

The Hurlbutt Buzz



SCHOOL & PTO NEWS

PTO CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

That cool, crisp bite to the air reminds us that October is here; and with it comes a taste of brisk mornings and beautifully warm days that autumn is known for. No day last week was more beautiful than Wednesday, which lucky for us was our school photo day! I would like to take a moment to thank Shirley Hwang for chairing this committee and for all of the planning that went into running this event. Thanks also to everyone who volunteered to offer guidance and last minute fashion assistance to the children. I am proud to report that every student got to use their own comb, which was promptly placed in the garbage afterwards. While maybe not the most eco-friendly practice, we'll do anything it takes to keep the "you know whats" away. [Lice. We're trying to keep away the lice. There, I said it.]

The recent appearance of cold weather serves as a perfect reminder that our gift wrap fundraiser has come to a close as well. Thanks go out to Eliza Tabacchi for once again doing an amazing job organizing this important fundraiser. Orders should arrive somewhere between tomorrow and Christmas, with my guess being sometime in early November. Between those three estimates I am guaranteed to be correct.

This week in The Buzz we are lucky to have an extensive report provided to us by our BOE representative, Tim Lawler. Simply put, there is a LOT going on with regards to the Weston Schools this time of year. Please take the time to read Tim's report, which is a fantastic Cliffs Notes version of everything that is going on. Much like it takes roughly 50 gallons of sap to make one gallon of maple syrup, Tim had to sit in on 50 hours of meetings to bring you a three page write up. Not everyone has the time to read the whole book, or in this case sit in on the whole meeting. That's why we have Tim. Thanks, Tim!

That's it for today. I promised myself that I would keep this week's newsletter short. I've got to get better at keeping promises.

Have a great weekend!

Dan McNeill and Tammy Roberts
PTO co-presidents

BOARD OF EDUCATION REVIEW

Facilities Review and Shared Space

The Town of Weston and Silver/Petrucci & Associates (Architects/Engineers/Interior Designers) have officially begun the Space Renovation Study for Weston Schools, Senior Center and the Annex.

Weston is searching for more space to create much needed offices for town officials and to improve the quality of town services. The temporary office space within the Town Annex Building needs to be relocated, because the structure is approaching the end of its effective life and will hopefully be demolished in the near future. The town has also authorized the the analysis of the Finance Department, I. T. Department, and Parks & Recreation Department for their particular space requirements.

This study is underway at the same time the Weston Police Department is doing a separate review of current and future needs for their facility.

With the need for all this additional space, the town must either construct new facilities or discover 'unused' space within its existing facilities. This is where the the Weston Schools and Central Offices (BOE) come into play.

The Space Renovation Study will:

- Investigate and field verify all existing conditions of HES & WMS and land in question.
- Evaluate surplus space and propose the relocation of specific classes.
- Create *draft plans* for review with town, *final plans* & report narrative with all findings & recommendations, construction cost estimate, and construction schedule.
- Produce *first draft* for public discussion by January 2014.
- The study will cost \$27,000.
- Security Study will be completed. Additional information will follow as we learn more.

The study's available options are one or more of the following:

- Moving the Senior Center out of HES South House to help restructure the floor plan
- Moving 2nd Grade from HES to WIS to make room for town offices in HES
- Moving 6th Grade from WMS to WIS to make room from town offices in WMS
- Moving 3rd Grade from WIS to HES to make room for the relocated 6th Grade

Change to the Weston Public School Systems would not be any earlier than the 2015-2016 school year. 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school years will not be affected.

Please attend monthly BOE - Facilities Committee Meetings if you want to hear more about the Facilities Review and other Weston school projects. Monthly meetings are opened to the public. Please see www.westonps.org for meeting times and agendas.

The next Facilities Committee Meetings are:

October 9th @ 4-5:30 pm (Office of the Director of Finance & Operations)

November 13th @ 4-5:30 pm (Office of the Director of Finance & Operations)

Student Enrollment Update

Hurlbutt Class Size		
2012-2013 Actual	2013-2014 Projected	2013-2014 Actual

K	115	116	134
1	157	119	133
2	163	160	176

Total	435	395	443
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BOE projected that enrollment in HES would decline by (-40) students or (-9%). Actual enrollment in HES by August 19, 2013 was up by (+8) students or (+2%). Three new teachers have been added to Hurlbutt Elementary School.

BOE projected that the Weston Public School District would decline by (-65) students. Actual enrollment in the District is up by (+15) students. Twenty-one new teachers have been added to Weston Public Schools.

Projected enrollment figures were incorrect, and shall be investigated further.

At this point the BOE feels that enrollment is not expected to increase for 2014-2015, but will not speculate further until the enrollment figures have been re-evaluated.

Budget Update

The Weston BOE has been very aggressive, creative and successful at keeping the annual school budget increases incredibly low for several years.

The BOE has stated a *preliminary* 2.46% increase for the 2014-2015 school year. This (preliminary) increase does not appear large, but is much larger than the 0% increase that was provided by the BOF for the 2013-2014 school year.

New Legislation for Weston Public School (WPS) 2013-2014 school year

- Academic Innovation & Measurements (AIM)
 - Full Integration (K-12)
 - Every school and every classroom
 - Fueled by expanded internal capacity
- 2. Blended Learning
 - Personalized learning
 - Increasing effectiveness of teachers
 - Expanding educational opportunities
 - Not replacing teachers with technology, but rather...
 - Training teachers to keep up with technology that students are already using
 - Show students how to learn with this technology
 - Using programs to assist & personalize learning
- 3. Common Core Standards
 - Ensure world class preparation
 - Depth vs. Width
 - Learn in great detail in one year, rather than small pieces over several years
 - Emphasis on higher level thinking

- Smarter Balanced Assessment Preparation
 - Weston wants to be a CT pilot school in Spring 2014
 - Adaptive, online assessments in all subjects except in Science
 - Online testing will not require paper or pencils
 - When a question is answered correctly, a more challenging question is given
 - When a question is answered incorrectly, a appropriate level question is given
 - This way all students are challenged accordingly
 - 31 states (including CT) will be joining the SBA
 - Weston can then be compared with 30 other states
 - Testing in grade (3-8) and (11)
 - Test scores might drop while teachers & students get familiar with the SBA
 - Testing is not as rigidly structured as CMT and CAPT
 - Therefore, testing can have a less strict schedule
 - Phase out CMT and CAPT

Board of Education - Facilities Committee Meeting

Wednesday, October 9th @ 4:00 pm
 Office of the Director of Finance & Operations
 Agenda to include:
 Facility Study Update
 Security Upgrade & Update

Board of Education - Special Meeting

Tuesday, October 15th @ 7:00 pm
 Weston Middle School LRC
 Agenda to include:
 Proposal to install Lights on WHS Stadium Field

Board of Education Meeting

Tuesday, October 21st @ 7:00 pm
 Weston Middle School LRC
 Agenda TBD

Board of Education - Facilities Committee Meeting

Wednesday, November 13th @ 4:00 pm
 Office of the Director of Finance & Operations
 Agenda TBD

Please see www.westonps.org for full meeting agenda(s)
 These meetings are open to the public.

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

By Suzanne Arnone, Stacy Slater and Meg Sullivan

Resilience

According to the American Psychological Association, resilience is defined as “the process of adapting well in the face of adversity... ‘bouncing back’ from difficult experiences.” More resilient people adapt to adversity without lasting difficulties; less resilient people have a harder time with stress and life changes, both major and minor. It’s been found that people who handle minor stresses with ease can also manage major crises more easily, so resilience has its benefits for coping in daily life as well as when tragic or devastating events occur.

While some people are, by nature, less upset than others by changes and the unexpected, resilience is not a trait one is born with. Resilience can be learned and developed. The development of resilience involves behaviors, thoughts and actions. The thoughts we have directly impact our feelings which influence our actions. Negative self-talk, such as “This is awful!”, leads to one feeling incapable and powerless, which then undermines one’s coping abilities. Positive self-talk, such as “This is not how I planned things, but I can be flexible”, leads to feeling confident and capable, which leads to successful coping behaviors.

The journey toward developing resilience varies for people. Some of the following strategies may be helpful for you and your children in the development of resilience.

Ten Ways to Build Resilience

1. *Make connections.* Good relationships with family members, friends or others are vital. Accept help and support from people who care about you and will listen to you.
2. *Avoid seeing crises as insurmountable problems.* You can’t change what has happened but you can decide how you ‘frame’ it, or perceive it, and how you respond to it.
3. *Accept that change is part of living.* Accept circumstances that cannot be altered; focus on what can be changed.
4. *Move toward your goals.* Develop some realistic goals and do something each day, no matter how small, toward accomplishing a goal.
5. *Take decisive actions.* Rather than detaching or wishing away problems, act on adverse situations as much as you can.
6. *Look for opportunities of self-discovery.* People learn and grow through tragedy and loss; look for this in yourself.
7. *Nurture a positive view of yourself.* Have confidence in your ability to solve problems and trust your instincts.
8. *Keep things in perspective.* Try to view the situation in a broader context and with a long-term perspective.
9. *Maintain a hopeful outlook.* Be optimistic! Expect good things to happen. Avoid worrying about what you fear.
10. *Take care of yourself.* Pay attention to your own needs and feelings.

Good mental and physical health helps you handle trying situations more easily.

Source: American Psychological Association, *The Road to Resilience*, www.apa.org

REQUEST FOR KIDS' CLOTHING FOR THE SCHOOL Doing your Fall cleaning, and have clothes that don't fit your children anymore? Put them to good use. The Nurse is in need of gently worn pants and shorts (girls and boys) size 2-12; and lightly used medium and large tops (girls and boys). Please bring the clothes to the School Nurse's office. Thank you!

PHOTO DAY AND RETAKE DAY UPDATE School Photo Day was a complete success last week. Thank you to all of the volunteers that took the time to come by to help ensure that everything ran in a timely fashion. Photos will be delivered via your child's backpack by early November. In the event the child's photo needs to be retaken, Photo RETAKE DAY is scheduled for Wed. November 13th. Please make sure to send your child in with the original set of photos for their retake. For any questions regarding your photo package, please contact our account representative at Coffee Pond: Lisa Parker, at lisa@coffeepond.com. Thank you!

MARKETPLACE

Help the school earn money just by using the PTO's links to shop on Amazon and by entering your Stop & Shop Card number. Visit www.westonpspto.org to learn just how easy it is. Don't forget to visit the HES PTO Marketplace tab and order labels through Labeldaddy.com.

ALTERNATE DISMISSAL FORMS (YELLOW PADS) Just a note that the yellow pads (alternate dismissal forms) complete with a hand-cut piece of carbon paper is available for your convenience. They are \$1 a pad and designed to make writing 2 copies of an alternate dismissal notes for playdates, afterschool programs, early pickup, etc. easy. Please see Mrs. Eagle or one of the nice ladies in the Main Office. All proceeds go toward the Hurlbutt PTO. Thank you!

REMINDER: WESTON HIGH SCHOOL PTO

Stamford, CT Lord & Taylor Tuesday, November 5th, 2013

The Weston High School PTO is again participating in Lord & Taylor's Shop Smart, Do Good fundraising event. The PTO receives \$5 for each ticket purchased and you receive unbelievable savings at the Stamford L&T store on Nov 5th. This event offers the deepest discounts of the year along with the least amount of exclusions!

\$5 ticket for admission grants you:

- Two Special 25% bonus coupons (good for one item each)*
- Exclusive 15% off savings pass to be used all day on regular and sale-priced items including cosmetics and fragrances*.
- Current L&T cardholders automatically save an additional 10%

- Open a new charge account on Fundraising Day and L&T will contribute \$5 to the WHS PTO and you save an additional 15% on your purchases all day. Download the flyer by clicking [here](#).

AROUND TOWN

WESTON PARKS & RECREATION

NEW information on winter youth sports & fitness and basketball programs are available on Weston's Park and Recreation [website](#).

TRUNK OR TREAT The Town of Weston is offering the popular Trunk or Treat event again this year on Halloween! Participate as a "Trunker" or a "Treater" or BOTH! The event is from 5-7 pm. You MUST register your car to be a "Trunker." Read more about the Halloween event at Weston Intermediate School on Halloween [here](#).

Halloween Event at the WESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY Sponsored by the Weston Girl Scouts Name of Event: Scare Fair Dates: October 26, 2013 (rain date October 27, 2013) Time: 12:00 Noon to 4:00 p.m. Cost: Free Admission - game and activity tickets are 50 cents each Description: The Weston Scare Fair, sponsored by the Weston Girl Scouts is an annual community event held on the grounds of the Weston Historical Society. There will be a wide variety of games, crafts, activities, moon bounce, and Silent Auction. This is a family partnership fundraising event to support the Weston Girl Scouts and the Girl Scouts of Connecticut. Please join us on Saturday, October 26th, 2013 from 12:00 Noon to 4:00 p.m. Rain date is Sunday, October 27th. Costumes are encouraged. Is it annual? Yes Event Location: Weston Historical Society 104 Weston Road Weston, CT 06883 Website: Phone: 203/227-7038 Email: gclaytondesign@gmail.com

WESTON PUBLIC LIBRARY **It's the Weston Public Library's 50th Anniversary!** Charles Keating will kick off the celebration with his free performance with his family on 10/19. Check out what the Weston Public Library has planned for October! Charles Keating (October 19th); New Yorker Roundtable Discussions (15th, 22nd), Movie Night (Oct 16th), Minecraft (October 20th), Book Groups (October 10th and 16th). Please visit www.westonpubliclibrary.org for more information.

WESTON KIWANIS CLUB

The Reservoir Run Half Marathon and 5K Races

October 27, 2013 Half Marathon Start at 8:30 am 5K Start at 8:40 am

This is the second year of the Reservoir Run Half Marathon, a gorgeous 13.1 mile autumnal race, and the first year for the new 5K. The half is open to anyone 14 years or older and the 5K

is open to younger children accompanied by an adult.

The 5K race is a wonderful opportunity for parents to run a race with their children, have a fun time and at the same time help the Weston Booster's Club purchase sporting equipment not covered by the annual education budget.

We also have a FREE KIDS' FUN RUN on the track after the 5k leaves. The ages are 9 and under and 10 to 12. Ribbons are awarded to all runners.

The Half Marathon is a very competitive race with runners coming from all over the State of CT and the United States. It is a wonderful opportunity for children to experience the results of athletic training and dedication for all ages.

The races begin at the Weston High School with the Half Marathon taking off first and running a completely different course than the 5K and ends on the track in front of the High School bleachers. Both races are chip timed. Each finishing runner receives a beautiful custom medallion and custom designed long sleeve shirt.

There is an awards ceremony after the race with a live band, fun and food for all runners.

The Half Marathon proceeds benefit Purple Heart Homes, ELIMINATE and the Weston Kiwanis Club Foundation equally. The net proceeds of the 5K go to the Weston Boosters' Club for purchase of sporting equipment.

Don't miss this beautiful, fun race and the opportunity to enhance kids' sports. Thank you from the Weston Kiwanis Club!

For more details and information email Phyllis Gary at thereservoiron@gmail.com or go to the website at <http://www.thereservoiron.com>. Registration can be done online at Raceit.com, <https://www.raceit.com/Register/?event=20944>.

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions should be relevant to Hurlbutt and the Town of Weston (i.e., town sports programs, Town of Weston sponsored community events or after-school sports programs for students taking place in the Town of Weston). If there is any question regarding the relevance of a submission, final approval will be determined by The Hurlbutt Buzz Editor and/or the Hurlbutt PTO President. Submission deadline is Tuesday – The Hurlbutt Buzz is emailed to all registered PTO Members on Thursday!

- 1. All write-ups should be in WORD format and the content should be print-ready,*
- 2. If you have a flyer, please submit a brief write-up and we will attach the flyer to the newsletter,*
- 3. If you want to re-run something from the previous week, let us know; review the write-up - does it need updating, i.e., change the wording from "coming home this week" to "you should have received last week"? If so, revise and resubmit,*
- 4. The email address for the Buzz is hesptonewsletter@westonpspto.org*

Thank you for your support and cooperation.