

SPRING 2026 • VOLUME 3, ISSUE 1

LINCOLN REVIEW



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Now on View...

Lincoln Public Library

- *March:* Art by Lincoln Public Schools students in grades K-5
- *April:* Friends of Modern Architecture

Clark Gallery

- *March:* Art by women in recognition of Women's History Month
- *Through April 19:* Kwame Okoto (Almighty God)

Rines Art Gallery (Weston)

- *Through April 12:* Color landscape photographs by Lincoln resident Jim Wojno (see below).



Some of Jim Wojno's photos now on view at the Rines Art Gallery in Weston.

The Rines Art Gallery in the First Parish Church in Weston (349 Boston Post Road, Weston) is hosting a show of dramatic color landscape photographs of Italy, the Southwest, Hawaii, Martha's Vineyard, and beyond by Lincoln's Jim Wojno (see www.jimwojno.com).

The show runs through April 12, 2026, and is open to the public on weekdays

from 9:30am–4:30pm and Sundays from 10:30am–1pm (closed on Saturdays).

To get to the gallery, turn into the parking lot from Church Street and enter the breezeway doors in the center of the church. If the door is locked, press the door bell and someone will buzz you in. For more information, email Jim at jwojno@verizon.net.

Adventures of a Water Meter Reader

By Virginia "Ginny" Lemire

Bob Lemire and I moved to Lincoln in 1961 when we bought a small house on Bowles Terrace. Soon after moving in, neighbors invited us to a cookout on Old Sudbury Road. Someone mentioned that the farm across the road was scheduled to become house lots. Bob was shocked to think this beautiful land would no longer be farmed and have a house on every quarter-acre. He was soon appointed to the Conservation Commission. It was the beginning of his many years in town government. My involvement in the town started in a completely different way. It gave me a view of the town that others would never see.

It began in the spring of 1970 with a paying job. It was a dare! Yes, the town manager, Warren Flint, dared my friend Jane and me to read the town's water meters! The Water Department's only employee was too busy. Water meters were read manually in the buildings where the water was consumed so we would have to enter nearly every house in town. It might be interesting! Twenty-five cents a meter was a steal! We agreed to do the job. Warren Flint provided a few minutes of training, gave us the water meter reader's book, and we were off.

I opened the meter book and drove to the first house on the first street. It was spring-time and it had rained for days. Homeowners were not going to like my wet boots, I thought. Approached the first house and knocked on the door. A woman shouted for me to come in. I opened the door and called out "Meter reader!"

"Come back here," the woman replied. I joined her in the kitchen where she had two young children, each in a highchair. I asked her if she knew where the water meter was. "Downstairs," she said, pointing to a door. I went through the door and down the steps. The floor seemed to be floating. What was this white stuff all over the floor? "What a mess," I thought as I spotted the meter on the far wall and got the reading.

As I put my foot on the bottom step to return to the kitchen I saw that the white stuff had stuck all over my wet boots! Neverthe-

less, I stepped into the kitchen. "Twins" she said when she spotted my boots. "I wash and dry a lot of diapers" she added. Ah! That white stuff was lint from the clothes drier. They didn't have a lint trap; wasn't it a fire hazard? I didn't want to think about it. Outside I located a water puddle to clean the white lint off my boots. If this is what I encountered at the first house, what was I going to learn about Lincoln? It was the beginning of my water meter adventures.

A few doors down the street I rang the doorbell. I rang it again. Thinking the car in the driveway meant someone must be home, I rang it a third time, just as the door opened revealing a barefoot man in a rumpled T-shirt and boxer shorts. He brushed the sleep from his eyes as I quickly handed him a postcard so he could mail in his meter reading. Warren Flint had provided these cards and now I knew why. Poor guy, he must work on the night shift, I mused. He was very embarrassed, as was I.

A few days later, I drove into the Massachusetts Audubon property where there were several water meters. I went to the first address. The door was opened by an elderly man leaning heavily on a cane. He was dressed in a light-blue V-neck sweater over a starched dress shirt open at the neck, khaki trousers, and penny loafers. I read the meter and walked away, wondering who this classy gentleman was. At Gordon Hall, I enquired as to the man's identity. He was Mr. Chapin, long-time chauffeur, now retired, to Mrs. Hatheway, the last resident of Gordon Hall.* What a treat to see an elderly man in such up-to-date attire.

Jane and I spent three weeks reading meters. I'll reveal more interesting adventures, including meeting an astonishing household pet, in the next "Adventures of a Water Meter Reader."

** Editor's note: Gordon Hall is the 1896 pillared brick house that serves as Mass Audubon's headquarters. It was willed along with the rest of what is now Drumlin Farm to Mass Audubon in 1955 by Louise Ayer Gordon Hatheway (see "Louise Ayer Hatheway" in Wikipedia).*

Artists at The Commons

In fall 2025, prospective and current residents presented works in a variety of media, including photography, woodworking, painting, stained glass, and stonework.

The resident-led Art Committee seeks to enliven the visual arts at the community

through classes, demonstrations, open studio hours, and the exhibition of artwork. Painting, ceramics, fabric arts, basket making, and beading are some of the current endeavors.



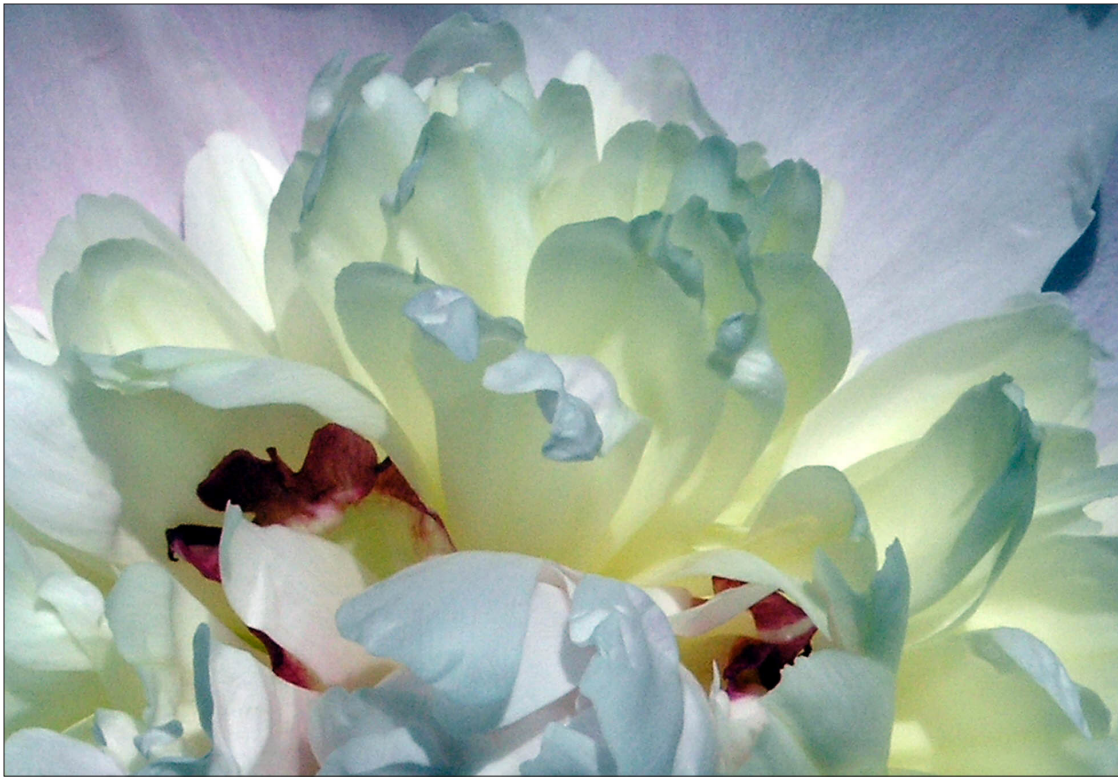
Oil painting by Carol Bull

Carol Bull's interest in art began in childhood, when she added her own creative spin to her mother's holiday decor. From earning degrees in art and art education to working in fashion merchandising and developing an interior design practice, she has always been drawn to the visual arts in all its forms.

Polly Allen's artistic passion began at the age of 10 with cake decorating—her first way of bringing surfaces to life through design. After five decades in apparel design, including projects with Marimekko and the U.S. Olympics, she continues to center her work on her lifelong passion: surface design.



Crafts by Polly Allen



"Peony" — photograph by Sandy Renna

Since grade school, Sandy Renna has been captivated by photography's ability to reveal what the eye might miss. Now, having returned to this passion after a career in dermatology, he continues to seek and capture fleeting illuminations of nature — especially light itself — as it transforms ordinary moments into extraordinary ones.



Chinese brush painting by Cristel Ide

Stewart Coffin: Putting the Pieces Together for Almost a Century

By Alice Waugh

Stewart Coffin of Lincoln is a maker. In his 95 years, he's become world famous for the three-dimensional puzzles he designs and builds. In his varied career, he's also been an electrical engineer, a boat builder, a writer, and even a nursery owner.

Coffin's creations are legendary in the puzzle world. He's designed hundreds of interlocking 3-D puzzles, including striking polyhedral sculptures, ingenious tray-packing challenges, and pioneering examples of interlocking cube puzzles, according to puzzlehub.org. He's written several books on the topic as well, including *Geometric Puzzle Design* and *AP-ART: A Compendium of Geometric Puzzles* (the start of the title is a nod to "the art that comes apart"). He still makes a few puzzles and sometimes sells them to individuals and at events such as the Lincoln Art & Farmers' Market in December 2025. (He'll be back there on April 3).

Puzzlecraft led to another item on Coffin's resume: public speaker. He's appeared at numerous puzzle conventions and was on an American Association for the Advancement of Science panel of puzzle experts.

Jerry Slocum, founder of the International Puzzle Party, told the Andover Eagle-Tribune in 2007: "His polyhedral puzzles, they're beautiful three-dimensional sculptures, basically. To create the structure from these bits and pieces of three-dimensional sticks is creating an object of art. You're not designing it, but you're creating this art by putting it together."

Coffin came to puzzle-making after starting out building computers for the defense industry at MIT's Lincoln Laboratory in the 1950s but grew disenchanted with that line of work. After he left the corporate world, he began to make a living with hands (and pen) as a woodworker, designer and maker of canoes and paddles, and writer.

He was also a somewhat reluctant businessman in his first Lincoln sojourn, which began

in 1964 when he and his wife were looking for a house that could accommodate their young family as well as a workshop. A property on Old Sudbury Road came on the market that included several acres of land and a greenhouse used in the previous owner's nursery business. They bought the property — but it turned out that the business was in bankruptcy, and some customers who had paid for plants that were never delivered came calling.

"I was trained as an electrical engineer and here I was a nursery man, and I knew nothing about it," he said. "People said, 'you can't let it die; we'll help you,' so they helped me and it worked out beautifully." It also turned out that if they made \$500 a year selling plants they could classify their property as a farm, which resulted in a helpful reduction in their property taxes.

Coffin eventually won patents for two of his puzzle designs, including one called Hectix, and he caught the attention of 3M. But the design was so complex that factory workers were unable to assemble them, so the parts were shipped to his Lincoln residence



The Coffin puzzle that graces the cover of AP-ART: The Art That Comes Apart.

where he, his daughters, and neighborhood children all put them together, reportedly making 20,000 puzzles in two weeks.

Lincoln was a good fit for someone who grew up hiking and camping in the Pioneer Valley and always enjoyed the outdoors. He made many friends in town who were fellow members of the Appalachian Mountain Club and was also part of the farming community — he and his wife raised poultry and grew produce that they sold at a stand outside their house, which was close to Boyce Farm, the Van Leer farm, and Ellen Raja's sheep farm, which is still in operation. "It was fun and it made everybody happy, so I wrote a book about it," he said

Tipcart Tales is a sequel to a volume about his early life called *Tall Trees and Wild Bees: Memories of Childhood That Never Really Ended*. He's also written poetry, fiction, essays, natural history (*Good Earth's Bounty*, illustrated with photographs taken by his father, R.L. Coffin, and *Black Spruce Journals*, about canoe tripping in the Canadian wilderness) — and most recently, *Reflections* (2025), which he describes as "looking pensively back and critically ahead." That title and his other books that are out of print are available as free PDFs on his website (stewartcoffin.com).

After his wife died in 1991, Coffin moved around in eastern Massachusetts. His son-in-law and daughter, Chris Brown and Margie Coffin Brown (a landscape architect for the National



Stewart Coffin at home in Lincoln with some of his 3-D puzzles.

Park Service who's based at Minute Man National Historical Park), bought the house from him after he donated several acres of the property to the town.

Speaking of history, Coffin has another story: his grandfather lied about his age to join the army and fight in the Civil War. Coffin's father was the youngest of seven children and had Stewart at age 40. "Add it all together and I may be the last person alive whose grandfather was in the Civil War. I would not be a bit surprised," he said.

As of September 2025, he's living in a newly renovated part of the house that gained an addition since he first lived there in the 1960s. In 2003, the state took the Pillar House, an 1845 Greek Revival building in Newton, by eminent domain and offered it for \$1 to anyone who would move it. Coffin's daughter and son-in-law plunked down the dollar, moved it to Lincoln piece by piece, and attached it to the

Old Sudbury Road house.

The greenhouse, which he used as a utility building and chicken coop back in the day, is now his workshop, but it's unheated, so in the winter he can only use it on sunny afternoons, "and even then it's tough because the glue that I use does not set when it's cold," he said. Fortunately, he has some indoor space to work in with a picture window where he can watch the voracious birds (he has to fill the feeders twice a day, he said). He's still writing, and his latest book on woodworking is about to be published.

"In recent years, puzzlecraft has just been one of my many pastimes, which have included control of invasive plants and collecting food donations for the needy. But much of my effort now goes into trying to improve my website, stewartcoffin.com, especially the final chapter, *Reflections*," Coffin said. "It is my feeble attempt at trying to help solve some of the many puzzles now facing our country and the world."

Art by a Lincoln Mother and Daughter

Sara Arshad makes one-of-a-kind collages. Growing up in Florence, Italy (which has a long tradition of beautifully printed papers among its world-famous art and architecture) gave her a deep appreciation for art — not just for color and form, but also for materials. Contact her at postadisara2@gmail.com.



A collage by Sara Arshad.

Rebirth

By Yasmin Arshad

More than wise,
Older than death,
Never stopping,
So marches time.
But when I gaze up at the stars,
My overwhelmed mind sees
Hopeful shapes of the distant
Birth of the universe,
Constantly reborn.
And my heart heals
Knowing all is infinite,
And I too am dust of stars!
My star is in my heart,
Hope is in that star.
And we shall be together
Forming stars.
For all eternity.

Yasmin Arshad Artist Statement

(Editors note: Yasmin is Sara's daughter.)

My name is Yasmin Arshad. I was born in Florence, Italy, and came to the U.S. at age 7. I'm bilingual. My awesome mother found me the ideal workplace when I turned 22: a studio for artists with disabilities called Gateway Arts in Brookline. I am a successful artist; my art sells at the Gateway store. I have exhibited at the Fuller Art Museum, Brockton, the Outsider Art Fair in New York, and in London and in Tokyo. I write poetry, enjoy traveling, walking, horseback riding, snow shoeing, and going to the symphony. I live with my parents for part of the week and with my caretaker and good friend the rest of the week.

I was an ideal subject for the Lurie Center's research program on facilitated communication. When I first started typing to communicate, no one could believe how much I knew; no one believed I could read. But I have been reading since I was 4. I enjoy pondering the Big Questions: what is the origin of life? of eternity? My true joy in life is now being able to communicate. I'm very happy to now be able to type to communicate; it makes such a difference in my otherwise lonely life of an autistic.



Cris Perez Pottery

Cris Perez lives in Lincoln and works as a civil engineer. Doing ceramics in her spare time is her means of expression and helps her decompress. See more of her work on Instagram: [@crisperezceramics](https://www.instagram.com/crisperezceramics).



Lincoln's Queen of Quilts

By Alice Waugh

These are not your grandmother's quilts.

Longtime Lincoln resident and quilter extraordinaire Dilla Gooch Tingley draws inspiration from well-known artworks to craft textiles with wildly varying textures and topics — and often a dash of humor. You see a selection hanging in Bemis Hall's map room through March, with an opening reception on Thursday, March 19 at 3:00pm.

"I'm most delighted in my work when I can take an artistic subject and reinterpret it in an interesting way," she says. Many of her quilts are based on famous paintings, such as "The Next Supper," a takeoff on da Vinci's "The Last Supper" where the dinner guests are religious figures including Buddha, Ganesh, Jesus, and Mother Theresa.

Then there's "Windows on Matisse," a 3x3 arrangement of Matisse paintings that feature windows, and a collage of works by Picasso. She's also made quilts based on Inuit art, Escher, Van Gogh, Toulouse-Lautrec, and Gauguin, "but Monet is too hard," she says. Often there's a humorous twist, such as a piece based on "Luncheon on the Grass" by Edouard Manet — except the gathering of picnickers now includes Paddington Bear and Winnie the Pooh.

Some of Tingley's quilts are based on art forms other than

painting, such as "Architextural," a collection of famous modern buildings including the Sydney Opera House, the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao, and the Transamerica building in San Francisco. As a surprise gift to Ellen Sisco, Lincoln's assistant librarian who retired in 2014, she made a quilt with some of Sisco's favorite literary characters and books such as Sherlock Holmes, Hercule Poirot, "The Owl and the Pussycat," "The Wizard of Oz," and Wallace

and Gromit. Another quilt called "Ex Libris" showing characters including Babar, Humpty Dumpty, and Madeline hangs in the children's room at library. And decidedly non-literary is "Branded," an array of brightly colored logos of Cheez-Its, Green Giant, Morton Salt, and more.

Tingley's quilts aren't always rectilinear, either. There's "Damn Everything But the Circus," whose top has the billowy shape and texture of a circus tent, and a



"Mountain Scape"



"Venice of Massachusetts" (Tingley's entry for a 2007 Lexington show with the theme of climate change)



"The Scrumptious Colors of Thiebaud"

round piece depicting a crying sun called "Sol Says Sorry" (caption: "My life-enabling warmth is causing so much grief — I cry for you") that was included in the global warming exhibit.

Tingley, who is self-taught, didn't start out on an artistic path. She earned a degree in physics at Vassar and then worked in a research laboratory in Harvard University's Division of Engineering and Applied Physics, "though it was clear I wasn't destined to be a physicist," she says.

Starting in 1977, she worked at a variety of jobs at Polaroid. "I started as a supervisor on the production line making SX70 film, so I told people I was a film producer. Doesn't that sound more interesting than saying you worked on a factory floor?" she says.

In 1988, she took early retirement from Polaroid, "and I bought a sewing machine on my way home from my last day of work," she says. She started by making pillows and eventually graduated to quilts. Her process involves finding interesting fabrics, then sketching a design, cutting out appliques, and ironing them onto pieces of fabric to guide her in cutting. When choosing a subject or theme, she's guided foremost by practicality. "Generally when I see the image, my first thought is: how easy would that be to render?" she says.

The post-career phase of her life also included working as a business manager for a Framingham youth guidance center and volunteering in numerous capacities in Lincoln including as a member of the Planning Board and as president of the League of Women Voters.

In her former Lincoln home

(continued on page 12)

On Writing

By Susan Mills

I didn't know that I would have no ideas
I didn't know that clearing my mind would be so hard
I didn't know that finding inspiration isn't a search but a prize
I didn't know that an idea can hide inside and be elusive
I didn't know that my empty mind would refill again
I didn't know that thoughts always come, bidden or unbidden
I didn't know that trying to create creates blocks
I didn't know that being free in thought could be scary
I didn't know where the ideas came from
I didn't know what I was going to write about but the ideas
came and refilled and created, bidden and unbidden

Dilla Tingley, Lincoln's Queen of Quilts

(continued from page 11)

on Laurel Drive, Tingley's workshop took up most of the basement and featured dozens of cubbies for fabric and a hanging quilt rack that her late husband Fred made for her. She downsized to a Ryan Estate condo after his death in 2022 but still has room on her walls for many of her quilts, along with a bedroom repurposed as a workroom. Unlike traditional American quilters who often use homey cotton scraps, she creates textures and backgrounds using everything from batik to silk to African mud cloth ("Demoiselles d'Mud Cloth" based on the similarly titled Picasso painting).

In 2004 she organized a group to make a quilt to celebrate Lincoln's 250th anniversary. It features scenes from Lincoln's history, including the Lewis Street pickle factory and a boathouse on Sandy Pond, and now hangs in the Tarbell Room at the library. Since about 2024, she's been a member of the Lincoln Quilters, whose members work on quilts together. They recently exhibited in the Lincoln Public Library and held a silent auction of quilts that raised nearly \$8,000 for charity.

Tingley's work has been featured in numerous solo and group exhibits at the

Depot Square Gallery in Lexington, including a 2007 show called "HOT: Artists Respond to Global Warming." Her submissions included the slyly humorous "We Love Our Cars" with colorful background landscapes overrun with cars full of monkeys, and "Venice of Massachusetts" showing a Venetian gondola in front of a State House at the top of Beacon Hill island surrounded by water.

One of Tingley's volunteer roles is chair of the Council on Aging & Human Services board of directors, and she's been deeply involved for years in efforts to create a new home for the COA, most recently as a member of the Community Center Building Committee. That work will reach fruition when the community center opens sometime in 2027 — and one of its interior walls will feature the quilt of Lincoln buildings that currently hangs in the living room at Bemis Hall.



“Punctuated Disequilibrium”

By Jennifer Morris

What is it that can make people passionate about punctuation? Evidently the basic alphabet isn't enough to express our meaning or feelings in text.

I'll be honest: I used to take pride in my grasp of English punctuation. As a writer/editor for small companies, I actually got paid to put the comma in the right place, and to debate use of the Oxford comma with colleagues (I'm a pro-Oxford type). I was allowed to express my own preferences and punctilious personality by applying em-dashes where others thought a double hyphen was good enough or failed to employ parentheses when they could help. Along the way, I began to think of punctuation as graphic art, a creative practice. A way to illustrate my thinking... when the words don't come swiftly.

Perhaps Emily Dickenson's poetry inspired my fondness for the em-dash. We can argue about whether it should be bracketed by spaces, but I like to give it room. To me, it reflects something about thought processes — the way a mind skips from one idea to another, related but not always connected — so I was dismayed to learn that this useful character recently became associated with A.I.-generated text (see “With the Em Dash, A.I. Embraces a Fading Tradition,” *New York Times*, Sept. 18, 2025). Must I, as a human writer, be intimidated by this? No way. My graphical quirks are my own, bots be damned.

You don't hear most people fretting about typography — say, arguing for **a** as opposed to **ɑ**.

I want to delve in to the hyphen, a bit of punctuation that says something important about how we think about each other. In her book *Hyphen*, anthropologist Pardis Mahdavi includes passages from Teddy Roosevelt's 1915 speech, which excoriated “hyphenated Americans” and called their loyalties into question. This led to a trend in current style guides, like the AP and Chicago Manual of Style, to eliminate hyphens in nationalities and ethnicities. But Mahdavi proudly “lives in the hyphen” and calls herself Iranian-American to emphasize her unique, inseparable selfhood.

Mahdavi asks, “Does a hyphen connect or divide?” This mark is discouraged, except when it comes to blended surnames. Doesn't the hyphen indicate a kind of connectedness? If we do not hyphenate, say, like in Asian American, aren't we somehow keeping those identities apart? That seems to be exactly what got Roosevelt worked up: fear of division among American immigrants, whether they be citizens or not. He couldn't envision the kind of novel identity that Mahdavi has embraced in its duality.

For copy editors, and the A.I. bots that may replace them, the current atmosphere of division and conflicting orthodoxies raise daily challenges. Many hyphenated modifiers eventually merge to become compound words: non-binary becomes nonbinary (though I don't see this happening with Irishamerican). Perhaps we should embrace the slash, as with she/her. Then I could be Irish/Welsh/English/American. For my children and others, with even further mixed ethnic and religious heritages, that would certainly get unwieldy. But there's meaning and feeling in a mark, which is why we fuss over them.

Editor's note: the em dash gets its name because it's roughly the width of a capital M.



Raindrops

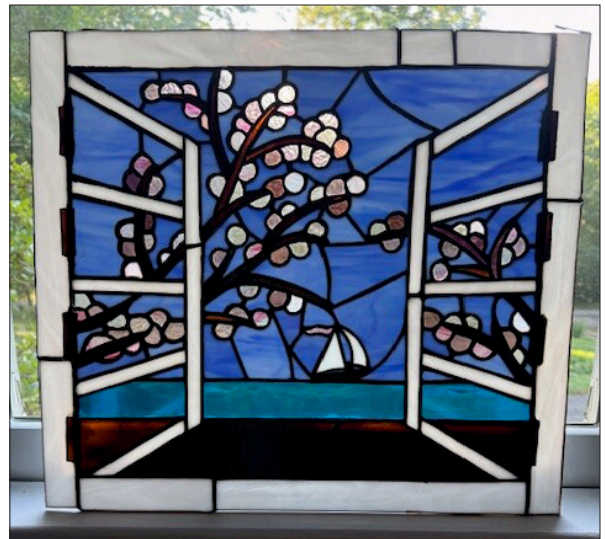
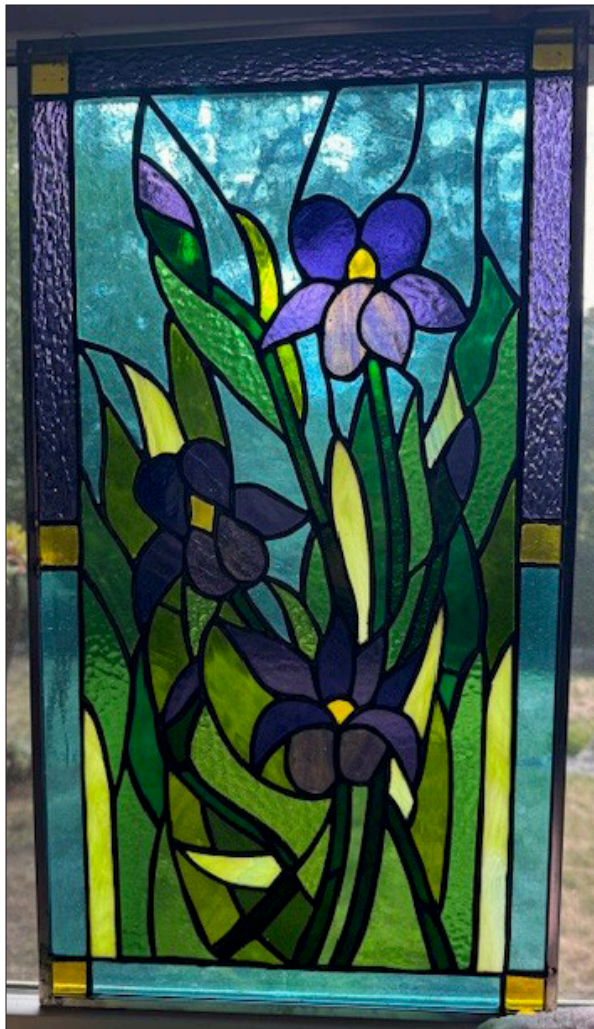
By Sarah Cannon Holden

A wet snow visited last night
and left ice to rest on the branches bare.
As the sun rose the ice sparkled and the day
stretched awake. Dark thin branches wore a
sparkling coat and tiny prisms flashed.
Branches shed as the sun moved upward.
We donned our rain hats under the drip, drip,
drip
that fell not as rain from the sky but the trees.
And then the ice was gone, the rain stopped.

We delighted in the wonder of a day
in transformation with the promise
of rebirth under the energy of the Sun.

Glass and color

Lincoln's Anne Warner makes art with stained glass. Here are a few samples from her home.



"Waves"

A villanelle* inspired by Winslow Homer's "The Fog Warning."

By Jane Appell

Feet in sand, I ponder the view.
Waves moving in gentle undulation
turn to turbulence white and blue.

Behind the fisherman, the surf grew
Like Hokusai's imagination.
With reverence, I behold the view.

The unknown can be scary and new
inspiring me to contemplation
of turbulence white and blue.

Such foreboding in the brew
haunts amid sleep deprivation
In awe, I take in the view.

Death sneaking up feels true,
loud rumblings in the world vibration
of turbulence white, blue.

It's hard not to stew
about what our nation calls us to do.
Feet in sand, I agitate the view,
turbulence, red, white and blue.

Waves in snow



The view from Canaan Drive facing southwest. (Photo by R.L. Smith)



"The Great Wave off Kanagawa," Hokusai's most famous print.



"The Fog Warning" by Winslow Homer

** Per Wikipedia, a villanelle is "a highly structured 19-line poem with French origins, consisting of five tercets (three-line stanzas) followed by a quatrain (four-line stanza). It uses only two rhymes throughout and features a strict repetition pattern where the first and third lines of the opening stanza alternate as the final lines of the subsequent tercets, ending with a couplet."*