

# THE MONTHLY TEA

The Official Monthly Newsletter for  
Employees of the Town of Bloomfield



OCTOBER 2025

VOLUME 22

## CELEBRATING CULTURE AND CONNECTION THIS OCTOBER

OCTOBER IS A MONTH RICH WITH CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE AND OPPORTUNITIES TO CELEBRATE THE DIVERSITY THAT MAKES OUR WORKPLACE STRONGER.

The first half of October continues Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept 15 – Oct 15), a time to honor the histories, cultures, and contributions of Hispanic and Latino communities. From art and music to innovation and leadership, these contributions have shaped our society in countless ways. Consider exploring local events, trying a traditional recipe, or learning about influential Hispanic leaders who have made an impact in your field.

This month also includes Yom Kippur, the holiest day in the Jewish calendar, observed from the evening of October 1 through October 2. Known as the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur is a time for reflection, prayer, and fasting. It's an opportunity to learn about Jewish traditions and the values of forgiveness and renewal that this day represents.

On October 14, many will observe Indigenous Peoples' Day, a day to recognize and honor the history, culture, and resilience of Indigenous communities. It's an important reminder of the need for inclusion and respect for all cultures and histories.

Later in the month, celebrations like Diwali, the Festival of Lights, bring vibrant traditions that symbolize the triumph of light over darkness and good over evil. This celebration is a reminder of hope, renewal, and community—values that resonate deeply in our workplace.

### **Why does this matter to us?**

Diversity and inclusion are more than values—they are strengths that drive creativity, innovation, and connection. By learning about and honoring these cultural moments, we create a workplace where everyone feels seen, respected, and valued.

## A COMMUNITY WOVEN WITH DIVERSITY

The Town of Bloomfield is more than just a place to live and work—it's a vibrant community enriched by cultural diversity. Our town's strength lies in the stories, traditions, and perspectives of the people who call it home. From its earliest days to today, Bloomfield has been shaped by the contributions of many cultures, creating a community that values inclusion and connection.

This October, we have a special opportunity to celebrate that diversity at the Bloomfield Mosaic Exhibition, taking place on October 30. This unique event, titled "Stories from Our Jewish, African American, and West Indian Communities," will showcase the rich heritage and lived experiences that make Bloomfield extraordinary. Through art, storytelling, and shared history, the Mosaic Exhibition invites us to learn, reflect, and appreciate the cultural threads that bind us together.

### **Why it matters:**

When we embrace diversity, we foster understanding, strengthen relationships, and create a sense of belonging for everyone. Events like the Mosaic Exhibition remind us that every story adds value to the fabric of our community.

Join us on October 30 to celebrate Bloomfield's cultural mosaic and be part of a conversation that honors the past while shaping an inclusive future.

## TOGETHER WE THRIVE: CELEBRATING CULTURE AND COMMUNITY IN BLOOMFIELD

Hey Team Bloomfield,

As we step into October, I want to take a moment to reflect on the incredible work you've all done over the past month. September was a busy and productive time for our team, and I am truly grateful for your dedication and professionalism.

We successfully participated in the **State-Wide Emergency Management Training**, ensuring that Bloomfield remains prepared and resilient in the face of any challenge. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this important effort. We also hosted the **Annual Senior Expo**, which brought together resources and services for our senior residents—another example of how we continue to strengthen our community connections.

September also marked the launch of our **Emerging Leadership Program**, an exciting initiative designed to develop and empower the next generation of leaders within our organization. And let's not forget the **Bloomfield Food Truck Festival**, which brought our community together for great food, fun, and fellowship. Events like these remind us of the vibrant spirit that makes Bloomfield such a special place to live, work, and visit.

As we move into October, I want to highlight the importance of **diversity and inclusion** in our community and workplace. Bloomfield is a town woven with many cultures, and that diversity is one of our greatest strengths. This month, we continue to celebrate **Hispanic Heritage Month**, observe **Yom Kippur**, and later in the month, many will celebrate **Diwali**. These moments remind us that when we embrace different traditions and perspectives, we create a stronger, more connected community.

One special event that reflects this spirit is the **Bloomfield Mosaic Exhibition** on **October 30**, titled "*Stories from Our Jewish, African American, and West Indian Communities.*" This event is an opportunity to learn, share, and celebrate



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

the cultural richness that makes Bloomfield unique. I encourage everyone to attend and be a part of this meaningful experience.

Finally, I want to remind you about our **United Way Campaign**, which will soon be underway. As I mentioned during our Quarterly Town Hall on September 30, I am looking forward to Team Bloomfield building upon last year's success of **90% participation** and reaching our goal of **100% this year!!**

Thank you again for your hard work, your commitment to excellence, and your dedication to making Bloomfield a great place to live and work. Let's keep the momentum going as we move into October!

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



Domestic Violence Awareness Month (DVAM) began in 1987, with Congress officially designating October as National Domestic Violence Awareness Month in 1989. DVAM provides an opportunity for everyone to learn about the prevalence and impacts of domestic violence, while coming together to show victims and survivors they are not alone. This DVAM, we invite you to be an ally and help us spread the word!

## OCTOBER IS BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Breast Cancer Awareness Month is an international health campaign that's held every October. The month aims to promote screening and prevention of the disease, which affects 2.3 million women worldwide. Known best for its pink theme color, the month features a number of campaigns and programs conducted by groups ranging from breast cancer advocacy organizations to local community organizations to major retailers aimed at: supporting people diagnosed with breast cancer, including those with metastatic breast cancer educating people about breast cancer risk factors encouraging women to go for regular breast cancer screening starting at age 40 or earlier, depending on personal breast cancer risk fundraising for breast cancer research.



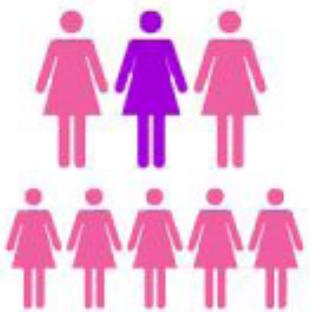
In 2024, more than 360,000 people will be diagnosed with breast cancer. But there is hope. Advancements in early detection methods and support continue to increase the chances of survival. When caught in its earliest, localized stages, the 5-year relative survival rate of breast cancer is 99%. (Source: [www.BreastCancer.org](http://www.BreastCancer.org))

This month can be a good reminder to learn more about breast cancer. Some good places to start might be examining your personal risk of developing the disease, giving yourself a breast exam, and scheduling your next breast cancer screenings.

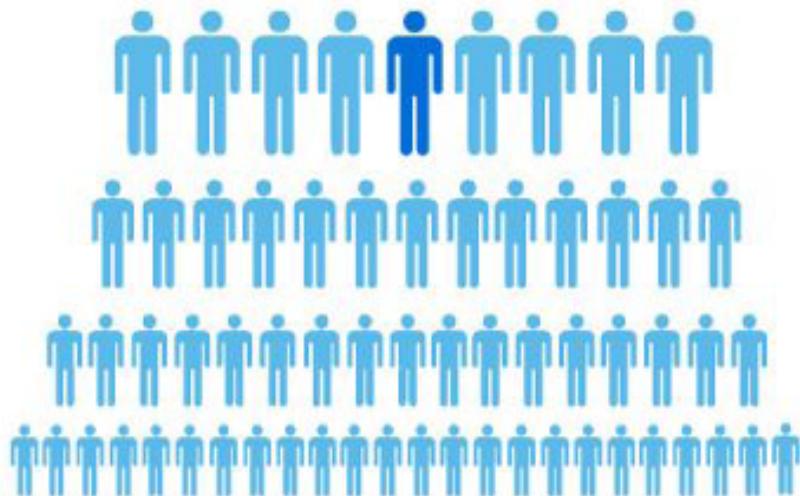
### **Self Exam Instructions:**

<https://www.breastcancer.org/screening-testing/breast-self-exam-bse>

**1 in 8 WOMEN**  
will be diagnosed with  
**BREAST CANCER**  
in their lifetime



**1 in 1000 MEN**  
will be diagnosed with  
**BREAST CANCER**  
in their lifetime





TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD

## EMPLOYEE SHOUTOUTS

### WARREN PLUMMER, BRUCE LAJOIE, JOSH MULLIGAN, CAMERON LANGEVIN, THANGU NARASIMHAN FROM MATT CHILDRESS, FACILITIES DIRECTOR

I would like to take a moment to extend my sincere appreciation to you and your team for the support you consistently provide to Facilities. Your responsiveness and commitment do not go unnoticed, and I am truly grateful for the partnership we share.

In particular, I would like to acknowledge the efforts of Joshua and Cam today. They responded immediately, quickly identified the root cause of the issue, and determined that the problem stemmed from a failed UPS on the HVAC system rather than a networking issue. Their knowledge, professionalism, and efficiency were invaluable in resolving the situation in a timely manner.

Please extend my thanks and recognition to both Joshua and Cam for a job very well done. Their efforts, along with the continued support from your entire team, make a significant difference and are greatly appreciated.

### VICTOR MENDOZA E-MAIL FROM A BLOOMFIELD RESIDENT

Today (September 23, 2025) I noticed something special in the Town Hall. Starting in the women's rest room and wherever else I walked, the intersection of the walls and floors was CLEAN. I mean sparkling clean. Not an easy job.

Please pass along my praise to the person cleaning the Town Hall (especially the rest rooms).

### ADAM O'NEIL, MARK DONDERO, THOMAS LANGER, SHANE O' NEIL, JOSE CARRERO FROM MATT CHILDRESS, FACILITIES DIRECTOR

The Facilities Department would like to proudly recognize the outstanding efforts of these five employees for their instrumental role in the replacement of the flagpole located in front of Town Hall.

Despite numerous challenges and tough obstacles, these gentlemen demonstrated perseverance, professionalism, and unwavering dedication. Their ability to work through obstacles with patience and determination ensured the successful completion of the project.

This achievement is a testament not only to their technical skill, but also their commitment to excellence. They went above and beyond their daily responsibilities, reflecting their price in serving the Town of Bloomfield and their dedication to making our community a more beautiful and welcoming place each day.

On behalf of our department, we extend our sincere appreciation for each of you.

**It's time to celebrate the amazing people who make the Town of Bloomfield shine! Employee Shoutouts is your chance to recognize the hard work, kindness, and creativity of your co-workers. Did someone go the extra mile? Lend a helping hand? Make your day better? Let's give them the spotlight they deserve!**

**Nominate your co-workers using the link below and help us spread positivity, appreciation, and team spirit. Let's keep lifting each other up and making our community stronger—one shoutout at a time!**

<https://bloomfieldct.gov/FormCenter/General-Forms-4/Employee-Recognition-Accomplishments-78>

# 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**



## 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

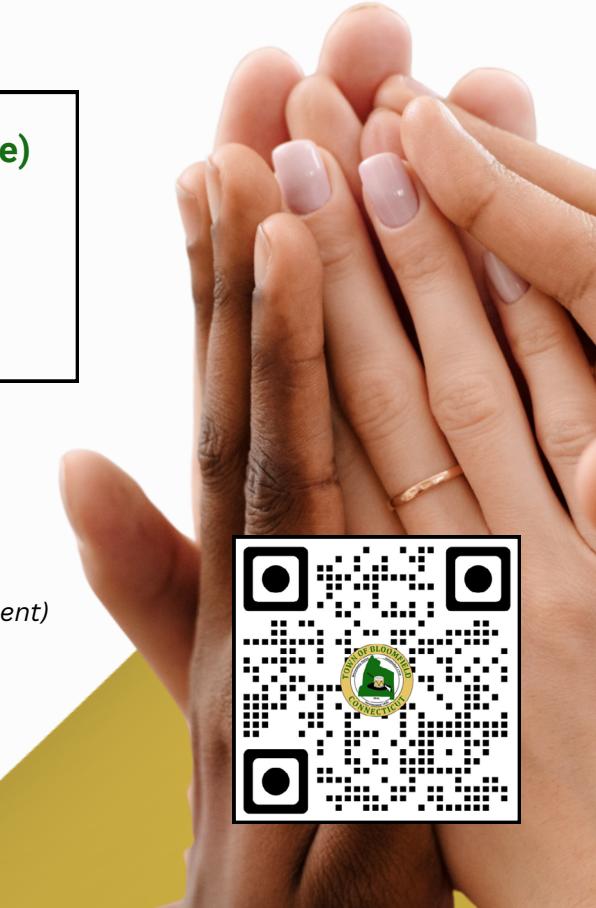
- Workplace environment issues
- Policy or procedure concerns
- Personal work matters
- Conflicts or disputes

#### 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](mailto:dcooper@bloomfieldct.gov)
- **Sharon Gentles-Harris** (*Risk & Process Improvement*)
  - [sharris@bloomfieldct.gov](mailto:sharris@bloomfieldct.gov)
- **Matthew Childress** (*Public Works - Facilities*)
  - [mchildress@bloomfieldct.gov](mailto:mchildress@bloomfieldct.gov)



BLOOMFIELD HUMANITIES COMMITTEE  
*in partnership with the*

WINTONBURY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
*presents*

# BLOOMFIELD MOSAIC



THURSDAY, OCT. 30, 2025

6:00 - 8:00 PM

ALVIN & BEATRICE  
WOODS HUMAN  
SERVICES CENTER  
330 PARK AVE.  
BLOOMFIELD, CT 06002



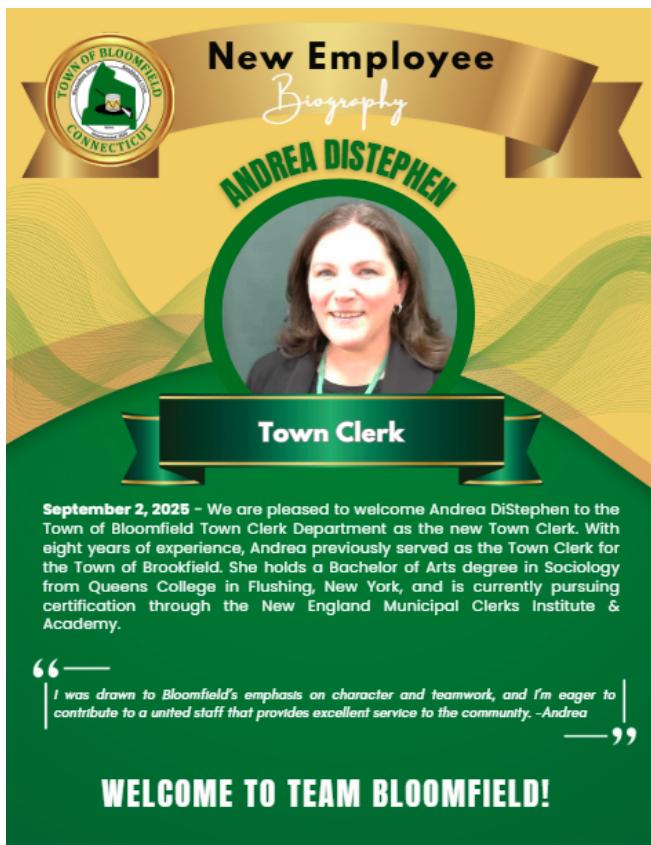
STORIES FROM OUR JEWISH, AFRICAN AMERICAN,  
AND WEST INDIAN COMMUNITIES

  
Seabury  
cthumanities



  
Seabury  
At Home  
  
  
UCONN  
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY  
ENGAGED, PUBLIC, ORAL,  
AND COMMUNITY HISTORIES

# HAIL WELCOME TO THE TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD



**New Employee**  
*Biography*

**ANDREA DISTEPHEN**

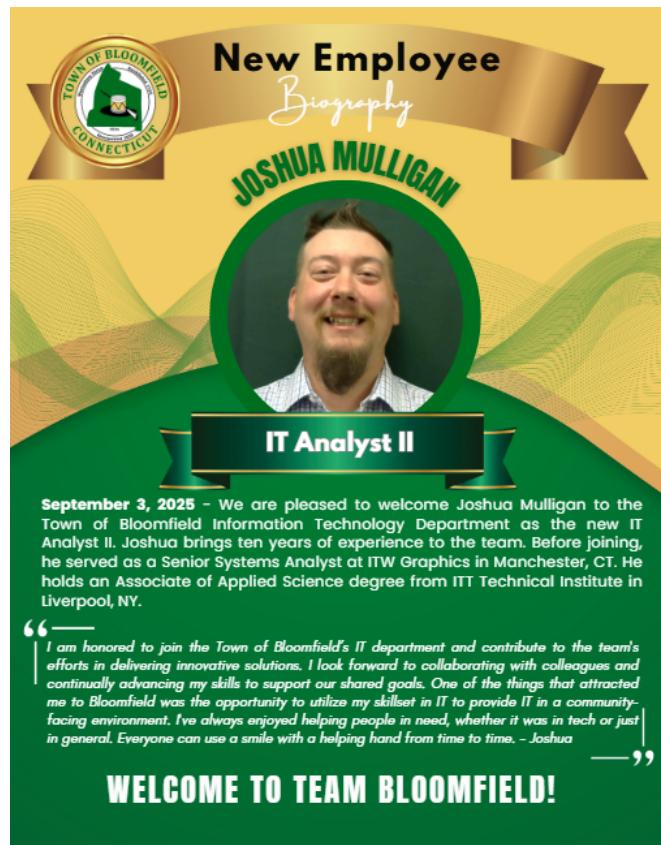


**Town Clerk**

**September 2, 2025** - We are pleased to welcome Andrea DiStephen to the Town of Bloomfield Town Clerk Department as the new Town Clerk. With eight years of experience, Andrea previously served as the Town Clerk for the Town of Brookfield. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from Queens College in Flushing, New York, and is currently pursuing certification through the New England Municipal Clerks Institute & Academy.

*I was drawn to Bloomfield's emphasis on character and teamwork, and I'm eager to contribute to a united staff that provides excellent service to the community. -Andrea*

**WELCOME TO TEAM BLOOMFIELD!**



**New Employee**  
*Biography*

**JOSHUA MULLIGAN**



**IT Analyst II**

**September 3, 2025** - We are pleased to welcome Joshua Mulligan to the Town of Bloomfield Information Technology Department as the new IT Analyst II. Joshua brings ten years of experience to the team. Before joining, he served as a Senior Systems Analyst at ITW Graphics in Manchester, CT. He holds an Associate of Applied Science degree from ITT Technical Institute in Liverpool, NY.

*I am honored to join the Town of Bloomfield's IT department and contribute to the team's efforts in delivering innovative solutions. I look forward to collaborating with colleagues and continually advancing my skills to support our shared goals. One of the things that attracted me to Bloomfield was the opportunity to utilize my skillset in IT to provide IT in a community-facing environment. I've always enjoyed helping people in need, whether it was in tech or just in general. Everyone can use a smile with a helping hand from time to time. - Joshua*

**WELCOME TO TEAM BLOOMFIELD!**

## EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER

Matt Teubner - Town Clerk's Office

I am honored to nominate Matt for this recognition. His depth of institutional knowledge is invaluable, and he shares it generously to benefit colleagues and the community. He consistently demonstrates excellent customer service, approaching every interaction with patience, professionalism, and care.

Beyond his technical expertise, Matt embodies the qualities of diligence, loyalty, and teamwork. He is a steady and reliable presence in our office; someone others turn to for guidance and support. His contributions ensure not only the smooth daily operations of the Clerk's office but also the preservation of knowledge that strengthens our entire organization.

Although I am still getting to know him personally, it is clear to me that Matt is an exceptional employee and colleague. His dedication and integrity deserve to be recognized, and I wholeheartedly support his nomination.



WORK ANNIVERSARIES

NAME	YEARS OF SERVICE	DEPARTMENT
Michelle Greaves	10/31/22 - 3 years	Building & Land Use
Krishna Naraine	10/7/2024 - 1 year	Building & Land Use
Victor Mendoza	10/7/24 - 1 year	Facilities
Damon Mack	10/28/22 - 3 years	Leisure Services
Dawn Dickenson-Kerr	10/27/23 - 2 years	Leisure Services
Zachary O'Bright	10/5/17 - 8 years	Police
Alan Wild	10/12/09 - 16 years	Police
Dashant Russell	10/15/07 - 18 years	Police
Mara Whitman	10/08/96 - 29 years	Library Services
Thomas Nicotera	10/14/96 - 29 years	Library Services
Allison Wilkos	10/22/12 - 13 years	Library Services
Nicole Dolat	10/28/15 - 10 years	Library Services
Jason Terva	10/3/05 - 20 years	Public Works
Dan Carter	10/6/15 - 10 years	Public Works
Bill Wolfe	10/9/23 - 2 years	Public Works
Anthony Grant	10/11/21 - 4 years	Public Works
Darin Lemire	10/28/24 - 1 year	Engineering
Waldemar Demby	10/10/16 - 9 years	Senior Services
Gregory Decarish	10/12/15 - 10 years	Senior Services
Amy-Beth Sirard	10/15/07 - 18 years	Senior Services

Happy  
**BIRTHDAY**  
to you

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL  
OF OUR  
OCTOBER BABIES IN  
TOWN!

ONE TEAM  
ONE FIGHT



**TOWN OF  
BLOOMFIELD  
EMPLOYEE  
FLU CLINIC**

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16  
9:30 AM - 12:00 PM  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS



## RECIPE CORNER

### Mac-O-Lantern and Cheese Bowls

Share your favorite recipe with us! Email [communications@bloomfieldct.gov](mailto:communications@bloomfieldct.gov) for a chance to be featured!!

#### Ingredients

- Kosher salt
- 6 medium orange bell peppers
- 8 ounces elbow macaroni
- 1 1/4 cups half-and-half
- 8 ounces cream cheese, at room temperature
- 4 ounces mild Cheddar, shredded (about 1 1/2 cups)

#### Directions

1. Bring a large pot of generously salted water to a boil. Fill a large bowl with ice water.
2. Cut the tops off the peppers and reserve. Remove the seeds and membranes. Put the peppers and the tops in the boiling water and cook until just tender, 2 to 3 minutes. Plunge the peppers into the ice bath. Once cool, remove them and use a sharp knife to carve a jack-o-lantern face into one side of each pepper.
3. Return the water to a boil, add the macaroni and cook until al dente, about 6 minutes. Reserve 1 cup of the pasta water and drain (don't rinse the pasta).
4. Heat the half-and-half in a large saucepan over medium heat until it just comes to a simmer. Continue simmering until reduced to about 3/4 cup, about 10 minutes. Add the cream cheese and stir until melted. Whisk in the Cheddar until all the cheese is melted and the sauce is smooth.
5. Off the heat, add the macaroni to the saucepan and stir to combine. Stir in some of the reserved pasta water to thin the sauce if needed. Season with salt if needed. Let sit for 10 minutes, then divide the mac and cheese among the peppers and cap each with a pepper top.



**Q: What did the monster say when October arrived?**

**A: It is boo-tiful outside**

**Q: What's the best band to listen to in autumn?**

**A: The Spice Girls**

**Q: What is it called when a tree doesn't think it's autumn?**

**A: Disbe-leaf**

