

NORWICH WOMEN'S CLUB

Community Service Since 1907

FEBRUARY 2014

BREAKING NEWS!

CINNY BENSEN IS THE 2014 NORWICH CITIZEN OF THE YEAR FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE!

We know we're into Spring Gala season when we have a new Citizen of the Year. What a pleasure it is to announce that our Award Committee, led by Cheryl Herrmann, has selected Cinny Bensen, a NWC member for many years, for this honor. And does she ever deserve it!

Cinny moved to Norwich in 1998 and lost no time getting involved and being of service. She jumped in at Marion Cross School, acting as "team parent" for her children's sports. She helped found the now-annual Spelling Bee and was program director of the "Giving Bowls" fundraiser. She's the gal who worked in the school library, organized several now-annual programs at MCS, and was always the unsung hero contributing to retirement parties and graduation programs. She was President of the Marion Cross School PTO for several years and served on search committees for both the MCS and Richmond School principals. She has continued her involvement with the district schools at Hanover High as well.

But wait – there's more! She's served as co-director for the Ford Sayre alpine racing program for the Ski Council; she's also been the academic liaison for the Ford Sayre Academy. She's served Children's Hospital at Dartmouth as a board member on the Friends of CHaD for eight years and is recognized as the Chair of that Board from 2011 to the present.

In spite of huge obligations in the schools, at Ford Sayre, and at CHaD, Cinny has found time to devote extensive hours to the Montshire Museum. Chairing the Montshire auction, the Board's Annual Fund and the Governance Committee has led to Cinny's being elected Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Montshire Museum in recognition of her enormous talent and contributions.

Frankly, I'm getting exhausted just writing this! Believe me, I'm not including all the details, and already this record of service is staggering. Somehow Cinny found time over the years to take numerous leadership roles at the United Church of Christ where she is a member. Beyond that she has characteristically reached out to the less fortunate members of the Upper Valley community, regularly volunteering at the Haven, providing meals for Listen and driving clients to and from medical appointments. She cooks for families at David's House and coordinates dinners for the workers at the Good Neighbor Clinic. And guess what – apparently she's a great cook!

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NWC Calendar

Coffee and Conversation
Monday March 3rd
10:00-11:00am, Norwich Inn

Book & Author Luncheon
POSTPONED – new date to be
announced

NWC GALA
Friday March 14th
6:00-10:00 pm Tracy Hall

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

NWC Board Meetings
Norwich Public Library
Monday 6:30 pm
February 10th
March 10th
April 7th
May 12th (Board Dinner)

MEMBERSHIP

We welcome warmly our newest member, Deborah Gillespie.

Do please let your friends know that they don't have to live in Norwich to be members! Anyone interested will find more information on our website – www.norwichwomensclub.org. Or they can contact me directly at sophiajcrowford@gmail.com.

Sophia Crawford
Membership Coordinator

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Cinny also has served Middlebury College as Head of Alumni interviewing for Vermont and New Hampshire for ten years. This spring she will be a volunteer for Gardens for Health International in Rwanda.

Cinny's nominators said, "Cinny gets it. She sees what matters, what needs to be done, and does it. Cinny finds her joy in the connection, welcoming a new family to town, feeding hungry graduate students, congratulating a young couple on a new baby. She isn't afraid of the difficult times, reaching out to read to a dying stranger, ferrying patients to challenging appointments, or providing sustenance to a family in a time of grief. Cinny cares deeply and works hard. I don't think a day goes by that she isn't doing something for someone else."

So how's that for our Citizen of the Year? We hope you'll honor Cinny with us at the 2014 Spring Gala on March 14. It is time for all of us to enjoy an evening with Cinny and her family, to stand up and cheer for her and all of our other wonderful nominees. See you there!



Sue Pitiger, Spring Gala Chair

Welcome and a big thanks to our newly appointed Club photographers: Paula Alexandrescu, Sandie Anderson and Annette Brown! They'll be snapping pix and feeding our website and Facebook page with lots of new photos. Don't forget to "Like" us on Facebook!

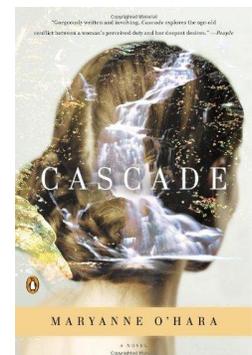
Annual Book & Author Luncheon

The annual book & author luncheon was scheduled for February 10th. Maryanne O'Hara, author of *Cascade*, was to be our featured author. However, regretfully, she has cancelled: the weather report for the Boston area, from which she comes, gave her sufficient nervousness to do so. We will try to re-schedule in the spring. It was going to be a lovely turnout, with about 30 people signed up, so we will try again when the trees are green.

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 contacting all those who signed up; don't hesitate to email her if you have any questions:

dana.s.ireland@gmail.com



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Norwich Women's Club Newsletter Member Profile

Lucinda Walker: Go-to Director of the Norwich Public Library

By Mary K. Otto



Whatever your connection to the Norwich Public Library—borrowing books and DVDs, coming in to read the *New York Times*, attending a program on getting the garden ready for spring, or delivering your three-year-old to story hour, as you walk through the library door on Hazen Street, you're likely to glance toward the main desk with a quick "Hi, Lucinda!"

Lucinda Walker, Director of the Norwich Public Library for over 10 years, is almost a Norwich icon, and the fact that she is simply "Lucinda" says a lot about her perspective on herself and on the library. She is well known, much admired, and a woman whom Norwich residents know they can count on. And of course, she is an active member of our Norwich Women's Club! I recently spent an informative hour with her in her office at the library.

We started with some background. When the NPL Board of Trustees interviewed Lucinda to be the new library director in 2002, they were after a candidate able to move into a newly renovated library building and make maximum use of a remarkable three-year Freeman Foundation Grant (the application was written by former librarian Sylvia Fraser, before her unexpected death) aimed to help this strong but small institution change and grow. Board members wanted a director who would enlarge the staff, offer more programs, and build the library bases of users and supporters. Lucinda, upon starting work on June 15, 2002, says she walked into her ideal job.

And how did she make the connection to Norwich? "By accident," she says! Lucinda, a Vermonter by birth, went to Oberlin College in Ohio, where her now husband, Peter Money, was a classmate. Being a history and communications major, she had no thought of becoming a librarian. Her post-college years included working in Akron, OH, as a retail store manager for the May Company; moving to New York with Peter, who was attending graduate school, and taking a job at the *Wall Street Transcript*, where she began doing reference work and loving it; deciding, with her mother's encouragement, to return to school for a degree in Library Science; and then accompanying Peter to CA, where they lived for 10 years.

During her years in San Francisco, Lucinda worked at the Mechanics' Institute Library, a historic membership library and cultural center in the heart of the Financial District. In 2001 Lucinda and Peter decided to take a year's personal

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sabbatical from work, having recently had their two children and wanting to return to the East Coast to be closer to their families. Settling near Windsor, where she had grown up, Lucinda claims that it took a mere seven weeks before she was ready to look for a job! Briefly, she and Peter, who also has a MLS Degree, shared a position at the Hartland Library, until Lucinda applied for the Norwich Library directorship and was hired.

To say that Lucinda is proud of her staff is an understatement. "We didn't set out to be a community center, but we are one," she says, "along with the Post Office, the school, and Dan and Whit's." The staff "gets it," according to Lucinda, meaning that there is an understanding among them of a shared library culture where they know patrons by name, work to learn about their preferences and their needs, and want to know their children. "I am lucky to work with them all," she concludes. Of course it is Lucinda's vision, her wisdom, her experience, and her willingness to take risks that help make all these aspects of the library into realities.

While she is busy full time at the library and does take work home, Lucinda also has other lives. In settling back in VT after their California years, Peter and Lucinda and their children, Hartley, 15, and Lily, 12, bought a home in Brownsville, which for her is "the country," by contrast to Norwich. "It's where I go to relax—to walk, ski, read, do things with the family." Peter, a poet and teacher, has a more flexible schedule these days and so absorbs more of the responsibility for the needs of the kids.

And, though it's almost part of her job right now, Lucinda currently devotes significant time to her year-long membership in the "Leadership Institute of the Upper Valley," where she meets monthly with thirty other members of the VT/NH work-force to discuss issues relevant to our area, such as economic development, health and human services, and justice, a topic coming up for their next meeting that will take them to the Spring Valley Correctional Facility as part of the experience. "It's a 'contacts and opportunities network,' giving me eight hours a month to leave my to-do list back in the library," Lucinda says.

But what's your bet: that the Norwich Public Library—and the Norwich community in general—will reap some of the benefits of these days outside the library? Knowing Lucinda, I'd put money on it! Our town is fortunate to have a librarian like Lucinda, and the Norwich Women's Club is delighted to count her among their members.

(Look for a longer article about Lucinda Walker and the Norwich Public Library in the March issue of the *Norwich Times*.)



Recipes for your drinking pleasure

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With the Spring Gala almost upon us, it seems appropriate to share the recipe for the Arlinitini. The winning "name your drink" bidder at the inaugural Spring Gala created this drink, which has been on the Elixir menu since 2011.

THE ARLINI-TINI By bartender Keith

Rim a chilled martini glass with a mixture of 4 parts sugar to 1 part ginger powder:

First wet the rim with a piece of lime, which is split before use. Dip the rim in the sugar mixture. Use the lime to wipe the inside of the rim clean.

In a cold cocktail shaker, use 1 oz. vodka to 1½ oz. Canton liqueur and 1/8 to 1/4 oz. fresh lime juice (adjust to taste)

Shake, shake, shake and pour into chilled martini glass.

For a change of pace, here is a recipe for the best Lychee martini I ever had. I have shared the recipe with the aforementioned Keith, Elixir's bartender extraordinaire, so don't be surprised if some version of this shows up on their drink menu.

Lychee Martini

3½ oz. vodka

1 oz. white cranberry juice

1 dash Agave syrup

1½ oz. pureed lychees with ginger *

*Puree 1-can lychees with a pinch of fresh ginger in blender



Salute... A votre santé... Cheers!