



December 2017



Jodi Ross,
Town
Manager

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

Important:

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

[Subscribe to Notifications](#)



All Trash and Recycling pickups will be one day later than usual on weeks of December 25, 2017, and January 1, 2018

2018 Dog Licensing began on December 1, 2018.



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

Dear Westford residents,

Please join us in publicly applauding our Westford Academy Girls Soccer Team for making their first-ever state final appearance and finishing with a 17-2-2 season. Great job athletes! You make us very proud!

Also, please join us in congratulating Westford Academy senior Jason Dolan for running in the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association All-State Cross Country Championships.

Our quest for a Westford dog park continues, and the Dog Park Task Force has been working with town departments and other committees to review municipal properties and partnership opportunities. As such, a portion of land in the Town Forest off Gage Lane, close to the intersection of Old Lowell Road is being considered at the December 19th Board of Selectmen meeting. The Town Forest Committee is considering entering a one year Memorandum of Agreement, and pending a positive experience, swapping this forest land with other Board of Selectmen land, in an effort not to decrease our forest acreage. This hard-working committee has been passionately pursuing a location for a dog park for the past 18 months.

The reconstruction of our Roudenbush building at 65 Main Street continues. The demolition is underway, all plumbing, electrical, and hazardous materials have been removed. We will follow the progress on our town's website at [the project's page](#).



Roudenbush Building 2nd floor, front room.

On November 28th, I presented my budget message for Fiscal Year 2019 to the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee. Budget materials are uploaded to our town's website, where you may [view the FY19 budget message](#). If you want more information about the town's budget, you may visit [the town's budget archive webpage](#), where we will be uploading more materials as budget hearings and other presentations develop.

Our town's Tax Collector/Treasurer is working with the Senior, Low-Income, Disabled Tax Relief (SLIDTR) Committee and received approval by the Board of Selectmen to include an informational flyer in the upcoming tax bills that describes programs available for property tax relief for qualified property owners. [This flyer](#) is also available to view online, and you may contact our town's Assessor's Office at 978-692-5504 or the Cameron Senior Center at 978-692-5523 for help understanding and/or to apply for the programs.

(Continued on next page)

Our Board of Selectmen's regular meeting dates have been scheduled for 2018. They generally meet the second and fourth Tuesday of every month. You may see [the approved schedule](#) online. All agenda requests are due to the Town Manager's Office by ten days prior to the board's meeting. If requests are emailed, please send to Greg Johnson at gregjohnson@westfordma.gov.

You may notice new stamped paver crosswalks to gain access to our Town Common. The Town Center Traffic and Parking Committee received approval from the Board of Selectmen to have the crosswalks installed, and the Common Restoration Project and the Parish Center for the Arts generously funded the costs. The remaining three crosswalks will be replaced to match the stamped pavers this spring to complete the entire project. Much of our improvements were funded through a Complete Streets Grant that our town applied for, and received for just under \$400,000.

The Westford Garden Club is donating plants and consulting services to provide us with new plantings in front of our Town Hall. Volunteers from the club have been working to beautify municipal properties for many years, and we are very grateful to co-Presidents Peg Mullen and Jane Glazier for their passion in leading this project for our Town Hall.

Officials from National Grid, including President Cordelia O'Hara and Incident Commander Dan Bunszell, recently reviewed their company's performance with the Board of Selectmen in response to the wind and rain storm of October 30, 2017. National Grid promised to work with my office and our public safety and highway departments to address communication concerns and improved responsiveness. You have my commitment to keep working with them to improve their level of service. Separately, the Board of Selectmen approved the waiving of building permit fees for residents with restoration work related to the storm.

The town's Community Electricity Aggregation program will continue with a new contract for electricity supply to begin in January 2018. My office worked with an energy consultant to solicit bids for a new supplier, and the winning offer will set the price at \$0.1012 per kilowatt hour for two years. If you are already enrolled, you will be automatically registered with the new supplier, Public Power. A list of those residents who had opted-out of the program will be provided to Public Power. If you would like to verify your enrollment status, please contact Public Power customer service at (800) 830-2944. For more information about the Community Electricity Aggregation program, please see [the MassCEA website](#) or read [this press release](#).

I am excited to be reviewing resumes to fill many town staff positions, including a Director of Land Use Management, Recreation Director, Assistant Town Planner, and full time Assistant Building Commissioner. These are critical roles within our local government, and we hope to fill these positions soon to continue to provide the highest quality of services for our residents.

Town staff are in the holiday spirit and will be decorating their departments' doors throughout town hall, the highway garage, parks, cemetery, and recreation office, water department, police and fire stations. Please stop by our departments and enjoy our festive displays.

In keeping with our holiday tradition, the Board of Selectmen and Town Manager's Office cooked and served breakfast to our seniors at our Cameron Senior Center on December 13th. We cooked a breakfast of scrambled eggs, sausage, blueberry pancakes, English muffins, toast, home fries, and also shared fruit and assorted pastries to a crowd of about 90 seniors. It is always an enjoyable event, and a lot of fun for the Selectmen.

(Continued on next page)

J.V. Fletcher Library

LIBRARY HOLIDAY HOURS: The Library will be closed on Sat., Dec. 23 through Mon., Dec. 25. We will reopen at 10 a.m. on Tues., Dec. 26. The Library will be closed on Sun., Dec. 31 and Mon., January 1. We will reopen on Tues., Jan. 2 at 10 a.m.

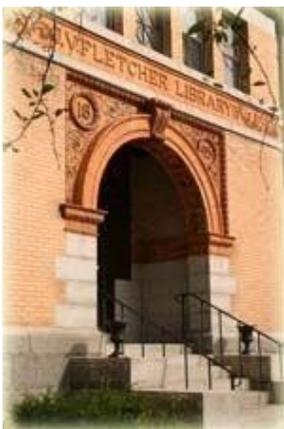
Annual holiday fun for everyone with Steve Blunt, Wed., Dec. 14 at 10:30 a.m. Celebrate the season with musician Steve Blunt – we'll be ringing jingle bells, dancing, and singing along. Tickets (\$2.00) for children and adults are available in person starting Monday, November 30. This program is for all ages.

J. V. Fletcher Adult Book Discussion Group: Thurs., Dec. 14 at 7:30 p.m. Join us to discuss "Love Anthony" by Lisa Genova. This will also be our "Title Picking Party for 2018". Bring your recommendations for next year's reading list. Copies of the current reading selection are available for check-out at the Main Desk. New Members are always welcome! Free! Drop in.

Lego® Club: Sat., Dec. 16 from 2 - 3 p.m. Come create something fun with Library Legos®. All creations will be displayed in the library until the next time we meet. Free drop-in for ages 5 and up with parent or caregiver.

India Through Literature Series with Professor Bruce Browne: Mon., Dec. 18 at 1 - 2:30 p.m. "Indian Summer: the Secret History of the End of an Empire" by Alex von Tunzelmann. *Copies of the current selection are available for checkout at the Main Desk. No registration required.* Bruce C. Browne is a professor, director, actor, and playwright. Bruce spent eighteen in India, and has taught in Iran, and Qatar, teaching for Qatar Community College, Doha Film Institute, and Northwestern-Qatar.

A Celtic Holiday Celebration: Holiday Harp Music: Thurs., Dec. 21 at 7 p.m. Join singer, harper, storyteller, and poet Kate Chadbourne for a warm and festive program of songs and stories drawn from Irish and Celtic tradition. Come to sing and laugh, to feel the wonder of winter, and to encounter a rather mysterious special guest. We will revel! Free! All ages are welcome. No registration required.



Teen & Tween Holiday Food and Craft Program: Wed., Dec. 27 at 11:30 a.m. Celebrate the Season with a hands-on cookery and crafts program where teens can learn how to make a variety of scrumptious treats and crafts for family and friends. For teens and tweens in Grades 5 to 12. **Registration is required and can be completed online, in person, or by phone.**

3rd Annual 9-Hole Mini Golf in the Library: Wednesday, December 28 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Yes, mini-golf in the library. Here is something to do with the whole family during the holiday break. This free drop-in program is generously funded by the KDK Memorial Foundation (in honor of Kurt Kelly).

WWW.WESTFORDLIBRARY.ORG

WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV

Town Clerk's Corner

Nomination Papers will be available in the Town Clerk's Office on Tuesday, January 2, 2018 for the May 1, 2018 Town Election.



Keep your eyes open for **the 2018 Census** which you will be receiving in January. Please be sure to return it ASAP!

Remember, only the Census and dog licensing with a self-addressed stamped envelope should be in the return envelope. **NO TAX PAYMENTS**. There are over 9000 census returns and it could take over 30 days for us to get to your census and if you included your tax payment in with the census you could be subject to late fees.

2018 Dog Licensing began on December 1, 2018. Remember to license your dog(s) before March 31, 2018 to avoid the fine!

If you're renewing the license, we may already have your dog's rabies certificate on file. Call us at 978-692-5515 if you're not sure. The rabies clinic is usually held in March at the Center Fire Station.



You may also renew or apply for your dog's license [online](#) or in person at our office. Please note that \$1 is added to the online dog licensing fee. This pays for mailing the license(s) and tag(s).



Need Assistance? Call: 1-877-227-1157 | Email: support@unipayteam.com

Cart (0) Login

Access your account on a range of devices.

Enroll Today

In the search bar, scroll down to "Westford Town Clerk"

Search

Westford Town Clerk

Welcome to UniPayGold

Town Clerk's Corner (Continued)

AVOID THE FINE!
Pay Your Dog License Online!
([click here](#))



Trash

Every week, your household trash will be picked up at the curb. There is no additional fee for the general trash that goes in your trash barrels (35 Gallon Max, limit 3 barrels). That is covered by your property tax. A \$5 bulk sticker will need to be purchased for items that don't fit into the trash barrel such as mattresses, furniture, and more. These may NOT be used on electronics or anything metal. More information is included on the [Recycling Commission's webpage](#).



Health Department

Winter Holiday Fire Safety



Did you know?

Nearly half of holiday decoration fires happen because decorations are placed too close to a heat source.

It's fun to decorate for the winter holidays, but holiday decorations can increase your risk for a home fire. As you deck the halls this season, be fire smart.

- ✔ Inspect holiday lights each year before you put them up. Throw away light strands with frayed or pinched wires.
- ✔ Water your Christmas tree every day. A dry tree is dangerous because it can catch on fire easily.
- ✔ Consider using battery-operated flameless candles, which can look, smell and feel like real candles.
- ✔ If you do use lit candles, make sure they are in stable holders and place them where they cannot be knocked down easily.



Health Department (continued)

Everyday Preventive Actions That Can Help Fight Germs, Like Flu

CDC recommends a three-step approach to fighting influenza (flu). The first and most important step is to get a flu vaccination each year. But if you get the flu, there are prescription antiviral drugs that can treat your illness. Early treatment is especially important for the elderly, the very young, people with certain chronic health conditions, and pregnant women. Finally, everyday preventive actions may slow the spread of germs that cause respiratory (nose, throat, and lungs) illnesses, like flu. This page contains information about everyday preventive actions.

How does the flu spread?

Flu viruses are thought to spread mainly from person to person through droplets made when people with flu cough, sneeze, or talk. Flu viruses also may spread when people touch something with flu virus on it and then touch their mouth, eyes, or nose. Many other viruses spread these ways too. People infected with flu may be able to infect others beginning 1 day before symptoms develop and up to 5-7 days after becoming sick. That means you may be able to spread the flu to someone else before you know you are sick as well as while you are sick. Young children, those who are severely ill, and those who have severely weakened immune systems may be able to infect others for longer than 5-7 days.

What are everyday preventive actions?

- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you or your child gets sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you (or your child) stay home for at least 24 hours after the fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. The fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.
- While sick, limit contact with others as much as possible to keep from infecting them.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces and objects that may be contaminated with germs like the flu.
- If an outbreak of flu or another illness occurs, follow public health advice. This may include information about how to increase distance between people and other measures.



Health Department (continued)

What additional steps can I take at work to help stop the spread of germs that can cause respiratory illness, like flu?

- Find out about your employer's plans if an outbreak of flu or another illness occurs and whether flu vaccinations are offered on-site.
- Routinely clean frequently touched objects and surfaces, including doorknobs, keyboards, and phones, to help remove germs.
- Make sure your workplace has an adequate supply of tissues, soap, paper towels, alcohol-based hand rubs, and disposable wipes.
- Train others on how to do your job so they can cover for you in case you or a family member gets sick and you have to stay home.
- If you begin to feel sick while at work, go home as soon as possible.



What additional preventive actions can I take to protect my child from germs that can cause respiratory illness, like flu?

- Find out about plans your child's school, child care program, or college has if an outbreak of flu or another illness occurs and whether flu vaccinations are offered on-site.
- Make sure your child's school, child care program, or college routinely cleans frequently touched objects and surfaces, and that they have a good supply of tissues, soap, paper towels, alcohol-based hand rubs, and disposable wipes on-site.
- Ask how sick students and staff are separated from others and who will care for them until they can go home.

Everyday preventive actions can help slow the spread of germs that can cause many different illnesses and may offer some protection against the flu.

Health Department (continued)

We would like to share some food safety thought from www.foodsafety.gov.

Protect you family through proper food safety during the holidays and the rest of the year too!

We all do our best to serve our families food that's safe and healthy, but some common myths about food safety might surprise you.

Common myths about food safety at home

Myth #1: Food poisoning isn't that big of a deal. I just have to tough it out for a day or two and then it's over.

Fact: Many people don't know it, but some foodborne illnesses can actually lead to long-term health conditions, and 3,000 Americans a year die from foodborne illness. [Get the facts on long-term effects of food poisoning](#).

Myth #2: It's OK to thaw meat on the counter. Since it starts out frozen, bacteria isn't really a problem.

Fact: Actually, bacteria grow surprisingly rapidly at room temperatures, so the counter is never a place you should thaw foods. Instead, [thaw foods the right way](#).

Myth #3: When cleaning my kitchen, the more bleach I use, the better. More bleach kills more bacteria, so it's safer for my family.

Fact: There is actually no advantage to using more bleach than needed. To [clean kitchen surfaces effectively](#), use just one teaspoon of liquid, unscented bleach to one quart of water.

Myth #4: I don't need to wash fruits or vegetables if I'm going to peel them.

Fact: Because it's easy to transfer bacteria from the peel or rind you're cutting to the inside of your fruits and veggies, it's [important to wash all produce, even if you plan to peel it](#).

Myth #5: To get rid of any bacteria on my meat, poultry, or seafood, I should rinse off the juices with water first.

Fact: Actually, rinsing meat, poultry, or seafood with water can increase your chance of food poisoning by splashing juices (and any bacteria they might contain) onto your sink and counters. The best way to cook meat, poultry, or seafood safely is to [make sure you cook it to the right temperature](#).

Myth #6: The only reason to let food sit after it's been microwaved is to make sure you don't burn yourself on food that's too hot.

Fact: In fact, [letting microwaved food sit for a few minutes \("standing time"\)](#) helps your food cook more completely by allowing colder areas of food time to absorb heat from hotter areas of food.

Myth #7: Leftovers are safe to eat until they smell bad.

Fact: The kinds of bacteria that cause food poisoning do not affect the look, smell, or taste of food. To be safe, [use our Safe Storage Times chart](#) to make sure you know the right time to throw food out.

Myth #8: Once food has been cooked, all the bacteria have been killed, so I don't need to worry once it's "done."

Fact: Actually, the possibility of bacterial growth actually increases after cooking, because the drop in temperature allows bacteria to thrive. This is why [keeping cooked food warmed to the right temperature is critical for food safety](#).

Myth #9: Marinades are acidic, which kills bacteria—so it's OK to marinate foods on the counter.

Fact: Even in the presence of acidic marinade, bacteria can grow very rapidly at room temperatures. To marinate foods safely, it's important to [marinate them in the refrigerator](#).

Myth #10: If I really want my produce to be safe, I should wash fruits and veggies with soap or detergent before I use them.

Fact: In fact, it's best not to use soaps or detergents on produce, since these products can linger on foods and are not safe for consumption. [Using clean running water is actually the best way to remove bacteria and wash produce safely](#).

Recycling Commission

Note: All Trash and Recycling pickups will be one day later than usual on weeks of December 25, 2017, and January 1, 2018.

HOLIDAY RECYCLING REMINDERS

Massachusetts state environmental regulations ban recyclables from the trash. Holiday season activities generate a large amount of recyclable material. The Westford Recycling Commission asks residents to recycle all they can. Recycling saves Westford money by keeping recyclables out of the trash which costs \$70 per ton.

Recycle your cardboard gift boxes, garment boxes, toy and game packing cardboard, clean food boxes, beverage cartons, and shipping boxes. All cardboard must be flattened and no larger than 3 feet by 3 feet in size.

Recycle your gift wrap paper (no foils), tissue paper, and paper tags, bags, cards, decorations, and envelopes. Recycle your newspapers, ads, magazines, and catalogs.

Recycle your clean clear and colored bottles, jars, aluminum and steel cans, clean aluminum foil, and plastic containers marked #1- #5, and #7. Styrofoam #6 is not recyclable at curbside.

On your recycling day, put recyclables in bins, boxes, or totes at the curb by 7 a.m. and separate them from your trash containers. All recyclables can be mixed together.

"Recyclables" stickers to affix to receptacles are available at the Town Clerk's office.

As an elective option, you may purchase your own 64-gallon wheeled recycling toter by mailing a check for \$50 payable to the Westford Recycling Commission, 55 Main Street, Westford, MA 01886. Or take your check to the Town Clerk's office. Please include your name, address and phone number. When your check is received, you will receive a call to pick up your toter.

**The Westford Recycling
Commission thanks you for
reducing, reusing,
repurposing,
and recycling!**



Holiday festivities offered at the Cameron Come Join Us...

HOLIDAY LUNCHEON AT THE REGENCY INN

Friday, December 15th at 11:30 a.m.

We are glad to share with you an opportunity to stroll through the Festival of Trees while enjoying the music of our very own Upbeat Band playing many traditional holiday favorites starting at 10:30 prior to lunch. You will see many beautifully and most creatively decorated Christmas trees, wreaths and gingerbread houses. Also, we will hear the WA Honor Chorus perform around 12:30 p.m. Holiday menu: Caesar salad, stuffed manicotti, broccoli, garlic bread, holiday dessert, tea and coffee. Cost: Friends members \$8 and Non-Friends members \$16. Transportation will be provided just call and reserve your seat at 978-399-2322.

FRIENDLY VISITOR MEETING - WANT TO VOLUNTEER ?

Please join us January 15th at 11:00 a.m. to learn about the Friendly Visitor Program. This social program connects volunteer visitors with senior clients and provides wonderful opportunity for reminiscing, combating loneliness, enhancing quality of life and so much more. If you are interested in being a visitor or are considering a visitor for a relative please join us. We hope to see you! Any questions, call Annette 978-399-2326.

CONCERT TO BENEFIT FOOD PANTRY

Community Christmas Chorus will hold its annual concert to benefit the Westford Food Pantry on Sun., Dec. 17, at 7:00 P.M. at First Parish Church, 48 Main St. Suggested donation for admission is \$5.00 plus 2 non-perishable food items for the pantry. For further information, call 978-692-8416.

UPDATED INCLEMENT WEATHER INFORMATION:

When there is inclement weather and recognizing that our center may be used as a shelter at any time and our COA staff needs to ensure building and surroundings are adequate for opening we ask you to please do the following:

- The Cameron will **now** be following the inclement weather policy of Town Hall. To see if Town Hall is experiencing a delay/closing **please go to the Town homepage at westfordma.gov** and look at the **top of the page** to find updated inclement weather information. Also remember if Town Hall is delayed by two hours the Cameron will be delayed by two hours. Classes that typically occur during this delay will be cancelled that day. Other scheduled programs will follow regular daily schedule.

or

- Please call the Cameron at 978-692-5523 for updated message beginning at 6:30AM.

The COA Van transportation will be decided by dispatcher and director on a day by day basis. Riders will be notified of any changes in the transportation schedules.

To view the complete Council On Aging
Newsletter please visit our website:
www.westfordma.gov/coa and click on [Newsletters](#).