



Westerly ARC Newsletter

Weekly Newsletter

30 Oct 2022



Artwork by Cookie Rivera

[Visit Our Website](#)

"A lot of different flowers make a bouquet."

– Islamic Proverb

Embrace



October 30

This Week's Protest

We will celebrate Children's Day on Sunday, October 30 with a Halloween Party. Stories, refreshments, music and crafts will be featured. Wear a costume if you like and plan to join the fun.

Refreshments will be exquisitely prepared by **Christine Davidson**. **Crafts and fun** for children of all ages will be presented by **Anne Pearce**. Stories will be read and maybe a surprise musician will round out the event. Come and support our children, Westerly ARC and the continued efforts of our community to make Westerly a welcoming place to live and work.



Last Week's Protest

Although our planned guest speaker, Dr. Padma Venkatraman, had to postpone her visit, we still had a large group of protesters gathered on the post office steps. In addition to many small-group conversations, we were reminded of the importance of the upcoming elections by **April Dinwoodie** and **Johnette Rodriguez**. April encouraged us all to write letters to the editor about issues and candidates, volunteer with a candidate we support, and talk to others about voting!

Johnette reported that when voting for School Committee and Town Council, where there are multiple seats open, you can vote for just the candidates you favor, even if there are more choices left. For example, if you prefer two candidates for School Committee and are allowed to vote for three, you can just vote for the two you prefer and not choose a third candidate.

We meet every **Sunday from 11:00–1:00** on the steps of the Westerly Post Office on High Street. Join us anytime!

A Letter from Westerly ARC

Please take time to read our letter which outlines the issues we have been focusing on as we research the numerous candidates for state and local offices. There is still time to make an informed decision before the November 8 election.

Candidate Forums, Stay Informed

There are many opportunities to learn about candidates for local and state offices. Take some time to review the candidate forums linked below. Make an informed decision!

Ways to get involved:

- Write a letter to the editor in support of your candidates.
- Volunteer to canvas with a candidate.
- Do your research. See the links below for helpful resources on candidates and voting.
- Talk to others about your voting decisions and encourage everyone to vote!

[Ocean Community Chamber of Commerce Candidates' Night](#)

[League of Women Voters Town Council Candidate Forum](#)

[League of Women Voters School Committee and State Senate Candidate Forum](#)

Town Meetings

Westerly ARC encourages those who can to attend Westerly Town Council and School Committee meetings. Your presence and involvement is an important way to show our elected officials that creating a more equitable and inclusive town and school system must always be a priority.



The importance of participating in these meetings was demonstrated recently by **Stevi Blanchette**. During the open forum at the School Committee meeting on October 19, several speakers spoke in favor of removing the book *Gender Queer* from the high school library and questioned the equity audit. After hearing all of the misleading and negative comments, Stevi spoke about proudly owning a copy of *Gender Queer* and why books like that are important. It takes courage to stand up and speak out when every other speaker is against your message. We are grateful for Stevi's courage and determination to be a voice of reason!

Wednesday, Nov 2 School Committee Meeting, 5:00 pm

Monday, Nov 7 Town Council Workshop, 5:30 pm

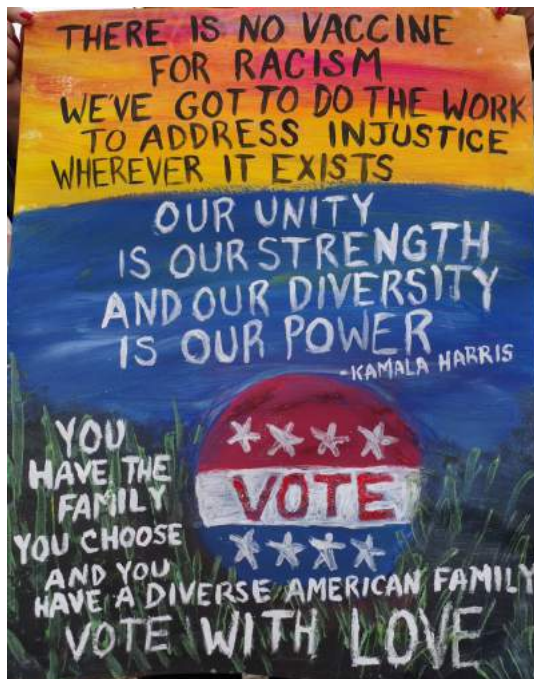
Monday, Nov 14 Town Council Meeting, 5:30 pm

Wednesday, Nov 16 School Committee Meeting, 5:00 pm

Monday, Nov 21 Town Council Workshop and Regular Meeting 5:30 pm

Here is the link to meeting schedules and agendas:

<https://clerkshq.com/westerly-ri>



Voters' Corner

Early Voting Oct. 19-Nov. 7 (Town Hall)

Election Day: November 8

[Click button below for sample ballot](#)

Voting Resources

- Vote.RI.gov - Update your voting record, register to vote, find your polling place, view a sample ballot, apply for a mail ballot and more!
- [League of Women Voters of Rhode Island](#) - a nonpartisan political organization encouraging informed and active participation in

government; conducts candidate forums and has many local resources.

- Vote.org - online voter guides for every state, including where to vote, what's on the ballot, voter registration forms, absentee ballot applications and more!
- Vote411.org - another resource to access personalized voting information, including your ballot, polling place, upcoming debates, and more.

Sample Ballot



What is this election about anyway?

Click below to read this reflection on this year's election by Rev. Matthew Fox, PhD, author, theologian, and activist priest.

[Read more](#)

Act

Here are a few ongoing ways you can support the work of Westerly ARC.



Share

Spread the news!
Forward this newsletter to at least one person you think might be interested in it. Ask them to sign up for our newsletter on the [Westerly ARC website](#).

We have **over 200 subscribers** as of now; help us reach an even wider audience!



Donate

ARC member Amanda Dunn continues to collect toiletries, personal care items, and non-perishable food to distribute to our community. Please bring your donations to Amanda at our Sunday rallies. Your kindness and generosity are greatly appreciated.



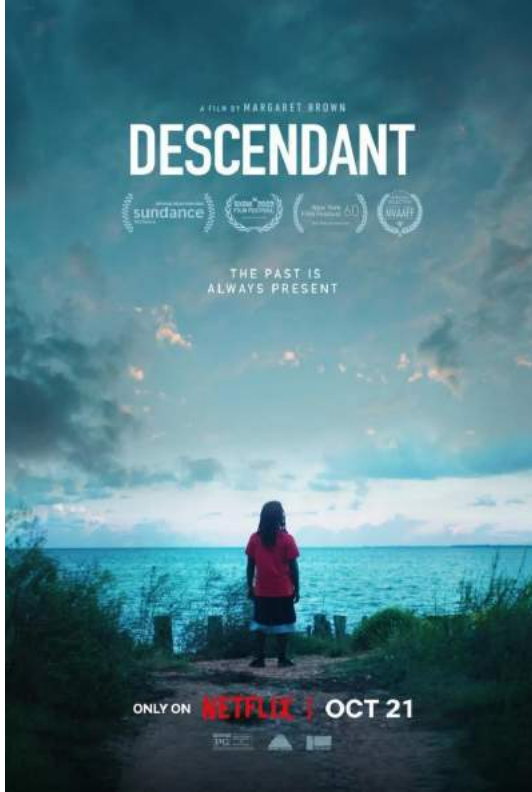
Show Up

Stop by one of our weekly protests, join one of the events listed in this newsletter, attend a town meeting, sign up for one of the trainings linked above.

*"We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented."
— Elie Wiesel*

[Read More](#)

Educate



Descendant

Thank you to **Sabrina** and **Cookie** who recommended the Netflix documentary *Descendant*. The documentary follows the story of activists who are descendants of the last known slave ship to bring captives to the United States, decades after the African slave trade was abolished. Though their history was kept alive through storytelling within their community, the descendants kept their story largely secret for a century out of a well-founded fear of retribution from the family of the white enslavers. The documentary follows the search for the slave ship *Cotilda*, the longlasting legacy of racism, and the community's search for justice and peace.



Halloween is Not an Excuse to be Racist

How can you be sure your Halloween costume is not racist or insensitive? What about costumes you wore as a child? [See this article](#) from Anti-Racism Daily for a great discussion about this timely and important topic.

Image by By [WeirdSister](#) via [Deviant Art](#)

"Treating other people's cultures as a costume is the entire problem. It's a problem if you are making fun of that culture; it's a problem if you think you are lauding that culture."

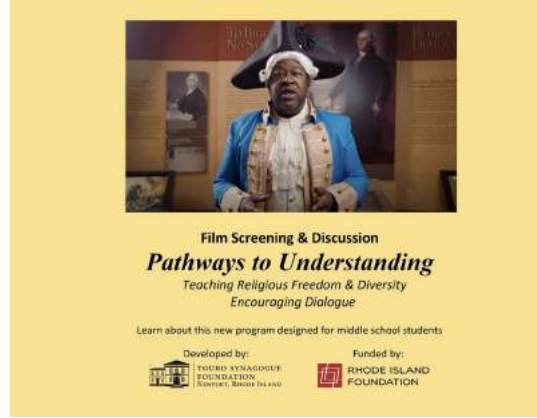
Elie Mystal for [The Nation](#)



Picking Up Stones: Grappling with the Moral Dilemma of Israel and Palestine

This 50-minute one-woman monologue was written and will be performed by Sandra Laub, an actress, playwright, and teacher. "Sandra grapples with the moral question of how to remain pro-Israel while disagreeing with Israeli policies and attitudes towards the Palestinian people who live within Israel's borders."

This performance will be held on Zoom on Thursday, November 17, 2022 at 3:30. [Click here for more information and to register](#) for the performance.



Teaching Religious Freedom and Diversity, Encouraging Dialogue

Pathways to Understanding

Touro Synagogue Foundation invites teachers, mentors, community leaders, and other interested adults to a screening of **Pathways to Understanding**. The short film developed for middle school students will premiere on **Wednesday, November 2**, at the Jane Pickens Film & Event Center in Newport. The stories, mostly fiction, emphasize overcoming adversity, the strength of character, and positivity. The event is free. [Click here](#) for more information and to register.

Culture Calendar

[Day of the Dead](#) - November 2

Día de los Muertos is an opportunity to remember and celebrate the lives of departed loved ones. It has origins in the indigenous rituals of the Olmecs, Toltecs, Mixtecs, Zapotecs, Maya, and Aztecs of Mesoamerica.



[Global Diversity Awareness Month](#) - October

Global Diversity Awareness Month is a reminder of the positive impact a diverse culture of people can have on society as a whole.

Up Next

Calendar of Events	
October 30	Children's Day (celebrating Halloween), 11:00-1:00, at the weekly protest
November 2	School Committee Meeting, 5:00 pm
November 7	Town Council Workshop, 5:30 pm
November 8	Election Day. Vote!



Westerly Anti-Racism Coalition

Join our weekly protests

Sundays 11-1

Downtown Westerly Post Office steps



westerlyarc@gmail.com

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