

SPENCER NEW LEADER

©2025, Issue #49 Free by request to residents of
East Brookfield, West Brookfield, North Brookfield, Brookfield, Leicester and Spencer

SEND YOUR NEWS AND PICS TO NEWS@STONEBRIDGEPRESS.NEWS Friday, November 28, 2025



Students proudly display their certificates during the recent Scholars Breakfast at Knox Trail Middle School. Photo courtesy of the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District's Facebook page.

Cherry Valley American Legion congratulates Joe Richardson on appointment as Veteran Service Officer for Leicester

CHERRY VALLEY — The Cherry Valley American Legion proudly announces and extends its heartfelt congratulations to Joe Richardson on his appointment as the Veteran Service Officer for the Town of Leicester.

In this vital role, Richardson will serve as a dedicated advocate for veterans, ensuring they receive the benefits, resources, and recognition they deserve.

His commitment to service and his deep connection to the veteran community make him an outstanding choice for this position.

“We are honored to celebrate Joe’s appointment,” said representatives of the Cherry Valley American Legion. “His leadership and compassion will strengthen the support network for veterans in Leicester, and we look forward to working alongside him in service to those who have served our nation.”

The Cherry Valley American Legion remains committed to supporting veterans and their families through community engagement, advocacy, and recognition of service. Joe Richardson’s appointment reflects Leicester’s ongoing dedication to honoring and assisting its veteran population.

North Brookfield hosting Santa Parade & tree lighting

NORTH BROOKFIELD — The town of North Brookfield will officially kick off the Christmas season with a Santa Parade and Tree Lighting, Saturday, Nov. 29. The parade will begin at 5 p.m., with the tree lighting and caroling at the church to follow at 6 p.m. Visit the library before the parade, beginning at 3 p.m., to write letters to Santa.

The parade leaves the high school and travels down North Main Street to deliver Santa to the Little Tree Park.

State approves sale of Leicester hospital, nursing home

LEICESTER — A significant change in the region’s health-care landscape is underway after the Massachusetts Public Health Council voted recently to approve the sale of Vibra Hospital of Western Massachusetts and the adjoining skilled nursing facility on Huntoon Memorial Highway. The facilities will transfer to Everest Hospital LLC, a company entering the Massachusetts market for the first time.

The decision, issued Nov. 12, followed a regulatory review by the Department of Public Health (DPH). State officials confirmed that the change in ownership met statutory requirements regarding financial stability, facility operations, and the protection of patient services. The sale includes both the long-term acute-care hospital and the 25-bed nursing center located on the same Leicester campus.

According to the state filing, Everest Hospital LLC has committed to maintaining existing clinical services following the transaction. The company also indicated that all current employees will be offered continued employment. While these assurances are included in DPH documentation associated with the determination of need, the long-term operational plans for the facility have not yet been detailed publicly.

Turn To SALE page A11

LHS partners with Shrewsbury and Clinton to offer educational opportunities to students



Pictured, from left to right, are LHS School Committee Liaisons Eryn Berkstresser, Taylor Gallant, Rhaegan Perry, and Jack Skoglund.

LEICESTER — At a recent Leicester School Committee meeting, four Leicester High School students provided an update to the school’s administration about the partnerships with Shrewsbury and Clinton and how students are adapting to their new school. This is the first full year of the partnership, and Shrewsbury and Clinton

both send a bus to LHS to take advantage of Career Technical Education at LHS.

Superintendent Brett Kustigian said, “It is vital for all students to feel welcome and this presentation shows that LHS is a great place to be, and the partnership is proving successful.”

Students from Clinton and Shrewsbury

are enthusiastically embracing the educational opportunities offered by Leicester High School (LHS). Many have eagerly joined various co-curricular clubs and athletics, including the football team and student council. These new students to LHS have a voice; as one student from Clinton stated, they “bring a whole new perspective to the school.”

A standout for many students is the continued expansion of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, which not only make learning more interactive but have also been designed to be inclusive environments, encouraging participation from students across all communities (Leicester, Shrewsbury, and Clinton). The diversity of Leicester High School and the communities that have joined us enriches the educational experience at LHS.

An overarching theme in the feedback from Clinton and Shrewsbury students and their families is that the warm, welcoming atmosphere of LHS distinguishes it from other schools. Whether it’s the compassionate support from an educator, the encouraging guidance from a fellow student helping a newcomer, or the advantages of attending a school that can personalize students’ education, LHS has a sense of community that makes transitioning to this new environment inviting and supportive for all students.

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Haston Free Public Library expands digital access for residents

NORTH BROOKFIELD — The Haston Free Public Library has launched several new digital resources this month, expanding access to e-books, research tools and online learning platforms for residents of North Brookfield and the surrounding towns. The updates, posted on the library’s Web site between Nov. 14 and Nov. 19,

reflect a growing effort to meet community demand for remote and on-the-go library services.

The most recent additions include enhanced access through CW MARS, the regional library consortium that supports more than 150 public and academic libraries across central and western Massachusetts. The consortium has rolled out

updated digital borrowing tools and expanded e-book and audiobook selections, which Haston Library patrons can access using their library cards.

Library staff noted in their Nov. 19 posting that residents now have smoother access to reading apps such as Libby, where new titles are being added weekly. The library emphasized that the platform now carries a broader selection of high-interest fiction, children’s materials and nonfiction categories that tend to see long waitlists during the holiday months.

In addition to e-books and audiobooks, residents can now use updated statewide electronic resources made available through the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and

the Massachusetts Library System, including online encyclopedias, language-learning tools, genealogy databases and homework-help platforms for students. These statewide digital collections are refreshed regularly, and the November update made several new research portals accessible to local cardholders.

For students, the library has promoted its improved access to the Massachusetts Libraries statewide databases, which include academic journals, age-appropriate research tools and multimedia educational resources. These can be used from home, an advantage during the winter months when school assignments increase and families face limited evening travel.

The November updates also highlight technical improvements to the online catalog interface, allowing patrons to place holds, renew items and manage

family accounts more easily. The catalog enhancements are part of CW MARS’ wider usability upgrade, rolled out to member libraries this month. Staff at Haston Library said the changes are meant to reduce login problems and improve navigation for newer users.

In recent years, digital borrowing has become a significant portion of circulation for small public libraries, particularly in rural areas where travel distances can be a factor for families and seniors. Providing more robust online resources allows libraries to maintain service levels even when building hours are limited or weather conditions affect in-person visits.

The library has encouraged residents who are unfamiliar with digital borrowing to stop in for assistance. According to recent notices, staff will continue offering one-on-one support for patrons who want help installing the Libby app, connecting their devices or navigating the online catalog. Assistance is available during regular operating hours, and card registration can be completed in person with

proper identification.

For families, the increased access to digital picture books and early-reader titles supports young readers outside of regular story-time hours. Library staff have also noted that many residents use digital audiobooks during holiday travel or long commutes, making the November refresh well-timed for seasonal demand.

The Haston Free Public Library, like many small libraries in the region, has sought to balance traditional programs with technology upgrades. While in-person events such as youth crafts, book clubs and community programs continue, the new online resources give residents additional ways to use the library when schedules or mobility make in-person visits more difficult.

Residents may access the updated digital tools through the library’s website or the CW MARS portal. Library cards are free to North Brookfield residents and available to others in accordance with regional borrowing agreements.

As the library prepares for December programming, the digital expansions announced this month signal an ongoing investment in both convenience and accessibility. For many in North Brookfield, the ability to borrow books, complete research or participate in self-guided learning from home represents a meaningful extension of public library service.

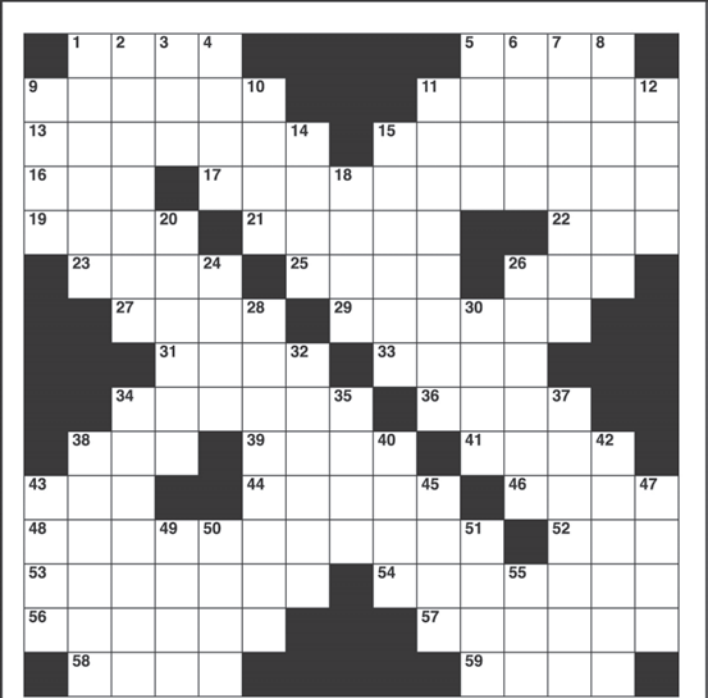


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CLUES ACROSS

1. Difficult

5. Coarsely ground corn

9. There’s one for the “world”

11. Loved Romeo

13. Sticky situation

15. Pelvic areas

16. An informal debt instrument

17. Cannot be repaired surgically

19. A device attached to a workbench

21. Related on the mother’s side

22. Sound unit

23. ___ Sagan, astronomer

25. Utah city

26. A disappointing effort

27. Steal goods during a riot

29. Wakes up

31. Hair salon service
33. Serenaded

34. Looked intensely

36. U.S. Air Force expert Robert F.

38. A type of cast

39. One’s duty

41. Where golfers begin

43. Make a mistake

44. Semitic sun god

46. Ancient Greek City

48. Having had the head cut off

52. A place to stay

53. Unwise

54. Most unnatural

56. Dennis is a notable one

57. Ointments

58. Students’ exam

59. Leaked blood

CLUES DOWN

1. Brave

2. Act of awakening

3. Jest at

4. Sandwich store

5. Chapter of the Koran

6. Dismounted

7. Small vehicle

8. Irrked

9. One who earns by disreputable dealings

10. Monetary unit of Samoa

11. Long, mournful lamentation

12. Weight unit

14. Alone, single

15. Decreases

18. Indicates beside

20. Worn by exposure to the weather

24. A body of traditions
26. College students’ ultimate goal

28. Amino acid

30. Nasal mucus

32. US government entity

34. Swinish

35. Legislative body in Russia

37. Grant an exemption to

38. Put in advance

40. Satisfy

42. Felt

43. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls

45. Witnesses

47. Picnic invaders

49. Gasteyer and de Armas are two

50. Ancient person of Scotland

51. Cheerless

55. Unwell

PUZZLE SOLUTION

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Workshop13 highlights local musicians with Singer Songwriter Series

WARE — Workshop13 is excited to highlight seven local and regional musicians - Charlie Diamond, Eric Troy, Tobey sol Laroche, O’Leyra, Catie Verostick, Makayla Nelson, and featured artist Taija New — in their new Singer Songwriter Series. This event takes place in Workshop13’s Grand Hall at 13 Church St., Ware, Mass. on Saturday, Nov. 29.. Doors open at 6pm and the performance begins at 7 p.m. Tickets are priced on a sliding scale and are available at www.workshop13.org.

Special guests from the Musical Chairs of Massachusetts podcast/YouTube channel, Chris Guerra & Nikki Cross, will be present. Enjoy photo ops, meet and greets, food for purchase (free popcorn), and a cash bar. The performance will feature sound design by Brian Jyringi and be hosted by Amanda Meli and MC’d by Kevin Wherry.

Singer-songwriters will share their original songs and the stories behind them, “in the round” style, a performance format that brings a group of singer-songwriters together sharing the stage, with each artist delivering songs one after another. After intermission, enjoy a special featured performance by nationally touring artist Taija New, followed by powerful second round, a group curtain call, and a community meet-and greet with all performers.

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

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR Nov. 28– DEC. 5

When November fades and December is near, These local events bring good seasonal cheer. From Spencer to Warren, with stops in between, Here’s what’s happening—lively or serene.

Friday, Nov. 29
If leftovers wait and the fridge is full, The Spencer Public Library keeps the day cool. A Lego Free-Build from 10 to noon— Kids craft towers that nearly touch the moon. (Spencer Public Library, 69 East Main St., Spencer)
Saturday, Nov. 30
In West Brookfield, shoppers will roam— The Village Storefront Stroll brings charm close to home. Local merchants open 10 to 4, Holiday treats and crafts galore. (Route 9 village center, West Brookfield)
Sunday, Dec. 1
Leicester lights glow as dusk settles in; At 6 p.m. sharp, let the season begin. The annual Tree Lighting brightens the green, With cocoa, carols, and a festive scene. (Leicester Town Common)
Monday, Dec. 2
A quiet start helps the week unwind; At the East Brookfield Library, you’ll find A crafting circle from 2 to 3, Where yarn meets needles peacefully. (East Brookfield Public Library, 104 Cottage St.)
Tuesday, Dec. 3
North Brookfield seniors gather to dine— A hearty lunch served at 11:30, fine. Call ahead, enjoy the meal, And share a chat that feels quite real. (North Brookfield Senior Center, 29 Forest St.)
Wednesday, Dec. 4
At Richard Sugden Library in Spencer town, Holiday story time brings smiles, not frowns. Join at 10:30 a.m. for tales well-told, Perfect for little ones two to four years old. (69 East Main St., Spencer)
Thursday, Dec. 5
Warren’s crafters gather again— A knit-and-stitch from 1 to 3, with friends. Bring your needles, your hooks, your yarn, And finish gifts before the holiday barn. (Warren Public Library, 934 Main St.)

The Spencer inventor who changed American bridges

When travelers cross a covered bridge in New England, few realize that many of those structures owe their design to an inventor from Spencer. William Howe, born in the town in 1803, changed the course of American bridge construction with a single idea—one that blended wood, iron, and mechanical logic in a way no builder had attempted before.

Howe's family had deep roots in the region. Several members were skilled carpenters and millwrights, familiar with the engineering challenges posed by rivers, freight, and the expanding transportation networks

of the 19th century. By the 1830s, as railroads pushed westward and manufacturers demanded sturdier ways to move goods, bridge builders sought designs that could handle heavier loads without requiring rare or costly materials.

In 1840, drawing on his background and the growing needs of the era, Howe patented what would become known as the Howe truss—a structural framework using wooden diagonals paired with vertical iron rods that could be tightened or adjusted on site. This was an innovation of uncommon practicality: it allowed builders to fine-

tune a bridge's strength after assembly, compensating for wood shrinkage or environmental changes. For railroad companies dealing with rapid expansion, it was a revelation.

The design quickly became one of the most widely used bridge frameworks of the 19th century. Railroads adopted it across the Northeast, Midwest, and beyond. The simplicity of its construction, combined with its adaptability, made it ideal for frontier regions where skilled carpenters were available but large iron components were expensive or difficult to transport.

Covered bridges built with Howe's patented system became common throughout Massachusetts, including in Worcester and Hampshire counties. Although many have been replaced over time, several Howe-truss bridges survive across the United States, preserved as historic landmarks. The design's influence also extended into early timber-and-iron railroad bridges—structures that made high-volume freight transport both safer and more efficient at a key moment in the nation's industrial development.

Howe's achievement placed Spencer on the map of

American engineering history. While the town later became more widely recognized for its wire manufacturing and textile operations, Howe's work remains one of its most far-reaching contributions. Even after the development of all-iron and steel trusses, his design continued to appear in covered bridges and smaller spans well into the early 20th century.

Today, the Massachusetts Historical Commission lists William Howe among the state's significant 19th-century inventors. Engineering texts continue to cite the Howe truss as a landmark example of combining materials in tension and compression in a way that was both economical and structurally elegant.

For residents of Spencer and the surrounding Brookfields, Howe's legacy is not simply a technical milestone. It is a reminder that innovations with national impact often begin in small towns—shaped by local craftsmen, local landscapes, and local needs.

As covered bridges remain symbols of New England heritage, they also stand as quiet markers of Spencer's place in the story. Every time a visitor walks through the timbered interior of a surviving Howe-truss bridge, they are, in a sense, walking through a chapter of local history that helped hold up the expanding nation.

Cornerstone Bank named one of nation's Best Banks to Work For

WORCESTER — Cornerstone Bank has been recognized as one of the 2025 Best Banks to Work For, ranking #15 nationwide on the annual list published by American Banker. It's the second year in a row Cornerstone has earned this honor celebrating banks that excel at creating supportive, engaging workplaces where employees feel valued and empowered to succeed.

The Best Banks to Work For program, now in its 12th year, is conducted by American Banker in partnership with Best Companies Group. This year, 90 banks across the country earned a place on the list following an in-depth evaluation of workplace policies and anonymous employee surveys assessing engagement and satisfaction.

"We're incredibly proud to be recognized among the best banks to work for in the nation," said President and CEO Todd Tallman. "Our employees are the heart of Cornerstone Bank, and this recognition reflects their dedication, teamwork and commitment to our customers and communities."

According to American Banker Editor-in-Chief Chana Schoenberger, "The banks recognized as Best Banks to Work For are institutions employees want to join and stay. They understand how to give workers reasons to find purpose in their jobs."

To determine the rankings, each participating bank was evaluated through a two-part process: a review of workplace practices, policies and benefits (25 percent of the total score) and an anonymous employee survey (75 percent). The combined results determined the final ranking.

About Cornerstone Bank

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tions throughout Central Massachusetts. Cornerstone works to connect customers with opportunities through a broad range of deposit and loan products and services. Built on Trust is not just a tagline, but also one of our guiding corporate values. Whether a business or personal partnership, Cornerstone stands on the foundation that relationships are built on trust. To learn about Cornerstone Bank's personal and business banking offerings, please visit cornerstonebank.com or call 800-939-9103.

About American Banker

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Kenneth “Ken” Leeds Hamilton, 79



AUBURN: Kenneth “Ken” Leeds Hamilton, 79, passed away on Tuesday, November 18, 2025, surrounded by family. Ken grew up in Millbury and then moved to Spencer to a home he loved for 46 years. He served proudly in the United States Marine Corps and was a police officer for the Worcester Police Department, a job he loved. He also worked construction when he wasn’t on duty. After he retired, he drove a school bus for disabled children and he really loved those kids. He then worked at Leroux Market and Crossroads in Leicester for many years.

He was predeceased by his parents Al and Evelyn Hamilton and his infant brother Richard (Ricky) Hamilton. He leaves his daughter Kim O’Mahoney and husband Keith of Dublin Ireland, sister Nancy Cantwell and husband Tom of Sturbridge,

Sharon Katz and husband Marshall of Concord, Diane Renauld and husband Ted of Shrewsbury, Deb Guterman and husband Peter of Mashpee, his god-child Lisa Cantwell of Brookfield, many nieces and nephews and his beloved cats Moose and Skittles. He also leaves wonderful friends especially Dave and Brenda Metterville and Jennifer Vaughn.

The family would like to thank the entire staff of Brookdale Eddy Pond East for their excellent care, compassion and friendship.

Burial is private. Ken leaves a legacy of love and caring. He took interest in those individuals that needed support the most. We love you Ken. Rest in peace. Please visit: www.morinfuneralhomes.com to leave an online condolence.



Advent Interlude at First Congregational W. Brookfield

WEST BROOKFIELD — First Congregational Church of West Brookfield, UCC, 36 N. Main St., will be hosting a new event, Advent Interlude, on Tuesday evening, Dec. 2, at 7 p.m.

Open to the community, Advent Interlude is an

hour of inspiring readings, short video presentations, and lively music offerings designed to help folks reflect upon, and be inspired by, the true meaning of the Advent season, in preparation for the Christmas celebration of the birth of Jesus.

All are welcome and invited to come for a time of joy and then go out inspired by the true meaning of the season in which we prepare for the birth of the Christ child! For more information, call 508-867-7078.

Wreaths Across America honors W. Brookfield veterans

WEST BROOKFIELD — A Wreaths Across America event will be held Saturday, Dec. 13 at noon on the Common. Sponsor a wreath to remember and honor a West Brookfield veteran. Wreaths will be placed on all of West Brookfield veterans’ graves

at Pine Grove and Sacred Heart Cemeteries following ceremony.

For more information, call Nadine Morin at 774-200-3396 or Joanne Dorman at 508-867-2524.

As a Gold Star Sister here in West Brookfield, this event is special to my

family and the entire town. We would be grateful for any advance publicity and hopefully some recognition from that day in the press. Last year, 400 wreaths were placed on our veterans’ graves here in West Brookfield.

First Congregational Church of West Brookfield participates in town’s White Christmas festivities

WEST BROOKFIELD — The First Congregational Church of West Brookfield, 36 N. Main St., will host an open house on Sunday, Dec. 7 from 11:30 a.m. - 5 p.m. during the town’s White Christmas celebration.

The dining area opens at 11:30 a.m. and the menu includes: A plentiful and delicious hot turkey sandwich with stuffing, gravy and cranberry sauce, hot

dogs, chili dogs, chili by the bowl, two kinds of homemade soup, chicken, egg and ham salad sandwiches, homemade pie - apple, blueberry and pumpkin and new this year - cheesecake! They will also offer a huge raffle with many items and gift cards, a concert by the Hardwick Memorial Handbell Choir at 1:30 p.m., “Find-the-Elf” for the kids, free door prize raffle and a bountiful baked-

goods table. A special treat this year is a raffle for a gorgeous handmade quilt. The pattern is Potato Chip and measures approx. 58 by 68 inches. The Christmas tunes will be playing, and the atmosphere will be festive and cheery. A wonderful place to be to welcome in our holiday season!

Call the church for more information at 508-867-7078.

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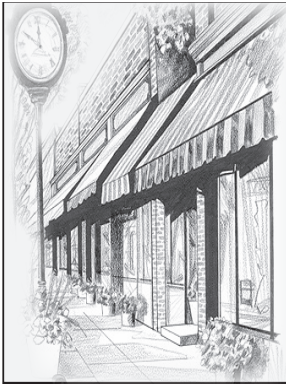
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LEICESTER HIGH SCHOOL ANNOUNCES HONOR ROLL

LEICESTER — Leicester High School has released its honor roll for the first quarter of the 2025-2026 school year.

LEICESTER MIDDLE SCHOOL ANNOUNCES HONOR ROLL

Leicester — Leicester Middle School has released its honor roll for the first quarter of the 2025-2026 school year.

8th Grade
High Honors: Beverly Ampaw, Maxwell Belizaire, Jolene Boudreau, Landon Bullock, Justin Cai, Olivia Cardona, Avery Cole, Mila Cortes, Gavin Ford, Adalynn Grant, Christopher Harrington, Tyler Kularski, Fiona Liebman, Cadence Medeiros, Emma Mercier, Nana Obeng, David Sanborn, Lily Schrader, Joseph Ukpong, Leah Varney
Honors: Dianexiz Acevedo-Ortiz, Elisa Aguirre, Shayla Benson, Trey Blais, Michael Cormier, Bridget Dillon, Athena Flanders, Shelby Grant, Haidi Hadi, Emily Hipple, Juliette Hoakstra, Ava Johnston, Sophia Johnston, Aaliyah Layne, Sadie Lenahan, Ayla Lis, Reagan Lyon, Benjamin Marjault, Hunter Martin, Charlie Marttila, Francis Marubu, Owen Murphy, Sophia Muzzy, Sonya Potvin, Hailey Rooney, Harmony Rowland, Kayzen-Kalani Santana-Ernestburg, Rayman Singharaj, Anthony Sullivan, Jackson Trainor, Liam Tremblay, Aaliyah Trought, Aiden Valinski, Amy Van Hazinga, Brady Walsh, Brody Weber

7th Grade
High Honors: Juliette Bellisario, Aubrey Bullock, Anna Derrick, Rylee Garrahe, Shaylie Moore, Stacy Morrobel Dominguez
Honors: Arianna Alicea Rodriguez, Mackenzie Beaulac, Edmund Besse, Charli Brunelle, Brooklyn Bullock, Kyesmarie Camacho, Victoria Cardona, Daniel Ciciliane, Sophia Collins, Logan Curren, Arizona Fleming, Jayden Gleason, Alessandro Guzman, Raegan Higgins, Sophia Kennedy, Larissa LaFlamme, Kris Lapi, Alivia Larson, Camille LeBlanc, Julianna LeClair, Andrew Lemerise, Mason Lynch, Nora MacDonnell, Olivia Maki, Jackson McKenzie, Karizma Menard, Alexander Perez, Logan Perry, Theresa Reynolds, Logan Ross, Scott Rowland, Leonel Sanchez Orellana, Isabella Sirianni, Michael Therrien, Charlyse Torres, Kason Ward

6th Grade
High Honors: Maxwell Alade, Skylar Backstrom, Vivienne Belizaire, Leah Cunningham, Benjamin Machado, Tylor Moorghen, Layla Mullins, Addison Murphy, Autumn Schimke, Taymiyyah Sullivan, Madison Westberg, Dylan Williams
Honors: Gannon Arnberg, Kaydence Beamenderfer, Nolan Beaudry, Summer Blais, Huy Bui, Elizabeth Cooper, Guiliana Escobar, Draven Fernandes, Calvin Fryer, Owen Giddix, Hunter Hayes, Adhuresa Latifi, Luke LaBlanc, Noah Loosemore, Olivia Mason, Jackson McCauley, Santy Melendez Vasquez, Benjamin Miller, Anna Nguyen, Hafsa Oubih, Bentley Payne, Blake Potvin, Emilianna Rodriguez, Rayden Singharaj, Richard Spratt, Julianna Trainor, Anthony Walsh, Tristan Walsh, Scarlett Wells, Finian Wood, Julian Wooden

5th Grade
High Honors: Julia Blanchard, Aubrielle Camacho, Kinsley Champagne, Ava Cunningham, Myles Derrick, Jurell Evans, Cristian Guzman, Maximus Huynh, Panjri Joshi, Jacob Lovejoy, Madelynn McNally, Victor Medina Garcia, Jada Moore, Allison Muzzy, Jayden Nguyen, Javian Ruiz, Aubrey Sanborn, Mason Settle, Joshua Soucie, Ryan Soucy, Phuc Khang Tran Ly, Jacob Varney, Brynn Wayman, Wyatt Zwirblia
Honors: Charlotte Barber, Jaziah Billinger, Mallory Brunell, Han Bui, Aubrey Colby, Delaney Copper, Gabriella Dillon, Declan Friend, Aryanna Furtado, Victoria Heenan, Avery Jackson, Madeline Jiang, Olivia Jyringi, Colin McGowan, Lila Meloche, Hattie Nadeau, Domenic Nardella, Grayson Nichols, Camila Pacheco, Mason Pacheco, Brock Patterson, Mason Patterson, Joseph Sirianni, Michael Siwale, Myla Snow, Aneesah Sullivan, Alexander Walsh, Ryder Walsh, Emmett Younger, Arham Zahid

High Honors
12th Grade: Kate Barbato, Kyle Bates, Eryn Berkstresser, Avery Bullock, Sophia Comeau, Brandon Escobar, John Gahagan, Shane Garrahe, Bueno Guzman Bueno, Emily Hunt, Natalia Kallio, Gabriel Key-Wallace, Hannah Martin, Christopher Moffat, Zoe Morales, Nola Perry, Cassidy Poce, Nicole Tuson, Tyler Williams
11th Grade: Jacob Beaulac, Joshua McCormick, Sabrina Wright
10th Grade: Matthew Alves, Brady Bouchard, Andrew Boucher, Haylee Kularski, Brock Lopez, Alena Martinkova, Julianna McCormick, Trinity Medeiros, Charlotte Mercer, Katherine Ozarowski, Paula Roberts, Ryan Sweeney, Jayke Williams
9th Grade: Jordan Argyriadis, Camden Beaudry, Nick Nguyen, Hunter Wright

Honors
12th Grade: Lenny Angua-Mante, Abigail Baker, Landon Beveridge, Isabella Beyers, Collin Connor, Jacob Cosper, Jasmine Fuller, Jason Fuller, Jordan Giggey, Brody Grant, Rowen Hennessy, Savannah Kulig, Ava Lane, Elyssia Leboeuf, Isabella LePoer, Savannah Lumb, Castillo Martinez Castillo, Augustine Marubu, Bethany Parke, Lucas Sampaio, Jack Skoglund, Nathan Wilder, Dakota Zinkevich
11th Grade: Destiny Barshell, Inal

Spencer's Operation Undercover celebrates 35 years

SPENCER — This will be the 35th year that “Operation Underwear” has been organized by the McPherson family.
Beth McPherson will be collecting packages of adult underwear and socks until Dec. 22. Laura and Marcus Torti will deliver these items to Jeremiah’s Inn, Mass Veteran’s Shelter and Abby’s House, the week before Christmas. You are invited to bring these to the Spencer Town Hall «giving tree,” Richard Sugden Library, or leave them in a hamper at the front of the McPherson home at 125 Pleasant St., Spencer.

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Bouزيد, Jenna Bush, Kelsey Cole, Alexander Fournier, Taylor Gallant, Kenneth Lane, Jahnisha Layne, Jeremy Ledbetter, Valerie Maynard, Kaidyn McDowell, Canas Merino Canas, Robert O’Neil, Gianna Panepinto, Laila Paquin, Ava Petruzzi, Jillian Rodrique, Taylor Rodrique, Hazinga Van Hazinga, Casey Waterman
10th Grade: Jack Albro, Anthony Andino, Muhammad Arslan, Russell Baker, Rory Barrett, Kennedy Bates, Emma Bernabei, Jude Campbell, Zachary Couture, Allison Gagne, Annalise Guzman, Hailey Knott, Joseph Kulla, Michael Lupien, Matthew Magoun, Joyce Marubu, Josiah McDonald,

Max Milionis, Maia Mitchell, Trevor Moorghen, Nikolai Ngo, Brandon Nguyen, Alivia Perry, Desmond Strom, Shane Stuart, Jameson Wood
9th Grade: Elijah Belisle, Sarah Clark, Lucas Cruz, John Derrick, Brody Dufries, Javier Flores, Liam Gentile, Benjamin Hagglund, Braydon Herbert, Mya Jones, James Karas, Diana Kitchen, Callie Ladner, Papayaw Larbi, Rocco Lauder, Tighe Lauder, Brody Mateiko, Lila McDonald, Kingston Nguyen, David Pacheco, Jaedyn Perry, Thinh Pham, John Poppalardo, Ella RowdenZenah Stagg, William Toomey, Robert Zinkevich

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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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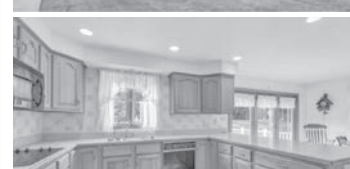


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Sheriff’s Office receives national award for reentry efforts in Worcester County



Sheriff Evangelidis, the WCSO RRC team, and Worcester City Officials pose for a photo with the NOHS award, a Proclamation from the city, and a citation from the Massachusetts State Senate.

WORCESTER — The Worcester County Sheriff’s Office Regional Reentry Center received the Community Activism Award from the National Organization for Human Services at the organization’s national conference on Nov. 8. The Regional Reentry Center was recognized for its holistic, person-centered approach to supporting successful reentry and long-term stability for individuals involved in the criminal justice system and returning to Worcester County communities.

Worcester Mayor Joseph Petty and the Worcester City Council formally recognized the Worcester County Sheriff’s Office Regional Reentry Center (RRC) during the Worcester City Council meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 18, at Worcester City Hall. The ceremony highlighted the Center’s selection as the recipient of the Community Activism Award from the National Organization for Human Services (NOHS), a national nonprofit dedicated to enhancing human services, supporting

professionals, and promoting excellence through advocacy, professional development, and collaboration.

The NOHS Community Activism Award honors individuals, groups, and organizations that demonstrate exceptional commitment to the communities they serve, equitable access to services, and community transformation. In its notification, NOHS highlighted the Reentry Center’s leadership, collaboration, and model of systemic advocacy, noting the program’s lasting impact on individuals and families throughout Central Massachusetts.

Sheriff Lew Evangelidis expressed deep gratitude for the recognition, noting that it reflected the dedication of the Regional Reentry Center team and the broader mission of the Worcester County Sheriff’s Office.

“This award is particularly gratifying because the concept of a reentry center originated with one employee through a grant and donated space,” explained

Evangelidis. “Over the past 15 years, the reentry center has evolved into an extraordinary service organization that serves as a national model. It was incredibly humbling for our Regional Reentry Center to receive this national award, especially among so many outstanding initiatives and dedicated professionals across the country.”

The Regional Reentry Center, located at 365 Main St., Worcester, provides a comprehensive continuum of services to those involved in the criminal justice system, including:

- Transitional and permanent housing assistance

Mental health and substance use treatment

- Workforce development and employment opportunities
- Peer recovery coaching
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New, unwrapped toys can be dropped off at: Spencer Fire Dept & ERA Key Realty Services (415B Main St), Cornerstone Bank (Spencer office), Choice Physical Therapy.

If you would like to sponsor a child, please contact Donna at donnaffannery@erakey.net or call 508-885-6336. If you are in need of assistance, applications can be picked up at: Spencer Post Office, Mary Queen of the Rosary Food Pantry, Town clerk's office in the town hall, or ERA Key Realty Services (outside mailbox). You can see updates on Facebook at Spencer Toys for Kids.

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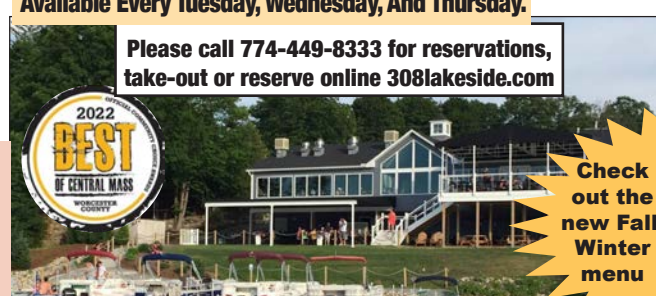
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EDITORIAL

The quiet value of gathering

Thanksgiving has a way of pulling families back into the same room, no matter how scattered they have become over the past year. Some arrivals require only a short drive across town. Others involve long flights, traffic-clogged highways, or rearranged work schedules. However people manage it, the act of showing up remains the holiday’s core tradition.

In communities like Spencer, Leicester, and the Brookfields, the reunion itself often matters more than the meal. Some households will host three generations around one table. Others will welcome a single guest who would otherwise spend the day alone. Many families will adjust old routines to include new faces, new dietary needs, or the reality that the dining room is tighter than it used to be. None of that diminishes the purpose of the day.

Thanksgiving is one of the few occasions when people consciously slow down long enough to sit without hurry. Children return from college with stories and new habits. Parents take stock of another year lived at a pace that feels faster than the last. Older relatives measure the day by the comfort of familiar voices. Even families that have weathered disagreements find that the holiday allows for a temporary truce, if only because everyone recognizes the value of an afternoon spent in each other’s company.

The simple routines hold the day together: someone peeling potatoes, someone checking the rolls in the oven, someone else searching for the extra folding chairs. These unremarkable scenes create a kind of shared rhythm that needs no explanation. They remind families that presence is more important than perfection.

Not every household celebrates in the same way. Some will eat early so relatives can split time between multiple gatherings. Others will meet later in the evening due to work shifts, travel delays, or the demands of young children. A number of families will observe the day with smaller tables than in years past, marking absences that remain deeply felt. Thanksgiving does not erase those truths. But the act of coming together, even in changed form, offers stability at a time of year that can feel unpredictable.

In these towns, the holiday often extends beyond living rooms. Neighbors drop off pies or casseroles to households preparing for a crowd. Local faith communities organize meals for residents who need them. Friends share the long weekend with each other when travel is not possible. These gestures reflect a broader understanding that families are defined not only by bloodlines, but by the people who choose to support one another.

As Thanksgiving approaches, the focus can return to what remains steady. A table—even a crowded or uneven one—can be enough. Families do not need matching plates, flawless recipes, or quiet rooms to make the holiday meaningful. What matters is the willingness to gather, to listen, and to recognize the value of being in the same place, even for a few hours.

This week, many residents across the region will do exactly that. And in a year when daily life has often felt rushed and fragmented, the chance to sit together may be the most important tradition of all.

Letter submission policy

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

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

VIEWPOINT

OPINION AND COMMENTARY FROM SPENCER, LEICESTER AND THE BROOKFIELDS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

DOGE

To the Editor:
Clarifying what the Department of Government Efficiency has delivered so far:

1) We have eliminated the Department of Consumer Protection. We can only assume because fraud and abuse no longer exists, and \$500 million, that returned \$18 billion to consumers the prior year, was unusual.

2) We have cut the \$3.5 billion National Parks budget, that had been returning \$55 billion a year, because we no longer need all trails and attractions open, or clean restrooms, because we are discouraging foreign visitors and even our own.

3) We have gotten rid of USAID. This will mean those farms proudly displaying signs on their barns that read “We Feed the World” will come down as farmers bankrupted for investing in seed, packaging and shipping equipment will be auctioned to China or other deep pockets. Discontinuing the flow of food has already killed millions, as we just paid to incinerated 500 tons (100,000 pounds) of food already in the system, and are paying \$10,000 a month storage on needed drugs This program was started by JFK, seeing the impact we could so easily have, because we are Camelot.

During the government shutdown, the White House has accelerated purging government payrolls. It is an ideal time, while the people who report unemployment figures are off, and those whose severance packages ended and became unemployment collectors.

A friend who worked for a downsizing government contractor years back went to work there right after he came home from Marine deployment to Vietnam. Because he worked there as a cost accountant for so long, he was a late cut at age 60. Although he found other work, it paid far less and jobs in his field were long filled by earlier cut people in same trade. When his unemployment ran out, he depleted his retirement funds. He was then required to

start accepting his Social Security at its lowest rate, as soon as he could. This race to the bottom for him is now becoming an often repeated one. Project 2025.

I am watching the activity of the Supreme Court and am a bit enthused seeing conservative judges probing what makes POTUS think he is entitled to usurp responsibilities like tariffs and purse powers , from congress. I can only assume they have taken notice of the press secretaries’ comments, that the checks and balances of the three co-equal branches, are inhibiting him doing his job. The writing is on the wall, that enabling cutting appropriated funds, raising and distributing funds outside of congressional oversight, and withholding SNAP payments court ordered, is actually beyond King status

When Charles I tried it, Parliament had him beheaded.

How many of you think hiring 31,000 masked agents, deploying troops to our streets, is really about rapists, drug dealers and thieves? I believe we are now moving beyond the day laborers, landscapers, pickers and packers, now working on school kids and people trying to navigate the immigration system that the bipartisan immigration bill Biden wanted would have addressed. The good news is, there will now be so many openings for unemployed people.

If you were of the impression that any of this was really about efficiency, please justify sending a carrier group costing us billions and using F-35 munitions costing us millions, to blow up little wooden boats, not knowing where they came from or are headed, then you are the kind of person who would use a sledge hammer for carpet tacks.

It bears repeating — “It is easier to con someone, than to convince them, they were conned.”

KEN KIMBALL
BROOKFIELD

Lanterns Along Main Street

LANTERNS
ALONG
MAIN
STREET
By CHIPPY

There is a particular kind of quiet that settles over small towns in Massachusetts at this time of year. It’s not the deep winter hush, when the world seems padded in wool and the sidewalks squeak under snow boots. It’s a gentler quiet, the kind that comes after the leaves finish their performance and before the holiday rush starts tapping on the windows. It’s a space in the calendar where nothing much demands attention, and yet everything feels like it’s gathering itself for something important.

I’ve always liked this pause. It’s the sort of stillness that lets you hear things you forget to notice: a screen door catching in the wind, a car starting reluctantly in the driveway next door, or the muffled laughter of kids playing a last game outside before the cold becomes a convincing reason to stay in. These ordinary sounds remind me that most of life is built out of moments no one photographs.

At this time of year, people start fussing around their homes with a mix of anticipation and mild dread. A friend of mine was out on her porch last week, shaking a stubborn string of bulbs as if she could rattle some life back into them. “I swear these worked last year,” she said. I told her that holiday lights have their own personalities. Some are dependable. Some give up early. And some begin flickering with a sort of theatrical exhaustion, as though they’ve seen too many Decembers and would like a vacation.

It’s amusing what a person notices when not rushing. The shorter days pull more of life indoors, and the world seems to contract around kitchens and living rooms. People talk about “getting ready” for the holidays, but it’s rarely the big things that occupy them. It’s whether the good tablecloth is clean. Whether they remembered where they stored the roasting pan. Whether the dog will behave when company arrives—a concern that has caused more tension in households than any political conversation ever could.

One of the quiet joys of living in a small town is seeing how people approach the holidays in different ways but still end up making the season feel shared. Some neighbors decorate their

homes early, glowing like beacons long before most of us have untangled our extension cords. Others keep things modest: a candle in each window, a wreath that’s been hanging on the same nail for twenty years, and maybe a single lighted star that looks as though it’s been guiding the same wise men around since the early ’90s.

What I’ve always appreciated, though, is the feeling that no matter how people get ready—enthusiastically, reluctantly, or somewhere in between—there is an underlying sense of kindness in the air. You see it in the way people hold doors for each other without needing to think about it. Or how someone lets another driver pull out first on a busy road, even if they themselves are late. These aren’t sweeping gestures, but they carry the same weight as any grand holiday message.

Most of us don’t need reminders about the importance of slowing down, but we take them anyway. Something about this season taps us on the shoulder and says, “Look, there is still warmth here. There is still softness.” It might be in the first smell of cookies baking, even if they come from a store-bought tube. Or in the way a grandparent leans in to listen to a story they’ve heard fifteen times but still pretend is new. Or in the laugh of a child who doesn’t yet understand what it means to worry about time.

And maybe that’s the purpose of this in-between season—the weeks when daylight shrinks and streetlights flicker on a little earlier each afternoon. It gives everybody permission to notice the lanterns along their own main street, whether actual lights or the people who brighten things simply by being there.

Winter will arrive soon enough, with all its demands and routines. But right now, in this softer stretch of the year, the world feels like it’s whispering instead of shouting. And if you’re willing to listen closely, you might hear something reassuring in that whisper: we’re all doing our best, we’re all moving at our own pace, and we’re all trying to bring a little light with us into the dark.

Sometimes, that’s enough.

Making the most of your Health Savings Account



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When it comes to saving for healthcare costs, few tools are as powerful as a Health Savings Account (HSA). Yet many Americans don’t take full advantage of it.

HSAs offer a rare triple-tax benefit. You don’t pay taxes when you contribute money, your earnings grow tax-free and you don’t pay taxes when you withdraw funds for qualified medical expenses.

It’s like a retirement account specifically for healthcare costs. Since out-of-pocket healthcare costs for couples in retirement can be high (over \$375,000 for those with Medicare and Medigap and nearly \$200,000 for those with Advantage plans, according to 2025 Milliman Retiree Health Cost Index), maximizing your HSA should be a priority.

Here are some things to consider:

Ensure your eligibility. To contribute, you must be enrolled in a high-deductible health insurance plan and cannot be on Medicare or claimed as someone else’s dependent. You also can’t have other health insurance coverage, though dental, vision and disability insurance are allowed.

For 2025, you can contribute up to \$4,300 for individual coverage (\$4,400 in 2026) or \$8,550 for family coverage (\$8,750 in 2026). If you’re 55 or older, you can add an extra \$1,000 annually. HSA contributions are generally made through monthly payroll deductions.

Think long-term. Many people treat their HSA like a checking account, spending the money as soon as medical bills arrive.

Another strategy, however, is to leave your HSA funds alone if you can afford to pay medical expenses out of pocket. This approach lets that money grow for future healthcare needs, including retirement.

This strategy transforms your HSA from a spending account into a powerful savings tool. You can always reimburse yourself later for those out-of-pocket medical expenses, even years down the road, so long as you keep your receipts.

Invest for growth. Most HSAs offer investment options, yet only 9 percent of account holders take advantage of them according to a 2025 Devenir HSA survey. The remaining 91 percent keep their entire balance in cash, missing out on potential growth opportunities.

Consider investing at least a portion of your HSA funds, especially if you don’t expect to need the money soon. Just keep enough cash available to cover any immediate and significant medical expenses you might face.

Avoid early penalties. Before age 65, taking HSA money for non-medical expenses means paying income tax plus a 20 percent penalty. But once you hit 65, that penalty disappears and your HSA works much like a traditional IRA for non-medical withdrawals.

Of course, using HSA funds for qualified medical expenses remains tax-free at any age, making it the ideal use for these dollars.

The bottom line: With healthcare costs continuing to rise, an HSA offers an opportunity to save money while reducing your tax burden. Whether you’re planning for next year’s medical bills or healthcare costs decades away, maximizing your HSA contributions could be one of the smartest financial moves you make.

Whether you’re planning for next year or catching up for 2025, your HSA can help turn today’s savings into tomorrow’s financial security.

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.

Bring a bit of spring indoors this winter



A container of forced grape hyacinth, daffodil and tulip bulbs.

Melinda Myers

Pot them up, give them a chill and enjoy spring flowering bulbs indoors or outside on a patio, deck or porch. Forcing spring-flowering bulbs like tulips, daffodils, hyacinths, grape hyacinths and crocus is a great way to use those bulbs that didn't get planted in the garden or were on sale late in the season.

All you need is a suitable container, some well-drained potting mix, the



GARDEN
MOMENTS
.....
MELINDA
MYERS

bulbs and a place to give the bulbs the chill necessary to force them to bloom. Gather all your supplies and clear a space to assemble your bulb planter.

Select a container with drainage holes that is deep enough to accommodate the largest bulbs. Shorter varieties are less likely to flop but taller ones can be held upright with stakes, twigs and other decorative supports. Cover the bottom of the container with two inches of a well-drained potting mix. Place the bulbs close together about one half the bulb width apart with the neck of larger bulbs at or

just below the soil surface. Set tulips with the flat side of the bulb facing the pot for a better display.

Create a spring garden in a larger container by using a deep container and planting the bulbs in layers. Select a variety of bulbs that bloom at the same time for greater impact or use a combination of early-, mid- and late-blooming spring-flowering bulbs to extend the bloom time and your enjoyment. The package usually lists the color, height and bloom time of the bulbs.

Place an inch or two of soil in the bottom and set the largest bulbs in place. Cover these bulbs with soil and add the smaller bulbs, like grape hyacinths and crocus, on the next level. Plant these bulbs close together for greater impact. Cover this layer with at least an inch of soil. Water thoroughly until the excess water drains out the bottom of the pot.

Move your bulb-filled containers to a cool location where temperatures remain above freezing and between 35 to 45 degrees Fahrenheit for 12 to 15 weeks. A spare refrigerator works well for this. Just avoid storing the bulbs with fruit, like apples

and pears, that emit ethylene gas that can negatively impact flowering. If refrigerator space is limited, you can store the unplanted bulbs in a paper bag, so they take up less space in the fridge for the needed chill before planting.

Those gardening in colder climates can also store the pots in an unheated garage. Just water the containers whenever the soil is thawed and dry. Or sink the container into a vacant garden space in your landscape. Mulch the soil once the ground starts to freeze with evergreen boughs. The winter mulch makes retrieving the container easier in winter or early spring.

Begin moving the containers out of cold storage once the 12- to 15-week chilling period is complete. Extend your enjoyment and the bloom time by removing one or just a few pots every week. Place the pot in a cool, bright location to encourage more compact growth. Water thoroughly when the top few inches of soil begin to dry. Soon the leaves will begin to sprout, and flowers will appear in about three to four weeks.

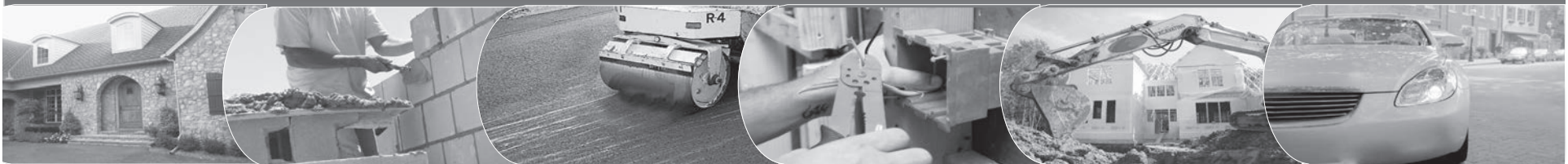
Provide ongoing care if you plan on moving the

bulbs into the garden. Remove the faded flowers, place the leafy plants in a sunny window and water thoroughly whenever the top inch of soil is dry. Fertilize with a dilute solution of any flowering houseplant fertilizer. Move them into the garden once the danger of frost has passed. Be patient because it may be a year or two before they bloom again.

Plant plenty for you to enjoy and share with others. Everyone will appreciate the extra spring color the forced bulbs provide.

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

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LEGALS

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate
and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO25P3752EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Estate Of:
Margaret R. Pataky
Date of Death:09/27/2025

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **George A. Pataky of Leicester 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:
George A. Pataky of Leicester MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond 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 12/09/2025.**

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. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.
Date: November 20, 2025
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
November 28, 2025

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. WO25C0561CA
CITATION ON PETITION TO
CHANGE NAME

In the matter of:
Lindsay Dawn-Jaffarian Holm
A Petition to Change Name of Adult
has been filed by
Lindsay Dawn-Jaffarian Holm
of **Brookfield MA**
requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:

Lindsay Dawn Jaffarian
IMPORTANT NOTICE
Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Worcester Probate and Family Court before 10 a.m. on the return day of 12/16/2025. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.
WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A Keamy, First Justice of this Court.
Date: November 13, 2025
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
November 28, 2025

Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Worcester Probate & Family Court, Docket No. WO25E0029PP. To Gary A. McComas and all other persons interested: A petition has been presented to said Court by Cynthia S. Roberts and Laura Lee Shortt of North Brookfield and Dover in the County of Worcester and Kent, representing that the petitioner holds an undivided part of certain land in said County, described in the petition, and requesting that such land be sold at private sale for not less than \$50,677.47 and praying that partition may be made of all the land aforesaid according to law, and to that end that a commissioner be appointed to make such partition and be ordered to make sale and conveyance of all, or any part of

said land which the Court finds cannot be advantageously divided either at private sale or public auction, and be ordered to distribute the net proceeds thereof. If you desire to object thereto you or your attorney should file a written appearance in said Court at Worcester before ten o'clock in the forenoon on the twenty third day of December, 2025, the return day of this citation. Witness, Leilah A. Kearny, Esq., First Judge of said Court, this twenty eighth day of October, 2025. It is ordered that notice of said proceeding be given by delivering or mailing by registered mail or certified mail as a copy of the foregoing citation to all persons interested whose addresses are known fourteen days at least before said return day, and if any person is not so served, by mailing a copy thereof to the last known address of such person fourteen days at least before said return day; and by publishing a copy thereof once in each week for three successive weeks in the New Leader, a newspaper published in North Brookfield, the last publication to be seven days at least before said return day. Witness, Leilah A. Kearny, Esq., First Judge of said Court, this twenty eighth day of October, 2025. The land in North Brookfield, Worcester County, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, being a certain parcel of land with buildings thereon situated on the westerly side of Lake Lashaway bounded and described as follows: Lots #1 & #2 of Block 4 on a plan of Pinecroft Lots owned by Howard S. Hill made by E.A. Chamberlain, Engineer, dated September 22, 1923 and recorded with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Plan Book 40, Plan 81. Being the same premises conveyed to Richard S. McComas and Wilma P. McComas by deed of William J. Vahey and Alma S. Vahey, husband and wife, recorded with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Book 4050, Page 577.
Kent Boyle
November 28, 2025

Notice of Public Hearing—
Planning Board
The Spencer Planning Board will be holding a Public Hearing on Tuesday December 16, 2025 in McCourt Social Hall of Memorial Town Hall, , 157 Main Street, Spencer, MA, and the hearing will be conducted in person and remotely on the following items starting at 6:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter as can be heard: Stormwater Permit Amendment—Applicant/Owner: Grazielle De Souza/ JR Siding, Inc, Location: 4 & 6 Eagleton St, Spencer Assessor's Map R38-19 & 19-2. The applicant is looking for a Stormwater Permit Amendment under the Spencer Stormwater Management Bylaw (Article 14 of the Spencer General Bylaws) to amend an approved Stormwater Permit that was issued on March 21, 2023. The property is located within the Suburban Residential (SR) zoning district.
November 28, 2025
December 5, 2025

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
Docket No. WO24P2597PM
CITATION GIVING NOTICE
OF CONSERVATOR'S ACCOUNT
In the matter of: Sandra Nichols
Of: Warren, MA
Protected Person/Disabled Person/
Respondent

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, you are hereby notified pursuant to Rule 72 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court, that the 1st account(s) of Alison Bartlett-O'Donald of Holyoke, MA as Conservator of the property of said Respondent has or have been presented to the Court for allowance. You have the right to object to the account(s) If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this court on or before 10:00 A.M on the return date of 12/16/2025 This day 1s NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to object to the account(s). If you fail to file the written appearance and objection by the return date action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you, including the allowance of the account(s). Additionally, within thirty days after said return day (or within such other time as the Court upon motion may order), you must file a written affidavit of objections stating the specific facts and grounds

upon which each objection is based and a copy shall be served upon the Conservator pursuant to Rule 3 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court
You have the right to send to the Conservator, by registered or certified mail, a written request to receive a copy of the Petition and account(s) at no cost to you

IMPORTANT NOTICE
The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.
Date: November 13, 2025
Stephanie K. Fattman
November 28, 2025

(SEAL)
COMMONWEALTH
OF MASSACHUSETTS
LAND COURT
DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT
25 SM 003555
ORDER OF NOTICE

TO:
Joan Namboira Katulege
and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act: 50 U.S.C. c. 50 § 3901 (et seq): Village Capital & Investment LLC claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Spencer, numbered 65 Maple Street, Units 1 & 2 a/k/a 65 Maple Street, given by Joan Namboira Katulege to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Fairway Independent Mortgage Corporation, dated June 30, 2023, and recorded at Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 69339, Page 132, and now held by the plaintiff by assignment, has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/ Defendants' Servicemembers status. If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at **Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108** on or before December 29, 2025 or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the grounds of noncompliance with the Act.
Witness, GORDON H. PIPER, Chief Justice of said Court on November 14, 2025.
Attest:
Deborah J. Patterson
Recorder
November 28, 2025

MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE
10 Meadow Road
Spencer, Massachusetts 01562

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by **LATOUR REALTY LLC** to the **Webster First Federal Credit Union** dated **April 23, 2020** and recorded with the **Worcester County** Registry of Deeds in **Book 62289, Page 112** of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder for breaching conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction, on the premises described in said mortgage on the **18th day of December 2025 at 11:00 A.M.** at the mortgaged premises of **10 Meadow Road, Spencer, Massachusetts**, all and singular, the premises conveyed by said mortgage, and therein described as follows: The land with buildings thereon known and designated as Meadow Road, Spencer, Worcester County, Massachusetts owned by Reginald Gobi dated December 27, 1967, Theodore P. Drazek R.L.S. bounded and described as follows: Beginning at a point in the Easterly line of Meadow Road at a wall situated 144.27 feet Northerly of a Worcester County Highway Bound, said point also being the Southwest corner of land of Lester D. Walker and the Northwest corner of the tract herein described as shown on said plan; Thence S. 15° 38' E., 35.3 feet to a point; Thence S. 6° 12' E. 245.57 feet to a

point;
Thence S. 24° 50' E., 200.23 feet to a point; the last three courses being by a wall and said Walker land;
Thence S. 36° 42' E., 78.20 feet still along said Walker land to a point;
Thence S. 69° 06' W., 42.60 feet crossing a brook, as shown on said plan, to a point at a wall and land of Raoul Chalifoux;
Thence S. 30° 11' W., 100.0 feet along said wall and Chalifoux land to a point;
Thence N. 68° 42' W., 199.68 feet along other land of the grantors to a point;
Thence N. 53° 34' W., 183.42 feet still along said grantors' other land to a point in the Easterly line of said Meadow Road;
Thence Northeasterly, 203.95 feet along a curve to the left in the Easterly line of Meadow Road to a point at a Worcester County Highway Bound, Station 6 + 93.07, 1959 County Alteration; said curve having a radius of 1030 feet;
Thence N. 29° 35' 41" E., 165.36 feet still along the Easterly line of Meadow Road to a point at a Worcester County Highway Bound;
Thence Northwesterly along a curve to the left along the Easterly line of Meadow Road, 144.27 feet to the point of beginning, said curve having a radius of 1030 feet.
Containing 2.56 acres of land. Said plan is recorded in Plan Book 319, Plan 118.
For title deed, see deed recorded herewith at Book 60681, Page 398
The said premises will be sold subject to and with the benefit of all restrictions, easements, improvements, outstanding tax titles, mortgages, liens, rights of tenants and parties in possession, unpaid taxes, municipal liens and other public taxes, assessments, liens or condominium fees, having priority over the mortgage described herein, if any. The above described lot is sold subject to the requirements of the Title V standards for subsurface sewerage disposal system 310 CMR 15.00 et al., if applicable.
The Mortgagee reserves the right to postpone the sale to a later date by public proclamation at the time and date appointed for the sale and to further postpone at any adjourned sale date by public proclamation at the time and date appointed for the adjourned sale date.
In the event that the successful bidder at the foreclosure sale shall default in purchasing the within described property according to the terms of the Notice of Sale and/or the terms of the Memorandum of Sale agreement executed at the time of the foreclosure, the Mortgagee reserves the right, but not the obligation, to sell the property by Foreclosure Deed to the second highest bidder (or other successive bidders, in the order of their bid) provided that the said highest bidder shall deposit with the Mortgagee's attorney, James M. O'Brien, Esquire, the amount of the required deposit as set forth herein within three (3) working days after written notice of default of the previous highest bidder, and the balance of the sale price shall be paid by certified or bank check by the purchaser, and the deed shall be delivered to said highest bidder, within thirty (30) days of such notice.
TERMS OF SALE: Cash, cashier's or certified check in the sum of Ten Thousand **(\$10,000.00)** Dollars as a deposit must be shown at the time and place of the sale in order to qualify as a bidder (the mortgage holder and its designee are exempt from this requirement); high bidder must sign a Memorandum of Sale upon acceptance of bid and tender deposit of **\$10,000.00** in cash or by certified or bank treasurer's check. The balance is to be paid in cash or by certified or bank treasurer's or cashier's check within thirty (30) days thereafter to be deposited with James M. O'Brien, Esquire, 271 Greenwood Street, Worcester, MA 01607. A foreclosure deed will be delivered upon payment of the balance due. The description of the premises in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication. Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.
WEBSTER FIRST FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
Present Holder of Said Mortgage
By its Attorney,
James M. O'Brien
271 Greenwood Street
P.O. Box 70505
Worcester, MA 01607
November 21, 2025
November 28, 2025
December 5, 2025

For Legal Advertising Information, Call 508-909-4127
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SALE

continued from page A1

The Leicester property has been part of Vibra Healthcare's regional footprint for more than a decade, serving patients who require extended hospital stays, rehabilitation, and complex medical care that cannot be provided in standard acute-care settings. Local health officials say the facility fills a key role in the central Massachusetts continuum of care by serving patients discharged from Worcester hospitals.

Regional observers note that the arrival of a new operator could have implications for staffing levels, referral patterns, and the availability of specialty services. The facility draws employees from Leicester, Spencer, Paxton, and several Brookfield-area towns.

While Everest Hospital's pledge to retain staff offers near-term stability, area leaders and families with connections to the facility say they will be watching for any operational changes that emerge under new ownership.

DPH's approval documents also highlighted ongoing oversight requirements. The agency will continue receiving quarterly reports from the new owner regarding service levels, staff retention, and compliance with state regulations governing long-term acute-care hospitals.

Local officials have not issued public statements about the sale, and the buyer has not yet released a detailed transition plan. The Town of Leicester's most recent update referenced the state's approval but provided no additional information. As of this

week, no filings indicate modifications to licensing, bed counts, or service categories.

Community members with relatives at the nursing center have raised practical questions about what the transition means for continuity of care, visiting procedures, and insurance coverage. State regulators have emphasized that patient services must continue uninterrupted during and after the ownership change, but further specifics will likely emerge when Everest Hospital begins its formal management of the facility.

The sale arrives during a period of broader change in post-acute and long-term care across Massachusetts, where facilities face persistent staffing shortages, increased oversight, and rising operating costs.

LEGALS

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
Docket No. WO25P2577GD
CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF
PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF
GUARDIAN FOR INCAPACITATED
PERSON PURSUANT TO
G.L. c. 190B, §5-304
In the matter of:
Brett Tyler Cordeiro
Of: Worcester, MA
RESPONDENT**

Alleged Incapacitated Person
To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by **Annette Fay Cordeiro of Spencer, MA** in the above captioned matter alleging that **Brett Tyler Cordeiro** in need of a Guardian and requesting that **Annette Fay Cordeiro of Spencer, MA** (or some suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve **Without Surety** on the bond. The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the appointment of a Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court and may contain a request for certain specific authority.

You have the right to object to this proceeding. If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of **12/02/2025**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

IMPORTANT NOTICE
The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy,
First Justice of this Court.
Date: November 13, 2025
Stephanie K. Fattman
November 28, 2025

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New 2 You hosting annual Christmas Bazaar

LEICESTER — New 2 You Thrift Store & Furniture Annex invites the community to its Fifth Annual Christmas Bazaar Dec. 6 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

Embrace the season's spirit and discover a treasure trove of unique gifts, delightful treats, and festive joy! Enjoy extended shopping hours with special buys and discounts at our thrift store. Raffles will include a 50/50, raffle table, and our scratch ticket raffle. There will also be face painting and crafts for kids, along with food, including meatball subs, chicken nuggets, fries, popcorn, desserts, and more. There might also be a special visit from Santa!

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Spencer library hosting Roaring Holiday Frolic

SPENCER — A Roaring Holiday Frolic will be held at the Richard Sugden Library Tuesday, Dec. 2nd from 5 – 8 p.m.

All ages are invited to join us in a Roaring 20's / Mardis Gras celebration. Roaring 20's / Mardis Gras attire is encouraged. Join us with a small group from the David Prouty High School Band, artwork displayed from David Prouty students. A jazz pianist will play from 5:30-6:30 p.m. The Shining Stars are back to dance for us. Snacks and crafts will also be available.

Come join the fun...more surprises await!

Unique holiday traditions across the globe

The holiday season is a special time of year. Regardless of which holiday people celebrate in December, billions of people across the globe embrace chances to be a little more festive and spend additional time with family and friends over the final month of the year.

Tradition contributes to the special feeling felt in many communities each December. Holiday celebrants who can't get enough seasonal magic can take note of some of the many unique traditions across the globe that help make the month of December such a special time of year.



The Yule Lads, Iceland

In a tradition that might call to mind the seven dwarves who welcomed Snow White into their home in the classic fairy tale, the Yule Lads of Iceland are said to leave a small gift for children who leave a shoe on their windowsills before going to bed beginning on the night of December 11. The tradition continues through Christmas Day, with each night featuring a visit from a different Yule Lad.

Hiding Brooms, Norway

Norwegian folklore suggested evil spirits and witches awoke on Christmas Eve, and this unique tradition is rooted in efforts to keep those unwelcome holiday guests grounded and avoid lost brooms. On the night of Julaften (Christmas Eve), Norwegians hide their brooms in closets inside their homes to keep them from being stolen by ill-intentioned witches.

Night of the Radishes, Oaxaca, Mexico

Held annually on December 23, the Night of the Radishes is a local celebration in Oaxaca, Mexico. This unique event celebrates oversized radishes, which certainly mer-

its the celebration's inclusion on any list of unusual holiday season celebrations. The event involves the carving of large radishes into figures, a tradition that began as a way to attract more customers to Oaxaca's Christmas market. A formal radish-carving competition was instituted in the late nineteenth century, and the Night of the Radishes continues to draw visitors today.

Krampus Parades, Austria (various sites)

The holiday season might be a heartwarming time of year in many locales, but the various Krampus parades throughout Austria turn that notion on its head. Krampus is a horned anthro-

pomorphic figure in central and eastern Alpine folklore. Krampus is something akin to Santa Claus's alter ego who's said to punish bad children rather than reward good ones with gifts. Legend says Krampus and his band of less-than-jovial elves roamed an area of the Alps and delighted in causing mayhem. Austrian Krampus parades take place at night and feature revelers dressed in scary costumes, making this a unique if not exactly lighthearted holiday season tradition.

Tradition figures prominently during the holiday season, and some customs stand out for their uniqueness.

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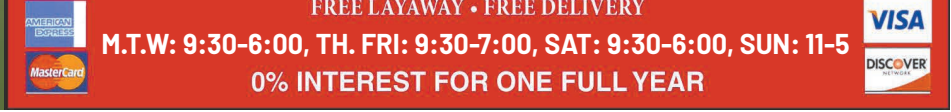
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