



Town of Westford Massachusetts

Town Manager's Newsletter

November 2019



Jodi Ross,
Town
Manager

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www.westfordma.gov/tm

Important:
Please sign up to receive updates on the latest road construction in town.

[Subscribe to Notifications](#)



Sign up for Westford's new Emergency Notification service—[Smart 911](#)



Bagged Leaf Collection
Saturday, December 7
See Page 13 for details

Westford Food Pantry
Items can be dropped off
Cameron Senior Center
Mon-Fri 9AM to 4PM



Watch Meetings Online
westford 
community access television
www.westfordcat.org

Dear Westford residents,

Thank you to everyone who prepared for, conducted, and attended the Special Town Meeting on October 28th. If you were not able to attend you may watch a recap on WestfordCAT at the following link: [Special Town Meeting 2019 Recap](#). The documents and results are available at this link: [Special Town Meeting 2019](#).

On November 11th we honored our resident military veterans and their families at a special Veteran's Day service. Thank you to our host, Veterans' Service Officer Ryan Cobleigh, and all who attended including State Senator Edward J Kennedy, State Representative Jim Arciero, the Board of Selectmen, and Assistant Town Manager Eric Heideman.



Photo Courtesy of George Demetriou

I will be presenting a preliminary Fiscal Year 2021 budget message to the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee on November 26th. The complete FY21 budget message will be presented at their December 17th meeting. Board of Selectmen Chair, Elizabeth Almeida, has encouraged all interested individuals to attend.

At their November 12th meeting, our Board of Selectmen voted to adopt a single tax rate of \$16.33 per thousand.

At that same meeting the 35 Town Farm Task Force made recommendations relative to the potential future use of 35 Town Farm Road. The board voted to extend the 35 Town Farm Road Task Force's appointment until the project is complete and revise their charge to continue their work with stakeholders through the request for proposal process, to relocate the Fire Training Facility to the old Highway Garage at 30 Beacon Street, and assist with renovations to transform the Town Farm into affordable senior housing and provide a new home for the Westford Food Pantry.

The board approved raising the minimum wage for municipal employees as provided for in M.G.L c.151 §1, 2, 2A and 7 from \$12.00 to \$12.75 effective January 1, 2020.

(Continued on next page)

On October 29th, the board received an update on town staff's actions regarding AirBnBs and other short-term rentals within the town of Westford. The board discussed bringing a bylaw change to Annual Town Meeting to restrict short-term rentals in residential neighborhoods. They have requested the Planning Board sponsor the bylaw change with the board's input. Additionally, they have requested town staff survey surrounding communities and real estate agents to see how they are managing this issue.

The Westford Police Department is participating in an annual fundraising and awareness campaign known as "No-Shave November" which will allow Officers to grow beards during the month of November in exchange for a monetary donation to a local charity. Their goal is to increase awareness and education concerning early cancer detection. Thank you, Police Chief Tom McEnaney, for waiving the department's facial hair policy to support this great cause.

Congratulations to our recently retired employees, Matt Hakala for 14 years of service as Building Commissioner in the Building Department and Joe Ingalls for 36 years of service as Operations Supervisor in the Highway Department. The town is grateful to you both for your years of service and thank you for a job well done.

I would also like to thank Bob Boonstra for a total of 10 years of service between the Agricultural Commission and Conservation Commission. Bob helped each with many accomplishments including helping East Boston Camps attain a secure financial footing, preserving the historical name of East Boston Camps, establishing a successful Community Garden, protecting a number of significant properties with Conservation Restrictions, and many more.

Please join us in welcoming our new Health Department Agent, Abby Graham, Assistant Assessor Lynda McQuade, Public Safety Dispatcher Bryan Keane, Library Pages Diana Daniels, Miriam Szabo-Wexler, and Amanda Franco, and recent Lowell Police Academy graduates and now Patrol Officers John Lincoln and Brett Fitzgerald!

Thanks to our Westford children who participated in this year's Trick-or-Treating at Town Hall, the Police and Fire Stations, J.V. Fletcher Library, and the Westford Museum. Our town staff also enjoyed dressing in costume to participate in the Halloween event.

There are several openings on our local boards and committees, including: 12 North Main Street Task Force, Affordable Housing Committee, Agricultural Commission, Communications Advisory Committee, Conservation Commission, Cultural Council, Election Officer, Energy Committee, Fence Viewer, Healthy Westford Committee, Historical Commission, Northern Middlesex Council of Government, Parkerville Schoolhouse Committee, Parks, Grounds and Recreation Commission, Pedestrian Safety Committee, Permanent Town Building Committee, Tax Possession Sale Committee, and Zoning Board of Appeals. I urge you to peruse our website for information about the work of these committees; and if you have interest, please complete a Citizen's Activity form at this link: [Citizen Activity Form](#).

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

I wish you all a wonderful Thanksgiving!

Sincerely,



Jodi Ross
Town Manager

November at the J.V. Fletcher Library

Our programs are generously funded by the Friends of the J.V. Fletcher Library, Inc.



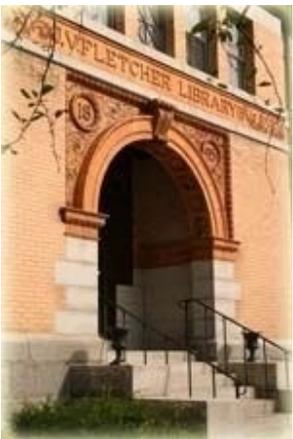
Make & Take Mondays: Nov. 18 and Nov. 25 Imagine, create, and Participate! Each Monday from 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm Teens and Tweens can participate in a variety of hands-on activities that include making fun, seasonal crafts and exploring STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) activities. This is a FREE drop - in event for Teens and Tweens in Grades 5 to 12, registration is NOT required.

Cookbook Club: Thu., Nov. 21 at 7:00 p.m. The Cookbook Club is dedicated to exploring cookbooks and sampling new recipes. We meet on the third Thursday of the month. Our November pick is *Julia and Jacques: Cooking at Home* by Julia Child and Jacques Pepin. Copies are available for check out at the Main Desk. If you would like to bring a dish from the cookbook (not required to participate), please contact Sarah Regan at 978-399-2309. Drop in! Check out our [Reading List](#).

Monday Mystery Book Club: Mon., Nov. 25 at 10:30 a.m. Wake up your week with a stimulating book discussion! We meet on the fourth Monday morning of the month @ 10:30 a.m. in the Mary Atwood Room. Our Nov. selection is *A Fatal Grace* by Louise Penny. Copies of the current selection are available for check-out at the Main Desk. New members always welcome! FREE! Drop in. Check out our [Reading List](#).

Knitting Group: Mon., Nov. 25 at 6:30 p.m. Do you enjoy knitting? Our informal knitting group meets in the Mary Atwood Room on the second Monday of every month from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. AND the fourth Monday of every month from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. This is a drop-in program that is open to all ages. Bring your latest project and share advice and socialize with other knitters! If you have any questions, please call Sarah Regan at 978-399-2309.

Link to Literacy: Link to Literacy is a non-profit, volunteer run organization devoted to enabling adults who have joined us from other cultures to read, write, and speak American English more effectively. Training and materials are provided to tutors. Tutors work with their students at the Library. To pick up a tutor or student application or for more information, stop by or contact the Information Services department at 978-399-2304.



Please visit www.westfordlibrary.org for more information about the library and our upcoming programs.

Cameron Senior Center

Festive Happenings at the Cameron- (for adults 55 and older)

Sincere thanks to our many Fall Cleanup Volunteers who helped rake yards for over 20 seniors. Volunteers included: several local scout groups, St. Catherine's Confirmation classes, United Methodist Church, First Parish Church, local business RBBN and WA National Honors Society students. A very large thank you to the Concord Gaining Ground program that provided 27 weeks of fresh organic vegetables to our residents on fixed incomes. These wonderful volunteers have brought much joy to our seniors, thank you!



TAVERN IN THE SQUARE – Fundraiser Lunch!

Monday, Dec. 9, open at 11:30 a.m., The Point, Littleton

Come celebrate the holidays early with friends & family, enjoy a fabulous lunch buffet and help raise funds for the Cameron. Tavern in the Square will donate 15% of the meal proceeds (excl. alcoholic beverages, tax & gratuity) to Friends of the Cameron. Dining for a cause tastes great!

Join Us!

HOLIDAY BREAKFAST with our Board of Selectmen and Town Manager

Wednesday, December 11th at 8:30AM

This breakfast tradition with our Selectmen and Town Manager preparing a festive, warm meal is a great way to start off your day. Come enjoy the fellowship and hear about what is going on in Town from our very own governing leaders. We hope to see you! Please RSVP to 978-692-5523 and sooner rather than later because this event fills up quickly.

MOVIE NIGHT – Thursday, December 13th at 4:30 pm

On the 3rd Thursday of every month from 4:30 – 6:30 p.m. a movie and light meal are offered for \$3.00. December's movie showing will be *the comedy ELF*. Buddy (Will Ferrell) was accidentally transported to the North Pole as a toddler and raised to adulthood among Santa's elves. Please call 978-692-5523 to sign up 3 days prior to the movie for food shoppers



BEGINNER'S LINE DANCING_ - Tuesday nights, 5:15-6:00 pm.

Line Dancing is ongoing so simply come and pay as you go! It's \$5.00 per class paid directly to the instructor. Enjoy dancing to all genres of music, from Country to Blues, Motown, Funky, Latin, Irish, Swing and Top 40. You don't need a partner or dance experience, just some comfortable sneakers and a love for movement and fun. Any questions call 978-692-5523.

HOLIDAY LUNCHEON AT THE WESTFORD REGENCY

Friday, December 13th at 12:00 noon ~ We are happy to share with you an opportunity to stroll through the Festival of Trees while enjoying the music of our very own '**Upbeats Band**' playing many traditional holiday favorites starting at 10:30 a.m. prior to lunch. You will see many beautifully and most creatively decorated Christmas trees, wreaths and gingerbread houses.

Once again, we will enjoy the performance of the talented **Westford Academy Honor's Chorus**.

Holiday menu: Salad, Chicken Piccata, starch and vegetable, Holiday dessert, tea and coffee.

Cost: Friends members \$12 and Non - Friends members \$24. **Reservations are a must by December 3;** call 978.692.5523. Transportation will be provided just call 978.399.2322 to reserve your van seat.



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

www.westfordma.gov/coa and click on [Newsletters](#).

Recycling Commission



NOTICE: Thursday, November 28, 2019 (Thanksgiving Day), is a holiday for trash and recycling. Pickups will be made one day later following the holiday.

Since July 1, residential and municipal recycling in Westford has been picked up by Waste Management. We appreciate your patience during this transition. Should you encounter an issue, please call Waste Management at 1-800-972-4545. If your question is not answered in 24 hours, please call the Town Manager's office at 978-692-5501.

UPCYCLE IT!

Turning Trash into Cash for Westford

As part of Sustainable Westford's mission to provide "green" programs to the community, the Upcycle It! program collects non-recyclables such as drink pouches, chip bags, granola bar wrappers to keep them out of landfills and incinerators.

As of September 2019, Upcycle It! earned **\$15,992.90** for Westford and kept **10,144 pounds** of trash out of the waste stream from **1,000,788 pieces** collected from residents.

You can find Upcycle It! collection containers at four convenient locations: J.V. Fletcher Library (basement near elevator), Roudenbush Community Center (near the side entrance), Starbucks at 174 Littleton Rd., and Nabnasset School (collecting from parents/students only, please check with Nab as their collection list may differ).

Upcycle It! funds are granted to worthy environmental projects that benefit Westford. Grant applications are accepted all year long.

Visit www.sustainablewestford.org/upcycle-it for the latest information on what can and cannot be collected, plus Frequently Asked Questions, and grant applications.

Please note that writing instruments, coffee bags, cereal bags, and candy packaging are no longer accepted.

Upcycle It! accepts -

- Foil Drink Pouches and their straws (i.e. Capri Sun, Kool Aid, Honest Kids etc.).
- Energy or Granola Bars ([ANY brand energy, granola, cereal, or protein bar](#)).
- Chip Bags ([ANY chip bag small or large](#)).
- Oral Care Products ([toothbrushes, plastic toothpaste tubes](#)). No electric toothbrush heads.
- Beauty Item Packaging – ANY brand makeup/personal care packaging (mascara, lipstick/lip balm, eye shadow, deodorant, lotion tubes). No items that can be curbside recycled such as most shampoo or conditioner containers.
- Brita brand water filters and accessories – [Brita](#) brand ONLY.
- Baby and toddler food pouches – [ANY brand baby or toddler food pouches and their screw caps](#).
- **NEW! Gillette Razors** – All brands of razors, systems, disposables, and replaceable-blade cartridges and packaging. No "Safety Razor" or loose blades.

Recycling Commission (Continued)

HOME COMPOSTING with an *EARTH MACHINE*

Since food waste is heavy, not putting it in the trash but composting it instead reduces Westford's trash collection costs. The compost produced can also benefit the environment.

Westford residents can purchase an Earth Machine back yard composter at a discounted price of \$25 by contacting Denise Seyffert at 978-692-6986. It comes with composting instructions. The regular price of an Earth Machine at a home improvement store is \$99.

Placing fruit and vegetable kitchen scraps, coffee grounds, eggshells, tea bags, shredded paper, grass clippings, sawdust, pine needles, and leaves in your Earth Machine will produce useable compost called "black gold," a rich soil conditioner.

In 1993, Massachusetts banned yard waste from the trash in an effort to reduce garbage, save money, utilize valuable organic waste, and provide nutrient rich compost for home lawns and gardens. Using compost on the soil adds essential nutrients, improves root growth, and helps retain moisture, which can help lower water bills



Empty. Clean. Dry. The best way to recycle.

EMPTY - remove food or product residue.

CLEAN - rinse or wash empty containers.

DRY - let containers dry before placing in your recycling bin or toter.

For answers on what is and what is not recyclable, go to the **Recyclopedia**: <https://recyclesmartma.org/>. Bookmark this page!

Alerts from the Westford Recycling Commission

PLASTIC BAGS, empty or filled, are **NOT** acceptable in recycling bins and toters.

TANGLERS - Cords, coat hangers, light strings, plastic 6-pack rings, garden hoses, wires, strings, ribbons, and chains - are prohibited from recycling bins and toters.

CAPS and LIDS – Replace caps and lids on clean bottles, jars, and cans or toss lids in the trash. Do not discard them separately in recycling.

PLASTIC YOGURT CUPS – Toss cups in recycle bin. Put aluminum lids in the trash.

BLACK PLASTIC TAKE-OUT CONTAINERS - Put this item in your trash. Clear plastic lids can be rinsed and recycled.

Please visit www.westfordma.gov/recycling for your recycling and trash questions.

Reduce! Reuse! Repurpose! Recycle!



Health Department

HOLIDAY FOOD SAFETY!!!!

The holiday season is just about upon us again and the Westford Health Department and the Partnership for Food Safety Education wants everybody to celebrate and enjoy Thanksgiving safely! While preparing your family feasts, we want to remind everybody to keep food safety in mind. Here are a few tips and thoughts.

CLEAN: Wash hands and surfaces often.

SEPARATE: Separate raw meats from other foods.

COOK: Cook to the right temperature (Turkey to 165 degrees)

CHILL: Refrigerate food promptly

Health Department (Continued)

Turkey Fryer Safety

Additionally, The **Westford Health Department** and the **U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission** would like to issue some safety tips for preventing fires and burns when using turkey fryers. Turkey fryers have become very popular in the past few years, due to the ability to cook a turkey quickly, but there is some risk in using them. The majority of reported incidents occurred while the oil was being heated, prior to adding the turkey. For this reason, it is very important consumers monitor the temperature of the oil closely.

If **any smoke at all** is noticed coming from a heating pot of oil, the burner should be turned off immediately because the oil is overheated.



There is a risk of injury resulting from splashing due to the cooking of partially frozen meats. Thoroughly thaw and dry ALL meats before cooking in hot oil. One reported burn incident occurred when partially frozen chicken wings were added to hot oil in a turkey fryer.

- Keep fryer in FULL VIEW while burner is on.
- Place fryer in an open area AWAY from all walls, fences, or other structures.
- Never use IN, ON, or UNDER a garage, breezeway, carport, porch, or any structure that can catch fire.
- Raise and lower food SLOWLY to reduce splatter and avoid burns.
- COVER bare skin when adding or removing food.
- Check the oil temperature frequently.
- If oil begins to smoke, immediately turn gas supply OFF.
- If a fire occurs, immediately call 911. DO NOT attempt to extinguish fire with water.
- Make sure there is at least 2 feet of space between the liquid propane tank and fryer burner.
- Place the liquid propane gas tank and fryer so that any wind blows the heat of the fryer away from the gas tank.
- Center the pot over the burner on the cooker.
- Completely thaw (USDA says 24 hours for every 4 to 5 pounds) and dry turkey before cooking. Partially frozen and/or wet turkeys can produce excessive hot oil splatter when added to the oil.
- Follow the manufacturer's instructions to determine the proper amount of oil to add. If those are not available:
 - Place turkey in pot
 - Fill with water until the turkey is covered by about 1/2 inch of water
 - Remove and dry turkey
 - Mark water level. Dump water, dry the pot, and fill with oil to the marked level.



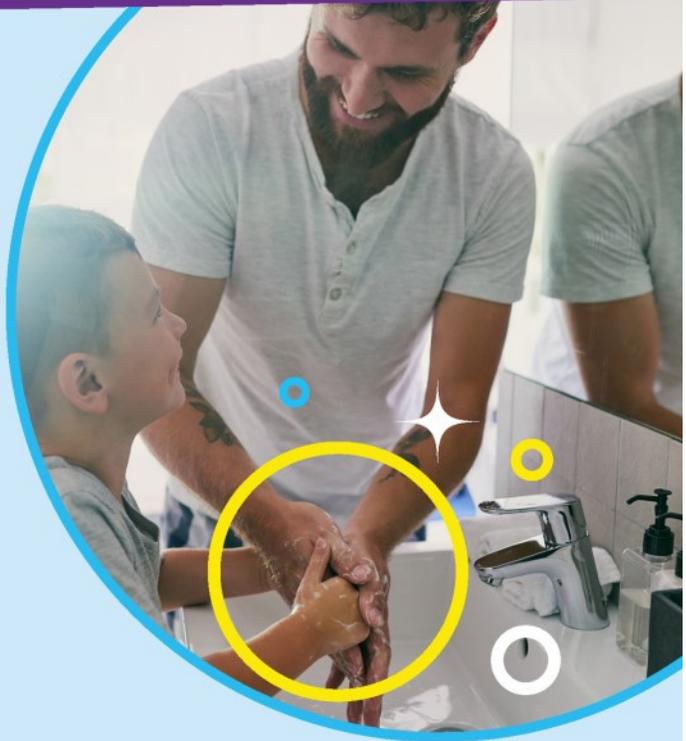
Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Health Department

Stop Germs! Wash Your Hands.

When?

- After using the bathroom
- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone at home who is sick with vomiting or diarrhea
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage



How?



Wet your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.



Lather your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.



Scrub your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.



Rinse hands well under clean, running water.



Dry hands using a clean towel or air dry them.

Keeping hands clean is one of the most important things we can do to stop the spread of germs and stay healthy.

LIFE IS BETTER WITH

CLEAN HANDS



www.cdc.gov/handwashing



Town Clerk's Corner

LEAF COLLECTION

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7TH, 2019

Acme Waste Systems will be collecting leaves. The cost is \$1.25 per bag with a minimum charge of \$20.00 per pick up.

Call the Town Clerk's office at 978-692-5515 to register.

Place your leaves, grass clippings and pine needles into paper leaf bags and have them at the curb by 7 AM on the collection day. Leaves will not be picked up if they are not in paper leaf bags.

YOU PAY ACME DIRECTLY BY ATTACHING A CHECK PAYABLE TO ACME WASTE SYSTEMS TO ONE OF YOUR LEAF BAGS ON COLLECTION DAY.