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SPENCER NEW LEADER

©2026, Issue #2 Free by request to residents of
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SEND YOUR NEWS AND PICS TO NEWS@STONEBRIDGEPRESS.NEWS Friday, January 16, 2026

DPHS welcomes back students after sprinkler main break

Leicester resident Donna McCance receives MASC All-State School Committee Award

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

SPENCER — The Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District celebrated the return to class in January following the winter break punctuated by reopening of David Prouty High School after the building closed in mid-December following a sprinkler system malfunction.

According to a release by district officials on Dec. 16, a burst sprinkler main line on the second floor caused water damage to the first two floors of the building and necessitated the evacuation of the school. The building was subsequently closed for the remainder of the calendar year, but students were officially allowed back in the school on Jan. 5, albeit with a delayed opening for the day.

After the water main line break, emergency personnel were called to the school to assist with the evacuation and dismissal of the students. Safety officials were later brought in to assess the damage.

Two days later, on Dec. 18, a follow-up from district officials confirmed the school would be closed for the remainder of the calendar year only allowing access for students and staff to retrieve personal belongings. At that point, there was no timeline for a return to normalcy at the school, but it did confirm the students would not reenter the classrooms for lessons until a further update.

Good news came a few weeks later as a final update officially announced that students would return to the high school at the start of 2026. Superintendent of Schools Paul Haughey used the opportunity to address parents and students directly about the incident.

“I want to extend my sincere gratitude to our local fire department, inspectional services, and our dedicated construction team at Fontaine Brothers for their tireless work together over the last two weeks,” said Haughey in a press release. “Their partnership has been vital in ensuring a safe return to the classroom for our staff and students.”

The release confirmed that the Spencer Fire Department cleared the building for occupancy and reassured the public of the district’s focus on safety in schools. The district has not publicly confirmed the extent of any lasting damage or further repair needs as a result of the main break.



Courtesy

Pictured, left to right: Glenn Koocher (MASC), Jim Reinke, Donna McCance, Paul Messier, Superintendent Kustigian, and John Higgins.

LEICESTER — Donna McCance, Chair of the School Committee for the Leicester Public Schools, was awarded the 2025 MASC All-State School Committee Award. This award recognizes excellence in school leadership and advocacy.

The MASC All-State School Committee is established to annually recognize significant achievement on the part of local school committee members. It honors school committee members who, during the previous year, have made a significant contribution to their community or their school committee either through specific action or

as an inspiration and role model for their peers and constituents.

McCance was presented the award by Glenn Koocher, Executive Director of MASC, at the Jan. 5 Leicester School Committee Meeting.

Koocher said, “The progress of the Leicester Public Schools has been amazing in the last four years. This award is truly deserved and Leicester is raising eyebrows across the state for the innovative programs recently started.”

Dr. Brett Kustigian, Superintendent of the Leicester Public Schools, stated, “Donna has been the Chair since I came to

Leicester almost four years ago, and I am honored to work with her. Consistency is key in any organization and she has been that consistent force to provide and propel our school district to create new and exciting opportunities for students.”

According to Kustigian, under McCance’s leadership the Leicester Public School District has thrived. The Massachusetts Department of Education approved five Career Technical Education (CTE) programs, two Career Innovation Pathways, test scores have improved, and most recently two LHS students received national recognition for their academic achievements. Leicester

also has formal partnerships with Shrewsbury and Clinton for CTE. Stated Kustigian, “Donna’s extensive background in education and leadership have proved to be invaluable toward moving our district forward. She always keeps the students at the forefront of everything we do, and fights hard in her demand for excellence for their educational experiences. Her exemplary leadership skills, integrity, and high expectations are a driving force behind our success.”

McCance has been elected to the school committee for two consecutive, three

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DPHS student receives M.A.S.S. Academic Achievement Award

Leicester Middle School Band Director marches in Rose Parade



SPENCER — The Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District is proud to announce that Matthew McNicol has been named the recipient of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (M.A.S.S.) Academic Achievement Award for the 2025-2026 academic year. This prestigious honor is reserved for students who

demonstrate exceptional academic focus alongside significant contributions to their school and community.

A standout student at David Prouty High School, McNicol has maintained a rigorous academic schedule, consistently earning High Honors while excelling in multiple Advanced Placement

(AP) courses. His intellectual curiosity and dedication to the sciences have previously earned him the Rensselaer Medal, the Telegram & Gazette Student of the Week award, and the esteemed “18 Under 18” recognition.

“Matthew is a remarkable example of what it means to be both academically driven and deeply committed to service,” Superintendent of Schools, Paul Haughey, noted in his commendation.

McNicol’s leadership extends far beyond the classroom. He serves as the Student Council Vice President and Class Secretary, and is a vital member of the National Honor Society. A versatile three-sport varsity athlete in soccer, indoor track, and outdoor track, he also flourishes in the arts as an accomplished alto saxophonist for the UMass Honors Band and local jazz ensembles.

Deeply rooted in service, McNicol serves as a lead altar server, a Project 351 Ambassador, and a dedicated caregiver to his grandparents. With plans to pursue biology and health sciences, he embodies the resilience and character the M.A.S.S. award seeks to celebrate.



Courtesy

Leicester Middle School Band Director Kristina Looney was one of 360 musicians from across North America chosen to march with the Band Directors Marching Band during the Rose Parade in Pasadena, Calif. On New Year’s Day.

LEICESTER — Under the umbrella of the Michael D. Sewell Memorial Foundation and their organization Saluting America’s Band Directors, the Band Directors Marching Band marched in the Rose Parade in Pasadena, Calif. on Jan. 1. Leicester Middle School Band Director Kristina Looney was lucky to be chosen as one of the 360 members representing all 50 states, Canada, Mexico, and Panama.

“It is an incredible honor to represent the state of Massachusetts, the town of

Leicester, and the Leicester Music department,” Looney said of the experience. “I hope that my participation in this large event can inspire students to play music for life.”

The Rose Parade takes place just before the famous Rose Bowl game. This year’s matchup was between Indiana University

Turn To LOONEY page A6



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Leicester C.A.R.E. to partner with Community Heart & Soul

BY JASON BLEAU
CORRESPONDENT

LEICESTER — The Leicester Community Advocates for Resource Engagement, also known as C.A.R.E., has announced a partnership with Community Heart & Soul, a national non-profit geared towards building stronger, close knit small communities across the United States.

C.A.R.E. representative Cheryl Cooney appeared before the Leicester Select Board on Jan. 6, revealing that the organization was approached by the Greater Worcester Community

Foundation about Leicester joining forces with Heart & Soul on a two-year program that will help build Leicester as a community and an economic center.

“The program seeks to bring Leicester residents together to identify and honor the unique character of their town, and the emotional connection of the people who live there. The foundation felt that given the efforts of C.A.R.E. in the community and the town’s engagement with us with the ARPA program that Community Heart & Soul could be a good fit for us,” said Cooney.

C.A.R.E. has long worked

to better the local community in one way or another, initially starting as the Leicester Savings Bank Grant Committee which spread more than \$1 million throughout the town over 25 years. That effort eventually evolved to assist with distributing ARPA money during the COVID-19 pandemic before becoming C.A.R.E. which continues to assist programs in the local community. The pending partnership with Heart & Soul serves to further grow that mission.

The Select Board agreed, calling the partnership an “easy sell” and speaking on the need for more positivity in the community. They unanimously approved a resolution paving the way for C.A.R.E. to officially enter an agreement that will bring in a coach from Heart & Soul to serve the town for the next two years.

“Community Heart & Soul is

pledging \$10,000 to C.A.R.E. for implementation expenses and the Greater Worcester Community Foundation will pay \$20,000 to cover the two-year salary of a part-time program coach who has been identified and introduced to CARE,” explained Cooney.

Community Heart & Soul was founded with the intent of providing a process for engaging members of the community to bring all voices together to determine a blueprint for future growth and decision making in communities across the country. Those values hold strong to this day. The process includes a multi-step approach that will invite stakeholders to the table to identify needs, improve connections, develop an action plan, and eventually implement actions determined to be of value to the community at large.

P.E.T. of the Week

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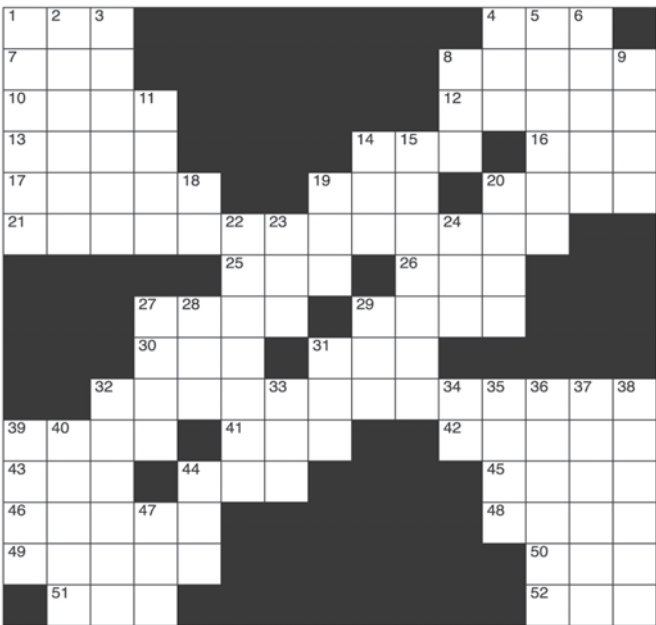
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CLUES ACROSS

1. Former CIA

4. Language

7. Constrictor snake

8. Demand

10. Rich man

12. Short-tailed marten

13. Zoroastrian concept of holy fire

14. Superconducting super collider

16. International group of countries within the Americas

17. Sacred state for Muslims

19. Shock therapy

20. Engrave

21. Localities

25. Paddle

26. Periodical

27. Dishonestly gained money

29. Gain possession of
30. Actor DiCaprio

31. High schoolers' test

32. Mr. October

39. Sign of healing

41. One's grandmother

42. Entrap

43. One who simultaneously buys and sells

44. __ Francisco

45. Web-based data provider of marine life

46. Type of snake

48. Dark mark or stain

49. Member of the Salii

50. Former measure of length

51. CNN's founder

52. Witness

CLUES DOWN

1. Acquire

2. Console

3. Hunting expedition

4. Pie __ mode

5. Simple shoes for peasants

6. Eurasian shrub

8. Reciprocal of a sine

9. Work together in harmony

11. Grenade

14. File extension

15. Minute pores in a plant

18. Medal of Honor

19. Make a mistake

20. Advance slowly, as if by inches

22. Sandwich meat

23. An awkward stupid person
24. Strong tree

27. Commoner

28. Electroencephalograph

29. __ Mahal

31. Congressman

32. Disorderly crowd

33. 007's creator Fleming

34. Atomic #55

35. Part of a door

36. Short-tail martens

37. Baltimore ballplayer

38. Cuddle

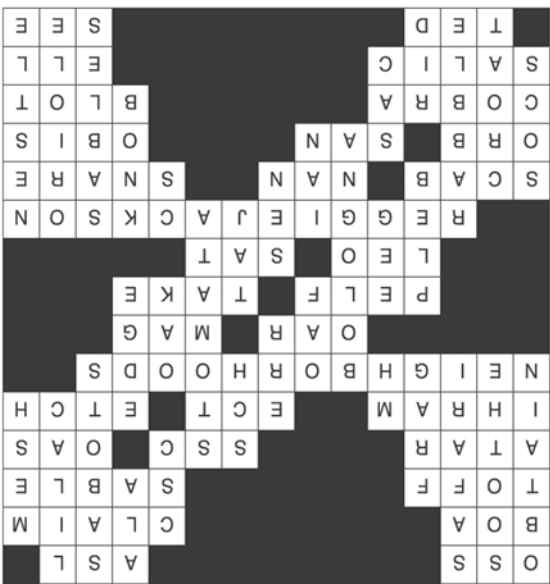
39. Gang in "The Outsiders"

40. Of Croatia

44. Body cavity

47. Get free of

PUZZLE SOLUTION



COMMUNITY CALENDAR JANUARY 16-23

Spencer
Monday, Jan. 19

Spencer Select Board meeting, 6:30 p.m., Spencer Town Hall, 48 Main St.

Tuesday, Jan. 20
Spencer Public Library children's story time, 10:30 a.m., 21 Mechanic St.

Wednesday, Jan. 21
Spencer Planning Board meeting, 7 p.m., Spencer Town Hall.

Leicester

Monday, Jan. 19
Leicester Select Board meeting, 6:30 p.m., Leicester Town Hall, 3 Washburn Square.

Tuesday, Jan. 20
Leicester Public Library adult knitting group, 6 p.m., 1136 Main St.

Thursday, Jan. 22
Leicester School Committee meeting, 6 p.m., Leicester Middle School media center.

Cherry Valley

Wednesday, Jan. 21
Cherry Valley Historical Society open hours, 1 to 4 p.m., 4 Maple Hill Road.

North Brookfield

Monday, Jan. 19
North Brookfield Select Board meeting, 7 p.m., Town Hall, 215 Pleasant St.

Tuesday, Jan. 20

North Brookfield Public Library book group, 6:30 p.m., 4 Summer St.

East Brookfield

Monday, Jan. 19
East Brookfield Select Board meeting, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall, 122 Connie Mack Drive.

Thursday, Jan. 22
East Brookfield Public Library story hour, 10:30 a.m., 21 Main St.

West Brookfield

Monday, Jan. 19
West Brookfield Select Board meeting, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall, 2 East Main St.

Wednesday, Jan. 21
West Brookfield Council on Aging lunch program, noon, Senior Center, 39 West Main St.

Brookfield

Tuesday, Jan. 20
Brookfield Select Board meeting, 6:30 p.m., Brookfield Town Hall, 12 Central St.

Warren

Monday, Jan. 19
Warren Select Board meeting, 6 p.m., Warren Town Hall, 48 High St.
Thursday, Jan. 22
Warren Public Library evening hours, 4 to 7 p.m., 4 High St.

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New storytelling group, The Story Exchange, forming in Brookfield

BROOKFIELD — A new community storytelling group, The Story Exchange, is forming in Brookfield and will hold its organizational meeting at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 10 at the Merrick Public Library Annex, 18 Common St., Brookfield.

The Story Exchange is designed for individuals interested in telling and developing true, personal

stories, shared aloud in a supportive, structured environment. The group emphasizes storytelling craft, focused listening, and constructive feedback, and welcomes participants of all experience levels. Stories shared during meetings are expected to be true, personal narratives, typically five to seven minutes in length, focused on a single moment or experience rather than a full life history.

The group will be facilitated by Joe Klimavich, an accredited public relations consultant and adjunct professor of communication at Worcester State University, who has taught effective speaking and communication courses for many years. While facilitated, The Story Exchange is intended to be largely member-driven, with participants shaping discussions, stories, and

feedback through shared experience.

If you've lived a little, noticed a lot, and you're curious about shaping real moments into meaningful, well-told stories, you'll feel at home with this group.

"As a public relations professional and educator, telling stories - my own and those of my clients - has always been central to

my work," said Klimavich. "Inspired by programs like The Moth and Stories from the Stage, The Story Exchange grew out of a belief in the power of true stories, told well, and the value of listening as much as sharing."

Participation will be limited to six to eight storytellers per session. There is no cost to participate, but advance registration is

required. Interested individuals should send a brief introductory email to joe.klimavich@gmail.com and indicate whether you are interested in sharing a story during the first meeting.

Following the organizational meeting, The Story Exchange will meet on the first Tuesday of each month at the Merrick Public Library Annex.

Brookfields Lions Club accepting scholarship applications

NORTH BROOKFIELD — The Brookfields Lions Club is now accepting applications for its annual

scholarship program, according to club president Bill Cass.

Each year, the club awards a scholarship of up to \$1,000 to a graduating senior in each of the club's

member communities, Cass said. Recipients of the 2026 Brookfields Lions Club scholarship awards will be announced in June.

To qualify for consideration, applicants must live in one of the member communities -- Brookfield, East Brookfield, North Brookfield, West Brookfield, and New Braintree -- and submit an application before their school's spring break. The application must include the student's class rank and be signed by the school's guidance director.

The application form is now available for download on the club's website at brookfieldslionsclub.org/scholarships. The

completed form should be mailed to the scholarship selection committee care of Brookfields Lions Club, Scholarship Committee, P.O. Box 128, North Brookfield, MA 01535.

For additional information, please contact the Brookfields Lions Club at brookfieldslionsclub@gmail.com, or visit the Club's Facebook page at facebook.com/BrookfieldsLionsClub.

As the world's largest,

youngest and most active service organization, the mission of Lions Clubs International is to empower volunteers to serve their communities, meet humanitarian needs, encourage peace, and promote international understanding. Members of the Brookfields Lions Club are dedicated to service and support in the communities of Brookfield, East Brookfield, North Brookfield, West Brookfield, and New Braintree.

Leicester Public Library to display student artwork

LEICESTER — Art students at Leicester High School will have a Pop Up Art Exhibit displaying their final works at Leicester Public Library between Wednesday, Jan. 14 and Friday, Jan. 23.

Each student in art teacher John Yarrows' Art 3 class created a trio of work based around a central theme or concentration, in either clay or paint. They will share their work at an opening

night event Thursday, Jan. 14 from 5 - 7:30 p.m. in the Library's Community Meeting Room. For interested viewers unable to attend, the work will be on display in the Library, during open hours, until Friday, Jan. 23.

On Tuesday, Jan. 20 from 6 - 8 p.m., the Library is co-hosting Ask-A-Farmer with Amanda Barker of Cotyledon Farm in Rochdale. Farmer Amanda

will answer questions about CSAs (community supported agriculture), discuss seed ordering, garden planning, spacing, timing, pest control and more. Bring your seed catalogs and your gardening questions.

Both events are free, and no registration is required. For more information about these and other events at the library, visit www.leicesterlibrary.org.

SNHU announces Fall President's List

MANCHESTER, New Hampshire — It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the Fall 2025 President's List. The fall terms run from September to December.

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

Chanlyn Basham of West Brookfield
Rosanna Lopez of West Brookfield
Cameron Hafner of Spencer
Lexie MacDonald of Spencer
Tyler Carter of Spencer
Nicole Dayutis of Spencer
Andres Perez Morel of Spencer
Steven Killmer of North Brookfield
Logan Peterson of North Brookfield

Melissa Benway of Leicester
Claire Kuchinski of Leicester
Kuku Layne of Leicester
Justina Hicks of East Brookfield
Krysta Tarves of East Brookfield
Tianna Laraia of Brookfield
Katelynn McCrohan of Brookfield

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

SNHU announces Fall Dean's List

MANCHESTER, New Hampshire — It is with great pleasure that Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) congratulates the following students on being named to the Fall 2025 Dean's List. The fall terms run from September to December.

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

Melody Serrano-Rodriguez of Spencer
Richard BUDNEY of Spencer
Myeisha McDaddie of Spencer
Christine Seaver of North Brookfield
Crystal Gagnon of North Brookfield

Nicholas Chatzopoulos of Leicester

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

Lasell University students named to Fall Dean's List

NEWTON — The Fall 2025 Dean's List at Lasell University includes students who have completed at least 12 credits as a full-time student in that semester and have achieved a semester GPA of 3.5 or higher.

Among the area residents named to the Dean's List were Dillon Winkelmann and Julia Cabana of Spencer.

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PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

EDITORIAL

Winter is long, but community shortens it

By the middle of January, winter has a way of settling in. The holidays are behind us, the daylight still feels scarce, and the calendar stretches forward with more cold than comfort in sight. It is the point in the season when patience gets tested, routines feel heavier, and it becomes easy to withdraw a little more than we should.

In towns like Spencer, Leicester, and the Brookfields, winter has always demanded something extra from residents. It asks for preparedness, flexibility, and a willingness to look out for one another. Snowstorms still disrupt schedules. Icy roads still require caution. Heating bills still rise at the very moment when incomes remain steady. None of that is new.

What is worth remembering, especially now, is how much of that burden has always been eased by community.

Winter meetings continue. Library lights stay on. Senior centers keep their doors open. Select boards, school committees, and volunteers show up on cold nights because local decisions still need to be made and neighbors still need places to gather. These are not grand gestures, but they matter. They remind residents that town life does not go into hibernation just because the temperature drops.

There is also something quietly reassuring about the predictability of this season. January meetings look much like December meetings. Story hours still bring children through library doors. Public works crews keep doing their jobs long before most people are awake. These routines form a kind of civic backbone, steady even when the weather is not.

Winter also has a way of narrowing focus. Without the distractions of summer events or fall deadlines, there is more room to pay attention to what is close at hand. A town meeting agenda. A library program. A neighbor who needs help clearing a driveway. These smaller moments define community life far more than the occasional big event.

As the calendar turns deeper into winter, there is value in staying engaged. Attending a meeting. Using the library. Checking in on someone who may be feeling the season more heavily. None of these actions are dramatic, but together they shorten the winter in meaningful ways.

Spring will arrive on its own schedule. In the meantime, community is what carries towns through.

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

Tired of winning

To the Editor:

Not tired of me winning, I am tired of the Cheeto winning. When Kristen Welker asked if he would follow the Constitution, he responded, “I will have to ask my lawyers” His current statement is that his morality is what restricts his compliance with international law. It is true. The level of his grifting staggers the imagination. It is not only the complete non-compliance with all emolument’s restrictions; we are actually seeing him selling pardons. He has defined his packed supreme court decision to grant him immunity from prosecution, as meaning immunity from adhering to any laws. He not only demonstrates this in his own behavior, but with pardon power, believes he can grant the same privilege to his minions.

His band of masked thugs and their supervisors, mirror hid disrespect for our nation. The young woman killed in Minnesota on the way home from dropping her six-year-old at school, was also a trained ICE disruptor, knew what she could legally do, and was murdered by an ICE thug suffering from PTSD because his wounds had barely healed since being dragged by an illegal car six months ago. This man was not in any condition to be armed or on the street. Because the video evidence starts after the woman had been illegally stopped by the agent who cut her off and jumped in front of her car. If you watch what was taped, you will realize that, if the agent was hit , it was by a vehicle with a dead driver, and you can watch the shooter holster his gun, walk towards the dead car, then go get in the car with its door open, that he used to cut her off. Noem and the administration, immediately put their foot in their mouth and started talking out of their butt. Like Jan. 6, do not let them talk you out of what you can see with your own eyes.

The guy who has been actively campaigning

for a peace prize and claiming to have settled conflicts that he had not, promised we would not put troops in harm’s way again or start any wars. Since then, we have bombed Iran, used a carrier group to destroy little wooden boats and kidnapped Venezuela’s president. I am not saying he is a nice guy, but neither is the guy from Honduras, sentenced to 45 years for bringing 500 tons of drugs here.

What part of this guy acting like Putin, do you not understand? You have put a mob boss in command of the most powerful military in the world. He is now requesting increasing the military budget to invade other countries, including Cuba, Columbia and Greenland, the latter being a NATO country. Later today, we expect to hear if SCOTUS will uphold his illegal tariffs.

On the home front, stock markets are doing well, but how many of us actually live off of them? Most of us by groceries, finance housing, pay utilities and insurance, all of which businesses are doing great. It is we the people who are not. Did I miss something or am I confused that Trump promised to make life more affordable? Didn’t he also promise to release the Epstein files, then, not only defy a law he signed that was veto proof? At 1 percent per month, we should have it all 8 and a half years after we should have. I put no stock in them as he is a known pervert who toured the miss teen America dressing rooms. My opinion of him is already as low as it gets, though he keeps trying.

Let me know when you get tired of him winning.

KEN KIMBALL
BROOKFIELD

It is time for Congress to act

To the Editor:

I am writing as a Spencer resident and emergency management professional deeply concerned about the direction of public safety and constitutional accountability in our country.

Recently, I sent a formal letter to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, urging senior military leadership to engage Congress regarding constitutional remedies, including impeachment. That letter forwarded separate correspondence I had sent to Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem recommending her resignation due to the institutional harm her leadership has caused to emergency management and civil preparedness.

Since that letter was written, a fatal shooting by an ICE officer occurred in Minneapolis — yet another reminder that Americans are not safe, and that failures of governance, accountability, and leadership have real and immediate

consequences. When emergency management systems are weakened, when constitutional norms are ignored, and when public safety is treated as secondary to political loyalty, people are put at risk.

The day of the fatal shooting in Minneapolis, Rep. Robin Kelly announced plans to introduce articles of impeachment against Secretary Noem. That action underscores what many professionals have been warning: this moment is long past due.

Emergency management depends on trust, lawful authority, and accountability. When those foundations erode, communities pay the price. It is time for Congress to act — not as a political gesture, but as a necessary step to restore public safety, constitutional order, and confidence in the systems meant to protect us.

DR. JENNIFER CARLSON
SPENCER

Our toxic, poisonous Trump administration & the damage it does to our country and families, week after week

To the Editor:

Chaos and Death in Minneapolis. Minnesota has a Covid Era onwards fraud problem that that involves some members of its Somali and Somali-American community. Investigations and court decisions have led to convictions, admission of guilt, imprisonment etc.

Remember however the fraud crimes do not involve violence. But what Has happened? First, as in the past, Trump and members of his administration called all Somalis “garbage “ and said they should go back from where they came from. Then he “surges” 2,000 - 3,000 ICE etc. agents - with costs - to a well policed city that has done so with about 600 officers. Then these agents create anger, fear and chaos - where remember it has a fraud, not violent crime, problem. Then a non-violent women is shot to death and videos seem to indicate the responsible agent broke the law in shooting her. Then the FBI refused to share evidence etc. with the local police department etc.

Similar and expensive costs continue with our intervention in Venezuela. Not only does the massive naval fleet remain, but so does the Maduro government, the removal of which was supposedly an

objective. In addition the oil - which so much interests Trump - seems not so needed and would require billions and billions of dollars and about 10 years of redevelopment – which our oil companies seem not excited about.

Now Trump wants Greenland which is part of our NATO ally, Denmark. He says he will take it over by either the easy or hard way. Either approach cause the end of NATO, our most important and long lasting military alliance.

Finally, just this morning the Trump administration has announced an investigation of the Chairman of our Federal Reserve Bank, not because of corruption or incompetence, but because of renovation of a building that was approved before he arrived .(In fact the real reason is because the disagree on interest rate policy).

To end a question what does all this chaos and destruction have to do about important issues like affordability, good jobs, climate change, an unfair tax system, rising national debt, health care, a possible bankrupt Social Security etc.?

The answer — nothing.

KEVIN KANE
SPENCER

New tax laws for 2026 that you should know



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The new year brings more than resolutions and fresh starts; it also ushers in several tax changes that could affect your wallet. Whether you’re saving for retirement, funding your child’s education, or supporting your favorite charity, here’s are a few things you need to know about the tax landscape in 2026.

More room to save for retirement and healthcare. There’s good news for savers: Contribution limits for retirement accounts are going up. If you’re under 50, you can now contribute up to \$7,500 to an IRA, which is up from \$7,000 in 2025. Those 50 and older can contribute an additional \$1,100, for a total of \$8,600.

The limits for 401(k), 403(b) and governmental 457(b) plans are also increasing, with workers younger than 50 able to defer up to \$24,500. Visit IRS.gov and search «401k limit increases» for an article outlining the details.

Health savings account limits are rising too. In 2026, individual coverage increased to \$4,400 and family coverage to \$8,750. If you are age 55 or older and are not enrolled in Medicare, you can contribute an additional \$1,000 as a catch-up contribution.

The start of the year is an ideal time to review your contributions and consider increasing them, even by small amounts which can add up over time.

A catch-up rule for high earners. If you’re 50 or older and earned more than \$150,000 last year, there’s a new wrinkle in your retirement planning. You can still make catch-up contributions to your workplace retirement plan, but they must now be Roth contributions rather than traditional pre-tax contributions. This includes 401(k), 403(b) and 457(b) plans.

While you won’t get an immediate tax break, Roth contributions offer tax-free income in retirement and can provide a tax-free legacy for your heirs.

Expanded benefits for 529 education plans. Families using 529 plans to cover K-12 expenses will see the annual federal distribution limit double from \$10,000 to \$20,000 per student. The definition of qualifying expenses has also expanded to include curriculum, books, certain tutoring expenses and testing fees.

This change provides more flexibility for families with overfunded plans and increases options for managing education costs across multiple children or beneficiaries.

New charitable giving provisions. The rules around charitable deductions are shifting in two directions. Taxpayers who take the standard deduction can now deduct up to \$1,000 in cash donations (\$2,000 for joint filers) to qualified organizations.

However, those who itemize deductions face a new threshold: only charitable contributions exceeding 0.5 percent of adjusted gross income are now deductible. Donors may want to consider bunching strategies or using donor-advised funds to maximize their tax benefits.

Getting help. Navigating these tax changes can be challenging, but you don’t have to go it them alone. A qualified financial advisor and tax professional can help you understand how these and other changes affect your specific situation. Together, you can develop strategies to make the most of new opportunities while minimizing your tax burden.

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

Lanterns Along Main Street

LANTERNS
ALONG
MAIN
STREET
By CHARLES

There is a particular sound you hear in small towns this time of year, one that never quite makes it into the tourist brochures. It is the sound of ice being scraped from windshields in the half light of early morning, followed by the solid thump of a car door closing and the low, patient hum of an engine warming up. It is not a dramatic sound. It is not heroic. But it is the sound of people getting ready to do what needs to be done.

I noticed it the other morning as I stood at my own kitchen window, mug of coffee in hand, watching a neighbor across the way coax his car to life. He was dressed for the cold in the same practical way most folks around here are, nothing fancy, just layers and a good hat pulled down over his ears. He waved when he

saw me, a small gesture that probably took more energy than he felt like giving at that hour. But he did it anyway.

Moments like that always make me think about how much of life in our towns runs on quiet habits rather than big announcements. Nobody sends out a press release when they shovel their walkway so the mail carrier does not slip. No one rings a bell when they bring in a neighbor's trash barrels because the wind tipped them over. These are not things people do for applause. They do them because that is how a place holds together.

In the larger world, everything seems to come with a microphone attached. Every opinion is amplified, every disagreement turned into a shouting match. But on Main Street, the old rules still seem to apply. You nod. You say

good morning. You hold the door. You do not need to win anything. You just need to get through the day with a little decency left over.

I have lived long enough to know that this did not happen by accident. The people who built these towns, the ones whose names are still etched on the bricks and cornerstones, were not chasing attention. They were chasing stability. They wanted a place where you could raise a family, earn an honest living, and trust that when something went wrong, someone nearby would notice.

I think of that whenever I stop at the local coffee shop, where the same faces appear at the same stools, week after week. There is the man who always orders his coffee black and reads the paper from front to back, even the parts most people skip. There

is the woman who keeps a little notebook, writing down reminders in neat, careful letters. They do not know everything about each other, but they know enough. They know who likes cream, who needs a little extra time to find their wallet, who has not been in for a few days and might deserve a quick phone call.

That is the thing about small towns. You are seen. Sometimes that can feel inconvenient. But most of the time, it is a gift.

I once heard someone say that modern life is about efficiency. You tap a screen and groceries arrive. You tap another and a movie starts. None of that is bad, but it does remove a certain kind of friction, the kind that forces us to notice one another. When you have to walk into a store, stand in line, and

exchange a few words with a real person, you end up learning small things about the people around you. Those small things, added up over time, become community.

Even now, when so much is done through devices, the old patterns have not disappeared entirely. You still see them in the way folks look out for each other when the weather turns rough. You see them in the way local volunteers show up for events that do not make the evening news. You see them in the simple courtesy of letting someone go ahead of you at the register when they only have one item.

None of this is glamorous. But it is sturdy.

As I get older, I find myself appreciating that sturdiness more than ever. The world will always have its noise.

It will always have its trends and its arguments and its urgent headlines. But here, along the sidewalks and storefronts of our Massachusetts towns, there are still lanterns lit by quieter things: habit, kindness, and a shared understanding that we are all, in our own way, in this together.

The neighbor eventually drove off, his headlights cutting through the cold blue morning. I finished my coffee and got ready for my own day, comforted by the thought that somewhere down the street, someone else was doing the same. No fanfare. No fuss. Just another small town waking up, one windshield scrape at a time.



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QCC awarded \$240,000 by state for re-entry workforce program

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College was recently awarded \$240,000 for a workforce development program to train formerly incarcerated individuals. The funding is part of the Healey-Driscoll Administration’s \$2.2 million in Re-entry Workforce Development Demonstration grants for individuals returning to the workforce.

QCC has received the Re-entry grant since 2022 and will continue to partner with the Worcester County Sheriff’s Office to offer a training program that focuses on the culinary and hospitality industry.

Program graduates will be placed in food preparation roles through organizations such as Snapchef, Latin American Health Alliance – Hector Reyes House and Massachusetts Restaurant Association.

“This type of partnership helps these individuals build a sustainable future,” said QCC President Dr. Luis G. Pedraja. “This program offers more than job training; it creates opportunities for returning citizens to thrive and contribute to their communities.”

“Building on the success of previous programs, the culinary training focus will give participants hands-on skills in a field with high

demand for workers,” said Director of Workforce Development Operations Kathleen O’Connor. “In past years, our programs have seen positive outcomes in improving employment and stability for individuals re-entering society.”

The program will serve 20 participants, who will receive training that includes basic culinary techniques, food safety, menu planning and customer service. Participants will also receive three industry-recognized credentials. In addition to mastering culinary skills, the program places a strong emphasis on healthy eating and cooking.

MCCANCE
continued from page A1

year terms, and is currently in the last of six years. She served the last four years as Chair.

Stated McCance, “It has been an incredible challenge serving in this leadership capacity, a challenge that I have dedicated myself toward facing every day. Challenge is growth, and we are growing at a rapid speed. It is a privilege working with Dr. Kustigian, school committee members, and the school community at large. Our students deserve nothing but the best, and together we are giving them that. I am grateful to MASC for the support and guidance they have given me through the years so that I can fulfill the role of being a leader and member of the school committee with the highest expectations and regard for the position.”

McCance is a longtime resident of Leicester, a graduate of Leicester High School, and a former elementary school teacher in the town for 22 years. Prior to being an educator, McCance worked in business management.

She has a Master’s degree in Education from Anna Maria College, Masters in Human Services Management from Worcester State University, Bachelors in Business Administration from Clark University, Associates in Business Administration from Becker College, and is a licensed principal/vice principal. She currently teaches for the Worcester Public Schools.

LOONEY
continued from page A1

and the University of Alabama, with IU as the victor.

During their stay in Los Angeles, the BDMB performed at an event called BandFest, which brings together the marching bands participating in the parade to perform for each other. Select high school and college bands from across the US, Mexico, and Japan were also accepted to march in the parade.

An important component of Saluting America’s Band Director is a “Service Through Music” initiative. Participating Band Directors are encouraged to complete a service project at the local level. Looney’s, service project, a reflection of the 2026 parade theme “The Magic in Teamwork,” involved combining local bands to perform together for a cause. I decided to create a composite band of Scouting America and Girl Scouts from the area to form the Central Massachusetts Scout Band. The group performed a concert on Nov. 7, hosted in the Leicester Middle School Fine Arts Center, in honor of Veterans and First responders. The CMSB was also able to make a donation in the amount of \$125 to Project New Hope in Worcester, an organization that provides food and services to veterans.

“I would like to thank the Scouts from the area who made the band performance possible, especially Troop 53/753 of Auburn who volunteered to provide and serve refreshments following the concert,” Looney said.

The Band Directors Marching Band persisted through the 5.5-mile route down Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena in the rain. 2026 marked only the 11th time it has ever rained on the Rose Parade in its 137 year history! The band performed “Strike Up the Saints!” a medley of “Strike Up the Band” and “When the Saints Go Marching In,” arranged specifically for the band by Lisa Galvin; “Brand New Day” arranged by Bob Thurston; and “Seventy-Six Trombones,” also arranged by Galvin. The band also performed Thurston’s stirring and emotional arrangement of “Amazing Grace” in honor of the firefighters and first responders who aided last year’s wildfires in Southern California which resulted in widespread loss of life and property throughout the region. The band had another opportunity to perform the song for the families representing the OneLegacy Donate Life float in honor of organ donors.

Looney was able to meet many band directors from programs large and small from every corner of North America while on this trip, and learned new techniques that I have already brought to my middle school band room in the process.

“Thank you to the Leicester community, and especially the LMS Staff and students, for supporting me in this process,” she said.



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Students at Saint Joseph School were honored with the Saint Martin de Porres Award during the school's December Recognition and School Spirit Assembly, recognizing their kindness, humility, and service to others in the spirit of Saint Martin de Porres. Student award recipients include: Pre-K 3-year-old: Jameson Proffer, Pre-K 4-year-old: Olive MacPherson, Kindergarten: Emilia Dziobak, Grade 1: Magdalena Kosiorek, Grade 2: Charlotte Marchand, Grade 3: Wrenna Shemansky, Grade 4: Olivia Guinto, Grade 5: Julia-Ann McCracken, Grade 6: Allen Oliver Jean-Paul, Grade 7: Lily Martin, Grade 8: Tenleigh Dowd.

Building community and character at Saint Joseph School's December Assembly

WEBSTER — On Dec. 16, Saint Joseph School gathered in the Nowak Gymnasium for its monthly Recognition and School Spirit Assembly, a tradition designed to strengthen community, celebrate growth, and reinforce the values that guide daily life at SJS.

Each assembly follows a consistent format that helps students build pride and a shared sense of purpose. The assembly begins with a welcome from Principal Mrs. Beth Boudreau, followed by the recitation of the school's mission statement. This month, Grade 1 students volunteered to lead the student body—an opportunity that encourages confidence, leadership, and ownership of Saint Joseph School's guiding principles of Religion, Respect, and Responsibility. With upbeat music playing throughout the gym, students are invited to celebrate one another's successes and the joy of being part of a faith-filled school community.

A meaningful portion of every assembly is the recognition of monthly birthdays. All students and faculty members born in November were honored and received a book from the school. Birthday celebrants were then recognized by the entire student body through two songs: the familiar "Happy Birthday," and "Sto Lat," a traditional Polish birthday song whose lyrics wish someone "one hundred years." Singing Sto Lat is a beloved Saint Joseph School tradition and a tribute to the Polish heritage that has long been an important part of the school and parish community.

Monthly assemblies also include a rotating special award that connects student character to the lives of the saints and the school's mission. In November, Saint Joseph School presented the Saint Martin de Porres Award, named for the Peruvian saint whose feast day is Nov. 3. Saint Martin de Porres is remembered for his humility, compassion, and service—especially to the poor and the sick—and for treating every person with dignity. Students are encouraged to follow his example by choosing kindness, helping others, and showing respect in their words and actions each day.

The assembly concluded with a spirited, school-wide activity that added an extra layer of fun and camaraderie: a friendly gym "snowball fight." Classes competed in timed rounds, staying on their own side of the court while tossing rolled-up white socks—"snowballs"—back and forth. The class with the fewest snowballs on its side at the end of 60 seconds won the round. Teachers joined the competition as well, adding to the laughter and school spirit.

Saint Joseph School's monthly assemblies are intentionally designed to balance celebration with formation—recognizing students, reinforcing values, and creating joyful traditions that help students feel connected, supported, and proud to be part of the SJS community.

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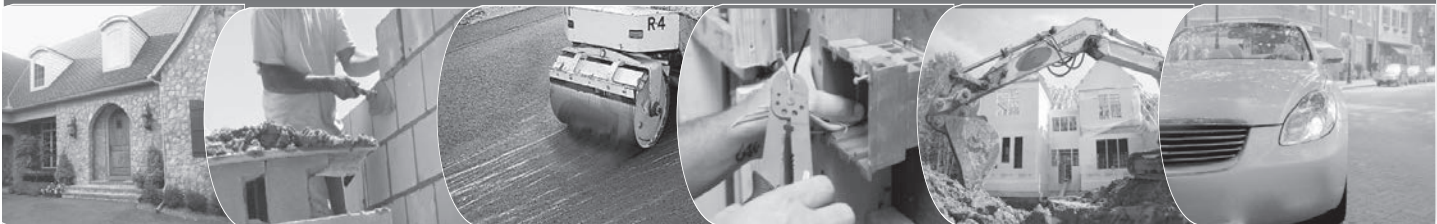
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Berthiaume announces local office hours

REGION — State Rep. Donnie Berthiaume and Chief of Staff, Donna, and Sen. Peter Durant's office invites Constituents and town officials to meet them to express any concerns, ideas, or issues that they may need assistance with. Please feel free to contact Donna if you would like a private meeting. 774-402-4742

Wednesday, Feb. 11 – In the Town of West Brookfield, at the Senior Center, 11:15 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Wednesday, Feb. 11 – In the Town of Brookfield at the Town Hall, 12:30 – 1:30 p.m.

Thursday, Feb. 12 – Town of North Brookfield – Senior Center 11 a.m.-noon

Wednesday, Nov. 18 — in the Town of Leicester at the Senior Center, 9 – 9:45 a.m.

Wednesday, Nov. 18 – In the Town of Spencer, at Howe Village, 10- 11 a.m. - With Tammy Ruda from Rep. Marsi's Office.

Wednesday, Nov. 18 – In the Town of East Brookfield at the Senior Center 11:15 a.m. – noon.

www.Stonebridge Press.com

LEGALS

**TOWN OF BROOKFIELD
BOARD OF HEALTH
PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE
Wednesday, January 28th, 2026,
at 7:00pm
Banquet Room, Brookfield Town
Hall, 6 Central Street,
Brookfield, MA**

In accordance with provisions of G.L. c. 111, §31, the Board of Health will hold a Public Hearing on Wednesday, January 28th, 2026, at 7:00pm in the Banquet Room of the Brookfield Town Hall located at 6 Central Street, Brookfield, MA 01506, to review and hear comments relative to a proposed amendment to the Board of Health Regulation entitled Restricting the Sale of Tobacco Products. Proposed amendment in the draft regulation include, but are not limited to, amending restrictions on the sale of and the nicotine content of oral nicotine pouches.

The proposed regulation can be reviewed by contacting the Brookfield Board of Health at (508) 867-2930 extension 22 and may be found at www.mytowngovernment.org/01506 under Board of Health

Any person interested or wishing to be heard on this proposed regulation should appear at the time and place designated.

January 9, 2026
January 16, 2026
January 23, 2026

(SEAL)
THE COMMONWEALTH
OF MASSACHUSETTS
LAND COURT
DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL
COURT
Docket Number: 25 SM 004057
ORDER OF NOTICE

To:
Thang T. Luong a/k/a Thang Trac Luong
and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (et seq):
Towd Point Mortgage Trust 2020-3, U.S. Bank National Association, as Indenture Trustee
claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in East Brookfield, numbered 306 West Sturbridge Road, given by Binh Ta Luong to Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., dated May 24, 2007, and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 41226, Page 85, 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 February 16, 2026, or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of non-compliance with the Act.
Witness, Gordon H. Piper, Chief Justice of this Court on January 2, 2026.
Attest:
Deborah J. Patterson
Recorder
28787
January 16, 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. WO25P1175EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION**
Estate Of:
Joseph A. Kularski, Jr.
Also known as: Joseph A. Kularski
Date of Death:08/11/2024

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **S/A - Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Chad A Kularski of Abingdon VA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.
The Petitioner requests that:
Joseph A Kularski, III of Charleston SC 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 02/10/2026.**
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: January 08, 2026
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
January 16, 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.WO26P0005EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION**
Estate Of:
Joseph O'Mara
Date of Death: 11/08/2025

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy** has been filed by **Karen Wilson of Worcester MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.
The Petitioner requests that:
Karen Wilson of Worcester MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**

IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/03/2026.**
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. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.
Date:January 05, 2026
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
January 16, 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. WO26P0014EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION**
Estate Of:
Christopher McInnes
Date of Death: 11/16/2025

To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Gail M McInnes of Spencer MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition.
The Petitioner requests that:
Gail M McInnes of Spencer MA be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**

IMPORTANT NOTICE
You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of 02/03/2026.**
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. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.
Date:January 07, 2026
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
January 16, 2026

Local residents named to Dean’s List
at Saint Anselm

MANCHESTER, New Hampshire — Saint Anselm College has released the Dean’s List of high academic achievers for the first semester of the 2025-2026 school year. To be eligible for this honor, a student must have achieved a grade point average of 3.4 or better in the semester with at least 12 credits of study which award a letter grade. This semester there were a total of 702 students from 25 states, the District of Colombia, and 3 countries.

Mark W. Cronin, Dean of the College, announced that Abigail Bernabei of Leicester has been named to the Dean’s

List for the fall 2025 semester.

About Saint Anselm College
Founded in 1889, Saint Anselm College is a four-year liberal arts college providing a 21st century education in the Catholic, Benedictine tradition. Located in southern New Hampshire near Boston and the seacoast, Saint Anselm is well known for its strong liberal arts curriculum, the New Hampshire Institute of Politics, a highly successful nursing program, a legacy of community service and a commitment to the arts.

STORRS, Conn. — The University of Connecticut congratulates the following students on being named to the Dean’s List for the fall semester of 2025.

Auburn
Lily Derenas,
Nathan Gawronski,
Sydney Lamontagne

Charlton
Colleen Cumming,
Chloe Graves, Akshat
Viswanath

Douglas
Kaylee Bolin,
Ashlyn Leonard

Dudley
Thaomy Phung

Fiskdale
Grace Connors

Grafton
Sahnavi Rao
Palimar, Catherine
Wroge

Groton
Allegra Gutermann,
Madelyn Kelly, Megan
Miller, Treyton Palmer

Leicester
Sarah Brouillard

Millbury
Samuel Bazydlo,
Francesca Beyer,
Quinn Romaine

Millville
Ashley Pisano, Julia
Trujillo

Milton
Odia Iyamu,
Matthew Paquette,
Amelia Stallions

Northbridge
Sara Bedigian,
Adriana Tilison, Keira
Touhey

Southbridge
Niyana Ramos

Spencer
James Mcnicol

Sturbridge
Kathleen Croyley

Upton
Marina Brockett-
Delgado, Alissa
Christensen

Uxbridge
Adam Chen, Sydney
Daniels, Grace Mathieu

Whitinsville
Ian Gahan

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Sign-On Bonus Eligibility:
The \$10,000 sign-on bonus is available to candidates who meet experience and skill requirements and successfully complete onboarding milestones. Bonus is paid in structured installments over the first year of employment.

HOW TO APPLY:
Submit your resume to centurytool@centurytoolcompany.com or contact (860) 923-9523. Qualified applicants will be contacted to schedule an interview and facility tour.

Local residents named to UConn Dean’s List

Kavon
Age 12
Registration # 8878

Kavon is a sweet, friendly, and outgoing young boy with a warm and engaging personality. He loves drawing, watching cartoons, playing games on his tablet, spending time in the water, and kicking around a soccer ball. Kavon is personable and funny, with a great sense of humor that helps him build strong connections with those around him. He is also very responsible and considerate—often reminding his peers to push in their chairs or turn off the water after using the sink. Always ready to lend a helping hand, Kavon enjoys being supportive and kind to his friends. Kavon likes going to school and is eager to learn new things. His favorite subjects are science and art, where he gets to explore, experiment, and be creative.

<https://www.mareinc.org/child/21189474869>

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.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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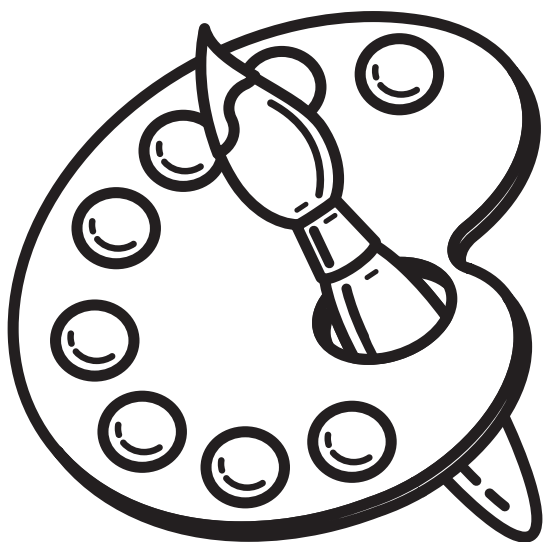
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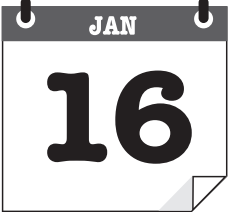
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THIS DAY IN HISTORY

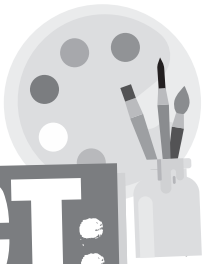


1909: Ernest Shackleton and his expedition find the magnetic South Pole.

1920: The League of Nations holds its first council meeting in Paris, France.

1969: Soviet spacecraft Soyuz 4 and Soyuz 5 perform the first-ever docking of crewed spacecraft in orbit.

Art FACT:



Various artistic activities can be considered hobbies, including this pastime that involves clay.

Answer: Pottery

Double Word Puzzle

Unscramble the individual words to reveal letters for the phrase.

FCART

6	2	1	7	3

TIGNTINK

	5		3	3			

ISTRAT

1	2			4	3

NTIPA

				3

1	2	3	4

		D	
1	5		

6	2	1	7	3	4	

Answer: Arts and crafts

NEW WORD

NICHE

a specialized segment of the market

How they say that in...

- English: Hobby
- Spanish: Pasatiempo
- Italian: Passatempo
- French: Passe-temps
- German: Zeitvertreib

Did You Know?

Hobbies have many benefits, including reducing stress, improving mood, fostering social connections, and encouraging community involvement.



Get the PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Sewing machine

SUDOKU

1	8							3
		3	6		7			8
	5					7		
7		1			2	3		
			1		9		2	
			4		3		9	
	3				8		6	
5		4	9					

Level: Advanced

Here's How It Works: Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

8	1	6	3	4	5	2	7	9
5	7	4	9	2	6	8	3	1
9	3	2	7	1	8	4	6	5
2	6	5	4	8	3	1	9	7
3	4	8	1	7	9	5	2	6
7	9	1	5	6	2	3	8	4
6	5	9	8	3	1	7	4	2
4	2	3	6	5	7	9	1	8
1	8	7	2	9	4	6	5	3

ANSWER:

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

RESOLUTIONS WORD SEARCH

H	A	B	I	T	J	T	L	A	B	E	P	B	C	T	L	P	A	R	J
M	H	J	P	E	S	R	M	B	C	L	Y	H	S	A	S	B	U	G	V
I	E	C	Y	R	P	A	N	O	A	H	A	F	C	T	C	O	U	E	E
U	B	W	C	R	R	N	D	N	T	N	I	F	O	G	H	A	S	D	G
N	I	O	H	O	T	S	F	Y	G	I	M	E	O	I	E	C	W	C	C
O	M	B	F	M	T	F	D	E	P	P	V	I	V	C	N	A	I	R	D
I	P	J	N	T	E	O	T	A	E	W	P	A	N	E	U	I	U	I	C
T	R	E	P	G	N	R	N	C	N	P	E	R	T	D	M	S	I	R	N
N	O	C	J	N	O	M	E	C	I	L	R	F	O	I	S	E	P	O	O
E	V	T	M	S	T	A	M	O	T	A	S	S	L	G	O	E	N	B	I
T	E	I	V	N	S	T	T	U	U	W	I	A	V	A	R	N	T	T	T
N	M	V	I	O	E	I	I	N	O	E	S	C	M	G	O	E	I	T	A
I	E	E	S	I	L	O	M	T	R	N	T	I	T	E	A	G	S	A	N
C	N	H	I	T	I	N	M	A	Y	E	E	W	C	C	V	B	S	S	I
A	T	O	O	A	M	V	O	B	V	R	N	P	R	O	M	I	S	E	M
G	C	C	N	R	C	S	C	I	S	T	C	E	D	T	G	R	U	R	L
G	Y	A	U	I	I	U	Y	L	Y	T	E	C	M	B	T	V	P	E	T
I	J	P	C	P	W	H	D	I	S	C	I	P	L	I	N	E	B	N	T
U	U	J	O	S	G	W	G	T	Y	N	E	Y	E	D	I	E	J	O	E
H	R	G	L	A	A	M	U	Y	M	H	J	E	F	P	T	O	R	C	D

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

WORDS

- ACCOUNTABILITY
- ACHIEVEMENT
- ASPIRATION
- CHANGE
- COMMITMENT
- DETERMINATION
- DISCIPLINE
- FOCUS
- GOAL
- HABIT
- IMPROVEMENT
- INTENTION
- MILESTONE
- MINDSET
- MOTIVATION
- OBJECTIVE
- PERSISTENCE
- PLAN
- PROGRESS
- PROMISE
- RENEWAL
- ROUTINE
- TRANSFORMATION
- VISION

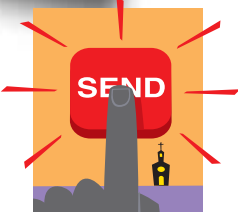
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2 -FAMILY offers 2,354 SF of living area! 2 Large Apartments, 5 Spacious Rms, 2 BRs, 1 Bath each. Beautiful grand front entry foyer with the charm of yesteryear! double French doors & other unique features. Plenty of Natural light that flows into these apartments! 2nd flr apt has a private enclosed rear entry with it's own outside covered porch. Updates were done to electric & roof to accommodate Solar Panels. Property was family occupied \$379,900.

* June Cazeault * Laurie Sullivan* Lori Johnson-Chausse * William Gilmore II * Maureen Cimoch * Bryan Pelletier

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



ASTOUNDING 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.

Two decades ago, Hope Real Estate Group opened its doors with a simple mission: to serve our community by helping our Clients navigate the real estate market!

As we celebrate 20 years of success, we wish to express our sincere gratitude for the support of our amazing Clients ~
Past, Present & Future & the Communities we serve in MA, CT & RI!

Here's to another year!
Best wishes from all of us
at Hope Real Estate Group!



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NEW CONSTRUCTION Craftsman Style Home! Tucked away on Cooper Rd, Webster Lake w/Access at Lakeside Beach/ Boat Ramp. 3rd of 4 Homes being built at this Site. Offers 2,155 SF +/- of Living Area, 7 Rms, 4 BRs, 2-1/2 Baths, 9' Ceilings. Wood Flooring Throughout w/Ceramic Tile Floors in the Baths. Spacious Main BR Suite w/Walk-in Closet & Private Full Bath, Double-Sink Vanity! Finished Lower level walkout w/Slider. Basement-rough plumbed Central AC! Garage \$649,900.

WEBSTER - 19 FIRST STREET



Bring an open mind to this unique property & let your creative design ideas flow! This one level 1,040 SF, 3 BR home is reminiscent of an English Country Cottage! It evokes a cozy, rustic, lived-in vibe. The overall aesthetic is one of practical comfort, collected charm and a relaxed, slightly whimsical atmosphere. Key characteristics include spacious rooms, hardwood floors, a primary BR with sliders to a very private deck, retractable awnings, replacement windows, etc. Move right in! \$304,900

On the shores of Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg



WEBSTER LAKE
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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! Boat house! 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 - 302 Killdeer Island
SORRY, SOLD!

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
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/Showers/Laundry & Workshop. Patio! Town Wtr/Swr + Private Well for Outdoor &/or Off-Season Water Use! 14,300 SF +/- Level Lot w/100+ of Shoreline. \$595,000

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STONEBRIDGE

Music & Movement at the Merrick Public Library in Brookfield

BROOKFIELD — Every Wednesday from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., join Julie at the Merrick Public Library in Brookfield for songs kids know and love! Stretch, move, sing, and dance, all while developing early literacy skills through music and rhythm! Recommended for ages five and under, but all ages are welcome. Drop in--no registration necessary. This program is sponsored by the Jeppson Memorial Grant and the Friends of the Merrick Public Library.

Richard Sugden Library presents “New England Ghosts”

SPENCER — “New England Ghosts” with Jonah Knight will be held at the Richard Sugden Library, Spencer on Monday, Feb. 2 from 6-7 p.m. (Snow date: Feb. 9.) This program features true ghost stories from across New England. This PG-13 storytelling magic show features one story per state along with magical effects. The stories range from 1778-2002 and include locations to help attendees plan a road trip.

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Winter SAVE 20-60%

We are in the process of selling out some of our current stock to make room for new 2024 models. Because of this, we are offering savings throughout the store!

Some items are one of a kind floor samples. *No orders will be taken on these items. Floor Sample Clearance items are sold on a first come first serve basis.

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