



Jodi Ross,  
Town  
Manager

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State Primary Election  
September 6

Strategic Planning Retreat  
Thursday, September 8  
5pm - 8pm  
Kimball Farm

Special Town Meeting  
October 17  
7:00 PM

WESTFORD, MASSACHUSETTS  
50 BEST  
PLACES  
TO LIVE  
IN AMERICA

MONEY MAGAZINE - 2021

46th

Watch



[www.westfordcat.org](http://www.westfordcat.org)

**Dear Westford residents,**

On July 21<sup>st</sup>, the Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) declared a Level 3 – Critical Drought in our region. To find out more about the drought status, please visit the following link: [Drought Management in Massachusetts](#). As a result of continued drought conditions and an increased demand on water, the Outdoor Water Use Restrictions remains at Stage III. For more information, please visit the following link: [Stage III Outdoor Water Use Restriction](#).

At the Select Board meeting on August 9<sup>th</sup>, the Select Board recognized the following:

- Westford Firefighters for their heroic efforts during the house fire at 62-68 North Main Street, which took place on Sunday, July 24<sup>th</sup>
- Groton Firefighter Explorers, Kyle Girard, Ryan Bellemore, Anthony Cianci, and Nathan Bernier for their voluntary efforts in assisting firefighters during the incident
- Noman E. Day Elementary School student Rahul Ram for receiving the President’s Environmental Youth Award for his work on sustainability at a local community garden
- Steve Edwards of WestfordCAT for his ten years of service during which time he recorded numerous board meetings
- Westford was ranked the sixth safest community in Massachusetts by SafeWise



*This past weekend, a flag raising ceremony was held on Town Common to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> Indian Independence Day.*

*The event was well-attended by community members and local officials.*

The board approved the 2022 State Primary Warrant. The State Primary Election is on September 6<sup>th</sup> and polling locations will be open at Westford Academy located at 30 Patten Road, and Stony Brook Middle School located at 9 Farmer Way. In-person early voting is available at Town Hall located at 55 Main Street, beginning on Saturday, August 27<sup>th</sup> through Friday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>. For election information or to view ballots for State elections, please visit the State’s website here: [Election and Voting Information](#).

(Continued on next page)

Our Strategic Planning Retreat is a month away and will be held on Thursday, September 8th, 2022 from 5:00 PM – 8:00 PM at Kimball Farm located at 400 Littleton Road. Topics this year will include the New Center Building (51 Main Street), the J.V. Fletcher Library Expansion Project, Community Wellness, Clean Energy and Sustainability, and there will be numerous exhibits from many different boards, committees and town departments. A copy of the agenda is available at the following link: [Strategic Planning Retreat Agenda](#). Online registration is now available at the following link: [westfordma.gov/SPRRegistration](http://westfordma.gov/SPRRegistration). **Please note – due to increases in costs, Kimball Farm is including dinner and ice cream, but is not including access to their amusement activities for this event.**

On Sunday, October 16<sup>th</sup>, from 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM, Westford Remembers is hosting a Westford International Block Party at the Franco-American Club to recognize and celebrate how culturally diverse our community is.

We are preparing for our Fall Special Town Meeting which is scheduled for 7:00 PM on Monday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022 in the Westford Academy Gym. The warrant is open and at the Select Board's meeting on September 13<sup>th</sup>, the board will review proposed warrant articles, set the order of the warrant and review draft motions. The Town Meeting timeline and other related meeting documents may be found at the following link: [2022 Special Town Meeting Documents](#).

Also at the board's most recent meeting, they considered a request from residents to dispose of two town-owned parcels. The parcels in question are:

- Parcel ID 078 0075 0000 a/k/a 20 Pine Tree Trail containing approximately 0.073 acres of land – Douglas MacDonald, 18 Pine Tree Trail, and
- Parcel ID 078 0076 0000 a/k/a 31 Byrne Avenue containing approximately 0.128 acres of land – Ronald Paulauskas, 29 Byrne Avenue.

The board voted unanimously to declare the parcels as surplus and add consideration to sell the parcels to our 2022 Special Town Meeting Warrant.

Finance Director Dan O'Donnell, Tax Collector-Treasurer Christine Collins, and I presented the Town Debt Service Analysis, which included excluded and non-excluded debt, and the impact of our upcoming proposed large capital projects. The presentation is available to view at the following link: [Debt Service Analysis](#). This presentation will also be recorded and televised by Westford CAT and will be available at our Strategic Planning Retreat and Special Town Meeting.

As additional funding has been received, the Select Board revisited American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding requests to determine allocations. The Select Board approved the following requests at this meeting in the amount of \$166,274:

- \$ 2,110 for supplemental appropriation for the electronic vote tabulators for Town Meeting
- \$ 25,000 for digitizing town archives and various department files at Town Hall
- \$ 67,000 for phone system upgrades to comply with 911 requirements
- \$ 30,000 for diesel fuel supplemental appropriation for school buses
- \$ 30,000 for fiscal year 2023 rental, mortgage and utility assistance for eligible residents
- \$ 2,014 for WestfordCAT Millennium School Meeting Room equipment upgrades to improve sound quality of recordings
- \$ 8,834 for WestfordCAT Studios (Groton Road, Town Hall, and Millennium School) network video production storage upgrades
- \$ 1,316 for WestfordCAT audio equipment upgrades for school sports coverage

ARPA project summaries are available to view at the following link: [ARPA Funding](#).

(Continued on next page)

In accordance with my retirement effective Tuesday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, the Select Board approved a Request for Proposals for an Executive Search Firm and a Town Manager Search Committee consisting of nine members: two Select Board members, one School Committee member, one Finance Committee member, and five residents-at-large. Five residents-at large were appointed as well as two resident-at-large alternates. The remaining appointments will take place at the Select Board's next meeting on August 23<sup>rd</sup>.

I am delighted to announce the success of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), which Westford, together with the towns of Acton, Boxborough, Littleton, and Maynard, launched Childcare Subsidy, Food Pantry, and Microloan Programs. Through these programs over \$861,000 was issued in aid, designed to support businesses, families, and food pantries impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. All programs ended June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022 with the end of the grant period.

Free iHealth Covid-19 Self-Test Kits are available to residents while supplies lasts. Each kit contains two self-tests and may be picked up at the following locations: Cameron Senior Center, J.V. Fletcher Library, and the Health Department in Town Hall.

Please visit the Westford Farmers Market at 65 Main Street on Tuesdays from 2:30 PM to 6:30 PM as there are only two weeks left. More information may be found at the following link: [Roudenbush Farmers Market](#).

Please join me in congratulating Select Board Member, Anita Tonakarn-Nguyen, on her new role with State Representative Arciero's Office as District Director and Researcher for the Joint Committee on Housing.

I would like to welcome our new Sustainability Coordinator, Sue Thomas. As Sustainability Coordinator, she will be assisting the Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee with their goals to develop help Westford attain net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. Sue has served on the Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee since 2021 and as an Election worker since 2018.

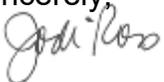
There are several openings on our local boards and committees, including: 35 Town Farm Road Task Force, Affordable Housing Trust, Agricultural Commission, Board of Cemetery Commissioners, Capital Planning Committee, Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee, Commission on Disability, Communications Advisory Committee, Council on Aging, Cultural Council, Dog Park Task Force, Economic Development Committee, Election Officer, Finance Committee, Healthy Westford Committee, Housing Authority, Parks, Grounds and Recreation Commission, Pedestrian Safety Committee, Permanent Town Building Committee, Senior Low Income Disabled Tax Relief Committee, Tax Possession Sale Committee, and Zoning Board of Appeals.

I urge you to peruse our website for information about the work of these committees; and if you have interest, please complete and submit a Citizen's Activity form at this link: [Citizen Activity Form](#).

Would you like more detailed information on the Select Board's meetings? Click the following links to access: [Select Board Documents](#) & [Select Board Meeting Videos](#).

I hope to see you at our Strategic Planning Retreat on Thursday, September 8<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM at Kimball Farm, 400 Littleton Road, Westford, MA.

Sincerely,



Jodi Ross  
Town Manager

## Land Use Management Department

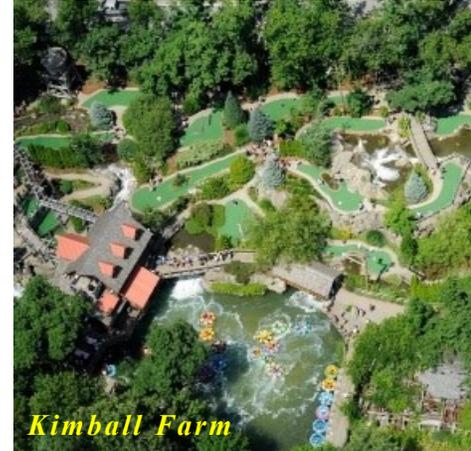
### At the Strategic Planning Retreat September 8, 2022, 5-8 pm at Kimball Farm

The annual Strategic Planning Retreat returns for 2022! The Land Use Management Department invites you to our booth for discussion and feedback on the following topics:

#### **Potential Commercial Recreation Zoning Bylaw Amendment**

To allow for additional commercial recreation opportunities in town and to streamline the permitting process.

- This use includes things like indoor and outdoor sports, camping, and establishments like Nashoba Valley Ski Area and Kimball Farm.
- Town-wide surveys for plans, such as the Master Plan and the Open Space & Recreation Plan, have found that Westford is an active community that desires more recreational opportunities.
- Currently, zoning limits commercial recreation in town to the Commercial Highway (CH) zoning district which is generally located along Littleton Road, and requires a special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals. Commercial Recreation is prohibited in all other zoning districts.
- The department wants your feedback to help determine locations that may be appropriate to allow these types of uses.



#### **Multi-Family Housing Zoning requirement for MBTA Communities in Massachusetts**

A new state law (M.G.L. Chapter 40A Section 3A) requires that all MBTA Communities (including Westford) have a zoning district that allows multi-family housing as-of-right.



- Currently, there is no district in town allowing this without special relief and/or a lengthy and onerous permitting process.
- District Requirements: The district must be of reasonable size (50 acres minimum total), be suitable for families with children, not specify age requirements, allow for a minimum density of 15 units/acre, and create the potential for 924 dwelling units (based on the 2020 census data). The district must be created by December 2024, or Westford is no longer eligible for certain state grants.
- Join us for a discussion and give your ideas for possible locations in town and criteria for evaluating potential locations to include in this district.

#### **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) Bylaw Update: Section 3.3 of the Westford Zoning Bylaw**

ADUs are permitted in Westford by special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The Board has approved an average of 5 ADUs per year since 2015. More than half of these applications also required variances relating to the size of the unit. Currently, ADU special permits expire upon transfer of ownership. Proposed amendments to the bylaw include:

- Remove confusing methods of calculating the allowed ADU size and instead allow a maximum of 900 square feet, thereby reducing the number of variances needed, and removing the current disadvantage for modestly sized homes.
- Special permits would no longer automatically expire when the property is sold to a new owner.

## Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee

### Westford has a new Sustainability Coordinator!

Thanks to the efforts of an energized, productive and skillful coalition of residents, volunteers, town appointees and town staff, Westford has created a part time grant funded Sustainability Coordinator position for 2022-2023 to help drive progress on the Westford Climate Roadmap.

Sue Thomas was hired in July with funding from a one year Efficiency and Regionalization Grant awarded to the town by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to leverage skill sets across town boundaries. Sue's time is split evenly between the towns of Westford and Carlisle. In these first weeks, she is making introductions and working with both towns to understand their sustainability goals and the obstacles town employees, residents and businesses face in trying to reach them.



Sue comes to the town with extensive experience as an appointee on both the Recycling Commission, and the Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee. She currently serves on the Roadmap Subcommittee, responsible for developing the Westford Climate Roadmap, in addition to being an active regular member.

A resident of Westford for 18 years, Sue has dedicated her time to volunteering in the community, filling needs in indoor and outdoor classrooms, board rooms, and fundraising for an array of causes. For the past two years, starting roughly at the beginning of the pandemic, Sue worked for the Middlesex Conservation District, a county level quasi-governmental organization, securing grant funding, working on education and outreach, and developing the financial and web based tools necessary to position the organization for growth. Sue continues to coordinate education and develop marketing outreach content for Fat Moon Farm.

Prior to starting a family, Sue worked in the government practice of a management consulting firm and as a director of inside sales and customer support for a health care information start up producing first of their kind data driven strategic planning software products. Sue has a degree in Economics from Williams College.

Daughter of a mechanical engineer, wife of a mechanical engineer and mother of a mechanical/ aerospace engineer, Sue is constantly practicing the art of translation, distilling technical topics for the layperson (herself!) and looks forward to applying those skills more formally for the town.

### Sustainability is a common thread at this year's Strategic Planning Retreat

Join us September 8<sup>th</sup> from 5-8 PM at Kimball Farm. Many of the decisions coming before Town Meeting this fall have climate impacts. Buildings, transportation and land use all have a big impact on emissions. As a result, sustainability measures and impacts, as well as grant resources, are being added to decision making criteria for these projects and purchases. Embedding these considerations in our town processes is essential to making progress and the Strategic Planning Retreat is a great start at illustrating how this can and should be done. Please join us to learn about the projects and decisions before the town, and to meet our new Sustainability Coordinator!

### Feeling the heat? Sweating your Energy Bill? Take these steps THIS week!

[Join Westford POP](#), Westford's Community Electrical Aggregation Program, to **green** both your wallet and the grid. Lock in your electricity generation rate with the town through 2023 at significant savings off National Grid rates while providing tax credits to develop clean energy in Massachusetts.

[Take Advantage of Tax-Free Weekend](#) (August 13 and 14) to replace that energy hog or gas fueled appliance or buy that battery powered equipment you have been considering. [MassSave](#) has energy rebates on many energy star rated equipment, and may even pay you to recycle your old appliance. Scroll down on the page in the MassSave link above to see further information.

## August at the J.V. Fletcher Library



Unless otherwise noted, the following programs are made possible by the Friends of the Library.

**From the Director:** The *Board of Library Trustees*, representatives of the *Permanent Town Building Committee* and the *Clean Energy and Sustainability Committee* have contracted with Finegold Alexander Architects and CHA Consulting, Inc. to re-visit and re-estimate the cost of the Library Building Design grant submitted in January 2017. This cost estimating will determine the funding which the Town must appropriate in order to collect the \$7,851,994 Massachusetts Public Library Construction grant. Anticipating new stretch codes, MassSAVE initiatives and net zero benchmarks, the proposed future library design will be re-evaluated for sustainability and future building costs. This project will be highlighted at the September 8 Strategic Planning Retreat (registration required), and will come before Westford voters at the October 17 Special Town Meeting and on the November 8 local ballot this fall. Learn more about the [Library Building Project](#).

**Labor Day Weekend Reading:** The Library's three Summer Reading Programs – all underwritten by the Friends of the J. V. Fletcher Library – may be winding down, but relaxing reading continues through Labor Day weekend, so come in and take out books, DVD's, magazines, hotspots and everything needed for the three-day weekend! Downloadable and streaming formats are available 24/7 and can go with you to your Labor Day destination!

**Mother Goose Story Time: Every Monday in August from 10:30 -11:15 a.m.** We are OUTSIDE for the summer! This is a great early literacy program for you and your littlest ones. Get them started with reading fundamentals like rhymes, finger plays, and stories. No registration required!

**Middle Grade Book Club and Author Q&A with Dr. Rajani LaRocca: Mon., August 15 at 3:00 p.m.** For kids entering grades 5-8. Join us for a discussion of Rajani LaRocca's novel-in-verse *Red, White, and Whole*. The author will be joining us for the end half of our meeting to answer any questions you may have! Copies of the book are available at the Main Desk. [Register here.](#)

**Young Adult Writers' Club: Tue., August 16 and 30 at 2:00 p.m.** A chance to meet up with fellow writers to discuss your latest projects, read your work aloud if you want to, and write in a relaxing and encouraging space. YA Librarian Jess will be present at each meeting with writing prompts, brain exercises, and snacks! [Register here.](#)

**Young Adult Craft Circle: Wednesday, Aug 17 at 2:00 p.m.** Join us outside on the library lawn to create one-of-a-kind painted rocks and tiles. For Grade 5 and up. [Register here.](#)

**Monday Mystery Book Club: Mon., Aug. 22 at 2:00 p.m.** We'll meet on the library's back lawn! Please bring your own lawn chair. If it rains, we'll meet on Zoom, and members will receive an email with the link that morning. We'll be discussing *The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie* by Alan Bradley. Print copies are available at Main Desk, and the ebook and digital audiobook are on Overdrive. Email Kristina at [kreedberg@westfordma.gov](mailto:kreedberg@westfordma.gov) for details.

**Middle Grade Book Club: Mon., Aug. 22 at 2:00 p.m.** For kids entering grades 5-8. Join YA Librarian Jess for a discussion of *Life in the Balance* by Jen Petro-Roy. Our library friend and award-winning author Jen Petro-Roy will join us for the end of the meeting to answer your questions! Copies of the book are available at the Main Circulation desk. [Register here.](#)

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## July at the J.V. Fletcher Library (Continued)

**VIRTUAL JOB SEARCH HELP FOR 50 & OVER – Applications, Cover Letters, and Negotiation: Wed., Aug. 17, 9:30-11:30 a.m.** The Massachusetts Library Collaborative's 50+ Job Seekers Group meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month, from 9:30am to 11:30am, via Zoom. If you are unemployed and actively looking, underemployed, seeking a new career direction, re-entering the job market after a long employment gap, or recently retired and looking for your "Encore Career", this networking group program is perfect for you! [Register here.](#)

**Library Garden Check in with Fresh Start Food Gardens: Wed., Aug. 24 at 10:00 a.m.** We will be monitoring the progress in our library garden with Fresh Start Food Gardens - Christine Berthold will be back to help us observe and care for our spring planted garden bags. We can talk about what is growing, what it looks like, did we find any bugs, have the critters left us alone? Weren't the sugar snap peas and the potatoes great? This fun informational program is for kids ages 4 to 10 with a caregiver. Come and learn how you can help us take care of the library garden!

**Friends of the Library e-newsletter:** The best way to learn about our upcoming programs and new services is through the FOL weekly e-newsletter. [Sign up here.](#)

Check out our [Museum Passes page](#) or call the Library for reservations. Unless otherwise noted, our museum passes are generously funded by the Friends of the Library. [Have you joined the Friends yet?](#)

### Quick Links to Our Most Popular Services!

[Programs – Adults](#)

[Programs – Kids](#)

[Programs – Young Adults](#)

**If you have questions or need assistance, please call us at 978-399-2300 or send us an email at [westfordlibrary@westfordma.gov](mailto:westfordlibrary@westfordma.gov).**



## Cameron Senior Center

The Cameron invites all adults 55+ to join us for our daily offerings!



### **Dementia Caregiver Support Group to resume in September with new co-leaders!**

**Joanne Fontaine RN and Lisa Sobhian LICSW** have been co-facilitating a support group for many years with the Alzheimer's Association. Joanne is a Geriatric Care Manager, owner of Pro-Active Eldercare. Lisa is an Alzheimer's Specialist and is currently the Director of Dementia Services and Social Services at D'Youville Life & Wellness Community. The group will meet at Cameron on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month from 6-7PM. Please call Lisa before attending your first meeting at 978-808-4246.



### **Join physical therapist and senior fitness specialist Steve Shain for a weekly fitness class**

**September 27 and October 25** from 1:00– 1:45. Beginners are welcome! We will be covering the basic steps, and we dance to all genres of music. Wear comfy clothes – layers are good, shoes with soles that will slide easily (sneakers stick; a leather sole works best). Bring a bottle of water and be ready for a good workout!

### **KIWANIS COOKOUT featuring the Cameron band, UPBEATS**

**Tuesday, September 13 at 6 pm**

This will be a highly sought out event with our very own musicians performing to a favorite summer cook-out with our long-time friends from the Kiwanis Club

We are excited and reservations are a must so please call 978.692.5523.

### **GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP – for Westford residents 55+ 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of each month**

We have heard from residents that a local grief support group would be appreciated. While grief can impact individuals in different ways, connecting with others to share stories, experiences, and receive/offer support can help with the grieving process. Please join us if you have suffered a loss and are seeking a safe place to express your feelings, to feel heard, to learn about the grieving process and to obtain helpful coping materials and resources. These “drop in” groups will be offered on the **2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of every month at 4:00** here at the Cameron *however please call to speak with Annette prior to your first visit*. There is no fee and no required attendance. Call Annette at 978-692-5523.

### **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION**

**Wednesday, August 24 at 12pm**

**Baked Potato Bar made by Jackie Russell.** Enjoy birthday cake and ice cream after lunch as we regale our birthday celebrants with a robust round of Happy Birthday singing. A special thank you to Bear Mountain Healthcare for their generous donation of cake and ice cream. Cost: \$5 and birthday celebrant lunch is free. To register please call 978.692.5523



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## Cameron Senior Center (Continued)

### BINGO FRIDAY LUNCHES

If you're interested in having lunch before BINGO, register for any or all of the following lunch offerings prepared by BINGO chef Mike Dyer Friday August 19 at 12pm Sausage & Peppers Stir Fry Pre-BINGO lunch is \$3. You must RSVP for lunch by calling 978.692.5523. For any questions about BINGO call your program coordinator, Katie Russell at 978-399-2330.

### SALEM & ROCKPORT TRIP

**Thursday, October 6, 9:00am**

Travel on a luxury Silver Fox Coach for historic Salem. Long renown as a famous seaport, Salem later became infamous for the witch trials. You'll initially tour the Peabody Essex Maritime Museum located in historic Salem, Massachusetts. Explore over 200 years of maritime trade from the Massachusetts' North Shore and view the museum's world class collection from the Far East and beyond. This blending of past and present is evident as you stroll the tree lined streets and cobbled



walkways. Authors, painters and poets have drawn inspiration from this fabled seaside city. You will enjoy a delicious luncheon across the street at Village Tavern, featuring an entrée' choice of Fresh Baked Haddock or Baked Chicken and a Dessert. After lunch you'll visit scenic Rockport, Massachusetts, with its collection of fine shops and beautiful seaside views. Your return time home will be 6:00 PM after a great tour on the scenic Massachusetts North Shore. Cost of the tour is \$109.00 per person. *Please RSVP to 978-692-5523*

### HOLIDAY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM - *A wonderful opportunity to help our neighbors*

The Cameron Senior Center is partnering with SVdP Society of St. Catherine's Church and the Westford Food Pantry for the Westford Holiday Basket Program. This program serves Westford families and individuals who would like to cook a Thanksgiving or Christmas meal that are facing a financial hardship. If you need assistance this holiday season, please contact Alison Christopher, L.I.C.S.W. The Town Social Worker at 978.399.2325. If you are interested in donating to the program, please contact Katie Russell at 978.399.2330.

### HARVEST MOON FESTIVAL

Thursday, September 22 from 6:30-8:30pm

Tadmuck Housing Community Room The Mid-Autumn Festival is the second grandest festival in China. To express thanks to the moon and celebrate the harvest, folks offered a sacrifice to the moon on autumn days. On the festival day, family members gather to appreciate the bright full moon, eat moon cakes, and express their longing toward family members and friends who live afar. \$5.00 fee for food and supplies. Deadline to sign up is Friday, September 16. Please call 978.692.5523 and there will also be sign-up sheets at housing. Thank you to the Friends of the Cameron for subsidizing costs.

**To learn more about the Cameron Senior Center programs and services please visit:**  
[www.westfordma.gov/coa](http://www.westfordma.gov/coa), [www.facebook.com/Cameron Senior Center](https://www.facebook.com/Cameron-Senior-Center)  
[www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) or simply call 978-692-5523.

## Regional Community Health and Wellness

**“988” is the three-digit, nationwide phone number to connect directly to the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline.**



Too many people experience suicidal crisis or mental health-related distress without the support and care they need. There are urgent mental health realities driving the need for crisis service transformation across our country. In 2020 alone, the U.S. had one death by suicide about every 11 minutes—and for people aged 10-34 years, suicide is a leading cause of death.

There is hope. The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline – previously known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline – is a **national network of more than 200 crisis centers** that helps thousands of people overcome crisis situations every day. These centers are supported by local and state sources as well as the Department of Health and Human Services' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). As of July 16, 2022, all calls and text messages to “988” route to a 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline call center.

*The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline provides 24/7, confidential support to people in suicidal crisis or mental health-related distress.*

- **New Nationwide Number:** 988 is more than just an easy-to-remember number — it's a direct connection to compassionate, accessible care and support for anyone experiencing mental health-related distress – whether thoughts of suicide, mental health, substance use crisis, or any other kind of emotional distress.
- **Provides Support:** People can also dial 988 if they are worried about a loved one who may need crisis support.
- **FCC Rules:** Under FCC rules, calls and texts to 988 will be directed to the Lifeline. Calls and texts to 1-800-273-8255 (TALK) will also continue to reach the 988 Lifeline even after the nationwide implementation of 988.
- **Saving Lives:** The FCC actions reflect its commitment to saving lives and connecting individuals to necessary intervention services. Switching to the easy-to-remember 988 makes it easier for individuals in crisis to access the help they need and decrease the stigma surrounding suicide and mental health issues.
- **Important Step:** The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline is an important step toward strengthening and transforming crisis care in this country. It serves as a universal entry point so that no matter where you live, you can reach a trained crisis counselor who can help.
- **Help for Veterans:** For calls, pressing “1” after dialing 988 will connect you directly to the Veterans Crisis Lifeline which serves our nation's Veterans, service members, National Guard and Reserve members, and those who support them. For texts, continue to text the Veterans Crisis Lifeline short code: 838255.

To learn more, visit <https://www.fcc.gov/988Lifeline>.

# Regional Community Health and Wellness

JOIN US FOR THE UPCOMING FREE

# YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING

MIDDLESEX COUNTY

## WHAT IS YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID?

The Youth Mental Health First Aid training teaches adults how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among children and adolescents from ages 12-18



## HOW IS THIS TRAINING BENEFICIAL?

1. Informs adults about common mental health concerns among youth
2. Helps reduce stigma
3. Helps adults recognize common signs and symptoms of mental health and substance misuse challenges beyond "typical" teen behavior
4. Provides guidance with a simple 5-step action plan (ALGEE) how to properly and safely respond to these challenges

## WHO SHOULD KNOW AND BE INVOLVED?

- Parents
- Educators
- All community members

## WHEN & WHERE?

**Date & Time:** August 26th 2022 from 8am to 4pm

**Location:** 65 Boston Road  
Westford, MA 01886

**Interested in attending?**

Please contact Brittany Nash for registration [bnash@westfordma.gov](mailto:bnash@westfordma.gov)

## Veterans Services

The PACT Act is a new law that expands VA health care and benefits for Veterans exposed to burn pits and other toxic substances.

They added more than 20 burn pit and other toxic exposure presumptive conditions based on the PACT Act. This change expands benefits for Gulf War era and post-9/11 Veterans.

### These cancers are now presumptive:

- Brain cancer
- Gastrointestinal cancer of any type
- Glioblastoma
- Head cancer of any type
- Kidney cancer
- Lymphatic cancer of any type
- Lymphoma of any type
- Melanoma
- Neck cancer
- Pancreatic cancer
- Reproductive cancer of any type
- Respiratory (breathing-related) cancer of any type

### These illnesses are now presumptive:

- Asthma that was diagnosed after service
- Chronic bronchitis
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- Chronic rhinitis
- Chronic sinusitis
- Constrictive bronchiolitis or obliterative bronchiolitis
- Emphysema
- Granulomatous disease
- Interstitial lung disease (ILD)
- Pleuritis
- Pulmonary fibrosis
- Sarcoidosis

### Based on the PACT Act, they added 2 new Agent Orange presumptive conditions:

- High blood pressure (also called hypertension)
- Monoclonal gammopathy of undetermined significance (MGUS)

For more information please visit: [www.va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits/](http://www.va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-and-your-va-benefits/)  
or call 800-698-2411

## Town Clerk's Corner

The State Primary is Tuesday, September 6, 2022. If you are not already a registered voter in Westford or if you wish to change your party designation, the deadline to do so is Saturday, August 27, 2022 at 5 pm. The Town Clerk's Office will be open, or you can register online.



[www.sec.state.ma.us/](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/)

### When you register to vote, you may

- Register in a POLITICAL PARTY by selecting one of the listed parties (currently Democratic or Republican), OR
- Register in a political designation, OR
- Register with no party affiliation by selecting "NO PARTY (unenrolled)," which is commonly referred to as "independent" meaning that you do not have a party designation

If you do not enroll in a party (i.e., choose unenrolled or a political designation), you may still vote in state and presidential primaries by choosing a party ballot and will remain unenrolled.

If you enroll in one of the parties listed above, you may vote only in that party's primary. In a general election, all voters receive the same ballot regardless of party enrollment.

### Three Ways to Cast Your Ballot:

**1) VOTE BY MAIL IS GOING ON NOW. THE LAST DAY TO APPLY FOR A VOTE BY MAIL BALLOT IS AUG 29<sup>TH</sup>.**

**2) IN PERSON EARLY VOTING BEGINS SATURDAY, AUGUST 27. The schedule is below:**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
Sat, Aug 27 <sup>th</sup>	9am – 5 pm	Town Hall
Mon, Aug 29 <sup>th</sup>	8 am – 4 pm	Town Hall
Tues, Aug 30 <sup>th</sup>	8 am – 4 pm	Town Hall
Wed, Aug 31 <sup>st</sup>	8 am – 4 pm	Town Hall
Thurs, Sep 1 <sup>st</sup>	8 am – 4 pm	Town Hall
Fri, Sept 2 <sup>nd</sup>	8 am – 4 pm	Town Hall

**3) VOTE AT YOUR PRECINCT ON ELECTION DAY.**

**Remember your precinct and location may have changed!**

You may visit the following link to find your voting location: [Where Do I Vote?](#)

If you have any further questions, please call 978-692-5515 or email [townclerk@westfordma.gov](mailto:townclerk@westfordma.gov)

## Westford Remembers



Westford Remembers will be hosting an International Block Party to recognize the culturally diverse community we are. They are inviting anyone who would like to display their heritage, their cultural pride and even entertain attendees. The public is invited to attend to enjoy and learn about our diverse community.

For those that would like to setup a table to share cultural traditions, serve ethnic culinary specialties, or entertain attendees and be a part of this event send an email to [westfordremembers01886@gmail.com](mailto:westfordremembers01886@gmail.com).

The International Block Party will be held on Sunday, October 16, 2022 from Noon to 4 PM and the Franco American Club located at 55 West Prescott St in Westford. Please watch for more information on social media.



### Flag raising ceremony to celebrate the 75<sup>th</sup> Indian Independence Day



## Recycling Commission

Much of the following was excerpted from the March 9, 2022 edition of the Recycle Smart Newsletter with some local options added:



**✗ Never put mercury-containing light bulbs in your trash or recycling bins.**

While you should never put any light bulb in the recycling bin, it's particularly important to keep mercury-containing light bulbs out of both the trash and recycling. These light bulbs can easily break and release mercury—a toxic heavy metal—into the air. If they break at any point during the disposal process, someone in your home, a waste hauler, or a disposal facility worker could be exposed to the released mercury vapor.

While the small amount of mercury in a single light bulb probably won't affect you in the short term, exposure to mercury over time can have serious health impacts. Ever heard the expression "mad as a hatter"? Mercury was used for over a century in the hat-making trade, but it wasn't until the 1940s that the connection was made between mercury exposure and the erratic behavior and slurred speech common among hatmakers. In Alice in Wonderland, the Mad Hatter's signature mood swings and nervous tics are likely symptoms of mercury poisoning.

### How can I tell which light bulbs contain mercury?

As a rule of thumb, all fluorescent light bulbs contain mercury. The most common type of fluorescents you'll find at home are compact fluorescent lights (CFLs), which come in several shapes and sizes.



On our webpage [www.westfordma.gov/recycling](http://www.westfordma.gov/recycling), under '[How to Recycle Most Anything](#)' we list: Fluorescent and Compact Fluorescent (CF) Bulbs Fluorescent bulbs contain mercury and should not be disposed of with the regular trash. Residents may recycle straight (contact store for length restrictions), Ushaped, round, and compact fluorescent bulbs at the following locations:

- Ace Hardware - 527 Groton Rd (Route 40); 978-692-0774.
- MacKay Ace Hardware - 224 Littleton Rd.
- Lowes - 50 Lowes Way, Lowell, MA 01851 (978) 677-5679.  
Accepts expired (but not broken) compact fluorescent bulbs in plastic bags at collection bin near entrance.
- Home Depot ("Returns" desk) -. Accepts expired (but not broken) compact fluorescent bulbs in plastic bags

## Earth Machine (composter) Demonstrations and Sales very Successful!

Over three Saturdays, July 23, July 30 and August 6 volunteers from the Westford Recycling Commission demonstrated the method and importance of composting to our community. We spoke to approximately 60 residents (37 households) and sold 30 Earth Machines for \$25 each – the actual cost is \$55 each with the balance funded by a grant from the MA DEP which rewards us for the many things our community does in regard to recycling and solid waste management. Organic material can make up to 20% of our weekly trash and composting is a powerful tool reduce Westford's trash costs. A special thank-you goes to Nicole Feliciano and the Public Works department for their support of this event as well as their willingness to provide ongoing support for composting. Earth Machine backyard composters are still available to Westford residents for only \$25 (please call or e-mail Nicole Feliciano at the Westford Highway Department at (978) 692-5520 or [nfeliciano@westfordma.gov](mailto:nfeliciano@westfordma.gov)).

