

# COMMUNITY COUNTS



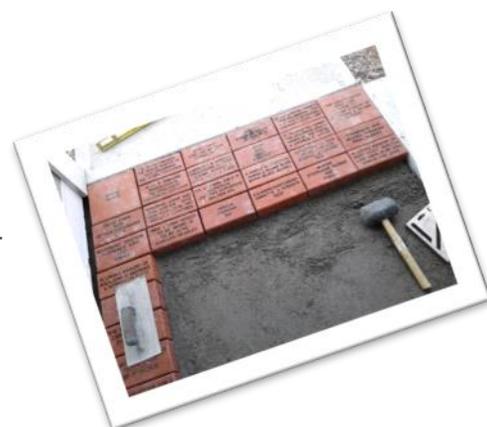
A quarterly newsletter  
of the WMCC

West Medford Community Center, Inc.

April-May 2017

## BRICK BY BRICK: PART ONE

Telling dozens of family stories, celebrating a wealth of local history, and expressing the joys of belonging to the neighborhood, close to eighty bricks have arrived at 111 Arlington Street, artfully inscribed and now permanently installed in the center's portico. Those bricks represent part one of the WMCC's first "Brick-by-Brick" fundraising campaign and have been all the buzz since they were temporarily laid out in the foyer of the building. Local brick mason Richard Horne has since excavated the space and skillfully installed the bricks, as the fickle NE weather allowed. If you have a brick already, you can check it out now, or wait for the big reveal, preceding the 4th Annual Community Breakfast on Saturday, May 13th at 9:30 a.m. Read more about this later in this issue.



## African-American Freedom Trail Goes through the "heart" of the Ville



Based upon the landmark scholarship of the late Tufts University professor and eminent historian Gerald R. Gill and nearly a decade in the making, an impressive collection of key historical sites in the Mystic Valley and Greater Boston area have been carefully mapped out and curated to form a new "African-American Freedom

Trail". The site includes a few monuments on the campus of Tufts, the Slave Quarters at the Isaac Royall House, and our own beloved West Medford Community Center. It also includes sites like the African Meeting House on Beacon Hill, Roxbury's Freedom House, and the South End's Harriet Tubman House. The University spent an entire day commemorating Dr. Gill and his vision in a fascinating symposium and tour on March 31st. The event, entitled, "The Past, Present, and Future of Black Boston". The event also included panel discussions, archival exhibits, and a presentation to Dr. Gill's family. WMCC's own Terry Carter hosted the group during the tour stop at the center and sat on one of the afternoon panels.



### Also in This Issue

- West Medford Open Studios Returns to the Center...
- 2nd Hoops and Hope BBall Tourney and Fund-raiser, a new summer centerpiece...
- AYC plans for a Summer to remember!
- Mystic River "Meet and Greet"
- ABCD Tax Prep Rocks!
- Annual Community Breakfast in mid-May...
- Medford Police come to WMCC for a Community Forum...
- Elder Services hosts BHM Film Series...
- Executive Director's Notes...

Photo Caption: Terry Carter talks about the history and importance of the WMCC in West Medford with tour group along the "new" African-American Freedom Trail.

## Notes from the Executive Director

It just recently occurred to me that I have now had the privilege and honor to be the Executive Director of the West Medford Community Center for just about one full year. When I first realized the fact that I was coming up on this anniversary, my first reaction was "Geez, that year went by fast!" (One of the gifts of getting older is that time does go by in a rush.) After I let that sink in, I did start thinking about my past year, and how it felt, becoming part of this West Medford Community Center family. In reflection, I find that if anything, I am even more excited about being here as I was when I started. Part of this is in reaction to all the amazing people I have had a chance to meet and work with. As I have written previously, this is a unique community and organization. A very different part of my feelings relates the events, political and social, we have all experienced over the past twelve months. For me, the world at large now feels somewhat less kind, less open, and less safe than it did a year ago. However, I have come to believe that bringing people together, for any reason, has a positive social, spiritual and political impact. When we can bring together people from different social, economic, ethnic and generational groups, it makes this impact profound. When we share stories, when we share food, when we share laughter, we create something beautiful and resilient. And that, my friends, is exactly what we have done, and, with your help, what we will continue to do at the West Medford Community Center. I thank you all for your kindness, your commitment and your passion.

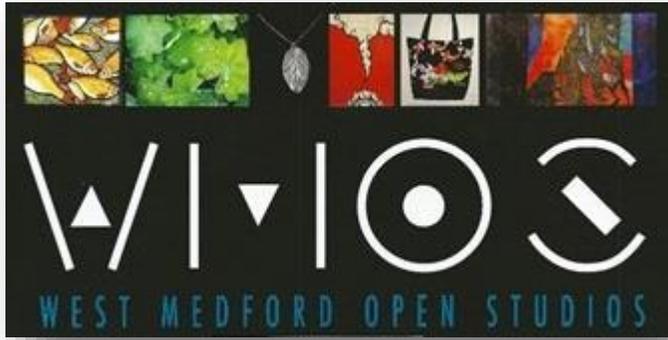
## Medford Police Hold Community Forum at WMCC

On April 5, Medford Police Chief Leo Sacco and 10 of his officers held a public forum at the West Medford Community Center. Over 45 West Medford residents spent two hours in dialog with Chief Sacco and officers, most of whom stayed after the formal event, holding one on one conversations with those in attendance on issues which had been raised during the formal session. Issues discussed ranged from concern over traffic patterns and illegal parking in West Medford, to a range of much more emotional issues. Folks from the community engaged the Chief and the officers attending in a serious dialog around the deep concerns about the potential interactions between law enforcement and the young men in the community. The officers spoke at length of how Police shared those concerns and are they are trained to defuse potentially difficult interactions with the young people in the community. Per other "hot button issues," The Chief also spoke at length about the role the local Medford Police have in enforcing the new the Federal Immigration standards (virtually none), and the difficulty in increasing diversity on the Medford Police force (because of "Civil Service" requirements as they impact hiring.) While it appeared we had more questions than time, the general agreement was that it was an extremely helpful opportunity to connect the police with the community they serve.



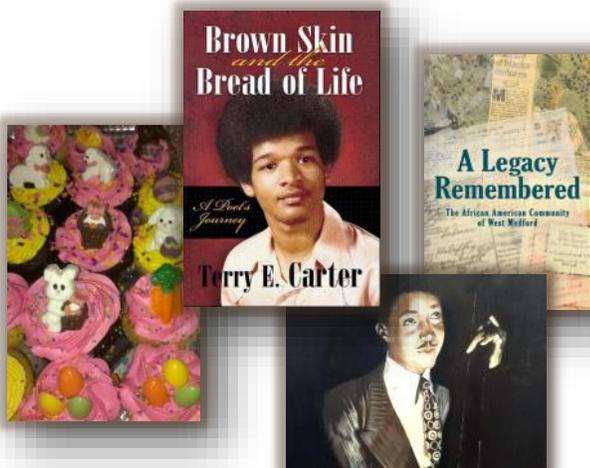
**April 5, 2017**  
**Medford Community Policing Forum**  
**West Medford Community Center**

Community folks fully are engaged and attentive during a very well-attended neighborhood meeting with the MPD. The police were courteous and genuinely interested in what their constituents had to say.



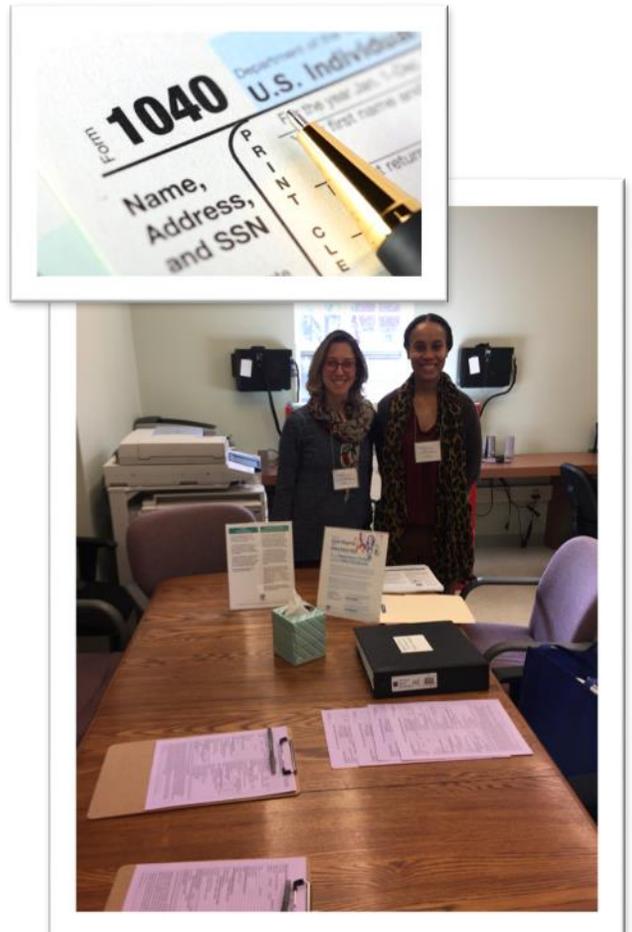
## West Medford Open Studios Returns to WMCC

For the second year running, the annual artistic festival known as West Medford Open Studios, will include the WMCC as a host and performance hub for a diverse array of artists and creative spirits. Running throughout the afternoon on April 29th and 30th, there will be rousing performances by native West Medford poet Terry E. Carter and several of his artistic friends and favorites, including artisan baker and poet Cheryl White Middleton. Renowned painter Hilton C. Parham will also exhibit some of his work. An exhibit by the West Medford Senior Club Knitters will also be featured, along with artwork and a creative stamp exhibit by Terry. You can also check out the West Medford Afro-American Remembrance Project and the West Medford legacy portraits of photographer Otha Sonnie. As one of the close to thirty different intimate home-based venues, WMCC's participation adds a separate note of artistic distinction and uniqueness to the weekend proceedings. Special thanks to Monique Doherty and Anita Jackson for once again facilitating the WMCC's inclusion in this annual creative showcase. We hope to see you there!



## ABCD Holds Free Tax Prep Sessions

Metropolitan Boston's leading anti-poverty agency continues to make tremendous inroads into the Mystic Valley with services from its new Malden-based offices. For the first year since opening, in 2013, its highly successful free tax prep initiative has targeted the West Medford community and been a tremendous success. WMCC partnered with ABCD to host its team of IRS-trained preparers in our computer suite. The team came in once a week for about twelve weeks in advance of the tax deadline in mid-April. They filed returns for over 30 low-income households and brought folks into the building that have never been in the community center before, many of who never knew it existed. Kudos to Cecilia Plotkin and Nephy Dehoux from ABCD. They were polite, professional, and proficient throughout the time they spent with us. They get high marks as well for their patience and community spirit!



ABCD's IRS certified Tax Preparers Cecilia Plotkin and Nephy Dehoux helped folks through the process of filing their 2016 returns.

# Memory Café Supports the Aging Brain

We are thrilled to continue to partner with “*The Community Family Adult Day Health Program*” to provide a monthly “**Memory Café**” for individual living with memory challenges AND their families. A “Memory Café” is a social gathering for people with forgetfulness or other changes in their thinking and/or mental processing. It is a place where those folks and their families can get together in a safe, supportive and engaging environment. A time and place where they can feel comfortable, and enjoy other’s company. This “Memory Café” is held the third Friday of each month from 10:00 AM – 12:00 noon, in the Founder’s Hall of the West Medford Community Center.



## Facts of Life:

As people age, it's normal to have occasional memory problems, such as forgetting the name of a person you've recently met. However, Alzheimer's is more than occasional memory loss. It's a disease that causes brain cells to malfunction and ultimately die.



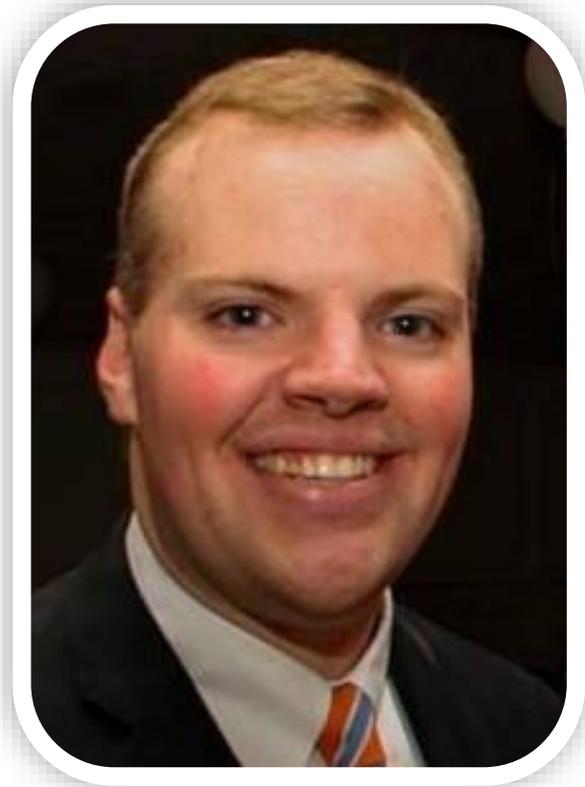
## WMCC Facility Rentals

Whether you need to entertain a large group, need access to a functional commercial kitchen or want to hold a small organizational meeting, the WMCC has the space to suit your event. Rental of our facility may include the use of the kitchen, chairs, tables and limited set-up for your function. We also have a computer lab, a small dance studio and a great kitchen which means we can host everything from martial arts classes to private catering. If you think the Community Center is the place for your next event, you can find out about schedules, rates and more information by contacting us at 781-483-3042.



## State Representative Sean Garballey Hosts Office Hours at WMCC

Just a quick reminder: State Representative Sean Garballey (who represents West Medford and is our voice in the Massachusetts House of Representatives) continues to hold "Open Office" hours right in at the West Medford Community Center (111 Arlington Street, West Medford MA.) Representative Garballey comes into the Community Center every other Thursday from 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM ish, and any constituent is welcome to stop by to ask questions, express concerns, and/or to hear from Rep. Garballey around what is happening at the Statehouse. **NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY.** If you're not sure which Thursday Sean is here, just give us us a call (781-483-3042.)

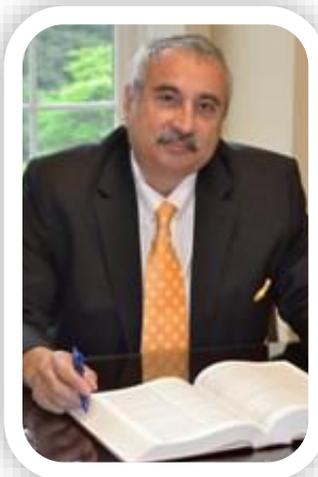


### QUOTE OF THE DAY...

" Even a brief stay in a long-term care facility can potentially wipe out your hard-earned savings, property and investments. Irrevocable trusts are a great tool for seniors looking to protect their assets from being lost to a catastrophic injury, serious illness, or lawsuit. They are a staple of successful estate planning and something that we've helped folks put in place for a reasonable cost with tremendous permanent outcomes."

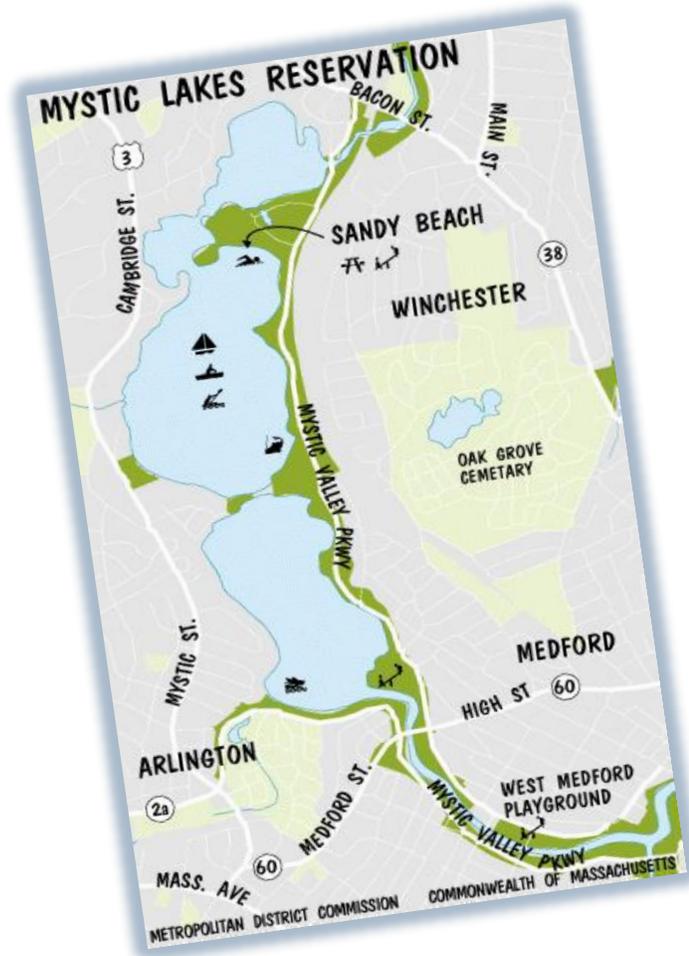
## SENIOR CLUB and ELDER SERVICES host "ESTATE AND TAX PLANNING" SEMINAR

Local Attorneys Tom Colonna and Phil Mastrocola joined Enrolled Agent and tax expert John Warren for a spirited give and take on the merits and methods of planning for those "golden years" with an enthusiastic group of neighborhood elders on January 18, 2017 here at 111 Arlington. As a special presentation, during their monthly West Medford Senior Club meeting, the seminar presented great information on wills, trusts, and the tax implications of retirement planning. The three local experts really did a great job of fielding questions and providing timely and easy-to-understand information without looking to scare or drum up business for their practices. We hope to have them back again as these topics are important ones for the health and vitality of the aging population of this historic community.



# Black History Month Film Series

Commemorating Black History Month for 2017, WMCC Elder Services reprised its popular showings of classic black films throughout February. Three movies were presented (a fourth was cancelled due to inclement weather). Eddie Murphy's hilarious comedy "Coming to America" was a big hit as the first film featured. A docu-drama chronicling the last days of Malcolm X came next. "Death of a Prophet" starred a younger Morgan Freeman and described the tumultuous times leading up to the assassination of the civil rights legend. The last film was a classic "race movie" called "Paradise in Harlem" shot in black in white and featuring an all black cast. The movies were presented on successive Wednesdays following our Senior Lunch program. It's become an annual event and all are welcome. Hope to see more of you next year!



## Mystic Meet and Greet

On Thursday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>, we were pleased to host a joint meeting of the "Friends of the Mystic River" and the "Mystic River Watershed Association." These two groups provided information on both the status of the River (surprisingly good and getting better) and ways member of the Community can get involved to continue this work of keeping the Mystic clean and usable. We felt it important to host this event, simply because the History of our community is directly tied to the Mystic River. The historic West Medford neighborhood was defined by those streets within the curve of the West bank of the Mystic River. The river has been, over time both a liability, (when it was allowed to become foul.) When clean, it is a real asset to people of West Medford, increasing both the quality of life and property values. **Also, if you are interested, the 22 Annual Mystic River Spring Cleanup is scheduled for Saturday, April 29, from 9:30 AM – 1:00 PM, with folks gathering at Mystic Riverbend Park/ Hormel Stadium Lot, Medford, more information at [www.fomr.org](http://www.fomr.org).**

## Membership has its privileges!

The West Medford Community Center is at its heart, a “Membership” organization. The essence of both the Mission and Work of the Community Center lies in responding to the needs, interests, and passions of our community as represented by our membership. As a member of the West Medford Community Center you can help determine both what we should be doing, and how we should be doing this work. You can easily become a “Member” of the West Medford Community Center by filling out a membership from our web site: [www.wmcc.us](http://www.wmcc.us).



## The West Medford Senior Club ‘Ques It Up...

**Save the date, y’all...**the Annual Senior Club Summer Barbeque is coming back on **Saturday, July 15th**...You can expect serious amounts of really great food (Chicken, Ribs, Burger, Dogs etc.) with everything you would want on the side. In addition to the wonderful food (as if you would need anything more) you can also enjoy the music, the company, and the amazing energy and excitement that the Senior Club brings to pretty much everything they do. Be on the lookout for tickets soon. They always sell out and you don’t want to miss the moment!



## “Hoops and Hope” is back...Saturday, August 26th!

This is the second year for the “Hoops and Hope Classic” a community event to honor and support the young people of Medford. The day will consist of youth basketball tournaments, numerous kids sports clinics, a silent auction, and other activities for children and families. Celebrity Host/Coaches, making an appearance will include NBA players and other local celebrities. The vision of this event is: “To bring together families from across Medford and its surrounding areas to celebrate the tradition of sports in Medford.(also celebrating the life of Brandon Bolden, a West Medford teen who died of a heart attack at 16 while playing basketball), and the West Medford Community Center – which continues to provide a range of services for youth and families in the area. You can learn more about this event at the web site: <http://www.hoopsandhope.org/>



# Dorothy Elizabeth Still Dancing at 95+

She's a nonagenarian and a community institution. Like the "Energizer bunny", she just keeps on going! Our own Dorothy Elizabeth Tucker is still dancing. Look for her next month in "Generations" a special program of chorus and choreography at the Medford Senior Center. She will be performing with her troupe, the Back Pocket Dancers in a lively event that will also feature the music of famed international vocalist Philip Hamilton and local Sax Man Billy Thompson. Sponsored in part by a grant from the



Massachusetts Cultural Council and the Medford Arts Council, Dorothy will be dancing in two shows, at 3:00 and 7:30 p.m. The cost of the event is \$20.00 and tickets are available online through Eventbrite — <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/generations-in-dance-and-song-tickets-33155722659?aff=es2> (just paste in your browser).



**Generations  
In Song and Dance**  
Featuring  
The Back Pocket Dancers,  
Billy Thompson, Phillip Hamilton and Regine Gelin

Saturday, May 6, 2017  
Medford Senior Center  
101 Riverside Avenue  
Medford, MA 02155  
Price: \$20.00  
Two shows: 3:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.  
Call 781-648-5579 or 617-974-3688 for information or  
For ticket info go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/generations-in-dance-and-song-tickets-33155722659>

## SUMMER CAMP

Swimming, Computers, Dance, Cooking,  
Sports, Crafts, Movies, Games, and  
more! Space is limited!!

**10 weeks**

June 26th - September 1st  
8AM to 6PM

**Middle School ages**  
Rising 6th - 8th graders

**Family Support**  
\$175 a week, only pay for the weeks you need!



Contact Bill Hager at (781) 483-3042 or [wmcobill@gmail.com](mailto:wmcobill@gmail.com) for more information.  
West Medford Community Center, 111 Arlington St, West Medford

## Summer for the AYC... "A Better Tomorrow, All Day/Every Day this Summer"

In response to what we've from parents in the area, the West Medford Community Center will be offering a full day program for Middle School aged youth, beginning Monday, June 26. This program will run 5 days a week (Mon-Fri) from 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM for the full 10 weeks of Summer vacation and will be developed specifically for youth entering 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. We are looking to provide a full range of activities for these kids, ranging from swimming and basketball to computers and pod casting, with side trips into cooking, arts and crafts and dance and music, all with an eye towards developing healthy social interactions. If you have kids this age (or you know someone who does), and you're looking for an enriching program for the summer months, please contact us at the center (781-483-3042.)

## Join us for the 2017 Community Breakfast at 9:30 a.m. on May 13th...

This will be our 4<sup>th</sup> annual “Community Breakfast,” where we offer you the opportunity to meet your public elected officials face to face and give these officials an opportunity to listen and respond to your concerns and comments. (This event was previously called the “Legislative Breakfast, but since we began inviting other local elected officials, we re-named it “Community Breakfast.”) An essential component of the mission of the West Medford Community Center is to provide a forum where the voices of the greater Medford Community can be heard. Towards this end, we have historically provided this forum to provide public officials an opportunity to interact with their constituencies. We will provide each official with an opportunity to make a brief statement and then react to the questions of the community member in attendance. We are in process of inviting officials from City (City Council, Mayor’s office, School Committee) State (State Representatives and Senators) and Federal governments. If you have any questions about this community breakfast or how this fits into the work of the West Medford Community Center, please feel free to contact us at any time. You reach us by calling by the center’s phone (781-483-3042) or this e-mail



## WMCC Board of Directors —AT A GLANCE—

**Brian Collins** – 149 Jerome St., Medford, MA, 02155  
781-771-8405(c), [icesemail@gmail.com](mailto:icesemail@gmail.com)

**Charles Green** – 80 Arlington St., Medford, MA 774-826-9372 (c),  
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**Jameel Webb-Davis** – 20 Second St., MA 781 219-4932 (h), (617) 461-2973 (c),  
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**Loring Green** – 133 Arlington Street, Medford, MA 781-929-9857 (c), [loring133@yahoo.com](mailto:loring133@yahoo.com)

**Jarrett Lovett** – 75 Arlington Street, Medford, MA 781-502-1997 (c), [jarrett.lovett@gmail.com](mailto:jarrett.lovett@gmail.com)

**Warren Belden** – 94 Monument Steet, Medford, MA 617-755-6272 (c), [warrenbeldenjr@gmail.com](mailto:warrenbeldenjr@gmail.com)



WEST MEDFORD  
COMMUNITY CENTER, INC.

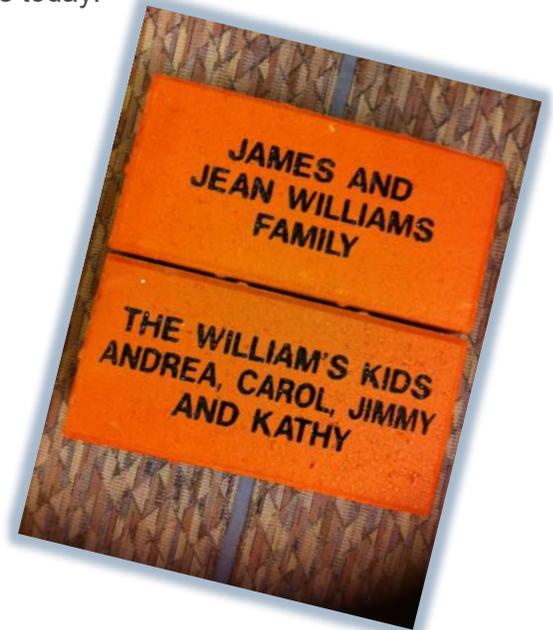
## Hey kid...Want to be the next Jimi Hendrix?

Well perhaps that's asking a bit much, but you can learn to play the guitar here at the WMCC. West Medford resident Ellen Epstein is a firm believer in the positive power of music. She's had the pleasure of making music with kids and adults ever since she learned to play guitar at 12 years old, and is looking forward to being an active part of the WMCC. Starting May 1<sup>st</sup>, Ellen is offering an introductory 4-week class for students 10 years old and up. **No music reading or previous music experience required** but an opportunity to learn a talent that could last a lifetime.



## Brick-by-Brick Official Dedication coming soon!

The 4th Annual "Community Breakfast" will be preceded at 9:00 AM by a formal dedication of the first installation of our "Brick by Brick" project." Those individuals and families who have purchased an engraved brick will be invited to join us for the formal un-veiling of the installation and a brief ceremony commemorating those people and families who have made the West Medford Community Center the very special place that it is today.



## 2017 WMCC LADIES HOOPS PROGRAM You Got Next!

We in process of organizing the 4<sup>th</sup> annual WMCC Girls Summer Basketball League. This program is open young women, ages 10 – 17. You don't need any prior experience and there is no cost to participate. There will instruction, drills and full court games, culminating in the "Francis Cooper Berry Tournament and Awards Ceremony." Build your skills, expand your game, and grow your confidence. Our emphasis is on healthy competition and fun. Practices and games are held at the Dugger Park Basketball Courts, West Medford, and begin on June 21<sup>st</sup>.



## A Letter from the President...

### President's Message:

It has been almost a year since our return to operating at near full capacity with the hiring of our Executive Director Bill Hager. Together, we've set an ambitious agenda that has reached many of you, and we hope to extend our impact this spring and summer to reach many more. Neither have we, nor can we sustain this progress without your cooperation, albeit through volunteering, program development, financial support or other means that empower us to carry out our mission. I call upon each and every one of you to help us sustain our efforts by getting involved.

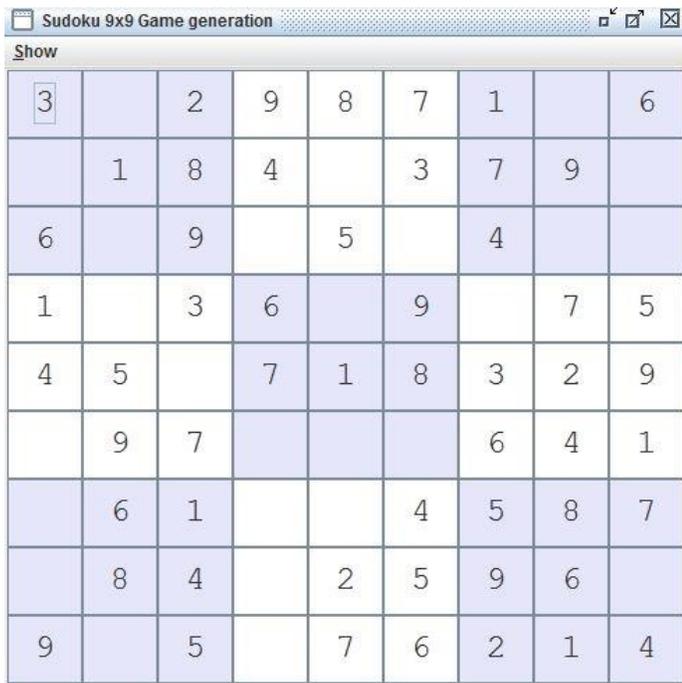
If you like the things we're doing, help us continue. If you don't, tell us why. In any case, don't just do nothing, because we ... are you ... and we're all in!

Brian Collins

President, Board of Directors

West Medford Community Center, Inc.

## A.Y.C. KID'S CORNER



Sudoku 9x9 Game generation

Show

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

### SUDOKU CHALLENGE

Can you figure out which numbers will complete the puzzle correctly??? AYC members...bring Bill Hager a solution before June 1st, 2017 and win a prize. First correct solution

### Contact Us

Give us a call or email us for more information about our services and programs....

#### W.M.C.C.

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Visit us on the web at  
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