



Westwood Public Library Update
Lizzy McGovern, Library Director
July and August 2022

Library Services and Programs

Adult Services

Open Maj Jongg continued throughout the summer months on Wednesday mornings. This Fall, we hope to offer another time slot at the Wentworth hall location (after the lower level is turned into three separate rooms which will open up simultaneous use).

With the success of the first annual plant swap at the branch library, Suzie and Caroline created a similar event for the main library in July in collaboration with the FOL: Beach Crafts and Beach Reads Book sale! We set up a tent outside the main doors of the library and had three tables of craft supplies to create succulents in a sand jar and seashell art. We had over 150 people attend over the course of two hours even though it was 95 degrees out!

Summer Reading was offered as a hybrid program where participants could sign up via Beanstack or use a paper form. To date, we have had over 115 adults participating. We have 5 grand prize baskets that were sponsored by the Friends of the Library, Dedham Savings, Roche Brothers, and Wegmans.

The Adult Services department is looking into organizing and possibly digitizing parts of our local history collection. We have vertical files, microfiche, newspapers, and so much more that needs to be cataloged and organized. After consulting with an Archives professor at Simmons College, the first step will be to do a survey analysis of the collection by an archivist. We are looking for a Project Archivist to conduct a semester-long survey of our documents, organizational records and photographs, which span the town's 125 year history. For the size of our collection and the hours needed, a stipend of around \$1500 is the going rate for such a project. I would ask that the Trustees approve the use of state aid to fund this special project that will be the key to making the collection as accessible as possible for the community.

Youth Services

June has been especially busy with the Children's librarians doing their summer reading outreach visits to all 5 elementary schools. Librarians visit each library class to talk to the kids about the summer reading program, prizes they can win, and booktalk a list of new books specially curated for each grade level. The Children's Librarians visited over 1236 students during these two weeks of June!

To date (August 19, 2022) we have over 869 kids signed up and participating, with 258 who have finished and earned their Summer Reading Champion signs! We have over 124 teens signed up for the Summer Reading program making it a total of 993 for the youth services department.

Summer is always a busy time in the children's department and this summer it has felt like the first "return to normal" since the COVID19 pandemic. As well as our regularly scheduled storytimes, Kristy and Janet Lucey of the ECC partnered to present Sensory Wednesdays program at the main library. We also hosted Tye dying for teens, Wingmasters (real owls and birds of prey were presented), and at the branch had a special Pajama Storytime on Wednesday evenings and Jungle Jim Balloon master for kids of all ages.

Islington Branch

The lower level of Wentworth Hall will have a small renovation as it will go from one big space to three separate rooms. During the weeks of August 29-September 18th, the lower level will be closed for use during construction.

We have an official date for the Wentworth Hall and Islington Branch dedication! The dedication ceremony will be on **Wednesday 9/28 from 4pm-5pm**. The Trustees are invited to attend and a representative from the Trustees will be asked to speak at the event. Tish Healey will be in charge of the planning of the event and we will need to let her know who will be speaking.

Poet Laureate

After the Select Board approved the Poet Laureate position back in the Spring, they endowed the Library Director with the responsibility of creating a Selection Committee made up of various representatives from the community. The Selection Committee is made up of:

1. **Maria Ryan:** Library Trustees will appoint one member to the selection board. (named as Chair)
2. **Kieran Moriarty:** Westwood High School/ English Department
3. **Anne Innis:** Member of the Cultural Council
4. **Karen Michaelson:** Resident with interest in Poetry/writing or local author for first year and FOL member.
5. **Christy McKenney:** Representative Youth and Family Services.

I met with the group in July to establish the committee and make note of what we need to accomplish before opening up the Poet Laureate position to candidates. Maria Ryan has graciously decided to chair the committee and keep things moving during my leave. The committee will meet again in the beginning of October to finalize details with hope to be open for applications from November 1st to December 1st and announce the chosen candidate in January. One of the first duties of the Poet Laureate will be to choose a teen Poet Laureate to work with during their term.

Strategic Plan

At the August 1st Select Board Meeting, Maureen and I made a presentation of the library's newly approved Strategic Plan for the years 2023-2025. The Select Board were enthusiastic of the plan and were very excited to support the library in its future initiatives that will benefit all ages in the community. I went ahead and submitted the plan to the MBLC in July (ahead of its October due date) and it was accepted and approved.

I also met with the Department Head team to begin to plan the first year of action items for the initiatives laid out in the plan. They will be spending the Fall reviewing action items identified in the plan and prioritizing them for January 2023.

Staffing

I am delighted to introduce you to the interim Library Director, **Charlotte Canelli** ! Charlotte was the library director in Norwood for about 14 years before retiring a year and half ago. Charlotte is very excited to dip her toes back into the library world for Fall during my leave. She will be part time and available for any needs by staff and Trustees and is very well versed in budgets and the state aid process. I have met with Charlotte a few times throughout August and she will be officially starting September 4th.

As part of a restructuring plan, I am also delighted to inform you that Chris Coleman has promoted Danielle Sutton (former director of youth and family services) to the newly created position of Human Services Director. Danielle will be the direct report for the library, COA, Recreation, and Youth and Family Services. She will be a great resource for us and will be available to attend to any library needs.

Joan Courtney Murray has sadly retired in June 2022 and has been succeeded by Molly Kean as the new Assistant Town Manager/Human Resources Director. Molly comes from Norwood and has already visited the library to get to know everyone.

We have been adding new substitute library assistants to our roster to cover vacation and sick time. We are also in the process of adding three new substitute reference librarian's to the on-call roster and weekend rotation to finally fill the gaps that were created when previous staff retired after covid.

Facilities

- The Facilities Department is continuing with their capital improvement for the library with repaving the parking lot outside the main library. Paving of the rotary and the parking lot down to the deerfield will be completed this August 2022. The library will have to be closed for the duration of the project, which is about 3 days due to lack of parking/access and safety concerns. In the Spring, the curbing and cobblestone work will be done to complete the project.
- The temporary chiller will be returned September 15th and the new and permanent chiller will be installed.
- Due to the high levels of humidity and heat this summer, there was some leaks from the condensation of the HVAC pipes in the ceiling on the second floor. Materials were removed from the area and to be on the safe side, we removed one shelving unit and are reconfiguring the shelving so that books are available for browsing but not in the way of the ceiling panels that access the pipes. Jim McCarthy is aware of the issue and is looking into ways to prevent the condensation.
- For FY23 we received capital budget funds for sound dampening for the main library. Jimmy and I have received quotes from a acoustical sound engineer firm that installs sound dampening measures in public buildings. We are planning to move forward with this installation within the year.

