

The Guide to

FREE

North Central Massachusetts



In This Issue...

Feeling Festive?

All in the (Farm) Family

Happy 250th, Johnny!












10 Reasons to Visit



Johnny Appleseed Country | Fall 2024



Year Round **FAMILY FUN**

-  **Pick Your Own Fruit** for the ultimate farm experience.
-  **Live Music:** Enjoy local bands in a picturesque setting.
-  Visit our **Cidery** for exclusive seasonal flavors and tastings.
-  Stop by the **Brew Barn** year-round for brews and tasty eats.
-  Enjoy charming **hayrides** through the farm's scenic landscapes – ideal for all ages!
-  Fresh Cider Donuts  Pumpkins  Apple Cider
-  Homemade Fudge  Farm Store  Family Fun

Visit us at the Stall in Boston or our cozy spots on Wachusett Mountain—perfect settings for unique treats and warm cider donuts!

redapplefarm.com

Scan here to explore all upcoming farm events.



Fairs & Festivals

- Appleseed Country Fair
- Thanksgiving Harvest Festival
- Winter Lights

Follow us on Social Media!



@redapplefarm

IN THIS ISSUE...

2 Happy 250th, Johnny!

• FARMS & FOOD

- 4 The Apple of Your Eye
- 6 Dining Out
- 10 All in the (Farm) Family
- 24 Feeling Festive

• GREAT OUTDOORS

- 14 Be a Sport!
- 30 Winter Wonderland
- 32 Mountain Skiing ... and More!

• THINGS TO DO

- 8 Leominster Celebrates a Legend!
- 12 Pepperell's Birthday Bash
- 16 10 Reasons to Visit North Central MA
- 20 Marvelous Museums
- 22 Art from the Heart of the Region
- 44 That's Entertainment
- 46 Out of This World

• CALENDAR

- 26 Calendar of Events
- 42 Quick Picks

• DESTINATIONS & ADVERTISERS

- 34 Places to Visit
- 43 Rest Up!
- 48 Advertisers & Lodging

ABOUT THE COVER:

Fall Cover: Statue of Young Johnny at the Johnny Appleseed Visitor Center

Winter Cover: Skiers at Wachusett Mountain



6



32



20



42



43

The Guide to North Central Massachusetts

Visit North Central Massachusetts

General Information Center & Main Visitor Center
Phone: 978-534-2302

Volunteer & Sponsoring Member Information
Phone: 978-534-2829

The Guide to North Central Massachusetts is published semi-annually to help visitors discover the pleasures of the region. This complimentary publication is distributed through the state tourist information center; AAA offices in CT, MA & RI; and sponsoring member locations serving visitors and newcomers to North Central Massachusetts. Write to us at 1000 Route 2 Westbound, Lancaster, MA 01523.

Publisher: Roy Nascimento

Executive Editor: Diane Burnette

Managing Editor: Patricia L. Gale

Editorial Production: Sitka Creations® LLC

Contributors to this issue: Diane Burnette, Pat Gale, Darryl Gagne, Chris Stimpson, Lester Spears, Steven Castle, TCTV/ Montachusett TV



@visitnorthcentralmassachusetts



@visitnorthcentralma



@VisitNCM

Johnny Appleseed Country



VISIT NORTH CENTRAL
MASSACHUSETTS
JOHNNY APPLESEED COUNTRY



MASSACHUSETTS
visitma.com

Funded, in part, by The Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism.
For statewide planning information, www.visitma.com

Happy 250th, Johnny!

Of course you've heard of Johnny Appleseed—he's our official Massachusetts Folk Hero and a national legend—and this is a great time to learn more, as we celebrate his 250th birthday! Be sure to stop in at the Visitor Center on Route 2 for a slice of birthday cake on September 26, and to pick up a commemorative coin or postal first-day covers!

Why all the fuss? Well, while it's likely that the mention of Johnny's name conjures up images of a rag-tag fellow with a stewpot for a hat and a bag on his back, casually strewing apple seeds as he wanders across the countryside—a caricature, familiar to anyone who has read childhood books—that image is both popular and misleading. Popular, because it gives instant recognition



to Johnny and his travels across the country. But misleading because John Chapman—also known as Johnny Appleseed—was actually a successful businessman who helped many pioneers survive and new communities flourish.

Born right here in Leominster on September 26, 1774, John Chapman was born to Nathaniel and Elizabeth Simons Chapman. Not much is known about his early life other than that his mother died when he was just two years old. His father packed up Johnny and his sister and moved about 50 miles across the state, settling in the Springfield area.

As a young man, Johnny headed west, making a name for himself as a businessman as he travelled for nearly 50 years across a growing nation. Along the way, he planted apple seeds—not scattering them carelessly, but with an eye toward a future market for his crops. He sold, and often gave away, seeds and seedlings to settlers in communities. Historians tell us that Johnny was a vegetarian, a lifelong bachelor, and religious man of peace—a "primitive Christian." He died in Fort Wayne, Indiana, on March 18, 1845.

But his legend lives on! Each year, we celebrate National Johnny Appleseed Day on his birthday, September 26.

His entire hometown of Leominster is celebrating Johnny's 250th this fall,



complete with a special display at the Historical Society, lectures, a dance, special school programs and celebratory events at Sholan Farms, the last working orchard in the city. See page 8 in this issue of *The Guide* for a complete listing of the city's special birthday events.

You can learn more about Johnny Appleseed, too, here at the Johnny Appleseed Visitor Center on Route 2 Westbound, between Exits 103 & 102. The center is stocked with a variety of books suitable for all ages—from coloring books for kids to more serious historical volumes. A display case serves as home to an assortment of Johnny memorabilia.

And, especially in this birthday year, the kids might enjoy having their pictures taken with the bronze statue of a youthful Johnny, standing at the entrance to the center! §

The City of GARDNER

CHAIR CITY



Events

*OctoberFest Party in the Street
September 28*

*Veteran's Day Service
November 11*

*Small Business Saturday
November 30*

*Holiday Stroll & Tree Lighting Ceremony
December TBD*

*Caroling with the Mayor
December TBD*

Recreation

*Greenwood Memorial Pool
Gardner Municipal Golf Course
Dunn State Park
Pulaski Playground & Dog Park
Jackson Playground & Skate Park
Crystal Lake Park
North Central Pathway
Perley Brook Trails
Bailey Brook Park*

Check our website and social media for updates on upcoming events.



www.gardner-ma.gov

 @GardnerCityHall

 @CityofGardner



The Apple of Your Eye

Fall is the perfect time for a country tour—and North Central Massachusetts is the perfect spot for that tour! Apples hang heavy on the trees, farmstands are piled high with fresh veggies, and the whole family can enjoy a hayride through blazing autumn foliage.

Even though this is known as Johnny Appleseed Country, there's so much more than apples to sample here. From late summer right through to the first frosty days of October (and beyond, if Mother Nature cooperates!), local farms and orchards are ideal spots for family outings.

Did you know there are dozens of varieties of apples grown here? Your local supermarket may offer a handful of the most familiar, from Red Delicious to Granny Smiths, but the orchards of this region will open your eyes to a whole new world of flavor! You can head out into the orchard to pick your own, or simply make your selections from the stands and stores.

From Ginger Golds and Paula Reds in August to Macouns and Galas in September and Baldwins and Russets in October, there's always something interesting to pick here.

And biting into a sweet Honey Crisp, juicy Mutsu or tangy



Macintosh is just the beginning when you visit a local orchard. The **Red Apple Farm** in Phillipston, and **Carlson Orchards** in Harvard invite you to raise a glass, too—of cider pressed from those local fruits.

Cider, of course, was a staple of every New England household in Colonial days. From the first English settlers to the late 1800s, Americans enjoyed cider—and at a time when water often contained dangerous bacteria, cider was a safer, more sanitary beverage option. It was a staple on most dinner tables, and there was even a special version for children. That worked out well for our hometown hero, John Chapman, who traveled west across the growing nation, planting apple trees that may not have produced great fruit for snacking, but provided the apples for cider production.

Unfortunately, cider experienced gradual decline in popularity due to various political and socioeconomic factors over the years, and after the 18th amendment was ratified in 1919, and prohibition of alcohol in the United States took effect, the production of cider became illegal; even fresh apple juice production was severely limited. Prohibitionists ensured that nearly all cider apple trees in the country were given the ax or the torch, undoing much of John Chapman's work.

But today's ciders have gone far beyond the staple of centuries ago. Consider these options at Carlson Orchards: Three Brothers Blend, “A semi-dry hard cider made from Heirloom French and American hard cider apples fermented with a white wine yeast from the Burgundy region of France. This cider is crisp, well balanced, and refreshing with just a hint of tartness,” or Blueberry Lavender, “Our newest cider on tap! Starting with our classic “Oak Hill Blend”, we added Blueberry juice, Culinary Lavender, and Spring honey to make a refreshing spring cider.”

In the mood for lunch? Local farms have you covered there, too—with options ranging from prepared deli sandwiches to made-on-site BBQ, brick-oven pizza and more. And don't forget the ice cream for dessert!



Want still more to do? You can find live music on many weekends, too, from Red Apple Farm in Phillipston to Hollis Hills Farm in Fitchburg, as the region celebrates this very special New England season!

Get the kids off the phones and show them where the food they enjoy comes from—down on the farm! §

An Apple Sampler from Johnny Appleseed Country

| VARIETY | HARVEST | BEST USES |
|-------------------|-----------|--|
| Baldwin | October | Eating / Pies |
| Cortland | September | Eating / Sauce / Pies / Salad / Baking |
| Delicious, Red | October | Eating / Salad |
| Delicious, Golden | October | Eating / Sauce / Salad |
| Empire | October | Eating |
| Gala | September | Eating |
| Ginger Gold | August | Eating / Sauce / Salad |
| Granny Smith | October | Eating |
| Jersey Mac | August | Eating |
| Liberty | September | Eating |
| Macoun | October | Eating / Sauce / Salad |
| McIntosh | September | Eating / Sauce / Salad |
| Milton | August | Eating |
| Mutsu | October | Eating |
| Northern Spy | October | Sauce / Pies |
| Paula Red | August | Eating |
| Red Free | August | Eating |
| Rome | October | Eating / Pies |
| Russet | October | Eating / Pies |
| Spencer | October | Eating / Sauce / Pies |
| Vista Bella | July | Eating |



THE CITY OF FITCHBURG

ONGOING

FIRST THURSDAYS - FREE ADMISSION 12 - 7 PM

Fitchburg Art Museum, 185 Elm St.
fitchburgartmuseum.org
Indoor Farmers Market starts in November

VARIOUS EXHIBITS - THROUGH SEPTEMBER 8

Fitchburg Art Museum, 185 Elm St.
fitchburgartmuseum.org
88th Regional Exhibition of Art & Craft, *Lost in the Woods, Call and Response: Feast*

SEPT 14 & OCT 12, 10 AM - 1 PM

Outdoor Fitchburg Farmers Market - FREE
Fitchburg Upper Common,
857 Main St.
Hosted by Growing Places

VARIOUS EXHIBITS - THROUGH FEBRUARY 23, 2025

Fitchburg Art Museum, 185 Elm St.
fitchburgartmuseum.org
Africa Rising: 21st Century African Photography

SEPTEMBER

SEPTEMBER 2, 10 AM - 3:30 PM

West Fitchburg Annual Labor Day Road Races & Fitchburg Military Band Concert
Stanley Park Gazebo, "O" Simonds Rd. at Westminster St.
All ages encouraged; 10 AM registration; 12 PM start; band at 2 PM

SEPTEMBER 8, 2 - 3 PM

Gallery Talk by Mark Del Guidice (Wood Sculptor)
Fitchburg Art Museum, 185 Elm St.

SEPTEMBER 13, 6 PM

Historic Fitchburg Lecture - Free
Fitchburg Historical Society,
781 Main St.
For info call: 978-345-1157

SEPTEMBER 13, 4 - 10 PM & 14, 11 AM - 10 PM

Annual Greek Festival
Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church,
1319 Main St.
Features traditional food, music, dancing

SEPTEMBER 14 & 15, 11 AM - 4 PM

Apple Festival at Hollis Hills Farm
340 Marshall Rd.
Visit facebook.com/hollishillsfarmMA

SEPTEMBER 14, 11 AM - 5 PM

Fitchburg Chalk Art Festival
174 Elm St.
All ages encouraged to participate

SEPTEMBER 21 & 22, 8 AM - 2 PM

Citywide Yard Sale
Assorted locations
fitchburgyardsale.com

SEPTEMBER 21, 12 - 4 PM

Latino Festival / Festival Latino de Fitchburg - FREE
Riverfront Park, 51 Commercial St.
Celebration of National Hispanic Heritage Month, with food, music, dance & games

SEPTEMBER 28, 10 AM - 5 PM

21st Annual Blacksmith Art & Music Festival - FREE
Riverfront Park, 51 Commercial St.
fitchburgforgein.org

OCTOBER

OCTOBER 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, 5:30 - 6:30 PM

Family Improv Workshop hosted by the Stratton Players - FREE
Christ Church Performance Hall,
569 Main St.
RSVP: strattonplayers.com

OCTOBER 12 - 14, 11 AM - 4 PM

Autumn Festival at Hollis Hills Farm
340 Marshall Rd.
Visit facebook.com/hollishillsfarmMA

OCTOBER 19, 10 AM - 1 PM

The Rollstone Hill "Rock Walk" - FREE
Walk starts and ends at the Boulder Art Gallery, 960 Main St.
Wear comfortable walking shoes, bring water, a friend, and don't forget your camera!

OCTOBER 19, 10 AM - 1 PM

Fitchburg Firefighters Memorial 5K Road Race
Fire Dept. Headquarters, 33 North St.

OCTOBER 19 & 20, 11 AM - 5 PM

Fitchburg Open Studios
Various locations through the city
fitchburgculturalalliance.org

OCTOBER 22, 7:30 PM

Fitchburg State University "Music Mega Mix"
Weston Auditorium, 353 North St.
Community Orchestra, Concert Band, Chamber Choir, Concert Choir & Modern Band)

OCTOBER 26, 1 - 4 PM

Trick or Treat on Main Street
Downtown Fitchburg, along Main St.

OCTOBER 26, 7:30 PM

Outdoor Spooky Movie Night
Lawn behind 700 Main St.
Featured movie: "Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire"

OCTOBER 31, 5:30 - 7:30 PM

Halloween (Trick or Treat in neighborhoods)
Throughout the city

NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER 11, 11 AM

Fitchburg Veterans Day Ceremony
Fitchburg Armory, 14 Wallace Ave.

NOVEMBER 11, 9 AM - 5 PM

VAU Fallen Heroes Memorial
Monument Park, "O" Wallace Ave.

NOVEMBER 21, 7:30 PM

Fitchburg State University Community Orchestra & Concert Band
Weston Auditorium, 353 North St.

NOVEMBER 30, ALL DAY

Small Business Saturday
Participating businesses throughout the city

DECEMBER

DECEMBER 1, 2 PM

Fitchburg Military Band Holiday Concert
Emanuel Lutheran Church,
1200 John Fitch Hwy.

DECEMBER 1, 5:30 PM

Santa Parade & Holiday Tree Lighting
Monument Park to Upper Common
Downtown Fitchburg

DECEMBER 4, 7 PM

Fitchburg State University Jazz Band
Kent Recital Hall, 367 North St.

DECEMBER 7, 11 AM - 3 PM

Fitchburg Cultural Council's Winter Bazaar
Fitchburg City Hall, 718 Main St.
Shop local artisans for handmade gifts

DECEMBER 7, 2 & 7 PM

North Worcester County Symphony Orchestra
Weston Auditorium, 353 North St.

DECEMBER 10, 7:30 PM

Fitchburg State University "Choral Kaleidoscope"
Weston Auditorium, 353 North St.

MARCH

MARCH 25, 7:30 PM

Fitchburg State University "Music Mega Mix"
Weston Auditorium, 353 North St.

All events are subject to change or postponement.

CHECK OUR CITY CALENDAR AND SOCIAL MEDIA FOR UPDATES ON UPCOMING EVENTS.

FITCHBURGMA.GOV/CALENDAR



@CityofFitchburg



@CityofFitchburg



@FitchburgMass

Dining Out

It's easy to work up an appetite while touring the 27 cities and towns of North Central Massachusetts. All that hiking, shopping, museum-viewing ... at some point, you just need to re-fuel. And you're in luck! There's no shortage of spots to stop in if you're looking for a quick lunch—from a pizza cooked in a wood-fired brick oven to a sandwich at a local deli or even a familiar fast-food shop.

And when you're in the mood to relax, enjoy some great food and attentive service, we've got you covered! Craving Italian? Want to try a Brazilian steakhouse? Feel like soaking up some incredible scenery while you dine in style? Or quaffing a tasty seasonal beer with your meal in a craft brewery setting?

We've gathered a selection of popular local restaurants that you're sure to enjoy, no matter where you happen to be in North Central Massachusetts! Relax, take a break, and enjoy a taste of the region.

COMEKETO BRAZILIAN STEAKHOUSE

23 Sack Blvd., Leominster

978-466-1224 | comeketo.com

Fine Brazilian cuisine with rodízio-style service, which is a true Brazilian experience; an assortment of dishes, especially meats, are brought to the table for picking and choosing, while customers help themselves to the gourmet salad bar.



BULL RUN RESTAURANT

215 Great Road, Shirley

978-425-4311 | bullrunrestaurant.com

The Bull Run has been a Tavern for centuries and was the first stop on the Boston-to-Albany Stagecoach route in the 1800s. Operated by the Geurcio family since the 1940s, the Bull Run has an intimate, one-of-a-kind atmosphere. Stop in for more than a meal—enjoy great entertainment year-round.



THE 1761 OLD MILL

69 State Road East, Westminster

978-874-5941 | 1761oldmill.com

Originally a sawmill, the Old Mill became a tea room in 1921 and a restaurant after World War II. The Old Mill continues to serve foods in a setting of rare charm; listen to the joyful music of water rushing merrily over the mill dam, watch the ducks on the mill pond—and be sure to try the corn fritters and pecan rolls with your meal!

LAZY BUBBLE

112 Main St., Pepperell

978-925-9777 | thelazybubble.com

Chef Chris' goal is to provide guests with high quality cuisines in a casual, comfortable environment in his own home town, set right in the heart of downtown Pepperell. Menus change weekly, so there's always something new to enjoy!



FORGE & VINE

128r Main Street, Groton, MA 01450

978-448-9200 | forgeandvine.com

Drawing inspiration from the region's history and natural surroundings, Forge & Vine features an eight-foot wood fired grill as its centerpiece, an open kitchen with counter seating where guests can enjoy dinner while interacting with the chefs. Menu highlights include Veal Milanese, Wood-Fired Berkshire Pork, and a Bone-in Ribeye for two. Hungry?

MOON HILL BREWING CO. AT GARDNER ALE HOUSE

74 Parker St., Gardner

978-669-0122 | gardnerale.com

This full menu brewpub known locally as the Gardner Ale House is kind of like one stop shopping for your stomach—whether you're in the mood for a mushroom Swiss burger, a chicken parmesan dinner or hand-cut steak tips, you'll find it here, along with incredibly interesting craft beers. §



Leominster Celebrates a Legend

It's party time, and our own hometown legend, Johnny Appleseed, is in the spotlight this fall!

To recognize John Chapman's birth a whopping 250 years ago, right here in Leominster, the city has planned a variety of fun events you won't want to miss. From the annual Johnny Appleseed Art and Culture Festival in mid-September right through to Johnny Appleseed Harvest Festival in mid-October, Leominster will be honoring the famous entrepreneur, orchardist and star of folk tales whose name adorns local schools, streets, and even a span of Route 2—the Johnny Appleseed Trail, stretching between the

Freedom Trail and the Mohawk Trail.

The kids will enjoy the Johnny Appleseed Scavenger Hunt and 250th Anniversary Parade. Everyone can gather for the dedication of Johnny's birth site on (you guessed it!) Johnny Appleseed Lane. Families can relax at a free movie night featuring Johnny on film. And don't forget the birthday cake, the book signing and the Jonny Appleseed Ball!

It's going to a busy fall here in apple country—and you're all invited to the party!

Here's a list of events planned to honor Johnny on this momentous occasion:

| | |
|--------------|--|
| September 12 | Release of Johnny Appleseed 250th Birthday Anniversary Coin , Leominster Mayor's Office from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm and at the Johnny Appleseed Visitor Center on Route 2 from 8:30 am to 5 pm. |
| September 14 | 31st Annual Johnny Appleseed Arts and Culture Festival in downtown Leominster from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. |
| September 14 | Johnny Appleseed Scavenger Hunt – clue sheets available at Leominster Public Library during the Johnny Appleseed Festival: test your knowledge, have a fun experience, and you could win a prize. Runs through October 4, 2024. |
| September 15 | Johnny Appleseed 250th Anniversary Parade in downtown Leominster. |
| September 19 | Leominster Historical Society Opening of "1774 in Context: Johnny Appleseed's Birth Year" Exhibit and Lecture, 17 School St., 7:00 pm. |
| September 21 | Johnny Appleseed birth-site dedication , Johnny Appleseed Lane. |
| September 25 | Johnny Appleseed on film , a family viewing night at Leominster Public Library, 30 West St. (free admission, refreshments available), 6:30 pm. |
| September 26 | Johnny Appleseed Birthday Celebration with birthday cake - Sholan Farms, 1125 West St. and Johnny Appleseed Visitor's Center, 1000 Route 2, Lancaster. |
| September 26 | Johnny Appleseed Stamp Cancellation – Leominster Public Library, 30 West St., 11:00 am to 2:00 pm. |
| September 28 | Book Signing with Johnny Appleseed , Man Behind the Folklore Main Street Gift and Café, 40 Main St., 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. |
| October 5 | Dedication of Apple Press Stone at Leominster Historical Society, 17 School St., 9:00 am. |
| October 5 | Johnny Appleseed Ball at Leominster Public Library, 30 West St. (Free admission), 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm. |
| October 12 | Johnny Appleseed Harvest Festival at Sholan Farms, 1125 Pleasant St., 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. |



*'Family Farm Experience'
Open Year-Round*

NEW MEGA SLIDE THIS FALL!



Great selection of locally made products mostly from Massachusetts.
CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE FOR DATES AND EVENT POSTING!

294 CHASE RD, MA-13, LUNENBURG, MA 01462
(978) 582-6246 | LANNIORCHARD.COM

Westminster Cracker Festival

Village Center

October 19, 2024 • 10 am – 5 pm

Home of Historic Cracker Factory

Free Admission

Rain date
October 20



Cracker Festival

Arts & Crafts • Food Vendors

Beer Garden • 5K Walk/Run at 9 am

4 BANDS 10 am – 5 pm

For more info and race registration visit crackerfestival.com

Presented by **Batallas Electric**



EXPLORE THE

Country Roads

OF NORTH CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS

Visit the shops and rediscover the warmth and nostalgia of small-town charm with Country Roads –where every journey feels like coming home.

19th Annual

HOLIDAY TOUR

November 9th - December 8th 2024

Smith's Cheese

Farmstead cheese, drinks, gifts
20 Otter River Road, Winchendon
978-939-5738

The Kitchen Garden

Bakery, gifts, and ice cream
268 Baldwinville Road, Templeton
978-939-8558

Country Bumpkin' Antiques

Antiques and collectibles
36 Baldwinville Road, Templeton
978-652-5429

Valley View Farm

Meat shop & custom butcher
179 Barre Road, Templeton
978-939-1066

Giacomo's Gourmet Foods

Meals, soups, bakery, local goods
152 Main Street, Hubbardston
978-820-1353

Valley Florist & Greenhouses

Florist, gift shop & greenhouses
1 Valley Drive (Rt. 101), Templeton
978-632-2950

The Good Earth

Farm & Garden Center
633 West Broadway, Gardner
978-632-0991

Plain View Farm

Alpacas & alpaca fiber products
130 Gardner Road, Hubbardston
774-258-1194

A Thyme & A Place

Gifts & refinished finds
52 Gardner Road, Hubbardston
978-928-1300

Sheldon Farm Baskets

Hand made baskets & classes
1587 Sheldon Road, Barre
978-355-2015

The Country Store

General store & Eatery
2 North Main Street, Petersham
978-724-0000

Petersham Arts Center

Fine arts & crafts
8 North Street, Petersham
978-724-3415

Valcourt Sugar Shack

Maple syrup
67 New Salem Road, Petersham
508-479-6635

Petersham Leathers

Handcrafted leathers
202 Popple Camp Rd, Petersham
978-724-3541

Back in Tyme

Reclaimed furniture & decor
58 Rice Road, Templeton
508-733-4600

Red Apple Farm

Country store, Cidery, Brew Barn
Winter Lights Festival
455 Highland Ave, Phillipston
978-249-6763

Soulful Body & Mind Apothecary

Gifts, plants, teas, herbs
12 Elm Street, Baldwinville
978-257-1776

Hartman's Herb Farm Bed & Breakfast and Greenhouses

Herbs, plants, dried flowers, and
arrangements
1026 Old Dana Road, Barre
978-355-2015

**Call stores or visit our
website for hours!**

countryroadschristmas.com

All in the (Farm) Family

Branches laden with red apples. Fields dotted with bright orange pumpkins. Farmstands overflowing with just-picked vegetables. Animals waiting to be petted. Music filling the air.

North Central Massachusetts has a centuries-old history of farming—rocky soil that’s been cultivated by generations of families, while constantly evolving to keep up with the times.

What’s new down on the farm these days? Check out these familiar spots today!

Bolton Orchards

Covering about 200 acres, this popular stop for visitors was once part of the Davis family farm. Generations ago, the farm was divided, and Bolton Orchards grew a great reputation for its apples.

As years went on, the farm added corn, peaches, pumpkins and more to its fields—and that oh, so popular, beverage, apple cider, said Sarah O’Toole, who with her husband Joel represents the sixth generation of the Davis family to farm the land.

Bolton Orchards is known for its expansive year-round farm stand featuring not only fruits and veggies grown by the family, but produce from neighboring farms, along with deli items and ice cream. “We’re still farmers at heart,” Sarah says, and offering a variety of locally-produced, healthy foods is a way of life here.



Davis Farmland/Mega Maze

Just down the road, Davis Farmland and Mega Maze in Sterling is a seventh-generation, 165-year tradition that has evolved over recent decades into, well, the “Adventureland” that has become part of its name.

The 300-acre Farmland isn’t a typical New England farm these days: the 300 acres are home to all manner of wildlife—from deer to coyotes, turkeys

and bobcats—along with the largest sanctuary of endangered and heritage livestock in North America! “Sustainability” has become a hallmark of the Davis property, where green projects include a 15-acre solar farm.

The “Davis Farmland” side of this family operation is totally kid-oriented, with farm-oriented activities, playgrounds and entertainment. Across the street, Davis Mega Maze is an adventure for the entire family. Picture it: twisting paths through eight acres of corn, with bridges, games and activities to explore along the way.

But wait! There’s more! As the Davis spread evolved from a farm to an endangered farm animal sanctuary to an awesome playground to a world-class corn maze, fifth-generation farmer Larry Davis also grew the entertainment side, with zip lines, barbecue to help “sustain” visitors, and entertainment to add to the farm fun!



Red Apple Farm

Of course there are apples at Red Apple Farm in Phillipston—along with blueberries, pumpkins, goats, chickens, and oh, don’t forget the cider donuts!

Fourth-generation farmer Al Rose and his family keep the farm humming year-round these days. No longer a seasonal orchard enterprise, as it was when his grandfather cared for the land, the hillside farm now draws visitors throughout the year. “Each of us has been given caretaker status, to keep the farm going,” Rose says, and the challenge has been to keep the New England farm relevant in a changing world. Over the decades, the family has embraced “ag tourism”—helping visitors to appreciate the New England farm experience.

So along with family-oriented pick-your-own apples,

animals to visit, and hayrides through the orchard, Red Apple has a large farm store featuring local products, and, more recently, a Brew Barn where both food and live entertainment are on the menu, beer from Moon Hill Brewing and cider made right on the farm. Hiking, cross-country skiing, dazzling holiday lights ... the farm is a four-season venture for the Rose family.



Carlson Orchards

Yes, there’s a good reason they call this Johnny Appleseed Country! Local communities have been home to generations of orchardists—although these days, apples are joined by a host of other popular fruits on the rolling hillsides.

Founded in 1936 by Walter and Eleanor Carlson, the farm has changed over the decades. In the thirties and forties, the Carlson family made their living from a diversified farm that included chickens, cows, potatoes and apples. In the late sixties, apples became the main



crop, as the farm evolved and specialized in fruits.

Today, granddaughter Katie Carlson runs the farm that has 100 acres producing apples, peaches, nectarines, blueberries, raspberries, sweet cherries and pumpkins. And don’t forget the fresh-pressed cider! Like many area farms, Carlson Orchards invites visitors to “pick your own” fruits in season—and will keep you entertained with live music, “Themed Thursdays” in the Cider Barn, and even smoked BBQ during food truck season.

Smith's Country Cheese

A few years ago, the Smith family in Winchendon, famous for their locally-produced cheese, decided it was time to retire—but they didn’t let the popular farm just fade away. The local dairy farmers worked with two new families—Jake & Allie Catlin and Mike & Leah Catlin—to teach them everything, from caring for the cows to making their award-winning cheeses.

Nearly a decade has passed since the Catlins became dairy farmers, caring for hundreds of cows and creating cultured butter, cheddar, farmer’s cheese, Gouda, Havarti and more to sell in their farm store, in shops throughout the region, and by mail.

Love cows? Love cheese? Visitors are welcome to stop by the farm, see the cows and even watch the cheese being made! §



See what's happening "down on the farm" this season! Visit our online calendar.

Pepperell's Birthday Bash

Happy birthday, Pepperell! With the roots of Massachusetts stretching right back to the founding of this nation, it's not surprising that over the past several years, cities and towns across the state have been lighting very large birthday candles.

In 2025, the local focus will be on Pepperell. It began as a community of settlements from Groton on scattered farms and river crossings on the Nashua and Nissitissit Rivers in the 1720s, became Groton West Parish in 1742, a district in 1753 and a town on August 23, 1775.

The community's birthday party is planned as a year-long celebration that includes a reenactment of the raising of the Liberty Flag on September 7, 2024, 250 years after local residents raised Pepperell's first flag in response to British oppression and a show of the colonists' fierce loyalty in the fight for the ideals of liberty and justice.

The 1774 Pepperell District Meeting record states: "This being a time when the civil liberty of this province are unjustly infringed upon, when the ministry of Old England have endeavored to take away our

Charter rights and privileges and the people of this province very much disturbed, every one looking after English liberties as departing from North America when congresses are appointed and appointing and the struggles very high, the people of this District prepared and raised a pole by the name of Liberty Pole the height of which was one hundred feet on the common directly before the Publick Meeting House door on the 29th day of August A.D. 1774 with a flag of Blew (sic) and red cloth five yards long and four breadths wide with convenience to hoist it to the top of the pole with ease."

Another historical re-enactment, "The Women Who Guarded the Bridge," is planned for May 3, 2025. The re-enactment features Pepperell's local heroine Prudence Wright, who assembled a band of women dressed in men's clothing to guard the bridge over the Nashua River in Pepperell, at the beginning of the Revolutionary War.

"Their strong will and bravery," the town's website notes, "resulted in the capture of a British spy in late April of 1775." Previously re-enacted

by the Town's Covered Bridge Committee in 2010 at the grand re-opening of the Pepperell Covered Bridge and by the DAR in Pepperell's annual Fourth of July Parade, this historic event is being brought back by popular demand.

The 2025 re-enactment will take place at the Prudence Wright Scenic Overlook, alongside the historic Pepperell Covered Bridge, on land owned by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife. The Prudence Wright Overlook and the Pepperell Covered Bridge are symbols of the struggles and successes that occurred outside the battlefields of Lexington, Concord and Boston during our ancestors' fight for independence.

And, yes, there's more! This birthday party will run throughout late 2024 and well into 2025, so stay tuned! You can follow the town's evolving plans for this celebration by following Pepperell's 250th Celebration on Facebook. §

2010 Re-opening of the covered bridge.



Celebrate the seasons in Leominster

AUGUST

- 27 DINING UNDER THE STARS**
Tuesday, 6 – 10 pm

SEPTEMBER

- 7 LEOMINSTER FARMERS MARKET**
Saturday, 11 am – 2 pm, Monument Square
- 13 FOOD TRUCK FESTIVAL**
Friday, 5 – 10 pm, Downtown
- 14 JOHNNY APPLESEED 250TH**
Saturday, 9 am – 5 pm
- 21 CITYWIDE YARD SALE**
Saturday, 8 am – 3 pm
Participating addresses throughout the City

OCTOBER

- 5 TRACTOR PARADE**
Saturday, 10 am, Downtown
- 5 LEOMINSTER FARMERS MARKET**
Saturday, 11 am – 2 pm, Monument Square
- 14 CANNOLI FESTIVAL**
Monday, 5 – 9 pm, Downtown
- 14–31 LEOMINSTER FRIGHTS**
Ongoing, All Day
Participating addresses throughout the City
- 19 HALLOWEEN PARADE**
Saturday, 1 – 3 pm, Downtown
- 31 TRICK OR TREAT**
Thursday, 6 – 8 pm, City of Leominster

NOVEMBER

- Nov 18–Dec 19**
FESTIVAL OF TREES
Ongoing til Dec 19 at 6pm, Hours Vary
Tata Auditorium at Leominster City Hall
- 21 INDOOR FARMERS MARKET**
Thursday, 4 – 6 pm
Tata Auditorium at Leominster City Hall
- 30 SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY**
Saturday, All Day
Participating businesses throughout the City

DECEMBER

- 6–29 LEOMINSTER LIGHTS**
Fri / Sat / Sun, 5 – 10 pm
Participating addresses throughout the City
- 7 WINTER STROLL**
Saturday, 3 – 5 pm, Downtown
- 7 PARADE OF LIGHTS & TREE LIGHTING**
Saturday, 5 pm, Downtown
- 19 INDOOR FARMERS MARKET**
Thursday, 4 – 6 pm
Tata Auditorium at Leominster City Hall

JANUARY

- 16 INDOOR FARMERS MARKET**
Thursday, 4 – 6 pm
Tata Auditorium at Leominster City Hall
- 19–25 COFFEE CRAWL**
Sun – Sat, All Day
Participating businesses throughout the City
- 28 GARDENMANIA**
Monday, 6 – 8 pm
Tata Auditorium at Leominster City Hall

FEBRUARY

- 3 GROUNDHOG DAY WITH FEATHERSTONE**
Monday, 8 am, Monument Square
- 16–22 LEOMINSTER RESTAURANT WEEK**
Sun – Sat, All Day
Participating businesses throughout the City
- 18 INDOOR DRIVE-IN MOVIE NIGHT**
Tuesday, 5:30 pm
Tata Auditorium at Leominster City Hall
- 20 INDOOR FARMERS MARKET**
Thursday, 4 – 6 pm
Tata Auditorium at Leominster City Hall
- 21 ONCE UPON A TIME**
Friday, 10 am – 2 pm
Tata Auditorium at Leominster City Hall

Dates subject to change.

BE A SPORT!

You don't have to be a great athlete (or even a mediocre one!) to test your skills, stretch some muscles and maybe take on a little competition in North Central Massachusetts.

Hiking the region's numerous trails may be the most popular form of exercise for local residents and visitors—but there's so much more to do when you want to get your heart rate up, your lungs filled with fresh air and the kinks out of those stiff joints. Here are a few affordable (or even free!) ideas to help you keep in shape on your visit.

Stay on Course

Spin a disc—on one of the area's disc golf courses. These popular attractions have been popping up in parks and woodlands in recent years, each offering its own unique setting and challenges. Fall is a perfect time to take a scenic ride to the **Royalston Fish & Game Club** for an enjoyable 18-hole experience. **The Flat Rock** course in Petersham has been described as “a classic short and technical New England woods course.” At the eastern end of the region, **Devens** offers three courses: The Hill, The General and The Commander. Fitchburg's **Cogshall Park** is a pleasure to visit any time of the year, and the disc course adds a fun feature to this great escape spot in the city.

Among the newest local courses are **Meadowbrook Orchards** in Sterling (which, as you might

guess, meanders through an apple orchard!) and **Bailey Brook** course in Gardner.

Looking for a short game? Try the **Ingleside course** at the new Community Park in Winchendon. Only three holes were complete in June, but work was progressing on another seven—so you can enjoy a new experience with every visit!



Pickleball, anyone?

Doyle Field in Leominster, with six outdoor hard courts, is a popular place to play pickleball...and the courts are open at no cost. Players have access to restrooms and water.

Fish Park on Maple Street in Athol has two outdoor courts that visitors can use for free. The courts are hard surface with temporary lines; bring your own nets.

The West Sterling Athletic Fields off Route 62 in Sterling have five lighted outdoor courts with permanent lines—but again, plan to bring your own nets.

Weather not cooperating? **The Fitness Center at Mt. Wachusett Community College** has four indoor pickleball courts, along with its two outdoor courts, so you can stay in shape even if Mother Nature throws

you a curve ball! **The Community Center in Lancaster** and **Game On Fitchburg** also have indoor courts that you can play for a one-time fee.



Paddle Your Own Canoe

With an abundance of lakes, ponds, and rivers, North Central Massachusetts is a paddler's paradise. The Nashua River runs through much of the region, and, with its tributaries, can be enjoyed from many spots.

The Nashua River Watershed Association, which has been instrumental over recent decades in preserving and promoting the river, has a terrific **Nashua River Canoe and Kayak Guide** that provides detailed information on the Nashua, Nissitissit, Squannacook, North Nashua, and Stillwater Rivers including information on canoe put-ins and take-outs, river hazards like dams and rapids, portages, and mile-by-mile notes for all paddle-able segments. The NRWA's list of launch sites includes spots in Devens, Groton, Harvard, Lancaster, Pepperell, Shirley, Sterling and Townsend.

At the western edge of the region, the Millers River watershed is another paddler's delight. **The Millers**

River Watershed Association was instrumental in development “Blue Trails on that river and its tributaries. Enjoy a trip on the Millers River Blue Trail (MRBT), which runs between Cass Meadow in Athol and River Front Park in Orange, or the Otter River Blue Trail from East Templeton to Gardner.

Didn't bring a canoe or kayak with you on your North Central Massachusetts tour? No problem! Swing by **Nashoba Paddler** in Groton—where you can not only rent equipment, but can also take advantage of a special event like a Fall Foliage Paddle. And in Orange, Billy Goat Boats—located on the Millers River—rents everything from canoes and kayaks to paddle boats and stand up paddle boards. For a unique experience, plan on visiting in mid-September to see (or even join in!) the **Orange Solstice Riverfest**, complete with fire pots and lighted boats on the river! §



130 Gardner Road (Route 68) Hubbardston, MA • 774-258-1194

Meet the Llamas & Alpacas!
Offering Tours, Walks, and Weekend Yoga.
Call or message for more info.
check Facebook & website
for upcoming events.
Giftshop, Alpaca clothing and yarn.
*Open Sundays, 10am - 4pm
or by appointment*

plain view Farm
Alpacas & Llamas

www.plainviewfarmalpacas.com
See our website or Facebook pages for special events

Wilderness Camping to Full Hookup Sites

THE PINES CAMPGROUND LLC

A Rustic Family Campground to Enjoy & Return to Often!

| | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Just 10 miles from Rt. 2 | Spacious Sites | Swimming Pool |
| Large Recreation Hall | Camp Store | Playground & Arcade |
| Laundry Available | WiFi Available | Picnic Tables & Fire Rings |
| Hot Showers Available | Parking Assistance Upon Request | Firewood, Ice & LP |

THE PINES LLC 4-SEASON CAMPGROUND
39 Davis Road • Ashby, MA 01431 • (978) 386-7702
thepinescampground.com • campgroundthepines@gmail.com

SMITH'S FARMSTEAD CHEESE

FARMSTEAD HEDDAR RAW MILK CHEESE SHARP

FARMSTEAD CHEDDAR RAW MILK CHEESE CHILI PEPPER

FARMSTEAD CHEDDAR RAW MILK CHEESE FARMHOUSE

from our farm, to your home.
we are proud to be your local family dairy!

www.smithscountrycheese.com
FOLLOW US! [f](https://www.facebook.com/smithscountrycheese) [i](https://www.instagram.com/smithscountrycheese) @smithscountrycheese

45th Annual NARRAGANSETT CRAFT FAIR
Saturday, November 9, 2024 • 9 AM~3PM
Narragansett Middle School
464 Baldwinville Rd., Baldwinville MA

Craftspeople from all around New England!
Wide variety of Crafts and Gift Items * Do all your Holiday Shopping early!

COFFEE CAN AUCTION! * CAFÉ OPEN ALL DAY!

Organized by: Phillipston Youth Supporters

For More Information visit www.narragansettcraftfair.com

10 REASONS TO VISIT North Central MA

With 27 cities and towns and scores of intriguing places to explore, making the most of your visit to North Central Massachusetts might seem challenging — but have no fear! We've selected 10 great spots, from museums to wineries, to get you started. Check our list, start your tour ... and feel free to follow any country road to find new adventures!

1 The over-sized ladderback chair on Gardner's Elm Street —once touted as the largest in the world—has a long history, and honors the community's role as a furniture manufacturing center. Learn all about the history of the Chair City at the **Gardner Museum** on Pearl Street. Visit Gardnermuseuminc.com.



2 Another local museum features intriguing works from halfway around the globe! The **Icon Museum and Research Center** in Clinton is the only specialized museum for icons and Eastern Christian art in the United States. It's a wonderful place for visitors of all ages to explore. Learn more at Iconmuseum.org.





Photo by Darryl Gagne.

3

See the sights from the heights! Stretch your legs with a hike to the 2,006-foot peak of **Wachusett Mountain**, and on a clear day you can see all the way to Boston—or simply take in the beauty of this region! The state reservation’s 3,000 acres offer great trails for hiking and birding. See mass.gov/doc/wachusett-mountain-hikes.

You don’t have to leave the city to enjoy the serenity and beauty of nature. Fitchburg’s 250-acre **Cogshall Park** is inviting at any time of the year, with miles of walking trails, colorful flowers, a stone house and bandstand—and, of course, beautiful Mirror Lake... all just a quick drive from downtown! Find details at facebook.com/friends of Cogshall Park.

4



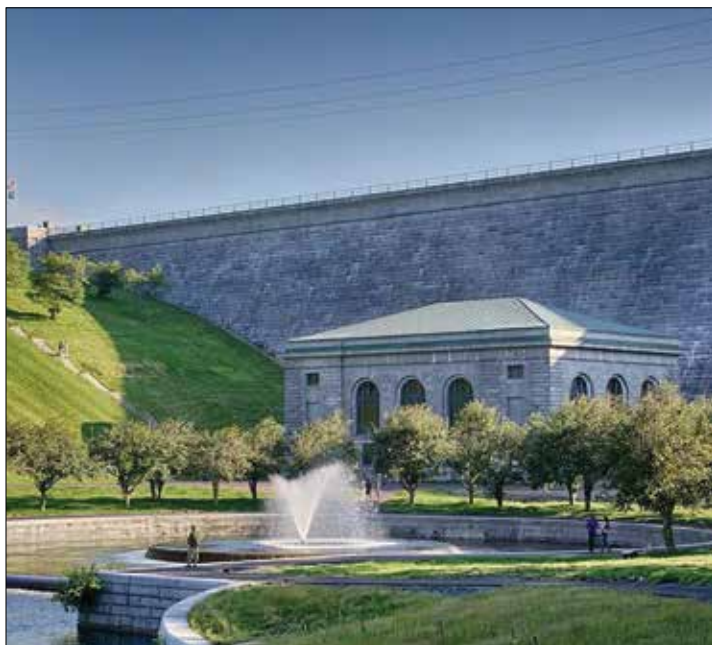
5

From fields of daffodils in the spring to the cozy warmth of the orangerie in winter, the **New England Botanic Garden** at Tower Hill is a not-to-be-missed stop on your tour! Experience the wonder of plants in the heart of New England, open year-round for garden viewing, trail walking, educational programs, exhibitions, and more. Learn more at nebg.org.



6

Wachusett Dam in Clinton is an engineering marvel. When it was completed in 1905, it was the largest gravity dam in the world, creating a reservoir that holds about 65 billion gallons of water. Built by a cadre of Italian, Greek, Irish, and Polish immigrants, Wachusett Reservoir is the second-largest body of water in Massachusetts. The top of the dam is open to visitors only two days a year, but the grounds are open year round. Visit mass.gov/locations/wachusett-reservoir.



7 Taking a farm tour in New England, you'd expect to see cows, sheep, chickens ... maybe some goats. And you will. But you can also meet soft and cuddly alpacas—and find wonderful toys, clothing, and other goods made from their silky fiber—at **In the Meadow Farm** in Lunenburg and **Plain View Farm** in Hubbardston. Check out inthemeadowalpacos.com or plainviewfarmalpacos.com.



8 Wickedly Watermelon. Lavender Lookout. Prescott Pear. Yankee Girl Blush. So many wines, so little time! Take a tour through wine country with a stop at **Hardwick Winery**, where you can sample some fabulous local flavors, listen to live music, or even try your hand at a new craft. Find your way there: hardwickwinery.com.

What do a Philharmonic Orchestra, Bluegrass band, country singer-songwriter, and Celtic fiddlers have in common? They're all performing at the region's newest venue, the **Groton Hill Music Center** this season. This one-of-a-kind space offers unparalleled acoustics and vibrant musical experiences. Visit grotonhill.org.

9



10

History. Art. Nature. You'll find all this, and more, at **Fruitlands Museum** in Harvard. Tour the 1790s Shaker building with one of the earliest collections of Shaker objects in the country. Explore the historic farmhouse where a young Louisa May Alcott lived during the Transcendental experiment in communal living. See works by Indigenous and non-native artists. Ready to explore? Visit thetrustees.org. §

If you can build it,
we can back it.



We're here to put our big lending power behind your commercial financing needs. We can customize loans to fit any need, just like we did for these businesses in Central Massachusetts.

- \$3 Million Waste Recycler
- \$3.5 Million Restaurant Group
- \$4.5 Million Commercial Retail Development
- \$1 Million Shipping/Distribution
- \$500,000 General Dentistry

Ready to get started? Let's work together. Our team has the local expertise and personalized service to help guide you through every step of the way.

Contact Michael Mahlert, EVP Senior Commercial Lending Officer, at **508.499.1887**.

Unlock your potential



Member FDIC | Member DIF



TOWN OF STERLING

STERLING FARMERS MARKET
1 Park Street, Butterick Municipal Building
Fridays 3 PM – 6:30 PM
May through October

STERLING STREET MARKET
Town Common in Sterling Center
Saturdays 10 AM – 2 PM
May through October

STERLING FAIR
Sterling Airport, 121 Greenland Road
September 6 – 8
sterlingfair.org



Fall 2024 & Winter 2025 Events

FRIENDS OF THE CONANT LIBRARY CRAFT FAIR
First Church Sterling, 6 Meetinghouse Hill Road, Sterling
Saturday, November 23
9 AM – 2 PM
sterlinglibrary.org

“LEFT FOR DEAD: SHIPWRECK, TREACHERY, AND SURVIVAL AT THE EDGE OF THE WORLD” WITH AUTHOR ERIC JAY DOLIN
Conant Public Library, 36 Muddy Pond Road, Sterling
September 18, 2024
6:30 PM
sterlinglibrary.org
Registration is required

ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM THEFT WITH BOB AINSWORTH
Conant Public Library, 36 Muddy Pond Road, Sterling
October 10, 2024
6:30 PM
sterlinglibrary.org
Registration is required

THE RELUCTANT MIGRANTS: MIGRATION FROM THE ITALIAN VENETO TO CENTRAL MA PRESENTATION
Conant Public Library, 36 Muddy Pond Road, Sterling
October 24, 2024
6:30 PM
sterlinglibrary.org
Registration is required

MARVELOUS MUSEUMS

Contemporary art. Local history. Cultures from around the world.

Tour the museums of North Central Massachusetts, and you can explore an Egyptian tomb, see Eastern European icons up close and personal, or learn about

the changing face of New England forests.

And along the way, you can revel in the blazing colors of fall foliage, see crystalline branches sparkling in the winter sun, or simply enjoy the bright green fields and forests of spring and summer.

The Fitchburg Art Museum, in downtown Fitchburg, is the leading cultural institution in North Central Massachusetts, and has been an important part of the region's identity, culture, and history for almost one hundred years.

FAM was founded through a bequest from Fitchburg native and American Impressionist painter, Eleanor Norcross (1854-1923). Norcross was motivated by two beliefs: that exposure to the fine art and crafts would be beneficial to the lives and productivity of the city's millworkers, and that great cities were marked by great public institutions. At FAM, on permanent display, is the exhibition *Evoking Eleanor*, which includes Norcross's paintings, artworks that she collected during her art career in Paris, and information about her life and legacy.

Another popular permanent exhibition at FAM is *Discover Ancient Egypt*, several galleries devoted to telling the story of ancient Egyptian civilization through authentic artworks and artifacts, reproductions of important treasures, and hands-on learning activities for kids and families. These activities can also be found throughout the Museum, in FAM's colorful and engaging Learning Lounges.

FAM has a collection of over 8,000 works of art, with particular strengths in American Art, African Art, and photography, which can be seen in changing exhibitions throughout the museum. Through February 23, 2025, visitors can enjoy *Africa Rising: 21st Century African Photography*, a visually stunning exhibition of over fifty photographs created by artists from across the continent in a wide range of styles. And through January 5, 2025, FAM will feature *G.O.A.T (Greatest of All Time): The Sports Photography of Walter Iooss*. Iooss's dramatic color images of American athletes graced the covers of over 300 issues of Sports Illustrated magazine.



FAM is also New England's leading presenter of the work of contemporary artists in our region, and the 2024-2025 exhibition season includes solo exhibitions by three prominent artists. In the fall of 2024, the Museum will present *Bob Dilworth: When I Remember Home*. Dilworth, from Providence, Rhode Island, creates enormous multi-media paintings about the people from the African American community of his childhood in Virginia. The winter/spring of 2025 will feature the career retrospective exhibition of Worcester photographer Stephen DiRado, and emerging Boston photographer Tara Sellios. DiRado's black-and-

white images are documents of his life with family and friends in Central Massachusetts and Martha's Vineyard, and Sellios' wildly creative color photos are based on constructed images of natural materials like bones, bugs, and foliage.

FAM's Community Gallery is a showcase for artists in our local community, and presents exhibitions organized by local schools, artist organizations, and non-profits that offer art programs for their clients. This year's roster includes shows organized by the North County Land Trust, the Aldrich Astronomical Society, and Making Opportunity Count.

The Museum's activities are not limited to exhibitions! FAM offers a wide range of events and public programs, and engages in collaborations with the Fitchburg Public Schools, Fitchburg State University, and other partners. FAM sponsors public art projects for the City of Fitchburg, and is currently working with NewVue Communities on the Fitchburg Arts Community, a campus of 68 units of artist-preference affordable housing, right across the street from the Museum, which will be ready for occupancy in January, 2025. FAM is also a fully bilingual English/Spanish museum.

For more information, visit fitchburgartmuseum.org.

Icon Museum & Study Center

The small industrial town of Clinton may seem an unlikely home for the largest collection of icons in the United States. After heading a successful company in town, Gordon Lankton decided that when the time came to display the icons he had collected while traveling the world, he would establish his museum in a historic building here.

The whole family will find the icons fascinating—children will enjoy examining the icons with magnifying glasses and taking an all-ages scavenger hunt in the galleries.

But, you may ask, what is an icon, and why is this museum so special? Although they're intriguing art works, don't think of icons as paintings; icons are “written” rather than “painted”—a complex set of interwoven symbols

that have evolved over centuries to form a refined and sophisticated visual language. When “reading” an icon, colors, clothing, hairstyles, gestures, and objects the subject holds all offer insight into what the iconographer was trying to convey. Icons range in size from the very small (for home use) to very large (for cathedrals). They are not worshiped, but are, rather, venerated and used in prayer. Traditionally unsigned, icons are considered a window or portal into a divine realm.

And right here in Clinton, you can visit the United States solely dedicated to Russian icons, holding the largest collection of Russian icons in North America, and one of the largest private collections outside of Russia!



Fisher Museum

If you think a forest is a forest is a forest...and the landscape you're seeing today is the same as the landscape the Colonists saw two centuries ago, think again!

The Fisher Museum at Harvard Forest in Petersham tells a different story—the story of the pre-settlement forest and how it changed as the early settlers cleared land for homesteads and farming, and changed again as farming was abandoned and different species of trees began to fill in the empty fields. (If you've ever hiked through local forests, you've no doubt seen the remnants this evolution—the stone walls that long ago marked the edges of a farmer's field.)

At the Fisher Museum, the changing landscape is a story told in dioramas, or models—and it's about more than just fields and trees. Learn about the effects of forest fires on the land, about wildlife habitats, and about conservation. And you'll be fascinated by the new panorama honoring Nipmuc land stewardship and collaboration. The kids can enjoy a scavenger hunt, too, as they take a closer look at the highly-detailed dioramas.

Want to stretch your legs? The Fisher Museum is located in a 3,850-acre forest with 32 miles of trails! Feel free to visit any time—the trails are open 365 days a



year. Brochures are available for a half-mile self-guided reflective trail (new in 2024) centering on local Indigenous land-kinship concepts; a self-guided ecology and Colonial history trail that begins at the Fisher Museum and covers 2.5 miles; a self-guided nature and Colonial history trail that begins at the museum and covers 0.5 miles (marked with red blazes); and more.

See the forests, see the world, see what's new in the studios of today's New England artists—tour a museum today! §

ART From the Heart of the Region

What better way could there be to learn about the region you're visiting than to see it through the eyes of local artists?

While North Central Massachusetts is fortunate to have noteworthy institutions like the **Fitchburg Art Museum, the Icon Museum and Study Center, the Fisher Museum at Harvard Forest, and Fruitlands Museum** in Harvard, small galleries in nearly every city and town regularly turn the spotlight on the work of local residents and works they choose to display.

These exhibitions tend to change from month to month, so no matter when (or how often) you tour the region, there's always a fresh perspective waiting to be discovered. Watercolors, sculpture, photographs, pottery, jewelry and more are on display every day, year-round, in these community galleries, often tucked away in libraries and senior centers.

Ready to explore the heart of the region? Here's a sampling of places you can find contemporary works (many of which may be available for purchase!) in area cities and towns.



The Boulder Art Gallery in Fitchburg.

The Meeting Hall Gallery, tucked between the Townsend Public Library and Senior Center, is home to changing exhibits of artwork and history. Check their schedule at townsendlibrary.org.

The Little Art Gallery at Westminster Town Hall, 11 South St., Westminster, features the work of artists on a monthly basis and can be viewed during regular Town Hall hours in the first floor lobby.

Gallery Sitka at 2 Shaker Rd., Shirley, is a woman-owned and operated New England art gallery in Shirley. Focusing on abstract art, Gallery Sitka represents the work of 20+ painters, sculptors, encaustic artists, and a few jewelry designers from New England and beyond. Visit gallerysitka.com.

The Gardner Museum, 26 Pearl St., Gardner, displays works including a photography exhibit, "Northeast Wild life Through My Eyes" by Jeff Sargent, from September 1 through the end of the year, along with centuries of crafted items from the city's past. Gardnermuseuminc.com.

The Boulder Art Gallery, located on Fitchburg's historic Upper Common on Main street—a short walk from the Fitchburg Art Museum—features original art, vintage art, photography, prints and sculpture. It's one of the area's most exciting venues for period and contemporary art.

The Diamond Heart Art Studio at 112 Main St., Gardner, is an art gallery and more—offering classes, book signings and other events, too. Stop by to see artists at work!



Artist Scott Neimi at The Boulder Art Gallery in Fitchburg.

From paper mosaics to pottery, the **Petersham Art Center** at 8 North St. always has something new to see (and do—classes are offered on a regular basis) in its picturesque home in a picturesque town! (Stop by the Petersham Country Store for lunch when you visit!). Learn more at facebook.com/petershamartcenter.

The East Wing Gallery at Mt. Wachusett Community College, 444 Green St., Gardner, showcases works by students and contemporary artists. The college also has a permanent collection featuring exemplary work from graduating art students, visiting artists, and alumni. Visit mwcc.edu.

The Hammond Hall Art Gallery at Fitchburg State University, 160 Pearl St., Fitchburg, exhibits student work throughout the year. Special annual exhibitions include *Visions*, a juried honors showcase of the year's best original student work in FSU's Communications Media Department; and *ARTeries*, a bi-annual juried exhibition showcasing original student work in drawing, painting, sculpture, and mixed-media art. Learn more at fitchburgstate.edu. §



Top & bottom image: Petersham Art Center.

Bolton Orchards

125 Still River Rd., Bolton, MA 978-779-2733 www.BoltonOrchards.co

Quality at the Crossroads

| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🍏 Local Apples Available Year-Round 🍏 Just Pressed Cider 🍏 Market Fresh Fruits & Vegetables 🍏 Homemade Entrees & Soups 🍏 Deli Sandwiches 🍏 Ice Cream | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 🍏 Gourmet & Specialty Items 🍏 Fruit Baskets 🍏 Homemade Bakery Items & Pies 🍏 Coffee Cafe Open at 8 AM 🍏 Cider Donuts Made Daily |
|---|---|

Open Daily, Year-Round, 9-5

FEELING FESTIVE?

From the first apple blossoms of spring to the joy of the holiday season, there's always something to celebrate in North Central Massachusetts

After a summer packed with blueberry festivals, peach festivals, sunflower festivals and more, local communities are ready to move into high gear in the fall—it is, after all, apple season in Johnny Appleseed's back yard! But there's so much more than apples on the festival menu here; you won't want to miss the Oktoberfest parties (featuring great brews crafted here); pumpkin festivals, where families can gather, and even decorate, those bright orange orbs; and, of course, garlic! Yes, the "festival that stinks" is a late-September tradition in Orange.

And the fun doesn't end with the harvest festivals on area farms. The Johnny Appleseed Festival is held right in downtown Leominster, and food trucks gather at Wachusett Mountain Ski Area for festival-goers who want to

spend a day eating everything from pizza to beef brisket and chocolate-covered strawberries; drinking craft beer (and pumpkin-spiced ale!); and enjoying live music. Love cannoli? The Italian favorite is the star of a festival in Leominster's business district.

What's on your annual Thanksgiving table? You'll find everything you need at the Thanksgiving Harvest Festival in Phillipston—and you can take a nature hike, watch blacksmith demonstrations, and keep the kids busy with family-friendly activities.

If fall is here, winter can't be far behind, and you won't want to miss the Christmas Tree Festivals at the Gardner Museum and Leominster City Hall. Picture it: dozens of themed holiday trees, by local residents and groups. Vote for your favorite; take a chance on winning a tree to take home; bring the kids and watch them delight in the sheer volume of holiday embellishment. Along with the large events listed on this page, local



organizations and communities have planned a full plate of festivals this season; many are listed in the Calendar section of this *Guide* and at visitnorthcentral.com.

Get that festival feeling any time of the year in North Central Massachusetts! The fun never ends, so be sure to check the calendar at visitnorthcentral.com for updated information on all the festivities in the region. §

SEPTEMBER

1-2 Sunday-Monday. Appleseed Country Fair, 10 am -5 pm at Red Apple Farm in Phillipston. Live music, vendors, hayrides, BBQ, fun family activities, more! Redapplefarm.com.

6-8 Friday-Monday. Sterling Fair. A two-and-a-half-day, family-oriented, community, agricultural fair with an emphasis on agriculture and education. Sterlingfair.com.

14 Saturday, 9 am-5pm. Johnny Appleseed 250th Festival in downtown Leominster. Leominster-ma.gov.

14-15 Saturday-Sunday, 12-3 pm. Great New England BBQ Fest at Wachusett Mountain Ski Area, Princeton. Wachusett.com.

14-15 Saturday & Sunday, 11 am-4 pm. Apple Festival at Hollis Hills Farm, Fitchburg. Live music, vendors, PYO apples, ice cream. Hollishillsfarm.com.

28. Saturday, 11 am-8 pm. Oktoberfest "Party in the Street" in downtown Gardner. A celebration devoted to beer, food, fun and families. Starting with a Run for the Beer at 10 am, the day includes a keg tapping at 11; Men's & Women's Stein-holding Competition at 1 pm; Chair Luge at 2; live music from 3-8 pm. Gardendale.com.

28-29 Saturday & Sunday, Garlic & Arts Festival at Forster's Farm, Orange. Visit the "Festival That Stinks" for everything garlic! Travel the garlic globe in the chef demo tent, view work by local artists, participate in workshops and contests at this very "green" event. Garlicandarts.org.

OCTOBER

5-6 Saturday & Sunday, 12-5 pm. Oktoberfest at Wachusett Mountain Ski Area, Princeton. Raise your steins and celebrate with food, live German music, contests, shows, craft and farmers' market vendors, and activities for the whole family. Wachusett.com.

12 Saturday, 10 am-5 pm. Winchendon Fall Festival. Live bands, food trucks, local artists, performances, kids' activities, vendors—enjoy a party that encompasses the entire downtown! Townofwinchendon.com.

14 Monday, 5-9 pm. Cannoli Festival at Monument Park in downtown Leominster. Leominster-ma.gov.

19-20 Saturday & Sunday, 11 am-5 pm. Applefest at Wachusett Mountain Ski Area, Princeton. Local beer, great food, tons of craft vendors, live music and more! Repeats Oct 26-27. Wachusett.com.

26-27 Saturday & Sunday, 11 am-5 pm. Applefest at Wachusett Mountain Ski Area, Princeton. Local beer, great food, tons of craft vendors, live music and more! Wachusett.com.

NOVEMBER

2-3 Saturday & Sunday, 12-5 pm. Fall Food Truck Fest at Wachusett Mountain Ski area, 499 Mountain Rd., Princeton. Visit wachusett.com.

13 Wednesday, 1-4 pm. Opening day of 19th annual Festival of Trees at the Gardner Museum, Gardner. Open Wednesdays-Sundays 10 am-4 pm. Festival closes with raffle of trees on Dec. 7. Gardnermuseuminc.com.

18 Opening day of Festival of Trees in Leominster City Hall. See creatively decorated trees through Dec. 19. Leominster-ma.gov.

Nov 23-24 Saturday & Sunday, 10 am-4 pm. Thanksgiving Harvest Festival at Red Apple Farm, Phillipston. Fresh crops and unique products, pony rides & hayrides, blacksmith demonstrations, local live music, PYO ornamental corn, guided nature hikes. Redapplefarm.com.

Nov. 23-24 Thanksgiving Harvest Festival at Red Apple Farm, Phillipston. Find everything you need for your Thanksgiving dinner—and join the hay bale-tossing and other fun farm contests. Redapplefarm.com.

Westminster Historical Society

Attic Treasures Sale

Saturday, September 28th ~ 9 AM—2 PM

Vintage, Unique and Affordable finds or all!!

110 Main Street

Westminster Cracker Festival

Saturday, October 19th

10:00 AM—5:00 PM

Westminster Center, Main Street

5k—Music—Arts & Crafts—Food & Drink

Farmer's Market ~ Every Friday 3:00—6:00 PM

Academy Hill through Oct 25th

Trick or Treat / Truck or Treat

Thursday, October 31st ~ 5:00—7:00 PM

Bacon Street / Pleasant St/ South Street

Halloween Bonfire @ 7:00 PM ~ behind Fire Station

Christmas Tree Lighting Event

on Academy Hill ~ December 1st

Christmas Tree Bonfire

Field behind VFW ~ January 11, 2025

Visit our web site for more upcoming events throughout the season and check out the recreation & hiking areas at Hager Park, Crocker Pond, Mid-State Trail, Muddy Pond and Wachusett Mountain.

Find it all at: www.westminster-ma.gov



Celebrate the 250th Birthday of Johnny Appleseed! September 26, 1774-2024

Stop in and visit our recently remodeled Johnny Appleseed Visitor Center with new interpretive signs, artifacts from our region's history, dog park for Fido, covered picnic tables, a water bottle filling station, and much more.

- 🍏 Jams, jellies, honey, hand dipped chocolate Oreos
- 🍏 Maple syrup, candy & freshly-made fudge
- 🍏 Gourmet cookies & Maple Kettle Corn
- 🍏 Alpaca socks, mittens, & adorable fluffy alpaca products
- 🍏 Books about the region and Massachusetts
- 🍏 Lots of brochures for local attractions

Johnny Appleseed Visitor Center
1,000 Rt. 2 West Bound in Lancaster, MA 01523
Between Exits 103 & 102
visitnorthcentral.com | (978) 534-2302



Exhibitions, events and more!

FALL - WINTER CALENDAR 2024/25



EVERYTHING YOU LOVE ABOUT NEW ENGLAND

WWW.VISITNORTHCENTRAL.COM/EVENTS/



VIEW OUR FULL CALENDAR ONLINE!



@visitnorthcentralma



visitnorthcentral.com



In this issue of The Guide to North Central Massachusetts, we introduce you to lots of great places and special events. But new concerts, new fairs, and new adventures pop up every day in the vibrant communities across this region.

The following Calendar pages offer a sampling of the great events you can enjoy here; to keep up to date on all the fun, use the QR code on this page, or visit our constantly-expanding website calendar at visitnorthcentral.com.

There's so much to see and do here—we don't want you to miss a thing!

SEPTEMBER

4 Wednesday, 10:30 am. *Story time* at Hollis Hills Farm, 340 Marshall Rd., Fitchburg. Repeats Sep. 18.

6 Friday, 5 pm. *Cruise night* at the PACC 171, Kendall Pond Rd., Gardner.

7 Saturday, 8 am-2 pm. *Templeton Town Wide Yard Sale*. Rain date Sep. 14.

7 Saturday 9 am-4 pm. *2024 Gold Star Ride* at Pepperell VFW Post 3291. Music, raffles, food.

11 Wednesday, 7:30 pm. *Guitarist J.P. Soars and the RedHots* perform at Bull Run Restaurant, 215 Great Rd., Shirley.

12 Thursday, 7-8 pm. *Ponzi program* at the Gardner Museum, 26 Pearl St., Gardner. For reservations, visit gardnermuseuminc.com.

14 Saturday, 5-10 pm. *Orange Solstice Riverfest on the Millers River*, Orange. Lighted boat parade, music, food trucks, fire spinners, more! See orangeriverfest.com. Rain Date Sept. 15.



Flame Twirling at Orange Solstice Riverfest.

14 Saturday 10 am-4 pm. *St. Edward's Fall Festival*, 10 Church St. Westminster.

14-15 Sunday. *Murder Mystery Theater* at the Cannon Theatre, 28 Andrews Parkway, Devens. Visit thecannontheatre.org.

15 Sunday, 10 am-2:30 pm. *Nordic Outdoor Marketplace/TORI & classic car cruise* at Finnish Center at Saima Park, 67 Scott Rd., Fitchburg. saima-park.org.

18 Wednesday, 10:30 am. *Story time* at Hollis Hills Farm, 340 Marshall Rd., Fitchburg.

19 Thursday, 6:30-8 pm. *Survival & Knife Safety* at the Gardner Museum, 26 Pearl St., Gardner. Reservations at gardnermuseuminc.com.

20 Friday, 8 pm. *Dana Fuchs, blues-rock star*, performs at Bull Run Restaurant, 215 Great Rd., Shirley. Tickets at bullrunrestaurant.com.

21 Saturday, 9 am-4 pm. *Fall Fair* at St. Denis Church, Main Street, Ashburnham.

21 Saturday, 10 am-3 pm. *Pepperell Fall Festival* at 4 Hollis St., Pepperell. Family activities all day. Hayrides, pie eating contest, vendors, music.

21 Saturday, 10 am-4 pm. *Celebrate Ashburnham Street Fair* on Main Street. Over 120 artisans and vendors, entertainment, food trucks. Visit the Facebook page.

21 Saturday, 10 am-2 pm. *Truck-a-Palooza and Craft Fair* at 12 Dudley Rd., Townsend.

21 Saturday, 6 pm. *Trailer Park Murder Mystery Dinner* at Williams Restaurant, 184 Parson Blvd., Gardner. Mystery Dinner, a benefit for Ahimsa Haven Rescue. Visit AhimsaHaven.com on Facebook.

21 Saturday, 8 pm. *The Bruce Marshall Group* at the Bull Run Restaurant, 215 Great Rd., Shirley. Visit bullrunrestaurant.com.

21-22 Saturday & Sunday, 10 am-5 pm. *Begonia and Gesneriad Society show and Sale* at New England Botanic Gardner, 11 French Drive, Boylston.

21-22 Saturday & Sunday, 8:30 am-3 p.m. *Fall pro. found Market* at Lancaster Fairgrounds, 339 Seven Bridge Rd., Lancaster.

22 Sunday, 11 am-4 pm. *Motorpalooza* on Templeton Common, 1 Boynton Rd., Templeton. See antique and vintage cars, farm machinery, anything with an engine!

22 Sunday, 1 pm. North Quabbin History Tour. Want to know more about the history of local towns? Mark your calendars and plan to spend a day in exploring community historical museums! Seven local historical society museums are participating. Visit RoyalstonHistorical on Facebook for details. Free.

25-29 Wednesday-Sunday. Winchendon Music Festival at Winchendon History & Cultural Center and the Beals Memorial Library, downtown Winchendon. Free concerts featuring Colin Davin, guitar, Wednesday; John McKean, clavichord, Thursday; John Arcaro & Band, Friday; Yoko Hagino, piano, Saturday; and Andrew Arceci & WMF Artists, Sunday. See Winchendon Music Festival on Facebook for details.

26 Thursday, 6:30 pm. Railroad in Song at the Gardner Museum, 26 Pearl St., Gardner. Reception at 6:30, program at 7 pm. Reservations required; visit gardnermuseuminc.com.

27 Friday, 8 pm. 1964: The Tribute at the Bull Run Restaurant, 215 Great Rd., Shirley. Visit bullrunrestaurant.com.

27-28 Friday & Saturday. Short Comedy Festival in the Guild Hall at Christ Church, 569 Main St. Fitchburg.

28 Saturday, 9 am-2 pm. Attic Treasures Sale at the Westminster Historical Society, 110 Main St., Westminster. Vintage, unique and affordable finds.

28 Saturday 11 am-4 pm. Townsend Fall Festival, 2 School St., Townsend. Crafters, paint a pumpkin, build a scarecrow, entertainment, food trucks, more.

28 Saturday, 10 am-4 pm. GrotonFest Fall, 75 Hollis St., Groton. Showcass budding artists and their crafts, and introduces community non-profit organizations.

29 Sunday, 9 am-3 pm. Devens Coin & Currency Show at Devens Common Center, 31 Andrews Parkway, Devens. Over 75 tables and 55+ dealers from New England and New York. Coins, paper money, tokens, medals, gold and silver. Free appraisals.

29 Sunday, 11 am-3 pm. Alpaca Farm Festival at In the Meadow Farm, 40 Page St., Lunenburg. Local farm products, local artisans, demos, activities for all, and, of course, alpacas for a great family day. Visit inthemedowalpacas.com.

OCTOBER

2 Wednesday, 10:30 am. Story time at Hollis Hills Farm, 340 Marshall Rd., Fitchburg.

3 Thursday, 7:30 pm. DeadBeat with Special Guests Robert Randolph and Wally Ingram jam at the Bull Run Restaurant, 215 Great Rd., Shirley.

5 Saturday, 2 pm. Tractor Parade in downtown Leominster. Doyle Field to Leominster Center.

5 Saturday, 4 pm. Haunted Trails at Winchendon Community Park, 86 Ingleside Dr., Winchendon. Trunk or Treat, Pet Parade, haunted trails. Live music/ from Neon Alley.

5 Saturday, 6 pm. Johnny Appleseed Ball at the Leominster Public Library, West Street. Free admission.

5-6 Saturday & Sunday, 10 am-5 pm. New England Carnivorous Plant Society Show & Sale at New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill, 11 French Dr., Boylston.

5-6 Saturday, 8 pm; Sunday, 12 pm. Psychic Standup: The Future Never Looked so Funny at the Bull Run Restaurant, 215 Great Rd., Shirley. Tickets at bullrunrestaurant.com.

6 Sunday, 10 am-4 pm. Free First Sunday at The Icon Museum and Study Center, 203 Union St., Clinton.

6 Sunday, 1-4 pm. Davis Fall Festival at Davis Farmland, 145 Redstone Hill Rd., Sterling. Davis Mega Maze, BBQ, Brews, and family-fun fall attractions.

10 Thursday, 6:30 pm. Challenges to the International Order at the Gardner Museum, 26 Pearl St., Gardner. Reservations: gardnermuseuminc.com.

11 Friday, 8 pm. The Joe Bouchard Trio performs at the Bull Run Restaurant, 215 Great Rd., Shirley. Visit bullrunrestaurant.com.

12 Saturday, 10 am-4 pm. Harvest Celebration at Sholan Farms, 1125 Pleasant St., Leominster.

12 Saturday, 8 pm. Singer-Songwriter Robert Ellis performs at the Bull Run Restaurant, 215 Great Rd., Shirley. Visit bullrunrestaurant.com.

12 Saturday, 11 am-5 pm. Pumpkin Fest on the Common, Shirley. Pumpkin decorating contest, music, food vendors.

12-14 Saturday-Monday, 11 am-4 pm. Fall Fest at Hollis Hills Farm, 340 Marshall Rd., Fitchburg.

14 Monday, 5-9 pm. Cannoli Festival at Monument Park in downtown Leominster.

16 Wednesday, 10:30 am. Story time at Hollis Hills Farm, 340 Marshall Rd., Fitchburg.

17 Thursday, 6:30 pm. Chair Caning at the Gardner Museum, 26 Pearl St., Gardner. Reservations required at gardnermuseuminc.com.

19 Saturday, 10 am-5 pm. Westminster Cracker Festival at Main Street, Westminster Center. Food, music, arts and crafts, 5k road race. See crackerfestival.com.

19 Saturday, 8 pm. Paul Rischell & Annie Raines perform at the Bull Run Restaurant, 215 Great Rd., Shirley. Visit bullrunrestaurant.com.

25 Friday. Play On! At the Cannon Theatre, 28 Andrews Parkway, Devens. Visit cannontheatre.org.

25 Friday, 8 pm. Dayna Kurtz and Robert Mache perform at Bull Run Restaurant, 215 Great Rd., Shirley.

25-26 Friday & Saturday. Haunted Walk on Templeton Common, Routes 2A and 101. Stroll through the Common and Burial Ground, listening to stories from Templeton's founding families and spooky tales. Visit Templeton Museum on Facebook.

26 Saturday, 10 am-3 pm. St. Vincent de Paul Harvest Fair, 18 Pleasant St., Baldwinville.

26-27 Saturday & Sunday, 11 am-5 pm. Applefest at Wachusett Mountain Ski Area, 499 Mountain Rd., Princeton.

Oct 28-29 Saturday & Sunday, 10 am-5 pm. New England Dahlia Society show & Sale at New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill, 11 French Dr., Boylston.

31 Thursday, 4-7 pm. Haunted Gazebo on Templeton Common, Routes 2A & 101. The Lions Club presents a fright-filled evening (suitable for all ages), complete with treats for the hobgoblins.

31 Thursday, 5-7 pm. Trick or Treating and Halloween Bonfire in Westminster Center. See Westminster-ma.gov.

NOVEMBER

1-2 Friday, 4-8 pm; Saturday, 9 am-5 pm. Pumpkin Patch Food & Craft Fair at Leominster United Methodist Church, 77 Hall St., Leominster. See leominsterumc.org.

2 Saturday, 11 am to 6 pm. Shirley Film Fest at historic Shirley Meeting House, 41 Brown Rd., Shirley. Engage with and appreciate a diverse range of films from various genres, cultures and perspectives.

3 Sunday, 10 am-4 pm. Free First Sunday at The Icon Museum and Study Center, 203 Union St., Clinton.

6 Thursday, 7:30 pm. Billy Prine presents songs and stories of John Prine at the Bull Run Restaurant, 215 Great Road, Shirley. Visit bullrunrestaurant.com.

7 Thursday, 6:30 pm. The Professor Was a Spy: Gardner's Norman Holmes Pearson at the Levi Heywood Memorial Library, 55 West Lynde St., Gardner.

8 Friday, 8 pm. No Static: Tribute to Steely Dan at the Bull Run Restaurant, 215 Great Rd., Shirley. See bullrunrestaurant.com.

9 Saturday, 9 am-3 pm. Narragansett Craft Fair at Narragansett Middle school, 464 Baldwinville Rd., Baldwinville. Visit narragansettcraftfair.com.

9 Saturday, 1 pm. Jack Rabbit Slims play the Wachusett Brewing Company, 175 State Road East, Westminster.

9 Saturday, 4-8 pm. Harvest Dinner Dance: at the Finnish Center at Saima Park, 67 Scott Rd., Fitchburg. See saima-park.org.

9 Saturday, 6-9 pm. Red Bridge Duo performs at King Philip Restaurant, Route 2A, Phillipston.

9 Saturday, 8 pm. Zoso: the Ultimate Led Zeppelin Experience at the Bull Run Restaurant, 215 Great Rd., Shirley. bullrunrestaurant.com.

13 Wednesday, 1-4 pm. Opening day of 19th annual Festival of Trees at the Gardner Museum, Gardner. Open Wednesdays-Sundays 10 am-4 pm. Festival closes with raffle of trees on Dec. 7. Gardnermuseuminc.com

15 Friday, 5:30-7 pm. Full Moon Hike at Mass. Audubon's Wachusett Meadow, 113 Goodnow Rd., Princeton.

15 Friday 7:30 pm. Comedy at the Boulder Café, 880 Main Street, Fitchburg.

16 Saturday 10 am-3 pm. Holiday Craft Fair at the Sizer School, 500 Rindge Rd, Fitchburg.

16 Saturday, 6 pm. Mr. Strickland performs at Wachusett Brew Yard, 175 State Rd East, Westminster.

16 Saturday, 10 am-3 pm. Annual Gaming Day at Devens, 94 Jackson Rd., Devens. Join in various miniature war games held throughout the day. No experience needed and all ages welcome! Visit fortdevensmuseum.org.

18 Monday. Opening Day for Festival Trees at Leominster City Hall, 25 West St. See creatively decorated trees through Dec. 19. Leominster-ma.gov.



Gardner Festival of Trees.

23 Saturday, 8 pm. Dave Hause performs at the Bull Run Restaurant, 215 Great Rd., Shirley. Visit bullrunrestaurant.com.

29 Friday. Opening of Christmas Tree Sales and Holiday Light Show at Sholan Farms, 1125 Pleasant St., Leominster.

30 Saturday, 10 am-4 pm. Holiday Market at Polish American Citizens Club (PACC), 171 Kendall Pond West, Gardner.

29-30, Friday & Saturday, 7:30 pm. *The Sound of Music* at Theatre at the Mount, 444 Green St., Gardner. Repeats Dec 1, 6-8. Special Sensory-Friendly Performance—December 7 at 2 pm. Visit mwcc.edu/tam.

30 Saturday, 2-3 pm. *Meditative Spiritual Bucket Drumming* at Alyssa's Place 297 Central St. Gardner. See facebook.com/drumhealthy.

DECEMBER

1 Sunday, 10 am-4 pm. *Free First Sunday* at The Icon Museum and Study Center, 203 Union St., Clinton.

1 Sunday. *Christmas Tree Lighting Event on Academy Hill*, Westminster.

1 Sunday, 2 pm. *The Fitchburg Military Band Holiday Concert* at Emanuel Lutheran Church, 1200 John Fitch Highway, Fitchburg.

5 Thursday, 5:30-8:30 pm. *Holiday Extravaganza* at Polish American Citizens Club (PACC), 17 Kendall Pond Rd W., Gardner. An evening of shopping with crafters and vendors.

7 Saturday, 8-10 am. *Pannukakku Breakfast* Celebrating Finland's 107 years of Independence from Russia. Finnish Center at Saima Park, 67 Scott Rd., Fitchburg. See saima-park.org.

7 Saturday, 11 am-3 pm. *Grotonfest Winter* at the Prescott Community Center, 145 Main St., Groton, celebrating artists in our region. See facebook.com/GrotonFest.

7 Saturday, 9 am-12 pm. *Sterling Garden Club Greens Sale* at the 1835 Town Hall, 31 Main St., Sterling.

7 Saturday, 3 pm. *Winter Stroll, Parade of Lights and Tree Lighting* in downtown Leominster. Do some holiday shopping from 3 to 5 pm, then welcome the season of light with a parade and tree lighting!

7-8 Saturday, 9 am-3 pm; Sunday, 9 am-1 pm. *St. Martin's Holiday Fair* at American Legion Hall, 3 Central St., Baldwinville. Visit saintmartinchurch.org.

8 Sunday, 3 pm. *The Greater Gardner Community Choir (GGCC) presents its Annual Holiday Concert, "Joy Is Here!"* at Bethany Baptist Church, 72 Ryan St., Gardner. Visit ggcchoir.com

14 Saturday 2 pm. *Fox & the Dragon performs at Hardwick Winery*, 3305 Greenwich Rd., Hardwick.

14 Saturday, 6-9 pm. *Red Bridge Duo performs at King Phillip Restaurant*, Rt. 2A, Phillipston.

15-30. *Holiday Light Fight* in Hubbardston. Take a driving tour of participating home, vote for your favorite decorated property. Visit hubbardstonma.us for details.

19 Thursday. *Indoor Farmers Market* at Leominster City Hall, 25 West St., Leominster.

20 Friday, 6-9 pm. *Trigger South performs at the Wachusett Brew Yard*, State Road East, Westminster.

20 Friday, 8 pm. *An Evening with Aaron Tveit* at Groton Hill Music Center, 122 Old Ayer Rd., Groton. Visit grotonhill.org.

31 Tuesday, 6-10:30 pm. *Starry Starry Night, a New Year's eve celebration* in downtown Orange. See starrystarrynight.org.

JANUARY

2 Thursday, 7-10 pm. *This Thursday Jazz Jam* at Phoenix Bar & Grill, 4 Ayer Rd., Shirley. Players are welcome to sit in, bring your horn axe or sticks and join the fun!

5 Sunday, 10 am-4 pm. *Free First Sunday* at The Icon Museum and Study Center, 203 Union St., Clinton.

11 Saturday. *Christmas Tree Bonfire on VFW Field*, Westminster. See Westminster-ma.gov.

16 Thursday, 8 pm. *Celebrity Series of Boston presents pianist Yulianna Avdeeva* at Groton Hill Music Center, 122 Old Ayer Rd., Groton. Visit grotonhill.org.

29 Monday, 6-8 pm. *Gardenmania at Tata Auditorium*, City Hall, 25 West St., Leominster.

FEBRUARY

1 Saturday, 10 am-2 pm. *Ski Trail Open House* at Finnish Center at Saima Park, 67 Scott Rd., Fitchburg. Trails open to the public for skiing and snowshoeing, or hiking. See saima-park.org.

3 Monday, 8 am. *Groundhog Day with Featherstone* at Monument Park in downtown Leominster. Who needs Puxatawny Phil when we have our own pink prognosticator? See what the hometown flamingo thinks about the arrival of spring!

8 Saturday, 7:30 pm. *Vista Philharmonic Orchestra presents a concert of Music Without Boundaries* at Groton Hill Music Center, 122 Old Ayer Rd., Groton, with special guests Robert Langevin, flute and Marco Granados, flute. Visit grotonhill.org.

18, Tuesday, 5:30 pm. *Indoor Drive-In Movie Night at Tata Auditorium* in Leominster City Hall, 25 West St, Leominster.

20 Thursday, 4-6 pm. *Indoor Farmers Market* at Leominster City Hall, 25 West St., Leominster.

23 Saturday, 8-10am. *Celebrate National Sauna Week* at a Pannakkuku Breakfast at the Finnish Center at Saima Park, 67 Scott Rd., Fitchburg. See saima-park.org.



Whether you are planning your wedding with us, enjoying a delicious dinner in one of our restaurants, attending one of our events or staying overnight with us, our goal is to make you feel at home.

The Colonial Hotel

The Colonial Hotel
625 Betty Spring Road, Gardner, MA 01440
978.630.2500
www.Colonial-Hotel.com



*Experience Classic
New England
Charm*

The Chocksett Inn

The Chocksett Inn
59 Laurelwood Road, Sterling, MA 01564
978.422.3355
www.ChocksettInn.com

Live Where You Play!

Call me for all your real estate needs.

MICHELLE HAGGSTROM

www.MAHomeConnections.com

mhaggstrom@kw.com

978.660.9912



Your Real Estate Resource

Each office is independently owned and operated.

kw NORTH CENTRAL
KELLERWILLIAMS REALTY



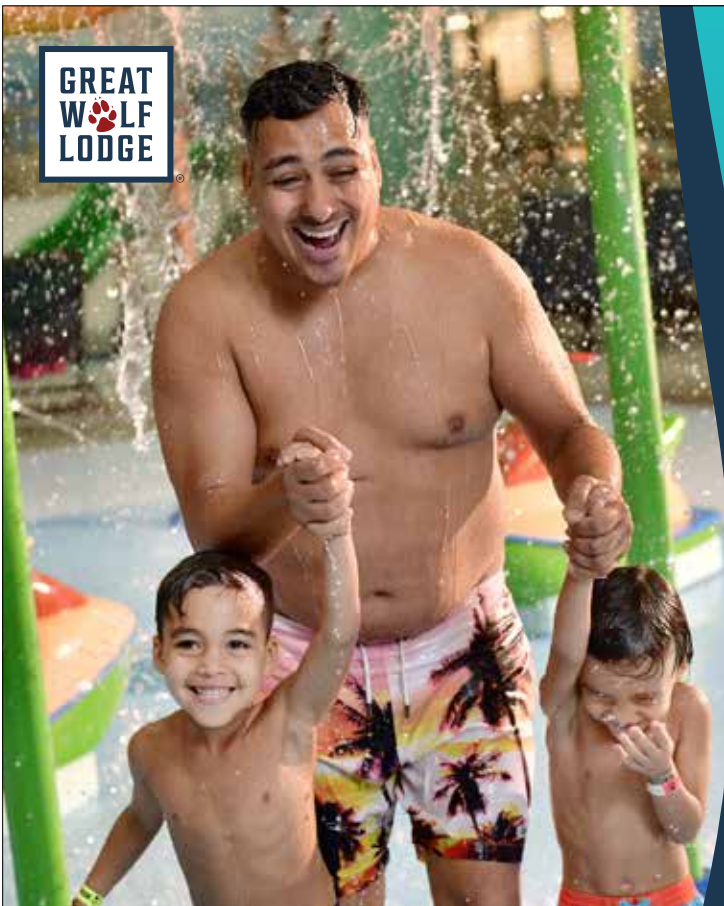
RELAX & REWIND IN THE HEART OF GROTON, MASSACHUSETTS

The Groton Inn is a boutique inn that seamlessly blends the charm and elegance of a historic hotel with the comforts and amenities of today's modern traveler. 60 luxurious guest rooms, beautiful outdoor spaces, and unique artwork from local artists create a sophisticated retreat.

The on-site restaurant, Forge & Vine, features an eight-foot wood-fired grill, open kitchen, seasonally rotating menu, and outdoor dining overlooking iconic Gibbet Hill.

THE GROTON INN

www.thegrotoninn.com | www.forgeandvine.com



Book now, and grow stronger as a pack

VISIT WWW.GREATWOLF.COM/NEW-ENGLAND



Winter Wonderland



Night Lights at New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill.

What could create more of a “New England” feeling than a leisurely stroll on a crisp winter evening? How about a stroll that’s illuminated by thousands ... no, tens of thousands ... even hundreds of thousands ... of holiday lights?

There’s no doubt that the acres of rolling orchards at **Red Apple Farm** in Phillipston are stunning in the spring, when the pink and white apple blossoms are in bloom, and breezes send petals fluttering like a soft snowfall. But the orchard takes on an entire new life, a new panorama, when winter arrives. The apple blossoms, leaves and ruby-red fruits of spring, summer and fall may have faded—but they give way in winter to miles and miles of twinkling lights, creating a country wonderland.

Al Rose, whose family has owned the hilltop farm for four generations, decided a few years ago that the fields and orchards deserved to be enjoyed beyond the last harvests of fall. Visitors were already trekking to the farm to shop in the country store and gather at the brew barn for food and music year-round— so why not help them enjoy the great outdoors when the air is crisp and clear, and the trees and fields are covered in snow? He teamed up with Lester Spear to create a new tradition for visitors to enjoy.

“The first year, we used about 100,000 lights, and then went to 200,000 last year ... and it’s growing,” Rose said.

Visitors on a winter evening can follow meandering pathways through the orchard, stop by a fire pit to warm up, and enjoy a mug of cider along the way. The paths, of course, aren’t paved— this is, after all, a working farm—but are suitable for most folks, including kids in strollers, to traverse.

“We love New England,” Rose said, “but in the winter, people may start to feel closed in. “This is another way for folks to get out and enjoy the country. It’s a memorable thing to do with a family. It’s kind of a Norman Rockwell, Currier & Ives, old-fashioned kind of experience.”

But Wait! There’s More!

Love the lights? Want even more? You’re in luck!

The Red Apple Farm offers a true

country experience—but if you just can’t get enough of holiday lights, the region has a couple more great options for you to try!

The New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill also has a walking experience awaiting your visit. Running from Thanksgiving through the end of the year, the holiday lights transform the formal gardens and conservatories into a glittering world. The Night Lights display is a key fundraiser for New England Botanic Garden, a nonprofit organization operated by the Worcester County Horticultural Society. The exhibit runs nightly from 4 to 10 p.m., and tickets can be purchased through the website, nebg.org.

Don’t feel like walking? Pack up the family for an awe-inspiring drive through the **Lancaster Fairgrounds**, a mile-long “Celebration of Lights” trip sparkling with a million LED lights

Winter Lights at Red Apple Farm.



during the holiday season.

And if you enjoy holiday light displays but would rather sit, relax and let the show sweep over you, head up to **Sholan Farms** in Leominster. High on a hill overlooking the city, the volunteer-run orchard puts on a dazzling

light display; sit in your car, turn your radio on, and enjoy the show!

Winter days may be short— but there’s plenty of light to brighten your holiday season wherever you are in North Central Massachusetts! §



RESOURCES

Get all the details about these season-brightening events here:

Red Apple Farm, 455 Highland Ave., Phillipston.
Redapplefarm.com.

New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill,
11 French Dr., Boylston. Nebg.org.

Sholan Farms, 1125 Pleasant St., Leominster.
Sholanfarms.com.

Lancaster Celebration of Lights, 318 Seven
Bridge Rd., Lancaster. Fiestashows.com.

Keep up to date with these, and other holiday-season events, at the Visit North Central Massachusetts website, visitnorthcentral.com.



— JEFFREY'S —
ANTIQUÉ CO-OP MALL

OPEN
7 DAYS A WEEK!
10 AM – 3 PM
WED. NIGHTS TILL 7 PM

Over 150+ dealers.
Come in and browse through this friendly & relaxed shop, offering the most eclectic and ever changing inventory of antiques & collectibles. Come in and find that unique antique.

Something for every collector's estate!
Vintage Jewelry
Furniture
Glassware
Comic Books
Prints
Pottery
Primitives
Linens
LP's
and much more...

62 Chase Road, (Rt.13) Lunenburg, MA
(978) 582-7831 • jeffreysantiquecoopmall@gmail.com



LEGENDS GRILLE & SPORTS BAR
Dine-In • Take-Out • Catering

FULL MENU • DAILY SPECIALS
DINE-IN • TAKE-OUT
CATERING • LOCAL CRAFT BEERS
INDEPENDENTLY-OWNED LOCAL SMALL BUSINESS

68 AIRPORT ROAD, FITCHBURG, MA
978-342-6500
VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR FALL/WINTER HOURS
LEGENDSBARANDGRILLE.COM

MOUNTAIN Skiing... and More!



As soon as the first flakes of snow hit the trails at Wachusett Mountain, ski enthusiasts pack up their gear and head to Princeton by car and train, anxious to hit the slopes for a fun day (or evening!).

But did you know that Wachusett Mountain Ski Area offers more than its popular 27 trails, eight lifts, and 100 percent snowmaking ability?

Wachusett Mountain—located right here in Central Massachusetts—is home to some of the best skiing and snowboarding in the region. It is well known for its beginner lessons, top of the line snowmaking and grooming, and great food options. However, we're going to give you a peek at a few things to do on the mountain that only the locals know about.

So...here are four things to do on the slopes of Wachusett Mountain that might be news to you:

1. Night Skiing. Wachusett is open daily until 9:30 pm, making it an ideal stop after school or work to get some much needed outdoor time in the winter! The lodge does get cozy with all the school group kids, but they are usually all out by 6 or 7 pm, leaving plenty of space on the hill (and in the restaurant).



2. Terrain Park. If you're a little daring or just want to explore a new type of skiing or snowboarding, look no further than the terrain park. With a wide variety of features including jumps, boxes, rails, spines, hits, and jibs there are plenty of ways to take your riding to the next level. Don't worry if you're new to the park scene, there is a dedicated beginner area with small unimposing features for those who just want to dip their toe in.

3. Bullock Lodge Cider House. Located in between Conifer Connection and Salamander Cutoff Trail you'll find Bullock Lodge, a 1930s stone lodge originally built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the days long before chairlifts whisked us to the top of the mountain. The lodge has been renovated and is now operated by Red Apple Farm out of Phillipston, serving up hot cider, fresh cider donuts, and apple turnovers. The cozy wood stove-heated interior and rustic charm make this the perfect stop during your ski day.



4. Balance Rock Trail top to bottom. Balance Rock trail was one of the original ski trails cut back when Wachusett was a state-run operation. The trail still exists today, but because of the intersection with Conifer Connection, it is hard to see it as a full run. But when all the sections of the trail are open, a fun adventure is to ski the whole thing from the summit to the base. Try these out on your next visit to Wachusett! §



INFLATABLE ARENAS & **Funcade**
ALWAYS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC



TWO NEW JUMPING ARENAS
FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT

THE SWAMP & BEACH BAY

BIRTHDAY PARTIES ARE OUR SPECIALTY

FUNSTUFPARTYPLACE.COM | 978 342 5000
791 WATER STREET (RTE. 12) FITCHBURG MA




Nov. 1
4 – 8pm

Nov 2
9am – 5pm

Leominster United
Methodist Church
77 Hall St. & Merriam Ave
978-537-1356

Featuring Santa
Sat. Noon-2pm

Friday, Nov. 1

Fried Chicken Dinner, 4:30 – 6:00pm

Saturday, Nov. 2

Breakfast, 9am – 11:30am

Lunch, 11:30am – 4:30pm (à la carte)

Dinners: Adults \$10⁰⁰ • Seniors \$9⁰⁰

Children under 9, \$5⁰⁰

www.leominsterumc.org



WINCHENDON FALL FESTIVAL

Central Street, Winchendon

Saturday, October 12 • 10am–5pm, rain or shine

Live bands Bounce House/Face Painting Food Trucks
Local Artists Performances Kids' Activities Over 150+ vendors

Local Restaurants

www.TownofWinchendon.com

facebook.com/Winchendon-Fall-Festival-2285999178280306

Ad Sponsored by the Winchendon Redevelopment Authority

Places to visit, people to see, things to do!

FALL - WINTER MEMBERS 2024/25

ANTIQUES

Hobart Village Antique Mall

445 Main St., West Townsend
978-597-0332

hobartvillage.com

An antique mall featuring 80 dealers; new country furniture, farm tables, Amish-made oak furniture and collectibles from local estates.

Jeffrey's Antique Co-op Mall

54 Chase Rd., Lunenburg
978-582-7831

jeffreysantiquecoopmall.com

Multi-dealer antique shop with eclectic and ever-changing stock of antiques and collectibles, furniture, country décor, vintage toys, and more.

ART GALLERIES

Diamond Heart Art Studio

112 Main Street, Gardner
978-516-3040

diamondheartsartstudio.com

A husband and wife team of artists creating abstract art and crafts, and classes.

Gardner Area League of Artists (GALA)

52 Murdock Ave., Winchendon
Galagardner.org

Visit GALA's unique Art Gallery and immerse yourself in artwork in various mediums and affordable prices. Rotating art shows, workshops and gift shop.

Gallery At 759 Main

759 Main Street, Fitchburg
Gallery759.com

We are discerning collectors specializing in sports, Hollywood, history, music and presidential collectibles. Each item was personally selected for its interest and value.

New Dawn Arts Center

84 Main Street, Ashburnham
978-235-3691

newdawnarts.org

We work to unite the community around the arts, through programming that makes arts education, appreciation, and presentation available to our greater region.

ATTRACTIONS

Davis Farmland

Children's Discovery Farm

145 Redstone Hill Rd., Sterling
978-422-6666

davisfarmland.com

The largest sanctuary of endangered farm animals in North America. U-Pick apples and pumpkins in the fall. Opening mid-April - October.

Funstuf Party Place

791 Water St., Fitchburg
978-342-5000

funstufpartyplace.com

Let us help you bring more FUN to your event. Remember, at Funstuf Party Place "It's All About the Party!"

Great Wolf Lodge

50 Great Wolf Drive, Fitchburg
978-343-9653

greatwolf.com/newengland

Weatherproof family fun, with a massive 84-degree indoor waterpark, exclusive to resort guests; MagiQuest; indoor ropes course and more.

BANKING

Avidia Bank

470 Lancaster St., Leominster
800-508-2265

avidiabank.com

A \$1 Billion mutual community bank, with branch offices in Hudson, Clinton, and Leominster.

BankHometown

9 Sack Blvd., Leominster
888-307-5887

bankhometown.com

For over 125 years, we have believed in always doing the right thing. For us, that's our customers and communities.

Enterprise Bank and Trust Company

420 John Fitch Hwy., Fitchburg
978-656-5689

enterprisebanking.com

Personalized, comprehensive banking solutions..

Fidelity Bank

9 Leominster Conn., Leominster
800-581-5363

fidelitybankonline.com

We are experts of Personal Finance. Fidelity Bank provides financial services to help our customers get where they want to be.

GFA Credit Union

229 Parker St., Gardner
978-632-2542

gfafcu.com

As a member of GFA, you are an owner. Your deposits help the first-time home owner buy their home or support a small local business.

IC Credit Union

300 Bemis Rd., Fitchburg
800-262-1001

iccreditunion.org

We strive to go beyond products and services and help our members achieve financial wellness.

Leominster Credit Union

20 Adams St., Leominster
978-537-8021

leominstercu.com

LCU is a member-owned, not-for-profit financial cooperative with seven branches in Clinton, Leominster, Sterling and Worcester.

Rollstone Bank & Trust

780 Main St., Fitchburg
978-345-1061

rollstonebank.com

RBT is a full-service community bank specializing in commercial banking and wealth management since 1846.

TD Bank

470 Main St., Worcester
800-322-3264

tdbank.com

TD Bank Massachusetts, has 160 branches in Mass. and Southern New Hampshire, including Fitchburg, Leominster, Gardner, Athol and Orange.

Workers Credit Union

815 Main St., Fitchburg
978-345-1021

wcu.com

We are a full-service financial institution offering competitive deposit and loan products. Founded in 1914 with 16 branches.

BEAUTY

Angel Salon & Spa

875 Merriam Ave., Leominster
978-537-4126

angelsalonandspa.com

We offer a variety of salon and spa services

Ash & Ash Classic Mobile Barbershop & Salon

206 Worcester Road, Princeton
978-464-2020

Luxury grooming service conducted by a master barber with over 30 years' experience.

Hey Good Look'n Salon and Spa

370 Summer Street, Fitchburg
978-345-2308

hglsalon.com

Hair, Nails, Waxing, Cosmetics, Pedicures and Massage Therapy.

House of Beauty Supply

653 N. Main Street, Leominster
978-840-3070

Newly opened, we sell all kinds of hair extensions, wigs and hair care products.

Keith Kartanos Hair Studio

130 Lancaster Street, Leominster
978-580-7944

Hair specialist.

LG Moda Salon & Boutique

1009 Central Street, Leominster
978-401-0289

lgmoda.com

Professional Hair, Color Stylist, Nail Techs, Waxing, and specializes in anti-ageing products & Women's Clothing Rx

Lush Rx Aesthetics

646 Central Street, Suite 3,
Leominster

978-212-9333

lushrx-aes.com

Providing safe and effective solutions curated to your individual beauty and wellness needs.

Soul Serenity/Powerful Crystals

67 Main Street, Leominster
978-518-2128

soulserenitybeautyinc.com

We focus on customized, result driven, non-invasive skin care treatments.

BREWERIES, WINERIES & CIDERIES

Hardwick Vineyard & Winery

3305 Greenwich Rd., Hardwick
413-967-7763

hardwickwinery.com

This Winery is home to a Federal style mansion and a timber frame barn. Six varieties of French hybrid grapes are used to make our award-winning wines.

Moon Hill Brewing/ Gardner Ale House

74 Parker St., Gardner
978-669-0122

gardnerale.com

Gardner Ale House is a family-oriented brewpub and restaurant, with a casual, bistro style menu, 12+ award-winning beers on tap and live music.

Red Apple Farm Cider

455 Highland Ave., Phillipston
978-249-6763

redapplefarm.com

Dry & semi-sweet flagship hard ciders, special blends & heritage varieties available. Outdoor cider garden, country store and Moon Hill beer on tap.

Thirsty Robot Brewing

265 Summer St., (Rear), Fitchburg
978-895-5931

thirstyrobotbrewing.com

A ragtag collection of misfits who find solace in working hard to produce beer that you will enjoy. Specializing in New England IPAs.

Wachusett Brewing Company, Inc.
 175 State Rd. E, Westminister
 978-874-9965
wachusettbrew.com   
 Open 7 days a week for you to enjoy our great food, live music, and our award-winning beers. Visit us online.

CAMPING
Lamb City Campground
 85 Royalston Rd., Phillipston
 978-249-2049
lambcity.com  
 Family owned/operated for over 30 years. With 280 sites, full hookups, 17 pull thru, tenting, RV rentals, cabins, sewage disposal, store, 2 rec halls, 3 pools, more.

Pine Acres Family Camping Resort
 203 Bechan Rd., Oakham
 508-882-9509
facebook.com/pineacres 
 Twice voted Park of the Year nationally! We offer tenting to waterfront sites, rustic cabins, RV rentals. Big rig friendly! Boating, fishing, pool, kids splash pad.

The Pines Campground
 39 Davis Rd., Ashby
 978-386-7702
thepinescampground.com 
 A four-season family campground with a pool, showers, weekend activities, store, heated bathroom, firewood, ice, picnic areas, and recreation hall.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS
Town of Ashburnham
 32 Main St., Ashburnham
 978-827-4100
ashburnham-ma.gov
 The "Town of Many Lakes" is home to Mount Watatic and the multi-state Midstate Trail. Enjoy vibrant arts, shops and dining.

City of Fitchburg
 718 Main St., Fitchburg
 978-829-1801
fitchburgma.gov 
 Enjoy attractions from Fitchburg State University to historic downtown architecture and the Fitchburg Art Museum.

City of Gardner
 95 Pleasant St., Gardner
 978-257-4136
gardner-ma.gov 
 The Chair City is evolving, manufacturing is growing, technology companies are expanding, and new businesses are opening, in the heart of Massachusetts.


City of Leominster
 25 West St., Leominster
 978-534-7500
leominster-ma.gov 
 Leominster encompass the very essence of New England, from a hilltop apple orchard to a lively downtown, 26 miles of trails, 12 annual events, with unique shops and restaurants.

Nashua River Watershed Association
 592 Main St., Groton
 978-448-0299
nashuariverwatershed.org 
 Conserve open spaces for water quality, wildlife habitat, farms, forests, and recreation.

Town of Lunenburg
 17 Main St., Lunenburg
 978-582-4130
lunenburgma.gov 
 The Town maintains a rural flavor, with farms and orchards.

Town of Pepperell
 1 Main Street, Pepperell
 978-433-0333
Town.pepperell.ma.us 
 Known for its community spirit and quaint New England charm, Pepperell provides numerous opportunities to explore nature as well as a variety of attractions for visitors to enjoy.

Town of Sterling
 1 Park St., Sterling
 978-422-8111
Sterling-ma.gov 
 The town retains much of its small-town atmosphere. Famous residents include Ebenezer Butterick developed dress patterns and Mary Sawyer pet lamb who inspired the poem, "Mary Had a Little Lamb".


Town of Townsend
 272 Main Street, Townsend
 978-597-1700
Townsendma.gov 
 Outdoor life abounds in Townsend and country life is how to best describe living and visiting the town.

Town of Westminister
 11 South St., Westminister
westminister-ma.gov 
 With Wachusett Mountain, Leominster State Forest and the Midstate Trail, Westminister is a paradise for outdoor enthusiasts.

Town of Winchendon
 109 Front St., Winchendon
townofwinchendon.com 
 Routes 202,12,140, pass through the quiet Town of Winchendon. A town rich in history, culture and the Winchendon Rail trail and New Amphitheater.

EDUCATION

Applewild School
 120 Prospect St., Fitchburg
 978-342-6053
applewild.org   
 Applewild School provides excellent, affordable education to families in North Central Massachusetts.

Fitchburg Public School
 376 South St., Fitchburg
 978-345-3200
fitchburg.k12.ma.us 
 One district where all means ALL, every student, every day, no exceptions.



The Last U-pick Orchard in Johnny Appleseed's Birthplace
Sholan Farms Since 2001
 CHECK FACEBOOK FOR UPDATED HOURS • JULY - OCTOBER 

FARMSTAND HOURS
 Open for the season August 24
 Hours: August-October: 10am-5pm
 November hours: Weekends 11am-3pm
 Check website for u-pick peaches, blueberries, & raspberries

HARVEST FESTIVAL
 October 12

CHRISTMAS TREE HOURS
 November 29 until sold out. Open 10am-5pm

CHRISTMAS TREE SALES & LIGHT SHOW
 Beginning November 29

Open to the public for hiking and picnicking throughout the year
 Field trips, tours & outings throughout the year. Check our hours on our website or Facebook

www.sholanfarms.com • 1125 Pleasant St., Leominster, MA
Farm: 978-840-3276 • Mail: PO Box 632, Leominster, MA 01453

Fitchburg State University

160 Pearl St., Fitchburg
978-345-2151
fitchburgstate.edu

FSU offers undergraduate and graduate programs with an emphasis on career-orientated learning. With liberal arts, and selected majors in traditional arts and sciences.

Montachusett Regional Vocational Tech School

1050 Westminster St., Fitchburg
978-345-9200
montytech.net

"Monty Tech" name has become synonymous with innovative career, technical training programs and exceptional academic programming.

Mount Wachusett Community College

444 Green St., Gardner
978-632-6600
mwcc.edu

Offering quality education at affordable prices, MWCC offers several degree and certificate program options to fit your life goals.

Sizer School

500 Rindge Rd., Fitchburg
978-345-2701
sizerschool.org

Commitment to diversity and inclusiveness, Sizer seeks to send graduates into the world who THINK for themselves, CARE about others, ACT creatively and responsibly.

St. Bernard's Central Catholic High School

45 Harvard St., Fitchburg
978-342-3212
stbernardscchs.org

It's been 100 years and St. Bernard's continues to graduate some of the region's best and brightest young men and women.

The Winchendon School

12 Ash Street, Winchendon
978-297-1223
winchendon.org

A great educational High School experience awaits you with campuses in MA and NYC.

FARMS

Bolton Orchards

125 Still River Rd., Bolton
978-779-2733
boltonorchards.co

Specialty food store, deli, produce, bakery, flowers, gift baskets, local apples and cider available year-round. Old-fashioned ice cream and coffee café.

Brookfield Orchards

12 Lincoln Rd., North Brookfield
508-867-6858
brookfieldorchardsonline.com

A family friendly country store supplying locally grown delicious apples for over 100 years! The 5th Generation farm is the quintessential New England experience.

Carlson Orchards, Inc

115 Oak Hill Rd., Harvard
978-456-3916
carlsonorchards.com

Open July to November. Pick your own fruit in season from apples, peaches, cherries, nectarines, blueberries, and raspberries. Over 100 acres of fruit orchards.

Sholan Farms

1125 Pleasant St., Leominster
978-840-3276
sholanfarms.com

The last working apple orchard in Johnny Appleseed birthplace, offers walking-hiking trails, picnic area, cross-country skiing, U-Pick fruits and Christmas trees.

Hollis Hills Farm

340 Marshall Rd., Fitchburg
978-696-3130
hollishillsfarm.com

Family owned and operated with their own maple products, local ice cream, pick your own fruits and flowers. Outdoor bar and restaurant open seasonally.

In the Meadow Farm

40 Page St., Lunenburg
978-696-3332
inthemeadowalpacas.com

Farm offers a complete alpaca experience. Shop for all things alpaca, take a tour, interact with the alpacas, take a felting/ knitting class. Yoga on Saturday mornings April–October.

Lanni Orchards

294 Chase Rd., Lunenburg
978-582-6246
lanniorchards.com

One stop shop for everything local. Wines, Craft Beers, Hard Ciders, Smith's Cheese, Dom's meats, chocolates, and cut flowers.

Meadowbrook Orchards

209 Chace Hill Rd., Sterling
978-365-7617
meadowbrookorchards.com

Operated by the Chandler family since 1912. They harvest apples, blueberries, pumpkins, nectarines and raspberries. Farm-store and bakery.

Plain View Farm

130 Gardner Rd., Hubbardston
774-258-1194
plainviewfarmalpacas.com

Stop by to see and meet the alpacas! Shop for quality alpaca items yarn, socks, hats, gloves, scarves, sweaters and more!

Red Apple Farm

455 Highland Ave., Phillipston
978-249-6763
redapplefarm.com

Country store has pies, dumplings, cider, donuts, fudge, fresh produce. Pick apples, peaches, berries, pears, pumpkins, potatoes, sunflowers. Visit the animals and take a hayride. Visit the Brew Barn, Cidery, and BBQ kitchen.

Rota Spring Farm

117 Chace Hill Rd., Sterling
978-365-9710
RotaSpringFarm.com

Old-fashioned homemade ice cream made on the premises, fresh produce and grass-fed beef. Watch the cows grazing, or come pet the goats.

Wildwood Farm

50 Wood Rd., Westminster
978-340-8347
Wildwood Farm LLC is a rustic 1700's working farm in the heart of New England offering a unique wedding experience.

FUNCTION FACILITIES

The 228 in Sterling
228 Leominster Rd., Sterling,
978-870-0605

the228insterling.com

Formal indoor accommodations up to 95; covered patio; BBQ/picnic area; covered venue shelter; and a beautiful gazebo for your on-site wedding ceremony and photos.

Devens Common Center

31 Andrews Pkwy., Devens
978-772-0188
devenscommoncenter.com

A celebrated convention facility and wedding venue located in the heart of historic Devens. Our well-appointed property offers the perfect meeting space for all your needs.

The Marlborough House

9 Ling Street, Marlborough, NH
603-876-0004
themarlbroughhouse.com

The perfect New England setting to accommodate your wedding, corporate events, concerts, live performances and more.

FURNITURE

LaChance Interiors, Inc.
501 W. Broadway (Loft), Gardner
978-630-3299

lachancefurniture.com

American-made solid wood and finely crafted upholstered furniture. Offering classic traditional styles to the soft-modern designs of today.

GOLF

Gardner Municipal Golf Course

152 Eaton St., Gardner
978-632-9703
Gardnergolfcourse.com

Four sets of tees await golfers of all abilities from beginners to pros. Call to set up your tee time today and try their 6131-yard tee.

Settlers Crossing Golf Course

994 Northfield Rd., Lunenburg
978-582-6694
settlersgolf.com

Nine-hole golf course featuring rolling hills, stone walls, tree lined fairways and views of Mt. Wachusett.

HEALTH CARE

Convenient MD

20 Commercial Road,
Ste #2, Leominster
978-798-6896

convenientmd.com

We bring the best to everything we do, with caring and experienced clinicians, modern clinics, and a patient-first mindset that inspires every step we take

UMass Memorial - Health Alliance Clinton

60 Hospital Rd., Leominster
978-466-2000
healthalliance.com

A full service, acute care hospital with advanced medical technology and specialty services. Member of UMass Memorial Health Care network.

LODGING

Boxborough Regency

242 Adams Place, Boxborough
978-263-8701
boxbororegency.com

Centrally located in suburban wooded area, the Hotel & Conference Center offers the perfect location for family getaways, romantic weekends, and corporate travelers.

Chocksett Inn

59 Laurelwood Rd., Sterling
978-422-3355
chocksettinn.com

A 25-room, all-suite hotel, full kitchens. Meeting rooms, function spaces, both indoors and outdoors. Specializing in relocations, long-term stays.

Colonial Hotel

625 Betty Spring Rd., Gardner
978-630-2500
colonial-hotel.com

One of Central Mass. most romantic hotels & wedding venues. This 112-room hotel, idealizes New England charm & quintessential hospitality.

Courtyard by Marriott Boston Littleton

102 Constitution Avenue, Littleton
978-440-5040
marriott.com/en-us/hotels/boslt-courtyard-boston-littleton

Located at exit 80 off I-495, just minutes from Route 2 in The Point complex with restaurants, shops & entertainment

DoubleTree by Hilton

99 Erdman Way, Leominster
978-534-9000
Leominster.doubletree.com

Spacious accommodations, modern amenities, indoor pool, fitness center.

Great Wolf Lodge

150 Great Wolf Dr., Fitchburg
978-343-9653
greatwolf.com/newengland

Massive 84-degree indoor waterpark. Battle a dragon while playing MagiQuest, challenge the climbing wall or play a round of put-put golf.

The Groton Inn
128 Main St., Groton
978-448-6600
thegrotoninn.com

Situated on the footprint of the original Groton Inn, with professionally designed guest rooms, meeting and banquet rooms and the Forge & Vine restaurant.

MUSEUMS

Fitchburg Art Museum
185 Elm St., Fitchburg
978-345-4207
fitchburgartmuseum.org

The Museum is a catalyst for learning, creativity, and community building in the heart of North Central, Mass. Experience our art historical collections, contemporary New England art, education programs. Plan your visit today!

Fort Devens Museum
94 Jackson Road, Devens
978-772-1286
fortdevensmuseum.org

Museum is a private non-profit that collects, preserves, and shares artifacts and stories that tell the history of Camp Devens and Fort Devens from 1917 to the present.

The Icon Museum and Study Center
203 Union St., Clinton
978-598-5000
iconmuseum.org

Founded in 2006 by industrialist Gordon B. Lankton. The largest private collection of its kind in North America and outside Russia.

New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill
11 French Drive, Boylston
888-869-6111
www.nebg.org

Tower Hill Botanic Garden is proud to be a place where everyone belongs, where wandering is always welcome, and where no two visits will ever be the same.

RB Racing Museum
300 Lunenburg St., (rear), Fitchburg
978-345-7227
Ronbouchardautostores.com/
rb-racing-museum.html
RB Racing Museum, honoring the local NASCAR legend Ron Bouchard. See Ron's 1981 Talladega winning #47 car.

RECREATION

Cornerstone Ranch
29 Dowds Ln., Princeton
cornerstoneranch.org
Riding lessons, trail riding, birthday parties, horse-drawn rides, and year-round activities for all ages.

Freedom's Way National Heritage Area
94 Jackson Rd., Suite 311, Devens
978-772-3654
freedomsway.org
We are committed to promoting, preserving, enhancing, and curating the natural, cultural, and historical resources within our 45 communities.

FunStuf Party Place
791 Water St., Fitchburg
978-342-5000
funstufpartyplace.com

Entertainment center where toddlers, kids, teenagers and adults all can have a blast in the arcade and playground. "It's All About the Party!"

Groton Hill Music Center
122 Old Ayer Road, Groton
978-486-95214
Grotonhill.org

Founded in 1985 as a community resource for all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. For over 35 years, we've been a leader in music education and performance. Sharing the transformative power of music.

Launch Trampoline Park
118 Commercial Rd., Leominster
978-237-5600
Launchtrampolinepark.com/
Leominster
Facility rentals available, any size group welcome! Check website of info and times.

Nashoba Paddler, LLC
398 West Main St., Groton
978-448-8699
nashobapaddler.com
Canoe, kayak, and stand-up paddleboard rentals, tours, and instruction on the Nashua River. Easy paddling on a beautiful, forested river. Group discounts. Open May - October.

Oak Hill Country Club
840 Oak Hill Rd., Fitchburg
978-342-2717
oakhillcc.org

A prestigious, member-owned private country club located in Central Mass. Oak Hill is the perfect club to satisfy golfers and families alike.

RC Excitement
208 Bemis Rd., Fitchburg
978-342-3374
RCexcitement.com

The premier racing complex in the northeast, home to family racing fun, with indoor/outdoor tracks to challenge all skill levels. Hobby and RC repair shop.

Wachusett Meadow Wildlife Sanctuary
113 Goodnow Rd., Princeton
978-464-2712
massaudubon.org/wachusett

A former farmstead with historic buildings, barns, spectacular scenery, woodlands, wetlands, and meadows. 12 miles of trails; facility rentals, snowshoe/canoe rentals.

Wachusett Mountain Ski Area
499 Mountain Rd., Princeton
978-464-2300
wachusett.com
With a 1,000-foot vertical drop, 2,006-foot elevation, 26 trails, 8 lifts. Big mountain skiing close to home.

Barrington's Autumn
Your scent is in season...
Seasonal Scents • Designer Fragrances • Essential Oils
978-235-7312
24 Church St., Leominster, MA 01453
BarringtonsAutumn@gmail.com
www.BarringtonsAutumn.com

CHANGE A CHILD'S STORY
Support a child in foster care as a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteer. Learn more today.
www.thecasaproject.org
CASA
Court Appointed Special Advocates
FOR CHILDREN
WORCESTER COUNTY

In The Meadow Farm
Alpaca Fun for Everyone
Tours | Groups | Alpaca Picnics
Felting/knitting classes | Gift Shop
Yoga with alpacas | Private Parties
Open Sundays 11-3 or by appointment
40 Page Street | Lunenburg, MA 01462
(978) 696-3332 | inthemeadow40@gmail.com
InTheMeadowAlpacas.com
Check our website, Facebook/Instagram for special events

CORNERSTONE RANCH
Trail Rides, Riding Lessons, Kids Programs,
Pony Rides, Birthday Parties, Adult Workshops
CornerstoneRanch.org
FUN FOR ALL AGES!
CHOOSE YOUR RIDING ADVENTURE
HORSE-DRAWN RIDES WITH S'MORES AND COCOA AT THE CAMP FIRE

Winchendon History and Cultural Center

151 Front St., Winchendon
978-297-2142

winchendonhistoricalsociety.org
The Center exhibits its large collection at the 22-room Murdock-Whitney House Museum. A new Toy Museum features Converse Toys.

Worcester Railers HC

105 Commercial St., Worcester
508-365-1756

railershc.com
The Railers are a professional ice hockey team based in Worcester. The team is a member in the Northern Division of the Eastern Conference of the ECHL.

RESTAURANTS/ FOOD

Aroma Joe's

200 New Lancaster Rd., Leominster
719-649-7190

aromajoes.com
Fueling the modern world by focusing daily on the customer.

Bull Run Restaurant

215 Great Rd., Shirley
978-425-4311

bullrunrestaurant.com
Restaurant and entertainment venue set in an historic 1740 Tavern. Top entertainment, trivia night, Friendly Friday sing-along and Saturday Jazz. Holds up to 300.

Cherry Hill Ice Cream

826 Leominster Rd., Lunenburg
978-582-7955

53 Main St., Rte 119, Townsend
978-597-0011
cherryhill-icecream.com
With locations in Townsend and Lunenburg, our Ice Cream stands focus on Customer Service and a great family experience.

Comeketo Brazilian Steakhouse

23 Sack Blvd., Leominster
978-466-1224

comeketo.com
At Comeketo we are pleased to bring Brazilian-style Rodizio to our friends and family.

Dairy Queen

18 Sack Boulevard, Leominster
978 798-1053

www.dairyqueen.com/en-us/locations/ma/leominster/18-sack-boulevard/15819/
Soft-serve ice cream & signature shakes top the menu at this classic burger & fries fast-food chain.

Delicious Dips

94 Franklin Road, Fitchburg
978-516-6124

deliciousdipsbpaige.com
A small woman owned business. We pride ourselves on providing fresh, quality chocolate covered treats and baked goods.

Dutch Kitchen Bake Shop & Deli

12 John Fitch Hwy, Fitchburg
978-345-1393

www.dutchkitchenbakeshop.com
Everything served is always fresh-made and traditional, with only the highest quality ingredients.

Gold Bowl

22 Ashby State Rd., Fitchburg
978-348-2088 | goldbowl8.com

With years in business, we adhering to the principle "customer is the King." We always are aiming to assure you a remarkable dining experience.

Identity Coffee Lab

35 Main Street, Fitchburg
identitycoffee.com

Explore our Collection of rare coffee blends and awaken your senses with coffees from around the globe.

Il Forno Restaurant

494 Electric Ave., Lunenburg
978-345-2511

il-forno.com
Bustling family-run eatery featuring wood-fired pizzas & other classic Italian dishes plus BYOB.

Kimball Farm in Lancaster

1543 Lunenburg Rd., (Rte 70), Lancaster
978-534-9800

kimballfarm.com
For over 75 years, Kimball Farm has served its famous, homemade ice cream, and providing some of the freshest seafood around. open (April-Oct.)

Legends Bar & Grille

68 Airport Road, Ste. 10, Fitchburg
978-342-6500

legendsbarandgrille.com
Come and enjoy the great variety of menu items for you!

Main Street Gift and Café

40 Main St., Leominster
978-534-5090

mainstreetgiftandcafe.com
Stop by for a delicious Breakfast or lunch. Sit, relax and chat or look around at our unique selection of cards and gifts.

Mamajuana Restaurant

423 Main Street, Fitchburg
978-343-5719

Freshly made Dominican cuisine located in downtown Fitchburg. Come and sample a taste of the islands.

Moon Hill Brewing / Gardner Ale House

74 Parker St., Gardner
978-669-0122

gardnerale.com
A family-oriented brewpub/restaurant with a bistro style menu, 12+ award-winning beers on tap. Open daily with Sunday brunch buffet, 9am-3pm.

Old Mill Restaurant & Country Store

69 State Rd. E, (Rte 2A E), Westminster
978-874-5941

1761oldmill.com
Full-service family restaurant serving delicious meals with old-fashioned hospitality. Lunch and dinner menu daily. (Open Tue.-Sun.)

Rise & Grind Café and Smoothie Bar

805 Main Street, Fitchburg
riseandgrindcafema.com

We offer specialty coffees, tea, smoothies or enjoy one of our breakfast or lunch sandwich/panini/or flatbread.

The Pauper's Pantry

695 Main Street, Fitchburg
978-660-2314

finickyforkcatering.com
Creating exceptional cuisine with simple, local and fresh ingredients.

Simply Sweet by Christine Inc.

206 Meriam Ave., Leominster
978-235-6634

onesweetcake.com
Simply Sweet by Christine specializes in fresh baked goods and beautiful delicious cakes and for any occasion.

Singapore Restaurant

170 Whalon Street, Fitchburg
978-345-0132

singaporefitchburg.com
The key to our success is simple: providing quality consistent food that taste great every single time.

Slattery's Restaurant

106 Lunenburg St., Fitchburg
978-342-8880

slatterysrestaurant.com
Cozy, long-standing pub with outdoor seating offering a large American menu and numerous draft beers.

Slavin in the Kitchen

313 Longley Road, Groton
508-320-6994

slavininthekitchen.com
Our creativity and attention to detail is what stands us apart from other caterers with extraordinary quality, sensational flavor and spectacular presentation.

Taco John's

536 Main Street, Leominster
978-252-0775

locations.tacojohns.com/ma/leominster/536-n-main
We serve traditional Mexican food with a twist. By fusing bold flavors with south-of-the-border spices for Bigger, Bolder, Better flavors.

The Central Cup, Coffee & Cupcaker

139 Central St., Leominster
thecentralcup.com

We make our orders from scratch, daily, with the finest ingredients. Besides our desserts, we offer fresh quality coffee and espresso drinks.

The Lazy Bubble

112 Main St., Ste. #5, Pepperell
978-925-9777

thelazybubble.com
Chef Chris' unique style of International Comfort Foods utilizes local, organic ingredients in our scratch recipes.

Zeda's Pizza / Bad Larry's

65 Loral Street, Fitchburg
1 Main Street, Lunenburg

978-342-9876
978-582-9876

zedaspizza.net
badlarrysbarandgrill.com
More than just a pizza place. We feature from scratch cooking, large portions, and an extensive menu. Dine in, takeout, or delivery.

RETAIL

Alicia's Spice Co.

12 Aitchison St., Worcester
774-303-0354

aliciaspiceco.com
All Natural, Gluten Free, Kosher, Keto, Vegan and low Sodium spices and focus on wholesome ingredients.

W. E. Aubuchon Co. Inc

95 Aubuchon Dr., Westminster
978-874-0521

hardwarestore.com
The oldest family owned chain of hardware stores in America throughout New England and Upstate New York.

Barrington's Autumn

24 Church Street, Leominster
Available at The Johnny

Appleseed Visitor Center
978-235-7312

barringtonsautumn.com
We offer 100% pure essential oils & blends, designer interpretations, fragrances for your home, bath and body.

Creative Connections

56 Main St., Ashburnham
978-827-6211

ccgiftgallery.com
Collection of gifts, from soy candles to blown glass, pottery, hand-crafted jewelry, gourmet items, confections, whole bean coffees and teas.

Cutie Patuties Consignment

1021 Central St., Leominster
978-534-6604

cutiepatuties.com
Your Central Mass headquarters for gently loved clothing, shoes, and accessories for kids, teens and ladies. With over 50,000 items available every day.

DeBonis & Davin Florist

900 Main Street, Fitchburg
978-345-4327

DeBonisFlowers.com
Looking for something truly special? We make unique, handpicked arrangement with the freshest blooms available for that special person or event.

**FULL
MENU**

**SUNDAY
BRUNCH
9AM - 3PM**

**OUTDOOR
DINING**



**FAMILY
FRIENDLY**



**FULL BAR
15 CRAFT BEERS
ON TAP**



**ANNUAL
OKTOBERFEST**

Diamond Hearts Arts Studio
 7 Wall Street #1, Fitchburg
 978-516-3040 
diamondheartstartudio.com
 We're a wife and husband team of artists creating abstract acrylic painting and crafts in Central Mass.

Fabric n Things
 843 Central Street, Leominster
 978-878-9514
fabricsnthings.com 
 The most amazing selection of new and discontinued fabrics, notions, sewing supplies, fashion, quilting, crafts, and home decorating fabrics.

Farm at Baptist Common
 342 Baldwinville Rd.,
 PO Box 157, Templeton
 978-939-8146
 Forty delicious flavors of homemade fudge. We sell our famous fudge at craft shows, fairs, festivals and at the Johnny Appleseed Visitor Center.

Golden Girl Granola
 2 Shaker Rd., Ste. C205, Shirley
 978-425-5058
goldengirlgranola.com 
 Produces gourmet granola products. Flavors including Forest Maple and Chocolate Decadence, can be found in grocery and specialty stores.

The Good Earth Farm & Garden Center
 633 W. Broadway, Gardner
 978-632-0991 
thegoodearthfgc.com
 The Good Earth (TGE) is not your average farm and garden center. We strives to be much more, our goal is to promote the well-being of the entire community.

Nellatiques
 843 Central Avenue, Leominster
 978-878-9514
nellatiques.com 
 We have a passion for all things vintage? Nellatiques sells vintage jewelry, fashion and accessories, furniture, linens, military, online and at selective locations.

Nutrishop Fitchburg
 18 John Fitch Hwy, Fitchburg
 978-627-3675 
nutrishopfitchburg.com
 Stop by today so we can help get you started on the right track towards your healthy goals!

Potpourri Gift Shop
 139 Central Street, Leominster
 978-400-6996 
potpourrigiftshop.com
 We offer a charming, eclectic assortment of products, with lots of Leominster novelties to peruse from.

Roots Natural Foods
 100 Crawford St., Leominster
 978-534-7668 
facebook.com/rootsnaturalfoods
 Organic produce, vitamins & herbs, natural body care, organic & natural grocery, & spices and the Roots Kitchen!

Sage Home Collection
 137 Mill Street, Leominster
 978-798-1347 
sagehomecollections.com
 Sage Home Collections is a plant boutique with hand-selected plants, curated gifts, crystals, and more!

Smith's Country Cheese
 20 Otter River Rd., Winchendon
 978-939-5738
smithscountrycheese.com 
 Old fashioned traditions of creamy Gouda, Havarti, and cheddar cheeses. We also carry gourmet local food items, home décor, and more!

The Kitchen Garden
 268 Baldwinville Rd., Templeton
 978-939-8558
templetonkitchengarden.com 
 Baked goods, Finnish coffee bread, made daily in our kitchen, gifts, specialty foods, books, and more. Ice cream shop open May-October.

SERVICES
Fitchburg Public Library
 610 Main St., Fitchburg
 978-829-1780
fitchburgpubliclibrary.org 
 Since 1859 the Fitchburg Public Library connects with your world.

Michelle Haggstrom Realtor KWNC
 670 Mechanic St., Leominster
 978-660-9912 
MAHomeConnections.com
 Looking to buy, sell or invest in the North Central Region? Your local real estate connection, bringing you home.

Polar Beverages
 1001 Southbridge St., Worcester
 508-749-2382
polarbev.com 
 New England's largest independent soft drink bottler, is a fourth-generation, family-owned business.

Wachusett Paving
 60 Sargent Rd., Westminister
 978-230-6666
wachusettpaving.com 
 Family owned company specializing in residential and commercial asphalt paving and maintenance, excavation, drainage and site work. Call for your free estimate!

WPKZ Radio
 978-343-3766
sales@kzone1053.com 
 WPKZ 105.3FM & AM1280 is your local community radio station and Sox affiliate, news, traffic, and more from 6am-9am.



HARDWICK VINEYARD & WINERY
 MASSACHUSETTS

 **Open 7 Days A Week!**
Live Local Music!


Fabrics-n-Things

nellatiques



Home of the \$3.95 a Yard Fabrics!

843 Central St
 Leominster, MA
 Wed-Sat 10-5
 978-878-9514



Antiques and Collectibles,
 Furniture,
 Sewing Machines,
 Dealer Supplies

We buy One Item or Entire Estate!



We offer Sewing & Quilting Classes - Check class listing @
Shop online: www.fabricsnthingsma.com & www.nellatiques.com

READ MORE ABOUT NCM BUSINESSES ONLINE

visitnorthcentral.com

Proudly Manufacturing and Supporting Our Local Partners in North Central Mass.



We've been designing and manufacturing office furniture for more than 30 years. Schedule a tour of our Leominster showroom and factory — we'll gladly host you.



Team Spaces



Workstations



Private Offices



Collaborative Areas



Meeting Spaces



Cafeterias

Contact us for a showroom tour! Leominster, MA | 978.562.7500 | ais-inc.com



Quick Picks

Haunted Happenings

Ghosts and goblins and things that go bump in the night ... Late October brings out all manner of creepy creatures throughout the region. Haunted houses, spooky cemeteries, trunk 'n treats—no matter how you want to celebrate this scary season, there's an event just waiting for you here.

Take a tour of hair-raising home Halloween decorations in Leominster or Hubbardston. Visit a haunted park in Winchendon, a haunted gazebo in Templeton, an entire haunted neighborhood in Leominster. Take a haunted hayride in Athol, enjoy a day-long “boo-fest” at Wachusett Mountain Ski Area, or stroll through Templeton's centuries-old graveyard to hear stories of the town's early settlers.

Got kids? Business districts in Fitchburg, Gardner and Leominster welcome little ghosties. Family spots like Hollis Hills Farm in Fitchburg, Davis Farmland in Sterling and In the Meadow Farm in Lunenburg are ready to entertain costumed youngsters.

How can you find all these super scary events? Check out the updated calendar at visitnorthcentral.com.



Check Your Holiday List



The Kitchen Garden in Templeton.

You don't have to shop till you drop when you head out on the Country Roads Holiday Tour—because this special seasonal event, now in its 19th year, has morphed from a weekend to an entire month of nostalgic pleasure! Antiques. Cheese. Herbs. Furniture. Maple syrup. And so much more! Your holiday shopping becomes so easy when you take this leisurely tour through Templeton, Hubbardston, Petersham, Barre, Phillipston, Gardner and Winchendon.

And it's not just about shopping. These are local stores, local farms, local bakeries, run by local folks who love to share their stories, offer tasty samples, and help you find that perfect gift.

The 2024 Country Roads Tour runs from November 9 right through December 8, so you'll have plenty of time to wrap up your entire holiday list! Visit countryroadschristmas.com for a list of all 18 shops on the trail.

Ice Out!

Sometimes, it's fun to just sit and wait for things to happen—especially in winter, when you're a bit worn out from enjoying the pleasures of the season. Skiing, hiking along snowy trails, skating on a local pond are all great ways to embrace the great outdoors of North Central Massachusetts.

But local residents know it's also fun to count down the chilly days of winter by (are you ready?!) watching the ice melt.

Yes, but not just any old ice. We're talking about the ice beneath the lifeguard seat on Rockwell Pond in Leominster, below the two-dimensional Cracker Bowl on Round in Westminster, or under the old-timey Frozen Assets outhouse on Country Hen pond on Williamsville Road in Hubbardston.

“Ice Out” contests, in which participants try to guess the exact day, hour, minute that Rocky, the lifeguard, the Westminster soup bowl or the chilly restroom will plunge through the melting ice have sparked interest among local folks who are just, well, anxiously waiting for spring to arrive! There are prizes to be won for the best guesses, along with bragging rights and the fun of watching streaming video of the great sinks.

You can learn more about following the tick-tocking fun at visitnorthcentral.com.



Rest Up!

Whether you're here for the weekend, stopping by on a business trip, or planning a longer vacation in the region, you're sure to find the perfect accommodations here. Want a hotel with all the amenities? A cozy Bed & Breakfast? A family-oriented resort with thrilling waterslides? Or maybe

a quiet cabin in a wooded campground?

It's all waiting for you in North Central Massachusetts. You'll find familiar names here, like

DoubleTree by Hilton, and **SpringHill Suites by Marriott**. There are local treasures, too, like the **Colonial Hotel** in Gardner, and the **Chocksett Inn**. For that country feel, a stay at the **Maguire House** in Ashburnham will send your stress packing, as you enjoy vistas and gardens.

No matter where your travels take

you along the Johnny Appleseed Trail, we have great lodgings waiting for you to rest your head, enjoy a relaxing meal, and get ready for another exciting day.

Check out the details of great places to stay on page 48 of this *Guide*, or stop by visitnorthcentral.com to learn more.... Then take some time to relax and unwind!! §

*Left: DoubleTree by Hilton in Leominster.
Center: Great Wolf Lodge in Fitchburg.
Right: Groton Inn in Groton. §*



A history of possibilities

Massachusetts has always been at the forefront of America and the way it dreams. As we mark the 250th anniversary of Massachusetts and our country's independence, we're inviting fellow Americans, and the world, to experience the history we've made and continue to make.

massachusetts250.org



That's Entertainment



Whether your tastes run to comedy or drama, country or classical, great entertainment awaits you in North Central Massachusetts!

Love the theater? Get ready to enjoy a full season of shows on stage throughout the region. Community theater is alive and well here! You'll want to check out Theatre at the Mount, located on the campus of Mt. Wachusett Community College in Gardner; the Stratton Players, who have a new venue at Christ Church in Fitchburg; the Barre Players Theater in Barre; Cannon Theatre at Devens; and the New Players Theatre Guild or StageWorks, both in Fitchburg;.

Is music your thing? The region is a treasure-trove of offerings! The Groton Hill Music Center is not to be missed—a 126,000 square foot music venue, complete with a 1,000-seat concert hall, 300-seat performance hall, teaching spaces and more. The Center has a fabulous schedule of performances planned this year, from bluegrass to traditional Latin, contemporary jazz and Celtic holiday fare.

The Winchendon Music Festival



Alasdair Fraser & Natalie Haas perform at Groton Hill in October.

will be returning for a fall season in two venues—and the Murdock-Whitney House alone is worth a venue to this community on the northern border of the region. The WMF is a non-profit organization that showcases performances by international artists from a variety of genres including (but not limited to) classical, folk, jazz, historical performance, and world music.

And here's a plus: the concerts are free to the public. In addition to the historic (and stunning!) Murdock-Whitney House, fall concerts will be held at the Beals

Memorial Library.

For a truly unique experience, head to Ashburnham for a visit to the Frederick Collection of Historical Pianos, and a series of concerts like nothing you've ever heard. Musicians come from around the world to perform with these pianos, lovingly restored by the Fredericks. What's so unusual about that? Each concert features music played on a piano from the era in which it was written—so you'll hear the music just as the composer would have heard it, a century or more ago!

SEPTEMBER

8 Saturday, 5 pm. Live on the Lawn: Fabiola Mendez. Traditional, Latin sounds at Groton Hill Music Center. grotonhill.org.

14 Saturday, 8 pm. Michael Cleveland & Flamekeepers perform Bluegrass at Groton Hill Music Center. grotonhill.org.

24 Friday, 8 pm. BeauSoleil avec Michael Doucet at Groton Hill Music Center. Enjoy some of the most potent and popular Cajun music on the planet. Visit grotonhill.org.

28 Saturday, 8 pm. Cécile McLorin Salvant performs at Groton Hill Music Center. Visit grotonhill.org.

29 Sunday, 3:00 pm. Classical music with Amanda Mole, organ. At Groton Hill Music Center.

OCTOBER

3-5 and 10-12. Poe at New Players Theatre Guild. nptg.org.

4 Friday, 8 pm. The Jacob Jolliff Band, bluegrass, at Groton Hill Music Center. grotonhill.org.

4-5 and 11-13, Friday & Saturday, 7:30 pm. Steel Magnolias at Theatre at the Mount. mwcc.edu/tam

5 Saturday, 7:30 pm. Opening Night 2024 for the Vista Philharmonic Orchestra at Groton Hill Music Center. Special guest—Joshua Mhoon, piano. Visit grotonhill.org.

6 Sunday, 7 pm. Singer-songwriter Suzanne Vega presents Old Songs, New Songs and Other Songs at Groton Hill Music Center. Visit grotonhill.org.

10 Thursday, 8 pm. Celebrity Series of Boston presents Emanuel Ax at Groton Hill Music Center. Visit grotonhill.org.

17 Thursday, 8 pm. Country Music star LeAnn Rimes performs at the Groton Hill Music Center. Visit grotonhill.org.

17-19 and 24-26. The Rocky Horror Show at New Players Theater Guild. nptg.org.

18 Friday, 8 pm. The Lone Bellow at Groton Hill Music Center. grotonhill.org.

19 Saturday, 2 pm. Ivy Bean, a children's musical, at Theatre at the Mount. mwcc.edu/tam

19 Saturday, 7:30 pm. Alasdair Fraser & Natalie Haas at the Groton Hill Music Center. Visit grotonhill.org.

20 Sunday, 7 pm. Danilo Perez, John Patitucci, Brian Blade – Legacy of Wayne Shorter featuring special guest Mark Turner bring an evening of jazz to the Groton Hill Music Center, Groton. Visit grotonhill.org.

25, Friday, 8 pm. Singer-songwriter Dar Williams performs at Groton Hill Music Center, with Special Guest, Lila Blue. grotonhill.org.

NOVEMBER

9-10 Saturday, 7:30 pm. Sunday at 3 pm. Vista Philharmonic Orchestra presents Ode to Joy at Groton Hill Music Center. grotonhill.org.

10 Sunday, 7 pm. Jane Monheit, jazz and contemporary vocalist, performs at Groton Hill Music Center. grotonhill.org.

17 Sunday, 7 pm. Hanneke Cassel & Dave Wiesler /Keith Murphy & Yann Falquet present an evening of Celtic music at Groton Hill Music Center. grotonhill.org

29-30 Friday & Saturday, 7:30 pm. The Sound of Music at Theatre at the Mount. Mwcc.edu/tam

DECEMBER

1 Sunday, 2 pm. The Sound of Music at Theatre at the Mount. mwcc.edu/tam.



6-8 Friday & Saturday, 7:30 pm. Sunday 2 pm. The Sound of Music at Theatre at the Mount. Special Sensory-Friendly performance on December 7 at 2 pm.

7-8 Saturday, 2 pm & 7:30 pm. Sunday, 3 pm. Christmas Magic! at Groton Hill Music Center. grotonhill.org.

21 Saturday, 8 pm. A Celtic Holiday with Lúnasa at Groton Hill Music Center. Visit grotonhill.org. §

A Must-See in Every Season

Wonder blooms year-round at New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill, a 200-acre garden destination in Central Massachusetts.



New England Botanic Garden
AT TOWER HILL

11 French Drive Boylston, MA NEBG.org



J.S. MCELVERY
T. THOMPSON

OUT OF THIS WORLD

Have you run into Bigfoot lately while hiking through local forests? Are you convinced that alien life forms have visited our planet? Do you feel a certain, unnerving, energy when you enter some buildings or pass by some objects?

Whether you're a believer, or a skeptic, when it comes to paranormal experiences and the likelihood of extraterrestrial visitors, you'll want to plan a stop at **The Education Earth Museum** in downtown Athol. Launched in May, 2024 by Storm Plains, a forensic psychologist with a background in archaeology and cryptozoology (the study of legendary, mythological, or unknown creatures and animals who are rumored to exist, but have not been proven to be real... yet!),

the small but fascinating storefront museum has been attracting visitors from throughout New England and beyond since its grand opening.

And those visitors, Plains says, are often happy—even anxious—to share with her their experiences, from Bigfoot sightings to alien abductions and spottings of the “White Lady,” the subject of a ghost story shrouded in mystery and sorrow. “I had it in the back of my mind for about 12 years, to open a museum,” just happened upon the Athol location, and things fell into place, she explained.

Over the years, Plains—who has also done paranormal and wildlife lectures, and works with rescue animals like snapping turtles and snakes—accumulated an assortment of interesting items. Animatronics,



The Michigan Dogman.

like Demogorgon and Michigan Dogman. A replica of the Annabelle doll that was housed at the Occult Museum of famed paranormal investigators Ed and Lorraine Warren. A display representing the examination of an alien body in

Things to Do



Providing Services to the Multicultural Population of Leominster/ Fitchburg and surrounding communities since 1966

Brindando servicios a la población multicultural de Leominster/ Fitchburg y las comunidades circundantes desde 1966

HOURS OF OPERATION
8:30 AM to 4:30 PM
Monday to Friday

HORAS DE SERVICIO
8:30 AM to 4:30 PM
De lunes a viernes

Recordando las tradiciones hispanas y siendo conscientes de los principios históricos de la Democracia Americana, el Centro Hispano Americano se adhiere a los valores de inclusión y aceptación de todos, mientras colaboramos y celebramos la esperanza de un futuro más próspero para todos.



SPANISHAMERICANCENTER.ORG
112 SPRUCE STREET, LEOMINSTER, MA 01453
978-534-3145



Storm Plains with Bigfoot.



Hangar 18.

Hangar 18 at Area 51. And a back room of the museum is home to some live (and some preserved via taxidermy) animals.

Each exhibit is accompanied by an explanation, chart or other materials that add an educational component to the display. While the subjects,

Plains notes, may not be suitable for very young children, older kids (and adults) are welcome to take selfies, turn on the animated figures, and ask lots of questions! Plains is already planning to bring more materials out of storage, offering changing exhibits to keep things fresh, along with

lectures and podcasts.

Looking for something a bit unusual—even other-worldly—to do? Stop by the Education Earth Museum at 475 Main St. in Athol for an interesting experience! The museum is open Thursdays through Sundays, or by appointment. §

Celebrating over 75 years with country dining at its best!

The Old Mill

1761

RESTAURANT & CRACKER BARREL PUB

RESTAURANT | WEDDINGS
REHEARSAL DINNERS | SHOWERS
& MORE!

RT 2A - 69 STATE ROAD EAST WESTMINSTER, MA. 01473
978-874-5941 | 1761OLDMILL@GMAIL.COM | 1761OLDMILL.COM

80 Dealers • Reproductions
West Village Antiques

445 Main Street
West Townsend, MA
(Entrance in rear)
Corner of Rt. 119 & Canal Street (NH Rt. 124)
Phone (978) 597-0332
Fax (978) 523-7107
E-mail: hobartvillage@gmail.com
Open 6 days 10 - 5 pm,
Closed Tuesday

hobartvillage.com

Find us on Facebook

Advertisers

Lodging

Legend

- * - No pool, but has a babbling brook
- ◇ - Indoor pool
- ◆ - Indoor waterpark

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| AIS Inc..... | 41 |
| Bank Hometown | 19 |
| Barrington's Autumn..... | 37 |
| Bolton Orchards..... | 23 |
| CASA Project Worcester County | 37 |
| City of Fitchburg..... | 5 |
| City of Gardner..... | 3 |
| City of Leominster..... | 13 |
| Colonial Hotel / Chocksett Inn..... | 28 |
| Country Roads..... | 9 |
| Cornerstone Ranch..... | 37 |
| Fabric n Things / Nellantiques..... | 40 |
| Fitchburg Art Museum | Back Cover |
| FunStuf Party Place | 33 |
| Great Wolf Lodge..... | 29 |
| Hardwick Winery..... | 40 |
| Hobart Village Antique Mall | 47 |
| In the Meadow Alpaca Farm..... | 37 |
| Jeffrey's Antiques | 31 |
| Johnny Appleseed Visitor Center | 25 |
| Lanni Orchard | 9 |
| Legends Sports Bar and Grill | 31 |
| Leominster United Methodist Church | 33 |
| Massachusetts250..... | 43 |
| Michelle Haggstrom / Keller Haggstrom | 29 |
| Moon Hill Brewing / Gardner Ale House | 39 |
| Narragansett Craft Fair | 15 |
| New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill | 45 |
| Plain View Alpaca..... | 15 |
| Red Apple Farm..... | Inside Front Cover |
| Sholan Farms..... | 35 |
| Smith Country Cheese..... | 15 |
| Spanish American Center..... | 46 |
| The Groton Inn | 29 |
| The 1761 Old Mill Restaurant | 47 |
| The Pines Campground..... | 15 |
| Town of Sterling | 19 |
| Town of Westminster | 25 |
| Wachusett Mountain Ski Area | Inside Back Cover |
| Westminster Cracker Festival..... | 9 |
| Winchendon Fall Festival..... | 33 |

| | # of Rooms | Free Breakfast | Restaurant on Site | Wedding Venue | Swimming Pool | Gym/Fitness Center | Banquet/Meeting Spaces | Pets Allowed |
|---|----------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| Boxborough Regency 242 Adams Place Boxborough 978-263-8701 boxbororegency.com | 143 | • | • | • | • | • | • (15) Cap. 500+ | • |
| Chocksett Inn 59 Laurelwood Road, Sterling 978-422-3355 chocksettinn.com | 26 Suites | • | • | • | * • | • | • (2) Cap. 275 | • |
| Colonial Hotel 625 Betty Spring Road Gardner 978-630-2500 colonial-hotel.com | 112 5 Suite | | • | • | ◇ | • | • (7) Cap. 400 | • |
| Courtyard By Marriot Boston Littleton 102 Constitution Avenue Littleton 978-440-5040 marriott.com/en-us/hotels/bosit-court- yard-boston-littleton/overview | 115 | | | | • | • | • Cap. 50 | |
| DoubleTree by Hilton 99 Erdman Way, Leominster 978.534.9000 leominster.doubletree.com | 187 22 Jr. Suites | | • | • | ◇ | • | • (15) Cap. 550 | |
| Great Wolf Lodge New England Waterpark 150 Great Wolf Drive Fitchburg 800-905-9653 greatwolf.com/newengland | 406 96 Suites | | • | • | ◆ | • | • (7) Cap. 500 | |
| The Groton Inn 128 Main Street, Groton 978-448-6600 thegrotoninn.com | 60 5 Suites | • | • | • | | • | • (5) Cap. 150 | |
| Maguire House 30 Cobb Road, Ashburnham 978-827-5053 maguirehouse.com | 3 | • | Nearby | | | | | |
| SpringHill Suites by Marriott/Devens Common 27 Andrews Parkway, Devens 978-772-3030 devenscommoncenter.com/ accommodations.php | 120 | • | Nearby | • | | • | • (5) Cap. 500 | |

Use #VisitNorthCentralMa
to share your adventure!

-  @Visitnorthcentralmassachusetts
-  @Visitnorthcentralma
-  @VisitNCM



**HAVE MORE
FUN THIS
WINTER!**

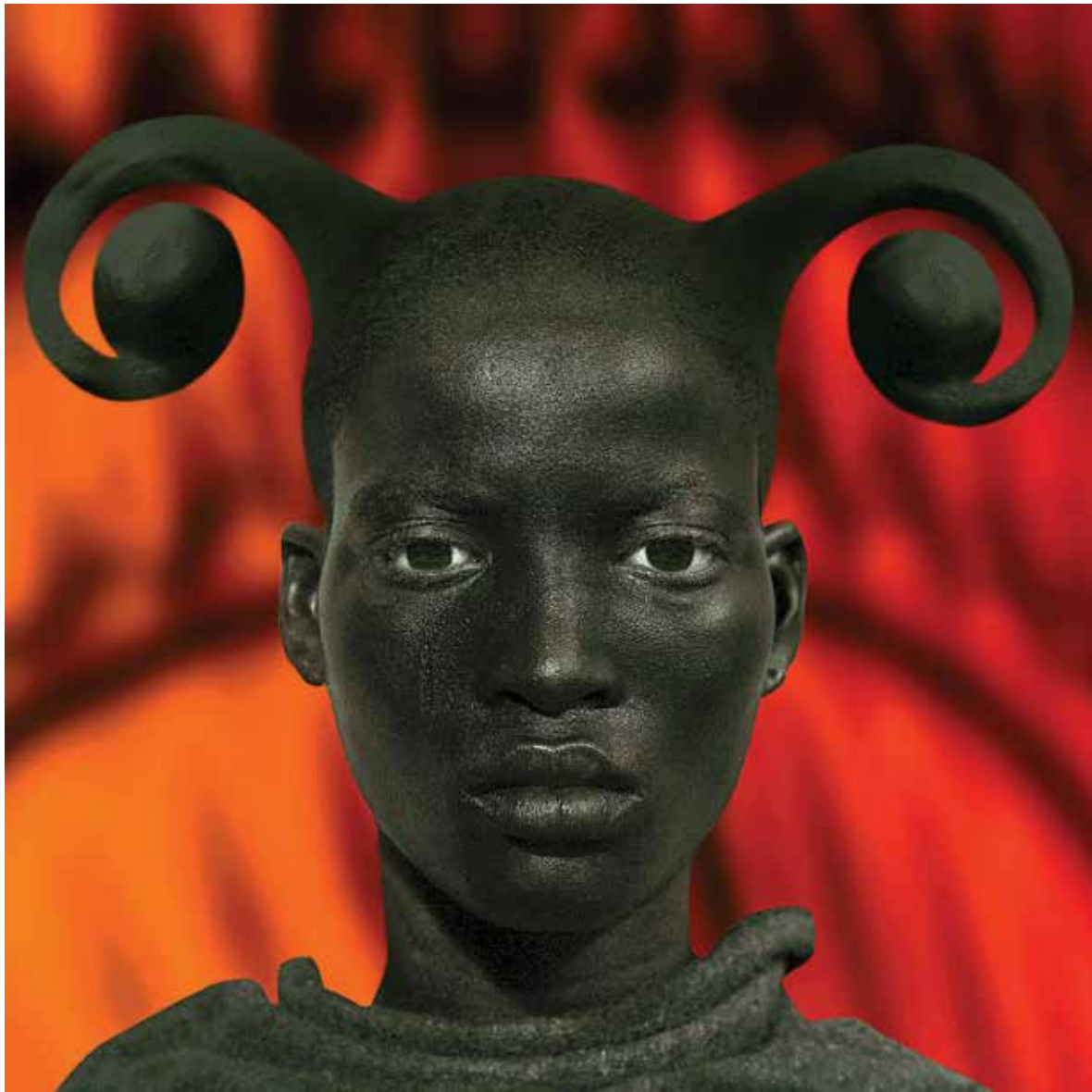
**LEARN TO SKI OR
SNOWBOARD AT
WACHUSETT**

*LET US TEACH YOU WITH OUR ONE OR THREE DAY
LEARN TO SKI/RIDE PACKAGE*

**FOR DETAILS GO TO
WACHUSETT.COM**



Wachusett Mountain Ski Area 499 Mountain Road, Princeton MA 01541 978-464-2300
Operated in cooperation with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation & Recreation



Wilfred Ukpong, *Are my Dreams Too Bold for the Carbon Skin I Bear #1* from the series *Blazing Century 1: Niger-Delta/Future-Cosmos*, 2011-2017.
Mixed media: pigment print and acrylic on canvas in artist's frame (fabric, polystyrene and light steel rod). Sinon Collection Fund, 2021.69.

Africa Rising: *21st-Century African Photography*

ON VIEW: NOW—FEBRUARY 23, 2025

A phrase coined in reference to the continent's rapid economic growth after the turn of the century, "Africa Rising" applies equally to contemporary African photography. Today, photofests and biennials proliferate in Africa and abroad; museums hold major exhibitions; and prices rise steadily on the international Art Market.

FAM | FITCHBURG
ART MUSEUM

fitchburgartmuseum.org
185 Elm Street
Fitchburg, MA 01420
978.345.4207