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SPENCER NEW LEADER

©2025, Issue #46

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Friday, November 14, 2025

First program held at newly renovated Swan Tavern carriage house

LEICESTER — The Swan Tavern-Leicester Historical Museum held its first public program in its newly restored & renovated carriage/summer house on Thursday, Oct. 9.

The detached building was originally a carriage house, but in the 1930's was renovated and turned into a half-glass structure to be used in the warmer months.

The structure had long been neglected when the tavern was used by Becker College as its administration building and it was at a point where it needed immediate attention. Coordinated by the town of Leicester Historical Commission, the project has been ongoing for the last two years. The major work was done by

Antanvica Construction of Leicester, funded by grants. The remaining exterior and interior work was done by the group of dedicated museum volunteers.

Steve and Bronya Joanis, historical reenactors who present public programs all over southern New England, held a public demonstration on how apple cider was made around the turn of the 19th century.

The tavern usually holds three programs in the spring, and three programs in the fall/winter after the Harvest Fair on the town common; this was a great opportunity to bring the public in to see how far the little building has come in the past couple of years to kick-off the fall/winter

events.

People driving by were able to look right through the first floor with no walls, so this was a great way to invite the public to see the newly renovated summer house. The event was well attended, and the crowd really enjoyed the program, with one attendee even interested in learning how to start making cider himself. It was really one of the most well received presentations in the past five years.

On Nov. 13 at 7 p.m., Tom Keleher from Old Sturbridge Village will present the history of Early New England Country Stores. December will be a busy month for the

Turn To SWAN page A10



Join North Brookfield COA for a night of singing, magic and laughter

NORTH BROOKFIELD — Join the North Brookfield Council on Aging for a free night of entertainment for all ages!

On Nov. 15 from 5:30-8:30 p.m., join us at the North Brookfield Senior Center for a fun night of singing, magic, and laughter with entertainment provided by LOL Entertainment.

Entertainers include Motown Performer Irving Lewis, Neil Diamond Tribute Artist Charlie Lask, and Magician and comedian Steve Charrette.

Stop in to the Senior Center to sign up, as seats are limited. Refreshments will be provided. Hope to see you there!

Nichols College hosts renowned author, filmmaker Christy Cashman for inspiring campus discussion



DUDLEY — Nichols College proudly welcomed celebrated author, actress, and filmmaker Christy Cashman to campus on Thursday, Nov. 6, for a public discussion and signing of her award-winning novel "The Truth About Horses." The free event, held in Fels Lounge, drew students, faculty, and members of the local community for an afternoon of creativity, conversation, and inspiration.

Cashman, whose film credits include American Hustle, Joy, and Ted 2, spoke about her career path, creative process, and the resilience required to succeed in the arts. She shared stories from her experiences in film and publishing, offering attendees practical advice on building confidence as writers and trusting their unique voices.

Throughout the discussion, Cashman emphasized that creativity flourishes through persistence and authenticity. Students had the opportunity to ask questions about her work and to learn firsthand about the balance between imagination, discipline, and self-belief that underpins successful storytelling.

Cashman told attendees, "Write through everything. Keep writing when you don't feel like it. Keep writing when you feel like you don't have anything to say. Keep writing when

Turn To CASHMAN page A10

Leicester Paraprofessionals Association awarded Mass. Child Grant

LEICESTER — The Leicester Paraprofessionals Association (LPA) is pleased to announce that it has used funds from the Massachusetts Teachers Association's Mass. Child Grant to support students in need across the district.

With these funds, the LPA purchased a variety of clothing and personal hygiene items, which are being distributed discreetly by school

nurses to students who may require them. These supplies help ensure that every student has access to basic necessities, allowing them to focus on learning and feel comfortable and confident at school.

Leicester Public Schools are deeply grateful for the generosity of the LPA and the partnership with the MTA's Mass

Child program. The district also appreciates the ongoing support of the Leicester School Committee as the community works together to meet the needs of students and provide a positive, nurturing environment for all learners.



Holiday makes for early deadlines

Due to the Thanksgiving holiday, the submission deadline for any press releases and letters to the Editor intended for publication in our Nov. 28 will be Thursday, Nov. 20 at 10 a.m. Submissions can be e-mailed to news@stonebridgepress.news.

The staff wishes our readers a safe and happy Thanksgiving.



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A family legacy

BAY PATH GRAD JOINS SISTERS AS LPN IN LOCAL HEALTHCARE

CHARLTON — Jason Houatchanthara joined the region’s healthcare workforce on June 2 as a practical nursing student in his last term and continues to do so after reaching an important professional milestone. Jason Houatchanthara, a resident of Fiskdale, has officially earned his LPN license by passing the NCLEX-PN exam on his first attempt. Jason graduated from Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy in Charlton this past June 20.

He is currently employed at the Southbridge Rehabilitation and Nursing Center in Southbridge.

Houatchanthara’s path to becoming a nurse was marked by determination, hard work, and a deep commitment to helping others. Balancing rigorous academic requirements with demanding clinical rotations and employment, he exemplified perseverance and dedication throughout his training. Jason is a graduate of Southbridge High School, where he was challenged with honors courses and Advanced Placement (AP) courses in Algebra and Statistics.

“The nursing journey was tough, filled with long nights, hard work, and sacrifice,” Houatchanthara shared. “But through dedication and determination, we finally made it. With the support of our families, classmates, and instructors, every challenge became a stepping stone to success.”

Hands-on training and clinical experience
Houatchanthara’s path was marked by perseverance, balancing academic demands with extensive hands-on training and prior employment. During the program, Jason completed 1,097 hours of didactic and clinical training, gaining hands-on experience across several healthcare settings:

Quaboag Rehab and Skilled Care Center in West Brookfield, where he demonstrated leadership in wound care and medication administration.

Vibra, The Meadows in Rochdale, where he performed advanced procedures such as trach care and G-tube feedings.

Lutheran Rehab and Skilled Care Center in Worcester, where he focused on patient care, charting, and communication with interdisciplinary teams.

His academic excellence earned him induction into the National Technical Honor Society, and he was an active member of the Mock Code Team. He built a strong foundation in pharmacology, Medical-Surgical Nursing, and geriatric care.

Career Transition and Early Nursing Experience
Before entering the nursing field full-time, Houatchanthara worked as the Head Custodian at Brimfield Elementary School until May 30. In that role, he managed staff assignments, ensured safety and maintenance standards, and coordinated supply inventories — experiences that strengthened his leadership, organization, and communication skills, all vital for nursing practice.

Shortly before graduating, as a practical nursing student in his last term, he began his healthcare career as a Graduate Nurse at Southbridge Rehabilitation and Nursing Center, gaining early professional experience in patient care and clinical teamwork.

Family Legacy in Nursing and A Family Tradition of Compassion

Houatchanthara’s dedication to nursing runs in the family. His successful transition into nursing continues a notable family legacy, joining his two older sisters in the nursing field.

His sister, Kamphan Houatchanthara, LPN, graduated from Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy in 2021. As a Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy graduate, Kamphan’s accolades include Recipient, Clinical Excellence Award and Random Act of Kindness Award; Member, Mock Code Team,



UNICEF Club, and Admissions Panel Interview; Certifications on Mental Health First Aid, Dementia Care, Infusion Therapy / Central Line Care Program, and attendance at the COVID-19 Contact Tracing Johns Hopkins University. She currently serves in a leadership position at the Lutheran Rehab and Skilled Care Center in Worcester. Khamphan became a nurse following their sister, Maxine. Their other sister, Maxine Khounthy, LPN, also works at Southbridge Rehabilitation and Nursing Center previously as Nursing Supervisor, now as the Assistant Director of Nursing, and shares a long-standing connection with Bay Path faculty.

Maxine recently sent a message to Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN, Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy’s former Academy Director, expressing her gratitude:

“Thank you so much for all you did for my sister Kamphan, and brother Jason,” Maxine wrote.

Maxine and Dr. Bolandrina first met in 2013, when Dr. Bolandrina served as the Clinical Facilitator at Southbridge Rehabilitation and Nursing Center, and Maxine was the evening nursing supervisor.

Serving the community
Now a fully credentialed LPN, Jason holds certifications in BLS/CPR for Healthcare Providers, Mental Health First Aid, Dementia Care, and Stop the Bleed.

Equipped with skills in EMR/EHR systems, infection control, and vital signs monitoring, he is eager to contribute to the healthcare community with compassion and professionalism.

“Nursing has taught me that compassion and teamwork can make a lasting difference,” Jason said. “I want to continue to give back to the community that supported me.”



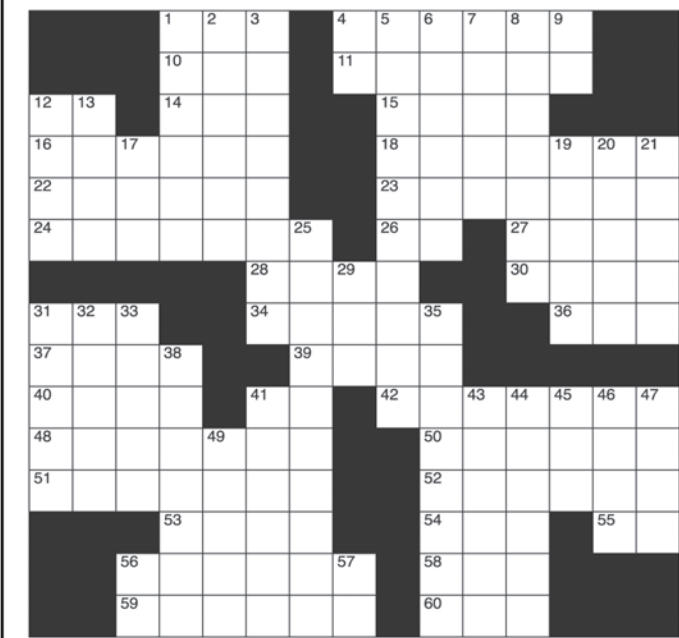
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CLUES ACROSS

1. Popular broadcast network

4. Train line

10. Go quickly

11. Straightforward

12. Canadian province

14. Swiss river

15. It can be straight or curved

16. Edit

18. Utter repeatedly

22. Gotten up

23. Sea vessel

24. Agents of one’s demise

26. Not out

27. Something to scratch

28. A round water pot

30. Slang for cylindrical green fruit

31. Promotions

34. Masses of matter
36. Soviet Socialist Republic

37. Nightstand item

39. The content of cognition

40. Arab ruler

41. Northern U.S. state

42. Chewed in small bites

48. Hawaiian island

50. More thin

51. Of one

52. Rigid bracelet or anklet

53. Barbary sheep

54. Not even

55. Atomic #106

56. Haggle

58. Boxing’s GOAT

59. Division of a group into opposing factions

60. Vietnamese offensive

CLUES DOWN

1. Horse-drawn carriage

2. Prejudices

3. Peacefully

4. University athletic official

5. Soldiers

6. Large mollusk

7. Take out again

8. Sour or bitter in taste

9. Songwriter Tunstall

12. Husk of wheat

13. Flexible covering in some birds

17. Energy

19. Night monkey genus

20. Small nails

21. Colorless volatile liquid

25. In a way, changes integrity
29. Mark Wahlberg’s stuffed animal

31. Remember it

32. “Good Will Hunting” lead man

33. Pleasant facial expression

35. Sea vessel

38. Lacking poetic beauty

41. Tall, swift and slender dog

43. Sports personality Michelle

44. Robber

45. Liquefied natural gas

46. Snake-like fish

47. Sediment at bottom of a liquid

49. Crimean seaport

56. Bad grades

57. Popular S. Korean rapper

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LEGALS

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TO:
Amanda M. Davin
and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act: 50 U.S.C. c. 50 § 3901 (*et seq*): Guild Mortgage Company LLC claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Spencer, numbered 10 Jones Street, given by Amanda M Davin to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Guild Mortgage Company LLC, dated July 11, 2022, and recorded at Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 67888, Page 298, and now held by the plaintiff by assignment, has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant/s/ Defendants’ Servicemembers status. If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at **Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108** on or before December 15, 2025 or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the grounds of noncompliance with the Act. Witness, GORDON H. PIPER, Chief Justice of said Court on November 3, 2025.

Attest:
Deborah J. Patterson
Recorder
November 14, 2025

www.StonebridgePress.com

DOT to hold virtual public hearing on Route 9 project

SPENCER — A Virtual Design Public Hearing will be hosted on the MassDOT Web site Tuesday, Nov. 18 at 5:30 p.m. to present the design for the proposed project in Spencer - East Brookfield.

The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed project. All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

The proposed project consists of improvements along Route 9 and at the intersection of Route 9 and Route 49 in the Towns of East Brookfield and Spencer.

The work involves construction of a cement concrete roundabout, improved bike and pedestrian accommodations, lighting, and upgrades to pavement, drainage, pavement markings, and signage. The proposed pedestrian accommodations consist of five-foot-wide sidewalks along Route 9 and a shared use path at the roundabout. The proposed bicycle accommodations consist of five-foot buffered bicycle lanes along Route 9 and a shared use path at the roundabout. Pedestrian and bicycle accommodations have been provided in accordance with applicable design guides.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT's policy concerning land acquisitions will be presented in the hearing.

Project inquiries, written statements and other exhibits regarding the proposed undertaking may be submitted to Carrie E. Lavallee, P.E., Chief Engineer, via e-mail to MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us or via US Mail to Suite 7550, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Project Management, Project File No. 613097. Statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than 10 business days (14 calendar days) after the hearing is hosted.

This hearing is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (e.g., interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, live captioning, videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), TTD/TTY at (857) 266-0603, fax (857) 368-0602 or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible and prior to the hearing, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the hearing.

This hearing will be hosted, or a cancellation announcement posted, on the Internet at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>.

Cornerstone Bank sponsors Exchange Club of Spencer's fall food fest

SPENCER — Cornerstone Bank is once again supporting the Exchange Club of Spencer and its annual Fall Food Fest, contributing \$5,000 toward this year's event. This marks the third straight year the bank has sponsored the fundraiser.

The Fall Food Fest raises money for a designated community need each year. In 2025, proceeds will benefit the Prouty Boosters, a group that provides financial assistance to the athletic programs at David Prouty High School, serving students from Spencer and East Brookfield.

“Supporting local students and the programs that help them grow is an important part of strengthening our communities,” said Cornerstone Bank CEO Todd Tallman. “The Spencer Exchange Club has a long tradition of uplifting local families, and we’re proud to continue partnering with them to ensure student-athletes have the resources they need to thrive.”

Earlier this year, Cornerstone Bank also donated \$1,000 to the Spencer Exchange Club's 18 Under 18 program, which recognizes exceptional youth leadership and community service.

The 2025 Fall Food Fest will take place on Saturday, Nov. 15 at the Spencer Country Inn. Local restaurants will feature tastings of their signature dishes, and attendees will enjoy raffles, entertainment and opportunities to support local students. The event sells out annually, with tickets available at Sheena's Salon & Spa or through Exchange Club members.

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 cornerstone-bank.com or call 800-939-9103.



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WEEKLY POLICE BLOTTER

Spencer

The Spencer Police Department did not log any reportable arrests this week.

Leicester

The Leicester Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of Oct. 30 to Nov. 5.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 30 for Unlicensed Operation of a Motor Vehicle, operating a motor vehicle with No Inspection Sticker, and a Number Plate Violation.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on Oct. 31 for Operating a Motor Vehicle after suspension of registration.

Christian Anthony Jordan, age 36, was arrested on Oct. 31 for Shoplifting By Asportation (third offense).

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on Nov. 1 for operating an Uninsured and Unregistered Motor Vehicle and operating a vehicle after suspension of registration.

Carmen Amanda Colon, age 58, of Southbridge was arrested on Nov. 2 for operating an unregistered and uninsured motor vehicle.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on Nov. 2 for Unlicensed Operation of a Motor Vehicle and for operating an uninsured and unregistered motor vehicle.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on Nov. 2 for Vandalization of Property.

A Veterans Day thank you

CHERRY VALLEY — In recognition of Veterans' Day, the Cherry Valley American Legion extends its sincere gratitude to all men and women who have served and continue to serve our country.

We also wish to acknowledge the individuals and businesses whose generous monetary donations and volunteer efforts supported the Gold Star Square Project and the Soldiers, Scouts, and Students movement. Because of your support, we have been able to install solar-lit signs and QR codes, which tell the powerful story behind each hero's sacrifice. These squares are now further enhanced with new shrubs and flowers. Our work is ongoing, and we remain dedicated to completing all 19 squares. Your help and donations have been invaluable, and we are grateful for your support.

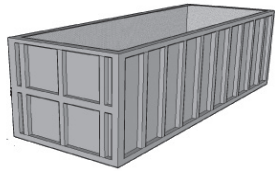
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FRANK G. CHILINSKI
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BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

EDITORIAL

A season of small gratitudes

In towns like ours, November doesn't roar in with fireworks or fanfare. It arrives quietly, with the scrape of rakes on damp leaves and the scent of woodsmoke drifting down Main Street. It's a month of smaller moments — and perhaps that's what makes it the right time to talk about gratitude.

We're good at saying thank you on Thanksgiving Day. We carve the turkey, name our blessings, and think we've done our part. But the kind of gratitude that really matters doesn't fit neatly onto a holiday table. It shows up in the rhythm of ordinary weeks — in the volunteer firefighter answering another midnight call, in the coach spending a cold Saturday morning shouting encouragement from the sideline, in the library clerk who greets every patron by name.

These are the unnoticed threads that hold a town together. You won't find them mentioned in state reports or grant summaries, but without them, nothing quite works. When the snow hits, it's a neighbor who plows your driveway before you're awake. When illness comes, it's the church supper that fills your freezer with enough casseroles to last a month. Gratitude, in small towns, isn't an emotion. It's a way of doing business with one another.

We could use more of that these days. The news — local and beyond — can make it feel like kindness is losing ground. Budgets are strained. Tempers flare in public meetings. Some residents feel unseen, others unheard. But step back a little, and you'll notice the quiet counterweight: the people who persist in doing good work without applause.

This week, a retired teacher is tutoring kids at the library. A local shop owner is donating coats to the community cupboard. Scouts are stacking canned goods taller than themselves for the holiday food drive. These gestures don't make front-page headlines, but they are how decency renews itself.

November's short daylight has a way of testing everyone's patience. The chores don't end; the light fades early; and every errand seems to require one more layer of wool. Yet maybe this is when gratitude counts most. It doesn't demand a sunny mood — only attention. It's noticing the small kindnesses and refusing to treat them as small.

In Spencer and Leicester, in the Brookfields and Warren, our best days are built from that kind of attention. The shared table might be in a church basement, a senior center, or a neighbor's kitchen. What matters is the effort to keep showing up, to keep the lights on, to keep one another seen.

So before the full rush of the holidays sweeps in, it's worth taking stock. Not of what's missing or what's next, but of what's quietly working: the food pantry stocked for winter, the rescue volunteers still on call, the child's mitten clipped safely to her coat at the bus stop.

In a world eager for headlines, these are the quieter successes — and the kind that endure. Gratitude doesn't have to be grand. In towns like ours, it's the everyday way we say: we're still here, and we're still looking out for each other.

Letter submission policy

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

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

VIEWPOINT

OPINION AND COMMENTARY FROM SPENCER, LEICESTER AND THE BROOKFIELDS

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Shell Game for Dummies

To the Editor:

Setting aside the fact that we have someone who is not legally in office, because Colorado, who wanted to omit him from their presidential ballots, because under Section #3 of the 14th Amendment, he is banned from all federal offices, unless ban removed by a two thirds vote of both houses, SCOTUS erroneously said it was not their job, but up to congress. Congress never removed the ban, meaning the court he rigged, gave him the job. When you elect a criminal, you should not be surprised when he acts like one.

In addition to attacking everyone who disagrees with him, by prosecuting them and inflicting giant legal costs for frivolous lawsuits, being done on our dime, we are now extending that net to going after candidates to alter elections. Not satisfied with just jerrymandering to take away the voices of 40 percent of the electorate, they are now going after the liberal Muslim mayoral candidate for NYC, because he received some foreign contributions.

You would think that in order to make this case against Muslim influence, you would not have been gifted a \$400 million plane, your son in lay put in charge of multiple millions of Saudi investments, used Marine #1 and a presidential podium, to host a dinner for largest investors in your crypto venture, that included many middle easterners and earned you

Massachusetts has become a Communist State!

To the Editor:

Under the Democrat one party rule in Massachusetts, legal citizens have lost their constitutional rights. Why do I say this?

In November 2024, voters passed a ballot question by 72 percent to audit the Massachusetts State Legislature. Attorney General Andrea Campbell has not allowed this to take place! Why? What is she hiding, along with the least transparent Governor in the history of this state, Maura Healey? The fact that Healey's Hotels have housed illegal aliens for the last three years, costing the taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars that she doesn't want residents to know where our hard earned monies go? We have homeless veterans and hungry Americans who don't get the benefits and freebies that the illegal aliens receive! Shameful! Yet she goes on TV blaming the Trump Administration for the government shutdown and subsequent loss of SNAP benefits for people. Wrong! It's the Schumer Shutdown because the Democrats are holding out for \$1.5 trillion for healthcare for illegal aliens! Unbelievable! Americans are struggling to pay for Obamacare, and Democrats want free care for illegals.

Talking about no transparency in the State House, Healey likes to give big jobs to her ex-girlfriend, Gabrielle Wolohojian, to the State Supreme Judicial Court in Massachusetts. The salary is \$185,000 a year! Yet, now, the incompetent Governor has hired over 10,000 new state positions and shed 24,800 private sector jobs. This has sent our economy

Our American gains

To the Editor:

Last Tuesday, Americans across the country by voting in free and fair elections, had a chance to show whether they approved or not of the way President Trump and his MAGA crooks, cronies and mega-millionaires and billionaires have and continue want to run the country.

Across the country, from governors and mayors elections on the East Coast, to local elections in the South and the Mid-West to changing Congressional boundaries on the West Coast, so loud and clear.

We voters — young and old, female and male, English and Spanish speaking, middle class and less well off — much more often voted for change rather than MAGA Trump policies, practices, including its high prices, tariffs, cruelties, and corruption like money grabbing and destruction.

Likewise, they saw the resident in our White House more interested in, without approval, tearing down part of it to build himself an unneeded and unwanted \$250 million ball room.

Meanwhile, 80 percent of we American struggle to meet expenses, hold onto jobs, face much higher medical costs, and lost

billions.

I am sure the Asian nations have seen that Trumps narcissism can be easily manipulated with gifts and awards. I am sure he will try to justify his junket while we are shut down, with many not being fed or paid. Wanna buy a bridge? How about an airbase?

Even Rand Paul, a GOP senator, thinks blowing up small boats that would need sever refuelings to get here, is piracy and illegal. If he gets us into a war with Venezuela, he can declare martial law.

Something is very wrong if we could not win such a war in hours, not days. It is believed that with Greenland and Canada off the charts, Venezuela has resources to be grabbed.

I am no longer concerned with Trumps lies, because on the few occasions he tells us the truth, it is to announce another law he plans to ignore. He has interpreted his immunity from prosecution, as immunity from following any laws and, with pardon power, his minions can also. Analysis calls this dictatorship..

What is most hard to believe, is there will be some. losing farms, snap benefits, health insurance ond any number of unappreciated freedoms, who will still think they are winning. I, for one, am tired of it.

KEN KIMBALL
BROOKFIELD

into crisis and now she's offering buyouts of \$10,000 and \$20,000 to state union workers to leave their jobs in order to save money. Maybe she shouldn't have given an 11 percent raise to all the legislators this year!

Now, it seems Healey's State House is in a "Cocaine Conundrum!" Her Deputy Director, LaMar Cook, who worked at the Governor's regional office in Springfield since 2023, was arrested on charges of cocaine trafficking after eight kilos of the drug was delivered to him at the state building on Oct. 29. He was also arrested for illegal possession of a gun and driving without a license. It was not his first rodeo, as he was arrested in 2001, when he and two others were arrested in a shooting incident in Springfield! Which brings up the question — who is vetting these hires? As Maura would say, "these things happen"... right under her nose! Where are our senators and representatives calling for an investigation? They sent a letter, that's it! They are silent! They are cowards, or just being complicit! There should be a full and thorough investigation of her and her Administration! Healey needs to be held accountable for the dismal state of our economy, not Washington, D.C.! Taxpayers are moving to states that are more affordable, welcoming and not a one-party ruling state. Massachusetts will end up just another Welfare State.

LINDA BUCKLEY
LEICESTER

benefits we paid for, need and deserve. Meanwhile, the mega -rich pay less taxes and the Trump family rakes in billions.

So yes, for we Americans, votes, free and fair elections, and demonstrations communities of all kinds matter.

Finally, a fond farewell to Buddy's Spa in Rochdale. For a long, long time, you served us well.

KEVIN KANE
SPENCER

Generosity meets strategy with tax-savvy donations



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Giving to charity feels good but understanding the tax benefits can benefit both the charity and you. Whether you donate regularly or are planning your first gift, knowing how charitable tax deductions work can help you make informed decisions while supporting causes you care about. Here are things to consider:

The basics: Itemizing vs. standard deduction. To benefit from charitable tax deductions, you need to itemize your deductions on your tax return. Everyone automatically receives a standard deduction, which in 2025 is \$31,500 for married couples filing jointly or \$15,750 for single filers. You'll only benefit from itemizing if your total deductions, including charitable gifts, exceed these amounts.

For many people, charitable donations alone won't push them over the standard deduction threshold. However, when combined with other deductible expenses like mortgage interest or state and local taxes, itemizing can make financial sense.

If you give regularly but don't usually exceed the standard deduction, consider "stacking" your donations. Instead of donating \$5,000 annually, you might donate \$15,750 in one year to exceed the itemization threshold, then take the standard deduction in subsequent years.

Ensure your donation qualifies. To claim a deduction, you must give to a qualified charitable organization recognized by the IRS. You can verify an organization's status on the IRS website or ask the charity for their determination letter. Donations to individuals, even those in need, don't qualify for tax deductions.

Additionally, you can't receive personal benefits in exchange for your donation. If you give \$500 to a charity but receive concert tickets worth \$200, your deductible amount is only \$300.

How much can you deduct? The IRS limits charitable deductions based on your adjusted gross income (AGI). For cash donations to public charities, you can typically deduct up to 60 percent of your AGI. If you donate stocks or other appreciated assets you've held for more than a year, the limit is generally 30 percent of your AGI.

If your donation exceeds these limits in a single year, you can carry forward the unused portion for up to five years.

What to donate. Think strategically about what you donate. While cash is easiest, donating appreciated stocks can provide additional tax benefits since you avoid paying capital gains taxes on the investment's growth.

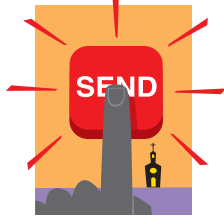
Keep good records. Documentation matters. For donations under \$250, a canceled check or receipt works fine. Cash donations of \$250 or more need written acknowledgment from the charity. For larger non-cash donations of property exceeding \$5,000 in value, the IRS requires a qualified written appraisal. Keep these records with your tax documents in case the IRS requests proof. See IRS Publication No. 526 and No. 561 for information on charitable contributions and valuing donated property.

The bottom line: Charitable giving may start with your heart, but understanding the tax implications helps you give more effectively. Work with a tax professional and a financial advisor to develop a giving strategy that aligns with both your charitable goals and financial situation. With thoughtful planning, you can maximize both your impact on causes you care about and the tax benefits you receive.

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@edward-jones.com.

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Latest auction news

It's been nearly a month and a half since my last auction news update, and there's a lot to report. I'll start by sharing news about a rare piece of Titanic memorabilia being auctioned in the United Kingdom.

Frederick Sutton, a 61-year-old first-class passenger from New Jersey, was lost at sea when the Titanic sank on April 14, 1912. Some of his personal effects were recovered and given to his family. The family held them for over 100 years before deciding to now auction the memorabilia. Mr. Sutton's family received his belongings in a white canvas bag marked "46." It included a first-class passenger list that had been damaged by the cold Atlantic waters after the tragic incident. The collection includes a note from Titanic's White Star Lines. Families of missing passengers were advised that they would have to pay for a first-class ticket to return deceased family members' bodies that were recovered. "This is callous in the extreme but goes to illustrate how different the world was in 1912," the auctioneer said in the BBC article. The passenger list is estimated to bring £100,000 (\$131,350 U.S.).

A massive collection of memorabilia from the estate of colorful and eccentric Indianapolis Colts owner, Jim Irsay, will be sold in several auctions. Irsay had shared some of his collection with the public in 2023 when he offered free concerts to the public with the opportunity to view some historical and pop culture memorabilia. One of the stops on the tour was at Boston's TD Garden, where I was fortunate enough to see some of the rare artifacts. Items being auctioned include "an Apple II manual signed by Steve Jobs, Hunter S. Thompson's Red Shark convertible and



ANTIQUES, COLLECTIBLES & ESTATES
WAYNE TUISKULA

Jack Kerouac's original typewritten manuscript of "On the Road," according to the Indy Star.

A toilet might make an impact on the art world when it goes on the auction block later this month. Made of gold, the working sculpture was designed by Italian artist Maurizio Cattelan and is titled "America." It "was created with 101.2 kilograms (223 pounds) of gold," according to MSN. An identical one was stolen from England's Blenheim Palace in a brazen 2019 heist. Cattelan is the artist who sold "Comedian," a banana duct taped to a wall, for \$6.2 million last year.

No estimate for the toilet was provided, but the gold used is worth approximately \$10 million at current rates. The artist is hoping it bowls over bidders and brings much more though.

Our single-collector Civil War auction will be taking place this month. Following that, we'll have a major auction with fine jewelry, sterling silver, art, and other antiques and collectibles. Please visit our website <https://centralmassauctions.com> for links to upcoming events.

Contact us to consign items or for auction information at: Wayne Tuiskula Auctioneer/Appraiser Central Mass Auctions for Antique, Collectibles Auctions and Appraisal Services info@centralmassauctions.com or (508-612-6111).

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Giving credit where it's due

To the Editor:

I have to give the Prez credit for a few things. He is a master of diversions (have you heard anything on the Epstein files in two weeks?) His gift and graft of the United States seems unmatched. His priorities are only for himself and not the American people.

Do you honestly think that as he is sitting on his gold toilet that he gives one thought to the veterans, elderly, disabled, children, poor who are hungry? Do you think he is even aware? He was ordered to disperse the money and instead he appealed the decision by the court to hold it up for more time. The money is there! Oh, yeah, that's another thing I will give him credit for: his lack of humanity and his cruelty to others.

So, as many go without, he throws a party for the haves and never mind about the have-nots. As these people go hungry, he goes ahead for plans for a gaudy ballroom replete with gold, gold, and more gold. He states that for years people have been clamoring for a ballroom. Never, never have I heard anyone asking for a ballroom. No, people ask for affordable healthcare and affordable housing, and affordable food.

As for the Affordable Care Act, a.k.a. Obamacare, what I think is that he and some have been trying to get rid of it for years (with nothing replacing it or amending it) because it is nicknamed after a black man. Oh, no, we can't have that!

He pardons a man who is involved with crypto funds and then says, "I don't know him." Well, if he doesn't know him, why pardon him? Surely, it is to benefit himself in some way. He is a true-blue sociopath — everything is about him. He must be at the top. He cares nothing about anyone else. He must be adored and glorified.

Okay, back to diversions from the Epstein files, he continues to blow up boats with absolutely no idea who they are or what they are doing. He destroys the East Wing of the White House. He talks of building a monument arch welcoming people into Washington. I'm sure it will want it named after him. And taking over the Kennedy center and now talking about naming it after his current wife.

Have you heard anything much about Ukraine? Gee, his buddy, Putin seems to have snubbed him after he rolled out the red carpet and the war there goes on killing thousands of people wanting only to have a democracy.

He threatens war on some South American country. He threatens to send troops into American cities. He has tons of food meant for an African country, desperately in need of help, incinerated rather than ship it to them. Why? Because their skin is probably black. ICE continues to arrest people without warrants insisting they don't have their "papers" with them. I don't have "papers" with me either. Is that what we have come to?

His threats to raise tariffs on some countries by 110 percent is so laughable. He isn't even intelligent enough to know that a whole is only 100 percent.

He has cut funds for research into cancer, Alzheimer's, and other diseases. Again, if it is not about him or affects him, he doesn't care.

So, while he lines his pockets in every way possible, yours are empty. Gas prices have not gone down, food prices are going higher and higher. He does not care as long as he is taken care of.

Oh, another thing about DJT — he lies and lies, even when it would be easier to tell the truth. If there is nothing to hide in the Epstein files, then why not release them? And my question for the Republicans and MAGA folks is this: what if it comes out that he did rape a teenager(s), as did Epstein and Maxwell. Will you still support him? Never mind, I don't think I want to know.

JUDY ROSE
EAST BROOKFIELD

Life balance

POSITIVELY
SPEAKING

TOBY
MOORE

We all want to move forward — to reach the goal, finish the book, launch the business, get in shape, fall in love, or become the person we know we could be. We all have dreams, and most of us don't lack the desire. What we lack is the willingness to act when the timing isn't perfect.

I'm all about maintaining a work-life balance, and boundaries are essential, but I sometimes think that it's not the world slowing us down — it's our own rules. The quiet, self-made commandments we invent in the name of balance, boundaries, and self-care. Rules like "I don't check emails after 5," or "I don't work weekends," or "I don't follow up twice with the same client." They sound healthy — responsible even — but sometimes they're invisible fences around our potential.

We build them to stay sane, but if left unchecked, they can also prevent us from going where we truly want to be in life.

A lot of these rules come from a good place. We've been burned before. We've felt the crash after burn-out, the sting of rejection, the exhaustion of trying too hard. So we promise ourselves limits: never again, not after hours, not on Sundays. But what starts as protection can quietly become a kind of confinement. Sometimes growth begins exactly where discomfort starts.

Every ambitious person eventually faces a crossroads between their rules and their results. The people who go far — the ones we admire — aren't neces-

sarily smarter or luckier. They're just the ones who decided certain rules didn't apply to them.

Stephen King ignored the publishing world's "one book a year" rule. He wrote so fast that his publisher couldn't keep up, so he created a pseudonym— Richard Bachman—to release more. When readers discovered the truth, both names became bestsellers, and the rule was never taken seriously again.

Or take Jeff Bezos, who in Amazon's early days answered customer emails and support calls at 2 a.m., believing connection mattered more than sleep. That obsessive rule-breaking focus on customers became the DNA of one of the world's biggest companies.

Or Ed Sheeran, who played dozens of free or low-pay gigs in a single year, sleeping on couches and busking on street corners. Friends said he was devaluing his art — but those nights built the loyal fan base that later filled stadiums.

Or Elon Musk, who broke Silicon Valley's "focus on one thing" rule. While most founders were told to master one company at a time, he was building rockets, cars, and solar panels all at once.

Each one of them broke a rule that sounded smart but wasn't serving the dream.

I'm not suggesting that people should work 24/7, but I am saying that sometimes you need to work 24/7. Knowing when to be flexible with your work-life balance can change your

entire future. It's knowing the difference between a guardrail and a cage.

Discipline isn't always about sticking to the same schedule forever; sometimes the boundaries need to bend. The rules that once protected your peace can, at a different season of life, start protecting your comfort instead. And comfort is a silent thief of momentum.

Every ambitious person reaches a point where "balance" becomes an excuse. Where the rule that once made sense starts standing in the way, the truth is, you can't build an extraordinary life while staying entirely within ordinary limits.

Your next breakthrough may not require a new plan, a new mentor, or a new skill. It may require pushing past self-imposed boundaries.

Examine the rules you've established for yourself. Keep the ones that keep you healthy — the ones that let you rest, recover, and reconnect with life. But question the ones that keep you safe at the expense of your potential.

We all need balance, and progress isn't found in balance alone. It's found in the moments you lean just a little further than what feels comfortable — when you stay an extra hour, take the extra call, send the extra pitch.

You don't need to give up balance — just bend it in the direction of what matters most.

Toby Moore is a columnist, the star of Emmy - Nominated A Separate Peace, and the CEO of Cubestream Inc.

Donations as of 11/6/2025

10/13/2025	Spencer Exchange Club	\$1,000.00
10/17/2025	Spencer Firefighters	\$1,000.00
10/17/2025	Bernie's Automotive	\$100.00
10/18/2025	E.M. Thibault Excavation, Inc.	\$250.00
10/18/2025	Wayne Fritze Carpentry, Inc.	\$50.00
10/19/2025	Rick's Welding, Inc.	\$100.00
10/21/2025	Gina M Nash DBA AJN Welding	\$150.00
10/23/2025	Sandra & Wallace Kiltredge	\$250.00
10/24/2025	Royal Crest Farm, LLC	\$250.00
10/24/2025	Jason Mulse DBA J Mulse SealCoating	\$200.00
10/25/2025	Conner, Karissa, Cal & Ari	\$250.00
10/29/2025	Norman & Michelle Berthiaume	\$25.00
10/30/2025	Spencer Family Dental	\$300.00
10/30/2025	Stuart & Sandra Milner	\$50.00
11/2/2025	Paul & Nancy Lavallee	\$100.00
11/3/2025	Crystal Clear Window Cleaning	\$50.00

Monetary Donations may be sent to: Spencer Toys for Kids, P.O. Box 186, Spencer, MA 01562.
New, unwrapped toys can be dropped off at: Spencer Fire Dept & ERA Key Realty Services (415B Main St), Cornerstone Bank (Spencer office). If you would like to sponsor a child, please contact Donna at donnatannery@erakey.net or call 508-885-6336. If you are in need of assistance, applications can be picked up at: Spencer Post Office, Mary Queen of the Rosary Food Pantry, Town clerk's office in the town hall, or ERA Key Realty Services (outside mailbox). You can see updates on Facebook at Spencer Toys for Kids.

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Cornerstone Bank donates \$5,000 to support financial literacy in Quaboag Valley

WORCESTER — Cornerstone Bank has donated \$5,000 to the Quaboag Valley Community Development Corporation (QVCCD) in support of its Learn and Save Club, a financial fitness program that teaches

participants how to develop healthy money habits and save toward the purchase of important assets.

“Financial literacy is the foundation for long-term success,” said Todd Tallman, CEO of Cornerstone Bank. “We are proud to support the Learn and Save Club again this year, which equips local families and individuals with the tools they need to make confident financial decisions.”

The year-long program combines financial literacy classes with matched savings to empower low-income residents of the Quaboag Valley to achieve greater financial stability. Participants attend monthly meetings, receive hands-on guidance and work toward goals such as home ownership, education or reliable

transportation.

This is the second consecutive year Cornerstone Bank has contributed to the Learn and Save Club. In addition to financial support, bank employees have volunteered to help lead financial education sessions, sharing their expertise with program participants.

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 cornerstone-bank.com or call 800-939-9103.



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Applications are to be filled out by January 5, 2026

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QCC campus police receive \$60,000 in public safety grants

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College was recently awarded \$59,912 from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security. The funding, which is part of the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant program, will allow QCC’s Police Department to connect to the Motor Vehicle Automated Citation and Crash System (MACCS). The MACCS is a state-operated, browser-based platform for electronic traffic citation and crash data collection and reporting.

Additionally, in

August, QCC received a \$5,000 Military and First Responder Grant from CSX Transportation, which will also be used to support the transition to MACCS.

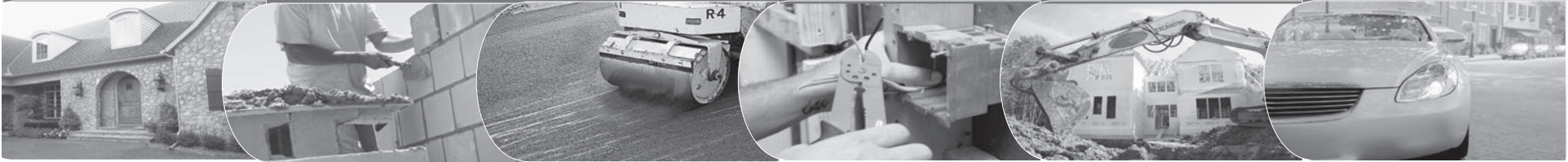
“QCC Campus Police are committed to modernizing our operations to better serve and protect our community,” said QCC Chief of Police Stephen DiGiovanni. “These grant funds will help us replace outdated manual processes with state-of-the-art equipment that connects to the Motor Vehicle Automated Citation and Crash System, which is hosted by the Massachusetts Registry of

Motor Vehicles.”

The QCC Police Department’s transition to MACCS will streamline citation and crash reporting, enabling safer and more efficient traffic stops and crash data. This will allow officers to spend more time in the community, increasing visibility and helping prevent crime. The system also enables real-time data sharing, enhances data accuracy and accountability, increases officer safety, and supports coordinated crime reduction strategies through integrated intelligence.

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Household Hazardous Waste Day in North Brookfield

NORTH BROOKFIELD — The North Brookfield Recycling Center, located at 58 East Brookfield Rd., will hold a Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day Saturday, Nov. 15,

from 9 a.m.—noon.

Residents of North Brookfield, Brookfield, East Brookfield, Spencer, Charlton, Warren, and Leicester may bring in the following:

Up to 10 gallons/10 pounds at no charge
10-24 gallons/pounds for \$35
25 gallons/pounds or more for a minimum of \$60 (charge determined on site)

All fees must be paid on the day of the event. Checks should be made payable to the 'Town of North Brookfield.'

The following is a list of all types of hazardous waste we WILL be collecting: Drain cleaners, metal polish, photo chemicals, dry cleaning fluids, rust preventatives, wood strippers, paint thinner, sealants, gasoline, engine and radiator

flushes, old chemistry sets, herbicides, brake fluid, pool chemicals, creosote fertilizer, moth balls, ammonia, oven cleaners, arts and crafts supplies, floor cleaners, radiator cleaners, wood preservatives, oil-based paints, solvent degreasers, antifreeze, transmission fluid, pesticides, insect sprays, rodent killers, muriatic acid, kerosene, bleach, cesspool cleaners, and

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The following items will not be accepted: Latex paint, compressed gas cylinders, explosives or shock-sensitive materials and ammunition, unknown materials, radioactive materials, infectious or biologically active materials, dioxin, tri-, tetra-, and pentachlorophenol and their chlorophenoxy derivative acids, esters, ethers, amine, and other salts.

Leicester Women's Club hosting Holiday Auction

LEICESTER — The Leicester Women's Club will host their annual Holiday Auction at Pine Ridge Country Club on Wednesday, Nov. 19 at 6 p.m. The event is both a social gathering for members, guests and friends, as well as a fundraiser for local charities, including

Hearts for Heat, McAuley Nazareth, Inc. and the Leicester Food Pantry. Donated items include food & wine, homemade baked goods, holiday décor, baskets and gifts. Purchases with cash or checks only, please. Women's Club members and non-members are welcome, but reservations are required.

The dinner, which includes salad, entrée, bread, dessert, coffee and tea, is \$28, payable at the door. A cash bar is available. For reservations, contact Linda Monahan

at 508-330-9250 before Wednesday, Nov. 12.

The Leicester Women's Club, founded in 1962, is both a community service organization and a social club. It is open to women who are residents of Leicester and surrounding towns. Annual dues are \$20, and meetings are monthly from September through April. Members hold a basket raffle at the Leicester Harvest Fair in September to raise money for local scholarships, and a holiday auction in November to raise money for local charities. For information about membership, please call Renee McCue-Hall at 508-892-0186.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR NOVEMBER 14 TO 21

Friday the Fourteenth, grab your coat. The frost on the Common still clings to your throat. At Town Hall, budgets line the floor, Leicester votes on plans once more.

Saturday dawns, with laughter and pie. At Mary Queen of the Rosary the bakerystry. A Craft and Vendor Fair from nine till two, Hot cocoa waiting, steaming for you.

Sunday bells ring calm and clear, Veterans honored with grateful cheer. In West Brookfield, at noon they meet, For wreaths and songs on Main Street.

Monday's mix of sun and chill, The East Brookfield Library buzzes still. Storytime starts at half past ten, Then crafts for kids will start again.

Tuesday night, the Select Board sits, Reviewing bylaws, budgets, bits. Residents fill the upstairs hall, To argue kindly — most of all.

Wednesday brings the senior crowd, With coffee talk and laughter loud. The Spencer Senior Center hums, Cards are played and apple cake comes.

Thursday's hush before the feast, The days grow short, the news released. A gentle week in mid-November, To rest, reflect, and still remember.

George Whitefield UMC hosting Holiday Fair

WEST BROOKFIELD — The George Whitefield United Methodist Church, 33 W. Main St., West Brookfield, will host its annual Holiday Fair Saturday, Nov. 22, from 9 a.m. – 2 p.m., featuring baked goods, hand knits and crafts, Jams, Fudge, Holiday décor and crafts, Thrift Store, and Lunch Room.

For more information, you may call Heidi at 978-989-5736

Richard Sugden Library hosting Holiday Frolic

SPENCER — A Roaring Holiday Frolic will be held Tuesday, Dec. 2 at 5 p.m. the Richard Sugden Library, Spencer. All ages are invited to this jazzy gala with community merrymaking to celebrate shared joys, and shaking off shared burdens. Dress in 1920s garb or sparkly Mardi Gras finery! Feathered masks and beads will be given out. Join us for lots of celebration and surprises.

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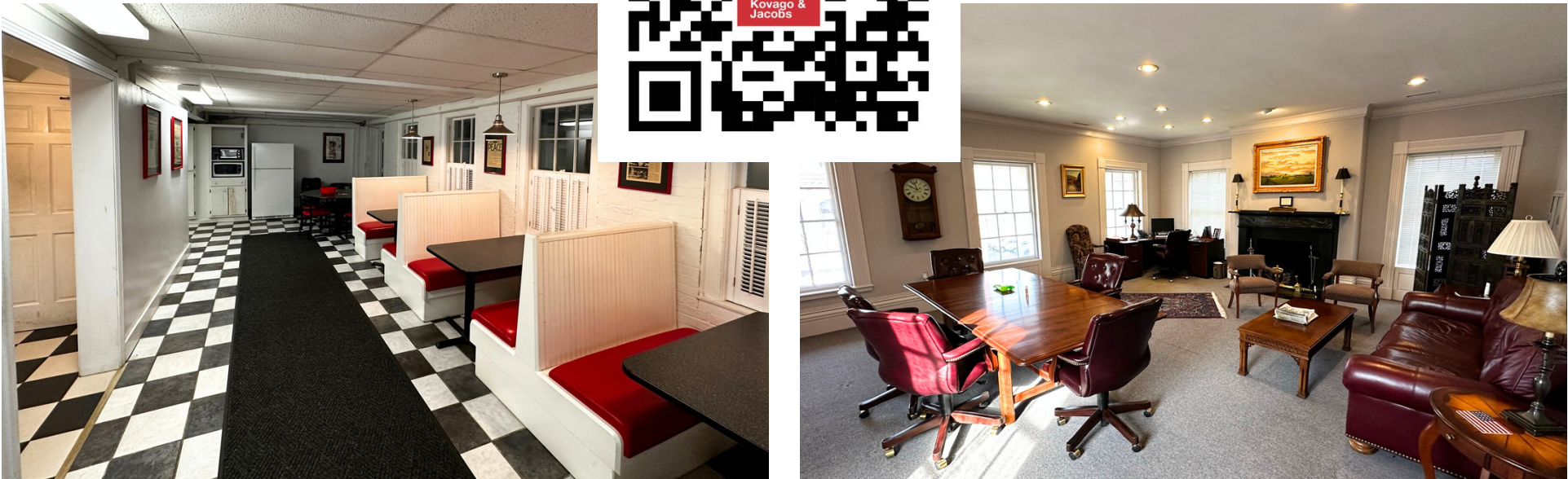
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Dress up your holiday gatherings with a few succulents

Add a bit of life to your holiday gatherings with the help of succulents. You and your guests will enjoy the easy-care beauty of succulents. Their subtle colors and dramatic form make them great gifts and decorations now and throughout the year.

Small-scale succulents provide a multitude of opportunities for incorporating them into your holiday celebrations. Just select containers that complement, but don't overpower their charm.

Create a succulent garden to use as a centerpiece for the table. A shallow container filled with a variety of succulents with different shapes and colors is sure to capture everyone's attention. Set the container on a saucer to protect the table and add a complementary table runner for even greater impact.



GARDEN
MOMENTS
• • • • •
MELINDA
MYERS

Consider using succulents as party favors for guests to take home and enjoy for years to come. But first, use them to decorate the table by making them into place cards for your guests. Simply add a name to the decorative pot.

Or display them all together in a tray, terra cotta saucer or other shallow container to use as a centerpiece throughout the evening. When the party is over, each guest can pick their own plant to take home.

Add a unique flair to the table by placing cocktail glasses filled with succulents next to each guest's

place setting. This makes a unique table decoration and party favor for guests to take home as a reminder of your fun gathering. Use a few planted cocktail glasses to decorate the beverage table or bar.

Grow these plants in a cacti and succulent potting mix. These fast-draining mixes help reduce the risk of overwatering. Further reduce this risk by using containers with drainage holes that are only slightly larger than the succulents' root system. Growing them in too large of a container for the plant size will retain moisture longer that can lead to root rot, decline, and even the death of your plants.

After the party continue to provide proper care so your centerpiece will be ready for your next event. Move the succulent planter to a cool, draft-free location near an unobstructed

south-, west- or east-facing window. If light is limited, consider adding artificial lights.

Water thoroughly but only when the top few inches of soil are dry and just often enough to keep the plants from shriveling. These winter-growing conditions often encourage a spring display of colorful and unique flowers.

Share these directions with your guest and if possible, the name of the succulent. This helps your guest keep the plants alive to enjoy for years to come.

With a trip to your favorite garden center and your imagination you can create fun holiday décor and party favors. You and your guests will enjoy their beauty throughout the holidays and beyond.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the Midwest Gardener's Handbook,



Melinda Myers

Create a succulent garden centerpiece with different shapes and colors this holiday season.

2nd Edition and Small Space Gardening. She hosts The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" streaming courses and the nationally syndicated Melinda's Garden Moment radio pro-

gram. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and her Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.



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SWAN
continued from page A1

tavern again this year. On Thursday, Dec. 4 at 7 p.m., Deb Friedman will present “The Story of Christmas Traditions.” There will also be an open-house on Dec. 6 from 4 to 7 p.m., with

refreshments and music, including a performance by the Leicester High School Chorus (following the tree lighting on the town common at 6 p.m.).

The “tavern tea party” event in the Spring was popular again this past year and so we decided on the

for photos following the discussion.

“Christy’s story and her commitment to encouraging young creatives resonated deeply with our students,” said President Pieczynski. “Her message about perseverance and confidence aligns perfectly with Nichols’ mission to empower students to pursue their passions with purpose and courage.”

Cashman’s debut novel, “The Truth About Horses,” earned the 2024

suggestion of some of the attendees, to have a tea party during the Christmas season, while the tavern is fully decorated for the holidays. This event will be held on Sunday, Dec. 14 at 2 p.m. Reservations are required, so please call Dianne at 508-259-6428.

IBPA Benjamin Franklin Gold Award for General Fiction, along with Silver Awards for Best New Voice and Teen Fiction. She has also authored two children’s books and founded YouthINK, a nonprofit dedicated to mentoring teen creators, and YOUThink Creative Wellness Retreats, which support wellness through art and storytelling.

CASHMAN
continued from page A1

you’re tired. Keep writing no matter what your circumstances are.”

Earlier in the day, Cashman met privately with members of the Nichols College Equestrian Club and participated in a luncheon with campus leaders. Nichols College President William Pieczynski also attended the event and joined Cashman

Kiana Barnes of E. Brookfield appointed to Nichols College Senior Advisory Council

DUDLEY — Kiana Barnes of East Brookfield is one of 15 students appointed by Nichols College President Bill Pieczynski to the 2025-2026 Nichols Senior Advisory Council (NSAC).

This group of accomplished seniors will meet with the President and members of the President’s Counsel monthly and act as an advisory group as the College plans for the future.

“Congratulations to the students selected for this year’s NSAC cohort. These are exemplary students, citizens and leaders who have distinguished themselves among a strong senior class,” said Pieczynski. “Their insights will be invaluable to the leadership

team, and we look forward to hearing their perspectives and learning more about these outstanding students.”

Upcoming NSAC meetings will include discussions on the College’s new initiatives as well as broader trends and issues in higher education. In addition to helping Nichols enhance the overall experience for all members of its community, the meetings are also intended as an opportunity for students to further strengthen their communication and presentation skills, which are critical to career advancement.

About Nichols College

Nichols College has earned business accreditation from the prestigious Association to Advance

Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International), the longest serving global accrediting body for business schools and the largest business education network connecting learners, educators, and businesses worldwide. Founded in 1815, Nichols transforms today’s students into tomorrow’s leaders through a dynamic, career-focused business and professional education. Nichols offers real-world learning focused on professional depth - combined with vibrant living, competitive athletics, and an unmatched alumni advantage - equipping students to exceed their own expectations. www.nichols.edu

Friday’s Child

Zyion
Age 11
Registration #7396

Zyion is a sweet, clever, and funny kid who lights up any room they enter. Those who know Zyion describe them as curious, loving, and full of energy, while Zyion describes himself as thoughtful, empathetic, and caring. What makes Zyion unique is their deep compassion for others—an extraordinary empathy that shines even in the face of past challenges. They are often described as “wise beyond their years” and have a remarkable ability to support and uplift those around them. Zyion thrives when engaging in creative activities. They love all kinds of arts and crafts, especially projects that involve building, designing, and problem-solving. Whether working with Legos, building blocks, or puzzles, Zyion’s imagination and determination always come through. They also enjoy drawing, painting, writing stories, and expressing their love of superheroes—using art and writing as powerful tools for self-expression and storytelling. Zyion proudly identifies these creative outlets as some of their greatest strengths. Outside of their artistic passions, Zyion enjoys playing Pokémon and Super Smash Brothers, spending time outdoors, and exploring new adventures. Though they haven’t yet chosen a specific dream for the future, Zyion’s big imagination and open-mindedness show that they’re on an exciting path of self-discovery—ready to explore the many possibilities ahead.

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

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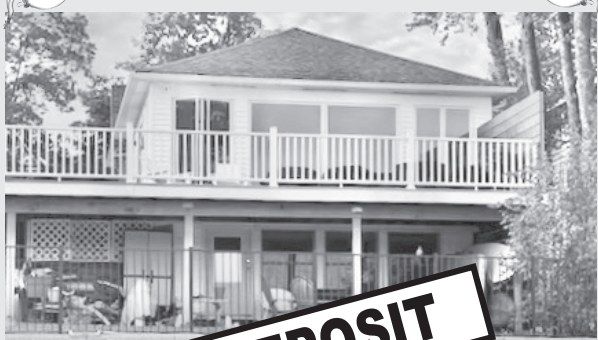


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WEBSTER - 24 COOPER RD

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WATERFORD CT - 20 AVERY LN.



SORRY, SOLD!

Beautifully updated farmhouse - 5 min. to the ocean. Nothing to do just to move in!! 2 bed, 2 bath New Heating System, Central Air! Huge shed & deck! Oversized garage. 3/4+ acre. assisted sale **\$365,000**

On the shores of Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg



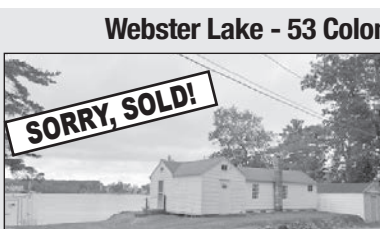
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Ready for your year round enjoyment. 4 bedroom, 2 bath home. Open floor plan. Garage w/ enclosed entry to mudroom. Open living room with spectacular view! 2 bedrooms - 3/4 bath, on main level. Central air. Lower level, additional 2 bedrooms, bath, bonus family room, summer kitchen! Boathouse! 51' of sandy beachfront! \$799,000.



Webster Lake Waterfront - 31 Bayview!!
SORRY, SOLD!

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



Webster Lake - 53 Colonial Rd
SORRY, SOLD!

WEBSTER LAKE WATERFRONT! JUST SIMPLY AN INCREDIBLE OPPORTUNITY! OVER 31,000 SQ FT OF LAND! Summer Cottage on 9482 SF of land.. assisted sale **\$1,199,900**



Webster Lake Waterfront 8 Long Island
SORRY, SOLD!

Beautifully Updated Circa 1890s Classic Antique Island Cottage, with Rare Boat House Included! Extremely Unique, Clean & Well Maintained, Modern Conveniences w/the Charm of Yesteryear! 1,240 SF, 6 Rms, 3 BRs, 2-1/2 Baths, Hardwood Floors! Fireplace w/Wood Pellet Stove, Wrap-Around Screened Porch, Lg Outbuilding w/Full Bath/Shower/Laundry & Workshop. Patio! Town Wtr/Swr + Private Well for Outdoor &/or Off-Season Water Use! 14,300 SF +/- Level Lot w/106' of Shoreline. \$595,000



6 2nd street Brookfield - Nanatomqua \$190,000

Buyer could not fulfill their purchase so we are back on the market - 2 bed/2 bath mobile in highly sought after Nanatomqua Mobile Home Park. Luxury vinyl plank floors, bed and bath at each end. Eat-in kitchen, oversized living room with electronic blinds and built-ins. All new windows throughout. Furnace only 2-3 years old. Park share \$17,250 included in list price. Monthly lot rent \$210 includes water, sewer, taxes, road maintenance and trash removal. Whole house generac generator, shed. Covered deck with handicap ramp. \$250 share transfer fee paid to the park at closing by seller

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Webster Five, Project New Hope Inc. launch food drive to support local veterans and military families



Webster Five partners with Project New Hope Inc. through United Way of Central Massachusetts to launch food drive. From left to right: Christopher Watson, Webster Five; Brian Westerlind, Webster Five; Leah Larson, United Way of Central Massachusetts; Amanda Coccia, Webster Five; Tim Garvin, United Way of Central Massachusetts; Rebecca Jalbert, Webster Five; Bill Moore, Project New Hope Inc.; and Debbie Erickson, Project New Hope Inc.

AUBURN — With Veterans Day approaching, Webster Five and Project New Hope Inc. are calling on the community to help support local Military and Veteran families in need through a regional food drive running Wednesday, Nov. 5 through Friday, Nov. 21.

All donations will go directly to Project New Hope's Sully's Pantry, which provides food and household essentials to Veterans, Service Members and their families across Central Massachusetts.

"Our partnership with Project New Hope through United Way of Central Massachusetts gives our community a meaningful way to support local Military and Veteran families," said Christopher Watson, Chief Business Lending Officer, Webster Five and Member of the Board of Directors, United Way of Central Massachusetts. "Every donation this holiday season helps provide essentials and reminds these families how much their service is appreciated."

"At Project New Hope Inc., we're honored to partner with Webster Five to help Military and Veteran families put food on the table this holiday season," said Bill Moore, CEO and Founder, Project New Hope Inc. "Every can, box and donation represents hope for those who have served our nation. Together, we're showing our Veterans and their families that their community stands with them."

How to Help
Donations can be dropped off at any Webster Five branch location:

- 400 Southbridge St., Auburn
- 208 West Main St., Dudley
- 343 Main St., Oxford
- 261 Grafton St., Shrewsbury
- 136 Thompson Rd., Webster
- 266 Chandler St., Worcester
- 100 Front St., Suite 150, Worcester

- Requested items include:
- Cereal
 - Canned Vegetables
 - Pop-Tarts
 - Canned Fruit
 - Applesauce
 - Canned Soup/Stew
 - Snack-Packs
 - Jello & Pudding
 - Canned Chili
 - Cranberry Juice

- Baked Beans
- Raisins
- Stuffing
- Knorr Sides
- Alfredo Sauce
- Ranch & Italian Dressing
- Rice-A-Roni
- Mayonnaise
- Broth
- Canned Tuna
- Soup – box
- Canned Chicken
- Canned Corned Beef
- Grape Jelly
- Canned Hams
- Peanut Butter
- SPAM
- Chef Boyardee
- Manwich
- SpaghettiOs
- Hamburger Helper
- Macaroni & Cheese
- Taco Kits
- Syrup
- Refried Beans
- Ketchup
- Instant Mashed Potatoes
- Shelf-Stable Milk
- Instant Oatmeal

Please donate only unopened items that are within their "best by" date to ensure freshness and quality.

About Webster Five
Established in 1868, Webster Five offers consumers, businesses and nonprofits not only a wide range of products and services but also stability and community support that can't be matched by their larger counterparts. To learn more about Webster Five, visit web5.com.

About Project New Hope Inc.

Project New Hope Inc. has been empowering Veterans, Service Members, and their families for over 14 years through transformative retreats, essential resources, and holistic support services. To learn more about Project New Hope's mission and programs, visit <https://www.projectnewhopema.org/>.

Quiet Corner Garden Club receives prestigious awards



WOODSTOCK, Conn. — The Quiet Corner Garden Club (QCGC) received 16 awards at the 96th Annual Federated Garden Clubs of Connecticut Awards Meeting in Southington on Oct. 22. QCGC's 122 members live in 26 towns in northeastern Connecticut and south central Massachusetts. The awards are based on garden club activities from June 2024 to May 2025.

The Lucille Schavoir Award is presented annually to a club for outstanding garden club work and is considered the highest award presented to a club. "Each year... [the Federated Garden Clubs of CT] look for a club that is just doing everything, supporting their community, improving their community, volunteering in the community, and making a difference in their community. The Quiet Corner Garden Club was recognized this year for its outstanding work in the community. Its club members are active in every aspect of garden club activities."

The QCGC received its first ever award from the

National Garden Clubs, Inc. A Certificate of Appreciation was awarded for the Club's monthly newsletter. The Lea Bauerfeld Beautification Award is presented to a club for an outstanding civic project that benefits the community both aesthetically and environmentally. This award

was presented for the Club's work at Quasset Cemetery in Woodstock.

The Pauline B. Tyler Award for excellence in promoting conservation was presented to Noreene Stehlik of Woodstock Valley for her efforts to eradicate and educate about invasive plants.

An Award of Excellence in Healing, Therapy and Senior Gardening was given for the Club's commitment to expand and share its passion for all things gardening. QCGC members conducted workshops at six local Senior Centers in Connecticut and Dudley, Mass.

QCGC received the Luckner Youth Award for its efforts working with the Putnam Rotary

Interact high school students who worked in the TEEG Community Garden. The club also received a Citation for Digital Media and a Certificate of Merit for the monthly newsletter. In addition, The QCGC received a Citation for its Floral Design Course under the leadership of Bonnie Berthiaume of Woodstock and Marcia Kettle of North Grosvenordale, and also a Citation for garden work at Eastford Municipal buildings and grounds.

Individuals also recognized for their work were Linda Kaplan of Woodstock, Kathy Mulford of Brooklyn, Deni Van Der Voort of Woodstock, Marian Hollowell of Woodstock, Laura Salo of Woodstock, Ashley Goyette of Putnam, Mary Ann Johnson of Woodstock, and Ginny Sears of Woodstock.

The Quiet Corner Garden club meets monthly from September to June at the South Woodstock Baptist Church. For more information see our Facebook page or our Web site, www.quietcornergardenclub.com.



18 Fox Run Brookfield \$295,000

Absolutely gorgeous manufactured home (60x28) at Brookfield Meadows 55+ community. 3 bedrooms, 2 full baths, kitchen loaded with cherry cabinets, formal dining area, breakfast nook, 2x6 construction, 4 season heated room with gas fireplace (stove) on thermostat. TONS of improvements - windows, furnace, hot water heater and central air done in 2023, new side deck with composite wood, newer flooring throughout. Generac generator 2018, Master bath has double vanity, huge linen closet and skylight, oversized living room with vaulted ceilings and tons of natural lighting. Storage shed with new roof and electric, patio sitting area out back with room for small garden. Lots of beautiful mature plants and flowers.

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