

THE **MONTHLY TEA**

The Official Monthly Newsletter for
Employees of the Town of Bloomfield



SEPTEMBER 2025

VOLUME 21

CELEBRATING HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

HONORING CULTURE, HISTORY, AND OUR BLOOMFIELD COLLEAGUES

Each year from September 15 to October 15, the nation observes Hispanic Heritage Month, a time dedicated to recognizing the histories, cultures, and contributions of Americans whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. The celebration begins on September 15 to honor the independence anniversaries of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. It also includes Mexico's Independence Day on September 16 and Chile's on September 18.

This month is not only about reflecting on history—it is also about celebrating the present and future. Hispanic Americans have enriched our communities through leadership, service, art, music, food, and countless other contributions that shape daily life across the country. The observance provides an opportunity for all of us

to learn more about the diverse traditions that make up the Hispanic experience while recognizing the resilience and achievements of this vibrant community.

Here in Bloomfield, we are proud to recognize and celebrate our own employees who are part of the Hispanic community. Their dedication, service, and unique perspectives strengthen our organization and enrich our workplace culture. This month, we honor their stories and contributions as part of what makes Bloomfield a stronger and more inclusive town.

We encourage all employees to take part in Hispanic Heritage Month—whether by attending local events, trying new foods, learning about history, or simply taking time to listen to the stories of colleagues and neighbors. Together, we celebrate not only the diversity within Bloomfield but also the shared values that bring us together as a community.



BLOOMFIELD FORWARD: HONORING OUR COMMUNITY AND EMBRACING CHANGE

Hey Team Bloomfield,

As we welcome September, I hope everyone had a restful **Labor Day weekend** and is ready to return "back to business" with renewed energy. This month also marks **National Senior Center Month**, a perfect opportunity to recognize the important role our Bloomfield Senior Center in keeping our community engaged, active, and connected.

September also begins **Hispanic Heritage Month (September 15 – October 15)**, a time to celebrate the histories, cultures, and contributions of Hispanic and Latino Americans. This observance reminds us of the richness of diversity in Bloomfield and the importance of fostering an inclusive community where every culture is honored and every resident feels valued.

This month is also a critical time for civic engagement. The upcoming primary elections are an important part of our democratic process. I want to extend my thanks to the Town Clerk's Office and the Registrars of Voters (ROV) for their outstanding educational outreach in support of the new early voting location at 330 Park Avenue. Their efforts ensure that residents are informed, prepared, and empowered to exercise their right to vote.

Most recently, we experienced a time of transition in Council leadership. Change brings both reflection and opportunity, and I am inspired by the dedication of our leaders as we work together to build a stronger, brighter Bloomfield. Please join me in welcoming our new Mayor Anthony C. Harrington, Jr. and



Town Manager Alvin D. Schwapp Jr. at the Retirement Celebration for former Bloomfield Police Officers

Deputy Mayor Cindi A. Lloyd, whose vision and leadership will guide us through this new chapter. I am confident that, together, we can continue to advance initiatives that benefit all residents and create a positive, collaborative work environment for our staff.

Thank you for your continued dedication and commitment to serving the Bloomfield community. Your work makes a difference every day, and I am grateful for all that you do.

Warm Regards,
Alvin D. Schwapp, Jr.
Town Manager
One Team, One Fight!!

Coming Soon
➡➡➡ Employee Climate Survey ⬅⬅⬅

TOWN TALK WITH THE MANAGER

NEW FEATURE IN THE BLOOMFIELD MESSENGER

Bloomfield Messenger

Bloomfield's own weekly newspaper

August 29, 2025

www.BloomfieldMessenger.com

Priceless 16 pages

A YEAR OF MEANINGFUL PROGRESS FOR BLOOMFIELD



By Alvin D. Schwapp Jr.

Bloomfield Town Manager

In what feels like the blink of an eye, my first year as your Town Manager has already passed. In that time, we've made meaningful progress on the issues that matter most to Bloomfield. From improving town services to strengthening community partnerships, we've shown what's possible when

leadership, staff, and residents work together with a shared purpose.

As we look ahead, I want to keep building on that momentum – and one of the best ways to do that is through transparency. I want you to hear directly from me on a regular basis. That's why I'll be using this space to share updates on the work being done across Bloomfield – not just the big projects that grab headlines, but also the smaller, everyday steps that quietly make our community stronger.

My hope is that by keeping you informed, we can celebrate our wins together, face challenges openly, and ensure accountability at every turn.

Being transparent means more than sharing words; it means showing outcomes. Since my arrival, we have developed over 35 new programs/initiatives to build a more resilient

and skilled work force while strengthening ties in our community. The following list captures some of our successes of the past year:

Building and Celebrating Our Community

- Launched the Community Impact Awards at our weekly Summer Concert series, to honor neighbors who go above and beyond.
- Celebrate Bloomfield – Food Truck Festival: A brand-new townwide event that bring residents, businesses and visitors together with food, music, and family fun.

- Bloomfield Armed Forces Resource Fair: Connected veterans and their families with essential benefits and services all in one place.

- United Way Fundraising Campaign: Relaunched after being dormant for eight years –

See TOWN MANAGER page 8

THE NEWLY RENOVATED 'OLD FARM SCHOOL' OFFERS FUN AND A GLIMPSE OF OLDEN DAYS



By Marilyn Johnston

The Old Farm School has a fresh look! It sports a repaired roof, brand new windows and gutters! The interior has been spruced up, too!

Come and ring the belfry bell of this schoolhouse built in 1796

HELP PRESERVE THIS TOWN TREASURE

when George Washington was president! Kids can sit at the desks of the olden days and play with replicas of 19th century

See OLD FARM SCHOOL page 8



WATCH EPISODE 1 WITH PARKS, RECREATION, & LEISURE SERVICES:

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1077704697811066>



SCHWAPP IT UP

with Alvin D. Schwapp, Jr.

Internal Ombudsman Program

Confidential Support for Town Employees

The new Internal Ombudsman Program offers a safe, neutral space to address workplace concerns quickly, fairly, and confidentially.

Key Features

- Confidential Workplace Support
- Grievances and Concerns

*Creating a
supportive, respectful
workplace—together.*

What You Can Report

- Workplace environment issues
- Policy or procedure concerns
- Personal work matters
- Conflicts or disputes

How It Works

- Submit your concern (form link or QR code)
- Get a response in 1–2 days
- Receive a private, fair review
- Resolution or referral as needed

Your Ombudsman Team

- **Dawn Cooper-Grodder** (*Social & Youth Services*)
 - dcooper@bloomfieldct.gov
- **Sharon Gentles-Harris** (*Risk & Process Improvement*)
 - sharris@bloomfieldct.gov
- **Matthew Childress** (*Public Works - Facilities*)
 - mchildress@bloomfieldct.gov



TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD PILOT PROGRAM EXTENDED

We've heard you! Based on the positive feedback we've received from both residents and employees, Bloomfield is extending the Pilot Hours Program at Town Hall and the Alvin & Beatrice Woods Human Services Center.

This extension will give us more time to evaluate how these hours best serve our community. Thank you for your continued participation and input!

MONDAY

8:30 AM TO 5:00 PM

TUESDAY

8:30 AM TO 6:00 PM

WEDNESDAY

8:30 AM TO 5:00 PM

THURSDAY

8:30 AM TO 5:00 PM

FRIDAY

8:30 AM TO 12:30 PM

WEEKENDS

CLOSED

**SPECIAL AWARDS ANNOUNCED
AT LUNCHEON !**

TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD

WALKING CHALLENGE

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND

**9TH ANNUAL WALKING
CHALLENGE**

SEPTEMBER 1ST - 30TH

**GET UP, MOVE, AND HAVE
FUN WITH A LITTLE
FRIENDLY COMPETITION
AMONG CO-WORKERS!**

RAFFLE PRIZES GALORE !

AWARDS FOR TOP WINNERS !

**COVETED PARKING SPOT FOR GRAND
PRIZE WINNER !**

**START WALKING ON MONDAY,
SEPTEMBER 1ST**



NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION MONTH



My Mental Health: Do I Need Help?

First, determine how much your symptoms interfere with your daily life.



Do I have mild symptoms that have lasted for less than 2 weeks?

- Feeling a little down
- Feeling down, but still able to do job, schoolwork, or housework
- Some trouble sleeping
- Feeling down, but still able to take care of yourself or take care of others



If so, here are some self-care activities that can help:

- Exercising (e.g., aerobics, yoga)
- Engaging in social contact (virtual or in person)
- Getting adequate sleep on a regular schedule
- Eating healthy
- Talking to a trusted friend or family member
- Practicing meditation, relaxation, and mindfulness

If the symptoms above do not improve or seem to be worsening despite self-care efforts, talk to your health care provider.



Do I have severe symptoms that have lasted 2 weeks or more?

- Difficulty sleeping
- Appetite changes that result in unwanted weight changes
- Struggling to get out of bed in the morning because of mood
- Difficulty concentrating
- Loss of interest in things you usually find enjoyable
- Unable to perform usual daily functions and responsibilities
- Thoughts of death or self-harm



Seek professional help:

- Psychotherapy (talk therapy)—virtual or in person; individual, group, or family
- Medications
- Brain stimulation therapies

For help finding treatment, visit nimh.nih.gov/findhelp.

If you are in crisis, call or text the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988 or chat at 988lifeline.org, or text the Crisis Text Line (text HELLO to 741741).



Connect with your MissionSquare Representative

Wherever you are on your savings journey, you need to plan for the retirement you want. **Your MissionSquare representative, Jim Tavares, is here to help you along the way.**

What can you do in a 30-minute one-on-one meeting?

- Enroll in your employer plan
- Roll-in from your old employer plan to your MissionSquare plan
- Contribution changes to accounts if permitted
- Account and portfolio review
- Investor education
-

Tuesday September 9th 9:00am-2:30pm
HR Conference Room, Bloomfield Town Hall
800 Bloomfield Ave, Bloomfield CT 06002

Jim will be offering one-on-one 30-minute meetings. Town employees please reserve your meeting time for Town Hall using the link below.

[Click here to schedule with Jim](#)

If you have questions or unable to meet on the dates provided, please contact:



Jim Tavares
Retirement Plans Specialist
jjtavares@missionsq.org
202-759-7068

THANK YOU SUMMER INTERNS

The Town of Bloomfield extends its heartfelt appreciation to our Summer Interns for the time, effort, and talent they shared with us over the past few months. Their fresh perspectives, innovative ideas, and strong work ethic have been a true asset to our departments, whether assisting with projects, supporting day-to-day operations, or helping us explore new ways to better serve our community.

This summer, our interns demonstrated professionalism and enthusiasm while contributing to meaningful initiatives that have helped move Bloomfield forward. By stepping into roles that provided real-world experience, they not only gained valuable skills but also left a positive mark on our organization. Their work has strengthened our capacity, enhanced our services, and reminded us of the importance of cultivating the next generation of leaders.

We are truly grateful for their commitment and contributions, and we wish them the very best in their academic and professional journeys. Their time here has made a difference, and we look forward to seeing all that they will accomplish in the future.

HAIL

WELCOME TO THE TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD

New Employee
Biography
Latonia Tabb
Clerk Of Council

August 27, 2025 - We are pleased to welcome Latonia Tabb to the Town of Bloomfield's Operations and Communications Department as the Clerk of Council. She previously served as a Director of Workforce & Organizational Management for Girls for Technology in Hartford, CT. Latonia earned a Bachelor of Arts in History from Central Connecticut State University, a Master's in Organizational Management & Leadership from Springfield College School of Human Services, and a professional degree in Planning from the Executive Leadership Academy in Atlanta, GA.

“ *Proud to serve the Town of Bloomfield by leading with integrity and ensuring professional transparency, trust, and consistency, while strengthening our communities in all council matters. -Latonia* **”**

WELCOME TO TEAM BLOOMFIELD!



The Town of Bloomfield is proud to introduce the Emerging Leadership Development Program, a new 12-week initiative designed to prepare employees for future leadership roles. Running from September through December 2025, the program combines in-person workshops, job shadowing, mentorship from senior leaders, and a capstone project that connects leadership to real-world challenges. Participants will strengthen skills in goal setting, time management, emotional intelligence, collaboration, conflict resolution, and strategic problem-solving—all while gaining the confidence and experience to lead with impact.

We are excited to announce the inaugural class of the Emerging Leadership Development Program:

1. Colin Cadarette
2. Michael Castonguay
3. Alle Floyd
4. Nicola Haynes
5. Rachel Hogan-McLennan
6. Amanda Reid
7. Alexander Samalot
8. Romano Tucker
9. Paola Vargas

Please join us in congratulating these employees as they embark on this important journey to grow their leadership skills and help shape the future of Bloomfield!

September PAY DATES

SEPTEMBER 11

SEPTEMBER 25

Happy
BIRTHDAY
to you

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL
OF OUR
SEPTEMBER BABIES IN
TOWN!**

**ONE TEAM
ONE FIGHT**



WORK ANNIVERSARIES

NAME	YEARS OF SERVICE	DEPARTMENT
Kayla Manderville	9/16/24 - 1 year	BVA
Michael Edwards	9/20/23 - 2 years	Facilities
Rachel Hogan-McLennan	9/9/24 - 1 year	Human Resources
Sage Brown	9/20/21 - 4 years	Leisure Services
Alexus Gordon	9/20/21 - 4 years	Leisure Services
Alexander Samalot	9/16/24 - 1 year	Building & Land Use
Stacy Thomas	9/1/15 - 10 year	Police
Liam Scafariello	9/4/24 - 1 year	Police
Jake Richter	9/4/24 - 1 year	Police
Jesenia Polanco	9/18/23 - 2 years	Police
David Spatcher	9/26/23 - 2 years	Police
Daniel Prizio	9/27/21 - 4 years	Police
Jadira Sanchez	9/27/22 - 3 years	Police
Elizabeth Lane	9/9/19 - 6 years	Library Services
Lorraine Huddy	9/13/22 - 3 years	Library Services
Jean Rawlings	9/23/14 - 11 years	Library Services
Katherine Battle	9/27/11 - 14 years	Library Services
Christopher Siloac	9/29/10 - 15 years	Library Services
Mark Dondero	9/10/12 - 13 years	Public Works
Thomas Langer	9/11/23 - 2 years	Public Works
Vernon Enloe	9/14/15 - 10 years	Public Works
Nelson Ortiz	9/30/24 - 1 year	Public Works
Peter Castaldi	9/17/84 - 41 years	Engineering
Luz Cora-Small	9/1/04 - 21 years	Senior Services
Luz Bodner	9/6/11 - 14 years	Senior Services
Lesteina Randolph	9/6/22 - 3 years	Social & Youth Services
Paola Vargas	9/12/22 - 3 years	Social & Youth Services
Christine Russo	9/27/21 - 4 years	Social & Youth Services
India Rodgers	9/25/06 - 19 years	Operations & Communications
Sharron Howe	9/6/05 - 20 years	Office of the Town Manager

RECIPE CORNER

Bread Pudding With Bourbon Sauce

Share your favorite recipe with us! Email communications@bloomfieldct.gov for a chance to be featured!!

Ingredients

- 1 loaf French bread, cut into 1 inch cubes (16 oz.)
- 4 cups milk
- 3 large eggs, beaten
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup raisins
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons pure vanilla extract

Bourbon Sauce

- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 large egg, well beaten
- 2 tablespoons Bourbon

Directions

1. Combine bread and milk in a large mixing bowl; set aside for 5 minutes.
2. Add eggs, sugar, raisins, butter and vanilla; stir well.
3. Spoon mixture into a greased 3 quart casserole.
4. Bake, uncovered, at 325°F for 1 hour or until firm.
5. Cool in pan at least 20 minutes before serving.
6. Spoon into individual serving bowls; serve with Bourbon Sauce.
7. Bourbon Sauce: Combine butter and sugar in a small saucepan; cook over medium, stirring frequently, until sugar dissolves.
8. Add egg, stirring briskly with a wire whisk until well blended.
9. Cook over medium heat 1 minute.
10. Remove from heat, cool slightly; stir in bourbon.



Q: Why don't computer programmers like nature?

A: Too Many Bugs

Q: Why did the scarecrow keep getting promoted?

A: Because he was outstanding in his field.

Q: Why did the photo go to jail?

A: Because it was framed.

