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WESTERLY ANTI-RACISM COALITION NEWSLETTER FOR 7.24.2022

LAST SUNDAY'S PROTEST

In spite of the hot summer sun, many dedicated ARC members attended the July 17th protest. Frank Pendola, our community troubadour, entertained us with folk songs, including one of his favorites, the beautiful "A Life Uncommon" by Jewel. Leslie Dunn encouraged the audience to get to know the local candidates for public office and urged people to stay informed about town issues. She asked Westerly residents to attend the 07/19 Planning Board meeting. On the agenda: the proposed development of the St. Pius property at Elm and School Streets. There is a proposal on the table to divide the property into three lots. Two lots would be for a single family home and one for a multi-family home. The plan for the third lot is contentious involving reuse of the school building and a proposed new building - a multi-family apartment building, including low and middle income units. The link below shows the current application. Plans and renderings start on page 70.

http://westerlyri.gov/DocumentCenter/View/9596/F2-2021-LMIH-01_StPius_AO-Memo_Pre-App_01182022_FINAL_LINK

MEETING FOLLOW UP: At the Planning Board meeting, the Elm Street Community Group presented their strong concerns about the project. Their primary issue is to maintain the unique and historic character of Elm St. They believe the Developer used faulty analysis in support of the plan. It was agreed that the Community Group and Developer would meet to work on concerns. Westerly has a severe shortage of low-income housing; Westerly ARC fully supports creating as many units as possible. Westerly ARC members Madeline Labriola, Tim Flanagan and Leslie Dunn spoke about the need for more low-income housing units. Ultimately, the Planning Board approved the preliminary plans for the project. As the project moves forward there will be more public hearings. We will keep you informed.

THIS SUNDAY'S PROTEST

Please join us this Sunday, July 24, for our weekly peaceful protest for equality and justice for our Black, Brown and Indigenous communities. While ARC originally formed to stand strong for anti-racism, racism casts a shadow over all other human rights and freedoms - women's and LGBTQ+ rights, environmental devastation, even war - all prevent people from realizing their freedom and our country from making progress. Join us and bring signs and banners expressing your concerns. *Please be mindful that our rallies are family friendly and so we ask that your signs and posters be respectful to each other and to the children in attendance.*

LOCAL ELECTIONS - YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Please make sure you are registered to vote. If you can, volunteer your time or donate money to candidates who

share your goals and values. Join the League of Women Voters of South County to get informed and take an active part in government. See <https://www.lwv.org/local-leagues/lwv-south-county>. Democracy doesn't just happen: it is the direct result of citizen participation. Let your voice be heard, join us on the Westerly Post Office steps every Sunday, rain or shine, from 11:00am-1:00pm. We encourage you to speak at one of our gatherings. The crowd is welcoming and we appreciate all our presenters. Read a poem, share a story, perform a dance or sing a song. The floor is yours!

Some topics planned for our noon presentation include banning books, incarceration, voting and voter information, candidates forum, policing, and a Hiroshima/Nagasaki remembrance on Aug 7. If you or someone you know can speak to any of these issues, please contact us at the Sunday rally or by email at westerlyarc@gmail.com. We would love to hear from you.

IT'S OFFICIAL: LESLIE DUNN AND KEVIN LOWTHER ARE CANDIDATES FOR LOCAL OFFICE

Westerly ARC is thrilled to announce that members Leslie Dunn (D) and Kevin "Big Lux" Lowther (D) have officially declared their candidacies for School Committee and Town Council, respectively. Leslie, Kevin and ARC are asking for volunteers in this fight for a bigger and better future for Westerly. Be part of their campaign - sign up for their mailing list and attend their campaign kickoff event. (see links below) https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdJaSivd3gCyDI0TJEy2ijP0dltBICNeBJ4KYh8X7EFq1nBXg/viewform?usp=sf_link

CAMPAIGN KICK-OFF PARTY THIS WEDNESDAY, 27 JULY

Kevin and Leslie's campaign kick-off event is at Paddy's Beach Club, Misquamicut on 27 July from 6:30-8:30pm. Please come and give our candidates an enthusiastic start! This is a fundraiser; purchase of tickets in advance is required. Please join us!

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/leslie-dunn-and-kevin-j-lowther-ii-campaign-kickoff-event-tickets-384387482307>

EDUCATE, EMBRACE AND EMPOWER - WE NEED YOUR HELP

We continue to monitor the Westerly Town Council and School Committee meetings. Please see the schedule below and if possible attend the meetings.

Monday, 25 July	Town Council Regular Meeting
Monday, 1 Aug	Town Council Workshop
Wednesday, 3 Aug	School Committee Meeting

All meetings convene at 5:30 in Council Chambers, 2nd Floor, Westerly Town Hall, 45 Broad Street. ARC is committed to attending these meetings regularly, and we need more volunteers to attend with us! Here is the link to meeting schedules and agendas: <https://clerkshq.com/westerly-ri>

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

We encourage our readers and friends to share perspectives, opinions, questions, ideas, etc., with our ARC community. We will publish your letters in our newsletter. Email us at westerlyarc@gmail.com.

WESTERLY WELCOMES RHODE ISLAND BLACK STORYTELLERS

Join us in Wilcox Park, by the fountain, on Saturday, July 23, from 2:00-3:00pm. The Westerly Public Library will present Rhode Island Black Storytellers (RIBS). Campfire-themed stories by Rachel Briggs of RIBS will be featured. Join us as she tells the story of a boy and his dad as they fly a kite and explore what keeps the kite up and what brings it down. A craft is included.

<https://facebook.com/events/s/rhode-island-black-storyteller/1032695930968565/>

CULTURE BEARER SERIES

Join us at Tomaquag Museum on Thursday, 28 July at 6:00pm for an evening with Indigenous educator Nakai Northup as he presents "Lifeways". This will be the fourth presentation in the museum's 2022 Culture Bearer Series. Throughout the year Tomaquag Museum hopes to introduce you to some incredible Indigenous educators who have been vital to the work of sharing and preserving cultural knowledge. The Tomaquag Museum is located at 390 A Summit Rd. Exeter, RI 02822. Their website is www.tomaquagmuseum.org

HELPING OUR COMMUNITY

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.

ARC CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<i>DATE</i>	<i>PRESENTER</i>
July 23	<i>Rhode Island Black Storytellers, 2:00-3:00pm by the Fountain in Wilcox Park.</i>
July 25	Town Council Meeting, 5:30pm
July 25	Kingston Chamber Music Festival, "Strings Attached", United Theater, 4:00 pm
July 26	Kingston Chamber Music Festival, "Memoir" United Theater, 7:30 pm
July 27	Kick off Campaign for Kevin and Leslie at Paddy's Beach Club, 6:30 pm
July 28	Culture Bearer Series, 6:00 pm

August 3	School Committee Meeting, 5:00 pm
August 7	Hiroshima/Nagasaki Remembrance led by Jonathan Daly-LaBel

PEACE,

WESTERLY ARC