



WESTFORD NEWSLETTER



February 2026

The **Eight Spotted Forester Moth** is native to Canada. Active during the day it is often mistaken for a butterfly. Mature adults feed on the nectar of herbaceous plants. They can stay in diapause for up to four years.

Westford Town Office

1713 Vermont Route 128 - Westford, Vermont 05494

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

<https://westfordvt.us/>

TOWN OFFICE NOTES

Selectboard FY'27 Budget Workshops & Public Hearing

The Selectboard began working on the FY'27 Budget in October. Meetings will be held on:

- March 2 – Public Hearing and Floor Vote Articles for Town Meeting

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 2026.

Senior Luncheon

February lunch is on! Please join us on Monday, February 9 for a potluck feast prepared and served by our fabulous volunteers. The doors of the BMH will open at 11:30 for socializing with lunch to follow around 12 noon. Following lunch and brief business meeting, we will have a presentation from a member or two representing Westford Mutual Aid. It will be beneficial to hear what our local group provides for services. As a reminder, if you are feeling poorly, please refrain from attending as to keep everyone healthy. If school is canceled due to weather, so is luncheon. Please feel free to reach out with any questions!

Co-Presidents Mary Fay (878-1215) or Cori Hill (238-1018)

TOWN OFFICE HOURS

The office is open to the public:

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

Closed:

- March 3 – Town Meeting Day Election

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the March Newsletter is 12:00 noon on Monday, February 23rd.

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



UPCOMING CONSTRUCTION

- **BROWNS RIVER COVERED BRIDGE REPAIRS**

Westford's beautiful, covered bridge, originally built in 1838, repaired in 1976, and fully restored in 2001, will be getting some needed maintenance to keep it enjoyable for years to come, thanks in part to a grant from Vermont Historic Preservation. Water damage due to faulty flashing has caused the wood to rot at the four corners where the bridge sits on its concrete abutments.

The Selectboard has chosen Miles Jenness from Vermont Heavy Timber

(<https://www.vermontheavytimber.com/>) to do the repairs which will begin this summer and wrap up in the fall. The bridge will be lifted from the abutments, new wood timbers will be installed, and superior flashing will be applied to keep rot from forming again in the future. During this work, there will be times when traffic may be limited to one lane on Cambridge Road. Any disruption will be minimized as much as possible. Thank you for being patient while we fix up this wonderful, historic landmark in the heart of Westford!



WINTER ROADS

What you need to know about winter road conditions.

- **Plowing:** begins when the snow has accumulated 2-3 inches. Each plow route takes the road crew about 4 hours to complete.
- **Sand:** applied to all gravel roads. Some particles may be large enough to cause windshield damage. Use caution and avoid following other vehicles closely.
- **Mailboxes:** Westford does NOT repair or replace mailboxes damaged by the plow.
- **Plowing Across Town Roads:** plowing snow from driveways across town roads is prohibited.

Read the full Winter Road Policy here: <https://westfordvt.us/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/Winter-Road-Policy.pdf>

Reminders:

- Each winter storm is different, roads may be icy and sand may be loose. Drive slow and know what your vehicle is capable of.
- Watch for walkers and wildlife. It will be more difficult to see pedestrians and recreational users of roads this time of year due to snowbanks. Walkers, bikers and other users can do their part by wearing bright, reflective clothing.
- Some VAST trails cross Westford Roads. Know where the trails are and watch for crossing snowmobiles. You can find a list of VAST trails here: <https://vtvast.org/trails.html>
- Several hunting seasons occur during early winter. Watch for vehicles parked on the side of roads for hunting access. Pedestrians & pets should wear orange/yellow reflective clothing during hunting seasons to help ensure they are seen. You can find a list of VT hunting seasons here: <https://vtfishandwildlife.com/hunt/hunting-and-trapping-seasons>

COMMON USE POLICY

The Westford Common Committee wants to remind residents that any major use of the Common or gazebo requires an application. This does not apply to small gatherings like friends meeting for coffee or a couple of folks having a picnic. This policy has been implemented to avoid conflicts since the Common and gazebo are being utilized more. We ask all town organizations to also follow this procedure so the calendar will reflect all activities.

Here is a link to the application:

<https://westfordvt.us/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Common-Use-Application-FILLABLE.pdf>

If you have any questions, please call the Town Office for assistance: 802-878-4587.



PLANNING COMMISSION RESIGNATIONS

Mo Reilly and Ian Gehlbach have resigned from their appointments to the Westford Planning Commission. On behalf of the town, the planning commission would like to thank Mo and Ian for their service to the town and the commission, including serving in their roles as Vice Chair and Clerk. Their thoughtful and caring deliberations and work contributions will be missed. We wish them only the best in their other endeavors.

Respectfully,

The Westford Planning Commission and Coordinator

George Lamphere
Will Dunkley
Max Tyler

WESTFORD MUSIC SERIES

PRESENTS

NAPOLITANO, LIPPOLD AND HILL



LOVE SONGS

-free will donation-

**4-5 PM: WESTFORD COMMON HALL
SUNDAY: FEBRUARY 15, 2026**

Seasoned favorites, Bob Hill on guitar (and vocals), Ero Lippold on Keyboard (and vocals) along with newcomer Frankie Napolitano on vocals and percussion will offer an eclectic mix of musical genres from old school artists like Aretha, Little Feat to contemporary bands like Lake Street Drive and Melt.

A pie raffle is included for extra fun! Call 802-734-8177 for more information.

MUNICIPAL JOB OPENINGS

For more information on job postings please visit our Careers page on the website: <https://westfordvt.us/careers/>

DOG WARDEN

The Town of Westford is looking for someone who is interested in serving as Dog Warden. What is a Dog Warden? A Dog Warden is a person who helps dog owners comply with the Westford Dog Ordinance.

Qualifications: A love for dogs, the ability to communicate effectively and a location to bring dogs until they can be reunited with their owner to name a few. You may think you need a kennel to be a Dog Warden. This is not the case. However, a stray dog does need to be kept in a healthy environment until it is reunited with the owner. A healthy environment includes shelter, food, water, and a suitable area for them to relieve themselves.

The Dog Warden position receives an annual stipend of \$500 and there are funds available for training, supplies and mileage. The Town also has supplies, including a dog house, that can be utilized. If you would like more information on helping your community by serving in this position, please contact the Selectboard at selectboard@westfordvt.us or call the Town Office at 802-878-4587. Westford residency is preferred but not required.

Eyeglasses and Hearing Aids for Recycling

The Jericho-Underhill Lions Club have placed collection boxes in the Westford Library & Westford Town Clerk's Office. The Collection Boxes are there for anyone that has used eyeglasses and used hearing aids that wishes to donate them for recycling.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE TOWN NEWSLETTER

If you would like to receive the Town Newsletter in your email inbox, send an email to townclerk@westfordvt.us with your name and email address. To view current and past newsletters visit:

<https://westfordvt.us/documents/newsletters/>





WESTFORD
COMMON HALL

February 2026 Newsletter

The Westford Music Series



Napolitano, Lippold and Hill Sunday, February 15, 2026, 4-5pm

The Westford Music Series celebrates the month of love at the Westford Common Hall on Sunday, February 15th, with a trio of Northern Vermont's best talent.

Well-known seasoned favorites, Bob Hill on guitar (and vocals), Ero Lippold on keyboard (and vocals), along with newcomer, Frankie Napolitano, on vocals and percussion, will offer an eclectic mix of musical genres from old school artists like Aretha, Little Feat, to contemporary bands like Lake Street Dive and Melt.

Coming up in 2026

The WCH Board just wrapped up our annual retreat, where we planned our programming for 2026. We look forward to another year filled with music, art, community gatherings, and much more. Stay Tuned.

News & Events

Only two public viewings left! Don't miss *Earth and Sky: A Photography Exhibition*. Stop by Feb 8th or Feb 22 for public viewing times.

Bone Builders exercise class is on **Wednesdays and Fridays, 10 am-11:15. Drop in any time!** Donations are appreciated.

Westford's Buddhist meditation and study group meets at WCH every Sunday morning from 10:30am-12pm. Come join neighbors for a 25 minute silent meditation, short readings from our current book--Start Where You Are by Pema Chodron--and some time for sharing and discussion. All are welcome, no matter your level of experience or if you read the book! Free will donation basis - all donations help cover operating expenses for WCH. Questions? Email the organizer at eileen.nehme@gmail.com.

Earth and Sky: A Photography Exhibition

Westford Common Hall is pleased to present "Earth and Sky," a photography exhibition featuring the work of four local artists:

- Amber O. Haller
- Ian MacDonald
- Deborah Parente
- Rene Renteria

The show explores the natural world through diverse photographic perspectives, capturing the beauty and wonder of our surroundings from the ground beneath our feet to the stars overhead.

Exhibition runs Dec.12 - Feb.28



Viewing hours are on the following dates:

- **February 8, 12 - 4 PM**
- **February 22, 12 - 4 PM**

**Don't miss your chance to see
the work of these artists!**

For more information, visit westfordcommonhall.org.



WESTFORD
COMMON HALL

Westford Music Series

2025/2026 Season

Sundays: 4-5 pm, Westford Common Hall
21 Brookside Road, Westford VT

February 15, 2026: Napolitano, Lippold and Hill

March 22, 2026: Paul Asbell

April 10, 2026: Special Friday night concert!! Minor Gold

April 19, 2026: Lewis Franco band

May 17, 2026: FREVO

June 7, 2026: John McBride's Big Easy; All that jazz (To be confirmed)

Early preview of 2026/2027 season:

September 13 2026: Missisquoi River Band

October 18 2026: Marsh Lights

November 15 2026: Twangtown Paramours

See <https://westfordcommonhall.org/westford-music-series> for more info!



Westford Common Hall | PO Box 53 | Westford, VT 05494



TRASH, RECYCLING & FOOD SCRAPS IN WESTFORD

Can I Recycle That?

Did you know that you are not supposed to put your recycling in plastic bags of any kind? The only exception to this is shredded office paper, which is accepted only if it's in a CLEAR BAG that's tightly closed.

Here are some other items that do NOT belong in your recycling bin:

- Dirty containers
- Plastic wrap
- Durable plastic (e.g., Tupperware, laundry bins, etc.)
- Styrofoam
- Motor oil or hazardous waste containers



For more information on the proper way to recycle, please visit <https://cswd.net/recycling/>. There is even an interesting video of a tour of the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) where your recycling goes to be sorted.

Food Scraps *(Effective July 1, 2020, per Act 148, food scraps are banned from landfills.)*

What are food scraps?

Food scraps are parts of food that are typically discarded rather than eaten: peels, rinds, cores, eggshells, seeds, pits, bones, shells, coffee grounds and filters, loose-leaf tea, and fats/oils/grease. Food scraps is also food that was eaten but not finished: "plate scraps" or leftovers that went bad. Any type of food can become food scraps including bread, pasta, soup, vegetables, fruit, sauces, meat, fish, dairy, sweets, etc.

What should I do with meat and bones?

If you compost in your yard, the law allows you to put meat and bones in the trash, so they don't attract animals to your composting bin. If you chose to bring food scraps to a drop-off center, you can include meat and bones with the rest of your food scraps.

CSWD has an abundance of information on their website including answers to questions, ways to reduce waste and how to compost to name a few. Please go to <https://cswd.net/scrapfoodwaste/> or call **872-8111** to get more information.

SEASONAL COMPOSTING TIPS: WINTER

- Leaves and grass clippings are valuable compost materials because they are carbon rich. Add them in small batches to avoid matting (too many leaves clump together and slow down the compost process)
- Cover your pile or use an enclosed composter to keep things moist but not sodden. This will also deter pests like bears, raccoons, and mice.
- Other items that can go in your compost this time of year include wood ash and the skeletons of annual flowers & plants. Break down large-bodied plants like tomatoes and broccoli before adding them to your pile.
- Store compost material like leaves & grass in a burlap sack near your pile for adding with food scraps.

How to make compost fast: <https://thisismygarden.com/2018/07/summer-compost-pile/>

STAY UP TO DATE WITH OUR HAULER

Myers has now set up a Facebook page for Westford specific trash & recycling communications! You can find it here: <https://www.facebook.com/Town-of-Westford-Waste-104918838111423>).



WESTFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

Special Program: Stuffy Sleepover



Join us on **February 13th at 6:30** for our **Stuffy Sleepover**. Bring one stuffy to our sleepover! Your stuffy will get to stay the night in the library. Enjoy a story, a snack, and a craft. Then put your stuffy to sleep and pick them up in the morning. We will take pictures of any playful mischief the stuffies get up to! Pick your stuffy up Saturday, or the following Tuesday.

Upcoming Events



Coffee and Cards

Tuesdays, 10:30-12:00

Join us weekly for card games and good conversation. All levels welcome!



Homeschool Meet Up Group

Wednesdays 2:30-4:00

All families interested in homeschooling are invited! This space is intended to help homeschooling families connect.



Wednesday Evenings at the Library

Wednesdays in February, 4:00-6:30

A living-room-style evening for all ages. Read a book, play a game, color or work on an ongoing craft. Designed to support screen-free time and togetherness.





Upcoming Events

Early Literacy Storytime: Thursdays, 10:30



Our storytime has changed to 10:30. Join us for a gentle, engaging storytime full of rhymes, songs, and stories. Playtime follows storytime!

Learn American Mah Jongg Thursdays from 1:00-3:00



Limited space, please email: westfordpubliclibrary@gmail.com to register.

Maker's Group



Thursday, February 5th at 6:30

Bring anything you are currently working on and spend time with other makers in a relaxed, creative space.

Special Storytime: Songs with Linda Bassick Saturday, February 7th at 10:30



Linda Bassick is an early educator and musician who connects music to learning for kids of all ages! Join us for this special storytime!

Library Trustee Meeting Wednesday, February 11th at 7:00



Adult Book Group

Wednesday, February 18th at 7:00

February Book Pick: *The Snow Child* by Eowyn Ivey
Copies available at the library.

Shakespeare Group Thursday, February 27th at 2:00



Join us to talk about the first part of Romeo and Juliet. All are welcome! Copies available at the library.



Legislative Updates

Brenda Steady

Three weeks have passed since the start of the new legislative session, and I continue to serve on the Human Services Committee. Our committee recently completed recommendations to the Appropriations Committee on the Budget Adjustment Act. Many organizations came before us to request additional funds.

We have now divided into teams, with each team assigned a portion of the Human Services budget to research. Our task is to understand the requested increases and develop proposals to bring back to the full committee. The committee will then review each team's recommendations and vote on whether to advance them to Appropriations.

I hope the proposals moving forward will be fiscally responsible. While I understand many of the requests, some appear quite costly, and I question whether they reflect mismanagement of original budgets. A few line items involved fiscal errors, which can happen. Several organizations also requested entirely new funding; those groups were asked to return when the committee begins testimony for the FY27 budget.

H.545 – An act relating to issuing immunization recommendations

The committee heard testimony from Dr. Rick Hildebrant, MD, the new Commissioner of the Department of Health. The bill authorizes the Department to issue immunization recommendations for children and adults as part of its immunization program. It also allows the Department to secure the best possible vaccine pricing from vendors. Under the bill, recommended immunizations would have no co-payments, coinsurance, or deductibles. Membership of the Vermont Immunization Advisory Council would also be updated.

This bill passed on the House floor and now moves to the Senate. I voted yes.

Governor's State of the State Address

On Wednesday, January 7th, I listened to the Governor's State of the State address. The primary focus was Education Reform, which he described as essential for affordability, housing, workforce development, economic growth, and Vermont's future. He also addressed rising education spending, childcare, infrastructure, and public safety. [Governor Phil Scott Delivers 2026 State of the State Address | Office of Governor Phil Scott](#)

Additional Bills Voted On

- H.649 – Proposes prohibiting certain loans and investments by risk retention groups, restructuring reporting requirements, and requiring certification statements from protected cells within sponsored captive insurance companies. I voted yes.
- S.60 – Establishes the Farm Security Special Fund to assist farms experiencing qualifying weather-related losses. I voted yes.
- H.84 – Allows telehealth appointments to be recorded with patient and provider consent. I voted yes.
- H.534 – Relates to community action agencies. I voted yes.

Housing Legislation

The committee is also working on a new housing bill following last session's veto of H.91. The new proposal, H.594, would establish the Temporary Emergency Housing and Accountability Program and the Return Home Program for fiscal years 2027 and 2028. The bill carries significant costs: \$60 million in 2027 and \$50 million in 2028.

I am extremely concerned about these costs, and with my continued focus on affordability, I am doing my best to keep an open mind as we hear testimony. A constituent contacted me with concerns about nonresidents receiving free housing. I share this concern, particularly when Vermonters are turned away due to limited room availability. I raised this issue in committee, and the Chair invited legislative counsel to explain why such restrictions cannot be included in the bill.

I also asked whether individuals who receive assistance to return to their home state may later return to Vermont and re-enter the hotel/motel program. The short answer is yes.

Committee Livestreams

All committee meetings are livestreamed, and I encourage constituents to listen in. Agendas and livestream links can be found on the State of Vermont committee webpages. I welcome feedback and suggestions to help me make informed decisions when votes are taken.

Community Recognition

Representative Taylor, Senator Mattos, and I had the pleasure of welcoming the Milton Varsity Boys Soccer Team to the State House last week. They sat in the House balcony as Resolution H.C.R. 159 was read, recognizing their 2025 Division II Championship title. Go Yellowjackets!

This week, I also signed onto my first Essex Westford School District resolutions, recognizing the 2025 Hornets Girls' Volleyball Team for winning their fifth consecutive Division I Championship, and the 2025 Essex High School Hornets Boys' Volleyball Team for winning the state championship. Go Hornets!

Kid Governor Visit

Our committee heard testimony from the newly elected Kid Governor, who ran on a platform focused on homelessness. She shared thoughtful ideas for projects she hopes to lead, including a Fun Run, a potluck meal, and a food and clothing drive.

Contact Information

Please feel free to visit my website at SteadyForVTHouse.org I maintain an open-door policy and welcome questions or concerns. I can be reached at bsteady@leg.state.vt.us or 802-338-8374.

Chris Mattos

The 2026 legislative session has begun! Like most times in the second year of the biennium, the legislature hits the ground running continuing to work on bills from the previous session and anything new for 2026.

Most notably, continuing the foundation of Act 73 of 2025, the transformation of education bill. This was the main focus of the Governor's State of the State in early January. Over the summer a task force was assembled to provide the legislature with up to three district maps. The task force took a different approach by providing options the legislature could take and came up with "Cooperative Education Service Agencies". In the afternoon committee I serve on, Senate Finance, we received a briefing on what these agencies are and how they would work. The focus of these agencies is to provide regional shared services to districts for services that are inefficient or difficult to deliver locally. I will continue to work on ensuring our education system can be more effective for the taxpayers, our schools and most importantly the children.

In the morning, I serve on the Senate Judiciary committee where we have been deeply involved in the confirmation process for two Vermont Supreme Court Justices, Christina Nolan and Michael Drescher. A little about the process, when there is a vacancy on the Supreme Court, applicants are reviewed by the Judicial Nominating Board. The nominating board interviews candidates and provides a list of qualified candidates to the Governor for his appointment. In this case, two nominees were appointed to fill the two vacancies and now the Senate Judiciary committee also interviews the nominees and receives testimony from the public followed by a vote to send each nominee to the full Senate for confirmation. The nominees have done an honorable job during the process by answering the committee's questions and responding to public testimony. The full Senate is expected to vote on the confirmations in early February.

In Judiciary, we have also been working on two bills, S.208 and 209. 208 is an act relating to standards for law enforcement identification which would require all law enforcement officers to display their name and badge number. In addition, officers would be prohibited from wearing masks or personal disguise unless they meet certain exemptions. S. 209 is an act relating to prohibiting civil arrest in sensitive locations which currently applies only to court houses. The bill aims to expand sensitive locations to state, county or municipal buildings, schools, community-based shelters, and healthcare facilities. There are some constitutional concerns and exactly how these bills would be enforced that I'm still gathering information on. Much more to come on both these bills.

I hope everyone can get out and enjoy some winter activities as the legislative session begins to warm up!

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out to me with any questions, comments, or concerns at cmattos@leg.state.vt.us.

Chris Mattos
State Senator
Chittenden-North District