



# West Norwalk Assoc. - Autumn Newsletter

## West Norwalk Association

### Letter from the Presidents

Dear West Norwalk Residents, you consider joining us?

As we complete our second term as Co-Presidents, we would like to welcome new neighbors and send a warm greeting to current residents. Our year as Co-Vice Presidents and two years as Co-Presidents have been filled with challenges and opportunities as we try to follow the mission of the West Norwalk Association.

Founded in 1947, when this was primarily a farming area, the mission was to foster and preserve the rural nature of the neighborhood. Although still primarily a residential area, some of our roads with heavy traffic, the successful Community College, and three houses of worship have changed our landscape. Dolce, a former Seminary, has become a successful business. The Dolce walking trails are open to all West Norwalk residents.

Our Board members are all volunteers who give their time and money because of their desire for a strong West Norwalk Association. The Board is made up of people of all ages, professions, small business owners, and retirees. Won't

Although a nonpolitical organization, we provide information to our residents about crucial issues through meetings, email blasts, letters to the Editor, and our website. Our role is to listen to both sides on an issue, then provide both points of view so that our residents make their own informed decision. We send a representative to Oak Hills meetings, CNNA and appropriate Zoning Commission meetings to learn about issues facing our community. On occasion, we do surveys to assess the residents' point of view and we publish the results in *The Hour* and/or on our website, [www.westnorwalk.org](http://www.westnorwalk.org).

However, the Association does get involved with a number of civic projects. Here are some of the activities where the WNA spends time and money.

**Spring: Cleanups:** Our signature spring cleanup involves neighborhood volunteers, teenagers fulfilling community service requirements, and this past year volunteers from the Congregational Church/ Nursery School on Richards Avenue. All volunteers were



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provided with new garden gloves, tongs, and garbage bags, coffee, and donuts. We picked up trash from the Norwalk Land Trust, The Meeting House Chapel, Fox Run School, and many streets. On a beautiful day in May, we collected over 60 bags of trash.

#### Spring/Summer: Adopt-a-Spots, Scholarships, First Family Fun Day:



We are responsible for maintaining three adopt-a-spots in West Norwalk. We also planted a Kousa Dogwood tree at the corner of Richards and Scribner and a rare Copper Beach tree at Fox Run.

Through the City of Norwalk Tree Advisory Committee, Gay was instrumental in removing diseased or fallen trees and planting 25 new Maple and Oak trees along the boundaries of Fox Run School. In June, we had the honor of presenting two scholarships to Brien McMahon graduates who live in West Norwalk, Sarah Van der Els and Steven Galyas.

We made a donation to Principal Jim Martinez at Fox Run School. We use the library at Fox Run for our Board meetings, participate in Reading

#### Board Members

- Linda Forcellina: Co-President
- Gay Mac Leod: Co-President
- Ken D'Arinzo: Vice-President
- Galen Wells: Treasurer
- Brian Forschino: Secretary
- Lucy Arecco
- Anthony Carrano
- Ron Paladino

Day, and have done some tutoring and mentoring of students.



**Fall: Annual Meeting: On Thursday, October 16, the WNA will host our Annual Meeting from 7-9 PM in the cafeteria of Fox Run School.**

**Winter: The Holiday Party: On Friday, December 12, the WNA will host the party from 6 -9 pm at Dolce.**

All West Norwalk residents and their families are invited to attend and celebrate the holiday season with their neighbors. As in past years, we will offer a selection of appetizers and desserts as well as a cash bar. As of last year, we have had to require

### WNA Annual Meeting, Thursday, October 16

Please join us at Fox Run to meet and ask questions of the local candidates for state representative and state senate as well as US Congress.

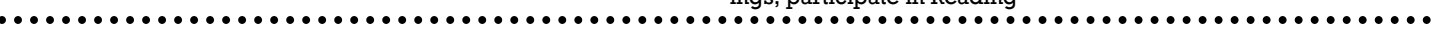
We also have invited Douglas Adams of General Growth

Properties who will present information about the proposed Mall on the former site of 95/7.

**Date:** October 16 (Thursday)

**Time:** 7-9 PM

**Location:** Fox Run Cafeteria



### Letter from the President's Continued...

a charge of \$10.00 per person so that we can continue at this venue. Children 10 and under will be admitted free.

The Association received many requests for information, complaints about signs, blight ordinances, and comments about the driving range and the mosque proposal. We try to get answers in a timely manner and reply to questions personally.

#### Some other accomplishments over the last 2-3 years

1. Made changes to the website and wrote many articles to keep neighbors up to date; used email blasts to promote activities;

2. Updated the Bylaws;

3. Hosted the Mayor's Night Out;

4. Contacted people on both sides of controversial issues and posted their comments/letters/articles on our website, and letters in The Hour;

5. Established a robust Facebook page;

6. Added Food Drives to the Annual Meeting and Holiday Party;

7. Sent many personal thank you letters to residents;

8. Welcomed groups who wanted to share their concerns or argue some sort of action

be made by the Association;

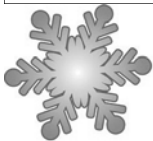
9. Made and delivered more than 40 Welcome Baskets.

As we write our final letter as Co-Presidents for this Newsletter, we believe that the organization has accomplished a great deal. We were impacted by local crises which took much of our time and energy and we had to deal with the sudden resignation of two presidents. However, we will leave future presidents with written directions to help them. We leave the Association with many great memories and heartfelt thanks for those who supported and appreciated our efforts.

Linda Forcellina and Gay MacLeod



### Holiday Party on Friday, December 12th, 6-9pm at the Dolce Center



Please come to share the holiday spirit with neighbors and friends at this year's West Norwalk Holiday Party. On Friday, December 12, from 6-9

pm, we will enjoy the delicious food that Dolce prepares for our celebration every year, a cash bar, and an opportunity to meet new West Norwalk residents.

This year we will be having the party on a

Friday evening so we will avoid conflicts with school concerts that prevented some from attending last year.

The Holiday Party is where you will have the opportunity to renew your membership or join the WNA for the first time. Most of our members will want to pay their dues for 2015 at this time.

As we had to do last year, if we want to continue the party in the beautiful and fes-

tively decorated Dolce Center with the level of food choices we have enjoyed in the past, we will need to charge \$10.00 per adult. Children under 10 are admitted free. This fee does not cover the cost of the event but allows us to continue at this venue.

We will look forward to meeting our neighbors and toasting the Holiday Season with many of you.



### What a Beautiful Day: WNA Family Fun Day

With nearly perfect weather, the West Norwalk Association hosted our first Family Fun Day on Saturday, July 12, at Fox Run School with considerable help from Board members and their spouses, children, grandchildren and many volunteers. From a Bouncy House and Slide, to face painting, games and prizes, balloons, removable tattoos, a fire truck that provided opportunity for kids to spray with the hose, and our special guests, the volunteers who train and work with the K-9 Rescue Dogs, families had lots to do. An added attraction was the water rockets that were made with Boy Scouts. Then add hot dogs and chips, water, popcorn, and cotton candy.

Pictured are Co-Presidents, Gay MacLeod and Linda Forcellina, with some of our young neighborhood volunteers who supervised all the games, the Van der Els family and a friend. The Alves family also volunteered to be in charge of the busy activity in the Bouncy House. Thanks to volunteers from the Congregational Church Nursery School who showed their artistry in face painting.

A special opportunity for all parents was to register their children in a national security base through the efforts of New York Life Insurance.

Feedback from families who attended was most positive and the Board members had a great time too, whether cooking hot dogs or supervising other activities. We all worked together as a team and enjoyed the day with our neighbors.



## 2 Outstanding Brien McMahon Seniors Receive WNA Scholarships



For the third year, The West Norwalk Association presented a scholarship to two fine scholars who also made considerable contributions to their community.

Sara Florie van der Els, who lives on Betmarlea Road, is a scholar athlete. She

played on the McMahon varsity La Cross, Cross Country, Track and Field and tennis teams and won the FCIAC Scholar Athlete Award for 2014. In addition to this, Sara was President of the National Honor Society and earned High Honors for all 4 years in high school. As part of her duties for the Honor Society, she was in charge of organizing scheduling for the tutoring program for freshman students and was a tutor herself. As an active member of the Senators' Community Foundation, Sara took part in activities to help prevent child abuse and animal cruelty. Sarah is attending Quinnipac College, majoring in liberal arts.

Our second recipient, Stephen Joseph Galvas, lives on Priscilla Road and is attending Fairfield University, majoring in Computer Science. While maintaining a grade point average of over 4.0, he was Vice President of Tri-Music Honor Society, Secretary of the Key Club, a tutor at Brookside Elementary School, helped teachers and students with technology questions, and aided both the McMahon Orchestra and Drama Departments with sound and set up for their productions. In addition, he was a member of the All-City Orchestra, won the Columbia Book Award, was a member of the National Society for High School Scholars, and earned High Honors for all four high school years.

## Ray of Hope Foundation Unveils 8th Computer Lab Donation

On Friday, August 1, 2014, NBA All-Star Ray Allen unveiled a computer lab at Ponus Ridge Middle School through his Ray of Hope Foundation that assists with community based programs and provides opportunity for our youth to "hope" to realize their potential. Dedicated to increasing access to impor-



tant technology for students, Allen and his foundation provided the Ponus Ridge lab with 20 new desktop computers and 10 laptop computers. Additionally, the donation included repainting the classroom, adding graphics and quotes to the walls and supplying the room with new furniture.

"It's such a great pleasure to continue building and improving these computer

labs for students and to provide them with new technology," Allen said. "Shannon and I are both passionate about giving back to children so that they can succeed in the classroom and have access to the tools that help them the most."



This article submitted by Linda Sumpter, Principal of Ponus Ridge Middle School

## Bats in the House

By Gay Mac Leod

Vampires- Carriers of rabies- Sharp fangs- Bats get a bad rap! Why would someone want to help and protect a bat, never mind offer them a special bat house of their own?

This poorly misunderstood animal is vital to the environment. Bats will eat thousands of insects – including the popular mosquito on your property. The more bats, the fewer pesticides needed for your garden, shrubs and trees.

A bat house reduces the chance of human to bat encounter by giving them a more suitable home than your own home.

The population of bats in North America has decreased significantly due to White Nose Syndrome. The syndrome is a type of fungus that occurs around the muzzle and

wings and is often fatal. The disease has the potential of causing extinction of several already endangered species. The fungus is not contagious to humans or any other animal.

So, the next time you see bats flying around, help them out and the environment. Build them a house and they will come!



## A Jewel of West Norwalk

By Linda Forcellina

The 66 acre property, currently known as the Dolce Research, Development and Training Center, welcomes West Norwalk residents to use the property for walking/exercise, sightseeing, and relaxation. Previously known as Ferndale, it was first a Seminary for The Holy Ghost Fathers and then a retreat for retired, sick and elderly priests. As you walk, you will note the lake, created by a series of small dams, the Stations of the Cross, and the old cemetery where tombstones date as far back as the 1800's. A walk through the Dolce Center is satisfying both for its contemporary beauty and its place in history, a reminder of a time when West Norwalk area was agrarian in nature, studded with farms and animals. Today, Dolce maintains the property so that the original bucolic nature of the area is preserved as much as possible.



[www.Westnorwalk.org](http://www.Westnorwalk.org)

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## **You can help! Join the Board and Donate to our Food Drive at our Holiday Party**

### **Board Members Wanted**

Your Board of Directors is seeking new members who will join us to maintain the standard of living in West Norwalk and to make this neighborhood even more desirable. If you are interested, please contact a Board member or visit our web - site. Our next Board meeting will be on November 3 at 7:30 at Fox Run School. We hope that you will consider serving your community in an organization that has been in existence since 1947. We need responsible, collegial, and enthusiastic members if we are to continue our many programs.

### **Food Drive at the Holiday Party**

At the Holiday Party on December 12, the West Norwalk Association will conduct a Food Drive for the Norwalk Pantry. **Please bring nonperishable items to the Holiday Party and we will see that they are delivered to the Food Pantry. We appreciate the participation of our neighbors in helping less fortunate families in Norwalk.**



**Visit [WestNorwalk.org](http://WestNorwalk.org)  
for information on events  
and volunteer opportunities.**

