October 2026 | Vol. 3, No. 8

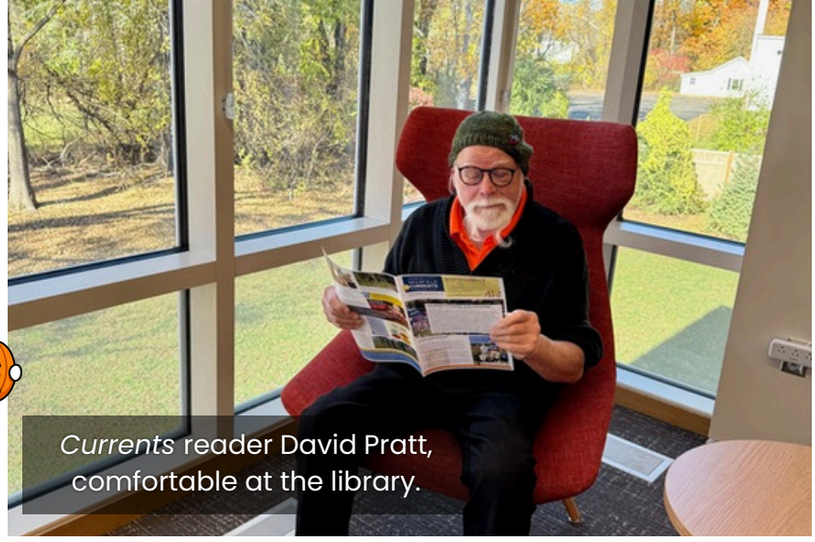
DEERFIELD CURRENTS

AWARD WINNING

The Engage: Deerfield SM Newsletter

ENGAGE: DEERFIELD

CHANNELING COMMUNITY INTERESTS INTO ACTION



Currents reader David Pratt, comfortable at the library.

TILTON LIBRARY'S GRAND OPENING

By Pat Ryan, Currents staff

Our reborn Tilton Library was christened with acclaim and applause on a beautiful Oct. 8 afternoon. State and local officials joined Deerfield residents, library trustees and staff to celebrate the opening of the expanded library. A ribbon cutting confirmed the completion of the construction project, supported in part by a grant of just over $4.4 million from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. Library Director **Candace Bradbury-Carlin** thanked all who came, helped, worked, spoke and voted in support. Refreshments from Ciesluk's Market and music from the Intermittent Winds quintet added to the party.

>> Check it out. The Tilton is a cost-of-living asset, a place where you don't have to spend money to gain value. You can get thousands of books, movies and TV shows, streaming services, tech support and places to meet, all free of charge. You can borrow tools and pick up free tickets to museums and attractions. Read more from NPR about library perks, "*Seven surprising ways the public library can save you money*."

Senator Jo Comerford: "Deerfield made a decision to invest not only in the right now, this moment, but in future generations. There is absolutely nothing more inspiring than to see a town like Deerfield plant a stake in its library and in its vision for what's to come."

Karen Traub, Mass. Board of Libraries Commissioner: "You gave your heart and soul, your time, your talent, your treasure, and you stayed with patience and determination to see this day finally come. Today's ribbon cutting is a historic event and an extraordinary accomplishment."

Selectboard Member Tim Hilchey: "To quote Keith Richards, 'When you are growing up there are two institutional places that affect you most powerfully: the church, which belongs to God, and the public library, which belongs to you. The public library is a great equalizer.'"

PHOTOS: Speaker-supporters Kathleen O'Rourke, Tilton Library Trustees chair; Nancy Maynard, Tilton Fund chair; Library Director Candace Bradbury-Carlin; Senator Jo Comerford; Koby Gardner-Levine, regional manager for Congressman Jim McGovern; Karen Traub, Mass. Board of Library Commissioner; Deerfield Selectboard member Tim Hilchey; Denise Mason, Deerfield Planning Board chair.

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Engage "Decodes the Ballot"

By Pat Ryan, Currents Staff

Friends and neighbors gathered in the Meeting House on Oct. 25 to listen, talk and make common sense out of our jam-packed ballot. Moderated by Engage's Town Crier **Lili Dwight**, the guest panel explained what "yes" and "no" votes mean on the nine questions we must vote on by Nov. 3. Panelists **Linda Dunlavy**, executive director, Franklin Regional Council of Governments; **Denise Mason**, Deerfield Planning Board chair; **Vincent Russo**, Realtor, Exit New Options Realty; and **Amy Lavallee** and **Lora Wondolowski**, candidates for state representative for 1st Franklin District (Lora and Amy in photo at right), then engaged with the audience to probe deeper into the issues. We all acknowledged that the far-reaching outcome of the ballot results cannot be predicted but garnered a clearer understanding of what's at stake with our votes.

>>Next Community Conversation: **"What's Up, Deerfield? A Bird's-eye View."** Enhance your view on Nov. 22, 2:45-5 p.m.

Engage:Deerfield will join the **17th Annual March for the Food Bank** on Nov. 23-24. Support our hardy hikers with a donation to Engage:Deerfield Fights Hunger here.

Banking Together at Bloody Brook

Friends and neighbors whose property borders the Bloody Brook gathered on Oct. 10 at the **Gretzinger-Russo** household at 5 Hillside Road for a day of learning and gardening. After a brief workshop by **Erik Vegeto**, founder of Earth Gardeners, on removing invasive species, the value of native plants and how to maintain a healthy backyard brook ecosystem, volunteers created an erosion-resistant native garden along the bank of the brook with plants donated from **Jocelyn Demuth** of Checkerspot Farm. Thanks also goes to **Kyla Power** of the Franklin Conservation District, who envisioned and coordinated the event.

An Appreciation

Election Day in Deerfield is made possible by our Town Clerk **Cassie Sanderell**, Town staff and the crew of volunteer poll workers. Currents sends appreciation and thanks to our state and local elected officials and to poll workers nationwide. They help protect the political process that lies at the heart of our constitutional system, uphold election integrity and discourage disruption of the voting process.

Did you know? Early written ballots: In 1636, the Massachusetts Bay Colony allowed adult male church members to vote using written ballots, an early form of democratic participation in governance. This public system was part of the colony's efforts to establish regular elections for choosing leaders.

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Carlos Rivadeneira, *Hero*

At the annual Super Chamber Breakfast on Sept. 25, six Franklin County Heroes were awarded symbolic superhero capes. Chamber Executive Director **Jessye Deane** said, "All of us and all of these people are continuously giving back and staying committed and showing up for our community every day." One local hero did not receive his cape alone: Deerfield Elementary School students accompanied **Carlos Rivadeneira**, the crossing guard at Deerfield Elementary School, who shows up every day, in all weather, with a smile and a helping hand. >> **Click here to nominate** someone for a 2027 superhero award.

It Was Never "King Philip's War"

By Lili Dwight, Currents staff | History Portals

Have you ever noticed that if you walk down a road, then turn around and retrace your steps, you see entirely different things, even though you're traveling the same path?

This was my experience when I attended the "Revisiting King Phillip's War" Conference hosted by **Historic Deerfield** on Sept. 26. Academic and cultural luminaries from across the country came together to refocus our vision of the history we think we know.

The Battle of Bloody Brook was not an isolated "massacre," Philip was not a king and his name was Metacom, not Philip.

For the indigenous people involved, the conflict was known as "The War for the Dawnland," not "King Philip's War."

Even the geographical names we use tell two different stories. "New England" looks back across the ocean to Europe, while "the Dawnland" speaks of this land itself: its first light, its orientation and the people who have lived here for millennia.

The tribes had a strategy to defend their homelands and restore self-determination. Because their tactics did not resemble European warfare, English colonists characterized their victories as "massacres."

Metacom was not a king commanding a unified army. He was a sachem and an important alliance-builder within the Wampanoag/Pokanoket community. Knowing no other form of governing than the king they had fled, the colonists identified Metacom by his white name, Philip, and named him King.

"The Dawnland" speaks of this land itself : its first light, its orientation and the people who have lived here for millennia.

Other sachems, like Sangumachu of the Pocumtuc at Deerfield, retained their own authority, goals and decision-making roles.

Unlike wars in Europe, the allied tribes were not fighting for "their king," they fought for the Dawnland itself. And at enormous cost. The Massachusetts Historical Society estimates that 40–50 percent of indigenous people in the region died as a result of the conflict.

Although their people were subsequently ravaged by enslavement, land loss and death, they did not disappear. They are here still, and their stories are part of the history of our region.

They invite you to take another walk down this familiar road — slowly, and with room for surprise. We don't need to discard what we thought we knew; we might simply look again, noticing the people, places and voices that have been here all along.

And how fortunate we are to be walking this road together in the Dawnland.

>>***For more to explore***, *visit the Massachusetts Historical Society, Historic Deerfield, PVMA, the National Museum of the American Indian and the book by Lisa Brooks, "Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War."*

Around Town

TRIAD Connects Seniors to Home Heating Help

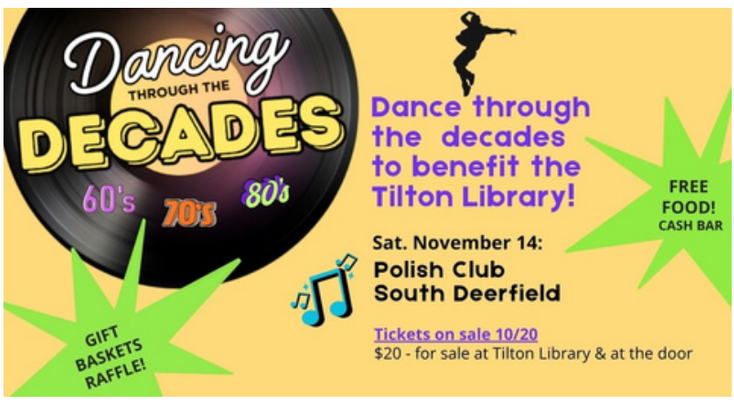
By Pam Predmore, Ad-Hoc Senior Housing Committee

Looking ahead to a possibly severe winter where the price of heating homes could be very high, the Franklin County Sheriff's Office TRIAD Program will connect seniors to affiliated networks that assist with applications for home heating fuel. Seniors can apply by calling (413) 774-4726.

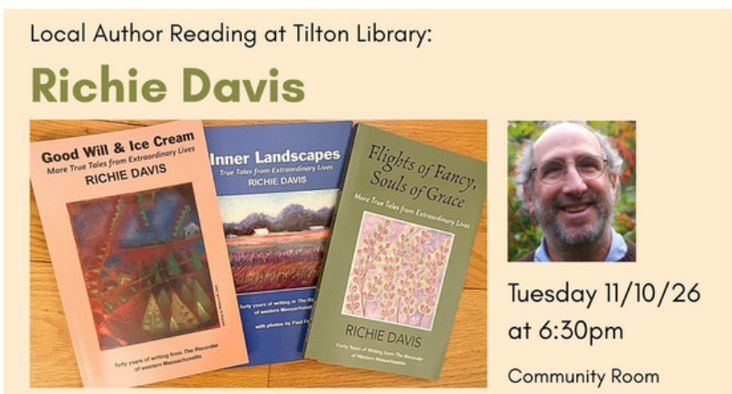
TRIAD is a senior-focused crime-prevention and wellness initiative serving about 1,400 older adults in Franklin County with safety education, support services, food distribution and medical equipment loans. (fcso-ma.us/triad)

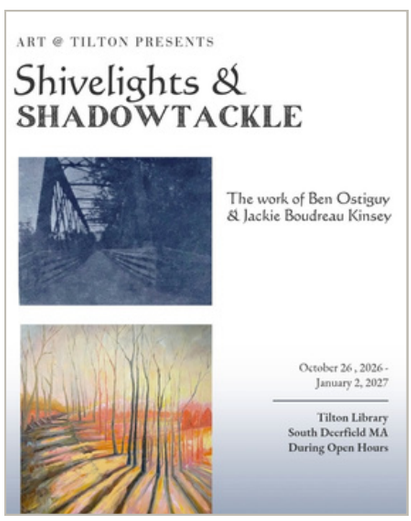
HOW TO HELP. Donations of toiletries (soap, lotion, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste, disposable razors, shaving cream) are welcome at the TRIAD drop-off shed, Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., 160 Elm St., Greenfield, MA 01301. Checks delivered or mailed there are appreciated.

Migrations Paintings Exhibit, curated by GuateMaya Art and Culture Connection, celebrates the human and natural diversity of the upper Connecticut River Valley, the Americas and Mayan village culture. Great Falls Discovery Center, 2 Avenue A, Turners Falls; Wednesday-Sunday, 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m.; Tuesday, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; on view until Nov. 30; free. greatfallsdiscoverycenter.org



SunnyDayz Cannabis Dispensary has opened its doors. CEO and co-owner **Brian Hajdarovic** said the approximately 5-acre campus at 105 Greenfield Road includes a 26,705-square-foot indoor cultivation facility and a 3,539-square-foot retail dispensary. The store carries products from 27 vendors, alongside SunnyDayz products made with cannabis grown in the cultivation building just outside. The grand opening is planned for Nov. 7.





Valley Fabrics + Yarn offers **Open Sew** on Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. ($10). Bring your sewing machine, supplies and project and sew in company. Register online. **Open Knit/Crochet** on Thursdays, is from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (free). 424 State Road, (413) 479-9737. shopvalleyfabrics.com

Want to get "**Engaged**"? Click here to learn about volunteer opportunities.

Engage: Deerfield℠ is a fiscally sponsored project of the Peace Development Fund. Make a tax-deductible donation by mail or online at: Engage:Deerfield Donate. By mail: The Peace Development Fund, PO Box 1280, Amherst, MA 01004-1280. Memo line: "Engage: Deerfield"

Currents is edited by **Pat Ryan** and designed by **Emily Gaylord**. Our Town Crier is **Lili Dwight**. Email Lili with news items at ldwight@engagedeerfield.org. Learn more at: engagedeerfield.org/about.