

The Journey

THE WINCHESTER MULTICULTURAL NETWORK NEWSLETTER

In a nation of millions and a world of billions, the individual is still the first and basic agent of change.

— Lyndon B. Johnson



WINCHESTER
MULTICULTURAL
NETWORK

We Educate, Advocate and Respond.

Winchester Multicultural Network 2015-2016 Board Members

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Looking Ahead / Mark Your Calendar

Multicultural Network/International Day at the Farmers Market

Saturday, September 19, 2015

9:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. (Market hours)

Winchester Town Common

The Multicultural Network will celebrate Winchester's Chinese community at the Farmers Market on September 19. There will be Chinese dance performances and information about the Winchester School of Chinese Culture.

Stop and visit the Multicultural Network's table. Representatives from the Network will be at the table to answer your questions and tell you about Network activities. We look forward to seeing you there!

Ability Awareness Day at the Farmers Market

Saturday, September 26, 2015

9:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m. (Market Hours)

Winchester Town Common

Sponsored by Brio, the Disability Access Commission (DAC), and the Multicultural Network, Ability Awareness Day at Winchester's Farmers Market will feature tables with activities for children and resource materials, including a handout with information on signing for those who are deaf, and braille for those with impaired vision. In addition, Brio's founder Sahar Ahmed Awerbuch will read two stories that will be signed by a sign language interpreter: *Don't Call Me Special* and *My Friend Has Downs Syndrome*. Both books have heartwarming lessons for adults as well as children. No matter what your age, we think you will enjoy and learn something new when you attend Ability Awareness Day at the Farmers Market on Saturday, September 26.

Cuba Past and Present: 1950s to 2015 A panel discussion

Tuesday, October 13, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

Jenks Center, 109 Skillings Road, Winchester

With Cuba so often in the news these days, the Winchester Reads committee has planned an informative panel discussion to complement and enhance appreciation for this year's book selection, Carlos Eire's *Learning to Die in Miami: Confessions of a Refugee Boy*. In addition to providing an historical context for the current opening of relations between Cuba and the U.S., there will be personal stories about escaping from the Castro regime. Lou Alvarez, retired Spanish teacher at Winchester High School and herself a refugee from Castro's Cuba, will moderate this panel discussion.

An Evening With Carlos Eire

Tuesday, October 20, 2015 at 7:00 p.m.

McCall Middle School, 458 Main St., Winchester

Author of the National Book Award-winning memoir, *Waiting for Snow in Havana*, and *Learning to Die in Miami: Confessions of a Refugee Boy*, Carlo Eire will discuss his experiences as an 11-year-old who was part of an airlift of Cuban children who were sent to Florida from Cuba after the Castro revolution. Known as the Pedro Pan airlift, the idea for it was generated by a teacher at the American School in Havana who had been part of the Kindertransport, an organized rescue effort prior to the outbreak of the Second World War that brought thousands of mostly Jewish children to Great Britain.

In an April, 2011 interview with writer Robert Birnbaum, Carlos Eire said that "the minute I landed in Miami, my childhood ended. I could no longer be assured that some adult was going to take care of me or be nice to me, which is what childhood tends to be all about for the lucky."

Eire asserts that there is a universal immigrant experience. "Everyone who moves to a different country has to become a different person. Their former self dies—whether they want it to or not. And I mean that metaphorically. What actually happens, and what I try to describe in the book, is that you get successive layers of yourself. Your former single self that you thought was a single being becomes more complex as you live in another culture."

Eire is currently Professor of History and Religious Studies at Yale University. Don't miss this opportunity to hear Carlos Eire.

Brio Integrated Theater

Brio will continue to offer free American Sign Language (ASL) classes at the Winchester Public Library every Tuesday from 7 to 8:30 p.m. An internship program for high school students has been established and openings are available for spring internships which will start in January. Contact info@briotheatre.org for more info and updates on Brio events and free community workshops.

Kathy-Ann Hart Leaving the Network for Connecticut



After serving for nearly three years as the first Executive Director for the Winchester Multicultural Network, Kathy-Ann is leaving us to move to Connecticut. Under her guidance, the Multicultural

Network transitioned from a volunteer-run to a professionally-directed, sustainable organization.

Thanks to major grants from the Cummings Foundation, the Network was able to hire Kathy-Ann, first as a part-time ED, and then full time. During her tenure with us, the Network moved to an accessible office at 2 Winchester Place, where Kathy-Ann worked closely with individuals and organizations in the community to carry out the Network's mission. She described her efforts as working "to achieve a world where all people, regardless of their race or ethnicity, are welcome and add value to every facet of society."

In reflecting on her time as Executive Director for the Network, Kathy-Ann said this: "The last two years have been such a time of growth and change for me. I thank the Board and the Network as an organization for giving me the opportunity to work with you on building and growing a strong nonprofit business. I hope that you will continue to learn and grow from my time as Executive Director to become an even bigger, better, and stronger organization."

We will miss you, Kathy-Ann!

Recommended Multicultural Films by Mindy Arbo

Go to filmophile@comcast.net for more suggestions or to add your own.

Films are available through The Winchester Public Library and its Minuteman Library Inter-library Loans, library.minlib.net, and/or at stores. All foreign films are subtitled. Unless noted, no films are extremely violent or sexually explicit.

F stands for family film, but does not include young children unless otherwise noted.

Michael Clayton

A rare Hollywood film at the top of its game. George Clooney leads a terrific cast through a tale of 'corporate greed with deadly results', and the various lawyers that both defend them and out them. **F**

Shun Li and the Poet

Another story of desperate Chinese who serve varied indentures far away. Venice, in this case, is where Li is befriended by an open-minded older widower fisherman. Finally, an immigrant story where America is not the bad guy (this time it's Italy)! A very realistic depiction of the situation, there are many lovely moments, but there is plenty of sadness as well. **F**

Lilting

In England a young gay Chinese Brit dies tragically, leaving behind his bereft partner and lonely, never-assimilated Chinese mother. Despite being disliked by this woman, the partner resolves to try to break through her walls and improve the quality of her life. This is a very realistic portrayal of grief and solitude, with a terrific screenplay and actors. **F**

The Two Faces of January

Another thriller from the author of the Ripley books. A chic American couple travels around 1960's Greece and a naïve American tour guide is drawn into their hidden lives. Tautly acted, well paced, with great costumes and cinematography. **F**

Finding Neverland

After seeing this film, you will never NOT think of Johnny Depp as James E Barrie, the creator of *Peter Pan*. His stillness, and that of Kate Winslett, bathes the film in a warm glow that you will take with you. A beautiful film in all possible ways—story, visuals, emotions. **F**

Belle and Sebastian

Just sweet enough—a touching Boy-and-Dog film that concerns a rural mountain community in WWII Spain. Fine acting, great scenery. **F**

Touch of the Light

In contemporary China, an unusual teen friendship grows between a socially awkward blind musical prodigy and an unhappy but perky girl who has lost sight of her dreams. A very relatable film, where the people and situations are as American as they are Chinese. Excellent screenplay and acting. **F**

Cold Comfort Farm

The iconic British comedy is updated with the finest of today's character actors. In 1930's London, our newly-orphaned upper class heroine takes her considerable pluck and energy to the cursed backwater farm of distant inbred relatives, determined to turn things around for all. Need a pick-me-up? Well, this should do it for you! **F**

Comedy of Innocence

A spoiled and disregarded French boy, on the occasion of his 8th birthday, shocks and unsettles his wealthy family when he declares that he has another home and a different, real, mother. He insists that it is time to go to live with her, and his mother accompanies him on his journey. The film's denouement contains a complex explanation that merits understanding.

The Promise

A fantastic Chinese epic in the spirit of *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. In Medieval China, a magical woman is loved by an Emperor, a General, and a slave. Family, lost childhood, violence, revenge, loyalty, and fate—all weave a spectacle that will keep you spellbound. **F**

International Connections

The International Connections Committee plans activities and events to foster community connections and to help international residents feel welcomed in Winchester.

Drop-in Coffee

On Thursday mornings, 8:30–10:00 a.m. international residents—newcomers and longtime residents—gather for coffee and informal conversation at Brueggers Bagels, 600 Main St. Anyone is welcome to stop in and join the conversation.

Conversation Groups

English at Large coordinates conversation groups for those for whom English is not their first language and are interested in improving their conversation skills. Groups are held at the Winchester Public Library. Contact English at Large for information on days and times for Winchester groups.

The office is at 800 West Cummings Park, Suite 5550, Woburn, MA 01801 and the phone is Tel: 781.395.2374. You can also go to www.EnglishAtLarge.org.

The Lunch Bunch

If you'd like to join us to sample food at different ethnic restaurants in the area, please email office@wmcn.org so we can let you know where and when the next lunch will be.

One Winchester, Many Traditions

The popular international film series will continue for the 2015–2016 year starting in November.

Screenings are the first Monday of the month from November to April at 6:00 p.m. in the large meeting room at the Winchester Public Library. Check the library's website (www.winpublib.org) for titles.

One Winchester, Many Traditions is a project of the Winchester Public Library in collaboration with the Multicultural Network, funded by the John and Mary Murphy Educational Foundation. Our purpose is to welcome residents from other countries and to celebrate all of our town's varied cultural heritages.

*International
Connections*

Hidden Differences

by Dotty Burstein

Often, people speak of 'hidden' differences, or differences that are not visible to others. If there is no wheelchair, prosthetic leg, hearing aide, or other 'clue' to a person's difference, it's often unclear that s/he may be suffering or even bullied or ridiculed when the difference is discovered. For example, it's impossible to distinguish between the physical appearance of people with certain neurological disorders and that of neuro-typical people. Andrew Solomon describes these types of hidden differences as well as obvious ones in *Far from the Tree*, which includes chapters on autism, schizophrenia, and issues of sexual orientation. This book succeeds beautifully in making a persuasive argument that difference is what unites us.

Winner of the National Book Award, Solomon considers clinical depression a difference that can be immobilizing and isolating yet always invisible. In terms both cultural and scientific, he examines depression in *The Noonday Demon*. As a clinical psychologist and one who has personally struggled with this often debilitating disease, he writes about its subtle complexities and describes the huge range of treatments available today. Both books can be found in the Minuteman system of the public library and are available for sale in paperback.

***We don't have to engage in grand, heroic actions
to participate in the process of change.
Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people,
can transform the world.***

—Howard Zinn

The Journey

THE WINCHESTER MULTICULTURAL NETWORK NEWSLETTER

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The Journey is published three times a year and is one means that the Network uses to carry out our mission to inform, advocate, and respond.

Winchester Multicultural Network

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Multicultural Network Supports Cambridge Street Rental Housing

by John Suhrbier

Housing proposed for Cambridge Street is consistent with Winchester's housing objectives of providing rental as well as home ownership opportunities and a mix of housing types and sizes that are priced so as to be affordable over a range of income levels rather than only to high income households.

Located on a three-acre parcel of land located immediately across from the Horn Pond Plaza, this new housing will have 95 studio and one, two, and three-bedroom apartments to be built on four floors, with five of the units being handicapped accessible. The project is smaller in size than four other housing developments already located along this mixed commercial and residential portion of Cambridge Street, and is comparable in density to other housing already existing within Winchester.

The Multicultural Network supports this proposed development because it is consistent with the organization's mission of providing opportunity to all individuals regardless of socio-economic status. Rents for one quarter of the units will be set at a level that will enable a three person household having an annual income of roughly \$65,000 to pay no more than 30 percent of their income for housing costs.

The project will be built under the provisions of Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 40B. These provisions can be utilized in communities where less than ten percent of the existing housing falls within affordability guidelines. Compared to this ten percent target, only 1.9 percent of Winchester's housing qualifies as being affordable. In comparison, Weston and Belmont currently are at 3.6 and 3.8 percent respectively. Concord and Lexington are at 10.4 and 11.1 percent respectively.

Approved in July by MassHousing, the next step is for the Winchester Zoning Board of Appeals to convene a formal public hearing during which the project will be reviewed in detail, including potential traffic, wetlands, visual, and other impacts. The ZBA can include conditions to mitigate negative impacts that are a direct result of the project as long as these conditions enable the project to continue to be financially feasible.

Today, a household with an annual income of \$120,000 can afford to purchase only 14 percent of the single family

homes in Winchester. Construction of the proposed Cambridge Street housing will serve middle and moderate income retirees as well as others living and working in Winchester, including town employees.

Introducing the Network's New Staff

We hope you'll have a chance to meet our wonderful new staff members at an upcoming event or in the office if you stop by.

Jeanette Kolodziej

Jeanette attended Lesley Graduate School where she received her M.Ed. in Elementary Education. She taught in the San Francisco Bay Area and, in 1998, moved with her family to Winchester. She has fond memories of volunteering in her two sons' schools over the years, at both local cooperative nursery schools and Lincoln Elementary School. Jeanette has always had a love of storytelling and folktales from different cultures and the lessons they convey. She will never pass up an opportunity to read aloud to children. Over the years, she has been active in various town organizations and cherishes the connections she has made with so many dedicated individuals.

Jeanette can be reached at adminasst@wmcn.org

Karen Sargent

Karen is a graduate of Bridgewater State University with degrees in Anthropology and Spanish. While she was at Bridgewater, her most notable accomplishment was founding and running The Interfaith Movement, an organization that seeks to embrace and encourage students of all different beliefs and spiritualities to fight stereotypes and educate others. Aside from interfaith relations, she is passionate about fighting Islamophobia and encouraging intersectional feminism. In her free time, she enjoys reading, marathoning shows on Netflix, and drinking coffee.

She can be reached at pr@wmcn.org and runs the Facebook page for the Network at www.facebook.com/wmcnorg.

We Can Make a Difference in a Racist Climate

by Sandy Thompson

Who of us hasn't been shocked—horrified—by the recent murders of Black people. Those of us who are white may think this is a recent trend, but people of color know that racist incidents have always gone on and part of the injustice involves the lack of public awareness. If anything good can come out of these tragic deaths, it is that they raise awareness of the racism that exists—and persists—in our society. It is part of the fabric of many of our institutions and practices, and is deeply imbedded in our culture, whether we see it or not.

Many think that because we have a Black President, we have gotten past racism as a country. But the Southern Poverty Law Center, SPLC, which monitors hate groups and other extremists, reports that “there are 784 known hate groups operating across the country, including neo-Nazis, Klansmen, white nationalists, neo-Confederates, racist skinheads, black separatists, border vigilantes, and others.” The SPLC also reports that the number of Patriot groups, including armed militias, skyrocketed following the election of President Obama in 2008—rising 813 %, from 149 groups in 2008 to an all-time high of 1,360 in 2012.

So what can we do about a problem that is historically rooted in slavery and dauntingly multifaceted? Certainly those of us who are white can make an effort to understand the power and privilege we have simply by virtue of the color of our skin. Contact the Multicultural Network if you'd like a list of recommended reading or

would like to participate in conversation about this subject.

Are there ways we can change institutional practices and policies that negatively impact communities of color? Network board member and pastor of the Crawford Memorial Methodist Church, Eric Dupee, believes that the most devastating public policy affecting communities of color is our nation's drug policy. Acting on this belief, Eric presented a resolution to the Annual Conference of New England United Methodists in June. The resolution called for an end to the war on drugs, contending that “to people of color, the ‘War on Drugs’ has arguably been the single most devastating dysfunctional social policy since slavery.” The resolution passed overwhelmingly. In an interview with Jon Shuppe of NBC News, Eric called it a “justice issue” and invites anyone interested to contact him at ericdupee@crawfordumc.org to learn more about the resolution and the concepts behind it. He has been contacted by people in various parts of the country who are working to change drug policy and mass incarceration policies.

Eric's action is a powerful example of the ways each of us can make a difference, whether on the institutional level, or the personal or cultural levels. We no longer can afford to think of ourselves as helpless or powerless to do our part to change the impact of racism.

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