

# SPENCER NEW LEADER

©2026, Issue # Free by request to residents of  
East Brookfield, West Brookfield, North Brookfield, Brookfield, Leicester and Spencer

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Paid for by the Committee to Elect Peter Durant

Peter Durant

State Senate

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BY NOVEMBER 3RD



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## LHS CTE, Innovation Pathway, and Performing Arts students make an impact at Harvest Fair



LEICESTER — Students and staff from Leicester High School’s Career Technical Education (CTE), Innovation Pathway programs and Performing Arts played an important role in this year’s Leicester Harvest Fair, demonstrating their skills, connecting with community members, and giving back to one of Leicester’s favorite annual events.

Students and teachers from every CTE and Innovation program at Leicester High School participated in some way, providing what Vocational Director William May described as “100 percent involvement” across the school’s CTE programs.

The Hospitality Program, led by Natalie

Rodriguez, was among the first to arrive at the fairgrounds. Students and staff set up early and served hot and flavored iced coffees and specialty drinks to vendors preparing for the event as well as community members attending the Harvest Fair.

Rodriguez said the event gave her students an opportunity to put their natural strengths into practice.

“The Harvest Fair gave our students the opportunity to bring their natural hospitality skills to life,” Rodriguez said. “The talent, creativity, and ability to connect with people were already within them. I simply helped them recognize those strengths and put them into action. I was incredibly proud

of their teamwork, confidence, and professionalism.”

The Culinary Arts Program, working with teacher and Chef Andrew Aucoin and Wolverine Grill Manager Steve Dahlgren, served another popular fair favorite: fresh corn on the cob. Students prepared and served three different varieties of corn while also making hot apple cider and pumpkin rolls.

For Aucoin, the Harvest Fair was a perfect example of how hands-on learning prepares students for real-world experiences.

Turn To FAIR page A10

## East Brookfield Library plans two-week Ghost Craft program

EAST BROOKFIELD — The East Brookfield Public Library is getting into the Halloween spirit with a two-part Ghost Craft Program planned for October.

Adults are invited to visit the library and create their own centerpiece ghost display during sessions scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 8, at 4 p.m. and Thursday, Oct. 15, at 3:30 p.m.

The craft is designed as a two-week project, with participants working on their displays during both sessions. Because the project requires both programs to complete, participants must be available to attend on both dates.

The program is open to all adults, but advance registration is required.

The Ghost Craft Program is among the seasonal activities offered by the East Brookfield Public Library and gives local residents an opportunity to create a Halloween decoration of their own while spending time with others in the community.

Those interested in participating should contact the East Brookfield Public Library to sign up for the program.

## Spencer announces early voting, state election and Special Town Meeting dates

SPENCER — Spencer residents will have several important civic dates to keep in mind this fall, with in-person early voting beginning in October, the state election scheduled for Nov. 3 and a Special Town Meeting following two days later.

The Town of Spencer has announced

that in-person early voting for the 2026 state election will begin Saturday, Oct. 17, and continue through Thursday, Oct. 29.

Early voting will take place at Spencer Town Hall, 157 Main St. The hours will vary during the early voting period, and residents are encouraged to consult the

town’s website for the complete schedule before heading to Town Hall.

The early voting period gives registered voters an opportunity to cast their ballots

Turn To VOTING page A10

## Spencer to review government format

BY JASON BLEAU  
CORRESPONDENT

SPENCER — The Town of Spencer will examine its government format for the first time in nearly 30 years, possibly considering embracing a town charter system rather than a legislative act.

The Town of Spencer Act Establishing a Board of Selectmen, also known as the Spencer Governmental Act, was approved by the state legislature in 1998, and has not been altered since. The act established Spencer’s current government format with an elected Board of Selectmen. A hired Town Administrator serves as the manager of the town and its various departments. Spencer is one of the few remaining municipalities in the commonwealth with a government established by legislative act rather than a town charter.

Spencer Board of Selectmen Chair Gary Woodbury said he had a conversation with Town Administrator Jeff Bridges who agreed it’s time for a long-overdue review.

“We thought it should be looked at

Turn To FORMAT page A10



Courtesy

Last week, the Spencer Police Department said goodbye to Chief Michael Befford as he retired after a distinguished career in law enforcement. Befford came to the Spencer Police Department in 1998 as a Sergeant, and has spent the years since serving in leadership roles within the department. He later became a Lieutenant and ultimately Chief of Police, dedicating nearly three decades to the officers, staff, and community he served. Throughout those years, he has been a part of many changes and milestones within the department and has had the opportunity to work alongside countless members of the Spencer Police Department, other agencies, town employees, and members of the community. The department thanks Chief Befford for his years of service, leadership, dedication, and commitment to the Town of Spencer. Photo courtesy of the department’s Facebook page.



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# Leicester Public Library hosting annual Craft Swap

LEICESTER — If you are interested in most any kind of craft, it’s worth your while to stop in at the annual Craft Swap at the Leicester Public Library, 1136 Main St. in Leicester, on Oct. 1, 2, and 3 during regular library hours!

“Our Craft Swaps have been very popular events!” Library Director Suzanne Finstad Hall exclaims. “Every time we hold the Craft Swap, the response has been awesome, with many area crafters and people interested in starting a particular craft coming to the library and finding materials they can use or bringing items they no longer need to give to neighbors who share their interests.”

“You don’t need to have anything to swap,” Hall explains. “Anyone is welcome to come and browse through all the items we’ll have and pick out items needed to work on whatever you may be working on or try something new.”

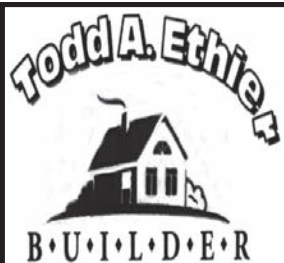
No donation is required to participate.

Every year attendees will find a wide variety of items, including paint, pencils, markers, brushes, art paper, sewing fabric, ribbon, yarn, felt, buttons, beads, jewelry making supplies, craft tools, kits, books, and more!

If you have items to swap / contribute to the Craft Swap, please bring them to the library anytime the library is open prior to the Swap or that day.

“We are fortunate to have a large number of people engaged in a variety of crafts, which means there are really a lot of items here to be found!” Hall continues.

Contact the Leicester Library if you have any questions.



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# Ware Comedy Show returns to Workshop13

WARE — Workshop13 is excited to announce the return of Ware Comedy Show, a Colorblindguy comedy event. This 21+ show takes place at 13 Church St., Ware, on Saturday, Sept. 26. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the performance begins at 7 p.m. Tickets are available for \$20 thanks to the support of the Ware Cultural Council and can be purchased in advance at [www.workshop13.org](http://www.workshop13.org). Comedy fans can expect a night filled with original material, quick wit, and memorable performances.

Returning as host is Boston Comedy Festival winner Dan Boulger. Dan headlined last year’s Ware Comedy Show and left audiences thoroughly impressed with his relaxed delivery, sharp observations, and polished stage presence. His ability to make comedy look effortless is a testament to his skill and experience.

Headlining this year’s show is Jake Silberman, a nationally touring comedian whose sharp wit, unique perspective, and exceptional crowd work have made him a favorite with audiences across the country. Jake’s ability to find humor in everyday life and connect with a crowd ensures a performance that is both intelligent and hilarious.

The opening acts are equally impressive. Avery Quinn has headlined venues throughout New England and regularly performs at the Comix stage at Mohegan Sun. His animated style and commanding presence immediately capture an audience’s attention. Joining him is Hilary Price, known for her offbeat sense of humor, originality, and relatable storytelling. Her thoughtful, clever material consistently earns big laughs while giving audiences something to think about.

Together, these performers create a lineup loaded with talent, originality, and the creative material that defines great stand-up comedy.

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](http://workshop13.org), or call 413-277-6072.

# East Brookfield library seeks vendors for annual craft fair

EAST BROOKFIELD — Local artisans and craftspeople will have an opportunity to showcase their work this fall when the East Brookfield Public Library hosts its Annual Craft Fair.

The fair will be held Saturday, Oct. 17, from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. and will feature handcrafted items.

Library organizers are emphasizing that participating vendors must offer items that are genuinely handmade. Products must be completely handcrafted rather than

commercially produced items that have been modified with a small number of handmade additions.

Prospective vendors will be required to have their work reviewed before participating in the fair. Those interested may email photographs of their handcrafted items to [cmacmaster@cwmar.org](mailto:cmacmaster@cwmar.org). Artisans may also bring one or two samples of their work to the East Brookfield Public Library for review.

The review process is intended

to ensure that the annual event remains focused specifically on handcrafted goods and the work of participating artisans.

The Annual Craft Fair will take place Saturday, Oct. 17, from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the East Brookfield Public Library.

Anyone interested in participating as a vendor should submit photographs by email or visit the library with samples of their work for consideration.

# WEEKLY POLICE BLOTTER

## Spencer

The Spencer Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of Sept. 9-16.

Wallace E. Kittredge, Jr., age 58, of North Brookfield was arrested on Sept. 14 for Cruelty To an Animal and multiple counts of Assault with a Dangerous Weapon.

## Leicester

The Leicester Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of Sept. 10-16.

Joao M. Gomes, age 49, of Brockton was arrested on Sept. 11 for Trespassing and Misdemeanor Breaking & Entering.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on Sept. 12 for Violation of an Abuse Prevention Order.

Moriah Washington, age 34, of Worcester was arrested on Sept. 15 in connection with a warrant issued by Worcester District Court.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on Sept. 15 for driving at a rate of speed exceeding the posted limit and Operating a Motor Vehicle after suspension of license.

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# SPENCER ALMANAC

## REAL ESTATE

### BROOKFIELD

None

### EAST BROOKFIELD

\$260,000, 355 Howe St, King, Patricia A, to Lashaway Holdings LLC.

### LEICESTER

\$680,000, 6 Pond Ct, Hair, Renee M, to Amoakohene, Stefany, and Amoakohene, Kwaku.

\$439,900, 18 Carleton Rd, Geldart, Brandyn, and Geldart, Elizabeth, to Soden, Stephanie.

\$430,000, 11 King St Ext, Greenleaf Ft, and Fay, Carol A, to Mastrorio, Joseph, and Mastrorio, Meaghan E.

\$350,000, 73 Sargent St, Daley 2nd John F Est, and Macdonnell, Meghan P, to Aguilar, Leonel, and Caraballo, Kyanisse.

\$250,000, 82 Waite St, Fish, Joseph R, to Andrade, Robert.

\$15,000, 165 Chapel St, Barrows, Christopher L, to Miller, Richard Fay, and Miller, Sandra Louise.

### NORTH BROOKFIELD

None

### SPENCER

\$500,000, 2 Church St, Cruz, Jorge Luis Dela, and Lazala, Linet Sanchez, to Lopez, Diego E, and Umana, Jennifer L.

\$355,000, 20 Bell St, Michael J Coffey Ret, and Coffey, Michael J, to Guardado, Christian Joel.

\$275,000, 17 Bixby Rd #5, 17 Bixby Rd T, and Goodrich Mtn Land LLC, to Gazaille, Andre, and Gazaille, Mary Ellen.

\$200,000, 41 Sherman Grv, Benoit Jr, Richard A, to Staruk, William, and Staruk, Maribeth.

\$150,000, 97 Smithville Rd, Laliberte, Anne L, to Matte, Daniel.

\$95,000, 4 I Capen Rd, Hansen, Krystal L, and Hansen, Christopher, to Ferreira, Carrie, and Ferreira, Jason.

### WARREN

\$654,900, 345 Bragg Rd, Czaporowski, Richard J, and Czaporowski, Darleen M, to Balistreri, Joseph D, and Balistreri, Danielle C.

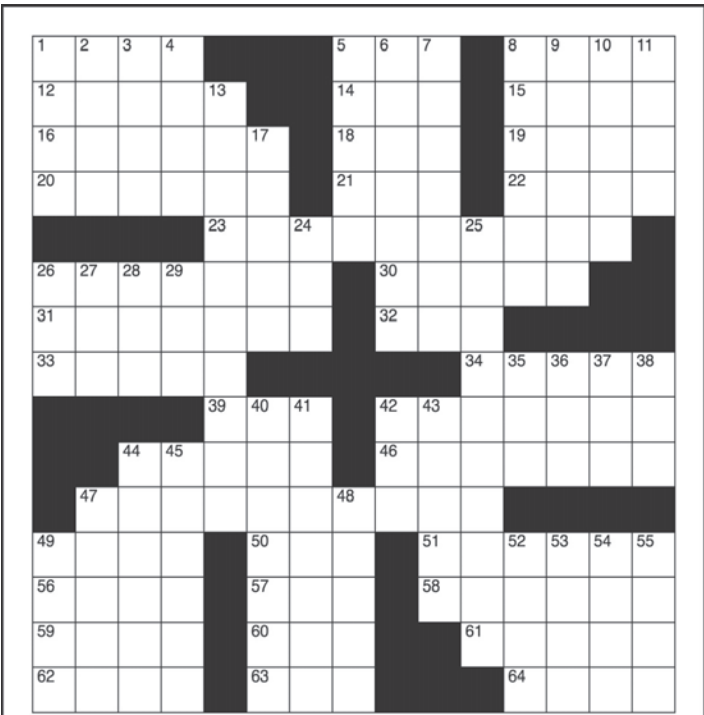
\$512,000, 95 Town Farm Rd, Fountain & Sons Const Co, to Rubel, Kaitlin C.

\$292,000, 59 School St, Lamb Marilyn L Est, and Lamb, Michael, to Floury, Audra.

\$21,000, High St, Regan, Joshua Paul, to Lone Oak Enterprises LLC.

### WEST BROOKFIELD

\$622,222, 17 Moorings Way, Roger E Caron Retrut, and Caron, Roger E, to Gregory P Cusson Lt, and Cusson, Gregory P.



## CLUES ACROSS

1. “Wicker Man” actor Nic  
5. Protection  
8. Cloth worn over a shoulder  
12. Ceramic jars  
14. Midway between northeast and east  
15. South American hummingbird  
16. Platforms  
18. Taxi  
19. Mild yellow Dutch cheese made in balls  
20. A citizen of Yemen  
21. Military mailbox  
22. Nuclear near reach weapon  
23. Clears  
26. Broken  
30. Actress Lathan  
31. Avid fan  
32. One and only  
33. Proceeding
34. River in Portugal and Spain  
39. Doctor of Education  
42. Defeat handily  
44. Less complicated  
46. Handyman tools  
47. Written works  
49. Castle dweller’s safety net  
50. Honorable title (Turkish)  
51. Greatest  
56. Can do  
57. A place to sleep on the road  
58. Member of U.S. Navy  
59. 24-hour units of time  
60. Actor Horsley  
61. In a way, sounds off  
62. Formerly (archaic)  
63. Eye infection  
64. Plundered

## CLUES DOWN

1. William \_\_, Buffalo Bill  
2. Wings  
3. Candle or lantern  
4. Freedom from difficulty  
5. A type of pie  
6. Metrical foot  
7. \_\_ Kerr, actress  
8. Nap  
9. Popular singer Bocelli  
10. Immune responses  
11. “Mad Men” leading man  
13. A citizen of Senegal  
17. Philly basketball player  
24. Not even  
25. Measures wind speed  
26. Insecticide  
27. Jordan glided through it  
28. Bird-like dinosaur genus  
29. Expression of satisfaction
35. Big Blue  
36. One point east (clockwise) of due north  
37. Of she  
38. Oral rehydration solution  
40. Knocks off course  
41. Popular cop show of yesteryear  
42. Zhou dynasty state  
43. Genus of gulls  
44. Onion flatbreads  
45. Declare as true  
47. Of a lobe  
48. Missouri county  
49. Produced  
52. Volcanic crater  
53. Off-Broadway theater award  
54. KU hoops coach Bill  
55. Check for

PUZZLE SOLUTION

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| S | T | I | V | E |   | E | E | T |   | S | A | V | D |   |   |
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| H | E | B | B | O | T | C |   | D | D | E |   |   |   |   |   |
| O | H | N | I | W |   |   |   | T | V | I | H | L |   |   |   |
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| H | S | V | S |   | D | V | d |   |   |   | E | G | V | C |   |

# Spencer Cultural Council now accepting applications!

SPENCER — The largest grassroots cultural funding network in the nation, the Local Cultural Council (LCC) Program enriches the cultural life of all cities and towns in Massachusetts. Led by municipally appointed volunteers, LCCs award \$6.6 million every year, supporting 7,400 cultural programs that include everything from field trips to lectures, festivals, and dance performances.

The Spencer Cultural Council grant cycle is now open (closes Oct. 15). This is a very easy grant to apply for. Grants are awarded/denied by Jan. 1. The grants need to be completed by Dec. 31, 2027. Grants are reimbursed to grantees when paperwork

is submitted after the program. For questions, contact Denise at [dfarmosa@cwmar.org](mailto:dfarmosa@cwmar.org). The online application can be found at <https://massculturalcouncil.org/communities/local-cultural-council-program/application-process/>.

Who is eligible to apply for an LCC grant?

- Applicants must reside or be located in Massachusetts. Local Cultural Councils may accept applications from anyone included in the list below:
- Individuals. Individual applicants must show that a public benefit results from the project for which they are applying.
- Incorporated private nonprofit organizations.
- Unincorporated associ-

ations that can establish a non-profit objective.

- For-profit organizations whose application demonstrates public benefit.
- A group of individuals coming together with a common purpose (e.g., local community band, theater group) that do not have nonprofit status.
- Public schools, libraries, other municipal agencies, and the Local Cultural Council itself.

- Religious organizations. Religious organizations or groups with a religious affiliation are eligible to apply for funding for a project or program that: Is available to the general public. Has the purpose of benefiting the public, not the

religious organization. LCCs cannot fund activities that are “inherently religious” such as religious worship, instruction, and proselytization.

The Mass Cultural Council is extremely appreciative of the efforts made by Local Cultural Council members in ensuring public access to culture in our communities. LCCs and their grant recipients are vital partners in our attempt to raise awareness about public funding for arts and culture in Massachusetts, both in the Legislature and with the public. The Spencer Cultural Council is a local agency funded by Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

## P.E.T. of the Week

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# Spencer American Legion Charity Golf Tournament set for Sept. 26

SPENCER — The Gaudette Kirk Post 138 American Legion invites golfers, sponsors, and community members to participate in its Annual Charity Golf Tournament on Saturday, Sept. 26, at Heritage Country Club. This annual event combines a day of golf, fellowship, and giving back, with all proceeds supporting veterans in need.

The mission of the Gaudette Kirk Post 138 Charity Golf Tournament is to help veterans by preventing hunger, homelessness, and the lack of life's basic necessities. Funds raised through the tournament provide direct assistance to local veterans and their families, ensuring those who have served our country receive support during difficult times.

Golfers of all skill levels are welcome to participate in the 18-hole scramble. The tournament fee is \$115 per golfer, which includes 18 holes of golf with a cart, a light lunch at Heritage Country Club, and dinner

at the Gaudette Kirk Post 138 American Legion following the tournament. The day will also feature on-course contests, raffles, prizes, and awards.

Businesses and organizations are encouraged to become sponsors, while individuals and foursomes are invited to register early and help make a difference in the lives of local veterans.

For registration, sponsorship opportunities, or additional information, please contact Carol by phone at 774-454-0366 or e-mail [post138spencerma@gmail.com](mailto:post138spencerma@gmail.com).

About Gaudette Kirk Post 138 American Legion

Gaudette Kirk Post 138 American Legion is committed to serving veterans, supporting military families, promoting patriotism, and strengthening the local community. Through its annual charity golf tournament and other fundraising efforts, the Post provides direct assistance to veterans by helping prevent hunger, homelessness, and

the lack of basic necessities, honoring the service and sacrifice of those who have served our nation.

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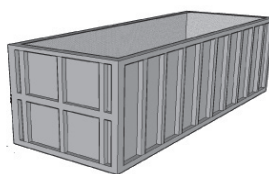
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## Girl Scout Troop welcomes new members

SPENCER — Girls entering grades Kindergarten and 1 in the fall are invited to join Troop 65501. The troop meets in Spencer every other Sunday, 4:30-5:45 p.m. Girl membership registration fee is \$111, and is active until September 30, 2027. Financial Assistance is available.

Girl Scouts is the premier organization for girls to learn about leadership, financial literacy, life skills, the outdoors, community service, science and technology. Girl Scout programming is customizable for all types of learners! Previous Girl Scout experience is not necessary.

You can register for a spot in the troop at <https://go.gscwm.org/troop65501>. Questions? E-mail [info@gscwm.org](mailto:info@gscwm.org) or call 508-365-0115.

About Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts

Girl Scouts of Central and Western Massachusetts serves nearly 6,000 girls in grades K through 12 with the strong support of over 2,500 adult volunteers in 186 towns and cities in central and western Massachusetts. The Girl Scout program allows girls to discover the fun, friendship, and power of girls together while building their personal leadership qualities. GSCWM supports girls by giving them extraordinary opportunities to explore, experience, and learn about their world and helps girls recognize that they are vital members of their communities.

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PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE  
EDITOR

EDITORIAL

When the classroom meets the community

There is a significant difference between learning how to do something and discovering that what you have learned has value to someone else.

Students from Leicester High School had an opportunity to experience that distinction during this year’s Leicester Harvest Fair. They were not there merely as spectators. Students from every Career Technical Education and Innovation Pathway program participated in some fashion, alongside members of the high school’s performing arts program. They served coffee. They prepared food. They painted faces. They talked about health assisting and electrical careers. They helped set up a tent. They sold products they had designed and manufactured. They performed music.

In other words, they worked. That may be one of the most valuable aspects of career and technical education.

A classroom can teach a culinary student how to prepare food, but serving customers at a busy community event introduces another set of lessons. Students have to communicate, manage money, work together and solve problems when something does not go according to plan.

Engineering students can design and manufacture a product at school. Putting that product in front of a customer introduces them to marketing, sales and the sometimes intimidating experience of asking someone else to place a value on their work.

Students studying early education can learn techniques for working with children. Sitting across from a youngster waiting excitedly for face paint or a temporary tattoo gives those lessons an entirely different dimension.

The Harvest Fair also gave Leicester residents something valuable: a chance to see what is happening inside their high school.

Career and technical education has become an increasingly visible part of Leicester High School. The fair allowed residents to speak directly with teachers and students about programs including hospitality, culinary arts, health assisting, early education and care, electrical, building property and maintenance, and engineering. Those conversations matter.

Public education belongs to the community, but much of the actual work of education happens beyond public view. Residents see budgets, School Committee meetings and graduation ceremonies. They do not always get to see students mastering a trade, designing a product, preparing for a career or gaining the confidence that comes from discovering they are good at something. The Harvest Fair brought some of that work into public view.

It also demonstrated why community events remain important in a town like Leicester. A harvest fair may be built around food, entertainment, vendors and tradition, but its larger value comes from bringing together people and organizations that might otherwise travel in separate circles.

Students met residents. Teachers explained their programs. School and town officials answered questions. Young musicians performed before audiences outside their school. Vendors received help setting up. Children encountered high school students serving as positive representatives of their community.

The relationship worked in both directions. Leicester High School contributed to the Harvest Fair, and the Harvest Fair became an extension of Leicester High School’s classrooms. That is the sort of partnership worth cultivating.

Career preparation is obviously about helping young people develop skills that can lead to employment, further education and independence. But the best programs can accomplish something more. They can show students that their skills have a place in the community around them.

A cup of coffee, an ear of corn, a 3D-printed keychain or a song performed in front of Town Hall may seem like small things.

For a student learning to turn knowledge into ability, and ability into service, they can represent something much larger.

The Harvest Fair offered Leicester residents a glimpse of what its students are learning. More importantly, it gave those students an opportunity to discover what they can contribute.

VIEWPOINT

OPINION AND COMMENTARY FROM SPENCER, LEICESTER AND THE BROOKFIELDS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Where have we arrived?

To the Editor:

I have witnessed a lifetime of memories. My grandmother saw the end of horse and buggy travel, electricity telephones, radio and television, air conditioning and supermarkets. I have seen magnificent automobiles through years of evolution, phones wired to the wall, give way to a computer in your pocket that does more than my first two desktop PCs. I watched the first moon landing, and have seen technology advance from mind boggling to a concern, that even if we do not get to the “Terminator” level of AI management, there can be no question that control in the hands of a bad actor, is more than scary.

While I am in full agreement with KK’s environmental concerns, and the fact that “Drill, baby, drill” Captain Bone Spurs has set us back beyond our ability to ever fully recover, make no mistake, this year’s temperature average will exceed last year’s.

Our nation, which is only 4 percent of the world’s population, will contribute at least 16 percent of its air pollution. Trump literally paid off a company building a wind farm, off our west coast, to stop. He also halted the nearly completed northern bridge, so his major contributor can keep the funds flowing to him. Not only is he responsible for a third of our deficit and counting, but his personal net worth and each family member, has seen their net worth triple.

Although the presidential Oath of Office, was for the first time ever, not sworn on a bible, it is to preserve, protect and defend the constitution. It is not to tear down public property and build monuments to yourself. Washington, Lincoln and Jefferson, all have memorials they did not build. God knows what makes you think yourself more worthy than they? The Kennedy Center is named for an assassinated president. Could be a path for others.

Just a bit over 250 years ago, we stood up to the most powerful empire in the world, and let them know that our freedom and liberty, were worth dying to obtain. Our current “King” has lost many of his crushing edicts in the courts. I hope the polls where we fully expect to see masked thugs, will find many of us “standing out” even if we have already mailed our ballot as the court has affirmed. If able, it would be my suggestion where long lines and intimidation is likely. There should be a law that requires voters will get to do so in a reasonable time or more polling places must be provided.

It is unclear whether suppressing voters is so they won’t need to “ find 11,780” votes, or they will seek to illegally seize ballots, basically to use the Stalin program, where it matters not who votes or how, only who counts the votes. On that note, I would love to hear how Elon delivered the last election.

If we do not “need” foreign oil., but are getting much from Venezuela, I have to assume our radically increased pricing is just to not anger those whose oil supply, we have effectively cut off. I expect this is a giant windfall for the oil companies of the USA, and the gauging is likely popular with billionaire investors, not those maxing their credit cards to buy gas to get to work.

You were warned what electing a felon would bring. He hated who you hated. Congrats, you got rid of the employed illegals, paying billions into Social Security, they cannot collect. You are spending billions more on tugs and prisons. That said, this somewhat resembles what you were promised. What doesn’t is the no end in sight Iran war, crazy price increases across the board, and a master at bankruptcy with an open ended credit card. We have arrived.

KEN KIMBALL  
BROOKFIELD

2026 state election ballot question suggestions

To the Editor:

Our state, with all its faults, ranks as one of the best in the United States. Likewise, if it were a country, it would stand one of the best in the world. This remains true, despite the current President’s ongoing efforts to damage our economy, institutions and we, the people. No John or John Quincy Adams, Kennedy, or H.W. Bush is he.

Each election year Massachusetts allows, even encourages our people and interest groups to put questions on the ballot for “we the people” to decide on.

This year, we have eight questions to vote on.

For your consideration, my suggestions.

Ballot question 1: Expanding the Public Records Law

My Suggestion “A Yes vote would make most records held by Legislature and the Office of the Governor public records under the Massachusetts Public Records Law.”

My Suggestion: our Democratic controlled state legislature ranks as one of the least transparent in the United States and the Office of the Governor serves as no shining light. Our elected, courageous and very experienced State Auditor Diana DIZoglio, wants to open these records so all can see.

Ballot Question 2: Collective Bargaining for CPCS employees

My Suggestion: A Yes vote would specify that Committee for Public Counsel Services employees (public service lawyers who provide legal assistance for those that cannot afford to pay a lawyer) may form a union to collectively bargain with their employer (the way police and teachers can).

Ballot Question 3: The proposed law would eliminate political party primaries for state elections and instead establish a system where there would be a single all party primary in which all candidates, regardless of their political affiliation, would be listed on the ballot and voters could vote for any candidate on the ballot. The two candidates receiving the most votes in the primary would advance to the general election ballot.

My Suggestion: A Yes vote would eliminate separate party primaries and have an open primary where the two candidates receiving the most votes would run against one another. Some other states do this. I think Massachusetts should also do this because Democratic insiders, not we the people, mainly control who gets elected.

Ballot Question 4: Election Day registration

My Suggestion: A Yes vote would permit eligible citizens to register to vote or so update their voter registration at their polling place on election day. This permission exists in all other New England states, gives more citizens the opportunity to vote. Also, because it requires proof of residence and signing of an oath backed by felony conviction- security against illegal voters.

Ballot Question 5: State Revenue Limit and Rebate

My Suggestion: A No vote would make no changes in the law relative to state revenue collection. Briefly, by reducing state revenue collection, it would benefit millionaires cause property taxes to rise and reduce funding for public, safety, education, health care, affordable housing, road maintenance, etc.

Ballot Question 6: Natural Resource Conservation Fund

A divided “No vote.” A good idea, but bad taxation logic

Ballot Question 7: Single Family homes. Briefly, the proposed law would allow, with oversight, for the building of smaller sized and lot single family homes ( like for example, many on the new and old Route 56 between that town and Rochdale

A Fully Supported Yes vote

Ballot Question: Prohibit Retail Sale of Adult Recreational Use Marijuana

A No vote I far from recommend its’ use, but with guardrails, feel it’s an individual’s choice like alcoholic drinks.

KEVIN KANE  
SPENCER

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.

Stress-test your retirement portfolio in volatile markets

If you’re planning to retire within the next few years — or you’ve recently retired — market volatility may feel especially unsettling. After years of saving and planning, you’re now entering a stage where your portfolio may shift from growth to providing income. The five-year window before and after your retirement date is especially critical — when market downturns can have an outsized impact on your long-term financial security.

While you can’t control the markets, there are meaningful steps you can take to “stress-test” your retirement income, so it is not consumed entirely by market drops before you stop working.

Explore your short- and medium-term income needs. One of the most important steps to take is to understand how much of your portfolio you’ll need to rely on for income. It depends on your other income sources such as Social Security, IRAs, 401ks, pensions and wages if you work in retirement. You’ll want to avoid taking too much from your portfolio in response to a decline because that could increase the likelihood that your money may not last through retirement. A financial advisor can help you determine your threshold for monthly withdrawals, based on your income needs, long-term outlook, inflation, and risk tolerance.

Review your emergency fund. Are you able to set aside at least three to six months’ worth of essential expenses in cash or very low-risk investments? That could allow you to avoid digging too deeply into your portfolio or selling stocks or other volatile assets at a loss if the market drops. The income bridge from an emergency fund gives your longer-term investments time to recover and can reduce stress during down markets. You may even find you want more than six months in this fund to help weather emergencies, depending on your risk and your comfort level.

Review your mix. As you approach or begin retirement, does your portfolio reflect your need for stability and income? You may need to reduce exposure to riskier assets such as stocks and increase holdings in more stable ones, like bonds or cash equivalents. Your ideal allocation depends on your risk tolerance, spending needs, and other income sources. The goal is to shield your savings from major losses just as you begin drawing from them.

Consider market swings. If the value of your portfolio dropped 20% tomorrow and stayed there for a period, would you need to change your lifestyle or spending immediately? Would you need to go back to work? If your answer is yes, revisit your asset allocation or spending plan. A more conservative approach may offer less upside but can provide greater confidence during the early years of retirement.

Assess your spending. Even small budget adjustments can make a big difference, especially early in retirement. Do you need to consider postponing a major purchase or trimming discretionary spending? If you’re still working, directing extra income into savings can help build a cushion. If you’re already retired, keeping withdrawals as low as possible during market downturns can help support long-term sustainability.

Stay grounded — and get support. Market swings are inevitable, but emotional reactions and risky investing can lead to costly mistakes. Don’t abandon your investment strategy. Instead, focus on what you can control: your asset mix, spending, and flexibility. A financial advisor can help you stress-test your retirement plan, evaluate your options and stay focused on your long-term goals — even when the markets are anything but steady.

FINANCIAL FOCUS

TREVOR NIELSEN

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

# The chair that knows summer is over

LANTERNS  
ALONG  
MAIN  
STREET

By CHARLES

There is a chair sitting in my backyard that knows something I have been refusing to admit. Summer is over.

Technically, I suppose there are arguments to be made about calendars and equinoxes. I am not interested in them. The chair has rendered its verdict.

It is one of those outdoor chairs that spent most of June, July and August getting dragged around the yard. Sometimes it was on the patio. Sometimes it migrated under a tree. Occasionally it wound up near the grill, where I would sit with a cold drink and offer completely unnecessary supervision to whatever was cooking.

For three months, that chair had a purpose. Now it sits there alone. I walked past it the other morning and realized nobody had occupied it in at least two weeks.

This is how September works in New England. Summer does not really end. We simply stop using summer things. Nobody holds a ceremony for the garden hose. One day, it is stretched across the lawn because the tomatoes need water. A few weeks later, it is still lying there, except now you step over it and think, "I really ought to put that away." You do not put it away. You simply continue thinking about putting it away until sometime in October, when the weather forecast contains a word such as "freeze," and suddenly the garden hose becomes an emergency.

The same thing happens with the citronella candle. Back in July, that candle was essential equipment. It sat proudly on the table, bravely defending civilization from mosquitoes. Now it contains three drowned moths, two leaves and approximately half an inch of rainwater.

Still, I cannot throw it away. There is wax left. That is how they get you.

My wife has begun making subtle observations about the collection of summer equipment lingering around the house.

"Are you going to put those chairs away?"

Eventually.

"What about the fan in the bedroom?"

Still warm occasionally.

"The cooler?"

Could need it.

"For what?"

You never know.

This is not procrastination. It is seasonal caution.

Anyone who has lived in Massachusetts long enough knows that September cannot be trusted. It will give you a 48-degree morning, convince you to locate a sweatshirt, then produce an afternoon warm enough to make you regret every decision you have made since breakfast.

So we hesitate. The window fan stays upstairs. The rake comes out, but the lawn mower remains ready. There might be a pumpkin on the front steps while a beach towel is still hanging in the garage. This is the only time of year when the household inventory makes absolutely no sense.

Eventually, of course, autumn wins. The chairs get folded. The hose gets drained. The grill gets used less often. That forgotten bottle of sunscreen gets moved somewhere mysterious, where nobody will be able to find it next Memorial Day. But I am not quite ready yet. The chair can stay out another week.

Maybe we'll get one of those unexpectedly warm September afternoons. Maybe I'll sit outside for a while with a cup of coffee and enjoy the yard before the leaves really start coming down. Or maybe I won't. Either way, putting the chair away feels a little too much like admitting something. And around here, summer deserves at least a decent argument before we let it go.

# Spencer Exchange Club to present 18 Under 18 Youth Leadership awards

SPENCER — For the sixth consecutive year, the Exchange Club of Spencer will in November announce the recipients of their 18 Under 18 awards to those under the age of 18 who reside in the towns Spencer or East Brookfield. The Exchange Club membership has annually been made aware of young men and women whose impact on their communities may have gone unnoticed. They are not necessarily the highest academic achievers, star athlete or the most popular among their peers. They are those unassuming young adults who demonstrate attributes of leadership, passion, a caring and supportive nature, selflessness and citizenship. They are making a difference to others and their

communities.

The Exchange Club has acknowledged and awarded nearly 100 young adults with the 18 Under 18 award over the past five years who were nominated by their teachers, employers, school counselors or others who felt they made a difference in their communities. Award recipients were recognized with citations and presented with monetary awards. This year's award ceremony will be held during a Worcester Railers game at the DCU Center in Worcester on Sunday, Nov. 22.

The Exchange Club membership is purposefully invested in the present and future of the Spencer and East Brookfield communities. They wish

to highlight the innate talents that our youth exhibit unselfishly every day in what sometimes seems like the simplest of actions of caring and the ability to relate to others. They believe that curiosity, analytical thinking, dependability and a strong work ethic make the greatest difference where we all live, work and play. The club's vision of the future is that these young men and women will carry on the Exchange's mission of "Unity for Service."

Application and nomination forms may be accessed on the Facebook pages of the Spencer Exchange Club, Spencer Bulletin Board or at [www.spencerexchangeclub.org](http://www.spencerexchangeclub.org). Sponsorship forms may also be accessed at those locations.

## New Braintree prepares to mark 275th anniversary with Olde Home Day celebration

NEW BRAINTREE — A cherished autumn celebration will take place on Saturday, Oct. 3, as New Braintree hosts its 275th anniversary celebration, Olde Home Day. Designed to highlight the town's unique heritage and vibrant character, the daylong festival features a jam-packed schedule of activities for all ages.

The festivities kick off at 1 p.m. with a traditional town parade, leading into a

afternoon lineup along the town grounds. Highlights include line dancing demonstrations led by J.P. Ellory—with plenty of audience participation—alongside performances by the Next Step dance group and a wandering clown to entertain younger guests. Families can also explore a "Touch a Truck" exhibit, traditional children's lawn games, chil-

dren's obstacle course, as well as a children's scooter/bicycle obstacle course. You can take a chance with the New Braintree Fire Association's Duck Race as they travel the "river" down Utley Road. A bustling Farmers Market will be on the grounds showcasing local growers and artisans.

Food and drink offerings will highlight local favorites. Attendees can visit the Beer & Wine tent featuring selections from Lost Towns Brewing & Agronomy, or grab lunch from local food trucks Savage Wraps, and Off the Hook as well as some sweet treats from local bakers Music and classic festival competitions anchor the afternoon. The band Over the Hump takes the stage from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m., coinciding with the popular pie-eating contest for children and adults.

Local bakers are also invited to enter their homemade creations into the Apple Pie Making Contest to compete for town honors. Bring your pies to the New Braintree Town Hall from 2 – 3 p.m. Judging will begin at 3:30 p.m. Check the New Braintree Web site at [www.newbraintree.ma.us](http://www.newbraintree.ma.us) for the contest rules.

As evening approaches, the energy picks up with a performance by Disco Lemonade from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., culminating in a spectacular evening bonfire.

Organizers are encouraging community members to get involved to help make the event a success. For volunteer opportunities, contest entry forms, or general information, contact event organizers at [newbraintree275@gmail.com](mailto:newbraintree275@gmail.com) or call (413) 537-4813.

## Open poetry reading series coming to Merriam-Gilbert Library

WEST BROOKFIELD — Local poets, readers and lovers of the written word will have a new opportunity to share their favorites when the Merriam-Gilbert Public Library hosts "One Poem," an open poetry reading series beginning in September.

The program is designed to provide a welcoming venue for writers to share their own poetry while introducing participants to the work of other published poets.

For each original poem a participant reads, organizers ask that the reader complement it with a poem by an established, published writer. Selections can range widely, from Shakespeare and Anne Bradstreet to Charles Bukowski,

William Butler Yeats, Rumi, Adrienne Rich and contemporary poets.

Participants do not need to be poets themselves. Those without original work are welcome to read favorite poems by published writers, while community members who would rather listen are equally encouraged to attend.

Readings will take place in round-robin fashion, with participants sharing no more than two poems during each turn. The number of opportunities each person has to read will depend upon attendance. Organizers ask participants to avoid particularly lengthy selections so everyone has an opportunity to take part.

The series is intended to foster a creative community of writers and readers

while exposing participants to poets and styles they might not otherwise encounter.

"One Poem" will run from September through May, generally on the third Thursday of each month from 4 to 6 p.m. Some dates may be adjusted because of holidays.

Programs will be held in the upstairs meeting room at the Merriam-Gilbert Public Library on Main Street in West Brookfield. The meeting room is accessible by elevator.

The series is open to the Central Massachusetts community.

"Come: read, listen, learn, savor," organizers invite participants.

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Jason Bleau  
Youngsters took part in a fun fishing game, one of many on the Town Common adding some family fun to the Harvest Fair.

# Leicester hosts annual Harvest Fair

LEICESTER — Leicester held its 26th annual Harvest Fair on Sept. 19, serving as the unofficial kickoff of the fall season for the community. The event featured a little bit of everything from historical experts showcasing the old practices of production to local vendors and artisans providing fun gifts and food options as well as music, games, and even local competitions for photography, floral arrangements, grown goods, and more. It was a fun filled day with a bit of a fall breeze, perfect for the small-town charm it evokes every year.



One of the centerpieces of the Harvest Fair was the Leicester Women's Club basket raffle which ran throughout the day and raised money for their scholarship fund.



The American Legion Cherry Valley Post 443 gets busy preparing classic burgers for Leicester's Harvest Fair patrons.

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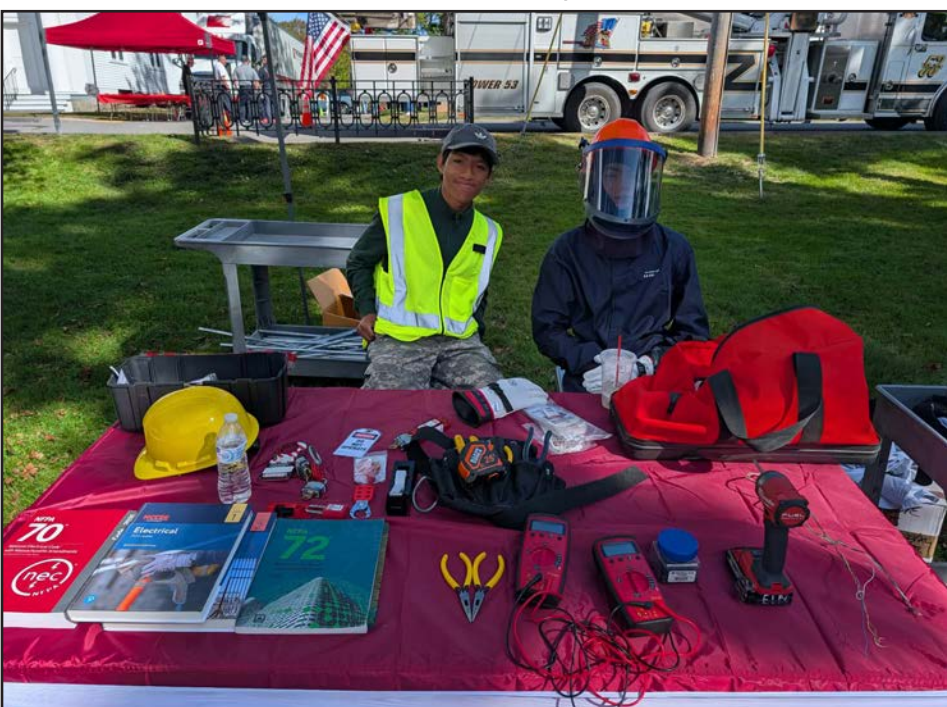


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- Large Open Concept Cubicle Areas

- Building size: 9,536 SF
- Lot size: 13,939 SF
- Loading docks: (1) tailgate height
- Basement: partial | Unfinished

**JONAH D. GLICKMAN**  
Vice President

508-868-3765

[jdglickman@glickmankovago.com](mailto:jdglickman@glickmankovago.com)

**JAMES GLICKMAN**  
Principal

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# Friends of the Leicester Public Library announce Fall Book Sale

LEICESTER — “If you are doing fall cleaning, the Friends of the Leicester Library would appreciate donations of unwanted books, board games, puzzles, DVD’s, and CD’s for our Fall Book Sale,” Charissa Berube, Friends of the Leicester Library Chair, says.

The Friends group holds a Book Sale every Fall and every spring.

“The Book Sales are huge events, and we’re able to provide opportunities to purchase all sorts of books for all age groups at truly discounted prices,” Berube explains. “It’s a terrific event that helps the library as well as people who come looking for books and the many other items we sell, and our Friends group truly enjoys helping through the events.”

The Fall Book Sale will be held on Saturday, Oct. 10 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and on Tuesday, Oct. 13 from 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Proceeds from the Book Sale are used to purchase arts and craft supplies for children’s and adult programs and to sponsor special educational presentations and programs.

“The monies raised are truly important and helpful, as we’re able to offer popular programs that the library would not be able to afford otherwise,” Berube continues.

All the items that are sold at the Book Sale are contributed by area residents.

“We count on the kindness of people who might be looking to clear out unwanted items and help the library in the process,” Berube states.

Please bring the items you would like to contribute to the inside of the library any day and time it is open. Please, no encyclopedias or medical textbooks.

Bring your unwanted items to the Library over the next few weeks, then come to the Book Sale and find some great prices on books, games, and other items that you will use and enjoy!

# Charlton and Leicester history groups team up for tavern crawl

CHARLTON — The Charlton Historical Society (CHS) and the Leicester Historical Commission will collaborate on a full day program exploring how the American Revolution shaped Central Massachusetts on Saturday, Oct. 3 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The day includes tours of the Swan and Rider Taverns, a tour of the Number 2 Schoolhouse, a walking tour of Leicester Common, presentations on the Marquis de Lafayette and the Declaration of Independence, and breakfast and lunch. The cost is \$35 per person before Oct. 3 and \$40 the day of the event. This event is limited

to 50 people. Participants will drive in their own vehicles to the two sites. In addition to walking, the day will include climbing one flight of stairs.

Roadside taverns like the Swan built in 1768, played a key role in starting the American Revolution. Come learn how it was in the Swan that the term “minutemen” was first uttered. Frenchmen like the Marquis de Lafayette were essential in helping us win the Revolution. Fifty years after the Revolution, Lafayette returned to the United States for a triumphant tour of the new country. Learn what his stop at the Rider Tavern was like. The ideals of the Revolution

would be a central part of American curriculums in one-room schoolhouses like the Number 2 one that is part of this full day of activities.

About CHS

The Charlton Historical Society collects, preserves and shares the history of Charlton, Massachusetts. The Society maintains the Number Two Schoolhouse and the historic Rider Tavern, which serves as home to the Society. The CHS regularly offers tours, talks, and activities for all ages in the Rider Tavern, a twenty-two-room turnpike inn restored to its original 1799 condition. The private, nonprofit CHS also

offers programs throughout the community. For more information <https://charltonhistoricalsociety.com>.

About the Friends of the Swan Tavern

The Friends of Swan Tavern is a registered non-profit group that assists the Leicester Historical Commission, a town agency with fundraising efforts, restoration, and repair work, as well as the operation of the tavern as a historical museum, community, and education center. Rotating historical displays and educational programs on local and regional history occur regularly at the Swan Tavern.

# Richard Sugden Library offers support group for widows

SPENCER — The Richard Sugden Library invites widows to an informal conversational group.

“Every ending has a beginning.” “He’s in a better place.” We’ve heard it all. But, we have experienced a loss that was unique, equal to no other. We’ve also experienced love like no

other. The Widows Group (WG) intends to build a community of love, support, patience, and understanding.

Please join us Wednesdays (the first and third of each month) beginning Sept. 2 from 1 - 2 p.m. Lifting hearts, one-at-a-time. September get-togethers will be Sept. 2 and 16 at the Richard Sugden Library, Spencer.

A Haunted Story Swap will be held at the Richard Sugden Library on Sept. 10 from 6 – 7:30 p.m. Share your eerie experience. We’re gathering a record of otherworldly experiences that have occurred in Spencer and want to hear from you! Our main goal is to collect cemetery-based accounts, but other stories will also be noted afterwards. Please join us for this exchange of tales of trepidation and haunted happenings! Sponsor: Spencer Historical Commission and hosted by Prof. Garret D. Langlois, Ph.D.

Grow Happiness with Wendy O’Leary at the Richard Sugden Library, Spencer. Adult Happiness Club kicks off Sept. 17 from 1-2 p.m. Monthly schedule: Oct. 29, Nov. 19, Dec. 17, Jan. 21, Feb. 18, March 18, April 15, May 13, and June 17. The in-person group will have an optional activity following the session from 2-2:30 p.m. Sign up with Wendy O’Leary

at [woleary25@gmail.com](mailto:woleary25@gmail.com). Sponsor: Friends of the Library.

Traditional Folk Music in the 21st Century will be held at the Richard Sugden Library on Thursday, Sept. 17 from 6 – 7 p.m. Music is an essential part of connection. Derek Piotr, folklorist, performer, and composer shares his Fieldwork Archive, featuring more than 2,000 recordings of “non-singers” poems, hymns & songs. Sponsor:

Friends of the Library.

Sound Healing experience at the Richard Sugden Library, Spencer. Immerse yourself in therapeutic sounds that calm the mind, heal the body, and uplift the spirit. Adults are invited to join us as Allison, from Friendly Ass Farm, leads this time of relaxation. Join us on Sept. 23 from 6-7 p.m. Tune into wellness. Vibrate with Harmony. Sponsor: Friends of the Library.

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# Independent Congressional candidate Nadia Mileron to speak in Spencer Sept. 24

SPENCER — The Spencer Republican Town Committee will be hosting Nadia Mileron, the independent candidate for congress running against incumbent Richard Neal. The event will take place on Thursday, Sept. 24 at 7 p.m. in the event hall at Charlie’s Diner, 5 Meadow Rd., Spencer.

All voters are invited and encouraged to attend for a speech and Q&A session.

The committee will meet regularly on the final Thursday of each month, holidays notwithstanding.

Any questions can be emailed to [spencermarepublicans@gmail.com](mailto:spencermarepublicans@gmail.com).

# 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. WO26P3010EA**  
**CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION**  
Estate Of:  
**Doreen H Rose**  
**Date of Death: 08/03/2024**  
To all interested persons:  
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Susan Chabot of Spencer 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: **Susan Chabot of Spencer 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 10/13/2026**. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written ap-

pearance 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: September 15, 2026  
Stephanie Fattman,  
Register of Probate  
September 25, 2026  
**(SEAL)**  
**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**  
**LAND COURT**  
**DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT**  
**26 SM 002948**  
**ORDER OF NOTICE**  
TO:  
Brian A. Woodward  
and to all persons entitled to the ben-

efit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act: 50 U.S.C. c. 50 § 3901 (et seq): Rocket Mortgage, LLC claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Spencer, numbered 138 East Charlton Road, given by Brian A Woodward to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Fairway Independent Mortgage Corporation, dated June 21, 2021, and recorded at Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 65477, Page 89, 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 October 26, 2026 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 September 14, 2026.  
Attest:  
Deborah J. Patterson  
Recorder

September 25, 2026

**At the Zoning Board of Appeals public meeting to be held on Tuesday, October 13, 2026, in the McCourt Social Hall of Memorial Town Hall, 157 Main Street, Spencer, MA, a public hearing will be held on the following items starting at 7:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter as can be heard:**  
**Notice of Public Hearing – Spencer Zoning Board of Appeals**  
**Public Hearing Special Permits & Variance– Applicant: New England Power Company and Massachusetts Electric Company; Owner: New England Power Company: 7.5 & 9 Meadow Road, Spencer, MA, Assessor’s Map U11-9 & 10. The applicant is seeking Special Permits under section 4.9.3.C (Extension of nonconforming use) and 3.4.1.G.9 (Earth removal within 4 feet of groundwater table), and a Variance under sections 5.1 (structures within side setback) and 7.3 (Variance requirements). Proposed construction and installation of certain substation-related equipment and facilities at its existing electric substation. The property is located within the Rural Residential (RR) and Commercial (C) zoning districts.**  
September 25, 2026  
October 2, 2026

## Annual Family Fall Fes open to all!

NORTH BROOKFIELD — The First Congregational Church of North Brookfield will be holding its annual Family Fall Festival Saturday, Oct. 3 from noon to 2:30 p.m., with activities for all members of your family.

The many activities include free hamburgers/cheeseburgers, chips, lemonade, and apple cider (hot and cold) for all. There will be a silent auction and cake/pie sale. A bouncy house, cotton candy machine, popcorn and games galore for the whole family, including the infamous {or famous} tug of war between the adults and the children. Other activities include horse rides, corn hole, Zumba with Melanie, and the North Brookfield Fire Department Fire Prevention team.

Come have fun with us! This event is free to all who attend! Call the church office with any questions at 508-867-8428.

## SNHU announces summer 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 Summer 2026 President’s List. The summer terms run from May to August.

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.

Christina Raymond of Leicester  
Giani Lewis of Spencer  
Cameron Hafner of Spencer  
Amanda Watson of West Brookfield  
Jessica Remick of Spencer  
Christine Seaver of North Brookfield  
Kuku Layne of Leicester  
Grace Wilbur of North Brookfield  
Marian Gomez of North Brookfield

Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) is a private, nonprofit, accredited institution with a 94-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.

## North Brookfield Cultural Council seeks funding proposals

NORTH BROOKFIELD — Proposals for community-oriented arts, humanities, and science programs are due Oct. 15.

The North Brookfield Cultural Council has set an Oct. 15 deadline for organizations, schools, and individuals to apply for grants supporting community cultural activities.

According to LCC spokesperson Nancy Waldron these grants can support a variety of artistic projects and activities in or around North Brookfield, including exhibits, festivals, field trips, short-term artist residencies, performances in schools, workshops, and lectures.

The North Brookfield Cultural Council is part of a network of 329 Local Cultural Councils (LCCs) serving all 351 cities and towns in the Commonwealth. The LCC Program is the nation’s largest grassroots cultural funding network, supporting thousands of community-based projects in the arts, humanities, and sciences every year. The state legislature provides an annual appropriation to Mass Cultural Council, a state agency that allocates funds to each community.

This year, the North Brookfield Cultural Council will distribute about \$7,200 in grants. Previously funded projects include: production of “Legally Blonde 2,” programs “Birds of Prey,” “Watercolor Painting” at the Haston Library; Hip Hop Square Dance at the Senior Center.

For local guidelines and complete information on the North Brookfield Cultural Council, contact Nancy Waldron at nancy.rachel@comcast.net. Application forms and more information about the Local Cultural Council Program are available online at [www.massculturalcouncil.org](http://www.massculturalcouncil.org).

## East Brookfield library plans community tag sale

EAST BROOKFIELD — Residents looking to clear out some unwanted belongings or hunt for a bargain will have an opportunity to do both when the East Brookfield Public Library hosts a community tag sale later this month.

The tag sale will be held Saturday, Sept. 26, with a rain date of Saturday, Oct. 3. The sale will run from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., with participants able to begin setting up at 9 a.m.

Residents interested in selling items during the event must reserve their spot in advance by visiting the East Brookfield Public Library.

Library officials are asking prospective sellers to make their reservations in person rather than by telephone. Staff members will explain where participants will be located and how they should set up for the sale, as well as answer questions about the event.

Participants should also plan to take all unsold merchandise and other belongings with them when the tag sale concludes. No items may be left behind following the event.

The sale offers residents an opportunity to give household items a second life while bringing community members together for an autumn event at the library.

For information or to reserve a spot, visit the East Brookfield Public Library in person before the sale.



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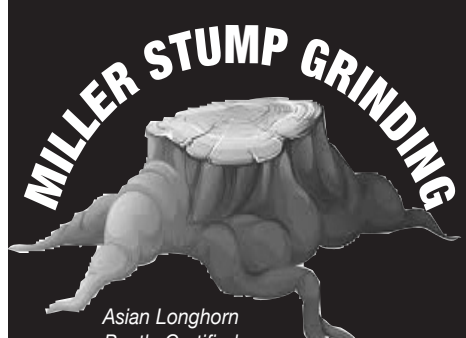
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FAIR  
continued from page A1

“Today’s Harvest Fest was a great example of hands-on learning in action,” Aucoin said. “Our students took ownership of the entire process, from preparing and grilling three different varieties of corn, making hot apple cider and pumpkin rolls, to serving customers, handling money, promoting the Wolverine Grill, and interacting with the community.”

Aucoin said students worked together throughout the event, solving problems as they arose and representing the Culinary Arts Program with pride.

“The positive feedback from everyone who attended was fantastic, and the pumpkin rolls were definitely a standout! Events like this give our students the opportunity to take the skills they learn in the classroom and apply them in a real-world setting.”

Melissa Ledbetter, Health Assisting teacher, also provided information about the Health Assisting opportunities available to Leicester High School students, helping families and students learn more about the career pathways available through the school’s CTE programs.

“The Harvest Fair was a great opportunity for the Health Assisting students to show off what they have learned in the classroom to the community of Leicester,” Ledbetter said. “We were able to interact with a number of people who came to our booth to learn about our program. I am so proud of our students as they are learning to give back to our community.”

The Early Education and Care Program, led by Nina Ryan, brought plenty of creativity to the event by offering free face painting and temporary tattoos for children of all ages. The activity was conducted under the supervision of Amanda Hart McCaffrey and provided students with a hands-on opportunity to work with children and demonstrate skills connected to their program.

The Electrical Program also had a strong presence at the fair. Teachers James Burgess and Jeff Romano showcased code books, tools, and other materials used in the electrical industry while speaking with community members about the program and the career opportunities available to students.

“This event is a wonderful opportunity for the CTE students to publicly feature their skills and knowledge,” Romano said. “This interaction also allows residents to see the progress being made in their school system.”

The Electrical Program experienced the highest student demand for CTE enrollment at Leicester High School last year, reflecting growing interest among students in skilled trades and technical careers. At the Harvest Fair, teachers were able

to speak directly with families and community members about the training and career opportunities available in the various industries.

“It’s great to see the kids and community show up for each other,” Burgess added. “There’s a lot of support for CTE programming in the town and it’s really fantastic that our students have this opportunity to put what they are learning on display.”

The Building Property and Maintenance Program also contributed to the Harvest Fair before the event even began. Earlier in the week, students and staff under the supervision of teacher Joe Richardson helped set up the major tent used for the event.

The Innovation Pathways program also brought student-created work into the community. Engineering teacher Tracy Arsenault said students were able to take products they designed and manufactured themselves and use the Harvest Fair as an opportunity to learn about sales, marketing, and interacting with customers.

“Innovation Pathways are designed to be more than just the classroom,” Arsenault said. “Today, students took their engineering-designed and manufactured 3D keychains and fidget devices as well as Leicester branded clothing from the school store into the field and learned about sales and marketing.”

Arsenault said the response from fair attendees was especially encouraging.

“Reaction was very positive and customers were excited to learn that Leicester offered classes like this,” she said. “With one customer noting how the students took such pride in their work.”

The High School Chorus also represented Leicester High School during the Harvest Fair, performing twice, once in front of Town Hall and again at the Unitarian Church. The chorus is led by teacher Alexis Phillips, who said the annual event has become a meaningful tradition for the school’s student musicians.

“This is an event we have been fortunate to be a part of for many years,” Phillips said. “I am so grateful for the Harvest Fair committee for always finding ways to include our student musicians. Big thanks to Pastor Sue for all her help in making these performances so special for the students and myself.”

School Committee Chairman Jim Reinke also attended the Harvest Fair and said he was impressed by the students’ work and the enthusiasm shown by both students and staff.

“It was absolutely wonderful and exciting to see LHS CTE students showcasing their new skills, knowledge and crafts,” Reinke said. “The dedication and commitment of these students was on full display and their pride in their trade was overwhelmingly evident”

Reinke said the Harvest Fair

also provided an opportunity for school and town officials to speak with residents about the district’s MSBA project and the role of CTE programs in Leicester High School.

“The Superintendent and I, joined by Tony Pina from our OPM team at TERVA, School Committee member John Higgins, and Kevin Menard of the Select Board, spent most of the day fielding questions about the MSBA project,” Reinke said. “There were some great questions asked and everyone that we spoke with were appreciative of our implementation of the CTE programs and all of the benefits that have come with it. There was an overarching enthusiasm among the folks that we spoke with and a common theme of ‘Give us more!’”

Superintendent Dr. Brett Kustigian also praised the students for their contributions throughout the event, particularly their willingness to help vendors and community members behind the scenes.

“The only thing better than the weather during the Harvest Fair was hearing how helpful our students were when helping vendors set up,” Kustigian said. “Once again, Leicester students rise to the occasion, and I am super proud of them.”

For May, the participation of every CTE and Innovation program was a meaningful example of what career and technical education can bring to a community.

“We had 100 percent involvement from every CTE and Innovation program at the school,” May said. “It is great to see the care and passion from the teachers and students in these programs as they dedicate their time and talents to help make the Harvest Fair a favorite community event.”

The Harvest Fair provided students with more than an opportunity to showcase their programs. It gave them a chance to work alongside their teachers, apply skills learned in the classroom, interact with community members, and experience firsthand the value of contributing to their community.

From serving food and beverages to working with children, demonstrating electrical skills, promoting student-designed products, performing for the community, and helping vendors prepare for the event, Leicester students played a variety of roles throughout the day.

Through hospitality, culinary arts, early education, electrical, building maintenance, health assisting, engineering, and the performing arts, Leicester High School students continue to demonstrate that career and technical education and Innovation Pathways are about more than career preparation. They are also about service, hands-on learning, teamwork, creativity, and building strong connections between the school and the community.

VOTING  
continued from page A1

before Election Day rather than visiting the polls Nov. 3.

Election Day itself is scheduled for Tuesday, Nov. 3. Spencer voters will cast ballots in the Great Hall at Town Hall, with polls scheduled to be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Town officials are encouraging eligible residents to participate in the election.

The November election will be followed closely by another important date on Spencer’s municipal calendar.

The town will hold a Special Town Meeting on Thursday, Nov. 5, beginning at 7 p.m. Town Meeting provides registered voters with the opportunity to consider and vote

FORMAT  
continued from page A1

because it’s been that long. I think that we need to get together and decide what changes should be (made) and some changes where maybe we should enhance the language that’s in there, but I think it’s worth looking at,” said Woodbury.

Changing even the language of a town government established by an act of the state legislature is an often long and complicated process requiring input from numerous parties on the town level. Once changes are approved, they need to be sent to the state to be finalized and codified.

With that in mind, moving to a charter system, where the town codifies its own government making it easier to amend, became a popular topic of discussion. Board Vice Chair Jonathan Viner said he would be in favor of at least considering that change.

“Legislative act is the most involved and difficult to change and it’s actually the least common as far as I recall,” said Viner. “There are relatively few towns in the state that have their government established by this.”

Another potential recommendation, brought up by Woodbury, was to change the need for a supermajority to hire and fire to a simple majority and make the Board of Selectmen more involved with contracts and appointments. However,

## Trinity Catholic Academy partners with Harvard Forest to study seasonal change



SOUTHBRIDGE — Trinity Catholic Academy is proud to partner with Harvard Forest through the Buds, Leaves, and Global Warming project, giving students the opportunity to participate in authentic, hands-on scientific research right here on our school grounds.

Students in Grades 4 and 5 are each assigned a branch on a specific tree and become its “scientists” for the school year. Each week, students

on municipal matters placed on the meeting warrant.

Additional information about the Special Town Meeting, including the warrant and matters scheduled for consideration, is expected to be available through the town as the meeting approaches.

The Town Clerk’s Office oversees election and voter records in Spencer. Town Clerk Sandra Fritze’s office is located at Town Hall and can be reached at 508-885-7500, ext. 150. Regular Town Clerk’s Office hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Wednesday and 7:30 a.m. to noon Thursday.

Residents seeking the latest election information, including the complete schedule of early voting hours, should check the town’s website as the dates approach.

Town Administrator Jeff Bridges noted that the goal of the act from as it is currently written was to de-politicize that process by putting a lot of those responsibilities in the hands of a non-partisan Town Administrator.

Regardless of what actual changes are proposed, Bridges assured selectmen that the town’s legal counsel will be heavily involved. He also detailed the level of involvement residents of the town should expect to have in the process.

“There was actually a five-person committee to create this one back in the day. That committee should meet with town counsel and the board, whichever way you want to go, so that they understand what it says and what it means. Then, as changes, proposals, all those good things come about, the committee incorporates things,” said Bridges. “Once the new draft is done, town meeting will have to vote on it. There will be a referendum to vote on it, and then it will be submitted to the legislature for amendment. Generally speaking, those processes take anywhere from 18 months to two years depending upon the legislature.”

The Board of Selectmen requested that the town’s legal counsel attend a future meeting to discuss what options are available to the town for different forms of government and charter establishment as they determine what they want to prioritize for the review process.

carefully observe their tree and collect and record data, including leaf length and width, air temperature, and changes in leaf color. Through this ongoing observation, students are learning the importance of making careful observations, collecting accurate data, and maintaining consistent records.

The data collected by our students is shared with Harvard Forest and becomes part of a larger research project examining seasonal changes and how growing seasons may be affected by a changing climate.

This partnership provides our students with a wonderful opportunity to see how the science they learn in the classroom connects to real-world research—and reminds us that even a single branch on a tree can contribute to a much bigger scientific story!

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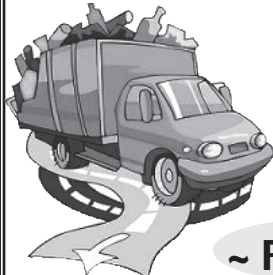
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# Tri-Valley, Inc. celebrates 50 years of service, independence and community

DUDLEY — Tri-Valley, Inc. is proud to celebrate its 50th anniversary, marking five decades of service to older adults, people with disabilities, caregivers and families throughout the communities it serves.

Since its founding in 1976, Tri-Valley has grown and evolved alongside the people and communities it serves. What began with a commitment to helping individuals remain independent in their homes and communities has developed into a broad network of programs, services and partnerships designed to promote dignity, choice, safety and quality of life.

“Fifty years represents much more than the passage of time,” said Lisa Prince, CEO. “It represents generations of people who have trusted Tri-Valley, employees who have dedicated their careers to serving others, community partners who have worked alongside us, and leaders who had

the vision to build and strengthen this organization. Most importantly, it represents the thousands of consumers whose independence, determination and voices have shaped who we are.”

Honoring the leaders who helped shape Tri-Valley

Tri-Valley’s 50-year history has been guided by dedicated executive leadership, beginning with Mr. Donald Warner and continuing through former Executive Directors Ms. Patricia Clark, Mr. Bernard Gagnon and Ms. Marilyn Travinski.

Each brought different strengths to the organization while carrying forward a common purpose: ensuring that people have access to the services and supports they need to live as independently as possible.

Under their leadership, Tri-Valley responded to changing community needs, expanded services, developed new partnerships and navigated significant changes in aging and disability services. Their contributions established the foundation on which Tri-Valley continues to build today.

A community achievement

Tri-Valley’s 50th anniversary is also an opportunity to thank the many people and organizations that have shared in its work: consumers and their families, current and former employees, volunteers, Board members, community organizations, health and human-service providers, municipal leaders, state partners, donors and advocates.

To every person who has been part of Tri-Valley’s first 50 years: thank you.

And as Tri-Valley begins its next 50 years, its commitment remains rooted in the principle that has guided its work for generations — helping people live with choice, dignity and independence in the communities they call home.

Fifty years — and the work continues

As Tri-Valley celebrates its anniversary, the organization is also looking toward the future.

The needs of older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers continue to change. Technology, workforce challenges, health care delivery and demographic shifts are transforming the human-services landscape. Tri-Valley enters its next chapter with the same willingness to adapt that has sustained the organization for five decades.

“As we recognize everyone who helped bring Tri-Valley to this milestone, we are equally excited about what comes next,” said Prince. “Our mission continues because the need continues. We will keep listening to consumers, supporting our staff, strengthening our partnerships and finding new ways to help people live with independence and dignity.”

About Tri-Valley, Inc.

Tri-Valley, Inc. is a community-based human-services organization headquartered at 10 Mill St. in Dudley, Massachusetts. For 50 years, Tri-Valley has connected older adults, people with disabilities and caregivers with programs, services and supports designed to promote independence, dignity and quality of life.

For more information about Tri-Valley and its 50th anniversary, visit [www.trivalleyinc.org](http://www.trivalleyinc.org).

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Celebrating the staff behind 50 years of service

At the heart of Tri-Valley’s history are its employees.

Over five decades, hundreds of staff members have answered phones, visited consumers in their homes, coordinated services, delivered meals, supported caregivers, advocated for consumers, managed programs and performed the countless behind-the-scenes tasks necessary to keep services available to people who depend on them.

Some employees have devoted decades of their careers to Tri-Valley, carrying the organization’s institutional knowledge and mission from one generation of staff to the next.

Their stories — and those of every employee who has been part of Tri-Valley during the past 50 years — demonstrate that the organization’s greatest resource has always been its people.

Programs that have evolved with the community

Throughout its history, Tri-Valley has adapted its services to meet the changing needs of older adults and people with disabilities.

Programs and services over the years have included our well-known and long-standing Meals on Wheels program and the original State Home Care program. Program offerings have expanded over the years to better serve the needs of community members. These include the Adult Family Care program, information and referral services, care management, caregiver and Veteran supports, protective services, options counseling, transportation and others.

Today, Tri-Valley continues to provide services that give consumers greater choice and control over how and where they live. Its work includes Personal Care Management functions within the Massachusetts MassHealth system, one example of the organization’s continuing role in supporting people who choose to live independently in their communities.

The programs may have changed, expanded and modernized during the past half-century, but the purpose behind them has remained remarkably consistent: listen to the individual, respect their choices and connect them with supports that help make independence possible.

## Webster Five Foundation awards nearly \$186,000 to 54 nonprofits in first half of 2026

AUBURN — The Webster Five Foundation has awarded 54 grants totaling \$185,917 during the first half of 2026, continuing its long-standing commitment to strengthening the communities it serves. (To view the complete list of grant recipients, visit [web5.com/bank-news](http://web5.com/bank-news).)

Through its grant program, the Foundation supports nonprofit organizations that expand access to education, arts and culture, social services, community development and other charitable initiatives.

The Foundation’s largest grants awarded during the first half of 2026 include:

Open Sky Community Services, Inc. — \$15,000.00 toward the organization’s Aurora Staff-Supported Activities which offers long term rental assistance and supportive services for young adults who need support in accessing behavioral health services, income and employment supports and tenancy stabilization skills.

CASA Project Worcester County, Inc. — \$10,000.00 to support the CASA Child Court Advocacy Program. As the only agency in Worcester reporting to the courts on the best interest of thousands of at-risk children, the priority of the program is to support abused and neglected children from across the 60 cities and towns that comprise Worcester County.

YMCA of Central Massachusetts — \$10,000.00 for the Achievers Program towards the organization’s Achievers Program which provides workforce development, leadership skill-building and college and career readiness to 150 teens.

“Supporting dozens of nonprofit organizations during the first six months of the year speaks to both the depth of need across our region and the incredible work being done to meet it,” said Brian Westerlind, President and CEO of Webster Five. “Each organization has its own mission, but together they’re helping create healthier, more connected and more resilient communities. It’s a privilege for Webster Five to support their work.”

Since its inception in 1996, the Foundation has awarded \$4,633,321 to 321 organizations.

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