

As seen in the Vermont Standard – Sept. 2, 2021

Time of Transitions

We closed out our successful summer season, Friday, August 27th with our much-anticipated Community Heroes Celebration. We were blessed with excellent weather, amazing volunteers, and wonderful music. The Eames Brothers opened the show, followed by our Tribute to Community Leaders, who took the opportunity to thank their staff and volunteers who stepped up during the pandemic.

As I noted in my introduction, Coretta Scott King once said:

“The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.”

On Friday we celebrated that compassion as demonstrated by a wide range of individuals, organizations, and entities, who upon seeing the impact of the pandemic on our community stepped up to make funds available to businesses and individuals, to deliver meals to vulnerable seniors, and to school age kids for whom the school meal program is a main source of nutrition. The meal deliveries connected individuals, already isolated and at risk, to a friendly face they knew would return if not the next day the following week.

We also celebrated heroes who despite the pandemic had no choice but to continue to work on the front lines: our postal workers, grocery clerks, bank tellers, first responders, health care workers, gas station attendants, the town and village employees who care for our roads and bridges, and at our schools, educators, food service employees, grounds keepers and administrators. We did our very best to cajole and bribe those heroes with movie passes to come and receive a round of applause. Almost to a person they responded, “I am not a hero, I was just doing my job.”

I acknowledged the amazing work from the following community leaders:

Dr. Clare Drebitko, Ottaquechee Health Center, Deanna Jones, Thompson Senior Center, Sherry Sousa WCSU Superintendent, Adi Wilson, Change the World Kids, Beth Robinson, Ottaquechee Health Foundation, Mary Riley, Woodstock Community Food Shelf, Jill Davies, Woodstock Area Relief Fund, and Joe DeNitalie, the EDC Business Relief Fund.

When challenged by the pandemic, these individuals made a hard pivot and found creative ways to continue to deliver their services, and in the case of the Woodstock Area Relief Fund and EDC Business Relief Fund, provided financial support to those in need.

Obviously, there are many more community heroes who have and continue to go the extra mile for those in need and harshly impacted by the pandemic. We continue to gather stories of resilience and of thanks for receiving support from the Community. Please send along any testimonials to me: director@Pentanglearts.org/.

To conclude my words, I asked that we all pledge that

once through the pandemic we keep Gandhi’s words to heart: “The true measure of any society (community) can be found in how it treats its most vulnerable members.”

Then Kat Wright and her fabulous band took the stage and did not disappoint. Toes were tapping, kids were running circles in the labyrinth as the waning August rays stretched out across the park. Many have told me it was their favorite Woodstock concert ever and it was wonderful to see the audience enjoying this moment in time.

And with that, we now move into the Fall season, when the neon green leaves darken and brown before the rainbow we call foliage returns.

For some parents, this return to some sort of normality includes send-offs to family members who return to college, jobs, and travel, releasing them from a year and half of being at home or closer to home than many probably could tolerate.

COVID gave our household a bonus year with all three birds back in the nest. Intellectually, and culturally it is apt they fledge and find their way. I am perhaps not alone in finding this transition difficult—but once complete, I eagerly await a new post-COVID rhythm. We can all agree going backwards to capacity limits, and travel restrictions, is not the ideal situation.

And it is for that reason that Pentangle we will enforce a mask mandate in the Town Hall Theatre, starting September 3rd regardless of vaccination or negative COVID tests results. Masks may be removed while enjoying concessions!

We urge our patrons to be respectful of this requirement for their own safety and for the safety of our staff.

On the Big Screen:

Respect

The film follows the rise of Aretha Franklin’s career from a child singing in her father’s church’s choir to her international superstardom, **RESPECT** is the remarkable true story of the music icon’s journey to find her voice. Directed by Liesl Tommy (in her feature directorial debut), from a screenplay written by Tracey Scott Wilson, the film stars Jennifer Hudson as Aretha Franklin. Forest Whitaker, Marlon Wayans, Audra McDonald, Marc Maron, Tituss Burgess, and Mary J. Blige are featured in supporting roles.

Some movie trailers don’t really get you jazzed to see a film, or perhaps they reveal too much about a film. The **Respect** trailer, on the other hand begs you to sing along with Jennifer Hudson (Dreamgirls) as she belts out *Respect*, and *Natural Woman*.

Screening times are:

Friday, September 3, 2021, at 7:30 pm

Saturday, September 4, 2021, at 7:30 pm

Sunday, September 5, 2021, at 7:30 pm

Monday, September 6, 2021, at 7:30 pm