



Westwood Public Library Update

Tricia Perry, Library Director

14 December 2020

Staffing

We are now operating with reduced staffing, as we move forward with filling positions vacated recently due to job changes and retirements.

A search for Head of Adult Services was initiated at the end of October, and we are continuing to review candidates. At this time the position has not been filled. Given the timing and the concurrent vacancy of our Adult Services Librarian, we are working on potentially re-advertising both positions simultaneously.

In addition, we have also posted two benefit-eligible Library Assistant positions for 20 hours in Circulation and in Tech Services. That posting will close at the end of business on December 15th, at which time potential candidates will be invited in for interviews. Initial interviews for Circulation will be conducted by Karen Gallagher and Claire Connors, with June Tulikangas and Liz Keefe taking the lead on the Tech Services position.

The “new” Patron Experience in our Covid-19 World:

June 29th – Curbside Holds Implemented

October 6th – Express Browsing introduced

November 1st: Express Browsing extended to accommodate browsing by appointment of Children’s Room

On Thursday, Chris Coleman provided all town department heads an update for the town’s plans for both in person and remote work given Governor Baker’s Tuesday, December 8, 2020 press conference. This will result in several departments moving back to working remotely, and providing services by appointment. At this time, the Board of Health (Jared Orsini) and the Town Reopening Committee (Pam Dukeman, Joan Courtney Murray) are supportive of the Library continuing with the services currently being offered, including Curbside Holds, Browsing by Appointment, Books and Bites, and Homebound Delivery.

At this time we are deferring adding any additional service options such as “Study Hall Passes” as we work to limit staffing numbers working in the building and overlap of staff; but we are poised to put this in motion once the Governor’s restrictions are lifted.

Browsing Hours will continue with our expanded schedule:

Monday – Thursday from 10 am – 1 pm and 3 pm – 6 pm (Senior Hours 9 am – 10 am on Tuesdays and Thursdays); Friday 10 am – 1 pm and 3 pm – 5 pm; and Saturday 11 am – 3 pm

Outreach Services:

Karen Gallagher and Claire Connors continue to provide Westwood Seniors with several service options that include delivery of materials, as well as the “Books and Bite” collaboration with the Council on Aging. At this time, the COA has committed to supporting the Book and Bites program through the month of January, and Lina Arena DeRosa is working to obtain additional support that will allow a further extension. At this time approximately 24 seniors are participating in the program, with deliveries made by Claire, Karen and Caitlyn.

Programming: A sampling of some of the options that are currently available via Zoom:

[Middle School Book Club: The Assignment | Liza Wiemer](#)

[Sit and Knit Online](#)

[DIY : Paperwhite Winter Solace Kit \(Registration Required\)](#)

[Friday AM Book Club](#)

[Winter Solstice Storytime @ Home](#)

[YA for Adult Book Club](#)

[Elf Interactive Movie in a Bag- PROGRAM FULL](#)

[Take and Make Winter Craft Kit](#)

Fresh Air Storytime (which was held outside on Fridays in November and December) was our first return to “in person” programming. The Hometown Weekly featured the program on its front page! In addition, staff are collaborating with the Early Childhood Council (ECC) on the “1000 Books Before Kindergarten.” They are also working on coordinating Read/Woke – a reading program for readers of all ages.

“Read Woke is a movement. It is a feeling. It is a style. It is a form of education. It is a call to action; it is our right as lifelong learners. It means arming yourself with knowledge in order to better protect your rights. Knowledge is power and no one can take it away. It means learning about others so that you can treat people with the respect and dignity that they deserve no matter their religion, race, creed, or color.”

-Cicely Lewis, creator of Read Woke and School Library Journal School Librarian of 2020



And in

the month of January, we are introducing a new reading initiative. From January 1st - 31st, the Westwood Public Library will be participating in Beanstack’s 4th Annual Winter Reading Challenge, “Books Like Us,” sponsored by Simon and Schuster (S&S). Patrons and students to keep track of their reading on our Beanstack Prizes will include book collections and virtual author visits. Ten (10) winning schools or libraries will each get a collection of fifty (50) books from the “[Books Like Us](#)” collection.

Library staff continue to engage with a wide variety of patrons and library supporters, including authors, knitters, and readers of all ages with Zoom programs and events. Planning is underway for additional Westwood Historical Society events in February and March. And Claire Connors is working with the Friends of the Library to firm up the author for their Annual Meeting on May 19th, with local author Jane Healey joining the group for that event.

The Library Knitters (Sit and Knit) has now expanded to a morning and evening group, and this month, Claire Connors hand-delivered scarves and hats created by the knitters to Pine Street. Claire received the following thank you note, which I am happy to share with everyone!



WWW.PINESTREETINN.ORG

444 Harrison Avenue
Boston, MA 02118
617.892.9170

November 12, 2020

Claire Connors
Westwood Public Library
660 High St.
Westwood, MA 02090

Dear Ms. Connors,

On behalf of the homeless men and women who are guests of Pine Street Inn, I would like to thank you for your donation of knit hats and scarves.

Thanks to partners like you, women and men are putting the pieces of their lives back together. Whether through emergency services, supportive housing or workforce development programs, the pieces come together to help homeless individuals rebuild their lives.

With 850 units of permanent supportive housing and more than 165 men and women in our workforce development programs each year, Pine Street is providing more pathways out of homelessness than ever before. This simply would not be possible without the support of friends like you.

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads 'Lyndia Downie'.

Lyndia Downie
President & Executive Director

*Pine Street Inn is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.
Your gift of knit hats and scarves received on Thursday, November 12, 2020 represents a charitable contribution. No goods or services have been provided to the donor in return. Please consult a tax advisor if you have questions about the extent to which your contribution may be deducted.*

Wentworth Hall Update

Weekly meetings continue with the architect, project manager, town administration and Tower Construction. At this point, the priority is on getting the necessary prep work done in advance of winter weather, including elevator footings and utilities.

In the meantime, the Islington Community Center (ICC) is being readied to be turned over to the developer on December 18th.

Budget Update

FY22 Budget (Salary and Expenses) has been submitted to Pam Dukeman for her review.

Poet Laureate Update

This past spring, members of the Westwood community brought forward a proposal for the establishment of a Poet Laureate position for the town of Westwood. Soon after that, a meeting was set up for a broad discussion of the idea with members of the Town Administration, including Town Administrator, Chris Coleman, and Tricia Perry, Library Director. However, as the Covid-19 Pandemic shortly thereafter swept across our country and the globe, meetings relating to this proposed initiative were delayed somewhat, but the idea has continued to be discussed with a number of individuals and boards, including discussions with the Library Trustees and the Board of the 21st Century Fund.

In the coming weeks, Danielle and Lina will be bringing this proposal to the attention of their Boards as well; and a timeline and rubric will be designed for consideration.

I believe that we are hopeful that the groundwork will be accomplished by January so that the Town's Select Board might then take up discussion of official designation of Poet Laureate for the Town of Westwood.

NEW ITEM! Donation of Philbrick Prints to the Westwood Public Library

In November, I received a telephone call from Mary Finnegan who was reaching out to determine if the Westwood Public Library might be interested in a collection of prints that her mother-in-law had collected, including framed prints and sketches by Margaret and Otis Philbrick.

As many of you may know, the Westwood Public Library has several prints and sketches by Margaret and Otis Philbrick housed in our Library collections, including many special "Views of the Town" dating from 1941 – 1973. In the 70s, the Library hosted an exhibition *Prints by Margaret Philbrick* which provided a listing of some twenty-five prints that Ms. Philbrick donated to the Westwood Public Library. (I can provide copies of this if anyone is interested.)

I concluded the conversation with Mary Finnegan indicating that we would be interested in accepting the donation, and with the new Islington Branch Library and the Main Library Gallery spaces, coordinating some sort of display of our existing artwork with these new additions would be something I think the Westwood residents would find very interesting. Ms. Finnegan wrapped the framed images, and they were delivered in late November.

My letter thanking the family for their donation is included in the Trustee documents indicating the following:

We will be pleased to add the prints from the collection of Evelyn and Paul Finnegan (from Scituate, Massachusetts) to our existing collection, and look forward to hosting a public exhibit at some point in the future that will showcase these significant sketches and etchings depicting Westwood's history and community.