

A Letter from NWC Board President Annette Brown - August 2023

Dear NWC Members,

As my first year as your president comes to an end, I must say I've learned a lot, and it's been a very busy year!

The Nearly New Sale went on as usual in October earning almost \$10,000 for the Scholarship Fund. Switching to a once-a-year sale with the acceptance of clothing from all seasons seems to be working, despite the increase in competition from thrift shops and other used clothing sales. As a result, we were able to make awards this year totaling \$22,000.

In November the Club and the Lion's Club hosted a town-wide welcome open house for our new police chief, Wade Cochran. It was a wonderful, warm event to not only welcome the new chief, but to thank Judy Powell and the other staff for keeping things going in the interim.

December brought us the opportunity to get together for our annual Holiday Gathering, this year at the historic home of Carol Loveland on Butternut Hill. A little glass of something and a bit of cheerful conversation is the best way to face the winter darkness!

In February we organized and ran the Candidates' Forum for the 5 Norwich Select Board candidates in person and via Zoom with the help of the Junction Arts Media group. Our moderator, Jack Candon, did a great job, and we later learned that it was the most well-attended event of that sort the Club has ever held!

The annual Book and Author Talk featured Charles Wheelan who read from his book ***We came, We saw, We left*** – about his family's gap year of traveling the world. It was held in the evening at the Norwich Inn for the first time and we were very pleased with the attendance.

In April our Citizen of the Year committee got organized and solicited nominations from the community. Their decision was made in May and plans were made to honor Bonnie Munday at our June Celebrate Norwich! event.

Thirteen Community Project Grants were approved by the committee in May for a total of under \$20,000. A list of the recipients is available at [2023 Community Project Grants](#).

Our Celebrate Norwich! event on June 4th was to be both our major fundraiser of the year as well as a fun, family-friendly event on the green. As you all know the weather was not on our side, and the bands could not set up on the gazebo with the rain forecasted, so we had to pivot at the last minute and have them set up in Tracy Hall. Though we were unable to have the games and face painting we had planned, I was most disappointed not to be able to hold the Great Norwich Cupcake Contest – but we'll try again to do that at some point in the future!

Besides the music from 6 bands courtesy of Tuck's Rock Dojo, we were able to hold the Citizen of the Year award ceremony presenting Bonnie Munday with a new plaque that we had created listing her and all the past citizens of the year, which will be hung in Tracy Hall. The Ledyard Nat'l. Bank also presented her with a check for \$500 to be awarded to the non-profit of her choice - American Legion Lyman Pell Post #8. The Lion's Club then surprised her with their own award as well.

We were also able to have Bonnie draw the winning raffle ticket for the electric bike that Hanover Adventure Tour had made possible for us to purchase at a discount. And in an amazing bit of coincidence and luck, the winner was Lisa MacCullough, who just the week before, along with her husband Aaron, had finished the scraping, cleaning, and repainting of the gazebo as part of a community service project paid for by the Club!

But the most important part of this event for the Club was ultimately the fundraising, which will give us the opportunity to continue providing education scholarships and community grant projects as we've been doing for more than 60 years. I'm happy to report that we were able to raise enough, with the help of Ledyard National Bank, to qualify for the \$25,000 match that a generous local supporter agreed to provide.

Our annual meeting in June was hosted by Heidi and Brendan Classon - a great turnout in their beautiful home on Elm Street.

Coming up this summer is one more concert on the green – August 27th, from 5 to 7 pm.

Mark your calendars for our Fall Gathering on Wed. Sept. 13, 5-7pm at the home of Joan Rose, 237 Main Street. We will also resume the Coffee and Conversations at the Norwich Inn (First Monday of each month at 10am) and hold the Nearly New Sale in October. These events and more will be in the planning stages soon, with more information posted on the website as it becomes available – www.norwichwomensclub.org

So, THIS is part of what the Norwich Women's Club does for our wonderful little town! **And I would like to thank you all in advance for paying the dues to continue your membership which provides continued support for all we try to accomplish.** Of course, life is never calm for any of us for long, and we are always in need of additional help for one event or another. If any of these activities sound particularly interesting to you, or you have a skill that you would be willing to share occasionally, we'd love to hear from you!

Please feel free to contact me or others on the Board if you have any questions at norwichwomensclub@gmail.com

Wishing you all sunny skies for the rest of the summer!

Annette Brown

Norwich Women's Club President