

# NORWICH WOMEN'S CLUB

Community Service Since 1907

APRIL 2014



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What a great Spring Gala it was! Despite the snow on the ground, the atmosphere inside Tracy Hall couldn't have warmer, or more spring-like. I can't thank Sue Pitiger and her crew enough for the Herculean effort it took to pull this off – again!

I asked the permission of our gracious honoree, Cinny Bensen, to quote from her remarks at the gala, so without further ado, here they are. If reading this doesn't make you proud to live in Norwich, I don't know what will!

From Cinny Bensen:

*"...We are extremely fortunate to live in a community that cares so deeply about the organizations that make it special and believes in nurturing and supporting the relationships that insure that the fabric of our town remains strong. While I sincerely hope that collectively we have raised a lot of money for the Women's Club, tonight's event is more of a community-raiser than a fund-raiser. A unique opportunity to come together and enjoy each other's company as well as to celebrate volunteerism for what it really is: an investment in our community and the people who live here. I have many of you to thank for the opportunity to get involved. Together you represent a myriad of extraordinary events and worthwhile causes. When you asked, I just said "yes!" More often than I'd probably like to admit, the only requirement for the assignment was that I be in a certain aisle in the Co-op the day you were looking for help.*

*I can't tell you how many friends have given me the refrigerator magnet "Please stop me before I volunteer again!" I can't seem to help it – apparently, I'm hard-wired to raise my hand. But here's the thing: while there are projects I've taken on because I thought I had to and without a whole lot of enthusiasm, for the most part I love the work I do and I find making a difference, no matter how small, extremely rewarding. Service feeds my spirit and I'm grateful to have had the luxury of time and gift of opportunity to contribute alongside so many remarkable people. I have forged incredible friendships here that I will cherish for a lifetime.*

*I'd like to thank the dear women who nominated me – I imagine it was a lot of work to pull it off. I understand they painted the broad-brush strokes and were counting on my husband to fill in all the details but came to find out, much to his dismay; he really had no idea what I did all day!!*

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## NWC CALENDAR

Book & Author Luncheon  
Monday April 7<sup>th</sup>  
11:00am, Norwich Inn

Nearly New Sale  
Friday-Sunday May 2nd-4th  
Tracy Hall

Coffee and Conversation  
Monday May 5th  
10:00-11:00am, Norwich Inn

Spring Bus Trip  
Currier Art Museum and Frank Lloyd  
Wright House, Manchester, NH  
Wednesday May 28th

NWC Board Meetings  
Norwich Public Library  
Monday 6:30 pm  
April 7th  
May 12th (Board Dinner)

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## MEMBERSHIP

We welcome warmly our newest members, Nichole Hastings and Alice Thomason Worth.

Anyone interested will find more information on our website – [www.norwichwomensclub.org](http://www.norwichwomensclub.org).

Sophia Crawford  
Membership Coordinator

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## SAD NEWS

Our former member and past president Pat Molloy died on March 27th. Our thoughts and prayers are with her family.

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*I have been overwhelmed by the generosity and kind heartedness of so many people – I've had hugs, cards, emails and phone calls from people who I wasn't sure knew who I was and from others who I didn't think would give a whit about the Gala. Our friends and neighbors are so genuinely nice and as I'm always telling my kids, "nice matters"...*

*...I'd like to leave you with a Kahlil Gibran quote, corny but so true:*

*"I slept and I dreamed that life is all joy. I woke and I saw that life is all service. I served and I saw that service is joy."*

*I can't imagine a more joyful occasion than tonight – thank you all for being here!!"*

Wishing you all a great April, and looking forward to the Nearly New Sale in May...

Debby

## NOT YOUR MOTHER'S RUMMAGE SALE!

The hot pink NEARLY NEW SALE flyer has been mailed to you: it includes dates/time for securing your pre-consignment packet, schedule for pre-consignment inspection, consignment and shopping. Exactly 1,598 sale flyers were mailed out for the spring sale; the number of flyers mailed has doubled since I sent out my first sale flyer in the fall of 2004! Thanks to the RSVP volunteers at Norwich Senior Housing for tackling all those labels over the years and to Dorothy Cloud for spearheading the effort since 2005.

The flyer also includes the all-important contact details for volunteers; the recruitment email will reach you the day after this newsletter arrives: [do please sign up to help](#). We can't put this sale on without [you!](#)

As always, CLEAN SHOPPING BAGS are needed. Bring them to Tracy Hall when you volunteer or pass by and put them in the "safe" in the Conference Room.

Last but not least, THANK YOU, CINNY BENSON! Cinny, volunteer extraordinaire and 2014 Citizen of the Year for Community Service, has chosen the Club's Scholarship Fund to be the recipient of her \$500 Ledyard Grant. What a wonderful kickoff for our Spring Sale and generous wrap-up to the NNS 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year celebrating the twice-yearly seasonal family clothing sales to support scholars.

Elaine Waterman, Nearly New Sale Chair

## Annual Book & Author Luncheon

The annual book & author luncheon has been rescheduled for Monday April 7th, 11am, at the Norwich Inn.

Maryanne O'Hara, author of *Cascade*, is our featured author.

In the meantime, you may want to read this "richly satisfying novel" [the Boston Globe]. Maryanne has received many honors for her writing: People Pick, Best Books of 2012, Boston Globe Best of the New, and Massachusetts Library Association Must Read for 2013.

Dana Ireland is coordinating. Don't hesitate to email her if you have any questions: [dana.s.ireland@gmail.com](mailto:dana.s.ireland@gmail.com)



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## COMMUNITY PROJECTS GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Finance Committee will be meeting at the beginning of May to go over 2014/2015 Grant Applications. Now is the time for Norwich community civic organizations to submit their requests. If you know of an organization that would qualify for a Grant, please contact a representative of that organization; they can download an application and find the guidelines to process a request at [www.norwichwomensclub.org/communityprojects.html](http://www.norwichwomensclub.org/communityprojects.html).

Requests must be received by May 1, 2014 and funds will be awarded after July 1, 2014. Send Grant requests to: [cloveland@wavecomm.com](mailto:cloveland@wavecomm.com) or

Carol Loveland  
32 Butternut Lane  
Norwich, VT 05055

Questions: 649-1549

Carol Loveland, Finance Chair

***Put the date on your calendar!***  
***Wednesday, May 28 for the Spring bus trip***  
***to the Currier Art Museum***  
***and Frank Lloyd Wright house***  
***in Manchester, NH.***  
***Details to follow in the May newsletter.***  
***Contact: Debbie Carter 649-1216***



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## Norwich Women's Club Newsletter Member Profile

### Alison May

Alison McCallum May was born and raised in Hanover. Her father was a Dartmouth English professor and her mother was active in the Hanover community. Don May's father was an economics professor at Dartmouth and the two faculty wives became lifelong friends, even though the May family moved to NY in 1934.

Alison credits her parents with giving her independence and Vassar College with giving her confidence about what she could do with her life. When Alison entered Vassar, she was the only public school student among her six roommates and the only one on financial aid. "The school was a great social leveler, and I was accepted on an equal plane."

After graduation, Alison went to work for the CIA in Washington. Although she was an economics major, she began her career filing in the library. She was then transferred to a section charged with looking for markings on Soviet armaments to identify when and where they were made: the CIA was interested in determining the capacity of Russian factories to produce weapons.

While working in Washington, Alison heard, undoubtedly through her mother, that Don had a sailboat. "I never knew anyone with a sailboat," she told me. Don was working as a newspaper reporter in Washington at that time but she hadn't had any contact with him since childhood; nonetheless she called him. That phone call led to their 60-year marriage and four children. They were married in 1954 by the Dartmouth Chaplain who told them: "My marriages last—don't let me down." Indeed, they did not!

After one year as an at-home mom, Alison said, "I started getting edgy." Her doctor gave her three choices: see a psychologist; take Valium; or do volunteer work. Not surprisingly, Alison opted for volunteer work. She began with the League of Women Voters in Alexandria, Virginia, and in 1956 became involved in the second Stevenson campaign. She later became Chair of the Alexandria Democratic Committee.

In 1958 Alison and Don bought a house in historic Old Town Alexandria, where they raised their four children. In 1965 there were race riots in Alexandria following the infamous Los Angeles riots in Watts. Alison became active with the NAACP and the ACLU and in 1968 worked with others to calm racial tensions when Martin Luther King was assassinated.

In 1970 Alison ran for the City Council and was the only white candidate to campaign in Alexandria's sole black ward. She spoke at the Baptist churches encouraging people to vote for her and the black candidate. The pastors said, "Listen to Sister May" and indeed they did. The black candidate came in 6<sup>th</sup> and Alison was 7<sup>th</sup>; the city council had six seats.

The following year she was appointed to the School Board by the City Council and served three 3-year terms. She was chairman of the Finance Committee and then Chairman of the School Board. While she was on the School Board, the Board made the controversial decision to desegregate the Alexandria schools. Alison was chosen to make the motion for

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desegregation at a heavily attended school board meeting. She acknowledges she was quaking in her boots. Looking out at the audience she saw the front row populated by a row of well-dressed men. The second row was filled with grungy-looking men. Alison, in a shaky voice, offered her motion—the men in the front row stood up, taking off their jackets to reveal shirts emblazoned with Nazi swastikas; the men in the second row then stood up, grabbed the men in the front row, and dragged them out of the auditorium. The second row had been filled with undercover cops. Alison said, “After that experience, nothing could rattle me.”

In 1973, with a small inheritance from her mother, Alison became familiar with the investment world. Knowing that she and Don had four children to put through college, she applied for and was rejected from a job with the investment firm where she was a client. Women were not investment advisors in those days. She was reluctantly hired by A.G. Edwards but only after she had had to go to Washington to meet with a higher up in the firm. When she received his stamp of approval, she got the job in Alexandria. She was the only woman in the office. Within a year she was the leading producer!

Her successful career as a financial planner and investment advisor never kept her away from volunteer work or politics. One year before Alison's retirement in 1994, she and Don took a trip to the Upper Valley to see if they wanted to live here. As soon as they saw the house on Hazen Street, they knew this was where they would live. They bought the house and hired Peter French to renovate it totally while keeping the original footprint. They gave Peter a free hand telling him that they wanted the house to look like it had always been there. And so it did!

Once they moved to Norwich, right across the street from the Library, Alison quickly became involved there. She was President of the Library Board of Trustees when the Board embarked upon the capital campaign to renovate and enlarge the existing building. The goal was to raise at least \$600,000 in order to meet the needs of the community—a daunting task. Alison credits Anne Silberfarb, another Norwich Women's Club member, with the success of the campaign. The community responded generously and the Library raised in excess of \$700,000.

Alison has served Norwich in many capacities. She was originally appointed and then elected Town Auditor and served on the Finance Committee. She was elected to the Selectboard in 2000, serving for seven years.

In addition to her political activities, she has been responsible for the biennial Women's Club Norwich Town Directory, assiduously pursuing every newcomer to town. She has been known to ring the doorbells of these newcomers to make sure that they know about the Women's Club while she gets their information for the directory. Alison has increased our directory profits (which go to the Community Projects Fund) by recruiting people to pay for business and service listings.

What you may not know about Alison are all her other talents. Together with Don, she created and administers the Salikenni Scholarship Fund, a non-profit organization dedicated to increasing educational opportunity for children in a village in a rural region of The Gambia in West Africa. <http://www.salikenni.org>. And together they have restored three houses. Alison has wallpapered their houses, shingled a barn and painted their picket fence, and written a family history. Among her many talents, Alison also gardens, sews, needlepoints, and is a general handywoman.

The Mays summer in their house on Prince Edward Island, but this year, instead of returning to Norwich, they will be moving into Kendal in Hanover. We wouldn't be surprised if she takes a leadership role there as well. A hearty thank you to Alison for all you have done to make the world and this community a better place. We are indeed fortunate that you have chosen to live in Norwich for the past twenty years!

Arline Rotman

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## RECIPES OF THE MONTH

**Barry Clarke** a/k/a the Barefoot Gourmet outdid himself with food at this year's Gala. He is always so obliging about sharing his recipes and answering all my questions. The consensus of people around me was that the shrimp were particularly outstanding. The recipe is for his Peri Peri sauce, which as you can see is good for chicken as well as shrimp\*.

### Barry Clarke's Peri Peri - for chicken or shrimp

*This Portuguese way of cooking was born in Mozambique. I was first introduced to it when I was about 14. My brother Chris was sugar farming in Mhlume, Swaziland and we went across the border to Namahash in Mozambique. We had peri peri prawns, fresh bread and Blue Nun wine. It was a stupendous lunch!*

1 stick of butter or 8 tbs peanut oil (I've used a very coarse and aromatic peanut oil – delicious on a whole new level!)  
1 tbs cayenne pepper (about as close as you'll get to the birds eye pepper used in southern Africa)  
2 cloves garlic, crushed  
1 tsp salt  
1 lemon, juiced

Melt the butter and mix in the other ingredients. If you are cooking shrimp, use a big skillet and toss in the shrimp as soon as the butter starts to sputter. Stir fry until they turn pink and serve immediately. For chicken, halved or quartered, baste periodically while roasting or BBQing.

\*I asked him how many shrimp would be used for the amount of sauce and should the chicken be marinated first. Here are his answers. *That amount of sauce would do up to 2 pounds of shrimp. With chicken on a BBQ, use it as a basting sauce later on in the cooking cycle with a lower heat so that it doesn't flame out on you and get a bitter burn. When roasting in an oven, you can marinate beforehand if you want...and baste once or twice in the cooking cycle.*

How about **Rita Lajole**? Can you believe that she made ALL those desserts single-handedly? She was good enough to share her recipe for those yummy Chocolate Espresso Coconut Islands. Bon Appétit!

### Chocolate Espresso Coconut Islands

|                                   |                               |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 3 oz melted unsweetened chocolate | 1 tsp instant espresso coffee |
| 1/2 c soft butter                 | 1 c firmly packed brown sugar |
| 1 large egg                       | 2/3 c sour cream              |
| 2 c flour                         | 1/2 t baking soda             |
| 1/2 t salt                        | 1 c flaked coconut            |

In a large mixer bowl combine chocolate, coffee butter, sugar, egg, sour cream, flour, soda, salt and 1/3 c coconut. Mix on lowest speed until dough forms. Drop dough by rounded teaspoonful onto parchment-lined cookie sheets. Bake at 375° for 12-15 minutes. Frost while warm. Sprinkle with remaining coconut.

#### Chocolate Frosting

|                                   |                  |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| 2 oz melted unsweetened chocolate | 1/4 c sour cream |
| 2 c sifted confectioners sugar    |                  |

Combine all ingredients and mix well.

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## ROCK THAT GALA!

**Here are the stats on the 2014 Spring Gala. I think you'll see - we rocked it!**

- **BEST SELLING LIVE AUCTION ITEM - A week in Martha's Vineyard - \$2200! Congratulations, Paula!**
- **FLASHIEST TIE - Dan Fraser, in a glittery gold number**
- **MOST ACHING FEET - Sue Pitiger, in her once-a-year pumps**
- **SWEETEST SIGHT - Canny Bensen with her proud family on that stage**
- **WORST SIGHT - number of black down coats on those coat racks - impossible to find your own!**
- **BEST APPETIZER - toss-up: either the shrimp or the chill thingles**
- **WORST MOMENT - set-up in the blizzard, which amounted to too many moments!**
- **LEAST EXPENSIVE AUCTION ITEM - little pillow, \$15. Every penny counts!**
- **LITTLEST DRESS - toss-up: either Terry Marshall or Jill Kearney Niles. They were both hot!**
- **MOST ANXIETY - back-office crew, Carol Loveland, Joanne Kent, and Sue Kaufman. Would computer system work?**
- **BIGGEST TRIUMPH - computer system worked!**
- **NUMBER OF TICKETS SOLD - 211**
- **NUMBER ATTENDED - 199**
- **NUMBER OF NWC MEMBERS ATTENDING - 67 (24% of membership)**
- **TOTAL NET FROM SILENT AUCTION - \$12,850**
- **TOTAL NET FROM LIVE AUCTION - \$5,475**

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- **ADD IT UP! \$18,325 FROM THE AUCTIONS ALONE!**
- **NET PROCEEDS FROM SPRING GALA - \$24,000+ (We're still paying straggle-in bills, but that \$24,000 is a lot of money for us!)**
- **NET PERCENTAGE INCREASE FROM 2013 - 50%!**
- **BEST GALA COMMITTEE - 2014! What a fabulous group of people!**
- **BEST GALA VOLUNTEERS - 2014 crew wins it too!**
- **BIGGEST LESSON LEARNED - It's worth doing a one-night rockin' party when you get the formula right.**
- **To all who worked it, and all who supported it, thank you, thank you. We raised our net income by 50% and it will make a huge difference to those applying for community project grants. We've never come close to that net profit before for any spring fundraiser in NWC history. We're very proud to have done it.**

**Appreciative thanks to our Spring Gala photographers: Paula Alexandrescu, Annette Brown, Steve Lajoie and Sandie Anderson and Reeve Williams! A selection of their photos can be found on our Facebook page and website ([www.norwichwomensclub.org](http://www.norwichwomensclub.org)) .**

