

2015– FINAL REPORT OF THE WELLESLEY CELEBRATIONS COMMITTEE (WCC)

The 47th Annual Veterans' Parade and the 17th Annual Wellesley's Wonderful Weekend, which included 27 events, were held over the weekend of Saturday, May 16 and Sunday, May 17, 2015. For the seventeenth year the Annual Parade was a spring event rather than, as in the past, a fall event. The weather was bright on Saturday and continued on Sunday, allowing all events to be completed as planned.

The highlight of the Weekend, the Annual Parade, was dedicated "To Those Who Serve" with the 2015 theme being "**The 40th Anniversary of the End of the Vietnam War**".

There were 124 Parade units recorded as entries with 19 bands and other musical groups providing music for the over 2,000 marchers; representing civic, military, militia, school, service, specialty and veterans groups. Additionally, 12 floats were entered, 9 of which received award recognition. The Best School float trophy went, for the second year in a row, to the Upham School, which will hold the award until the next Parade.

The 27 events under the umbrella of Wellesley's Wonderful Weekend actually started on Friday afternoon, May 15th with the Annual Hunnewell School Fun Fair.

Later on Friday evening, an 18th Century Military encampment was set up on the hillside in front of Town Hall by the Royal Irish Artillery, who fired their cannons on the half hour all day on Saturday, while tours were conducted showing how folks lived in Revolutionary times. This lasted until after the Parade on Sunday.

Saturday morning began with the Wellesley Rotary Club's Annual All-Day Pancake Festival at the Wellesley Middle School (WMS). During that time the Needham Lion's Club Eye Mobile was stationed at the WMS for free eye exams. A "Dog Contest" was coordinated by the Board of Health and the Wellesley Animal Control at Warren School Field.

For the fifteenth year, the Wellesley Trails Committee hosted a walk, which was held this year around Morses Pond and the newly acquired North 40 property. The Wellesley Historical Society hosted a 90 minute guided walk showing: "Wellesley Square: Then and Now".

Throughout Saturday a "Gardener's Fair" was held at Elm Bank, sponsored by the Massachusetts Horticultural Society.

From mid morning through late afternoon, numerous Open houses were held throughout town; for the sixteenth year at the Wellesley Police Station, hosted by the Wellesley Police Department and for the fourteenth year at the main Wellesley Fire Station #2 on Route 9, hosted by the Wellesley Fire Department.

Additionally, the Wellesley Municipal Light Plant, in conjunction with Sustainable Wellesley held a Sustainable Living Festival at the MLP garage.

"Wheels of Wellesley", a car show featuring exotic, antique cars, motorcycles and bicycles was sponsored at and by the Wellesley Community Center.

A Farmer's Market and the Unitarian Universalist Spring Carnival were coordinated during the morning and afternoon by the Unitarian Universalist Church.

The Wellesley Bike Safety Committee ran a Bike Rodeo and races at the Tailby Parking lot with free bike tune-ups done by Landry's Bicycle Shop.

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Raptors, Goats and You -- Explore the North 40, offering Hay rides, garden tours of the North 40 and the Raptor project, a show of birds of prey and the Goat Girls, was coordinated by the Celebrations Committee at the North 40 all day .

The Wellesley Community Art Project and Wellesley Women Artisans had an "Art in the Park" display all day long at Simons Park, which was left up for the following two weeks.

A display of Vietnam War materials was made available at the Main Branch of the Wellesley Free Library for the entire Weekend.

The Wellesley Conservation Council held a "Build Your Own Woodland Troll & Fairy House" at the Cochituate Aqueduct.

At 4:00 PM the Seventeenth Annual Veteran's Ecumenical Memorial Mass, hosted by the Wellesley Veterans' Council, was held at St. Paul Church.

Sol y Canto, a Pan Latin traditional music concert, was run by the Wellesley Rotary Club and the Wellesley High School Spanish Club at Wellesley High School in the evening at 7:30PM.

The Wellesley Choral Society held their Spring Concert featuring Edward Whalen, at the Wellesley Hills Congregational Church, starting at 8 PM

Early Sunday morning a Wonder Run 5K Race was run, hosted by the Wellesley Hills Junior Woman's Club, starting at Wellesley High School.

At 1:00 PM on Sunday, May 17th, the Wellesley Celebrations Committee, under bright sunny skies and temperatures in the high 70's, started the 47th Annual Veterans' Parade with a step-off of the Parade, west along Washington Street, continuing from the Wellesley Community Center, at the junctions of Routes 9 and 16, and ending at about 3:20 P.M. over the Crest Road Bridge to the Tailby Parking Lot. The Parade Grand Marshals, numbering 40 plus Vietnam veterans were honored by riding through the Parade route, in the Lookout Farm Trolley, and then were stationed at the Reviewing Stand in Wellesley Square, before a collation was held for all the Honorees at the Wellesley Village Church, after the Parade.

From 4:00 PM to 5:30 PM the 55th annual Grace Knight Babson Fund for Religious Education program was held at Knight Auditorium on Babson College Campus.

At 5:00 PM the Picnic in the Park at Hunnewell Field began, with food provided by the Charles River Rotary Club and other food vendors. Rides for kids were available until dusk, including among others the "Moon Bounce", "Merry-Go-Round" and "Big Slide"; face painting and balloon twisters added to the festivities.

At 6:30 PM the Annual Concert featuring "The Reminisants" backed up by "The WHS 2 O'clock Jazz Group", played until dusk.

At dusk the Piece de Resistance of the evening, the final celebration of the 17th Annual Wellesley's Wonderful Weekend, the most spectacular Fireworks display ever, was completed, as a wrap up of the entire Weekend.

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Honorees of the 2015 47th Annual Wellesley Veterans' Parade:

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| Parade Grand Marshals | <i>Vietnam Era Veterans</i> Anyone who served on active duty for more than 180 days in the Republic of Vietnam, between February 28, 1961 and May 7, 1975 OR served on active duty for more than 180 days for any time between August 5, 1964 and May 7, 1975. |
| Distinguished Service Award | <i>Janice M. Kasetta</i> Retiring from 29 years at the Wellesley Recreation Department, most recently after 13 years as Director. |
| Chief of Staff | <i>Philip R. Rolph</i> Former Major in the U. S. Marine Corps, Vietnam Era Veteran and community activist. |
| Community Service Award | <i>Donald S. McCauley</i> Retiring from term on Board of Selectmen, 8 years on the Planning Board, Advisory Committee, longtime TMM. |
| Community Service Award | <i>Terri J. Tsagaris</i> Retiring from two terms on Board of Selectmen, 15 years TMM. |
| Community Service Award | <i>K.C. Kato</i> Retiring from 2 terms on School committee, TMM. |
| Community Service Award | <i>Tere Ramos</i> Retiring from term on School Committee. |
| Community Service Award | <i>Amanda Fischman Henshon</i> Retiring from 3 terms on Library Board of Trustees |
| Community Service Award | <i>Jessica Wolfe</i> Retiring from term on Library Board of Trustees. |
| Community Service Award | <i>James Conlin</i> Retiring from 6 terms, 18 years on Recreation Commission; 1 term on Library Board of Trustees; 26 years as a TMM. |
| Community Service Award | <i>Neal B. Glick</i> Five years Planning Board, Wetland Protection Committee. |
| Special Recognition Award | <i>Wellesley Department of Public Works</i> In recognition of the DPW's "Snow Busting" prowess during the historic winter of 2015. |
| Special Recognition Award | <i>Wellesley Municipal Light Plant</i> In recognition of the WMLP's outstanding service during the historic winter of 2015. |

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- Special Recognition Award** ***Grignaffini & Sons, Inc., C. Joseph Grignaffini***
55th Anniversary, three generations in construction business.
- Special Recognition Award** ***Reynolds Electrical Co., Raymond J. Reynolds***
77 years in business, three generations in electrical business.
- Special Recognition Award** ***St. John the Evangelist Parish***
In recognition of the 125th Anniversary of the founding of the parish.
- Special Recognition Award** ***Wellesley Hills Woman's Club***
In recognition of 125th Anniversary of providing service to the Community.
- Dedicated Service Award** ***Barbara Ardine***
40 years Wellesley Crossing Guard
- Dedicated Service Award** ***Marie Schofield***
40 years Wellesley Crossing Guard.

Donations for this year's events received from citizens, local merchants, civic groups and service clubs and from many along the parade route and at Hunnewell Field amounted to \$54,086.69 from over 300 donors. A town appropriation of \$4,700.00, plus the donations, were all used toward the \$58,708.70 cost of conducting the 17th Annual Wellesley's Wonderful Weekend and the 2015 Annual Veterans' Parade, most of which was for fees of the bands, specialty units, transportation and the Fireworks.

Many others helped, particularly from among Wellesley's wonderful town employees, including the Police and Fire Departments, the Engineering, GIS, Highway, Municipal Light Plant and the Parks and Recreation Departments, who unselfishly gave much of their personal time and energy in order to make this year's Weekend's events a success.

Special thanks go to all of the members of the Wellesley Celebrations Committee who coordinated all of the activities of this year's Wonderful Weekend: Mark Antonelli, Adele Beggs, Jim Bishop, Cathy Brauner, Dick Carls, Salvatore "Tory" DeFazio, Diane Duddy, Stan Dunajski, Lindsay Ellms, Laura Fragasso, Rowie Gray, George Johnston, Joann Jones, Pete Jones, Kyle Mackinnon, Richard McIntosh, Carl Nelson, Debbie Reynolds, Eoin Shea, and Tom Ulfelder.

An additional thank you goes to all the donors and sponsors, who each year come to the assistance of the Celebrations Committee; particularly the Roche Brothers/Sudbury Farms Supermarkets and The Wellesley Dental Group, Dr's Ali and Ali, for their donations, that made the fireworks display possible. All of their help is most sincerely appreciated.

Sincerely,

Royall H. Switzler, Chairman
Wellesley Celebrations Committee

