

2008 – FINAL REPORT OF THE WELLESLEY CELEBRATIONS COMMITTEE (WCC)

The 40th Annual Wellesley Veteran's Parade and 10th Annual Wellesley's Wonderful Weekend were held on the weekend of Saturday, May 17th and Sunday, May 18th, 2008 with the Parade theme being "40 Years, Looking Forward-Looking Back".

The most spectacular attraction of this year's 10th Annual Weekend was the appearance at a free outdoor concert at the Hunnewell Field baseball fields, by the internationally renowned band, "The Beach Boys", that was sponsored by an anonymous Wellesley donor and that was attended by some 17,000 people, the largest crowd at an event in Wellesley in memory.

For the first time in five years, with the cooperation of the weather, all of the 22 events planned for the Weekend were completed on the two day weekend, with no postponements; although a rain shower preceding the Beach Boys Concert was felt to have a limiting impact on attendance at that event.

On Sunday, May 18th at 1:00 PM under clear skies, the 40th Annual Veterans' Parade, dedicated "To Those Who Serve", stepped off at 1 P.M., beginning at the Wellesley Community Center, at the junctions of Routes 9 and 16, and proceeding along Washington Street through Wellesley Square to its completion just after 3:00 P.M. at the Crest Road Bridge. 124 units were recorded as entries, with 19 bands and 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 Outstanding School float was awarded to the Fiske School, which will hold the school trophy until the next Parade. A fly-over of the line of march by World War II aircraft added to the success of the event.

The 22 events under the umbrella of Wellesley's Wonderful Weekend began on Friday evening, when the reenactment of an 18th Century Military encampment of the Royal Irish Artillery was set up on the hillside in front of Town Hall, that continued on Saturday with cannons firing on the hour during the day, and the offering of escorted tours of the encampment for visitors, which lasted until after the Parade on Sunday.

Starting on Saturday morning May 17th the Wellesley Rotary Club's Annual Pancake Festival was held at Wellesley High School from 7:30 AM to 2:30 PM. A Bike Safety Day was held at the Tailby Parking Lot, hosted by the Kiwanis Club of Wellesley. A Healthy snacks program at the Wellesley High School gym and a tour of the Fitness Center were coordinated by the Wellesley Board of Health.

For the sixth year, the Wellesley Trails Committee coordinated a walk, which was held this year at the Town Forest. Additionally, a Tots and Tails on Trails walk began at Wellesley High School, sponsored by the Natural Resources Commission and the Board of Health.

From mid morning through late afternoon, numerous Open Houses were held throughout town: for the ninth year at the Wellesley Police Station, hosted by the Wellesley Police Department and for the seventh year at the main Wellesley Fire Station #2 on Route 9, hosted by the Wellesley Fire Department. For the third time the Wellesley Municipal Light Plant held an open house displaying the varying aspects of the department's operation. Open Houses were also held in the afternoon at the Wellesley Fells and Hills Branch Libraries and a concert by the Tropical Gems Steel Band was held at the Main Library.

During the morning and afternoon the Wellesley Hills Junior Woman's Club sponsored The Wellesley Kitchen Tour 2008. In the afternoon a Build Your Own Fairy House was sponsored for elementary children by The Wellesley Conservation Council at the Cochituate Aqueduct near Morses Pond.

Additionally, a Micro-Chip clinic for household pets was hosted by Stray Pets in Need (SPIN) at the Wellesley High School parking lot. Saturday's events were completed at 4:00 PM with the 10th Annual Ecumenical Memorial Mass for all veterans, hosted by the Wellesley Veterans' Council at St. Paul Church.

On Sunday the Massachusetts Horticultural Society hosted their 24th Annual Society Row Plant Sale at Elm Bank and in the afternoon the Wellesley Choral Society held their Spring Concert at St. Andrew's Church.

After the completion of the Parade on Sunday, May 18th, with the threat of rain, activities began at the Hunnewell Fields at 4 P.M., with the Picnic in the Park offering food and drink, coordinated by the Interfaith Community for Action in Wellesley (ICAW), the Kiwanis Club of Wellesley and the Charles River Rotary Club and other vendors. Rides for kids were available until dusk, including among others the "Moon Bounce", "Obstacle Course", "Adrenaline Rush" and "Big Slide"; additionally face painters and balloon twisters added to the festivities.

At 5 P.M. the opening act for the Beach Boys Concert was performed by the classic rock band "The Reminisants", who played for 1 1/2 hours, under rain showers during much of their performance.

The outstanding Beach Boys Concert began at 7:00PM, after the earlier rain storm, and once the performance began it continued until its completion for 2 hours and 10 minutes without a break, as the band performed 43 songs to tumultuous crowd approval. Immediately at the completion of the Concert a spectacular fireworks display was shot off, under what at that time were clear skies.

Honorees of the 2008 Parade were:

- 1. Grand Marshal**---Walter Woods, 1st Chairman Wellesley Celebrations Committee, 1968-1975;
BPW member for 15 years.
- 2. Distinguished Service Award**—David H. Locke, State Senator and Representative for Wellesley
for 32 years and a former Selectman.
- 3. Community Service Award**---David J. Himmelberger, Retiring 2 term Wellesley Selectman.
- 4. Community Service Award**—Wellesley Symphony Orchestra, 60th Anniversary of serving Wellesley.
- 5. Chief of Staff**---John L. Saunders, Veteran and Community activist
- 6. Community Appreciation Award**—Professional Pharmacy, Mitchell J. Freeman, Proprietor,
47
years of serving Wellesley, 2nd generation.

7. **Special Recognition Award**---The Wellesley League of Women Voters, 70th Anniversary of serving Wellesley voters.
8. **Special Recognition Award**—Lee Volvo, 60 years serving Wellesley, 3rd generation.
9. **Special Recognition Award**—Henry J. Burke and Sons Funeral Home, 75 years serving Wellesley, 3rd generation.
10. **Special Recognition Award**—George F. Doherty & Sons, Funeral Homes, 71 years serving Wellesley, 3rd generation.
11. **Special Recognition Award**—Wellesley Service League, 81 years of volunteering for Wellesley.
12. **Special Recognition Award**—Jarvis Appliances, Inc. 51 years serving Wellesley.

A balance of \$37,837.07 was carried over from 2007, as, because of rain, there was no Parade completed in that year. Additional donations were received this year from citizens, local merchants, civic groups and service clubs, as well as from the rides and events held at Hunnewell Field prior to the Beach Boys Concert and Fireworks show, which totaled \$28,663.83 from over 150 donors. Additionally, along with a town appropriation of \$4,700.00 all funds were used toward the \$42,874.93 cost of conducting the 10th Annual Wellesley's Wonderful Weekend and the 2008 Annual Veterans' Parade, most of which was for the fees of the bands and specialty units in the Parade and for the Fireworks show.

Special thanks go to all of the members of the Wellesley Celebrations Committee who coordinated all of the activities of this year's extended Wonderful Weekend: Mark Antonelli, Jim Bishop, Cathy and Hyacinth Brauner, Steve Castellini, Marcey DeChristofaro, Salvatore "Tory" DeFazio, Diane Duddy, Lindsay Ellms, Jackie Gauthier, Rowie Gray, Greg Leach, Laurie Lizak, Sarah Murphy, Irene Palmigiano, Debbie Reynolds, Kim Shevlin, John and Dwin Schuler, Harold Sheldrick, Teresa Touey and Joellen Toussaint.

Many months of meetings were held with department heads and members of various town departments, that were coordinated by the Selectmen, DPW and Police Department management staffs, who were involved from the beginning in the organization and planning toward the successful completion of the "Beach Boys Concert", as well as all of the other events that were accomplished during the 10th Annual Weekend. The involvement of many of Wellesley's wonderful town employees, including the Police and Fire Departments, the Engineering Department, the Highway Department, the Municipal Light Plant, the Parks Department, the Recreation Department, the Wellesley School Athletic Department, the Planning Department, the Natural Resources Commission and Beta Engineering, unselfishly gave much of their personal time and energy, in order to bring this year's extended Weekend's events to a rewarding conclusion. Additionally, the Wellesley Amateur Radio Society once again offered invaluable help in coordinating the individual units from the start to finish of the Parade, through their communications network.

An additional thank you goes to all the donors, who each year come to the assistance of the Wellesley Celebrations Committee; particularly the G. Drew Conway Family and Roche Brothers/Sudbury Farms Supermarkets for their donations, which made the fireworks display possible. All of their help is most sincerely appreciated.

A most particular thank you goes to the Wellesley citizen, who was responsible for the donation of the magnificent undertaking of the Beach Boys Concert for an appreciative audience of Wellesley residents, which set a plateau of achievement that may be difficult to surpass.

Sincerely,

Royall H. Switzler, Chairman
Wellesley Celebrations Committee