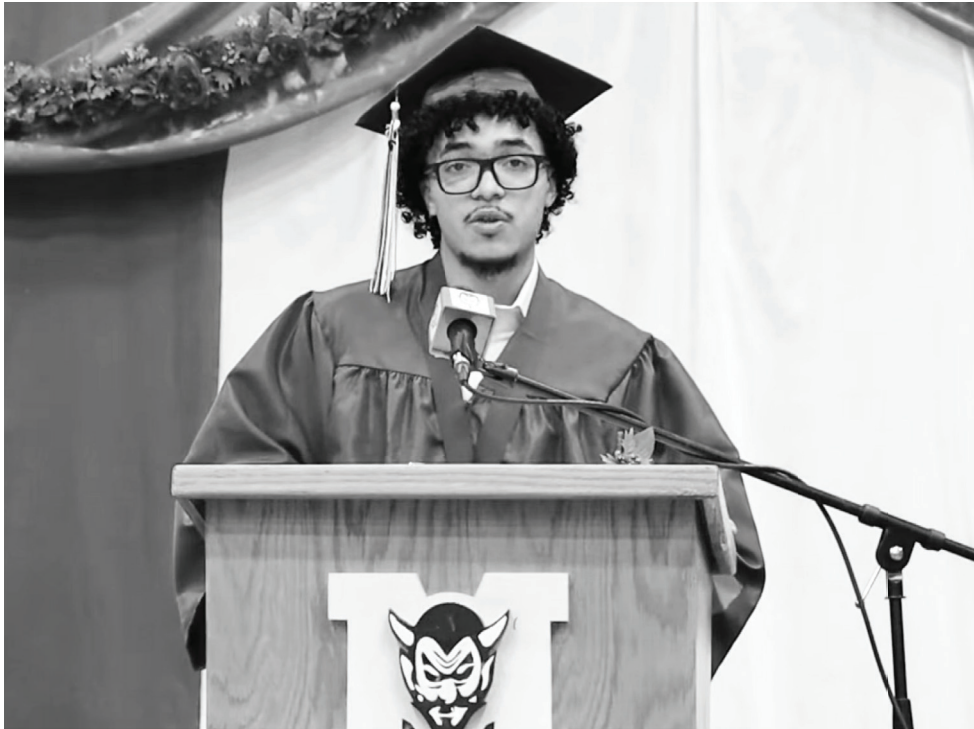


Cheers, Tears, Best Wishes and Fond Memories at the 137th Murdock High School Commencement



Class Salutatorian Aden Pimentel
Image copyright Winchendon Public Schools



Class Valedictorian Holly Harris
Image copyright Winchendon Public Schools

by Inanna Arthen

Students, friends, family members, school staff and members of the School Committee all gathered in the Murdock High School gymnasium on Sunday, June 7, at 2:00 p.m. for the 137th Murdock High School Graduation Exercises.

Seniors, dressed in blue gowns and mortarboard caps, filed into their seats as the traditional processional, "Pomp and Circumstance" (by Sir Edward Elgar) played on the sound system. When everyone was seated, Class of 2026 President Kylieanne Brown introduced the Murdock High School Choir, which performed the National Anthem. Ms. Brown then introduced "the dignitaries on the stage today: Vice Chair of the School Committee for the Town of Winchendon, Mr. David Iannaccone, Superintendent of Schools for the town of Winchendon, Miss Charlotte King, Director of Special Education for Winchendon Public Schools, Miss Kelsey Garcia, Principal of Murdock High School, Mr. Dave Fredette, Assistant Principal of Murdock High School, Miss Kristie Barry-Ayres, and Advisor of the Class of 2026, Miss Stephanie Rondeau."

Ms. Brown then introduced the first speaker, Aden Pimentel. "Aden was recognized as the class salutatorian, the student with the second highest GPA in the class,"

she said. "Aden will be continuing his academic career this fall, attending the University of Massachusetts Lowell to study electrical engineering. Aden participated in dual enrollment as a junior and senior."

Mr. Pimentel greeted everyone, and went on, "My name is Aden Pimentel, and I'm the salutatorian for the class of 2026, and I'm very grateful today. I'm grateful for the friends, for the family, and the teachers who have pushed me to this point today, and I'm grateful for all the opportunities that I've received in order to grow, and I hope everyone else is also as grateful as I am. Because today is a huge step into our future. It is a day where we close one chapter and mark the beginning of a new one. Each of us has taken a different path to get here, but we all have in common that we made it. We couldn't have made it without all the people supporting us as well. So, I just wanted to say, thank you. Thank you for the friends, the family, the teachers, the coaches, and anyone else who made a positive impact on our lives. Thank you for believing in us and encouraging us through our journey. Thank you for celebrating all of our accomplishments and always being there in critical times.

"I also want to give a special thanks to my family, because their support is the backbone of

the person who I am today. To my mother, thank you for pushing me to never settle for less than my best, and to keep challenging myself every day. To my father, thank you for teaching me to embrace and overcome adversity. And to my siblings and grandparents, thank you for your never-ending love and support throughout my life. Everything that I build will always start from the foundation of my family's support. It is so hard to believe that graduation is right here in front of us. It seems like yesterday I was just walking through these doors and starting high school. The nerves are high, and many of us were wondering what these four years had ahead of us. We came here looking to find our place as freshmen, and now we leave as seniors to build our own legacy.

"When I look back just a couple years ago, I find it funny because I was pretty dumb back then, and when I reflect on that, and when other people feel the same way as me as well, when they reflect on that, they should be all proud of themselves, because it means that we've grown, we've grown from that dumb little kid that we were just a little bit ago to a slightly less young adult today. Just knowing how we have changed and grown from that fateful first day is truly remarkable, because success is not

measured solely by titles, achievements, or awards, success is measured by our growth, our ability to stand up and respond to challenges in life, and everything that we will face. Every person here today has faced these challenges, but instead of giving in, they are here taking on another challenge, one of our hardest challenges, saying goodbye. It's a difficult challenge, but it's not the first or last time we'll have to go through it, and as we leave this chapter behind and start anew, we all have different paths to follow. But one thing I can say is not to be afraid to take risks or make mistakes or to step out your comfort zone, because I was taught that growth often comes from when we challenge ourselves. So, to the Class of 2026, congratulations. Be proud of everything you've done and everything you plan to do."

Murdock High School Principal Mr. Fredette spoke next, saying, "Today we gather to celebrate not just an ending, but a beginning. Graduation is often viewed as the culmination of years of hard work, dedication, and perseverance, and while it's certainly true, it's also the commencement of a new journey, one that will shape the course of your lives in ways you cannot yet imagine. As I stand before you

Turn to GRADUATION page 14

Robinson-Broadhurst Foundation, Inc.

robinsonbroadhurst.org

Wildlife services

PAC Agent 045027

253 front st
Winchendon ma 01475

Patrick McNeil
Owner / Operator

978-868-0104
mcneilpatrick06@gmail.com

Montachusett Agricultural Alliance

for Farmers, Homesteaders, Growers, Breeders, Gardeners, Producers

and anyone passionate about supporting local agriculture and producing healthy food and natural products in North Central Mass

Workshops ~ Group Purchasing ~ Marketing Support ~ Advocacy ~
Networking ~ Knowledge sharing
Monthly Meetings - Join us!

montachusettagriculturalalliance.org
facebook.com/MontachusettAgriculturalAlliance

Winchendon News

The HUB Holds Grand Opening for Beautifully Refinished Back Patio Space



The newly refinished back patio space
Photo by Inanna Arthen

by Inanna Arthen

On Friday, June 19, The HUB hosted a combination Grand Opening Celebration for their newly finished back patio space and a celebration of the Juneteenth federal holiday, with raffles, a student art display, and live music provided by Annie Wallflower & Julian Wagner and the Rusty Truck Saloon Band. The HUB was full of people, both inside and outside, enjoying cool but lovely weather and admiring the new space.

If you had seen the back area two years ago, you would hardly believe your eyes now. Formerly a rubble-strewn “vacant lot” filling the corner where the bowling alley and the office addition to it connect, the pristine space now features concrete paving, a gravel center with Adirondack-style chairs, a trim privacy fence on the open sides painted deep gray so that it is hardly noticeable, freshly painted walls and murals, a stage area, tables, benches and chairs, lighting, a sound system, and a concession window where volunteers can serve food and drinks from inside to guests on the patio. Weather allowing, the patio doubles the amount of space available for classes, meetings, events and activities. Visitors access the patio through a door at the back of the meeting/classroom area next to the food pantry. It was all made possible thanks to the generous support of the T-Mobile Hometown Grant Program through Main Street America, the Robinson Broadhurst Foundation, Inc., and the Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts.

The celebration began at 5:00 p.m. and ran until 8:00 p.m. The Sunshine Cafe was open, as were all the bowling lanes, for half price. The classroom space featured a table full of raffle baskets and a display of art and writing by members of the student art club at Murdock Middle School. All proceeds will go for new bowling shoes for The HUB bowling alley.

At 6:30 p.m., Miranda Jennings, Director of the Winchendon CAC

and The HUB, called everyone together for the official ribbon cutting.

After thanking everyone who was attending, and the volunteers who were handling the tech so we all could hear, Ms. Jennings wanted everyone present to hear what had been said at the Ounce of Prevention Conference 2026 in Worcester on June 17 by Dr. Robbie Goldstein, the Massachusetts Commissioner for Public Health. Dr. Goldstein had picked one organization in the entire state to exemplify the conference theme of “Prevention Along the Stream: Collaboration and Connection to Build Healthy Communities,” and he chose The HUB as his example. Ms. Jennings played a recording of his words. Dr. Goldstein said, “One more thing about this bowling alley. It is once again a bowling alley, with the rumble of balls down the lanes, the clatter of pins falling, kids cheering or perhaps groaning, families laughing, the sounds of a very vibrant community. What was once an empty building has become a place of connection, opportunity, and hope. It is a bowling alley transformed into a launchpad for human potential. When a community decides that people deserve support, stability, and opportunity before crisis ever arrives, that is prevention.”

“This year’s conference theme, ‘Prevention Along the Stream,’ is not just a metaphor, it’s a framework for how we have to think about the work. Some of you are working downstream, responding to crises, providing care in moments of acute need, showing up when someone is struggling. That work is vital, and we need it. Some of you are working midstream in schools and shelters and health centers, catching problems before they become emergencies, building connections before people fall through the cracks, and that work is vital. We need it. And some of you are working upstream, addressing the root causes, the housing, the food access, economic security, the racism. You’re looking at the historical disinvestment, the



Artwork from the student in the art club at Murdock Middle School
Photo by Inanna Arthen

conditions that shape health long before anyone walks through a clinic door, and that work too is vital. We need it. We need all of it, not as competing approaches, but rather as a continuum.”

State Representative Jon Zlotnik stepped up to say, “I just want to congratulate you all again. This is, I don’t know what number ribbon cutting as we get through different stages, but I remember Miranda first came to me with this idea a few years ago, and we had a nice chat, and I walked away from that meeting thinking, well, that’s a really nice vision. I don’t know if she’ll pull it off, and I don’t know if it’s possible this decade, but with a little bit of help from the state, a little bit of help from our private donors, and a whole lot of help and effort from the local community, not only has this happened, but it’s happened in really record time. I got to tell you, I have other communities in my district that would love to have something like this. Some of them are working on it and can’t pull together, but what this little town has done to make this a thriving social spot is really something special, and it’s something each and every one of you should really be proud of the effort that’s gone into it, so really, congratulations.”

Ms. Jennings went on, “Before we do our ribbon cutting, I want to say thank you to some people. I want to tell a little bit of a story. So, when we first got this building, we didn’t know what to do with it, because it was a smelly, stinky bowling alley, a wonderful bowling alley, but it was kind of stinky and smelly, because it has been here for a very long time, and it’s like a staple in this community. Raise your hand if you used to play here when you were little. So a lot of you have very fond memories of this place. So we wanted to do that justice.

“We were connected by one of our Select Board members, Dr. Erika Eitland, with the firm she works with, called Perkins & Will, and they did a design for free of this patio and of the entire building,

so everything you’re seeing here is through this amazing vision of an internationally renowned, one of the top design firms in the entire world did this for Winchendon, because they saw the possibility and the drive and the hard work that we have here in Winchendon. I think we made them proud, we are so grateful for that design.

“And then there have been hours, I think we’ve counted over 2200 hours of volunteer sweat and labor that went into making this patio itself happen. Every single piece of dirt, piece of cement, piece of rock, piece of furniture was hauled in by hand down that little pathway or pumped over the roof to fill in the cement, and that was done by Winchendon School students, Murdock School students, volunteers from Winchendon and I think from Johnson & Johnson, many of you who were here, all of our regular volunteers at the CAC, our board members. So it’s just been a labor of love to make this happen, and a lot of people didn’t think we could do it, but we definitely proved them wrong, and we did it.

“So to all of you, and there’s a special volunteer who’s over there hiding, his name is Howie. Yes, Howie has probably put in like 500 of those 2000 hours, or like half of those 2000 hours. He built this entire fence by himself, basically, with students, which has made it possible for us to have our after-program here. He helped fill in the gravel, fill literally everything out here.”

After a round of enthusiastic applause, Ms. Jennings explained that this ribbon cutting ceremony would be a little different than the usual one. Short streamers of fabric were passed out to everyone present, and Ms. Jennings told everybody on the patio to form a big circle, and tie the ends of their streamer to their neighbors’ streamers. This formed one long multi-colored ribbon, whose ends were attached to the ribbon held up on the stage.

“The reason we’re doing this is

Winchendon News

Cornerstone Church Gives Presentation on Their "VolunteerHub" to BOS



from left, Paul Hackett, Melanie Franklin and Pastor J Lilly explain the VolunteerHub program to the BOS

Photo copyright Town of Winchendon

by Inanna Arthen

At the Board of Selectmen's meeting on Monday, June 8, Pastor J Lilly, Melanie Franklin and Paul Hackett from the Cornerstone Church came forward to give a presentation on a church program which is proving very successful in matching volunteers with town organizations, called the VolunteerHub.

Pastor J began, "About five years ago, as a church, we made a shift after the COVID break, closing down a lot of our ministries that we had at the church and beginning to just volunteer with the town. Currently, we have about 30 volunteers from our church who volunteer in various capacities through the town—the library, Parks & Rec events going on, we've been doing that for a number of years. After the vote last year for the override, I called together a number of agencies that we work with, and just said, what can we do to help. The big thing that came across was more volunteers were needed, and so we made a decision at that point to shift our course a little bit, and just begin helping the town to build volunteerism.

"So we began putting energy towards that and creating a program that we've called VolunteerHub, and putting our money behind it. We started last year by doing a volunteer recognition for a few of the agencies that we worked most closely with. We had about 60 individuals that we celebrated at The HUB. We did a dinner for them, and then we did our first volunteer

recruitment also, and we've been working on that.

"The need was clear. People were willing to help, but a clear path to volunteering was not always easy. People wanted to serve, opportunities were scattered, there was a lot of back and forth, training was needed. We found, as we began to do this work, a lot of the agencies just needed help with structures and applying structures that they already had, and volunteers needed clarity, and so one of the things that we did was we put staff hours towards this as a church. Melanie was already working as a paid community volunteer. It's something that we've done for the last several years as a church. We put our church staff hours towards helping the community in various ways. Melanie was doing some work with the communications committee already, this seemed like a good segue for her into that."

Ms. Franklin continued, "So we have me as a single friendly front door for volunteer interest follow up and placement. A resident would express interest through filling out our interest form, it comes directly to me. I follow up with them, match them with an opportunity, and help them walk through the steps to become a volunteer, and then they can begin volunteering. So it made it a bit more organized and a bit smoother for people to navigate."

"We're willing to work with any agency that says, yeah, we'd love some help with this, and each agency has a different onboarding procedure and

different practice, so we accommodate those," Pastor J said. So far, they've worked with the Beals Memorial Library, The Winchendon CAC/ The HUB, the Community Connector, Parks & Recreation and the Winchendon Senior Center. "Melanie receives the volunteer applications. We also actively recruit. We just did the Founders Day. We'll be at the Food Truck Festival. We were also at the Health Fair this year. We'll do the Fall Fest next year. It'll be the second year that we've done that."

"We promote the VolunteerHub in multiple ways, so residents can see and understand and act," Ms. Franklin said. "We have monthly volunteer posts that are pushed out on social media, we have event booths at various events and personal invitations that we've made. It works best when it's repeated, visible, welcoming, and easy to to act on."

"So, there are lots of entry points that we're trying to make, and this has been a work in progress," Pastor J said. "We love working with the agencies that we're working with. So far, the leadership has been great in connecting with us and helping us to understand their processes. It takes a lot of work to build a volunteer, it takes a lot of work to retain a volunteer. We know that through church ministry. Church runs pretty much solely on volunteers, and so we know what it takes to bring a volunteer in. We're always working on volunteer building and retention, so we're doing the same thing, trying to apply a lot of the same principles that we do in the church here for the town.

"Right now, the VolunteerHub is being coordinated without a direct cost to the town, while creating meaningful community value. The estimated community value right now is somewhere around \$23,000 to \$25,000, and that doesn't calculate the number of volunteers that we are also able to raise and build for the town throughout the years to come."

Ms. Franklin put in that these figures were based just on the volunteers they had recruited in the past six months or so for the five agencies they were currently working with.

"So we're here just letting you know what we're doing, just how we can offer ourselves in whatever way we can help," Pastor J said. "That's really our only goal here, is to figure out how do we help our town grow and move forward into greater prosperity. We're hoping to turn goodwill into action, that's what we're all about. Our church's motto is 'Doing Life Together,' and we've been doing that as a church for five years. We changed our tack back about five years ago, and we've been building a strong community at Cornerstone for the last five years, we've really

HORSE & BUGGY FEEDS

Proudly Serving Local Communities Since 1976

FOR 50 YEARS...

THE SUPPLIES YOU NEED

THE NAMES YOU TRUST

Pet Owners, Breeders, Gardeners, Homesteaders, Farmers

Bulk Feeds, Pet Nutrition, Seeds and Plants, Health Maintenance, Equipment, Pest Management, Fertilizers, and more

380 School Street
Winchendon, MA
978-297-2518

24 Dunbar Street
Keene, NH
603-352-0328

Finally Summer

Time for celebrations galore!

Customized floral arrangements, gourmet chocolates, food baskets, gift items, décor, and more!

TO EACH HIS OWN DESIGN

FLOWERS & GIFTS

Flowers and Gifts for All Occasions

Order online at toeachhisowndesigns.com

978-297-3959

Visit us in store at
172 Central Street
Winchendon, MA 01475

Winchendon News

VOLUNTEERHUB

continued from page 2

been focusing on relationship. Now we’re turning ourselves outward and asking, how can we build stronger relationships, a stronger community within our town, and not just our town, but the surrounding communities as well.”

According to one presentation slide, the next phase of the project “is about expanding participation, strengthening tracking, and securing the right tools.” The program hopes to invite more organizations to take part, and pursue grants for VolunteerHub software to streamline recruitment, scheduling, communication and reporting.

Board of Selectmen member Erika Eitland referred back to that slide, saying, “You’re doing amazing work, and I really appreciate you bringing people together, because the volunteering is, to your point, not an easy lift. It is about that training, it is about making sure people stay involved, so you don’t lose out on all that energy you just invested. So, when I see stuff about pursuing grants for VolunteerHub software and making it more efficient, or having ways to stay in touch with people a little bit easier, if there’s something that the Board can do, like writing a letter of support to be able to talk about the value, I think we would be keen to do that. That would unlock some of the technological little helps, so that you guys aren’t trying to chase people down when you could have a click of a button help you navigate that.”

Pastor J agreed, “that was kind of our goal in coming here tonight, is just to make more people aware of what we’re doing throughout the town. We would love to work with other organizations as well. Last year, when we did the recruitment phase, we did invite a bunch of organizations out to the first recruitment event, and the ones that we’re currently working with are the ones that have expressed most desire to see volunteers built. We would love to have more organizations come along. We would also love to have support for grant operations.”

Ms. Eitland asked what some of the things are that people are volunteering to do right now.

Ms. Franklin said, “So, for the library, we’re connecting people with the Friends of the Library. Pastor J is the secretary of the Friends of the Library, and so I connect them with him, and then they attend a meeting, and then go through that process. They volunteer for various events that the Friends put on. For the CAC, we connect people with the food pantry, because they always need help with the food pantry, and The HUB will look for volunteers for their various events, they have a food tent that they work at many of the events in coordination with the Parks & Rec, and so they’re looking for volunteers for that. For general cleaning of The HUB, for the bowling and shoe rentals, and for the various youth activities that they have. For the Community Connector, we are looking for volunteers for driving and also dispatchers. For Parks & Rec, event support, logistics and planning, office

help, and the Senior Center, they’re looking for volunteers for the Meals on Wheels delivery, backup delivery drivers, meal prep for the meals that they serve, the lunches that they serve, cleaning, and various events that they have or activities that they have.”

Board member Audrey LaBrie asked how people interested in volunteering would reach out to contact the VolunteerHub.

Mr. Hackett (who had just joined the panel) said, “Basically, if you go to the websites right now and they say fill out the form, say I want to volunteer at The HUB or volunteer at the Senior Center, it looks like it’s going to them, it’s actually coming to us. It goes to Melanie. The gap that we found was people want to volunteer, but they weren’t sure how. How can we volunteer? Where can we go? So that was the first gap, and the second gap was it’s a lot of back and forth to actually get them on board into somewhere. So that’s where Melanie’s coming in. So all that you would do is we would add a little line to that form that says, contact Audrey for this, I want to volunteer for whatever, and then Melanie would get it, and she would say, “Hey, Audrey, I got a volunteer, this person wants to volunteer for you.”

“So that’s one way. The library, they take care of a lot of stuff on their own. We just send it to them. Where, like, the CAC and others that need a lot of paperwork filled out, this, this, this has to be done. You can’t drive without this, this, so we’ll take care of that piece first, and then send them off to the various groups. So, and that’s kind of the purpose of this. Are there other ways that people know that want to connect, that we can connect people to different volunteer opportunities? Because what’s good is there’s a lot of people out there that want to volunteer. How do we do it? See me, I’ll throw it on the website for you, Audrey, whatever you want.”

“Basically, we are here to serve,” Pastor J said. “What Melanie does is, a lot of times people call in and volunteer, and because she knows what’s available, she can talk through, well, what do you like to do? What are your strengths? And that’s where a lot of the back and forth comes. The second part is the onboarding, so what Melanie takes care of is, each agency has upfront paperwork that needs to be filled out, she makes sure that all that gets done before the interview is with whoever is actually set up. So if there are Boards or whatnot that have openings, and you want to advertise them through us, and you give us information, we’ll be glad to work with you on that.”

The VolunteerHub could talk to interested volunteers about what skills are needed for a Board or committee, and what availability would be needed for meetings and so on.

There was some discussion about utilizing the VolunteerHub for the town, which has some specific requirements, such as CORI checks for people who work with children or senior citizens. Mr. Hackett said that he was applying for grants for software that would help them manage the whole process. “we use the free tools right now, so at least to get it started to see how it worked, because we weren’t sure if this was going to work or not. We’re not going to spend \$5000 if it’s not going to work. Hey, it’s working, let’s take it to the next step now.”

Board Chair Andrew Beauvais said, “I want to thank all of you and everybody that’s not here tonight, that’s been behind driving this forward. This is huge. I think what’s really important is that we reestablish a sense of community and pride in our community, where people feel they feel valued, they have a place, they’re part of something bigger than themselves, and I think this is a great way for them to connect and get involved. So, thank you all.”

HUB PATIO

continued from page 5

because this place is so much more than a cool patio or a bowling alley,” Ms. Jennings said. “It is our community center that we have built, and we will continue to build and take care of. It is a place where teens can now come four days a week for free teen drop-in centers. We have senior bowling, we have a youth workforce program. Here’s Richie, he’s part of it. He’s cooking tonight. We have a food pantry, we have social services, we have a thrift store, and we have a whole lot of fun and a whole lot of community happening here, which you don’t find that in other places. This place is truly magical, and it’s because every single person here makes it magic, and I’m saying that out of all sincerity.”

She asked people in various groups—board members, volunteers, people who had gotten services from the CAC, people who had come to an event or activity, and so on—to raise their bit of ribbon high, until the entire circle was holding up their ribbon.

“I end with a quote that my mother always used when she gave speeches, from Margaret Mead,” Ms. Jennings said. “Never doubt that a small group of people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

With that, volunteers Richie and Howie snipped the ribbon with the giant scissors, which had been brought by Planning Coordinator Nicole Roberts.

Ms. Jennings told the *Courier* that credit and their unending gratitude also go to Powell Stone & Gravel, which donated gravel for the patio, PLAC Concrete Construction LLC, for donating the time and labor to pour the concrete surfaces, Tenney Remodeling, and Dame Electric LLC.

206 Central Street
Winchendon MA

978-895-9496

YOUR DAILY
DOSE OF
HAPPINESS
IN EVERY CUP!

HOURS

Monday
CLOSED

Tuesday
7:00AM - 2:00PM

Wednesday
7:00AM - 2:00PM

Thursday
7:00AM - 2:00PM

Friday
7:00AM - 2:00PM

Saturday
8:00AM - 1:00PM

Sunday
8:00AM - 1:00PM

Edward Jones

> edwardjones.com | Member SIPC

Caps, gowns...tuition bills. Are you prepared?

A quick conversation today can make a big difference tomorrow— let’s connect and plan for the future.

Jordyn Lynds
Financial Advisor

115 Central Street
Winchendon, MA, 01475
978-297-7452

529 College Savings Plan

ing and submitting 529 College Savings Plan Application Form, I certify that this app
te and all information provided is true and accurate and contains no willful falsifi
resenation. I understand that falsifications, rep... or omissions may dis
consideration to this position. I hereby authorize... person to contact
his employers for verification, conduct a background... and check
id.

Legal	Last Name	Doe	First	John
		44-78		

Winchendon News

BOS Faced With Solomonic Decision in Lengthy Dangerous Dog Hearing



From left, Susan Young advocates for Titan the dog, as owner Michaela Krafve, and plaintiffs Pam Saulnier and Steven Saulnier listen.

Photo copyright Town of Winchendon

by Inanna Arthen

At their meeting on Monday, May 11, the Board of Selectmen held a "Notice of Dangerous Dog" public hearing. Board Chair Andrew Beauvais summarized the situation leading to the hearing, saying, "We received a few different letters with complaints about a dog named Titan. So back in September there was a situation where somebody was, I believe, riding their bicycle, and the dog did attack." He asked anyone present who would like to speak about what happened to come forward. Four people came forward: Steven Saulnier, who was making the complaint, accompanied by Pam Saulnier, and Michaela Krafve, the dog owner, accompanied by Robert Betourney.

Mr. Saulnier began by saying that the incident in his complaint, which occurred on September 13, 2025, "was actually the second incident. The first incident was October 10, 2024." Mr. Beauvais asked him to speak about the second incident. "I was on my mountain bike, as you stated," Mr. Saulnier said. "Traveling down Joslin Road, and the dog came off her property and bit my calf and knocked me off my bike." He had sent some video of his bite and torn pants, and one of the dog barking at the camera.

There was some question as to whether that section of Joslin Road is a public way or a discontinued road maintained by its abutters. The property in question is a 9-acre parcel on a section of Joslin Road between Mill Glenn Road and Rice Road that does not appear to be maintained by the town, and which dwindles away to a rocky trail through the woods, although there is more to Joslin Road further north where it joins Hitchcock Road. It's another one of Winchendon's "mystery roads."

Speaking to the dog's owner Dr. Krafve, who is an associate veterinarian with Townsend Veterinary Hospital, Board member Erika Eitland said, "Just as a dog owner, I'd love to hear your perspective."

Dr. Krafve said, "I'd like to say right off the bat, we've gone to court with this five times, and every single time the court has gone in my favor, to the point where they even said that the dog is doing his job. This is a ongoing issue. I have it even from Steven himself, where he had tried to put the dog in his four wheeler, and suddenly, when he got told that he couldn't hunt on the property anymore, this has started, and it's non-stop. He goes down, he provokes the dog. Animal

control, and their boss, Lieutenant Wolski, went down numerous times, and they know if you wait at the end of that road, that dog is going to come up. That is his job. That is what he is legally allowed to do. He is a working farm dog. This is an area that has bears, and it's proven already, just this week, that there's a bear out there. And I have expensive livestock down there. I've been down there for 20 years, and every single abutter on that area has written a notice for this dog's defense, and has never had a problem with him, except for Steven, who continues to go down there on posted land, claiming that he can hunt down there, even his wife, we have on pictures taking down the No Trespassing signs. This is an ongoing personal battle that the courts themselves have said the dog is in his right."

Mr. Beauvais said that the Board hadn't had that information before now. Dr. Krafve said this was the second time she'd been "brought up last-minute, when my side's never allowed to be said," and she wanted to defend the dog.

Mr. Beauvais asked Lt. Kevin Wolski if he could fill in the Board on what he knew.

Lt. Wolski came forward to say, "So I supervise animal control. I'm not an animal control officer. The animal control officers have cited Miss Krafve a few times for the dog being loose, running at large, according to the bylaw, and she has appealed to the court and won those cases. The court magistrate, has, to my knowledge, ruled in her favor, because the bylaw indicates that the dog can be used for agricultural purposes. So if you read the bylaw, and it clearly states that the issue is that the dog is coming off the property when nobody's there to supervise the dog, and has bitten Mr. Saulnier at least once and come after him a couple more times. That road, to my knowledge, is an unmaintained town road. It's still a public way. It's just not maintained, so he has the right to go down there. So the issue is that the bylaw allows for the dog to be used for agricultural purposes. So when you cite somebody for that, and they appeal it, we're going to lose. That's why we're here for a dangerous dog hearing or a nuisance dog hearing. The first time we had the hearing, Miss Krafve was not notified of it, and she appealed that to the court and they ruled in her favor on that. So that's why we're here today."

Dr. Krafve said, "My dog does wear a GPS tracker at all times, so I always have access to where that dog is. And when I've asked for bite reports twice, there is not one. When you get bit by a dog, and I know this as a fact, as a veterinarian, you go to the hospital, you fill out a bite report. It cannot be your significant other, any different than if my own dog bit somebody, I can't write the bite report. And there is not a bite report on file."

Lt. Wolski said that the police had reports that were filed with them. Dr. Krafve said that

a report by an independent medical professional needs to verify the report or it's just one person's claim against another's. Mr. Saulnier said, "I'd like to add that this hearing is not about a loose dog or properties. It's about me getting bit twice by the dog. That's a public way, and it's only a matter of time before a child or an elderly person that's not able to defend themselves is going to get hurt down there. I supplied all the email screens and the videos and pictures."

Dr. Krafve said, "He has a No Trespass order down there and continues to go down despite another abutter offering him a secondary route to go around, that he chooses to still go down in front of these dogs. And I have witnesses as well that will attest to that."

Mr. Beauvais said that this was the first time the Board has dealt with a complaint of this kind, and while he understands that the animal is on private property, "once they enter a public property or public way, that's a whole 'nother situation." He invited other members of the public to speak.

Pam Saulnier said, "I'd like to just say that he didn't seek medical attention, because it wasn't that bad that he felt like he needed medical attention. But he did have an injury, he did break the skin, and he did file it with the police each time. I would also like to add that on the two occasions that he was bitten by that dog off property that Michaela failed to quarantine that dog..." Dr. Krafve put in that this was incorrect, and Ms. Saulnier went on, "Michaela did not quarantine the dog. She claimed it was a different dog. She has two dogs. Steven knows both of those dogs very well. He never had a problem with the previous dog that was down there. This is the only dog that he's ever had a problem with. He's not trying to make it difficult. He's been traveling through that way for 25 years. My son lives on the other side of Joslin Road, and we pass through there often. There's no reason why we shouldn't be able to be on a public way without being at risk of a dog coming off property and suffering a bite."

Dr. Krafve said, "I also have in writing from Steven himself, where I said, you're welcome to come meet the dog. How can we make this better? They were at our house a few days earlier, and they said, Nope, it's fine. It's fine. And then he said, I'm sick of this. I've been patient enough with all your dogs. I've owned this property for 20 years. I've never had an issue with these dogs."

Mr. Betourney asked if the town had any other complaints about the dogs, but the Board didn't have that information. Dr. Krafve said that the dogs had been at her home on North Central Street, and the Murdock track students run right past their front yard without provoking the dogs.

Turn to DOG HEARING page 6

978-297-0961
70 Front Street
Winchendon, MA
www.morinrealestate.com

Darlene Terry Alejandra

MORIN REAL ESTATE
BUILT BY GENERATIONS OF TRUST
Licensed in MA & NH
Bringing People Home for Over 40 Years

Winchendon News

DOG HEARING
continued from page 5

Mr. Betourney said that he doesn't own the dogs, or have any connection to the Joslin Road property, Dr. Krafve simply lives at his house, but he is being sued.

Monica Cleaver came forward, stating that she was formerly the Winchendon Animal Control Officer and animal health inspector. "My concern about this bite incident is the bite report that doesn't exist. As far as I know from when I worked for this town and for the State of Massachusetts, a bite, regardless of the extent, needs to be reported if it's in a police report, and that doesn't exist, and that means that the animal control officers either didn't do their job or the bite didn't happen, because there has to be a report through the state to be able to do a quarantine for an animal, it has to be done within 24 hours of that bite."

Lt. Wolski stated that the bite wasn't reported to the ER, which would have reported it to the police. The bite was reported to the police, it was passed to the ACO, and the dog was quarantined. There was some confusion about the notice of quarantine not being received right away, and a different dog being transferred to the Joslin Road property.

A speaker named Megan came forward to describe in detail her interactions with Titan while she farm-sat for Dr. Krafve recently. She and her two kids, aged 11 and 9, played with the dog. She offered to show photos and videos of the dog with her children. "I will submit anything you want to the Board showing that this dog is not a threat to anybody," she said.

Mr. Beauvais asked Dr. Krafve what she had done to secure or control the dog. Dr. Krafve said none, "because of the wild animals down there, you don't have to legally tie a farm dog. That's the bylaws. Because they're doing their job. They're protecting that stock. They chase them off, they go back to their stock. That is what they do. You tie these dogs, you're putting them in danger, and you're putting the livestock in danger." She went on, "These are expensive show sheep. This land is surrounded by woods, and I will gladly submit you an aerial and show you what this looks like. This is not an area where my house is. These are expensive animals that are out in pasture during the spring, summer, fall, and especially during hunting season. And I've had other hunters. I have two of them right here that have gone hunting. Many hunters go through there. Nobody has an issue, except for the Saulniers that were told not to."

Susan Tavaleski came forward to say, "I'm the former ACO for Winchendon, senior, I was also the ACO for Fitchburg for fourteen and a half years. I'm state and nationally certified through NACA, National Animal Control. I was the animal health inspector as well. When doing the bite incidents, you have to go to the hospital and get it checked. I don't care if it's a puncture, a scratch, it needs to be checked so that can be verified. Other than that, all it is is a he said, she said, because then also the quarantine does have to come down, but it has to be verified normally through the hospital."

In response to a question from Pam Saulnier, Lt. Wolski clarified that while hospitals must report bites to the police, the police are not mandated to report bites to the hospital.

Resident Gary Allen came forward to say he had hunted on the property for 15 years, and installed trail cameras, and he had never had a problem with the dogs—they interacted with him in a friendly way.

Susan Young came forward to describe in detail the friendly relationship she had with Dr. Krafve's dogs. "This all seems nonsense to me. It seems like there's a personal issue or a further issue, other than what the face of this is, and that may need to be resolved, but it's not that he's a dangerous dog," she said.

Pam Saulnier said, "When Steven was driving down that road on his bicycle, he didn't have an opportunity to greet that dog and say hi. The dog jumped out from the edge of the road, knocked him off his bike and bit him. He didn't have an opportunity to greet that dog and say, Hi. You're a good dog, you know, how are you?—I understand the dog has a job to do. I am an animal animal lover by nature. I don't want to see Michaela's animals hurt by any means. The dog, unfortunately, has now twice bit him."

Ms. Eitland said, "What kind of resolution are you looking for by coming in front of us tonight that we can provide or help mediate?"

Mr. Saulnier said, "I want to be able to drive down that road either going hunting, trail cameras, to my granddaughter's house, and not be bitten by a dog. I think it needs to be banned from the property like it was previously."

Dr. Krafve said that Mr. Saulnier does not have permission to hunt on her property and has "multiple trespass warrants."

Pam Saulnier asked to read a statement, saying, "My husband was bitten twice now by Michaela's dog Titan while present on a public road. He was not trespassing. He was not on the owner's property at the time of these incidents. He's a trusted veteran who has responsibly hunted and started this area for more than 25 years without ever having a problem or complaint involving any animal or any resident. Steven has never experienced any issues with her previous dog. We want to be very clear, we don't wish harm to this animal. We do not believe the situation is solely the fault of the dog. However, owners have a legal and ethical responsibility to maintain maintain proper control of their animals and to comply with all safety and quarantine requirements established by the town of Winchendon and

Massachusetts law. The Town of Winchendon Bylaws prohibit dogs from running at large, which is defined as being free to wander on public or private ways or on the property of another. The bylaws further prohibit dogs from becoming a public nuisance, including attacking persons while off the owner's property. While the bylaws do provide a limited exemption for working or sporting dogs actively engaged in hunting, field trials, training, agricultural assistance or guard work, that exemption does not remove the owner's responsibility to keep control of the dog or prevent it from posing a danger to the public.

"In this case, the dog was on a public roadway when Steven was bitten twice. The situation is especially concerning because our granddaughter lives nearby, and this dog has been seen on my son's property. This is a beautiful area where families should feel safe walking, riding, biking, horseback riding and enjoying outdoor activities, I hope that someday I can soon comfortably spend time there with my granddaughter without fear or concern for her safety. Unfortunately, Michaela has demonstrated repeated failures to follow these rules, including improper compliance with quarantine guidelines following the bite incidents. As a veterinarian, she should fully understand the seriousness and importance of these public health and safety requirements. Equally concerning is the lack of accountability demonstrated throughout this matter. Rather than accepting responsibility, Michaela attempted to have my husband arrested using falsely represented video evidence, despite the fact that he was not trespassing and remained on the public way. We believe this behavior raises legitimate concerns regarding credibility, judgment and willingness to comply with future safety requirements in orders imposed by the town. This hearing is not about punishment or retaliation. It's about public safety, accountability, and ensuring that clear rules are followed before another person is injured. We respectfully ask the Board to consider the repeated nature of these incidences, why the owner demonstrates disregard for established guidelines and the risk posed to members of the public using town roads and surrounding countryside."

There was some more discussion about whether Mr. Saulnier had been on the property legally and how incidents should be documented and reported. By this time the hearing had lasted more than 40 minutes.

The Board voted to close the public hearing and make a determination.

Ms. Eitland said, "I feel that just because a dog is in that public right of way does not make them a dangerous dog....the evidence that has been brought today, to me, suggests that the dog does not appear dangerous. It is doing its job. I think in a farm town like this, that is going to necessarily be there. So again, without some of that medical evidence, without some of that other detail, it is hard for me to make any decision one way or the other."

Board member Melissa Blanchard, somewhat emotional, said, "I didn't join the Board to put a dog down. That is not why I'm here. I'm looking at this video, and I'm looking at a dog telling this person to back off. I know dog language. Dog are telling you something, when the dog is standing there barking at me, turning his back to me to walk away, that dog is not threatening me, but telling me to back off." She went on, "It tears me apart that we can't find a resolve because that dog is a working dog trying to protect what is trained to do. And it's just heartbreaking." Surrendering the dog would be as severe a punishment for a working dog, they can't be confined, she said.

Ms. Eitland said she would like to move to dismiss the complaint.

Mr. Beauvais said he also felt this was "100 percent not what I signed up for." But, he said, "while Massachusetts law does recognize working dogs, it does not give them unlimited freedom to roam off the property. So dogs used for herding livestock, for example, cattle and sheep, may be off leash while actively working and under control. However, they must still be under the handler's control, not posing a threat to people or other animals. If a farm dog, which in this case it is, if the farm dog leaves the property, enters public ways, chases or bites someone, it loses any practical protection of being a working dog and is treated like any other loose or dangerous dog. However, in my opinion, I would agree, without actually having any one proof that any of this occurred in a public way...and because there's been one complaint brought forward about this specific dog...I would also agree that we should move to dismiss."

The Board voted to dismiss the complaint. Mr. Beauvais said, "If this were to come before the Board again, I would ask that all parties involved please provide every shred of evidence you can, and that way we can make a better determination."

Save the Date!

ST. MARTIN'S CHURCH

FESTIVAL AND CHICKEN BBQ

Saturday, July 18 • 10 am-2 pm

Otter River Sportsman's Club

To reserve dinner tickets (\$15) call 978-939-5588.

Theme baskets, 50/50, raffles, free activities for kids, and more! Hot dogs and snacks available all day.





Community Connector

Welcome to The Community Connector! In this pull-out section of the printed *Winchendon Courier*, you'll find a complete calendar of local events, a page of events and activities by category, and where to find more details about the organizations and groups that help make Winchendon a great place to live.

Continuing Events

Vacation Bible School with United Parish

Runs for one week

Monday, July 13 through Friday, July 17

8:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.

Limited space - Registration Required - Donation Appreciated



Join us for a 5 half-day VBS program titled "Rainforest Falls, Exploring the Nature of God" Registration is open to kids in grades K-5. You can register your child at <https://vbspro.events/p/3789a4> or scan the QR code. We are also looking for volunteers to help run this fun program. You can sign up to volunteer by scanning the QR Code as well or going to our website, unitedparish.com. Come join us in the rainforest!

At United Parish of Winchendon, 39 Front St

At The HUB

5 Summer Dr

Kids Bowl Free!

Wednesday through Saturday

10:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.

\$3 shoe rental not included (for those without their own bowling shoes) - Registration Required. See flyer below for link.

Senior Strikers Bowling

Fridays

10:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m.

\$5 suggested donation, pastry & coffee, lunch available through Senior Center—call 978-297-3155 by Thursday to order a lunch, suggested donation \$3.

Brunch & Bowl

Saturdays

10:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m.

\$10 suggested donation, bowling, coffee, pastries, breakfast sandwich, cartoons and free bowling for kids.

Beals Memorial Library Summer Reading Club

50 Pleasant St

Theatre Squad at the Beals

Runs for one week

Monday, July 13 through Friday, July 17

11:00 a.m.- 12:30 p.m.

FREE - Limited space - Registration Required

Explore the world of drama, comedy, and improv with Theatre Squad! In this five-day class, you will learn the basics of theatre and stage presence, while we create our own play! This series culminates in a short performance for caregivers on Friday, July 17 at 12:00 p.m. Funded in part by the Winchendon Cultural Council and the Friends of the Beals Memorial Library.

Part of the Summer Reading Club Line-up of Special Events!

At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant Street, Winchendon.

For more information, or to register, visit the library or call 978-297-0300.

CFCE Storywalk in July

Tuesday Mornings in July

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Join us for a reading adventure! Discover the exciting stories we have waiting for you on the library lawn.

July 7: *Miguel's Community Garden* by JaNay Brown-Wood

July 14: *The Bad Seed* by Jory John

July 21: *The Surprise Garden* by Zoe Hall

July 28: *Lola Plants a Garden* by Anna McQuinn

Part of the Summer Reading Club Line-up of Special Events!

At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant Street, Winchendon.

For more information, or to register, visit the library or call 978-297-0300.

Summer Reading Club One-Off Events

(see Calendar listings on following pages 8-9 for details)

Thursday, July 9: Animal Craze Petting Zoo

Thursday, July 9: Land Conservation Presentation with Mt. Grace Land Conservation Trust

Thursday, July 16: Local Farm Producers' Panel

Wednesday, July 22: Plant Science Experiments

Friday, July 24: Victory Garden Presentation

Wednesday, July 29: International Snack Taste Test

Join the Summer Reading Club!

FOR ALL AGES! All reading counts! Short, long, for work, for entertainment, graphic novels, audio books, stories you read aloud and stories someone reads to you—it's all READING! You just record the hours you spend reading in your log—help the Beals break last year's all-time record!

Register and get your log at the library or online. Start at any time, right up to the last day, August 14! For more info, go to:

bealslibrary.org/summer

Winchendon Community Park 86 Ingleside Dr

Saturday July 11
6:00-10:00 p.m.



Tickets \$5. Kids under 12 free. "Island Vibes" is part of the Sunset Socials series and brings tropical energy, great music, and relaxed summer fun to the amphitheater. Whether you're dancing, lounging with friends, or just soaking in the atmosphere, "Island Vibes" is all about enjoying summer together in a beautiful outdoor setting. Get tickets at www.eventeny.com/events/sunset-socials-island-vibes-2026-27902. Sponsored by Farming Is Life and Winchendon Parks & Recreation.

**Friday, July 3
Holiday Observed
Library, Senior Center and
The HUB will be closed**

**Saturday, July 4
Independence Day**

Need a Ride?

Book a ride with the Community Connector app, or call 978-297-8089. All rides are FREE! Please book your ride at least one week in advance.



HOW DOES IT WORK?

Use the link or QR code below to register your child. You'll receive coupons each week by email or in the app to redeem for two free games per day during the program dates.

2026 PROGRAM INFORMATION

- Program Dates: June 1st until October 31st, 2026
- Program includes 2 Free Games Per Day
- Kids 15 & Under eligible for registration
- Shoe rental not included
- Subject to availability. Some exclusions may apply.

FREE GAMES VALID FOR REDEMPTION

WEDNESDAY	10:00am – 3:00pm
THURSDAY	10:00am – 3:00pm
FRIDAY	10:00am – 3:00pm
SATURDAY	10:00am – 3:00pm

REGISTER TODAY!

kidsbowlfree.com/center.php?alley_id=7511

Scan to Register

KIDS BOWL FREE

Learn more at the-hub.org

THIS IS NOT A SCHOOL SPONSORED EVENT



JULY

WEDNESDAY JULY 1

Wandering Wednesdays Walking Group

9:30-11:30 a.m. A relaxed social walk led by Lynn Murray. Bring comfortable shoes, water, and your curiosity. Come wander with us and discover the stories, beauty, and community spirit that make Winchendon special! Today's walk: "Railroad Ramble Part I—Destination Winchendon" (Meet at the Clark Memorial YMCA, 155 Central St). Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation.

Craft & Chat

6:30-8:00 p.m. Craft and Chat is a space for adults of all ages to come and spend time relaxing while crocheting and chatting. Bring your crochet supplies and whether you want to learn or work on ongoing projects, we would love for you to join us! At Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

THURSDAY JULY 2

Our Neighbor's Kitchen Dinner

5:15 p.m. at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church. Served in the Parish Hall. This week the menu is pizza, salad and dessert. Free-will donation \$2 per person, \$5 per family; no one turned away. 52 Spruce Street, Winchendon.

MONDAY JULY 6

Beals Music Movie Night: Hamilton

6:00 p.m. Join us for a special movie night to celebrate the country's 250th anniversary by watching the Tony-winning smash hit *Hamilton* on our BIG screen! At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

TUESDAY JULY 7

CFCE Storywalk in July

10:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Join us for a reading adventure! Discover the exciting stories we have waiting for you on the library lawn. This week: *Miguel's Community Garden* by JaNay Brown-Wood. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Social Art Circle with GALA

1:00-3:00 p.m. Explore a variety of art in a supportive social environment—a group with different skill levels who wish to learn, explore, laugh, share, connect, and be inspired in a safe, low key, non-intimidating space. Bring your portable works in progress or try and pick from the shared community art supplies we have on hand. This is a self-led group, but there will be classroom monitors who will assist you. No cost, but registration required, at <https://form.jotform.com/253415023143949>. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

WEDNESDAY JULY 8

Wandering Wednesdays Walking Group

9:30-11:30 a.m. A relaxed social walk led by Lynn Murray. Bring comfortable shoes, water, and your curiosity. Come wander with us and discover the stories, beauty, and community spirit that make Winchendon special! Today's walk: "From the Beginning: Old Centre" (Meet in Old Center). Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation.

Teen Gender & Sexuality Alliance at the Beals

3:30-4:30 p.m. A safe space for teens to meet, exchange information, receive support, socialize, build a community, and talk about issues and concerns related to sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Declaration of Independence Reading at Beals Memorial Library

6:00 p.m. Join us as we celebrate the country's 250th anniversary with other communities across the country in a read aloud of the Declaration of Independence on the steps of the library. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

THURSDAY JULY 9

Denis Cormier - Songs of Yesteryear

10:45 a.m.- 12:15 p.m. Enjoy timeless tunes, familiar melodies, and a touch of nostalgia as Denis performs favorites from years past. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

Summer Reading Club - Animal Craze Petting Zoo

2:00-4:00 p.m. Join us for a fun time with the Animal Craze Traveling Farm from Mistletoe Farm in Winchendon. Children will have the chance to pet, hold, brush and feed adorable farm animals. Limited space, registration required. Register at www.bealslibrary.org/summer, call 978-297-0300 or visit the library. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Our Neighbor's Kitchen Dinner

5:30 p.m. at UU Church of Winchendon. Dinner will be served in the Parish Hall; take-out available after indoor diners are served. This week's menu will be spinach lasagna. Free-will donation \$2 per person, \$5 per family; no one turned away. 126 Central Street.

Summer Reading Club - Land Conservation Presentation with Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust

6:30-7:00 p.m. What do Sunset View Farm, Murdock Farm and the Old Marchmont Property have in common? They are all preserved by Mt. Grace Land Conservation Trust. Join Mt. Grace to learn about all the properties in Winchendon that are conserved, and the benefits they hold for the town. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

FRIDAY JULY 10

Sound Bites & Movie on the Lanes

6:00-9:00 p.m. The HUB's very own Open Mic. Sign up list is available at the HUB at 30 minutes before the music starts at 6:30. For more information contact Sound Bites Events. www.soundbitesevents.com At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

SATURDAY JULY 11

Child Loss Support Group

10:00-11:00 a.m. For parents, grandparents and siblings of a child that has died. This is a non-professional support group not affiliated with any religion. If you are in need of support or know others who would benefit from this group, please invite them to come. If you have any questions, please contact Carla Wood 978 297-2217 or Phyllis Cochran 978 297-1193. At United Parish, 39 Front St, Winchendon.

Sunset Social: Island Vibes

6:00-10:00 p.m. Tickets \$5. Kids under 12 free. Island Vibes is part of the Sunset Socials series and brings tropical energy, great music, and relaxed summer fun to the amphitheater. Whether you're dancing, lounging with friends, or just soaking in the atmosphere, Island Vibes is all about enjoying summer together in a beautiful outdoor setting. Get tickets at www.eventeny.com/events/sunset-socials-island-vibes-2026-27902. Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At Winchendon Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

Damian McGinty Acoustic Tour 2026

6:00 p.m. Join Damian McGinty, the charismatic star of Celtic Thunder and Glee, for an unforgettable evening of music, charm, and pure magic! On this special summer night, Damian's heartwarming ballads, upbeat tunes, and captivating stories are set to come to life on stage. Known for his powerful voice and charismatic stage presence, Damian brings an authentic blend of folk and pop. Damian's soulful voice weaves through a tapestry of songs, including hits from his latest releases and his repertoire of solo originals, fan favorites, and a few beloved Celtic Thunder classics. With a mix of personal anecdotes from his life on the road and incredible musicianship, this tour is designed to connect deeply with every audience member. Tickets available at damianmcginty.com/tours. At Winchendon History & Cultural Center, Murdock-Whitney House, 151 Front St.

TUESDAY JULY 14

CFCE Storywalk in July

10:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Join us for a reading adventure! Discover the exciting stories we have waiting for you on the library lawn. This week: *The Bad Seed* by Jory John. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

WEDNESDAY JULY 15

Wandering Wednesdays Walking Group

9:30-11:30 a.m. A relaxed social walk led by Lynn Murray. Bring comfortable shoes, water, and your curiosity. Come wander with us and discover the stories, beauty, and community spirit that make Winchendon special! Today's walk: "Where was Marchmont?" (Meeting place to be determined). Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation.

Craft & Chat

6:30-8:00 p.m. Craft and Chat is a space for adults of all ages to come and spend time relaxing while crocheting and chatting. Bring your crochet supplies and whether you want to learn or work on ongoing projects, we would love for you to join us! At Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

THURSDAY JULY 16

Book Club at the Senior Center

10:00 a.m. For more information, call the Senior Center at 978-297-3155.

Merrily's Free Card Making Class

10:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. This is a free class offered by GALA. Make your own greeting card using found objects and your creativity! Merrily will guide you to make a one-of-a-kind creation. Held in the Community room. Register at: <https://form.jotform.com/242247912496968>. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

Our Neighbor's Kitchen Dinner

5:15 p.m. at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church. Served in the Parish Hall. This week the menu is Parishioners' Potluck—a variety of dishes and desserts. Free-will donation \$2 per person, \$5 per family; no one turned away. 52 Spruce Street, Winchendon.

Summer Reading Club - Local Farm Producers Panel

6:30 p.m. Join four local food producers to talk about their work and the benefits of eating locally grown food. Panelists are Beth Hunt (Not Just Produced), Ali Catlin (Smiths Country Cheese), Richy Pena (Farming is Life) and Erin Silva (Owner of Piping Plover Baking. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

FRIDAY JULY 17

Teen Night & Movie on the Lanes

6:00-9:00 p.m. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

SATURDAY JULY 18

St. Martin's Church Summer Festival & Chicken BBQ

10:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m. Theme basket, certificate and major prize raffles, along with adult and children's Chinese auctions; music; free activities for children; and, of course, a chicken dinner served from noon to 1:00 p.m. Dinner tickets are \$15 and can be reserved by calling 978-939-5588. Reservations are suggested, as a limited number of tickets will be available on July 18. At the Otter River Sportsman's Club, 250 Lord Road, Templeton.

Into the Floyd Concert

7:00-9:00 p.m. Tickets \$20. Based in Central Massachusetts, Into The Floyd brings the music of Pink Floyd vividly to life, performing an authentic and expansive catalog spanning the band's entire career—from their earliest psychedelic works of the 1960s through their final studio recordings. Get tickets at www.eventeny.com/events/into-the-floyd-2026-27905. Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At Winchendon Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

SUNDAY JULY 19

FIFA World Cup Watch Party

1:00 p.m. Join us at the park on July 19 for an afternoon of soccer, food, and community fun! Gates open at 1:00 p.m. Game starts at 3:00 p.m. on the big screen. Come grab some food from local food trucks, bring your chairs & blankets, and cheer on the match with us! Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At Winchendon Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

MONDAY JULY 20

Walking Beside You Caregiver Support Group

6:00-7:30 p.m. We invite all parents, grandparents, and caregivers raising individuals who are neurodivergent, on the autism spectrum, or have other special needs. We aim to create a safe space to come together, support each other, and share the joys and challenges of raising individuals with unique needs. 3rd Monday of each month. For more information visit the library or see bealslibrary.org. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

TUESDAY JULY 21

CFCE Storywalk in July

10:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Join us for a reading adventure! Discover the exciting stories we have waiting for you on the library lawn. This week: *The Surprise Garden* by Zoe Hall. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Growing Places Farmers Market

10:30-11:30 a.m. Fresh local vegetables available for purchase using cash, debit/credit or SNAP/HIP benefits! At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

WEDNESDAY JULY 22

Wandering Wednesdays Walking Group

9:30-11:30 a.m. A relaxed social walk led by Lynn Murray. Bring comfortable shoes, water, and your curiosity. Come wander with us and discover the stories, beauty, and community spirit that make Winchendon special! Today's walk: "Railroad Ramble Part II—Departing Winchendon" (Meet at the larger bike path parking lot [Grout Park] near the "big bicycle" sculpture, Spring and Glenallen Streets). Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation.

Summer Reading Club - Plant Science Experiments

2:00 p.m. Junior scientists age 3-12 will have the opportunity to try hands-on experiments as they explore the world of plant science with Melissa the Mad Scientist. Limited space, registration required. Register at www.bealslibrary.org/summer, call 978-297-0300 or visit the library. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

THURSDAY JULY 23

Our Neighbor's Kitchen Dinner

5:30 p.m. at UU Church of Winchendon. Dinner will be served in the Parish Hall; take-out available after indoor diners are served. This week's menu will be chili and corn bread. Free-will donation \$2 per person, \$5 per family; no one turned away. 126 Central Street.

2026



Bingo Night
6:00-9:00 p.m. Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Hawaiian Speakeasy Night with Amber Chaves & Jared Moore at the Snowbound Club
7:00-11:00 p.m. Come join us for fun summer evening in the Speakeasy with Amber Chaves & Jared Moore. Entrance is at 130 1/2 Lower parking lot. Password is “OHANA”. Drink Specials available & light refreshments served. At the Snowbound Club, 130 Baldwinville Rd, Winchendon.

FRIDAY JULY 24

Community Open Mic & Picnic in the Park
2:00-8:00 p.m. FREE! This all-ages community event invites neighbors, friends, and families to gather outdoors for an evening of live local talent, including music, comedy, storytelling, and more. Whether you’re stepping up to the mic or enjoying the performances from the lawn, this is a great chance to connect, unwind, and celebrate community creativity. Bring a picnic, blanket, or lawn chair and enjoy the beautiful park setting while supporting local performers. Performers of all experience levels are welcome—sign-ups will be available on site. Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At Winchendon Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

Summer Reading Club - Victory Garden Presentation
4:30 p.m. Join us for an informative presentation about Victory Gardens and their importance and success during both World Wars. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Friday Night Frequencies & Movie on the Lanes
6:00-9:00 p.m. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

SATURDAY JULY 25

The Reminisants Concert
4:00-8:00 p.m. Tickets \$10. Known for keeping crowds entertained and the dance floor moving, The Reminisants deliver a high-energy mix of classic hits and crowd favorites spanning multiple decades. Their interactive style and wide-ranging song list make them a perfect fit for a relaxed, family-friendly outdoor concert. Bring your friends, your lawn chairs, and your dancing shoes, and enjoy a laid-back summer concert in the park that’s all about fun, familiarity, and community connection. Get tickets at www.eventeny.com/events/reminiscentcents-27913. Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At Winchendon Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

Verlon Thompson & Shawn Camp Concert at the Snowbound Club
7:00-10:00 p.m. An intimate evening of songs & story telling by these Grammy award winning artists. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Ticket sales limited to 100. \$60 per person. For more information go to www.snowboundlubinc.com/events. Donâ€™t delay as this sold out quickly last year! At the Snowbound Club, 130 Baldwinville Rd, Winchendon.

MONDAY JULY 27

Cookbook Book Club
6:00-7:00 p.m. Each month, participants will cook a recipe from the selected cookbook, bring a dish to share, and discuss how it turned out, what worked well, what they would change and what they enjoyed. For this month’s cookbook, contact the library at 978-297-0300. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

TUESDAY JULY 28

CFCE Storywalk in July
10:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Join us for a reading adventure! Discover the exciting stories we have waiting for you on the library lawn. This week: *Lola Plants a Garden* by Anna McQuinn. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

WEDNESDAY JULY 29

Summer Reading Club - International Snack Taste Test
3:30 p.m. For teens/tweens age 10-18, take your taste buds on a tour around the world! Participants will get to try a variety of snacks from all over the globe. Limited space, registration required. Register at www.bealslibrary.org/summer, call 978-297-0300 or visit the library. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Craft & Chat
6:30-8:00 p.m. Craft and Chat is a space for adults of all ages to come and spend time relaxing while crocheting and chatting. Bring your crochet supplies and whether you want to learn or work on ongoing projects, we would love for you to join us! At Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

THURSDAY JULY 30

Community Game Night at the Beals
5:30-7:30 p.m. Play one of our games or bring your favorite to share! This event is open to everyone in the community. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Our Neighbor’s Kitchen Dinner
5:30 p.m. at UU Church of Winchendon. Dinner will be served in the Parish Hall; take-out available after indoor diners are served. This week’s menu TBA. Free-will donation \$2 per person, \$5 per family; no one turned away. 126 Central Street.

RECURRING WEEKLY EVENTS

MONDAY through FRIDAY

Pickleball - Open Courts
9:30 a.m.- 1:00 p.m. Drop in and play pickleball! At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. 978-297-3155.

MONDAYS

Gentle Yoga with Paula
10:00 a.m. Chair yoga tailored to the older generations to increase flexibility, balance, and breathwork to lower stress levels. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. 978-297-3155.

Friends’ Book and Used Media Sale
1:00-3:00 p.m. The Friends of the Library Book Sale is back! Browse a wide selection of used books, DVDs, puzzles, music and more. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

Lego Club for Kids at the Beals
4:00-5:00 p.m. Join us for fun-filled afternoons building Lego creations straight from your imagination! For information, contact the library at 978-297-0300. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

Yoga With Chantal from Shadow Academy Wellness
4:30-5:30 p.m. Unwind, relax, and celebrate the beauty of yoga. All skill levels welcomed! Mats and Blocks are available, if needed. Open to adults and teens. For more info, contact 978-297-0300, bealsmemoriallibrary@gmail.com or visit www.bealslibrary.org. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

AA Meeting
7:30 p.m. Open meeting, all are welcome. UU Church of Winchendon, 126 Central Street.

TUESDAYS

Men’s Shed Club
10:00-11:00 a.m. Mainly for older guys. We have tools and materials for pursuing our interests and passions, for learning something new and sharing skills. We join to make stuff and tinker, make friends and enjoy life. May be in different locations, call for more information. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. 978-297-3155.

Family Friendly Story Hour at the Chapel
10:00-11:00 a.m. For preschool age children. Parents must stay with their children for the story time, At the Chapel Downtown, 286 Central St, Winchendon.

Taste of Home Lunch
11:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. Enjoy a homecooked lunch made by volunteers! Call 928-297-3155 to reserve a spot. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. 978-297-3155.

Teen Dungeons & Dragons Club
3:30-5:00 p.m. A tabletop roleplaying club for teens! Membership is limited, contact the library at 978-297-0300 to sign up. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

WEDNESDAYS

Ukelele Class with Julie
9:00-10:00 a.m. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. 978-297-3155.

Open Bowling & Sunshine Cafe
10:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Kids Bowl Free!
10:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Gentle Yoga with Paula
10:00-11:00 a.m. Chair yoga tailored to the older generations to increase flexibility, balance, and breathwork to lower stress levels. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. 978-297-3155.

RUMMIKUB
10:15-11:15 a.m. Learn to play Rummikub. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. 978-297-3155.

Bingo!
12:30-2:30 p.m. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. 978-297-3155.

THURSDAYS

Open Bowling & Sunshine Cafe
10:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Kids Bowl Free!
10:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

CFCE Preschool Playgroup at the Beals
1:00-2:00 p.m. Join us for an afternoon of free play, a craft, story time and music & movement. This program is in partnership with the Winchendon CFCE. Contact the library at 978-297-0300 for more information. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

Friends’ Book and Used Media Sale
5:00-7:00 p.m. The Friends of the Library Book Sale is back! Browse a wide selection of used books, DVDs, puzzles, music and more. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

Open House “Porch Night” at the WHCC
6:00-8:30 p.m. Come join us for our summer favorite - Thursdays on the porch! Bring some wine, cheese, or snack and beverage of your choice and enjoy the beautiful mansion! Tour our buildings at your leisure and go back in time at these beautiful properties! There is NO CHARGE for this event! Acoustic music provided by local musicians. At Winchendon History and Cultural Center, 151 Front St.

Cub Scout Meetings
6:30-7:45 p.m. For more information, please contact ccpack193@gmail.com.

FRIDAYS

Story Time at the Beals
10:00 a.m. Join us for a fun half hour of stories with Ms. Kristin and Ms. Melissa. This program is in partnership with the Winchendon Community Playgroups & CFCE. Contact the library at 978-297-0300 for more information. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

Open Bowling for the Public
10:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m. FOR DETAILS and TO RSVP VISIT: <https://www.the-hub.org/community-bowling>. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Kids Bowl Free!
10:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Senior Lunch and Senior Strikers Bowling
10:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Come in and enjoy lunch, free bowling, and fellowship! Please call 978-297-3155 at least 24 hours in advance to reserve a lunch. Bowling is free for all seniors 55+ from 10:00 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. Suggested donation, \$5. At the The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, WinchendonFriends’ Book and Used Media Sale

Friends’ Book and Used Media Sale
12:00-2:00 p.m. The Friends of the Library Book Sale is back! Browse a wide selection of used books, DVDs, puzzles, music and more. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

SATURDAYS

Brunch & Bowl at The HUB - Kids Bowl FREE!
10:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Come on over to The Hub and grab brunch and enjoy bowling! Fun for the whole family. PAJAMAS welcome! Continental breakfast, unlimited coffee, 1 hour of bowling (shoes included), beverages available to purchase. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Open Bowling for the Public
10:00 a.m.-10:00 p.m. FOR DETAILS and TO RSVP VISIT: <https://www.the-hub.org/community-bowling>. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Winchendon Farmers Market
10:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m. Crafts, fresh farm produce, baked goods. In front of The HUB, 5 Summer Drive, Winchendon. Rain or shine! In inclement weather, the Market will move inside The HUB, which is open on Saturdays.

Shopping Transportation to Rindge for Seniors
3:30-4:30 p.m. Leaves from the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. Must reserve your ride one week in advance. Call 978-297-3155.

North Central Collective Greenhouse
5:30-7:00 p.m. Join us for a meal, message and worship. NCC is a collective of likeninded churches who purpose to establish a Gospel presence that leads to Gospel proclamation in our region. At The Chapel Downtown, 286 Central St, Winchendon.

America’s 250th Celebration

Beals Music Movie Night: *Hamilton*

July 6, 6:00 p.m. Join us for a special movie night to celebrate the country's 250th anniversary by watching the Tony-winning smash hit *Hamilton* on our BIG screen! At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Declaration of Independence Reading at Beals Memorial Library

July 8, 6:00 p.m. Join us as we celebrate the country's 250th anniversary with other communities across the country in a read aloud of the Declaration of Independence on the steps of the library. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Thoughts and Ideas

Summer Reading Club - Land Conservation Presentation with Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust

July 9, 6:30-7:00 p.m. What do Sunset View Farm, Murdock Farm and the Old Marchmont Property have in common? They are all preserved by Mt. Grace Land Conservation Trust. Join Mt. Grace to learn about all the properties in Winchendon that are conserved, and the benefits they hold for the town. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Summer Reading Club - Local Farm Producers Panel

July 16, 6:30 p.m. Join four local food producers to talk about their work and the benefits of eating locally grown food. Panelists are Beth Hunt (Not Just Produced), Ali Catlin (Smiths Country Cheese), Richy Pena (Farming is Life) and Erin Silva (Owner of Piping Plover Baking. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Summer Reading Club - Victory Garden Presentation

July 24, 4:30 p.m. Join us for an informative presentation about Victory Gardens and their importance and success during both World Wars. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Wandering Wednesdays Walking Group

Wednesdays, 9:30-11:30 a.m. A relaxed social walk led by Lynn Murray. Bring comfortable shoes, water, and your curiosity. Come wander with us and discover the stories, beauty, and community spirit that make Winchendon special! Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation.

Food and Meals

Brunch & Bowl at The HUB - Kids Bowl FREE!

Saturdays, 10:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Come on over to The Hub and grab brunch and enjoy bowling! Fun for the whole family. PAJAMAS welcome! Continental breakfast, unlimited coffee, 1 hour of bowling (shoes included), beverages available to purchase. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Our Neighbor’s Kitchen Dinner

July 9, 23 and 30, 5:30 p.m. at UU Church of Winchendon. Dinner will be served in the Parish Hall; take-out available after indoor diners are served. Free-will donation \$2 per person, \$5 per family; no one turned away. 126 Central Street.

Our Neighbor’s Kitchen Dinner

July 2 and 16, 5:15 p.m. at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church. Served in the Parish Hall. Free-will donation \$2 per person, \$5 per family; no one turned away. 52 Spruce Street, Winchendon.

Growing Places Mobile Farmers Market

July 21, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Fresh local vegetables available for purchase using cash, debit/credit or SNAP/HIP benefits! At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

Taste of Home Lunch

Tuesdays, 11:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. Enjoy a homecooked lunch made by volunteers! At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon. 978-297-3155.

Brunch & Bowl at The HUB

Saturdays, 10:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Come on over to The Hub and grab brunch and enjoy bowling! Fun for the whole family. PAJAMAS welcome! Continental breakfast, unlimited coffee, 1 hour of bowling (shoes included), beverages available to purchase. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Winchendon Farmers Market

Saturdays, 10:00 a.m.- 1:00 p.m. STARTS MAY 16. Crafts, fresh farm produce, baked goods. In front of The HUB, 5 Summer Drive, Winchendon. Rain or shine! In inclement weather, the Market will move inside The HUB, which is open on Saturdays.

St. Martin’s Church Summer Festival & Chicken BBQ

July 18, 10:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m. Theme basket, certificate and major prize raffles, along with adult and children’s Chinese auctions; music; free activities for children; and, of course, a chicken dinner served from noon to 1:00 p.m. Dinner tickets are \$15 and can be reserved by calling 978-939-5588. Reservations are suggested, as a limited number of tickets will be available on July 18. At the Otter River Sportsman’s Club, 250 Lord Road, Templeton.

For Kids

CFCE Storywalk in July

Tuesdays, 10:00 a.m.- 12:00 p.m. Join us for a reading adventure! Discover the exciting stories we have waiting for you on the library lawn. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Lego Club for Kids at the Beals

Mondays, 4:00-5:00 p.m. Join us for fun-filled afternoons building Lego creations straight from your imagination! For for information, contact the library at 978-297-0300. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

Family Friendly Story Hour at the Chapel

Tuesdays, 10:00-11:00 a.m. For preschool age children. Parents must stay with their children for the story time. At the Chapel Downtown, 286 Central St, Winchendon.

CFCE Preschool Playgroup at the Beals

Thursdays, 1:00-2:00 p.m. Join us for an afternoon of free play, a craft, story time and music & movement. This program is in partnership with the Winchendon CFCE. Contact the library at 978-297-0300 for more information. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

Story Time at the Beals

Fridays, 10:00 a.m. Join us for a fun half hour of stories with Ms. Kristin and Ms. Melissa. This program is in partnership with the Winchendon Community Playgroups & CFCE. Contact the library at 978-297-0300 for more information. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

Cub Scout Meetings

Thursdays, 6:30-7:45 p.m. For more information, please contact ccpack193@gmail.com.

Summer Reading Club - Animal Craze Petting Zoo

July 9, 2:00-4:00 p.m. Join us for a fun time with the Animal Craze Traveling Farm from Mistletoe Farm in Winchendon. Children will have the chance to pet, hold, brush and feed adorable farm animals. Limited space, registration required. Register at www.bealslibrary.org/summer, call 978-297-0300 or visit the library. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Summer Reading Club - Plant Science Experiments

July 22, 2:00 p.m. Junior scientists age 3-12 will have the opportunity to try hands-on experiments as they explore the world of plant science with Melissa the Mad Scientist. Limited space, registration required. Register at www.bealslibrary.org/summer, call 978-297-0300 or visit the library. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Check out the full online town directory at winchendoncourier.net/directory.htm and the online community calendar at winchendoncourier.net/index.html#connector

Entertainment

Denis Cormier - Songs of Yesteryear

July 9, 10:45 a.m.- 12:15 p.m. Enjoy timeless tunes, familiar melodies, and a touch of nostalgia as Denis performs favorites from years past. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

Sunset Social: Island Vibes

July 11, 6:00-10:00 p.m. Tickets \$5. Kids under 12 free. Island Vibes is part of the Sunset Socials series and brings tropical energy, great music, and relaxed summer fun to the amphitheater. Whether you’re dancing, lounging with friends, or just soaking in the atmosphere, Island Vibes is all about enjoying summer together in a beautiful outdoor setting. Get tickets at www.eventeny.com/events/sunset-socials-island-vibes-2026-27902. Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At Winchendon Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

Damian McGinty Acoustic Tour 2026

July 11, 6:00 p.m. Join Damian McGinty, the charismatic star of Celtic Thunder and Glee, for an unforgettable evening of music, charm, and pure magic! On this special summer night, Damian’s heartwarming ballads, upbeat tunes, and captivating stories are set to come to life on stage. Known for his powerful voice and charismatic stage presence, Damian brings an authentic blend of folk and pop. Damian’s soulful voice weaves through a tapestry of songs, including hits from his latest releases and his repertoire of solo originals, fan favorites, and a few beloved Celtic Thunder classics. With a mix of personal anecdotes from his life on the road and incredible musicianship, this tour is designed to connect deeply with every audience member. Tickets available at damianmcginty.com/tours. At Winchendon History & Cultural Center, Murdock-Whitney House, 151 Front St.

Into the Floyd Concert

July 18, 7:00-9:00 p.m. Tickets \$20. Based in Central Massachusetts, Into The Floyd brings the music of Pink Floyd vividly to life, performing an authentic and expansive catalog spanning the band’s entire career—from their earliest psychedelic works of the 1960s through their final studio recordings. Get tickets at www.eventeny.com/events/into-the-floyd-2026-27905. Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At Winchendon Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

Hawaiian Speakeasy Night with Amber Chaves & Jared Moore at the Snowbound Club

July 23, 7:00-11:00 p.m. Come join us for fun summer evening in the Speakeasy with Amber Chaves & Jared Moore. Entrance is at 130 1/2 Lower parking lot. Password is “OHANA”. Drink Specials available & light refreshments served. At the Snowbound Club, 130 Baldwinville Rd, Winchendon.

The Reminisants Concert

July 25, 4:00-8:00 p.m. Tickets \$10. Known for keeping crowds entertained and the dance floor moving, The Reminisants deliver a high-energy mix of classic hits and crowd favorites spanning multiple decades. Their interactive style and wide-ranging song list make them a perfect fit for a relaxed, family-friendly outdoor concert. Bring your friends, your lawn chairs, and your dancing shoes, and enjoy a laid-back summer concert in the park that’s all about fun, familiarity, and community connection. Get tickets at www.eventeny.com/events/reminiscents-27913. Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At Winchendon Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

Verlon Thompson & Shawn Camp Concert at the Snowbound Club

July 25, 7:00-10:00 p.m. An intimate evening of songs & story telling by these Grammy award winning artists. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Ticket sales limited to 100. \$60 per person. For more information go to www.snowboundlubinc.com/events. Donâ€™t delay as this sold out quickly last year! At the Snowbound Club, 130 Baldwinville Rd, Winchendon.

Art, Music and Dance

Social Art Circle with GALA

July 7, 1:00-3:00 p.m. Explore a variety of art in a supportive social environment—a group with different skill levels who wish to learn, explore, laugh, share, connect, and be inspired in a safe, low key, non-intimidating space. Bring your portable works in progress or try and pick from the shared community art supplies we have on hand. Spend a few hours to be a part of our social art gathering with artists, friends and seniors! Share your project and make new friends. This is a self-led group, but there will be classroom monitors who will assist you. No cost, but registration required, at <https://form.jotform.com/253415023143949>. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

Craft & Chat

July 1, 15 and 29, 6:30-8:00 p.m. Craft and Chat is a space for adults of all ages to come and spend time relaxing while crocheting and chatting. Bring your crochet supplies and whether you want to learn or work on ongoing projects, we would love for you to join us! At Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

Sound Bites & Movie on the Lanes

July 10, 6:00-9:00 p.m. The HUB’s very own Open Mic.Sign up list is available at the HUB at 30 minutes before the music starts at 6:30. For more information contact Sound Bites Events. www.soundbitesevents.com At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon. Events, www.soundbitesevents.com. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Merrily’s Card Making Class with GALA

July 16, 10:30 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. Come on out to the Winchendon Senior Center where we are hosting our Free Card Class with Merrily! To register go to: <https://form.jotform.com/242247912496968>. At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

Ukulele Class

Wednesdays, 9:00-10:00 a.m. Come to the Winchendon Senior Center and learn how to play the Ukulele, no experience necessary! At the Old Murdock Senior Center, 52 Murdock Ave, Winchendon.

Community Open Mic & Picnic in the Park

July 24, 2:00-8:00 p.m. FREE! This all-ages community event invites neighbors, friends, and families to gather outdoors for an evening of live local talent, including music, comedy, storytelling, and more. Whether you’re stepping up to the mic or enjoying the performances from the lawn, this is a great chance to connect, unwind, and celebrate community creativity. Bring a picnic, blanket, or lawn chair and enjoy the beautiful park setting while supporting local performers. Performers of all experience levels are welcome—sign-ups will be available on site. Sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. At Winchendon Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr.

For Teens

Teen Gender & Sexuality Alliance at the Beals

July 8, 3:30-4:30 p.m. A safe space for teens to meet, exchange information, receive support, socialize, build a community, and talk about issues and concerns related to sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Teen Dungeons & Dragons

Tuesdays,, 3:30-5:00 p.m. This is for kids in grades 8-12. Membership is limited, contact the library to sign up. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Teen Night & Movie on the Lanes

July 17, 6:00-9:00 p.m. At The HUB, 5 Summer Dr, Winchendon.

Summer Reading Club - International Snack Taste Test

July 29, 3:30 p.m. For teens/tweens age 10-18, take your taste buds on a tour around the world! Participants will get to try a variety of snacks from all over the globe. Limited space, registration required. Register at www.bealslibrary.org/summer, call 978-297-0300 or visit the library. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St, Winchendon.

Recreation

Yoga With Chantal from Shadow Academy Wellness

Mondays, 4:30-5:30 p.m. With Chantal from Shadow Academy Wellness. Unwind, relax, and celebrate the beauty of yoga. All skill levels welcomed! Mats and Blocks are available, if needed. Free with a suggested donation. For more info, contact 978-297-0300, bealsmemoriallibrary@gmail.com or visit www.bealslibrary.org. At Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St., Winchendon.

Winchendon News

Winchendon Commission on Disabilities Holds Information Session on Service Dogs



Nicole Fleming with Freya
Photo courtesy of Katrina Fleming

by Inanna Arthen

On Monday, June 1, the Winchendon Commission on Disabilities held an informative discussion at the Beals Memorial Library about the various types of working dogs in our community. This presentation was given by the Commission's Vice Chair, Nicole Fleming, who is deaf with cochlear implants and has a service dog named Freya who alerts her to sounds. Ms. Fleming explained the differences between service animals, therapy animals and emotional support animals, and the laws surrounding each type.

Ms. Fleming explained that there are three kinds of assistive dogs: Service Dogs, Therapy Dogs and Emotional Support Dogs.

A Service Dog is specifically trained to perform a certain task, or several tasks, for a person with a disability. They are protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which

says, "Service animals are defined as dogs that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities."

Some tasks Service Dogs perform include alerting their handler to sounds, guiding a blind or low-vision handler, picking up dropped items, assisting with balance and stability, and subtle changes in medical conditions. Service dogs can warn a handler of an impending seizure, for example.

Service Dogs have legal right to public access when accompanying a handler with a disability, which means access to places the general public is allowed to go, such as stores, restaurants and hotels. Permanent housing, private property, member-only associations and religious institutions are exempt from the law. Service Dogs must be allowed to live with their owner even where there is a general "no pets" policy. They can fly in the cabin of a plane with the handler. They must be able to tolerate novel environments, experiences and interactions.

Ms. Fleming explained that businesses should be aware that Service Dogs are not pets. They must be allowed to accompany their handler "unless this fundamentally alters the nature of the business." Pet fees or other fees for accommodating the Service Dog are not allowed.

Ms. Fleming emphasized that handlers are responsible for controlling their Service Dog, and the animal may be removed for misbehavior such as jumping, barking excessively, soiling or climbing on furniture. The person with a disability should be allowed to remain with reasonable accommodations.

Ms. Fleming gave the "Dos and Don'ts" for interacting with a Service Dog team. DO address the handler, ignore the dog, and explain Service Dog etiquette to children. DON'T talk to the dog, pat the dog without permission, point, stare, or take photos without permission.

An Emotional Support Animal is defined as any animal, with or without training, that provides comfort and emotional support to a person with a psychiatric disability. It may require documentation from a treating service provider that the emotional support animal is genuinely

needed. Emotional Support Animals do not have the public access rights of Service Dogs. They are allowed in housing that is otherwise "no pets", and may or may not be allowed to fly in the cabins of planes.

A Therapy Dog is trained to provide comfort to many people in different settings. They may visit people in hospitals, schools, libraries, churches and so on with the permission of the people in charge. They do not have the public access rights of Service Dogs.

Ms. Fleming explained that there are some common misconceptions about Service Dogs. They may not be wearing a vest identifying them, and they may not be on a leash. They may not have an "ID Card" identifying them. There is no way to tell what disability a person with a Service Dog may have simply by looking at them, and it is not okay to ask to see a demonstration of what the Service Dog is trained to do. Emotional Support Animals may not be taken anywhere, like a Service Dog. It is not possible to certify a pet dog as a Service Dog online—extensive training is involved.

The Winchendon Commission on Disabilities will be offering more discussions and information sessions like this one in the future. To stay updated, follow them on Facebook at www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61586958982464.

WPS Offering "Summer Eats" Free Lunches Through the Summer!

Free meals don't end when school is out for summer! Children and teens ages 18 and under can enjoy FREE meals all summer long at Toy Town Elementary School—no registration, ID, or paperwork required. Just stop by and eat!

June 23 - August 22, 2026

Monday - Thursday, 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Toy Town Elementary School, 175 Grove Street

Need a ride? Free transportation is available through the Community Connector. Call 978-297-8089 to schedule pickup and drop-off service.

Eric Ducharme Appointed to Board of Health in Joint Meeting of BOS and BOH



Eric Ducharme responds to a question
photo copyright Town of Winchendon

by Inanna Arthen

In a joint meeting of the Board of Health and Board of Selectmen convened on Monday, June 22 so the two boards could consider applicants for two open seats on the Board of Health, applicant Eric DuCharme was the only one of three who appeared to be interviewed.

BOH Chair Monique Connor began the interview by asking, "How do you see yourself helping out with the Board of Health?"

Mr. DuCharme said, "I think that I can help the Board of Health through just being present, also being maintaining integrity while being present, also being conscious when being

present, and making sure that I'm abiding by proper code, ethics, and responsibilities that are given to me."

BOH member Barbara Zisk asked, "Are you comfortable making decisions based on state regulations, even when they're unpopular?" When Mr. DuCharme replied yes, Ms. Zisk continued, "How would you handle a situation where a friend or business owner presses you for special treatment?"

Mr. DuCharme replied, "I would first make them realize that I'm here professionally, and that type of pressure that you're putting on me is actually unprofessional and unkind of you to put me in that situation, so I wouldn't feel necessarily uncomfortable, but I would just be very blunt with them to say that it's very unprofessional and crude of you to put me in that type of situation."

Ms. Zisk went on, "How would you balance personal opinions with state and local public health laws?"

"We all have opinions, but we have to follow local health laws," Mr. DuCharme said.

BOH member Paula Whitaker asked what sparked Mr. DuCharme's interest in serving on the board, and whether he had served on any others. Mr. DuCharme replied, "I have a background in science, particularly in sustainable farming and food production, so it kind of like aligns. And secondly, I just think this is a way

for me to be able to understand the needs of my community that I've lived in my whole life and see where I can just give back and participate in my local community." He is currently the housing treasury for the American Legion. "I really don't have expectations, it's just serving the community. I'm pretty straightforward and transparent, so just trying to get more a feel for local government and understanding the needs and where I can help," he added.

Board of Selectmen member Audrey LaBrie asked, "One thing that you have to be aware of when you come into any of these positions, is that even though you may not personally like a decision that the board makes, once the majority of the board or the committee makes that, you have to support that. Is that something that you think you'd be comfortable doing?"

"Yes. And the reason why, I served in the military, that's exactly how you have to behave. You keep your own opinions to yourself, and you follow the orders," Mr. DuCharme said.

Asked about his availability to attend meetings (the Board of Health currently meets the first Monday of the month at 10:00 a.m.), Mr. DuCharme explained that he is a stay-at-home father and an entrepreneur, so he can make his own schedule.

Members of both boards were satisfied with these answers, and both boards voted to appoint Eric DuCharme to the Board of Health.

Winchendon News

Winchendon Farmer Allie Catlin Elected Chair of North Central Mass Chamber of Commerce Board

North Central Mass. - Allie Catlin, co-owner of Smith’s Country Cheese, a family-owned working dairy farm, creamery, and retail destination in Winchendon, Massachusetts, has been elected Chair of the North Central Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce board of directors for 2026-2027. The announcement was made at the Chamber’s Annual Meeting on June 11, 2026. As Chair of the Chamber’s board of directors, she will work with fellow board members, Chamber staff, and the membership to champion the Chamber in its mission to serve the region’s business community.

Catlin brings deep roots in the region’s agricultural economy to her new role. Founded in 1985, Smith’s Country Cheese has grown into one of the region’s most beloved agricultural enterprises. In 2016, Catlin and her family purchased the farm from its founder and built on its legacy, growing the operation into a thriving business that draws visitors from across the region to its farm store and working dairy farm, where guests can shop for handcrafted cheeses, milk, and butter and watch the cheesemaking process firsthand.

Under her co-ownership, Smith’s Country Cheese employs 14 people and produces approximately 180,000 pounds of raw milk Gouda, Havarti, and cheddar cheese annually, distributed nationally through the farm store, local farmers markets, and online. In 2024, Catlin was named to the Worcester Business Journal’s Power 100 list of the most influential professionals in Central Massachusetts.

Catlin holds degrees from Franklin Pierce University and Suffolk University and has served on the Chamber’s Board of Directors for several years, holding leadership positions on the board, including Vice Chair.

She succeeds Tony Fields, president and owner of Cleartech Group, who now moves to the position of Immediate Past Chair of the board of directors.

“The Chamber has been such an important partner to our farm and to so many small businesses across this region,” said Catlin. “I’m honored to take on this role and to continue the work of connecting our business community, supporting our members, and championing the people and places that make North Central Massachusetts such a special place to live and work.”

“As a farmer and small business owner, Allie brings a perspective to the board that’s vital to understanding the full picture of our regional economy,” said Roy Nascimento, president and CEO, North Central Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce. “Her leadership will help ensure the Chamber continues to serve businesses of every size and sector, and I look forward to working with her in the year ahead as we continue advancing the economic vitality of North Central Massachusetts.”

In the same election, Melissa Glenny, founder and CEO, Franklin Professional Associates, located in Leominster, was elected Vice Chair. Chris Hendry, president and CEO, IC Credit Union, located in Fitchburg, was elected to the position of Treasurer. Rounding out the Executive Committee, Mark Hettinger, president and CEO of GFA Federal Credit Union, and Patrick McCarty, president of the McCarty Companies, were elected to fill the two non-officer seats on the committee as outlined in the Chamber’s bylaws.

Board members elected for new terms were

- Tony Fields, president and owner, Cleartech Group, Leominster
- Dr. Donna Hodge, president, Fitchburg State University, Fitchburg
- Johnny Ahern, managing partner, Aroma Joe’s, Leominster
- David Moura, president, Moura’s Cleaning Service, Fitchburg

- Nicole Moorshead, general manager, Chocksett Inn, Sterling and the Colonial Hotel, Gardner
- Rozanna Penney, president & CEO, Heywood Healthcare, Gardner
- Kenneth Hodges, plant director, Georgia-Pacific/Dixie, Leominster, appointed to fill a one-year board vacancy

Continuing current terms on the board of directors are

- Marieke Cormier, owner, Roots Natural Foods, Leominster
- Joseph Basile, president, Catania Oils, Ayer
- Patrick McCarty, president & CEO, McCarty Companies, Leominster
- Mark Hettinger, president and CEO, GFA Federal Credit Union, Gardner
- Barbara Mahoney, president & CEO, All-One Credit Union, Leominster
- Joshua Page, president, JP Electric and Son, Fitchburg
- Alex Matthews, general manager, Great Wolf Lodge New England, Fitchburg
- Kayla Nault, broker/owner, Central Mass Real Estate, North Central Massachusetts

The Chamber congratulates its newly elected and appointed board members and thanks all those who continue their service to the region’s business community. For more information, visit northcentralmass.com.



Allie Catlin
Photo courtesy North Central Mass Chamber of Commerce



More than 175 people filled the UU Church of Winchendon for the fourth and last concert of Winchendon Winds’ 2026 season on Sunday, June 28. Audiences heard a concert themed on “Characters” that included highlights from *Wicked*, *West Side Story*, and James Bond, selections from Elgar’s *Enigma Variations* and Sousa’s “Stars and Stripes Forever” conducted by a member of the audience.

.Photo by Inanna Arthen

Advertise in the Winchendon Courier!

The *Winchendon Courier* Online is uploaded every Thursday night and reaches hundreds of Winchendon readers every week. In April, 2026:

- 3,172 visitors spent more than a minute on the site
- 228 visitors spent an hour or more on the site
- 32 people downloaded the PDF of the Garden Club Scholarship application
- 59 people downloaded the most recent Small Business Shopping Map (updated continuously!)
- 396 people reached the site through a link on Facebook and 81 through a link on the town website
- The *Courier*’s Facebook page has over 1,700 followers

The monthly print edition of the *Winchendon Courier* has a press run of 500 and an uptake of over 90 percent. (That means 450+ copies in the hands of readers – and many copies are read by more than one person.) The press run will be increased as circulation and demand grow.

If you’re a business owner, entrepreneur, local organization or individual, contact us for information about display ad requirements and rates. We offer:

- **Free** ad design services for our paying advertisers, if desired – change your ad as often as you want, at no extra charge!
- Discounted annual rate for advertisers who commit to a full year of weekly ads
- Automatic placement of any business card or double business card ad in the monthly print addition, at no extra charge, for advertisers who place their ad for a full month in the online edition
- Ad sizes available in the print edition range from business card size to full page. We’re flexible! If you have a specific size ad you want to use, ask us what it will cost. Questions about formatting or dimensions? Contact us!

For a rate card and/or a full information packet, contact:
editor@winchendoncourier.net

Ideas & Information

Gardening

Five-Minute Garden Maintenance



A mailbox filled with garden tools and set in the garden for convenient access.
Photo courtesy of MelindaMyers.com

by Melinda Myers

Improve a garden’s beauty, increase enjoyment, and reduce stress five minutes at a time. As gardeners we know, and research proves that gardening is good for the mind, body, and spirit. However, busy schedules often lead to neglected projects, weedy gardens, and long to-do lists.

We often delay tackling these tasks until we have an afternoon or evening to dedicate to our landscapes. By then the weeds have overtaken the garden, perennials become floppy and veggies are past their prime. Fight the overwhelming desire to give up.

Instead, look for small tasks that can be done in between other activities or when you need a brief break from work to clear your mind and stretch your muscles.

Keep a weather-proof container or two filled with gloves, a favorite weeding tool, and pruners in a convenient location near the garden. This ensures that the time available will be spent weeding or deadheading instead of looking for tools. A bucket with kneeling pads and tools by the door or an old mailbox set in the garden will save time and steps retrieving these items.

Use this time to remove spent flowers or cut back perennials in need of a trim. Prune off any dead or damaged twigs above a set of healthy buds when you are out working in your garden. Use a bypass hand pruner to make clean cuts that leave your plants looking their best.

Dig weeds, roots and all. This task is easiest when the soil is moist and the weeds are small. Eliminating weeds from the garden before they set seed means fewer weeds to pull in the future.

Prioritize projects into Must Do, Should Do and Might Do tasks. This is a great way to reduce what seems like an overwhelming project into manageable steps.

The Must Dos ensure your plants will survive. Focus on watering as needed, weed control, and managing plant-threatening pests.

Should Dos include mulching, fertilizing and winterizing as needed and can be done after you take care of the Must Dos. These could wait a year but should be addressed soon. Tackling the Should Do tasks eventually reduces time spent on the Must Do ones. Might Do tasks are those like deadheading and staking that boost beauty but are not critical for the plant’s survival.

This is just one way to divide your gardening tasks, but priorities will vary from gardener to gardener based on your desired goals. Some may feel deadheading or staking is critical and add it to the Must Do or Should Do list while others consider it a task to do once the others are complete. You may decide to replace higher maintenance plants with those that are free flowering, self-supporting and have fewer pest problems.

If the Must Do tasks are difficult for you to accomplish, consider asking for help or hiring a professional. Pay for big jobs and those you prefer to skip so you can focus on those you can do and that bring you joy.

You’ll be surprised how much you can accomplish in just a few minutes. Plus, tackling your landscape one small task at a time can be less overwhelming and less stressful.

Melinda Myers has written over 20 gardening books, including *The Midwest Gardener’s Handbook, 2nd Edition* and *Small Space Gardening*. She hosts *The Great Courses “How to Grow Anything”* instant video series and the nationally-syndicated *Melinda’s Garden Moment* radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine and her website is www.MelindaMyers.com.

Financial Focus®

Five questions that could change how you see retirement

Saving for retirement is important, but it’s only part of the picture. If you’re within five to 10 years of your target retirement date, it’s time to start thinking about what you actually want your retirement to look like. After all, getting to retirement isn’t the end goal – it’s what you want to do once you’re there that matters.

Start by asking yourself these five questions.

When do you want to retire? The age at which you retire matters more than you may realize. Retiring early sounds appealing, but it means saving more and having less time to do it. It can also create gaps in health care coverage and income before key benefits kick in. For example, Social Security benefits can begin at 62, but at a reduced amount. Full benefits are available between ages 66 and 67, depending on birth year, and waiting until 70 means the maximum benefit. Medicare doesn’t start until age 65, and penalty-free withdrawals from retirement accounts generally aren’t allowed until age 59-1/2.

For couples, timing gets even more complicated. Staggering retirement dates can sometimes maximize benefits; in other cases, retiring at the same time works better.

A financial advisor can help you sort through these decisions and find the approach that makes the most sense for your situation.

How do you want to spend your time in retirement? Many new retirees are surprised to find that having unlimited free time feels disorienting rather than freeing. Thinking ahead about how to fill the days with meaningful activity – whether that’s travel, volunteering, pursuing hobbies or spending more time with family – can make the transition smoother.

It helps to sketch out what a typical week, month or even first year might look like. If there are big gaps, it’s worth thinking now about what might fill them in rewarding ways.

Where do you want to live as a retiree? Some retirees stay put, while others downsize or relocate entirely. Either way, it’s wise to consider whether a chosen location will work well as you get older, taking into account factors like proximity to family, access to health care, cost of living and climate.

What will your retirement lifestyle cost? It’s not uncommon for retirees to discover that their travel, entertainment or leisure expenses were higher than expected. The more active and involved you plan to be, the more you will likely need to budget.

Does your retirement involve giving back? Retirement often brings both the time and motivation to be more generous. Whether the goal is helping family members, donating to charity or volunteering in the community, it’s worth defining those goals and building them into an overall plan.

Now that your vision is taking shape, turn it into a plan. Work with your financial advisor to align your savings with the life you want “and revisit that plan as your priorities evolve so your retirement keeps pace with you.



This content was provided by Edward Jones for use by Jordyn Lynds, your Edward Jones financial advisor at 978-297-7452 or stop by 113 Central St. Winchendon, MA 01475.

Edward Jones is a licensed insurance producer in all states and Washington, D.C., through Edward D. Jones & Co., L.P. and in California, New Mexico and Massachusetts through Edward Jones Insurance Agency of California, L.L.C., Edward Jones Insurance Agency of New Mexico, L.L.C., and Edward Jones Insurance Agency of Massachusetts, L.L.C.

THE WINCHENDON COURIER
A Publication of By Light Unseen Media, LLC
325 Lakeview Drive
Winchendon, MA 01475

Publisher and Managing Editor: Inanna Arthen
Production, Design and Pre-Press: Inanna Arthen

To submit news, letters to the editor, obituaries or calendar listings:
email editor@winchendoncourier.net
or mail to 325 Lakeview Dr., Winchendon, MA 01475

Text event listings are free of charge for non-profit, community and town organizations and groups, and for charitable or benefit events. Short text articles about forthcoming local events are free of charge. Display ads are published on a fee-only basis.

For information about display and classified ad rates and requirements, contact the Publisher at the above email or address.

The print edition is printed by Eagle Printing in Pittsfield, MA.



Read the Winchendon Courier Online Every Week!
News, events, police logs, obituaries, community directory
and archives of every previous issue back to September, 2019
winchendoncourier.net

Read it on your phone!
Uploaded every Thursday night

Winchendon News



Sophia Boisvert
Keira Brady
Colin Britton*
Kyle Brown*
Kylieann Brown*
Ava Bussiere*
Jenna Carbonella*
Jacob Case
Devin Casson
Gerlyn Celiz
Shannon Connolly
Kayce Cote
Yaleris Crespi Martinez*
Isabella Degalis

The Murdock High School Graduating Class of 2026
Jahzeel Diaz Otero
Tora Estes
Logan Gammel
Michael Gonzalez
Holly Harris* (Student Council Member)
Olivia Hutchings*
Paige Irons
Ashley Jean-Francois
Kaiya Jess*
Thomas Lafrennie*
Cambri Langston
Jaime Lepkowski*
Lorelei Lewis

Kevelyn Loughman-Van Why
Danny Lynch
Leah Maguy
Bailee McKinnon*
Romeo Medeiros*
Deaven Merritt
Jace Morales
Randi Murphy*
Autumn Oyola
Michael Gonzalez
Abigail Paton
Colton Pearson*
Aden Pimentel*
Ava Prouty

Audrina Putnam*
Alex Rodriguez
Hannah Scott
Mason Sledzik
Shamus Solomon*
Madilyn Stewart*
Gannon Sweeney
Jordan Tatro
Clayton Tenney*
Jack Varca
Kiana Walsh
Matthew Wester
Levi Woertz

GRADUATION
continued from page 1

today, I’m filled with immense pride and admiration for each and every one of you. This moment represents hours of effort, sacrifice, and growth. It represents the support of families, your teachers, your coaches, advisors, and friends who have helped you along the way. Most importantly, it represents your commitment to reaching this milestone. Throughout your time here, you have exhibited resilience, determination, and an unwavering commitment to excellence. From the early mornings spent studying for the exams to the late nights filled with activities and laughter with friends, each experience has contributed to the person you are today.”

Mr. Fredette went on, “As you prepare to leave this chapter behind and begin right in the next one, there are three qualities I hope you carry with you, qualities that will take you far in life. The first, and what I feel is the most important, is empathy. We live in a world that often feels divided. It’s easy to judge, to dismiss, or to assume we understand someone else’s story. Empathy asks us to do something different. It asks us to listen. It asks us to seek understanding before judgment. It asks us to recognize that every person we encounter is carrying struggles, hopes, and fears, and experiences that we may never fully see. Empathy allows us to build bridges where others build walls. It allows us to lead with compassion, to strengthen relationships, and to create communities where people feel valued and respected. Whatever future career you pursue, maybe you become a teacher, maybe an engineer, healthcare professional, as some of you are pursuing, a parent, your ability to understand and care for others will matter just as much as any skill you acquire.

“The second quality is resilience. Life, as you soon discover, if you have not already, is not a straight path, it’s not linear. There will be moments of success and celebration, but there will also be setbacks, disappointments, and failures. There will be times when things do not go according to plan. But resilience is not about avoiding failure, it’s about refusing to let failure define you. It’s the ability to stand back when life knocks you down. It’s the courage to continue moving forward when the destination seems uncertain.”

The third quality, he said, “is humility. In a world that often encounters self-promotion, humility can sometimes be mistaken for weakness. In reality, humility is one of the greatest strengths a person can possess. Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it’s thinking of yourself less. It’s recognizing that no matter how much you know, there is always more to learn. It’s understanding that success is rarely achieved alone. It’s appreciating the people who helped you along the way today, and acknowledging that every accomplishment is built upon the support and sacrifice of others. As you achieve your goals and pursue your dreams, stay grounded, continue to ask questions, continue to learn, continue to listen, treat every person with dignity and respect, regardless of their title, position, or background. True greatness is not measured by how many people know your name. It’s measured by the

impact you have on others and by the character you demonstrate when no one is watching.”

Following his remarks, Mr. Fredette introduced graduation senior and class valedictorian Holly Harris to play “Over the Rainbow” on the clarinet.

Superintendent Charlotte King then came forward to speak. “This is about much more than earning a diploma, it is the culmination of years of hard work, determination, growth, and perseverance,” she said. “Each of you has taken a unique path to arrive at this moment. Some of those paths were straightforward, others included unexpected challenges, setbacks, and obstacles. Yet, despite those challenges, you are here today. You made it. As I look at this graduating class, I’m reminded that success is rarely about perfection. Success is about showing up when things are difficult, it’s about learning from mistakes, adapting when circumstances change, and continuing forward even when the next step is not entirely clear. There’s something else that makes this class special: its size. A small graduating class has one advantage that many larger schools can’t offer: no one is anonymous.” Ms. King spoke of the way that people in a small community know and care about each other, because they develop deep connections with each other.

“What stands out to me is not any single accomplishment,” she went on. “It’s the character of this class. It’s the way you’ve shown up for one another, and the way you persevere. You’ve seen what happens when people show up for one another. When one person succeeds, the community celebrates. When someone faces a challenge, others step forward to help. The world is much bigger than this town. Explore it with confidence and curiosity, challenge yourselves, take risks, learn new things, and continue to grow. But wherever life takes you, carry with you the values you’ve nurtured here, the belief that people deserve kindness and respect, and that we all have a responsibility to contribute something positive to the places where we live and work. Your character will be remembered longer than your accomplishments.”

Vice Chair of the School Committee David Iannaccone came forward to underscore the well-wishes and thanks that previous speakers had made. Gale LaFortune then came forward to name the recipients of the 2026 John LaFortune Scholarships: Seamus Solomon and Randi Murphy.

Class Advisor Stephanie Rondeau offered a collection of “advice that you can take with you when you leave this building,” including remembering to wear sunscreen, learning how to tie a necktie (gender regardless), and other tidbits. She ended with, “Wherever life takes you, be the person that makes things better when you arrive, not the person who makes things better when you leave. As you leave high school behind, remember that your legacy will not be defined solely by what you achieve, but by how you treat others.”

Finally, class valedictorian Holly Harris was introduced by Ms. Rondeau, who said, “Holly was recognized as the class valedictorian with the highest GPA in the class of 4.6. Holly has served as the National Honor Society president this past year, and is a three-season athlete. Holly

participated in our dual enrollment program as both a junior and a senior, and will be graduating from Murdock High School with 43 college credits. She will be continuing her academic career this fall, attending Bridgewater State University to study communication sciences and disorders.”

Ms. Harris came forward to speak, beginning, “From world history quizzes to learning how to read the room with Mr. Collins, we’ve survived it all. Good afternoon, teachers, family, faculty, honored guests, and of course the Class of 2026. I am Holly Harris, and it is my honor to stand before you all as valedictorian. I know most of you expected this from me, especially if you knew me my sophomore year. I’m not afraid to admit it. I was a nerd, honestly. I guess I still am. Back then, I would always put my work first. I would be the first person to tell someone to lock in while they’re having any conversation. Looking back, I realized I should have just enjoyed laughing with my friends, but before high school and during my freshman year I was homeschooled. That definitely explains why I’m so weird. I hated it. I hated being homeschooled. I would spend my time doing anything but work. Most of my time was spent on Pinterest and not on Algebra One. Sorry, Mom and Dad.

“It wasn’t that I wasn’t smart enough, I just had no motivation. When I got to Murdock my sophomore year, my parents proposed a deal: if I played a sport and kept my grades up, I can go back to public school. That became my motivation. As I look across the room, I see parents with a tear in their eye. My mom, of course, is bawling her eyes out. I see teachers with proud smiles and shocked faces that we got our service hours done in time, and I see you definitely placing bets on who will fall on their face—I’m kidding. Make sure your shoes are tied, guys. I’m so proud of all of us. You have all come so far since the first day we walked through that door. In basketball, my dad, or as he introduced himself to our team last year, Coach Trey, Holly’s dad, would always tell me to leave it all on the court, which I never knew what it meant until it was almost over. For those who need explanation, as did I, it means to put your all into the game. This will not guarantee you a win or the title of MVP, but it will guarantee you did absolutely everything to play the best game you could. As Mr. Collins is constantly saying, we play to what?”

The room chorused back to her, “to win!”

Ms. Harris described some of the changes and challenges they had all lived through, from classes in the Cornerstone Church basement while the boiler was fixed to the departure of beloved teachers. “I urge you to leave the comfort of familiarity behind, so you can discover possibilities you have never even thought of,” she said. “I hope to receive texts from all of you in a few years on how you have been put on the right track to achieve your dreams. Each and every one of you deserve it. When I was in the sixth grade, I wrote myself a letter. In my letter, I asked about those I cared about, my old friends, my brother, and music. I sadly don’t talk to those friends anymore, but I miss them dearly. Yes, Quade is still annoying, but I love him. And yes, you still love music.

Community Notice Board

Town Committee Monthly Meetings by Week All Meetings in Town Hall

week	MON	TUE	WED	THUR
1st	Board of Health 10:00am	Planning Board 6:00pm Parks & Rec Commission 6:30pm		School Committee 6:00pm
2nd	Board of Selectmen 6:30pm	Finance Committee 7:00pm	Economic Development Task Force 5:30pm Agricultural Commission 7:00pm	Conservation Commission 6:00pm
3rd	Winchendon Redevelopment Authority 5:00pm	Planning Board 6:00pm Parks & Rec Commission 6:30pm	Zoning Board of Appeals 7:00pm	School Committee 6:00pm
4th	Board of Selectmen 6:30pm		Economic Development Task Force 5:30pm	

Agendas, minutes and meeting recordings available on the Town website at www.townofwinchendon.com/129/AGENDAS-MINUTES, as well as on the pages for each Board or Committee.

Boards may cancel or change times for meetings, or add extra meetings, based on specific business at hand. Check the Town Meetings Calendar on the town website, www.townofwinchendon.com.

Toy Town Trolley Now Running Later on Saturdays!

We’ve expanded service hours to help more Winchendon residents—especially those in need of transportation to warming centers, shelters, and essential services.

New Saturday Hours are 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Book ahead! Saturday rides must be scheduled by 3:00 p.m. on Friday.

Door-to-door rides within Winchendon are available for:

- Medical appointments
- Grocery shopping
- Shelter and warming center access
- Pharmacy trips
- And more

Call (978) 297-8089 or email communityconnector@winchendon-cac.org.

Prefer to book with your phone? Download the Community Connector app at www.townofwinchendon.com/577/Get-the-App

Let your neighbors know! This expanded schedule helps ensure safe, reliable transportation for those who need it most — especially during colder weather.

Senior Workoff Program Applications for FY26 Available on Town Website

Applications for the Senior Property Tax Work-Off program for FY26 (July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026) are now available at www.townofwinchendon.com/civicalerts.aspx?aid=40.

This program allows eligible senior citizens to do odd jobs for the town in exchange for an offset in their property taxes. The credit is equivalent to \$15 per hour for a maximum of \$1,100 per household during the fiscal year.

To qualify, a senior must be at least 60 years old, own and occupy a home in Winchendon, have an annual income of less than \$40,150 if single or a combined household income of less than \$45,900 if married, have transportation to work, and be able to work during regular business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Applications for the program are now available in the Town Manager’s office and on the town website at <https://www.townofwinchendon.com/documentcenter/view/226>, and will be accepted until the ten (10) slots are filled. There are different types of positions that are available depending on preference and qualifications of the resident and the needs of each department.

Types of past and current positions have been: Custodial services, clerical help for both School & Town, Library Aides, Senior Center Aides, Cable Station Operator, Bike Path Clean up, Painting, Light Outdoor Work and Classroom Volunteers.

Please contact the Town Manager’s Office at (978) 297-5431 or ddennis@winchendon-ma.gov for more information or if you need an application mailed to you.

Farmers, Homesteaders, Crafters: Vending Spots Still Open for the 2026 Winchendon Farmers Market!

If you are a farmer, producer, homesteader or crafter and would like to have a table at the Winchendon Farmers Market, there’s still space available! The 2026 season will begin on May 16, and the Market sets up every Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at The HUB, 5 Summer Drive. The Market is rain or shine—in inclement weather it moves inside The HUB, which is open on Saturdays. The application form to sign up is at <https://www.winchendonfarmersmarket.org>.

Fill out the Beals Memorial Library’s Community Survey!

Online survey or printable PDF at www.bealslibrary.org/survey

Also available at the library and various places around town.

Winchendon Lions Want to Welcome You!

The Winchendon Lions meet at the Winchendon American Legion Post 193, 295 School St., downstairs hall, 7:00 p.m.

Meetings are on the third Tuesday of each month, September through June. Dues are used for all Administrative cost, which is why we can say “All money received through fundraisers go back to the community, eye research, or other natural disasters around the world!”

Feel free to join us and try it out. We would love to see you!

If you have any questions feel free to call Joni 978-297-2753. Please leave a message if no answer!

“WHERE THERE’S A NEED, THERE IS A LION”

2025 Town Reports Now Available

The 2025 Town Reports are available to residents at the Town Clerk’s office, Winchendon Town Hall, 109 Front Street.

Town Clerk’s Office July Hours

Through the month of July, the Town Clerk’s office will have intermittent hours. We are a two person office and we strive to keep the office open as much as possible each day, but sometimes it can’t be avoided. During July, we expect to be open each day. However, we may need to open late and/or close early. Some days we will be closed during lunch time. Please know we will do our very best to accommodate whenever possible. The office phone number is 978-297-2766. If you wish, you can call prior to your visit if you need to order a vital record so we can make arrangements for pick up. Thank you for your understanding and sorry for the inconvenience.

Toy Town FYIs

Transfer Station Hours

Wednesday 12:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Thursday 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. (June 1 to September 30)

Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Saturday 8:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m.

653 River Street

978-297-0395

Sticker price: \$95 (\$25 for additional stickers)

Pay-As-You-Throw bags required

33-gallon, \$5.25 per bag, 16-gallon, \$3.25 per bag as of July 1, 2026

2026-2027 Transfer Station sticker now on sale in Town Hall and at the Transfer Station.

Is Your House Number Clearly Visible from the Street?

The Winchendon Fire Department reminds all residents to make sure their house number is clearly visible for first responders who may need to find you. Numbers should be at least four inches high and facing the street, with lighting if possible. Put numbers on a contrasting background so they will stand out. If your driveway is long, put the number on a mailbox or pole on the street or at the end of driveway, facing in both directions. (Reflective numbers are helpful.) Check your house numbers to make sure foliage has not grown up in front of them without your being aware of it.

Report a Pothole to the DPW

You can report potholes directly to the DPW using this form on the town website: www.townofwinchendon.com/FormCenter/Public-Works-6/Report-a-Pothole-50

Questions or Concerns? Email the Town Manager!

A one-click email form has been added to the town website for all residents who would like to contact the Town Manager with concerns and questions about things happening in the community. The direct link is: www.townofwinchendon.com/506/



**Buy Local! Support the Courier's
advertisers – and tell them where
you saw their ad!**

Winchendon News

GRADUATION

continued from page 14

I hope little me would be proud of how far she has come, and I hope your younger selves are too.

"I hope that years from now you will reminisce and be proud of yourselves, not because high school is perfect, but because you made mistakes. Mistakes help you grow. They make you stronger every single day. They help you know

that you are always strong enough to keep going despite every single hurdle you have to jump. We aren't leaving high school as perfect people. We are leaving better than we started. So be kind, stand tall and be true to yourself. Let's leave it on the court. Congratulations, Class of 2026."

Following this, each senior was called to the stage by Ms. Rondeau to shake hands with Ms. Barry-Ayres, receive their diploma

from Mr. Fredette and smile for a quick photo, and shake hands with Ms. Garcia, Supt. King and Mr. Iannaccone. When all graduates were back in their seats, Mr. Fredette came forward to make it official, saying, "This diploma certifies that these students have completed all necessary coursework as outlined by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the town of Winchendon. I hereby proclaim them as graduates of Murdock

High School, on the 7th day of June, in the year 2026."

Ms. Brown returned to the lectern to cue her classmates, "graduates, you may turn your tassels." Every graduate switched their mortarboard tassel from the right side to the left, amid a shower of confetti from confetti cannons that popped around the gymnasium. The graduates then processed out to their chosen Class Song, "Landslide" by Fleetwood Mac.

"Wandering Wednesdays" Visits UUCW



by Inanna Arthen

The "Wandering Wednesdays Walking Group," led by the very knowledgeable Lynn Murray, wandered over to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Winchendon at 126 Central Street on June 24, as part of a tour that included several churches or sites of former churches, the I.M. Murdock Building (once owned by UUCW) and the Winchendon History & Cultural Center. Clerk-of-the-Church (and Minister Emerita) Inanna Arthen showed the group around to see the stained glass windows (two of them from Tiffany Studios), the 159-year-old E.& G.G. Hook pipe organ (maintained in perfect condition), original black walnut pews and other features of the sanctuary. They also learned a lot of history, both old and more recent, about the building, heard about the "Set In Stone" restoration project which was just approved for funding for Phase 5 of its work restoring the granite stonework of the church exterior, tested their knowledge with the Set In Stone quiz board, and heard more about events and activities at UUCW.

"Wandering Wednesday" walks take place on Wednesday mornings from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. and are sponsored by Winchendon Parks & Recreation. Their July Walks are:

- July 1: "Railroad Ramble Part I—Destination Winchendon" (Meet at the Clark Memorial YMCA, 155 Central St)
- July 8: "From the Beginning: Old Centre" (Meet in Old Center)
- July 15: "Where was Marchmont?" (Meeting place to be determined)
- July 22: "Railroad Ramble Part II—Departing Winchendon" (Meet at the larger bike path parking lot [Grout Park] near the "big bicycle" sculpture, Spring and Glenallen Streets)

Wandering Wednesdays is a relaxed, social walking group where we explore some of Winchendon's most beautiful and historic spots together. All ages welcome! Whether you're coming for the fresh air, the history, the movement, or just some good conversation—this is for you. No pressure, no pace expectations...just a great way to start your Wednesday with good people and good energy.

Photo by Inanna Arthen

One More Volunteer Needed for the Board of Health

There is still one open seat on the BOH. Any Winchendon resident interested in this position should send a letter of interest to Debra Dennis at ddennis@winchendon-ma.gov or mail to Town of Winchendon Attn: Debra Dennis, 109 Front Street, Winchendon MA 01475.

The mission of the Winchendon Board of Health is to protect the health of the public and Winchendon residents to prevent and promote a healthy community. This mission will be accomplished through education, public health programs and services, community partnerships, and enforcement of current and future regulations. The Board of Health currently meets on the first Monday of each month at 10:00 a.m. More information is at: <https://www.townofwinchendon.com/286/Board-of-Health>.

Winchendon Farmers Market Settling Into Its New Location by The HUB



Some of the plants on sale at a recent Farmers Market

Photo copyright Winchendon Farmers Market

The Winchendon Farmers Market is setting up on the front lawn of The HUB (Winchendon CAC/bowling alley) at 5 Summer Drive every Saturday from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Vendors have been offering garden plants, eggs, fresh strawberries, preserves and pickled foods, jewelry, crafts, and baked goods. There is ample parking available in front of or next to The HUB. And weather is no factor—should the weather be rainy,

the Farmers Market can move inside The HUB, which is open on Saturday mornings.

One benefit to the Farmers Market's partnership with The HUB is the ability to accept SNAP and HIP payments. SNAP benefits may be used for any edible or food-related item, processed or fresh, and including food plants and seeds, and edible flower plants and seeds. HIP benefits are a little more restricted, but cover fresh produce and live edible plants. (If you have SNAP benefits, you also have HIP.) The Farmers Market also accepts cash, and some vendors accept credit/debit cards or Venmo.

On Saturday mornings, kids can bowl for free from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and The HUB runs "Brunch and Bowl" for everyone, with the Sunshine Cafe selling coffee, latte, or hot chocolate, breakfast sandwiches and continental breakfast. Pajamas are welcome, and there will be Saturday morning cartoons for kids. The CAC food pantry and the Community Threads clothing thrift store will also be open. Come down to the Farmers Market and check out The HUB as well!

Winchendon Agricultural Commission Seeks New Members

The Winchendon Agricultural Commission is seeking enthusiastic people to fill several vacant seats. The Agricultural Commission's purpose is to support and promote agriculture in the town of Winchendon. The Commission deals with town bylaws related to farming and agriculture, concerns that may arise for farmers/homesteaders and/or their neighbors, state and national legislation directly impacting agriculture in Winchendon, and the business of producing and providing healthy food and other natural agricultural products for sale. As part of boosting farming businesses, the Commission supports the Winchendon Farmers Market.

Members don't have to be farmers or have direct experience with farming; a passion for locally produced food, smaller-scale agricultural production, land preservation and knowing where our food comes from are all that you need.

If you'd like to join the Agricultural Commission, send a letter of interest to Deb Dennis in the Town Manager's office, ddennis@winchendon-ma.gov. Agricultural Commission members are appointed by the Town Manager.

The August print edition of The Winchendon Courier will go to press on Tuesday, July 28 at noon. Content for that edition must be received by the publisher by Sunday, July 26.