



# WESTFORD NEWSLETTER

May 2020



Keep an eye out for the **Starflower** (shown left), they bloom mid-late spring and into summer and are pollinated by local bees!

## Westford Town Office

1713 Vermont Route 128 - Westford, Vermont 05494

Phone: (802)878-4587 Fax: (802)879-6503

<https://westfordvt.us/>

## TOWN OFFICE NOTES

### Absentee Ballots for Upcoming Elections

In anticipation of the TBA rescheduled annual meeting of the Essex Westford School District (EWSD), we bring to your attention the following information:

1. Due to an emergency amendment to the election laws, the School Directors are permitted to warn all annual meeting items, including floor vote items, to be voted on by ballot.
2. All voters are encouraged to vote by mail by requesting an early/absentee ballot now. Here's how ballots can be requested:
  - a) Call the Town Office at 878-4587 and leave your name, phone number, address, mailing address (if different), and which election(s) you are requesting the ballots for (i.e., all local elections, August primary, November general); or
  - b) Email [townclerk@westfordvt.us](mailto:townclerk@westfordvt.us) with the same information requested above; or
  - c) Request online through My Voter Page at <https://mvp.vermont.gov/> (Please note: the EWSD Annual School Meeting vote cannot be put in the My Voter Page until a date has been set.

The Town Clerk's Office will mail you your requested ballot(s) as soon as they are ready for the upcoming elections.

Important: You will not receive ballots automatically; you must request them. Requests must be renewed each calendar year. You can submit a request now for all elections through December 31, 2020.

### Property Taxes Due – Final Installment

The final property tax installment is due Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup>. Payments postmarked (US postal, UPS, FedEx) by the 15<sup>th</sup> are considered timely as well as payments placed in the drop box before the office opens at 8:30 a.m. on Monday, May 18<sup>th</sup>. The drop box is located to the left of the town office door.

**Please note** - If you pay your taxes using Bill Pay (generating a check online through your financial institution), please make sure you allow sufficient time for mailing. These envelopes do not bear a postmark therefore will be acknowledged by the date received at the Town Office not by the date on the check.

**Any taxes received or postmarked later than May 15<sup>th</sup> will be subject to 1% interest and an 8% penalty.**

### Senior Luncheon

There is NO luncheon in May due to Covid-19. We have not decided about June. It would be on June 8<sup>th</sup> and personally, I don't think it is worth taking the risk. I do not know many seniors who would say yes. So, please call me and let me know your feelings. I don't answer phone calls that I don't recognize, please leave a message with your name and phone number and I will call you. Please look at your newsletter in Jun or on Front Porch Forum. If you aren't sure of what is happening, please call me at 878-3090 or email me at [carolfrank2@comcast.net](mailto:carolfrank2@comcast.net). I'm wishing everyone good health.

**Carol Howrigan**, President, **Beth Menut**, Secretary, **Maureen Estus**, Vice President, **Lorren Teer**, Treasurer

## TOWN OFFICE (con.)

### **Dogs Licenses**

If you have not licensed your dog(s) please do so as soon as possible (licenses were due April 1<sup>st</sup>). Late fees were waived through June 1<sup>st</sup>. After June 1<sup>st</sup>, late fees will be assessed.

A current rabies certificate is required. If you are unsure if the current certificate is on file, please call or email the Town Office (878-4587 or [townclerk@westfordvt.us](mailto:townclerk@westfordvt.us)). For your convenience, you may mail or drop off the fee and rabies certificate along with a self-addressed stamped envelope and we will mail the license to you. The fee is \$17.00 unless your dog is spayed or neutered, in which case the fee is \$14.00.

### **Town Office Hours**

The Town Office will be closed Monday, May 25<sup>th</sup> in observation of Memorial Day.

Office hours Memorial Day through Labor Day are as follows:

- Monday through Thursday, 8:30am - 4:30pm
- Friday 8:30am - 1:00pm

### **Newsletter Deadline**

The deadline for the June Newsletter is 12:00 noon on Tuesday, May 26<sup>th</sup>.

### **Spring Yard Clean Up**

When cleaning up your yard, please keep the following in mind:

- Burn permits are required prior to any burning. Burn permits are available online at <https://westfordvt.us/administration/fire-warden/>, from the Fire Warden (Dennis Angiono, 879-1231) or from the Town Office during regular office hours.
- Yard waste, such as leaves, brush and topsoil are not considered household garbage, therefore Myers will not collect these materials. You can compost yard waste or bring it to a participating CSWD drop off center. For a list of centers please visit [www.cswd.net](http://www.cswd.net).
- See additional information in this newsletter from the Planning Commission for when working within Water Resource areas.

### **Vermont Department of Taxes Issues 2020 Tax Season Guidance in Response to COVID-19 Emergency**

The Vermont Department of Taxes continues to carefully monitor the evolving situation related to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The Department is working closely with the office of Governor Phil Scott and the Vermont legislature, following changes at the federal level, and adhering to guidance from the Vermont Department Health. Please see the Department's information on relief for Vermont taxpayers at [tax.vermont.gov/coronavirus](https://tax.vermont.gov/coronavirus). You should check this link periodically as the guidance may change. You may also follow the Vermont Department of Taxes on Facebook and Twitter.

## VERMONT INCOME TAX FORMS

Ways to get your Vermont Income Tax forms from the Vermont Department of Taxes

1. Download, complete and print fillable PDF forms from the web: [www.bit.ly/vttaxforms](http://www.bit.ly/vttaxforms)
2. Order forms by email: <https://tax.vermont.gov/form-request>
3. Order forms by phone: call toll-free in the U.S. at (855) 297-5600



## MUD SEASON!

### What you need to know about early spring road conditions

- **Mud:** appears on gravel roads as snow thaws. Reduce your driving speeds to ensure safety and to preserve road conditions
- **Snow:** a mix of precipitation can occur. Snow on top of muddy roads will become more slippery
- **Potholes:** WILL appear on gravel roads. They cannot be fixed in freezing temperatures. Do your part to help reduce potholes by driving slowly and avoiding areas in poor condition if you can.
- **Heavy Loads:** do damage to thawing roads. Traveling roads with heavy equipment may be prohibited at any time.
- **Repairs:** roads are repaired as weather allows. Know that this takes time, it might take the road crew some time to get to your road. Highly traveled roads in poor condition are given priority.

#### Reminders:

- Watch for increased activity by wildlife including bears coming out of hibernation, wild turkey and young animals navigating roads for the first time.
- Pedestrian & recreational use of roads will increase starting at this time of the year.



## A NOTE FROM THE LISTERS:

Although the VT Income Tax filing deadline has been extended to July 15<sup>th</sup>, we encourage homeowners to please file their HS122, Homestead Declaration Form no later than June 15<sup>th</sup>. This ensures that your property tax bill will reflect the residential rate. Homestead Declarations filed after June 15<sup>th</sup> will require the Town to mail revised tax bills for those properties. Revised tax bills can cause confusion for taxpayers and escrow companies, as well as adding extra work to town staff for processing.

You can file your Homestead Declaration form online at: <https://myvtax.vermont.gov/>.

### LISTER VISITS

Property owners who received a building permit for this past year, or have one from a prior year, can expect a visit from the Listers. This inspection is separate from the Zoning Administrator.

We will schedule inspections on new homes and additions prior to coming. Smaller projects, such as decks and sheds, will not be scheduled but we will leave a note that we were there.

Notices of Change of Appraisal will be sent in May.

If you have any questions, please contact us at [lister@westfordvt.us](mailto:lister@westfordvt.us).



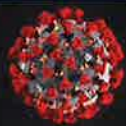
# WESTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

<http://westfordpubliclibrary.org>

(802) 878-5639

[westfordpubliclibrary@gmail.com](mailto:westfordpubliclibrary@gmail.com)

1717 VERMONT ROUTE 128, WESTFORD VT 05494



Due to COVID-19, the building may be closed, but you have access to a wealth of resources. There is a comprehensive and up to date list on our website.

Our WiFi is available 24/7 from our parking lot.

Curbside pickup of library materials is available Wednesday 3-5pm and Saturdays 10-Noon. Materials request form is on our website.

## Highlighting Resources We Offer:

**LEARNINGEXPRESS**  
An EBSCO Company

Learning Express has something for everyone! It covers homework help, prep for the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) exam, nursing and medical testing prep, job interview and resume writing, computer skills, SAT, LSAT, and GRE test prep, to interactive tools for choosing a career. Use the link on the library's website and create an account.

Gale online research and consumer databases. Great resource for all ages—Kid InfoBits through Chilton Car Repair Guides! Uses geolocation for authentication, so allow it to use your location.



RESEARCH  
DATABASES

**Universal  
CLASS™**

Universal Class offers more than 500 online classes ranging in topics from writing skills, software programs (including Adobe and Microsoft programs), to science, html, and graphic design.

Though classes are not for college credit, they are led by a real instructor with whom you can communicate by e-mail. Courses allow you to proceed at your own pace, working on assignments anytime, day or night. There also are babysitting training courses, art classes, and math reviews.



If you have not already, be sure to follow us on Facebook for up to date notifications and more enrichment activities.

## **Library Hours**

Wednesday: 1-7pm  
Thursday: 10am-7pm  
Friday: 1-7pm  
Saturday: 10am-2pm

The library will remain closed indefinitely. See website for updates.

## **Virtual (maybe?) Adult Book Group May 20 7:00-8:00pm**

**Elephant Company  
Vicki Constantine  
Croke**

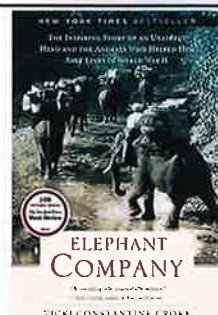
**Book group will be  
held (?) via Zoom**

Books available for curbside pickup—fill out form on our website. Also available via Libby, but there could be a wait.

The remarkable story of James Howard "Billy" Williams, whose uncanny rapport with the world's largest land animals transformed him from a care-free young man into the charismatic war hero known as Elephant Bill.

In 1920, Billy Williams came to colonial Burma as a "forest man" for a British teak company. Mesmerized by the intelligence and character of the great animals who hauled logs through the jungle, he became a gifted "elephant wallah." When Japanese forces invaded Burma in 1942, Williams joined the elite British Force 136 and operated behind enemy lines. His war elephants carried supplies, helped build bridges, and transported the sick and elderly over treacherous mountain terrain. *Elephant Company* is an inspirational narrative that illuminates a little-known chapter in the annals of wartime heroism. (amazon.com)

**Zoom invites sent to "clubbers",  
contact Bree if you wish to join.**



## **Virtual Early Literacy Storytime: Kids of all ages!**

New Storytime released every Thursday during our closure.

Story times can be found on our Facebook page, links on Front Porch Forum or archived on our website under the Storytime Tab

Ms. Bree misses all her Storytime friends!



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](mailto:westfordpubliclibrary@gmail.com)

## May Library Events

### Month-long Events:

### Westford Community Coloring Project

**May 1 - Dorothy's List Voting**

**May 6 - Trustees Meeting via Zoom - 8am**

**May 8 - Dorothy's List Watch Party (see insert for details)**

**May 13 - Town Wide Bingo via Zoom 7-8pm**

**May 15 - Dorothy's List Trivia Challenge (see inset for details)**

**May 20 - Adult book group via Zoom (?) 7-8pm - discussing Elephant Company by Vicki Constantine Croke**

**May 30 - Green Up Day (More on this TBD)**

### Curbside Pickup of Library Materials:

**Wednesdays 3-5pm**

**Saturdays 10-Noon**

**Order form is on our website and Facebook page—order before 7pm the day before**

**Storytime released digitally every Thursday**

## Community Coloring Project during the month of May!

Talented Westford artist, India Tresselt, has created a one of a kind image for this project. Copies of this coloring sheet will be on our Facebook page, Front Porch Forum, our website, and available for pickup curbside on May 2. Color this design with whatever you have at home, then place it in your window - if you live near a road, or waterproof it with tape, a zip top bag, laminate it, or with a sheet protector and place it in your yard, by the road, near your mailbox for everyone to see. Kids as well as adults should get coloring!! Color more than one! Show your community spirit - Leave it up all month! "These connections we make now, will make it easier to come together as a community later."



## Dorothy's List Activities

(these activities apply to students in grades 4-8 who have been reading this list the entire school year)

Activities will be coordinated by Beth Shelley, school librarian, in conjunction with the Westford Public Library.

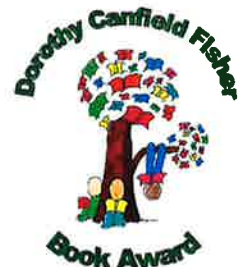
All links will come from school.

**May 1 - Vote for your favorite book and the new name for the list**

**May 8 - Dorothy's List Watch Party (the new list!) via Zoom: 3rd&4th graders - 4:30-5:30, Middle schoolers - 7-8pm**

**May 15 - Dorothy's List Trivia Challenge via Zoom: 4th graders - 4:30-5:30, Middle schoolers 7-8pm**

**Things may change, but this is our plan as of now. More TBD.**



## Town-wide Bingo Game Via Zoom

**Wednesday, May 13 - 7-8pm**

Use your own bingo cards, print some cards from online or make your own. We will also have cards available at our curbside pickup starting May 2. Bree will be calling BINGO via zoom.

Just for fun, no money or prizes, but it is something to look forward to. Zoom link will be posted on Front Porch Forum and our Facebook page as it gets closer.



"These connections we make now, will make it easier to come together as a community later."

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.



Check  
out!

# Westford Public Library

Virtual Storytime via  
YouTube every  
Thursday.

## Story Time



Adult Book Group is  
meeting virtually.

## Book Group



Free ebooks and  
audiobooks via Libby.  
Allocated more funds  
for less wait time.

## ebooks and audiobooks



Learning Express,  
Universal Class and VT  
Online Library. Updated  
website links make this  
easier to access..

## Resources



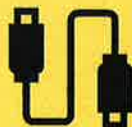
## Library Services

When the building is  
closed, the Library is  
still available to you!



## Connectivity

Answering emails daily,  
checking phone  
messages, renewing  
and making cards



## Tech Help

Helping community  
members with digital  
resources, library card  
issues, and a variety of tech  
issues.



## WiFi 24/7

Providing digital equity  
– distance learning, job  
seeking, unemployment.



## Curbside Pickup

Twice weekly pickup  
in a safe, socially  
distant manner

## MAY 2020 NEWSLETTER

Please contact Tonya Calley with any question at [recreation@westfordvt.us](mailto:recreation@westfordvt.us) or 802.324.7132

### WESTFORD RECREATION DEPARTEMENT

 May

The Recreation Board has an open seat. This is a volunteer position. If you are interested in helping to shape the communities recreation programs please email Tonya for more information at [recreation@westfordvt.us](mailto:recreation@westfordvt.us)

All programming is still on hold.



### Recreation suggestions with social distancing

During the current COVID19 Public health crisis, getting outside and connecting with nature is an excellent way to maintain mental and physical health. Hiking, backyard camping, biking, walks in nature, gardening or whatever you love help our well being. Whatever activity you choose please practice social distancing to continue to keep your family and our community safe.

<https://westfordconservationtrust.org/trails/>  
<https://www.miltonvt.gov/Facilities/Facility/Details/Milton-Town-Forest-4>

### Voltage Summer Soccer Camps

This year two sessions will be offered.

June 22-26, 5pm-8pm, 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders

July 13-17, 9am-12pm, 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders.

Registration Fee: \$125

### REFUNDS

Refunds have been requested for all programming and are being processed.

LAX season. Full refunds will be issued

LAX clinic. Pro-rated refunds will be issued.



# 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/WAIVER 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 CONSERVATION COMMISSION

### TRAIL USE

All Westford Trails are open, and you are welcome to have fun and explore. Some of the Misty Meadows (school) trails have been marked as temporarily closed and this is due to extreme muck and mud. Please let us know if you encounter any other impassable trails, whether it be due to mud, downed trees, debris, or other reasons. Email: [westfrodcc@googlegroups.com](mailto:westfrodcc@googlegroups.com)

Please respect social distancing guidelines currently in place **THIS INCLUDES YOUR ANIMALS**

If you didn't have enough to worry about, the ticks are also out so take precautions by tucking pantlegs into socks, using tick repellant and always performing tick checks after outside activities.

A map of the town trails can be found at <https://westfordvt.us/westford-town-lands/>

Enjoying the trails? Consider a donation to the Westford Conservation Commission to help our hard-working volunteers purchase equipment, hire professionals and sponsor events.

**Westford Conservation Commission**  
**1713 Vermont Route 128**  
**Westford, VT 05494**



# CARING FOR YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM

Septic systems are very much like automobiles. They need periodic inspections and proper maintenance to continue working properly. Also, like automobiles, they must be operated properly and cannot be overtaxed without the owner suffering consequences such as repair or replacement bills.

## WHAT TO DO

- **HAVE YOUR SEPTIC TANK PUMPED** every 2 to 5 years by a septage hauler. At the same time, the tank should be inspected for leaks or damage to baffles and pipes. Any leaks or damage should be repaired immediately. This is not a do-it-yourself job. You should, however, check the level of sewage scum and sludge in the tank yearly.
- Each spring, after the frost is out of the ground, check your leachfield for wet spots. You should also **INSPECT THE DISTRIBUTION BOX (AND PUMP OR SIPHON CHAMBER if you have one)** to make sure they are level. If these components are not level, the leachfield will not receive even distribution and the siphon or pump may not function properly. It may be necessary to call a designer or installer to reset and repair these components or any shifted or broken piping going in or out of them.
- Several times each year (set up a regular schedule) **INSPECT THE SIPHON OR PUMP** – if your system has one. Observe the operation of at least one cycle. Run water in the house until the chamber is filled and the siphon or pump activates. If the chamber does not fill or does not empty and fill to the specified levels, then servicing is required.

## WHAT NOT TO DO

An absorption field generally does not require any maintenance. However, to protect and prolong the life of the absorption field, follow these simple rules:

- Plant only grass over and near your septic system. Roots from nearby trees or shrubs may clog and damage the absorption field.
- Do not drive or park over any part of your septic system. This can compact the soil and crush your system.
- Direct all wastewater from your home into the septic tank. This includes all sink, bath, shower, toilet, washing machine, and dishwasher wastewaters. Any of these wastewaters can contain disease-causing microorganisms or environmental pollutants.
- Keep roof drains, basement sump pump drains, and other rainwater or surface water drainage systems away from the absorption field. Flooding of the absorption field with excessive water will keep the soil from naturally cleansing the wastewater, which can lead to groundwater and/or nearby surface pollution.

## SEPTIC SYSTEM HEALTH TIPS

- Conserve water to avoid overloading the septic system. Be sure to repair any leaky faucets or toilets. Use low-flow fixtures.
- Do not use caustic drain openers for a clogged drain. Instead, use boiling water or a drain snake to open clogs.
- Do not use septic tank additives, commercial septic tank cleansers, yeast, sugar, etc. These products are not necessary and some may be harmful to your system.
- Use commercial bathroom cleansers and laundry detergents in moderation. Many people prefer to clean their toilets, sinks, showers, and tubs with mild detergent or baking soda.
- Your septic system is not a trash can. Do not put disposable diapers, sanitary napkins, tampons, paper towels, facial tissues, plastics, cat litter, or cigarettes into your septic system. These items quickly fill your septic tank with solids, decrease the efficiency, and will require that you pump out the septic tank more frequently. They may also clog the sewer line to the septic system causing wastewater to back up into your home.
- Avoid dumping grease or fats down your kitchen drain. They solidify and the accumulation may contribute to blockages in your system.
- Keep latex paint, varnishes, thinners, waste oil, photographic solutions, pesticides, or other hazardous chemicals out of your system. Even in small amounts, these items can destroy the biological digestion taking place within your septic system.

**If you would like more information or a copy of your septic system plans please contact Melissa Manka, Planning Coordinator, or Kate Lalley, Zoning Administrator, at the Town Office (878-4587).**



## **CLEANING UP YOUR YARD? IMPORTANT REMINDERS WHEN WORKING WITHIN WATER RESOURCE AREAS:**

Spring is the perfect time to be outdoors and enjoy working on your property. For those of us with project lists that include brush and tree removal please realize our Water Resource and Flood Hazard Overlay areas require special protection. With the exception of managed forestry and agricultural plans, most destructive disturbances such as brush and tree removal are prohibited in these overlay areas.

We all live in a watershed with some of us closer to our streams, natural ponds and rivers than others. Please be sure to identify the water resources on your property. Our official Water Resources Overlay and Flood Hazard Overlay map is available on our Town website [www.westfordvt.us](http://www.westfordvt.us). Click Documents, then Land Use & Development Regulations where it is the last item in the menu.

When you have determined a Water Resource or Flood Hazard Overlay is located on your property it is important that you familiarize yourself with Town regulations for the appropriate Overlay District. These regulations can also be found at [www.westfordvt.us](http://www.westfordvt.us) under Documents in 2016 Land Use & Development Regulations chapters 270 and 280.

***The purpose of the Town of Westford Water Resource Overlay District and Flood Hazard Overlay District is to:***

- 1. Ensure the natural processes (geomorphology) of Westford's water-related resources are protected***
- 2. Preserve and conserve riparian ecosystems and biological diversity;***
- 3. Maintain Westford's rural character through the conservation of natural resources.***
- 4. Utilize natural resources for preservation, recreation, education, and human consumption.***
- 5. Protect public health, safety, and welfare by ensuring protections are established concerning: water quality, erosion control, storm water control, and minimizing flood losses and damage.***
- 6. Minimize the demands on public services and financial impact that result from flooding.***

Westford's streams, natural ponds and rivers are protected by 50' and 100' buffers. Our 100' buffers have been an integral part of Westford's water resource protection for over 40 years and have proven effective in the protection of water quality, wildlife habitat, wildlife corridors and flood prevention. Remember the critical hydrological properties and ecosystem of our waterways are a lot larger than the immediate body water. Recent heavy rain events have demonstrated both the need and effectiveness of large undisturbed absorption areas in flood prevention. Water quality is everyone's responsibility and Westford residents should take pride in our community's leadership role and enjoy the benefits of being a model for water quality protection in Vermont.

The Westford Planning Commission meets monthly, or more frequently as required downstairs at the Town offices at 6:30 pm. Our meetings are open to the public and your attendance is encouraged. Our public meeting schedule is available on our Town's website; [www.westfordvt.us](http://www.westfordvt.us), or by contacting Melissa Manka at the Westford Town Office.

### **WESTFORD CEMETERY REMINDERS**

**Artificial flowers, glass containers and items with wire are NOT allowed** in any of the Westford cemeteries. They will be subject to removal by cemetery officials. Also **the planting of trees and shrubs is NOT permitted**. There are signs posted in each cemetery.

Thank you for your cooperation,  
Westford Cemetery Commission



***We are excited to share - at a safe social distance - this momentous 50th Anniversary Green Up Day with you!***

No one really expected the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Green Up Day would include working around a pandemic, but we will accept our challenges and persevere to make this Green Up Day memorable.

We have some fun celebratory things planned for this year that will launch us into the next 50 years. Please keep reading for details.

We hope everyone will apply their excitement to get outside, to Green Up on May 30<sup>th</sup>. This act of community service and making our state shine is so good for our hearts, souls, and civic engagement - even at a distance. "Greening Up" is much more than the act of A DAY, it is a caring mindset that we teach our children, it is taking care of where we live for a healthy environment, and it is about connecting our communities with a goal for common greatness. ***Together, let's make it a safe and hugely successful 50th Green Up Day.***

**Green Up Day Safety Tips:**

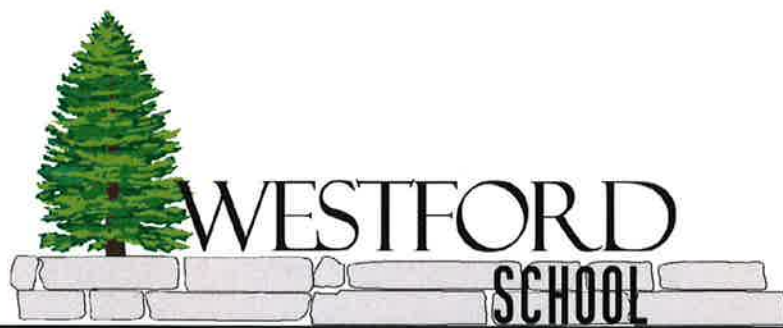
- Wear rugged work gloves.
- Wear long pants and boots.
- Always check for ticks.
- Do not pick up sharp objects. Get an adult.
- Dispose of any sharps in a heavy plastic bottle with the lid screwed back on and marked "do not recycle."
- Wear bright colored clothing.
- Review safety rules with kids.
- Work facing oncoming traffic.
- Use sunscreen.

**\*\*Please note due to COVID-19, the students at the Westford School will NOT be doing their traditional Green Up activities this year. This means that all roads will need attention.\*\***

## Subscribe to the Town Newsletter

If you would like to receive a copy of the Town Newsletter by email, send an email to [townclerk@westfordvt.us](mailto:townclerk@westfordvt.us) with your name (required), email address (required) and address (optional). To view current and past newsletters visit: <https://westfordvt.us/documents/newsletters/> If you do not have access to the Internet or have a computer, you can call the Town Office at 878-4587 to request being added to the mailing list.





## WESTFORD SCHOOL NEWS

We recognize that each family is dealing with this pandemic in their own way. We hope that our focus on health and safety, communication and personalized learning plans is meeting your family's most essential school needs during this school closure. We look forward to your feedback on the weekly survey so that we can adjust as needed.

### Priorities at this time

1. Health and Safety
2. Communication
3. Learning Plans

### Health & Safety

#### Meals

Food Services continues to prepare bagged meals (breakfast and lunch) and uses a drive-thru pick-up style of service from 10am to noon at Westford School to best support social distancing.

#### Access to the building

Building access is restricted to essential employees and essential needs via district protocol.

### Communication

For the latest updates from the Essex Westford School District specific to COVID-19, please visit: [www.ewsd.org/covid](http://www.ewsd.org/covid). This includes a wide range of information such as chromebook repair, tutorial on home wifi tips, funds for grocery needs, and building access.

Additionally, you can expect any Westford specific information to come directly from teachers and/or Principal Lewis.

### General Updates & Information

- First day of the 20/21 school year will be **Thursday, August 27th**.
  - The Westford School day is 8:00am-3:00pm with the exception of Tuesdays when students will continue to be released at 2:00pm as teachers participate in professional learning communities.
  - The preschool schedule is 8:00am-10:30 four days a week- Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday.
- **Placement** into classrooms and homerooms for 2020/21
  - We invite parent input into your child's learning needs as we determine student placement. Please enter your responses on the [Learner Characteristic Form](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1102JFimJpFIKqeykTYXevywAiaXkjEfarOoRmBC9lbo/edit?usp=sharing) (<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1102JFimJpFIKqeykTYXevywAiaXkjEfarOoRmBC9lbo/edit?usp=sharing>) and return to Stephanie Jones at [sjones@ewsd.org](mailto:sjones@ewsd.org) by Friday, May 8th. This information is considered along with school-based information as we undertake the process of assigning students to classes.

- [Kindergarten Registration is Open](https://www.ewsd.org/kindergarten) (<https://www.ewsd.org/kindergarten>) and we are waiting on guidance from the Governor specific to school closure before publishing a K orientation date.
  - If you have a child who will be kindergarten-aged for the 2020-2021 school year, please let us know. This information will support our planning of appropriate kindergarten programming. Please contact Terri Martin, Office Manager by phone at 802-878-5932, or by email at [tmartin@ewsd.org](mailto:tmartin@ewsd.org). We anticipate holding summer school- details to come.
    - Families may access the school's **public internet** in the parking lot to support those with unreliable home access. You are welcome at any time. The password is [wifi@EWSD](mailto:wifi@EWSD)
    - State and local **spring assessments** will not take place.
    - The [Homework Help Line](#) is open M-F from 3:00 - 4:00.

## Learning Plans

We have moved to Phase 2 in our distance learning plans now that school closure has been extended. In addition to our previous efforts and learning plans, we are also providing learning opportunities focused on new/essential learning. Teachers have been recording lessons and using another resource utilizing video to provide instruction and thoughtfully providing learning activities and adjusting based on family feedback. We are identifying the most essential learning tasks in literacy and math, as well as providing activities for all other classes along with extension opportunities so that students and families have choice in what works best for them and their circumstances. We understand the importance of personalization and have created flexible schedules for Fridays. We also recognize that some students are engaged in specialized instruction, band lessons, Algebra, and French B, as examples. Thus, our distance learning plans reflect accommodations and modifications based on student needs and family capacity with an intent to streamline communication to avoid overwhelming students or families with multiple emails.

Teachers are focused on providing ongoing feedback via personal messages, video conferencing, exit questions and assignments. Teachers will write narrative statements for a progress report at the end of the school year to accompany the standards based reports from earlier in the year.

## SCHOOL BOARD NOTES

**School budget:** In the last newsletter we had indicated that the school budget vote would be held in May. Shortly after that article was written, the Secretary of State's office issued guidance that no votes should be held in April or May. At present we are thinking the vote will be held in June. In these uncertain times it is hard to know.

There are eight other districts in the state that have not held their first school budget vote. The legislature is currently having discussions about how these districts should be treated since the economic conditions in the state have changed so dramatically since early March. To date no final decisions have been made and the EWSD board is monitoring the conversations closely. It is a challenging time for the board to decide the best way to move forward. We are meeting on April 28th and May 5th. Discussions of this topic are likely to dominate these meetings. In addition, we are coordinating the timing of the vote with the Village of Essex Junction. They were also scheduled to hold their budget vote in April. We want to hold the votes on the same day so officials involved in both votes don't have to come out twice. Of course, there is also the possibility that we will not be able to vote in June either. This plays into the legislative discussions as well.



**COVID-19:** The other topic that consumes a lot of board meeting time is the pandemic. Superintendent Cobb briefs the board at each meeting about the work that is being done by teachers and staff to continue student learning at this difficult time. The board remains appreciative of the work teachers and staff are doing to stay connected to students.

Discussions will soon turn to the summer and whether there will be a need to hold an expanded summer school to get students ready for learning in the fall. There is great concern about the inequities related to learning that are likely being magnified by remote learning. The district is in constant discussion about how to plan for an uncertain future.

**Absentee Voting:** We would like to add our voices to Nanette's and urge voters to request Absentee Ballots for upcoming elections. Assuming the district is allowed to hold a budget vote in June, it will be helpful to all those involved in running the vote if as many folks as possible use the absentee option.

**Getting the latest information:** Another reminder that school board meetings can be viewed live or on tape. All the relevant information for doing so is available on the school district website: [ewsd.org](http://ewsd.org) We encourage you to read all the latest and to contact us with any questions or concerns.

**Martha Heath and Andre Roy**  
*Westford reps on the EWSD Board*

## OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE YOUR COMMUNITY!

**The Selectboard is seeking town residents interested in serving as Westford's representative on the following:**

### Chittenden County Regional Planning Commissioner Alternate Representative

The Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission was founded in 1966 to promote the mutual cooperation of its 19 member municipalities and to facilitate the appropriate development and preservation of the physical and human resources in Chittenden County.

CCRPC is composed of 19 municipal commissioners and five at-large commissioners (representing Agriculture, Conservation/Environment, Socio-Economic/Housing, and Transportation). The legislative body of each of Chittenden County's municipalities selects its own commissioner and alternate commissioner. The Full Commission selects the five at-large representatives. Each commissioner has one vote.

CCRPC's regular monthly meeting is on the third Wednesday of the month at 6:00pm in the Main Conference Room. These meetings are open to the public.

For more information go to <https://www.ccrpcvt.org/about-us/commission/commissioners-alternates/>.

### CCRPC Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC)

The Clean Water Advisory Committee (CWAC) oversees the Chittenden County Regional Planning Commission activities and policy development regarding but not limited to, the Vermont Lake Champlain Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Plan and its related plans and programs. The Committee typically meets the first Tuesday of the month. To view minutes, agendas and other documents, please go to <https://www.ccrpcvt.org/about-us/committees/clean-water-advisory-committee/>. For more information contact Dan Albrecht, CCRPC Senior Planner, at [dalbrecht@ccrpcvt.org](mailto:dalbrecht@ccrpcvt.org) or 846-4490.

Please contact the Town Office at 878-4587 or [townclerk@westfordvt.us](mailto:townclerk@westfordvt.us) if you are interested in being appointed to one of these positions.