



SPENCER NEW LEADER

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Free by request to residents of

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Friday, March 20, 2026

Community celebrates topping off of new high school



Courtesy

David Prouty High School Senior Class President Lauren Tutlis delivers a speech during the topping off ceremony of the new David Prouty High School.

Poetry reading and book talk at Leicester Public Library

LEICESTER — Tuesday, March 31 from 6 - 7:45 p.m., join former Poet Laureate, two-time Pushcart Prize nominee, and Lunar Codex contributor — and home town boy — Christopher Reilley to discuss his new book “Pour Decisions: Notes from Behind the Bar” and talks about writing, publishing, editing, workshopping.

The event is free, no registration required. Books available for sale at \$3 off cover price, and an additional \$3 from every book sold goes to the Friends of the Library.

This new poetry collection from Christopher Reilley—a longtime bartender, former Poet Laureate, Lunar Codex contributor, and two-time Pushcart Prize nominee—offers a sharply observed portrait of American tavern life as experienced from behind the bar. Rooted in years of service across working pubs and late nights, the collection traces the emotional undercurrent of public life one conversation, one pour, one closing shift at a time.

Rather than romanticizing nightlife, the poems attend to the lived textures of the work itself: fleeting intimacy, humor, grief, and moments of unexpected grace. Bars emerge not as spectacle but as civic interiors—places where people arrive unguarded and language becomes both refuge and currency. With a voice shaped by literary discipline and sustained labor, Reilley writes with a rare authority grounded equally in craft and experience.

Early readers have praised the collection for its restraint and clarity.

“Funny, bruised, and honest as hell,” wrote one longtime bartender. Another called it “working-class poetry at its best—unpretentious, generous, and real.”

Reilley served as Poet Laureate of Dedham, has work archived on the moon in the Lunar Codex, and has twice been nominated for the Pushcart Prize. Coincidentally, this book launches on the second anniversary of the Nova mission, the first to successfully land on the moon. This collection extends a body of work known for its attentiveness to place, labor, and voice, positioning the barroom as a vital site of contemporary American life and the bartender as both witness and translator.

The book will appeal to readers of contemporary American poetry, working-class and documentary writing, regional literature, and oral-history-influenced verse. It is well suited for literary festivals, university programming, community readings, and cross-disciplinary arts events.

More information is available at the Library’s Web site: www.leicesterlibrary.org, or call 508-892-7020.

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

SPENCER — The Spencer - East Brookfield Regional School District held a special celebration on March 2 for the long-awaited topping off ceremony of the new David Prouty High School.

Topping off ceremonies traditionally celebrate a project’s success and progress by placing a beam, normally signed by numerous stakeholders, at the building’s highest

point. The David Prouty beam included an evergreen tree affixed to the beam as part of the tradition meant to bring good luck to the new building. District Superintendent Dr. Paul Haughey started the short but cheerful ceremony acknowledging the long road to completing the project and the role the new building will play in building future generations of learners.

“Today, we look up at the highest point

Turn To TOPPING OFF page A4

Leicester Elementary hosts Community Reading Day



LEICESTER — To celebrate National Reading Month, Leicester Elementary School welcomed members

of the community into its classrooms on March 11 for a special Community Reading Day, a morning dedicated to sharing stories and celebrating a love of reading with students.

The day began in the school’s library, where community readers gathered for coffee and pastries. During the informal meet-and-greet, participants introduced themselves, shared their roles in the community, and had the chance to connect with one another before heading to their assigned classrooms.

Each of the school’s 28 elementary classrooms was vis-

ited by a special guest reader. Community members spent time reading with students and sharing their enthusiasm for books, creating a memorable experience for both the children and the volunteers.

As the morning concluded, many readers expressed how meaningful the experience had been and how much they enjoyed spending time with the students. Several commented on how special it felt to be welcomed into the classrooms and to help foster a love of reading.

Leicester Elementary

Turn To READING page A4



North Brookfield officers recognized for role in 2025 shooting investigation

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

NORTH BROOKFIELD — Almost a year to the day after a pair of North Brookfield officers helped resolve a shooting incident out of Southbridge, the Southbridge Police Department acknowledged their bravery and quick response in a letter submitted to the North Brookfield Police Chief and Board of Selectmen.

Selectmen read the letter for the public record during a meeting on March 10 which recognized North Brookfield officers Brent Lavoie and John Francis for helping locate a vehicle involved in a shooting in Southbridge on March 13, 2025. The letter was signed by Southbridge Police Chief Shane Woodson, who complimented the two officers as fine examples of their community department.

“The North Brookfield Police Department should be proud to employ officers of this quality. Officer Lavoie and Officer Francis are a credit to your agency, and their efforts are appreciated and admired,” wrote Woodson.

The two North Brookfield Officers jumped into action after receiving a BOLO (be on the lookout) that contained a description of the suspect vehicle involved in a shooting in Southbridge during the night hours of March 13, 2025. They soon located the vehicle at a residence in North Brookfield and observed a firearm in the passenger seat. According to an official report from the Southbridge Police in 2025, the vehicle was then towed away to Southbridge where officers discovered a handgun, loaded magazines, and 25 rounds of ammunition.

However, the letter from Woodson revealed another important detail of the investigation which saw Officers Francis and Lavoie remove even more weapons from local streets.

“During further investigation, Officers Lavoie and Francis recovered the suspected firearm used in the shooting, still inside the vehicle. The also recovered two semi-automatic rifles and hundreds of rounds of live ammunition inside the residence of the registered owner of the vehicle,” wrote Woodson.

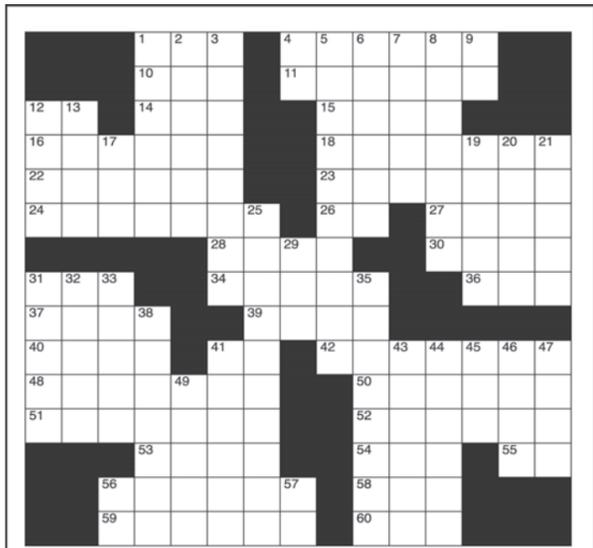
Both officers were recognized with a standing ovation during the Board of Selectmen meeting with the board members also complimenting their commitment to the job.

According to the official arrest report from the Southbridge Police Department last year, the shooter was identified as Jose Paredes of Southbridge who was officially arrested on March 18, 2025 on charges of discharging a firearm within 500 feet of a dwelling, possession of a firearm without a License to Carry, possession of a loaded firearm without a License to Carry, and unlawful possession of ammunition.

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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Inclined to do
- 4. Sketches
- 10. Book of Chronicles (abbr.)
- 11. Atomic #58
- 12. Dorm official
- 14. Small Eurasian deer
- 15. Southern constellation
- 16. Workers' groups
- 18. Former
- 22. Excellent
- 23. Romance language related to Spanish
- 24. Reference
- 26. Equally
- 27. Dirty towels
- 28. A cargo (abbr.)
- 30. Ammunition
- 31. You get one in summer
- 34. Slang for trucks with trailers
- 36. Swiss river
- 37. Exchange rate
- 39. British School
- 40. College teacher
- 41. Foreign Service
- 42. Horse gear
- 48. Cost to fly
- 50. A salt or ester of boric acid
- 51. Mocking
- 52. One who bird-watches
- 53. Concluding passage
- 54. A major division of geological time
- 55. Sodium
- 56. A way to produce
- 58. Soak
- 59. Laughed loudly and harshly
- 60. Affirmative

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Moth species phalonia
- 2. Quantum of energy
- 3. Break the law
- 4. Location of White House
- 5. Official cancellation of a decision
- 6. Where rockers work
- 7. Cut of beef: __ mignon
- 8. Nocturnal burrowing reptile
- 9. Atomic #62
- 12. Genus of evergreen shrubs
- 13. Flowering plant of the legume family
- 17. Inches per minute (abbr.)
- 19. Tropical fruit
- 20. Hot fluid beneath the earth's crust
- 21. James __, painter
- 25. Popular dessert
- 29. Payment (abbr.)
- 31. Cuisine style
- 32. Genus of true flies
- 33. City in western France
- 35. Arrangement
- 38. One holding a position of command
- 41. Weekday
- 43. An evening party
- 44. Print errors
- 45. Not good
- 46. Egyptian Sun god
- 47. East German town
- 49. Olfactory property
- 56. Atomic #37
- 57. "Pollock" actor Harris

PUZZLE SOLUTION

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Kindergarten registration now open; free Integrated Preschool available for Leicester families

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

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

To enter Kindergarten, students must provide:

Proof of a lead screen-

ing with results
 A physical exam dated within 13 months of the start of school

5 doses of Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis (DTaP)

4 doses of Polio

3 doses of Hepatitis B

2 doses of Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR)

2 doses of Varicella vaccine or documentation of chickenpox disease

Families are invited to attend Kindergarten Information Night on Wednesday, April 8, from 5–7 p.m. at the Leicester Middle School Fine Arts Center. The evening will include an informative presentation, a question-and-answer session, and a tour of Leicester Elementary School. It is a wonderful opportunity for families to learn more

and begin building connections within the school community.

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

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

Children enrolling in the preschool program must be independently toilet-trained (no diapers or pull-ups), unless a specific special education

service requires otherwise. Children who are not yet independently using the restroom during the school day will need to wait to begin the program until they are developmentally ready.

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

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

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

School District accepting applications for Kindergarten & Preschool

SPENCER — The Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District is now accepting Kindergarten & Preschool applications for the 2026-2027 school year.

Kindergarten (for children who will reach the age of five years old by Aug. 31) Letters were mailed out last week to all families that listed their eligible child(ren) on the 2025 town census and emails were sent to all resident families that have a child currently enrolled in our

Cubs' Corner Preschool program that will be of age by the cut-off date. Kindergarten is offered at both Wire Village School in Spencer and East Brookfield Elementary School in East Brookfield. Students are enrolled at the school in their town of residence, in

accordance with District policy. School hours are 8:25 a.m. to 2:45 p.m., Monday through Friday. There is no registration deadline.

Medical forms must be completed by a physician and must detail that your child has been given the following immunizations (including the dates the immunizations were given):

5 doses Diphtheria, Pertussis, and Tetanus (DTaP)

4 doses Polio

3 doses Hepatitis B

2 doses Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)

2 doses of Varicella Vaccine or Chicken Pox disease

Proof of Lead Screening Vision and Hearing Screenings

Cubs' Corner Preschool The Spencer-East Brookfield Regional

School District's Cubs' Corner Preschool will be relocated to the all-new preschool wing at David Prouty High School starting with the 2026-2027 school year. Our program is an integrated preschool with tuition-paying students, as well as special needs students. The resident rate is \$20/day for half days and \$40/day for full days. The non-resident rate is \$22.50/day for half days and \$45/day for full-days.

Sessions will be filled on a first come, first served basis. The following sessions are offered:
 Monday/Wednesday/Friday: AM, PM or Full Day
 Tuesday/Thursday: AM, PM or Full Day
 Monday-Friday: AM, PM or Full Day

Preschool Eligibility Requirements

Age require-

ment: Those attending a tuition-based preschool slot must be three

(3) years old by the Aug. 31 cut-off date to be eligible to attend the current school year. District residents that qualify for Special

Education services may attend once they turn three, regardless of the birth date cut-off.

Toilet Training: All tuition-based preschool students must be reliably toilet trained (no diapers or pull-ups) at the start of school. Children who do not evidence signs of reliable toilet training while in school will be found ineligible for enrollment.

Registration process All student registrations are done online. If you would like to register your child to attend, please complete the Pre-Registration Form to begin the registration process and select the 2026-2027 school year. Once your form has been approved, you will receive an email with further instructions to create your PowerSchool online parent portal account where you will complete all of the required enrollment forms and upload required documentation. Families must provide a birth certificate (original or copy with a seal), most recent physical/immunization records/lead test (dated within one year of school start date), and two forms of proof of residency from the accepted documents listed on the address form. Tuition-based preschool families must submit a deposit equal to one week's tuition to secure their child's spot.

If you do not have access to the internet to complete the forms, we have a kiosk set up inside the Student Services office at David Prouty High School for families to use. An appointment is required to ensure that the kiosk will be available and a staff member is present to assist. The office is open for appointments Monday through Thursday, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 3 p.m. Please call 508-885-8515 (opt. 0) with any questions, to schedule an appointment or to provide supporting documentation.

For more information about the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District and to stay up-to-date on the latest happenings across the district, please visit the website at www.sebrsd.org, follow us on Twitter and Facebook, and download the SEBRSD mobile app.

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JOY (Just Older Youth) Adventurers offers journey through Canadian Rockies & Pacific Northwest

PAXTON — This journey traces an unforgettable path from Canada's Pacific Coast deep into the heart of the Rockies, blending vibrant cities with some of North America's most awe-inspiring wilderness. Beginning in Vancouver, the adventure opens amid coastal mountains, historic neighborhoods, and lush green spaces before drifting across the Gulf Islands to the charming capital of Victoria. Here, manicured gardens, waterfront views, and rich heritage set an elegant pace.

The landscape soon transforms as the route

climbs inland through British Columbia's dramatic highways toward alpine terrain. Highlights include the soaring presence of Mount Robson and the pristine beauty of Jasper National Park, where glacier-fed lakes, rugged peaks, and serene wildlife encounters define each moment. A cruise on Maligne Lake and time along the iconic Icefields Parkway lead to the immense Columbia Icefield, offering rare access to ancient glaciers and sweeping mountain vistas.

Further south, the turquoise waters of Lake Louise and the storybook

charm of Banff National Park deliver classic Rocky Mountain magic, balancing outdoor exploration with relaxed town life. Crossing into the United States, the journey continues through the untamed grandeur of Glacier National Park, where alpine passes, historic lodges, and cultural storytelling reveal the soul of the "Crown of the Continent."

The experience concludes as forests and mountains give way to vineyards, lakes, and the energetic waterfront of Seattle. From coastal elegance to icy glaciers and iconic skylines, this trip

weaves together nature, culture, and comfort into a richly layered exploration of western North America.

Pricing: \$7,625 per person (double) - includes 14 days with 20 meals, hotels, and all transfers within tour; but does not include airfare and transportation to airport. Pricing for airfare and ground transportation to airport will be finalized soon, but plan for under \$1,000 per person. For more information, contact Bill Murwin at whmurwin@gmail.com or by phone 508-756-3193.



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Workshop13 highlights local musicians with Singer Songwriter Series

WARE — Workshop13 is excited to highlight seven local and regional musicians in the next session of their Singer Songwriter Series: Jason Wood, Samantha Herman, Morgan Alyse, Valerie Newman, Jake Goldstein, Josh Noone, and our featured performer Peter J. Newland. This event takes place in Workshop13's Grand Hall at 13 Church St, Ware, MA on Saturday, March 28. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., and the performance begins at 7pm. Tickets are priced on a sliding scale and are available at www.workshop13.org.

Enjoy photo ops, meet and greets, and great local music. Hot coffee, tea, beer, and wine are available for purchase, and free popcorn is provided. 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. This performance format 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 Peter J. Newland followed by a powerful second round, a group curtain call, and a community meet-and-greet with all performers.

Singer/songwriter and multi-instrumentalist Peter J. Newland formed the Springfield, MA rock band FAT in 1969, which is still performing today. FAT released albums on RCA and their own Dream Merchant Records and were signed to Atlantic Records by Ahmet Ertegun and Jerry Wexler in 1980. Peter wrote all the songs on the FAT albums, collaborating on several with other FAT members. In 1985, Peter moved to Nashville and worked as a staff writer for Paul Overstreet and Fitzgerald/Hartley. He has had songs cut by Hank Williams Junior, Colin Raye, Tracey Lawrence, Alan Jackson and others. He moved back to Springfield in 2002. He performs locally and regionally with his original band FAT, his rock quintet RadioX, and The Peter J. Newland Trio.

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Friday's Child



Ana
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Registration #9008

Ana is mature, insightful, and incredibly understanding. They have a thoughtful way of looking at the world and bring a level of self-awareness that truly stands out. Ana's favorite colors — black, blue, red, and white — reflect their bold and expressive personality. Ana enjoys staying active and taking care of themselves. They participate in kickboxing, practice yoga, and enjoy spending time at the pool. Volleyball is a particular favorite, and they would love more opportunities to play and continue building their skills in the sport. Creative and artistic, Ana expresses themselves in many ways. They have a strong musical side and can play the bass clarinet, showcasing both talent and dedication. Whether through athletics, art, or music, Ana brings passion and depth to the things they love.

<https://www.mareinc.org/child/22622764828>

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

The process to adopt a child from foster care includes training, interviews, and home visits to determine if adoption is right for you. These steps will help match you with a child or sibling group that your family will fit well with. To learn more about adoption from foster care visit www.mare-inc.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.



TOPPING OFF
continued from page A1

of this new, 21st century David Prouty High School, but our focus remains on what's happening on the ground, the students. This topping off ceremony is a celebration of resilience. It is a tribute to our students who have adapted, persevered, and showed immense gratitude to the construction teams working around them. This new building is for you. It is designed to foster, challenge, inspire, and bring about the next generation of leaders in our communities," Haughey said. "As we place this final beam, we aren't just signing steel. We're pledging to support the students who walk these halls for decades to come. This is more than just a building. It's our community's collective pride."

The ceremony was attended by representatives from the school district, the building committee, the Prouty Student Council, project leaders including the involved construction companies and the architectural firm, as well as the town administration. However, possibly the most important attendees were the students who walked into the school for the first time to start the school year back in August and have spent months watching the remaining portions of the building come to fruition.

David Prouty High School Senior Class President

Lauren Tutlis helped punctuate the importance of this project to the student body in her speech, talking about how the children played a role in fighting for a new learning space.

"Our class will forever hold a unique place in history — the first to graduate from the brand-new David Prouty High School. What makes it even more special is we're kind of a bridge between the two eras, the heart of the old David Prouty and we get to walk through the new halls of the new Prouty," said Tutlis, who later discussed how students attended town meetings and held signs to support the building of a new school.

"Education is our future. Having a space that reflects the value of education sends a powerful message to the students, staff, and our entire town. When friends and family ask us how the new school is, we don't hesitate. We proudly tell them how beautiful it is and how we enjoy being in school with the new building and how worth the wait it was."

When students returned to school in the fall, they were welcomed by the first phase of the new building project, which included classrooms and a gym. Construction has continued on a new auditorium, cafeteria and other facilities during the school year minimizing interruptions to education while allowing students to see the project progress right before their eyes.

Leicester Senior Citizens Club launches membership drive

LEICESTER — The Leicester Senior Citizens Club is a group of older adults that meets at the Leicester Senior Center twice a month. The club is looking to attract new members from all the area towns and cities.

The group meets on the first and third Tuesday of each month. Meetings begin at 10 a.m. At the conclusion of each meeting, there is a scheduled form of entertainment or informational presentation.

The Leicester Senior Citizens Club is linking older adults with each other, and to opportunities that improve their health, well-being, and sense of community. It is the club's way of reducing the effects of isolation. We want to offer special programs beyond normal hours, and we need input and ideas from new members to help get us there. Membership is open to all individuals aged 60 and older. The cost to join is \$10 for an annual membership.

To learn more about the membership drive or to sign up, please visit the Leicester Senior Center at 40 Winslow Ave., Leicester, during operating hours (Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.), or call David Wood, Program Director at the senior center, at (508)-892-7016.

West Brookfield Historical Commission announces 2026 scholarship

WEST BROOKFIELD — The West Brookfield Historical Commission is pleased to announce its 2026, 15th annual scholarship in the amount of \$2,000. Qualified students must reside in West Brookfield and may attend Quaboag Regional High School, or be school-choice students, home schooled students, and independent school students.

This award is made possible through the J. Irving and Jane L. England Charitable Trust.

Application criteria:
The students must be planning to attend either a four-year college/university program or a two-year college with the intent to transfer to a four-year college. The Commission will show preference to study plans with concentration on History and History-related areas. Major or minors may include Political Science, Social Studies, Anthropology, Archaeology, Historical Preservation, Museum Studies, and Education in any of these related fields.

Applicants must submit a brief essay based on one of the Notable Persons or Significant Places listed on the application. All necessary information will be found on the West Brookfield Historical Commission website. <http://westbrookfield.org>

Essays are due no later than April 6.
E-mail- info@westbrookfield.org
Mail: West Brookfield Historical Commission, PO Box 372, W. Brookfield, MA 01585.

The application and details can be found on the Historical Commission Web site, <http://westbrookfield.org>.

Donations needed for Community Baby Shower

LEICESTER — Organizers are seeking donations for the Leicester Regional Public Health Coalition's Community Baby Shower for expectant parents coming up May 7 from 1-4 p.m. at the Leicester Town Hall Gym, sponsored by Walmart, Hannaford, Deja New, and C.A.R.E. Leicester.

Items needed include diapers (newborn to size three), baby wipes, rash cream, clothing (onesies), sleepers, sleep sacks, hats, socks, and newborn outfits), hygiene & health items such as baby wash, shampoo, lotion, manicure sets, thermometers, and hand sanitizers), feeding equipment (bottles), formula, burping cloths, bibs, nursing pads, and pacifiers), gear & bedding (swaddle blankets, crib sheets, pack 'n plays, strollers, and car seats), and safety items such as outlet covers and cabinet locks.

Donation drop-off bins are located at the Leicester Public Library, Town Hall, Senior Center, and Deja New.

Leicester Knights of Columbus to hold ham raffle

LEICESTER — Leicester Knights of Columbus, located at 91 Manville St., Leicester, will have a Ham Raffle on Sunday, March 29. Doors open at 11 a.m., and games begin at noon. Game cards are 50 cents each. Prizes include hams and gift cards. 50/50 Raffle and other raffles are also included.

This is a family friendly event.

READING

continued from page A1

School Principal Tracy Steiger and Assistant Principal Katie Ford expressed their gratitude for the strong community support. They noted how fortunate the school is to be part of a community that consistently shows up for its stu-

dents and values opportunities to connect with them.

Events like Community Reading Day highlight the positive relationship between Leicester Elementary School and the broader Leicester community, while reinforcing the importance of reading and shared experiences in students' lives.

LEGALS

Brookfield Planning Board Notice of Public Hearing

In accordance with M. G. L., Chapter 40A, Section 5 and the provisions of the Brookfield Zoning Bylaws Section 13.D, the Brookfield Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on proposed amendments to the Town of Brookfield Zoning Bylaw concerning a temporary moratorium on permitting of Battery Energy Storage Systems.

The hearing will take place on Wednesday, April 8, 2026, in the Banquet Hall of Brookfield Town Hall, 6 Central St., Brookfield, MA, starting at 6:45 pm or as soon thereafter as can be heard. Meeting details and agenda will be posted at www.mytowngovernment.org/01506. A copy of the proposed amendments may be inspected at the office of the Town Clerk at Brookfield Town Hall during normal business hours.

Kevin Erkkila, Chair
Brookfield Planning Board
March 20, 2026
March 27, 2026

(SEAL) COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS LAND COURT DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT Docket 24 SM 004226 ORDER OF NOTICE To: MELISSA BARRETT-THOMAS, AS TRUSTEE OF THE BROWN STREET REALTY TRUST and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (et seq): Lakeview Loan Servicing LLC, claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Spencer, numbered 19 Brown Street, given by Melissa Barrett-Thomas and Leroy Thomas to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Prospect Mortgage, LLC, dated December 29, 2016, and recorded in Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 56545, Page 291, and now held by 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 April 20, 2026, or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of noncompliance with the Act. Witness, GORDON H. PIPER, Chief Justice of this Court on March 4, 2026. Attest: Deborah J. Patterson Recorder 24-013446 March 20, 2026

(SEAL) COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS LAND COURT DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT

Docket No. 26 SM 000806
ORDER OF NOTICE

TO: Steven M. Barry Elise D. Barry and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (et seq):

Rocket Mortgage, LLC f/k/a Quicken Loans, LLC f/k/a Quicken Loans Inc. claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in East Brookfield, numbered 128 North Street, given by Steven M. Barry and Elise D. Barry to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for 1st Alliance Lending, LLC, its successors and assigns, dated May 25, 2017, and recorded in Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 57166, Page 202, as affected by a Loan Modification Agreement dated September 30, 2022, and recorded at said Registry of Deeds in Book 68488, Page 116, 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 04/27/2026 or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of noncompliance with the Act.

Witness Gordon H. Piper Chief Justice of this Court on 3/6/2026

Attest: Deborah J. Patterson Recorder March 20, 2026

(SEAL) COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS LAND COURT DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT

TO: Heirs, Devisees and Legal Representatives of the Estate Manuel Zink, Susan Swan a/k/a Susan S. Zink, Jennifer Alden Zink and Jonathan Peter Swan Zink a/k/a Jonathan Zink,

ORDER OF NOTICE
Docket Number: 26 SM 000800

and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (et seq.):

Argolica, LLC claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Spencer, 98 Clark Road, given by Manuel Zink, , and to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as Nominee for Prospect Mortgage, LLC, dated 07/22/2011, and recorded at the Worcester (Worcester District) County Registry of Deeds in Book 47638, Page 320, 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 4/20/2026 or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of noncompliance with the Act.

Witness, Gordon H. Piper, Chief Justice of this Court on 3/9/2026

Attest: Deborah J. Patterson Recorder March 20, 2026

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court

Worcester Probate and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200

Docket No. WO26P0652EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR FORMAL ADJUDICATION

Estate of:
Vera Heide Eberhardt
Date of Death: 11/13/2025

To all interested persons:
A Petition for Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative has been filed by David Kuiper-Moore of Huntington IN requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.

The Petitioner requests that: David Kuiper-Moore of Huntington IN 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 04/07/2026.**

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)

A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration. **WITNESS, Hon. Kathryn M. Bailey, First Justice of this Court.**
Date: March 05, 2026
Stephanie Fattman, Register of Probate
March 20, 2026

Nomination papers for Brookfield town election due March 16

BROOKFIELD — Brookfield will hold its Annual Town Election Monday, May 4, with polls open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Town Hall, 6 Central St.

Nomination papers for the Brookfield Annual Town Election are available until the March 16 filing deadline at the Town Clerk's Office. The following offices and terms are open to candidates:

- Moderator (1 Year Term)
- Select Board (3 Year Term)
- Assessor (3 Year Term)
- Planning Board (5 Year Term)
- Planning Board (4 Year Term)
- Elementary School Committee (3 Year Term)
- Water Commission (3 Year Term)
- Board of Health (3 Year Term)
- Trustee For Merrick Public Library (2 - 3 Year Term)
- Cemetery Commissioner (2 Year Term)
- Cemetery Commissioner (3 Year Term)
- Town Collector (3 Year Term)

Monday, March 16, 5 p.m.

Last day to obtain and return nomination papers (49 days before election)

Monday March 30, 5 p.m.

Last day for registrars to certify Nomination Papers: (35 Days before election)

Monday, March 30, 5 p.m.

Last day for candidates to withdraw (Letter to the Town Clerk)

Please note you can now register to vote online at: <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/ovr/>.

Celtic traditions come to life at Old Sturbridge Village

STURBRIDGE — Celtic traditions will come to life at Old Sturbridge Village's annual Celtic Celebration this March with live music, traditional dance performances, storytelling, and for the first time, the chance to meet two Scottish Highland calves visiting from Moonlit Run Farm in Barre.

Throughout the weekend of March 21-22, visitors will learn about Irish and Scottish history and the ways they shaped 19th-century New England. They will be treated to a host of Celtic traditions including fiddle tunes, bagpipes, and musicians alongside a variety of demonstrations and activities, including:

Irish poetry readings and folk tales

Harp performances by Cate Mahoney on Saturday and Shelley Otis on Sunday

Play Rounders (an Irish game similar to baseball)

A Celtic magic show with magician Daniel GreenWolf & Bella

A step dancing performance by the Inishfree Dance School

Character presentations about an immigrant's experience in early New England

Celtic Celebration is sponsored by Southbridge Credit Union. This event will occur on March 21 and 22 from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., and is included with general daytime admission or Village membership. To learn more, or to purchase tickets, visit osv.org/event/celtic-celebration.

WEEKLY POLICE BLOTTER

Spencer

The Spencer Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of March 4-10.

Frederick O. Cook, age 27, of Framingham was arrested on March 9 for Operating Under the Influence (Liquor) and Negligent Operation of a Motor Vehicle.

A 28-year-old male from Spencer was taken into protective custody for intoxication on March 10.

Juan Robles, age 18, of Worcester was arrested on March 10 for Disorderly Conduct and Disturbing the Peace.

Leicester

The Leicester Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of March 5-11.

Anthony James Urraca, age 26, of Leicester was arrested on March 5 for operating a motor vehicle after suspension of license and operating a vehicle with No Inspection Sticker.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest for operating a motor vehicle after suspension of license, operating a vehicle with No Inspection Sticker, and operating a motor vehicle after suspension of registration. A second individual received a summons in lieu of arrest for operating an Uninsured Motor Vehicle.

Timothy Stollberg Tyler, Jr., age 38, of Spencer was arrested on March 11 for operating a motor vehicle after suspension of license, operating a vehicle with No Inspection Sticker, and Possession of a Class A Drug.

Among Lionel Mairo, age 18, of Worcester was arrested on March 11 for operating a motor vehicle after suspension of license and driving at a rate of speed exceeding the posted limit.

Friends of the Leicester Library to hold plant sale

LEICESTER — The Friends of the Leicester Public Library will host a Plant Sale during Library hours beginning March 19 - 26 at the Leicester Public Library. A variety of houseplants, herbs and other flora will be available. Cash or checks only.

Donations of plants are gladly accepted any time the library is open before the sale. Varieties include monstera, Christmas cactus, spider plants, Swedish ivy, string of pearls, string of turtles, and other favorites. All money raised directly supports Library programs.



Quabbin Regional School District Should be **YOUR CHOICE** for School Choice.

Quabbin Regional Middle High School is hosting a **Prospective Middle and High School Students School Choice Open House for Grades 6-12**
THURSDAY, APRIL 2ND 6:00 - 8:00 PM

The night will feature information on:

- ♦ Innovation Pathways Program including **Advanced Manufacturing, Information Technology** and **Business & Finance**
- ♦ Rich STEM offerings including **robotics, biotechnology, cybersecurity, Project Lead The Way, Artificial Intelligence, Horticulture**
- ♦ Award winning performing and visual arts programs including **music, drama, arts, video production and digital design**
- ♦ Athletics, Clubs & Activities
- ♦ IB (International Baccalaureate) World School Diploma Programme
- ♦ AP (Advanced Placement) Courses
- ♦ Comprehensive World Languages including **American Sign Language**
- ♦ Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (NJROTC)
- ♦ Opportunities for paid & unpaid internships

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800 South Street, Barre, MA 01005 978-355-4668

To schedule a campus visit or for more information please visit our website: www.qrsd.org
OR EMAIL: schoolchoice@qrsd.org

EOE: Quabbin Regional School District's Policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public and individuals with whom it does business; and will apply to race, color, national background, religion, sex, disability, economic status, political party, age, handicap, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness and other human differences.

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Assistant to the Superintendent

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“The Secret World of Elephants” exhibit now open at the EcoTarium!

WORCESTER — “The Secret World of Elephants” exhibit opened at the EcoTarium on March 7, with a special Opening Day celebration. As the inaugural exhibition in the Museum’s new Stoddard Exhibition Hall, the exhibit invites visitors to explore

the remarkable lives, abilities, and history of the world’s largest land mammals, and reveals new scientific insights into how elephants think, communicate, and shape entire ecosystems, as well as the urgent challenges they face today.

“Today marks the first time Worcester, Massachusetts, is able to be the host city for a large-scale national science exhibition, thanks to the new Stoddard Exhibition Hall,” said Noreen Johnson Smith, President & CEO of the EcoTarium. “The 8,000

square foot Stoddard Hall features 16-foot high ceilings and flexible IT and electrical infrastructure to support modern, immersive, tech-driven exhibitions. The kind of exhibits you could only find in Boston or New York City or at the Smithsonian in Washington

DC are now available right here in Worcester.”

The EcoTarium welcomed distinguished guests to the opening ceremony of “The Secret World of Elephants,” including Senator Michael Moore; EcoTarium Board Chair Joseph Bartulis; Trustees Ray Quinlan, Harry Kokkinis, and Dr. Flo Tseng; and longtime supporters, community leaders, and friends Judy Stoddard King, Barbara Merolli, Sarah Ribeiro, Cynthia Pitcher, and Linda Robbins. EcoTarium Corporators, staff, and visitors also joined the celebration to mark this momentous occasion.

Following the ceremony, visitors excitedly formed a line, and then the doors to Stoddard Hall opened to reveal this magnificent exhibit!

“As we enter our third century of continuous operation as a science and nature museum, we are singularly focused on our guests: the curious, the studious, the explorers, the passionate science students, and lifelong learners who are eager to discover and learn more,” said Smith. “The Elephant exhibit will inspire everyone to learn

more about these beautiful creatures who roam the forests of Southeast Asia and the savannahs of Africa.”

Featuring life-size models, including a scientifically accurate woolly mammoth, touchable teeth casts, multimedia experiences, and interactive displays, the exhibition highlights elephants’ extraordinary senses and behaviors. Visitors can discover how elephants “hear” with their feet, use the 16 muscles in their trunks, and maintain complex social bonds.

The exhibit also explores the long relationship between elephants and humans, from their roles in war and work to their presence in religion and cultural symbolism. Notable objects on display include Vietnamese puppets of the legendary Trung sisters and a large figure of the Hindu god Ganesh.

The exhibit will run through Sept. 7. Visitors can learn more, view ticket timeslots, and get tickets on the EcoTarium Web site.

The Secret World of Elephants is organized by the American Museum of Natural History, New York (amnh.org).

A night of harmony and hope JAK-L FOUNDATION TO HOST DUELING PIANOS IN AUBURN



The members of the JAK-L Foundation. Front row, from left: David Boucher, Christine Afful, Joy Kochinskas, Devon Renfro, Steve Kochinskas. Second Row, from left: Karen Sisko, Kathy Konkol-Saad, Kim Sterczala, Shirley Shephardson, Kerry Bielicki, Ruth Cahill, Laurie Boucher

AUBURN — Get ready to sing, dance, and make a difference. On Saturday, May 2, the local community will gather at J. Anthony’s Italian Grill for a high-energy “Dueling Pianos” event presented by the JAK-L Foundation.

The evening promises a vibrant blend of music and laughter, but the mission behind the melodies is deeply personal. Proceeds from the event will directly support youth mental health and suicide prevention programs within the local community.

Turning pain into purpose The JAK-L Foundation was established in 2023 by

President Joy Kochinskas. For Kochinskas, a local salon owner and stylist for more than 25 years, the cause is an intimate one. After losing her sister to suicide in 2017, she became a dedicated advocate, participating in the “Out of the Darkness” walks for years before founding the JAK-L Foundation to create a more direct impact on mental health awareness.

“I’m hoping to make more of an impact on the mental health society,” Kochinskas said regarding the foundation’s mission. Alongside an active event committee, the foundation is working to transform

how the community discusses and supports mental wellness.

Event details The event kicks off at 8:00 PM, though supporters are encouraged to arrive early.

When: Saturday, May 2

Time: 8 – 10 p.m. (doors open at 7:30 p.m.)

Where: J. Anthony’s Italian Grill, 917 Southbridge St., Auburn

Admission: \$35 per person (plus fees)

Pro-Tip: Guests who enjoy dinner at J. Anthony’s prior to the show will receive priority seating for the performance.

Community support

The success of the JAK-L Foundation is driven by a dedicated team of volunteers. The event committee includes David Boucher, Christine Afful, Joy Kochinskas, Devon Renfro, and Steve Kochinskas. Supporting the front lines are team members Karen Sisko, Kathy Konkol-Saad, Kim Sterczala, Shirley Shephardson, Kerry Bielicki, Ruth Cahill, and Laurie Boucher.

By attending, guests aren’t just buying a ticket to a show—they are helping to “spark meaningful change” for local youth who may be struggling in silence.



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BAY PATH ALUMNA MOREEN BARBER ACHIEVES MILESTONE RN STATUS



Moreen Barber

nursing education. This March, Barber achieved a major career milestone, passing the NCLEX-RN on her very first attempt—a feat that follows her graduation from the Advanced Placement LPN program at Quinsigamond Community College (QCC).

For Barber, the road to becoming a Registered Nurse began in Charlton at the Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy. A standout member of the PN Class of 2022, she was recognized early on for her clinical sharpness and competitive spirit, earning a Gold Medal in Medical Terminology at the SkillsUSA District level and a Silver Medal at the State level.

A foundation in excellence
Barber's time at Bay Path was marked by more than just high marks; it was defined by service. From serving as an officer for the UNICEF Club to volunteering at community health clinics and middle school screenings, she consistently looked for ways to apply her skills beyond the classroom.

After passing her NCLEX-PN on the first try in September 2022, Barber immediately entered the workforce, gaining vital experience in rehabilitation and geriatric care at Marlborough Hills and later at Eliot Rehabilitation in Natick. Even while working as a dynamic LPN, she remained focused on her goal of advanced practice.

A full-circle moment
In December 2025, as she prepared to graduate with her Associate in Science in Nurse Education from QCC, Barber reached out to retired Academy Director, Dr. Gretheline Bolandrina, with a heartfelt invitation: "I'm kindly inviting you to attend my pinning ceremony at QCC. This has been a long journey starting with you at Bay Path. Please join me in celebrating this achievement. You are a blessing to me."

The pinning ceremony served as a bridge between her foundational training at Bay Path and her future as a Registered Nurse. During her clinical rotations at St. Vincent's Hospital (Maternity), and UMass, Barber was praised for her critical thinking and her ability to coordinate complex care plans in emergency and surgical

settings.

Skills for the future

With a robust clinical toolkit that includes certifications in Dementia Care, Mental Health First Aid, and Infusion Therapy, Barber brings a high level of expertise to the nursing field. Her background in end-of-life care, surgical recovery, and quality improvement makes her a vital asset to the Central Massachusetts healthcare community.

As she transitions into her new role as an RN, Barber continues to embody the spirit of the "lifelong learner." With a proven track record of enhancing patient outcomes and a dedication to ethical practice, her journey serves as an inspiration to nursing students across the Commonwealth.

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FRANK G. CHILINSKI
 PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
 EDITOR

EDITORIAL

A beam raised, a community lifted

There are moments in the life of a community when progress becomes visible in a very real way. On March 2, residents of Spencer and East Brookfield experienced one of those moments when the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District marked the topping off of the new David Prouty High School.

A topping off ceremony is a longstanding construction tradition. The final beam, often signed by those involved in the project, is raised to the highest point of the structure. An evergreen tree, symbolizing good luck and continued growth, is often attached as the beam is placed.

But while the ceremony may be rooted in construction tradition, the meaning behind it goes far deeper.

The beam raised at David Prouty High School represents years of conversation, planning, debate, and ultimately commitment by the community. Major school construction projects are rarely quick or simple. They require patience, persistence, and trust that the investment will benefit generations to come.

What made the Prouty ceremony particularly meaningful was the recognition that the building itself is not the ultimate goal. The goal is the students.

Superintendent Dr. Paul Haughey captured that sentiment during the ceremony when he reminded attendees that while the community looked up at the building's highest point, the real focus remains on the students learning inside.

That perspective matters.

Schools are more than structures of steel, brick, and glass. They are places where young people discover interests, test ideas, develop friendships, and prepare for the responsibilities of adulthood. The environment in which those experiences take place can make a significant difference.

For years, many residents recognized that the previous David Prouty High School building was showing its age. Like many mid-20th century school buildings across Massachusetts, it served generations well but eventually reached the point where renovation and modernization were necessary.

Replacing or rebuilding a school is never an easy decision. It involves significant financial commitment from taxpayers and often requires multiple rounds of public discussion and voter approval.

That is why the image of students attending town meetings and holding signs in support of the new school carries particular meaning. The people who will benefit most directly from the investment were not passive observers. They became part of the conversation.

Senior Class President Lauren Tutlis spoke about that connection during the ceremony, noting that her class stands in a unique position. They carry the memories of the old Prouty while also experiencing the promise of the new one.

That bridge between generations is something many communities understand well. School buildings often become landmarks that tie together decades of shared experiences. Alumni remember classrooms, athletic fields, concerts, and graduation ceremonies. Families see siblings, cousins, and neighbors pass through the same halls.

The new Prouty building will eventually become part of that same tradition.

It is also worth noting the thoughtful approach taken during construction. By opening portions of the building while other sections continue to be completed, the district has allowed students to remain part of the daily life of the school while minimizing disruptions to their education.

Students have been able to watch the building rise around them, seeing firsthand how a major project comes together piece by piece. In its own way, that has become a learning experience as well.

The topping off ceremony marks an important milestone, but it is not the finish line. The final phases of construction, including the auditorium and cafeteria, will continue to take shape in the months ahead.

Still, the beam now standing at the building's highest point sends a clear message.

The Spencer and East Brookfield communities made a decision to invest in their future. They chose to provide students with a modern learning environment designed to support the next generation of teachers, artists, athletes, scientists, and leaders.

Years from now, most people will not remember the details of the construction schedule or the debates that took place during planning. What they will remember are the students who walked those halls, the teachers who inspired them, and the opportunities that began inside those classrooms.

A beam of steel may mark the highest point of a building.

But the real measure of success will be the young people who grow within it.

VIEWPOINT

OPINION AND COMMENTARY FROM SPENCER, LEICESTER AND THE BROOKFIELDS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

When Leicester shows up, we are powerful

To the Editor:

Something powerful happened in Leicester last [week].

Our Democratic caucus filled the room at the Leicester Public Library with energy, purpose, and something that has been missing from too many places lately: people showing up for each other and for democracy.

If you weren't there, you missed a night that reminded all of us why this work matters.

Last year, our caucus was small. This year, the room was nearly five times larger. Neighbors, new faces, longtime Democrats, first-time participants — people came because they believe this moment matters and that our town has a role to play in shaping the future.

And the momentum in the room was unmistakable.

We were honored to welcome representatives and speakers from across the Democratic community, including a representative from Jim McGovern's office, State Rep. David LeBoeuf, and several leaders and candidates working every day to move our state and our country forward.

A special thank you to the speakers who joined us and energized the room:

- Anne Gobi, representing the Maura Healey-Kim Driscoll campaign
- Alex Rikleen Candidate for U.S. Senate
- Shannon Teabo Candidate for MA State Senate in the Worcester & Hampshire district
- Diego Maldonado, representing Senator Markey's campaign

Their presence made something very clear: people are paying attention to what is happening in Leicester.

But the most important part of the night wasn't the speakers.

It was the people in the room.

People who care enough to show up on a Monday night. People who believe democracy is something we build together. People who are ready to organize, speak up, and make sure our community has a voice.

If you missed it, don't worry — this is only the beginning. There will be many

more opportunities to get involved, to stand together, and to help shape the direction of our town, our state, and our country.

But if last night proved anything, it's this:

When Leicester shows up, we are powerful.

That is how movements grow.

And after last night, one thing is certain: the momentum in Leicester is real.

And we're not slowing down.

Our next moment together is coming quickly.

On March 28th from 12:00-2:00 PM, we will gather in Leicester for the No Kings Protest — a rally to stand up for democracy, accountability, and the idea that in America no one is above the law and no one rules alone.

This one is going to be big.

In fact, I will say it plainly: this is the event that is going to put Leicester on the map.

If last night showed us anything, it's that when people in this town decide to show up, something remarkable happens. Voices grow louder. Communities grow stronger. And the message spreads far beyond the room we're standing in.

So if you were there last [week] — thank you. You helped spark something real.

And if you missed it, don't worry. The next chapter is only weeks away.

March 28
 Noon to 2 p.m.
 Leicester.

Come stand with us.

When Leicester shows up, we are powerful.

And we are just getting started.

Top of Form
 Bottom of Form
 Warm Regards,

ELIZABETH M. ZITO
 CHAIR
 LEICESTER DEMOCRATIC TOWN
 COMMITTEE

Beware of icebergs

To the Editor:

Most well informed people know that 75 to 85 percent of icebergs are hidden from view below the surface. Navigators bare this in mind when anywhere proximate to visible floating ice. It is also vital to observe caution when dealing with politicians. I received a letter from a congressman, that detailed several issues that he had voted for and some he voted against. With a little research, I found out it was all in one bill.

Some years back, there was a ballot initiative related to the state's gasoline tax. There was not much detail or clarity, except for the provision in the law that specified that the tax would automatically increase at the inflation rate, and that was not acceptable because the legislature did not go on record supporting the increase. Then, there is what Paul Harvey, used to call the rest of the story. I believe the rate was 8 cents a gallon, and was all committed to be used on roads and bridges. It would have gone up a penny in three or four years. The repeal you voted for, took all the funding from roads and bridges and became general funds. Can anyone tell me if the Trump tariffs made it to the general funds?

I have been voting for a long time. Although my last license renewal requested all the info in the proposed new federal voting bill, one would think that information would be better provided when reg-

istering than creating a foolish issue while the polls are open. The census showed who lives here, including dogs. The voter registry shows address and party affiliation. They usually ask me where I live, look up names of voters living there, check me off, and give me a ballot. After filling it out, same process when turning it in. If I had to show passport, license, birth certificate, it would be nutso, but only increase the time to vote (excluding getting everything together) a minute. That is here. In urban centers where they are doing everything they can to suppress voting, which can already take several hours, I expect it will discourage voting. In a true committed democracy like Australia, everyone is registered at birth and all legal voters are mailed a ballot elections last a month, you can go there, or vote by mail. You can sign your ballot and vote for nobody; as long as ballot returned, you will not be fined.

Other than fools who still think 2020 election was stolen, research by even the GOP Heritage think tank says fraud percentage is under .000000008, and would change no result ever. So, many of you are thinking, what is the problem with ID requirements? The problem is that it is an iceberg. States can and do have ID rules, but what this bill actually does is pick up on the Big Brother AI registry that Musk and DOGE started trying to build and the courts stopped. Unless you think that political registry is entitled to your mother's maiden name, and everything that can possibly known about you, by anyone, anywhere, then you need to stop going online acting indignant that many do not support the invasion of your privacy. Worried about illegal voters?

Participate locally. Do not sign on to the Big Brother 1984 program that Trump says will yield GOP wins everywhere.

Isn't this presidency already enough of an iceberg for you? Those lower prices, no foreign wars, stability and international respect, have all sunk below the waves. Tired of winning yet?

KEN KIMBALL
 BROOKFIELD

Ease the squeeze on your retirement income plan



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Rising prices may not dominate headlines the way they did a year or two ago, but if you're retired, you're probably still feeling them. Even when overall inflation cools, the costliest expenses — like health care, utilities, insurance, and property taxes — tend to rise faster than broad inflation numbers suggest. That creates a squeeze that can make you question whether your income plan is built to last.

Fortunately, you often can adjust without drastic cuts that affect your lifestyle. Start by understanding where the pressure comes from and how to build more flexibility into your plan.

Inflation hits retirees differently. You've likely noticed your grocery bill, prescription drug costs and heating expenses haven't returned to "normal." Even small increases compound over time, and can chip away at your buying power.

If your income plan was created years ago, it may assume lower inflation or relatively stable price increases over time. Recent years have shown that's not always the case.

Why some income plans feel strained. Any plan relying on fixed withdrawals or rigid budgets can feel tight when living costs rise. If you're drawing from investments, you may hesitate to increase your withdrawals because of market volatility. And if you depend on fixed income sources like Social Security or a pension, yearly cost of living increases may not keep pace with your expenses. You might live 25 to 35 years in retirement, giving small annual cost increases decades to add up.

What you can do without sacrificing stability. A few adjustments can help you stay ahead of rising costs and maintain your financial confidence.

First, review your withdrawal strategy. Ask your financial advisor about flexible approaches that increase income when markets and portfolios perform well and pull back during tougher times. This protects your long-term plan with room to respond to rising prices.

Next, rebalance your portfolio. You may uncover opportunities to shift toward investments with more consistent income or better tax efficiency. Sometimes a small tweak can generate extra cash flow without increasing overall risk.

Finally, look at your income sources. You may be less affected by rising costs if you delay taking Social Security, work a part-time job, add inflation-protected bonds, or create predictable lifetime income with annuities, if they're appropriate for your situation.

Don't overlook health care: Health care costs often grow faster than general inflation. Medicare premiums and out-of-pocket expenses can rise annually, and the need for long-term care remains a big financial uncertainty for retirees. Building health care-specific inflation into your plan now can help prevent surprises later. Any savings you have in a health savings account can help you cover health care costs. And many pharmaceutical companies offer financial assistance programs to help pay for costlier medications.

Stay flexible and informed: Today's retirements look different from those of even a decade ago. The key is staying flexible, reviewing your plan regularly and making small adjustments before pressure builds. A financial advisor can help you find the right approach to navigating rising costs without disrupting the life you've worked hard to build.

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

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.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

It's time for the President to start hearing "no"

To the Editor:

These past couple weeks we have witnessed our President declare "an excursion" into Iran. He has assured us that the massive bombing of that country will likely free the people of Iran to select regime change. What has this US display of military might accomplished?

The "excursion" has demonstrated that we have a mighty military that apparently does not need or seek congressional approval to engage in hostile activities against other nations. Our Secretary of "War," Pete Hegseth, has declared that under his and Trump's leadership, our military would not be hampered by "Woke" rules of engagement, whether long held international standards or our own congressional laws.

Here at home, we are beginning to see economic repercussions, but perhaps the least appreciated loss is to our international image. If the rule of law is so easily ignored by our leadership, who will want to do business with us? What value is a treaty or trade agreement with a country that believes it is above the law? Despite Trump's constant claims, he is not the stabile genius he pretends to be; and his repeated business ventures in the past ending in fiscal bankruptcy should have served as a warning against reliance on his managerial skills.

Trump needed to distract public attention away from the momentum of the Epstein scandal. But the genuine anger over the lies and cover up used to protect wealthy abusers of young girls and women will not be easily quelled. Most Americans, regardless of political background and as they are learning more details, will not relent until justice is finally delivered to the guilty parties. Hopefully, our country can begin the lengthy process of rebuilding the trust

of the international community through our participation and contributions to solve the environmental and social threats that can no longer be ignored.

Our world is facing an ever-increasing number of challenges, with the threat of irreversible environmental degradation topping the list. When we most need cooperation to address common threats we all face, we now are beginning to see the consequences of a chaotic winner take all strategy. Canada, for good reason, has declared itself free to seek other nations with whom to enter trade agreements and other alliances. Others will likely follow suit, and the US will probably find that our embracement of the "America First" attitude will result in an "America Alone!"

Freedom! America, Land of the Free! Free to what? Free to abuse children, to pollute the air we all breathe and the water we all drink, to treat people like merchandise to sell and trade? With freedom comes responsibility. Every parent tries to instill that appreciation in their children. Unfortunately, some "spoiled rich kids" feel entitled to freedoms they don't deserve. Trump is clearly a spoiled bully. He does not deserve a Nobel Peace Prize. He does not deserve his image carved on our mountains, his name attached to libraries, ballrooms, monuments, or currency. He does not deserve a reign of retribution in which he can punish those who would dare to put our nation's and the world's welfare above his own. A schoolyard bully quickly loses his power when his threats are recognized for the pathetic power displays they are. It's time for our privilege-seeking President to start hearing the word "no."

DAVID W. BROWN
NORTH BROOKFIELD

Trump's personal war of choice and what he thinks — in his own words

To the Editor:

We already have in Trump's words that he decided to go to war because of his "feel."

Then recently he called the war an "excursion." Dictionaries define as a 'short journey or trip, especially one engaged in as a leisure activity. No President in America history — Washington, Lincoln, Roosevelt etc. has ever said in any way shape or form that war, with all its' grief and pain is anything like an "excursion."

Read, for an example, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.

Trump also recently said that the Iran war will end "When I feel it in my bones," as if he, and he alone, will decide. In his damaged, delusional, self centered mind, we Americans, our government, the rest of the world and even the people of Iran have nothing to say that he needs consider.

All disagree.

The No Kings rallies scheduled for Saturday March 28 give us a chance to have our say. With now between 2,000 and 3,000 planned, including from Leicester, Spencer and the Brookfields to Boston can provide good places to show and tell Trump and his "servants" that we have a role to play and that we very much disagree.

The last No Kings rallies drew about seven million people. Studies from other countries show that when about three percent of a country's population, turn out show their opposition even bad leaders listen — the millions "butterfly" effect if you will. For the United states this means something like nine or 10 million people. So, let's not only go to one, but bring friends, neighbors — even relatives.

KEVIN KANE
SPENCER

The lost art of knowing your town

LANTERNS
ALONG
MAIN
STREET
By CHARLES

The other day, I needed to stop at a small local bank branch to take care of a simple errand. Nothing complicated, just the sort of quick visit that most people expect to finish in a few minutes.

While I was waiting, I noticed something that used to be fairly common in Massachusetts towns but feels a little rarer these days.

The teller greeted nearly every person who stepped up to the counter by name.

Not loudly, and not in a showy way. Just a friendly, matter-of-fact kind of greeting. "Morning, Bob."

"How are you today, Linda?"

One fellow walking out the door paused long enough for a quick conversation about someone's daughter who had recently gone off to college. Another customer asked about the progress of a new roof being put on the teller's house.

None of it lasted long. A minute here, 30 seconds there.

But it reminded me of something that used to be second nature in small towns: people knowing one another, not in the grand sense of lifelong friendships, but in the simple recognition that comes from sharing the same streets, shops, and sidewalks for years.

There was a time when nearly every town had places like that.

The hardware store where the owner remembered what kind of paint you had bought the year before.

The diner where the waitress didn't need to ask how you liked your eggs.

The post office where the clerk might mention that your neighbor had picked up a package earlier that morning.

None of these connections were particularly dramatic. They were small, everyday acknowledgments that people lived side by side in the same place.

Over the years, many parts of life have grown more efficient, which is not always a bad thing. Self-checkout lanes move quickly. Online banking saves a trip across town. Packages arrive at the door without anyone needing to stand in line at the counter.

Convenience has its advantages. But sometimes, I wonder if we've quietly traded away a few of those small human moments along the way.

When everything is done through a screen, there are fewer chances to run into someone you know. Fewer moments when a casual "How are you?" turns into a

short conversation about a local ball game or the latest town project.

And those small conversations matter more than we sometimes realize.

They help knit a town together.

In Massachusetts communities, where many residents have lived for decades and families often return generation after generation, those everyday connections create a sense that a place belongs to the people who live there.

You are not simply passing through.

You are part of the town's ongoing story.

That doesn't mean everyone needs to know everyone else's life history. No one expects that.

But there is something reassuring about walking into a familiar place and seeing a face that recognizes yours.

A quick greeting.

A nod.

Maybe a short conversation about the weather, or the Red Sox, or how quickly the kids seem to grow up.

By the time I finished my errand at the bank that day, I had heard at least half a dozen people greeted by name. Some lingered to talk. Others hurried off to their next stop along Main Street.

The teller returned to her work without much fuss.

To her, it probably felt like a normal morning.

And perhaps that's exactly the point.

In the best small towns, the quiet habit of knowing one another doesn't feel unusual at all. It simply feels like the natural way a community should work.

A town where people recognize one another, even in small ways, is a town where neighbors are never very far apart.

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Laughter is the best medicine, so get your dose at the Bradley Playhouse

PUTNAM, Conn. — The Theatre of Northeastern Connecticut at the Bradley Playhouse is excited to present Season 12 of Scott Higgins Comedy All Stars. Four comedy headliners that perform all over the country and have been seen on Comedy Central, Amazon Prime, HBO, and Showtime are ready to take the stage. They have been heard on podcasts and SiriusXM Radio, and now Scott Higgins brings them live to The Bradley for one night of hilarious comedic skits, saying what we all think but wouldn't dare say out loud.

Dan Altano (Whose album "Stand-Up Dad" debuted #1 on iTunes), Emily Ruskowski (Appeared on Laugh TV on Fox and 2 Dope Queens podcast), Chris Monty (Seen on HBO and Amazon Prime), and Howie Mason (A Regular at Mohegan Sun and Foxwoods), with host Scott Higgins (Behind The Funny Podcast – Boston Comedy Choice Nominee Best Podcast) will bring a night of laughs that will surely leave you wanting more.

Laughter is the best medicine, so come and get your dose. This is a show you don't want to miss.

Scott Higgins Comedy All Stars is one show on March 28 at 7:30 p.m. The suggested audience is 18 and up. Line up is subject to change with notice.

The Bradley Playhouse is located at 30 Front St. (Route 44) in Putnam. All seats are reserved. Reservations may be made with a major credit card online at www.thebradley-playhouse.org or by calling 860-928-7887. Tickets may be purchased at the theater box office, either before the performance, or at the door if available. Purchasing your tickets ahead of time is always a good idea.

Cornerstone Bank commits \$7,500 to support Abby's House 50th Anniversary Gala

WORCESTER — Cornerstone Bank has donated \$7,500 to support the Abby's House 50th Anniversary Gala, scheduled for May 29 at the Hogan Center at the College of the Holy Cross. The milestone gift builds on the bank's ongoing commitment to the organization, following donations in 2023, 2024 and 2025.

"Abby's House has been opening doors for women and children in Worcester for half a century, and we are proud to stand with them at this historic moment," said Todd Tallman, CEO of Cornerstone Bank. "Their impact is profound, and this contribution reflects our belief in their mission and our commitment to strengthening the communities we serve."

Abby's House provides shelter, affordable housing, advocacy and support services to women and children. Over the past five decades, the organization has helped more than 16,000 women and their children rebuild their lives and achieve stability and independence. It operates one of the first overnight shelters for women in the country and is now the largest provider of affordable, supportive housing in Worcester designed specifically for women and children.

The 50th Anniversary Gala will celebrate Abby's House's legacy, recognize key community partners and support the organization's continued work to meet the evolving needs of families across the region.

About Cornerstone Bank

Cornerstone Bank was formed in 2017, born of a long history of supporting the community, and providing a strong foundation to help people and businesses thrive. Serving Worcester County, Massachusetts, Cornerstone Bank's local presence and community-based banking model enables a unique ability to deliver outstanding service, with a personal touch. Cornerstone, which is a subsidiary of PeoplesBankCorp, MHC, operating independently under its own name and brand, provides the highest level of service and expertise for individuals, businesses, and community organizations with branch locations 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.

Cornerstone Bank donates \$5,000 to support Veterans Inc. Recovery Summit, 35th Anniversary Military Gala Ball

WORCESTER — Cornerstone Bank has donated \$5,000 to Veterans Inc. to support the organization's Annual Recovery Summit and 35th Anniversary Military Gala Ball. The contribution builds on the bank's continued support, which included a \$5,000 donation in 2025 and \$3,000 in 2024.

"We are proud to continue to support Veterans Inc. and the meaningful work it does for veterans and their families," said Todd Tallman, CEO of Cornerstone Bank.

The funding helps advance Veterans Inc.'s mission to be there for veterans and their families in their time of need and to help end veteran homelessness through holistic supportive services such as housing, employment and training, case management, food security, health and wellness programs and family support.

The Annual Recovery Summit focuses on grace, self-reflection and inner healing through the recovery journey. The event offers learning opportunities, performance art and networking with the health community.

The bank's support also helps power the Veterans Inc. 35th Anniversary Military Gala Ball on Oct. 24, which will celebrate more than three decades of service to veterans across New England and beyond.

Veterans Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit incorporated in 1990, has helped more than 100,000 veterans and their families and is the largest provider of veteran services in New England.

About Cornerstone Bank

Cornerstone Bank was formed in 2017, born of a long history of supporting the community, and providing a strong foundation to help people and businesses thrive. Serving Worcester County, Massachusetts, Cornerstone Bank's local presence and community-based banking model enables a unique ability to deliver outstanding service, with a personal touch. Cornerstone, which is a subsidiary of PeoplesBankCorp, MHC, operating independently under its own name and brand, provides the highest level of service and expertise for individuals, businesses, and community organizations with branch locations 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.

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BHS Class of 1986 seeks community's help locating classmates for 40th reunion

REGION — As the Bartlett High School Class of 1986 prepares to celebrate its 40th reunion on Sept. 26, organizers are asking the community for assistance in locating classmates who have not yet been reached through social media or via text.

To make the process simple, the reunion committee has created a short contact-information form and is encouraging residents, friends, and former classmates to help spread the word. If you know someone on the "missing classmates" list, organizers ask that you text them the link to the form so they can update their information.

Contact Info Form: <https://tinyurl.com/BHS1986-40Years>

If it's easier, you may also complete the form on a classmate's

behalf — so long as you have their current contact details. Organizers emphasize that any help tracking them down is truly appreciated, as personal connections often succeed where digital outreach falls short.

A list of classmates the committee is hoping to locate appears below. With the community's support, they hope every member of the Class of '86 will have the opportunity to join this milestone celebration.

Peter Allain
Beth Antonopoulos
Marie Aperges
Andrew Baca
Austin Bailey
David Beardsley
Frank Belanger
Carolyn Bembenek

Richard Bernier
Sheila Bialoncik
Beth Bialy
Jason Borski
Doreen Bourget
Eric Brisbois
Kathleen Brown
Paul Browning
Paul Bugan
Cindy Bullens
Sandra Butt
Mont Canterbury
Stephen Carlson
Daniel Chapdelaine
Kelly Cobb
Ken Cournoyer
Timothy Decker
Tammy Deschenes
Aaron Dorcas
Daniel Doyle
Dorothy DusoSelina Fife
James Gardner
Jeffrey Gatto

Tina Giakoumis
Alicia Goudreau
Richard Guerin
Robert Hamm
Scott Horanzy
Jane Houle
Todd Hufault
Joseph Hughes
Melissa Jankowski
Thor Johnson
Nena Johnston
Lisa Kozlowski
Robert Krasnecky
Jill Krause
Michael Kryger
Rick Lawson
Deborah Leite
Linda Lifer
Patricia Majewski
Renee Marchand
Jennifer Marsh
Jennifer Mason
John Meagher

Fumiyo Mochizuki
Deborah Munsch
Brett Napierata
Wayne Parmentier
Brian Poplawski
Gary Poplawski
Edward Powers
William Radcliffe
James Remy
Debra Ross
Collin Salmon
Dale Schleis
Theresa Sergel
Henry Skiba
Alan Standrowicz
Jeffrey Surozenski
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* June Cazeault * Laurie Sullivan * Lori Johnson-Chausse * William Gilmore II * Maureen Cimoch * Bryan Pelletier

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



Sprawling 62'x30' fieldstone faced 1 Level Ranch, located on a +/- 0.5-acre level w/24'x24' 2 car att'd garage. Offers: 1,860 sf main level plus 1,000 sf +/- finished lower level, 3 BRs, 2-1/2 Baths, 2 stone fireplaces w/pellet stove inserts, FHW BB heat by oil. Open floor plan w/15'x13' kitchen, 15'x22' living rm, 13'x11' dining rm, 10'x28' breezeway w/sliders to rear deck, and 3 season sunroom, hardwood & c-tile floors, replacement windows/doors & more, more, more! How do you like it? Call today to schedule a showing! \$525,000

Webster - 24 Cooper Rd
New Construction - Craftsman Style home



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

On the shores of Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg

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



ASTONISHING Panoramic Views across mid-section of Webster Lake! Sun drenched from early morning sunrise till sunset! View the lake from all windows. Located on a peninsula providing 2 Shorelines. Fireplaced Living Room! Recent Kitchen & Bath! Primary Bedroom w/walk-in closet. Hardwood Floors. 2 Baths. FHW Oil Heat! Central Air. Garage. \$ 900,000.

Webster Lake - 302 Killdeer Island



Renovated + move-in ready lakefront home w/1,700+/- sq ft. Open kitchen/dining/living w/cathedral ceilings + wall of windows. Primary suite w/private bath! 2 add'l bedrooms, 2nd Full bath. Lower level family room w/walkout to water. Wraparound deck, new vinyl railings, terraced yard, sandy beach, professional landscaping. Many updates \$775,000

Webster Lake Waterfront - 31 Bayview!!



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



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QCC's director of community engagement receives Black Excellence award



Sean Harris

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College's Director of Community Engagement, Sean Harris, was recently named a 2026 Black Excellence of the Hill award recipient by the Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative Caucus (MBLLC). This annual honor celebrates Black and Latino Community leaders who are making a meaningful difference in their communities.

Harris was nominated for the award by Massachusetts State Representative David LeBoeuf. "Sean embodies the best of QCC and the Worcester community. We are incredibly proud to see his impact recognized at the state level with this distinguished honor," said QCC President Dr. Luis Pedraja. A longtime pillar of the Worcester community, Harris has supported local organizations and initiatives for decades.

He is the founder of the Professional Men of Color Dinner Club and serves on the boards of the Business Improvement District for Downtown Worcester and Dress for Success. In 2023, he was recognized with the BIPOC Community Leader Award from the Diverse Professional Roundtable. Additionally, Harris was a founding member of the Worcester Youth Center and later served as its youngest executive director.

Harris has worked at QCC since 2021, becoming the Director of Community Engagement in 2023. In addition to fostering relationships and partnerships between QCC and the surrounding community, he co-chairs the Access to Opportunity Committee and serves as a member of the Advisory Council for Access & Opportunity.

"I'm deeply honored to be recognized among such dedicated leaders from across the state. Working within the Worcester community has always been rooted in unity and what we can accomplish together," said Harris.

The award winners were celebrated last week at a ceremony featuring remarks from Massachusetts Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll and keynote speaker Mechalle Brown, President of the 7uice Foundation and mother of Celtic's star Jaylen Brown.

Here Today Adopted Tomorrow hosting "Spay"ghetti Supper

PALMER — Here Today Adopted Tomorrow (HTAT) invites all animal lovers to our annual "Spay"ghetti Supper fundraiser at the St. Thomas Parish Center in Palmer on Saturday, March 28.

Enjoy a delicious chef-prepared meal while helping the very cats in our community! Whether you're a true party animal or simply want to make a difference, it's a great way to support a good cause with friends and family. Plus, enjoy raffles, prizes, and plenty of fun throughout the evening!

Each year, HTAT sees more cats pawing at its doors for help. As prices rise, everyone feels the strain—but many people don't realize that rising costs affect pets, too. It's not just veterinary care that has exploded; as food and housing prices rise, many loving pet owners find themselves struggling to keep up. When life becomes overwhelming, cats can be the ones caught in the middle.

That's where HTAT steps in. Events like the "Spay"ghetti Supper make our support possible, helping us provide food, shelter, and care for cats who might otherwise fall through the cracks.

HTAT Executive Director Rachael Max says the event is a chance for the community to come together while making a real difference. "Spay'ghetti Supper is one of our most popular events of the year," said Max. "It's always a fun night, but it also plays an important role in helping us continue our work with cats who need a little extra care and attention."

The "Spay"ghetti Supper takes place at the St. Thomas Parish Center in Palmer on Saturday, March 28, 2026, from 5:00-6:30 PM. Advance tickets are \$15 for adults and \$10 for seniors and kids under 12, while limited door tickets will be available at \$20 for adults and \$15 for seniors and kids. To purchase tickets, visit www.heretodaysanctuary.org or call 413-324-8224.

If you are local and need assistance feeding or caring for your pet, HTAT can help. Local cat owners can spay or neuter their cats for \$80 or less, and strays and ferals can be fixed for free! Visit [\[daysanctuary.org\]\(http://daysanctuary.org\) to learn more about our community assistance programs.](http://www.hereto-</p>
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About Here Today Adopted Tomorrow Animal Sanctuary

Here Today Adopted Tomorrow (HTAT) was founded by mother-daughter team Barbara Horn

and Rachael Max. HTAT is a volunteer driven group focused on helping cats and the people who love them in our community. In 2012 we opened our no kill, cageless cat adoption center for adult cats and kittens in Brimfield, MA. It is deeply important to us that every resident's stay at HTAT is comfortable and healthy, making for well-adjusted, happy animals. Shortly after opening, we realized there were more homeless cats than we could handle by adoption alone. We believe that pets are cherished members of the family and that every cat deserves care, respect, and the chance to thrive, no matter their circumstances. We have programs to help special needs cats flourish and get adopted, as well as community assistance programs to help pet owners keep their pets, such as our Pet Food Pantry, low-cost spay-neuter program, and free cat behavior program. Each year, HTAT helps over 1,500 animals and their families. For more information, visit heretodaysanctuary.org.

Visit Here Today Adopted Tomorrow on Facebook at facebook.com/heretoday-sanctuary, and follow us on Instagram at [@heretodayadoptedtomorrow](https://instagram.com/heretodayadoptedtomorrow).



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