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Friday, May 15, 2026

## Brookfield man receives Excellence in Teaching Award from Worcester State



Courtesy

Joe Klimavich, APR with Worcester State University President Barry M. Maloney.

**BROOKFIELD** — Worcester State University presented Joseph J. Klimavich, APR, with the university's Adjunct Professor Excellence in Teaching Award during the Worcester State University Employee Service Recognition Celebration held May 5 at the Gene J. and Julianne DeFeudis Wellness Center.

The award recognizes adjunct faculty whose teaching is challenging, motivating, and student-centered, helping students succeed both academically and personally. This year's award — the fifth annual

presentation — was given to Klimavich, a public relations professional and educator who has taught at Worcester State University for a combined total of 18 years while continuing a professional career in communication.

Klimavich teaches courses in public relations, interpersonal communication, public speaking, and related communication disciplines. His teaching philosophy centers on the belief that communication is not simply an academic subject, but a practical skill students will use throughout their personal

and professional lives. His classes emphasize experiential learning through case studies, collaborative exercises, applied assignments, and real-world communication challenges.

A PRSA-accredited public relations professional, Klimavich has held communication leadership roles in the banking, healthcare, and insurance industries. He also recently led the effort to reactivate the Greater Worcester Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America. Drawing on those experiences in the classroom, Klimavich works to connect communication theory with real-world organizational practice while encouraging students to think critically about how communication shapes relationships, workplaces, and communities.

Klimavich's connection to Worcester State extends beyond the classroom. An alumnus of the university, he has served on the Alumni Advisory Board and, in 2013, received the university's Distinguished Alumni Award in Education, the highest non-degree honor Worcester State presents to alumni. For eight years, he also performed with the Worcester State Chorale, traveling with the ensemble to Portugal, Germany, and Italy.

In his spare time, Klimavich enjoys participating in film projects shot throughout central Massachusetts. He has appeared as a background actor in the Apple TV+ series *Defending Jacob*, as well as the series pilot, *Hollywood*, and the locally filmed horror film, *Birthrite*. A former student also cast him in a featured role in the short film, *Madigan's Again*. And, together with his wife, Barbara, he is a costumed volunteer with the Old Sturbridge Village Singers.

Klimavich lives in Brookfield, where he operates an independent public relations consulting practice specializing in media relations, social media, graphic design, crisis communication, and storytelling.

## Brookfield, N. Brookfield hold annual elections

BY JASON BLEAU  
CORRESPONDENT

**REGION** — North Brookfield and Brookfield each held their annual elections on May 4 securing new town leadership, although in some cases these positions were already spoken for due to a lack of competition. Neither town had any extra questions added to their ballots for 2026.

### North Brookfield

North Brookfield's election included naming a new selectman, school committee members, and water commissioners, which were the only contested this year. At the top of the ballot was a selectman race to replace the departing long-time member Jason Petraitis which saw Peter Orsi claim victory over John Tripp in a 418 to 97 decision.

Petraitis was also involved in a unique contest for School Committee with three positions filled by all write-in candidates. Petraitis received 38 votes and failed to secure a seat while Nancy Waldron and Michelle Thayer earned two seats with votes of 113 and 77 respectively. Michelle Petraitis also joined the committee through a separate contest as a write-in to fill a vacancy.

The other contested battle was for Water Commissioner, where Richard Kinnan defeated James Arcese for a position, and Donald Gillette won a separate election uncontested to fill a vacancy. Gillette was also uncontested for a seat on the Southern Worcester County Regional Vocational School District.

The other winners of the night, all unopposed, were Karen Hubacz and Sadie Kelly for the Planning Board, Ethan Melad for Board of Health, Carol Kelley and Noah Caouette for Library Trustee, Kirk Burnham for Cemetery Commissioner, and Darlene Levin for the Housing Authority, and Brandon Avery for Board of Assessors. The Board of Assessors also had two vacancies to fill with multiple write-in candidates earning votes, but no decided winner highlighted in the official results provided by the town.

### Brookfield

Brookfield also had one elected seat decided completed by write-in votes while a battle for Select Board also saw a write-in candidate contend against an incumbent.

Select Board member Beth Lisa Coughlin maintained her seat on the board with 152 votes, but write-in candidate John Holdcraft gave her a contest. Holdcraft earned 87

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## Override options fail at West Brookfield polls

BY JASON BLEAU  
CORRESPONDENT

**WEST BROOKFIELD** — West Brookfield held its annual town election on May 5 picking new town leadership and deciding the fate of a pair of proposed Proposition 2 1/2 Override options.

With no truly contested seats on the ballot, much attention was focused on the two questions presenting different override requests that, if approved, would have required a town meeting to fully implement in the spending plan. The results saw both options fail, effectively forcing the town to stay with

in the confined of Proposition 2 1/2, which officials warned was needed to maintain level services for both the municipal and education plans.

Voters were presented with Questions 1A and 1B on the ballot with 1A seeking an additional \$1.6 million that would have supported both the Quaboag Regional School District and the municipal budget. Question 1B provided another option, adding the smaller ask of \$1.1 million that would have maintained level municipal services but necessitated cuts in the school budget. Neither question passed with Question 1A failing in a 624

"no" to 497 "yes" decision and 1B denied by a margin of 604 "no" and 501 "yes."

Much talk has been made over the years about the school district's financial struggles, with many fearing the lack of funding could eventually lead to the closure of the West Brookfield Elementary School, a decision that lies in the hands of the Quaboag Regional School Committee. The town has been using one-time revenues to fill the gap in expenditures, according to statements made by Town Administrator Theresa Cofske in March, which she considers an unsustainable practice.

What the override's failure means for the town and schools in the short and long term have yet to be seen but cuts are considered inevitable to fit within the confines of Proposition 2 1/2, a state law that caps annual tax levy growth at 2.5 percent of the prior year's total with new growth considered. The budget will be addressed during the annual town meeting in June.

As far as elected positions, all candidates on the ballot earned their seats with a lack of competition in the races.

Henry Brogna won the single vacancy for Selectman, Jason

Turn To POLLS page A8

## LHS Nursing students show 100 percent passing rate on CNA exam

**LEICESTER** — Leicester High School's Health Assisting program is producing impres-

sive results, as all students enrolled in the program successfully met the criteria to

become a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA). This program is approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and Chapter 74 by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

The Health Assisting program is taught by Leicester resident and former Leicester Middle School Nurse Mellissa Ledbetter who holds a Master of Science in Nursing. She has experience at UMASS Medical, Melrose Wakefield Hospital, New England Medical Center and Brigham and Women's Hospital. Her pride for her students is obvious saying, "They deserve all the credit. Our students worked extremely hard and their hard work is paying

off."

LHS Senior Makayla Lyons disagrees, "If it wasn't for Mrs. Ledbetter, we would not have passed. She is like our mom!" Jordan Giggey, mentioning May is Teacher Appreciation Month, said, "Mrs. L is the best teacher in the world!" Isabella Beyers agreed with Jordan and Makayla stating, "This class is the best and we have a great mentor and friend."

CNA is not the only industry credential that the students are earning. They are working towards Basic Life Support Certificate, OSHA for Health Care and Dementia and Alzheimer's Certification. A pinning ceremony is being planned for May 26 at 6 p.m. at Leicester High School.



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# Richard Sugden Library announces upcoming events

SPENCER — A Henna Party for all ages will be held at the Richard Sugden Library, Spencer. Join us Monday, May 18 and get your tattoo from 5-7 p.m.

Mel Allen, Retired Yankee Magazine Editor, speaks about New England stories and pictures that connect us all. Adults and Teens are invited to the Richard Sugden Library Monday, June 1 to join us for this inspiring program. The presentation will be held from 6-7:30 p.m.

“Mel Allen brought New England to life in a way that made us all proud to call it home. His stories connected us to each other — and to the spirit of this place we love. Our Duxbury audience of more than 80 people responded with a standing ova-

tion,” raves Brooke McDonough, Media Manager, Duxbury Senior Center. Sponsor: Friends of the Library.

Crafting with Diane: Witch Hats. Design fancy witch hats for next week’s visit of the Southern New England Dancing Witches. Space is limited. Call (508) 885-7513, ext. 1 or visit the library to sign up. This fun craft is for all ages and free. This program is funded in part by a grant from the Spencer Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Dancing Witches at Powder Mill Park on Saturday, June 6 (rain date Sunday, June 7) from 1-2 p.m. The Southern New England Dancing Witches is a dance troupe

from Connecticut. They are entertaining for all ages. Bring witch hats made at Crafting with Diane, or one from your own collection. Costumes are encouraged! All ages are invited. This program is funded in part by a grant from the Spencer Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Spencer Congregational Church Fire stories will be shared at the Richard Sugden Library on Thursday, June 11 at 6 p.m. Fire Chief Parsons will share stories about the Spencer, First Congregational Church fire.

The Delvena Theatre Company will be presenting “Nun of This and Nun of That!” at the Spencer American Legion, 175 Main St., Spencer, on Thursday, June

25, at 6 p.m. Nun of This and Nun of That! is an interactive, live comedy featuring two actresses. Now is the time for the 50th Class Reunion of St.Bartholomew’s Parochial School. The sisters are excited to meet with their former students from the Class of 1957. The audience members, of course, are the reunion attendees. A good time will be had by all reminiscing about the old days and catching up with everyone. A fun, light-hearted comedy! This program is funded in part by a grant from the Spencer Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

## Concerts on the Common return May 30

NORTH BROOKFIELD — North Brookfield Parks and Recreation, in conjunction with the North Brookfield Cultural Council, will be hosting Concerts on the Common this summer season.

An MCC grant is making these concerts possible for all residents to enjoy. We have a lineup of five dates and bands:

May 30 - North Brookfield High School band will play, followed by DJ Tabby Leblanc.

June 20, we will enjoy the sounds of Ravenwood, an easy listening blue grass band.

On July 25, we will host Sue Lyons, an acoustical guitar player and vocalist.

Aug. 15 will bring us Stan Matthews, who will entertain us with country music with some exceptional Johnny Cash tunes.

The season will end with the Superchargers, a fun rock and roll band.

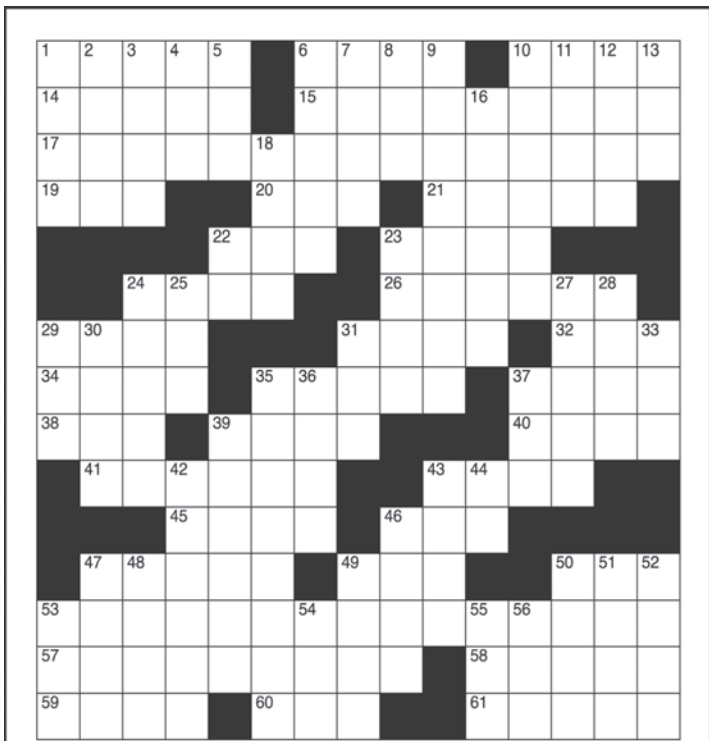
All concerts are free. They are held on Saturdays and start at 6 p.m. and end around 8 pm. Food will be available for purchase but folks are welcome to bring their own! Feel free to bring chairs, blankets, bug spray and sun screen - whatever makes you comfortable. The playground is right on the common, located on Grove Street in town. We will have games for families to enjoy and some \*surprise \* craft tables during some concerts!



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### CLUES ACROSS

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Notable casino destination           | 35. “Partner” to groans              |
| 6. Current units                        | 37. Jewish calendar month            |
| 10. Roman military unit                 | 38. Where wrestlers work             |
| 14. American lizard                     | 39. Egotistical                      |
| 15. Fates                               | 40. Potted plants                    |
| 17. The Yankees have lots of these      | 41. Containers                       |
| 19. Unhappy                             | 43. Large, flightless birds          |
| 20. Mimic                               | 45. Part of a book                   |
| 21. Remove from the record              | 46. American spies                   |
| 22. Where cargo ships dock (abbr.)      | 47. Pancakes made of buckwheat flour |
| 23. A way to fight                      | 49. Swiss river                      |
| 24. Turfs                               | 50. Disfigure                        |
| 26. Contract                            | 53. Have surgery                     |
| 29. Country along the Arabian peninsula | 57. Formal withdrawal                |
| 31. Tree species                        | 58. Early English council            |
| 32. Pituitary gland secretion (abbr.)   | 59. Area units                       |
| 34. Perfect                             | 60. 2,000 lbs.                       |
|   | 61. Siskel and ___                   |

### CLUES DOWN

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Animal jaws                         | 29. Resistance unit               |
| 2. Small water buffalo                 | 30. Ancient kingdom near Dead Sea |
| 3. An appliance has one                | 31. Cast out                      |
| 4. Every                               | 33. 60-minute periods             |
| 5. Largest English dictionary (abbr.)  | 35. Most worn                     |
| 6. Very skilled                        | 36. European river                |
| 7. No more than what is specified      | 37. Atomic mass unit              |
| 8. Tire measurement                    | 39. Items of food                 |
| 9. Towers                              | 42. Body parts                    |
| 10. Forward                            | 43. Ireland                       |
| 11. Jacob __, American journalist      | 44. Partner to Pa                 |
| 12. Vale                               | 46. Sammy __, songwriter          |
| 13. Former CIA                         | 47. Dutch settler                 |
| 16. Middle Eastern nation              | 48. Full-grown pike fish          |
| 18. Exhausts                           | 49. Sun or solar disk             |
| 22. South Dakota                       | 50. Minute arachnid               |
| 23. The complete duration of something | 51. From a distance               |
| 24. Kids love him                      | 52. A monthly expense             |
| 25. Singular                           | 53. Young women’s association     |
| 27. Cod genus                          | 54. Brazilian state               |
| 28. Mild yellow Dutch cheese           | 55. Air freight provider          |
|  | 56. Pointed end of a pen          |

PUZZLE SOLUTION

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## WEEKLY POLICE BLOTTER

**Spencer**  
The Spencer Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of April 29 to May 5.  
Pamela M. Donovan, age 60, of Spencer was arrested on April 29 in connection with a warrant.  
Shawn J. Jackson, age 40, of Spencer was arrested on May 2 in connection with a warrant.  
Kenneth J. Chiapulis, Jr., age 55, of Spencer was arrested on May 5 in connection with a warrant.

**Leicester**  
The Leicester Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of April 30 to May 6.  
An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on April 30 for Operating a Motor Vehicle in Violation of License Class, operating an Unregistered Motor Vehicle, and a Motorcycle Equipment Violation.

Jared Jason Kapurch, age 24, of Charlton was arrested on May 1 for a Marked Lanes Violation, Operating Under the Influence (Liquor), and driving at a rate of speed exceeding the posted limit.  
Jimmy C. Milner, age 30, of Leicester was arrested on May 1 for Operating Under the Influence (Liquor), Negligent Operation of a Motor Vehicle, a Marked Lanes Violation, and Possession of an Open Container of Alcohol in a Motor Vehicle.

Mikayla R. Leonard, age 30, of Charlton was arrested on May 2 for driving at a rate of speed exceeding the posted limit, a Marked Lanes Violation, and Operating Under the Influence (Liquor).  
An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication was arrested on May 2 for Assault with a Dangerous Weapon, Threatening to Commit a Crime, and Disorderly Conduct.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on May 3 for Larceny under \$1,200.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on May 4 for operating an Uninsured and Unregistered Motor Vehicle and Operating a Motor Vehicle after suspension of registration.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on May 5 for Operating a Motor Vehicle after suspension of license and operating a motor vehicle with No Inspection Sticker.

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### SPENCER ALMANAC

— REAL ESTATE —

**BROOKFIELD**  
\$575,000, 155 Fiskdale Rd, Morin, Jeffrey Scott, to Dowlee, Kaylee J, and Morin, Rebecca L.

**EAST BROOKFIELD**  
\$565,000, 110 Pondview Rd, Dubois, Anthony J, and Dubois, Rita G, to Lamoureux, Marc, and Fritze, Taylor.

**LEICESTER**  
\$6,450,000, 1445 Main St, Century Properties Xxv-Lp, to Veo Trio LLC.  
\$630,000, 2 Shelter Ridge Rd, Opacki, Robert P, to Pagung, Erin E, and Pagung, Ediandro.  
\$330,000, 120 Pine St, Buchyn, Patricia D, to Fournier, Carly.  
\$75,000, 47 Woodland Rd, Paige, John, and Paige, Jean M, to Paige, Joseph, and Paige, James J.

**NORTH BROOKFIELD**  
\$238,000, 18 E Brookside Rd, Klu Properties LLC, to Varney Properties LLC.

**SPENCER**  
\$372,000, 26 Church St, Fitzgerald Nathan K Est, and Fitzgerald, Joshua, to Lesiege, Kyle James, and Biscocho, Jenna Isabelle.  
\$276,500, 16 Smithville Rd, Vink John P Est, and Vink, Jean M, to Driven Realty LLC.  
\$100,000, Langevin St, Polleys, Brenda L, and Paradis, Dawn M, to Vineyard Sky Farms Corp.  
**WARREN**  
\$360,000, 368 Keys Rd, 368 Keys Rd LLC, to Madison, Nancy J.  
\$342,500, 235 Crouch Rd, Zglobicki, Louis A, and Mendes, Jason, to Mendes, Lynn, and Merriett, Alexis.  
\$200,000, 2185 Main St, Tetreault, Sarah D, and Ostopchuk, Rebecca F, to Wyngowski, Edward F.

**WEST BROOKFIELD**  
\$302,000, 103 Wickaboag Valley Rd, Perry, Elaine E, to Braconnier, Christine, and Braconnier, Craig.  
\$205,000, 23 Ware St, 1037 Main Street Nt, and Buzzell, James D, to 23 Ware Street Nt, and Buzzell, James D.

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# LES holds sendoff for officers taking part in Police Unity Tour



LEICESTER — The Leicester Elementary School community came together on Tuesday, May 5, to recognize two members of the Leicester Police Department, Officer Lombardozzi and Sgt. Guertin, as they prepare to take part in the annual Police Unity Tour.

The Unity Tour is a four-day, 250-to-300-mile bicycle ride, typically traveling from New Jersey to Washington, D.C., during National Police Week. With more than 600 officers participating each year, the event honors fallen law enforcement officers and raises funds for the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund and Museum.

Guided by the motto, “We Ride for Those Who Died,” the tour also supports the families of officers who lost their lives in the line of duty. For Officer Lombardozzi and Sergeant Guertin, this year’s ride holds deep personal significance. They will be riding in honor of their friend, Ronald Tarentino, who was killed in the line of duty on May 22, 2016.

In a heartfelt sendoff, Leicester Elementary students, some of whom are children of Leicester police officers, shared well wishes, delivered speeches, and presented thoughtful gifts and treats to the riders. The entire school community also signed a banner as a symbol of support and gratitude.

Principal Tracy Steiger notes, “The Leicester Police Department supports our school community in so many ways. It’s really special and important for us to be able to show our appreciation and support right back.”

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Courtesy

North Brookfield Elementary School wanted to share a quick update that our Band Camp earlier this month was a tremendous success. We had 18 students participate, and the energy and engagement throughout was outstanding. A special thank you to Ms. Saunders for organizing and coordinating the entire experience as her efforts truly made this opportunity possible for our students. Our young musicians greatly enjoyed working alongside the talented students from University of Massachusetts Amherst, and the collaboration was a highlight of the day. We’re also excited that some of the UMass musicians will be joining us for our upcoming concert.



## ARTHRITIS?

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“Committed to Advancing appropriate care to people with arthritis”

## Local land trust celebrates 20 years of land conservation

LEICESTER — Do you recognize the name Common Ground Land Trust? As an all-volunteer, private, non-profit (501c3) organization, we dedicate our time and energy to open space protection in Spencer and Leicester. With support from individuals, students, families, organizations, and businesses, our membership has grown over the years since inception in 2006. This year, Common Ground Land Trust is celebrating its 20th anniversary. Help us celebrate and become a member!

Do you enjoy outdoor recreation? If you engage in activities such as birding, hiking, hunting, fishing, or simply listening to the tranquil sounds of nature around you, Common Ground Land Trust may be a good partner for you.

Do you believe in the preservation of

land, water, and open space? Join our land trust, become more informed, and share your thoughts and talents.

Are you curious or interested in partnering with us? To learn more about our goals and accomplishments you can find us at:

Web: [CommonGroundLT.org](http://CommonGroundLT.org)  
Email: [info@commongroundlt.org](mailto:info@commongroundlt.org)  
Phone: 774-371-0156

Common Ground Land Trust, PO Box 400, Leicester, MA 01524

As stewards of multiple properties in Spencer and Leicester, our work is on-going and involves time, energy, and community camaraderie. Whether you are a resident of Spencer, Leicester, or any other community, Common Ground Land Trust welcomes you! Join today, get involved, and protect the integrity of our rural towns.

## Friday's Child



**Korben**  
Age 9  
Registration #8266

Korben is a sweet and loving young boy with a gentle and joyful presence. He enjoys being around others and often engages with peers in his own unique way, using babbling as a form of communication. His personality shines through in the little moments, especially when he is feeling comfortable and connected. Korben finds happiness in simple, meaningful activities. He loves having books read to him and enjoys the closeness and connection that comes with sharing

a story. Music and TV shows are also favorites of his, bringing him comfort and enjoyment throughout the day. Korben especially enjoys spending time with people who are patient and attentive. Whether he’s listening to a favorite book, enjoying music, or simply being near others, he thrives in environments where he feels supported and cared for.

<https://www.mareinc.org/child/21187524165>

Can I Adopt?

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

The process to adopt a child from foster care includes training, interviews, and home visits to determine if adoption is right for you. These steps will help match you with a child or sibling group that your family will fit well with. To learn more about adoption from foster care visit [www.mareinc.org](http://www.mareinc.org). Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) can give you guidance and information on the adoption process. Reach out today to find out all the ways you can help children and teens in foster care.



## PEPIN

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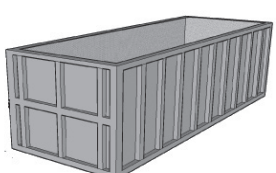


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 EDITOR

## EDITORIAL

# Teaching the next generation to care

There is a great deal of conversation these days about workforce shortages in health care. Hospitals, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, and home care agencies across Massachusetts continue searching for qualified professionals to meet growing demand. While much of that discussion happens at the state and national level, one local program in Leicester is quietly proving that solutions can begin close to home.

Leicester High School's Health Assisting program recently achieved something worth celebrating. Every student enrolled in the program successfully met the qualifications to become a Certified Nursing Assistant. That accomplishment speaks not only to the dedication of the students, but also to the strength of career and technical education programs that give young people practical skills tied directly to meaningful careers.

Programs like this matter because they offer students an opportunity to connect education with purpose. Not every student follows the same path after graduation. Some head to four-year colleges, others pursue trades, military service, or direct entry into the workforce. The strongest schools recognize that success is not one-size-fits-all. Leicester High School's Health Assisting program demonstrates the value of giving students multiple pathways toward productive futures.

The medical field demands intelligence, discipline, compassion, and emotional maturity. Certified Nursing Assistants work directly with patients during some of the most difficult moments in their lives. They assist elderly residents, comfort frightened patients, and support nurses and families every day. These are responsibilities that require not only technical training but also character.

That makes the comments from students about instructor Mellissa Ledbetter especially meaningful. When students describe a teacher as a mentor, supporter, and trusted guide, it reflects the kind of educational environment every community should want for its schools. Strong teachers do more than prepare students for exams. They help young people build confidence in themselves and their abilities.

Leicester is also demonstrating how schools can better align with real workforce needs. The students are not only earning CNA certification, but also pursuing additional credentials in Basic Life Support, OSHA health care safety, and dementia and Alzheimer's care. Those certifications carry genuine value in today's job market and provide graduates with immediate opportunities to contribute in a field where workers are urgently needed.

Career and technical education programs were once too often viewed as secondary to traditional academic tracks. That outdated thinking has steadily changed, and for good reason. Programs like Leicester's Health Assisting course show that technical education can be rigorous, demanding, and deeply rewarding. Students are learning science, communication, responsibility, and problem-solving while also preparing for careers that directly serve others.

There is also something encouraging about seeing young people choose professions centered on care and compassion. In a world that can sometimes feel increasingly divided or impersonal, these students are preparing to spend their lives helping vulnerable people. That deserves recognition.

The upcoming pinning ceremony on May 26 will certainly be an important milestone for the students and their families. But it is also a moment the broader community can take pride in. Leicester High School is helping produce skilled, motivated young adults ready to make a difference both locally and beyond.

Communities are strengthened when schools prepare students not only to earn a living, but also to serve others with professionalism and humanity. Leicester's Health Assisting program is doing exactly that.

# VIEWPOINT

OPINION AND COMMENTARY FROM SPENCER, LEICESTER AND THE BROOKFIELDS

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### When enough is enough

To the Editor:

When the November elections flip the House and Senate Blue, it will be time to skip past impeachment and go directly to Article II Section #4 of the constitution, and literally drain the swamp. Their gifting is now done openly in the belief that anything we let them get away with, is acceptable. I strongly disagree, and think it is well past time to stand up for ourselves. It is clear this congress and court will not. The POTUS is using our DOJ (department of Justification) as his personal hit squad

Because of DOGE, you no longer pay farmers to use their surplus to supplement their income while feeding starving people and providing the conduit necessary for all of our charitable outreach programs in the world. We have eliminated consumer protection, because who would cheat us? Instead of clean rest rooms at national parks, we sent billions to Argentina and fund the Board of Peace, which nobody knows who or what that is or does. Clearly, peace is not evident.

We are depleting our very expensive arsenal, blowing up Iran, so we can pay them restitution for what we destroy. We are spending a billion dollars a day on troops and ships deployed to the Middle East, with the bottom line being doubling our own fossil fuel costs. The spinoff of that being costs to manufacture and deliver everything, even made here, is escalating. They have figured out a way for the "free plane" and "free ballroom"

### What are you comfortable with cutting next?

To the Editor:

Over the past few weeks, I've seen a lot of discussion about the upcoming school budget override in Spencer. Much of it comes from real frustration, especially around taxes and the feeling that it's always something new. That's fair. But I also think some of the key facts are getting lost in the noise:

The proposed \$264,456 override for the FY27 school budget isn't about adding new programs or anything flashy. It's about the basics that keep our schools running day to day; maintenance, heating and ventilation, utilities, and custodial staffing. Not the exciting stuff, but the things that matter when they don't work. I've seen a number of comments suggesting these costs weren't planned for or somehow weren't included in the budget. That's just not true, as they were. The issue is that even after significant cuts, there still isn't enough to cover them.

Here are more facts, the district has already cut over \$1 million from its original level-service budget, eliminated administrative budget lines, reduced 12 full-time positions, and used \$133,496.29 in reserves. Those aren't small adjustments, they're real cuts with real consequences. And after all of that work, there's still a gap.

### Suggestions to plan and enjoy a better quality of life

To the Editor:

- Free your mind of trivia, useless information, negative thoughts, ideas and concepts.
- Limit your time and be selective in watching tv programs, sports, games and news.
- Select friends who are positive, upbeat, loyal, supportive and trustworthy.
- Plan trips to visit family and friends, enjoying the spirit of the moment, discussing past and future events.
- Declutter thoughts in your mind with data that could be classified as worthless information.
- Attack with vigor your "Plan of the Day" with a great deal of thought, passion and gusto.
- Review and make the necessary adjustments or changes to your insurance policies and financial goals.

#### 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.

to cost us billions.

Wouldn't you think the moron in chief, would cut us some slack by suspending tariffs, and not even consider building more expensive monuments like an arch? You would be wrong. While still actively taking away from the people, he is seeking more war funding, plans to invade Cuba, thinks he is entitled to a contractor's fee for the ballroom, and is overseeing the IRS settlement with himself.

I have to admit, the border is secure. So what has that gotten us? The illegal day workers, pickers, packers, maids, etc., who were contributing billions to Social Security, because they cannot collect but must pay, will now flip that around by being housed in warehouses / 25 per pen and toilet, for which we will pay private contractors to operate, costing us billions. The social programs we cut instead of funding, would have been cheaper than this reality.

From the day Trump arrived at his investors' crypto dinner on Marine#1 and used a presidential podium, I knew we had been hijacked, and while I was outraged, the fact that people who should have done something about it, and didn't, tells the story. As long as you can keep the people with the torches, fighting the people with the pitchforks, you are golden. The FBI interview with the 13 year old he [allegedly] molested need not be released to know he is a disgrace, embarrassment and a traitor.

KEN KIMBALL  
 BROOKFIELD

## Saving for retirement: Are you guessing or planning?



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Let's say you dream of spending your retirement mornings on a warm beach, coffee in hand, waves rolling in. To get there, you had a simple plan: save \$1 million and buy the beach house you always wanted.

But when retirement arrives, reality hits. After accounting for keeping your current home, everyday expenses, and health care, \$1 million doesn't stretch as far as you thought, and the beach house remains a dream. The problem wasn't your discipline – it was that your number was never really your number. It was arbitrary, not anchored to what your ideal retirement would actually cost.

How can you make sure your retirement number is right for you?

A solid savings goal starts with a clear picture of the retirement you want. Think through where you plan to live, whether you'll keep your current home or downsize, how much you plan to travel, if you'll help children and grandchildren financially and what health care might cost you later in life. Build a realistic monthly budget, then multiply by 12 months to find your annual need. Adjust this amount for inflation until the first year of retirement.

Then, multiply that figure by 25 to get a sense of how much may be needed to save. It's a formula based on the idea of withdrawing 4 percent annually from your savings, assuming you retire in your mid-60s. If you need \$60,000 a year, your target is around \$1.5 million. You may need more or less depending on your lifestyle, health, unexpected expenses, Social Security benefits and other income. No single rate or strategy will work for everyone. A financial advisor can help you determine your number and strategy.

Once you know your target, the path forward becomes clearer. Here are a few tips for next steps:

Start early. The sooner you begin saving, the more time compound interest has to work in your favor. Small amounts set aside automatically each paycheck have the opportunity to grow significantly over decades.

Live below your means. Spending less than you earn is one of the most powerful wealth-building habits. When your income rises, save and invest the difference instead of upgrading your lifestyle.

Keep your debt under control. Since credit cards and other high-interest debt can slow your progress, pay off balances monthly when possible.

Invest consistently. If your employer offers a 401(k), aim to contribute at least 10-15 percent of your salary, and increase your contributions after every raise. If you max out your 401(k), a traditional IRA or Roth IRA may offer additional tax-advantaged growth (eligibility and contribution limits apply).

Boost your income when you can. Develop new skills, ask for a raise or explore a side income. Every extra dollar saved moves you closer to your goal.

The difference between a retirement you love and one full of compromises often comes down to the planning you do today. Know your real number, build a solid plan, and get the right help along the way.

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

DONALD L. GAUDETTE, SR.  
 SOUTH HADLEY (FORMERLY OF  
 BROOKFIELD)

# The sound of a ball game on a spring night

There are certain sounds a town doesn't realize it would miss until they come back again.

Around here, one of those sounds is the crack of a baseball bat on a cool spring evening.

Not the roar of a professional stadium, mind you. I mean the smaller sounds. The real sounds. Aluminum bats echoing off a school backstop. Cleats scraping gravel in a parking lot. A coach hollering "Run it out!" while somebody's little brother chases a foul ball toward the concession stand.

You hear it drifting through town this time of year. Through open pickup truck windows. Across the pond at dusk. Sometimes while standing in line at the hardware store, you suddenly realize you can hear a game going on somewhere nearby.

And for a moment, the whole town feels exactly the way it's supposed to feel.

I drove past one of the local fields the other evening after supper. I wasn't headed there. I had no grandson playing, no reason to stop, and my knees certainly weren't volunteering to sit on aluminum bleachers for two hours. But the parking lot was full, the lights were on, and there was something about it that pulled me in.

So I parked. I sat there in the truck for a while with the windows cracked, listening.

A boy struck out and slammed his helmet down harder than necessary. A girl in the outfield was picking dandelions between innings. Somebody burned popcorn in the snack shack. Two older fellows near the fence were discussing the Red Sox as if the front office might call them for advice at any moment.

## LANTERNS ALONG MAIN STREET

By CHARLES

It was perfect. You know, when people talk about small-town New England life, they usually mention the postcard things. Church steeples. White fences. Covered bridges. Fall leaves.

But they forget these spring nights at the ball field.

That's where communities really happen.

You see grandparents who haven't missed a season in twenty years. You see exhausted parents still wearing work boots, arriving just in time for the third inning. You see kids learning difficult lessons about teamwork, patience, embarrassment, effort, and occasionally what happens when you forget there's a runner on second base.

Nobody remembers the score ten years later.

But they remember who showed up.

I remember my father standing along a chain-link fence with his arms folded, saying almost nothing during games. That was his generation. Men didn't chatter encouragement every thirty seconds back then. You knew they were proud because they came. Because they stood there after a ten-hour workday instead of heading home to rest.

Every once in a while, after a decent play, he'd clear his throat and say, "Not bad."

From him, that was practically a parade.

I didn't appreciate those evenings enough at the time. Most kids don't. You think life will always include grass stains and orange slices and the sound of somebody dragging the infield after sunset.

Then one day you realize decades have passed, and suddenly you'd give quite a lot to stand near that fence again.

These days, life moves

faster than it ought to. Everybody's rushing somewhere. Phones buzz through dinner. Half the country seems angry all the time. Folks wear earbuds walking down Main Street now, which still strikes me as a funny way to avoid hearing the world.

But at a local ball field, for an hour or two, things slow down again.

Neighbors talk. Kids laugh.

Teenagers who act too cool for everything suddenly become ten feet tall after catching a fly ball.

And old men like me sit quietly in pickup trucks pretending we only stopped for a minute.

The best part may be that these evenings cost almost nothing. A couple dollars for a hot dog. Maybe another for a soda if you're feeling reckless. No fancy tickets. No valet parking. No giant video board demanding applause.

Just people gathering because spring finally returned to Massachusetts and somebody chalked the baselines again.

I think towns need traditions like that more than ever.

Not grand traditions. Not expensive ones.

Simple ones. The kind that remind people they belong to one another.

By the time I finally drove home that night, the field lights had gone dark except for one near the parking lot. A few players were still fooling around by the dugout while parents folded chairs into car trunks.

And for a second, the place looked exactly the same as it probably did 30 years ago.

Maybe even 50.

That's comforting these days.

There aren't many things left in life that still sound the same after all that time.

But on a spring night in Massachusetts, the sound of a baseball game still does.

# Ayala, of North Brookfield, graduates from Regis College

BOSTON — Serenity Ayala, of North Brookfield, graduated with a Nursing degree from Regis College during its May 9, 2026 Commencement. Ayala was among more than 1,000 students who received degrees ranging from associate to doctorate.

With her approaching retirement on June 30, Antoinette Hays, PhD, RN, reflected on her 15 years as president in her final remarks to the graduating class.

"I have had the privilege of witnessing you discover your voices and your purpose. Of working alongside dedicated faculty and staff who bring the Regis mission to life every day. I will always be grateful for the tenacity, compassion, and resilience of this incredible community. As we acknowledge your accomplishments today, whether it be an associate, bachelors, masters, or doctoral, know that it is an extraordinary achievement," she said. "It is the result of hard work, the support of your family and friends, the caring and compassionate Regs community - a community to which you will be forever linked - and the enduring values of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Boston. For 41 years, Regis' values have guided me throughout my journey and have influenced how I live and work. I hope they have formed you too."

President Hays was awarded an honorary degree for her compassionate and visionary leadership. This year's commencement marks the conclusion of President Hays' leadership of the university.

Kerry Kennedy, President of the Robert & Ethel Kennedy Human Rights Center delivered the commencement address and received an honorary degree.

"When President Hays asked me to speak today, I didn't hesitate. With its Catholic roots and commitment to service, Regis holds a special place in my heart," she said. "As you graduate, I encourage you to take some time to reflect on the lessons you learned at this uniquely ambitious experiment of a college and what you'd like to carry forward for the rest of your lives. The lessons you learned, the importance of teamwork, and most of all, building partnerships and community will make a profound difference."

Kennedy is an attorney and author who has devoted more than 40 years to the pursuit of equal justice and the promotion and protection of basic rights. She currently serves on the board of directors of the United States Institute of Peace, Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation Laureate and Leaders, as well as Kennedy Human Rights Center's numerous international affiliates. She is on the advisory committee

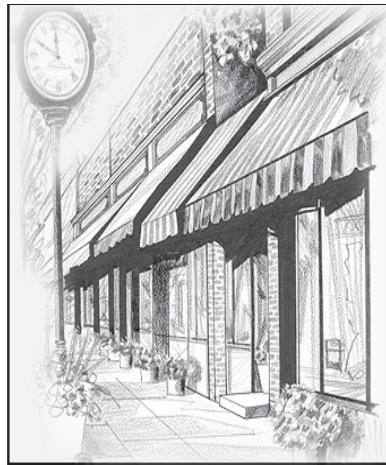
for the Association of American Indian Affairs, the Albert Schweitzer Institute, Sankofa, San Patrignano, and the Center for Victims of Torture, and the NYU Stern Center for Business and Human Rights. Kennedy served as chair of the Amnesty International USA Leadership Council for over a decade. Among her many accolades, she received the humanitarian award from the Congress of Nobel Peace Prize Laureates.

Honorary degrees were also awarded to Kathleen Jose '87, '94, MSN, RN, former chair of the university's board and chief nursing officer of Lahey Health; Tracy Palandjian, MBA, co-founder and CEO of Social Finance; and Gerald Algere, senior vice president and managing director of institutional banking at The Washington Trust Company.

The Class of 2026 President Sarai Velez '26 and Graduate Student Speaker Lilla Torontali '24, G'26 also imparted words of inspiration on the Class of 2026.

"We learned through our time at Regis that we will fail; that things will not always go our way. In fact, we may fail more than we succeed," Velez '26 said. "But we will succeed. We will work harder, we will try again, and we will persevere. Because our resilience got us here today. We will leave this pavilion stronger and wiser than the freshmen who arrived four years ago. These degrees are a testament to our determination, and together we go into the world ready to serve the dear neighbor."

"Regis believed in us before we believed in ourselves. And now, it is our turn. Wherever you go after today, you carry that belief with you," said Torontali '24, G'26, who flew in from Denmark to receive her degree. "We leave with degrees, yes, but we also leave knowing what it feels like to be seen without distinction, supported without hesitation, and welcomed without condition. May we offer that same hospitality to others. May we choose to see potential before it is proven. May we believe in someone before they believe in themselves. Because that is the legacy of this institution: one that proves every day that greatness is never measured by size, but by heart."



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# Brookfields Lions Club awards local scholarships



Madison DeCelle



Willow Anderson



Hunter McQueston



Emily Black



Gianna Lindsey

NORTH BROOKFIELD — The Brookfields Lions Club has awarded five scholarships totaling \$5,000 to local high school graduates, according to club president, William Cass.

Each year, the Lions award scholarships of up to \$1,000 to students who live within the club's service area, and attend one of five local high schools: David

Prouty High School, Spencer; North Brookfield High School, North Brookfield; Quabbin Regional High School, Barre; Quaboag Regional High School, Warren, and Tantasqua Regional High School, Sturbridge.

"We're proud to support these students as they begin the next chapter of their education," said Cass. "Each of them has demon-

strated hard work, commitment to their education, and the potential to make a meaningful difference in the lives of others. The Brookfields Lions Club is honored to help invest in their future."

Madison DeCelle, of Brookfield, attends Tantasqua Regional High School, where she is a member of the National Honor Society and the National Art Honor Society. She is the daughter of Amanda DeCelle. Madison will be studying fashion design and marketing at Lasell University, in Newton, Massachusetts,

Willow Anderson is the recipient from East Brookfield, and also attends Tantasqua Regional High School. She is the daughter of Eric and Ellen Anderson. Willow will be attending The College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, where she will be studying language in the hopes of someday working as a government interpreter.

Hunter McQueston, of New Braintree, attends Quabbin

Regional High School, where she is a member of the National Honor Society and Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps. She is the daughter of Michael and Jessica McQueston. Hunter will be attending the University of Maine at Orono where she will major in nursing.

Emily Black, of North Brookfield, attends Quabbin Regional High School. She is the daughter of Cassie Hobbs and Andrew Black. Emily will be attending Nichols College, Dudley, MA where she will be studying criminal justice with an eye toward being a criminal psychologist.

Gianna Lindsey is the recipient from West Brookfield, where she attends Quaboag Regional High School. She is the daughter of Eunice and Craig Lindsey. Gianna will be attending Western New England University where she will be studying law.

To be eligible for a Brookfields Lions Club scholarship, applicants must be a resident of one of the Brookfields or New Braintree. The student's high school guidance director must confirm the student's class rank and sign the application, and the completed application must be submitted before the high school's spring break. To receive the scholarship, recipients must demonstrate that they are enrolled as a full-time college student and have earned passing grades.

As the world's largest, youngest and most active service organization, the mission of Lions Clubs International is to empower volunteers to serve their communities, meet humanitarian needs, encourage peace, and promote international understanding. Members of the Brookfields Lions Club are dedicated to service and support in the communities of Brookfield, East Brookfield, North Brookfield, West Brookfield, and New Braintree.

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## SUCCESS, SUNSHINE AND GRATITUDE

On Saturday, April 25, the Lake Wickaboag Preservation Association ("LWPA") of West Brookfield coordinated members and volunteers in a gathering to clean up the shorelines and roadsides around the lake. The LWPA is grateful to all the volunteers who joined in the effort, filling many bags to help improve and preserve the natural environment and beauty of the area.

## ArtWorks Gallery invites artists to create a LandEscape



WARE — ArtWorks Gallery in Ware invites artists of all applied mediums from throughout the northeastern US to submit works to LandEscape. This exhibition aims to expand or even reimagine the traditional landscape as a personal sanctuary and urges creators to consider moving beyond mere geographical representation. Ultimately, the exhibition aims to document the diverse spatial forms of escapism that we need to recharge our spirits. The deadline for entry is May 28 by midnight. The entry form and full details can be found on workshop13.org. ArtWorks

Gallery is located at 69 Main St. in Ware. LandEscape will be on display from June 27 through Aug. 2, opening with a reception on Saturday, June 27, from 3-5 p.m. Gallery hours are Saturdays and Sundays from 1-4 p.m.

The juror for LandEscape is Shona Macdonald. Macdonald received her MFA in 1996 in studio arts from the University of Illinois at Chicago and her BFA in 1992 from Glasgow School of Art in Scotland. She has held selected solo exhibitions at Real Art Ways, (2025), McDonough Museum of Art, (2023), Zillman Art Museum,

(2020-21), Brattleboro Art Center and Museum (2018), Roswell Art Museum, (2011), Tarble Arts Center (2015), Gridspace, (2014) Engine Room, Wellington, New Zealand, (2010), Proof Gallery, Boston, MA (2009), Reeves Contemporary, NY, NY (2008), Den Contemporary, LA, CA, (2007), Skestos-Gabriele, Chicago IL, (2005), Galerie Refugium, Berlin, Germany, (2002), and Fassbender Gallery, Chicago (1998 and 2000).

About ArtWorks Gallery and Workshop13

ArtWorks Gallery is Workshop13's gallery on Main Street. This space features numerous art exhibitions each year and is also available to rent for individual or group shows. Workshop13 is a dynamic center where arts, culture, and community converge—expanding access to the arts and nurturing creativity and self-expression in our rural region. For more information visit workshop13.org, or call 413-277-6072.

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**ELECTIONS**

continued from page A1

votes despite not being on the actual ballot, although it wasn't enough to unseat Coughlin. Caughlin and Holdcraft also contested for a seat on the town's available Board of Assessors seat which saw all write-in candidates competing to decide the winner. Caughlin earned 97 votes while Holdcraft earned 3, and between them was Mike Seery, who

earned 21 votes.

The remaining races saw William Gillmeister elected moderator, Christopher Gorham and Jennifer Lynne Santucci for Planning Board, Donald Clowes and Gary Lincoln for Cemetery Commission, Jake Hill for Board of Health, Brenda Parish for Town Collector, Shelby Hill and Rebecca Beck for Library Trustees, Donald Traft for Water Commissioner, and Jeffrey Morin for Elementary School Committee.

**POLLS**

continued from page A1

Paquette was uncontested for Board of Health, Cassie Paolucci was re-elected to the Common Committee, Janet Foley and Jane Higgins rejoin the Library Board of Trustees, Philip Guerin returns to the Water Commission, and Matthew Peloquin from the Town of Warren, and Philip Landine

and Travis Mathieson from West Brookfield were re-elected to the School Committee.

There were write-in votes cast for open positions with no listed candidates for Board of Assessors Housing Authority and Planning Board although the actual winners of these seats were not listed on the official election results posted by the Town of West Brookfield.

**Brookfield Council on Aging announces upcoming events**

BROOKFIELD — The Brookfield Council on Aging is welcoming residents to a full calendar of fitness classes, social gatherings, and wellness programs this May at the Brookfield Congregational Church.

Weekly activities include Functional Fitness on Mondays at 11 a.m. and Thursdays at 9 a.m., Chair Yoga on Tuesdays at 9 a.m., and a Walking Club every Wednesday at 8:30 a.m. Coffee Hour is held Tuesdays from 10 a.m. to noon, while Crochet and Handcrafts meet Thursdays at 10:30 a.m.

Several special activities are also planned throughout the month. On May 12, seniors can enjoy Bingo and Pizza along with glucose and blood pressure testing. A SHINE representative will be available by appointment on May 14 to assist with health insurance questions, followed by appointments with a Tri-Valley Options counselor on May 18.

Gardeners can take part in a Container Gardening program with Steve Novak on May 19, while Game Day returns May 26 featuring cards, cribbage, Rummikub, pitch, and puzzles.

Additional services include manicures with Micki for \$5 and a Foot Clinic available by appointment for Brookfield residents at a cost of \$10.

Programs are held at Brookfield Congregational Church, 8 Common St., Brookfield.

For more information or to schedule appointments, contact the Brookfield Council on Aging at seniors@brookfieldma.us or call 508-867-2930, ext. 21.

*First Congregational W. Brookfield to host concert June 20*

WEST BROOKFIELD — The First Congregational Church of W. Brookfield, UCC, 36 N. Main St., W. Brookfield, will host a concert on Saturday, June 20 at 7 p.m., preceded by a social hour from 6 - 7 p.m.

Solstice Sing for Peace and Justice - Songs to Cultivate Community, Compassion, and Commitment will feature local singing group, A Chorus for These Times, directed by Nym Cooke with instrumentalists & guest artist Leslie Sweetnam.

All are welcome! Free yummy snacks!

There is no admission charge but donations will be accepted to support Abby's House, Worcester's largest provider of affordable housing specifically designed to meet the needs of women and children.

For more information, Call the church at 508-867-7078, contact Karen Murphy (kmurphy718@charter.net) or Nym Cooke (nymcooke@gmail.com).

**Kindergarten registration open at NBES**

NORTH BROOKFIELD — North Brookfield Elementary School is excited to announce that Kindergarten registration is now open for the 2026-2027 school year! Please contact Katelin at NBES: 508-867-8326 or kgaines@nbschools.org to register.



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**BROOKFIELD**

Brookfield Ecumenical Food Pantry  
St. Mary's Church  
4 Howard Street, Brookfield, MA 01506  
Distribution: Wednesday 9:30 AM-11 AM:  
Saturday 9:30 AM-11AM

**CHARLTON**

Chip - In Food Pantry  
McKinstry Building  
37 Main Street, Charlton, MA 01507  
Distribution: 3rd Saturday 9 AM-12 Noon

St. Joseph's Church, Charlton  
Tuesday 6:30-7:30 p.m.  
Wednesday 9-11 a.m.  
Everyone is welcome.

**LEICESTER**

Leicester Food Pantry  
St. Joseph-St. Pius X Parish  
759 Main Street, Leicester, MA 01524  
Distribution: Tuesday 5 PM-7 PM

**NORTH BROOKFIELD**

St. Joseph's Food Pantry  
Located in the church hall at 296 North  
Main St. North Brookfield  
Distribution is the 1st Thursday of the  
month from 5:00-6:30PM  
the 3rd Thursday of the month from 12  
Noon-1:15PM  
Any questions should be directed to the  
Rectory office 508 867-6469.  
St. Joseph's Food Pantry is a community  
partner affiliated with the Worcester County  
Food Bank.

**OXFORD**

Oxford Ecumenical Food Shelf  
Oxford Community Center  
4 Maple Road  
Oxford, MA 01540  
Distribution: Thursday 4:30 PM - 6:30 PM

**ROCHDALE**

The Lord's Cupboard Food Pantry  
Greenville Baptist Church  
674 Pleasant St.  
Rochdale, MA  
Distribution: Every Monday from 12:00 -  
2:00 p.m. Open to everyone.

**SOUTHBRIDGE**

St. John Paul II Parish Food Pantry  
279 Hamilton St., Southbridge  
Tuesday 3-5 p.m., Wednesday 9-11 a.m.  
(508) 765-0245

Southbridge Food Share  
Located at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church,  
lower level  
446 Hamilton St,  
Southbridge, MA 01550  
Email:  
Southbridgefoodshare.org@gmail.com  
Phone: 508-764-6583  
Open Monday, Wednesday, and Friday,  
from 10:00 am to 11:15 am.

**SPENCER- EAST BROOKFIELD -  
RESIDENTS ONLY**

Mary Queen of the Rosary Food Pantry  
60 Maple St, Spencer, MA 01562  
Distribution: Thursday 10 AM-12 Noon

**STURBRIDGE**

Saint Vincent de Paul Society Food Pantry,  
Located in the St. Anne Church basement,  
16 Church Street, Fiskdale, MA 01518  
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Contact: 508-347-6398

**UXBRIDGE**

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**WEBSTER**

Webster-Dudley Food Share  
4 Church St #2  
Webster, MA 0570  
Distribution: Tuesday and Thursday from  
8:30 -11:00 am. Open to Webster and  
Dudley residents.  
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**WEST BROOKFIELD**

Sharing Cupboard Food Pantry  
First Congregational Church  
36 North Main Street,  
W.Bookfield, MA 01585  
Distribution: Wednesday 10 AM-11:30 AM  
Thursday 7 PM- 8 PM



*Brookfield Agricultural Commission high-  
lights spring planting opportunities*

**BROOKFIELD** — The Brookfield Agricultural Commission is pleased to share upcoming spring planting activities taking place on the Brookfield Common on Saturday, May 23. The day will begin with the long-standing tradition of the Brookfield Garden Club's annual plant sale.

As in previous years, the Garden Club has invited the Agricultural Commission to participate. The Commission will once again offer free seed giveaways for young people interested in starting their own gardens. This initiative is made possible through a grant from the Brookfield Community Club, along with additional donations. Free starter fertilizer kits will also be available. While composting and fertilizer use are familiar practices, they've become especially important topics as fertilizer costs continue to rise.

Beginning at 11 a.m., Oakholm Farm Estate will host hayrides around the Common to celebrate the start of the planting season.

This year will also feature "Big Boy" tomato plants, grown by the youth group from Brookfield Congregational Church. Proceeds will help support their upcoming mission trip to a small town in New Jersey, where they will join other groups in assisting residents with needed home and community projects.

For the first time, the Brookfield Cultural Council will join the event, offering starter plants and berry bushes.

As always, experienced growers will be on hand throughout the day to answer questions and provide gardening advice. The timing of this event coincides with the typical end of the frost season. There is also a bit of local folklore suggesting that more delicate plants should not be placed outdoors until the "Blue Moon," which this year falls on May 31.

**Word of Life Church to hold  
Memorial Day service**

**SPENCER** — Word of Life Church will hold a special Memorial Day service on Sunday, May 25, at 8 a.m. at the American Legion, 175 Main St., Spencer.

The service is being held to celebrate and remember the men and women of the United States armed forces, especially those who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to the nation and the freedoms enjoyed today.

Community members and veterans are invited to attend the observance as the country prepares to mark Memorial Day weekend.

**Memorial Day  
parade route  
announced**

**SPENCER** — The Memorial Day Parade sponsored by Gaudette-Kirk American Legion Post #138 will take place on Monday, May 25 at 9 a.m. The parade route will start at the American Legion and proceed down Main Street, a left onto Elm Street, a left on to Chestnut, left on to Maple Street back to Main Street and end at Issac L. Prouty Memorial Park. Memorial Day services will take place on Monday, May 25 at the Isaac L. Prouty Memorial Park immediately following the parade.

We welcome all groups, youth groups and organizations to participate in the parade and attend this year's services.

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**OBITUARIES**

**Emmanuel A. Therrien, Jr.**

West Brookfield- 83 passed  
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Arrangements provided by  
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Services on May 21, 11:00am  
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# LEGALS

**Town of Spencer Conservation Commission PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**

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

**Kenneth MacDonald** has filed an **RDA** with the Spencer Conservation Commission for a proposed septic system located at **11 & 15 Wilson Avenue, Spencer, MA.**

**Taniel Bedrosian** has filed an **NOI** with the Spencer Conservation Commission to construct a single-family home, septic and driveway located at **R01-18 Lot 1 William Casey Road, Spencer, MA.**

**Taniel Bedrosian** has filed an **NOI** with the Spencer Conservation Commission to construct a single-family home, septic and driveway located at **R01-18, Lot 2 William Casey Road, Spencer, MA.**

**Brianna Dodd** has filed an **RDA** with the Spencer Conservation Commission to renovate a deck located at **170 Greenville Street, Spencer, MA.**

Applications can be reviewed at the Office of Development and Inspectional Services, Town Hall. A public hearing regarding these filings will be held by the Spencer Conservation Commission in McCourt Social Hall at Town Hall, 157 Main Street, on Wednesday, May 27, 2026 at which time all persons having an interest may be present or call in remotely to participate. Conservation Commission meetings open at 6:15 p.m.  
Mary McLaughlin, Chairwoman  
May 15, 2026

**CHERRY VALLEY SEWER DISTRICT P.O. BOX 138 ROCHDALE, MA 01542 ANNUAL MEETING WARRANT**

To: Cheryl Balkus, District Clerk  
Cherry Valley Sewer District  
Greetings:  
You are hereby directed to notify the Voters of the Cherry Valley Sewer District to meet in the Town Hall Auditorium, 3 Washburn Square, Leicester, Massachusetts Thursday, and the 28<sup>th</sup> day of May 2026 at 7:00 P.M. then and there to act on the following:

**ARTICLE 1: MODERATOR**  
To elect a Moderator to preside at said meeting and for a period of one (1) year thereafter.

**ARTICLE 2: REPORTS**  
To act on reports of the district.

**ARTICLE 3: COMMISSIONER**  
To elect a Sewer Commissioner for a term of three (3) years.

**ARTICLE 4: BUDGET**  
To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate transfer from available funds, or otherwise provide a sum of money from any available means, for the operating budget for Fiscal Year 2027, to provide for the District's annual operating requirements, including but not limited to, salaries, related services, office expenses, maintenance, construction and other items related thereto: to execute any instruments or documents necessary or appropriate to accomplish said purposes: and to take any other action thereon.

**ARTICLE 5: REVOLVING FUND FOR CONSTRUCTION**  
To see if the District will vote to autho-

ize the Board of Sewer Commissioners to establish a fund to receive and deposit fee paid pursuant to Chapter 33 of the Acts of 1998, and, from which expenditures may be made by the Board of Sewer Commissioners for legal services, administrative services and engineering services, (including but not limited to, design, plan review, and inspection of the project being constructed) in connection with any sewer system design, review, and construction, or take any action thereon.

**ARTICLE 6 - FUNDING STABILIZATION ACCOUNT**  
To see if the district will vote to raise and appropriate, transfer from available funds or free cash, or otherwise provide a sum of money, or any other sum, from any available funding source or by available means to fund the Sewer Stations fund accounts.

**ARTICLE 7: USE OF STABILIZATION ACCOUNT**  
To see if the district will allow the use of the Sewer Stations fund Stabilization account if any issues arise including but not limited to costs associated with pumps, motors, drives and communication equipment that are outside the normal operational repairs.

**ARTICLE 8 - CLOSE OUT OF PRIOR PROJECTS**  
To see if the district will vote to close-out the below projects that were previously approved at prior annual Sewer District Meetings.  
You are hereby directed at giving notice of this Warrant by posting attested copies thereof at two public places within the limits of the Cherry Valley Sewer District and with the Clerk of the Town of Leicester seven days before the time of said meeting.  
Given under our hands this 6<sup>th</sup> of May 2026. Donald G. Manseau, Chairman  
Robert H. Lemieux, Sr. Commissioner  
Peter Cusolito, Commissioner  
A TRUE COPY ATTEST:  
Cheryl Balkus Clerk-Cherry Valley Sewer District  
(SEAL)  
May 15, 2026

**TOWN OF NORTH BROOKFIELD MASSACHUSETTS CONSERVATION COMMISSION**  
Notice of Public Hearing  
Pursuant to Mass General Laws, Chapter 131, Section 40, Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, the North Brookfield Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on **Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2026** at 7:00 P.M., in the Senior Center at 29 Forest St., North Brookfield, on the Abbreviated Notice of Resource Area Delineation filed by Goddard Consulting, LLC on behalf of Greenpath Brookfield Energy Initiative LLC (the applicant). The applicant seeks confirmation of resource area locations within the area described in the application. The application is on file and is available for public inspection in the Conservation Commission Office on Monday through Thursday from 9 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.  
May 15, 2026

**NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE**  
Premises: 123 Park Street, East Brookfield, MA 01515  
By virtue of and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a

certain mortgage given by Larry M. McPartland to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Finance of America Reverse LLC, and now held by **Finance of America Reverse LLC**, said mortgage dated January 9, 2021 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 64224, Page 185, said mortgage was assigned from Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Finance of America Reverse LLC to Finance of America Reverse LLC by assignment dated August 1, 2025 and recorded with said Registry of Deeds in Book 72367, Page 11; for breach of the conditions in said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same will be sold at **Public Auction on June 4, 2026 at 01:00 PM Local Time** upon the premises, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit: *The land in the Easterly part of East Brookfield, Massachusetts, Easterly of and adjoining Lake Lashaway. Being Lot #1 as shown on Plan of land entitled Division of Property in East Brookfield, Massachusetts, John J. McPartland Lot #1; Lionel A. Aucoin Lot #2; Herve G. Aucoin Lot 03 dated August 4, 1961 recorded in Worcester District Registry of Deeds, Plan Book 258, Plan 14, bounded and described as follows; Beginning at an iron pipe at the Northeasterly corner thereof; Thence N. 59° 16' W., 202.70 feet by land of Paul Huard to the Lake Shore; Thence Southwesterly along the Lake Shore, 45.0 feet to a drill hole in a concrete wall. Thence S. 61° 06' E., 131.02 feet to an iron pipe; Thence S. 12° 08' W., 23.10 feet to a point; Thence N. 77° 31' E., 91.83 feet to the place of beginning. Being that parcel of land conveyed to Larry M. McPartland from John J. McPartland and Lillian O. McPartland, husband and wife by that deed dated 3/28/1977 and recorded 3/31/1977 in deed book 6149, at page 287 of the Worcester County, MA public registry.*  
The description of the property contained in the mortgage shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication.  
For Mortgagor's Title see deed dated March 28, 1977 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 6149, Page 287.

**TERMS OF SALE:** Said premises will be sold and conveyed subject to all liens, encumbrances, unpaid taxes, tax titles, municipal liens and assessments, if any, which take precedence over the said mortgage above described.  
**FIVE THOUSAND (\$5,000.00)** Dollars of the purchase price must be paid in cash, certified check, bank treasurer's or cashier's check at the time and place of the sale by the purchaser. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid in cash, certified check, bank treasurer's or cashier's check within thirty (30) days after the date of sale.  
Other terms to be announced at the sale.  
Brock & Scott, PLLC  
23 Messenger Street  
2nd Floor

Plainville, MA 02762  
Attorney for Finance of America Reverse LLC  
Present Holder of the Mortgage (401) 217-8701  
May 1, 2026  
May 8, 2026  
May 15, 2026

**WATER DEPARTMENT IN-HOUSE CLERK TOWN OF EAST BROOKFIELD**  
The Town of East Brookfield Water Department is looking for a part-time in-house Water Department clerk. Duties and responsibilities include but are not limited to performing a variety of administrative functions, including billing, and maintaining records. Provide customer service by responding to inquiries and resolving account issues. Familiarity with VADAR and Eye-On-Water would be helpful though not a prerequisite. Non-benefited, approximately 16 hours per week.  
To obtain a complete job description please reach out to [EBBOS300@eastbrookfieldma.us](mailto:EBBOS300@eastbrookfieldma.us). Resumes and letters of interest should be sent to: Water Department, Town of East Brookfield, 122 Connie Mack Drive, East Brookfield, MA 01515 or email to [EBWater@eastbrookfieldma.us](mailto:EBWater@eastbrookfieldma.us)  
Applications will be accepted until the position is filled.  
*The Town of East Brookfield is an Equal Opportunity Employer*  
May 15, 2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Worcester Probate and Family Court 225 Main Street Worcester, MA 01608 (508) 831-2200 Docket No. WO26P1419EA INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE**  
Estate Of:  
**Christine L. Oliver**  
**Date of Death: March 3, 2026**  
To All persons interested in the above-captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Jeffrey M. Loparto of Pawtucket RI** a Will has been admitted to informal probate.  
**Jeffrey M. Loparto of Pawtucket RI** has been informally appointed as Personal Representative of said estate to serve without surety on the bond. The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.  
May 15, 2026

**For Legal Advertising Information, Call 508-909-4127**  
**email: [legals@stonebridgepress.news](mailto:legals@stonebridgepress.news)**

## Bingo fundraiser to benefit Leicester Historical Museum

LEICESTER — The Swan Tavern Leicester Historical Museum will be holding a Bingo fundraiser on Friday, May 22, at the Cherry Valley American Legion Post. Doors open at 5:30 p.m., and games begin at 7 p.m. The cost is \$25 at the door for a packet of 12 games. Additional cards will be available for purchase as well as snacks & drinks. There will be cash prizes, raffle baskets, a 50/50 raffle, and a door prize.

Come out for a fun night and support the ongoing restoration efforts at the historic Swan Tavern!

Also, a reminder that the next historical presentation will be on Thursday, May 21 at 7 p.m.: "Resurrecting Lost Voices: The Letters of George Gould." Join Stan Prager, owner of GoGeeks Computer Rescue in East Longmeadow, as well as an independent historian with an interest in the Civil War era, as he tells the story of the discovery of the letters of Private George W Gould. In July 1862, Leicester resident George Gould enlisted in the 25th Massachusetts Volunteers, leaving his wife Almira and their three young children at home. Private Gould was killed on June 6, 1864, at the battle of Cold Harbor. Join us in the presentation of PVT Gould's letters and the tale to preserve his story. As always, this program is open to the public free of charge.

The museum is open from 11am to 2pm the last Sunday of the Month and one hour prior to the Summer Concerts on the Common series. The tavern will be open the Sunday before Memorial Day.

## West Brookfield Farmers Market returns for 16th season

WEST BROOKFIELD — The West Brookfield Farmers Market returns on Wednesday, June 3 on the beautiful West Brookfield Common for its 16th consecutive season!

The 2026 Season market will feature 15 vendors with a wide array of locally grown and made goods including 3 NEW vendors sure to please our customers.

The West Brookfield Farmers Market is held every Wednesday afternoon from 3 to 6 p.m. on the West Brookfield Common starting on June 3 through Oct. 7, rain or shine.

2026 featured vendors:

- Autumn Leaf Mushrooms all sorts, eggs, microgreens, Roundtable cheese
- Bucha Bros. Kombucha
- \*Dragonfly Flower Farm Freshly grown flowers- treat yourself
- Flourish Farms Organic vegetable and herb plants, microgreens, turmeric and ginger root, figs in season
- Grime's Apiary Honey, honey sticks, Bee

- pollen, hand cream, whipped honey
- \*Hoffman Breads Artisanal breads, pastries
- JARS Savory pastries, premade foods, baking and soup mixes
- Joy of Beans Fresh roasted coffee, whole bean or ground, specialty teas
- Kate Bakes Sweet baked goods
- Naultaug Farm Maple syrup
- \*Nonna's Kitchen Granola, granola bars, herb blends for the kitchen
- \*Stillman Farm Fresh produce, vegetable and fruits
- Thompson's Maple Farm Ice Cream, roasted maple pecans, bourbon aged maple syrup
- Crafts: Chairman of the Board Cutting boards, birdhouses, garden trellis, B & D enterprises Turned wood products, beautiful salad forks, knives, ink pens



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### Southbridge - 14 Servant Way Featured Listing!

Gently used, well maintained RANCH on a cul-de-sac! 1,300 sq +/-, 3 BRs, 2 full baths, gas fireplace, central AC. A comfortable open space w/lots of natural light, private main BR w/California closets, a remodeled Bath w/handicap accessible wide-door roll-in shower. Offers a half acre of land Close to I-84 & Sturbridge. List Price: \$459,000

\* June Cazeault \* Laurie Sullivan \* Lori Johnson-Chausse \* William Gilmore II \* Maureen Cimoch \* Bryan Pelletier

### Thompson ~ 6 Lillian Ave Bonnette Acres on Webster Line



Young (2019) Pristine Raised Ranch, 1800+ SF, 3 BRs, LL Family Rm, 2-1/2 Baths, Primary BR Suite, Central AC, Country Setting with .70 Acre Lot & Lg Fenced Area on Cul-de-sac! \$489,900

### Webster - 106 East Main St (Rte 12) Commercial Opportunity!

Corner Lot, 275' +/- Road Frontage, Extremely High Traffic Count, 6,200 SF (75x80) Commercial Building, Currently 2 Units -> Potential for More. Economical, Efficient Natural Gas FHA Heat & Cooling. Its close proximity to Successful National Franchised Businesses generates Significant Commerce at this Location. Convenient Access. List Price: \$615,000



### Featured New Listing Webster - 34 Eastern Ave Condos ~ Unit M ~ Move In Ready!

Original Owner, 1st Time Offered, Well-Kept, 2-BRs, 1-1/2 Baths, 1,500+ SF, LL Living Potential, Private Deck, 20-Unit Complex, Desirable Setting, 1395 in mins. List Price: \$310,000

### Featured Listing ~ New To Market! Webster ~ 33 Slater Street

Sprawling fieldstone faced 1 Level Ranch, located on a +/- 0.5-acre level, w/24'x24' 2 car att'd garage. Offers: 1,860 sf main level plus 1,000 sf +/- finished lower level, 3 BRs, 2-1/2 Baths, 2 stone fireplaces w/pellet stove inserts, FHW BB heat by oil. Open floor plan kitchen, living rm, dining rm, breezeway w/sliders to rear deck, and 3 season sunroom, hardwood & c-tile floors. \$525,000

### Webster - 24 Cooper Rd New Construction - Craftsman Style home

Tucked away on Cooper Rd. Webster Lake with access at Lake-side beach/boat ramp. 3rd of 4 homes being built at this site. Offers 2,155 sq. ft +/- of living area, 7 rms, 4 brs, 2 1/2 baths, 9ft ceiling, wood flooring throughout with ceramic tile baths. Spacious main BR Suite w/ walk-in closet, and private full bathr, double sink vanity, finished lower level walk-out w/ slider. Central AC, garage. \$649,900.00

## On the shores of Lake Chargoggagogmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg



### Webster Lake Waterfront 22 Union Pt Snug Harbor Villa

Waterfront Lake Snug Harbor Villa End Unit!  
Most Luxurious & Largest on the Lake!

Presenting a distinguished condo residence that will provide an exceptional waterfront lifestyle! Offers an expansive 4600 sf +/- featuring 4BRs, 4-1/2 baths, 3 frplcs & more, all designed for relaxation & convenience! Nothing quite compares! Priced to Sell. List Price: \$1,050,000.

### Webster Lake Waterfront Listing!! On Indian Point # 10 "Private Rd"



ASTONISHING Panoramic Views across mid-section of Webster Lake! View the lake from all windows. Located on a peninsula providing 2 Shorelines. Fireplaced Living Room! 2 Baths. FHW Oil Heat! Central Air. Garage. \$900,000.

### Webster Lake - 302 Killdeer Island



Lakefront home w/1,700+/- sq ft. Open kitchen/dining/living w/cathedral ceilings + wall of windows. Full baths. Lower level family room w/ walkout to water. \$775,000

### Webster Lake Waterfront - 31 Bayview!!



Panoramic View, from this absolutely lovely home, 2600 +/- SF, 3+ Beds, 2 full baths, 2 car detached garage! 63' +/- waterfront. .37 Acres! Sandy Waterfront! \$1,100,000

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# Connect to Caring

Meet with a Customer Advocate at **Spencer Senior Center**



Our Customer Advocates will be available to meet one-on-one on **Thursday, May 14, 2026** to discuss options to manage your energy bill and help you find assistance, including:

- Discount Rate
- Payment Plans
- Budget Plan
- Arrears Management Program (AMP)

**No appointment is needed, but please bring the following when you visit:**

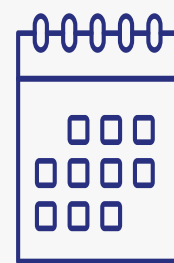
If you receive SNAP, MassHealth, SSI or WIC, please bring your benefit card and/or program acceptance letter to enroll in our Discount Rate Program.

**If you are looking for assistance, we're here for you.**

For more information, please visit [ngrid.com/hereforyou](http://ngrid.com/hereforyou)

**Life can be hard but finding assistance shouldn't be.**

**Spencer Senior Center  
68 Maple Street  
Spencer, MA 01562**



**Thursday,  
May 14, 2026  
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.**