

What's happening in Washington, CT

Winter 2021

Washington's Art Hero

By Dan Sherr

On September 1 at Infinity Hall in Hartford, CT, JoAnne Torti, Executive Director and Founder of ASAP!, the arts infused education organization based in Washington Depot, was presented the Connecticut Art Hero Award. The award was established in 2016 by the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) and honors CT residents who reaffirm the significant role that arts play in advancing the culture of CT.

In 1999, members of the Waterbury Foundation, now the Connecticut Community Foundation (CCF), Ann Burton, Marlene Smith, Ann Bazos, Jeanne Paparazzo and Lisa Baker, recognized the need for an after-school arts program for middle schoolers in Region 12 - the towns of Washington, Roxbury and Bridgewater. Area artists and arts organizations were invited by CCF to a collaborative brainstorming session to explore ideas for a program that CCF committed to providing \$30,000 per year for a period of three years.



The meeting reconvened two weeks later when choreographer and teacher JoAnne Torti presented ASAP!, which included local artists and arts organizations teaching dance, music and visual arts workshops for middle schoolers. Under the umbrella of Washington Parks and Recreation, the program began with \$32,000, 72 students, and four arts organizations. Over five years, ASAP! grew to 350 students and a \$350,000 budget. ASAP! became a 501 (C) 3 in 2004, and in 2005, rented

its first office in the New Preston Women's Club. ASAP! moved its office to Washington Depot in 2008 and now has five employees and provides programming for nearly 10,000 students each year from 100 towns. Its annual budget is \$650,000.

In 2016 ASAP! was voted top cultural arts organization and received the CultureMax Award from the Northwest CT Arts Council and CT Office of the Arts for its excellence in arts educational programming and the positive impact it makes on regional communities.

Today, ASAP!'s programming is held year-round and during the school day and includes environmental, science, math, engineering, literary, performing, visual, and culinary education with 40+ teaching artists, organizations and museums for pre-k through adults, and established a Teaching Artist Collective. ASAP! is funded by fundraising events, private contributions and governmental grants.

JoAnne Torti, receiving the Connecticut Art Hero award, said "I am inspired by our participants' curiosity and have gratitude for the opportunity to work alongside our staff, board of directors, teaching artists, and community members to create and provide programs that challenge us to grow and stretch ourselves and foster the joy of learning."



Message from the Selectmen's Office

Summer and fall showed a continuing trend of more people coming to Washington; visitors as well as people choosing to make Washington their permanent home. While this has presented some challenges, it's also an exciting time. Our business community, schools and civic organizations have all benefited from this trend. If you're new to town and would like to become more involved, please visit washingtonct.org or explorewashingtonct.com. There are many opportunities to serve and your community can always use your talent and passion.

We're also continuing the process of bringing a new Senior/Community Center to the residents of Washington. While we were slowed by the pandemic, we're confident that we can now resume our efforts safely. To date we have had multiple public discussions, engaged a design firm and fine-tuned our goals based on your input.

At this time, we're looking for individuals to serve on our committee and subcommittees. There are opportunities for virtually all fields of interest. Subcommittees will include fundraising, construction, landscaping, interior, amenities and programming, to name a few. While it would be fantastic to have volunteers with knowledge in these fields, we feel what's most important is enthusiasm and a passion for the project. If you or someone you know is interested in getting involved with this exciting project, please reach out to the Selectman's Office at jbrinton@washingtonct.org.

As we enter the winter months, touch base with the Town Hall if you or someone you know is in need of assistance. There are many resources in place to help those in need. On behalf of all Town employees, we wish you a happy, healthy and safe holiday season.

Washington Board of Selectmen
Jim Brinton, Jay Hubelbank, Dean Sarjeant



HOLIDAY IN THE DEPOT OUR 30th YEAR!!

Friday, December 10

- Lighting of our tree followed by Santa arriving at 6pm by horse and wagon
- Christmas carolers
- Visit with Santa
- Children's can mail letters to Santa
- Shops in the Depot

All this and more! We're looking forward to seeing you all there!!

Spotlight on Business: Delivering The PO

By Dan Sherr

At the invitation of the Frederick Gunn School, the longstanding Café on the Green has reopened as The PO. An international restaurant consultant and well-known local chef/baker, The PO has brought an entirely new menu to the well-known dining and gathering place on the Washington Green.



Maggie, born and raised in New Milford, grew up cooking with her grandmother, a professional chef. She attended Newbury College in Boston for culinary arts and restaurant management. Her travels allowed her the opportunity to learn about international foods and tastes. Committed to careers in the restaurant business, Maggie teaches culinary enrichment for the New Milford Youth Agency.

In 1989, Maggie joined New Milford's beloved Food for Thought as the pastry chef and baker. She bought the cafe in 1998, introduced dinner service, began showing local artists and expanded the catering business. Her family took focus for the next decade but she continued to teach, cater and serve as a restaurant consultant.

In March 2020, Maggie took over 9 Main in New Preston and, despite the many challenges that came along with the Covid pandemic, the business thrived until the building was sold. Shortly after, on October 15, 2020, Maggie opened The PO. Still challenged by supply chain and staffing issues, she has focused the first year on the menu, including expanding the array of baked goods: morning pastries, larger than average PO cookies (for sharing) and fresh fruit pop tarts. With improvements in availability of staff, The PO will offer catering and reintroduce their sought after cakes. Longer term, Maggie voices an interest in multiple locations. A seasonal location in Washington has already been secured!

Maggie moved to Washington in 2018 and, with her family, operates Flirtation Farm in New Preston. As she looks to the future, she clearly indicates a strong continuing commitment to the "energy of the Green," with a great appreciation for the support of the neighbors and students. To Maggie and her family, The PO "feels like home."

The PO
5 Kirby Rd
Washington, CT 06793
860-868-1879

Steep Rock Events

Counting Chickadees and Tallying Titmice

A Citizen Science Opportunity

Sunday, December 19, 2021 from 10:00am – 12:00pm

Join Steep Rock Association on a 1 ½-mile winter birding excursion through the diverse habitats of Macricostas Preserve. Your eyes, ears and enthusiasm are needed to collect data for the nation's longest-running citizen science bird project, Audubon's Christmas Bird Count. Everyone from seasoned ornithologists to first-time birders, individuals to families with children are welcome to participate in this special holiday activity. Register at steeprockassoc.org/events-programs/

Midwinter Eagle Survey

A Citizen Science Opportunity

Training: Monday, January 3, 2022 from 5:00pm – 6:00pm

Survey: Saturday, January 8, 2022 from 7:00am – 11:00am

Bundle up and become a citizen scientist by scanning sections of the Shepaug River for bald eagles. The data collected will be reported to the CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) as

our contribution to the nationwide survey whose goal is to document trends in eagle populations over time. Register at steeprockassoc.org/events-programs/



News from the Assessor's Office

The Assessor is currently finalizing property values to be adopted by the Town for the 2021 Grand List (GL). The 2021 GL lists the owners and assessed values that are used to create the Tax Collector's tax bills for July 1, 2022.

The 2021 GL is expected to be completed at the end of January 2022. If there is an assessed value increase for any real or personal property, written notices of increase will be mailed to property owners. Owners who believe their assessments are incorrect are encouraged to contact this office for an explanation. Owners may also file a 2021 GL Board of Assessment Appeals application.

Information about the specific time frame for filing an application with the Board of Assessment Appeals will be included in the written increase notices. Property owners can also find information at www.washingtonct.org/.

Information about filing for an appeal hearing, as well as a prescribed application, can also be found and downloaded at <http://www.washingtonct.org/board-of-assessment-appeals>. Property owners who happen to be out of the area can still complete the application, name an agent to present their appeal information in-person before the Board (usually in March) and have the hard-copy original application mailed to this office so it is received – *not postmarked* – by the prescribed date.

Together Again at the Judy Black Memorial Park and Gardens



THE JUDY BLACK
MEMORIAL PARK
AND GARDENS

As the leaves began to turn and a chill crept over the heart of Washington Depot, The Judy Black Park and Gardens prepared for a busy and eventful fall. The Jack-O-Lantern Contest @the Park, a new event, invited participants of all ages to try their hand at pumpkin carving and park visitors to cast their votes for “spookiest,” “funniest” and “most creative.”

Art @the Park

We were pleased to present two art exhibits this fall. The first featured paintings by artist Peter Cusack from his collection titled “A Letter to Zola.” The second highlighted the works of Judy Jackson and Elizabeth MacDonald. The show, titled “Fifty Years and Counting,” featured a stunning collection of clay tile wall hangings and pottery pieces.

Farmers Market @the Park

The park remained a staple of our community’s weekend as, for five and a half months, the farmers market offered us all an opportunity to greet friends and neighbors and purchase produce from local farmers, chefs and bakers.



Additionally, a generous underwriter allowed monthly farmers markets to transform into a music-filled event. Various local artists performed throughout the months, including Tom Scarola, Ron Castonguay, Jerry Phelps, duo Kevin Vidou and Daniel Varghese, and The Bentley Lewis Trio.

Upcoming Events @the Park

Our December events will feature two displays simultaneously. Part of the exhibit will include a curated collection of quilts depicting the poem “The Night Before Christmas” by Clement Clarke Moore. This will be the collection’s opening debut, which will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the writing of the poem in 2022. Complementing this exhibit is Jean Sullivan and Dixie De Luca’s personal collection of handcrafted, painted porcelain building and figurine collectibles from The Dickens’ Christmas

Village. This particular Christmas Village, which was first produced and collected in 1984, is adapted from Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*. Programming surrounding this exhibit will take place throughout the month, beginning with an opening reception on December 4.

In January, the park will welcome a special photography show in collaboration with KMR Arts, featuring works by photojournalist Ernest Withers. This will coincide with our participation in the annual Washington Gives event that celebrates Martin Luther King Jr. Day. The following months will feature special watch parties for sports games and a slew of community-oriented events and exhibits.

Check out our website (www.thejudyblackparkandgardens.org), sign up for our e-blasts, or follow us on Facebook and Instagram for details of the events and more. If you’d like to be part of “the action” at the park, join us as a volunteer, sponsor an event or donate. Contact Laura Neminski at laura@thejudyblackparkandgardens.org for more information.

ASAP!® Upcoming Programs

For more information about these programs, please visit asapct.org or call 845-518-5859.

Celebration of Young Game Designers Grades 3-12 • Virtual Event

The Celebration of Young Game Designers will nurture creativity and provide a new platform for joyful learning, creative problem solving and connecting young gamers. Individual students in grades 3-12 are invited to submit their idea for a video game based on the theme ‘Nature.’ The top finalists will join a panel of professional designers in a game jam weekend—a unique chance to collaborate with a professional team and learn about the many skills and creative processes needed in the creation of a real video game.

Submissions open December 1. Last day to submit is February 1, 2022.
February 25 - 27 - Game Jam Weekend
This event is free to submit and attend.
More info at asapct.org



ASAP! Presents Pilobolus & the Village Project

In-Person, Masks Required for This Event

Celebrate the arts at Mattatuck Museum and the Palace Theater! Begin your day by experiencing the expressions of home and community displayed in The Village Project, on view at Mattatuck Museum. This sprawling exhibition, made up of thousands of tiny clay homes meticulously arranged into magical villages and hung above with massive vine sculptures, were made by participants from all over Connecticut—most recently Waterbury students in grades 2-12.

Later on, celebrate world renowned Pilobolus Dance Company’s 50 years of wit, passion and stunning physical acumen. In this special presentation, the full company will perform classic and new pieces, as well as the work they created with Waterbury students in the Community Dance Project (CDP). The inventive and expressive choreography created by CDP students under the guidance of Pilobolus dancers will be a delightful



addition to Pilobolus’ exciting repertoire.

ASAP! Presents The Village Project at the Mattatuck Museum
144 W Main St, Waterbury, CT 06702

The exhibition opens January 22 and runs through February 18. Mattatuck hours are 11am-5pm Monday - Saturday, Thursdays open until 7pm and Sundays 11am-4pm.

ASAP! Presents Pilobolus at the Palace Theater
100 E Main St, Waterbury, CT 06702
Saturday, January 22:
Pilobolus Matinee Performance: 2:00pm
Pilobolus Evening Performance: 7:00pm
For information on ticket prices, visit asapct.org

Holiday Market tradition continues at Institute for American Indian Studies

Native American Indian crafts will again be featured at our annual Holiday Market at our Museum.

For Washington shoppers that'll appreciate unusual holiday gifts, take a trip to the Institute for American Indian Studies at 38 Curtis Road in Washington, Connecticut to shop for authentic Native American arts and crafts.

Our Holiday Market begins on Saturday, November 27 and then is open each Saturday and Sunday until December 12. PT from Bethlehem will again be our featured craft seller using our Discovery Room to sell their creations. Several other Native crafters and artists will be presenting art work and crafts in different sections of our museum

creating a special holiday experience.

PT will be featuring wood-fired clay masks and pottery, folded bark and decorated gourd vessels and jewelry made from stone, bone, shell and feathers, as well as antique trade beads. Other vendors will have holiday gourd ornaments, sage bundles, rattles and hand-crafted flutes.

During January and February, our staff is preparing several winter-themed activities, including Winter Survival Skills with



Griffin Kalin. Dates will be announced in our winter calendar that we'll share at the end of December. We also expect to do a winter moon walk in January or February that'll depend on ground cover to be most effective. Another snow-related program will be our Native Snow Snake activity on a course behind our replicated Native Village.

Our Holiday Market will be open Saturday and Sunday November 27 and 28, December 4 and 5, and 11 and 12 from 11am to 4pm. The Museum is open every week Wednesday to Saturday from 11am to 4pm.

Gunn Memorial Library & Museum www.gunnlibrary.org

News & Updates

Thank you to everyone who visited our table at the Washington Fall Festival!



Visit www.gunnlibrary.org for more information and registration.

Holiday Hours

- Thanksgiving Day: CLOSED
- Christmas Eve: CLOSED
- Christmas Day: CLOSED
- New Year's Eve: CLOSED
- New Year's Day: CLOSED

Adult Programs

- Holiday Cookie Swap-Thursday, December 2 @ 6:30 pm
- Winter Reading Challenge (January-March)
- Monday Movie Matinees at 1 pm in January
- Winter Reading Kick Off Party- Thursday, January 6 @ 6 pm
- Susan Katz Poetry- January 13 @ 6:30 pm
- Sleep Tips with Dr. Wendy- January 20 @ 6:30 pm
- Family Game Day- Saturday, January 22 from 1-2:30
- Mugs & Minds: a Shepaug Libraries Collaboration at Burnham Library- January 29 @ 1 pm

- Weekly Meditation Group- Tuesdays in February at 6:30 pm

Junior Programs

- Holiday Programming
- Grab n' Go Gingerbread House Kits – December 4- Zoom in @ 1pm
- Annual Holiday Sale for Children Only. Registration required. Please go to our website to register for your ticketed time slot.
 - Thurs, Dec. 9 - 3:30 to 5:30
 - Fri, Dec. 10 - 3:00 to 4:30
 - Sat, Dec. 11 -10:00 to 1:00
- Story Times & After School Programs
- Morning Toddler Story Time- Fridays 10:30 - 11:15, Feb. - April
- Afternoon Preschool: Fridays 2:15 - 3:00, Feb. - April
- Kindergarten & 1st grade - Storycraft: Tuesdays 3:30 - 4:15, Feb. - April
- 2nd & 3rd grade - Storycraft: Thursdays 3:30 - 4:15, Feb. - April

Winter Saturday Family Programs

Saturday programs continue February & March @ 1:00pm for multiple ages. Please stop in and pick up our monthly calendar or

check our website for further information. Registration will be required.

Stairwell Gallery Exhibits:

- Gerry Sacks (10/23/21-1/22/22)- Acrylics and some collage
- Marisabel Artieda (1/29/22-3/12/22)- Oil painting and charcoal
- Taylor Giroux (3/12/22-4/23/22)- Photography

Museum Programs

- Monday, December 13 @ 6:30pm on Zoom - "Raising the Curtain: The History of Theater in Washington" with Sarah Griswold
- Monday, January 17 @ 6:30 pm on Zoom - "Pilobolus Origins" with Renee Jaworski and Matt Kent
- Tuesday, January 25 @ 6:30 pm, Hybrid program, in person at the Gunn Library and on Zoom - Washington History Club at Night: "Notable Citizens of Washington, Then and Now" moderated by Dimitri Rimsky
- Monday, February 21 @ 6:30 pm on Zoom - "Washington, An Agrarian Community: Past, Present & Future" with Patrick Horan
- Monday, March 21, @ 6:30 pm on Zoom - "History of the Shepaug Railroad" with Col. Don Woodworth



Join the Conversation

Conversations On the Green is back – “up close and personal,” as ABC used to say.

Celebrating the 10th anniversary of its founding, the forum, which is produced and filmed in Washington and is known by the cognoscenti simply as COG, will resume in the spring of 2022 with a bevy of nationally known headliners exploring the issues that affect Americans' daily lives.



But unlike last year, when the pandemic forced the producers to go virtual, COG this year plans to resume in-person events covering such pivotal topics as Climate Change, The Politics of Sports, Racism, SCOTUS, The Future of the Political Parties and National Security and Foreign Policy, among others.

A cross between the “PBS News Hour” and a community town hall, COG is the equivalent of a dinner conversation among erudite guests, the only national television talk show that chats with – rather than talks to – Americans and introduces them to leaders who shape public policy in a free-flowing exchange of ideas.

Founded as a grassroots effort to raise money for groups working to help the area's most vulnerable residents, COG until 2020 was a live, in-person show. But the pandemic forced the production to go virtual even as it went national with PBS broadcasting 13 programs headlined by a group of nationally known voices.

COG is moderated by Jane Whitney, a Washington resident and a veteran talk show host who often is heralded for her “earthly sensibility” and her unique affinity for connecting with live and broadcast audiences.

Produced by area volunteers, COG is a federally recognized charity charged with improving civic engagement and education and is looking for supporters, volunteers and interns. If you would like to participate or can contribute, please contact us through our website, conversationsonthegreen.com. Or write Laura Neminski, the executive director, at info@conversationsonthegreen.com.

All episodes in the 2021 season are available by clicking on the CPTV tab on the program's website, conversationsonthegreen.com.

Washington Environmental Council Celebrates 50 Years

Save The Date! Join us in celebrating the Washington Environmental Council's (WEC) birthday at our 50th Anniversary Moon Dance, April 30, 2022 at the Washington Town Hall. Wine and whiskey bar, plentiful hors d'oeuvres, desserts, silent auction, and dancing to The New Desperation. All proceeds will go to WEC's student scholarship fund.

WEC is a local nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting the environmental quality of the Town of Washington and beyond through advocacy, leadership, education and collaboration. Please check out our website at Wec-ct.org to learn more and to find out how you can get involved!



Town Taxes Due January 1 to February 1

Town of Washington supplemental motor vehicle and second installment of real estate taxes on the grand list October 1, 2020 become payable **January 1, 2022**. Motor vehicle supplemental tax bills will be mailed in late December and posted online by January 1, 2022. The last day to pay without interest is February 1, 2022.

When paying your second installment of real estate taxes, please use your original payment coupon that was mailed in June 2021.

Payments received or postmarked after February 1 are considered delinquent and will be charged interest at the rate of 1.5% per month or a fraction thereof. Conn. Gen. Statutes 12-130, 145 & 146.

If motor vehicle taxes remain unpaid as of February 1, they will be reported to the Department of Motor Vehicles. State law requires DMV to deny vehicle registrations in the name of a person reported as tax delinquent.

If real estate taxes remain unpaid as of March 31, 2022, tax liens will be applied.

Save time by utilizing one of the following payment options:

- Drop your payment in the **black metal box** beside the town hall central doors. Place your check including phone number with original payment coupon in a sealed envelope. Absolutely NO CASH in the box.
- **U.S. Postal Service.** The postmark is accepted as date of payment. Mail to: P.O. Box 383 Washington Depot, CT 06794
- **Online** at www.washingtonct.org. Credit/debit card payments cannot be processed in the office.

Make checks payable to **Town of Washington** (Include phone and bill number).

Tax office hours: Monday – Thursday 9am – 12pm, 1pm – 4:30pm; Friday 9am – 12pm, 860-868-7796.

If you have questions regarding assessments or MV tax bill issues, please call the assessor's office at 860- 868-0398 prior to paying your taxes.

For Building Permit and Health Department Tax Sign-offs: Please submit your documents to the respective departments, and they will contact the tax office.

Stay in the loop on Washington news and events!

Visit ExploreWashingtonCT.com, the official community website for events, things to do, shopping, dining, and happenings around town. Sign up for “This Month in Washington” e-news to stay in the loop on all things Washington! Just click on the envelope icon at the top of the website to sign-up.



Visit washingtonct.org, the town's website for municipal and departmental information. To sign up for weekly e-news from the First Selectman, look for the envelope icon on the website.



News from Regional School District 12

This fall, Region 12 received news that our schools are among the top schools in the state. Washington Primary School boasts the ranking of #14 elementary school of the 681 elementary schools rated by *US News and World Reports*. It should be noted that Booth Free School took the top spot in the state and The Burnham School showcased excellence but wasn't able to be ranked due to the small sample size of students. While the statewide recognition is wonderful, we have always known that our school district has amazing students, staff and community.

This year, Region 12 opened up the school year with renewed hope and optimism. Our students, staff and community members continue to evolve through the pandemic, and as time passes we learn more. This school year provides more opportunities for time-honored events and social interactions. We're able to re-introduce our traditions as well as new celebrations and experiences for our students. We welcome back in-person after-school activities, spring book fairs, and Halloween fun at the elementary schools, and Homecoming, full athletic schedules, and drama productions, and events at Shepaug Valley School. The schools and PTOs are mindful of safety protocols in designing these events in order to create joy for our children and communities.

Our 158 Washington Primary School students are enjoying the start of the school year and returning to some beloved school traditions. We're happy to introduce Mrs. Monique Oppel and the Instrumental program to the Washington Primary

School community this year. Students will begin with percussion before moving toward wind instruments. Additionally, we're introducing Mrs. Betsy Minton who will teach students computer science and programming at the elementary schools. Our students have the opportunity to explore robotics and programming while building their problem-solving and analytic skills. We look forward to the return of our foreign language program at the elementary level next school year. More information will follow as we shift from stabilizing education from the pandemic to enriching the classroom opportunities for our students.

Shepaug Valley School welcomed its new principal, Mr. Donald Schels, to our community. I encourage you to reach out to meet the new leader of our middle/high school.

As part of the reopening of Shepaug, our students have been enjoying the returned freedom of being in the mall, regular hallway travel, locker and locker room use, as well as pep rallies and free periods. Academically, Shepaug boasts 17 college-level classes and continues to look for opportunities for our students to grow including certification courses. This year our administrative team in partnership with students, staff and community is reviewing the school schedule for alternative configurations that'll provide



our students with more opportunities. We look forward to presenting a schedule that works for academic growth while supporting our students' needs.

The Agriscience Academy of Shepaug Valley School welcomed students from the towns of Bethel, Brookfield, Danbury, New Fairfield, New Milford, Newtown, and Sherman. The question that we are asked most in our program is what separates agriscience from traditional vo-ag programs. Our answer is the action research that our students are doing each day. Our students are taking a scientific approach to agriculture so they can transform farming practices and seek new opportunities to be good stewards of our planet. We're not only

training students for the jobs of today, we're building their capacities so they can create the jobs of tomorrow.



We're looking forward to planning community events including tours of Shepaug

this year. It's our hope that we can cut the ribbon together on our science labs and agriscience program that are actively used by staff and students.

Region 12 Schools want to thank the town of Washington and its community members for allowing our students to grow and thrive. The success of last year's school year is due to your care and consideration of health and safety practices. Our community is the heart of our schools!



We look forward to seeing our friends and neighbors this holiday season.

Watch for the hashtag **#ShopWashingtonCT** for great ideas.



Home

is where our story begins

The Housing Commission and the Affordable Housing Task Team would like to thank everyone who participated in the development of the Washington Housing Plan. The final plan was presented and approved at a Public Hearing of the Planning Commission on October 6 and was adopted by the Board of Selectmen on October 28. A copy can be found on the Town's website at washingtonct.org. Now the hard work begins. If the lack of affordable housing, housing for seniors, houses for people looking to downsize or for young families is of concern to you, please get involved. Page 13 of the plan gives several options for volunteering and we look forward to hearing from you.

Washington Refugee Resettlement Project

One late October afternoon, about 80 townspeople gathered at the Judy Black Park to learn about a new project – the Washington Refugee Resettlement Project (WRRP).

The plan for a community resettlement project was originally proposed by members of the Washington Council of Congregations (the group that has been holding food drives, collections at the farmers market and blood drives during the pandemic), but was quickly embraced by members of the community at large. The organizing team understood the pressing need for communities throughout Connecticut to help settle Afghan families. They understood, too that this would be an ambitious undertaking that would succeed only if supported by a cross-section of the Washington community. The response to date has been very enthusiastic.

According to Integrated Refugee and Immigration Services (IRIS) of New Haven,

the U.S. State Department will ask Connecticut communities to resettle over 700 refugees from Afghanistan in the coming months. At the October 23 “Community Conversation,” Ashley Makar, IRIS

Community Co-Sponsor Liaison, described IRIS’ and the community’s important role in a co-sponsorship of a refugee resettlement. There are approximately 40 CT communities working with IRIS at this critical moment. WRRP will be working to resettle a family in tandem with the efforts of our closest IRIS companion, New Milford Refugee Resettlement (NMRR).

Members of the community who would like to volunteer to join one of the teams (e.g., housing, healthcare, employment, transportation, education, cultural orientation, finance, fundraising, etc.) can go to the project’s website at www.wrrp.net and fill out the Volunteer application. Those who would like to make donations to support the effort should go to the same website or mail checks made out to the Washington Refugee Resettlement Project to WRRP, P.O. Box 1205, Washington, CT 06793-1205.

Core team members include Washington residents Ted Bent, the Reverend Robyn Gray (First Congregational Church of Washington), Gregory Maniatis, Carolyn Setlow and Monica Thornton. The team’s co-leaders are the Reverend Geoffrey Hahneman (St. John’s Episcopal Church of Washington) and the Reverend Lisa DiNunno Hahneman (St. John’s Episcopal Church of New Milford). While this is a Washington-based project, the team will need to resettle the refugee family in New Milford, where there is public transportation, more employment opportunities, etc.

“Community co-sponsors play an integral role in helping refugees get off to a strong start in their new home country and eventually to become self-sufficient,” said Carolyn Setlow. “Volunteers from prior refugee resettlement programs tell us that their involvement has been one of the most gratifying experiences of their lives.” “Refugee community sponsorship allows us to welcome and integrate newcomers to our beautiful corner of Connecticut while also creating bonds among neighbors, as we unite around a common cause,” said the Rev. Geoffrey Hahneman.

Washington Honored with Sustainable CT Certification

The Sustainability Committee of Washington is proud to announce Washington is among 23 Connecticut municipalities to be recognized this fall for achieving Sustainable CT certification. We had to meet high standards in a broad range of sustainability accomplishments to qualify for the prestigious Bronze-level certification.

Sustainable CT is a statewide initiative that inspires and supports communities in becoming more efficient, resilient, and inclusive.

We would like to thank the many nonprofits and town commissions that partnered with the Sustainability Committee to make this possible. The work of Steep Rock, the Garden Club, the Lake Waramaug Task Force, The Judy Black Memorial Park and Gardens, the Washington Environmental Council, the Housing Commission, the Economic Development Committee, the Board of Selectmen, the Planning Commission and many others contributed to the successful application. We had to demonstrate work in 12 sustainable impact areas ranging from inclusive community building, thriving local economies, and clean and efficient energy

use, to vibrant arts and culture, well-stewarded land and natural resources and diverse housing.

Sustainable CT has seen strong momentum and growth as a valuable, high-impact program. One-hundred twenty-five municipalities have registered for the program, representing 86% of the state’s population. Collectively, sixty-four municipalities, 60% of the state’s communities, have earned Sustainable CT certification. Certification lasts for three years, with submissions rigorously evaluated by independent experts and other Sustainable CT partners.

“Congratulations to our newest Sustainable CT certified communities,” said Lynn Stoddard, Executive Director of the program. “We are inspired by the leadership and collaboration of elected officials, staff and residents to make Connecticut communities more inclusive, healthy, connected, and strong.”



The program includes actions that help towns and cities build community connection, social equity and long-term resilience. The program’s action roadmap and support tools are especially relevant as towns seek practices and resources

to promote racial justice, respond to the Covid-19 pandemic and address climate change.

Sustainable CT is independently funded, with strong support from its three founding funders: the Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation, the Smart Seed Fund and the Common Sense Fund. Additional support is provided by the Connecticut Green Bank and a growing number of community foundations and other sponsors.

Washington and all 2021 certified communities will be recognized at the Annual Convention of the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities. For more information, visit www.sustainablect.org.

That Certain Shade of Christmas

WAA | Washington Art Association
& Gallery

There have always been colors associated with the holidays that are traditional and familiar. But what if these historic colors were re-examined, softened and made new?

“That Certain Shade of Christmas,” presented by the Washington Art Association & Gallery as the annual 2021 Holiday Gift Show will address that question. The event chair and interior designer, Bruce Glickman along with designer Betsey Netsler are putting their design expertise into curating unusual and one-of-a-kind handmade pieces with color, décor and gifts that are unexpected and frankly slightly off. This is what will set WAA’s annual sale apart from the other sales and will include exceptional jewelry in copper, silver and Italian Murano glass beads, functional and sculptural ceramics, exquisite, unique cards, beeswax and soy candles,



Shino glazed bowl, Deb Lecce, hand thrown stoneware bowl with original brushwork



Carnelian Knoll Earrings, Julie Siegmund, Italian Murano hand blown glass beads



Hand turned Christmas Trees, Richard Heys, turned on a lathe in various woods

hand-turned and carved wooden gifts, and of course artwork by WAA members.

Join us for “That Certain Shade of Christmas” as we transform the gallery into a magical shopping experience and share this season of giving with artful treasures.

Open: Friday, November 26 through Friday, December 24 (till 3:00pm)

Gallery Hours: Wednesday – Saturday: 10:00am - 5:00pm Sunday: 10:00am – 4:00pm



Washington Trivia by Shelia Anson

Why was the Washington Food Market called “The Big Store” before 1955 and what changed that after the Flood of 1955?

See if your answer is correct in the next issue, out in March2.

Answer from the last issue.

The 18th century name for the present Clamshell in the Steep Rock Preserve was “West Tongue.”

Visit ExploreWashingtonCT.com

The official community website for events, things to do, shopping, dining and happenings around town. And

be sure to sign up for “This Month in Washington” e-news to stay in the loop on all things Washington!



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Look for our next issue, coming out in March.

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