



WESTFORD NEWSLETTER

May 2026



The **Blackberry Looper** is a moth found from Manitoba to Florida, primarily on North America's eastern coast. Their caterpillars feed on all sorts of flowers and fruits. The moth goes through two generations a year.

Westford Town Office

1713 Vermont Route 128 - Westford, Vermont 05494

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

<https://westfordvt.us/>

TOWN OFFICE NOTES

Property Taxes Due – Final Installment

The final property tax installment is due on Friday, May 15th. Payments postmarked (US postal, UPS, FedEx) by that date will be considered timely as well as payments received by May 15th at the counter or in the drop box. The office will be open until 4:30pm on that date to accommodate the tax payment deadline.

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.

Due to changes in how postmarks are done at USPS the Selectboard voted to consider postmarks that bear a postmark a week from the May 15th deadline (May 22) as timely. Any taxes received after this point will be subject to 1% interest and an 8% penalty.

Dog Licenses

Dog Licenses were due on April 1st. Please license your dog if you have not dog so already. A letter went out to previously registered dogs who were not registered on April 22nd. In June, a list of unregistered dogs in Westford will be provided to the Selectboard and Dog Warden for review and action. Licensing your dog is required by state law. The fee for a spayed/neutered dog is \$13.00 and the fee for an intact dog is \$15.

Senior Luncheon

Ciao! It's May which means it's our Italian feast! Past & current Westford residents 55+ are welcome to join us for lunch on Monday May 11th for Italian dishes prepared by our fabulous volunteers. Doors of the Brick Meeting House will open at 11:30 for socializing with lunch served around 12noon. Please join us, we enjoy seeing new faces!

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

TOWN OFFICE HOURS

The office is open to the public:

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

Closed:

- May 25 – Memorial Day

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for the June Newsletter is 12:00 noon on Monday, May 26th.



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



MUD SEASON!

What you need to know about 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 on 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, slow and allow room for all road users.
- Please keep pets and other animals under leash or vocal control when on or near roadways.



TRAIL CLOSURES: During mud season, various trails will be closed to prevent erosion from pedestrian traffic. Please adhere to trail closures while we wait for things to dry out. We may not have enough signs to close all affected trails, so please use your best judgment; if you need to go off the trail to walk the trail, you should not be on the trail. In other words, if conditions are so muddy or deteriorated that you need to go well off the traveled way in order to go forward, it's time to turn back. It may be possible to walk on parts of a trail, but not all the way through.

"Trails that are oversaturated are vulnerable to damage from soil compaction and erosion with every footstep. Soil compaction degrades the quality of the trail by reducing its ability to absorb water, causing increased flooding later and making it harder for vegetation to grow. Erosion then carries the soil away, leaving rocks and roots exposed." – Green Mountain Club

FLICK A STICK - Please let us know if you see downed trees or other required maintenance to any of the trails. We're happy to go out and clean things up! Feel free to flick winter sticks and other small obstacles as you enjoy the trails. All debris must be kept within the trail right of way on trails that run through private land, so debris should be just off to the side of the traveled path. We will soon be scheduling a Spring Clean-Up Day, so stay tuned.

TICKS: It's that time of year! Ticks are out and about with the spring weather. Take precautions by tucking pantlegs into socks, using tick repellent, and always performing tick-checks after outside activities. Don't forget to check your four-legged friends too!

EXCLUSIVE - Be one of the very few to own an authentic Westford hoodie. Proceeds benefit the Conservation Commission. Locally printed on a high-quality Gildan garment by New Duds in Colchester. NEW COLORS! Available in red, navy, sport grey, ash; L or XL. \$50 each. Contact westfordcc@googlegroups.com for ordering.

DONATIONS!: The WCC is funded in part by donations. If you appreciate our efforts, and would like to help fund our work, please send a donation **to:** Westford Conservation Commission, 1713 Vt. Rte. 128, Westford, VT 05494. Thank you!

The WCC's next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 20, 2026 at 6:00 pm at the 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

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.

WESTFORD MUSIC SERIES

PRESENTS

FREVO



ECLECTIC

-free will donation-

**4 - 5 PM: WESTFORD COMMON HALL
SUNDAY: MAY 17, 2026**

A well-known popular crossover group from the Vermont Contemporary Music Ensemble. Frevo makes eclectic music for flute, clarinet, cello, and classical guitar in exciting arrangements of Jazz, Latin, and Classical. Known for their high energy and love of playing for all groups, ages, and genres, the talents of Steven Klimowski, Wendy Greenwald Matthews, and Peter Matthew are a perennial favorite at the Westford Music Series

A double 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.



Westford Historical Society

NEWS FROM THE WESTFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY MARCH 2026

In preparation for our country's celebration of independence, we have been doing some digging. At the time of the Revolutionary War (1775-1783) our town was no "town" at all. It was an area containing 36 square miles having been chartered by Governor Wentworth of New Hampshire in 1763. The land was covered with heavy forests with every variety of timber and clearing and settling the "town" was a huge task undertaken by some of the first settlers who arrived around 1787. And, the town was not officially organized until 1793. How is it that there are some soldiers who fought in the Revolutionary War buried here? How did that come to be?

We hope to have some answers for you on the weekend of July 25th and 26th and we hope you will plan to join us at our building on the Common and on the Common itself. If all goes well we will host an encampment, fife and drum music and more on Saturday the 25th. And, Alexandra Garrett will give a free presentation on Vermont's role in the Revolution on the 26th. Details to follow. Also, we plan a presentation of "250 Years of Americana" at our building. We hope we have piqued your interest. It should be a busy and educational weekend.

To join the Westford Historical Society just come to our meetings scheduled for the 3rd Monday of the month at 10 Common Road at 2 P.M. To schedule an appointment to donate items, or to remember us in your will, or to have a tour of our building please contact our President, Caroline Brown, at 802-878-8890.





OPEN HOUSE / CARD SHOWER
FOR
MILLIE THERRIEN
SATURDAY, MAY 2ND
2-4 p.m.
BRICK MEETING HOUSE
1685 Rte. 128, Westford VT

*Anyone unable to attend is encouraged to
Shower Millie With Your Birthday Card Greetings and Memories*

MAIL GREETINGS TO:
MILLIE THERRIEN
c/o Lorrie Machia
2933 N Sheldon Rd, Franklin VT 05457
we'll put them in a pretty box for her to pour over at her leisure.

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.



SUPPORT AND PARTICIPATE IN THE 2026 WESTFORD FARMERS MARKET!!

The Westford Farmers Market is now planning for the 2026 season and is seeking both community sponsors and vendors. Our goal is to foster connections between community members and producers by creating a market for folks to find fresh, local food and unique, hand-crafted products from their neighbors. As we look ahead to 2026, we are working to strengthen the market's financial stability and expand vendor participation.

Sponsors:

Local businesses and community partners are invited to support the market through our sponsorship program. Sponsorship funds help offset operational costs, marketing, and community programming. Please reach out to us at westfordfarmersmarketvt@gmail.com to learn more about sponsorship options.

Vendors:

Looking for local farmers, food producers, and artisans to join us for the 2026 Summer season. The Market will be held on Sundays from 3-6pm, June 7th-September 27th, on the Westford Town Common.

High demand for fresh produce, preserved/prepared foods, eggs, meats and cheese but all types of farmers and artisans from the surrounding communities are welcome to apply. Easy sign up process and flexible scheduling options.

If you are interested in applying as a vendor, please fill out the application here:

<https://forms.gle/vGi5ZSkSgjfCmj4A9>

Reach out to learn more about requirements and availability. Please contact market managers, Kirsten and Kristin at westfordfarmersmarketvt@gmail.com

Find us on Facebook and Instagram

@westfordfarmersmarketvt



May 2026 Newsletter



Upcoming Events

Check out our upcoming community events and activities. If you or your group would like to host an event, drop us a line: info@westfordcommonhall.org

Westford Music Series Presents: FREVO

Sunday, May 17, 2026, 4-5 pm



FREVO, the well-known crossover contemporary music quartet is back by popular demand to the **Westford Common Hall on Sunday, May 17th at 4pm** for an hour of eclectic music with flute, clarinet, cello and classical guitar in arrangements of Jazz, Latin and Classical.



WCH Calender

Bone Builders exercise class is on Wednesdays and Fridays, 10 am-11:15.

Westford's Buddhist meditation and study group meets at WCH every Sunday morning from 10:30 am-12 pm.

May 2, 12 - 1pm, Science & Birding with Martha McClintock: @The Westford Public Library

May 23, 8 - 10 am, Bird Talk & Walk with Jason Crooks @WCH

June 20, 12 - 1 pm, Bird Photography with Deborah Parente
Learn photography techniques, composition tips, and great local spots to observe and capture birds. @The Westford Public Library

July 4th Celebrations

Once again the Westford Common Hall will be selling hot dogs, chips and drinks During Westford's July 4th Celebration. Be sure to stop by our table!

SAVE THE DATE! Sept. 28th!
Honky Tonk Night
@the Westford Common Hall!



WEEKLY EVENTS



Bone Builders exercise class is on Wednesdays and Fridays, 10am - 11:15. Drop in any time. Please bring comfortable shoes and clothing and a water bottle for rehydrating. Donations are appreciated.

For more information, please contact by text or phone: Jocelyn Vrba-Chauvin, volunteer instructor - 802-999-6387



RSVP Bone Builders is an exercise program designed by Tufts University researchers to prevent the condition of osteoporosis in both men and women. It also is designed for keeping independence as we gracefully age and meet new challenges with our changing bodies. The classes are sponsored by the United Way and free to the community.



Westford Buddhist meditation and study group

Sundays, 10:30am - 12pm

What to expect: 25 minute silent meditation, short readings from the book, and time for reflection and discussion. Ok to leave at the break around 11:30.

Books we've read so far: Thich Nhat Hanh Peace is Every Step; Pema Chodron Start Where You Are

New to Buddhism and meditation, or just curious? Join us and see what the group is all about!

Free will donation basis to help cover operating expenses for WCH

Questions? Email eileen.nehme@gmail.com

SPECIAL EVENTS



Spring Birding Events in Westford!

Join us this spring for a series of engaging birding programs sponsored by the Westford Library and Westford Common Hall!

Sponsored by the Westford Common Hall and the Westford Library



May 2, 12 – 1pm, Science & Birding with Martha McClintock: Discover what community science is, explore birdwatching in Vermont, and learn about top birding apps and tools. @The Westford Public Library Community

May 23, 8 – 10am, Bird Talk & Walk with Jason Crooks

Start with a short talk, then head out on a guided bird walk to appreciate our feathered neighbors. **Space is limited, be sure to register!** <https://shorturl.at/kD30T> @Westford Common Hall

June 20 from 12 – 1 pm, Bird Photography with Deborah Parente

Learn photography techniques, composition tips, and great local spots to observe and capture birds. @The Westford Public Library

**Save
THE
DARK**
**Sept.
28!**



Westford Honky Tonk Night!



We're putting in a dance floor, hiring a live band, and turning the Common Hall into a Texas-style honky tonk for one fun evening! There'll be a cash bar, yummy nibbles, and a photo booth, plus a silent auction and a raffle.

Show up at 6:00 for a two-step lesson (if you want to look like you know what you're doing). Band plays 7:00–9:00.

**This is a WCH fundraiser, and a great night out for the community!
Tickets will be on a sliding scale so everyone can come.**

If you'd like to donate something for the raffle or silent auction, email us at info@westfordcommonhall.org.



“Calling all Artists” for a Summer Art Exhibit

Westford Common Hall is hosting a Summer Art Exhibit and we want to showcase YOU!

Are you an artist living in the Town of Westford who wants to share your creativity and be part of a community celebration of art? This show is intended to highlight unique perspectives, artistic talent and expression from within our Westford community.

Due to limited exhibition space, all submitted works will be reviewed by a selection committee to determine which ones will be included in the display.

If you are interested in potentially displaying your work for 3 months this summer, please go to the Westford Common Hall Website

<https://westfordcommonhall.org/artist-submission> to learn how to submit your work and understand the selection criteria. **Please send inquiries to info@westfordcommonhall.org.**

Westford Garden Tour – Hosts Wanted!

The Westford Common Hall is sponsoring another Garden Tour this summer, and we're looking for hosts! Help inspire others and celebrate the beauty of our local gardens!

Do you love to garden? Would you like to share your garden with the community?

We're inviting local gardeners to showcase their spaces and be part of this beloved summer event. Email deborah@westfordcommonhall.org to learn more.

Get Involved with the Westford Common Hall!

Help create fun and educational events for the Westford community and surrounding areas! The Westford Common Hall is looking for volunteers to support their annual programs!

Lend a hand at events or take a more active role, there's a place for you:

- Volunteer at one or more events
- Help plan and organize community programs
- Join the Board of Directors

Be part of bringing people together and making great things happen in our community!

Reach out to learn more and get involved. Contact: deborah@westfordcommonhall.org



WESTFORD
COMMON HALL

Westford Music Series 2026/2027 Season

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

May 17, 2026: FREVO quartet

September 13, 2026: Missisquoi River Band

October 18, 2026: Marsh Lights

November 15, 2026: Twangtown Paramours

December 11, 2026: HOLIDAY CONCERT at 7:00 pm Fairfax Westford

Band

December 20, 2026: Carol Ann Jones

January 10, 2027: The Vermont Mandolin Trio

February 7, 2027: Dave Roberts & Chicky Stolz

March 7, 2027: Spenser Lewis

April 4, 2027: The Buck Hollars

May 16, 2027: FREVO

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



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: Spring

- Scavenge for compostable material during your spring clean! This is an easy way to recycle cardboard boxes, just remember to take off any tape!
- When adding new material to your compost pile, breaking down that material into smaller pieces will help it compost faster.
- Did you know you can add ash? Just do so sparingly. Coffee and coffee filters make great composting material as does citrus, just be aware that citrus takes a long time to break down.

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 Community Dinner!

Join your neighbors for a community meal

A free event with food prepared by volunteers



Date: Saturday, May 17

Time: 5:00 PM

Location: Red Brick Meeting House

To RSVP, volunteer, or ask questions:

wdunkley65@gmail.com



We hope to see you there!

Hosted by Westford Mutual Aid



Legislative Updates

Senator Chris Mattos

Spring has finally sprung! Just as the temperatures start to rise, so does the race to the end of the session. Over the last several weeks, the bulk of our time has been spent in committee with little action on the floor. In the coming weeks, more of the work will be done on the floor while morning committees in the Senate wrap up May 8.

Senate Judiciary has been working on a multitude of bills including an animal cruelty bill, H.578. This bill has passed the House and would increase penalties on certain offenses, improve procedures both within the court and the field and recover fees for the cost of care for animals that are surrendered. H.578 will make it clearer for law enforcement, humane officers, and the courts to ensure the swift care of the vulnerable animals involved in these awful cases. We have also been working on H.772, a landlord-tenant bill. As passed the House, it would make changes to the eviction process, rental agreements, court proceedings, and a credit reporting pilot program. In Senate Judiciary, we are running out of time to complete the work on all the bills in our jurisdiction. We are making amendments to narrow the scope of this bill to the eviction process for violent situations and some slight rental agreement changes. We are also working on two firearm bills, H.606 and S.329. S.329 is the same as H.606, with the addition of a ban on firearms in establishments that serve alcohol. It appears H.606 will become a bill just relating the relinquishment of firearms and S.329 will move forward as the broader firearms bill. I can agree on some of S.329 as it relates to syncing up to federal language with machine guns, but I cannot support the blanket ban of firearms in bars. More to follow on these bills and more in the coming weeks for Senate Judiciary.

Senate Finance has been busy working on provisions within the Transportation Bill, annual yield bill and the miscellaneous tax bill. Our focus on the T-Bill is the mileage-based user fee, MBUF. This would be a fee based on miles driven which comes out to be 1.4 cents per mile. The MBUF would be phased in over time to eventually incorporate all vehicles registered in the state under 10,000 pounds GVWR. I have concerns about moving this forward as it pertains to gas consumption vehicles. Currently, BEV vehicles pay an increased registration fee for EV infrastructure, but do not pay a gas tax in support of the upkeep of our roads. Moving to an MBUF for BEV and eventually plug-in hybrids I would be in support of, but we would essentially be double taxing gas users through an MBUF and the gas tax as it currently stands. The yield bill sets the yields that are used to calculate education property tax rates across the state. Senate Finance landed on using about \$100million to buy down property tax rates to an average tax bill increase of 3.8% and about \$4million additionally appropriated for the renter credit program. I supported both these provisions to provide relief to both parties. Lastly, the miscellaneous tax bill is mostly an administrative bill linking up and decoupling to federal law and housekeeping provisions.

I'm hopeful we can finish our work over the next few weeks and wrap up in May. There is a large amount of work left to do, the Senate just received the House's education reform bill that will need to be looked at by both Senate Education and Finance.

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

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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/>