



Town of Westford Massachusetts

Town Manager's Newsletter

May 2023



Kristen Las
Town
Manager

klas@westfordma.gov
www.westfordma.gov/tm
978-692-5500

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Memorial Day Ceremonies
Will be held
Sunday, May 29
(See page 16)

American Red Cross
Blood Drive
June 6, 18, and 22
(See Page 12)

Westford Farmer Market
Opening Day
Tuesday, June 20
2:30 - 6:30 PM



Watch
westford CAT
community access television
www.westfordcat.org

Dear Westford residents,

It was so nice to see many smiling faces on Saturday May 13 as I marched with the Select Board in my first Apple Blossom Parade. The participants and the spectators represented so much of what makes Westford a wonderful town.

This month, we welcome Pam McNiff as the new Project and Procurement Specialist in the Town Manager's office. Pam is a Westford resident and formerly the Registrar for the Recreation Department. I would also like to extend my thanks to Nicole Laviolette, Community Wellness Coordinator and Kathy Wilson for assisting in the Town Manager's Office during our time of transition.

I would like to thank the poll workers who dedicated their time on May 2 to facilitate the local Town Election. During the day, I was able to visit both Stonybrook Middle School and Westford Academy to see the set up and meet many people. Tom Clay and Chris Barrett were elected to the Select Board. For more information about the election results, please find them on the [Town Clerk's webpage](#).

If you have any suggestions for articles or added features in future newsletters, please do not hesitate to reach out to the Town Manager's office at (978)-692-5501 or email at klas@westfordma.gov.

At their meeting on April 25, 2023, The Select Board reviewed a proposed firearms bylaw to regulate firearms businesses in Westford. The Select Board voted to co-sponsor a potential Zoning Bylaw amendment with the Planning Board. The Planning Board reviewed the draft at their May 1, 2023 meeting. A public hearing on the draft bylaw will be held during the Planning Board meeting on June 5, 2023, at 7PM at the Town Hall Meeting Room

The Select Board authorized the Town Manager's Office to participate in the upcoming Community Electric Aggregation Program bid process being held on May 2, 2023. Residents and businesses will have three options when the new 36-month contract begins including, Opt Down Basic Service (no additional renewable energy, state minimum standard), Default Service (10% additional renewable energy), and Opt Up Option (100% renewable energy). More information about this program will be available in the summer.

The Board also approved a proclamation to designate May as Mental Health Awareness Month. This proclamation will help support the Community Wellness and Health Department by bringing Mental Health Awareness to the Westford community and help to reduce the stigma associated with mental illness. This was officially shared during the May 1, 2023, Mental Health Awareness event on the town common.

At their meeting on May 9, 2023, the Select Board congratulated Chris Barrett as the new Select Board Member. They also recognized the efforts of the Westford Police Department who worked to identify the body found on Providence Road in 2019 and inform the public that an individual had been formally charged with the crime.

(Continued on next page)

WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV

The Select Board approved the charge to form a Budget Task Force including 9 full member seats, and appointed Chair Tom Clay as the Select Board representative. The deadline for Citizen Activity Form submissions was May 17, 2023 but forms will continue to be accepted after this time.

A charge was approved by the Board for the MBTA Communities Multi-Family Housing Advisory Committee (MCMAC) and Citizen Activity Form submission are being accepted through May 25, 2023.

The Board reviewed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) requests on April 25, 2023 and May 9, 2023. They will continue to prioritize the requests over the next month. More information on this can be found [here](#).

On May 9, 2023, the Select Board voted to issue a Proclamation for National Public Works Week that will be annually recognized as the 3rd week in May. This will help the citizens, civic leaders, and children of Westford gain knowledge and create ongoing interested and understanding of the importance of public works and public works programs in our community.

Would you like more detailed information on the Select Board's meetings? Click the following links to access: [Select Board Documents](#) & [Select Board Meeting Videos](#).

Don't forget to sign up for Rave/Smart911 Emergency Notifications to receive alerts regarding school/town office closings and delays, trash/recycling collection delays, and more directly to your phone or email. If a child is missing, a hurricane or tornado is approaching, a break-in occurs, or a general message needs to be sent to the community, this is the most efficient way the town can send quick and accurate information to residents. To find out more information and to sign up for this notification, you may visit the following link: Smart911.

There are several openings on our local boards and committees, including:

35 Town Farm Road Task Force,
Affordable Housing Trust,
Agricultural Commission,
Budget Task Force,
Bylaw Review Committee,
Capital Planning Committee,
Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee,
Commission on Disability,
Cultural Council,
Dog Park Task Force,
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee,
Economic Development Committee,
Health Insurance Trust,

Healthy Westford Committee,
Housing Authority,
MBTA Communities Multi-Family Housing Advisory Committee,
Nashoba Valley Technical High School Committee (alternate position),
Permanent Town Building Committee,
Scholarship and Grant Committee,
Senior Low Income Disabled Tax Relief Committee,
Selectmen Policies & Procedures Sub Committee,
Senior Low Income Disabled Tax Relief Committee,
Tax Possession Disposition Committee.

I urge you to peruse our website for information about the work of these committees; and if you have interest, please complete and submit a Citizen's Activity form at this link: [Citizen Activity Form](#).

Sincerely,



Kristen Las

Westford Public Schools

Our district wide core values within the acronym of SPIRIT are Safety, Perseverance, Inclusion, Respect, Integrity and Teamwork. During SPIRIT lessons within our schools, the definition of integrity includes doing the right thing, even when no one is watching.

Recently, some of our students have been sharing examples of scenarios that they have witnessed or experienced involving unacceptable behavior by their peers when adults are not around—both in school settings and out in the community at large. Integrity is not as straightforward as safety and teamwork or even respect, which are some of our other core values. We need to spend more time exploring what this characteristic and quality looks like as there are fewer examples of it in the social media feeds that many of our children are exposed to on a regular basis. Some of these behaviors, both by our students and by the social media influencers that they follow, are unacceptable due to the biased and or prejudicial content they contain. The intent of a student using this biased language or even their active engagement in sharing or liking a social media post might not be to do harm, but the impact is damaging and hurtful.

As we venture further into the spring and closer to the end of the school year, I wanted to take the opportunity to appeal to all of our families to take the time to have additional conversations with your children regarding their choices as they tend to spend more time with their friends in the better weather and often in less structured situations. Most of us strongly believe that our kids would never (fill in the blank), but the reality is that all children, at times, make choices that can surprise us when not under adult supervision.

Our schools are reflections of the communities we serve. All members of our community and guests that share our spaces are deserving of a safe, respectful environment in which they feel a sense of belonging. We invite you, families and caregivers, to join in this discussion with our young people to help reinforce the importance of integrity and how their behavior can directly impact others. As a community, we know that there is more work to be done; we reaffirm our commitment to the ongoing work of anti-racism and to creating anti-bias spaces in which our young people can thrive and be their best selves.

Sincerely,

Chris

Christopher Chew, Ed.D
Superintendent
Westford Public Schools



Sustainability - Sue Thomas, Sustainability Coordinator, 978-399-2798

April was the hot time to hedge electricity contracts

The Town just locked in municipal and residential rates for the coming years to help keep your tax and electricity supply bills in check. Westford residents are fortunate to have a Community Choice Aggregation Program. Take advantage of it! Make sure you are part [of Westford Pop](#). WBUR just ran a series on the [Massachusetts electricity market](#), [the unfortunate advertising deregulating the electricity supply has created](#), and the [value of community aggregation plans for consumers](#)

Many thanks to everyone who voted in our local election this past month and supported the funding of the Blanchard Roof project. We hope to add solar to this effort soon.

Have you noticed May has been hot and dry?

While we have had enough periodic heavy rain to finally pull us out of drought, and clear weather is wonderful for spring celebrations, southeastern Massachusetts is still [abnormally dry](#), the Pacific Northwest is experiencing a heat wave, and the national weather service issued a drowning danger alert last week for New Hampshire to warn people not to swim in normal cold spring waters when the weather is abnormally hot.

What can you do?

- Attend the virtual [Carbon Countdown](#) Saturday with Climate Chief Melissa Hoffer and learn more about pathways to 2030 climate targets
- **Consider greener cooling** – attend a heat pump webinar at Carlisle Town Hall on May 24th at 7:00 PM to learn about this technology and get direction on equipment and funding
- Get your **A/C tuned up** for maximum efficiency
- [Purchase a rain barrel](#), **abide by water restrictions**, and **limit or stop mechanized irrigation**, which is both an electricity and water hog
- **Plant** a [drought tolerant landscape](#). This list is not exclusively natives. Native plants are best, not natives or cultivars (which often have catchy, marketing names), which are bred for human preferences and may no longer serve as food or other desirable traits for the ecosystem that is your yard. See the [Native Plant Trust](#) and pay attention to where a plant was grown to avoid error and importing unwanted hitchhikers (bugs, worms).
- [Drive to Concord and visit lawn alternatives](#).
- **Support local agriculture and minimize trucking! Eat in season, grow your own food, frequent the Farmer's Market and/or join a CSA.**

It Isn't Just [The Air Temperatures](#)

New England Right whales have noticed too, and have largely left our waters for cooler temperatures and likely more plentiful food further north, allowing restrictions for their safety to be lifted this month.

(Continued on next page)

Sustainability (Continued)

Dryer weather means fewer insects (for you and the birds) and disease vectors, so lighten up on the poisons, practice natural controls, and use plants to feed both pollinators and birds.

- Save money and protect your health: eliminate regular spraying and chemical applications
- Remove standing water from around your property (that isn't wetland or a vernal pool)
 - invert wheelbarrows, pots etc.
- Screen your house and your rain barrels
- Use plants that repel critters and insects, like marigolds, onions and garlic, citronella, bee balm and the mint family. Many of these attract pollinators. Go native. Use containers for bee balm and the mint family, which are aggressive, unless you are growing a meadow.
- Practice [companion planting](#)

Looking to stay cool in the kitchen?

Join New Yorkers, [Buy an induction stove to get heat only when you need it and get a money back from Mass Save.](#)

May is Westford Academy Capstone Month

You may have spotted two Westford Academy seniors cleaning up our environment, removing both trash and two invasive plants, garlic mustard and Asian bittersweet, from around town, and learning just how persistent they can be.

Look for their presentation at the Capstone Exhibition at Westford Academy on May 26th from 10-12 AM.

Remember to **avoid single use items** as you celebrate the end of the academic year, recognize those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom, and enjoy summer.

Best wishes for moving May gatherings and a bountiful growing season!

May/June at the J.V. Fletcher Library



Summer Reading – Be a Readosaurus! Now that the theme has been revealed, ask your kids if Nancy and Jess have been to their school yet to talk about the FREE summer reading program at the library. Check out the [Kids](#) and the [Teens](#) sections of our website for all of the details about charms, raffles, hidden characters, and of course programs. All prizes and programs are fully funded by the Friends of the J.V. Fletcher Library and the KDK Foundation (in honor of Kurt Kelly).

Director's Corner: LIBRARY TO RECEIVE SUPPLEMENTAL GRANT FUNDS! Subsequent to a vote by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC), and after the Library Project meets critical benchmarks during construction, the Library Project is slated to receive an additional \$829,263 in grant funding from the MBLC. This award notice brings the total grant offset to \$8,681,257. Additionally, grant libraries are seeking funds from the State Legislature to cover escalation costs being seen by libraries now in construction.

Friends of the Library June Book Sale: The June Book Sale will take place in the Meeting Room, Friday, June 9- Sunday, June 11. On Friday night from 6:30-9:00 p.m. there will be a Members Only Preview Sale. Memberships will be available to purchase at the door or purchase one [online](#). The sale will be open to the public on Saturday from 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. On Sunday, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. purchase a bag to fill for \$10.00. Please note, you must purchase a bag to participate in the Sunday sale.

Holiday Closing: The Library will be closed Sat., May 27 - Mon., May 29 in observance of Memorial day.

VIRTUAL JOB SEARCH HELP FOR 50 & OVER – JOB SEARCH HELP FOR 50 & OVER – Interview Practice: Wed., May 24, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. The Massachusetts Library Collaborative's 50+ Job Seekers Group meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month, from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 2nd & 4th Wednesdays of the month from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., via Zoom. If you are unemployed and actively looking, underemployed, seeking a new career direction, re-entering the job market after a long employment gap, or recently retired and looking for your "Encore Career", this networking group program is perfect for you! [Register here](#)

Monday Mystery Book Club: Monday, May 22 at 2:00 p.m. Wake up your week with a stimulating book club discussion! We'll meet in the Mary Atwood Room to discuss *The Maid* by Nita Prose. No registration required. Print copies are available at Main Desk. Email Justin Liberti at jliberti@westfordma.gov for more information.

YA Crafternoon – Sharpie Art: Monday, May 22 from 3:00-400 p.m. This program is open to preteens and teens. Join Jess for an afternoon of crafting and creating in the Meeting Room. Please e-mail jdymnt@westfordma.gov if you have any questions. [Register Here.](#)

(Continued on next page)

March at the J.V. Fletcher Library (continued)

Virtual 50 Hikes in Eastern Massachusetts: Tuesday, May 27 at 7:00 p.m. Just in time for summer! We are looking forward to chatting with author Madeline Bilis about her book "50 Hikes in Eastern Massachusetts". Hopefully, we'll all feel motivated to dust off our hiking shoes and hit the road! From the rocky ledges of the Blue Hills Reservation to the sandy stretches of the Cape Cod National Seashore, incredible trails and vistas abound in this varied region. In addition to stunning natural views, you'll delight in discovering dozens of small towns, cultural attractions, and historical sites during your adventures around Boston and the Cape. [Please register](#) for this event and you'll receive the link in the confirmation and reminder emails - make sure to check your spam folder for them. The email will be coming from Zoom. This program is in partnership with the Ashland Public Library.

Jazz Concert: Thursday, June 1 at 6:30 p.m. in the Meeting Room Join us for a delightful evening of jazz music performed by vocalist Helene Gove and guitarist Michael Chasse. Helene and Michael have been performing throughout the New England area for over thirteen years. Stop by to listen to their unique style which includes passionate interpretations of the American jazz standards and original music too! **Registration is not required for this program.**

Animanga Club: Thursday, June 8, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Join us in the Meeting Room on the first Thursday of the month at 6:30. We will talk manga, browse the newest selections, watch anime on the library's Crunchyroll account, eat snacks and draw characters. Feel free to bring your favorite Squishie to keep us company! For grades 6 and up. Registration is very helpful but drop-ins are always welcome! [Register here.](#)

Westford Academy Students - Exam Week Study Hours: Monday, June 12, Tuesday, June 13, and Wednesday, June 14 from 2:00 to 10:00 pm Drop into the Meeting Room during Exam Week to get together and study! Free pizza will be provided each night at 6:00 p.m. Free snacks, beverages, and coffee will be provided every day. Students must have a ride home promptly at closing time.

Friends of the Library e-newsletter: The best way to learn about our upcoming programs and new services is through the FOL weekly e-newsletter. [Sign up here.](#)

Check out our [Museum Passes page](#) or call the Library for reservations. Unless otherwise noted, our museum passes are generously funded by the Friends of the Library. [Have you joined the Friends yet?](#)

Quick Links to Our Most Popular Services!

[Programs – Adults](#)

[Programs – Kids](#)

[Programs – Young Adults](#)

If you have questions or need assistance, please call us at 978-399-2300 or send us an email at westfordlibrary@westfordma.gov.



Unless otherwise noted, the following programs are made possible by the Friends of the Library.





In spite of threatening skies and chilly temperatures, hundreds turned out again this year for Westford Climate Action's Earth Day Festival on the Common. Many residents took advantage of the information available from local organizations and town departments, including the Water Department, Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee, Recycling Commission, League of Women Voters and others. MIT Haystack Observatory climate scientists were on hand to share their current research.

For those looking to save money on heating and cooling homes or purchasing an electric vehicle while reducing their carbon footprint, Mass Save provided information on rebates and incentives. A petting zoo with lambs, chicks, kids and bunnies kept the little ones happy along with face painting, poster making and planting. Music was provided by Momentum Rocks, Oh Contraire and Westford Academy students Estella Cui and Malvika Bhardwaj.

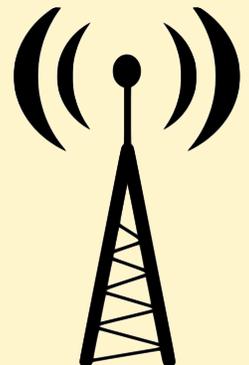
The festival was generously supported by the J.V. Fletcher Library, First Parish Church United, Westford Conservation Trust and the MA Cultural Council.

Carol Morse
Westford Climate Action

Westford Climate Action is a grassroots organization of town residents who are concerned about the climate crisis. Our mission is to drive climate action. We promote sustainability and advocate on a local level for actions that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and safeguard the health of our community for future generations.

Be Prepared and Informed Incase of an Emergency

**Set Your
Radio Preset
to
Westford
Emergency
Management's
1630 AM**



Cameron Senior Center

Happenings Around the Cameron for Our Friends age 55+- Join Us!



Afternoon Tea with Friends

Wednesday, May 24th from 1:00-3:00PM

Bring a friend and come learn about the Friends of the Cameron, benefits of a Friends membership, seeing and meeting new "Friends" all while enjoying an array of assorted teas, sandwiches, and baked delights. For more information and to sign up call 978-692-5523. Cost:\$8 *The Friends of the Cameron Senior center is a Tax deductible 501(C)3. Help Friends carry out its mission in support of Westford seniors.

Applications Being Accepted for Senior and Veterans Tax Work Off Program

Tax Work Off applications are available at the Cameron Senior Center. Please apply if you are interested in participating in this program to **work in a Town department or school (100 hours) in exchange for \$1,500.00 (minus federally mandated deductions) reduction in your FY 2024 real estate tax bill.** You must submit a NEW application if you are interested in being placed this year, even if you have participated in the past. We will be placing first time applicants first and using a lottery to place repeat applicants and/or new applicants (if there are more applicants than slots in the program). Applicants must be 60+ years old, own and occupy the property for which Westford taxes are paid or be a Veteran 18+ who owns/occupies their property. **Only one member of a household is eligible. Applications must be submitted to the Senior Center by May 26th.** The lottery will take place on June 16th at 1PM. If you have questions about the program, please call Alison Christopher at 978-399-2325.

The Cameron is proud to be the home of the Champions Northeast Division of the Massachusetts Senior Pool league



Pictured are team championship members which include: Mike Priest, Joe Reppucci, Tim Butler, Jerry Moscarariello, Peter Cina and Tony Ruvido



(Continued on next page)

Cameron Senior Center (continued)

IT'S TIME FOR TRIVIA A-GO-GO

Tuesday, May 23 at 1:00pm

Our trivia master, Ken, presents "Trivia with a Twist". There will be special games for extra points, unique team selection and champion prizes. All this for \$3.00. Sure to be a great time! Don't miss the fun - sign up at 978.692.5523

T.R.E.A.D. -Applications are available at the Senior Center and will be **DUE ON AUGUST 30th**. **Tax Relief for Elderly and Disabled is a donation funded program for property tax relief.** Applicants must be 65 years or older OR have a state recognized disability and must own and occupy their home. The T.R.E.A.D. Committee will meet to determine awards in December 2023 and assistance will be applied to the next tax bill. If you have any questions about the program or need application assistance, call Alison Christopher, LICSW at 978-399-2325 or Jen/Annette at 978-399-2326.

HIKE WITH MIKE IS BACK!

All of the hikes with Mike Woessner, Westford resident meet at 9:00 am, rain or shine. Lightning will cancel the Hike. The trails are mostly flat, unpaved, loose footing with rocks, roots and rolling hills. Participants should dress for the weather, wear sturdy, closed toe, walking shoes / boots., and should bring water and bug repellent. Hiking pole(s) optional. Most hikes are 2 miles long and will take about 2 hours. Call 978.692.5523 to sign up. **East Boston Camps June 12, 2023, 2.3 miles** Trailhead: Kiosk at EBC parking lot off of Depot St., **Westford Greystone Pond June 26, 2023, 2 miles** Trailhead: Kiosk at Greystone Field parking lot, off Russell Way (on the right before 15 Russell Way), Westford.

THE TEXAS TENORS TRIP

Tuesday, June 20

Travel to the Danversport Yacht Club Danvers, MA for a live concert with The Texas Tenors. Since appearing on America's Got Talent in 2009, these classically trained, versatile tenors have performed around the world including headline shows in Las Vegas, China and on a 24-city tour in the United Kingdom. Don't miss Out! The cost of the trip is \$124 per person. Lunch choices are Baked Stuffed Chicken or Baked Scrod.

EBI'S ANNUAL SUMMER BBQ COOKOUT

Friday, June 23, 12pm at the Franco Pavilion You will enjoy freshly grilled BBQ chicken and/or beef, accompanied by rice, grilled tomato, dessert, beverages, and some tunes performed by Micky Lorden. A special thanks to Ebi and Desiree Masalehdan for sponsoring this free event. Please RSVP at 978.692.5523.

To learn more about the Cameron Senior Center programs and services please visit:

www.westfordma.gov/coa,

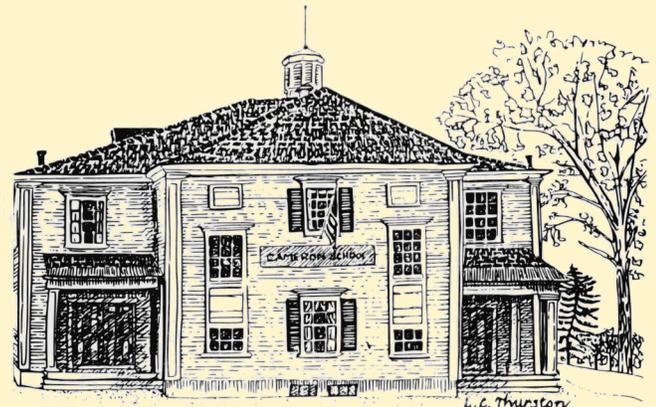
www.facebook.com/CameronSeniorCenter/

www.youtube.com/channel/

[UCaNgAZb3tw8EYYQ5bEe7XXq](https://www.youtube.com/channel/) or call 978-692-5523

To view the complete Council On Aging Newsletter please visit our website:

www.westfordma.gov/coa and click on **Newsletters**.



Westford Senior Center

Health Department

Westford Selected for Nutrition Health Survey

The National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) will be conducted in Middlesex County from June 5 through August 21, 2023. Westford was selected as one of our random segments within Middlesex County. For further information about our study, please see the video links below. One video explains the study and the other is a tour of the Mobile Examination Center (MEC). These are very informative and will answer many of the questions you may have about the NHANES.

- NHANES Communications Outreach Coming to Your Community Video - Time: 7 minutes & 5 seconds - <https://bcove.video/3u0H5sj>
- NHANES MEC Tour with Dr. Tony - The Nation's Mobile Health Survey Video - Time: 4 minutes & 51 seconds - <https://bcove.video/3mOgxXW>

Click on the links below for additional information:
[NHANES Overview Brochure](#)

[NHANES Media Release County-English Middlesex County](#)

[NHANES Bullet point-informational flyer.Middlesex County](#)

Upper Merrimack Medical Reserve Corp. Training Day Held on May 6th

Over 100 volunteers from our region attended the training day for continuing education! Thank you to our MRC Coordinator, Nancy Burns, and Gail Johnson our Public Health Nurse for their tremendous efforts in organizing and teaching. All the speakers and sessions were informative, professional, and engaging. Thank you to speakers and Middlesex Community College.



Sergeant Mark Saia of Peabody PD and NEMLEC presented on Active Shooter Response.



National MRC Director Dustun Ashton, Chris Farrand, Nancy Burns (MRC Coordinator), Jed Fiato of FEMA Region I, and Rev. Fred Meade.

Health Department (continued)



WESTFORD COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVES

SPONSORED BY: WESTFORD HEALTH DEPARTMENT

H.E. Fletcher Club

11 Brookside Rd.

Westford, MA 01886

June 6th 11a.m. to 4p.m.

Roudenbush Community Center

65 Main St.

Westford, MA 01886

June 18th 9a.m. to 2p.m.

First Parish Church

48 Main St.

Westford, MA 01886

June 22nd 10a.m. to 3p.m.

Please call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter: Westford to schedule an appointment.

Streamline your donation experience and save up to 15 minutes by visiting RedCrossBlood.org/RapidPass to complete your pre-donation reading and health history questions on the day of your appointment

1-800-RED-CROSS | 1-800-733-2767 | RedCrossBlood.org | [Download the Blood Donor App](#)

Health Department (continued)

PEOPLE MATTER,TM WORDS MATTER

ARE YOU USING CARING AND CONCERNED LANGUAGE ABOUT CHILD & ADOLESCENT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH?

Language matters in compassionate care, and that is not just limited to what we say in front of a patient. What you say behind closed doors can be the seed for stigma, and not recognizing cultural differences may lead people to distrust and avoid treatment.

Children and adolescents were already facing a behavioral health crisis before the COVID-19 pandemic began – and the pandemic has dramatically accelerated that crisis. Stigma often prevents children and adolescents from getting the help they need. What you say matters in helping youth feel safe, understood and willing to seek care.

IF YOU HEAR THIS ...

- ▶ What do kids have to be depressed or anxious about? I bet they're faking it, or just not trying to cope with stressful situations.
- ▶ Kids today don't know how to behave — they're aggressive and disrespectful. Kids wouldn't act this way if they were disciplined.
- ▶ These kids aren't mentally ill; they just haven't been parented right.
- ▶ Why do these insane kids have to come here for treatment? I work here to help kids with real illnesses like cancer or heart disease.
- ▶ That kid doesn't need medication. They just need to be more motivated to act right.

[THESE WORDS PROPAGATE STIGMA
AND DON'T RECOGNIZE
A YOUTH'S VALUE.]

CONSIDER RESPONDING WITH...

- Mental illness doesn't discriminate by age. In fact, 75% of all behavioral health disorders begin by age 24.
- Children and adolescents' misbehaviors are often caused by fear or unmet needs. Asking a child how you can help can go a long way in improving behaviors.
- Mental illness in youth is more common than you think. According to the Academy of Pediatrics, one in five of all children have an identified mental health condition each year.
- Behavioral health disorders are medical problems, just like heart disease or cancer. Using demeaning slang only exacerbates the stigma of seeking treatment.
- Medications, often combined with psychotherapy, can play an impactful role in treating behavioral health disorders, just like medications can impact cancer or diabetes.

[THESE WORDS SHOW COMPASSION
AND COMBAT STIGMA.]

Health Department (continued)



ARPA FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR KIDS CLUB SUMMER OR AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Through ARPA funding we are proud to announce that we will be reviewing/accepting applications for the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 for one free week of Kids Club Summer (starts June 26th, 2023) per child OR \$400 per child for the Recreation Department After School Program (starts August 30th, 2023).

Eligibility for this program is income and Westford residency based. The information on the application will be used to determine your family's eligibility for assistance based on your present gross household income that falls at or below 300% of the federal poverty level (the following income eligibility chart is located on page 3 of the application).

Applications should be emailed to Regional Community Health and Wellness Coordinator, Brittany Nash at bnash@westfordma.gov or hand-delivered to the Westford Town Hall, Health Department Attn: Brittany Nash. Applications are funded on a first-come, first basis.

For any questions please email bnash@westfordma.gov or call Brittany Nash at (978) 399-2564.

[Click Here For The ARPA Financial Assistance Application](#)

Community Wellness

May is National Mental Health Awareness month. The Town of Westford held a Mental Health Awareness event on May 1, 2023. Westford Cat recorded the event, and you can view the recording here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6ujcfouYnk>

Increasing mental health awareness to our community, **J.V. Fletcher Library** has several beautiful Mental Awareness Month book displays.

We encourage you to explore the various resources available to support you or your loved ones mental health journey:

William James INTERFACE Referral Service:

Mental health and wellness referral help line Monday through Friday, 9 am-5 pm, at 888-244-6843 This is a free, confidential referral service for individuals across the lifespan living in participating communities (Westford is a participating community). Callers are matched with licensed mental health providers from an extensive database. Each referral meets the location, insurance, and specialty needs of the caller. <https://interface.williamjames.edu/>

Behavioral Health Helpline:

The Massachusetts Behavioral Health Help Line (BHHL) is here to connect you directly to clinical help, when and where you need it. Even if you're not sure what kind of help or treatment you may need, they can help guide you. Call or Text: 833-773-2445 <https://www.masshelpline.com/>

NAMI, Massachusetts (National Alliance on Mental Illness)

- NAMI seeks to improve the quality of life for people living with mental health conditions, their families, and their caregivers. They work to ensure that all people impacted by a mental health condition receive the support they need when they need it. To learn more about NAMI's resources, programs, and supports visit: <https://namimass.org/>

Westford Mobile Clinician:

A no – cost Clinician to support residents on wait lists for mental health appointments. If the intake determines the Mobile Clinician is the right fit for you, 6 sessions will be offered. The plan will be reviewed at the 5th session, with a maximum of 6-8 sessions. For questions or for an intake please contact the Community Wellness Coordinator, Nicole Laviolette 978-399-2503 or Town Social Worker, Alison Christopher 978-399-2325

National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline – call 988 - The Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals in the United States. <https://988lifeline.org/>

You are not alone. For more information or help connecting to resources:

Community Wellness Coordinator, Nicole Laviolette

(978) 399-6149 nlaviolette@westfordma.gov

www.westfordma.gov/1487/Community-Wellness



Memorial Day 2023

Town wide observation of Memorial Day will be held on Sunday, May 28th. Ceremonies will be conducted at Freedom Park at 9 AM, Forge Village monument at 9:15 AM, Graniteville monument on North Main St at 9:45 and then at Nab Lake, Byrne Ave. dam at 10:45. On the Town Common, the reading of the Honor Rolls will begin at 10:20 AM.

Culminating the village ceremonies will be a parade starting at noon from the Roudenbush Community Center to the Town Common.

Veterans who would like to participate should meet at Freedom Park at 8:30 AM on Sunday. All are encouraged to commemorate our US servicemembers who have died in defense of our country on this holiday weekend. Join us if you can.

An "event guide" containing parade routes and times will be located on the town website in the Veterans Services Documents, www.westfordma.gov/1580/Memorial-Day-2023

US flags to be placed on veterans graves in May

American Legion Post #159 members will be putting the US flags up in the weeks prior to Memorial Day. We will do our best to make sure that every veteran's grave is properly marked. Sometimes a flag will be misplaced or unintentionally omitted, please let the Veterans Service Officer know if a flag is missing, we will try and put one in place prior to Memorial Day. The Town of Westford's Military Burial Index can be found at <https://data.westfordma.gov/vets/>

The flat bronze markers are provided by the VA at no cost, more information on obtaining them can be found at www.va.gov/burials-memorials/memorial-items/headstones-markers-medallions/ or by calling/emailing the Veterans Services department. (978) 392-1170 or veterans@westfordma.gov



Westford Recycling Commission

TIRE RECYCLING PROGRAM is a Win-Win

The Central Massachusetts Mosquito Control Project will pick up your old tires and recycle them for free. Tires left outside collect water and become areas for mosquitoes to grow in. The Project helps keep the environment clean and stops mosquitoes. Since 2006, they have collected 15,000 tires. They were awarded an Environmental Merit Award by the EPA in 2014. For additional useful information or to register for a pickup, go to www.cmmcp.org or call 508-393-3055.



REDUCE JUNK MAIL

Do you have unwanted paper catalogs and charity mail cluttering your snail mail box? For an easy purge, go to www.catalogchoice.org and register to reduce and/or eliminate these items. It is a free service funded by a non-profit. You have a dashboard to track your entries. To do this, you need to have the address label of the mail you want to discontinue. The Catalog Choice program has saved 573K mature trees and reduced 225M pounds of solid waste.

BACKYARD COMPOSTING IS EASY

Compost your kitchen vegetable and fruit scraps, egg shells, coffee grounds, tea bags, and tired flowers and plants. It is a simple and easy way to lower the weight in your trash which, in turn, reduces the cost of trash tonnage that Westford must pay - with our tax dollars. Over time, rich soil is produced. It is the bonus result that can be used in your garden or for house plants.

To order an Earth Machine composter at a reduced price of \$25, contact Nicole Feliciano at the Westford Highway Department at nfeliciano@westfordma.gov or call 978-692-5520.

WINNER OF EARTH MACHINE

Catherine Wu of Westford was the lucky winner of the drawing for a free Earth Machine at the Recycling Commission's Earth Day Festival table on April 22. Nick Schott of the Commission presented the composter to Catherine.



**Reduce, Reuse, Repair,
Repurpose, and Recycle!**
MA resource for "What is Recyclable?"
www.RecycleSmartMA.org.

WESTFORD RECREATION

Westford Partnership for Children

Recreation's After School Program:
Session 5 Open Enrollment through
Thursday, June 22

The WPC program for grades K-5 offers:

- Safe and easy transition from classroom to program.
- Choice of activities and flexible schedules.
- Experienced, caring Site Directors and staff.

WPC runs Monday-Friday, school dismissal to 5:45 p.m., with locations at Abbot, Crisafulli, Day, Miller, Nabnasset, and Robinson.

Register for any session, at any time.

Learn more at About WPC - westfordrec.com.

Spring-Summer Highlights

Stay Tuned for Program Updates

For Youth: Nitehawks Track & Field, Fast Skills Football, Flag Football, Knucklebones Ninjas and Lil' Ninjas, and Speed & Agility. For Adults: Pickle Ball and CPR, Plus *Marcus Lewis Tennis* for youth and adults and a new session of *BollyX Dance*.

Learn more at Programs - westfordrec.com.

Rec's Summer Weekly Programs

Full-day, Full-Week, Early Arrival, Extended Day

Experience it: flexible schedules *and* happy children!

SUMMER BEACH PARTY AT D.E.

Summer program coverage just when you need it – from August 14-18. Ages 4-13.

KIDS CLUB at Nabnasset School

Fast-paced, fun-filled activities for children at all levels. Seven weeks of programming. Ages 4-13.

DESTINATION EXPLORATION at East Boston Camps

Classic summertime activities in a classic summertime setting. Seven weeks of programming. Ages 7-13

Learn more at Summer Weekly Programs - westfordrec.com.

[ARPA Financial Assistance](#) for Kids Club and the 2023-24 WPC Afterschool Program is available for eligible families. For information, email bnash@westfordma.gov or call Brittany Nash at (978) 399-2564.



From Top to Bottom:
Carpenters in the making at the Day School, with Site Director Tom Leclair.