

April 9

This Sunday

Although it is Easter Sunday on April 9, several of our ARC community members are planning to meet on the Post Office steps from 11-1pm as usual. Please join us if you are able. Even if there are only two or three of us, we know the rest of you will be with us in spirit. There are no formal activities planned, just our usual community conversations and shared brotherhood/sisterhood.



Last Sunday

The crowd gathering on Sunday April 2nd warmly welcomed Jonathan Daly-LaBelle, local peace activist and ARC supporter. Jonathan organizes Just Peace RI and follows the state legislature closely, especially when there are bills about the military. He travels across the state with banners and flyers calling attention to the bloated military spending. In fact on the last Friday of each month he and other Westerly activists demonstrate against the war machine at the intersection of Rt. 1 and Rt. 78 from 12-1:30 in front of CVS. Feel free to join them any time.

This week Jonathan informed us of a bill that was being introduced in the House that would change the name of Victory (VJ) Day to [Peace and Remembrance Day](#). Rhode Island is the only state that continues to celebrate August 15, 1945 the day Japan surrendered the U.S. dropped two atomic bombs

on Japan. It commemorates one of the most devastating and horrific events of WWII. The innocent people of Japan who suffered this horrendous tragedy and their descendants do not need to be reminded of this moment. By renaming this day to Peace and Remembrance Day we remind ourselves of the desire for world peace while honoring all those soldiers and civilians who perished during that time.

Jonathan asked all those in attendance to write to send emails in support of House Bill 5452. This is exactly why our Sunday gatherings are so important. Ideas are exchanged, discussions are held, points are debated and action is taken. Democracy at its best!

School Committee Update

April 6, 2023 Meeting

Occasionally we will share updates about the content of public meetings relevant to ARC concerns. They will contain Take-a-ways for all parties as we pursue inclusion and equity through multiculturalism.

On Wednesday, several citizens spoke at the [School Committee meeting](#) to support Westerly ARC's request for a clear and specific code of conduct for public comments. After months of false and defamatory language directed toward ARC and individuals associated with ARC, and at the School Committee chair's suggestion, it was essential to express that the Committee consider our request as a future agenda item. Initial reflection from the Committee included reflections about civility, respect, collegiality, and confidentiality. They agreed to add the topic as a future agenda item.

Reflecting on the meeting and the opinions expressed, we offer the following take-aways:

What we hope the School Committee will do:

1. Communicate clear and specific expectations for public participation in School Committee meetings.
2. Continue open and respectful conversations with each other regarding a code of conduct.
3. Come to each meeting with an open mind.

What the ARC Steering Committee will continue to do:

1. Remain vigilant and speak out when ARC or individuals associated with ARC are personally, inaccurately, or unjustly attacked.
2. Be a part of the discussion to support a code of conduct at School Committee meetings.
3. Continue to be transparent in our work through our public Sunday gatherings, weekly newsletter, social media, and website.

What Friends of ARC can do:

1. Recognize that social justice work is hard and outcomes take time. Even when there is contention, keep sight of a path forward.
 2. Do your research. Keep learning and deepen your understanding of how injustice and inequity manifest in our society.
 3. Keep yourself well and support those under attack, especially BIPOC individuals who already carry a heavy burden doing this work and are the first to be maligned.
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JUNETEENTH COMMITTEE Plans are Evolving!

The Juneteenth committee is planning a lovely celebration for Juneteenth 2023! This will be our 3rd year observing this federal holiday that commemorates the emancipation of enslaved people in the United States. Sunday, June 18th is the proposed date with the theme "Celebrating the Journey" We will use our regular Sunday time from 11-1pm so as not to interfere with Father's Day. The exact location will be announced soon. There will be music, speakers, performers, crafts and traditional foods. All ages are welcome. If you would like to bring refreshments or help in any other way please contact us by sending an email to westerlyarc@gmail.com or speak to one of the organizers at the Sunday gathering. With everyone's help we can make this the best Juneteenth ever!



peace parade

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.

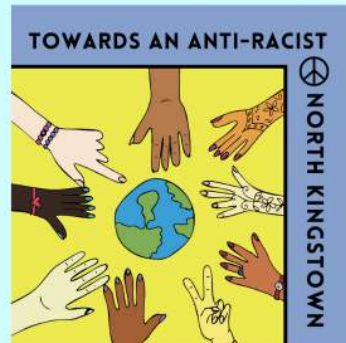
Join us on Saturday, 4/29 at Saugutucket Park in Wakefield

Kid and pet friendly!
Face painting for kids **10am - 12pm**

Snacks

Information

Activities for kids



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

EMPOWER

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.

April 13 Multicultural Committee Meeting 5:30 pm

April 17 Town Council Meeting 5:30 pm

April 19 School Committee Meeting 5:00 pm

Here is the link to meeting schedules and agendas:

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



Help Improve Our Newsletter

Help Wanted

We're still hoping for a few more volunteers to assist with and expand our newsletter. Pass this along to anyone who you think might be interested.

- **Compiling, formatting, and publishing** - We will train you in how to use our newsletter template to add previously created content. You will work with an experienced person and be able to add your own ideas!
- **Creating content** - You will assist with researching and creating specific content for our newsletter. We have some ideas, and you can bring your own.
- **Taking photos** - Can you take some photos at our weekly gatherings on the post office steps and/or at other events? We'd love to use your photos in the newsletter.

Maybe you know a young person who is good with technology or would like to earn some community service hours! Click below to contact us if you are interested or talk to Madeline or Tim on Sunday. Thank you!

[Click here to contact us](#)

Click the images below for details on these two empowering opportunities

6th Annual **Kingian Nonviolence Global Summer Institute 2023**



Register Here



- Acquire skills to enhance the community within your classroom
- Practice effective problem solving skills
- Use the Nonviolent Steps to reconcile conflict and restore relationships
- Maximize teaching time by utilizing proactive techniques to decrease disruptions

August
1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16, 22
via Zoom

9:00-11:45 a.m.
E. S. T. (U.S.A.)

Designed for school staff, administrators, and those who work with or for young people

website: NonviolentSchoolsRI.com
Contact: NONVIOLENTSCHOOLS@GMAIL.COM

24th Annual **International Nonviolence Summer Institute** June 5-16, 2023

On-campus




Nonviolence and conflict resolution training based on the philosophy and strategy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



Level I Nonviolence Training Certification: June 5-16 (Training fee: \$825 (tuition + \$100 registration) Housing fee for Level I (two weeks of campus housing in Providence, RI): \$1000 (if needed): \$775

Level II Nonviolence Leadership Training: June 22-16 (Training fee: \$550 (tuition + \$100 registration) Housing fee for Level II (one week of campus housing in Providence, RI): \$1000 (if needed): \$350

Some schools shops, decisions, credits available for summer classes!
More info at: www.uri.edu/nonviolence

THE UNIVERSITY OF RHODE ISLAND CENTER FOR NONVIOLENCE AND PEACE STUDIES

The URI Center for Nonviolence and Peace Studies organizes educational programs, training workshops, documentary films, and guest lecture series to promote nonviolence, foster peace, self-help, human rights, and a beloved global community. Learn more: www.uri.edu/nonviolence Phone: (401) 874-2872

[Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) [Twitter](#) [LinkedIn](#) [YouTube](#)

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](http://WesterlyARC.com).

Don't forget to like, subscribe, comment, and share on our social media posts!



Donate

ARC advocate 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 gatherings, join one of the events listed in this newsletter, attend a town meeting, etc.

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

— Elie Wiesel

EDUCATE

Irish Slave Myth Comparison is Divisive

Saint Patrick's Day, like many other ethnic and religious celebrations, reminds us of our multicultural and pluralistic culture. The holidays of one group become those for all. Thus, the oft-repeated phrase on March 17, "Today, everyone is Irish." We are one society

of varying socioeconomics, religions, races, gender identities, political interests, etc. But we hold it together through discourse and respect.

We can be fiercely loyal to one team, even in the contentious sports sector. At the same time, we can unconditionally love our sister, brother-in-law, or friend even though they are loyal to the opposing team. Perhaps originating with the German philosopher Hegel's preoccupation with dualism, today we know that it is often intellectually and emotionally mature, sophisticated, and healthy individually and collectively to hold two opposing views simultaneously.

Psychology Today calls it "living in the messy gray." F. Scott Fitzgerald said, "The test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold two opposing ideas in mind at the same time **AND** still retain the ability to function."

So, it is troubling when people or groups use comparisons to dismiss claims of inequity. In the guise of unity, sometimes, these claims are divisive tactics. The alarming comparisons all too frequently made between the immigrant experience and the imposed African diaspora of slavery are a case in point. Often, even locally, in today's discussions of equity, we hear references to "Irish Need Not Apply" as evidence that the Irish American experience in some way compares to hundreds of years and generations of African American enslavement in the US. The comparison disregards the conclusions of the *1619 Project*, preponderant evidence of systematic racial inequity in American government and society, and the facts of history.

The Irish immigrant experience and the history of slavery in the US are different. [Learn how they differ and how to respond to the claim](#), as presented in a recent Al Jazeera article. (Thank you to Geoff Serra for this contribution.)

April 23

Picking up Stones: An American Jew's Moral Dilemma

Please join us for a performance of ***Picking up Stones: An American Jew's Moral Dilemma***, a new solo play written and performed by fellow member **Sandra Laub** and directed by **Emma Palzere-Rae**.

Note: The performance scheduled for the United Theater on April 29 has been canceled. [Click here to learn more](#) about an opportunity to see the performance at the Dragon's Egg in Ledyard, CT.

Culture Calendar

April 9 **Easter Sunday**

Easter is a familiar holiday to many of us, the day where Christians celebrate their belief in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is the last day of Lent, a 40-day period of fasting, prayer, repentance, sacrifice and almsgiving. Easter is also a time when Christians find hope in the story



of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. At a time when the world faces so many challenges and a heightened awareness of injustice, we offer this reflection from Rt. Rev. Carmen Lansdowne, the 44th moderator of The United Church of Canada: [Easter calls us to change the world.](#)

Up Next

Calendar of Events	
April 13	Multicultural Committee Meeting, 5:30
April 17	Town Council Meeting, 5:30
April 19	School Committee Meeting, 5:00
April 29	Peace Parade, Saugatucket Park in Wakefield, 10am-12pm
April 29	" Picking Up Stones ," United Theater, 2:00



Westerly Anti-Racism Coalition

Join our weekly gatherings

Sundays 11-1

Downtown Westerly Post Office steps

westerlyarc@gmail.com

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



[Unsubscribe](#)

