



COMMUNITY IS OUR MIDDLE NAME

# West Medford Community Center Newsletter



## Winter 2016

IN THIS ISSUE

## *She Got Next*

Anyone who has played serious basketball at Dugger Park would have echoed the phrase 'I got next' many times in their youth. It is how one signals that they and their homies would be challenging the winner of the current hoop game. For the most part, this phrase has always been echoed by young men - not any more.

2015 saw the confluence of a lot of hard work, collaboration and tribute wrapped up in the spirit of community that pervades the *Ville* every Labor Day. I'm referring to West Medford's Labor Day Block Festival that held its 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Brandon Bolden Memorial Championship for the boys and the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Frances Cooper Berry Memorial Championship for the girls. Yes, now we have young women

coming down to the park - on their own - eagerly striding up to courts claiming 'I got next'.

The late Frances Cooper Berry was a prominent mentor to young women as a member of Zonta, an international organization that works to advance the status of women. How fitting it became to host the 1st WMCC girls hoop championship in her honor, with the financial support of the Berry family and Zonta who graciously supplied the funds for the league in Frances's honor.

The girls met down Dugger Park every Tuesday and Thursday and played until the sun went down, and then complained about having to stop. In fact, if you asked them what were the best times they had over the summer, many would say it was when they

*Continued on page 9*



DANCE CALIENTE – Dancing through the Decades Page 4



WMCC's Afterschool Youth Club is now well into its 3<sup>rd</sup> year of afterschool activities at the Center.

Pages 7-8

# IN MEMORIAM

A Community Reflection by T. E. Carter

The place that I'm from, West Medford, Massachusetts, is a unique and historical community, one of the state's oldest African-American neighborhoods. It's also home to many heroes (past and present-day)...heroes of foreign wars, heroes of human rights, and heroes of public service.

My dad, the late Varnie Carter, was one such hero, but there have been others whose lives have profoundly affected mine. One of these "other heroes" was celebrated in passing and sent to his eternal rest a little while ago. His name is Wallace Kountze. I won't belabor this reflection by repeating his obituary. I just want folks to know that he was a remarkable man of tremendous

intellectual gifts, an infectious smile, a winning way, and a huge heart. True West Medfordites of any real age know this well. He was a Godly witness, a bridge-builder, a life-long learner, and a "man for all seasons." I admired and was mentored by him in many meaningful ways.

He was always very good to my parents, especially as age and infirmity visited them both. As a family, we lament and are diminished by his loss. To his dear wife Claretta, and to my friends Jocelyn, Michelle and Vallery, I once again want to offer our heartfelt sympathies. "Wally" (Out of respect I only called him Mr. Kountze...) was the best of us and he will be long remembered and sorely missed. He loved West Medford and we loved him back.

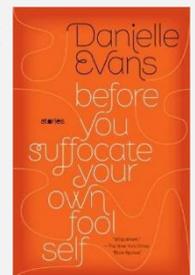
We shared him with the city, the state and the federal government as a public servant, but in the end, he belonged to Monument Street, Dugger Park, Shiloh Baptist, West Medford Community Center, Rhone Tennis Courts, Kale Drug, Humpty's Barber Shop, and the Little Store. Folks from the "Ville" will know what I'm talkin' 'bout! Rest in Peace, "Wally" Kountze!

Blessings and peace, TC the BSP



GREAT WINTER READ

*before you suffocate your own fool self*



.. read this book

by Danielle Evans (Author)

★★★★☆ 54 customer reviews

DOROTHY'S DANCE



On October 11, Dorothy Elizabeth Tucker performed in a Dance Event fundraiser for the Center in celebration of her 93<sup>rd</sup> birthday. The event was filled to capacity and highlighted her passion for community and the arts with rhythm and grace.

Dorothy's celebration showcased her own creativity as well as that of the community. Several performances of singing, poetry and music culminated



with her dance Troupe's stirring movement and expression that captivated the Center's Audience.

Encore..



# Medford's Got Talent II

Valerie David's Medford's Got Talent had its first showing back in 2010 and it was a big success. Cheryl Shaw's dancing repertoire and volunteering record here at the WMCC are both well-known and expansive. So when these two community leaders offered to direct their efforts towards a fundraiser for the benefit of the Center and our youth, the WMCC Board of Directors was quick to throw their support behind this effort: hence Medford's Got Talent II.



The cast Valerie assembled for the October 2015 fundraiser included a number of different dances lead by Cheryl, the Suffolk Community College steppers, local diva Sayida Farmer, dance group Da Set, the Shiloh Baptist Church's Voices of Praise, Tyreke Qualls and internationally renowned singer Ashanti Munir.



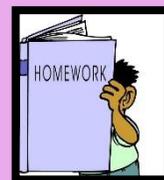
Cheryl's dancers met at the Center for over a year to practice their routines which included tap dancing with both kids and adults tapping to the hit Broadway play The Wiz. To top it off, MGT II included a Fashion Show with Dad-Daughter pairings showing off the latest fashion trends.



VOLUNTEERING SUPERSTAR

**Victoria Price** is no ordinary volunteer. She is a Tufts Student who came to us 3 years ago when our After school program just began. Ever since, she been making her way down to the Center - through rain, snow and sleet - to help the kids with their homework.

**She get an A+ from us**



## DANCE CALIENTE “DANCING THROUGH THE DECADES”

“Spring fever” hit the West Medford Community Center like a March wind, as “Dancing Through the Decades” came for a rousing visit on the afternoon of May 20th, 2015. The Dance Caliente partnership of Eileen Herman-Haase and Raul Nieves celebrated timeless dances from the 1800’s through the present at our historical neighborhood home. Sponsored by the WMCC Elder Services office, the event thoroughly entertained a mostly older audience of more than 25 attendees, who all felt the passion, experienced the energy, and remembered the joy of partner dancing as they engaged with the talented duo. Herman-Haase and Nieves performed the Waltz, Peabody, Charleston, Swing, Argentine Tango, and Salsa! “Dancing Through the Decades” featured a one-hour highly interactive dance performance in which the Dance Caliente team artfully blended inspirational dance performances with great costumes, humor, nostalgia, and loads of personality. The program was supported in part by a grant from the Medford Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.



## The Grass is Greener Again



After a hot dry summer that promoted a lot of local “brown-outs” on the lawns in the neighborhood and an ugly proliferation of weeds in our own front yard, a number of West Medford seniors and community partners sprang into action again to raise several thousand dollars and install both a sophisticated sprinkler system and a lush green live sodded lawn at 111. So “abra-cadabra”, we have that all-important “curb appeal” once again. Thanks to outstanding WMCC Operations volunteer Bill Tanner for directing the efforts of the two landscaping contractors and for doing a lot of the site prep work, prior to the installations. Thanks also to WMCC Board Member Rev. Dr. David M. Kilpatrick for assisting with the fundraising outreach. “Major” contributions were received from two significant community resources who chooses to remain anonymous. The lawn looks fantastic and we garnered enough resources to hopefully allow us to keep it that way. P.S. “Keep off the grass!”



# Community Affairs

Youth activities and more ...

Branching out, the Center's Youth committee has organized activities for all ages, including this year's Adult Halloween party fundraiser for the Center.



The committee has also organized the Black History Event, the Community Legislative Breakfasts, Christmas caroling and Game Nights here at the Center. This expanded role calls for a name change, the group will now be referred to as *Community Affairs* when dealing with non-youth activities. Leigh Canada



leads this effort and writes: *To think we are nearing the end of 2015 only adds excitement to what we have in store for 2016 with the Youth Committee/Community Affairs initiatives. Recapping what fun we had this past year which started out with an Easter egg decorating day for the community. We had well over 20 kids and adults come in and decorate eggs, then we participated in the breakfast forum which we*

*showed off our skills with an original line dance created by our own legendary dance instructor Cheryl Shaw. Summer quickly approached where we had our largest outcome for the W.M.C.C. Basketball league. Approximately 30 young ladies were on the courts every Tuesday and Thursday. Parents filled the bleaches and fathers (and mothers) referred and coach. Very proud of our ladies and thankful for the parents that supported this summer's league. Huge thank you to all that helped make it happen! Zonta International and West Medford Reunion Committee graciously sponsored the teams with tee-shirts, Risman Insurance blessed us with a donation that supported the Labor Day Block Party games, West Medford Lobster Fest donated food, parents and friends donation helped to provide the teams with certificates and trophies. Game nights were eventful as we cooked out, played music, games but most importantly we as a community, family and friends reconnected. The smiles and laughter made more memories to add to this awesome community. As we moved into the school year begin, leaves falling and chill in the air we were able to have showcase our Talent with Ms. Vee David's "Medford's Got Talent Show" where proceeds were raised for the W.M.C.C. Youth Committee and our 2nd annual Halloween party that adults were able to tap into their inner child. Dressed up, ate candy and dance to the music of "Dysco". Now the end of the year we are hoping to continue with a couple of more events and we hope all come out to enjoy and support. Please check the website, Facebook, flyers, friends and members of the W.M.C.C. for up and coming events.*



## President's Message

*"It is important not only to have the awareness and to feel impelled to become involved, it's important that there be a forum out there to which one can relate, an organization a movement"* – Angela Davis

The Center's mission is alive and kicking, now that we have rekindled that passion for our community and each other over the last few years. We have had a full board active and engaged over the last two years. We have the youth back at the Center, and the adults that grew up with the Center are coming back to give what they have to keep it going.

We now are focused on finding that missing piece to our puzzle, an Executive Director. Soon with help from our elected officials and various charitable organizations, we hope to lay the groundwork to hire an E.D. to take the reins and drive us where we want to go.

Last year's girls' basketball league proved what can be done when we channel our efforts towards common objectives. We celebrated a life, kept the kids engaged, worked with different local organizations and encouraged parents and volunteers to come down to Dugger Park and have some fun, which Caroline did (below), and she's from Sweden!



## RIBS, CHICKEN AND FUN...SUMMER SENIOR BARBEQUE SIZZLES IN JULY!



It just wouldn't be summer without the WMCC Senior Club's annual BBQ...The grills are cold now, but this year's "hot fun" did not disappoint, as literally dozens of neighbors, friends, and cook-out fans converged on 111 Arlington to "eat-in" and "take-out" tasty plates of BBQ ribs, chickens, burgers, hot dogs and all the fixin's.

As the men manned the hot grills, the ladies executed "kitchen patrol" with precision and efficiency, turning out over 150 delicious meals to a delighted audience of all ages. The tabulations are still being worked out, but no doubt a significant donation will make its way into the WMCC coffers based on the event.

Thanks to the officers and members of the Senior Club for making it all possible, as well as to our outstanding volunteers for getting the job done once again.

# Afterschool Action



The Center is now in its 3<sup>rd</sup> straight year of providing afterschool homework help and activities for middle schoolers. Our program has grown increasingly more popular and this year we have well over 30 registered students.

We refer to this program as the Afterschool Youth Club, the AYC. We have a page on our website dedicated to this program where you can receive all the latest updates and program activities.

<http://wmcc.us/after-school-youth-group/>



The program supports a number of different health, recreational and educational initiatives through efforts of volunteers, parents, and professionals who wish to share their knowledge and experience. Upcoming programs include Math Games, Financial literacy for middle-schoolers, and Taekwondo.



Puzzles and games keep the kids amused, below you'll find 3 of our students who have passed the Cube Puzzle test – assemble these 7 pieces into a cube. Some kids give up after a few minutes, but these students don't know how to give-up and stuck with it and solved the puzzle in a few minutes.



# Afterschool Action

## continued

As we move into the season of thanksgiving, we ask all AYC families and friends to support our Fall community service projects that include:

### SOCK COLLECTION:

We are collecting new white socks (adults) for the homeless. These will be distributed through the Outdoor Church in Cambridge. Please think of buying a pack when you are next in Kmart, Target, BJs, etc.

### FOOD COLLECTION:

We will be collecting canned goods and packaged foods, as part of a city-wide "Medford gives Thanks" food drive. Donations will be distributed to local food pantries.

### COAT COLLECTION:

We will also collect coats (new/used in good condition) for distribution to those in need.

Street and Harvard Ave) for kids to get to the Center..



Nicole pictured above - enjoys working with our middle schoolers and Parents to provide a fertile environment for young minds to collaborate and work together to get their work done while having fun.

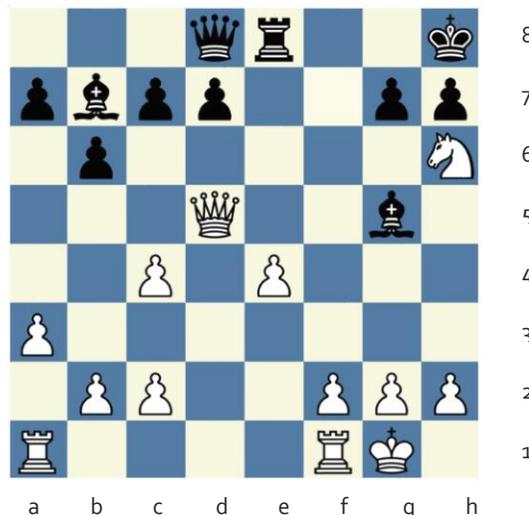


Medford-In-The-Middle (MinM) manages the AYC in partnership with the Center and has hired Nicole McRee to oversee the program. AYC is open 2:45-6pm (and earlier on Wednesdays) whenever Medford Public Schools (MPS) are in session. Through MinM's cooperation with MPS, there is now a dedicated MPS bus stop (at the corner of Arlington

Those wishing to help further the Center's mission to provide educational assistance for youth are encouraged to contact us on our website <http://wmcc.us/>



### CHESS PUZZLE: WHITE TO MOVE



Find checkmate in 3 moves

### SUDOKU CHALLENGE

				9		8		5
		6			3			
		8					4	6
8		2				3		9
	3				9		8	
7	1			2		6		
1	2		6					
	4	3	9		7		2	
	8	5		1	4			

### Test Your Logical Thinking

### WHICH WAY DO YOU ROLL

A rooster lays an egg on top of a roof, which way does it roll?



Answers given on the last page ...

## HEALTH PARTNERSHIPS HELP EDUCATE OUR SENIORS

WMCC Elder Services benefits greatly from our excellent community health partners. We receive nutritional assistance from Mystic Valley Elder Services,



regular wellness visits from Greater Medford Visiting Nurses Association, volunteering, clinics and screenings from Rite Aid Pharmacy and Hallmark Health Systems and educational resources from Cataldo Ambulance Service.

All of these resources come to us in a very friendly, caring manner with little or no charge. And, if you ask any of our visiting friends they'll tell you in a minute, "The West Medford Community Center is my favorite place to volunteer...Your folks have a great time together and I always feel welcome!"

In that spirit, Mark Nicholas, a Business Development Executive with Cataldo Ambulance, spent an interesting and informative hour with the Senior Club back in May (?). He gave us a very valuable lesson on the capabilities



and proper use of our in-house defibrillator, as well as a primer on choking assistance, heart attack and stroke recognition, and other forms of emergency health intervention. It was definitely news we can use from a trusted and well-prepared educator! Kudos to Mark and to the folks at Cataldo Ambulance for lending us his talents!



### VOLUNTEER SHOUT OUTS

Without U, there's no US

*Bill Tanner*

*Mimi Olivier*

*Valerie Rice*

*Beverly Rice*

*Leigh Canada*

*Joe Jones*

*Ann Thompson*

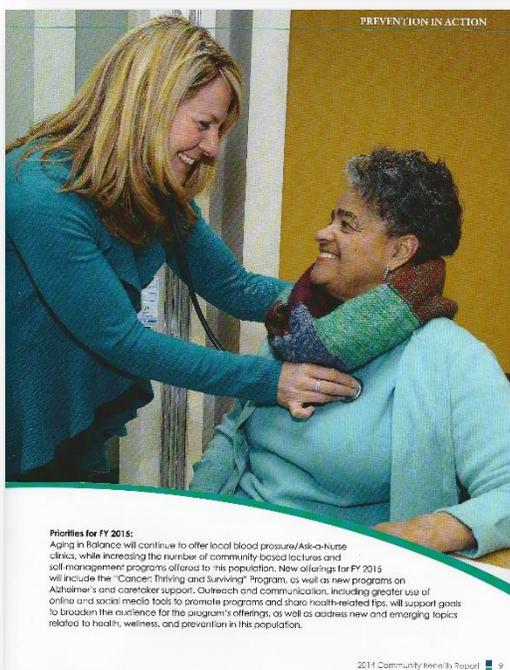
*Eric Reed*

*Casey Prater*



# IN THE NEWS WITH HALLMARK HEALTH

Our fantastic health education partner, Medford's own Hallmark Health Systems (HHS) has been supporting WMCC Elder Services for a number of years with health fairs, immunization clinics, wellness forums, and other valued resources. Once a month, our HHS visiting nurse, Joya Pezzuto, RN, stops by to perform blood pressure readings during the Senior Lunch gathering. Early in the year, Joya came with a professional photographer and took some great shots for Hallmark's 2014 Community Benefits Report. Here's the shot that made the magazine. Kudos to Joya and WMCC Board Member Rachel Tanner for representing the best in this important community partnership... And for all the folks that didn't make the cut, "Don't hate...congratulate!"



# She Got Next *Continued on page 1*



Left: Milana Margretson receives the MVP trophy.

Right: The late Frances Cooper Berry at the Center's Black History Event in 2014. The Girls Championship Game will be held annually in her honor.



played in and through the rain, which they did on 3 separate occasions. In the picture topping this newsletter, you'll see the **The Lions** with their coach WMCC board member Jarrett Lovett and the Championship Trophy. In the picture above, **The Swish'** pose with their coach Kevin McCoy after an exciting championship game at Dugger Park.



**West Medford Community Center Board of Directors**

The Board of Directors wishes to thank all of our sponsors, volunteers and members who have helped us deliver our message and move us forward. Special thanks to Terry Carter, Medford In the Middle and Leigh Canada for their contributions to our newsletters.

**Not me, we**



**Brian Collins**  
President



**Neil Osborne**  
Vice President



**Lovita Strain**  
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**Carolyn Rosen**  
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**Rachel Tanner**



**David Kilpatrick**



**Robert Penta**



**Stacey Moore**



**Loring Green**



**Jarrett Lovett**



**Dorothy Tucker**



**Contact us to have your business advertised here**

**Email:**  
[westmedfordcommunitycenter@gmail.com](mailto:westmedfordcommunitycenter@gmail.com)

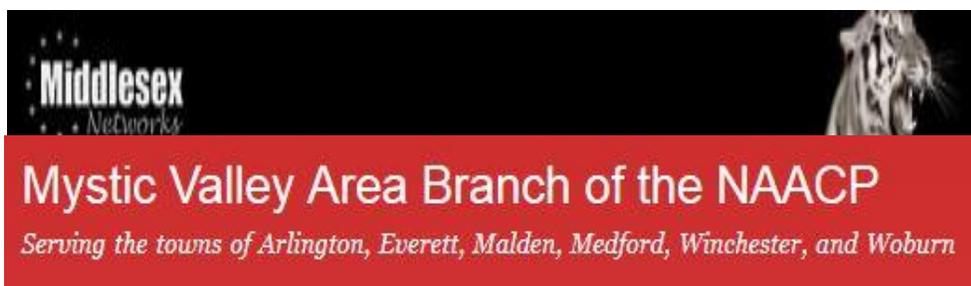
**HOW DID YOU DO?**

**Chess puzzle:**  
1. Qg8+ R x Q  
2. Nf7#  
Checkmate!

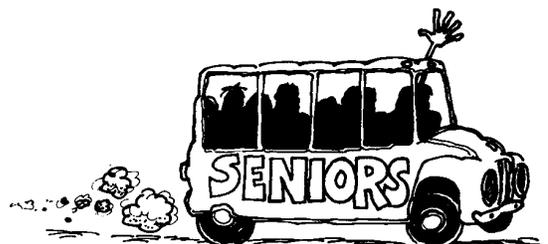
**Sudoku Solution**

2	7	1	4	9	6	8	3	5
4	9	6	8	5	3	2	1	7
3	5	8	1	7	2	9	4	6
8	6	2	5	4	1	3	7	9
5	3	4	7	6	9	1	8	2
7	1	9	3	2	8	6	5	4
1	2	7	6	3	5	4	9	8
6	4	3	9	8	7	5	2	1
9	8	5	2	1	4	7	6	3

**Which way does it roll?**  
Roosters don't lay eggs.



# Coming Soon to the WMCC



## BLACK HISTORY more than just a month!

See our website: [wmcc.us](http://wmcc.us) for more information about upcoming events and potential new partnerships including:

- Bright Nights at Forest Park: Saturday, December 12, 2015
- Game Night: Saturday, December 5, 2015
- Black History Event: February, 2016

Check us out and like the WMCC on Facebook!



**THANKS FOR YOUR ONGOING SUPPORT OF THE WEST MEDFORD  
COMMUNITY CENTER, INC.**