

Westford Newsletter

December 2016
Town Office Notes

Season's Greetings!



FY'18 Town Budget Meetings

Budget meetings are part of the Selectboard's regular meetings and will be held on Dec. 8th and 22nd. Additional meetings will be held if needed. The Board encourages residents to attend these meetings to provide feedback to assist the Board in developing a budget to be voted on in March 2017.

The Selectboard will hold an informational meeting **Thursday, January 12th at 7pm** at the Westford School in the Common Area to present the proposed town budget. This is an excellent opportunity for residents to provide feedback prior to finalization of the budget and before being voted on in March 2017.

Senior Luncheon

The Senior Luncheon will be on December 12th at noon at the Red Brick Meeting House on the common. All seniors (55+) are welcome. Please join us for a home cooked meal and good conversation. If you need a ride, please call me at 878-3090 or Beth Menut at 893-2263. We are having many new faces. Hope this continues as it is always nice to keep growing. If you have a neighbor that isn't coming, please contact them and see if they would like to give it a try. We will be having roast pork this month. This is our Christmas luncheon. We will be sharing cookies for our seniors to take home.

We do have several new volunteers helping us this year, but can always use more to bring in the food items. The way it works is Caroline Brown is our menu coordinator. She sends out a menu about 2 weeks before the luncheon to all the volunteers. We each sign up to bring one item. When we have all replied to her, she will send out another notice of what didn't get signed up for, etc. until all items are accounted for. So, as you can see, the more volunteers we have, the easier it is to get all signed up for. There is always a couple volunteers that can't do it, so it is most helpful having extra people available. If you do sign up to be a volunteer, you certainly don't need to sign up every month. Sometimes, the list gets filled in so fast, that others can take a month off, but having more volunteers than is needed is a huge help. If this is something you might be interested in, please call me and I will answer any other questions you might have.

Have a wonderful holiday season and I look forward to seeing you at the Christmas luncheon on the 12th. Carol Howrigan, President, 878-3090.

Office Hours

- Monday, December 19th – Closing at 1pm
- Monday, December 26th - Closed
- Monday, January 2nd - Closed

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the January Newsletter is 12:00 noon on Tuesday, December 27th.



Westford Town Office
1713 Vermont Route 128, Westford, Vermont 05494
Phone (802)878-4587 • Fax (802)879-6503 • www.westfordvt.us



SCHOOL BOARD NOTES

Looking forward to the 2017 school year, our Westford Board is starting to see how pieces of our new school district are coming together. There has been a vast body of work both in public and behind the scenes. Decisions on governance, a Superintendent search, evaluating financial and human resource software, merging two fully separate districts, teacher contract negotiations, budgeting, transportation...the list goes on.

Much of this is a work in progress, leveraging the expertise of our district employees and volunteer boards to “make it work” in time for a July 1 start date. All this is in addition to their regular roles and responsibilities. Thank you all for your incredible dedication.

As town residents, we have a place in this transition as well. Our first responsibility is to remain informed and connected. The best way to check in on our new district’s work is to read about it at their blog, <http://essexwestford.blogspot.com>. Meeting dates, agendas, minutes, recaps, and more are available. I know that, given a busy schedule, many residents may not have the time they’d like to devote to following board business. It requires us to make time. Given the investment our residents make in education, that is time well spent.

Receiving information via minutes or meetings is only part of the story. Real engagement occurs when we are more purposeful in our opportunities to work together within our school communities. This type of engagement is something that we would like to become a central part of our culture. To that end, we have been actively involved with both Essex Junction and Essex Town (through a grant from the Nellie Mae Foundation) to build the expectation and expertise to make such a model a reality. It tries to break out of our “meeting at the school gym” model to find meaningful engagement opportunity with students, families, residents, and staff. Building a coalition of stakeholders into decision-making is intended to demystify the process and focus our effort on the things that matter most.

You will see bits and pieces of this work in the coming months as we define and begin our short and long term engagement goals. Building trust within our communities is vital to our future success. It is also our best method of bringing Westford’s voice to any district conversation. The involvement and eloquence of our community is second to none—I hope we can continue to enjoy that benefit.

Respectfully,

The Westford School Board

Mark Drapa, Christian Frenette, Martha Heath, Kim Phinney, Andre Roy

ESSEX UNITED SOCCER CLUB

Essex United Soccer Club has openings in the following age groups for both girls and boys:
U-8, U-10, U-12, U-14, U-16, U-19

Essex United teams participate in the Vermont Soccer League that begins play in April 2017. If interested, please contact the club registrar at registrar@essexunitedsoccer.org

UNIFIED UNION SCHOOL BOARD UPDATE

The new school board for the Essex Westford Educational Community Unified Union School District has been meeting twice a month since last February. As Mark Drapa has indicated in his "School Board Notes" article, there is much work to be accomplished before the new district begins operation on July 1, 2017.

The board has three major task teams contributing to the work of the board: Policy, Communications and Superintendent Search. On the policy front, there are a number of mandatory policies that must be in place prior to July 1st. The Task Team is doing the background work to bring the policies to the board for approval. The Communication Task Team has been working on the Nellie Mae Grant work that Mark discusses in his article as well as keeping the board's blog updated with meeting "take aways", minutes, and other documents.

The Superintendent Search is underway. With the help of its Task Team, the board appointed a 12 member Superintendent Search Advisory Committee made up of teachers, administrators, parents and community members who volunteered for this important work. The committee has conducted a first round of interviews and will be conducting a second round in the near future. The board hopes to conduct final interviews and to make a decision on the selection in early to mid-January.

Contract negotiations for a new teacher contract have commenced. As with many of the tasks before the new district, two separate contracts must be merged into one. In addition, VEHI is dropping its old health insurance plans and has created new options that more closely align with the Health Exchange. These new policies go into effect on January 1, 2018 and part of the negotiations process will be to determine how costs will be shared under these new plans. It will be a challenging task.

The budget process is beginning and the board will be approving budget guidelines at its meeting on December 6th. The board will conduct budget workshops every Tuesday in January. This is a good time to remind folks that while we realize some savings from merger this year compared to what would have been the case without merger, the projected savings aren't expected to be fully realized until the 3rd and 4th year of operation. We will be tracking those savings closely. In addition, it is a good time to remind you that the vote on the budget won't take place until April. The vote will be by Australian Ballot and the ballots will be comingled at a central location where they will be counted.

The Unified Union Board meets on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month. The meetings take place in the library at Essex High School. The meetings are recorded by public access television stations RETN or LCATV and you can find links to these videos on the blog. The blog also contains minutes, documents and other pertinent information for the new district. Here again is the web address: essexwestford.blogspot.com Please don't hesitate to contact us with your questions, comments or concerns.

Martha Heath and Andre Roy



'TIS THE SEASON FOR GIVING



For the past several years, the Town has collected monetary donations to purchase Hannaford gift cards for Westford residents in need. The gift cards provide recipients with the ability to purchase food and household items as needed and according to their personal preferences.

Monetary donations will be accepted November 28th through December 19th. If you prefer, you can purchase the gift cards yourself (ones that prohibit tobacco and alcohol purchases). Please mail or deliver your donation to the Town Office. The gift cards will be mailed on December 20th to Westford residents only.

If you prefer to donate food items, there are boxes located at the Town Office and Library for the Westford Food Shelf. Whatever you choose to do, thank you for supporting your community!

WESTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

http://westfordpubliclibrary.org

(802) 878-5639

westfordpubliclibrary@gmail.com

1717 VERMONT ROUTE 128, WESTFORD VT 05494

The Library will be CLOSED December 24 & 31



Confused about Medicare? Learn the ABCs of Medicare from Affiliated Associates



Wednesday, Dec. 1 at 7pm

What does Part A cover?

What does Part B cover?

How do I sign up? And when?

How much will it cost?

Come find out the answers!

Travel Talk- 7-8:30pm - Wednesday, December 14

Destination: Honduras

Presented by: Jason Crooks

Jason and his family took a trip to Honduras last March and they will be showing pictures and telling stories about their Central American trip.

Refreshments served.



Westford "Moth" Storytelling Event

Friday, Dec. 16 5:30-7pm

Westford Moth is a live storytelling event organized for the school and larger community. The first half of the event will feature students orally sharing pre-practiced stories, and the second half of the event will be open to everyone (adults and



community members included) and organized around a theme! The "theme" that will guide the second half of our program will be announced soon. Please come, even if you are not sharing!

Library Hours

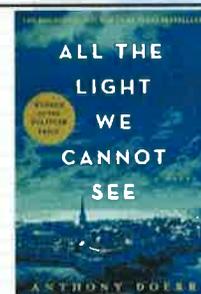
Wednesday:	1-7pm
Thursday:	10am-7pm
Friday:	1-7pm
Saturday:	10am-2pm
CLOSED: December 24 & 31	

Adult Book Group December 21 7:00-8:00pm

Pick up your books at the front desk!

We will be reading **All the Light We Cannot See**

by: **Anthony Doerr**



WINNER OF THE PULITZER PRIZE Stunningly ambitious; about a blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II.

Marie-Laure lives with her father in Paris near the Museum of Natural History, where he works as the master of locks. When she is 12, the Nazis occupy Paris and they flee to the walled citadel of Saint-Malo, where Marie-Laure's reclusive great-uncle lives in a house by the sea. With them they carry what might be the museum's most valuable and dangerous jewel.

In Germany, Werner grows up enchanted by radio. Werner becomes an expert at building and fixing these crucial new instruments, a talent that wins him a place at an academy for Hitler Youth, then an assignment tracking the resistance. Werner travels through the heart of the war and, finally, into Saint-Malo, where his story and Marie-Laure's converge.

Deftly interweaving lives, Doerr illuminates the ways, against all odds, people try to be good to one another.

Early Literacy Storytime :Birth to Pre-School Every Thursday at 11am No registration required!

12/1/16: Theme: Snow

12/15/16: Theme: Mice

12/8/16: Theme: Winter

12/22/16: Theme: Holidays

12/29/16: Theme: Book Lovers!

Storytime consists of several stories around a theme, as well as a theme-based craft. All ages and levels of attention are encouraged to come. Don't worry if they fidget - they are still getting a lot out of it!

The WESTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY provides access to materials, technology, reference services and programs to meet the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the Westford community.

WESTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

<http://westfordpubliclibrary.org>

(802) 878-5639 ♦ westfordpubliclibrary@gmail.com

December Library Events

- December 1 - The ABCs of Medicare 7-9pm
 December 3 - Drop in and Create an Ornament 10:30-Noon
 December 7 - Trustees Meeting 7-9pm
 December 9 - How the Grinch Stole Christmas Movie Night and Cookie Swap 7-8pm - Bring some cookies to share!
 December 10 - Drop in and Create an Ornament 10:30-Noon
 December 14 - Dorothy's List Book Group - The Blackthorn Key - afterschool - 4:30pm
 December 14 - Travel Talk: Honduras 7:00-8:30pm, refreshments served
 December 16 - Westford "Moth" Story Telling Event - 5:30-7:00pm, Come tell your story! Students and community members are encouraged to participate. Refreshments served.
 December 17 - Drop in and Create an Ornament 10:30-Noon
 December 21 - Adult Book Group 7-8:00pm, refreshments served
 December 24 - CLOSED
 December 28 - Lego Building Challenges 3-5pm
 December 30 - Lunch and a Movie Noon-2pm, bring your own bagged lunch and we'll watch a movie.
 December 31 - CLOSED

Storytime every Thursday 11am

How the Grinch Stole Christmas Movie and Cookie Swap!

Friday, December 9 from 7-8pm

Bring some cookies to share, and watch the classic, animated film (30 minutes) and then stay for cookies, hot chocolate and a cookie swap.



We will need some bakers to drop off cookies at the library (12/8 & 12/9) so that families can take home at least a dozen cookies.

This is not a drop off event.

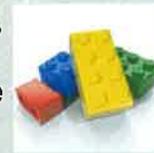


Crazy 8's Math Club!!!
 Weekly in January and February
 Grades K-2 - Thursdays (begins 1/5)
 Grades 3-5 - Wednesdays (begins 1/4)
 Bus transport provided from school, pickup at Library between 4:30-5:00pm

Crazy 8s is an afterschool Math Club sponsored by Bedtime Math. There will be two clubs: grades K-2 and 3-5. This is a FUN, exciting enrichment opportunity. Clubs will be led by fantastic moderators and follow an action packed curriculum. More information will be given to those who sign up. Your child should plan to attend all classes - best behavior expected.
 Permission slips and more information emailed home to families who sign up.
SPACE IS LIMITED!

Kids Bored Over Vacation? We've got you covered:

Dec. 28 - LEGO Building Challenges anytime from 3-5pm - Stop by and build a creation based on a challenge and then display it in the case.



Dec.30 - Lunch and a Movie Noon-2pm Bring a bagged lunch and we'll have a family movie to watch - something newer. OK to drop off ages 9+.

Drop in and Create an Ornament Saturdays!



Stop by the library anytime from 10:30am-Noon on 12/3, 12/10, and 12/17 to make an ornament. Each week will be different, so come to all three!

The Library is **no longer accepting donations** of books, audiobooks, and DVDs **at this time** for our annual Fourth of July Book Sale. We will begin accepting donations in the spring of 2017. Thank you to community for supporting our annual Fourth of July Book Sale.

The WESTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY provides access to materials, technology, reference services and programs to meet the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the Westford community.

Westford Public Library
Annual Fundraising Appeal



Providing access to materials, technology, reference services and programs to meet the informational, educational, and recreational needs of the Westford community.

Consider making a donation to the Westford Public Library this holiday season to support community programs, public access to technology in our community, and the purchase of books, magazines, videos and more!

The Library was open for 200 days last year. Here's a snapshot of how our community enjoyed the Library during that time:

- Over 15,300 materials circulated among patrons, a 20% increase over the prior year.
- Visits to the Library totaled 8,301, a 10% increase.
- 845 patrons used the Library's 3 public access computers
- An additional 2,244 community members used the Wifi access that was boosted on the Common.
- Attendance at Library programs totaled 2,552.
- 282 volunteers contributed just over 549 hours.
- The Library hosted community meetings with over 920 people in total attendance.

With appreciation for the community's support of your public library,
The Library Board of Trustees and Bree Drapa, your Library Director

Donation Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Donation Amount: \$ _____

Please make checks payable to "Westford Public Library" and mail to Westford Public Library, PO Box 86, Westford VT 05494 (or drop off your donation in person and check out some new materials!)

Thank you!



Westford Recreation Department

Mission Statement:

The Westford Recreation Department was created to provide recreational, educational, athletic, cultural, and entertainment activities to all Westford residents and neighbors. We strive to offer programs for a wide variety of ages, abilities and interests. We depend on community input, support and volunteers to make these programs successful.

Gingerbread House Workshop



Dec 2, 2016

3pm - 5pm

WES Art Room

Grades 2 and up may stay afterschool until pick up at 5pm

Grades PK - 1 must be accompanied by an adult

\$25/participant

(no charge for PK-1 parent helper)

Participants will build and decorate a gingerbread house to take home.

Adult Pick Up Basketball



Wednesdays November 16th - May 31st

8:00pm - 9:30pm

WES Gym

Nordic Skiing

Registration is now open!

Fridays January Through March

Exact Dates TBD

3:00pm - 4:45pm

Grades 1-8

\$20 with own equipment / \$40 with equipment rental

Grades 1-2 must be accompanied by an adult



We are still in need of coaches for this program!

If you are interested in coaching, please call (802)662-1042 or email WestfordVTRec@gmail.com.

Program Fee is waived for coach's children.

Recreation Department Committee Members

Bekah Gwozdz, Coordinator
Maureen Carpenter
Martha Bennett
Greg Baker

662-1042
893-5096
878-9269
324-5537

Danielle Vierling 871-9404
Jeff LaBossiere
Meredith Irish 373-9980
Nancy Volkers

Email: WestfordVTRec@gmail.com

Yoga

Gentle Yoga Flow with Kim Horton, RYT

Wednesdays December 7th -January 11th

8:45am - 9:45am

All levels welcome!

Red Brick Meeting House

6 weeks: \$60 for series or \$12 drop-in

Practice a gentle, but dynamic flow sequence to open and strengthen the body. Focus on linking breath to movement, increasing energy and calming the mind.

You can expect a friendly and supportive class environment.

Contact Kim with any questions~ Kim@annecy.us



Power Flow Yoga

Wednesdays January 5th - February 9th

6:15pm - 7:30pm

All levels welcome!

Red Brick Meeting House

6 weeks: \$72 for series or \$13 drop-in

Afterschool Art Club



Thursdays January 19th - February 23rd

3:00pm - 4:30pm

Grades 3 - 5

WES Art Room

6 Weeks: \$85/participant

Minimum: 6 Maximum 15(ish)

Come explore a variety of art mediums!

Afterschool Chorus

Tuesdays February 7th - March 28th

3:00pm - 4:30pm

Grades 3 - 5

WES Music Room

6 Weeks: \$40/participant

Minimum: 10

Final Performance:

March 19th 7pm



Westford Recreation Department—Registration Form

NAME (Parents) _____

ADDRESS _____ TOWN _____ ZIP _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS (only to be used for WRD mailings) _____

HOME PHONE _____ ALT PHONE _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT _____ PHONE _____

DOCTOR'S NAME _____ PHONE _____

Please list medical conditions, physical limitations, allergies, or restrictions WRD should be aware of: _____

Name	Grade	Program	Fee
1. _____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____	_____
Total Fee:			_____

Would you be willing to coach or be a parent helper? Yes No

I agree that Westford Recreation may use photographs of registrants with or without their name and for any lawful purpose, including for example such purposes as publicity, illustration, advertising, and Web content.

*****Please contact a Recreation Department member if your financial situation is preventing you from signing yourself, or your child, up for a program. Scholarships are available.*****

RELEASE/WAVIER AGREEMENT:
 I am fully aware of the inherent risk, and give my consent for the above named applicant(s) to participate in the program(s) listed above. I hold harmless the Town of Westford, Westford School, their employees, elected officials, and/or any volunteers or instructors from any and all liability from any injury, claim, costs or loss of services which may be incurred by me, or us, or our minor children on account of participation in said program(s). Permission is hereby granted for me or us, or my child(ren) to receive emergency treatment if needed and I authorize the attending physician to administer any needed medical attention. Furthermore, I certify that I, or we, or my child(ren) are in good health and that there are no limitations to my/our participation except in writing above. I have read this document carefully and sign it voluntarily with full knowledge of its significance.

Signature _____ Date _____

Send registration with check payable to:
WESTFORD RECREATION DEPARTMENT
 Town of Westford, 1713 VT Rt.128, Westford, VT 05494



Westford Ice Rink on the Common

\$15/Player (Grade 9 and Up)

Minimum 5 players required per team

Team Registration Due Jan 6th!

(Only 22 Slots Available!)

First Come - First Served!!

(\$20/player for tournament day additions to roster)

This is NOT ice hockey!
No Skates are needed - players wear their own boots.
We'll provide broomsticks and balls.
Teams may be co-ed.
All players (or parent if under age 18) MUST sign our participation waiver. NO EXCEPTIONS!

Minimum \$75 non-refundable deposit is required to reserve slot.

Exact times and schedules determined by the number of teams and will be emailed to the team leaders one week prior to the tournament.

Make checks payable to Westford Rec
Send completed registration form to:
Westford Rec; 1713 VT Rte 128; Westford, VT 05494

Food and refreshments will be for sale at the Red Brick Meeting House throughout the tournament.

Proceeds benefit RBMH Restoration and Westford Recreation programs and equipment purchases.

Registration Form

Team Name: _____

Team Captain: _____

Captain's Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Team Members:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Westford Recreation Department—Registration Form

NAME (Parents) _____

ADDRESS _____ TOWN _____ ZIP _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS (only to be used for WRD mailings) _____

HOME PHONE _____ ALT PHONE _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT _____ PHONE _____

DOCTOR'S NAME _____ PHONE _____

Please list medical conditions, physical limitations, allergies, or restrictions WRD should be aware of: _____

Name	Grade	Program	Fee
1. _____	_____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____
5. _____	_____	_____	_____
Total Fee:			_____

Would you be willing to coach or be a parent helper? Yes No

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Signature _____ Date _____

Send registration with check payable to:
WESTFORD RECREATION DEPARTMENT
 Town of Westford, 1713 VT Rt.128, Westford, VT 05494



AN AFTERNOON OF MEDIEVAL,
RENAISSANCE, AND TRADITIONAL MUSIC
WITH
FULL CIRCLE

RECORDERS, HARP, HAMMERED DULCIMER, VOICES,
GUITAR AND PERCUSSION

Event Date: Sunday, December 11th, 4-5 pm
Where: UCW white Church, Westford common
Contact: Marjorie Hamrell 879-4028; mhamrell@comcast.net

The five-piece ensemble of talented musicians makes soulful airs with recorders, hammered dulcimer, harp, guitar, percussion and voices. Full Circle's extensive repertoire includes Celtic songs and dances, folk music from North and South America, music from the middle Ages and Renaissance and a collection of songs, dances and carols for the winter holidays.

The concert is free. Refreshments will be served.

United Church of Westford - December Schedule

Sunday, Dec 4, 8:30am – Traditional Worship Service with Rev. Katherine Arthaud
Sunday, Dec 11, 8:30am – Traditional Worship Service with Rev. Katherine Arthaud
Saturday, Dec 24, 7pm – Candle Light Holiday Service.

All are welcome! We are an Open and Affirming Community Church



Westford Community Holiday Gathering & Tree Lighting

Saturday December 3rd
6:30 p.m.
On the Westford Common

Bring your flashlights and your singing voices for a holiday sing-a-long and the annual lighting of the tree in the gazebo!



CANDLE LIGHT HOLIDAY SERVICE
UNITED CHURCH OF WESTFORD
DECEMBER 24 AT 7PM

All are welcome! As home of the Westford Food Shelf, we are encouraging people to bring a nonperishable food donation for the food shelf pantry. Thank you.