

Westbrook events

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Selectman's Corner

Budget Process – What You Need to Know

The budget process began in late December and continues through May. This lengthy process insures that there is rigorous scrutiny of all expenditures and projected revenue. Westbrook continues to have one of the lowest mil rates on the shoreline as a result of careful, conservative and prudent budgeting. Our current reserves exceed what is required for a municipality of our size. There have been no reductions in municipal services and, in fact, we have increased programs in response to the needs of the community. We all understand that your property taxes pay for our municipal and educational programs.

February: The Board of Selectmen reviews all department budgets and forwards its recommendation to the Board of Finance who conducts its own review with department heads beginning in early March.

March: The Board of Education submits its proposed budget directly to the Board of Finance on March 20. We are all very pleased that last year, the Board of Education's budget was a .5% increase.

April: The Town publishes a Citizens Guide to the Budget that is sent to all residents documenting the pertinent financial information.

April 22 and May 7: Informational Budget Hearings are held for residents.

May 7: All eligible Westbrook residents are encouraged to vote at the Town Meeting on the proposed municipal and Board of Education budgets. Challenge: One of our major challenges is that the State of Connecticut is no longer able to provide the financial support for some of our initiatives that historically have been vital for programs and services. We are not currently budgeting ANY projected income from the State as we develop our budget for 2019/20. For example, six years ago, we received approximately \$700,000 from the State for various services; most notably funding for educational programs.

We have taken several initiatives to regionalize some of our services in order to reduce costs. Our required annual municipal audits have been extremely favorable and document the thoroughness of Westbrook's finances.

All of the above meetings are open to the public and announced on the website and the proposed budget is printed in the Harbor News prior to the Town Meeting vote on 5/7/19.

continued on page 2



Noel Bishop

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Centerbrook, CT 06409

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www.essexprinting.com

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Cover Photo

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The Board of Selectmen is extremely pleased that our budgets have been conservative with very modest increases to keep taxes as low as possible.

One major reason we can control our budgets is the important role of volunteers. We are very fortunate that over 200 volunteers do so much to insure that we continue to provide great services while maintaining balanced budgets.

Remember, it is your budget; your taxes. Stay connected to the process and feel free to call my office at any time with your concerns.

Finally, I would direct you to our new website, www.westbrookct.us. The website contains important information on all our services, programs and at the appropriate time, information regarding the budgets.

Noel Bishop, First Selectman

Save the Date!

May 18th Garden Club May Garden Market Town Hall / 8 am

May 27th Memorial Day Parade Rain or Shine 10 am

June 2nd WDTC Arts & Craft Fair

June 8th Park & Recreation Family Day

June 9th Rain Date

A Message from the Town Clerk

Thursday nights in the vault have become a hot spot. We are not just for title searchers anymore! Our vault has become the temporary home of a group of individuals who share a passion. And, as a result, a book is on its way to being published!

About three years ago, long-time resident Gail Colby started coming in to do research on a property she purchased on Bellstone Avenue. Gail's quest was based on a bet she had made with her uncle regarding the history of the property she purchased. Gail has been spending summers here since 1950 and finally moved here full time in 2013. Gail's research focused on a time during 1932 – 1935 and her uncle disagreed with her about cottages being on the property at that time.

Her mission was to find the answer and win the bet, which brought her to our town clerk's vault. She began spending hours researching through older town tax records and land records of the early 1930s. Gail enlisted the help of our Town Historian and President of Westbrook Historical Society, Cathie Neidlinger Doane, who is a great resource. Gail also reached out on social media, posting a request on Facebook for anyone who might have knowledge regarding West Beach landmarks, one of them being the "Fowler House." A response from previous long-time resident, David Bradley, helped fill in some blanks that brought Gail to the

point where she decided this would become a book about the people and places of West Beach.

In 2018, the Westbrook Historical Society held several workshops on Thursday evenings in the vault. A volunteer, Attorney Elizabeth Jolly showed the members how to search old land records.

Gail became part of this group and thanks to the many hours of volunteer time given by Attorney Jolly, Gail embarked on a mission to complete her book and Thursday evenings continue to reveal more of Westbrook's recorded past.



Cathie Neidlinger Doane, Gail Colby and David Bradley doing research in the Town Clerk's Vault



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From the Nurse's Corner

Flu season can last until May, and right now, it is at its peak. The best way to prevent getting the flu is by getting vaccinated. If you have not received your flu vaccine, it's not too late. There are still Flucelvax Quadrivalent vaccines available at the Westbrook Visiting Nurses office until the end of March. If you have Medicare, Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield, Connecticare or Connecticare Medicare HMO plans, your vaccine will be covered

in full. Please call our office at 860-399-3088 to make sure our on duty nurse is available to administer a vaccine when it is convenient for you.

Life Line Screening will be returning to the Westbrook Town Hall on Monday, April 1st. The following non-invasive, painless screenings will be available:

Carotid Artery/Plaque Screening
Heart Rhythm Screening

Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening
Peripheral Arterial Disease Screening
Osteoporosis Risk Assessment

You must pre-register for this screening event. Please contact Life Line Screening directly with any questions and to register. They can be reached at 1-866-229-0469. You can also register online at www.lifelinescreening.com/communitycircle.

Social Services

Renter's Rebate Program

A person renting an apartment or a room in a dwelling may be eligible for a partial rebate of rent and utility (excluding telephone and cable) bills if:

The renter and/or spouse is at least 65 years old as of December 31, 2018 OR is at least 50 years old and the widow/widower of a previously approved applicant OR is totally disabled and receiving benefits under a federal, state or local retirement program which contains requirements comparable to those of the Social Security Administration.

Applicants may have rented elsewhere in Connecticut for all or some portion of the year preceding the year of filing, but must file in the town in which they reside during the filing period.

Income limits are determined annually by the State of Connecticut. "Income" is defined as income from all sources, including tax-exempt interest and Social Security. For the 2019 application period, 2018 income from all sources is considered. The income limits for 2018 are \$43,900 for married and \$36,000 for single applicants, the same as for the Homeowners' Program. These income limits are adjusted each year.

The program runs between April 1 and October 1. Applicants must bring: proof of rent and utilities paid during the preceding calendar year, original or copies of their federal income tax (if filed) and their SSA-1099. If taxes are not filed, statements of all income sources (pensions, interest income, etc.) must be provided.

Please call Westbrook Social Services for an appointment!
860-399-3090

Social Security Statements Online – Your Social Security information is now available online. "My Social Security" allows you to set up your personal page and access it at any time. It includes an online version of the yearend statement that was previously mailed, as well as estimates of your future retirement benefits, lifetime earnings to date, and the total Social Security and Medicare taxes you've paid. You may also print documents such as last year's FORM-SSA 1099. To open an account, go to www.socialsecurity.gov/mystatement and answer a series of questions to verify your identity, and then create a user name and password.

Westbrook Senior Center

Tai Ji Quan - Moving for Better Balance

The first 24 week session of Tai Ji Quan - Moving for Better Balance is full! The next session will begin in September 2019. If you are an older adult who has poor balance or is at risk of falling and interested in participating in this research based balance training, please call 860-399-3048 to register early.

The goal of the Westbrook Senior Center is to improve the quality of life for the

senior citizens of Westbrook and our neighboring shoreline towns. The senior center welcomes citizens 60 years of age or older to participate in our many daily activities directed by staff and volunteers. The goal of these programs is to promote the physical and mental well-being of our senior community.

Are you recently retired and looking for a good time? The Westbrook Senior Center is the place to be!

Volunteer Opportunities available. To see our scheduled calendar of events and upcoming special events, please come down to the center Monday-Friday or visit us on the town website: www.westbrookct.us. We look forward to seeing you.

Courtney Burks, Director

Westbrook Youth & Family Services

Register for Spring Programs:

Narcan training and distribution and QPR Suicide Prevention Training, March 18 at Westbrook Public Library 6:30 pm. All are welcome!

Mother- Daughter Night for girls aged 9-13 and their mothers or female caregivers. Have fun while learning about this dynamic time for girls. May 1st.

Stepping Up: After-School Leadership Group for Daisy students! Applications and Lottery start this April!

Welcome Summer Ice Cream Social: Celebrate warm weather in the best way, with families, friends and community, June 20

It Takes A Village: Parents with young children, 0-6, meet for fun, connection, and support.

Counseling Services

WYFS provides support and therapy for individuals, families and couples. Our therapists help strengthen family functioning, and support children and families working through life's challenges, including emotional and behavioral issues, stress, anxiety, grief, depression, trauma, peer issues and life transitions. Call 860-399-9239 for an appointment. Check us out at WYFS.org & Like Us on Facebook!



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"Mom's memory loss meant her way of life was changing, but we did not want her quality of life to change as well. We are so happy – and a little surprised – at how quickly she settled into her new home and routine at Safe Harbor Memory Care Neighborhood in The Saybrook at Haddam, where residents "experience the difference" and blossom. **Safe Harbor offers:**

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Resident Doris Whitmore with daughter Beryl enjoying a cup of tea in the country kitchen.



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Energy Committee Update

LED Streetlights Installation and Virtual Net Billing Projects

The Energy Committee completed its individual review of each streetlight in Town and submitted the list of new fixtures and bulbs to be installed to contractor Siemens shortly after Thanksgiving. The fixtures were ordered by Siemens in late January and are due to be delivered to Westbrook some six weeks later. Siemens bucket trucks are slated to replace the entire “cobra head” style fixtures on utility poles and replace bulbs in the metal decorative posts in subdivisions during the months of March and April. The Boston Post Road will be the first priority, followed by streets south of Route 1, and then less densely populated streets to the north. Old cobra head fixtures being removed with enclosed high pressure sodium bulbs will be recycled by Siemens and replaced with new anodized aluminum LED cobra fixtures designed to last 25 years. Westbrook constables will be accompanying bucket trucks on State routes and major thoroughfares, and traffic cones will be utilized by the bucket truck crew on lesser-traveled residential streets. Colleen Topitzer, administrative assistant at the Department of Public Works, should be notified of any subsequent outages at 860-552-4496.

The Town purchased its 626 existing fixtures from Eversource in the middle of April 2018, and the Town has been saving on Eversource’s substantial fixed maintenance charges since then, with Siemens replacing bulbs or fixtures as needed at a lower cost. Once the new fixtures and bulbs are installed, the full benefit of the conversion process will be realized, with both reduced maintenance through the manufacturers’ and installer’s warranties and the reduced electricity that the LED fixtures and bulbs consume. The Town will then be eligible for a rebate for installing more efficient

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Miss Mulvey

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photo by Catherine Marino



Town Info

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TOWN GARAGE

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860-552-4496

TOWN HALL HOURS

Mon – Wed: 9:00 am to 4:00 pm
Thursday: 9:00 am to 7:00 pm
Friday: 9:00 am to noon

TOWN HALL CLOSED

April 18th closing at 4pm
April 19th Good Friday
May 27th Memorial Day

lighting, expected to total over \$50,000. Over the expected life of the fixtures, the savings are projected to total over one million dollars.

If there is a light out on your street, please contact Westbrook Public Works Administrative Assistant, Colleen Topitzer at 860-552-4496 and appropriate repairs will be scheduled.

Virtual Net-Metering: Westbrook's Energy Committee has been investigating the possibility of solar arrays on various Town and Board of Education owned buildings and land parcels for the past 2 years. Unfortunately due to numerous reasons (age and condition of roofs, location of parcels and overall economics) pursuing such projects is not in the best interest of the Town.

In the spirit of utilizing clean renewable energy the Energy Committee has been able to secure 1 megawatt of solar energy from a solar array project in Somers, CT. The town will be able to mitigate up to \$205,000 annually of its energy costs at our 3 schools, Town Hall and the Library. The town should start seeing these savings in late 2019/early 2020 once the facility in Somers is operational.

The Energy Committee welcomes new members and participation from residents at our meetings. If you are interested in giving your time and talent please contact Chairperson Chris Ehlert at 203-623-9819. We meet the 3rd Wednesday of the month at Town Hall – 5 pm.

Harbor Management Commission

The Harbor Management Commission will decide between two candidates for Westbrook Harbormaster by the end of March.

Patchogue River Mooring Renewals were due January 1. Please get them in no later

than March in order to give those on the waiting list a chance. Beach Mooring renewal forms and stickers are available now. We plan to have at least one session in late spring when mooring registrations can be brought in and mooring permit stickers immediately issued.

Notification of this session will be on the town website. The Army Corps of Engineers dredge "Currituck" will dredge our entrance channel sometime in May or early June. The permits and the federal funding process are complete.

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It takes a community to improve the quality of life for all – neighbors and friends who give their time and resources to support a passion or area of interest. We applaud the good people who are partnering to provide access to essential services to those who might otherwise go without.

Together, we are making a real difference. Thanks to our donors and Funds, critical programs for veterans and seniors continue in Middlesex County. One of our newest Funds, the St. Luke's Home Fund, is providing financial support to nonprofit organizations working to improve the daily lives of seniors and veterans. Grants are awarded to programs offering basic services such as shelter, access to care, and transportation.

Thanks to you, we are able to make even the smallest gift have a big impact - through charitable funds that support animal welfare, arts and culture, health and social services, education, history, the environment, civic improvements, recreation, and economic security and opportunity.

We celebrate all of you who share the same desire to help our local community thrive today, and tomorrow.

We invite you to learn more by calling us or visiting us online.



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Westbrook Emergency Notifications



Question: How can the Town of Westbrook notify its residents and visitors of a life/safety emergency within the town?

Answer: When residents register cell phones (with the option of other electronic devices) with CT ALERT Resident's must OPT in. They are not automatically added.

The CT ALERT Notification System is FREE to join and your information is NEVER shared with telemarketers or political parties. Its sole purpose is for emergency, life/safety notification.

- Go the Westbrook Emergency Management website at www.westbrookem.com.
- Scroll to the bottom, left of the home page and follow instructions, clicking on the link for CT ALERT

If you already registered, please ensure the information is valid for your account; number, address, etc.

- Ensure everyone with a cell phone in your household is registered.
- If an emergency notification is distributed, please listen/read it carefully and follow all instructions.

Westbrook Emergency Management is responsible for distributing this type of mass notification. When a message is sent, you will be directed to view our website or Facebook page for additional information. However, social media should not be used as the initial notification for a life/safety message.

The CT ALERT message could be distributed when you sleeping, thus the importance of you waking up and adhering to the information.

Types of information sent:

- Emergency Evacuation (regardless of the reason)
- Shelter in Place (remain inside)
- Pre-Storm Life/Safety information
- Post Storm Life/Safety information - Town Update
- Any other reason for your immediate life/safety

Question: But I have a traditional land line telephone (Comcast, Frontier or Vonage). Do I still need to register with CT ALERT?

Answer: YES...however if there is a power loss within the town or other issue with your telephone provider, you will

still want to be notified. Since these messages are life/safety topics, it's better to receive a message twice (as a duplicate) on your devices.

Question: I don't have a traditional land line telephone. What should I do?

Answer: Then you need to register your cell phone and OPT in.

Thank you,
Donald Izzo
Emergency Management Director

Estuary Council Regional Senior Center

220 Main Street, Old Saybrook

The Estuary Council of Seniors, Inc. is a community center for the region's residents over 50 years old providing meals, transportation, health services, educational classes, exercise programs, and socialization activities. We have been promoting healthy and active lifestyles through quality programs and services in the nine-town Estuary region for over 40 years. Please visit us at www.ecsenior.org for additional information or call us at 860.388.1611.

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Westbrook Board of Education Changemakers!

In education today it is important to consider every school dollar and how the impact of each one of those dollars is measured. To be certain, every line item in a budget must be managed for maximum effect. And yet, there is a definite value multiplier that we should count when we consider the out-of-the-box thinking of our professionals and of our own students. Let's think about the innovators among us; those who run with the resources we have, to create new opportunities for others, new horizons to reach. They are the "Changemakers" and they come in all shapes, sizes and age ranges. Let's explore this Westbrook phenomenon and learn why our students speak so highly of their schools and community. We can start with the measurable success of our Unified Sports program; a chance for students with and without special needs to partner and play on teams to make a difference.

Unified Sports is a registered program of Special Olympics that combines athletes with and without intellectual disabilities or other developmentally identified needs and places them on sports teams for both training and competition. The teammates are grouped according to similar age and each team is placed in a competitive division. Given their level of ability each member of a team can play, partner or eventually lead others in activities that range from developmental skill-building to recreation or to competition. This program has positioned our students to participate and to earn partnership skills. It has also signaled that many of our students are ready to take on leadership roles in this program. To give you a sense of the size and scope of the success of this student program, the combined Westbrook High School Athletics and Unified Sports program hosted a Shoreline Conference Unified Basketball Tournament. 10 of the 12 Shoreline Conference schools engaged. Unified Sports students and other student volunteers served as welcome hosts for each team, as game officials, clock operators and hosts of the after-game gathering. 117 students were on hand with 49 competing as athletes and 68 as partners in the games. With each school playing a total of 4 games, the afternoon saw a total of 20 games played.

Sharing pizza after the awards ceremony, the value of Unified Sports was apparent. Nearly 120 participants sat for a traditional conference picture, a lifelong memory. And, work is already underway to bring Unified Sports to the MS where once again, our students may take on leadership roles bringing this program to their younger colleagues. Surely, the minimal budget dollars expended toward getting Unified Sports opportunities for our students (all students) can be valued exponentially in the impact of the effort and success for students with and without special needs. The comparatively small amount of money placed in the service of this activity comes back to us in myriad chances for all students to create and take on new opportunities for leadership roles. We supplied minimal budget dollars and staff and students

supplied the enthusiasm and spirit resulting in more chances for others to be involved. We hope to see Unified Sports begin for our middle school students. Watch for more news about our Changemakers on our website and in this publication.

A Note from the Westbrook Public Library

The Friends of the Westbrook Public Library has applied for and received seven grants from the Westbrook Foundation. The first, in 1998, in the amount of \$16,788, supplied half of the amount needed to join the Libraries Online (LION) consortium. In 2004, the Foundation granted \$15,096 for the purchase of 8 public access computer workstations, software, and wifi. In 2006, the library received a grant of \$14,460 to purchase 4 more workstations, a digital projector, and a lectern and sound system for the community room. In 2007, as the library renovated and expanded, the Westbrook Foundation provided \$150,000 in memory of Barbara Spencer for the furnishing of the new children's room. In 2011, the Foundation provided a grant of \$9,350 to purchase 8 new public computers for the children's room, three laptops, 4 networked printers, and software. In 2013, the Foundation granted \$6,760 for new public computers in the adult section and two tablet computers. Practically all the public access computer equipment in the library has been

continued on page 12

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WESTBROOK Community Listings

IMPORTANT TOWN HALL NUMBERS

Accounts Payable	(860) 399-3008
Animal Control Officer	(860) 790-1075
Assessor	(860) 399-3016
Assessor Clerk	(860) 399-3045
Building Official	(860) 399-2035
Emergency Management	(860) 577-0622
Emergency Management website	www.westbrookem.com
Environmental Health	(860) 399-3018
Finance Director	(860) 399-3004
Finance Director / Assistant	(860)399-1235
Fire Department / Business calls	(860) 399-9492
Fire Marshal Office / Business calls	(860) 552-4496
Harbor Master	(860) 399-2477
Health Director	(860) 399-9869
Inland Wetland Enforcement	(860) 399-3017
Transfer Station	(860) 399-6356
Land Use - Planning/Zoning/IWWC Admin. Asst	(860) 399-3091
Land Use - Building/Health Dept. Admin. Asst	(860) 399-0339
Probate Court	(860) 510-5028
Recreation	(860) 399-3095
Registrar of Voters	(860) 399-3042
Selectman's Office	(860) 399-3040
Senior Center Director	(860) 399-3048
Social Services	(860) 399-3090
Tax Collector	(860) 399-3043
Town Clerk	(860) 399-3044
Town Garage	(860) 552-4496
Town Planner	(860) 399-3201
Town Web site	www.westbrookct.us
Treasurer	(860) 399-3040
Westbrook Senior Center	(860) 399-2029
Zoning Enforcement	(860) 399-3041

SCHOOLS

Daisy Ingraham Elementary School	(860) 399-7025
Junior-Senior High School	(860) 399-6214
Middle School	(860) 399-2010
Superintendent of Schools	(860) 399-6432

HOME HEALTH CARE

Visiting Nurses of Westbrook	(860) 399-3088
Ambulance & Oxygen Business Calls	(860) 399-7000

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Resident Trooper	(860) 399-7304
State Trooper	(860) 399-2100

LIBRARY

Westbrook Public Library	(860) 399-6422
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USEFUL NUMBERS

9 Town Transit	(860) 510-0429
Community Foundation of Middlesex County	(860) 347-0025
First Congregational Church of Westbrook	(860) 399-9367
Garden Club	westbrookgardenclub@yahoo.com
Historical Society	(860) 399-7473
Westbrook Youth & Family Services	(860) 399-9239
St. Mark's	(860) 399-9207
St. Paul's Episcopal Church	(860) 399-5402

Public Library continued from page 11

purchased with grants provided by the Westbrook Foundation. In 2016, the Foundation provided a grant of \$4,950 to purchase a perpetual subscription to Mango Languages so that Westbrook Public Library cardholders can access free foreign language classes online.

All of us at the library- Staff, Board, and Friends- are profoundly grateful to the Westbrook Foundation for this consistent and significant financial support all these years. Thank you!

This year the Westbrook Foundation provided a grant of \$12,000 for the purchase of a portable computer lab consisting of a lockable charging and storage station, 10 Mac Books, 10 PC laptops, and software to support instruction and workshops on coding and other computer learning and activities for students and the general public. For now this activity will take place in the community room and conference rooms on the lower level of the library. Both of these spaces are busy and heavily used by the community. With the support of the Board of Selectmen

and the Board of Finance we are planning to renovate space in the unfinished basement area adjacent to the community room to provide a general purpose room dedicated to technology education.

This winter the library began hosting free small business workshops offered by SCORE (a group of retired businessmen) and mentoring sessions twice a month. Upcoming workshops are listed on the library website at westbrooklibrary.lioninc.org. In addition to our preschool story hour for children age 3 to 5, Children's Librarian Mary Nyman started a new playgroup for children younger than 3 called Read, Rhyme, and Romp Wednesday mornings at 10 am in the community room. These sessions will run until the end of April. The AARP volunteer tax helpers will be at the library by appointment on the following Mondays from 9 to 1 (unless noted otherwise): 2/11, 2/25, 3/4, 3/11, 3/18 (9-12), 3/25, 4/1, and 4/8. Call the Estuary Office in Old Saybrook at 860 388-1611 to make an appointment.

Westbrook Garden Club

Westbrook Garden Club is a dynamic group of dedicated members who actively seek to learn more about gardening, horticulture and the environment while working to beautify our town and having fun at the same time.

If this sounds like something you might be interested in, then please join us! We meet on the third Monday of the month from March to October at the Westbrook Public Library Community Room at 3:00 pm. Our monthly programs host captivating



speakers whose programs are free and open to the public. If you wish to join, please contact us at: westbrookgardenclubct@yahoo.com.

Presently we are working on our 60th anniversary project of creating a meadow at the entrance to the Salt Island overview. Maybe you have seen our sign? Thanks to generous grants from both the Westbrook Foundation and Plant America, we will be able to continue our efforts on this worthwhile project of creating a sustainable meadow that not only will be beautiful to look at but will also provide a habitat for birds and other animals to enjoy.

Have You Visited Westbrookct.us?

The new Westbrook website is quickly becoming a go-to resource for information and notifications. You can sign-up for notifications of updates for things like meetings, jobs, agendas and minutes.

We'll keep improving our offering based on great analytics and statistics helping us understand what citizens are interested in. Here are a few interesting facts, just since we've welcomed the 2019 New Year. The top 10 countries visiting the website are: The United States, Canada, India, China, Philippines, Nigeria, Russia and France.

The top 10 cities viewing our town's website are:

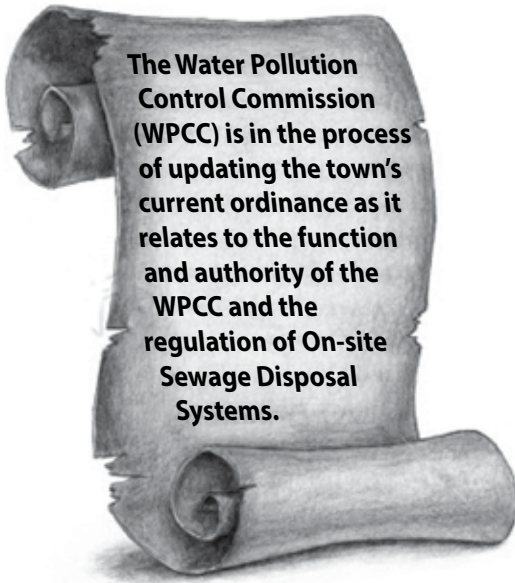
Clinton, Connecticut
Belmont, Massachusetts
Hartford, Connecticut
Old Saybrook, Connecticut
Killingworth, Connecticut
Chicago, Illinois
New York, New York
Durham, Connecticut
Middletown, Connecticut
Guilford, Connecticut

And what are people searching for?

While visitors may find the answers they are looking for by navigating the website, the explicit search function reveals that people are looking for (in order of frequency):

Employment
Bids
Tax Collector
Taxes
Calendar
Hours
Pay Taxes
Transfer Station

Water Pollution Control Commission



The Water Pollution Control Commission (WPCC) is in the process of updating the town's current ordinance as it relates to the function and authority of the WPCC and the regulation of On-site Sewage Disposal Systems.

The commission in consultation with the Health Department felt it was necessary to make some changes to the current ordinance to enhance its effectiveness.

Westbrook is under orders from the Department of Energy and Environmental

Protection (DEEP) to abate a pollution problem due to densely developed areas predominantly south of Route 1 and aging septic systems. Various plans to sewer the areas were not approved. Consequently, the WPCC adopted a Sewer Avoidance Approach in 2005. The goal of this approach is to keep on-site septic systems as the primary wastewater treatment type in town, to the greatest degree possible, while still protecting the environment and public health.

The ordinance gives authority to the WPCC and the Westbrook Health Department to have regulations to facilitate the goals of the Wastewater Management approach. Some changes simply involved the elimination of unnecessary definitions, language changes and restructuring which will result in a more streamlined document that will be easier to understand. Specifically, the definition of a bedroom

was eliminated; therefore, the public health code definition will be in effect. Other notable changes include: Any cesspools or metal septic tanks shall be removed if you are performing an addition, increasing the design flow of the building, or doing a tear down rebuild. Cesspools and metal tanks pose safety concerns and replacing older structures makes sense as they may leak, polluting groundwater and surface water. Pump outs are required to be done once every 5 years.

The ordinance is in the final stages of review. A draft copy will be uploaded to the town website once it is fully vetted by WPCC's attorney, the Board of Selectmen, DEEP and DPH. Then the final document will go to an informational meeting for comment followed by a town meeting for a vote. The dates have not been determined but we are looking towards June or July.





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The 2019 Legislative Session

On January 9, 2019, the legislative session began. On that day, we heard from newly-elected Governor Ned Lamont and he outlined his vision for the upcoming session. On February 20th, Governor Lamont proposed his state budget which included tolls, sports betting, and a tax on soft drinks.

This session, I was appointed to serve on three legislative committees: Transportation, Planning & Development, and Finance, Revenue and Bonding where I will serve as the House Ranking Member on the Transportation Bonding Subcommittee. In addition, I was named an Assistant Leader in the House Republican Caucus.

The Transportation Committee has cognizance of all matters relating to the Department of Transportation, including highways and bridges, navigation, aeronautics, mass transit and railroads; and to the State Traffic Commission and the Department of Motor Vehicles.

The Planning & Development Committee has cognizance of all matters relating to local governments, housing, urban renewal, fire, sewer and metropolitan districts, home rule and planning and zoning; regional planning and development activities and

the State Plan of Conservation and Development, and economic development programs impacting local governments.

The Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee has jurisdiction over all matters relating to finance, revenue, capital bonding, fees and taxation.

Some of the major topics up for discussion this session include the budget deficit, tolls, marijuana, property taxes, and an increase in the minimum wage.

As always, please let me know if you have any questions or concerns related to this session, issues of importance to you, or any matters with state government. You can contact me at (860) 240-8700 or devin.carney@housegop.ct.gov.

Thank you for electing me to another term and I look forward to serving as your State Representative for the next two years.

*State Representative Devin Carney,
Lyme, Old Lyme, Old Saybrook, Westbrook*



Westbrook Recreation - Spring Programs

Days are getting longer and all the snow is melting, so spring should be here soon. That means it must be time to register for all our spring programs, travel soccer and T-Ball. Open registrations have already started and many programs are filling up. Register online soon so your children won't miss out on all the spring/summer fun. Please call our office with any and all questions.

We have so many fantastic sports and theater camps. They include Slammas Jamma Basketball, Challenger Soccer, Between the Lines Baseball, Children's Theater and Broadway Bound Theatre camps. We also have tennis, youth and teen field hockey camps rounding out the rest. The best way for a student to improve in any sport is to register for a camp teaching that individual sport. All of our other sports camps information will be posted in our spring brochure.

Floor hockey will start on March 2nd at the Daisy Elementary School. Boys and girls of all ages are welcome to participate. We will prorate floor hockey if you sign up late.

Our Tot T-Ball program will be the next program that starts on April 20th. It has the children from all over the shoreline participating in this springtime favorite. We introduce baseball to children as young as 3 years old, for their first big league experience. We teach your child how to properly throw, catch and hit a ball while having a fun time doing it. It's an interactive program that's fun for parents and children alike. Parents should oil their old baseball gloves and get ready for the new upcoming baseball season!

We are still running bus trips to popular destinations all around New England. Instead of stressing out with all the

traffic, you can enjoy one our trips and relax during the drive. Please contact our office and we can give you a list of all the upcoming trips. There are only 50 seats per bus so please sign up soon.

Our Seventeenth annual Westbrook Family Day will be held on June 8th (rain date June 9th), at the Town Green. Westbrook Family Day has also become known to many friends and families as the annual Westbrook Town Picnic. Be sure to mark this date on your calendars for a fun-filled day of rides, entertainment, food and most of all, for all the funny clowns. This event is brought to you through the generous donations of many businesses from our shoreline and is totally free to the public.

Please call Rich at 860-399-3095, if you wish to make a donation or volunteer the day of the event.

Westbrook Assessor

HOMEOWNERS AND TOTALLY DISABLED TAX RELIEF PROGRAM

The following is a summary of the benefits currently available to certain Westbrook homeowners. The details of the programs are set forth in the Connecticut State Elderly and Totally Disabled Program (Connecticut General Statutes Section 12-170aa) and the Municipal Tax Relief Program (Connecticut General Statutes Section 12-129n and the ordinance of the Town of Westbrook entitled Amended Resolution for Providing Tax Relief for Elderly Homeowners) and is subject to the provisions of those statutes and ordinance.

Westbrook homeowners may apply for the Elderly/Disabled Homeowner Program between February 1 and May 15, 2019. The applicant must be 65 years of age to apply or any age if they are permanently and totally disabled and qualify with the state income limits. Please bring a copy of your form 1040 and/or form SSA-1099 when applying, and, if under age 62, a Benefit Verification Letter. This program is also called the Circuit Breaker Program. This form must be filed every two years.

Along with the homeowner's age or disability requirements, the qualifying income limits for the Grand List 2018 applications are \$36,000 for single and \$43,900 for married. If you are unsure if you qualify for the upcoming year, please call the Assessor's Office 860-399-3016 or 860-399-3045.

The town of Westbrook also has a Senior Tax Freeze Program, wherein your taxes can be frozen the first year you qualify. From then on, as long as your income criteria does not exceed the state income limits and you do not increase the value of your home by way of additions or outbuildings, your taxes will not increase. If a homeowner is on the Elderly Homeowner Program (Circuit Breaker), their taxes can be frozen and the forgiven taxes do not have to be repaid when they sell their home. There are certain limitations, however, based upon the total tax forgiven annually. This is determined on an individual basis with the taxpayer at the time of application.

If the homeowner does not qualify for the circuit breaker program, the homeowner may still qualify for the freeze program. However, in that event a lien will be placed on the property in the amount of the taxes not paid, and when the property is sold, the lien amount must be repaid to the town.

The total income is calculated from the IRS 1040 form line 20A Social Security Benefits, and line 37 Adjusted Gross Income. If the applicant does not file an income tax return and has social security as their only yearly income then a copy of the form SSA-1099 – social security benefit statement will be required.

Owners of mobile homes may apply for either the elderly Homeowners Program or the Renters Program. You cannot apply for both programs.

Additional Veterans Program - You must be a town of Westbrook resident on the assessment date of October 1st to receive a veteran's exemption.

Regular Veteran's Exemption: to qualify for a Regular Veteran's Exemption, the Veteran must have served at least 90 days during wartime and received an honorable

continued on page 16



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Assessor continued from page 15

discharge. Original discharge papers (DD-214) or separation papers must be filed with the town clerk's office prior to October 1st. There is no income criteria for this exemption. If you have questions about qualifying, please stop by the Assessor's Office.

Disabled Veteran's: Disabled veterans who receive eligibility letters directly from the U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs may be entitled to increased property tax exemptions for service related disabilities. In order to receive this exemption, the Veteran must file the disability letter with the Assessor's Office.

Additional Veteran's Exemptions: An additional benefit is available for veterans with incomes lower than \$36,000 for a

single person and \$43,900 for a married couple. The filing period is February 1st through October 1st. Qualifying income includes your form 1040 tax return if filed or SSA 1099 – social security statement. Additional Veterans Benefits double the regular Veterans Benefits.

Qualifying income for 100% V.A. Disabled Veterans is \$18,000 for a single person and \$21,000 for a married couple. Social Security income is not considered.

A widow/widower is entitled to keep 100% of their spouse's veteran's benefit.

QUALIFYING INCOME-PROGRAM YEAR 2018

The following tables show the levels of qualifying income for the Elderly and Totally Disabled Tax Relief Program applications to be filed in the year 2019. These levels are to be used for the 2018 Grand List Homeowner and Renter Rebate applications, 2019 Grand List Additional Veteran's applications and may be used for any local option programs.

PLEASE NOTE: Homeowner applications that were taken for the 2017 G/L (RENEWALS) are calculated for the 2018 G/L using the 2017 qualifying income schedule, NOT the schedule below.

HOMEOWNERS

Income and Grant Information -2018 Benefit Year / Filing period February 1 - May 15, 2019

Income		Tax Credit%		Tax Credit Maximum		Tax Credit Minimum	
Over	To	Married	Unmarried	Married	Unmarried	Married	Unmarried
\$-0-	\$18,100	50%	40%	\$1,250	\$1,000	\$400	\$350
18,100	24,200	40	30	1,000	750	350	250
24,200	30,200	30	20	750	500	250	150
30,200	36,000	20	10	500	250	150	150
36,000	43,900	10	-0-	250	-0-	150	-0-

RENTERS

Income and Grant Information - 2018 Benefit Year / Filing period April 1- October 1, 2019

Income		Maximum Credit		Minimum Credit	
Over	To	Married / Single	Married / Single	Married / Single	Married / Single
\$-0-	\$18,100	\$900	\$700	\$400	\$300
18,100	24,200	700	500	300	200
24,200	30,200	500	250	200	100
30,200	36,000	250	150	100	50
36,000	43,900	150	-0-	50	-0-

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Westbrook Historical Society

WESTBROOK, OH THE STORIES YET TO BE TOLD!

Don't you just love a good mystery?



Poker Rock, Feb. 4, 1905
Neidlinger friend and Alma Neidlinger

Legend has it that once there was a murder and the body was poked into a rock crevice. Do you know where this rock is located in Westbrook? And, what role did Josephine Ruggles play in this story? Did you know that footstones in most cemeteries were moved to accommodate mowing? We believe that many of these were tossed away in the 1700s. Recently, Joseph Reed's 1790 footstone was returned to Westbrook after being carried all over the world.



Shack on Salt Island – Wm. J. Neidlinger, photographer

Did you know that in the early 1900s that at least six large buildings were removed from the current Elks property to Post Avenue?

How did they do it? We believe the same way Joseph Church Post moved the Pond Meadow schoolhouse to a more southerly location by using oxen, the same Devon lineage that remains today at Maple Breeze Farm. It was a frugal and humble society then, a day of true conservation.

And, just who was Stillman H. Robinson? In 1916, upon his death, it was reported in *The Day* that he “has spent many summer seasons at the cabin on Salt Island.”

Your Westbrook Historical Society welcomes you to discover and to share these stories with us. This year we continue our Historic House Plaque Program to give visitors a visual timeframe for early Westbrook. A book about the history of West Beach looks promising. We shall pursue repairs to the final broken gravestones in the Old Burying Ground. We open again in March, Wednesdays from 9:00 am – noon.

Catherine Neidlinger Doane, President
Westbrook Historical Society, Inc.

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The Westbrook Foundation

The next deadline for Westbrook Foundation Grants is April 1.

The Westbrook Foundation accepts grant applications twice a year, in April and October, from nonprofit, non-political organizations whose work positively impacts Westbrook residents' lives. The deadline for the spring grants cycle is April 1, 2019. Guidelines and applications are available on the the Foundation's website, www.westbrookfoundation.org.

In the fall 2018 grants cycle, the Foundation awarded more than \$90,000. Each of the seven grantees demonstrated that it will use the grant funds to fulfill a specific project or initiative that will benefit Westbrook residents.

Fall 2018 grants cycle awards included: \$50,000 to the Valley Shore YMCA to support its \$5.5 million capital renovation project.

\$15,565 to the Westbrook Garden Club to cover the costs of its 60th anniversary project to create a meadow in a 7,200-square-foot area at the entrance to Salt Island Overlook Open Space on Boston Post Road.

\$12,000 to the Friends of the Westbrook Public Library for the purchase of 20 laptops, a locked charging station, and Adobe Creative Cloud for one of the new laptops. These laptops will be available for students who wish to learn how to code, participate in STEM-related programs, and edit videos and photos at the Westbrook Public Library.

\$5,000 to High Hopes Therapeutic Riding to enable Westbrook residents to participate in horseback riding and equine-related therapeutic activities that aid those with cognitive, physical, and/or emotional disabilities.

\$3,000 to the Incarnation Center's Bushy Hill Day Camp Scholarship Fund to enable Westbrook residents to attend summer day camp programs.

\$3,000 to Literacy Volunteers Valley Shore CT, Inc., for one-on-one tutoring for Westbrook residents.

\$2,250 to Pay4ward, Inc., to create a documentary for social media and the web that captures the organization's mission to reintegrate combat veterans with PTSD into society through sailing.

Westbrook Treelighting Committee

THE WESTBROOK TREELIGHTING COMMITTEE THANKS SPONSORS, HELPERS, AND PERFORMERS

The Westbrook Tree Lighting parade and event on the Town Green planned for Sunday, December 2 was cancelled this year due to adverse weather conditions and public safety concerns. An informal tree lighting was held on Monday evening, December 3 at 6 pm.

While the Sunday event was cancelled, we want to thank the many individuals and organizations who helped plan and prepare for the event. The following agreed to donate food and beverages: Chef Joe Kaluski, Julie's Cup Of Joe, Lighthouse Church, Vista Life Innovations, Colors in the Wind, 640 Massage Therapies, Westbrook Ambulance, Westbrook Emergency Management, Westbrook Scouts, Westbrook Elks, and Westbrook Pizza.

The following groups and individuals were scheduled to perform: Westbrook Congregational Children's Choir, Bob Hale, Old Lyme Band Tubadores, St. John's School Choir, WHS Chamber Choir and Sean and Kelley Moore. Essex Savings Bank agreed to sponsor Dave Bradham and his veterans' horse and carriage with help from WHS Future Business Leaders. Dan Medieros was ready to carve an ice sculpture sponsored by the Elks Club. Jen Capano planned the bonfires and smores. Crafts were prepared

with help from PaperCraft Clubhouse. Other helpers included Oxford Academy, Girl Scouts Troop 62263 and 67893 with Andrea Jacobs and Liz Miller dressed as reindeer. Christmas spirits Randy and Ann Bell were ready as well. The Westbrook Foundation was selected to light the tree this year in recognition of their outstanding philanthropic activities for the good of the town. Co-chairman Brian O'Connor and his wife Alice lit the tree Monday night.

ShopRite, Envirotech, and Bill Cusson provided supplies and services. Barry Clark, Scoutmaster Doug Thomas, Richard Lianos, and the Westbrook Boy Scouts, John Riggio and the Public Works crew and the Town Building and Sanitation Departments, and Fire and Public Safety helped prepare. This year's committee thanks you all. We hope for better weather next year and hope to have a contingency plan in place in case the weather is bad.

Volunteers on this year's committee included chairman Dennis Allen, Bill Arute, Jill and Dana Brainerd, Jim and Mary Brewster, Darlene Briggs, Jennifer Capano, Lew Daniels, Kim Esposito, Don and Chickie Harger, Don Izzo, and Bernadette Jones.

Lew Daniels for the Westbrook Tree Lighting Committee



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Middlesex Health: Helping CT Women at Risk

Middlesex Health Cancer Center's Comprehensive Breast Center is specifically designed to help identify women who may be at high risk for breast cancer due to family history or benign breast disease, as well as to monitor and treat women who have an established high risk for breast cancer. It also helps patients currently in treatment or in recovery.

For many women, their primary care doctor handles their mammograms, and that is appropriate care. However, those who are at greater risk for breast cancer would benefit from being monitored more closely, and that's where the Comprehensive Breast Center can help.

Dr. Andrea Malon, medical director of the Cancer Center and Comprehensive Breast Program; Dr. Kristen Zarfos, medical director of the Comprehensive Breast Center; and Dr. Chia-Chi Wang, a surgical oncologist, see patients who visit the Comprehensive Breast Center. Women who are identified as being high risk, or who think they might be at high risk, are encouraged to either make an appointment directly or discuss their concerns with their primary care physician who can make a referral.

Within the center, the scheduling of diagnostic tests and a meeting with one of the breast surgeons can happen on the same day. Overall, Middlesex's goal is to coordinate care in a way that can reduce anxiety, expedite the process and help patients better navigate a cancer diagnosis and treatment.

Middlesex Health Cancer Center is accredited by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers. The Comprehensive Breast Center is located at 540 Saybrook Road in Middletown. The same services are also offered at a satellite office at the Middlesex Health Shoreline Medical Center in Westbrook.

To contact the center, call 860-358-2780.

The Dangers of Xylitol

Most people know not to feed their pets food like chocolate and grapes, but sometimes danger can come from unexpected places. Due to an artificial sweetener called "xylitol," a pack of gum can be more dangerous to dogs than an entire bar of chocolate.

Xylitol is often used in gum and "sugar-free" foods like candies, gummies, and baked goods. While harmless to people, xylitol can

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Denise Merrill
10 Trinity Street, Hartford, CT 06106
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<http://www.sots.state.ct.us/>

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5 Elm Street, Hartford, CT 06106
860.702.3000
State.treasurer@ct.gov

Attorney General
William Tong

55 Elm Street, Hartford, CT 06106
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Rep. 23rd District
Devin Carney
CT House Republican Office,
L.O.B. Room 4200, Hartford, CT 06106
860-240-8700, 800-842-1423 Toll Free
devin.carney@housegop.ct.gov

Senator 33rd District
Norman Needleman
Legislative Office Building, Room 3300
Hartford, CT 06106-1591
860.240.8600

Rep. 35th District
Jesse Maclachlan
CT House Republican Office
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860-240-8700, 800-842-1423 Toll Free
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Fax (860) 258-6958
702 Hart Senate Office
Washington, DC 20510
(202) 224-2823,
Fax (202)224-9673


Congressman Joe Courtney
101 Water Street Suite 301
Norwich, CT 06360
(860) 886-0139
215 Cannon House Office
Washington, DC 20515
(202) 225-2076
www.courtney.house.gov

be extremely dangerous to cats and dogs. Even if a large dog eats just a few pieces of gum, it's still enough to cause hypoglycemia (low blood sugar), liver failure, and seizures.


As xylitol's popularity grows, it's important to be vigilant about what food you give your pet. Even typically dog-friendly treats like peanut butter can now sometimes contain xylitol. It can also show up in items such as toothpastes, deodorants, and over-the-counter medications, so make sure to always check the ingredients list before giving your pet anything not specifically made for animals. If you keep products or foods containing xylitol around your house, make sure they are in a secure location away from curious cats and dogs.

Symptoms of xylitol poisoning include vomiting, weakness, tremors, and seizures, and can start to show as quickly as 15 minutes after ingestion. With immediate and aggressive veterinary care, most pets will recover. However, if left untreated xylitol can cause liver damage, seizures, comas, and can even be fatal. If you suspect your pet has eaten any amount of xylitol, call your local emergency veterinarian or animal poison control for help.

Zoe Schwartz, Pieper Veterinary



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Come in and ask about our discounts!

Westbrook Land Conservation Trust

Ash Borer Damage

Forests are complex ecosystems, and in Eastern Connecticut, they are struggling and changing, due to both native and introduced parasites that decimate trees on a large scale. At the Land Trust Open House in February, guest speaker Tom Worthley, Associate Extension Professor at the UConn Cooperative Extension Service, addressed this issue. An insect that has killed many oak trees is the Gypsy Moth. Another very visible pest is the Emerald Ash Borer.

Have you noticed small holes and scraped bark on any of your Ash trees? It could be that the Emerald Ash Borer is doing its work in your forest. Westbrook was confirmed positive for this insect in 2016, and is under federal quarantine, meaning you may not transport ash wood from your property. The Emerald Ash Borer is a green beetle native to Asia. Eggs are laid in folds of the bark. Larvae hatch in a week, then bore into the phloem, eating tunnels throughout winter. The adult beetle emerges in spring through D-shaped holes, as seen in the picture. The damage you see around the holes is due to woodpeckers. In two to four years, the tree may die.

If you have questions about your forest, and similar issues, contact the Experiment Station at CAES.StateEntomologist@ct.gov.



Informative websites include <http://www.emeraldashborer.com> and the Connecticut Tree Protective Association at <https://ctpa.org>.

The Land Trust owns 31 land parcels totaling just under 141 acres, as well as the conservation rights to 51 acres. We celebrated our 50th anniversary in 2018. If you live near a parcel, or simply appreciate the protected open space we preserve, please consider joining this organization. Write or email us at: WLCT, PO Box 1124, Westbrook, CT 06498. Email: WestbrookLCT@yahoo.com.

Westbrook Land Conservation Trust

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Dr. Robert Ballard - The Race to Save the Human Race by Sigrid Kun



Above center, increasing our oceans' productivity can provide the way to human survival.



Above right, each Nautilus expedition includes scientists, student interns, and educators.

Just back from the last leg of a 7 month-long expedition by his Corps of Exploration, Dr. Robert Ballard was at his Lyme, CT home - busy summarizing the 2018 series of expeditions by his 64-meter exploration vessel, the E/V Nautilus. Yes, he discovered the Titanic in 1985 (old news, he says, of what was actually a cover for a top secret naval operation). Yes, his work caused a wholesale change in how science was taught by uncovering the secrets of plate tectonics and hydro thermal vents (a revolutionary revelation evidencing that sunlight wasn't needed to support life). And the 30-year naval veteran and /geologist/undersea robotics developer/explorer has for so many years revealed to the world human history lost beneath the sea - with over 35 National Geographic television specials and countless books. After 150+ expeditions, starting at age 17, retirement isn't in the works for the 76-year old.

Our Oceans - The Last Frontier

Dr. Ballard's unrelenting pursuit of ocean education and exploration through his non-profit organization, the Ocean Exploration Trust ("OET"), is urgent. There are sobering facts: 95% of the Earth's population lives on less than 5% of the Earth's surface; farmland is being replaced with housing tracts; while 95% of all living space is located in largely unexplored international waters. But 90% of all large, predatory fish have been hunted down and killed. The carrying capacity of our planet is already at the brink. By 2050 we will not have enough food to feed everyone.

The Wichita, Kansas-born explorer explains that the Earth's waters, largely unexplored, are the human race's final hope. "I'm worried about the human race," he says. "The big question is, will the human race survive? The Earth will be fine. The planet is a creature. It was born. It evolves. It will die. It just has a long life expectancy. But there's no Plan B for the human race." The key, he says, is to move from hunting/gathering in the ocean to creating productive waters via deep sea farming - just as society thousands of years ago moved away from hunting and gathering on the Earth's lands and into organized food production. Every Ballard/OET/Nautilus expedition provides vital information as to how our Earth's waters can provide for the survival of humanity. The programs run on

multiple tracks; internships, community STEM and STEAM (to include the Arts) programs, and fellowships. Each ocean expedition includes scientists, student interns and educators as part of the Nautilus corps. The OET website is maintained on a 24/7 basis while the Nautilus is at sea to provide for live communication and interaction. During the last expedition, over 24,000 questions were answered live. Each expedition cultivates a new set of students and mentors (both on and off-board). "The key is to do it wave after wave after wave," he says. To make a difference you needed to reach millions of students.

No Boundaries

Dr. Ballard's message, however, is about more than just the ocean. Life's lessons include understanding one's self. Dr. Ballard is dyslexic. For quite a while, he didn't even know it. It took the book "*The Dyslexic Advantage*" to explain me to me. It was a strange but enlightening experience. Those affected (which is 10% of the population) are often loathe to admit it. To him, it is a gift - an interesting advantage. "I created a dyslexic world that I excel in," he explains. Dyslexia has caused him to rely on visualization and memorization. "It's perfect," he says. "In the sea, it's all dark...it's pitch black. But the water goes away and I see everything." He recalls a dive in 1986 to explore the Titanic. Everything went wrong. No sonar. No tracking. Landing 12,000 feet below surface in the mud, there were no signs of the Titanic to the other crew members. "It's over there," pointed Ballard. And, indeed, the Titanic was.

Dr. Ballard is also a keen proponent for empowering women. As he puts it "males as top leaders is by their design." Empowering women, he maintains, is a key to saving the human race. Accordingly, he mandates that 50% of his team be comprised of women.

Where Do We Go From Here?

Dr. Ballard is a problem solver - from 15 years spent restoring an earlier home to jigsaw puzzles (even when the 1,000 pieces are the same shade of blue, with no border pieces, holes in the puzzle, and extra pieces just for kicks.) But he doesn't have the ultimate answer. Will the human race survive? "I am a realist. The Earth is becoming aware of us and deeming us as a threat," he observes. "We still have time but indications are we are going in the wrong direction." What can we do? "Look at the first 12 feet around you. Look at what you are doing," urges the avid recycler. "Leave things better than you found them. That's what my grandmother taught me."

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