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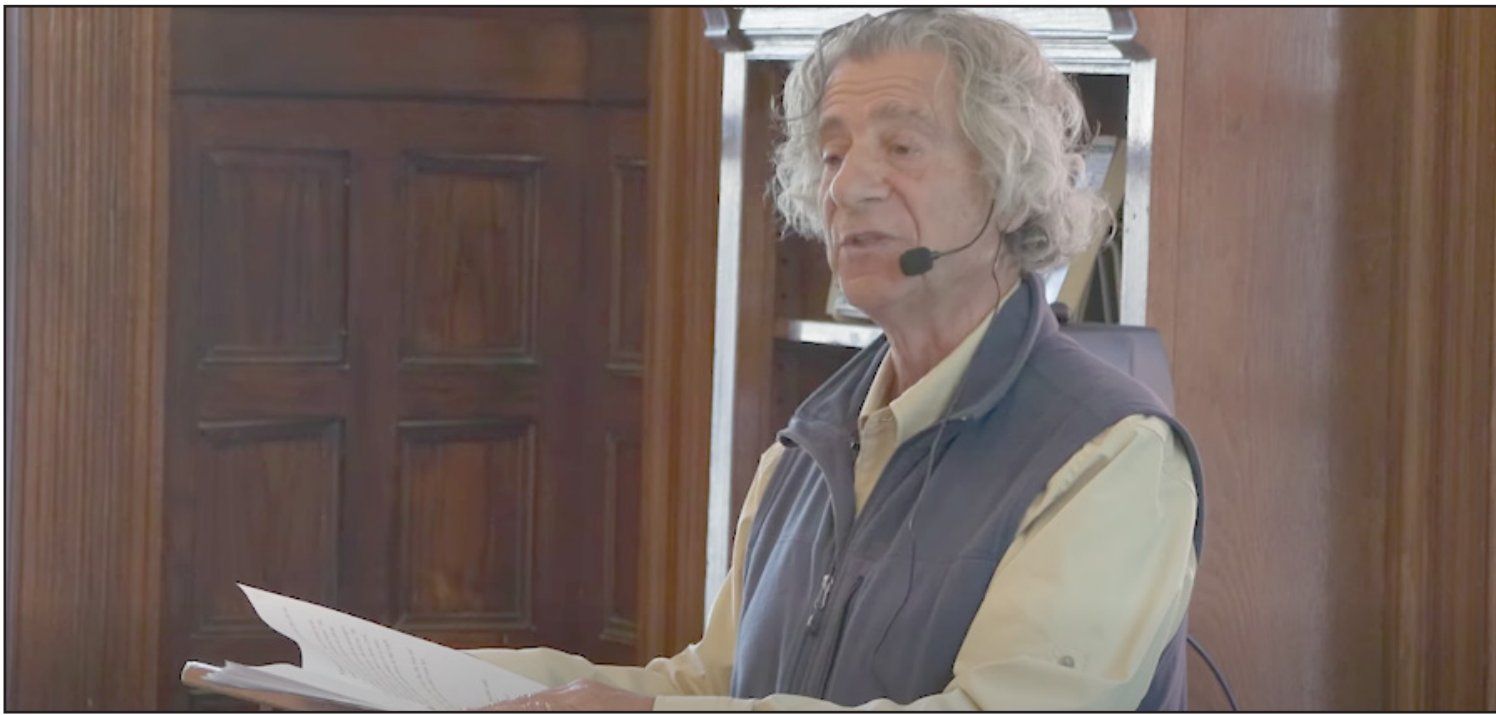
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Friday, June 19, 2026

## Former Yankee editor shares stories of New England



BY JASON BLEAU  
CORRESPONDENT

SPENCER — Mel Allen made a name for himself as the longtime editor of Yankee Magazine, a New England staple that has chronicled both the most notable and hidden stories of New England life.

Through his time with the magazine, Allen has had the privilege of meeting and sharing the stories of many New Englanders whose lives and experiences define not only the American spirit, but also what it means to be from the northeast corner of the United States.

Allen paid a visit to the Richard Sugden Library in Spencer as part of a library tour to promote his book “Here in New England,” where he chronicles many of the stories he wrote during his career with Yankee Magazine — stories he believes help connect us all in a time of great division.

“When I write about people I spend hours, often days with them. When they see me listening intently, they will tell me stories of their lives they may not have told to anyone else because few people have somebody totally listen to their story, but that’s what I do,” Allen said. “I listen, and as they tell me their story, as they open their lives, the words they speak become intimate albums that I get to keep.”

Allen began by discussing how working with the late Edie Clark, a contributor to Yankee Magazine, which led to him meeting Steve Lewers of publishing company Earth, Sky + Water. After Clark’s passing, he and Lewers worked together on a memorial where Lewers heard Allen’s stories and offered to publish a collection of his writings, feeling that the world needed to read Allen’s work.

Those stories were the basis of Allen’s presentation where he provided brief insight into many of the individuals and local stories he had the privilege of sharing with the world.

“Because of Yankee, I had the gift of knowing people and places in a way that few of us can,” Allen said. “I heard stories that break your heart, and stories that restore faith in people, and stories that inspire me every time I think of the people I came to know. All of these matter, and sometimes there are stories that do all of this at one time.”

Allen, in many ways, is a storyteller who took the responsibility of sharing other people’s experiences to heart. He talked about how he felt anxiety before every meeting and interview, unsure if he could find the words to do these stories justice. However, by the end of his career, he had helped share the trials and successes of so

many often-overlooked members of the larger New England community, shedding a light on the diversity and perseverance of our small section of the nation.

Among his many tales chronicled in “Here in New England” are a Maine fisherman Joe Woods who took his love of photography and applied it to his profession as a fisherman capturing photos that give a unique insight into the trade; Erin Gotteald who’s Essay “The Name We Carry” details a family history of public servants, members of the military; interviews with Grace Corrigan, the mother of the late astronauts and teacher Christa McAuliffe; talks with famed author Stephen King from early in his career; the final days of pioneer homesteader Scott Nearing; the weather observers on the summit of Mt. Washington; and Sandra Mansi who caught a famous photo of the legendary Lake Champlain sea creature Champ just to name a few.

Through his presentation, Allen held on to one truth: that libraries, a continued source of hard copy literature and community gathering, are more important than ever. They provide a space where anyone can learn the stories of generations past and come together to share their own experiences at a time where community is more

Turn To ALLEN page A9

## Leicester voters place new faces on School Committee

BY JASON BLEAU  
CORRESPONDENT

LEICESTER — Leicester held its annual town election on June 9 in a quiet year where nearly every race was all but decided, even before the big day.

The only competitive race was Turn To LEICESTER page A9

## Lake Wickaboag “Lights Up” for our nation’s 250th

WEST BROOKFIELD — To celebrate our nation’s 250th birthday, the Lake Wickaboag Preservation Association (“LWPA”) is sponsoring a 4th of July weekend spectacular in the theme of “The Spirit of America - Light Up Lake Wickaboag.” Cash prizes will be earned by several, bragging rights will be claimed by many, and lots of fun will be had by all!

Starting on Friday, July 3, the weekend will include displays of patriotic and themed docks, boats and decorated cottages. On Saturday, July 4, at approximately 6:30 p.m., a massive boat tie up center lake is planned to recite the Pledge of Allegiance and sing the Star Spangled Banner. Following at 7 p.m., a full “Light Up Lake Wickaboag” parade will start at the Boat Club and continue cruising into the night.

If you can’t get out on the lake in a boat, kayak or canoe, no worries. Pack your beach chairs and picnic baskets or relax on a floatie within the town beach area. Whether an active participant or spectator, you won’t want to miss it.

For more details, check the LWPA Facebook page, visit lakewickaboag.com, or email LWPA01585@gmail.com.

## Spencer Summer Concert Series kicks off July 5

SPENCER — The Spencer Parks & Recreation Commission’s 2026 Summer Concert Series kicks off from 2 to 5 p.m. on Sunday, July 5 at Powder Mill Park, corner Smithville and Meadow Roads, Spencer with The Chain.

Unique. Special. Different. Sparkling. These are some of the words that can be used to describe The Chain, a musical group that has developed a sound that is fresh and new, yet very easy to love. Audiences

respond instantly to them. Fellow musicians admire their taste and skill. Led by the dynamic presence and powerful voice of Alison McTavish, The Chain has developed a set of music that is an eclectic mixture of cover songs that make the listener smile and say, “I remember that one. I love it!” Rich three-part harmonies, a dynamic rhythm section, great musicianship and of course, Alison, combine to make The Chain one of the most exciting new bands

in Central New England.

Following The Chain, next up in this series will be The Deloreans on July 12 in what will be one of their final appearances.

The concert series is proudly sponsored by Cornerstone Bank. Cornerstone Bank was formed in 2017, born of a long history of supporting the community, and providing a strong foundation to help people and businesses thrive. Serving Worcester County, Massachusetts, Cornerstone Bank’s local presence and community-based banking model enables a unique ability to deliver outstanding service, with a personal touch. Cornerstone, which is a subsidiary of PeoplesBankCorp, MHC, operating independently under its own name and brand, provides the highest level of service and expertise for individuals, businesses, and community organizations with branch locations throughout Central Massachusetts. Cornerstone works to connect customers with opportunities through a broad range of deposit and loan products and services. Built on Trust is not just a tagline, but also one of our guiding corporate values. Whether a business or personal partnership, Cornerstone stands on the foundation that relationships are built on trust. To learn about Cornerstone Bank’s personal and business banking offerings, please visit [cornerstonebank.com](http://cornerstonebank.com) or call 800-939-9103.



The Chain

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For further information call Randall at (413) 436-5357 or email [adventuretours@att.net](mailto:adventuretours@att.net) or visit [www.adventuretoursforwarren.com](http://www.adventuretoursforwarren.com) for details

# Quaboag Valley Amateur Radio Club taking part in A.R.R.L. Field Day

WEST BROOKFIELD — The Quaboag Valley Amateur Radio Club (QVARC) will be participating in the 2026 A.R.R.L. Field Day on Saturday, June 27, and Sunday, June 28, operating from 2 p.m. Saturday through 2 p.m. Sunday on the West Brookfield Town Common. The public is warmly invited to visit between 2-6 p.m. on Saturday and between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Sunday to explore the world of amateur radio firsthand.

Field Day is the largest on-air amateur radio exercise in the United States, bringing together tens of thousands of licensed operators to demonstrate the reliability, resilience, and public service value of amateur radio. For QVARC, it's also a chance to welcome neighbors, families, students, and anyone curious about radio, electronics, or STEM activities.

Visitors will be able to watch live radio contacts being made across the country and around the

world, explore the equipment and antennas used for emergency and off-grid communication, and even sit behind a radio to make a contact themselves. Club members will be on hand to explain how amateur radio supports communities during storms, power outages, and public service events, and why these skills remain relevant in today's interconnected world.

ARRL President Rick Roderick, K5UR, recently reflected on the long tradition behind Field Day, not-

ing that "Amateur radio has been part of the American story since the earliest days of wireless communication... For more than a century, the Amateur Radio Service has advanced the nation's communications capabilities by fostering technical innovation, developing a pool of trained and skilled operators, strengthening emergency and public service communications, and promoting international goodwill."

He emphasized that these contributions show why

amateur radio remains "a uniquely resilient and volunteer-driven national resource."

QVARC is proud to carry that tradition forward here in the Quaboag Valley. Our members include hobbyists, engineers, emergency volunteers, and newcomers who simply enjoy learning something hands-on and practical. The club meets on the last Tuesday of each month, except for July and August, and welcomes anyone interested in getting involved or learning more

about the hobby. Whether you're interested in emergency preparedness, electronics, shortwave communication, or just want to see what amateur radio is all about, Field Day is the perfect time to stop by. Everyone is welcome, and no experience is required.

For more information about the Quaboag Valley Amateur Radio Club, please visit [www.qvarc.com](http://www.qvarc.com).

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## Australian epic folk group The Heart Collectors return to Workshop13

WARE — Workshop13 is excited to welcome The Heart Collectors back to their Grand Hall stage. This show takes place at 13 Church St., Ware, on Saturday, June 20. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., and the performance begins at 7pm. Tickets are available on a sliding scale from \$15-\$25, and can be purchased in advance at [www.workshop13.org](http://www.workshop13.org).

From acoustic harmony led ballads to Bowie-esque sonic soundscapes, Australian four-piece 'Epic Folk' group The Heart Collectors capture the essence of inspiration, honesty of love, and the nature of the cosmos in their music. From humble beginnings in regional NSW, the last seven years have seen the band regularly sought out by some of the biggest international music conferences and festivals in the world, including South by South-West, Folk Alliance International, NAMM, Canadian Music Week, and Global Music Match. They have wowed audiences, representing Australia with their tight vocal harmonies, intricately beautiful musicianship, and larger than life stage presence and performance.

Merging the inspiration of '60s and '70s inspired folk and roots music, their latest sound has grown to include delicately played piano, atmospheric electric guitar, melodic banjo, bowed mandolin, and haunting cello. These instruments combine to create intimate acoustic harmony driven songs, catchy folk/pop themes, upbeat "epic anthems" and the cosmic tonalities heard in their current work. Described by John T Davis, author of 'Austin City Limits: 25 Years Of American Music' as "...Fleetwood Mac with more of an organic, Celtic-inflected lilt of vocals and melody.... Kymrie's voice is the stuff angel's wings are made of." Their much anticipated fifth studio album "The Space Between" was released on February 2nd, 2024; following the success of their latest no. 5 charting EP release, "Timeless Space."

About Workshop13

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

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## Lasell University students named to Spring Dean's List

NEWTON — The Spring 2026 Dean's List 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 students named to the Dean's List were Julia Cabana of Spencer and Dillon Winkelmann of Spencer.

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### BROOKFIELD

\$85,000, 14 Lakeside Ave, Kohlstrom, Scott D, to Cronin, Katherine E, and Cronin, David.

### EAST BROOKFIELD

\$560,000, 145 Draper Rd, St Laurent, Sarah, and St Laurent, Dean, to Kenney, Marianne, and Anderson, Thomas.  
\$396,000, 130 Faith Dr, Nelson, Jamie Marie, to Komssi, Ryan.

### LEICESTER

\$700,000, 875 Pleasant St, He Parth LLC, and Patel, Shailesh, to 875 Brook LLC.  
\$479,000, 17 Siani Rd, Smith, Ethan A, and Smith, Ferol A, to Lytle, Bobbi, and Maiser, Jason.

### NORTH BROOKFIELD

\$425,000, 1 Bell St, Sharon L Nickerson T, and Nickerson, Sharon L, to Coleman, Alisha Marie.  
\$325,000, 14 S Main St, Albert, Joseph Edward, and Gallivan, Allison Lynn, to Callender, Margaret, and Goselin, Benjamin R.  
\$140,000, 8 Walker Rd, Aubrey, Pamela A, to 8 Walker Road Rt, and Mulvena, Michelle.

### SPENCER

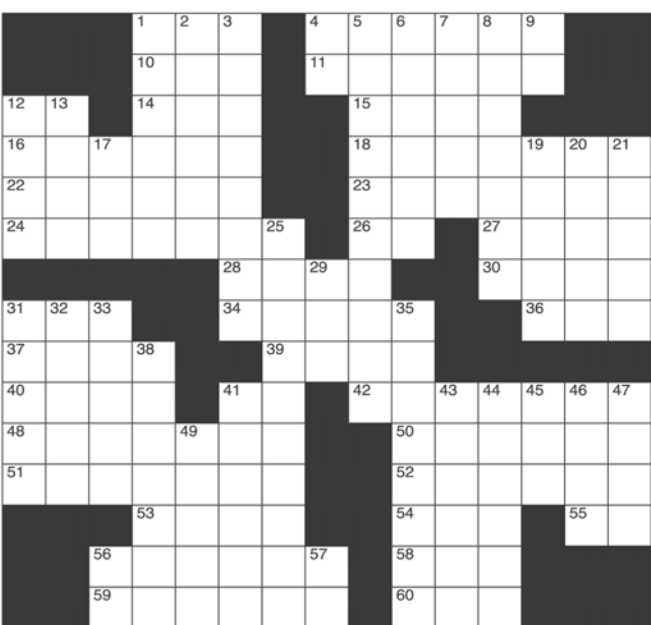
\$599,900, 16 N Spencer Rd, Mfb Realty Consulting LLC, and Buzzotta, Michael F, to Cabral, Andrea E, and Cabral, Christopher P.  
\$460,000, 196 N Spencer Rd, Flavin Marilyn J Est, and Kennen, Thomas W, to Saltz, Andrew T, and Strohschein, Travis.  
\$305,000, 19 Brown St, Brown Street Rt, and Barrett-Thomas, Melissa, to Milton, Colby Lee.  
\$235,000, 51 Mechanic St, Beford Janet J Est, and Lacaire, Brenda L, to Tm Re Holdings LLC.  
\$79,900, 23 William Casey Rd, Gibbons, William N, and Gibbons, Robin M, to Phoenix Properties LLC.

### WARREN

None

### WEST BROOKFIELD

None



### CLUES ACROSS

- Similar
- Have an ambitious plan or a lofty goal
- No (Scottish)
- Aires, city
- Morning
- Senior's son (abbr.)
- A notable achievement
- European nation
- Endings
- Puts into place
- Former
- Grenadier
- Sea patrol
- Algerian port
- Norwegian river
- Precipitation
- Sunscreen rating
- New York is one
- Patti Hearst's captors
- Soft mineral with greasy feel
- Retired Brazilian footballer
- An Indian nursemaid
- Atomic #24
- Immobile
- Insignia of royalty
- Seeds from which chocolate is made
- Begin again
- Round root
- Beginning to end (alt. sp.)
- What newlyweds just said
- Empire State
- Give back
- College hoops tournament
- Unstable situations
- Young women's association

### CLUES DOWN

- Administer a drug
- Holy places
- Contrary opinions
- Blood type
- Gags
- Micturating
- Silly
- A type of "cuff"
- Spanish be
- Austrian river
- Messenger ribonucleic acid
- Consume food
- California supermarket
- Electronic communication
- Cassia tree
- Written works
- Cool!
- Noteworthy 90s lawyer Kenneth
- One who was compensated
- National symbols
- Raising
- A type of talk
- Cloud
- Middle Eastern peoples
- Pouches
- 007's creator
- A cut of meat
- Sports entertainment award
- Christine \_\_, actress
- Relief organization (abbr.)
- Canadian province (abbr.)

**PUZZLE SOLUTION**

# Smola supports funding for municipal road and bridge repairs

BOSTON — The House and Senate have authorized a \$300 million Chapter 90 appropriation for cities and towns to assist with municipal road and bridge repairs, with the support of State Rep. Todd M. Smola (R-Warren, Ranking Member, Ways & Means Committee)

The funding was included as part of a \$4.58 billion transportation bond bill enacted in both branches on June 4. The bill is now before Governor Maura Healey for her review, with a June 14 deadline to sign the bill into law.

House Bill 5375, An Act financing long-term improvements to municipal roads and bridges, allocates \$200 million in Chapter 90 funding for Fiscal Year 2027 using the program's traditional weighted formula that is based on a community's local road mileage (58.33%), population (20.83%), and employment levels (20.83%). An additional \$100 million will be distributed to cities and towns based solely on a community's local road mileage as a way to ensure that rural communities with smaller populations receive their fair share of state funding assistance to help maintain their local transportation infrastructure.

"Maintaining safe and reliable roads and bridges is one of the most important responsibilities we have to our residents, businesses, and visitors," said Representative Smola. "Chapter 90 funding provides critical assistance to our cities and towns, helping local officials address infrastructure needs without placing the entire burden on local property taxpayers. These investments will help improve public safety, support economic development, and ensure our transportation infrastructure remains strong for the future."

Established by the Legislature in 1973, the Chapter 90 program offers state funding assistance to cities and towns on a reimbursable basis to help pay for maintaining roads, bridges and sidewalks. Representative Smola said his district is slated to receive a total of \$3,580,690 under the bill.

\$487,927 \$265,547 \$747,267 \$687,792 \$195,355 \$705,041 \$491,761

In addition to the Chapter 90 funding, House Bill 5375 also includes:

- \$500 million for the bridge and pavement lifecycle asset management program;
- \$200 million for transportation capital projects;
- \$200 million for the Parkway Resilience Improvement and Safety Modernization (PRISM) program, which provides accelerated deferred maintenance, modernization, and safety improvements for multi-modal transportation infrastructure under the control of the Department of Conservation and Recreation; and
- \$200 million for the implementation of rail improvements, including the design and acquisition of commuter rail locomotives.

Smola noted that House Bill 5375 also reauthorizes \$3 billion in funding for several transportation-related initiatives that were previously approved under the 2022 transportation bond bill. This includes funding for:

- interstate and non-interstate federal highway system projects;
- non-federally aided roadway and bridge projects, and the non-participating share of federally aided projects;
- municipal roadway pavement and surface condition improvements; and
- the public realm improvement program, which supports grants to municipalities for improvements to sidewalks, streets and parking spaces to create additional capacity for pedestrians and cyclists.

## East Brookfield Library offers summer activities, crafts for children and families

EAST BROOKFIELD — The East Brookfield Public Library is inviting children and families to take part in a variety of summer activities designed to encourage creativity, learning and fun.

The library's weekly Activity and Play program will be held Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m. as an extension of the library's story time program. Caregivers are required to remain with participating children, with one adult required for every two children.

A series of special afternoon activities will begin at 2 p.m. throughout the summer. The schedule includes paper airplane making on June 30, cornhole on July 7, sidewalk chalk drawing on July 14, bubbles on July 21, origami on July 28, bracelet making on Aug. 4, and a guided tour of the library pond on Aug. 11.

The library will also host a summer Arts and Crafts program beginning June 23. Additional sessions are scheduled for July 7, July 21, Aug. 4 and Aug. 18, with all programs starting at 11 a.m.

Registration is required for the Arts and Crafts program. Adult caregivers must attend with children under age 12, with one adult required for every two children. Some projects may continue into the following week's session.

Library officials encourage families to register early and participate in the wide range of educational and recreational activities planned throughout the summer.

For more information or to register, contact the East Brookfield Public Library.

Brimfield Holland Palmer Sturbridge Wales Ware Warren

## University of Hartford students named to Dean's and President's Lists

WEST HARTFORD, Conn. — The University of Hartford is pleased to announce that 2,332 students have been named to the Dean's List and President's List for the spring 2026 semester.

The Dean's List recognizes students achieving superior academic standing. The requirement, with some exceptions, is a grade point average of at least 3.0 and no grade below C.

The President's List recognizes a select group of students reaching the highest level of academic standing. To be placed on the President's List, students must maintain a GPA of at least a 3.75 and receive grades of C or better.

Please join us in congratulating:

Hannah Collette - Leicester - Dean's List and President's List

Patrick Harrington - Leicester - Dean's List and President's List

Collin Harrington - Leicester - Dean's List

Grace Karbowski - Spencer - Dean's List and President's List

Casey Macarusio - Leicester - Dean's List and President's List

Janelle Sefah - Spencer - Dean's List

Congratulations to all our students on their hard work and academic achievements

The University of Hartford blends raw passion with emerging talent, offering intentional preparation across six career-focused schools and colleges so every student can thrive. Located on a 350-acre campus neighboring Connecticut's capital city and positioned midway between New York City and Boston the University is home to approximately 4,300 undergraduate and 1,700 graduate students from 42 states and 53 countries. Here, students are guided to discover their place, their people, and their purpose.



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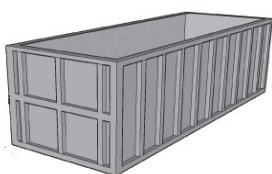


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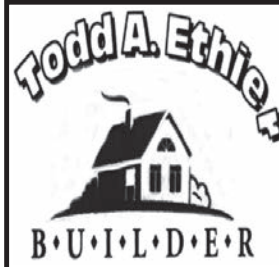
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Richard Age 14 Registration #8694

Richard is an engaging, energetic, and friendly boy with a great sense of humor. He enjoys playing video games, watching movies, and participating in sports. Richard has built many positive relationships with both peers and adults at school and is known for being kind, respectful, and easy to connect with. Those who know Richard describe him as compassionate, intuitive, and exceptionally polite. He cares deeply about others and strongly believes in standing up for people when needed, while also advocating for himself. Richard's caring nature, strong values, and outgoing personality make him a joy to be around. He would benefit from a supportive and encouraging family that can continue to help him grow and thrive.

<https://www.mareinc.org/child/21181269059>

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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](http://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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PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

**BRENDAN BERUBE**  
EDITOR

## EDITORIAL

# Democracy works best when more voices participate

Leicester's annual town election on June 9 produced few surprises. Most races were uncontested, and many outcomes were effectively known long before voters arrived at the polls. Yet even in a quiet election year, the results offer important reminders about the value of local democracy and the responsibility residents share in shaping their community.

The most notable development came in the School Committee race, where voters chose two newcomers, Elizabeth Zito and Alisa Heenan, while also returning incumbent Paul Messier to office. At the same time, School Committee Chair Donna McCance was not re-elected, signaling that voters were ready for change in at least one area of town government.

Whether residents supported the winning candidates or not, the election demonstrated one of the strengths of local government. Leadership positions are not permanent. Public service requires earning the confidence of voters, and elections provide citizens with the opportunity to express their priorities and expectations. The transition on the School Committee reflects that principle in action.

At the same time, the election highlighted a challenge facing many communities, not only Leicester. Numerous positions drew only a single candidate, while several seats had no candidates at all and may ultimately be filled through write-in votes or appointments. The willingness of residents to volunteer for public service remains essential to the health of local government, yet recruiting candidates continues to be difficult.

Serving on a board or committee is rarely easy. The hours can be long, the issues complex, and the rewards often limited to the satisfaction of helping one's community. Nevertheless, these volunteers make decisions that affect schools, public health, planning, housing, libraries, public safety and the overall quality of life in town. Their work deserves appreciation.

The vacant positions that appeared on this year's ballot should serve as a reminder that local government depends on citizen participation. A healthy democracy requires more than voters casting ballots every year. It also requires residents willing to attend meetings, serve on committees, ask thoughtful questions and, when the opportunity arises, consider running for office themselves.

Leicester is fortunate to have many dedicated residents who continue to step forward when needed. The election of new members to the School Committee and the continued service of experienced board members across town demonstrate that commitment. Still, a larger pool of candidates would strengthen the process and provide voters with more choices.

Local elections rarely generate the headlines or attention of state and national contests. Yet the decisions made by town officials often have the most immediate impact on daily life. They influence the schools children attend, the roads people drive, the services residents receive and the future direction of the community.

As Leicester moves forward with a mix of returning officials and new faces, the focus now shifts from campaigning to governing. Residents should stay engaged, support those who have volunteered to serve and continue participating in the civic life of the town.

Democracy does not begin and end on Election Day. In communities like Leicester, it is an ongoing effort that depends on neighbors working together for the common good.

### 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

### Consistency

To the Editor:

If there is anything our POTUS can be relied on to deliver, it is not only braggadocios behavior, it is highly amplified lies and steadfastly arguing against truth. Who is surprised that the Republican is no longer in the lead in a California Senate race? Who is it who always advocates stopping counts when you have a lead? Because someone decided that you cannot count or certify mail in ballots before the polls close, our most populated state takes days to match signatures and tabulate mail-in votes? One might think with all the lip service on having secure elections, that being meticulous in vetting voters, before counting their votes, would be a good thing. Who remembers the five-month, multi-million-dollar cyber ninja recount in Arizona, where virtually all voting is by mail, that yielded a few extra Biden votes and changed nothing?

Who recalls Trump calling the AG of Georgia, and asking him to "find" 11,780 votes? Trumps lawyer/AG is working to find a way to prosecute that AG, E. Jeanne Carroll, his sex crime victim, and everyone who rubs him the wrong way. We can only hope the misfit GOP congress will not confirm him as a permanent part of his misfit loyalist cabinet

The grifter in chief has improved on investing based upon insider information, by acquiring ownership, then awarding the contracts that improve the value. On the subject of rigging, Musk has already admitted he engineered Trumps win, and seems poised to

"manage" the midterms the same way.

Speaking of buying influence, it is only a matter of time before the first amendment and the 4th estate of broadcast journalism, goes the way of dinosaurs. Colbert is fired, CBS is cloning Fox and CNN may well be next. Trump stormed out of "Meet The Press," when Kristen Welker requested the evidence of his California cheating claims. A Democrat winning there is as unusual as in Massachusetts, no matter how loud you yell that cheating is why.

The Iran war we were promised would not happen is still looking for the nukes we blew up last summer. The Strait of Hormuz is still closed, but we are freeing Russian oil from sanctions, to fill the gap and fund pounding Ukraine. We still give lip service to seizing Cuba, and its antiquated infrastructure, while Puerto Rico has still never been renewed since last disaster. NATO has rejected helping us in Hormuz, while Israel who dragged us into this quagmire, wants to keep pounding until Lebanon is as wrecked as GAZA.

Bozo is still focused on building things with his name and contractor fees on them, while citizens are maxing out their credit, buying gas, food, utilities and healthcare. His yo-yo Cheshire cat, says the higher spending shows higher confidence in the economy. Is that your take? As he gets richer, we get poorer. I hope you do a rally on his birthday, and not his.

KEN KIMBALL  
BROOKFIELD

### It has been our honor to serve you

To the Editor:

With heartfelt appreciation, the board of directors of the Spencer Rescue Squad wishes to inform you that the Spencer Rescue Squad will cease operations on June 30 at midnight. Our annual subscription drive and all benefits also expire on that date.

We are grateful that the Spencer Rescue Squad has been able to donate all of its assets to the Town of Spencer, including the building, ambulances and equipment. Most importantly, ambulance service will continue through the Town of Spencer Fire

Department.

For the past 68 years, the Spencer Rescue Squad has been honored to serve this community. We sincerely thank our employees, volunteers, board members and residents for their steady support, generosity and trust over the years.

We hope you will continue to support your town EMS service in the years ahead.

With gratitude,

VINNY CLOUTIER  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
SPENCER RESCUE SQUAD

### Massachusetts loyalty trying again...

To the Editor:

I've asked the question before — where do the liberals get the idea President Trump is trying to be King Trump? One doesn't have to look any further than Massachusetts.

In another money grabbing attempt, Queen Healy's administration recently announced they want to take between \$50 million to \$100 million from the state's pension system to fund economic development grants in Massachusetts, much to the chagrin of union and political watchdog groups.

The bill which Queen Healy recently filed, called the Mass Wins Act (H. 5386), would require the Pension Reserves Investment Management (PRIM) board to commit between \$50 million and \$100 million to be used for grants supporting economic development initiatives, under Section 104.

In a letter from both the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 509 and the National Association of Government Employees (NAGE), the groups expressed their firm opposition to this.

The unions aren't the only organizations against the idea of using state pension funds to cover the costs of economic development grants, with fiscal watchdog the Massachusetts Fiscal Alliance also chiming in on Beacon Hill's "fiscal irresponsibility."

"After years of massive growth in state spending and increasing reliance on one-time revenues and budget maneuvers, it's troubling to see Beacon Hill now looking to pension assets as their next tool to paper over their fiscal irresponsibility," MassFiscal

Executive Director Paul Craney said. "The state's pension system exists to serve retirees, not as a venture capital fund for politicians. Investment decisions should be based on maximizing returns for beneficiaries, not on what projects state officials want to promote."

The Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research is echoing the same call, saying "The state's pension fund is not an economic development program."

"The state owes taxpayers and retirees the best risk-adjusted returns possible," Pioneer Institute COO Mary Connaughton said.

Are we possibly witnessing history repeat itself, with what the federal government has done with the Social Security System? Social Security recipients are frequently hearing that the SSA will be insolvent in a few years. The state pension system was set up to financially take care of retired police, fire fighters, schoolteachers, DPW workers, and other state government workers.

Democrats fought against the privatization of the SSA, and rightfully so in my opinion. "There does not appear to be any mechanism to return the original principle to the pension fund — let alone guarantee a reasonable return on investment" according to the opposing unions. Why would Democrats support this gamble?

I hope voters remember this come November.

JOHN SHOCK  
CHERRY VALLEY

### A grave injustice has been righted

To the Editor:

Finally, a grave injustice has been righted. The John F. Kennedy Memorial Center for the Performing Arts name once again stands alone as originally intended by Congress. President Trump's ill conceived attempt at placing his name on a memorial meant to honor a President who gave his life for our country is over. A President who was also a WWII hero who swam eight miles in choppy seas to get help and save the crew of his PT Boat that was cut in two

by a Japanese destroyer. For three and half of those miles, he also towed one of his injured crew by pulling a strap in his teeth. I know Mr. Trump has a limited vocabulary, but a memorial is meant for the dead. Yes, Mr. Trump, as a candidate, lost a few drops of blood when young man shot at him, but that hardly qualified him to have any kind of memorial any more than his alleged bone spurs qualify him for a Purple Heart.

RALPH E. HICKS  
SPENCER

## Turn your savings into paychecks in retirement

Margaret had saved diligently for



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decades. Every paycheck, a portion went toward her retirement account. Then, the day finally came: she retired. Suddenly, the hardest part wasn't the saving. It was learning to spend.

If that sounds familiar, you're not alone. Many retirees find the shift from building savings to living off them emotionally difficult, even when they've planned carefully. Here are five smart strategies that can help you feel more confident about what's ahead.

Give yourself permission to spend conservatively. Your retirement plan likely assumes a certain annual spending amount, with increases each year to account for inflation. All else being equal, the lower those initial withdrawals, the longer your money will last. A financial advisor can help you set up portfolio withdrawals personalized to your goals and situation. Feel free to give yourself permission to spend those amounts, knowing there's intention behind them.

For many retirees, the challenge isn't math — it's mindset. After years of being rewarded for saving, spending can feel like doing something wrong. It can help to reframe withdrawals as a paycheck you've already earned. For example, using your monthly distribution to cover travel, hobbies or time with family isn't indulgent; it's the purpose of the plan you built. Connecting spending to your values can make it feel more natural and sustainable.

Do be sure to review your spending regularly and don't forget to set aside funds for annual expenses like taxes and insurance.

Keep some cash on hand. A general rule of thumb for retirees is to keep about 12 months' worth of withdrawals in a separate account for spending and another three to five years' worth in short-term, fixed-income investments. This cushion can allow your stock investments time to recover from a market downturn, reducing the need to sell investments when markets are down. That said, holding too much cash carries its own risk, as your portfolio may not grow fast enough to keep pace with inflation. So, while some cash is good, you'll also want to remain invested in assets with more growth potential to help your portfolio last through retirement.

Review regularly. Retirement can last 25 years or more, and even the best-laid plans need updating along the way. Review your financial strategy at least once a year or after any major life change.

Stay flexible. Even small adjustments to your spending can have a big impact on how long your money lasts. Retirees who hold off on spending increases in years when their portfolio declines are often able to stretch their savings further than those who increase withdrawals each year for inflation regardless of market performance.

Making the switch from saving to spending takes both careful planning and a genuine shift in mindset. A financial advisor can help you build out an effective approach to switch from saving to spending, and work with you so you can fully enjoy the retirement you worked so hard to reach.

*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. Edward Jones, Member SIPC.*

# A handshake, a hammer, and a few quiet lessons

Father's Day arrives every year with a familiar collection of neckties, coffee mugs and backyard cookouts. Those are fine traditions, but as I get older, I find myself thinking less about the gifts and more about the men who shaped us, often without realizing they were doing it.

My father was not much of a talker.

That seems to be a common trait among fathers of a certain generation. They could spend an entire afternoon working beside you and say fewer than a dozen words. Yet somehow, years later, you realize they taught you more during those silent hours than many people could teach in a semester-long class.

My father believed that if a job was worth doing, it was worth doing correctly. He did not need a motivational poster on the wall to remind him. He simply got up every morning and went to work.

As a kid, I didn't always appreciate that philosophy. In fact, I spent a fair amount of time wishing he would hurry up. Whether it was fixing a lawn mower, painting a fence, or repairing something around the house, I wanted the shortest route between broken and fixed. He wanted it done right.

At the time, it seemed unnecessarily slow.

Today, I catch myself doing the exact same thing.

I hear his voice every time I reach for a shortcut. Measure twice. Check your work. Clean up after yourself. Leave things better than you found them.

Funny how those lessons settle in when you're not paying attention.

Fatherhood itself has changed quite a bit over the years. Today's dads seem more comfortable expressing emotions and spending time with their children in ways previous generations often didn't. That's a good thing. Yet many of the fundamentals remain unchanged.

Children are still watching.

They notice how their fathers treat their mothers. They notice whether promises are kept. They notice how a father responds when things go wrong. They notice whether he shows kindness to strangers and respect to neighbors.

Most of all, they notice consistency.

A father does not need to be perfect. No father ever has been. But children remember the man who shows up. They remember the one sitting in the bleachers on a rainy afternoon. They remember the one helping with homework after a long workday. They remember the one who drives across town when the car won't start or answers the phone at 10 p.m. because a son or daughter needs advice.

The older I get, the more I appreciate those ordinary acts. My own children are adults now. One is away building her future. The other lives nearby and is creating a life of his own. Fatherhood changes as children grow. You spend years teaching them to become independent, and then one day you realize they actually listened.

That can be both rewarding and a little unsettling.

These days, conversations are less about curfews and homework and more about careers, relationships and life decisions. The role changes, but the responsibility never completely disappears. A father never stops being a father. The worries simply evolve.

On Father's Day, many of us will celebrate with our families. Some will be remembering fathers who are no longer here. Others may be thinking about grandfathers, stepfathers, uncles, coaches, teachers or neighbors who stepped into that role when it was needed.

They all matter.

The truth is that some of the most important fathers in a community are not necessarily related by blood. They are the men who volunteer to coach Little League, teach Scout skills, mentor young people or quietly lend a hand when someone needs guidance. Every town in Massachusetts has a few of those men. They rarely seek recognition, but their influence stretches farther than they know.

This Father's Day, perhaps the best gift we can give is a little gratitude.

A phone call. A visit. A handshake. A simple thank-you.

And if your father is still around, maybe ask him a few questions. Ask about his first job. Ask about his childhood. Ask what worried him when he was your age.

One day you'll be glad you did.

The older I get, the more I understand that fathers rarely leave their greatest legacy in bank accounts or buildings. They leave it in habits, values and lessons that quietly travel from one generation to the next.

Sometimes, all it takes is a handshake, a hammer, and a few quiet lessons.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Pen Pal Program of Leicester

To the Editor:

What a joyous day June 9 was for our older adults, fourth graders, faculty, teachers, staff, chefs, who were all at the Wolverine Grill to celebrate the Pen Pal Program. Until that day, older adults and fourth graders in the program knew each other through letter writing only. We did not know each other in person.

At the Grill, these young students lined up waiting to meet their pen pal. It was exciting to see them come forward to share stories, have fresh veggies and dip, eat pizza, sip on lemonade or a special punch filled with fresh fruit and afterwards enjoy fudge brownies with cream and most of all chat. Our Culinary students made delicious pizzas, delicious libation to celebrate a very special moment.

The Pen Pal Project in Leicester has existed for many years. Most recently, with the opening of the Grill a school restaurant, it has added a delicious bonus for us. Kudos to those involved: William May Director of Career Technical Vocational Programs; Chef Andy Aucoin and Steven Dalgren; Principal Tracy Steiger; Assistant Principal Katie

Ford; Paraprofessional and fourth grade teacher Michelle Meloche especially for her skilled photography on our special day.

Thank you, Ann Marie Walsh, a retired schoolteacher and Principal in Worcester Schools, now a member of our COA Board. Ann Marie took on the responsibility as overseer of Pen Pal for us.

A huge thank you to Superintendent Brett Kustigian for investing in the future of Leicester's youth by supporting our endeavors. Brett came to Leicester as Superintendent and saw a need. He valiantly stepped up to a special mission to build on a vision called CTE (Career Technical Education) programs so needed in Leicester. It is a dream come true for many young adults from near and far. It reminds us always that it takes tenacity, involvement, commitment by special people to make dreams come true.

RACHELLE S. CYR  
DIRECTOR OF ELDER AFFAIRS  
LEICESTER

## Richard Sugden Library offers busy summer schedule

SPENCER — From comedy theater and wood carving to gardening crafts and textile art, the Richard Sugden Library is offering a variety of programs this summer designed to bring adults together for learning, creativity and fun.

The summer lineup begins Thursday, June 25, when The Delvena Theatre Company presents "Nun of This and Nun of That!" at 6 p.m. at the Spencer American Legion, 175 Main St.

The interactive live comedy centers on the 50th class reunion of St. Bartholomew's Parochial School, where former classmates from the Class of 1957 gather to reconnect. Audience members become part of the reunion as the sisters reminisce about the past and catch up with former students. Organizers describe the production as a light-hearted comedy designed to entertain audiences of all ages.

The library's adult summer programming continues in July with several hands-on workshops.

On Thursday, July 9, adults can learn traditional woodworking skills during "Carve a Wooden Spoon" with Owl Eyes Wilderness Survival. The program will be held from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Richard Sugden Library. Participants will have the opportunity to create their own wooden spoon while learning carving techniques and basic

tool safety.

Gardening enthusiasts can head to Bemis Farms Nursery on Monday, July 20, for "Create Succulent Turtles" from 1 to 2 p.m. The workshop combines crafting and gardening as participants create decorative turtle planters featuring live succulents.

Later in the month, Kulina Folk Art will lead a "Paint Silk Scarves" workshop on Thursday, July 23, from 6 to 8 p.m. Adults will have the opportunity to design and paint their own wearable works of art while exploring traditional decorative techniques.

Advance registration is required for all July programs. Interested participants may visit the library or call 508-885-7513, ext. 1, to reserve a spot.

In addition to special events, the library continues to offer several ongoing programs for adults throughout the week.

History enthusiasts gather Mondays from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. for Spencer History Chats, a discussion group focused on local history and community stories.

Those seeking relaxation and mindfulness can attend Pause Meditation on Tuesdays from 9 to 10 a.m.

Crocheters of all experience levels are invited to meet Tuesdays from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. for a weekly crochet group that welcomes beginners

and experienced crafters alike.

On Wednesdays, knitters gather for Knit With Us from 3 to 4 p.m., providing an opportunity to work on projects while enjoying conversation with fellow fiber arts enthusiasts.

Library officials said the summer programs are intended to offer opportunities for creativity, education and community connection while showcasing a variety of interests and skills.

The special summer programs are supported in part by a grant from the Spencer Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Additional support for the Massachusetts Statewide Summer Library Program comes from the Massachusetts Library System, the Boston Bruins and the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

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### P.E.T. of the Week

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Rose is currently lyme positive and as such would be foster to adopt while she is being treated. If you have any questions about the foster to adopt process please feel free to give us a phone call.

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## Seniors celebrate summer at Sheriff's annual Senior Picnic



Courtesy

This year, Mary Toomey, Jane Van Winkle (Pictured), and Sharon Lapointe, Auburn residents, were the lucky recipients of a raffle prize from the Sheriff's Office.

SHREWSBURY — Sheriff Lew Evangelidis, the Worcester County Sheriff's Office, and the Worcester County Reserve Deputy Sheriff's Association (WCRDSA) successfully hosted the annual Sheriff's Senior Picnic on Saturday, June 6, 2026, at SAC Park in Shrewsbury. The free drive-thru event welcomed one thousand seniors from across Worcester County, providing a festive kickoff to the summer season.

Seniors received BBQ boxed lunches, goodie bags, raffle prizes, and giveaways while enjoying music and greetings from Sheriff Evangelidis, members of the Sheriff's Office, volunteers, and dozens of community partners.

"The Senior Picnic continues to be one of our most anticipated community events, and this year's turnout and attendee enthusiasm were outstanding," said Worcester County Sheriff

Lew Evangelidis. "It was a pleasure to spend time with seniors from across Worcester County, share conversations, and celebrate the many contributions they have made to our communities."

Evangelidis emphasized that it is the dedicated group of volunteers who make this event possible year after year.

The Sheriff's Office expressed its gratitude to the Worcester County Reserve Deputy Sheriff's Association and the many community sponsors and partners whose support helped make the event possible, including, The Overlook, Table Talk Pies, Mercadante Funeral Home, Massachusetts State Lottery, Interstate Specialty Products, Chick-fil-A Worcester, Chick-fil-A Westborough, Automatic Rolls of New England, Pamela Massad in memory of David and Bette Massad, Commerce Associates &

The Krock Family, The Cliff and Susan Rucker Foundation, Diamond Auto Group, KAL Construction, Falcone Enterprises, Imperial Cars, NEPBA Local 550, and The Gun Parlor.

This year's drive-thru vendors included Holy Trinity Nursing and Rehabilitation, Audiology Associates of Worcester, St. Francis Nursing and Rehabilitation, Guardian Angel Senior Services, District Attorney Joseph Early's Office, CareOne at Millbury, Worcester Red Sox, Rockland Trust Bank, Centro, Senior Connection, Heart to Home Meals, Family Services of Central Massachusetts, Elder Services of Worcester Area, and MassEDP.

The Worcester County Sheriff's Office looks forward to continuing this tradition and welcoming seniors back for next year's picnic.

## Workshop13 invites community to participate in Lady Liberty Project

WARE — Workshop13 invites community members of all ages and abilities to help create a large-scale modern Lady Liberty puppet to delight the crowds at Ware's celebration parade for the 250th anniversary of the US Revolution. Your artwork will be incorporated into Lady Liberty's flowing robes, bringing together public art, storytelling, and community participation. The deadline to participate is July 1.

Use eight and a half by 11 inch paper or fabric to draw, paint, write a message, poem, pattern, or artwork of inspiration and hope for the future. Your artwork will become part of Lady Liberty's robe — a colorful quilt of hopes, dreams, and community stories. Artwork can be dropped off in person in the dropbox outside Workshop13's main building at 13 Church St., Ware. You can include your name, age, and email on the back of your piece or submit anonymously. You can also submit your work by emailing [info@workshop13.org](mailto:info@workshop13.org) with the subject line: Lady Liberty.

Workshop13 is also offering several free workshops related to this project. For adults, there will be a special community art gathering on June 24th from

6-8pm facilitated by Megan McDonough. For all ages, Elizabeth Buck will be leading three family-friendly workshops on June 23, 24, and 25 from 10am-12pm. On the 23rd, people can drop in to dye, paint, print, or draw on a fabric patch for Lady Liberty's robes. On the 24th, participants will craft a unique crown that reflects their personality, creativity, and community pride. They will be invited to join Workshop13 in the parade as one of the shining stars on our celebratory flags. And on the

25th, participants can craft a personalized percussion instrument a be invited to march with Workshop13 in the parade as part of the vibrant drum circle that will lead the way for the Lady Liberty puppet.

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

## WEEKLY POLICE BLOTTER

### Spencer

The Spencer Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of June 2-9.

Edward Chartier, Jr., age 19, of Worcester was arrested on June 7 for Disorderly Conduct, Disturbing the Peace, and Resisting Arrest.

Ariel Leonel Gomez Jaimes, age 19, of Worcester was arrested on June 7 for Disorderly Conduct and Disturbing the Peace.

### Leicester

The Leicester Police Department reported the following arrests during the week of June 4-10.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on June 4 for Operating a Motor Vehicle after suspension of license.

Misty M. Hanlon, age 44, of Portland, Maine was arrested on June 4 for Failure to Appear Upon Recognizance.

Melissa M. Yargeau, age 49, of Portland, Maine was arrested on June 4 as a Fugitive From Justice on a Court Warrant.

An individual whose identity has been withheld from publication received a summons in lieu of arrest on June 7 for operating an Uninsured Motor Vehicle.



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# Greater Worcester Community Foundation awards \$1.14 million to strengthen local grassroots nonprofits

WORCESTER — Greater Worcester Community Foundation has awarded \$1,140,000 in Facing Change: Sustainable Pathways grants to 15 community-based organizations in Worcester and surrounding areas, providing multi-year support to strengthen operational infrastructure, build long-term sustainability and position organizations to meet growing demand.

The three-year grants, ranging from \$35,000 to \$120,000, are tailored to each organization's annual budget and stage of development. Most of the grantees are founder-led and volunteer-driven, and many have experienced rapid growth in recent years. These investments will help organizations align their internal capacity with that momentum, often by hiring staff, improving systems and developing diversified funding strategies.

"Facing Change: Sustainable Pathways is about meeting organizations at a pivotal moment," said Pete Dunn, President & CEO of Greater Worcester Community Foundation. "These groups are doing vital work in our community, and many have outgrown their current infrastructure. This support gives them the tools and time to build a stronger foundation so they can sustain and expand their impact at a time of significant funding uncertainty."

In addition to financial support, grantees will participate in a cohort experience offering peer learning, mentorship and opportunities to share best practices. The cohort model is designed to reduce isolation often experienced by small, founder-led organizations and to foster collaboration across the region.

Grantees are advancing a wide range of community-rooted work across Worcester and the region. For example, Project New Hope will receive \$100,000 to support its work with veterans and their families; Community Health Awareness Network Grows Equity (CHANGE) will receive \$90,000 to support its work with African immigrant communities; and Adaptive Recovery Teaching Incorporated (A.R.T. Inc.) will receive \$60,000 to support individuals and families affected by substance use, mental health challenges and trauma.

"This investment will help us stabilize our operations and strengthen our infrastructure to meet demand," said Lovo Koliego, President & Founder of CHANGE. "Through the Facing Change: Sustainable Pathways program, we hope to develop a diversified funding roadmap and vetted governance structure, ensuring CHANGE remains a resilient pillar of health equity in Worcester."

A full list of grantees is available below. The Sustainable Pathways grants are part of the Foundation's Facing Change initiative, a \$3 million investment announced last year in response to growing financial pressures and shifting federal priorities impacting Worcester County's nonprofit sector.

The \$3 million commitment includes \$2.5 million from the City of Worcester and \$500,000 in additional support from the Foundation's Community Leadership Fund and other sources. These supplemental resources enabled three nonprofits outside Worcester to receive funding: Our Bright Future and The Wellstorm, Inc. in Southbridge and Centro Celeste in Fitchburg.

To learn more about the Facing Change initiative program, visit [greaterworcester.org](http://greaterworcester.org).

## New Bocce League open to community

SOUTHBRIDGE — Bay Path Continuing Education & the Southbridge Italian Club have teamed up to launch an exciting new bocce league on Tuesday nights throughout May and June.

Bocce is a game that all can enjoy—no special skills or talents are required! If you can roll a ball, you can play! These two community organizations are thrilled to bring this sport to a wider audience. Both Bay Path Continuing Education and the Southbridge Italian Club are dedicated to offering various events for people to engage, socialize, and have fun. This new league is a perfect fit. Here are the details:

Tuesdays: May 12 – June 30 (eight weeks)  
Teams of four to eight players  
\$240 per team  
One game per week at either 6 or 7 p.m.  
Maximum of eight teams – don't wait!  
Only team captains need to register for their team.

A brief informational captain meeting will be held before the season starts.

Gather your friends (18 and older), form a team, and come join us for a fantastic time on the court!

Games will be held at:  
Italian American Club  
20 North St., Southbridge

To register your team, call Bay Path Continuing Education at 508-248-5971, ext. 1715. Spots for teams are limited, so don't hesitate—call today!

About Greater Worcester Community Foundation

Greater Worcester Community Foundation is central Massachusetts' leading community foundation, employing its expertise and resources to address the region's most urgent needs. Since 1975, it has worked in partnership with donors to build a \$270 million endowment composed of more than 650 named charitable funds and award over \$186 million in grants that have helped transform communities and build a strong and vibrant region. For more information on the Foundation's programs and how to give, please visit [www.greaterworcester.org](http://www.greaterworcester.org).

### Full List of grantees

The Village — \$120,000 – Founded in 2020, The Village is an Afrocentric cultural center in Worcester's Main South neighborhood advancing racial and social justice through learning, creativity, community and healing.

Love Your Labels — \$120,000 – Founded in 2018, Love Your Labels fosters social connection and identity development for LGBTQIA+ youth and community through programs like Threads, a multi-month sewing and fashion design initiative for youth.

Project New Hope — \$100,000 – Founded in 2010, Project New Hope is a military-affiliated resource hub that connects Veterans, service members and their families to wellness resources.

UHAI for Health — \$90,000 – Founded in 2010, UHAI for Health serves African immigrants and refugees with culturally and linguistically appropriate prevention, intervention, education, advocacy and support services.

Community Health Awareness Network Grows Equity (CHANGE) — \$90,000 – Founded in 2018, CHANGE supports African immigrant communities in Greater Worcester by addressing complex integration challenges and empowering individuals to navigate the healthcare system.

508 C.H.E.E.R.S. — \$80,000 – Founded in 2022, 508 C.H.E.E.R.S. is a youth-led Worcester organization providing leadership workshops, advocacy training, community service initiatives and civic engagement opportunities.

Refugees and Immigrants Cultural Empowerment Massachusetts (RICEMA) — \$80,000 – Founded in 2023, RICEMA is a performance arts and education organization that builds community and preserves culture among immigrants and refugees through cultural arts and learning.

Her Way Home — \$80,000 – Founded in 2025, Her Way Home is a survivor-led Worcester nonprofit supporting women healing from the violence of the sex trade, homelessness and substance use disorder.

Adaptive Recovery Teaching Incorporated (A.R.T. Inc.) — \$60,000 – Founded in 2020, A.R.T. Inc. is a Worcester-based grassroots nonprofit supporting individuals and families affected by substance use, mental health challenges and trauma through creative, peer-centered programming.

Guardians of Tradition — \$60,000 – Founded in 2019, Guardians of Tradition is a nonprofit dedicated to preserving cultural heritage and empowering underrepresented communities through arts, education and inclusive programming.

El Salón — \$60,000 – Founded in 2019, El Salón is a nonprofit artist collective creating inclusive spaces that empower BIPOC artists to share skills, build community and create opportunities.

Casita Cultural Latina — \$60,000 – Founded in 2021, Casita Cultural Latina is a collective that hosts cultural and creative activities in inclusive, intergenerational spaces while elevating issues affecting

Latino communities.

Our Bright Future — \$60,000 – Founded in 2016, Our Bright Future empowers youth through STEAM-based programming that builds skills, resilience and leadership through hands-on learning opportunities.

The Wellstorm, Inc. — \$45,000 – Founded in 2021, The Wellstorm provides community-rooted support across Worcester County by increasing access to essential resources while centering dignity, equity and lived experience leadership.

Centro Celeste — \$35,000 – Founded in 2021, Centro Celeste is a Fitchburg-based grassroots nonprofit serving Latino families by fostering cultural connection, inclusion and access to community resources across Worcester County.

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G.E. 27 CU. FT. FRENCH DOOR REFRIGERATOR REG. \$1999.99 <b>\$1499.99</b>	5 CU. FT. CHEST FREEZER REG. \$699.99 <b>\$499.99</b>	AMAYTAG WASHER OR DRYER REG. \$599.99 <b>\$489.99</b>	ENERGY STAR 18 CU. FT. REFRIGERATOR REG. \$699.99 <b>\$599.99</b>
FAMOUS-MAKER OVER-THE-STOVE MICROWAVE REG. \$249.99 <b>\$229.99</b>	LG WASHER OR DRYER Front Load - REG. \$1599.99 <b>\$1,399.99</b>	MAYTAG DELUXE WASHER OR DRYER REG. \$899.99 <b>\$499.99</b>	FRIGIDAIRE SIDE BY SIDE REG. \$1,499.00 <b>\$1,099.99</b>

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# LEGALS

**Town of Brookfield Zoning Board of Appeals**  
 6 Central Street  
 Brookfield MA 01506  
**Notice of Public Hearing Administrative Appeal Robert Barnes**  
 44 South Maple Street  
 Brookfield MA 01506

The Brookfield Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing, **Wednesday June 24, 2026 at 6:05pm**, in the Brookfield Town Hall Banquet Room, first floor. The purpose of the hearing is to consider an administrative appeal from **Robert Barnes** requesting relief from a zoning order regarding two violations of **Section 4C Environmental Controls and Districts B Prohibited use all Districts 5:** All uses which are excessively obnoxious, hazardous, or injurious to the neighborhood or to property in the vicinity, and all open air storage of junk, salvage materials, and except as otherwise provided in this by-law, the collection, treatment, storage, burial, or incineration of wastes, including those classified as low level radioactive waste, are expressly prohibited in all zoning districts. **The property is owned by Robert Barnes and located at 44 South Maple Street (District Business A).**  
**Charles K. Wilson-Chairman**  
 Zoning Board of Appeals  
 June 12, 2026  
 June, 19, 2026

**225 Main Street Worcester, MA 01608 (508) 831-2200**  
**Docket No. WO26P1702 INFORMAL PROBATE PUBLICATION NOTICE**  
 Estate Of:  
**Janet M. Abrams**  
**Date of Death: April 25, 2026**

To All persons interested in the above-captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner **Meagan A Starr of Torrington CT** a Will has been admitted to informal probate.  
**Meagan A Starr of Torrington CT** has been informally appointed as Personal Representative of said estate to serve without surety on the bond. The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.  
 June 19, 2026

**Notice of Public Hearing**  
 The North Brookfield Planning Board will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, July 8, 2026 at 6:15PM at the Senior Center, 29 Forest St., North Brookfield, MA. Public opinion will be received for 91 Oakham Road, regarding a proposed large scale commercial solar energy facility (Bylaw Section VI.F.1-5. and Bylaw Section VI.G.1-5.) per the North Brookfield Zoning Bylaws. The property is in the R-66 District and requires a special permit and site plan review. Any person interested in being heard or seeking information should appear at the above stated time and place. A copy of the proposed permit application is on file in the office of the Town Clerk, 215 North Main St., North Brookfield, MA.  
 William King, Chair  
 June 12, 2026  
 June, 19, 2026

(SEAL)  
 THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
 LAND COURT  
 DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT  
 26 SM 000763  
 ORDER OF NOTICE  
 To:  
 Emmanuel G. Matias  
 and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (et seq):  
 Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC  
 claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Spencer, numbered 26 Donnelly Cross Road, given by Emmanuel G. Matias to Mortgage Electronic Registrations Systems, Inc., as nominee for Lakeview Loan Servicing, LLC, dated February 22, 2021, and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 64608, Page 299, and now held by plaintiff by assignment, has/have filed

**Notice of Public Hearing**  
**Monday, July 6, 2026 at 6:00pm**  
 A Public Hearing will take place at the **Brookfield Town Offices, 267 Wentworth Road, Brookfield, NH 03872 at 6:00pm** to consider an Intent to Excavate Application and Permit for continued operations by Thomas Smith of Longmeadow Construction and Smith Pit on property located at 228 Governor's Road, Brookfield, NH. Tax Map 11, Lot 1 pursuant to **RSA155-e:2.**  
 June 19, 2026

**Oxford Rochdale Sewer District Invitation for Priced Proposals**  
 The Board of Sewer Commissioners is requesting Priced Proposals for the purchase of Pre-Engineered Metal Building.  
 Priced Proposal documents may be obtained at the Oxford Rochdale Sewer District offices, 28 Comins Road, North Oxford, MA 01542, online by emailing garystine6641@yahoo.com or by calling 413-896-7797 between 9 A.M. and 2 P.M. after **Thursday June 18, 2026.** Oxford Rochdale Sewer District will receive Priced Proposals at 28 Comins Road North Oxford, MA 01542 until **10 A.M. Thursday July 16, 2026** at which time Priced Proposal documents will be publicly opened and read. Priced Proposals for Pre-Engineered Metal Building will be opened and recorded for each bidder.  
 The Board of Sewer Commissioners reserves the right to reject any and all Priced Proposals deemed not in the best interest of the Oxford Rochdale Sewer District.  
 Board of Sewer Commissioners  
 Oxford Rochdale Sewer District  
 June 19, 2026  
 June 26, 2026

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts The Trial Court Probate and Family Court Worcester Probate and Family Court**

# East Brookfield Public Library launches Reading Buddies and Card Game program

**EAST BROOKFIELD** — The East Brookfield Public Library will offer two new programs for children and families beginning Thursday, June 25, providing opportunities for reading, learning and social interaction throughout the summer.

The library's new Reading Buddies program will begin at 2 p.m. and is designed to pair children together to practice reading skills, build confidence and foster a love of books. Parents interested in having their child participate are encouraged to contact the library so children can be matched with a reading partner.

Following Reading Buddies, the library will host a Card Games program at 3 p.m. each Thursday beginning June 25. Participants will learn and play a variety of classic card games, including Uno, Go Fish, War and others.

The card game program is open to all ages and offers a fun way for community members to develop new skills, enjoy friendly competition and spend time together.

Library officials encourage families to take advantage of both programs as part of the library's summer activities for children and youth.

For more information or to register for Reading Buddies, contact the East Brookfield Public Library.

## Christ Memorial hosting annual chicken BBQ

**NORTH BROOKFIELD** — Christ Memorial Episcopal Church will hold its annual chicken BBQ Saturday, June 20 from 12:30-1:30 p.m. at 133 Main St., North Brookfield. The community is invited to enjoy half a chicken with a baked potato, cole slaw, roll, drink, and fresh Strawberry Shortcake. Take-out or eat in. Tickets sold at the door, or call Sandi at 508-867-3272 or Mary at 508-662-8174. \$20 per person.

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 July 13, 2026 or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of noncompliance with the Act.  
 Witness, Gordon H. Piper, Chief Justice of this Court on June 5, 2026.  
 Attest: Deborah J. Patterson  
 Recorder  
 29037  
 June 19, 2026

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Eva M. Adjoian to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for HarborOne Mortgage LLC, dated November 26, 2019 and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 61494, Page 1, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, by assignment from:

Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for HarborOne Mortgage LLC, its successors and assigns to Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., recorded on December 1, 2023, in Book No. 69952, at Page 104  
 Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. to NewRez LLC DBA Shellpoint Mortgage Servicing, recorded on February 7, 2024, in Book No. 70172, at Page 364

for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at 2:00 PM on July 6, 2026, on the mortgaged premises located at 132 North Brookfield Road, East Brookfield, Worcester County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,  
 TO WIT:

The land in East Brookfield, Worcester County, Massachusetts, with the buildings thereon, situated on the easterly side of the State Highway leading to North Brookfield and bounded and described as follows:

BEGINNING at a point in the easterly line of said State Highway at land now or formerly of one Snay;  
 THENCE northeasterly by said Snay land 162.25 feet to land of the North Brookfield Railroad Company;  
 THENCE northwesterly by said railroad land 77.35 feet to land now or formerly of one Balchunas;  
 THENCE southwesterly by said Balchunas land 181.25 feet to said highway;  
 THENCE southeasterly by said highway 75 feet to the place of beginning. Containing about 12,881 square feet of land, and being the premises shown as Lot No. 5 on a plan of House Lots in East Brookfield, owned by Arthur Ledoux", which said plan is recorded with the Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Plan Book 41 Plan 54.

For mortgagor's(s') title see deed recorded with Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 61493, Page 394.

These premises will be sold and conveyed subject to and with

the benefit of all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, covenants, liens or claims in the nature of liens, improvements, public assessments, any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, tax liens, water and sewer liens and any other municipal assessments or liens or existing encumbrances of record which are in force and are applicable, having priority over said mortgage, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the deed.

**TERMS OF SALE:**  
 A deposit of Ten Thousand (\$10,000.00) Dollars by certified or bank check will be required to be paid by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. The balance is to be paid by certified or bank check at Harmon Law Offices, P.C., 150 California St., Newton, Massachusetts 02458, or by mail to P.O. Box 610389, Newton Highlands, Massachusetts 02461-0389, within thirty (30) days from the date of sale. Deed will be provided to purchaser for recording upon receipt in full of the purchase price. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication.

Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.  
**NEWREZ LLC D/B/A SHELLPOINT MORTGAGE SERVICING**  
 Present holder of said mortgage  
 By its Attorneys,  
**HARMON LAW OFFICES, P.C.**  
 150 California St.  
 Newton, MA 02458  
 (617)558-0500  
 28366  
 June 12, 2026  
 June, 19, 2026  
 June 26, 2206

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS LAND COURT DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT 26 SM 001832 ORDER OF NOTICE TO:** Olivia R Lucas and Nicholas Mustone and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (et seq) Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency claiming to have an interest in a mortgage covering real property in Spencer, numbered 32 S. Spencer Road aka 32 South Spencer Road, given by Olivia R Lucas and Nicholas Mustone to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Fairway Independent Mortgage Corporation, dated August 17, 2022, and recorded at Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 68084, Page 120, and now held by Plaintiff by assignment, has filed with this court a complaint for determination of 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 July 20, 2026 or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of noncompliance with the Act.

Witness, GORDON H. PIPER, Chief Justice of said Court on June 5, 2026  
 Attest: Deborah J. Patterson Recorder  
 June 19, 2026

**LEICESTER**

continued from page A1

for the School Committee, which featured a change of the guard as two brand new members were elected while the committee chair lost their re-election bid.

Elizabeth Zito and Alisa Heenan were both elected as new members of the committee, Zito in the main three-person race for two three-year seats and Heenan as the lone candidate for a two-year seat. Paul Messier, an incumbent on the committee, also earned a three-year seat. Donna McCance, the current chair of the School Committee, was not re-elected receiving only 184 votes to Messier's 308 and Zito's 300.

All other races with candidates were essentially pre-determined before the election due to a lack of competition. The Select Board for example will stay exactly the same with incumbents Kevin Menard and Dianna Provencer elected without contest.

Sara Underwood was elected Assessor for a three-year term while incumbent Robert Mercer was elected to a two-year term after filling the remaining term of David Mero.

Elizabeth Barrett was elected to the Board of Health for a two-year term after serving to fill a vacancy. Another Board of Health seat for three years had no candidates, but 58 write-in votes were recorded. A winning candidate was not included in the unofficial results posted by the town. The Housing Authority race also had no candidates, but 145 write-in votes were cast with no official winner included in the town's results.

Judith Zalansky and Sharon Nist were elected to the Planning Board with one other vacancy still remaining on that board likely to be filled by a write-in candidate. Ingrid Hathaway and Regan Fortune were elected as Library Trustees, and Pamela Lafleur will continue as the Town Clerk after an uncontested reelection campaign.

**ALLEN**

continued from page A1

valuable than ever before.

"I've thought a lot about libraries since I began giving so many talks around the region and so many libraries. So many people

have forgotten that happy feeling of holding a printed page in our hand. My life has been about print on a page, so I'm thankful that libraries remain that keeper of that flame," said Allen, later adding to this sentiment. "The library is ours. It belongs to us. In a

country now where we feel hopelessly divided between the other, whoever the other may be, the library knows no other. Only us, and all of us belong and that's one of the most beautiful things about a library."

For Allen, the stories he experiences as a writer rep-

resent a larger reality many people forget. These stories are a connecting thread for everyone no matter how big or small. Stories remind us that challenges, successes, personal evolution, and personal tragedy are all part of everyone's lives.

After a decades-long

legacy of helping Yankee Magazine share these stories, Allen continues to work to bring awareness to the hidden tales, even in retirement, reminding us of all of the bonds we share by just being here in New England.

**Brooke Bergevin of West Brookfield named to Dean's List at North Shore Community College**

DANVER — North Shore Community College is proud to announce that Brooke Bergevin of West Brookfield has been named to the spring 2026 Dean's List.

The College supports academic achievement and is pleased to recognize and reward undergraduate students like Bergevin whose performance merits special attention. Dean's List Honors are awarded to students who have earned six or more semester hours of academic credit with a grade point average (GPA) of 3.30 or higher.

Celebrating 60 years of learning, service, and impact, North Shore Community College (NSCC) proudly serves 26 cities and towns across Massachusetts' North Shore with campuses in Lynn and Danvers. Founded in 1965, NSCC delivers high-quality, affordable, and accessible education to more than 7,000 students in more than 40 unique degree programs each year, along with thousands of noncredit learners. The College also supports lifelong learning for more than 640,000 residents through workforce training, professional development, cultural enrichment, and community partnerships-demonstrating the enduring value of community college in transforming lives and strengthening the regional economy.

**Area resident named to Dean's List at University of New England**

BIDDEFORD/PORTLAND, Maine —Gabrille Soter of Spencer has been named to the University of New England's Dean's List for the spring semester 2026. Dean's List students have attained a grade point average of 3.3 or better out of a possible 4.0 at the end of the semester.

The University of New England is Maine's largest independent university, with two beautiful coastal campuses in Maine, a one-of-a-kind study-abroad campus in Tangier, Morocco, and an array of flexible online offerings. In an uncommonly welcoming and supportive community, we offer hands-on learning, empowering students to make a positive impact in a world full of challenges. We are the state's top provider of health professionals and home to Maine's only medical and dental colleges, physician assistant program, and pharmacy school, in addition to a variety of other interprofessionally aligned health care programs and nationally recognized programs in the marine sciences, the natural and social sciences, business, the humanities, and the arts. Visit [www.une.edu](http://www.une.edu).

**Leicester Senior Center to host flea market and craft fair June 27**

LEICESTER — Bargain hunters, craft enthusiasts and community supporters are invited to the Leicester Senior Center on Saturday, June 27, for a Flea Market and Craft Fair that will benefit the historic May House.

The event will take place from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Leicester Senior Center and will feature a variety of vendors offering handmade crafts, collectibles, household items, gifts and other treasures. Organizers hope the event will provide an opportunity for residents to shop locally while supporting an important community resource.

Vendor space is limited to 30 spots, and applications must be submitted by June 20. Organizers encourage interested crafters, artisans and sellers to reserve their space as soon as possible.

The fundraiser is being organized to support funding for the May House, a valued local facility that serves area seniors through programs, activities and community gatherings.

Events such as the Flea Market and Craft Fair help generate financial support while also bringing residents together for a day of shopping, socializing and community engagement.

Those interested in reserving vendor space may contact Diane Calvano at 508-335-9706 or by email at [diane\\_calvano@yahoo.com](mailto:diane_calvano@yahoo.com).

Organizers expect a variety of vendors and welcome community members to attend, browse the booths and support the fundraising effort.

**Springfield College recognizes Dean's List students for Spring Semester**

SPRINGFIELD — Springfield College recognized its Dean's List students for the 2026 Spring Semester. The following local students were recognized for academic excellence:

Avianna Gregoire from Spencer. Gregoire has a primary major of Health Science / Pre-PA.

Peyton Knott from Leicester. Knott has a primary major of Health Science / Pre-OT.

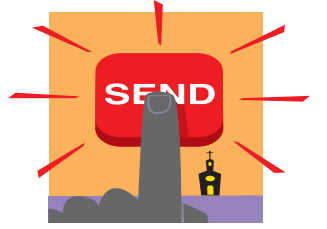
Margaret Stevens from W Brookfield. Stevens has a primary major of Pre-Prof Athletic Training.

Julianna Torres from Rochdale. Torres has a primary major of Physician Assistant Studies.

The criteria for selection to the Dean's List are as follows: The student must have completed a minimum of 12 credit hours of graded coursework for the term, exclusive of "P" grades. The student must not have any incompletes or missing grades in the designated term. The student must have a minimum semester grade average of 3.500 for the term. Student must not have been barred from Dean's List due to disciplinary action.

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# Cornerstone Bank donates \$6,000 to support Habitat for Humanity project building playhouses for veteran families

**WORCESTER** — Cornerstone Bank has donated \$6,000 to Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/Greater Worcester to support the 2026 Operation Playhouse Build-A-Thon, which took place Thursday, June 4, at Elm Park in Worcester.

The contribution marks the ninth consecutive year Cornerstone Bank has donated to the initiative. In addition to the financial support, bank employees participated in the event as part of an annual volunteer day.

During the Build-A-Thon, teams of eight to ten volunteers came together to construct custom playhouses for children of veteran and military families. Each structure was designed around a theme selected by the recipient family and was completed in a single day with guidance from Habitat staff and trained volunteers.

“This event brought



together teamwork, creativity and community impact in a very meaningful way,” said Todd Tallman, CEO of Cornerstone Bank. “Our employees look forward to this volunteer day each year and have taken great pride

in building something special for local families who have served our country.” Funds raised through Operation Playhouse support Habitat for Humanity MetroWest/Greater

Worcester’s broader mission to provide safe, decent and affordable housing across the 42 cities and towns it serves.

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 the addition of Athol Savings Bank, a Division of Cornerstone Bank, in 2026, Cornerstone offers customers access to 17 branch locations throughout Central Massachusetts, the most in Worcester County. Built on Trust is not just a tagline, but also one of our guiding corporate values. To learn about Cornerstone Bank’s personal and business banking offerings, please visit [cornerstonebank.com](http://cornerstonebank.com) or call 800-939-9103.

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*Webster - 24 Cooper Rd  
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# Central Mass. farmers' market season starts now!

REGION — May marks the semi-official beginning to farmers market season, with many of the seasonal farmers' markets in our region starting their regular schedules, with more starting in June. Central Mass Grown is proud to support more than two dozen farmers markets across the Worcester County area.

Just in the city of Worcester, residents can choose from no less than six different markets, including the markets run by the Regional Environmental Council, both

the Beaver Brook Market (306 Chandler St.) Friday mornings starting June 12 and the University Park Market (965 Main St.) Saturday mornings starting June 13, plus the Out To Lunch Market on the Worcester Common Oval behind City Hall every Wednesday from June 24 to Aug. 26. On Sundays, there's both the Market on Exchange Street starting May 17th and the Brussels Street Market starting June 7. And on Thursdays, check out the Burncoat Center for Arts and Wellness at 78 Burncoat St. for their new farmers market starting May 14th. Some of these markets feel like festivals, while others are farmers markets in the truest sense, focused on offering fresh food and agricultural products directly from local farms.

Throughout the region, there's a market nearly every day of the week: for example, the Sturbridge Farmers Market on Sunday,

Holden on Tuesday, Grafton on Wednesday, Westborough on Thursday, and Westminster on Friday. And so many, many more markets featuring a wide variety of items you won't find anywhere in supermarkets, including purple cauliflower, celery, husk cherries, goat cheese, duck eggs, or alpaca wool socks!

Every farmers' market is important to the farmers and other vendors that are there.

According to Central Mass Grown Executive Director David Reed, "Farmers markets are a vital source of revenue for farmers, because every dollar goes right back to them. And they are an important way for consumers to see where their food, flowers, wool, and soap all come from. If you usually shop in a big box store or online, you've never had a real chance to know anything about what you are buying."

Most farmers markets in our region have one or more

farms that participate in the Healthy Incentives Programs, a benefit connected to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). SNAP recipients can use their EBT card to purchase fresh produce from participating farms and receive an immediate refund to their card, up to a monthly limit that is based on household size. The end result? Free farm-fresh fruits and vegetables, and the reward of knowing you supported your local farm!

So this summer season, visit a farmers' market and take a second to say hi to your local

farmers. The farmers want to meet you. They want to say hi. Because farming is hard work, and they do it because they love it and they want you to love it, too.

Find out more about local farmers markets at [centralmassgrown.org](http://centralmassgrown.org).

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**FATHER'S DAY SPECIALS**

## All Saints Academy preschoolers celebrate a year of learning and growth



WEBSTER — The preschool students at All Saints Academy proudly celebrated the completion of a successful school year during their Preschool Celebration 2026. Family members and friends gathered to enjoy a heartwarming program that highlighted the many skills and accomplishments the students achieved throughout the year.

The celebration began with a welcome from the narrator, who reflected on the children's growth, learning, and friendships. The students then processed into the ceremony, enthusiastically waving to their families. Faith played a central role in the program as the children began by reciting the Our Father, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. Throughout the year, the preschoolers learned the importance of prayer, respect, kindness, and working together as a classroom community.

The students proudly demonstrated many of the skills they practiced throughout the school year while families smiled as the children showcased their growing knowledge and enthusiasm for learning. Musical performances added to the celebration. The students delighted the audience with a lively rendition of "I'm a Little Teapot" and sang a colorful song highlighting the many colors they learned throughout the year.

Before receiving their certificates, the children recited their lunch-time prayer, demonstrating another daily routine that has been an important part of their preschool experience. A special highlight of the event was the presentation of certificates, recognizing each child's hard work, growth, and accomplishments throughout the year. Proud families applauded as each student was recognized.

The celebration concluded with a farewell message reflecting on the friendships, memories, and learning experiences shared throughout the year. While saying goodbye to preschool, the students look forward with excitement to the adventures and opportunities that await them next year. The Preschool Celebration served as a joyful reminder of how much the children have grown academically, socially, and spiritually during their time at All Saints Academy. The school community congratulates its preschool graduates and wishes them continued success as they take their next steps in their educational journey.

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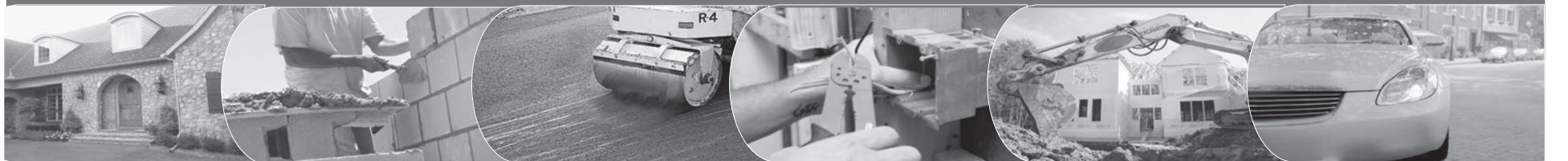
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