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## January 2016 NWC Newsletter



Sue Kaufman, NWC President

### **Happy 2016 to you, the special women of the Norwich Women's Club--**

The Board and I are looking forward to another great year of fun and fundraising on behalf of the Norwich community. The NWC wouldn't be such an exceptional organization if it weren't for the many capable and committed women who are willing to invest their time, energy and resourcefulness.

Looking back briefly, our **Holiday Party** in December was well attended and enjoyed by all. The Historical Society setting was made more special this year with inspiring antique decorations in the front rooms. A highlight was Annette Brown's hand crafted gingerbread replica of the Norwich Inn, complete with lighted windows. There was still space for our holiday treats and happy visiting. In addition to having a good time attendees generously contributed cans of tuna for the Haven as part of "The 19 Days of Norwich." Thank you.

On to our next events. The Club's annual **Book and Author Luncheon** is scheduled on Monday, February 8, at the Norwich Inn. It is always a sell-out event so make your reservations soon. You can register through the website - [www.norwichwomensclub.org](http://www.norwichwomensclub.org) or by contacting Isabel McCarthy ([iznmike@comcast.net](mailto:iznmike@comcast.net)).

And please save room on your calendar for the **Spring Gala** coming on Friday, March 11. Sue Pitiger, chair of the Gala committee, and her outstanding team are working diligently

on the super auctions (on-line before the event as well as on the night of) to be paired with wonderful food and drink. Linda Ely and Arline Rotman already have a number of outstanding auction items, and Cheryl Herman and committee are soliciting nominations for Citizen of the Year until January 25. You still have time to submit the name of someone you feel is a very special person to our community. The Gala has become an anticipated community event and raises major money for the Women's Club Community Project grants. Please help make this year's event extra special.

On our calendar this spring will also be a Candidates' Forum on February 23 at Tracy Hall, organized by Melanie Michel. Two Select Board positions are up for reelection. By the time Town Meeting and voting get here, planning for the **Spring Nearly New Sale** will be kicking into high gear. The **Sale** will take place from Friday, April 29 to Sunday, May 1. There will be lots of related signing up of volunteers and pre-consigning starting weeks before the sale takes place.

Please keep looking at the Club's website and on Facebook for more NWC events. If you can fit it in, join the group at the monthly **Coffee and Conversation** on the first Monday of the month at the Norwich Inn at 10.

Happy winter – I'm hoping for some nice, fluffy snow soon.

Sue K



## **SPRING GALA TIME, GALS!**

Friday March 11 at 6 PM looms near and we're well on our way to a terrific event.

Tracy Hall will be aglow as only Karen Ward and her helpers can make happen, and this year we're ramping up the food to make sure everyone leaves satisfied with a full stomach and a rave review. Of course our caterers will have wine and beer for you too.

Our auction prizes are already pouring in, and if I do say so, they are just terrific. Our new auction Chair, Linda Ely, is fabulous at nailing down great swag, and of course we have veteran successful asker Arline Rotman, who somehow charms everyone into giving great prizes.

We're increasing the size of our online auction, which will be announced about two weeks before the event. Lily Trajman did a great job last year at this first-ever effort for us, which wound up being a key component of our successful auction. It was and will be a great way for someone unable to attend the Gala to support the cause and have fun too.

There will be a silent and live auction at the Gala, always a good time to compete with each other for the best stuff. The auctions, on-line, silent, and live, are by far the key to financial success at the Gala. We need everyone to help support them.

The sweetest part of the evening will be the presentation of the awards to the 2016 Norwich Citizen of the Year. It's always lovely to take time to fete a special person. Among other things, the Citizen of the Year is the recipient of the \$500 Ledyard Grant to be spent on the not-for-profit of his or her choice. It's a credit to our community that each year we are able to find just the right person to be honored.

The Spring Gala is once again being underwritten by our very generous friends at Ledyard National Bank. Ledyard is key in enabling us to produce a first rate event and realize almost all of the income earned as profit. That profit supports the ever-increasing grant requests that come in each year to fund wonderful improvement projects here in Norwich. Thank you, Ledyard Bank, for being such a long-standing and committed friend.

We're counting on our membership to not only support the Gala on March 11 but to have a fine time doing it! See you there!

## CITIZEN OF THE YEAR NOMINATIONS

NOMINATE YOUR CANDIDATE FOR CITIZEN OF THE YEAR!

**WHO?** A member of the Norwich community who's made an outstanding contribution through work or community service.

**HOW?** Send us a few sentences or paragraphs describing why you think your candidate should be considered. Email to [Cheryl.L.Herrmann@gmail.com](mailto:Cheryl.L.Herrmann@gmail.com).

**WHY?** We'll honor the winner at the 2016 Gala on March 11.

COME ON! MAKE YOUR SOMEONE A WINNER!



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## 2016 BOOK AND AUTHOR LUNCHEON: Another Great Selection!

I must confess that after last year's fabulous B & A luncheon, I worried that we might come up short this year. However, the Norwich Bookstore has done it again, helping us find Stephen Kiernan, the author of the 2015 book *The Hummingbird*. Kiernan is a Vermont Author and, by all accounts, very entertaining. His book is described as "a compelling and moving story of compassion, courage, and redemption."

This annual NWC luncheon is always a great event that sells out almost immediately, so register now by sending a check, made out to the Norwich Women's Club (\$30 for members and \$35 for nonmembers), to NWC, PO Box 191, Norwich, VT 05055.

We hope to see you at the Norwich Inn for lunch on Monday, February 8, beginning at 11:30. Here's to a good time and a sunny day with no ice!

--Isabel McCarthy



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ALISON MAY, LONG STANDING BOARD MEMBER, RETIRES

It was with sadness that the members of the Norwich Women's Club received Alison May's fond farewell to board service last week.

Alison's health is declining and she feels it's time for Sophia Crawford to assume the position of Town Wide Phone Directory Chair, a role Sophia has been learning from Alison over the past five years. Alison has meticulously edited the directory biannually for twenty years and has done a wonderful job. The Women's Club realizes several thousand dollars with each new edition.

On a broader note, Alison will be sorely missed at the board table. She has been a voice of reason, contributing in many ways. Unexpected projects pop up for the Women's Club each year and Alison has always been the person to volunteer for the job and do that job well. She's been participatory in every sense of the word. Beyond achievements with our club, Alison successfully led the town wide capital campaign to expand the Norwich Public Library and served on our Selectboard for several terms.

Alison and Don moved to Kendal in Hanover less than two years ago and have kept in touch with their many Norwich friends. We're hoping that Alison's health stabilizes and that we see her soon about town.

You can read a longer profile on Alison from our April 2014 newsletter, available on the NWC website.

Sue Pitiger

### **Membership**

A warm welcome to **new member Ellie Ringer**.

Membership is open to anyone living in any town, any state. Please assure your friends - Thetford, Enfield, Windsor, Lyme - that we would love them as members.

Any questions? Email me [sophiajcrowford@gmail.com](mailto:sophiajcrowford@gmail.com)

Sophia Crawford  
Membership Coordinator

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### **Voter Information Update**

Two Norwich Select Board positions expire this year, currently held by Linda Cook

and Stephen Flanders. The deadline for filing petitions for these positions is January 25.

The NWC is organizing a **Candidates' Forum** on Tuesday February 23 from 7-9 pm. Stop by Tracy Hall that evening to participate in what is sure to be a lively discussion.

Town Meeting will occur on Monday, February 29, from 7-9 pm. Town meeting voting is on Tuesday, March 1, from 7 am-7 pm.

Please contact me at [Melanie.m.michel@gmail](mailto:Melanie.m.michel@gmail.com) or 410-382-2215 if you have any questions about the information above.

Melanie Michel

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### **Join us for Coffee**

NWC's monthly "Coffee and Conversation" get-togethers at the Norwich Inn are a great place to get together with other women in town. In January, 18 members and friends came in from the cold to sit in front of the fire, and they had a great time. Please join us on the first Monday of each month at 10:00 at the Inn. We'll look for you soon, February 1 or March 7.

Debbie Carter



### **Linda Ely – An Involved Woman!**

Linda Ely moved to the area in the fall of 2013, joined the Women's Club,

agreed to serve on the board as auditor, agreed to co-chair the Gala auction, and began acquiring auction prizes at breakneck speed. Her early life sheds light on her ability to seamlessly and effortlessly become an integral part of any new community.

Born in New York City, Linda lived there for the first six years of her life until her parents divorced. Her mother then moved back to Kokomo, Indiana, to be with her family, taking Linda with her. Linda described Kokomo as a Midwestern “Andy Griffith scene”— a conservative and friendly place. Her mother, a singer with a Master’s degree from the New England Conservatory, became a music teacher. Her father, Nathaniel Merrill, was the stage director at the Metropolitan Opera from 1956-1985.

Although Linda lived with her mom in Indiana, she spent vacations with her father in New York. She was a frequent flier before the term took on another meaning, spending summers with her father’s family on a dairy farm on Caspian Lake, in the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont. As a result of this disparate background, Linda said, “ I became very good at talking to anybody. I read people quickly and accurately.” Imagine her splitting time between ultra-cosmopolitan New York, where she accompanied her father to opera rehearsals and mingled with stars like Pavarotti, and places like conservative Indiana or bucolic Vermont. In order to fit in as she moved from one locale to the next, she had to be adaptable.

Linda worked hard to do well in school so that she could go to college. Her father, a Dartmouth graduate, took her to see Dartmouth, Harvard and Cornell. She chose Cornell, where she majored in Chemical Engineering. There were just five women in her class of eighty Chemical Engineering majors. After graduation she worked for DuPont in New Jersey and for the U.S Navy in Yorktown, Virginia.

Linda and her husband, Rick, were married at the historic Bruton Parish Church in Williamsburg, Virginia, which just celebrated its 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary. While living in Virginia they both earned MBA degrees at William and Mary. Rick went on to get a law degree at NYU in 1988, after they moved to New Jersey.

Linda then worked for Air Products in product management, which combined her MBA and engineering background, until she and Rick moved to Brooklyn,

when he took a position with Sullivan and Cromwell, a law firm with offices around the world. Linda joined a boutique consulting business doing strategic planning and management consulting.

In 1993 Rick was offered the opportunity to move to London for two years, so they packed up their children, ages 7 and 4, and went. Their third child was born in 1994 in London. Linda told me, "London was great, especially with a wonderful ex-pat community of smart, stay at home moms."

After London they moved back to New York. Rick changed jobs, and they returned to London in 1997, staying until Rick retired in 2013.

In London, Linda did a lot of volunteer work that she found challenging and fulfilling. This allowed her to be at home with her children while still making use of her talent and skills. She was a member of the Board of Trustees of the American School in London (ASL) where she was also the Chair of Development and Chair of Administration and Finance, monitoring a \$50 million budget.

Her children all graduated from ASL but attended college in America. Her oldest attended Colby College and moved back to London where she is an elementary school teacher. Her son went to Hamilton and is now working for Barclays in New York as a credit analyst. Her younger daughter is a junior at Princeton, majoring in economics and political science at the Woodrow Wilson School.

When Rick retired, they decided not to return to New York but rather to consider Vermont, where they had spent many family summers. Ultimately, they wanted a college town not too far from Greensboro. After renting in Hanover and liking it, they bought their current house, on Weatherby Road in Hanover.

Linda learned about the Women's Club when working on Holiday Baskets with Sophia Crawford. They hit it off, having London in common, and Sophia invited Linda to a Women's Club morning coffee. Linda noticed that everyone was welcoming and worked hard for good causes while having fun. When Sue Pitiger asked her to take on the Gala auction, Linda jumped right in and is doing a fabulous job. With her unassuming but confident manner, she is acquiring



auction items that are sure to entice people of all ages and interests.

Her real passions are needlepoint and working as a pastry chef—she took a one-year course at the Cordon Bleu. She has graciously shared with us one of the tips that she learned for making professional looking cookies.

The Women’s Club and Linda are a perfect match!

Arline Rotman



**Linda’s easy trick for making professional bakery looking cookies**

Make your favorite cookie dough—oatmeal, chocolate chip, or whatever—and scoop two tablespoons of dough onto a cookie sheet. Then grab the dough ball with the fingertips of both hands and pull it into equal halves. Rotate the halves 90 degrees and join them together with the ragged surfaces pointing up. Place the newly formed balls on the baking sheets, ragged surface up, and bake as directed in recipe.

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Mary Otto, Editor



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