

CULTURE AND LEISURE

REPORT OF THE WESTON CULTURAL COUNCIL

The Weston Cultural Council is charged with distributing money allotted to Weston by the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC), a state agency supporting the Arts, Humanities and Sciences. The State Legislature appropriated \$12 million to the MCC in 2006, of which \$2.9 million funded the Local Cultural Council Program (LCC) in 2007. This money allowed 329 LCCs across the state to fund local projects which explore local arts and history, expand education and accessibility, and celebrate diversity. Weston's allocation for 2007 (and 2008) was \$4000, which was an increase from 2006.

Grants are made to individuals or groups to support worthy projects that enhance the cultural side of our lives and enhance our appreciation of our cultural environment. Grants are also available to educational institutions (the PASS grant program) for such activities as field trips to concerts, museums, etc.

Applications for LCC grants in 2007 were due at the Town Hall on October 16, 2006. A public meeting of the Weston Cultural Council was held on November 20, 2006 to discuss 23 applications, totaling \$10,360. The Council voted to extend one grant approved for 2006 (Boston City Band) and approved 11 new applications. Eight were fully funded and three were partially funded for a total of \$4,000 and all had local sponsorship.

Grants funded in 2007:

Mary Shaw and Bill Sano – Songs of World War II (Pearl Harbor Day)	Council on Aging
Golden Tones – Seniors “Sing Together;” Intergenerational event	Council on Aging and Weston Middle School
Ruth Harcovitz – “Songs from the Movies of the Thirties and Forties,” Apartments	Brook School
Rivers Seminar on Contemporary Music – March 30 – April 1, 2007	Rivers School
Gregory Maichack – Workshop: The Art of Pastel – May 3, 2007	Library
Elizabeth Anker – A vocal concert: “New Songs for Contralto,” – May 6, 2007 Committee-Library.	Music
Edward Cope, Jr. – “Reading is Magic” – July 2007	Library
Society for Historically Informed Performance – 6 early music concerts Church	St. Peter’s
Boston City Band – Summer concert on the Town Green (postponed) Department	Recreation
Yankee Notions – “A Peddler’s Pack of New England Folk Songs”	Land’s Sake
Davis Bates – “Celebrating New England: Songs and Stories for Everyone,”	Land’s Sake

Delvena Theatre – “Creepy New England Legends, Curses and Hauntings,” Golden Ball Tavern

Applications for LCC grants in 2008 were due at the Town Hall on October 15, 2007. A public meeting of the Weston Cultural Council was held on November 20, 2007 to discuss 27 applications, totaling \$14,165. The Council voted to approve 10 applications; 7 were fully funded and 3 were partially funded for a total of \$4020 (\$20 taken from accumulated interest).

Members of the Weston Cultural Council are appointed by the Board of Selectmen for a 3-year term. The council is allowed to have up to 10 members who may serve two consecutive 3-year terms. In 2007, current members Lynne Weber (Secretary), Meredith Eppel and Mary Lou Ackley were joined by new members Sue McFarland, Susan Kuhr, Andrea Levinson, Daniel Woloshen and Diana Chaplin.

Resignations were accepted in the fall of 2007 from Beth Schlager (Treasurer) and Alison Braunstein at the completion of their one term and from Lynn Taff (Chair) who completed two terms. Residents interested in joining the Council are encouraged to contact the Selectmen or the new Chair, Susan Kuhr.

REPORT OF THE WESTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

The mission of the Weston Public Library is to provide materials, resources and programs for lifelong learning and enjoyment. The Library serves the entire community by making available collections on a broad array of subjects of interest to its patrons. It is a forum for the community, providing a welcoming and well-maintained facility for meetings, informal gatherings, lectures and other cultural events.



The Weston Public Library was fortunate to receive the second part of a large bequest from the estate of Mr. Waldo Noyes this year. Thanks to Mr. Noye’s gift, the library is able to purchase materials related to “reference and books in the fields of history, economics, medicine and nutrition, art, music, architecture, gardening, and works of fiction more than twenty five years old...” There is a long history of extremely generous Weston residents. The first gift that established a trust fund was in the amount of \$1,000 given in 1859, by Charles Merriam for the purchase of books. A trust fund in memory of James Messing, resident and former trustee, is

used to enrich the audio collection of the library. According to state regulations, 16% percent of the library's budget must be spent on materials for the public. We depend on the trust funds to meet this obligation, with additional support from town appropriations.

The Weston Public Library is extremely fortunate to be so supported by its residents and our active Friends of Weston Library organization. We recorded over 250,000 visitors to the library this year and hope to continue to offer our residents excellent customer service.

Adult Services

We continue to emphasize programming for all ages and this year the library hosted a number of authors, in addition to workshops, lectures and concerts. Sophie Freud, William Tapply, and Puran and Susanna Bair visited our library in 2007 to give presentations of their work. Sophie Freud, granddaughter of Sigmund Freud, presented a fascinating talk about her life, Living in the Shadow of the Freud Family. Mrs. Freud spoke to 80 people in a packed house in the library Community Room. William Tapply, a well loved mystery author whose stories unfold in New England, came to speak about his latest mysteries, including his final collaboration with close friend and fellow mystery writer, the late Philip Craig. Husband and wife team, Susanna and Puran Bair, gave a lecture about their two well- received books, Living from the heart : heart rhythm meditation for energy, clarity, peace, joy, and inner power and Energize your heart in four dimensions.

We have added some new services for patrons. Library users have often asked if they can pay for an overdue fine or lost book by credit card and earlier this year we implemented the ability to do so over the Internet. Simply go to <http://westonlibrary.org> , hit Login to My Account, enter your library card number and pin, and follow the prompts to enter your credit card payment. In addition, the library now sends automated reminder notices to you two days BEFORE the items are due. This is a terrific way to avoid those late fees.

In order to take advantage of these new services you must establish an email address and pin number for your account. See a circulation staff member in order to do this. You will receive emails when any of your requested library materials are in, and if they are overdue and accruing fines. Remember, these great features are only available to library users with an email address in their account. Please give us an email address today! Your email is totally confidential.

Circulation of items at the Weston Library totaled 277,893 in 2007. Popularity of audiovisuals, like DVD's and spoken CD's, remain high. However, top sellers in 2007 at the Weston Library were children's books (25% of all items checked out in '07) and adult books (22% of all items borrowed). DVD's for adults were 21% of the annual '07 circulation. In addition, adult music CD's were 7% of total circulation, spoken word CD's for adults, 5%, and kid's DVD's, 5%. The printed word still wins out as the top circulating item in 2007 at the Weston Library.

Reference

The Reference Department serves as a point of contact for adults in the community who need to locate materials and information. Our main responsibilities are to assist patrons in the use of our print and electronic resources and offer guidance in selecting recreational reading. We also participate in collection development and the planning of lectures and special events of interest to the general public.

In evaluating new purchases for the library we have broadened our focus to include more electronic resources. There is considerable interest in the study of foreign languages and our

patrons have enthusiastically embraced the online home-access Rosetta Stone language learning program. More than 100 patrons currently use this product. Other recent acquisitions in electronic format include the popular Ancestry Library Edition, ReferenceUSA Business, Boston Consumers' Checkbook and p4 Antiques.

Microfilm continues to be used by patrons and Madeleine Mullin, local history librarian, led the undertaking to evaluate new microfilm machines. The result was an excellent new machine for the library that will serve the community for many years.

During the last twelve months, hundreds of patrons have visited our Community Room to attend events that were planned by the Reference Department including: a living history performance of *Louisa May Alcott; Dinner at the White House* with Judy Bernstein; *Chocolate Making Workshops* with Renee Hake; *The Knitting Circle* hosted by Iris Hermann; *Investigating Sherlock Holmes* with Daniel Polvere; *Pastel Workshop* with Gregory Maichack; and *Wolf Talk* with Michael LeBlanc.

In addition to wireless Internet service more than 10,000 uses of library PCs were logged in 2007. The Reference Department answered an average of over 14,000 queries this year.

Youth Services

Youth Services was a busy place in 2007. In helping our clientele find books for school assignments, pleasure reading or just plain curiosity, we answered 11,995 reference questions. Approximately 2,500 people used the computers in Youth Services. We had 240 programs, with 3,149 people coming to them.

There are a few new things in the Youth Services Department this year. Along with the rest of the library, our walls were repainted in May—a nice creamy white that made everything look lighter. We also brightened things up with new cushions on our picture book window seat and in the upstairs study loft. The new crimson color compliments our carpets and spices things up considerably. Thanks go out to the Trustees for funding this project.

Programs during the school year stayed fairly consistent this year. We did change the Two Year Old Story Time to Wednesday mornings, which seems to be more popular. Library Lapsits, After School Book Clubs, and Three to Five Years Old Story Times have continued successfully. Vacation craft programs have regained some of their old popularity in 2007. School visits have gone up, as both Field School classes and Preschool classes have taken advantage of their proximity to the library. In the 2007/2008 school year, we have begun an outreach program to local preschools, with the first visits beginning in early 2008.

Our Summer Reading Programs were successful, with a record-breaking 41 middle and high school students participating. The Younger programs were also quite successful, with 212 children participating in the Reading Program and Young Readers. Together, 131 children read 5,660 books and 81 children counted 2,506 hours of reading.

Young Adult participation in the YA Summer Find It @your Library! Reading Program was extremely successful, with more participants than ever before. During the summer, they participated in knitting workshops, Mystery Movie night, answered trivia questions and wrote reviews of books. Over 41 middle and high school students participated and 22 joined us for the final party—with pizza and an auction of prizes.

The Friends-supported programming was well attended this summer. Animal Adventures was extremely popular, as animal programs always seem to be. The SuperCold Science program from the Museum of Science was excellent. And we would love to have the Toe Jam Puppet Band back some day, as everyone who was at their performance had a wonderful time. Ed the Wizard also provided an enjoyable afternoon of mesmerizing magic. For in-house programs, our Harry Potter Marathon was the most successful and turned out to be lots of fun. Bringing crafts down to the Concerts on the Town Green continued to be successful, and we had several families either sign up or come into the library after learning about our program there. About 250 people joined us for the Summer Celebration Ice Cream Party, where kids could pick up their reading packets and pick a book, if they read enough.

During the fall, the Youth Services Department assisted the Reference Department with their very successful WolfTalk program. Animal programs do seem to bring the crowds, so next summer's "Wild Reads" summer reading program should be fun! We also added two new "Homework Computers" to the Youth Services area. Located under the double-level study carrel, they have word processing, spreadsheet, and Power Point programs for student use. Although they do not have Internet capability, we are hoping that they will be well used by all our after school crowds.

In 2008, we're looking forward to more programs, more outreach to schools, and an online summer reading program. Come visit us anytime and see what's new in programming, ask a question, use the computers or pick out a book.

Technical Services

The Technical Services Department (or Cataloging Department) had another stellar year, adding to our catalog 9,688 items including 7,665 books, 835 DVDs, 651 music CDs, and 442 audio books on CD. With the development and growing popularity of new technologies, fewer titles were added to our VHS and Book on Tape collections. Look for the latest form of audio book technology, Playaways, in the library. Playaways are self contained audio recordings of books. They take the place of Books on CD and are about the size of a deck of cards. Simply plug in your own earphone, a triple A battery and you're ready to go. More and more titles are becoming available in this highly transportable and easy to use media format.

In addition to processing new items, Technical Services assisted the Adult Services, Reference and Youth Services departments in creating six new sections within our collection. English as a Second Language (ESL), Special Education and Small Business collections were set up in Adult Services. The Adult DVD collection has a new area specifically for TV series. In Youth Services, Young Adult Anime and graphic novel sections were created due to popular demand. Patron response to the new collections has been excellent.

In staffing news, Department Head Frank Baxter left the library in April of 2007. He was replaced by former Children's Librarian Beth Katsoris Meehan. Beth is very excited to join dedicated Library Assistants, Renee Hake and Erika Saunders.

Local History Room

The Local History Room, supported jointly by the Trustees of the Weston Public Library and the Friends of the Weston Public Library, is open to the public on Wednesday afternoons from 1-6 PM or at other times by appointment. Close to eighty requests pertaining to Weston local history and genealogy were answered in 2007.

Madeleine W. Mullin, Local History Librarian, and volunteer William D. Hartmann continue to work on numerous projects including the *Weston Town Crier* Obituary Index, the vertical file of ephemeral materials which relate to Weston local history, the photograph collection from the *Weston Town Crier*, and the expansion of holdings of the Weston High School yearbooks. In addition, indexes are being created for documents that relate to four major construction proposals in Weston and its environs: Highland Meadows Active Adult Community, The Weston Corporate Center (formerly Massachusetts Broken Stone Company), The Commons at Prospect Hill (formerly Polaroid Company in Waltham) and The Green Street Development (formerly Route 128 Used Auto Parts in Waltham).

The Weston Public Library celebrated its sesquicentennial anniversary in late 2007 with an exhibit of photographs, manuscripts and printed materials dating from 1857 that are included in the collections of the Local History Room.

Arts and Exhibitions Committee

The mission of the Arts and Exhibitions Committee is to bring a revolving display of art to the library gallery. The committee is composed of dedicated volunteers and a representative from the Board of Library Trustees. Artists are allowed one month to exhibit their work for the public and the gallery is booked for the entire year, with the exception of August. The committee is also responsible for choosing an artist who can display a piece of sculpture on library grounds for a period of two years. Weston residents are always welcome to apply for an exhibit of their work to the Arts and Exhibitions Committee.

This year, among many talented artists, the library was fortunate to host a wonderful exhibit of the art work of Weston Public School faculty members. In addition, the outdoor sculpture of a metal horse is the work of James Burnes, a former resident. Each month brings a new artist to the gallery and shows have included quilts, paintings, photography, print making, wood sculpture and more.

Music Committee

The Music Committee of the Friends of The Library sponsored ten concerts during 2007. This made for a very busy season with at least one per month. A holiday music and sing-a-long evening in December, along with the annual all day Music Fest in March were enjoyed by all participants. The Music Fest is open to Weston musicians with children's performances in the morning and adult performances scheduled for the afternoon. All of the concerts are free and open to the public, although donations are welcome for the maintenance of the piano.

Publicity for the concerts can be found in the Boston Globe, the Suburban West newspaper and the Town Crier. You can also check the schedule at www.westonlibrary.org/calendar.

Friends of the Weston Public Library

The mission statement of the Friends of the Weston Public Library is "to make the residents of Weston more aware of the Public library and its services as well as encourage the development of a strong, active library for the Town and to provide where appropriate, items and programs not otherwise funded."

The Friends continue to enhance the basic library services by providing activities and events that meet the needs and requests of our community. The Friends board members work with the library's director to determine these needs. Speaker programs, music concerts and field trips continue to be the mainstay of our year. The ever-popular Ice Cream Social, Children's Reading

Program and sponsorship of museum passes encourage the community to make use of our library in a social setting. A donation to the Military History Group preserves our desire to keep ongoing records for future use. Service to the Homebound ensures that all members of the community are able to take advantage of the Library services. All of this is accomplished through fundraising events anchored by our Annual Book sale. This is a joint effort within the community – those who donate books for the sale along with those who purchase during the event. The book sale could not be completed without the help of the library staff. To show their appreciation, the Friends provide an annual luncheon. We continue to pay stipends for staff members to attend professional conferences and work closely with the Director to fund any special requests. We encourage all residents to become members through a small monetary donation.

REPORT OF THE RECREATION COMMISSION

2007 was a very busy year for the Recreation Department, as we continued to administer a wide variety of programs for citizens of all ages within the Town. The Community Center continued to be a special gathering place for Town residents – hosting memorable birthday parties, bar mitzvahs as well as our annual Holiday Luncheon for the Town’s senior citizens. As in years past, countless exercise and educational classes ran every weekday and night while recreation-sponsored dances and special events were being held for kids of all ages. Also serving once again as the setting for St. Julia Parish’s annual outdoor mass and picnic, the Center remains an invaluable asset to the Town, used by its residents throughout the year.

The recreation staff consists of 7 full-time employees ably assisted by an ever-evolving staff of part time help. They continue to coordinate program offerings, plan field trips for citizens of all ages, and guard stations at the Town pool or camp. The Department continues to employ talented, qualified and friendly counselor positions for our summer camps.

In 2007, 700 programs were offered during the course of the year. Among the new programs were special events that capitalized upon the success of Boston professional sports teams – kids were invited to celebrate the victories of both the Red Sox and Patriots with special creations and treats. Our summer camps endured a slight decline in numbers, with 1481 campers taking advantage our diverse and comprehensive offerings during the 7 weeks that our camp programs were in operation.

The Town pool was once again a gathering spot for residents who took advantage of the exceptional facility and programs we provide there. The pool featured a new facility for the guards that was located inside the pool’s gates, simplifying “the changing of the guards” process and adding to the safety of our patrons. As we did last year, in an effort to raise additional monies for our budget, we offered a limited number of pool memberships to individuals and families from surrounding Towns as well as to the relatives of people still living in Weston. The pool accommodated this patron expansion seamlessly and we plan to implement the practice again this year and years to come. The arrival of warmer weather inspired citizens of all ages to take advantage of this remarkable facility, with the dedicated seniors taking laps in the early morning and late evening. Campers and family members enjoyed the pool throughout the day. By summer’s end, 14,763 patrons had visited us during the swim season and had made both family nights and theme nights events to remember. During the summer, Wednesday night concerts on the Town Green were a big hit thanks to Mother Nature’s cooperation. Anyone

passing by the Green on those warm summer nights heard the sounds of wonderful music and children's laughter as families gathered to socialize throughout the months of July and August.

During the winter months, the department provides open gym, access to the indoor swimming pool, the ever-burgeoning Red Wave Swimming Program for the Town's youth (as well as adult basketball programs.) Other popular offerings include arts, crafts, musical and exercise.

As usual, Doug MacDougall and his dedicated staff continue to offer diverse and smoothly run programs. When it comes to delivering top-quality programs at affordable prices, no one can match the work they do. We are fortunate to have such devoted, tireless workers comprising the recreation staff. Please remember to thank them for their efforts the next time that you see them.

Finally, as we stated last year, the year ahead will bring additional budgetary constraints that will challenge the recreation department's ability to provide the same number of programs and high-quality service that it has in the past. As always, we will strive to serve the Town in a friendly and efficient manner.

REPORT OF THE RECREATION MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

The Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee (RMPC) was formed in October 2005 for the purpose of acting as the advocate for the playing fields and outdoor recreational facilities in the Town.

The RMPC was jointly appointed by and reports to the Town Selectmen and School Committee. The membership of the RMPC is represented by five Weston residents with relevant backgrounds, a representative from Weston Youth Soccer, Little League and Youth Lacrosse, a representative from Team Up For Weston, a non-profit fund raising entity, the Recreation Director, Facilities Director and Athletic Director. The appointed members of RMPC are as follows:

Bob Crowley	Chairman	Representing Recreation Commission
Ripley Hastings	Member	At-large (Past Selectman, FinCom Member)
Ed Heller	Member	Representing School Committee
Alan Stone	Member	At-large (Baseball team owner, Entrepreneur)
John Becker	Member	At-large (Commercial Architect)
Adam Wisnia	Member	President, Weston Little League
Bill McCabe	Member	President, Weston Youth Soccer
Mark Perry	Member	President, Weston Youth Lacrosse
John Power	Member	Managing Director, Team Up For Weston
Doug MacDougall	Staff	Recreation Director
Jerry McCarty	Staff	Facilities Director
Peter Foley	Staff	Athletic Director (Retired)
Robert Desaulniers	Staff	Interim Athletic Director

The RMPC presented a 10 year Master Plan for the reparation and improvements of the Town fields and outdoor recreational facilities in October of 2005 to the Selectmen and School Committee which was unanimously adopted. The Master Plan called for an approximate expenditure of \$10 million over 10 years in the form of capital improvements and maintenance of

all the Town fields and outdoor recreational facilities (tennis courts, basketball courts). This figure has since been revised upward to \$12 million.

The Master Plan reached the following major conclusions:

1. Over the past three decades the Town has lost 8+ fields to other construction projects.
2. The number of Town residents participating in sports has more than doubled in the past 30 years due to a) Title IX, b) new sports (lacrosse, softball, ice hockey, etc.), c) adult leagues, d) increase in households and e) changing demographics to more youthful families with children.
3. There is a severe shortage of available fields (due to the above two factors) and therefore, the fields are being grossly overused. Fields are not given adequate rest periods and playing during inclement weather - results in further permanent damage to the fields and soil.
4. The playing season has been shorted, resulting in over crowding on fields, significant scheduling conflicts and challenges, missed games, reduced practice time and the need to play more away games in other towns.
5. The above problems could be solved by taking the following steps:
 - a. Assemble all significant users of the fields under a single organization for purposes of coordinating schedules, sharing resources, collaborating on capital improvements and providing a single voice to the Selectmen and School Committee. (Field Steering Committee)
 - b. Create an overall long-range plan to address the near-term and future needs. (Master Plan)
 - c. Attempt to improve the utilization of all existing fields and outdoor recreational facilities in use first, before seeking additional land. (Phase A of the Master Plan).
 - d. Determine the most critical capital improvements necessary to relieve the near-term pressure on the fields and propose a multi-phased implementation schedule (Phases 0-3 of Master Plan).
 - e. Partner with the Selectmen, CPC, School Committee and private fund raising entities to address the cost requirements of implementation of the Master Plan, forming a public/private partnership. (Funding sources - 60% public funds, 40% private).

The RMPC divided the Master Plan into distinct implementation phases based upon the above criteria. Each phase has a budget and timeline, identification of impacted users, identified source(s) of funds, survey/design, construction and wrap-up stage.

In May of 2006, at the Town's Annual Meeting, the Town approved a \$600,000 use of funds from CPC for Phase 0 of the Master Plan, to construct a multi-use playing field located between the Middle and High Schools on a dormant septic field. This project was completed in November 2006 on-time and under budget. At the same Annual Town Meeting \$425,000 was approved in the School Committee budget to rebuild the High School gymnasium. This project was deferred to the summer of 2007 due to scheduling conflicts and completed in October 2007. Additionally in Phase 0, the High School varsity baseball field, through private donations, added two major league dugouts, new sod in the infield and numerous other field improvements -completed in April 2007.

In December 2006, the RMPC began plans for implementing Phase 1 of the Master Plan which includes the revitalization of over 10 fields in 2007. Those fields include Alphabet (installation of synthetic turf), College Pond (creation of multi-field baseball park), Field #14

at the high school (installation of synthetic turf), rebuilding tennis and basketball courts at the High School, Burchard Park and possibly other sites, irrigation and drainage work on numerous other grass playing fields. The budget for Phase 1 is \$6 million. It is anticipated that the majority of the funding for this phase (\$5M) will come from private donations.

As of December 31, 2007 over \$4.1M in donations had been raised from private donations and it is anticipated that the balance of the \$5M will be raised by summer of 2008. At the May 2007 Town Meeting an additional sum of \$1M was approved from the CPC for addressing the tennis and basketball courts, landscaping, a playground and picnic pavilions at Burchard Park and revitalization of numerous natural grass recreational fields. Field #14 construction was completed in September, 2007 and the new synthetic turf field was opened for play as school opened in the fall. Burchard Park began construction in September 2007 and it is anticipated to open in May 2008. Alphabet Field has received all necessary approvals from the Town and construction is anticipated to begin in the summer of 2008 following the completion of the private fund raising effort by Team Up For Weston.

Following the completion of Phase 1, The RMPC will begin planning for Phase 2 to be implemented in the 2008-2010 timeframe. This phase will include numerous improvements to over a dozen fields. It is anticipated that this phase will be funded by public funds.