the air, rainwater, and plant debris that accumulate in their environment. They can be mounted on a board but usually are grown in an orchid mix made of peat, fir bark, and perlite. This or a similar combination retains water while providing needed drainage.

Place your plant in a bright location near an east-, west- or slightly shaded south-facing win-

dow. Your orchid will do best when it receives 12 to 14 hours of sunlight daily. Enlist the help of artificial lights if your orchids are struggling when natural light, especially during winter, is insufficient. Newer full-spectrum LED lights are more affordable, require less energy, and are longer lasting than the grow lights of the past.

Give your orchid a good watering about once a week with room temperature water just as the planting mix starts to dry. Pour off any excess water that collects in the saucer. Don't allow orchids to sit in water and don't water too often as this can lead to root rot and death of your plant.

Fertilize actively growing and flowering plants every third or fourth watering. Use an orchid plant fertilizer according to label directions. Skip winter fertil-

ization if temperatures are cooler, sunlight is limited, and the plants are not putting on new growth.

Improve the environment even more by increasing the humidity around the plant. Group them with other orchids and indoor plants. As one plant loses moisture, or "transpires," the others will benefit from the increase in humidity. Plus, you'll create a beautiful display while improving the growing conditions.

Or increase the humidity around your plants with humidity or gravel trays. Place pebbles in the saucer and set the pot on top of the pebbles. Allow excess water to collect in the pebbles below the pot. As the water evaporates it increases the humidity around your plant. It also eliminates the need to pour off the excess water that collects in the saucer.

You won't need to repot your orchid for quite a while. Wait to repot it until it is done blooming, the potting mix has broken down or the plant becomes pot bound. This is usually about every 18 to 24 months.

Enjoy a second flush of



Melinda Myers

The moth orchid also known as phalaenopsis orchid provides months of exotic blossoms with minimal care.

flowers with cool nights and proper post-flowering care. Leave the flower stem intact and the plant may produce a second flush of smaller blooms at the tip of the stem. Or you can cut the flower stem back between the second and third node from the bottom. For the best rebloom and to allow the plant to replenish energy spent on flowering, prune the flower stem back to about one-half inch above the

leaves and enjoy a second flush of flowers in about a year.

And if reblooming your orchid is too much work, treat it like a long-lasting bouquet. And if you can't stand to toss or compost it, give it to an avid gardener. There's always someone willing to adopt and try to rebloom your plant.

Melinda Myers has written over 20 gardening books, includ-

ing Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition and Small Space Gardening. She hosts The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" instant video and DVD series and the nationally syndicated Melinda's Garden Moment radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine. Myers' Web site is [www.MelindaMyers.com](http://www.MelindaMyers.com).

## EAST BROOKFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY

122 Connie Mack Dr.

### Library Hours

Monday 10 a.m.-7 p.m.  
Tuesday 9 a.m.-4 p.m.  
Thursday 9 a.m.-5 p.m.  
Saturday 9 a.m.-1

### Library Winter Events

#### Teen Volunteer Program

Interested in volunteering with us? We'd love to have you! Let us know when you are available. For ages 12 and up.

#### Sponsor an Author

Do you have a favorite author? Hate being on the waitlist to check out their newest book? Our "Sponsor an Author" program is for you! Sponsoring the newest book guarantees that you will receive the book first as soon as we get it in. Your price is what the library pays. See Carolann for details!

#### Friends of the Library

Want to help the library but don't know how? Join the Friend's Group! We are rebuilding our group and we will meet on Thursday, February 6th at 11:30

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#### Maker Space and Library of Things

Come visit our Maker Space area and Library Things, there you will find cake pans, charcuterie boards, platters, small specialty appliances, tools, button maker and so much more. We are looking for items to add to our Library of Things and Maker Space, tools, small kitchen appliances, gardening supplies, baby monitor, DVD player, let us know what you have and we will let you know if we can use it.

#### Mitten tree

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

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

#### A Visit from Santa

Santa will pay a visit to the library on his way to the North Pole on Thursday, December 19th at 10:30am. Please drop by and have a picture taken with your own camera. Well behaved Pets are welcomed.

Teddy Mountain Stuff your own Bear Come to the library any day, Starting Saturday, November 23rd and pick up your stuff your own bear/animal. The kit including stuffing, animal skin and house are \$12.00, a portion of the proceeds will go to our playground fund.

cash or checks only

#### Holiday Movie

Monday, December 23rd at 11:30  
Charlie Brown and Frosty will be viewed.  
All are welcome, bring a snack if you would like!

#### Story-Friends Game Day

Tuesday, February 18th at 10:30  
Come play games, color and make a craft project.  
Open to ages 12 months to 7 years old. Parents or guardians need to remain with the child.

#### Story-time

Children ages 6 months to 6 years play games, listen to stories, and create art projects to take home. Thursday at 10:30, caregivers are required to stay with the child.

One adult caregiver is required for every 2 children.

#### Knitting Group

Adult Knitting Group meets on Thursdays at 12:30. All skill levels are welcome! Bring a current project or check out our many pattern books for inspiration.

#### Library Book Talk Group

Meets the first Tuesday of every month, at 11:00. Stop by the library and pick up the book in advance. Patrons are welcome to pick up the book even if they are not attending the discussion.

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#### Pokémon Go Club

Meets every Monday, 4pm, players must have their own device to play on. All children and adults are welcome. Children under 12 years old must be accompanied by an adult.

#### Drop in Craft

Every Monday in the children's room there is a self-directed craft project. Craft projects may have small parts.

Children under 12 years old must be accompanied by an adult, with one adult for every 2 children.

This project is available as long as the supplies are available.

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#### Technology Tuesday!

Need help with technology? We're here for you! We can teach you how to do things like use the library catalog to look for books and materials, place holds, add Libby to your

e-reader or phone, and generally make the most out of the online resources we have available for you! We can also help with non-library related things like setting up an

e-mail account. Note: If you would like help specific to your device, please bring it along.

#### Homework Help

Staff members will be available to assist children with homework questions. This is NOT a tutoring session; this program is designed for children to ask for help on a specific question. Mondays, at 5:30-6:30, children under the age of 12 must have a parent or guardian remain with them.

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## EDITORIAL

# Rediscovering the lost art of handwritten recipes

In an era of digital convenience and instant gratification, some of life's most cherished traditions are quietly slipping away. Among these, the art of handwritten recipes. These are a tangible connection to the flavors of our past, the love of our grandmothers, and the warmth of family gatherings. In a world dominated by cooking apps and online recipe repositories, the simple act of putting pen to paper to share culinary secrets seems almost archaic. Yet, it's precisely this nostalgia and intimacy that make handwritten recipes a lost art worth preserving.

Handwritten recipes are more than just a list of ingredients and instructions; they are pieces of culinary history, infused with the personality and heritage of those who penned them. Each smudged, stained, and dog-eared card or piece of paper tells a story, a tale of generations passing down family traditions, the evolution of tastes and preferences, and the love and care that goes into creating a homemade meal.

The act of writing out a recipe by hand is an act of devotion. It's a moment where the cook imparts their wisdom, tips, and variations to the next in line. The penmanship, the flourishes, and the personal notes ("This one's always a hit at family gatherings!") add a layer of character that cannot be replicated by sterile digital text.

One of the most remarkable aspects of handwritten recipes is their adaptability. They are not bound by the limitations of standardized formats and measurements. Instead, they encourage creativity and experimentation. A pinch of this, a handful of that, and a dash of love, these imprecise yet heartfelt instructions allow each generation to put their own spin on the family classics, ensuring that the recipes remain dynamic and relevant.

In an age where convenience often trumps sentimentality, it's easy to overlook the value of preserving handwritten recipes. But as we flip through fading recipe cards and rediscover the treasures hidden in old recipe boxes, we are reminded that these handwritten culinary heirlooms are more than just instructions; they are a link to our past, a source of inspiration, and hold tradition.

## Letter submission policy

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

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

# VIEWPOINT

OPINION AND COMMENTARY FROM SPENCER, LEICESTER AND THE BROOKFIELDS

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Every Christian must stand firm against the opposition

To the Editor:  
I am sharing with you an article a family member shared with the public on Facebook:

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

We are not garbage, despite what they may say.

We are not uneducated, despite their claims.

We are not unintelligent, regardless of their accusations.

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

We are God's people – those who

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

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

For regardless of who may reign in earthly power; our King of Kings and Lord of Lords reign forevermore!"

Fall for Jesus. He will never leave you.

Dwell in peace!

ROLAND BLAIS  
BROOKFIELD

## Trump 2024

To the Editor:  
As sung by the Late Tom Petty, "The waiting is the hardest part." The wait is over, and the American people have loudly proclaimed, "We want Trump!" winning both the electoral college and the popular vote in what can only be hailed as the election of the century. My personal belief is that the popular vote is of little consequence, but the libs bring it up so often I felt it needed to be mentioned at least once.

After being installed as the Democrats' presidential candidate, Kamala tanked her campaign in a fashion that gave the Titanic a glimmer of hope that it could, once again, be buoyant. When asked if she would have done anything different than Biden, instead of creating some distance between her and the former vice president, she replied, "I can't think of anything I would have done differently." Her inability to answer even the most basic of questions was not lost on the voters. At least, that might explain the fact that 15 to 20 million fewer Democrat votes in this election than there were in 2020. It couldn't

be that those votes in the 2020 race were... fraudulent.

In 2019, I went to bed with guarded optimism as I watched the results trend towards another Trump victory. However, in what can only be a peculiar series of coincidences, the perfect number of votes were found in the dead of night to help the former vice president overtake Trump and claim victory. This year, I stayed up until I was sure, Trumps' Victory was certain.

It'll be amusing to see what the local libs have to say about this election. I can't wait to read the mental gymnastics needed to explain the abject failure of the Harris/Walz assault on America. For those of us with our eyes wide open, the results are a clear indication that an overwhelming majority of Americans reject what the left were offering.

God Bless America, and God Bless Donald J. Trump!

MATHEW HERHOLZ  
SPENCER

## Massachusetts is turning into a Marxist state!

To the Editor:  
As a lifelong resident of Massachusetts, it disgusts and angers me to watch our State be destroyed by the Democrat Party! Maura Healey, who calls herself Governor, is telling MSNBC that she will not comply with ICE Deportations of Illegal Aliens once President Trump is back in the White House! She states that it's her job to protect the residents of Massachusetts! Really? By residents, she is referring to the illegals! The people who have broken the law to get into our country and receive thousands of free money, housing, food, healthcare-you name it! While the legal taxpayers of Massachusetts foot the bill for the billions of dollars spent on these people. Under her regime, Americans have been told to leave their apartments so illegals can move in. This includes our veterans! Just

in the past week, ICE and local police have arrested several illegals for drugs, MS-13 gang members and the rape of children! Healey's response, "these things happen."

If Healey and Mayor Wu refuse to comply, Tom Homan, our new Border Czar, said that President Trump will use the Alien Act of 1798. This Act can be used to end sanctuary cities which limit cooperation with federal immigration authorities. This Act allows the President to detain, relocate or deport illegal citizens. I'm hoping Ms. Healey will be arrested for aiding and abetting illegals and putting the legal citizens of Massachusetts in harm's way!

LINDA BUCKLEY  
LEICESTER

## Buying and selling at auction



Auctions had an inauspicious start when brides were first auctioned in Greece back in 500 BC. Thankfully, that practice ended, and auctions have evolved into a tried-and-true method for selling everything from diamond rings to factory buildings. I'll

focus on antiques, collectibles, and estate auctions in today's column.

There are many reasons why people sell items at auction. One of the top reasons is that competitive bidding is an effective way to get fair market value for items. Auctions help a

consignor do their due diligence if they have a financial obligation to an estate or trust.

For the types of auctions that we run, we're typically contacted by estate personal representatives or attorneys.

Turn To **ANTIQUES** page **A11**

## Which IRA is right for you?



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The individual retirement account (IRA) is celebrating its golden anniversary. Created in 1974, this savings vehicle has helped millions of people build resources for retirement. And in 1997, the Roth IRA was introduced. But which IRA is right for you?

Let's look at the basic differences between the two IRAs. With a traditional IRA, you generally invest pretax dollars, so the more you put in, the lower your taxable income. Your earnings grow tax deferred, meaning you pay no taxes on them until you start taking withdrawals. (If you take withdrawals before you reach 59 and a half, you'll be subject to ordinary income tax and a 10 percent IRA penalty.)

When you invest in a Roth IRA, your contributions aren't deductible, but they can be withdrawn at any time, tax- and penalty-free. And you can typically withdraw your earnings on these contributions tax free once you're 59 and a half and you've had your account at least five years. (If you don't meet these conditions, withdrawals of earnings are subject to income taxes and the 10 percent penalty.)

So, are you better off by taking the immediate tax break offered by a traditional IRA or the long-term benefits of tax-free withdrawals available with a Roth IRA?

If you think you'll be in a higher tax bracket when you retire, you might want to consider a Roth IRA, especially if you have a long time until retirement. This will give you more opportunities to put away funds that can be withdrawn tax free. Conversely, if you think you might be in a lower tax bracket upon retirement, you might lean toward a traditional IRA, as you'd get the tax benefits now, when you're in a higher bracket, and can eventually make your taxable withdrawals when you're in a lower one.

Here's something else to keep in mind: Once you turn 73 (or 75 if you were born in 1960 or later), you must start taking taxable withdrawals — technically called required minimum distributions, or RMDs — from your traditional IRA. But if you have a Roth IRA, you won't face RMDs and can essentially keep the money in your account indefinitely. If you don't need all the funds in your Roth IRA for your retirement, you can pass them on to your heirs.

Ultimately, though, your income may determine which IRA is right for you. You can earn any amount and contribute to a traditional IRA, though if you exceed certain income limits, your contributions may no longer be tax deductible. If you and your spouse don't have a 401(k) or other retirement plan through your employers, you can make a full, deductible contribution to a traditional IRA regardless of your income.

But you may not be able to contribute to a Roth IRA, or at least not make the full maximum annual contributions, if your income is above certain levels. Your tax advisor can explain these levels, which often increase from year to year. (In 2024, the most you can contribute to either IRA, depending on your income, is \$7,000 per year, or \$8,000 if you're 50 or older.)

Under some circumstances, you can convert a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA, though you'll need to pay taxes on the conversion. In any case, think carefully about your options and make the choices that are appropriate for your needs.

*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.*

# Choosing a Holiday Tree

Now that Thanksgiving is in the rear mirror, many people are getting a head start on Christmas this year, and that means putting up the holiday tree. When it comes to choosing a trim worthy tree, for many the choice is steeped in tradition, for others, the question becomes whether to pick a fresh or artificial one. When determining which Christmas tree to choose, many factors come into play. Read on for some interesting information, as well as our annual guide to choosing a fresh tree.



**TAKE THE HINT**  
**KAREN TRAINOR**

to tree sap. In this case, the only real solution is to only purchase artificial trees for your home, and avoid close proximity to real Christmas trees.

**Environmental Impact:** If you're leaning toward an artificial tree, but concerned about the environmental impact of artificial trees, note this: Several years ago, PE International, a consulting company that studies environmental sustainability in numerous industries, did an analysis of the environmental impact of artificial Christmas trees, versus real trees. The study found that, depending on how a real tree is disposed of, an artificial tree would only have to be used for 3.6 to 4 years before there was a net benefit with regard to contribution to global warming. This means that if a household uses an artificial tree for at least 4 years, its carbon footprint (with regard to Christmas trees) will be smaller than that of a household that purchases a real tree every year.

In addition, the study found that with both real and artificial trees, no matter how they were ultimately disposed of, Christmas trees accounted for less than 0.1% of the average person's annual carbon footprint. This means that the environmental impact is negligible, and can easily be offset by other lifestyle changes, such as driving less, recycling more regularly, purchasing items that use less packaging, etc.

If a fresh cut tree is impractical, an artificial tree can be a good investment - if you choose wisely. Did you know a well made artificial tree can last a decade or more? Choose trees with many branch tips and multiple needles, thus creating a "fullness" that rivals the real deal. Look for easy to set up models with hinged branches for quick and easy set up. High end trees often come equipped with an abundance of lights. Make sure the tree stand is sturdy enough to hold a tree laden with heavy ornament and garlands. Lastly, consider a tree that can easily refold into a box or bag, for hassle free storage.

Read on for our annual guide to choosing a real tree:

Selecting a Christmas tree is a fun family tradition, but getting caught up in the festivities, one can overlook the require-

ments of a successful pick. The first thing to remember is in a lot or on a farm, a tree can look much smaller than it will in your home. Rule number one is to always bring a tape measure to ensure a proper fit.

When choosing a freshly cut evergreen, look for nice, even coloring throughout the tree with no signs of browning. Also, beware of brittle branches, which are another sign of an old tree that may not last the season in a heated home. Look for flexibility in a bough.

To test freshness, pick a needle and bend it. A fresh fir needle will snap; a fresh pine needle will bend, but not break. The old "shake tip" really reveals a tree's freshness. Simply shake from the trunk, or wave a bough and observe how many needles fall off. If it is more than several, keep looking.

Live trees balled with the root and wrapped in burlap or containers (a.k.a. balled and bagged trees) are a great choice if you plan on planting the tree after the holidays. The most important consideration with a balled and bagged tree is to make sure the tree species can thrive in your climate zone.

Once you've chosen a holiday tree, it's necessary to prep it for inside enjoyment. If you're using a cut tree, when you get home make a fresh cut at the base. This will help the tree better take up water. It pays to keep in mind that a properly watered tree will keep about a month inside. Be sure to keep the water level above the base of the tree. To prevent fallen needles, add one of these to the base: three tablespoons glycerin; three tablespoons sugar; or a few crushed aspirin.

And after Christmas is over, the holiday tree will need to be properly disposed of. Check your city or town transfer stations for recycling options. Many municipalities recycle trees and grind them into mulch that is repurposed back into the community as such. Visit [RecycleYourChristmasTree.com](http://RecycleYourChristmasTree.com) for more recycling options.

Tree preservatives are pricey. Mix up this homemade potion for pennies: Combine one quart of fresh warm water; a half cup of light corn syrup, and a teaspoon of liquid chlorine bleach in a two-gallon bucket. Fill the water reservoir with this solution. How does it work? This mixture helps keep trees moist because fresh-cut trees,

which absorb and digest corn syrup as an energy source, don't have to waste as much energy converting stored sugar. Therefore, they can focus on staying green and beautiful!

\*Want your fresh tree to last longer? The lower the temperature and the higher the humidity, the longer your tree will last.

\*Placement is also important. Avoid setting up a tree near a heat source or in front of a window that gets direct sun.

\*Did you know? A freshly-cut tree can consume a gallon of water in 24 hours!

\*Want to avoid a trail of fallen needles to the back door? Before you set up your tree, place a tree disposal bag around the base of the trunk prior to placing it in the stand. At the end of the season, simply pull the bag up over the entire tree.

\*Check with your local transfer station or recycling center to find out if they offer a tree pick up.

\*Going artificial this year? You can still mimic the fresh scent of balsam, simply by sprinkling your carpets with a pine scented carpet freshener before vacuuming. Since smell is the most potent of our senses, visitors to a house that smells like the holidays will feel doubly welcomed!

Win a Three Course Dinner for Two at the Publick House

Your tips can win you a great dinner for two at the historic Publick House Historic Inn in Sturbridge! Simply send in a hint to be entered into a random drawing. One winner per month (or whenever I receive enough tips for a column) will win a fabulous three course dinner for two at the renowned restaurant, located on Route 131 across the town common in historic Sturbridge. Because I'm in the business of dispensing tips, not inventing them (although I can take credit for some), I'm counting on you readers out there to share your best helpful hints!

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



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# Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy participates in Shepherd Hill's Festival of Crafts

DUDLEY — The 32nd Annual Shepherd Hill's Festival of Crafts was held at the Shepherd Hill Regional High School. A member of the Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy Class of 2025, faculty and alumni participated along with New England Crafters and Artisans with top-quality hand-crafted items, raffles, and food trucks. The Bay Path Practical Nursing team was led by Professor Adelina Healy DNP, MSN, RN of Dudley. The Practical Nursing volunteers offered free Blood pressure screenings and first aid ser-

vices. This year's practical nursing student volunteer was Loise Ngigi of South Grafton and alumni volunteers were John Martin Wanjiru, LPN and Hannah Lombardo, RN of Dudley.

"We are grateful that Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy has been invited and continues to allow our practical nursing students to be of service to the community," stated Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN Academy Director at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy.

Professor Suzanne Taylor, MSN, RN,

originally invited Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy and coordinated the practical nursing student's participation. The past two years, the invitation came from Chet Perea-Beaulieu.

"Great day at Shepherd Hill today! It is a wonderful learning opportunity," said Dr. Healy. "I am glad to be joining Shepherd Hill's Festival."

When the opportunity came, Dr. Healy did not hesitate to say, "count me in!"

Student volunteer Ngigi stated, "Thank you for the opportunity. It was a wonderful experience, and Dr. Healy was amazing!" Wanjiru who stayed until 4 p.m. committed to volunteering weeks in advance and at the day of

the fair was glad to arrive on time, and happy to report, "everything is fine, and so far, so good!"

The Shepherd Hill's Festival of Crafts is an annual event promoted by the Shepherd Hill Music Parents. Students from the music department sang and assisted with bringing food. The Shepherd Hill's Festival of Crafts has 5,000 people attending annually. The celebration highlights the community. Vendors look forward to next year's celebration. For more about the Shepherd Hill's Festival of Crafts, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/shepherdhillfestivalofcrafts/>.



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From left: John Martin Wanjiru, LPN, Dr. Adelina Healy, and Loise Ngigi, SPN.

Courtesy

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**Bay Path FY26 Annual House Building Project**

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**VISIT**  
continued from page A1

structured opportunities to develop readiness and social skills,” stated Nancy Manske, the district’s Director of Preschool Programs. “The curriculum encompasses a total developmental model to ensure that children develop their cognitive, gross motor, fine motor, social-emotional, self-help, and communication skills.”

David Prouty High School students are also involved in the preschool program through their Career Technical Education courses (CTE) in early childhood education. Additional CTE courses are offered in marketing, criminal justice, and environmental science and technology.

“The goal of these four programs at David Prouty High School is to provide real-world workforce preparedness,” Haughey said. “When our students graduate from high school, they can enter the workforce with meaningful employment that provides them with a living wage.”

Haughey was also excited to share

with the Secretary plans for the preschool’s future location.

“The Cubs’ Corner Preschool will be moved to David Prouty High School when the building project is completed, so that our preschoolers and high-schoolers will be available to one another for vocational experiences during the school day and on the same campus,” the Superintendent said.

Looking long-term, students will arrive in the SEBRSD as preschoolers and, many years later, complete their journeys at graduation on the same campus. The preschool will be housed in a separate part of the facility from high school instruction, with vocational opportunities directly supervised by faculty and staff.

Throughout his tour, Tutwiler commended administrators and staff members for their dedication to early education.

“Students who have experiences in early education are more likely to graduate high school and matriculate to college,” Tutwiler told guests. “It is an honor to be here and see this great work taking place.”



Students share their favorite activities with State Sen. Peter Durant.



State Director of Rural Affairs Anne Gobi works with preschoolers at EBES.



Local officials join school leaders and students in welcoming Secretary of Education Patrick Tutwiler (pictured third from left).

**STUDY**  
continued from page A1

Members of the Leicester Advisory Committee and Select Board also supported the feasibility study authorization.

“When we bought the campus, it was known that there was going to be work required to be done to make the buildings fully functional and up to code,” read a recommendation released by the Advisory Committee ahead of Town Meeting. “We are at the point where we need to do a major project to fully utilize the campus, and this study will result in a plan

and costs to implement the repairs to the roofs, heating systems, and make the buildings ADA compliant.”

Looking ahead, the building upgrades will significantly augment the school district’s career technical education (CTE) program, which is bringing new students and opportunities to town.

Following the recent approval of a new partnership, Leicester High School will soon welcome students from Shrewsbury into its CTE program.

With a 5-0 vote earlier this month, members of the Shrewsbury School

Committee approved a memorandum of understanding, selecting LHS as their district’s preferred CTE school.

In mid-January, LHS will accept 15 Shrewsbury students into its CTE program.

“The Leicester School District is creating a new chapter of endless possibilities by partnering with Shrewsbury,” Kustigian stated. “I look forward to a productive partnership where both communities benefit.”

Both the Leicester and Shrewsbury districts previously sent students to Assabet Valley Vocational-Technical High School for CTE

programming. A combination of factors made these arrangements no longer possible.

“Assabet Valley is no longer accepting students from nonmember districts, as the demand for CTE has increased,” Kustigian added. “The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education mandated that CTE

schools cannot accept students from nonmember districts when they have a waiting list of students from member communities.”

In other Special Town Meeting news, officials are pleased with the results of a venue change for the meeting. A few minor adjustments are expected, but officials are encouraged by the smooth transition.

“We changed venues from the Town Hall gymnasium to the Leicester Middle School auditorium, and it seemed to go very well,” said Town Clerk Pamela LaFleur.

The Town Meeting warrant featured nine total articles, which all passed.

To review the complete warrant and descriptions of the articles, visit [www.leicesterma.org](http://www.leicesterma.org).

**REGIONALIZATION**  
continued from page A1

tion to move forward, each town would need to approve the agreement during these meetings. The timeline for this process is crucial, as the votes must take place before Jan. 1, 2026, for the transition to a regional district to begin.”

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

To help North Brookfield school leaders and staff members better understand the

proposed opportunity, McCormick released a document covering several topics. These include operating costs, budgeting, debt responsibilities, and building locations, among several others.

“If this agreement progresses beyond the School Committee votes, we expect to hold additional meetings with residents and families to further discuss the implications and gather feedback,” McCormick added.

If all required approvals are secured, the newly regionalized district would be known as the Quaboag Regional School District. A nine-member school committee would manage the district, with three officials representing each member town.

School committee

members would be elected to two-year terms. If a vacancy occurs, the Select Board from the given town would appoint a member to serve until the next state election.

If the regionalization is fully approved, the new district would hold middle school classes in North Brookfield (grades 6-8). High school classes would likely take place at the current facility serving QRHS in Warren, officials said.

The three K-5 elementary schools would continue operating in their respective towns. The new school committee would determine the location of the preschool.

QRSD leaders could not be reached for comment on the regionalization proposal by press time.

SPENCER — For more than three decades, a local mission of giving has helped brighten the holiday season for those in need. And thanks to the leadership of Beth McPherson and Laura Torti, Operation Undercover is still going strong.

Now in its 33rd year, Operation Undercover will once again enable residents to donate new men’s and women’s underwear. Donations will be delivered to Jeremiah’s Inn, Abby’s House, and the Massachusetts Veterans Shelter.

From Nov. 25 through Dec. 15, you can drop off unwrapped packages in the hamper on the front step at 125 Pleasant St. in town.

Donations will also be accepted in the Town Hall rotunda and at Richard Sugden Library.

Please leave your donation in the original package.

“Thank you for your generous donations all these years. We wish you a happy and healthy holiday season,” read a statement released by project organizers.

Additionally, guests are invited to decorate the mitten trees at Town Hall and Richard Sugden Library.

“Continue a tradition started by the Town Clerk in 2012 and bring a donation of hats, gloves, or mittens to be given to the Spencer-East Brookfield schoolchildren at Wire Village and Knox Trail Schools,” read an informational statement.

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# LEGALS

**Burncoat Pond Watershed District**  
Please be aware that the Burncoat Pond Watershed District will hold the annual “tax rate meeting” on December 10, 2024 at 7PM at Leicester Town Hall, 3 Washburn Square, Leicester, Ma 01524 to set the tax rate for fiscal year 2026. All proprietors are welcome.  
November 29, 2024

**Burncoat Pond Watershed District**  
Please be aware that the Burncoat Pond Watershed District will hold a “special meeting” on December 10, 2024 at 7 PM at Leicester Town Hall, 3 Washburn Square, Leicester, Ma 01524 to transfer a sum of money from taxation, free cash, to adjust the budget for the Fiscal Year 2025, or to take any action thereon.  
November 29, 2024

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING BOARD OF HEALTH LEICESTER, MASSACHUSETTS**  
In accordance with MGL Chapter 111, § 31, The Board of Health will hold a Public Hearing at the Leicester Town Hall, Meeting Rooms #3, 3 Washburn Square, Leicester, MA 01524 on Monday, December 16, 2024 at 6:00 PM to consider adopting *Body Works regulations*, in the Town of Leicester. The regulation would establish permitting, inspection and enforcement language for all places of business in the town offering Body Works services. A copy of the proposed regulation is available in the Town Clerk’s Office at 3 Washburn Square, Leicester, MA. All interested parties are invited to attend the hearing.  
Christopher Montiverdi  
Chairperson  
Leicester Board of Health  
November 29, 2024  
December 6, 2024

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts Worcester Probate and Family Court**  
225 Main Street  
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(508)831-2200  
Docket No. WO24E008PP  
A. C. 92A  
Petition to Partition  
To: Amy Gerstel and to all other persons interested.  
A petition has been presented to said Court by Richard Herman Henry III of West Brookfield in the County of Worcester representing that he hold as tenant in common part or share of certain land lying in Warren in said County of Worcester and briefly as follows:  
Setting for that he/she desire all the aforesaid described part of said land may be sold at private sale not less than three hundred twenty thousand (\$320,000.00) dollars, and praying that partition may be made of all the land

aforesaid according to law, and to that end that a commissioner be appointed to make such partition and be ordered to same make sale and conveyance of all, or any part of said land which the Court finds cannot be advantageously divided either at private sale or public auction, and be ordered to distribute the new proceeds thereof.  
If you desire to object thereto you or your attorney shall file a written appearance in said court at Worcester before ten o’clock in the forenoon on the seventeenth day of December 2024 the return date of this citation.  
WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A Keamy, Esq., First Justice of this Court, this first day of November 2024.  
Stephanie Fattman,  
Register of Probate  
November 22, 2024  
November 29, 2024  
December 6, 2024

**ANTIQUES**

continued from page A6

The representative may request that we appraise an estate for IRS or Probate. However, we're typically contacted to see which estate items may be a good fit for our auctions. We handle higher valued items of all types ranging from smaller antiques and collectibles like gold jewelry to larger items like vintage automobiles. Of course, not everything in a home is antique, collectible, or valuable. There are other auction companies that sell pretty much everything in a

home from a sofa to pots and pans. Sometimes we handle the more valuable items and offer suggestions to the seller for the rest.

There are of course many other reasons why people might decide to auction their items. They may be downsizing. They may have inherited things that they don't collect and would like to convert those items into cash. Consignors often have items of value like gold jewelry, sterling silver, or coins that they don't want anymore. Peoples' tastes change and they may no longer want the old painting that hung in their liv-

ing room. People often tell me that they are getting older and their families have no interest in their belongings, therefore leading them to auctions.

Auctions can be online or live. We were unable to run live auctions during the pandemic and switched to all online auctions. This has expanded our reach to bidders across the world, but other auctioneers are still finding success run-



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ning live auctions. Bidders can search multiple websites including liveauctioneers.com, invaluable.com, auction-ninja.com, hibid.com, bidsquare.com, and others to find items that they collect.

There are tools available for online bidders. Many online auction sites offer bidders the ability to create a want list. They can enter search terms for whatever they collect. For example, you could enter "Waltham

gold pocket watches" and get an email when watches meeting your criteria are being sold. If you see something that you like, many sites will allow you to follow that item and receive an email or text when your auction item is about to be sold. If it is something that you really want, you can place a proxy bid. You enter the maximum amount that you are willing to pay such as \$500. The bidding is competitive so you may get outbid, but you might also win it for less than your \$500 bid. Whether you're a consignor or a bidder, hopefully you'll be a winner at auction.

We are currently cataloging a large collection of Civil War memorabilia from a local estate as well as running an antique auction in a Beacon Hill Boston estate. We are accepting consignments of all types for future auctions. Please visit our Web site, <https://centralmassauctions.com>, for links to upcoming events.

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# kids' corner

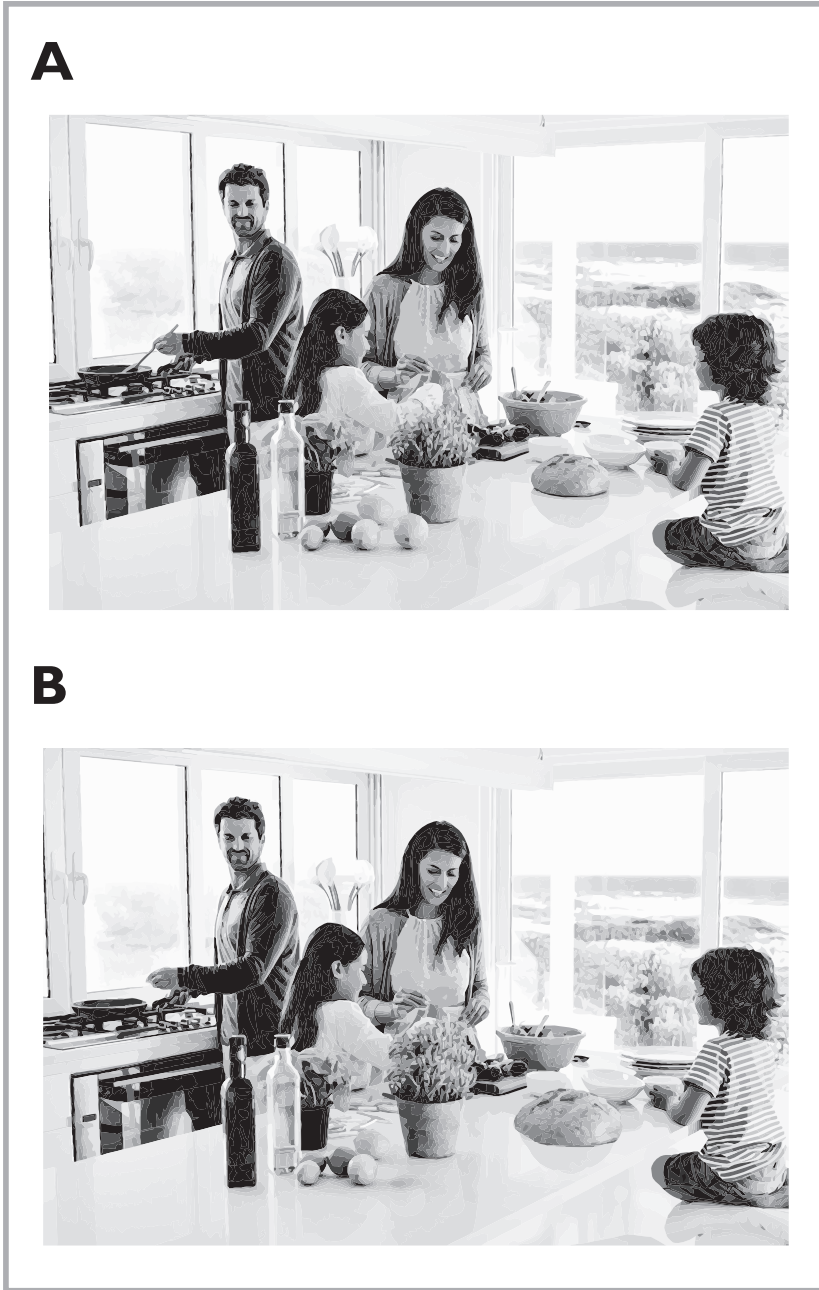
## Food FACT:

True or false?  
It can take young children 10 to 15 times of seeing a new food on their plates before they are willing to try it.

Answer: True

## What's the Difference?

Identify the four differences between these pictures.



Answers: 1. Plant is taller 2. Bread is larger 3. Missing spoon 4. Missing lemon

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY



**1732:** A magnitude 6.6 earthquake hits southern Italy in the former Kingdom of Naples.

**1961:** Enos, a chimpanzee, is launched into space.

**1982:** Michael Jackson releases "Thriller," which becomes the best-selling music album of all time.

## NEW WORD

### RESIDE

be situated or live somewhere

## How they say that in...

**English:** Dine  
**Spanish:** Cenar  
**Italian:** Cenare  
**French:** Dîner  
**German:** Abendessen

## Did You Know?

People may eat anywhere from 3,000 to 4,500 calories during Thanksgiving dinners, which is more than what should be eaten in a day.

## Get the PICTURE?

Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Turkey

## CRYPTO FUN

Solve the code to discover words related to veterans. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 26 = E)

**A. 12 26 17 26 22 9 14**  
Clue: One who served in the military

**B. 25 26 22 12 7 11 26**  
Clue: Participation in the military

**C. 25 5 14 5 22**  
Clue: Show of respect

**D. 12 9 3 5 22**  
Clue: Strength of mind or spirit

Answers: A. veteran B. service C. honor D. valor

## SUDOKU

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

Level: Beginner

**Fun By The Numbers**

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

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

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

ANSWER:

# POLICE REPORTS

## Leicester

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14

12:04 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 4:59 a.m.: stolen mv (Pleasant Street), report taken; 6:33 a.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 7:50 a.m.: mv stop (Paxton Street), verbal warning; 7:54 a.m.: investigation (Pleasant Street), report taken; 8:10 a.m.: investigation (Pleasant Street), report taken; 9:09 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 9:26 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 10:20 a.m.: ambulance (Pleasant Street, Worcester), transported; 10:56 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), name and address redacted from police log, number plate violation to conceal ID, op w/suspended registration, citation issued; 11:59 a.m.: assist citizen (Bottomly Avenue); 1:37 p.m.: ambulance (Locust Street), transported; 4:17 p.m.: assist citizen (Paxton Street); 6:16 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 6:23 p.m.: assist citizen (Town Beach Road); 7:16 p.m.: assist other PD (Stafford Street, Spencer), services rendered; 7:52 p.m.: mv stop (Mill Street), verbal warning.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15

12:50 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 1:16 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 1:22 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), written warning; 9:20 a.m.: harassment (Main Street), report taken; 11:17 a.m.: ambulance (Jacques Avenue, Worcester), transported; 11:23 a.m.: debris in road (Main Street), removed; 11:37 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 12:12 p.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), name and address redacted from police log, unlicensed operation, criminal application issued; 1:04 p.m.: welfare check (Main Street), services rendered; 1:30 p.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 3:10 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 4:10 p.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 5:03 p.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 8:20 p.m.: investigation (Chapel Street), report taken; 8:28 p.m.: abandoned 9111 call (Logan Street), unfounded; 8:45 p.m.: suspicious mv (Towtaid Street), resolved; 8:59 p.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 10:22 p.m.: welfare check (Ingram Road), services rendered; 11:15 p.m.: erratic operator (Main Street), unfounded; 11:48 p.m.: erratic operator (Stafford Street), unfounded.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16

12:49 a.m.: welfare check (Main Street), services rendered; 12:56 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 1:01 a.m.: erratic operator (Main Street), Dareishaly Suarez-Seda, 26, 49 Harrison Avenue, Auburn, OUI liquor, intoxicated licensee to carry firearm, arrest; 1:52 a.m.: welfare check (Ingram Road), services rendered; 3:35 a.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), unfounded; 3:55 a.m.: mv off the road (Pine Street), services rendered; 6:22 a.m.: mv stop (Huntoon Memorial Highway), verbal warning; 8:02 a.m.: ambulance (Main Street), services rendered; 10:43 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), name and address redacted from police log, possession Class E drug, criminal application issued; 10:56 a.m.: ambulance (Victoria Drive), report taken; 11:35 a.m.: accident (Whittemore Street), report taken; 1:45 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 3:20 p.m.: assist citizen (Soojians Drive); 4:00 p.m.: welfare check (South Main Street), spoken to; 4:14 p.m.: investigation (Siani Road), report taken; 10:58 p.m.: abandoned 911 call (South Street), resolved; 11:55 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17

8:42 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 8:50 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 8:58 a.m.: disturbance (Craig Street), transported to hospital; 11:31 a.m.: accident (Main Street), mv towed; 12:28 p.m.: assist other agency (Main Street), advised civil action; 8:25 p.m.: suspicious mv (Stafford Street), services rendered.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18

2:36 a.m.: vandalism (Main Street), report taken; 4:14 a.m.: disturbance (Pleasant Street), spoken to; 8:01 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 8:34 a.m.: disturbance (Main Street), spoken to; 10:06 a.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), verbal warning; 12:56 p.m.: assist other PD (Main Street), services rendered; 1:45 p.m.: restraining order service (South Main Street), served; 3:17 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), no service; 3:24 p.m.: investigation (Pine Street), report taken; 4:14

p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 4:37 p.m.: ambulance (River Street), transported; 6:53 p.m.: ambulance (Sconset Avenue), transported; 7:11 p.m.: stolen mv (Stafford Street), no service; 8:15 p.m.: ambulance (Soojians Drive), transported; 10:05 p.m.: suspicious mv (Winslow Avenue), investigated.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19

12:53 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 3:35 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 8:10 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 8:14 a.m.: investigation (Craig Street), report taken; 8:21 a.m.: assist citizen (Main Street); 9:02 a.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 10:24 a.m.: keep the peace (Main Street), assisted; 10:43 a.m.: welfare check (Main Street), unfounded; 11:01 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), spoken to; 11:09 a.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), verbal warning; 11:43 a.m.: investigation (Stafford Street), report taken; 12:46 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 1:33 p.m.: malicious mischief (Winslow Avenue), report taken; 1:52 p.m.: suspicious activity (Huntoon Memorial Highway), spoken to; 2:00 p.m.: illegal dumping (Washburn Street), report taken; 2:21 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 4:15 p.m.: assist citizen (Craig Street); 5:23 p.m.: accident (Stafford Street), report taken; 5:26 p.m.: lobby service (South Main Street), restraining order served; 7:12 p.m.: suspicious mv (Marshall Street), assisted; 8:17 p.m.: mutual aid (Stafford Street, Charlton), services rendered; 9:52 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 20

1:25 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 4:59 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 8:21 a.m.: assist citizen (Craig Street); 9:10 a.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), citation issued; 9:44 a.m.: ambulance (Craig Street), transported; 10:13 a.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 12:02 p.m.: keep the peace (Main Street), resolved; 12:28 p.m.: keep the peace (Main Street), assisted; 1:10 p.m.: assist other PD (Soojians Drive), unfounded; 1:29 p.m.: threats (Pleasant Street), report taken; 2:34 p.m.: accident (Dale Court), name and address redacted from police log, unlicensed operation, report taken; 2:51 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 5:27 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported.

###

## Spencer

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13

12:01-2:24 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 1:11-2:02 a.m.: parking violations/4 (Mechanic, Cherry, Main, Chestnut streets, Old Farm Road), flyers issued; 1:57 a.m.: DPW call (Paxton Road), rep. damaged stop sign; 6:49 a.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 7:38 a.m.: assault (Main Street), Clint Joseph Brooks, 24, 18 Abbott Street, Worcester, assault w/dangerous weapon, disorderly conduct, threatening to commit a crime, arrest; 8:17 a.m.: mv complaint (Cherry Street), c/o mvs speeding; 10:04 a.m.: mv lockout (R. Jones Road), assist; 10:05 a.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), assist Brookfield PD; 11:00 a.m.: animal complaint (Valley Street), cat in tree; 11:39 a.m.: DPW call (Mechanic Street), foundation leaking water; 11:55 a.m.: lost/found (Main Street), found check in lot; 12:01 p.m.: officer wanted (Paxton Road), req. escort/retrieve belongings; 12:03 p.m.: officer wanted (Pleasant Street), re: mail rec'd; 1:07 p.m.: fire/woods/grass (Howe Road), referred; 1:25 p.m.: suspicious persons (Clark Road), resolved; 2:45 p.m.: mv lockout (Mechanic Street), assisted; 3:13 p.m.: hit/run accident (West Main Street), report taken; 3:17 p.m.: restraining order service (R. Jones Road); 3:19 p.m.: officer wanted (Bay Path Road), spoken to; 3:26 p.m.: mv complaint (North Spencer Road), erratic operator; 4:41 p.m.: fire/woods/grass (Northwest Road), illegal bonfire; 4:53 p.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 5:11 p.m.: fire/woods/grass (Main Street), rep. odor of gas; 5:39 p.m.: medical/general (Greenville Street); 8:29 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), re: custody issue; 8:36 p.m.: medical/general (Maple Street); (total daily mv stops - 0).

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14

12:09 a.m.: medical/general (First Street); 12:18-1:07 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 12:31 a.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), deer in

roadway; 12:52-1:18 a.m.: parking violations/4 (Taylor Drive, High, Cottage, Cherry streets), flyers issued; 1:16 a.m.: officer wanted (North Spencer Road), rep. OUI; between 1:18-2:00 a.m.: mv stop, time and location of incident not recorded on police log, Philip Panagiotidis, 28, Peach Street, South Barre, OUI liquor, negligent operation, marked lanes violation, arrest; 2:00 a.m.: mv complaint (West Main Street), erratic operator; 2:06 a.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), seeking advice/civil matter; 4:53 a.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; 9:06 a.m.: disturbance (Main Street), family issue; 10:20 a.m.: animal complaint (Adams Street), re: voucher to neuter cat; 10:41 a.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 11:24 a.m.: fire/woods/grass (Elm Street), backyard burn; 11:38 a.m.: fire/woods/grass (Pearl Street), illegal burn; 12:01/12:33 p.m.: restraining order service/2 (West Main Street); 12:51 p.m.: mv complaint (Route 49), erratic operator/truck; 12:59 a.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), Charlton PD bolo; 1:03 p.m.: accident (Paxton Road), report taken; 1:56 p.m.: medical/general (Adams Street); 3:03 p.m.: medical/general (North Spencer Road); 3:34 p.m.: DPW call (Briarcliff Lane), leaves dumped on town property; 3:46 p.m.: restraining order service (Paxton Road); 3:53 p.m.: accident (West Main Street), report taken; 5:19 p.m.: animal complaint (East Charlton Road), loose dog; 5:49 p.m.: fire/woods/grass (Main Street), rep. odor of gas; 5:49 p.m.: DPW call (Main Street), needs water turned on; 7:14 p.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), no location noted on police log/domestic disturbance; 7:20 p.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), Charlton PD req. assistance; 8:16 p.m.: medical/general (Fourth Avenue); 8:23 p.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), dogs howling/barking; 9:50 p.m.: mv complaint (Pleasant Street), rep. aggressive operator; 11:15 p.m.: officer wanted (Treadwell Terrace), gf left on foot; (total daily mv stops - 3).

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15

12:18-1:44 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 12:38-12:39 a.m.: parking violations/3 (Mechanic, Chestnut, Elm streets), flyer issued; 2:36 a.m.: parking violation (Main Street), flyer issued; 5:23 a.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; 5:48 a.m.: officer wanted (Buteau Road), att. to serve warrant; 6:54 a.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 7:22 a.m.: parking complaint (Main Street), lumber truck blocking road; 8:52 a.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), services rendered; 9:01 a.m.: medical/general (Lincoln Street); 10:01 a.m.: animal complaint (Donnelly Cross Road), rep. dead beaver; 10:34 a.m.: medical/general (West Main Street); 11:00 a.m.: animal complaint (Grant Street), loose dog; 12:17 p.m.: medical/general (Bixby Road); 3:28 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 3:28 p.m.: animal complaint (West Main Street), re: ACO check on horse; 4:55 p.m.: animal complaint (Briarcliff Lane), loose dog; 5:12 p.m.: mutual aid (Main Street), Leicester PD req. assistance/accident; 5:17 p.m.: larceny (West Main Street), report taken; 6:06 p.m.: accident (West Main Street), report taken; 6:48 p.m.: school alarm (Main Street), referred; 7:13 p.m.: medical/general (Ash Street); 7:37 p.m.: suspicious mv (Main Street), investigated; 7:41 p.m.: medical/general (Lakeview Drive); 8:52 p.m.: accident (West Main Street), mv vs deer; 8:52 p.m.: officer wanted (Brooks Pond Road), fireworks complaint; 9:30 p.m.: building checked, secure; 9:39 p.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), rep. poss. OUI; (total daily mv stops - 0).

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16

12:09 a.m.: residential lockout (Fourth Avenue), assisted; 2:38 a.m.: officer wanted (Lambs Grove), rep. concern for individual; 8:53 a.m.: officer wanted (Clark Road), spoken to; 9:36 a.m.: officer wanted (Wm. Casey Road), spoken to; 10:07 a.m.: fire/woods/grass (Ash Street), brush fire; 10:20 a.m.: mv lockout (Chestnut Street), assisted; 11:32 a.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 1:37 p.m.: suspicious persons (Main Street), investigated; 1:47 p.m.: medical/general (Delude Avenue); 1:54 p.m.: mv lockout (Meadow Road), assisted; 4:01 p.m.: disturbance (Mechanic Street), neighbor issue/noise complaint; 4:24 p.m.: animal complaint (Columbine Road), loose dog; 4:46 p.m.: disabled mv (West Main Street), info taken; 4:47 p.m.: suspicious persons (Main Street), investigated; 5:14 p.m.: fire/woods/grass (Pleasant Street), illegal burn; 6:16 p.m.: medical/gener-

al (Mechanic Street); 8:23 p.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), Leicester PD bolo/domestic dispute; 8:31 p.m.: lost/found (Chestnut Street), lost cell phone; 11:25 p.m.: fire/woods/grass (Woodside Road), referred; (total daily mv stops - 1).

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 17

12:29-3:24 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 1:01-1:44 a.m.: parking violations/6 (Cherry, Mechanic, Prospect, Main streets), flyers issued; 1:05 a.m.: missing person/juvenile (Ash Street), report taken; 1:21 a.m.: suspicious mv (Mechanic Street), investigated; 2:31 a.m.: medical/general (Jolicoeur Avenue); 3:31 a.m.: parking violation (Grove Street), flyer issued; 6:04 a.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; 9:56 a.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), services rendered; 10:24 a.m.: medical/general (Ash Street); 10:37 a.m.: medical/general (Lyford Road); 12:40 a.m.: illegal dumping (Kittredge Road), dumping on pvt. property; 12:51 p.m.: officer wanted (Meadow Road), poss. disabled mv; 3:40 p.m.: medical/general (Pleasant Street); 3:58 p.m.: disturbance (Chestnut Street), 2 fems/verbal dispute; 4:16 p.m.: officer wanted (Chickering Road), spoken to; 4:20 p.m.: medical/general (Northwest Road); 6:04 p.m.: medical/general (Howe Village), lift assist; 7:29 p.m.: 911 call (Cherry Street), hang-up; 8:42 p.m.: buildings checked, secure; 9:42 p.m.: building checked, secure; 11:32 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); (total daily mv stops - 0).

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 18

12:04-2:33 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 1:32-2:45 a.m.: parking violations/5 (Mechanic, Prospect, Elm, Cherry streets, Old Farm Road), tickets issued; 3:50 a.m.: disturbance (Chestnut Street), fight; 4:08 a.m.: medical/general (Valley Street), lift assist; 8:22 a.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 8:39 a.m.: fire/woods/grass (North Spencer Road), illegal burn; 8:59 a.m.: commercial alarm (Water Street), accidental/resolved; 10:17 a.m.: larceny (North Spencer Road), report taken; 10:29 a.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), Leicester PD bolo/domestic; 11:02 a.m.: mv complaint (Water Street), truck blocking lane; 11:27 a.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), rep. customer took scooter; 11:34 a.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), spoken to; 11:48 a.m.: medical/general (Valley Street), lift assist; 12:39 p.m.: animal complaint (Ash Street), rep. rabid skunk in yard; 1:53 p.m.: medical/general (Greenville Street); 2:00 p.m.: medical/general (Jolicoeur Avenue); 2:14 p.m.: fire/woods/grass (Kingsbury Road), illegal burn; 2:43 p.m.: officer wanted (Cherry Street), RMV license suspension; 2:53 p.m.: officer wanted (Paxton Road), open door/investigated; 3:47 p.m.: disturbance (Wilson Street), noise/profanity complaint; 3:47 p.m.: suspicious persons (Main Street), unwanted person; 4:02 p.m.: accident (West Main Street), report taken; 4:41 p.m.: medical/general (Howe Village), lift assist; 4:53 p.m.: mv lockout (Howe Village), assisted; 5:14 p.m.: commercial alarm (West Main Street), services rendered; 7:09 p.m.: animal complaint (North Spencer Road), loose dog; 7:22 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), unauth. use of cash app; 7:27 p.m.: commercial alarm (Mechanic Street), services rendered; 7:46 p.m.: animal complaint (North Spencer Road), have husky detained; 11:54 p.m.: building checked, secure; (total daily mv stops - 0).

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 19

12:02-2:16 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 1:11-1:34 a.m.: parking violations/3 (Cherry, Elm, Mechanic streets), tickets issued; 5:08 a.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; 7:15 a.m.: medical/general (Lake Street); 7:46 a.m.: mv lockout (Bemis Road), child locked in mv; 7:51 a.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 11:00 a.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 11:25 a.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), rep. person driving w/suspended license; 2:04 p.m.: medical/general (Lincoln Street); 5:23 p.m.: disabled mv (Pleasant Street), assisted; 5:48 p.m.: accident (Elm Street), report taken; 6:17 p.m.: medical/general (Crestview Drive); 9:42 p.m.: building checked, secure; 9:45 p.m.: suspicious persons (Main Street), investigated; 10:01 p.m.: suspicious mv (Main Street), investigated; (total daily mv stops - 6).

###

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# How some popular holiday traditions got their start



Will you be baking gingerbread or hanging stockings by the fireplace this holiday season? Perhaps you'll be lighting the menorah or playing a game of dreidel? The holidays are steeped in tradition, some of which are older than celebrants may realize.

Individuals gather during the holidays and participate in various traditions that have withstood the test of time. Most people engage in these traditions or recognize symbols automatically, but it can be interesting to learn how these traditions came to be.

**Christmas caroling**  
The British traditions of wassailing and mumming and the Slavic tradition of koliada were some of the precursors to more modern caroling. People would go door-to-door and recite poetry or sing with the hope of bringing about good fortune or influencing a future harvest, according to Rutgers University. Carolers spread hope and good tidings through song during a time of year when sunlight was limited.

**Christmas trees**  
Pagans once displayed evergreen branches as a reminder that spring would come again, while Romans placed them around temples to honor Saturn, the god of agriculture. Eventually the evergreen was used in conjunction with Christian Christmas celebrations. In the sixteenth century,

German Christians put trees inside their homes as symbols of everlasting life.

**Santa Claus**  
Children who celebrate Christmas eagerly await the arrival of a jolly sort who goes by the name of Santa Claus. His origin story stretches back to the third century, when Saint Nicholas became the patron saint of children. Saint Nicholas was a monk in what is modern-day Turkey. It is said that he traveled helping the poor and the sick. History.com says he is believed to have saved three impoverished sisters from slavery by providing them with a dowry so they could be married, and he also provided gifts to children.

**Menorah**  
The menorah is a multi-branched candelabra used in Jewish religious rituals. The menorah is first mentioned in the book of Exodus when the design of the lamp was revealed to Moses by God on Mount Sinai. Many menorahs are seven-branched, but during Chanukah, an eight-branched menorah is used. The Chanukah menorah is modeled after the Tabernacle menorah that corresponds to the eight-day festival. It was used to celebrate the rededication of the Second Temple. The available oil supply was supposed to light the menorah for just one day, but the candles actually burned for eight.

**Mistletoe**  
Kissing under the mistletoe is a holiday season tradition that can lead to some red faces when couples are caught beneath the plant. Norse mythology paved the way for kissing under the mistletoe. Legend has it the gods used mistletoe to resurrect Odin's son, Baldur, from the dead. Baldur's mother, Frigg, the goddess of love, made the plant a symbol of love and vowed to kiss anyone who passed under it. Mistletoe blooms under cold conditions, which is how it became associated with the holiday season.

**Yule log**  
Yule logs were once part of winter solstice celebrations to bring good luck and fortune, but America is where a yule log really caught on as a holiday tradition. In 1966, the WPIX television station in New York City aired a continuous loop of a fireplace burning for three hours with holiday songs playing. It became an annual tradition, says History.com. Some people even serve a cake that looks like a yule log. The Bûche de Noël is a traditional Christmas cake that is especially popular in France.

Holiday traditions continue in full force. Traditions are an endearing component of celebrations and help to unite people from all backgrounds during this special time of year.

## Tips to make holiday dinners more affordable



"Eat, drink and be merry" is a familiar refrain come the holiday season. Hosting a holiday dinner is a great way to welcome family and friends and encourage them to embrace the festive nature of the season. However, the high cost of foods and other essentials may have certain holiday hosts rethinking their menus and their guest lists this year.

A 2024 Pew Research Poll showed Americans worried about the state of the economy cite the price of food and the cost of housing as their foremost concerns. More than 90 percent of Americans say they are "very" or "somewhat" concerned about the cost of food and consumer goods.

Average annual food-at-home prices were 5 percent higher in 2023 than in 2022, according to the USDA Economic Research Service. Inflation has been a key topic of discussion for much of the last three years. While data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates inflation continues to cool off from all-time highs, consumers are still anxious about how food prices are affecting their bottom lines and their holiday entertaining plans. According to Farmdoc Daily, which offers agriculture-based data analysis, 68 percent of U.S. consumers expected rising food prices

to impact their holiday meals in 2023. Similar concerns may prevail in 2024.

Stretching holiday entertaining dollars comes down to being savvy. With that in mind, hosts can consider these meal modification strategies this holiday season.

- Replace a high-cost protein with a more affordable alternative. Sometimes a holiday meal calls for pulling out all of the stops, and that may mean spending more on a special main dish. Rather than a luxury like beef tenderloin or prime rib roast, consider a less expensive dish, such as a pork tenderloin, roasted chicken or even seafood.

- Add extra side dishes. Incorporate an inexpensive item like rice, beans or an extra vegetable side dish into the meal so that plates can be filled with the less expensive foods and fewer high-cost items.

- Shop the sales. Plan meals around a supermarket circular. While you may have had one holiday dinner idea in mind, once you see what the stores are putting on sale you can stock up on those items and build the dinner around them. If you find a good deal several weeks away from the holidays, buy the items and freeze them until they're needed.

- Buy generic or store brands. Chances are no one will notice if you use generic or store brand ingredients, which can be considerably cheaper than their brand-name counterparts. Many are even manufactured in the same facilities that produce the name brand stuff.

- Make an affordable drink. Alcohol costs can add up when you try to cater to everyone's tastes and preferences. Make one or two bulk drinks, like a holiday punch or signature cocktail, so you can keep alcohol costs in check.

- Stretch the snacks. Instead of a charcuterie board filled with expensive cheeses and meats, opt for dips and raw vegetables or a low-cost cheese ball made with cream cheese and herbs with crackers. Keep snacks to a minimum; otherwise, guests may fill up and then not have room for dinner.

Holiday hosts can embrace various strategies to save money on family meals this season.

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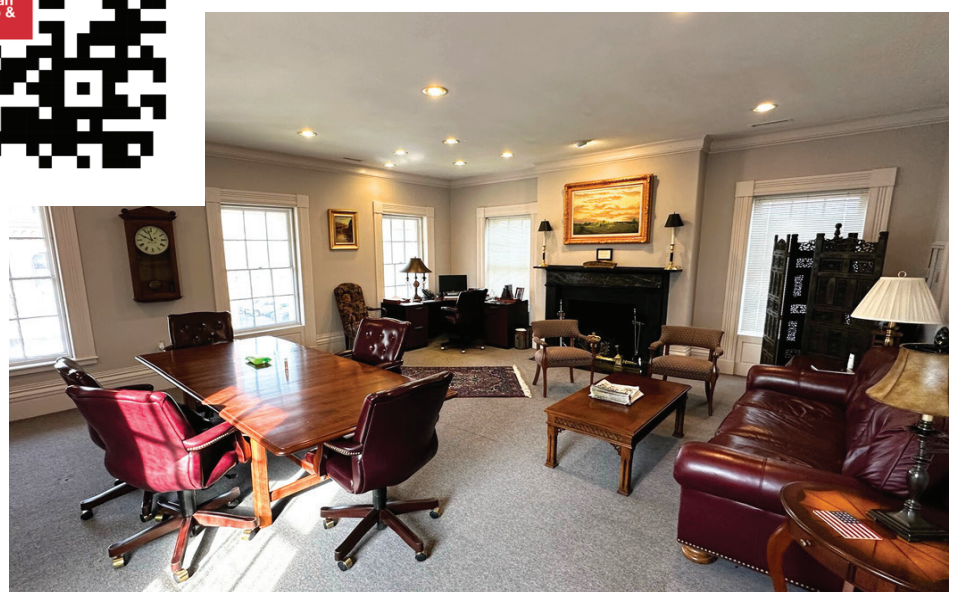


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