THE chronicle

A WLWP Digital Publication



volume 2 • issue 1 / january 2026

table of contents

volume 2 • issue 1 / january 2026

from the executive director 1

park news 2

public services 3

development news 4-5

program spotlights 6-8

mystery month 9

hanging in the hoxie 10

the pop-up at coy 12

books, media & more 14



from the executive director



One of the first things we think about when it's the start of a new year are resolutions. Every January, millions of us pledge to eat healthier, exercise more, or finally tackle that cluttered closet. Often resolutions are about improving oneself, but what if one of the most meaningful resolutions you could make this year is to strengthen your community by supporting your local public library?

Westerly Library & Wilcox Park is a private, non-profit, owned and operated by the Memorial & Library Association that was incorporated in 1892. The Association was created by members of this community. They sought donations to make the living Civil War Memorial & Library a reality for their community. And it has been the prudent management of donations since then that we have relied on to operate a free public library and park. Westerly Library & Wilcox Park thrive because of people who believe in the power of shared spaces and lifelong learning. We are more than shelves of books & green space, we are a hub of learning, access, and opportunity and a place for passive recreation, mental well-being, and cultural community events. Financial donations help fund literacy programs, technology upgrades, and community events. Even modest contributions ensure that everyone, regardless of income, can access knowledge and resources.

Volunteering for the library or park is where resolutions become relationships. From helping with children's story hours to assisting patrons with digital tools, pulling weeds or planting flowers, or serving on a committee or Board, your time and skills make us a more welcoming place where memories are made and futures are nurtured. Whether you commit to a few hours a month or a weekly shift, your time and skills will transform lives. And in return, you gain perspective, connection, and a sense of purpose that no gym membership can match. Westerly Library & Wilcox Park is a reminder that personal growth and community growth are intertwined. By giving and volunteering, you're not just supporting an institution—you're investing in the collective imagination, beauty, and belonging, and future of your town.

Giving and volunteering aren't just altruistic - they're transformative. They remind us that fulfillment comes not from what we accumulate, but from what we contribute. This year let's measure success not only in personal milestones but in the difference we make together.

So, as you compile your list of resolutions, consider adding one that extends beyond yourself: give more, do more, and be part of something bigger. It's a commitment that enriches not only your own year, but the lives of countless others. That's a resolution worth keeping all year long.

Warmly,



Brigitte Hopkins
Executive Director

park news

New Dedications Database





Wilcox Park is home to several dedications including flowering shrubs, trees, benches and monuments. We have three Dedication programs that are available to the general public. A tree, for example, can be dedicated to a loved one either as a Memorial or as an Honorary dedication.

Westerly Library and Wilcox Park is pleased to announce the completion and rollout of the Memorial & Honorary Dedications searchable database via Google Maps. The database can be accessed by scanning the QR code below or visiting our website's Dedications page. Dedications, dating from the 1970s to present, include over 250 benches, monuments and markers, trees, and flowering shrubs. Items are identified by honoree name. Information also includes donor name, item location, date installed or planted, dedication date, and common name (including genus and species) for all trees and shrubs.

public services

New Service Highlight

Our Makerspace now has a Laminator! The equipment is available for patron use at any time during library hours, as long as a staff member is present to assist.

With heat and pressure applied, the laminator preserves documents between protective plastic film. Stop in to laminate projects like educational or promotional materials, cards, menus, photo collections and more.

Pricing to laminate includes:

- 8 ½ x 11 - $1.00
- 8 ½ x 14 - $1.50
- 11 x 17 - $2.00



There's still time to make your Annual Fund donation in 2025!

We're midway through our fiscal year. Our Annual Fund sustains our programs, resources, services, and materials for the public.

Since 1892, Westerly Library & Wilcox Park has been at the center of our community. Over time, we have adapted to respond to the evolving needs of our patrons. We depend on the generosity of people like you, who value our work and make a commitment to invest in our mission.

Donors like you help us continue to...



Foster Social Connections



Preserve History



Encourage Lifelong Learning



Provide Access to Technology



Promote Literacy



Conserve Green Space

Your gift to Westerly Library & Wilcox Park ensures that our services and resources remain free and accessible to all. Our Annual Fund goal is $250,000 this fiscal year. To date, we have raised $175,132. Please support our work with a donation to our Annual Fund.

Click to make your end-of-the-year gift.



Fiscal Year July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

WESTERLY LIBRARY
& WILCOX PARK

MURDER BY THE BOOK

JAN. 23, 2026

IN WESTERLY LIBRARY AT 6:00 PM

LAST CHANCE to grab your Early Bird tickets before the special ends on 12/31!

Early Bird Special!
$85 per person until 4pm on Dec. 31 | **$100 per person** after 4pm on Dec. 31 | **$150 per person** VIP Tickets

Join us for an interactive murder mystery event!
The year is 1946 and a body is discovered in the library. Detective William "Willie" Soffit is on the case, but he needs your help. Join the citizen detective squad to figure out whodunit! Collect clues throughout the library and enjoy live performances from potential suspects as you try to crack the case. Tickets include food stations and open bar. Try your luck in the 50/50 raffle. Stumped? Buy a bonus clue!



westerlylibrary.org/event/murderbythebook | 401-596-2877 X 322 | sjackson@westerlylibrary.org

SPECIAL AGENT SPONSOR | $5,000

Friends of Westerly Library & Wilcox Park

DETECTIVE SPONSOR | $2,500

PARSONSKELLOGG

WHODUNIT SPONSORS | $1,000

FIRST FINANCIAL ADVISORY SERVICES, INC. A REGISTERED INVESTMENT ADVISOR

GENERAC 22 Littlebrook Road, Westerly, RI 02891 401-322-7875

PPG Wealth Management Professional. Personal. All About You. (401) 596-2800 | www.ppgadvisors.com

WASHINGTON TRUST What we value is you.

Westerly Community Credit Union

For details on our upcoming fundraiser, or to sponsor, please click the image above or visit: westerlylibrary.org/event/murderbythebook

program spotlights

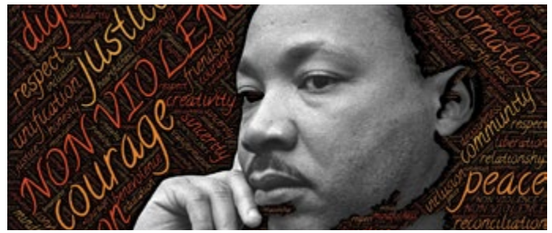
adult services

[Adult Winter Reading Challenge, January 5-31, during library hours]



Get your new year started on the right foot, and start ticking books off of your “To Read” list by joining our Winter Reading Challenge! Submit a ticket for each book you read during the month of January, and you’ll be entered to win one of our weekly prizes! Winners will be chosen each Saturday during the challenge. Email reference@westerlylibrary.org or call (401) 596-2877 x306.

[Celebrate MLK Day | “King in Chicago”, Thursday, January 15, 5:30-7:30 pm, Auditorium]



Join us for this hour-long movie followed by a brief, small-group discussion in celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Refreshments will be provided.

Co-sponsored by Westerly Area Peace and Justice Group, Young Global Leadership Foundation, The Rotary Club of Westerly, and Westerly’s Anti-Racism Coalition and Westerly Library & Wilcox Park.

[Rhode Island’s Early Independence, Wednesday, January 21, 6:00-7:30 pm, Auditorium]



Join Jean Gagnier for a talk that reexamines the founding documents, nature, and actions of America’s smallest and most rebellious colony. This event will share primary sources used in research such as the Colonial General Assembly records, diaries, naval records (both Royal Navy and US) Parliamentary Patent, and the Royal Charter of Rhode Island.

[Rhode Island Food Crawls: Touring the Neighborhoods One Bite and Libation at a Time Saturday, January 31, 1:00-2:30 pm]



Rhode Island Food Crawls is an exciting culinary tour through the Ocean State. Discover hidden gems with the freshest seafood, hottest cocktail bars, and the best seaside views around. Each crawl is the complete recipe for a great night out, the perfect tourist day, a new way to experience your own city, or simply indulging in some eye candy from home.

[For our full calendar of events, click here or visit: westerlylibrary.org/calendar-of-events]

program spotlights

youth services

[Kids Craft Time: New Each Week, Thursdays, 4-5 pm, Kids Room Castle]



Join us for Kids Craft in the Kids Room Castle, every Thursday for a new craft! Crafts are planned for kids ages 2-8. The Castle will open at 4 pm and will stay open until 5 pm or until craft supplies last.

01/8 Mystery Watercolor Winter Hat • 01/15 Winter Memory Photo Frame • 01/22 Puffy Paint Melted Snowman • 01/29 Beaded Snowflake

[Teen Space Tunes, Wednesdays, 4-5 pm, Teen Space]



Join fellow teen musicians weekly to share and collaborate in acoustic jam sessions! Explore different musical styles, practice your craft, and build confidence in a supportive environment. This program is for teens in grades 7-12. Registration is not required.

[Tween Craft Time: New Each Week, Thursdays, 4-5 pm, Tween Space]



Join us in the Tween Space every Thursday for a new craft! Crafts are planned for ages 9-12.

01/08 Paper Squishies • 01/15 Clay Snowmen • 01/22 Mini Ice Skating Rink • 01/29 Watercolor Winter Forest

[La Befana Celebration: Holiday Storytime & Craft with the Dante Society of Westerly, Saturday, January 10, 10:00-11:00 am, Terrace Room]



In partnership with the Dante Society of Westerly, children and families are invited to join us for a morning celebration of the Italian folklore tradition of La Befana. The Legend of Old La Befana will be read at 10:15 am followed by the Disney short film “La Luna”. Kids will enjoy a themed craft to work on with help from Westerly High School Italian language students. Cookies will be provided from Fresh Cup Cafe.

program spotlights

public services

[Sewing Basics, Wednesdays, January 7 & 21, 6:00-6:30 pm, Makerspace]



Stop by the Makerspace to learn how to sew and more! From learning your stitches to winding bobbins, develop your sewing skills using our sewing machine along with other materials. Ages 16 and up, or with parental guidance for younger ages.

[Open Art Studio, Wednesdays, January 7 & 21, 6:30-7:30 pm, Makerspace]

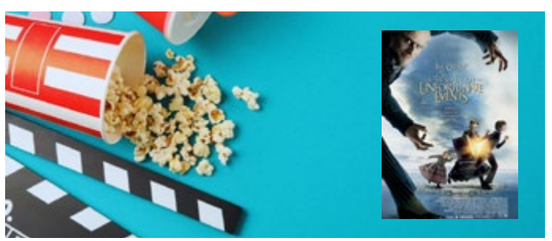


Join us for this hour-long movie followed by a brief, small-group discussion in celebration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Refreshments will be provided.

Co-sponsored by Westerly Area Peace and Justice Group, Young Global Leadership Foundation, The Rotary Club of Westerly, and Westerly's Anti-Racism Coalition and Westerly Library & Wilcox Park.

all ages

[Family Movie Matinee: *A Series of Unfortunate Events*, Saturday, January 31, 1-3 pm, Auditorium]



Join us for Family Movie Matinee! Each month we will be featuring a generational favorite that can be passed down to young movie buffs. This month, we will be watching A Series of Unfortunate Events and decode our mysterious puzzles!

mystery month



Clue into Mystery Month at the Library! Unravel all things happening mystery-themed, for all ages, all month long below.

KIDS

Thursday, 01/08, 4-5 pm: Kids Craft Time | Mystery Watercolor Winter Hat

All month:
Chapters, Cookies, and Coloring Club, Tuesdays, 4:00-4:45 pm, we will be reading mysteries beginning 12/30 with *Calendar Mysteries: New Year's Eve Thieves* by Ron Roy.

Kids will be invited to decorate a mini magnify glass and solve the Case of the Missing Library Books on our bulletin board gingerbread village.

TWEENS

All month:
Mystery-themed blind bag books, and a middle grade mystery novels display.

Our Library Let's Plays for this month will be *Snoopy & the Great Mystery Club*.

TEENS

All month:

Teen Maker Monday, Mondays, 4-5 pm, we'll have Mystery Ink Art.

Mystery Take and Make Craft Bags

Mystery Book Bundles

ADULTS

Monday, 01/05, 9 am-8 pm: Crafternoon To Go | Mystery Craft Bags

Friday, 01/23, 6-9 pm: Murder by the Book
Be sure to stop by our mystery-themed book display.

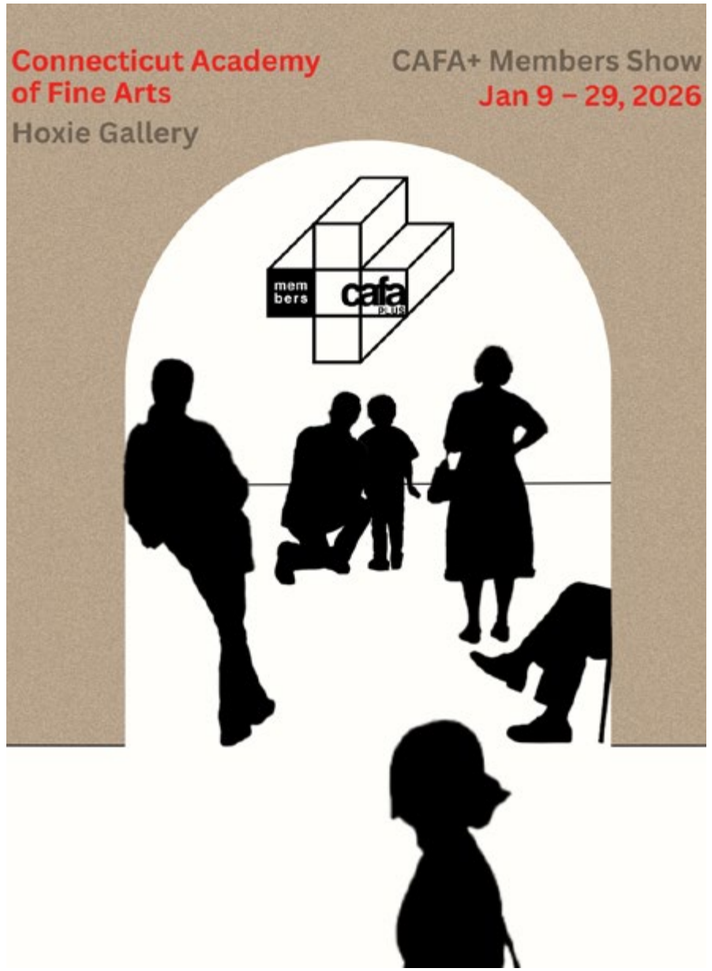
ALL AGES

Saturday, 01/31, 1-3 pm: Family Movie Matinee | *A Series of Unfortunate Events*, and we will create decoder rings to solve our mysterious puzzles.

For our full calendar of events, click here or visit: westerlylibrary.org/calendar-of-events

hanging in the hoxie

January Exhibition | CAFA + Members



Opening Reception
Wednesday, January 14th, 5-7 PM

This month's exhibit will feature works by Connecticut Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA)+ Members! Head to the Hoxie Gallery from 5-7 pm Wednesday, January 14th for an opportunity to meet the artists and enjoy light bites. Works can be viewed in the Hoxie Gallery from Monday, January 12th-Thursday, January 29th, during library hours.

*This is a hybrid exhibition which will feature pieces in-person at the gallery as well as an online presentation on the CAFA website.

For more information, please visit: ctacademy.org/exhibitions/cafa-members-2026

About CAFA:

In 1910 the Connecticut Academy of Fine Arts was established by a group of renowned Connecticut Artists who enjoyed a National reputation. Their goal was to promote the art of area members. They achieved this through the Annual Salon show, a juried exhibition which held high standards of artistic ability. Artists could gain membership by proving themselves in the jury process.

We are a non-profit organization supported by the membership. All of the leadership positions and exhibition activities are performed by volunteers dedicated to the preservation of this organization and the values it represents.

For more information on the artists, upcoming exhibits, and the Hoxie Gallery please visit:
westerlylibrary.org/hoxie-gallery

air

artist-in-residence



save the date
February/March 2026
Writer/Director
Dave Solomon returns



To learn more about our AIR program, upcoming artists, or to apply, please visit: westerlylibrary.org/artist-in-residence

*Our 2026 AIR Program is now full. We are accepting submissions for 2027 residencies with a rolling deadline. To be considered for a 2026 residency in the event one opens up, please note that in your application submission.

Previous artist-in-residence, Noam Makover's new album, *Cyprinidae* is available for download! Noam worked on the entire album during his residency with us. To listen, click the album cover below or visit: distrokid.com/hyperfollow/noammakover/cyprinidae-2/



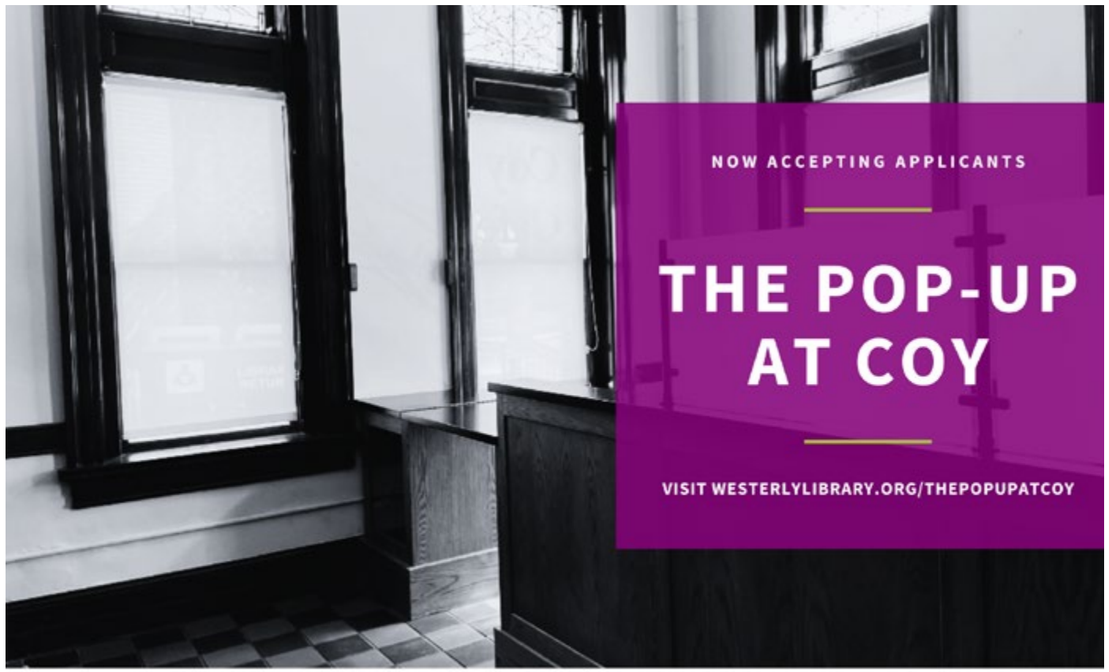
"*Cyprinidae* is a concept album that plays continuously from top to bottom, simulating the short-form digital ecosystem it both emerges from and critiques. The idea came to me as I looked out the cottage window at the pond, thinking about the koi living there. Their taxonomic family name, *Cyprinidae*, became the album's title, and their symbolic association with fleeting attention and constant motion felt like a perfect metaphor for the piece's central theme. The album is a result of daily creations during my time as artist-in-residence, later woven together with seamless transitions that evoke the experience of scrolling mindlessly without fully registering the passage of time. *Cyprinidae* is a wholly independent work: I wrote, performed, arranged, produced, and mixed everything on-site in the cottage. The setting, the solitude, and the quiet presence of the pond all shaped the album's form and its reflection on attention, fragmentation, and the way we experience music in the digital age."

save the date

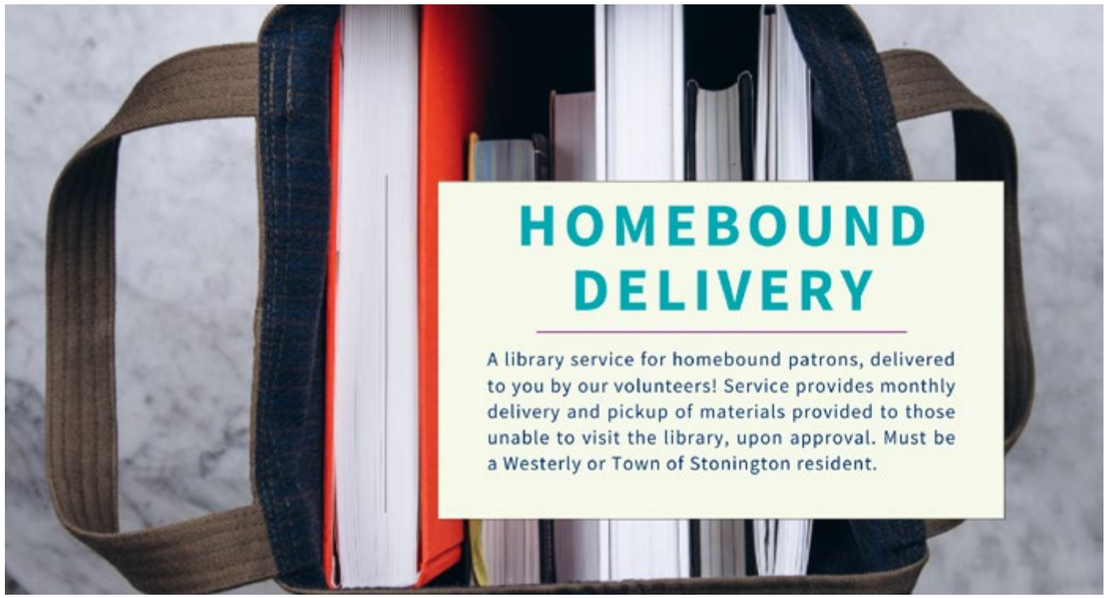


Friends Pop-up Book Sale • February 9th-14th, 2026

Stay tuned for details by visiting our website events calendar: westerlylibrary.org/calendar-of-events



If you are interested in reserving space for a temporary storefront, informational & resource hub, student project or more, please contact awagner@westerlylibrary.org. For more information about The Pop-Up at Coy, please visit the link above.



For more information or to apply, please call 401-596-2877 x342 or visit:
www.westerlylibrary.org/homebound-delivery



Susan Rosen, Volunteer Community Resource Advocate
Tuesdays/1-3 PM/Roberts Room

Susan is available weekly to offer guidance to connect your or loved ones with local resources available based on specific needs.

Toby, Volunteer Mental Health Advocate
Thursdays/10 AM-12 PM/Roberts Room

If you have concerns about your wellbeing and want to talk to someone, feel free to stop in to see Toby, available weekly.

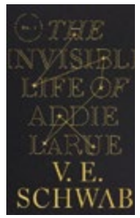
email: advocate@westerlylibrary.org

Visit our website events calendar for their most up-to-date schedules.

staff curated recommendations

books, media & more

for customized recommendations click here



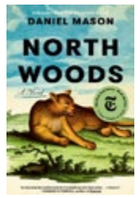
The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue by **Victoria Schwab**
Recommended by Sara

France, 1714. A young woman makes a Faustian bargain to live forever--and is cursed to be forgotten by everyone she meets. Everything changes when, after 300 years, Addie meets a young man and he remembers her name.



Between Two Fires by **Christopher Buehlman**
Recommended by Claire

The year is 1348. Thomas, a disgraced knight, has found a young girl alone in a dead Norman village. And now she has convinced the faithless Thomas to shepherd her across a depraved landscape to Avignon.



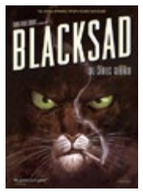
North Woods: a novel by **Daniel Mason**
Recommended by Stacey

When a pair of young lovers abscond from a Puritan colony, little do they know that their humble cabin in the woods will become the home of an extraordinary succession of human and nonhuman characters alike.



Evenings and Weekends by **Osin McKenna**
Recommended by Kim

Pregnant and broke, Maggie struggles with a looming move home while her boyfriend, Ed tries to run from his past with her best friend Phil, who already has another, very serious boyfriend during a sweltering London summer.



Blacksad by **Juan Diaz Canales**
Recommended by Ericka

Private investigator John Blacksad is up to his feline ears in mystery and intrigue, child abductions, and nuclear secrets during the 1950s Red Scare in the United States.



Babylonia by **Costanza Casati**
Recommended by Colleen

From the author of the bestselling Clytemnestra comes another intoxicating excursion into ancient history, as Casati reimagines the rise to power of the Assyrian empire's only female ruler, Semiramis. When kings fall, queens rise.



Where the Forest Meets the Stars by **Glendy Vanderah**
Recommended by Lynn

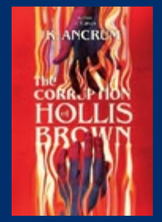
A mysterious child teaches two strangers how to love and trust again. Though the three have formed an incredible bond, they know difficult choices must be made.



The Women by **Kristen Hannah**
Recommended by Brigitte

As green and inexperienced as the men sent to Vietnam to fight, Frankie is overwhelmed by the chaos and destruction of war, as well as the unexpected trauma of coming home to a changed and politically divided America.

youth picks



The Corruption of Hollis Brown by **K. Ancrum**
Recommended by Kim

Hollis lives in a rotting small town where no one can afford to leave. After unknowingly making a deal at the crossroads, Hollis finds himself losing control of his body and mind, falling victim to possession.



Sunrise on the Reaping by **Suzanne Collins**
Recommended by Hannah

As the day dawns on the fiftieth annual Hunger Games, fear grips the districts of Panem. This year, in honor of the Quarter Quell, twice as many tributes will be taken from their homes.



Stitched. Vol. 1, The First Day of the Rest of Her Life by **Mariah McCourt**
Recommended by Ericka

Crimson Volania Mulch has a problem; she just woke up in a crypt and, besides her name, has no idea of who, where, or what she is. Welcome to the Cemetery of Assumptions, a vast landscape of stones, mausoleums, and secrets. Home to monsters and mayhem, it may also hold the answers to her unknown parentage.

video game recs

Visit our YouTube channel where you'll find a new Library Let's Plays courtesy of our Tween Librarian, Ben, every Thursday!





Pimin 1+2
Recommended by Ben

From finding a way home to collecting treasure, Olimar (plus Louie in the Pikmin 2 game) must partner with a parade of Pikmin to survive the harshest of conditions.



Dave the Diver: Anniversary Edition
Recommended by Ben

Welcome to the mysterious Blue Hole, an adventure RPG, management hybrid! Explore the depths of the Blue Hole! From tropical fish to ancient relics, the sea is full of mysteries! Run a sushi restaurant by night! Create special sushi menus using fresh-caught fish. Danger lurks in the deep! Enhance your equipment and prepare for the dangers in the deep!

WESTERLY LIBRARY & WILCOX PARK

January 2026

all programs

Program Highlights

- La Befana Celebration: Holiday Storytime & Craft with the Dante Society of Westerly, Saturday, January 10, 10:00-11:30 am
- January Exhibition | CAFA+ Members Show, Wednesday, January 14, 5:00-7:00 pm
- Celebrate MLK Day | "King in Chicago", Thursday, January 15, 5:30-7:30 pm
- Irish Costal Club Presents: Fireside Song & Story, Saturday, January 17, 2:00-3:30 pm
- Rhode Island's Early Independence, Wednesday, January 21, 6:00-7:30 pm
- Murder by the Book, Friday, January 23, 6:00-9:00 pm
- Family Movie Matinee: "A Series of Unfortunate Events", Saturday, January 31, 1:00-3:00 pm
- Rhode Island Food Crawls: Touring the Neighborhoods One Bite and Libation at a Time, Saturday, January 31, 1:00-2:30 pm

Ongoing Programs & Events

MAKERSPACE

Sewing Basics, Wednesday, January 7th, 21st, 6:00-6:30 pm

Open Art Studio, Wednesday, January 7th, 21st, 6:30-7:30 pm

ADULTS

Adult Winter Reading Challenge, January 5th-31st, Business Hours

Chess Club, Thursdays, 5:30-7:30 pm

Cookbook Club, 2nd Wednesday of the month, 6:00-7:30 pm

Crafternoon To-Go, 1st Monday of the month, 9 am-8 pm

The Dramatic Book Club, 1st Monday of the Month, 2-4 pm

Knit and Crochet, Tuesdays, 5:30-7:30pm

Learn the Language of Ireland with Irish Coastal Club, 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month, 6:30-7:30 pm

Monday Night Book Discussion, 4th Monday of the Month, 5:30-6:45 pm

Mostly Fiction Book Club, 2nd Tuesday of the Month, 6:00-7:30 pm

The Poetry Gathering, 2nd Monday of the Month, 5-7 pm

Sewers in Stitches, Mondays, 2-4 pm

Westerly Area Needle Workers, 1st & 3rd Saturdays, 9 am - 12 pm

Westerly Writers Group, 1st, 3rd, & 5th Saturdays, 10:00 am-12:30 pm

TEENS

Homeschool Hangout: Office Hours, Wednesdays, 1-3 pm

Teen Cafe, Saturdays, 1-3 pm

Teen Craft Collective, Thursdays, 4-5 pm

Teen Maker Monday, Mondays, 4-5 pm

Teen Space Tunes, Wednesdays, 4-5 pm

Teen and Tween Young Adventurers Guild, Tuesdays, 4:00-5:30 pm

TWEENS

Homeschool Hangout: Office Hours, Wednesdays, 1-3 pm

Tween Craft Time, Thursdays, 4-5 pm

D&D

Teen and Tween Young Adventurers Guild, Tuesdays, 4:00-5:30 pm

KIDS

Chapters, Cookies, & Coloring Club, Tuesdays, 4:00-4:45 pm

Homeschool Hangout: Office Hours, Wednesdays, 1-3 pm

Kids Craft Time, Thursdays, 4-5 pm

Kids Take & Make, 1st Monday of the month, 9 am-8 pm

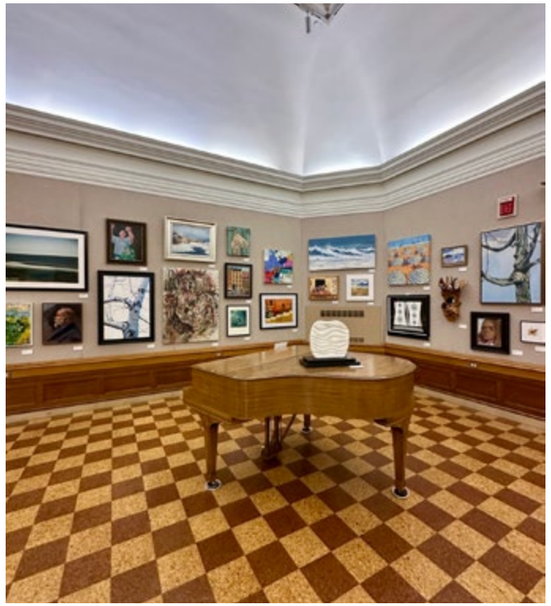
RESOURCES/INFORMATIONAL TABLES

Caregiver Support Group, 2nd Wednesday of the month, 5:30-6:30 pm

Community Resources Advocate, Tuesdays, 1-4 pm

Mental Health Advocate, Thursdays, 10 am-12 pm

Project Outreach Veterans Assistance, 2nd Wednesday of the month, 10-11 am



WESTERLY LIBRARY & WILCOX PARK



January 2026

for news, events, programs and happenings please
always refer to our website for the most up-to-date info
westerlylibrary.org

holidays • closings

Thursday, January 1 • Closed for New Year's Day
Monday, January 19 • Closed for Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Library Hours
Monday-Thursday: 9 AM-8 PM
Friday: 9 AM-6 PM
Saturday: 9 AM-4 PM
Sunday: Closed

Park Hours
Monday-Sunday: Dawn-9 PM

WESTERLY LIBRARY
& WILCOX PARK