



Westerly ARC Newsletter

Weekly Newsletter

25 Sept 2022



Artwork by Cookie Rivera

[Visit Our Website](#)

Shanah Tovah! Happy Rosh Hashanah!

"As long as the candle is still burning, it is still possible to accomplish and to mend."

– Rabbi Yisrael Salanter

Embrace



September 25

Read-In This Sunday!

As some people remember the “Sit-ins” on college campuses in the 60-70’s we join with other communities throughout the country in a **“Read-In”** on the steps of the Westerly Post Office this Sunday, September 25. We will read as a sign of protest for the continued war against the freedom to read.

Banning books has become a political football with many schools restricting books that students can read as a result of parental objections. “More than 1,600 book titles across 32 states were banned from public schools during the 2021-2022 school year, with the bulk of the ban requests coming from a handful of right-wing groups pushing for censorship of books that feature LGBTQ+ characters and characters of color” ([New Jersey Monitor](#)).

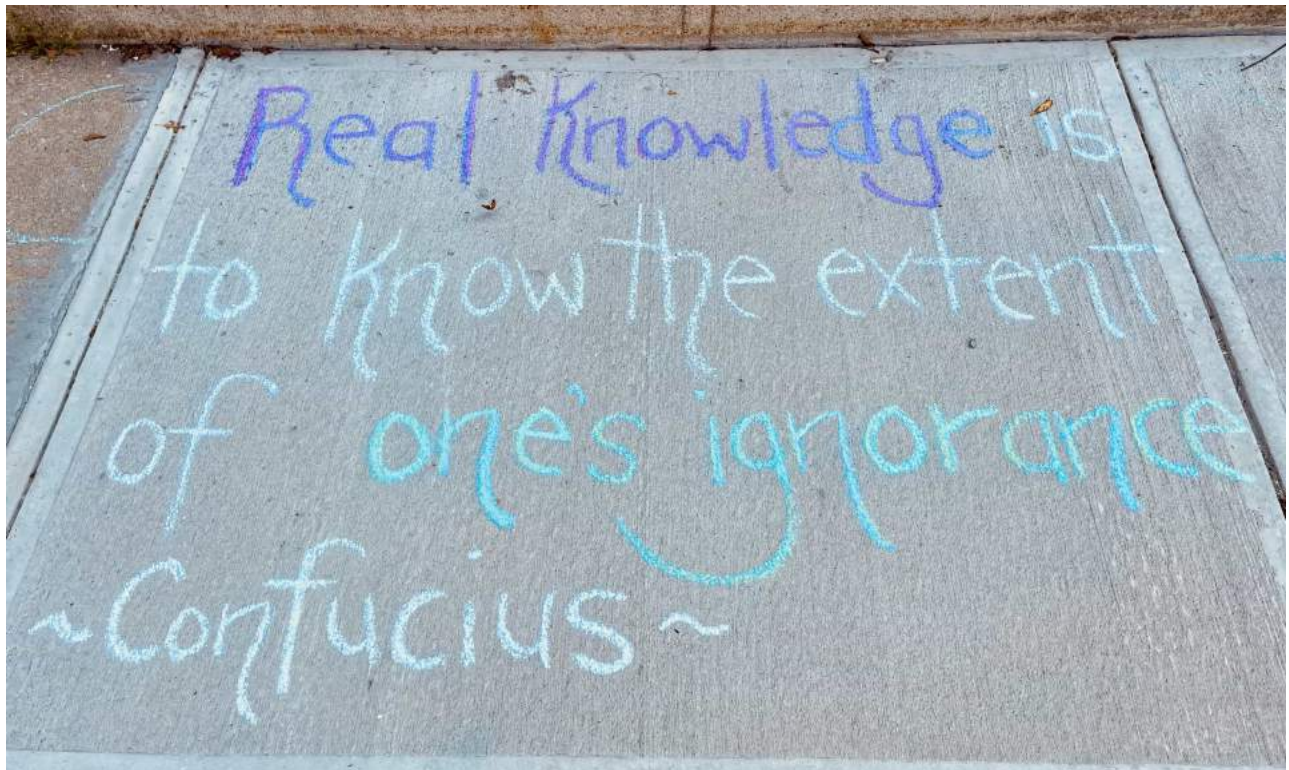
Our reading together will be a sign of our solidarity with all those who oppose the practice of censoring and banning books and materials from our schools and libraries.

We are excited to have **Ery Caswell** (they/them), librarian, writer and tech instructor, present at 12:00 pm Sunday, September 25th to share their story concerning banned books. As the founder of [Beyond the Stacks](#) Ery has been active in supporting the freedom to seek and to express ideas, even those some consider unorthodox or unpopular. They will bring the Beyond the Stacks library which will be available with plenty of “banned books” for you to enjoy. Feel free to bring your own reading material.

Resources for Banned Books Week

Here are a few resources to learn more about Banned Book Week, including **ways to take action** against banning books!

- "[An 'unprecedented flood' of book bans engulfs U.S. school districts, PEN report says](#)" (*New Jersey Monitor*)
 - According to the article, "40%, or 659 of 1,648 unique titles, that were banned had main or secondary characters of color, and also found 20%, or 338 titles, that addressed race and racism were also banned."
- "[The Number of Banned Books is Rising. Here's Why.](#)" (*Anti-Racism Daily*)
 - "Despite what dissenters insist, book bans only make schools less safe and welcoming, particularly for [marginalized students](#)."
- [Banned Books Club](#) - a monthly book club and "Resources for students, librarians, teachers and authors to dismantle banned books."
- [National Coalition Against Censorship](#) - many resources that "promote the freedom of thought, inquiry, and expression."



Last Week's Protest

September 18th was a bright, beautiful, sunny Sunday when friends and neighbors gathered together to socialize, share stories and plan for future activities and events. Without a formal presentation scheduled, members of ARC were able to spend time discussing the issues of the day and encouraging each other to continue to work for equity and equality for all.

Thank you to all who faithfully attend our Sunday gatherings and contribute so much to our sense of community and shared goals. Special thanks to **Meredith Ingram** who comes early and leaves us an inspiring sidewalk chalk message every Sunday.

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



Donate to the Mobile Library

A special request from Ery Caswell, Librarian, Adult Services Librarian, Mystic & Noank Library

Ery has made a [banned book wish list](#) that people can buy copies for the mobile library if they're so moved to do so. It's hosted through [Bookshop.org](#) and all of the copies will be bought from *People Get Ready*, a Black-owned bookstore in New Haven. The first 10 books are those most frequently banned or challenged in the last year according to the American Library Association. Ery is happy to have multiple copies of these books since they'll be among the most circulated and could have them available for use in book clubs, etc. There are books listed from prior years, along with some titles about sex education, consent, parenting queer & trans youth, and other books that would be welcome additions to the collection.

Anyone who would like to purchase a copy of a book for the mobile library may do so through that list! You can send the book(s) to **Ery Caswell at 40 Library St., Mystic, CT 06355**. Please include the name and the title of the book(s) ordered for the collection so that a donation note can be included in the book.

Empower

THANK YOU WESTERLY ARC COMMUNITY!

Thank you so very much to all those who wrote letters of support and who attended the School Committee meeting on Wednesday night to speak out in support of the Westerly Public School equity audit initiative. After much discussion and debate, beginning in May 2022, the equity audit initiative passed in a 4-3 vote. Thank you also to the four School Committee members who took courage in hand to see the need to work together in a deeper and more conscious manner. Their vote is an acknowledgement of the vast amount of research showing an education focused on equity, and research-based studies, such as equity audits, is the answer to supporting every student with the resources they need to fit their individual circumstances.

[Read More](#)

Town Meetings

Upcoming Meetings:

- Monday, 26 Sept – Town Council Regular Meeting 5:00 pm
- Monday, 3 Oct – Town Council Workshop and Reg. 5:30 pm
- Wednesday, 5 Oct – School Committee Meeting 5:00 pm



School Committee meetings convene at 5:00, Town Council meetings at 5:30pm, and both meet in the 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>



Voters' Corner

Mail-In Ballot Application Due by: Oct 18

Election Day: November 8

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](https://www.lwvri.org/) – a nonpartisan political organization encouraging informed and active participation in government; conducts candidate forums and has many local resources.
- [Vote.org](https://www.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!

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



Share

Tell us your story. Share your perspectives, opinions, questions, ideas, etc. Write a piece for this newsletter or our website. Prepare a talk or performance for our weekly protest.



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 or show up to one of the events or meetings described in this newsletter.

[Read More](#)

Educate


In the News

The logo features two American flags on poles, crossed at the base. Below them, the text "WESTERLY CANDIDATES NIGHT" is written in a bold, sans-serif font, with "WESTERLY" in blue and "CANDIDATES NIGHT" in red. Underneath, the date and time "OCTOBER 6, 2022 ★ 6PM" are displayed in blue. At the bottom, the text "Get to know the Candidates on the ballot for: Westerly Town Council, Westerly School Committee, State Senate and House of Representatives" is written in a smaller, blue font.

**WESTERLY
CANDIDATES
NIGHT**
OCTOBER 6, 2022 ★ 6PM
Get to know the Candidates on the ballot for:
Westerly Town Council,
Westerly School Committee,
State Senate and House of Representatives

Westerly Candidates' Night

On October 6, 2022 the Ocean Community Chamber of Commerce will hold a **forum for candidates** for



peace parade


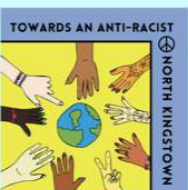
Peace is not merely a distant goal we seek, but the means by which we arrive at that goal.
— Martin Luther King, Jr.

Nonviolence is active and challenges us to stand up to injustice on personal and societal levels. The principles and steps can be applied to virtually all situations that we experience in our lives each day. Learn about what nonviolence is and ways to manifest it within your community.

Join us on Saturday, 10/1 at Saugutucket Park in Wakefield

Kid and pet friendly!
Face painting for kids
Snacks
Information
Activities for kids

10am - 12pm

Peace Parade

Our neighbors and co-peace activists **Nonviolent Schools RI** and **Toward an Anti-Racist North Kingston (TANK)** are holding a Peace Parade on Sat. Oct. 1 from 10-12 in Wakefield.

Please join them as they stand up to injustice on a personal and societal level.

[Click here for details of the Peace Parade.](https://www.oceanchamber.org/events/details/westerly-candidate-s-night-2022-33327)

Westerly School Committee, Town Council and State and National office. The meeting will begin at 6 pm at the Westerly Town hall at 45 Broad St., Westerly RI. The public is invited to attend in person or on the Ocean Community Chamber of Commerce Facebook page, on local public access TV, or live on WBLQ (103.6 FM). See the following link for more information.

<https://www.oceanchamber.org/events/details/westerly-candidate-s-night-2022-33327>



EVERYDAY TOOLS TO STOP VIOLENCE

Bystander Intervention Skills for Pax Christi Members
(Held via Zoom)

Sat., Oct. 1st, 2022

Meta Peace Team and Pax Christi USA are teaming up to offer this hands-on skills workshop.

Pax Christi USA and Meta Peace Team offer Bystander Nonviolence Skills Training

Here is a wonderful workshop that is



International Day of Peace Event

On Wednesday, Sept. 21, **Westerly Area Peace and Justice**, our

sponsored by **Pax Christi USA**. We have all participated in peaceful protests with very few incidents of violent speech or behavior, but sometimes even the most peaceful intentions can result in conflict. When that happens it's so important that we know some skills to deescalate these situations. If you are able to give the time on Sat. Oct. 1, we know you will find this program well worth your while.

[Click here for more information and to register for the workshop.](#)

partners in social justice, held their [5th Annual Interfaith Peace Vigil](#) in commemoration of the **U.N. International Day of Peace**. This year's theme was "End racism. Build peace." Secretary-General António Guterres said racism continues to poison institutions, social structures and everyday life in every society.

About 25 attendees joined their voices with others around the world to pray and act for peace. There were readings, prayers from many religious traditions, and silence along with beautiful music by **Frank Pendola** and **Geoff Kaufman**.

Period Action Day

A message from Colleen King, Teen Librarian at Westerly Library:

"October 8th in honor of [Period Action Day](#) teen volunteers will be putting together care packages of period products for teens in the community who need them. The care packages will be handed out from Teen Space in the library whenever a teen comes in and asks for period products. In preparation for this event, I am organizing a drive for period products. "

Please bring any feminine personal care products to Amanda Dunn on Sunday, Sept. 25 and Oct. 3. We will donate these to the Library in ARC's name. Thank you.

Up Next

Calendar of Events	
15 September-15 October	Hispanic Heritage Month
25 September 2022	"Read-In" on the steps of the post office, 12pm. Ery Caswell shares their story and the

	“Beyond the Stacks” lending library.
1 October 2022	Peace Parade, 10-12, Wakefield
1 October 2022	Nonviolence Skills Training Workshop, 11-3:30, online
6 October 2022	Candidates' Night 6-9 pm, Westerly Town Hall, sponsored by Chamber of Commerce

Westerly Anti-Racism Coalition

Join our weekly protests

Sundays 11-1

Downtown Westerly Post Office steps



westerlyarc@gmail.com

You received this email because you signed up on our website at one of our events.

[Unsubscribe](#)

[Megaphone, Fast, Give icons created by Freepik - Flaticon](#)

