

September 2025

Your DGB Cultural District E-News



Register for our Annual Meeting!



Downtown Great Barrington Cultural District Annual Meeting - Join us to celebrate the accomplishments of the past year, and to hear about Cultural District activity in the coming year.

All are welcome - please share this invitation with anyone who would be interested in the activity of the Cultural District! We also welcome submissions of downtown Great Barrington photos for use in our promotional materials! Please include photo credits.

RSVP now for the 6th Annual Meeting of the Downtown Great Barrington Cultural District, please e-mail: culturalgb@gmail.com. Alternatively, If you cannot make the meeting but would like to submit a question or comment, please e-mail: culturalgb@gmail.com.

When: Thursday, October 16th at 9 am

Where: The Indigo Room - 20 Castle Street, Great Barrington

Cultural District Business Updates

Half Rats Wine Bar - Half Rats Wine Bar is a natural wine bar located at 343 Main Street. The project is the creation of longtime local and hospitality veteran Abby Pendergist, who built Half Rats from the ground up in the former Berkshire Community College building, recently redeveloped by Alander. With help from a devoted crew of friends, neighbors, and skilled volunteers, Abby has transformed the space into something entirely personal. The name Half Rats, a nod to Victorian-era British slang for being slightly tipsy, speaks to the laid-back spirit she's built into the place: unfussy, warm, and a little wonky. The space is inspired by the neighborhood bars Abby encountered in her travels through Europe; small, personal spaces where people of all kinds gather. Be sure to follow [@imhalfrats](#) on social media for updates!



Better Yoga Berkshires - Better Yoga Berkshires is located at 40 Railroad Street. At Better Yoga, “better” does not mean better than someone else, another studio, or any outside comparison. Instead, it means better for you. It’s about feeling better in your own body, breathing better, moving better, and living better through the practice of yoga. “Better” is personal—an invitation to find practices that meet you where you are and support your unique growth, healing, and well-being. From Begin to Flow, Align/Katonah Yoga™, Ayurvedic yoga, Yin, and Move, our classes cater to your needs and preferences. Our daily multi offerings bring variety so your mind and body stay engaged every week. Click the [link](#) to find a class that suits you!



Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce

[The Berkshire Edge](#) - Erik Bruun, owner of SoCo Creamery in Great Barrington, has been named as the Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce Business Person of the Year! The Southern Berkshire Chamber of Commerce honored Erik Bruun as its Person of the Year at Catamount Mountain Resort on Wednesday, September 10th. A former journalist for The Berkshire Eagle, Bruun has been the owner of SoCo Creamery for the past 10 years. He is the founding board president of Railroad Street Youth Project and the co-founder of the South Berkshire Youth Coalition. He currently serves as a board member and trustee for the Railroad Street Youth Project, Community Health Programs, and the

To read the full article click the [here](#).



Festival Latino of The Berkshires

Festival Latino of the Berkshires celebrates Hispanic Heritage. Taking place on Saturday, September 27th, 2025 from 12:00 pm. to 6:00 pm., behind the Great Barrington Town Hall and Saint James Place.

The Festival is free of charge, open to the public and alcohol-free.

- Food Vendors
- Sale of Traditional Crafts
- Social Services
- Dance Companies
- and more!

The Festival offers an outdoor and indoor gathering of joy and learning for all who attend — and offers the opportunity for the Latino community to rediscover its roots, strengthen its identity and artistic tendencies.



Indigo Room Grand Opening!

Great Barrington, Mass.—The Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center will hold a Grand Opening Celebration for its new performance space the Indigo Room from October 10th through October 12th, with performances by jazz vocalist Ann Hampton Callaway, blues guitarist Guy Davis, and family-friendly musician Terry A La Berry, among ceremonial festivities throughout the weekend. Further programming for the Indigo Room is also announced.

The Indigo Room is a flexible performance space in the former Great Barrington firehouse building at 20 Castle Street, next door to the historic Mahaiwe theater.

Seating in the Indigo Room is modular, allowing different audience capacities based on the nature of a program. About 80 patrons fit in an arrangement of café tables; 100 in plain rows; and 150 when standing-room-only. These seating plans can be customized in various combinations, such as with plain rows behind café tables in front.



“The Mahaiwe team is thrilled to celebrate the opening of the Indigo Room,” says Mahaiwe Executive Director Janis Martinson. “Over the weekend we will demonstrate exactly what the Indigo Room will be: a versatile performance space with a true range of offerings. Between comedy, cabaret, blues, family fun and more, we hope to appeal to all entertainment appetites in our community. Come toast this new cultural hub in downtown Great Barrington!”

- Tickets to Terry A La Berry, Guy Davis, Matt Cusson, Ann Hampton Callaway and Isaiah J. Thompson are on sale now!
- Tickets can be purchased online at mahaive.org/events, or by calling or visiting the Box Office, 413-528-0100, on Wednesday through Saturday from noon to 4 p.m.

Rewind and Rediscover - History of Searles Castle

Searles Castle - Located in the center of downtown Great Barrington is a magnificent residence built in the 1800's by Mary Hopkins, widow of the renown railway tycoon Mark Hopkins. At a cost of \$16.5 million dollars the castle, is over 54,000 square feet, boasts over forty major rooms, and displays the luxuriant ambience enjoyed by the wealthy during America's Gilded Age.



Originally known as Kellogg Terrace, the castle was commissioned in 1875 for Mary Sherwood Hopkins by her husband Mark Hopkins, treasurer and one of the founders of the Central Pacific Railroad. Mark Hopkins died in 1878 and Mary Hopkins married Edward Francis Searles, who had designed the interior while the castle was being built. He was 23 years younger than she was. Hopkins died in 1891, but Searles maintained the castle until his death in 1920.

After Searles died, the structure was used as a private girls' school for 30 years. It then passed through a variety of owners and uses, serving as a training and conference center for The Home Insurance Company of New York, an all-girls boarding school, and a country club. From the mid-1980s, it housed John Dewey Academy, a school for troubled intellectually gifted teens. The castle was listed for sale in 2007 for \$15 million. It was sold to artist Hunt Slonem in 2021 for \$3.25 million.

The Searles Castle is a French chateau-style castle-style initially designed by Stanford White of McKim, Mead and White, a famous New York architectural firm at the time. The stone of the exterior of the castle is blue dolomite. All the pillars in the atrium were hollowed out except one. The Louis XV Versailles Room was imported from Venice. The wood floors are finger locked construction, meaning there are no nails used anywhere. The pond was built as a cross specifically so it could reflect the castle from the other side, to add to the beauty when people would have tea by the façade. The carriage house which currently stands was not the original. The original burned down a few years after the castle was completed, and was replaced by the current one.

Did you know? The 1996 movie *Before and After* was filmed in the castle. This movie included actors Liam Neeson and Meryl Streep. The 2016 movie *Like Lambs* was also filmed in the castle.

Great Barrington Historic Walking Tours

The Great Barrington Historical Society offers two, self-guided walking tours now available on the Apple and Android App Store!

The *Great Barrington Walking Tour* allows visitors to explore the history of Great Barrington from its colonial origins, through the industrial revolution, to the Gilded Age and the 20th century.

While the second historic walking tour allows visitors to explore the Du Bois Freedom Center. This tour explores the history of African American heritage in the Berkshires, the biography of W.E.B Du Bois, and the story of the town's first black church.

Download the Great Barrington Walking Tour App and explore the towns rich history, cultural significance, and historic sites!



Creative Economy Jobs

You can also find exclusively creative economy jobs, including remote and hybrid opportunities, at [MCC's HireCulture](#). Several sample postings are below.

Find Berkshire County in-person, remote, and hybrid jobs that pay a minimum of \$40K a year in all fields, including arts, education, nonprofits, and related, at [1Berkshire's The Jobs Thing](#). Among some of the current openings of interest are:

- [Development Director, Berkshire United Way](#)
- [Payroll and Benefits Specialist, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts](#)
- [Advanced Engineering Specialist, General Dynamics Mission Systems](#)



- [Studio Supervisor, Berkshire Pulse](#)
- [Front Desk Staff Member, Berkshire Pulse](#)

The National Organization for Arts in Health (NOAH) provides transformational leadership

to bring the arts in health together and advance the field.



Check out current open hybrid/remote positions in the field of arts in health [here](#).

Arts Funding and Resources

**Curated information about funding and financial assistance
for those working in the creative economy.**



Learn about grants, events, and resources, find fellowships and apprenticeships, and identify art spaces by subscribing to [MCC's Monthly Newsletter](#)

[Opportunities & Resources for Orgs – September 2025](#)

MassDevelopment's Small Business Technical Assistance Grant Program - nonprofits with established small business services can apply for funds provided that their proposed programming advances growth and stability for businesses with fewer than 20 employees and no more than \$2.5 million in revenues. Proposal deadline: Oct. 9, 2025.

The Awesome Foundation - is a global community advancing the interest of awesome in the universe, \$1000 at a time. Each fully autonomous chapter supports projects through micro-grants, usually given out monthly. Projects include initiatives in a wide range of areas including arts, technology, community development, and more. Many awesome projects are novel or experimental, and evoke surprise and delight. Deadline: Rolling.

An overview of MCC's FY25 Programs and Funding Opportunities is available [HERE](#).



Creative Capital is a nonprofit, grantmaking organization funding artists in the creation of groundbreaking new work, amplifying the impact of their work, and fostering sustainable artistic careers.

[Artist Opportunities for September and October 2025](#)

[Craft Research Fund Grant Kit](#) - Grants up to \$15,000 are awarded to support new and interdisciplinary research about craft in the United States. In addition to receiving this prestigious award and funding, recipients of the Craft Research Fund will become members of the Center for Craft Alumni

Network. This social platform is designed exclusively for current and previous grantees and offers valuable resources, networking opportunities, and ongoing support for craft research.

Deadline: October 17th, 2025

[Studios at Mass MoCA](#) - The Studios at MASS MoCA runs year-round, hosts up to 10 artists at a time for stays of 2 or 4 weeks, and primarily seeks applications from visual artists (painters, sculptors, installation artists, photographers, video/new media artists, fiber artists, printmakers, etc.) and writers in all literary disciplines. Artists from around the world are encouraged to apply.

Deadline: November 1st, 2025

[The Iris Artistic Residency](#) - is a collaboration between the Studios at MASS MoCA and The Berkshire Immigrant Center. This open call is for artists in Western or Central Massachusetts (Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire, Hampden, Worcester) who are foreign-born, or identify as first or second generation American. We welcome applications from artists in all career stages, income levels, and disciplines (painters, sculptors, installation artists, fiber artists, printmakers, writers, performers, designers, photographers, filmmakers, etc.) whose practice allows them to work quietly (nothing is sound-proofed, so power tools and loud music are discouraged).

Deadline November 1st, 2025



Access online courses and resources designed to help artists build thriving practices at any career stage and in any discipline.

[Creative Capital Artist Lab](#) - is a new online professional development curriculum designed to help artists build thriving practices at any career stage and in any discipline. Free for individual use, courses are created by art professionals, industry experts, and fellow artists who share vital concepts, skills, and tools to help grow artists' careers—including courses on crafting artist statements, grant proposals, managing multiple income streams, and more.

Videos include ASL and Spanish interpretation, as well as CART services.



NEFA cultivates and promotes the arts in New England and beyond.

Check the NEFA website for a wide range of resources, including:

[Recent Publications](#)

[Arts & Accessibility](#)

[Community Initiatives](#)

[Racial & Social Justice Resources](#)



ArtsHub is an ever-evolving idea designed to highlight and bring together the amazing artists, organizations, and events that are happening within the creative communities of Western Mass.

The ArtsHub site regularly updates with opportunities, events, news, and more.

[See profiles and list yourself here](#) and [learn about promoting yourself on NEFA's related site: CreativeGround.](#)



Mass Creative advocates for a well-resourced and equitable creative sector essential to Massachusetts's economic and civic vibrancy.

MASSCreative's [Action Network](#) fights for policies that benefit cultural nonprofits, creative businesses, and individual artists in Massachusetts. Where arts, culture, and creativity are recognized as vital components of civically engaged, economically vibrant, and equitable communities.

Great Barrington Public Libraries: Programming & Events



Adult Programs - Mason Library

Author Talk: Getting to Know You by Claudia Gold

- Dr. Claudia Gold presents her book Getting to Know You, which is relevant not just for practitioners working with infants, but also parents and caregivers. The book

comes from both developmental science and extensive clinical experience and describes how taking a stance of not-knowing can help us find our way into another person's experience, offering the greatest opportunity for connection, growth, and healing.

- Friday, September 26th - 4:00 pm

OtherWords Reading Series: Enjoy spoken word poetry and refreshments.

- Saturday, September 27th - 4:00 pm

1 on 1 Financial Planning with Luke Delorme, CFP, of Tableaux Wealth has offered to give 30 minute appointments to our patrons. Schedule yours today!

- See available appointments on our website. Each appointment is 45 minutes in length.
- Thursdays - 2:00pm - 4:45pm

Classical Music Listening Party

- In conjunction with the addition of this new database, we will be holding a program to provide a tutorial on how to take advantage of this wealth of music. Alongside the tutorial, we'll listen to some music! The playlist will be curated by Jamie, the Head of Programming, and a trained classical musician herself. These Classical Music Listening Parties will continue to be held on every first Friday of the month with new playlists and new discussion topics for listeners to enjoy.
- Every first Friday - 4:00 pm

Children's Programs - Mason Library

Chicken-ologie 101

- Cluck, Cluck! Join us for Chicken-ologie 101, a fun, hands-on program where kids ages 4–6 will explore the science of chickens while building empathy and curiosity through safe, up-close encounters with these live feathered friends.
- Registration required.
- Saturday, September 27th 10:30am

Chicken-ologie 102

- Cluck, Cluck! Join us for Chicken-ologie 102, a fun, hands-on program where kids ages 7–9 will explore the science of chickens while building empathy and curiosity through safe, up-close encounters with these live feathered friends.
- Registration required.
- Saturday, September 27th 11:00am

Nature Club

- Kids ages 6-10 and their grownups are invited to explore the wonders of nature through hands-on activities and outdoor adventures every other Wednesday for six weeks!
- Registration is required
- Every other Wednesday - 4:30pm

Read to or Visit a Therapy Dog!

- Join us in the Children's Room most Friday mornings at 11:30, to meet a therapy dog who will be available for an hour for patrons to greet, pet, and read to.
- Fridays - 11:30am

Youth Chess Club

- Join our Youth Chess Club, and have fun! Whether you're a beginner or a budding grandmaster, come learn, play, and sharpen your skills in a friendly, relaxed environment.
- Saturdays - 11:00am

Be sure to visit the [Great Barrington Pubic Libraries](#) website to view more and programming and events!

OtherWords Reading Series

[OtherWords](#), is a monthly poetry reading series that takes place at the Mason Library. Curated by poets [Michael Gottlieb](#) and [Evelyn Reilly](#), *OtherWords* is a continuation of the series that was hosted at the Familiar Trees Bookstore and RA Gallery on Railroad Street for the past two years.

The September poetry reading will take place Saturday the 27th at 4pm. The reading features Nathan Kernan, Peter Gizzi, and Geoffrey Young.

SEP 27
4 PM

OTHERWORDS
READING SERIES

**JAMES SCHUYLER
REMEMBERED**

WITH **NATHAN KERNAN
PETER GIZZI
GEOFFREY YOUNG**

AT
MASON LIBRARY
231 MAIN STREET
GREAT BARRINGTON MA

CURATED BY
**MICHAEL GOTTLIEB
& EVELYN REILLY**

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ALL
TO
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What | When | Where

What: [Smithsonian Academy Orchestra](#)

When: Wednesday, September 24th | 7:30 pm

Where: Saint James Place

Details: Founded in 2024, the Smithsonian



Academy Orchestra is a project of the Smithsonian National Museum of American History in Washington DC, directed by Kenneth Slowik. Modeled after Frans Brüggen's Orchestra of the Eighteenth Century, their repertoire ranges from Bach to Schoenberg performed on period instruments. Hear them perform Haydn's Symphony No. 95 and Beethoven's Symphony No.3 "Eroica." This event is free!



What: [Mahaiwe Rumba featuring Luana Dias David and DJ RVMB](#)

When: Saturday, September, 27th | 6:00 pm

Where: The Indigo Room

Details: The Mahaiwe will celebrate Festival Latino with a salsa class from instructor Luana Dias David at 6pm followed by a salsa party with DJ RVMB at 7pm. These events will take place in the Mahaiwe's Indigo Room.



What: [WIT Festival presents: David W. Blight and Deval Patrick in conversation with Imani Perry](#)

When: Sunday, September 28th | 11:00 am

Where: Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center

Details: Join award-winning scholar David W. Blight (Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom) and former Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick—two models of public service and public spirit—as they discuss how to foster historical understanding and civil discourse in a contentious political climate. The conversation is moderated by Harvard professor Imani Perry, whose new book is *Black in Blues: How a Color Tells the Story of My People*.

What: [WIT Festival presents: Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde & Marilynne Robinson \(in conversation with Paul Elie\)](#)

When: Sunday, September 28th | 3:00 pm

Where: Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center



Details: How do we tend to the human spirit in a time of fear and harm? Join Bishop Budde and Marilynne Robinson, two luminaries cherished for their wisdom and imagination, for a conversation that promises to be gracious, grave, radiant, and revelatory.



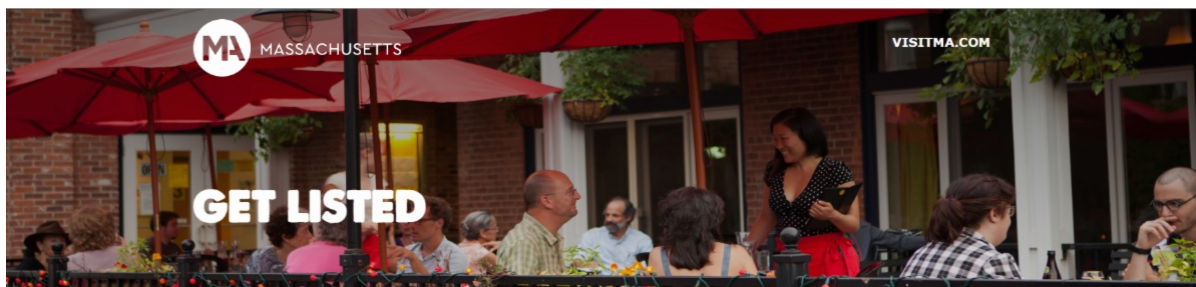
What: [iiCoCo - International Interactive Collaborating Composers](#)

When: Friday, October 3rd | 7:00 pm

Where: Dewey Hall

Details: iCoCo is a group of international creative outliers in the arts that started with a core group of composers from Juilliard. This composer's lab will feature Nina Colosi, Maretha Davel, Carolyn Lieberman, Howard Lieberman, Robert O'Connor, Lance Phillip, Patrick Suter, and Dan Yurkofsky.

Be sure to follow the Downtown Great Barrington Cultural District on Facebook and Instagram to stay up-to-date on all the latest news and events happening downtown!



Mass Office of Travel and Tourism

The [Massachusetts Official Travel and Tourism \(MOTT\) website](#) includes a FREE business database where you can list your business! To get started, [visit their website](#), where you can sign on as a new business or update your information if you are already registered.

Are you making the most of the #mylocalMA campaign? [Submit Your Story](#) for a chance to be featured on social media and in MOTT's My Local MA e-newsletter. You can find more information and

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