



# WESTWOOD

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## A COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Winter 2010

Volume 23 Number 2

## Neighbors Helping Neighbors

*A concept that makes a town a community.*

Even the smallest acts of kindness go a long way towards helping our neighbors.

### Westwood Community Chest Offers Financial Assistance from Generosity of Those More Fortunate

Westwood Community Chest (WCC) is a community-based, non-profit organization dedicated to helping Westwood residents in need through temporary financial assistance. WCC awards funds to our neighbors facing financial difficulty so they can meet basic needs –medical expenses, utility payments, and housing payments. WCC also runs a Campership program that provides unique needs-based scholarships so school-aged children may attend summer camp. All WCC funds are distributed directly to the company or camp.

The turbulent economy continues to pose difficult challenges for many families, including unemployment, deterioration of retirement savings, and reductions in needed support services. Not surprisingly, WCC has seen a record number of new applicants in the past year, as well as an increase in repeat applications. In just the last year, the number of Westwood residents requesting assistance increased from 56 to 70, and the average award has increased by \$100 in the last three years. Clearly, more of our neighbors struggle with utility and medical bills.

Funding for Westwood Community Chest is provided by local businesses and by fellow residents who make individual donations. Through the generosity of our donors, WCC has risen to the challenges posed by the difficult economic environment. To date, WCC has not had to turn away individuals or families due to insufficient funding.

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### Aid to the Elderly and Disabled Tax Fund Counting on You

*(Excerpted from a letter to residents from the Aid to the Elderly and Disabled Tax Fund Committee, dated 10-20-2010.)*

In these trying economic times, it is not surprising that many Westwood elderly and disabled residents find it difficult to continue to live in the town they call home and still make ends meet. For many, living on fixed incomes and paying rising fuel costs and real estate taxes is a struggle.

Fortunately, we live in a town that cares about all of its residents. The Aid to the Elderly and Disabled Tax Fund, established by Westwood residents at Town Meeting in 1999, provides real estate tax assistance to qualifying, low income elderly and disabled residents. For the past 11 years, this Fund has assisted many long-term residents by paying a portion of their tax bills.

The success of the Fund depends completely on the generosity of residents and businesses,

as it is comprised solely of donations. “Community support of our seniors and disabled is the key to helping these neighbors of ours remain in the town, and in the homes they love,” said Pat Ahearn, Chairman of the Elderly and Disabled Tax Fund Committee.

“Thank you for your continued generosity – your kindness makes a real difference in my life... Westwood has been such

*“Thank you for your continued generosity – your kindness makes a real difference in my life... Westwood has been such a wonderful town to raise our family over the past 50 years. I could not imagine living elsewhere.”*

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## Did You Know . . .

- Did you know that there is a new *Food Allergen Awareness Regulation*? The Westwood Board of Health would like to inform residents that the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network identified the eight most common food allergens as: peanuts, tree nuts, fish, shellfish, eggs, milk, and soy to prevent adverse reactions to food allergens. By October 1st, local food establishments had to display on their menus a statement that read “before placing your order, please inform your server if a person in your party has a food allergy.” By February 1, 2011, food establishments must attend training and receive a certificate of allergen awareness which must be posted in the establishment. Look for the awareness statement on menus where you dine. For more information, please contact the Health Department at [mrc@townhall.westwood.ma.us](mailto:mrc@townhall.westwood.ma.us) or call 781-320-1027/1026. ❖
- Did you know that the Westwood Board of Health with the help of 30 Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers administered 950 doses of seasonal flu vaccine in three hours at the annual seasonal flu clinic held on Saturday October 23, 2010? This was the first time the Board of Health administered seasonal flu vaccine to children in a clinic setting. It was also the most vaccines ever administered at the annual clinic. We need medical and non-medical volunteers to become members of the MRC. If you are 18 years of age or older and would like to become a member of the MRC please visit the Board of Health webpage at [www.townhall.westwood.ma.us](http://www.townhall.westwood.ma.us) or contact the Health Department at [mrc@townhall.westwood.ma.us](mailto:mrc@townhall.westwood.ma.us) or 781-320-1026/1027. ❖
- Did you know that library users have access to the OverDrive Audio Book Collection via the web site at [www.westwoodlibrary.org/](http://www.westwoodlibrary.org/)? Hundreds of current and classic book titles are available for download with your library card. Most Apple and MP3 players are compatible with the OverDrive collection. Just click on Downloadable Audio Books in the Quick Links section to get started! ❖

### “Sleep Tight; Don’t Let the Bed Bugs Bite!”

- Did you know that bed bugs have made a resurgence in the United States? The Westwood Board of Health offers the following information to prevent bed bugs from becoming unwelcome guests.

Bed bugs are tiny, brown, flat, oval-shaped insects that feed on the blood of humans and may live for weeks without a feeding. They are called ‘bed bugs’ because they most often live in your bed, but they can also be found in upholstered furniture, behind wallpaper and in cracks and crevices.

To avoid bed bugs when traveling:

- Treat the exterior of your luggage with a appropriately labeled insect repellent, before you leave home.
- Place your luggage on a luggage stand, away from beds and upholstered furniture and keep your clothing in your suitcase on the stand
- Avoid bringing personal items, such as pillows and blankets
- Check the mattress and box spring at the corners and edges for spotting, which is a sign of bed bugs

To prevent bringing bedbugs home with you after traveling:

- Avoid placing luggage on your bed
- Wash and dry clothing before storing

Most people do not have a reaction to bites. If you develop a rash see your physician. ❖

### All Night Parking Ban Information

- Did you know that there is an all night parking ban in Westwood during the winter? The Westwood Police Department wants to advise all residents that in accordance with town by-laws (Article 10. Police regulations. Section 18), from **November 1st through April 30th** on-street parking for longer than two hours between 2 am and 6 am is prohibited. Violations of this by-law may result in your receiving a fine of \$15.00. Residents are also reminded that parking on any sidewalk **at any time** is prohibited. ❖

## Updated Town Charter Draft Available for Residents’ Review

The Board of Selectmen appointed the Government and Charter Study Task Force last year to review the current Town Charter which has not been updated since its adoption in 1970. The Task Force has recently prepared a draft of a revised Town Charter, and residents are encouraged to review the revised Charter on the town website at [www.townhall.westwood.ma.us](http://www.townhall.westwood.ma.us) within the Government and Charter Study Task Force’s publication section.

Residents’ comments and suggestions pertaining to the Charter revisions are welcome via email to [amcintyre@townhall.westwood.ma.us](mailto:amcintyre@townhall.westwood.ma.us) or by mail to Government and Charter Study Task Force, Town Hall, 580 High Street, Westwood.

Residents are encouraged to attend a Public Forum conducted by the Task Force on Wednesday, December 15, 2010, at 7:00 pm in the Thurston Middle School Auditorium. A presentation summarizing the Charter changes will be made by the Task Force followed by an open discussion. ❖

**Did You Know . . .** (continued)

- The Assessors' office will be accepting abatement applications from property owners who feel that their real estate assessment is over-valued. Owners have until February 1, 2011 to file these applications. Any owner who is interested should come into the Assessors' office anytime after January 1, 2011. They should first ask for a copy of their property record card. If all the data on the card is accurate, the owner will have to prove the property is over-valued by using comparable sales that occurred during the calendar year 2009. More information is available on this process in the Assessors' office, please call 781.326.1904 with any questions.

**TOWN OF WESTWOOD PERSONAL REAL ESTATE EXEMPTIONS**

Clause	Basic Qualifications	Maximum Income	Maximum Assets Other than domicile	Exemption Amount
<b>Elderly:</b>				
17D	Age 70 or older	N/A	\$40,000	\$175
41C	Age 65 or older-single	\$20,000	\$40,000	\$1,000
41C	Age65 or older-married	\$30,000	\$55,000	\$1,000
<b>Veterans:</b>				
22	10% Wartime Service Disability or Purple Heart	N/A	N/A	\$400
22A	Loss of foot, hand, or eye	N/A	N/A	\$750
22B	Loss of two limbs or eyes	N/A	N/A	\$1,250
22C	100% disability with specially adapted housing	N/A	N/A	\$1,500
22E	100% Disability/10% Service	N/A	N/A	\$1,000
22P	Paraplegic due to war injury	N/A	N/A	100%
<b>Others:</b>				
37	Legally Blind	N/A	N/A	\$500
17D	Surviving spouse or orphaned minor child	N/A	\$40,000	\$175
42/43	Surviving spouse or orphaned minor of Police Officer or Fire Fighter Killed in line of duty	N/A	N/A	100%
18	Extreme Hardship – There are several qualifications. Seek further information at the Board of Assessors office.			Varies
<b>Deferred Tax Payment:</b>				
41A	Age 65 or older	\$40,000	N/A	Varies

Deferred taxes accumulate with simple interest at 3%, as a lien on the property until it is sold or the owner(s) is deceased.

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Any resident in need of financial assistance may apply, and the application process is strictly confidential. Applications for assistance are available at the Westwood Police Station, Fire Station, Senior Center, the Post Office on High Street, Town Hall, Westwood Public Libraries, the Recreation Department, and at Westwood Youth and Family Services. Applications can also be accessed online at [www.wcc.cfsites.org](http://www.wcc.cfsites.org). The website is a great resource for information about Westwood Community Chest and about additional avenues of assistance. Westwood Community Chest can be reached by phone at 781-326-3217.

The Westwood Community Chest is run by a volunteer board. In addition, community liaisons serve on the board, and can provide guidance to anyone wishing to learn more about the WCC's programs. Community liaisons include John Antonucci, Superintendent, Westwood Public Schools; Pat Larkin, Westwood Senior Center; Danielle Sutton, Westwood Youth and Family Services; Chief William Chase, Westwood Police; and Sgt. Paul Sicard, Westwood Police.

The concept of "neighbor helping neighbor" is what makes the Westwood Community Chest possible. Donations are especially needed during the winter months as utility bills rise and families make summer camp plans. Contributions are welcomed on an ongoing basis at Westwood Community Chest, P.O. Box 250, Westwood, MA 02090. ❖

## RAINBOW PROFILES: Celebrating the Cultural Diversity of Westwood

*(Rainbow Profiles is a series of articles based on interviews conducted by the Westwood Human Rights Committee with Westwood residents who display the richness and cultural diversity of the Westwood community.)*

### AN INTERVIEW WITH RANDA ISTFAN

There's a Native American Cheyenne proverb that reads, "Do not judge your neighbor until you walk two moons in his moccasins." A popular derivative is "Never judge people until you have walked a mile in their shoes." Although this may be impossible to do literally, this edition's Rainbow Profile can help us at least, in spirit, "try on" a different pair of moccasins by way of listening carefully, and learning a little of what it's like to be an immigrant, walking a new path in a very different culture. And in this same spirit of compassion, we can be aware that it's not just immigrants who suffer judgments for being different. Enjoy reading about this interview with Mrs. Randa Istfan, given by Westwood Human Rights Committee member, Marge Griffin.

#### Meeting Randa

"Civil war had been ongoing in Lebanon" said Randa, "and it was difficult living under the shells." She talked about leaving home and arriving in America in 1985, the first and only one of her family to leave and not return permanently. She'd completed her doctorate in Biochemistry at the American University in Beirut and was accepted for a post-doctoral fellowship at Massachusetts General Hospital. Not too long after she arrived, she became engaged to Nawfal Istfan, whom she'd met in Lebanon. They were married in the Appleton Chapel at Harvard University. Mindful of the political climate in Lebanon and the career opportunities in America, they decided to stay. After moving to Westwood, they started their family. Their two sons, who attended Westwood schools, are now in college.

#### Education and Language Studies a Family High Priority

"Education was important in my family," explained Randa, "and very encouraged. My father is a graduate of MIT with an MS in Electrical Engineering. My father's father was a physician. He came by boat to America for a two year fellowship in medicine. My mother's father was a physician too." The women in Randa's family were also educated. Her mother is a college graduate, as were two aunts, one of whom was awarded a Doctorate of Chemistry from Harvard University. Study in America was valued as an important educational supplement. And in Lebanon, it was common for city women to be educated, even two generations ago.

Trilingual Randa, whose native language is Arabic, was sent to French school in Lebanon, starting at age four. This was not unusual as Lebanon was under French mandate at that time. English studies began in high school and enabled her to complete her university studies in Beirut in English. Her sons are also trilingual, English being added to their Arabic and French.

#### The Move to Westwood

Randa recalled, "It was the American dream to buy a house in a nice community. As we looked at communities with the best public schools, the house we liked was in Westwood." She added this telling point. "We met two Lebanese families who lived here and encouraged us to buy here. It felt secure with friends in town. It's comfortable to have friends because it's intimidating when a town is not diverse." That was 1988. She notes later on that the composition of the town has changed since then.

#### Blending Into a Homogenous Westwood Community

This was challenging. At the outset, they well remembered the uncertainty and dangers of having lived in the midst of a civil war. Randa relates it this way. "We were in survival mode – how to survive and bring up children. It helped a lot that people here were very welcoming." In describing some difficult moments resulting from not being entirely familiar with the American culture and from being of a culture foreign to most people, she admitted, "We suffered feeling different." One time, Randa, who was well-read and educated in her native culture, and then here trying hard to learn about and blend in with her new cultural home, inquired about joining a reading group. The selected book was a well known American classic that, not surprisingly, she'd never heard of. As she inquired about it, even asking the spelling of the title, she felt a misunderstanding towards her that left her feeling humiliated. Another type of challenge occurred when her children's friends came to play in their home. There were culinary aromas from Lebanese recipes that, understandably, were very strange to American children, who would sometimes "make faces" at them.

Add to that learning the American way of life – such as shopping, finding where to buy ingredients for native recipes, understanding the public school system concept, being a parent volunteer, using a public library, ensuring that your children become fluent in English while not losing their Arabic and French, making new friends, learning the ways of American recreation – to name just a few – and, fellow neighbor, we've listened and taken the first few steps in a new neighbor's shoes.

#### Community Activity

Randa's been pleased to be active in and contributing to our community. She has served on the Thurston Middle School PTO, the Friends of Westwood Performing Arts (both sons played in band), in Scouts (one son achieved the Eagle rank), and on the Vestry at St. John's Episcopal Church. Here she adds her special deep gratitude for St. John's saying, "[They have been] so welcoming, unbelievable, supportive – everything!" As an active user of our

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## Updates from the Town Clerk's Office

### Dog Licensing

The Dog licensing season is almost upon us. At the Annual Town Meeting, held on May 3, 2010, the town voted to approve the following bylaw change relative to Dog licensing:

“Effective January 1, 2011, the term of any license issued by the Town Clerk shall be for the period of January 1st to December 31st. The Town may charge a late fee of twenty-five (\$25.00) dollars to be paid by the owners who license said dog or dogs after January 31st”.

- Licensing will begin for 2011, on December 1, 2010 through January 31, 2011.
- You may license your dog by mail, provided you include a copy of a current rabies certificate. If you are licensing your dog for the first time, proof of spay or neutering is also required.
- Kennel owners are required to apply for a special permit per zoning bylaw, sec. 4.339, before you will be able to obtain a license.

Licensing Fees are as follows:

- Dogs **not** Neutered or Spayed .....\$15.00
- Dogs Neutered or Spayed.....\$10.00
- Kennel with up to 4 dogs .....\$30.00
- Kennel with 5 to 9 dogs .....\$50.00
- Kennel with 10 dogs or more .....\$100.00

### Town Census

Please be aware that the 2011 Annual Town Census will be sent to each household on or before January 1, 2011. It is extremely important that you fill this out and return it within 10 days of its receipt. Failure to answer and return the Annual Census may cause a voter to be designated as inactive on the voting list (MGL, Ch.51, Sec4).

Please contact the Town Clerk's office at 781-326-3964 or 781-320-1013 if you have any questions. ❖

### Alumni Association Raffle for scholarships

The Westwood Alumni Association is holding a raffle to raise money for their Scholarship Fund. The Alumni Association has given over \$30,000 to deserving graduates over the years. Only 500 tickets will be sold and the winner gets the choice of a new, sporty hybrid Honda CR-Z (MSRP \$25,000; loaded and equipped with a Navigation system) or \$20,000 cash. Tickets cost \$100 each, or you can buy 5 tickets for \$400. The drawing is scheduled to take place on December 31 (subject to change). Visit the Westwood Alumni website for more information and to purchase raffle tickets: [www.westwoodalumni.org](http://www.westwoodalumni.org). Westwood Alumni has partnered with our sponsor Bernardi Honda of Natick. ❖

## Construction at the Library – Updates

### Parking Restrictions

Parking at the Main Library remains restricted following the move of the Colburn School. The excavated site is fenced off for safety reasons and all traffic must now enter and exit between the Library and the former school location.

Handicapped parking spaces have been moved to the side of the library building. Please use caution when using the parking lot. Visit [www.westwoodlibrary.org](http://www.westwoodlibrary.org) for parking and construction updates.

### Book Sale Earlier Due to Construction

The Main Library will host the Friends Annual Book Sale the week of February 14. The sale will be held a month earlier due to the expected start of library construction. Book Sale Chairs David and Felicity Botwinik have an especially large inventory of fiction and non-fiction titles, many special books, and a great variety of children's and audio-visual items. Don't miss this fun community event and help support the Friends of the Library. ❖

### Talking Trash in Westwood

No more overflowing recycling bins and heavy lifting! If residents are already separating recyclings, they do not have to change anything, but all recycling now goes into one collection truck. Town residents can now mix all their recycling materials in a regular trash barrel repurposed and dedicated to this new recycling system. The existing recycling containers or any 32-gallon container with handles that is clearly marked with special stickers can be utilized (it does not have to be colored green or blue). The idea is to make it easier for residents to recycle.

The dedicated recycle barrel needs to be clearly identified with a *special sticker* that can be obtained at Town Hall, the DPW office, or the Westwood Main Library. The stickers are paid for by Waste Management. Information is available on the town website for the new program [[www.townhall.westwood.ma.us/](http://www.townhall.westwood.ma.us/)]. Recycling collection is still every other week, following the green and blue bin schedule that DPW has sent to every household.

The Westwood Environmental Action Committee will introduce and explain the “new” mixed recycling collection program with informational flyers and an attractive educational visual display that will be making the rounds at various locations in town to help educate residents about this new recycling system. One clear advantage of this new system is that a resident will be able to keep a lid on their dedicated recycle container, eliminating the wind from scattering recycles around the neighborhood on collection days.

Acceptable recyclable items have not changed, but more details on what is not accepted (such as no styrofoam items or plastic trash bags) can also be found on the town website. Recycling saves the town money, and also reduces our dependence on foreign oil and reduces greenhouse gases emissions. ❖

Aid to Elderly – continued from page 1

a wonderful town to raise our family over the past 50 years. I could not imagine living elsewhere,” writes one past recipient. In total, the Fund has received \$215,000 since inception and has distributed \$211,000. This past year alone, the Fund has been able to defray the real estate tax bills of 52 residents, with an average payment of \$700. A typical recipient is 84 years old and has been living in their home for 50 years.

Once again, we are asking for your support! The Fund is currently in need of donations and your assistance will make a significant difference in the lives of the elderly and disabled residents of Westwood. Every dollar collected is applied directly to a qualifying resident’s tax bill. Your donation will help our town of Westwood continue to remain a great place to live. Payments can be mailed to “Aid to the Elderly & Disabled Trust Fund,” Tax Collector’s Office, Westwood Town Hall, 580 High Street, Westwood, MA.

Thank you for your consideration,

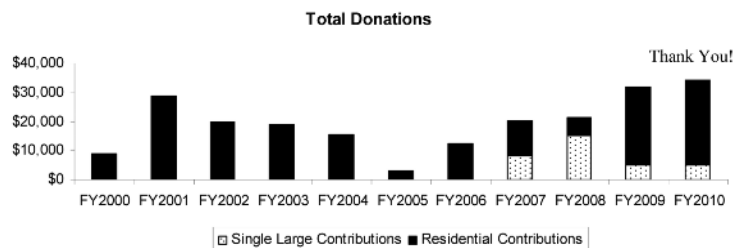
The Aid to the Elderly & Disabled Tax Fund Committee Members: Patrick Ahearn (Chair), Josepha Jowdy, Al Wisialko, Jim Gavin, Pam Dukeman, Michael Krone, Janice Polin, Pat Larkin, Sharon Papetti ❖

## More Information Regarding the Aid to the Elderly and Disabled Tax Fund

### Please consider a donation to this cause.

#### Fund Overview: Donations

- The *Fund* was established by Town Meeting in 1999 to provide real estate tax relief assistance to qualifying, low income Westwood elderly and disabled residents.
- Since establishment 11 years ago, the *Fund* has received \$215,000 in total donations averaging \$18,000 per year.
  - We have recently asked for increases in donations from our residents and you responded, providing important funding for this account.



#### Distributions:

- Over the years, the Fund has assisted many long-time Westwood residents who wish to remain in the Town and homes they love. It is becoming increasingly difficult for these residents to afford living here on fixed incomes, particularly due to rising home heating costs and real estate taxes; and this fund can help.
- Since its inception, the *Fund* has provided assistance to a number of these qualified residents by directly paying a portion of their tax bill. Distribution for the 11 year period totaled \$211,000.

- In FY10, we had to reduce the amount we could distribute to \$36,250, down from \$39,500 in FY09.
  - Approximately 52 residents received a payment ranging from \$250 to \$1,600. We reached as many recipients as the prior year, but had to reduce the amount we could distribute to each by approximately 20%. The typical recipient in FY10 was 84 years old; had lived in Westwood for 50 years; and lived in a home valued at approximately \$400,000.

The current balance in the account is \$4,800. We ask again that you consider a small donation to increase this balance and to help these individuals. Some of our residents give a small donation each time they pay their quarterly tax bill. Other residents give in response to the annual appeal letter in the fall. Please know that any of the methods and any donation, large or small, makes a real difference in what we can give to our deserving recipients.

Please consider a donation and mail it to:

The Town of Westwood – Aid to the Elderly &  
Disabled Trust Fund,  
Tax Collector’s Office,  
Westwood Town Hall,  
580 High Street,  
Westwood, MA 02090

The Aid to the Elderly and Disabled Tax Fund Committee thanks you for your help this past year and for your consideration of a donation in the upcoming year. ❖

## Newcomers Club

The Westwood Newcomers Club had another successful year. Highlights of activities included a Spring Egg Hunt and Fall Hayride for families, several morning coffee get-togethers, and Ladies Night Out. Please join the club for the spring season. We’re always happy to welcome new members and volunteers (either those new to Westwood or long-time residents who want to meet new people). Visit <http://www.westwoodnewcomersclub.com> for a list of activities and a membership form. ❖

## Winterfest 2010 sponsored by the WYWC

The Westwood Young Women's Club (WYWC) will hold its annual Winterfest fundraiser on Saturday, December 11, 2010 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at Westwood High School. This annual family event features entertainment, raffles, a silent auction, kids' crafts, and an assortment of games. "Pocket Lady" and "Pocket Pal" will be strolling through Winterfest with their pockets full of prizes for the little ones! A librarian from the Westwood Children's Library will be on hand to read stories by the "fireplace." Entertainment will be provided by My Gym (10 am to 12 pm), Mini Athletes (12 pm to 2 pm), Miss Janet's Dancer's (2 performances: 10 am & 12 pm), Music by Miss Tina Stone (concert/sing-a-long from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm), and Violet the Clown (10:15 am to 11:15 am). Photos with Santa by Mark Detoma of Images4Kids will be available for a nominal fee. Refreshments will be available as well as homemade, nut-free treats at the WYWC Bake Sale. The event is wheelchair and stroller accessible.

Winterfest is an official Toys-For-Tots collection site for new, unwrapped toys. For more information, please visit [www.wywc.org](http://www.wywc.org).

We hope to see you on December 11th for a wonderful event for the entire family!

### New Club Year Invitation

The Westwood Young Women's Club has started a new club year. Take an opportunity to see what the club is all about and how the WYWC makes a difference in the community, by joining us for our monthly meeting.

The WYWC is a non-profit organization. We work to enhance our community through volunteer service, and we raise funds to support programs, education and fun family events. Members join the WYWC to network, meet other women in the community and work on events and projects that enrich the town of Westwood. While accomplishing these goals you are bound to make friends, have lots of fun and make a difference in the lives of others in our community!

Please visit [www.wywc.org](http://www.wywc.org) and click on Becoming a Member if you are interested in attending a meeting. ❖

## Rotary Club of Westwood

### Recognize A Youth Awards

The Rotary Club of Westwood and the Westwood Youth & Family Services recently honored Caroline Bean, Kathryn Watson, Sarah Bredy, and Sophia Medina with the RAY (Recognize A Youth) award. The RAY award gives the two organizations the opportunity to celebrate young people in the Westwood Community for their initiative and commitment to community service. Caroline and Kathryn made bracelets which they then sold to friends and family to raise funds for Hope for Haiti, assisting with earthquake relief. Kathryn was actually able to present the check for \$1,600.00 to the organization's headquarters in Florida. Sarah placed a container in her school's cafeteria to collect funds for earthquake relief in Haiti. She encouraged her classmates to donate money that would normally be spent on chips and ice cream to help others in need and raised \$450.00 for the Red Cross. Sophia made origami cranes and sold them to raise funds for The Smile Train, an organization that helps to fund surgery to correct cleft palates of impoverished children. She raised \$300.00 which will cover the cost for one child.

### Solar powered well in Southern Nigeria

The Rotary Club of Westwood has applied for and received a grant from the Rotary Foundation to construct a \$35,000.00 solar powered well in Southern Nigeria. The well, when completed, will provide clean water to seven villages with approximately 2,500 residents. The expectation is that the rate of disease, especially among children, from contaminated, unclean water, will decline dramatically when villagers will, for the first time, have access to a clean water supply. Construction of the well, under the supervision of the

Uturu Rotary Club in Nigeria, is expected to commence in mid November and be completed by Christmas. The Rotary Club of Westwood was assisted in the funding by the Needham, Dedham, Brookline and Neponset Valley Rotary Clubs. Rotary district 7910 and the Foundation of Rotary International also made substantial contributions to the project. Projects such as this one are done by hundreds of Rotary Clubs every year throughout the world as part of Rotary's International Matching Grant Program.

### 50th Anniversary of Rotary in Westwood

In November, the Rotary Club of Westwood celebrated its 50th anniversary. Established in November 1960, the Rotary Club of Westwood has been an organization of business men and women that work together in their immediate community as well as internationally placing Service Above Self. Current and former members gathered for a night of looking back at the projects in which the club has participated, as well as what the club, town, and world looked like in 1960.



Rotary Club of Westwood President Robert Folsom receives a proclamation from the Town of Westwood presented by Michael Jaillet.



*Rainbow Profiles – continued from page 4*

library, which she loves(!), she was very appreciative of how the children’s department was so accepting of her and her children, and of how helpful children’s books were for supporting her sons in learning English. Public libraries, along with public schools, in Lebanon were rare. As was green space for tennis courts. Here with America’s open spaces, she added with fervor, “It’s heaven on earth! Tennis courts were everywhere.” This was another way she found to be active.

**Why Is Diversity Important?**

“The more diversity, the more acceptance,” concluded Randa, noting that now, 22 years since her move to town, there are many Lebanese families living in Westwood to give support to newcomers and help with that sense of acceptance. “New Lebanese families have it much easier,” she said. “We can give them advice on a variety of issues, we can explain the American way of life, and we can encourage them to be active in the community.”

**How Westwood Could Become More Diverse**

Randa’s sense of our town today is that it is diverse and here she brought out another important aspect of it saying, “Diversity brings knowledge, historical information. There are stories to tell. Everyone has one.” She expanded this thought with offering another approach to diversifying. “Diversity comes with bringing world information here to us. People here don’t know as much as others in the world about what’s going on in the world. They don’t seem as interested. And that may be because America is so far away.” She also points out that diversity brings stereotypes and even friction, which can be relieved by gaining information which brings understanding.

*Interviewer’s note:* Randa’s comments lead right into the idea that a town program or club devoted to being more informed about news on a global scope, would increase our sense of diversity. Wouldn’t that provide us lots more moccasins to try on? And lots more understanding to contribute to world peace! ❖



**NEW OFFICE HOURS**

Mon/Wed/Thur: 8:30-4:30  
 Tuesday: 8:30-7:00  
 Friday: 8:30-1:00

**SAVE THESE DATES  
 NEW YEAR’S EVE FIREWORKS**

Friday, December 31  
**7:00 p.m. Sharp**  
 Westwood High School  
 All Ages Welcome – Free!



Saturday, March 12, 2011  
 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.  
 Westwood Recreation  
 All Ages Welcome - Free

**Activities**

- Information Booths
- Interactive Activities & Observation
- Summer Playland, Crafts, Games
- **10% Discount on Summer Programs** (paid in full)
- Prizes & Surprises

**RECREATION LISTSERV**

It is the fast lane to program information! Sign up and be the first to receive the Brochure, New Program Offerings, Event Reminders and Recreation News.

**SIGN UP TODAY!** Go to [www.townhall.westwood.ma.us](http://www.townhall.westwood.ma.us) – choose Town Offices, then Recreation and click on Sign up for email list.

**Dedham Savings 27th Annual Holiday Program**

Dedham Savings invites you to join us in celebrating our 27th Annual Holiday Program. Please consider visiting our Main Office, 55 Elm Street in Dedham during the week of December 13th to the 18th for live holiday music (local choirs, schools, soloists, etc), hot apple cider and light refreshments. Each branch, including the Westwood Office, will also be celebrating by providing hot drinks and refreshments during this week. Our complete performer schedule will be available in all branch locations at the beginning of December. Some of our Westwood favorites have already informed us that they are coming, so please mark your calendars. The Westwood Swing Band will be performing on Thursday, December 16th from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm and the First Baptist Church of Westwood Bell Ringers will join us on Saturday, December 18th from 10:30 am to 12:00 pm. We hope to see you. Happy Holidays! ❖



*Veteran’s Day ceremonies were held on November 11, 2010 at Veteran’s Park. Pictured here is a detail of the memorial bricks along the walkways in the park.*



## Hale Reservation Looks to Improve Front Entrance

Over the past few years, you may have noticed that Hale Reservation has made several improvements to the property. Earlier this year, a small boat house, a retaining wall and an updated picnic area made Noanet Landing an even more inviting place for visitors. This past summer, Membership Beach got much needed new bathrooms and a changing area. Last year, two new camp sites were built for agency partners providing the groups more space and shelter. Most recently Hale began work on what they hope will be another project to enhance the “Hale Experience” – a more welcoming front entrance.

Working with the Boston Architectural College (BAC), Hale Reservation board and staff are looking for ways to make the entrance more accessible while expanding office, facilities and parking areas in ways that will be efficient and environmentally friendly.

“We have previously worked with BAC; their faculty and students are very professional. The results from each project are extremely valuable,” comments Executive Director, Eric Arnold. “In the case of this specific project, we have a great chance to change the initial impression of what Hale Reservation is when you enter the property.”

Last month, the BAC met at Hale Reservation to discuss initial concepts and to get an overall feeling for what people wanted to see at the new entrance. In addition to the BAC, the firms of DGT Survey Group and R.E. Cameron & Associates have also generously donated their services to Hale for this project.



Staff members, Julia Brune and Eric Arnold, participated in a design exercise at a meeting to discuss possibilities for a new entrance at Hale Reservation.

Anyone interested in learning more about this project or about Hale Reservation in general should visit [www.HaleReservation.org](http://www.HaleReservation.org) or call 781-326-1770. ❖

### Calling any town organizations, any community endeavor activists: Your Stories, Events, News Items Wanted!

The next quarterly newsletters are due to be delivered to homes on or about March 15, June 15, and September 15, 2011. Please submit articles for consideration 6 weeks prior to the expected delivery dates. Newsletter correspondence can be sent to: Diane Thornton, Editor, Westwood Community Newsletter, 580 High Street, Westwood, MA 02090 or email: [newsletter@townhall.westwood.ma.us](mailto:newsletter@townhall.westwood.ma.us)

## TOWN BULLETIN BOARD

Dec 11 10-2 p.m. Winterfest 2010 Fundraiser (*see page 7*)  
Westwood Young Women’s Club

Dec 15 7:00 p.m. Charter Study Task Force Public Forum (*see page 2*)  
Thurston Middle School Auditorium

Dec 24-31 Winter Vacation. No School.

Dec 27 7:30 p.m. Quarter Century Award Ceremony: 2010 Recipients  
Russ and Marilyn Downes  
Westwood Historical Society, 830 High Street

Dec 31 7:00 p.m. **New Year’s Eve Fireworks!!** (*see page 8*)  
Westwood High School. All ages welcome!

Jan 9 2-4 p.m. Open House & Exhibit: “Westwood Restoration/ Changes”  
Westwood Historical Society, 830 High Street

Jan 11 7:30 p.m. Thomas Dunlay “The Boston Painters”  
Westwood Historical Society, 830 High Street

Jan 13 6:30-8 p.m. Owl’s Eve Family Program  
Hale Reservation

Jan 17 Martin Luther King Day. No School.

Jan 18 6:30-8 p.m. Moonlight Tracking Family Program  
Hale Reservation

Jan 20 6:30-8 p.m. Moonlight Snowshoe Family Program  
Hale Reservation

Feb 1 Deadline for Tax Abatements (*see page 3*)

Feb 6 2-4 p.m. Open House & Exhibit: “Westwood Restoration/ Changes”  
Westwood Historical Society, 830 High Street

Feb 8 7:30 p.m. Roseanne Ferrini “A Restoration in Westwood”  
Westwood Historical Society, 830 High Street

Feb 14-18 Friends of the Library Annual Book Sale  
Westwood Public Library

Feb 21-25 February Vacation. No School.

Mar 6 2-4 p.m. Open House & Exhibit: “Memorabilia of the South Pacific”  
Westwood Historical Society, 830 High Street

Mar 8 7:30 p.m. Charles Donahue “Reflections of a WW II Naval Officer in the South Pacific”  
Westwood Historical Society, 830 High Street

Mar 12 10 a.m.-12 March Into Summer with Westwood Recreation  
Westwood High School (*see page 8*)

All Year Volunteer Opportunities for Town Boards/ Commissions  
Visit town website for more details.



# WESTWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

December  
2010  
page one

Dear Westwood Residents,

The school year so far has been exceptional. Our students continue to perform at the highest level, and our talented faculty and staff get stronger every day. Also, we know we are fortunate to work in a community that values public education, and provides us the resources we need to offer our students a first-class education.



However, the challenge to fund our schools is getting harder every year, as the state and federal governments scale back on their financial commitments. Westwood is better positioned than most communities, but it has taken a balance of strong financial management and some good luck to withstand the most difficult fiscal climate in decades. As the budget season approaches, I encourage all residents to stay informed by attending School Committee meetings, reviewing the material on the district website, or by contacting me with questions.

Thank you for your continued support. Have a great holiday season!

## Integrated Preschool Earns Accreditation

by Sandra Raymond, Preschool Director

The Westwood Integrated Preschool provides an outstanding educational environment for three- to five-year-old preschoolers. Our preschool has met the high standards of the NAEYC, the National Association of Young Children. This fall, the Westwood Integrated Preschool earned accreditation by this organization, which is the recognized



mark of quality in early childhood education.


The program enhances children's growth in the areas of communication skills, emotional/social development, cognitive skills, motor and perceptual skills, and health and wellness. This is accomplished within a warm, nurturing, fun, and child-centered approach that recognizes the unique needs and strengths of each child. Seamless transitions into the Westwood Public Schools kindergarten programs are planned for all students who attend our preschool.



Enrollment for current families starts at the end of December and enrollment for new families begins on January 7, 2011. On December 15, 2010 and January



5, 2011 we will be having Open House programs for prospective families. Please call (781) 326-7500, ext. 5113 or email me, Preschool Director **Sandra Raymond**, at [sraymond@westwood.k12.ma.us](mailto:sraymond@westwood.k12.ma.us) to sign up for

this Open House or to make an appointment to tour our preschool. This fall, in addition to our high caliber learning experiences, the children enjoyed the enrichment activities shown in these pictures. 







# WESTWOOD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

December  
2010

page two

## Elementary Schools Welcome Parents as Learners

by **Peggy Scott**, Martha Jones Elementary School Principal  
and **Kristen Evans**, Sheehan Elementary School Principal

The learning that takes place in the Westwood schools isn't just for children. We also value the learning of the adults in our community. For the past three years parent book discussion groups have been formed to fulfill this need. The groups have met regularly to discuss the challenges of raising children in the age of the "helicopter" parent. We are the parents who are always overhead, ever vigilant, and ready to help at an instant's notice. Unfortunately, when we "land" by intervening too quickly and trying to fix all problems, we can inadvertently

undermine our children's success and competence. The on-going guide has been the book, *The Blessing of the Skinned Knee* by Wendy Mogel. This is not a how-to book, but a fresh perspective on what is important as we try to guide and raise happy, responsible and resilient children. The meetings are full of rich conversation about specific, concrete, and realistic ways to become more deliberate and thoughtful about our parenting skills.

The first discussion group originated three years ago, thanks to a Westwood Educational Foundation

grant that funded the purchase of the books. It was co-led by **Amy Keith**, a Deerfield parent, and **Peggy Scott**, principal at Martha Jones. For each of the past two years, new discussion groups have formed each fall and alternated between meeting at the Martha Jones and Sheehan Schools, with



facilitation from Peggy as well as **Kristen Evans**, Sheehan principal.

The benefits to the participants have been immediate, important, and lasting: parenting support, real-life advice, and practical examples of how to address key familiar family concerns. Topics have included: respect for adults, chores, expectations, meal-time battles, coping with frustration, avoiding over scheduling and overindulgence.



It has never been harder to be a parent, but hopefully, the book groups taking place have provided a time to share the challenges and success, to minimize the landing, and for our schools to be a place of learning for children and their parents.



*Sheehan Principal Kristen Evans (far left) and Martha Jones Principal Peggy Scott (second from left) lead a group of parents in discussion. Other photos on this page depict parents engaged in conversation and laughter as they share their parenting experiences and concerns.*



# WESTWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY — WINTER 2010

For additional programs and further information, please call the Main Library Children's Department at 781-320-1042 or the Islington Branch Library at 781-326-5914 or visit the web site at [www.westwoodlibrary.org](http://www.westwoodlibrary.org)

## Main Library Programs for Preschoolers

Children **must** be the appropriate age by the first day of each session.

**Registration is not required.**

**Preschool Literacy Adventures** – Ages 2 & up with caregiver

Jan 11-Mar 1 Tuesdays, 10:15-11:00 a.m.

Mar 22-May 3

**Storytime** – Ages 3 and up

Jan 12-Mar 2 Wednesdays, 10:15-11:00 a.m.

Mar 23-May 4

**Babies & Books** – Under 2 years with caregiver

Jan 14-Mar 4 Fridays, 10:30-10:50 a.m.

Mar 25-May 6

## Main Library Programs for School Age Children

**Wishing Well** – Ages 5 and up

Registration is required and begins December 14th

Jan 11-Mar 1 Tuesdays, 4:00-4:45 p.m.

Mar 22-May

*\*\*There are no sessions the week of February 14-18 for the Friends of the Library annual book sale and during public school vacations.\*\**

## Special Programs at Main Library

**Lego Club** – Create and build Lego constructions. Grades 2-4.

Registration is required and begins 1 month prior to event.

Dec 27 Monday, 2:00 p.m. School vacation week.

Feb 25 Friday, 2:00 p.m. School vacation week.

**REPTILES ROCK with The Rainforest Reptile Show**

Live reptile show recommended for school age children.

Registration is required and begins Dec 1st.

Dec 28 Tuesday, 11:00 a.m.

**Winter Crafts** – All ages. An assortment of winter crafts to make and take! Registration is not required.

Dec 29 Wednesday, 11:00 a.m.

**A Series of Fortunate Library Events** – *Celebrating our favorite stories & characters!* Activities, games, crafts, contests, & more based on books! Registration is required and begins 1 month prior to event.

Jan 24 **Magic Tree House** – Grades 2 + up

Monday, 4:00 p.m.

Feb 23 **100 Acre Wood – Winnie the Pooh & friends** – Preschool - Gr. 1

Wednesday, 10:30 a.m.

**Storytelling Saturdays** – Folktales from around the world!

Ages 2½ and up with families. Registration begins 1 month prior.

Feb 5, Mar 5, Folktales & more on a Saturday morning.

Apr 2 Saturdays, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

## Massachusetts Book Award Book Club

Students must read the monthly choice before attending the club.

Mondays, 4:00-5:00 p.m. Book discussion and activity club.

Jan 10 **The Willoughbys** by Lois Lowry

Feb 7 **No Talking** by Andrew Clement

## Westwood Early Childhood Council and Library Babysitting Clinic

Featuring child development, safety, & activities with community guest speakers. Students must attend all sessions to receive certificate.

Registration is required and begins Feb 7th.

Mar 7, 14, 21, Babysitting clinic for grades 6-8.

Mar 28, Apr 4 Mondays, 3:30-5:00 p.m.

## Islington Branch Programs

**Storytime** – Ages 3 and up

Jan 13-Mar 3 Thursdays, 9:30-10:15 a.m.

Mar 24-May 5

**Young Readers Book Club** – Grades 2-4. Registration is required.

Mar 1, 8, 15, 22 Tuesdays, 4:00-4:45 p.m. Snacks provided!

**Adult Book Share**

Bring a book you love to share with the group. Registration is not required.

Jan 18, Mar 15 Tuesdays, 10:00 a.m.

## Main Library Adult Programs

**Adult Computer Assistance**

Westwood High School student will assist you with computer usage needs for a 30 minute session. Please visit or call the Reference Department for an appointment (781-320-1045).

Fridays 3:00-5:00 p.m.

**PAGETURNERS**

Reading suggestions old and new presented by Nancy Hogan. Registration is not required.

Mar 4 Friday, 3:00 p.m.

## Westwood Sings! *Toe tapping, sing-a-long Music for ages 0-100+!*

Presented by Westwood's Early Childhood Council,  
Senior Center, and Public Library.

**\*\*All programs held at the Westwood Senior Center\*\***

**Mackseedoodle with Duane Sullivan:** Sing-a-long with old and new favorites!

Jan 27 Thursday @ 10:00 a.m.

**Westwood High School Musical:** Featuring our High School Students!

Feb 10 Thursday @ 10:00 p.m.

**The Noteables:** An all women acappella group sings music of the 30s-60s!

March 9 Wednesday @ 10:00 a.m.

**David Polansky:** A rousing Patriotic sing-a-long!

April 13 Wednesday @ 10:00 a.m.

Registration begins 2 weeks prior to events, please call ECC 781-461-9548

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