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Friday, May 22, 2026



Courtesy

Knox Trail Middle School's National Junior Honor Society worked hard to support important causes in their community. One of their efforts included raising money for Second Chance Animal Shelter by selling Pops that students could purchase at lunch. This donation helped provide much-needed financial support for animals in need. In addition, both staff and students at Knox Trail generously donated items such as food, toys, and supplies to benefit the animals at the shelter. NJHS members also helped hang flyers around the school to encourage more staff and students to bring in donations for Second Chance Animal Shelter. Their combined efforts made a meaningful difference by improving the lives of many rescued pets. Beyond helping local animals, NJHS members are currently working hard on processing care packages for soldiers in need.

Spencer voters approve firefighter funding, deny school budget override

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

SPENCER — Spencer held its annual election on May 12 selecting new town leadership while also addressing two significant Proposition 2 ½ override funding questions on the ballot.

The election not only chose new selectmen and a new moderator, but much of the focus was on two questions that sought to secure funding for firefighters and the school district budget respectively. The question to support firefighters passed while the school override was voted down.

Question 1 sought to secure an override totaling \$368,390 to continue to fund four existing firefighter positions within the Spencer Fire Department. It passed by a margin of 898 to 619. The firefighters are currently funded by a grant which is set to expire. The override vote secures money to maintain these positions in the town's budget.

Question 2 sought a second override for \$264,456 to support the Spencer East Brookfield School budget. That question saw the almost exact opposite result of the firefighter override with 626 voting "yes" and 890 voting "no". This will force the school district to proceed with a budget confined by the limitations of Proposition 2 ½ likely necessitating cuts to stay within that tax limit. East Brookfield did not vote on an override during their election the same day as the budget is split between the two towns, and East Brookfield's contributions did not necessitate an override vote.

Looking at elected positions, the Board of Selectman race was the most competitive on the ballot with four candidates seeking two seats being vacated by Ralph Hicks and John Howard who did not run for re-election and whose terms are expiring. Christopher Lee Woodbury led the slate with 831 votes while Norman Letendres, Jr. Came in second with 628 votes. The pair secured the available seats while Gina Beford and Jennifer Jean Gaucher received 592 and 476 votes respectively coming in third and fourth and will not join the board.

Outgoing Selectman Hicks was part of a different election in 2026 running for moderator against Jason Michael Brewster. Brewster took the win with 794 votes to Hicks's 632.

The rest of the slate of candidates were all uncontested including Treasurer/Collector, Assessor, the School District committee, the Southern Worcester County Regional Vocational School District, the Board of Health, Library Trustees, Water Commissioner, Sewer Commissioner, Tree Warden, Housing Authority, and Park Commission.

North Brookfield schools look toward the future

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

NORTH BROOKFIELD — The North Brookfield school district is looking toward the future, examining how the town can evolve to maintain student enrollment and continue as a standalone district.

Part of that effort is a series of initiatives collectively referred to as Reimagine NBPS (North Brookfield Public Schools). Over the last two months Superintendent Timothy McCormick has presented details regarding the early efforts to determine a path forward for the district's two schools that provides what students, parents, and shareholders want most from the education experience.

McCormick provided identical presentations at two School Committee meetings, most recently on May 11 as the committee welcomed its newest members, showcasing what research has been conducted to date and what was still on the horizon for charting the future of North Brookfield schools.

It all started back in March, when six listening sessions gave district leaders insight into what employees and educators hoped to see from this evolution. They also spoke directly with staff members who wanted to provide input outside of a group setting.

"Ultimately, this was the starting point. This was to gather some conversation, some ideas from staff members about what they

like about the district now and what they feel we can do better," McCormick told the school committee. "We wanted to identify themes across the district and across these conversations. We want to then develop strategic priorities and then bring it to the next step in talking with our families and greater community about what do they feel we can do to make this district the best we can be."

The process has put a focus on four major areas: programmatic opportunities, student experience, partnerships, and structures & systems, exploring where the district has already excelled and where the schools can continue to grow to meet the demands and needs of the students.

Looking at the schools from an educational perspective, some of the notable interests are expanding arts and trades, a focus on more real-life skills like home economics, cooking, and personal finances, world languages, STEM enrichment, expanding honors and advanced placement options, enhanced career readiness and early college opportunities, and more.

"One thing the staff did talk about is if we're looking to phase in AP courses we should also look to phase in dual enrollment opportunities for our kids — It's really about finding a partner that can support our students," said McCormick

Discussions have also involved how to enhance the student experience. Creating a

more welcoming environment for kids to start their day, incorporating more clubs, celebrations, student inclusion opportunities,

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Spencer Memorial Day parade kicks off at 9 a.m.

SPENCER — Gaudette-Kirk American Legion Post #138, will hold its Memorial Day Parade and Service on Monday, May 25, starting at the legion and ending at the Isaac L. Prouty Memorial Park.

The Memorial Day Parade 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 Isaac 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. For more information, please contact me at the information listed below.

Leicester Elementary School PTO donates communication board to Integrated Preschool



LEICESTER — On Monday, the Leicester Integrated Preschool held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the installation of a new playground communication board, an important addition that will help ensure all students can

engage, connect, and communicate during play.

The project was made possible through the collaborative efforts of Tracy Rodwill, secretary of the Leicester Elementary School PTO, and preschool Speech-Language Pathologist Sarah

Swift. With support from the PTO, the board was purchased and donated through the Flutie Foundation.

Communication boards like this provide students with speech and language challenges, including those with Childhood Apraxia of Speech, autism, or other communication needs, a way to express themselves on the playground. By offering visual symbols and language supports, the board helps give every child a voice during unstructured playtime, fostering inclusion and meaningful peer interaction.

For Rodwill, this project is especially personal. Her son, Donovan, a student in the Leicester Integrated Preschool, has been diagnosed with Childhood Apraxia of Speech, a neurological disorder that affects the brain's ability to coor-

minate the movements needed for speech. Donovan currently communicates using limited verbal speech, sign language, and a high-tech communication device. The addition of the playground communication board will provide him and other students like him with greater opportunities to communicate and participate alongside their peers during play.

"I'm so thankful that, as a community, we were able to provide a more inclusive play experience for all children," Rodwill shared.

The Leicester Elementary School community is proud to support initiatives that prioritize inclusion and belonging. The PTO continues to play a vital role in enhancing student experiences, demonstrating the powerful impact of dedicated volunteers working together to support both students and staff.

Leicester Concerts on the Common returns for 36th season

LEICESTER — Music, dancing, and summer tradition will once again fill the Leicester Common as the Leicester Concerts on the Common series returns for its 36th season this summer.

The longtime community concert series will feature eight weeks of free performances running Wednesday evenings from July 1 through Aug. 19, bringing a mix of big band, classic rock, blues, country, folk, and tribute acts to the town center.

Concerts are scheduled from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. on the Leicester Common and are supported in part through grants from the Leicester Arts Council and the Massachusetts Cultural Council, along with contributions from local businesses, sponsors, the Fontaine Fund, and community donations.

The season opens July 1 with The Abletones Big Band performing a patriotic "Salute to America" concert ahead of Independence Day celebrations. The 15-piece ensemble will feature vocalist Rhiannon Hurst, along with a flag presentation by VFW Post 7556. Organizers describe the evening as a showcase performance to kick off the summer season.

On July 8, The Love Dogs will bring a mix of jump blues, funk, swing, and jazz to the Common. Known for their energetic horn section and boogie-woogie piano, the band has built a strong following across New England. The concert is sponsored by Country Bank, with a rain date scheduled for July 9.

The following week, July 15, The Deloreans will take audiences back through the music of the 1970s and 1980s with a seven-piece band featuring brass, keyboards, and rock vocals. The concert is sponsored by Cornerstone Bank, with a rain date of July 16.

Fans of 1960s music can enjoy "Holding Back the '60's" on July 22. The performance will highlight British Invasion favorites, Motown classics, and rock-and-roll hits from the era. A rain date is set for July 23.

The New Grown-Ups Band performs July 29, blending folk, country blues, Celtic influences, bluegrass, and contemporary acoustic music. Organizers describe the group as combining strong musicianship with a lively stage presence. The rain date is July 30.

August begins with

"Moondance" on Aug. 5, a tribute concert celebrating the music of Van Morrison. Sponsored by the Fontaine Fund, the show promises a lineup of Morrison classics spanning decades of the Irish singer-songwriter's career. The rain date is Aug. 6.

Country music takes center stage Aug. 12 with the Heartland Radio Band, which organizers describe as one of New England's premier country acts. The performance is sponsored by the Leicester Concerts Arts Committee, with a rain date of Aug. 13.

The series concludes Aug. 19 with "Viva Las Elvis," featuring Dan Fontaine and The Memphis Sun Mafia Band performing a tribute to Elvis Presley. The concert is sponsored by MAPFRE Insurance, G.F. McKenna Insurance, and community donations. The rain date is Aug. 20.

Over the past three decades, the Leicester concert series has become a staple of the town's summer calendar, regularly drawing residents and visitors to the Common with lawn chairs and picnic blankets for evenings of live entertainment and community gathering.

Organizers encourage attendees to check the town website for weather-related postponement information.

Spencer Legion to host suicide prevention training

SPENCER — American Legion Post 138 will host a public suicide prevention training event on Saturday, June 20, aimed at helping community members recognize warning signs and support individuals who may be struggling with suicidal thoughts or emotional crisis.

The event, titled "Turning Conversations into Lifelines: Identifying & Helping Veterans and Those in the Community Who Need Immediate Support," will feature instructors connected with the Columbia Lighthouse Project, an organization focused on suicide prevention through education and intervention strategies.

The training centers on the Columbia Protocol-Suicide Severity Rating Scale, commonly known as the C-SSRS, a tool used internationally by healthcare providers, counselors, educators, veterans organizations, and emergency responders to assess suicide risk.

According to organizers, the Columbia Lighthouse Project's message is simple: "Just ask. You could save a life."

The 90-minute program is being organized by American Legion Post 138 and its auxiliary members, who invited the instructors to Spencer in an effort to expand access to mental health awareness and suicide prevention resources within the local community.

The event is open to the public and intended not only for veterans and their families, but for anyone interested in learn-

ing how to identify and respond to warning signs in friends, neighbors, co-workers, or loved ones.

Following the training, participants are expected to learn how to use the Columbia Suicide Severity Rating Scale to help determine whether an individual may be at risk. The session will also cover common warning signs and risk factors, the different forms of suicidal ideation and behaviors associated with imminent risk, and methods for communicating effectively with someone who may be in crisis.

Organizers say the training is designed to be practical and approachable for everyday community members, not just healthcare professionals.

The event will begin with coffee and pastries from 9 to 10 a.m., followed by the formal program from 10 a.m. to noon. A question-and-answer session and networking opportunity will follow the presentation.

The training will take place at American Legion Post 138.

Suicide prevention and mental health awareness have remained significant concerns nationwide, particularly among veterans, first responders, and individuals facing isolation or emotional distress. Organizers hope the training will help equip local residents with the confidence to have difficult conversations and intervene when needed.

For more information, residents may call Mariann LoSasso at 508-885-3132 or email post138spencerma@gmail.com.

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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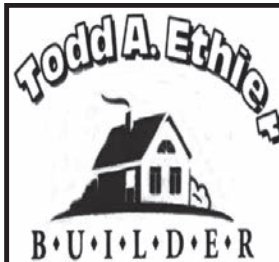


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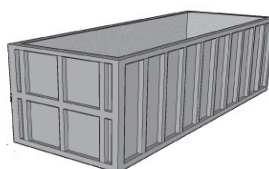
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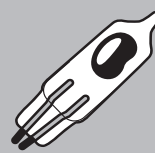
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FRANK G. CHILINSKI
PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

EDITORIAL

Planning ahead before choices are made elsewhere

For small towns, schools are more than buildings. They are where generations grow up together, where families gather for concerts and games, and where communities quietly define who they are. That reality makes the ongoing "Reimagine NBPS" effort in North Brookfield especially important.

Too often, school discussions in rural communities happen only after enrollment has already declined, budgets have tightened, and options have narrowed. By then, communities are reacting to problems instead of shaping their future. North Brookfield appears to be trying something different. District leaders are beginning the conversation before decisions are forced upon them.

That matters.

The listening sessions held this spring may not produce immediate answers, but they represent something valuable: a willingness to ask difficult questions honestly and publicly. Superintendent Timothy McCormick and the School Committee are acknowledging a reality many small districts across Massachusetts are facing. Families today have more educational choices than ever before. Charter schools, vocational schools, school choice programs, homeschooling, and neighboring districts all compete for enrollment. Communities can no longer assume students will automatically stay.

If North Brookfield wants to remain a strong standalone district, it must give families clear reasons to believe their children can thrive there.

The encouraging part of this process is that the discussion has not centered solely on test scores or budgets. Instead, many of the ideas emerging from staff and community conversations focus on creating a more complete educational experience. Expanded arts opportunities, career and technical education, financial literacy, world languages, early college partnerships, clubs, homework centers, and stronger student support systems all recognize an important truth: families are looking for schools that prepare students not only academically, but practically and socially as well.

That kind of thinking reflects how education has changed. A successful district today cannot rely entirely on tradition or familiarity. It must show students and parents that it is evolving alongside the needs of modern families.

At the same time, North Brookfield should resist the temptation to believe bigger automatically means better. One of the greatest strengths of a small district is the personal connection students can have with teachers, coaches, administrators, and classmates. In many large systems, students can feel anonymous. Smaller districts still have the ability to know their students individually, recognize struggles earlier, and create a stronger sense of belonging. Those advantages should not be overlooked while discussing future improvements.

The conversation about marketing the district is also worthwhile. Some people may instinctively recoil at the idea of schools "marketing" themselves, but in today's environment communication matters. If good things are happening inside classrooms, the community should hear about them consistently and clearly. Families should understand the opportunities available to students before they begin considering alternatives elsewhere.

Perhaps the most promising part of the process is the willingness to involve multiple voices. Teachers, staff, students, parents, and community members all experience the schools differently. Listening carefully to each perspective may reveal patterns that statistics alone cannot capture.

No district will solve every challenge overnight. Enrollment pressures facing rural and small-town schools are real and unlikely to disappear soon. But communities that ask thoughtful questions early often place themselves in a stronger position than those waiting for circumstances to force difficult decisions later.

North Brookfield's schools have long been an important part of the town's identity. Planning carefully for the future is not an admission of weakness. It is a sign that the community understands the value of protecting and strengthening something worth keeping.

VIEWPOINT

OPINION AND COMMENTARY FROM SPENCER, LEICESTER AND THE BROOKFIELDS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I fear for our country under Trump

To the Editor:

A recent letter from Pat Sweet implores many to stop writing Trump-bashing letters. Some months ago, another wrote a similar letter. My reply then was that I didn't hate Trump but I certainly didn't like the hateful things he was saying and doing. Do you really think that things coming from Trump are inspiring for our young people? I don't.

I have been director for a local food pantry for 20 years. With some dedicated volunteers we have served people in need from three local communities. We have done our best to be helpful as Pat Sweet suggested.

But — do you remember? I do. Donald Trump made an entrance descending the escalator in Trump Tower to announce he was running for President of the United States in the 2016 election. When he took his place on the Republican debate stage he offered (in my estimation) nothing as to what he would do for the country and the people. He did, however, make fun of those with whom he shared the stage. He also called them names. And wonders of wonders he became the nominee. How did that happen I asked myself. There were others on the stage who were much more qualified, I thought.

He ran against Hillary Clinton, who had much more experience. She became Senator from New York in 2000. I lived in New York at that time and voted for her. When she was re-elected in 2006, my husband and I had retired and moved to Massachusetts so we couldn't vote for her again. She went on to become Secretary of State in Obama's administration.

At the close of the 2016 election, while Clinton received almost three million more popular votes than Trump, he took the Electoral College vote and thereby became President. Clinton was gracious and conceded. I wondered if the Electoral College was still the process we should follow. I still do.

In 2020, the presidential candidates were Trump and Biden. The election

results were that Biden had 7 million more popular votes and he took the Electoral College vote as well. Did Trump graciously concede? He did not. He went to many lower courts looking for a way to win. He also called the Secretary of State in Georgia looking for votes to win. No luck. Did he then concede? No. Instead he claimed the election was stolen. What a poor loser!

I would like to remind readers that Trump is a pathological liar. Many are discovering that his campaign promises for the 2024 election have not been kept. Apparently, they didn't believe he was a liar. Trump is also transactional which means he is always looking for what's in it for him in any instance. In his campaigns he often said he would be our retribution. That puzzled me. I have concluded that it seems to be his harsh and cruel retribution toward anyone who doesn't agree with him or says anything about him he doesn't like. It could also be called being "thin skinned."

So, now we have an elderly man in the White House who sends out derogatory messages in the middle of the night and then nods off during the day because he hasn't gotten enough rest. And he has chosen to quarrel with the Pope as if he were a political rival, no less. Such disrespect!

Trump also has no respect for the Constitution. He ignores the balance of powers of Executive, Judicial and Legislative branches. He went to war in Iran without going to Congress. And now he doesn't seem to know how to end that war.

And now that name calling is directed at him Trump wants anyone doing that to be fired or dismissed. It seems that he can "dish it out," but he can't take it.

I fear for our country if we have Trump for his whole term. I am all in favor of using the 25th Amendment to remove him from office!

PATRICIA JACKMAN
NORTH BROOKFIELD

Nothing to worry about

To the Editor:

When POTUS was asked about Iran war impact on consumers, he answered honestly, that he has no concern impact that the war has on citizen finances. He claims Iran not getting nukes is most urgent. A few months ago we bombed their underground nuclear facility, saying it set them back years. Now we have killed the current Ayatollah's father, wife and child and hope he will sit down and negotiate. Would you?

Regarding nukes, because of mutual assured destruction, nobody who wants to survive will use them. We won't use them on Russia or China. India won't use them on Pakistan. Others with nukes, like North Korea, UK, France, Israel may

argue with neighbors, but using a nuke would be like trimming your toe nails with a hand grenade. Only someone as dumb as Trump, who suggested blowing up hurricanes, would be a danger. It is nonsensical to think Iran or Israel could attack each other with nukes. I, therefore, think Iran only wants them to deter us.

A woman told the story of a son doing research for a report, by wearing a MAGA hat for two weeks. Two days in he had been spat on, kicked, yelled at and had things thrown at him. Now she is worried how things will go when he actually leaves the house.

KEN KIMBALL
BROOKFIELD

This time, Trump told the truth — what can we do about it?

To the Editor:

Our eyes and ears can see and hear Donald Trump say "I do not care about Americans' financial situations." Then back to lying, he said the reason was making sure Iran doesn't have a nuclear weapon. However, many more dangerous countries like North Korea, and Russia and China have nuclear weapons aimed at the United States.

Trump did not mention that in first his term as president, he tore up an agreement that John Kerry — our own military veteran, Senator, and Secretary of Secretary of State, with years of effort — had hammered out a global agreement that made sure Iran could not make a nuclear weapons for years to come.

In other words, to quote Trump again, rather than paying attention to ordinary American families and our ever increasing financial difficulties we face, he felt "good" about an "excursion" into Iran that has already cost - not including interest payments - our families tens of billions of dollars and higher prices and much, much of both to come.

So yes, not even counting the protected benefits he provides billionaires and his family, Trump does not care about the financial situation of we ordinary

Americans.

And we know this. Poll after poll show Trumps approval ratings have gone way down. And "We, the People" already have begun to do something about it. We have made it known we do not approve of his wars, his economic policies, his tariffs, and the incompetence and corruption.

What to do about it?

Practice the "butterfly effect." In polite ways, tell others why you are against him and his policies and actions, realizing that those comments and feelings will often help others understand and then say the same.

Peacefully participate in public rallies and demonstrations that support our Constitution, democracy and way of life.

Contribute and otherwise support organizations that work for free and fair 2026 elections.

Support U. S. Senate and Congressional candidates be they Democrats, Independents, or Republicans who will work for "We the People" rather than billionaires, friends and family.

KEVIN KANE
SPENCER

Help your graduate use credit and debit cards wisely



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As your new graduate prepares to step into the next chapter of life — whether that's more education or starting a career — one of the best things you can do is help them understand how to use credit cards, debit cards, and prepaid cards wisely. They can be powerful financial tools, but without some basic knowledge, they can also lead to trouble.

Here are a few things for graduates, whether from high school or graduate school, should know.

Credit cards have benefits — and risks. About 69 percent of Americans ages 18-29 have at least one credit card, according to the Federal Reserve. They can borrow money up to a set limit, pay it back and borrow again — a cycle known as revolving credit. Used responsibly, credit cards can help build their credit history, cover unexpected expenses, and even earn rewards like cash back or travel discounts.

On the cautionary side, if your child or grandchild doesn't pay the full balance each month, interest charges can accumulate quickly. Carrying a high balance relative to the credit limit can hurt their credit score. Perhaps most importantly, it's easy to fall into a debt cycle in which they charge more than they can pay, interest can add up to more than the original purchases cost, and they might even open new cards to cover old ones. It creates a hole that's hard to climb out of.

The key message is simple: pay off the balance monthly, pay on time and treat the card as a convenience, not a lifeline.

Debit cards can be a good option. Since debit cards draw directly from a bank account, they naturally limit overspending. But they aren't risk-free. Overdrawing the account can trigger fees, and debit cards generally offer fewer fraud protections than credit cards. Additionally, since you're spending your own money rather than borrowing, debit cards don't help build a credit score. Still, for a young person just starting out, a debit card can be a practical way to manage day-to-day spending.

Prepaid cards can help teach the basics. Money is loaded onto the card before use, and your young adult can only spend what's already on the card. Because of this, there's no risk of debt, no credit history needed and no bills to pay.

Prepaid cards come in several forms. General purpose reloadable cards can be used anywhere cards are accepted. Payroll cards are sometimes used by employers to distribute wages. Gift cards are another option.

The downside is that prepaid cards typically don't help build a credit history, since transactions usually aren't reported to credit bureaus. Some also come with fees for activation, reloading or transactions. These fees can add up, so it pays to read the fine print.

Teaching your graduate the difference between these tools, and how to develop good habits for each, can help them build financial confidence for decades to come.

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.

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The quiet things we carry home

There's a certain sound to Memorial Day in small towns.

It's the distant thump of a bass drum echoing down Main Street. The squeak of folding chairs being opened along a parade route. The soft flutter of little American flags planted in damp cemetery grass before sunrise by volunteers who probably didn't tell anyone they were doing it.

When I was a boy, Memorial Day seemed simple to me. It meant a day off from school, a parade, maybe the smell of charcoal grills drifting through the neighborhood by late afternoon. I remember old veterans standing straighter than usual in their uniforms, though I was too young then to notice how some of them walked a little slower than others.

As a kid, you don't fully understand why grown men go quiet during the playing of "Taps."

You just know they do. Now that I'm older, Memorial Day feels dif-

LANTERNS ALONG MAIN STREET

By CHARLES

ferent. Not heavier exactly, but deeper. The older you get, the more you realize every town has names carved into stone somewhere. Boys who grew up on the same streets we drive every day.

Young men who probably fished the same ponds, sat in the same diners, worked summer jobs, complained about cold winters and muddy springs just like the rest of us.

And then one day, they left home wearing a uniform and never came back.

That's what Memorial Day really asks of us. Not grand speeches. Not perfect patriotism. Mostly remembrance.

Just remembrance. I think that's why New England towns observe Memorial Day the way they do. There's something modest about it here. The ceremonies are rarely flashy. A few speeches. A prayer maybe. Flowers placed carefully at a monument.

Veterans standing shoulder to shoulder, even when age has bent their backs a little. People still show up.

That matters.

I've always noticed how children behave differently during Memorial Day ceremonies too. Even the fidgety ones somehow sense this is not quite like the Fourth of July. There's usually one little boy waving a flag too enthusiastically until his mother gently lowers his arm. Somebody's toddler starts asking questions halfway through the ceremony. Teenagers stand around trying to look uninterested while quietly paying attention anyway.

That matters too. Because remembrance has to keep getting handed down.

The older generation understood that. My father certainly did, though he wasn't much for emotional speeches. He belonged to that old school of men who believed you showed respect by showing up. Rain or shine. Suit jacket on. Hat off during the anthem. Handshake firm. No fuss made about it.

A lot of those men are gone now.

Truth be told, Memorial Day can feel a little lonely sometimes because of

that. You look around town greens and realize many of the veterans who once led the parades now ride quietly in the passenger seat instead of marching. Some are missing altogether.

Time catches everybody eventually.

Still, there's comfort in the traditions staying put even as generations change. The local scout troops still help. High school bands still miss a few notes halfway through the march. Volunteers still place flags at gravesites. Somebody still brings extra donuts nobody asked for.

And somehow that ordinary kindness feels connected to the meaning of the day itself.

Memorial Day was never really meant to glorify war. At least I don't think so.

It's about honoring sacrifice while quietly hoping future generations won't have to make the same sacrifices quite so often.

That may sound old-fashioned nowadays. So be it.

I suppose I've reached the age where I don't mind sounding a little old-fashioned now and then. There are worse things a man can be.

Over the years, I've noticed something else too. The people who attend Memorial Day ceremonies most faithfully are often not the loudest people the other 364 days of the year. They're usually steady people. Humble people. Folks who understand gratitude doesn't always need a microphone.

Maybe that's the lesson I keep carrying home from

Memorial Day each year.

A healthy town remembers.

Not perfectly. Not dramatically. But sincerely.

It remembers the people who built the community, protected it, sacrificed for it, and never made it back to enjoy the peaceful little moments the rest of us often take for granted. Ballgames. Backyard cookouts. Kids riding bicycles at dusk. A quiet evening with family while the screen door creaks open and shut.

Ordinary American life.

The kind of life somebody else once gave up everything to protect.

And every Memorial Day, whether we realize it or not, we carry that gift home with us.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Let's use America's 250th to reflect on both our successes and failures

To the Editor:

This year marks 250 years of our nation's existence since the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Throughout the nation, there will be greater reflection on our historical journey to the country we are today. Most of us appreciate the parts of that journey that have contributed to democracies throughout the world; but that journey has seen many hills and valleys. Where are we now?

Many of our ancestors wanted to start life anew in this land of opportunity, where they hoped to escape oppression and discrimination, and where people had the ability to participate in the choice of leadership. During our nation's history there have been times when we have fallen short of being a great country. Some people have had the opportunity to become extremely wealthy, but not always by just means. Such wealth often came at the expense of others. Is that what made this country a great land of opportunity? Did it matter how that wealth was obtained, and how it was spent? We take pride in emphasizing the freedoms we enjoy; and this coming Memorial Day, we will be honoring those who died in battles trying to protect those freedoms. But what freedoms were they defending? The freedom to exploit and tax minorities while denying them their right to vote? Freedom to pollute the land, water and air, to squander out national resources, and now risk the continued survival of our world?

Taxation without representation was the evil that moved many to embrace the Declaration of Independence. Our President and his loyalists plan to cut taxes

for the wealthiest while cutting social and environmental programs that would benefit all. He is currently attempting to take \$10 billion from the coffers of the IRS. Who pays for that? Who is being represented?

We pay substantially to have the most powerful military in existence, but what is its purpose? To enable better trade deals via the backing of our military might? To become the private army of an autocrat who refuses to recognize any needs but his own? To honor this autocrat with military parades on his birthday? To back his unlawful threats of revenge and retribution, or to even suggest a willingness to devastate another nation and eliminate hundreds of thousands to millions of its inhabitants? Is Trump confusing self-service with service?

This year, we will be encouraged to better appreciate our historic contributions. I hope that we reflect on not just the accomplishments, but also the failures. If more of our citizens learned a true accounting of our history and the times our country failed to meet standards of real greatness, perhaps we would be less likely to repeat the mistakes of our past. Perhaps we would not be in our present position, sending our youth abroad to potentially sacrifice their lives at the misguided whim of a mentally compromised leader obsessed with superficial values like golden ballrooms or even golden toilets. Unfortunately, his obsession with gold does not extend to the golden rule.

DAVID W. BROWN
NORTH BROOKFIELD

SNHU announces Spring Dean's List

MANCHESTER, New Hampshire — It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the Spring 2026 Dean's List. The spring terms run from January to May.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.500 to 3.699 for the reporting term are named to the Dean's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

Lexie MacDonald of Spencer
Jamie Hiott of Spencer
Jessica Remick of Spencer
Margaret Lacaire of North Brookfield
Melissa Benway of Leicester
Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) is a private, nonprofit, accredited institution with a 93-year history of educating traditional-aged students and working adults. Now serving more than 200,000 learners worldwide, SNHU offers approximately 200 undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs, available online and on its 300-acre campus in Manchester, NH. Recognized as one of the «Most Innovative» regional universities by U.S. News & World Report and one of the fastest-growing universities in the country, SNHU is committed to expanding access to high quality, affordable pathways that meet the needs of each learner.

SNHU announces Spring President's List

MANCHESTER, New Hampshire — It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the Spring 2026 President's List. The spring terms run from January to May.

Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

Chanlyn Basham of West Brookfield
Rosanna Lopez of West Brookfield
Tyler Carter of Spencer
Andres Perez Morel of Spencer
Steven Killmer of North Brookfield
Grace Wilbur of North Brookfield
Crystal Gagnon of North Brookfield
Claire Kuchinski of Leicester
Kuku Layne of Leicester
Tianna Laraia of Brookfield
Katelynn McCrohan of Brookfield

Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) is a private, nonprofit, accredited institution with a 93-year history of educating traditional-aged students and working adults. Now serving more than 200,000 learners worldwide, SNHU offers approximately 200 undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs, available online and on its 300-acre campus in Manchester, NH. Recognized as one of the "Most Innovative" regional universities by U.S. News & World Report and one of the fastest-growing universities in the country, SNHU is committed to expanding access to high quality, affordable pathways that meet the needs of each learner.

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.

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Kindergarten registration now open; free integrated preschool available for Leicester families

LEICESTER — The Leicester School District is pleased to announce that Kindergarten registration is now open for the 2026–2027 school year. We are also excited to continue offering tuition-free enrollment in our integrated preschool program for Leicester residents.

Children who turn five years old on or before Aug. 31, 2026 are eligible to enroll in Kindergarten at Leicester Elementary School. School hours are 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Friday. There is no registration deadline, and families are encouraged to register as soon as possible to help us prepare for the upcoming school year.

To enter Kindergarten, students must provide:

- Proof of a lead screening with results
- A physical exam dated within 13 months of the start of school
- 5 doses of Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis (DTaP)
- 4 doses of Polio
- 3 doses of Hepatitis B
- 2 doses of Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR)
- 2 doses of Varicella vaccine or documentation of chickenpox disease

Registration information can be found at: https://leicester.k12.ma.us/for_parents/student_registration

In addition to Kindergarten registration, Leicester is proud to offer a tuition-free integrated preschool program for in-town residents. Children who turn three or four years old on or before Aug. 31, 2026, are eligible to apply. District residents who qualify for special education services may begin attending once they turn three, regardless of the birthdate cutoff.

Children enrolling in the preschool program must be independently toilet-trained (no diapers or pull-ups), unless a specific special education service requires otherwise. Children who are not yet independently using the restroom during the school day will need to wait to begin the program until they are developmentally ready.

More information about the integrated preschool program can be found at <https://sites.google.com/lpsma.net/leicester-integrated-preschool?usp=sharing>.

For questions about Kindergarten or Preschool registration, please contact Leicester Elementary School at (508) 892-7050.

We look forward to welcoming our newest learners and partnering with families as they begin this exciting educational journey in Leicester!

Community invited to join in North Brookfield's Memorial Day observance

NORTH BROOKFIELD — On Monday, May 25, North Brookfield is presenting a full array of events to honor the sacrifices and patriotism of North Brookfield Veterans who have given distinguished service to their country over the years. These events are:

8 a.m. — Starting at the Walnut Grove cemetery and concluding at the St. Joseph cemetery a ceremony will take place consisting of a Military Color Guard, an invocation, Firing Squad volley, and the playing of Taps (near and echo) to render appropriate gratitude to deceased Veterans. We welcome and encourage fellow Veterans to join us in these tributes and the parade.

9:15 a.m. — The long tradition for a Town parade, honoring deceased Veterans, will depart from the town Firehouse and proceed north on Grove Street to the intersection of North Main Street. It will then move south on N. Main Street to the intersection of Main, Summer and School Streets. It will then disperse to partici-

pate in activities at the Haston Library.

9:30 a.m. — Should there be inclement weather an abbreviated Memorial Day program will be held in the North Brookfield Congregational Church.

10:30 a.m. — Starting in the center of town (N. Main/School Streets) a Veteran's Color Guard and Firing Squad will march to the Haston library where they will be posted. They will be accompanied by members of the NB Jr./Sr. HS band led by Ms. Chelsea Saunders, bandmaster. Richard Leblanc will also be supplying patriotic music at the library location.

10:35 a.m. — Ceremonies will begin with opening comments by MC Bill Cass and an invocation given by Frank Potter the chaplain of the N. Brookfield VFW Post. This will be followed by the long-time tradition of the reading of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. Historically this has been done by the NBHS Jr. Class President. Whitney

Reno will be fulfilling that honor. The bells of the N.B. Congregational Church will then be rung by Nic Guertin, assisted by Noah Gillette, to symbolize a sign of respect and honor for Fallen Heroes who have given their all.

10:50 a.m. — Continuing the ceremony in front of the Town War Memorials (Haston Library) includes speeches by honored guests: the Pastor Nate Hayman, Pastor of Pilgrim Baptist Church will start and be followed by Jamie Gilman (Chairman of the North Brookfield Select Board).

11:05 a.m. — Richard Leblanc will play the Hymns of the various military branches in order of founding (Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Air Force and Space Force) plus America the Beautiful.

11:25 a.m. — At this time the most solemn part of the program begins with the reading of deceased veterans of North Brookfield starting from the Civil War to the present conflict in the war against terrorism. As each name is

read a poppy flower (by poppy girls: Makailyn Chausse, Macy Kilbourn and Claire Madden, Makenna Killelea and Austin Feeley) will be attached to a wreath supplied by the Ladies Auxiliary of the N.B. American Legion Post 41. A drum roll is also rendered after each name is read by an NBHS band student. After the readings, the Military Firing Squad will render a 3-volley salute in honor of these deceased veterans. Following the rifle salute, Mark McGrail and a student from the band will render the playing of Taps with an echo.

The ceremony is concluded by the lowering and raising of the American flag by the commanders of the NB American Legion (Vice Richard Eccleston) and Veterans of Foreign Wars (Cmdr Wally Kitteredge) detachments. Simultaneously, the community will be led in the singing of the National Anthem by Carleen McQuaid. All are encouraged to participate in the singing of our National Anthem.

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 A r t i s a n a l 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
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LEGALS

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Docket No. WO26P1515EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Estate Of:

Alice Friend Lizak
Date of Death: 12/10/2025

To all interested persons:
A Petition for Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by Fair Havens, Inc. d/b/a Quaboag of West Brookfield MA requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that:
Laura McDonnell of West Brookfield, MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **With Corporate Surety** on the estate in **unsupervised administration.**

IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 06/09/2026.** This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.
WITNESS, Hon. Kathryn M. Bailey, First Justice of this Court.
Date: May 11, 2026
Stephanie Fattman, Register of Probate
May 22, 2026

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WEEKLY POLICE BLOTTER

Spencer
The Spencer Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of May 6-13.

Eduardo Rocha Siqueira, age 22, of Spencer was arrested on May 12 for Operating Under the Influence (Liquor), Negligent Operation of a Motor Vehicle, and Unlicensed Operation of a Motor Vehicle.

Collin Patrick Sweeney, age 26, of Oakham was arrested on May 13 in connection with multiple warrants.

Leicester
The Leicester Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of May 7-13.

Bruce Kevin Lowe Dopnang, age 28, of Worcester was arrested on May 7 for Negligent Operation of a Motor Vehicle, Failure to Stop for Police, and driving at a rate of speed exceeding the posted limit.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on May 8 for Operating a Motor Vehicle after suspension of license, operating an Uninsured Motor Vehicle, and for not being in possession of a driver's license.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on May 8 for Unlicensed Operation of a Motor Vehicle.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on May 10 for a Number Plate Violation to Conceal ID.

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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
 Email: 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.

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Tabitha Myers named to President's List at Bob Jones University

GREENVILLE, S.C. — Tabitha Myers, a Junior Strategic Communication major from East Brookfield, was among over 580 Bob Jones University students named to the spring 2026 President's List.

The President's List recognizes students who earn a 3.75 or higher grade point average for the semester.

Founded in 1927, Bob Jones University is a Christian liberal arts university located in Greenville, S.C. BJU offers a well-rounded education that combines strong academics with a biblical worldview, preparing students to succeed in their future careers while deepening their faith. With a student body representing 48 states, 40 countries and 5 territories, the University offers a dynamic campus environment where each student is encouraged to pursue a higher calling-anchored in truth, mentored in wisdom and strengthened in faith.

Rachel Myers named to the Dean's List at Bob Jones University

GREENVILLE, S.C. — Rachel Myers, a Junior Music major from East Brookfield, was among approximately 600 Bob Jones University students named to the spring 2026 Dean's List.

The Dean's List recognizes students who earn a 3.00-3.74 grade point average during the semester.

Founded in 1927, Bob Jones University is a Christian liberal arts university located in Greenville, S.C. BJU offers a well-rounded education that combines strong academics with a biblical worldview, preparing students to succeed in their future careers while deepening their faith. With a student body representing 48 states, 40 countries and 5 territories, the University offers a dynamic campus environment where each student is encouraged to pursue a higher calling-anchored in truth, mentored in wisdom and strengthened in faith.

North Brookfield church to host Memorial Day chicken barbecue

NORTH BROOKFIELD — The First Congregational Church of North Brookfield will hold its annual Memorial Day Chicken Barbecue on Monday, May 25, from noon to 2 p.m. on the church lawn under the large outdoor tent.

The longtime community tradition will feature barbecued chicken dinners, live music, family activities, and games as residents gather following Memorial Day observances.

The main dinner includes a half a barbecued chicken, whole potato, green beans, salad, dessert, and a drink for \$15. Organizers are also offering a free hot dog meal for children under age 10 with the purchase of a chicken barbecue ticket.

Additional hot dog meals will be available for \$5 and include chips, a drink, fruit cup, and dessert for adults and children over age 10.

Entertainment during the afternoon will include a free concert by the Steve Bell Trio beginning at 1 p.m. on the church lawn. Family-friendly activities are also planned, including cornhole, Gaga ball, and face painting.

Church officials encourage residents to purchase tickets in advance by calling the church office at 508-867-8428.

Payton Prouty of Spencer awarded an undergraduate degree during Salve Regina University's Commencement

NEWPORT, R.I. — Payton Prouty of Spencer was awarded an undergraduate degree during Salve Regina University's 76th Commencement held May 17, on the University's oceanside campus. Dr. Kelli J. Armstrong, president, conferred 525 bachelor's degrees upon the Class of 2026. A separate ceremony was held Thursday, May 14 for recipients of graduate degrees — 204 Master's degrees, 25 doctoral degrees and five Doctor of Nursing Practice degrees.

Located in historic Newport, R.I., Salve Regina University is a Catholic, coeducational institution of higher education founded by the Sisters of Mercy in 1947. It offers rigorous, innovative academic programming in the liberal arts tradition that prepares students to be global citizens and lifelong learners. More than 2,700 students from around the world are enrolled in Salve's 60+ academic programs, which include bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees along with graduate certificates and combined bachelor's/master's programs. Every undergraduate student engages in Salve Compass, a four-year experience that charts a personalized, values-based path connecting college to a successful, fulfilling career and life. The University is also home to the Pell Center for International Relations and Public Policy, a multi-disciplinary research center focused on the intersection of politics, policy and ideas. For more information visit salve.edu.

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SENIORS NAMED TO BAY PATH HONOR ROLL

CHARLTON — Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical School congratulates the following students in grade 12 on being named to the honor roll for the third quarter of the 2025-2026 school year.

High Honors

Addison Emily Aho, Adrianna Nataly Alicea, Isabella Aria Bitar, Edward Stephen Blash, Dominic Dewayne Boyd, Aleah Claire Brink, Brianna Livia Brink, Dominic Raymond Brodeur, Emily Ann Corey, Valentina Ashley Culberson, Joseph Michael Daige, Myiah Kiara DeLaRosa, Basil Oliver Doud, Jocelyn Elizabeth Evans, Yandel Feliciano, Jordan Mariah Ferreira, Jayla Marie Fowler, Luke Robert Heller, Liam Wayne Hesselton, Nicholas Edward Jalbert, Zachary Raymond Landry, Phoebe Alyson Lawendowski, Ava Rose Mastrototaro, Emily Jean McDonald, Felix Casey Menard, Alexis McGee Messina, Liam Macrae Nicoll, Matthew Thomas Obrycki, Mariah Lynn Pereira, Kayleigh Jean Ramm, Samantha Jeanne Reseigh,

Nathan Alexander Rouille Montoya, Jordan Joyce Russell, Sawyer Luke Schultz, Luke William Smolski, Gaige Charles Thompson, Haylee Marie Zurowski

Honors

Bayleigh Alexis Abdella, Helena Rowan Adkins, Gianna Marie Albano, Jacob John Archambault, Alexander Tyr Audunsson, Arianna Rose Belanger, Ryan Michael Berthiaume, David Betancur, Roger Joseph Bishop, Dimitri Anthony Burt, Cameron James Cabana, Mecchanise Monic Calo Resto, Samuel Ella Ceppetelli, Lily Sabina Chartier, Charles Michael Congdon, Hunter Matthew Coombs, Jacob William Creeron, Brody Lawrence Cunningham, Connor Anthony Czechowski, Samuel Richard Davis, Treyton Joseph Dery, Cody Daniel Dombroski, Max Andrew Domineck, Zenovi Irene Dupont, Heidi Lynne Ebbeling, Ethan Alexander Ford, Tristan Alexander Garcia-Cruz, Aliyah Marie Gonyea, Jocelynn Rose Gordon, Molly Elizabeth Grant, Isaiah Terrence Harris-Harrington, Sadie Lynn Hawley,

Kolton Trevor Hemenway, Hannah Jean Ingalls, Natalie Rose Ingles, Joshua William Irons, Amara Kimberly Johnson, Christian Michael Johnson, Tabian Marschall Keegan, Samuel Arjun Kittredge, Allison Hemenway Klar, Cassie Lee Kotomski, Marshall Thomas Lafond, Nia Mya Laforest, Callie Mae Lambert, Gabrielle Ruth LaPan, Miranda Kate Linde, Nicolas Sebastian Londono, Cullen Gregory MacLeod, Mystic Leigh Marion, Bradley Anthony McCarthy, Madeline Beverly McDonald-Trimby, Kyle Joseph Mondor, Sebastian Luke Moniz, Alexis Paige Moody, Chase Patrick Newman, Sebastian Alexander Nieuwenhoff, Benjamin Francis Nocchi, Connor James O'Brien, Kelsey Lynn Olson, Cole Henry Paradis, Amari Audrey Pereira, Jacob Paul Pratt, Samuel Joseph Prefontaine, Jae Mia Prochnow, Taylor Lynn Richard, Jorge Santiago, Jared Robert Senosk, Brianne Marie Sentence, Jaxon Russell Sitko, Nathan Adam Steen, Yandel Omar Torres, Anne Louise Turcotte, Sebastian Paul Vargas, Ezekiel Velazquez, Esmerelda Velez, Natalie Helen Vigeant,

Harley Ann Wilson Wadden, Ava Quiyn Wall, Marcanthony Justin Weld, Hunter Earl White, Trey Stephen Wilkin, Noah Williamson

Principal's Trust

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EAST BROOKFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY

122 Connie Mack Dr.
508-867-7928
Carolann MacMaster, MLIS
Library Director

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Celebrating America from the Beginning

Come learn about how the National Parks played key roles in the Revolutionary War, enter for your chance to win a book and view a musket, and pick up the National Commemorative Stamp and coin, that tells the history of the National Parks. Refreshments from the Revolutionary War will be served. This is a two-part program:

“Road to Independence” Monday, June 29th at 5:30

“World Turned Upside Down” Monday, August 10th at 5:30

All ages are welcomed; however, the program should hold the interest of people from 12 and up. Vincent Kordack is an East Brookfield resident with more than 38 years of experience as a National Park Ranger, He was assigned to 16 of the 18 National Parks that revolve around the Revolutionary War. Will share his vast knowledge with you.

Ed Popielarczyk, Magic Show

Thursday, August 13th at 10:30

All ages are welcome to attend, come see Ed do magic tricks and create his balloon art. Ed also has a flea circus to show you! Ed has been doing magic shows for nearly 35 years. Come to the library and enjoy the show.

Gilbert and Friends

Thursday, July 16th at 10:30

Come visit with our cute and smart special guests, Gilbert the Pig and his friends, Meadow and Sprinkle! Pet them, feed them, and help them with some tricks. Take pictures with our special guests and learn all about pigs! This program will be about an hour long.

All ages welcome, children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult caregiver. One adult for every 2 children.

Springfield Thunderbirds

Thursday, August 6th at 10:45

Come meet the NHL St. Louis Blues affiliate the Springfield Thunderbirds mascot After a stellar season, of knocking out the number one seed in the 2nd round. At posting the T-Birds are still in the hunt for the Calder Cup.

--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.

Arts and Crafts

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED

Adult caregivers must attend with any children under 12 years old. One adult for 2 children. (sorry, no exception to this rule for this program). Some art projects continue to the next week. Starts Tuesday July 7th, 21st, 23rd, August 14th and 18th at 11:00

Activity and Play

Tuesdays 10:30

An extension of our Story-time, come and join the fun. Caregivers are required to stay with the child. One adult caregiver is required for every 2 children.

Paper Airplane making June 30th

Cornhole July 7th

Sidewalk Chalk Drawing July 14th

Bubbles July 21st

Origami July 28th

Bracelet making August 4th

Tour our Pond August 11th

Knitting Group

Adult Knitting Group meets on Thursdays at 1:00. All skill levels are welcome! Bring a current project or check out our many pattern books for inspiration.

The library Wish List!

Cheap paper plates (the kind that you must use more than one or your food will spill off.) Playdough Bubbles Large crayons Ribbon Cookies Card stock all colors Purple glue sticks Small bags of chips Sandwich bags Large zip lock bags Juice Coloring books Construction paper Googly eyes Feathers

Town Election Information and Voter Registration

Annual Town Meeting, June 10th, 7pm, at the East Brookfield Elementary School.

State Primary, September 1st, deadline to register to Vote is August 22nd at 5pm. If Registering at the Town Hall or 11:59. If registering online at <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/ovr/>

General State Election, November 3rd, deadline to register to vote is October 24th at 5pm, if registering at the Town Hall or 11:59pm if registering online at <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/ovr/>

Puzzle Making / Adult Board Games

If you like to build puzzles or play board games, maybe meet new people from the community, this program is for you! Program is for adults 18 years or older.

Walk-ins are welcome but registration is preferred so we can plan accordingly for the snacks and number of games. Join us in the library for an afternoon of games and snacks. Every other Tuesday at 1:00, starting June 2nd.

Saturday Board Games

All ages are welcome to come to the library and play a few board games. Saturday at 10:00

Baking Decorating Class

Come learn how to decorate cookies, cupcakes and cakes. We are looking for supplies for this program which include the following. Cupcake wrappers, cake decorating supplies such as decorating tips, bags, jimmies, cake mixes, cookie mixes, confection sugar, food coloring. This program will be held on the last Tuesday of the month at 1:30. Donations for this program are greatly appreciated. Registration is required one week prior to the program. Please speak to Carolann for more details.

Food Shelf

Please bring new, unexpired food 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. Food items suggestions: canned meat, canned vegetables, spaghetti sauce, mac and cheese that can be made without milk, baking supplies. The collected items will be distributed to local families and individuals in need. Our food shelf is always available during normal library hours.

Game Day Afternoon

Thursday at 3:00 starting Jun 25th

Come learn to play different card games, like Uno, Go Fish, War, and more. All ages are welcome to attend.

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.

Pokémon Go Club

Meets every Monday, at 3:30pm. 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.

Technology Tuesday!

Need help with technology? We're here for you! We can teach you how to do things like using 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!

Movie Time

Stop by the library with your lunch and enjoy a block buster movie, meet new friends. All shows start at 1:00 on Monday June 22nd, July 6th, July 20th, August 3rd and August 17th.

Reading Buddies

Starting Thursday June 25th at 2:00

Please call the library for your child to be matched with

Another child.

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!

Library Hours

Monday 10-6

Tuesday 9-4

Thursday 9-5

Saturday 9-1

Library Staff: Carolann, Elyse, Sue, Ally, Hunter, Elliot

Library Closed: July 4th, August 29th

Friends of the Library

Want to help the library but don't know how? Join the Friend's Group! 1 hour 6 times a year!!

Maker Space and Library of Things

Come visit our Maker Space area and Library of 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.

Summer Eats

Starting June 29th through August 13th

11:00 to 12:00

We will once again host the Summer Eats Program at the library all children are welcome to come by the library and pick up a FREE breakfast and Lunch meal.

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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).

Celebrating America from the beginning at upcoming library programs

EAST BROOKFIELD — Come learn about how the National Parks played key roles in the Revolutionary War, enter for your chance to win a book and view a musket, and pick up the National Commemorative Stamp and coin, that tells the history of the National Parks. Refreshments from the Revolutionary War will be served. This is a two-part program:

"Road to Independence" Monday, June 29 at 5:30 p.m.
"World Turned Upside Down" Monday, Aug. 10 at 5:30 p.m.

All ages are welcomed; however, the program should hold the interest of people from 12 and up. Vincent Kordack is an East Brookfield resident with more than 38 years of experience as a National Park Ranger. He was assigned to 16 of the 18 National Parks that revolve around the Revolutionary War. Will share his vast knowledge with you.

Brookfield Unitarian Universalist Church to hold clothing drive

BROOKFIELD — The Committee for Ecology and Social Action of the Brookfield Unitarian Universalist Church is sponsoring a clothing drive through Helpsy, the largest clothing collector in the Northeast. Textile waste is a fast-growing problem, and occupies nearly 5 percent of all landfill space, but 95 percent of unwanted clothing can be reused, repurposed, or recycled. Only 15 percent currently is.

From Monday, July 6 through Saturday, July 12, the church will be open between 3 and 7 p.m. so you can bring your old clothing (including slips, bras, underwear, socks) and certain other acceptable items, such as shoes, accessories (including hats, bags, belts, scarves and jewelry), luggage, stuffed animals and linens (including sheets, blankets, curtains, table linens and quilts). All items in any condition are acceptable if they are clean, dry, and odorless.

The Brookfield Unitarian Universalist Church is located at 9 Upper River Street on the Brookfield Common, near the junction of Route 9 and Route 148. For more information, contact Barbara Hale at blh.buuc@gmail.com.

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FUTURE
continued from page A1

better structuring and consistent scheduling, middle school recess, and a structured after-school homework center were just a few suggestions.

These early listening sessions have allowed district leadership to produce a list of early priorities for this process which include expending Student Opportunities, strengthening career & college readiness, enhancing culture and belonging, refining systems and supports, and increase accountability.

Another goal of this process, according to McCormick, is to better understand how the schools should market themselves to show students, both new and existing, why North Brookfield Public Schools

are worth the commitment. "We partnered this year with Kartoon Edu to do two anchor videos for the district. We started with STEM. The second one was a district-wide celebration, kind of an experience video showing the families of students what we do within the district. But how do we make sure that we're messaging that consistently to all of our stakeholders? I think we need to be more purposeful with our social media presence and how we tell our story," McCormick said.

The School Committee offered some insight noting that part of the struggle is maintaining student numbers which are essential to justifying these expanded programs. However, these new programs could also serve as powerful tools to increase student inter-

est in remaining in North Brookfield rather than exploring outside options. It was suggested that part of this initiative could involve seeking a better understanding from students who plan to leave the district about what they found more desirable outside of the North Brookfield schools.

The district's study is far from complete. McCormick was set to host another listening session the day after the May 11 meeting, incorporating input from students. They plan is to solicit input in the form of surveys and additional listening sessions from students, parents, and stakeholders throughout the year as they look towards the next school year and how they can continue to build North Brookfield as a successful district for all.

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

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First Congregational Church
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W.Bookfield, MA 01585
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Thursday 7 PM- 8 PM

Massasoit Art Guild announces Spring Small Works show at Leicester Public Library

LEICESTER — The Massasoit Art Guild will present its Spring Small Works Art and Photography Show from April 30 through May 27 at the Leicester Public Library, offering visitors a chance to view a wide range of compact-format artwork created by guild members from across the region.

The members-only exhibition will feature original pieces limited to a maximum size of 12 by 14 inches, measured by outside frame dimensions. Artists may submit up to two entries each. Organizers said the smaller format encourages experimentation and accessibility while allowing a broad range of styles and media to be displayed in a shared community setting.

The show will be judged as a single category rather than divided by medium. Awards will be presented for first, second and third place, along with an honorary mention. A People's Choice selection will also be recognized. Ribbon prizes will be awarded to winners.

Artwork drop-off and check-in is scheduled for Thursday, April 30, from 9:30 to 11 a.m. in the library's ground-floor Community Room. Later that day, the guild will host a public meet-and-greet reception with participating artists from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. in the same location. Organizers encourage all participating artists to attend the reception to connect with visitors and

fellow exhibitors.

The exhibition will remain on display during regular library hours through May 27. Pick-up for submitted artwork is scheduled for Thursday, May 28, from 9:30 to 11 a.m., again in the Community Room.

Registration for the show opened Feb. 22 and continues through April 15, or until available space is filled. Advance registration is required, and artists must complete the entry process through the guild's website.

Guild representatives said the annual small works exhibition provides an opportunity for artists to present new material while also introducing local audiences to

the range of talent within the organization. The show is designed to be approachable for both established artists and newer members interested in exhibiting their work publicly.

Support for the exhibition is provided in part through a grant from the Spencer Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Mass Cultural Council.

Additional information about show rules and registration is available through the Massasoit Art Guild website. Questions may also be directed to the organization by email at massasoitartguild@gmail.com.



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Webster - 34 Eastern Ave Condos
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Webster Lake Waterfront -
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