

# NORWICH WOMEN'S CLUB

Community Service Since 1907

June 2013

## President's Message

"If it isn't fun, we don't do it", a take-off on Dan & Whit's motto, is a great descriptor of the Norwich Women's Club's most recent activities. And we have been doing a lot.

A "wine and apps" evening, piloted last month, successfully tested our belief that many of our members, whose days are filled with work, child care and household responsibilities, might be eager for an occasional evening out—just to socialize.

Graciously hosted by Geneviève Verlaak-Graham, Sheryl Stotland, Ashley Clapp and Cinny Bensen in the wine cellar of the Norwich Inn, the get-together was attended by about 17 Upper Valley women. Based upon their enthusiastic response, we plan to repeat the successful event several times during the next year. Similar to our popular Monday morning "coffee and conversations", the events, open to all women of the Upper Valley, will provide a relaxed and social atmosphere to find out more about our Club and who we are.

The spring outing to the Arnold Arboretum provided a stress-free, fun-filled day, allowing us to enjoy the bountiful blooming lilacs and other landscaping during our guided tour of the gardens. We sipped our wine, and snacked on goodies on the trip home, while we left the driving to our bus driver. Thanks to Dana Ireland and Debbie Carter for arranging and organizing the day. You can find a picture of the happy group on our website, [www.norwichwomensclub.org](http://www.norwichwomensclub.org).

Among the many things that our Club members do well is support the community, throw good parties, and cook and cater as needed.. Two recent events hosted by NWC members provided financial support to the Norwich Public Library as well as our own community grants program.

The silent auction at this year's Library fundraiser included a chance for "dinner with the Norwich Women's Club officers". Karen Ward, Deb Hall, Sue Pitiger, Joanne Kent, and myself, cooked, served and fully enjoyed ourselves, dining together with Mary and David Otto, Lisa Cashdan, Peter Stein, Penny McConnel, Jim Gold, Beth Krusi and Sandy Harris.

"Effortless Entertaining in an Elegant Setting", or a "cocktail party with a view", auctioned off at our Spring Gala, was won by Ashley Clapp. She got to host a great party for her thirty plus invited guests with no more responsibility than sending out invitations. This time the caterers were Isabel McCarthy, Sue Pitiger, Karen Ward, Carol Loveland, Eileen Shaevel, Linda Hazard and myself. We knew we had outdone ourselves when we heard people talking about how they were going to bid on this event next year. For your eating or entertaining pleasure, I am including a couple of recipes from the evening's menu (see last page). From time to time, I will share other delicious NWC recipes with you, here or on our website.

An unexpected benefit from both of these events was the addition of new members from among the guests. When people see what fun we have while doing so much for the community, they want to be a part of it. We always make the point that membership shows support for our mission, even if people have no time at present to volunteer to help in any other way.

Our next event will be the Annual Meeting, graciously hosted by Paula Schleicher, on June 12. We will be electing a new board and officers and, after a short business meeting, breaking bread together. Each person is asked to bring one pint of salad fixings, which when put together with salad greens by our hospitality chair, PJ Stanwood, magically makes a delicious lunch for all. I hope to see you there. More information can be found on our website, [www.norwichwomensclub.org](http://www.norwichwomensclub.org), along with other pictures of our happenings. While you are there, you can "like" us on Facebook.

It has been my honor and privilege to serve as your President for the past three years. The Norwich Women's Club is a vital and ever growing organization, which I know will always continue to enrich our community in so many ways.

Arline

## NWC Calendar

### NWC Annual Meeting

Paula Schleicher's  
Highland Farm  
249 Bragg Hill Road  
Norwich, VT  
Wednesday 06/12/13  
11:00 am-1:00 pm

### All NWC sponsored concerts take place at 7:00 PM on the Green and are free

06/28 The Panhandlers Steel Band  
07/19 The FRYDADDY Band  
07/26 Still More Cats  
08/09 East Bay Jazz Ensemble

### Coffee at the Norwich Inn

Monday 09/09/13  
10:00 am-11:00 am

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## LOOKING AHEAD

The very successful Spring Nearly New Sale has just wrapped up with consignor checks going out on Sunday, June 2nd, just shy of four weeks after the sale closed! Thanks to Sydney Smith and her very efficient accounting team for so promptly getting checks out in record time.

The Fall 2013 sale begins the Nearly New Sale's **50th Anniversary year** of holding this event to benefit the Norwich Women's Club Scholarship Fund! As the year progresses, interesting, historical information will be coming your way.

The Fall 2013 sale window opens on Wednesday October 16th with set-up and pre-consignment inspections and closes on Sunday October 20th with the bag sale and clean up. As with all sales during my tenure as chair since the fall of 2004, clothing left after the close of the bag sale is donated to The Upper Valley Haven for which recipients are most appreciative.

THANK YOU, MEMBERSHIP, FOR YOUR CONSISTENT SUPPORT OF THE BI-ANNUAL NEARLY NEW SALE WITH VOLUNTEERING, CONSIGNING AND SHOPPING. WE COULDN'T HOLD THIS EVENT WITHOUT YOU.

Elaine Waterman, Chair

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## NWC Garden

Each time we finish working in the garden, I make a point to thank each gardener for her hard work, cheerfully done. I appreciate each one so much. They are wonderful volunteers for the Norwich Women's Club.

I hope when you see Dana Ireland, Ruth Jabbs, Bonnie Lawlor, Carol Loveland, Alison May and Anne Silberfarb, you will give each one a great big Thank You for making our garden so beautiful.

While I am thanking volunteers, I want you to know that our beautiful garden sign sleeps for the winter in George Loveland's barn. He brings it out each year and installs it for us to welcome spring. Thanks, George.

Enjoy the flowers.

Mary Ann Holbrook



## Coffee and Conversation

We are taking a break for the summer, starting again on Monday, September 9th (avoiding Labor Day on the first Monday).

We look forward to seeing you then.

## Membership

We welcome warmly our newest members: Jean Harris-Schwab, Evelyn Laskaris, Jenny Snyder.

Many of you have already returned your check in the dues renewal envelope, for which we are most grateful. If you haven't already paid your dues, you can save a stamp and bring your check\* to the Annual Meeting on June 12th! (\*\$20, payable to NWC)

Do you know anyone who is interested in becoming a member? You and she will find more information on our website - [www.norwichwomensclub.org](http://www.norwichwomensclub.org).

Sophia Crawford



THE NWC TRIP TO ARNOLD ARBORETUM

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## NWC Member Profile:



## Geneviève Verlaak-Graham

It is hard to believe that Geneviève has been in Norwich just short of two years. She has certainly hit the ground running. When asked how she accomplished so much in such a short time, she describes herself as “driven!”

Geneviève immigrated to Virginia from her native Belgium in 1994 where she had her own architectural practice. Similar to many other stories, what brought her here is a boyfriend who wanted to come to America. Where her story veers from the commonplace is what she did before she got here. Knowing that she would need a green card to work, she found an architectural firm in Richmond Virginia that was willing to hire and sponsor her. She hired an immigration attorney, and continued working in Belgium until she got her green card three years later. Her boyfriend did not have a green card--

so they married and came to Richmond together, green cards in hand. They divorced 10 years later, and Geneviève planned to move to Boston, having been hired by Shepley Bulfinch, one of the oldest architectural firms in the country.

But life intervened and she never made it to Boston. While Geneviève was working for a firm that designed healthcare facilities, she met Dr Richard Graham, a well-respected urological surgeon, and fell in love. As Geneviève explained it, Richard might have been even more driven than her as he worked incredibly long hours doing kidney transplants, sometimes performing 6 or 7 surgeries a day. “I had to make appointments with his nurse in order to see him!”

While in Richmond, Geneviève gave birth to their two sons, Karsten in 2004, and Berend in 2005. During her first pregnancy she completed an 18-month executive MBA program, taking courses on the weekends and Tuesday evenings. She also started her own residential architectural firm.

As Geneviève was building her business, Richard was growing more concerned about the changes in the healthcare system. He believed that life had more to offer than the “rat race” he was in so was delighted to accept an offer from Gifford Medical Center here in Vermont. He now works fewer hours, is able to enjoy the time he is able to spend with his patients, and happily comes home to help with the children.

Before their move here Geneviève thoroughly researched the area. She was attracted to the more relaxed quality of life in the Upper Valley and decided that Norwich would be the perfect community for their family. While searching the Internet to see what organizations were here, she found the Women’s Club website and determined that it offered her a great opportunity to become involved in the community.

The rest is history. Geneviève immediately offered to chair the Silent Auction at our first Spring Gala. We all stand in awe of her calm demeanor, composure and perfectionist standards, although she acknowledges that “I am often nervous on the inside.”

In addition to joining the NWC Board in charge of publicity, Geneviève teaches religious education to 8- year-old children at her church on Sunday mornings (with Berend in her class). In winter she spends Sunday afternoons as a ski coach in the Ford Sayre program where both of her children ski. She is active in the Marion Cross PTO doing the displays for them at the library. Did I mention that she is a ranked tennis player? She plays in a summer and winter league at the RVC, but claims it “isn’t often enough.”

Now that Richard had a more relaxed schedule and could come home to be with the children, Geneviève felt ready to go back to work. She took a real estate course, and is now a licensed real estate agent working at Sotheby’s. As an independent contractor she can arrange her own schedule. But of course, in typical Geneviève style, she works many hours, determined to learn as much as she can as fast as she can. When asked about the change from architecture to real estate, she said she could make use of all her prior experience. As an architect with an MBA, she can visualize the potential of a house, appreciate its finer details, and transmit her vision to her customers.

Notwithstanding her new career, her involvement in her children’s lives as well as the community, Geneviève has willingly agreed to chair the 2014 Spring Gala Silent Auction and is busy planning what can be done to raise even more dollars.

Norwich in general, and the Women’s Club in particular, are fortunate to claim her as our own.

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## NWC Community Grant Awards

This year the Women's Club received a record \$34,000 in Grant Requests. The Finance Committee had \$22,429 to distribute back to the Norwich Community, and they worked diligently to give money toward each request. The Fraser Family was celebrated at our 2nd Spring Gala as the Norwich Outstanding Citizens of the Year for Service to the Community. The Women's Club provided them \$500 to donate as they wished. The Frasers have designated the Norwich Public Library as the recipient. Thank you to our members and the community for supporting the NWC with the your time and donations.

### 2013 Community Projects Grants Totaling \$22,429

Aging in Place Norwich  
Community Education Programs  
Beaver Meadow School House  
Capital Improvement Project  
The Family Place  
Landscaping  
Hanover High School  
2014 Graduation Party  
Hartford Holiday Baskets  
Marion Cross School  
Visiting Author Jan Reynolds  
Marion Cross School  
River Day for 5<sup>th</sup> Graders  
Marion Cross School  
Hulbert Outdoor Leadership Program  
Marion Cross School  
"Think3rd" Presenter  
Montshire Museum  
Natural History Teaching Collection  
Norwich Historical Society  
Collection Care  
Norwich Nursery School  
Gail Dolan Scholarship Fund  
Norwich Public Library  
Community Room Art Display System

Revels North  
Summer Solstice Celebration  
Seusstival  
Sponsorship and Promotions  
Town of Norwich  
Updating Wireless Sound System  
Town of Norwich Trails Committee  
Hazen Trail Kiosk  
Town of Norwich Fire District  
Ballard Trail Repair  
Town of Norwich Recreation Dept  
Huntley Meadow Trash Receptacles  
Town of Norwich Recreation Council  
Bleachers for Marion Cross School  
Town of Norwich Police Department  
Portable Camera  
Norwich Women's Club  
Spring Gala 2013 Grant: Fraser Family: Norwich Public  
Library  
Candidates Night  
League of Women Voters  
Memorial Books  
Off Cycle Requests  
Spelling Bee  
Summer Concerts  
Triangle Plantings

Submitted by:

Carol Loveland, Chair of Finance Committee

Joanne Kent, Arline Rotman, Debby Hall, Sue Pitiger, Geneviève Verlaak-Graham

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## ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NORWICH WOMEN'S CLUB June 12th, 2013

Here are the nominees for the Board of Directors for 2013-2014  
on whom we shall vote at our Annual Meeting on June 12th:

President	Deborah Hall
Vice-President	Geneviève Verlaak-Graham
Recording Secretary	Eileen Shaevel
Corresponding Secretary	Paula Alexandrescu
Treasurer	Joanne Kent
Finance	Carol Loveland
NWC Directory	Jaye Pershing Johnson
Auditor	Sue Kaufman
Spring Gala	Sue Pitiger
Historian	Holly Sateia
Hospitality	PJ Stanwood
Membership Coordinator	Sophia Crawford
	* Sue Spademan, <i>Coffee &amp; Conversation</i>
Membership Development	Karen Ward
Newsletter	Deb Kaplan
	* Arline Rotman
	* Eileen Shaevel
	* Mary Otto
Public Relations & Social Media	Ann Waterfall
	* Arline Rotman
	* Sheryl Stotland
Nearly New Sale	Elaine Waterman
Nominating	Arline Rotman
Programs	Holly Sateia
	* Debbie Carter
	* Dana Ireland
Scholarship Chair	Martha Graber
<i>NWC member</i>	* Karen Ward
Summer Concerts	Rita Lajoie
Town Phone Directory	Alison May
Town Garden	Mary Ann Holbrook
Voter Information	Janet Saint Germain

\* denotes committee members

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*NWC Summer Concert Series*

All NWC sponsored concerts  
take place at 7PM on the Norwich Green and are free

June 28 The Panhandlers Steel Band

July 19 The FRYDADDY Band

July 26 Still More Cats

August 9 East Bay Jazz Ensemble

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## Recipes from the Cocktail Party

### Herbed Ricotta Bruschettas - Karen Ward

1 baguette bread  
2 cups Ricotta  
3 T. minced scallions, white and green parts  
2 T. minced fresh dill  
1 T. minced fresh chives  
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper  
Good quality olive oil  
Artichoke tapenade (may be store-bought)  
Sundried tomatoes in oil  
Kalamata olives

Slice baguette on an angle, brush with olive oil, sprinkle with salt and pepper and bake in 350 F oven until lightly browned.

Combine ricotta and fresh herbs, then set aside. Slice sundried tomatoes into ¼-in slices and halve the Kalamata olives.

To assemble: Spread about a tablespoon of the herbed ricotta onto the toast, then a teaspoon or less of tapenade on top of that. Finish with a slice of sundried tomato and a piece or two of olive.

### Apple, Blue Cheese & Walnut Salad on Endive Leaves – Isabel McCarthy

1 lge tart red apple (Gala or Braeburn) 1/8 inch dice  
3 oz. Blue cheese crumbed. ...3/4 cup  
3/4 c. finely chopped celery  
3 T. mayonnaise  
1T.fresh lemon juice  
Kosher salt to taste  
5 endives, leaves separated  
1/2 c. chopped, toasted walnuts (or hazelnuts)

Combine all ingredients except endives and nuts. To assemble -mound a small amount of mixture in a large endive leaf and sprinkle with walnuts and serve. Can be served as a salad or as hors d'oeuvres. Serves 6 to 8.