

Town of Weston

*Culture and Recreation*



After the Josiah Smith Tavern and Old Library Working Group presented its unanimous support for the Weston Art and Innovation Center proposal to reuse the Old Library, proponents got to work and gathered community support through several outreach meetings and teas. Annual Town Meeting overwhelmingly approved the Weston Art and Innovation Center proposal in May for the design and engineering drawings. The Center, as proposed, will be a branch of the Weston Public Library and will provide hands-on learning opportunities related to art and technology for residents of all ages. The integrity of this historical building will remain in tact and the Old Library will once again be a place for the community to learn, create and explore.

## REPORT OF THE WESTON CULTURAL COUNCIL

The Weston Cultural Council is charged with distributing money allotted to the Town by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Weston's allocation for fiscal year 2017 was \$4,400. Grants are awarded to individuals or groups in support of projects in the arts, humanities, and sciences that are a benefit to the residents of our town.

### Grants Awarded in 2016

<b>Grant Title</b>	<b>Council Liason</b>	<b>Grant Amount</b>	<b>Performance Date</b>
<b>Gregory Maichack</b> Pastel Paint the 45-Million Dollar Flower	Fang Liu	\$470.00	January 19, 2017
<b>Land's Sake</b> Open Farmyard - Experiencing Farm Life	Jinshang Shen	\$1,250.00	Weekly, from June through mid-October
<b>Weston Friendly Society</b> A Christmas Carol	Rebekah Lord Gardiner	\$700.00	November 26 <sup>th</sup> through December 4 <sup>th</sup> , 2016
<b>The Massachusetts Educational Theater Guild</b> Massachusetts Theater Celebration	Tricia Liu	\$500.00	March 18, 2017
<b>Jacob Litoff</b> Music Concert	Emily Fishkin	\$330.00	October 2017
<b>Weston Drama Workshop</b> Bringing the Dance in Billy Elliot	Thomas Szekely	\$1,000.00	July 2017
<b>Sara Ann Curry</b> Stories Yet to be Told	Amy Gerson	\$150.00	February 14, 2017

### 2016 Weston Cultural Council Members

*Appointed by the Board of Selectmen*

Tricia Liu, Chair	April 2018	Amy Gerson	April 2018
Jinshan Shen, Treasurer	April 2018	Fang Liu	February 2018
Cheryl Alpert	<i>Resigned</i>	Audrey Pepper	March 2016
Inge Thorn Engler	March 2016	Diane Sherlock	November 2017
Emily Fishkin	April 2019	Thomas Szekely	November 2017
Rebekah Lord Gardiner	April 2019		

## REPORT OF THE WESTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

### Trustees of the Weston Public Library

This was a busy year. We encouraged more people to visit the Library as we focused more on community outreach. The early months of 2016 were spent preparing for the design fund request for the Weston Art and Innovation Center, or WAIC, to be developed in the Old Library building. Preparations paid off, as the funds were approved by Town Meeting in May. More details on that effort can be found later in this report.

As always, the Library's staff underwent changes during the year. Well-loved staff members moved on, and we welcomed several new talented members to our team.

Interior and exterior updates to the building continued, including updated interior signage and, with a focus on safety, a handicapped rail was added along the front walkway, leading to the parking area. Curbing improvements were made and more will follow. Also, a Soofa, a solar powered charging station that doubles as a park bench, was added to the front lawn of the Library. This generous gift from the Friends of the Weston Public Library (the Friends) provides a public place for recharging electronic devices at any time, regardless of whether the Library is open.



*The Friends of Weston Public Library generously provided funding for the addition of a solar charging bench as a gift to commemorate their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Soofa Solar Bench is a combined outdoor bench and solar powered charging station*

Our many cultural programs were varied and successful, including a very special "Afternoon at Downtown Abbey," which was sponsored by the Friends. Author talks, concerts, reading groups, lectures, art exhibits and children's events were well attended throughout the year.

We look ahead to the introduction of "One Point of Service," which entails blending the Reference and Circulation desks together for more effective service. We also anticipate wide appreciation for our new public computer system, through Useful, that will be introduced in 2017.

While we focus on always improving service for all library users, we also look ahead to the renovation of the Old Library building and the creation of the Weston Art and Innovation Center, which will enable us to welcome more people and offer more services.

### Adult Services Department

In 2016, the total number of items checked out at Weston Library was 366,945. Books are the most frequently circulated item, followed by DVDs, and books on CD. While there were 9,670 e-books checked out, this figure represents approximately 10 percent of the books that are being read by our patrons. In spite of the many tablets and electronic reading gadgets, print books remain overwhelmingly more popular. By subject, the most widely read genres at the Weston Public Library are (in order of popularity): Fiction, Cooking, Mystery Fiction, Travel, Medical/Fitness, Self Help, Economics, books in Chinese, Management/Public Relations, and Social Science.

Library users visit our curated collection of "Best Bets" and "Awards" so often that this section was expanded in 2016. When a patron asks for a really good book, this section is their "best bet." Titles that were popular in this collection included: "My Brilliant Friend," by Elena Ferrante; "A Man Called Ove,"

by Fredrik Backman; "In the Unlikely Event," by Judy Blume; "Never Go Back," by Lee Child; "Orphan Train," by Christina Baker Kline; "Three Wishes," by Liane Moriarty; and "The Light Between Oceans," by M. L. Stedman. Most borrowed titles in the "Awards" collection included: "Conservationist," by Nadine Gordimer; "Narrow Road to the Deep North," by Richard Flanagan; "We Are All Completely Beside Ourselves," by Karen Joy Fowler; "Death Comes to Pemberley," by P. D. James; and "The Sympathizer," by Viet Thanh Nguyen.

Weston Public Library participates in the OverDrive Advantage program, which allows the Library to purchase additional e-books and audiobooks for the exclusive use of Weston residents. The 886 digital titles available in the Advantage collection were checked out a total of 2,952 times. While print borrowing is still more popular, patrons' use of our e-books has increased an average of 12 percent between 2015 and 2016. Currently, the most popular titles from the e-book list are: "Hillbilly Elegy," by J. D. Vance; "A Man Called Ove" by Fredrik Backman; "A Gentleman in Moscow," by Amor Towles; "Small Great Things," by Jodi Picoult; and "The Underground Railroad," by Colson Whitehead. The e-books that were most circulated in 2016 were: "The Nightingale," by Kristin Hannah; "The Girl on the Train," by Paula Hawkins; "All the Light We Cannot See," by Anthony Doerr; "The Sympathizer," by Viet Thanh Nguyen; and "Me Before You," by Jojo Moyes.

What *was* the most popular book in Weston in 2016? It was "When Breath Becomes Air," by Paul Kalanith, the moving account of a young doctor finishing medical school and at the same time learning of his own terminal diagnosis.

The long-standing Fiction Book Discussion Group meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month, from September to May. The group is co-facilitated by the Adult Services Librarian and a dedicated group member who provides tireless leadership and logistical support. At its May meeting, a reading list is chosen for the next year. Members of the group volunteer to lead the book discussions each month. A majority of group members have attended 10 years or longer and many have been members for 30-plus years.

### Youth Services Department

The borrowing of children's books increased in 2016 over the prior year by about 1,500 items. A total of 164,869 items circulated from the Youth Services Department throughout the year. Children visiting the Library asked 13,438 reference questions this year (compared to 14,259 in 2015) and the number of requests to use a computer decreased slightly from the prior year. This may be due to children bringing their own devices to the Library with them. We also have continued the 2015 policy of computer use for homework only until 5:00 p.m.

### *Children's Programming*

In 2016, Youth Services offered more than 300 programs for children of all ages. Continuing programs included Jeannie Mack's monthly Lapsit, Two Year Old Storytime, Preschool Storytime, After School Book Clubs for grades 1 - 5, Read to a Dog, and Vacation Craft Programs. We also hosted monthly preschool visits from the Roxbury Weston Preschool and from four classes from the Weston Windows Program at both Country and Woodland schools.

In June, the Kindergarten classes from Country School stopped by to learn about the Library and the Summer Reading Program. Over the summer, 20 - 25 Metco students participated in four different workshops held at the Library in conjunction with the SOAR (Summer Opportunities in Academics and Recreation) Program.

Throughout the school year, several Field School classes came in to do research projects and to find books to read. We also hosted two sessions of STEM (Science Technology, Engineering, and Math) programs in coordination with Weston Community Partnerships. Finally, the Weston Community Children's

Association (WCCA) came in for several group storytimes. The WCCA also sponsored Library Week and Book Week, with author visits, storytimes, and a puppet show.



*Learning about aerodynamic force during ScienceTellers Dragons & Dreams, one of the Science Saturday programs*

This year, we started a new Science Saturday program, which ran during the school year on the second Saturday of the month. Some of the programs we sponsored were “Chemystery,” “Watts Up,” “Walloping Weather,” “Matter of Fact,” and “Space Travel” from Mad Science of Greater Boston, and “Dragons and Dreams” from Sciencetellers. Ed the Wizard came in to do a Halloween program, which was co-sponsored by the Weston Cultural Council. We also had a spring and fall session of Toddler Signing, with Sheryl White of BabyKneads. We started an evening Pajama Storytime once a month in the fall, for families with kids ages four to seven. Our fall topics were Family and Friends, Nature, and Imagination.

Popular programs for teens this year included several workshops for college preparation, two watercolor workshops, a talk on teen resiliency, a robotics class, and two 3D printing workshops.

During the summer, we also had a range of different programs and crafts for everyone, including: Kidstock Theater; Jungle Jim; The Museum of Science Traveling Programs with Reptiles and Super Cold Science; Jedi Jim; and workshops for watercolors, stained glass, and 3D printing. In our Craft Room, projects included: Olympic bracelets; marshmallow shooters; sports pennants; bubble paintings; and sports Frisbees.

This fall, we replaced the table tops in the Craft Room. The previous table tops dated back to the original 1995 building, and were covered with glitter and grit. The new kiwi-colored tables really brighten up the room.

#### *Summer Reading Program*

This year, the Massachusetts Library System, the organization that manages the Summer Reading Program, introduced a new online tool for registration and reading tracking. Now, instead of just counting books and/or minutes, participants in all three reading groups (Preschoolers, Elementary Readers, and Teens) could also complete reading challenges for prizes. Some of those challenges included creating things, taking photographs of reading endeavors, and writing reports on what was read. We had over 70 different challenges in all and kids could continue to count their time reading. In order to help coach our readers and parents through the new database, we created a series of short commercials explaining the process.

By the end of the summer, 363 children had registered and 295 finished the programs. The Young Readers category had 46 preschoolers who read 1,288 books; the Reading Program category had 204 children who completed 716 challenges and read for 214,008 minutes; and the Teen Program category had 45 teens that read 367 books and completed 140 challenges. Our big prize of the summer was a Kindle e-reader, which was won by Lucie Watkins. Our Guessing Jars this summer contained bubble gum (and prizes), and were guessed by Zachary Kano and Ari Pulsone.

#### Reference Department

The Reference Department is staffed by a small team of dedicated and enthusiastic librarians whose responsibilities are wide-ranging:

- responding to both routine questions and providing research assistance;
- instructing patrons in the use of electronic resources;
- helping people to select books, movies and audiobooks;
- managing museum passes;
- facilitating interlibrary loan service;
- planning programs for adults;
- designing marketing materials and research aids;
- creating displays;
- assisting with collection development;
- engaging in outreach efforts; and
- proctoring exams

This year our team responded to nearly 12,000 queries across the desk, via telephone, email and in off-desk consultation.

In response to current trends in library services, our team has been conducting an ongoing evaluation of books in the reference collection. As patrons increasingly find the information they need using web-based resources, the use of these books has declined. Over the last few years those titles considered to be standard and authoritative were mostly reassigned to the circulating stacks. Infrequently used reference books and those superseded by electronic resources were withdrawn. Gradually, the configuration of the Department has changed. Only two of the six original shelving units remain and these are now used to highlight foreign language materials and a new collection of titles by local authors. Over and above that, the reference area has been further renewed by the addition of study space, which, as was demonstrated by the 13 percent increase in study room reservations, is much appreciated by patrons.

To complement current database offerings, the Library's collection was enhanced by the addition of the following resources: the popular ConsumerReports.org guides patrons in search of the best choices in products; Lynda.com teaches business, software, technology and creative skills; and lastly, the renowned Oxford English Dictionary is accessible through an easy to use interface. Brochures were created to publicize these resources. Tracking of reference transactions was improved with the implementation of an excellent web-based service called Gimlet. Staff is now able to create a knowledge base of questions and answers and pull a variety of reports that can be used to improve library services.

In the changing landscape of reference services one aspect that continues to expand is readers' advisory services. Our librarians use a range of approaches to help patrons identify materials that will appeal to their interests:

- At the front entrance, patrons entering the Library are welcomed with varying displays featuring an endless array of topics
- Readers wanting to talk about books can join the conversation at the non-fiction book group, which met nine times in 2016 with a total of 91 participants
- A video segment called "Check it Out!" filmed by the Weston Media Center offers suggestions of book titles that staff have enjoyed
- "In the News" is a flyer prepared twice a month to connect interesting news and popular culture events to library resources
- The Library's book blog "FeastonBooks" added 51 new posts this year and reported 1,093 views this year

With funding from the Friends of the Weston Public Library, the Reference Department coordinated a variety of programs for adults throughout the year, including:

- Poetry Rhythm and Rhymes;
- Creative Writing for Fun;

- How to Catch a Story;
- A Visit from E. A. Poe;
- Foraging for Wild Edibles;
- English as a Second Language tutoring and English as a Second Language Conversation Groups;
- Great Operatic Divas;
- Knitting with Iris;
- Feasting from Our Local Farms;
- Armenian Cooking;
- Crochet for Beginners; What is Zentangle?;
- Enjoy Fantastic Foliage; and
- the Financial Planning series

A total of 1,467 people attended 475 programs coordinated by the Reference team.

### Local History Room

The staff of the Local History Room, which is supported by the Friends of the Weston Public Library, assists library patrons in their Weston historical and genealogical research pursuits. During the year, 150 queries were answered. These searches ranged in complexity from topics discussed at Town Meeting such as the Case Campus, the Josiah Smith Tavern, Lamson Park, the Old Library, and the Weston Rail Trail to the genealogy of families in Weston from the 1600s to the present.

In addition, the Local History Librarian continues to work with the Weston Public Schools and the Weston Historical Society. A presentation in May on the “Green Books” of the Hillcrest Gardens, which was operated by Marion R. Case from 1910-1940, was attended by 60 students and their teachers from the Field School. The students were working on a project on the history of the Field School, which is located on land formerly owned by the Case family.

The Weston Historical Society continued to showcase its vast collection of artifacts from Weston’s history, which included displays entitled “Cold War Preparedness in Weston” and “The History of the First Parish Friendly Society.”

A new section for Local Authors has recently been placed just outside the Local History Room. The books include adult and children’s titles, from poetry to prose, from fiction to non-fiction. You are welcome to peruse the authors from Amadon to Wood and titles from “Avelinda” to “Wedgewood.”

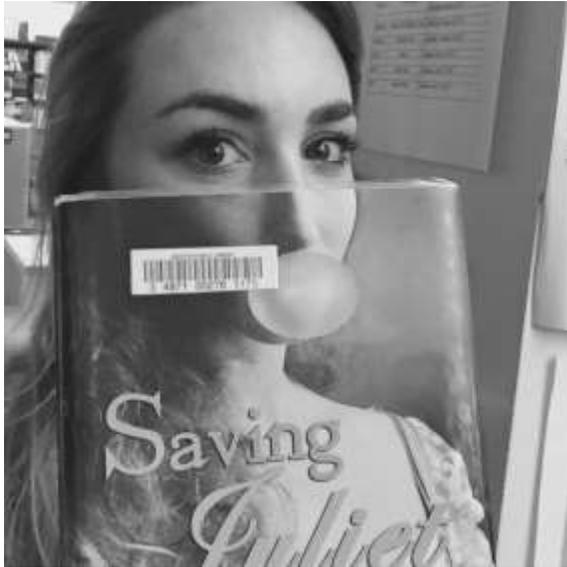
### Technical Services Department

In 2016, approximately 12,266 new items were added to the library collection. Technical Services is responsible for the physical processing and creation of item records in its electronic management system for most of these items. Physically processing an item entails preparing it to go on the shelf by adding a spine label with a call number, adding a barcode and radio-frequency identification (RFID) tag, and attaching any corresponding stickers. Creating an item record is the mechanism for adding the item into the Library’s computer system so that it can be found by patrons searching for it.

Items added to the collection this year were:

- 7,861 books
- 871 DVDs
- 379 books on CD
- 393 music CDs
- 428 Overdrive Advantage e-books and Audiobooks
- 128 Playaway Audio
- 13 Playaway Views

- 12 Playaway Tablets
- 2,181 magazine issues for which item records were created by the Adult Circulation and Youth Services Departments



*#bookfacefriday - a popular posting on Instagram this year where staff members' faces were blended with book covers*

The Technical Services Department manages the appearance of items in the collection. In 2016, call number prefixes for fiction (books, large print and media) were changed from MYS, SCI, ROM, FAN and FIC abbreviations to FICTION in order to make the call numbers less confusing. Mysteries and other genres receive stickers on their spines to aid with identifying them when paging or shelving a book. Adult paperbacks now have a call number prefix PBK instead of PB at the end.

Technical Services staff created many clever and fun displays during the year. Some of the most notable were: staff suggestions, which included bookmarks with the reason why it was a favorite book; National Preparedness Month; National Library Month (including banned books); books with captivating covers; and a display entitled "Intrigued by the first line?" that featured books hidden in paper bags showing only a typed card with the book's opening line. Weston Library also joined Instagram in 2016 and

shared photos of displays in addition to other inviting aspects of the Library. One hashtag trend that was a big success was "#bookfacefriday," which blended staff members' faces and book covers.

The Interlude program has become a perennial favorite and a welcome respite in cold winter months. A giant crossword puzzle was mounted to cardboard and added to the reading room. Also added was a jigsaw puzzle challenge.

#### Arts and Exhibitions Committee

The mission of the Arts and Exhibition Committee is to include an ongoing rotation of art at the Library by inviting local artists to show their work in the gallery each month. One Library Trustee serves on the committee alongside these dedicated volunteers. The gallery space is continually booked throughout the year, with the exception of the month of August. Artists selected in 2016 were: George Taylor; Swapan Jha; Miranda Updike; Beverly Foster; Fan Xue Hua; Nancy Walton; Angela Turner; Louis Pingitore; Tim Masters; and Catherine Doocy. The addition of beautiful art each month offers innumerable benefit to the library community. For example, a classroom teacher from Field School brings students to the gallery to spark their imaginations for poetry writing.

#### The Friends of the Weston Public Library

Additional funding for activities and events, which may not be otherwise funded, is provided for by the Friends in order to enrich the Library and the community.

Throughout the year, the Programs Committee has sponsored several interesting programs. Popular programs this year included the "Fashions of Downton Abbey," which was a presentation made by fashion historian Karen Antonowicz, a talk by animal behaviorist Ray McSoley, and a book signing with local author Ted Reinstein for his book documenting famous New England feuds. The committee seeks programs that are diverse and appeal to various age groups.

The Music Committee hosted over 10 world class concerts in the Library, which included performances by pianist Igor Lovchinsky, the Weston Wind Quintet, and the Ancient Mariners Dixieland Band. All performances were very well attended by residents from Weston and surrounding towns. The all-day community celebration, MusicFest, has been going strong for more than a decade. In 2016, it was held on the second Saturday in May and musicians of all ages signed up to perform recitals.



*Art exhibit at the Library inspires poetry writing*

In spring, the Hospitality Committee hosted the annual staff luncheon. Refreshments and goodie bags were provided by the Friends. This annual event fosters a relaxed atmosphere for library staff, the Friends, and guests to mingle.

The Newsletter Committee published three newsletters last year, one in the fall, winter and spring. Newsletters are sent electronically to our members and print copies are made available at the Library for everyone.

The Friends continued to sponsor passes to Boston-area museums and this year a pass to the House of Seven Gables was added. Passes are available to everyone in the community and surrounding towns.

The Annual Book and Bake Sale were held in early November and was well attended and appreciated by the community. The book cart continues to be popular and internet sales have been very strong. In June, a one-day book sale was held to kick off the Summer Reading Program.

In 2016, a solar charging bench was given to the Library as a gift to commemorate the Friends' 50th Anniversary. The bench allows patrons to charge their phone or tablet while relaxing on the Library grounds. The Friends also continued to support the Library in other ways, by funding children's summer reading programs, adult programs, CDs, DVDs, and more. We are very thankful to our 400-plus members, book donors, and board and committee members for their continued commitment and support.

#### Weston Art and Innovation Center - a Branch of the Weston Public Library

In December of 2015, the Josiah Smith Tavern and Old Library Working Group presented its unanimous support for the Weston Art and Innovation Center (WAIC) proposal to renovate and refit the Old Library as a community center for the arts, fabrication, and learning. Upon the news, the Board of Library Trustees formed the Weston Art and Innovation Center Advisory Board, a sub-committee of the Trustees, to move the project through Town Meetings and to develop the programming for this new venture.

The Advisory Board, established in January, accomplished the following during the year:

- Held three "informational teas" at the Library, two town-wide forums, and hosted an open house in the Old Library
- Presented to various Town government committees and community organizations, including the Council on Aging, the League of Women Voters, the Finance Committee, the Recreation Commission, the Traffic and Sidewalk Committee, the First Parish Church and the St. Julia Church
- Distributed a town-wide survey to gauge the type of programming that would be of most interest to residents
- Established a website, a Facebook page, and a monthly e-newsletter, and published several articles in the Town Crier

- Hosted seven art or technology events in Town
- Visited several art centers and makerspaces in the MetroWest area, including the New Art Center in Newton, the HATCH in Watertown, the Artisans' Asylum in Somerville, the Umbrella in Concord, the Framingham Makerspace, and the Lexington Arts and Crafts Society



*One of the first WAIC events was held at Spring Fling, where muralist and illustrator Ben Jundanian was invited to showcase his talent by creating a mural that reflects the Town of Weston. Artists of all ages and abilities were invited to add their images to the mural as it evolved and grew over the course of the event*

Annual Town Meeting overwhelmingly approved the Weston Art and Innovation Center proposal in May by voting for the use of Community Preservation Act funds for the design and engineering drawings. In June, the Permanent Building Committee began working with the Advisory Board on the request for proposals for designer services for the adaptive re-use and renovation of the Old Library. A design firm was selected out of 14 responses. The Advisory Board will be working towards the construction fund request, anticipated for the 2017 fall Special Town Meeting.

#### 2016 Board of Library Trustees

*Elected by the Voters*

Doris A. Sullivan, Chair	2019	Denise Mosher	2018
Joel Angiolillo	2018	Joseph W. Mullin	2017
Emily Hutcheson	2019	Julie Panagakos	2017

#### Weston Art and Innovation Advisory Board

*Appointed by the Trustees*

Joel Angiolillo	John Sallay
Cecily Cassum	John Thompson
Gloria Cole	Adam Wisnia
Lee McCanne	Susan Brennan, ex officio
Nicole Mordecai	Diane Butt, ex officio
Audrey Pepper	Doris Sullivan, ex officio

## REPORT OF THE RECREATION DEPARTMENT

The Recreation Department had yet another busy year in 2016 with its core programming efforts remaining consistent with years' past and the various summer camps and Memorial Pool topping the lists. New programs for adults that were geared toward increasing physical activity were well received, as well. Three renovation and construction projects of varying sizes took place and funding was secured for capital upgrades to Memorial Pool. The Recreation Commission also partnered with the Conservation Commission on two land preservation efforts that will have long-term positive impacts for the Town.

Adult programming gained positive participation in some new and exciting programs. In the spring, Weston Recreation partnered with Marathon Sports in Wellesley to host a successful 5 kilometer (3.1 mile) training program, helping many participants complete the Run for Lovelane 5k road race in June. An adult, 3 vs. 3 basketball tournament was also met with great enthusiasm, and rivalries have developed for future tournaments. In total, 278 adults registered and participated in at least one organized program with many doing multiple programs.

Hipstitch sewing classes and many, wildly popular Lego classes were added to our after-school youth programming, and our single-event baking and cooking workshops regained in popularity. Also, our standard popular classes such as Make-It Bake-It Take-It, Gymnastics, and Super-Sports continued to fill to capacity with new and returning participants. Over the course of the year, we enrolled and entertained 1,372 participants in our preschool and youth workshop programs.

The Red Waves Swim Team had the same coaching staff return for the third year in a row and participation greatly increased. The team had 143 swimmers, which is 47 more over the 2015 season for an increase of 48 percent. With its emphasis on participation and inclusion, Weston parents continued to choose Red Waves over other more-competitive programs. Children on Red Waves, in turn, graduate to the nationally-ranked Weston High School team Red Tide.



*Camp Outer Limits and KWEST campers on a whitewater rafting field trip*

The Memorial Pool enjoyed a sunny summer with many enthusiastic swimmers. The pool had a total of 19,471 visits with more than 500 children taking part in group or camp swimming lessons. The staff hosted 11 family-fun special pool events, including the Annual July 4<sup>th</sup> Celebration, a Caribbean Cruise-themed event, complete with a poolside ice cream sundae buffet, and a Star Wars Day featuring a poolside Jedi Training Class. The Recreation Department partnered with SOAR (Summer Opportunities in Academics and Recreation), again, to offer swim lessons for the children involved with the Metco Summer program.

Summer Camps were highly successful and more fun than ever this year. We had 1,563 campers enrolled during our six-week sessions, which was an increase of three campers over 2015. We offered the important Counselor in Training (CIT) program, again, which teaches Weston teens the skills needed to be future camp counselors. The biggest field trip of the summer was particularly well-received. KWEST and Outer Limits ventured to the Berkshires and had the adventure of a life time with a tree-top roller coaster zip line and a half day of white water rafting. KWEST and Outer Limits also had the crazy camp sleepover with 42 campers who spent the night in the Community Center and enjoyed ice cream sundaes, games and movies galore. Our younger campers in ABC and Adventure had a great time with the kids' carnival complete with candy, popcorn, bounce houses, and traditional carnival games. Color Games was the most popular week at camp and included the triathlon, favorite color day, and original chants

and cheers. This summer, we added electronic medical forms, which made it easier for parents, guardians and staff to ensure all camper information is current and correct on site and especially for times when campers are off site on field trips.

The Recreation Department continued its tradition of partnering with Weston Public Schools to offer another Junior Broadway production. This year, "The Lion King" was performed by 5<sup>th</sup> grade students and directed by high school students. More than \$8,000 was raised through ticket sales, program advertisements and concession sales for the Make-A-Wish Foundation.



*Jedi Training at the Memorial Pool*

Finally, the Recreation Department continued its tradition of offering free community events, including the Spring Egg Hunt, the September 11<sup>th</sup> Memorial Flag Display, and the Summer Concert Series. The egg hunt and flag display brought larger-than-usual turnouts, while the weekly concerts continued to be a hit. The memorial flag display received an endowment donation from two anonymous Weston families, which will ensure that this tradition continues for many more years.

The Recreation Department staff consists of seven full-time employees who are assisted by many dedicated part-time and seasonal staff. Regular trainings are conducted with all staff members in accordance with the laws and codes for their jobs and also to ensure a positive environment for all Recreation Department participants.

The budget for fiscal year 2016 was \$1,504,797 and was offset by \$1,034,053 in revenue. An additional \$485,521 came from the tax levy and revenues in the Town's general funds. The difference of \$14,777 was transferred to the Retained Earnings account. The Community Center continued to be a popular place for events and functions. The primary function hall commonly referred to as the Great Room was rented a total of 23 times and classroom space was rented out a total of 10 times for meetings and smaller birthday parties. The building rental revenue for fiscal 2016 was \$16,791. The Community Center is used by various community groups at minimal charge on a monthly basis. The groups that use the Community Center most often are Weston Little League Baseball, Weston Youth Lacrosse, Land's Sake Board of Directors, Wayland/Weston Rowing Association, Weston Community Children's Association (WCCA), and the Weston Dad's Foundation.

Capital projects included a renovation at Burt Field, the creation of safety steps at the College Pond skating area, and the beginning of playground construction at Lamson Park. The Burt Field project was initiated by the Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee under the direction of the Recreation Director; more details can be found in that committee's report. Access to the ice skating area at College Pond was improved dramatically with appreciation to Weston Boy Scout Michael McLoughlin who took this on as his Eagle Scout project. With the help of his family and Weston Boy Scout Troop 157, Michael designed and built a natural-looking stairway made of wood and crushed stone and consisting of 14 steps in total to replace the trail that was suffering from extensive erosion. Lastly, the building of a new playground at Lamson Park began with great attention. A public effort in the form of a petitioned Special Town Meeting held in February was called in order to move the playground to Case Estates. This petitioned warrant article failed and resulted in the Recreation Commission moving forward in approving a smaller design and layout. Construction began in the fall only to be halted due to the discovery of ash during excavation. The soil test confirmed lead, arsenic and other contaminants consistent with coal ash. Though the contamination levels were within an exemption range, they were

reported and remediation efforts were started in order to keep the process transparent. It is expected that the soil will be remediated and the playground completed in 2017.

At November Special Town Meeting, the Recreation Department received \$120,000 in capital funds to conduct capital repairs to the swimming pool, including upgraded electrical work, concrete repair, well repair, roof replacement on the filter house, and replacement of a removable staircase needed for accessibility. This Town Meeting also approved the request to increase the size of the Recreation Commission from six to seven members.



*Weston Red Waves had a terrific season this year with lots of great talent gearing up for the Red Tide*

The Recreation Commission partnered with the Conservation Commission on two land protection initiatives. Ownership of both the Cat Rock and Burt Field properties were transferred to the Conservation to guarantee protection as open space, also known as Article 97 protection. A Memorandum of Understanding was developed to identify the Recreation Commission as the managing authority over a specific area of each property, which includes the existing ballfields. The Recreation Commission has also maintained authority to investigate further development for recreational purposes within these specific areas.

2016 Recreation Commission Members

*Elected by the voters*

Matthew Schulman, Chair	2019	Elly D. Pendergast	2017
Michelle Callanan	2018	Victoria A. Whalen	2019
Franz Loeber	2018	Xinsheng Zhu	2017



## REPORT OF THE RECREATION MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

The Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee began the year by implementing the final upgrade plan outlined in the 10-year Master Plan developed in 2005, which was a renovation to Burt Field. The project was advertised for bids early in the year and, after some scheduling delays, was completed in September. The renovation included the addition of an 8 vs. 8 soccer formation playing field and much needed upgrades to the baseball infield. The project finished under budget and the field is scheduled to re-open for baseball in the spring of 2017 and soccer in the fall of 2017.

The Committee also focused its attention on a renewed maintenance effort on existing fields, which was identified as a priority by residents in a 2015 survey. This effort was headed up by the Fields and Grounds Coordinator; a new Town Facilities position approved in the budget at the 2015 Town Meeting. Mr. Ben Polimer assumed this role in January, and through his efforts and the support of this Committee, noticeable improvements have been made at Alphabet Field and many fields at the Middle School and High School. By the end of the year, the Committee was developing a plan to address less visible fields, such as Cherry Brook and Ferrelli Field.

The Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee supported the efforts of the School Committee to secure design fees to renovate Proctor Field at the High School, which will involve a synthetic turf field to replace the existing natural turf and a renovated track. The request for construction funds is anticipated to come before Annual Town Meeting in 2017. The Committee also initiated the investigation of a Town-wide irrigation management system, which could provide a cost benefit through water usage monitoring.

In 2017, this group expects to continue working with the School Committee on the Proctor Field Project, be involved in the Rail Trail project, and continue to analyze and improve maintenance practices on all Town and School fields.



*Fields and Grounds Coordinator  
Ben Polimer started in Weston in  
January*

### 2016 Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee Members

*At-large members jointly appointed by the Board of Selectmen and School Committee*

Trevor MacDonald	At-large
Tani Marinovich	At-large
Alan Orth	At-large
Alex Cobb	School Committee
Matthew Schulman	Recreation Commission
Andrew Van Ogtrop	Weston Youth Lacrosse
Robert Scott	President, Weston Little League
Patrick O'Donnell	Weston Youth Soccer
Peter Foley	Athletic Director (retired), ex officio
Ben Polimer	Field and Grounds Coordinator, ex officio
Michael McGrath	Athletic Director, ex officio
Chris Fitzgerald	Recreation Director, ex officio