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The Mayor's Corner

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as your Mayor these past four years, and for your continued support for the present term. It is hard to believe that four years have passed and there is still much to do.

It has been my goal to bring positive attention to Vernon and to enhance the programs that our citizens enjoy by dusting off some old favorites like the "Santa's House" featured every December on the town green for so many years and developing newer versions of programs like our new Senior Center on Bolton Road. These activities would not be possible without very devoted volunteers and the efforts of our departments working hard on your behalf.

This issue we feature the Santa's House on our cover courtesy of Christine Desmond Photography. This is the third anniversary of the Santa's House returning to Central Park and we are really excited about the coming season. The inside cover story will bring you all up to speed on why this project is so successful and continues to attract donor support and volunteers. Please bring your children to see Santa during the month of December in Central Park. We promise they won't be disappointed.

The New Senior Center, 135 Bolton Road is really coming together. This project truly continues to be a team effort. Our Senior Citizen's Advisory Board, Public Works Department and new Senior Center Director Maureen Gabriele are moving right along with design, color schemes, plantings and furniture. The Public Works Director, Robert Kleinhans and Superintendent of Schools, Joseph Macary are working collaboratively with the talented staff from the Board of Education and Department of Public Works to complete the project work and stay on budget. Everyone is invited to the Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting upon completion. Stay tuned for all the details.

We are pleased to announce that Michael J. Purcaro is our new Town Administrator. Michael comes to us from his position at the Vernon Board of Education where he served as the Director of



Daniel A. Champagne, Mayor

continued on page 3

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First Selectman's Corner... continued from page 1

Business and Finance. Mr. Purcaro brings years of state and local experience with him to his new position. Stop by the Town Hall during his open office hours for residents beginning in 2018.

Finally, I would like to congratulate Steve Krajewski, Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation, on receiving the 2017 Distinguished Service Award from the Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association. This is the most prestigious award that

CRPA offers. This award recognizes the recipient's years of outstanding contributions to parks and recreation. Congratulations to Steve Krajewski !

Wishing everyone a safe and happy holiday season!

Daniel A. Champagne
Mayor

Town of Vernon Assessor Notice

ELDERLY AND TOTALLY DISABLED HOMEOWNER PROGRAMS

Programs Currently Available in Vernon

1. State program which provides a tax credit on your real estate property tax bill. Amount of credit based on the amount of your income and the amount of your property taxes.
2. Local program which provides a tax credit on your real estate property tax bill. Amount of credit based on the amount of your income and the length of time you have owned your property.
3. Local program which "freezes" your real estate tax bill. Homeowner, or spouse, has to have been age 70 or older as of December 31, 2017. A tax lien is placed on the property annually for the difference in tax savings. When the property is sold, taxes that are saved now have to be paid back to the town.

ELDERLY AND TOTALLY DISABLED HOMEOWNER PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Applications for these tax relief programs are taken in the Assessor's Office from February 1, 2018 to May 15, 2018.

- The homeowner, or their spouse, has to have been 65 years old as of December 31, 2017, and must have been the owner (or have had life use) of the property on October 1, 2017.
- If you are Social Security Totally Disabled there is no age requirement for these tax relief programs. Proof of Social Security total disability will need to be provided to our office.
- When coming into the office to apply, you must bring proof of income for the calendar year 2017. This includes a signed copy of your federal income tax return and the SSA-1099 Social Security form. If you do not have to file an income tax return, please bring all documents provided for 2017 income (interest, dividends, pensions, etc).
- The qualifying income limits set by the State of CT are \$35,200 for unmarried and \$42,900 for married. Income is your adjusted gross income PLUS untaxed social security benefits. (The state sends us the updated income limits each year in November.)
- Taxpayers will need to reapply for these programs every other year. A reminder

letter will be sent with updated information before the refiling date.

SPECIAL MEETING

Board of Assessment Appeal Hearings {State Statute #12-110 sec (b)}

Please be advised that the Vernon Board of Assessment Appeals Board will meet for the sole purpose of hearing appeals filed between January 1 through February 20, 2018.

Appeals are specifically for assessments related to 2016 Supplemental Motor Vehicles, Real Estate and Business Personal Property for the October 1, 2017 grand list. All questions may be directed to: (860) 870-3625. The time and place as follows:

Town Hall Annex Building @ 8 Park Place, Vernon, Connecticut (Next to Town Hall)

March 19, 2018 between 4:00 pm & 7:00 pm
March 20, 2018 between 4:00 pm & 7:00 pm
March 21, 2018 between 4:00 pm & 7:00 pm

Walk-ins will not be permitted.

David Wheeler
Town Assessor

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From the Town Administrator



The drawing to a close of another year is a time to reflect on what we have accomplished, as well as our goals and priorities for the new year. Thank you, residents, and colleagues for the warm welcome received during my transition from the Vernon Public School system to my role as Vernon's new Town

Administrator. Our community is fortunate. Vernon employees have an excellent reputation for their caring nature and dedicated service. My interactions with staff have only confirmed this, and I thank our employees for their support during this transition.

In these unprecedented economic times, municipalities have faced a number of significant budgetary challenges. Despite these challenges, Vernon continues to achieve superior credit ratings. This is due to a coherent effort involving general government departments, our public school system, and local elected and appointed officials as

evidenced by our strong reserves and liquidity, manageable fixed costs (such as pension, benefits, and debt service), and proactive management of spending controls to address potential shortfalls.

In the year ahead, we will continue upgrading Vernon's infrastructure which includes the new Water Pollution Control Facility and the new Senior Center. Beginning in the new year, my office will also offer regular Open Office Hours for residents, providing an opportunity to hear directly from you relative to subjects impacting your lives. With the partnership of the community and direction of town leadership, we will meet and exceed taxpayer expectations by identifying and implementing the most efficient ways to provide high quality services that directly benefit our residents and families.

It is a privilege to serve Vernon as Town Administrator and I am excited for our future. I can say with confidence that our community is poised to continue its legacy as a great place to live, work, play, and learn. I wish everyone a peaceful and happy holiday season.

Michael J. Purcaro
Town Administrator

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New England Civil War Museum: One Man's Sacrifice



Photo courtesy of Alan Crane



Photo courtesy of Frank Niederwerfer

Oliver Dart (author Frank Niederwerfer's great-great uncle) was, like many young men in the Vernon area in the 19th century, of patriotic, hardworking, rural stock. Born in 1839, Oliver was the youngest of six children on his father's farm on modern-day Dart Hill Road.

As the Civil War approached Oliver's life drastically changed. His wife Emily passed away in early 1860 and a year

later he married Maria Symonds. In 1862 President Lincoln called for more volunteers and, like many local boys, Oliver exchanged his farm plow for a rifle and enlisted in Company D, 14th Connecticut Regiment. By September they found themselves in the middle of the bloodiest day in American history at the Battle of Antietam. There, nearly 23,000 Americans fell.

The following December the 14th Connecticut participated in the Battle of Fredericksburg. As they charged Marye's Heights a Confederate artillery shell burst into the ranks of Company D wounding several men. John Symonds (Oliver's brother-in-law) was blinded by the burst. Oliver had a fragment of the shell tear into his face losing part of his upper jaw and most of his teeth. A witness recalled, "[it looked like] a meat cleaver had cut [Dart's] face to pieces." He was carried off the battlefield by

Sergeant Benjamin Hirst to a hospital in town. His action likely saved Dart's life.

Oliver spent three months in army hospitals before returning home. After two operations on his face he was committed to an institution in Hartford. He returned to Vernon to find his wife had deserted him, but after obtaining a divorce he married a third time in 1869.

Though Dart 'was a peculiar man' he had an offbeat sense of humor. However his wounds, both physical and mental, remained with him. A family historian stated, "[Oliver] was somewhat affected, undoubtedly due to the shock and suffering that ensued from the injury." He died on August 11, 1879. He was only 40.

Learn more about Civil War soldiers like Oliver at the New England Civil War Museum in Rockville. Member Vernon Volunteers' Collaborative.



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Dress the Staff for Halloween - Vernon Center Middle School



The staff at Vernon Center Middle School participated in the annual *Dress the Staff for Halloween* event. As part of the Vernon Center Middle School Positive Behavior pro-

gram, students regularly receive SOAR cards for demonstrating the values of Safety, Organization, Achievement, and Respect/Responsibility. Students were able to use their SOAR cards to vote on costumes for staff members to wear for the day on October 31st. Another huge success!

EPOCH Art Program - Vernon Center Middle School



Students in the Vernon Center Middle School EPOCH Art program, under the direction of teacher Sherri O. Nevins, traveled to Real Art Ways gallery on October 27th. On

this grant-funded film field trip, Art students investigated art, justice and civic engagement through the lens of film and community conversation in viewing the documentary "Waste Land." Filmed over nearly three years, Waste Land follows renowned artist Vik Muniz as he travels from his home base in Brooklyn to his native Brazil and the world's largest garbage dump. There he photographs the "catadores," the pickers of recyclable garbage. His collaboration with these inspiring people results in the creation of amazing pieces of art out of garbage. Waste Land reveals both the dignity and the despair of the catadores and they begin to re-imagine their lives.

After the viewing, students participated in a moderated discussion about the themes of poverty, creativity, elitism, environmental care-taking, and hope. Students were also able to view the exhibits currently installed at Real Art Ways. One of the exhibits, Peter Edlund's Names on The Land, recently featured in the Hartford Courant, explores scenes in American landscapes and connects them to issues of conservation and Manifest Destiny. Students were able to make connections between what they know about the history of Native Americans and the development of the land and Edlund's paintings and etchings.

Community Project Maple Street School



The entire Maple Street school community worked on a project based on the book *Only One You* by Linda Kranz. The book is about the words of wisdom some fish share with their son about being unique and helping make this world a better place. Every student, every staff member, and many parents and community members painted rocks as an expression of their unique contribution to our school. These rocks are now

displayed together to enhance the beauty of Maple Street! "We are all unique and beautiful, but together we are a masterpiece."

Introducing Melissa Iles, Director of Pupil Personnel, Vernon Public Schools



On August 28, 2017, the Vernon Board of Education approved Melissa Iles to be the new Director of Pupil Personnel Services for the Vernon Public Schools. Melissa received her Sixth Year Program in Educational Leadership (Diploma of Advanced Graduate Study), 2008 and Certification: Administration (092) from Southern

Connecticut State University; her Masters of Science degree in Counseling, 1999, Certification: School Counselor from Central Connecticut State University and her Bachelor of Science degree in History with dual certification in Elementary and Special Education, 1990, from Mount Saint Mary College, Newburgh, New York. Melissa's previous positions include School Counseling Coordinator in Wallingford and the Director of Student Services in Wolcott. She has extensive experience teaching special education and serving as a school guidance counselor. Welcome to Vernon Melissa Iles!

Author Carol Weston Visits Vernon Center Middle School

Author Carol Weston, writer of more than 16 books and advice columnist for *Girls' Life Magazine*, will visit VCMS on November 3rd for a presentation and question and answer session with students. In preparation for Weston's presentation, students were asked to complete an assignment where they chose to either write a letter to themselves at a different time in their life or to write an advice column to a character in a book they are currently reading. Weston, who loves to interact with students and who writes a lot about middle schoolers,

BOE NEWS

offered to visit Vernon Center Middle School for free while in town for the Connecticut Children's Book Fair hosted on November 4 and 5 by UCONN and Barnes and Noble.



Rockville High School Marching Ram Band



Congratulations to the Rockville High School Marching Ram Band for the very successful 25th annual Festival of Bands on Saturday, October 14th, 2017. The Band members and their director Mrs. Ayers, as well as the Booster Club parents and all who attended, made the Festival a great community event.

Vernon Public Schools Participate in Eversource Hartford Marathon



On Saturday, October 14, 2017, Center Road School and Skinner Road School were part of the biggest race in Connecticut – Eversource Hartford Marathon. Runners, families, charities and volunteers all came together that day in community spirit. We are very proud that Vernon Public Schools were represented at the event! Way to go!

Crumbling Foundations Persist Within Vernon

Vernon has not escaped the deteriorating concrete issues plaguing over 30 surrounding town. The State of Connecticut has confirmed that the mineral pyrrhotite is a “necessary contributing factor.” We have issued permits for several foundation repairs and replacements in Vernon so far this year with an expectation of many more to come.

The Building Department as well as Town Administration are working collectively to determine the gravity of this problem and what can be done to assist Vernon home owners. We encourage anyone affected to register with the Department of Consumer Protection. The more residents who register, the better position the Town Administrator has when requesting aid. This is a crisis that local governments are not financially able to assist with independently.

Moving forward, the town has submitted the request for funds allocated for testing under the Small Cities community Development Block Grant, and will continue to apply for any funding available. Effective October 12,

continued on page 8

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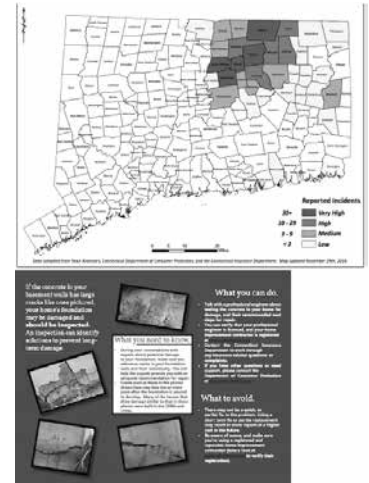
Crumbling Foundations... continued from page 7

2016, the Town Council passed Ordinance #304 waiving the Building Permit fees for those affected with this costly burden. A report from a licensed structural engineer is required. CROG (Capitol Region Council of Governments) has released a qualified vendor list <http://crocog.org/concrete-vendors>. Also, effective 10/1/16 Public Act 16-45 under House Bill No 5180 all Building Departments are

mandated to collect the name of the concrete provider in an effort to identify where future concrete originated.

If you have any questions, please contact the Building Department at 860 870 3633. Our department is willing to assist in any way we can.

John L. LaBossiere, Building Official



Rockville Public Library

Have you visited our newly designed website? We revamped our website to make it easier to find information about library services. You can now request most museum passes online in advance of your visit and print them out at home. The exceptions are Mystic Aquarium, State Parks and the Connecticut Science Center. Look for the BOOKS AND MORE tab and click on MUSEUM PASSES.

The new EVENTS page has information about upcoming events and allows you to register online. There are links to downloadable eBooks /audiobooks, information about borrowing items and forms to request a purchase or make a suggestion.

We encourage you to sign up for our monthly eNewsletter which has information about upcoming monthly events

and library activities. Go to the HOW DO I... section on our homepage and click the link that mentions SIGN UP FOR THE ENEWSLETTER. We don't spam or give out any information to others.

Donna Redfern, Director

Vernon Cemetery Commission

Veterans Memorial Walkway

The Veterans Memorial Walkway has been established at the Lugg Memorial Field at Grove Hill Cemetery. Memorial bricks are available for purchase with the inscription of a veteran's name and additional information. The honored veteran need not have been buried at Grove Hill Cemetery. Proceeds will be used for the maintenance of the Walkway.

Visit the Cemetery website for order forms for the Veteran Memorial Walkway. Cemetery Rules and Regulations and a fee schedule for lots and services are also posted on the web site. The Cemetery Office is located at 22 Cemetery Avenue at the entrance to Grove Hill Cemetery. Web site: vernon-ct.gov/cemetery.

Wreaths Across America

On Saturday December, 16th, 2017 members of the community gathered together to honor veterans during the holiday season as part of the annual Wreaths Across America Day.

The Vernon Cemetery Commission will conducted the ceremony this year at Lugg Field, the Veterans Section at Grove Hill Cemetery on Saturday December 16th starting at 12:00 noon. Seven ceremonial wreaths were placed to remember all soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines who

served, honor their sacrifices, and teach our younger generations about the high cost of our freedoms.

Specially designated wreaths for the Army, Marines, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, Merchant Marine, and POW/MIA will be placed during the ceremony that will be coordinated simultaneously at over 1,000 participating locations all across the Country.

Wreaths across America TM is a national nonprofit organization founded in 2007 to

continue and expand the annual wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery begun by Maine businessman, Morrill Worcester, in 1992. One interesting fact is that Mr. Worcester attended Rockville High School for a brief period in his youth.

For more information, please visit www.WreathsAcrossAmerica.org or contact the cemetery office for more details, 860-875-3158.

Fire Marshall

Winter Fire Safety Tips

With the arrival of the winter season there are some important seasonal fire safety tips that could save your life and property. The Town of Vernon Fire Department and the Town's Fire Marshal's Office offer the following:

- Be sure your furnace has been inspected and serviced by a qualified professional during the last 12 months.
- Be sure chimneys and vents are cleaned and kept clear of debris
- Be sure that smoke alarms and CO (carbon monoxide) alarms are tested and working, replace batteries.
- If you burn wood be sure it is dry and seasoned and dispose of all ashes in covered metal containers kept at least 10 feet from any buildings.
- Teach children to stay at least 3 feet away from fireplaces, wood & pellet stoves, oil stoves or other space heaters.
- If you should use a portable space heater, do not use extensions cords; plug the unit directly into an outlet using the cord provided.

Also, for those wishing to decorate their home or business for the winter holidays be sure to:

- Use decorations that are flame resistant or flame retardant.
- Check and test all lights, cords and plugs before using, replace any that are damaged.
- Check to see if the lights or cords are intended for inside or outside use and use accordingly.
- Turn off decorations if you will not be home or go to bed, put out all open flames (candles, etc.) when you leave a room or area or go to bed

One very important decoration that everyone needs is a clearly visible house number.

Finally, when the snow and ice starts to fall everyone is reminded to keep all exits clear of snow and ice, and to shovel snow away from fire hydrants.

If you would like more fire safety information contact the Vernon

Fire Marshal at 860-870-3652 or check www.nfpa.org/education. The NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) is a leader in fire and life safety education and research.

Retail Occupancy Holiday Fire Safety

The holiday sales season is upon us and everyone wishes for a busy, successful, and safe shopping season. This time of year means increased inventory on hand, an increase in the number of shoppers, and likely the use of more temporary and seasonal workers. While all of this is great news it also increases the risk of fire and safety hazards.

In order to help prevent problems the Town Of Vernon Fire Marshal's Office is distributing a fire prevention safety checklist to the business community and asking everyone to look at their own business and ask themselves the safety questions on the checklist.

The Fire Marshal's Office will also, from late November through December, visit stores in Vernon working with store managers and owners to help make their buildings and occupants safe from fire.

Fire safety needs our attention as the National Fire Protection Association reports that annually U.S. fire departments respond to over 13,570 fires in stores and other mercantile properties. These fires, on average, cause 12 civilian deaths, 299 civilian injuries, and cause \$604 million dollars in direct property damage. These fires more commonly occur during the day (5 am to 9 pm).

Please contact the Vernon Fire Marshal's Office at 860-870-3652 if you have any questions.

By all of us working together we can make this a successful and fire safe holiday season.

Respectfully

Raymond A. Walker Jr., Vernon Fire Marshal

Fire Safety Retail Store Safety Checklist

Name of Premises _____

Address of Premises _____

Access and Premises

_____ Is building address clearly visible from the street?

_____ Are fire lanes clear and unobstructed?

_____ Is the Knox Box visible and accessible?

_____ Are fire hydrants maintained and kept visible and accessible

Occupant Egress

_____ Are all exit doors visible, accessible, & fully functional?

_____ Do all exit doors open readily without the use of keys or special knowledge or effort?

_____ Are required fire doors self-closing and positive latching?

Egress Lighting

_____ Are exit signs illuminated?

_____ Is emergency lighting in place and does it work?

Storage

_____ Is all storage, equipment, etc.? at least 18" below automatic sprinkler heads?

_____ Is trash regularly removed from the building?

_____ Does storage including stock in receiving rooms block access to exits?

Automatic Sprinklers and Fire Alarms

_____ Is the FACP (fire alarm control panel) free of any alarms, trouble or supervisory signals?

_____ Are all automatic sprinkler system valves in the open position?

Inspector _____ Date of Inspection _____

Vernon Parks & Recreation Department

Winter 2017 - 120 South Street, Vernon, CT 06066 / 860-870-3520 / www.vernonrec.org

OFFICE HOURS: Monday - Wednesday, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm, Thursday, 8:30 am - 7:00 pm / Friday, 8:30 am-1:00 pm

GENERAL INFORMATION

VISIT US ONLINE – www.vernonrec.org is your source for the most up to date program and event information. You can register for programs and view information about all the parks and trails in Vernon.

CONSIDER YOURSELF REGISTERED – if you do not hear from us. You will be notified if a change occurs or if the program is filled. You are automatically put on the waiting list and your payment returned if the class is filled at the time your registration is received. You may register online at www.vernonrec.org

INSURANCE – All persons participating in recreation programs should carry their own personal health insurance. The Town of Vernon is not responsible for personal injuries. Participants in all department sponsored programs participate at their own risk. Only those enrolled in the program may attend.

ADA – The Town of Vernon does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, or disability in provision of programs and services. We are committed to assuring equal access to programs, activities, and services to all individuals. If you or a family member needs assistance, please let us know when you register.

CLASSES – We reserve the right to limit class size and to cancel classes failing to meet minimum requirements.

PAYMENTS & REFUNDS – Registration is not considered valid until the program fee is paid. We accept cash, check, MasterCard, Visa or Discover. Please visit us online at www.vernonrec.org for our refund and payment policy

INCLEMENT WEATHER – In the case of inclement weather, the Parks and Recreation Department reserves the right to cancel programs for the day. Registered participants will be notified via e-mail. Participants may also call the after-hours cancellation line at 860-870-3520.

PROGRAM PHOTOS

We invite everyone to browse our photo collection of recent activities and programs. Our staff photographer, Andre Garant, strives to cover as many of our events as possible. All photos are available for sale to parents at low prices. For further details, please visit our photo site at www.flickr.com/photos/vernonpr.

Before & After School Programs

R.E.K. (RECREATION AND EDUCATION FOR KIDS)

AFTER SCHOOL

After school fun right at your child's elementary school!

R.E.K. is available for children in grades K-5 at Center Road School, Lake Street School, Maple Street School, Northeast School, and Skinner Road School.

Hours & Dates: End of school day – 6:00 pm
First day of school – Last day of school

Fees: \$14/day; \$19/early dismissal day

Please visit our website or refer to the Parent handbook for more details on payment schedule and cancellation & refund policies

Daily Activities: • Homework time • Snack (one snack per day provided) • Recreation Activities include team sports, group games, outdoor free play, arts & crafts, board games, and more!

To register please visit www.vernonrec.org for a registration form or stop by the Parks & Recreation Office. Payment for the first full month is due with registration.



MORNING CLUB

****NEW THIS YEAR- MORNING CLUB AT NORTHEAST SCHOOL!****

Start your child's day in a positive way at Morning Club!

Morning Club is available for children in grades K-5 attending Northeast School & Skinner Road School.

Hours & Dates: 7:00 am – First Bell

First day of school – Last day of school

Fees: \$8/day

Please visit our website or refer to the Parent handbook for more details on payment schedule and cancellation & refund policies

Daily Activities: • Participants are welcome to bring a prepared breakfast item or participate in the school's breakfast program

• Recreation Activities include board games, arts & crafts, group games, Legos, and more!

To register, please visit www.vernonrec.org for a registration form or stop by the Parks & Recreation Office. Payment for the first full month is due with registration.

VACATION CAMP

No School? No problem!

Vacation Camp runs on select holidays and Professional Development days when there is no school during the school year. This program is open to children in grades K-5, and is held at Center 375 (375 Hartford Turnpike).

Hours & Dates: 7:00 am – 6:00 pm
Tuesday, November 7th

Wednesday-Friday, December 27th – 29th

Thursday, Friday, Monday, February 15th – 19th

Monday – Friday, April 9th – 13th

Fees: \$40/day for Vernon residents

\$50/day for non-Vernon residents

Please visit our website or refer to the Parent handbook for more

details on payment schedule and cancellation & refund policies
Daily Activities: • Participants should bring a lunch, drink, and two snacks • Recreation Activities include team sports, group games, outdoor free play, arts & crafts, board games, and more! • Longer sessions of Vacation Camp may include field trips

PRESCHOOL & YOUTH PROGRAMS

MOVE “N” GROOVE

This parent/child class will be sure to get your child up and dancing to the beat, moving to the music and having fun! Ms. Jess with Beyond Dance will be instructing the class. This program is for children age’s 18-36 mths. *Parent participation is required.* Participants will play fun games, dance, sing songs, and learn rhythm and beats. NOTE: Classes will be held continuously in 4 week sessions and participants are welcome to start at any point.

Thursdays

10:30-11:15 am

Vernon Teen Center Fitness Room

Fee: \$40.00 for 4 week session increments beginning January 4

Drop in fee: \$12 per class

PRESCHOOL FITNESS

Get your little ones on their feet and ready to have some fun! This program is a for children ages 3-5yrs old. Participants will play fun games with hula hoops, parachutes, sing songs, skip, jump and much more. This class will help your child develop motor, listening and social skills. NOTE: this is a 4-week program.

Tuesday EVENINGS, January 9-30, 5:30-6:15 pm

Fridays MORNINGS, January 12th - February 2nd, 9:30-10:15 am

Vernon Teen Center Fitness Room

Fee: Residents \$35.00, Non-Residents \$45.00

PARENTS NIGHT OUT

If you’re looking for a well-deserved night out, mark these dates on your calendar! Drop the kids with us to play board games, crafts, group and co-operative games. Pizza dinner provided. Each night has its own unique theme. Pre-registration is required and space is limited.

Program is held at the Teen Center (375 Hartford Turnpike)

Ages 6-10

5:00 pm-9:00 pm

Saturday November 18th Costume Dance Party

Saturday December 9th Movie and Popcorn Night

Saturday December 16th Cookie Decorating

Fee: Residents \$20, Non-Residents \$30



YOUTH WRESTLING

Learn the sport of Wrestling. It teaches self-discipline, self-confidence and fortitude. It also helps to develop strength of character in young people. This is an

eight week co-ed program held one night a week at the Rockville High School Wrestling Room. Class is tentatively scheduled to begin the first week of January. Participants receive a t-shirt.

Ages 5-7, 5:30-6:30 pm

Ages 8-12, 6:30-7:30 pm

Fee: Residents: \$45, Non-residents: \$55

PEE WEE BASKETBALL

An instructional, coed program for ages 3-5 years old. Participants will play games and activities which introduce basketball movements. This is an eight week program.



Classes will progress through basketball skills such as running, dribbling, shooting and passing. Class size is limited. Participants receive a T-shirt.

Saturdays

December 9th through February 17th (no program on 12/23, 12/30 & 1/13)

Ages 3-5 years old

9:00 am-9:30 am

9:30 am-10:00 am

Fee: Residents \$45, Non-residents \$55

K-1st GRADE JUNIOR BASKETBALL LEAGUE

An instructional, coed program that teaches the fundamentals of basketball to young players using a variety of fun drills and activities designed to develop basketball skills. Class size is limited. Participants receive a T-shirt. This is an eight week program.

Saturdays

December 9th through February 17th (no program on 12/23, 12/30 & 1/13)

Grade K & 1

10:15-11:00 am

11:00-11:45 am

Fee: Residents \$45, Non-residents \$55

GRADE 2 BEGINNERS BASKETBALL LEAGUE

An instructional, coed program for children in Grade 2. Instructional full court basketball games are introduced in the second half of the program. Teams will scrimmage within their registered time blocks. Class size is limited. Participants receive a T-shirt. This is an eight week program.

Saturdays

December 9th through February 17th (no program on 12/23, 12/30 & 1/13)

Grade 2

12:00 pm-1:00 pm

1:00 pm-2:00 pm

Fee: Residents \$45, Non-residents \$55

continued on page 12

Parks & Recreation... continued from page 11

*GRADE 3 & 4 RECREATION BASKETBALL LEAGUE

Full court basketball games are introduced with an instructional format. Teams are instructed by volunteer coaches. Practices will take place for one hour one day a week. Games will take place once a week on Saturdays. Participants will receive a T-shirt.

Teams play a six game schedule.

Mandatory player evaluations will be the week of November 13th.

Practice will tentatively begin the week of November 27th.

Girls, grade 3&4

Boys, grade 3&4

Fee: Residents \$55, Non-residents \$65

*GRADE 5-8 BOYS & GIRLS RECREATION BASKETBALL LEAGUE

Develop your basketball skills while you become a team player in this recreation league program. Participants will be placed on a team and will be coached by volunteers. Teams practice on a weeknight with games on Saturdays and possibly a few Sundays. This league partners with surrounding towns and some games will be away games. There are no requests for team placement or practice night. Participants will receive a T-shirt. Mandatory player evaluations will be the week of November 13th. Practice will tentatively begin the week of November 27th.

VERNON RESIDENTS ONLY: \$55

Girls, grade 5&6

Boys, grade 5&6

Girls, grade 7&8

Boys, grade 7&8

*GRADE 9-12 BOYS

RECREATION BASKETBALL LEAGUE

Develop your basketball skills while you become a team player in this recreation league pro-

gram. Participants will be placed on a team and will be coached by volunteers. Teams practice on a weeknight with games on Saturdays and possibly a few Sundays. There are no requests for team placement or practice night. Participants will receive a T-shirt.

Mandatory player evaluations will be the week of December 11th.

Practice will tentatively begin the week of December 18th.

VERNON RESIDENTS ONLY: \$55

Boys, grade 9-12

*VOLUNTEER COACHES NEEDED

The Boys and Girls Recreation Basketball Leagues cannot begin until we have volunteer coaches for all the teams in that league. Extensive basketball knowledge/playing experience are not



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required. We look for coaches who will provide a safe, fun and educational experience while setting nothing less than the best example for players. All coaches must submit to a background check and attend the pre-season coaches meeting.

VERNON TEEN CENTER

The Vernon Teen Center is open to Vernon Teens in grades 6-8 on Friday evenings now until May. The Teen Center provides a variety of safe, supervised activities for all teens. Some of these activities include billiards, basketball tournaments, dodgeball, xbox tournaments, dances, karaoke, and much, much more. Teen Center is open for sixth, seventh and eighth-graders. Guests are permitted on a limited basis. A registration form must be completed upon the first visit to the Teen Center. The registration form must have a parent or guardian's signature before any activities can be attended. Cost is \$12.

DANCE PROGRAM

Dance classes will be held continuously in 4 week sessions, beginning the week of January 2. Each week progresses for a performance in June 2. All classes are held at Center 375. Instructor Jessica and staff from Beyond Dance will be teaching a variety of different classes.



Monday Classes: Dance Stars (age 2) 4:45-5:30
Dance Stars (ages 3-4) 5:30-6:15
Boys Hip Hop (ages 6+) 5:30-6:15
Hip Hop Teen 6:15-7

Instructor Permission Only for Hip Hop Teen

Tuesday Classes: Dance Stars (ages 3-4) 4:30-5:15
Hip Hop/Jazz (ages 5-7) 5:15-6

Wednesday Classes: Shooting Stars (ages 7-11) 4:45-5:30
Instructor Permission Only for Shooting Stars
Tap/Jazz/Hip Hop (ages 6-8) 5:30-6:15
Hip Hop (ages 8-10) 6:15-7

Thursday Classes: Move-N-Groove (parent/child ages 18-36 mths) 10:30-11:15
Dance Stars (ages 3-4) 1-1:45
Ballet/Tap (ages 5-6) 4:30-5:15
Tap 1 (ages 8+) 5:30-6:15
Ballet (ages 11+) 5:15-6:15
Tap 2 (ages 10+) 6:15-7

Instructor Permission Only for Tap 2

Ballet (ages 7-10) 6:15-7:15
Pom/Jazz (ages 8+) 6:15-7 (in the gym)
Hip Hop Teen (ages 11+) 7-7:45
Contemporary Teen (ages 12+) 7:45-8:45
Adult Tap (18+) 8-9

Saturday Classes: Dance Stars (ages 2.9-3) 9-9:45
Tap/Jazz/Hip Hop (ages 7-11) 9:45-10:30
Dance Stars (ages 4-6) 10:30-11:15
Open Ballet/Lyrical (ages 8+) 11:15-12
Dance Class Fee Structure Per Dancer Per Session: \$40 for 1 class, \$30 for each additional class. Discount is NOT available with online registration. For discount, you must pay at the class for the additional class discount.

*NOTE: The classes that require instructor permission, MUST get permission and register at site. Online registration is NOT available for permission only classes
If you are interested in trying a class, you may pay a \$12.00 drop in rate at the site.

ADULT PROGRAMS

ZUMBA®

Are you ready to party yourself into shape? That's exactly what the Zumba® program is all about. It's an exhilarating, effective, easy-to-follow, Latin-inspired, calorie-burning dance fitness-party that's moving millions of people toward joy and health. The exercises include music with fast and slow rhythms, as well as resistance training. The program runs weekly.

Mondays & Wednesdays

7:05-8:05 pm

Center 375 Gym

Tuesdays & Thursdays

9:30-10:30 am

Vernon Teen Center Dance Room

Drop In rate: \$8.00/class

POUND

POUND® is a full-body drumming workout that uniquely combines cardio, conditioning, and strength training with yoga and Pilates-inspired movements using lightly weighted exercise drumsticks (Ripstix®). Channel your inner rock star with this full-body cardio jam session inspired by the infectious, sweat-dripping fun of playing the drums. Using Ripstix®, lightly weighted exercise drumsticks, torch calories and drum your way to a leaner, slimmer physique – all while rocking out to your favorite music!

Thursdays

7-7:45 pm

Vernon Teen Center Fitness Room

Drop In rate: \$8.00/class

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Parks & Recreation... continued from page 13

ADULT SOFTBALL

The Vernon Parks and Recreation Department offers several adult softball leagues. All players must be at least 18 years old; teams can have up to 24 players on a roster. There are no additional fees for non-resident players. Scheduled games are on set nights (make-ups may need to be different nights). 14 game regular season schedule, all teams make the playoffs. The Semi-finals and Championship playoff games are best of three. Season begins the week of April 16th.

Returning team registration opens February 5th, a 50% deposit holds your spot. New team registration opens February 26th; a 50% deposit holds your spot. Pay your full balance by March 9th and save \$50! Final balances due by March 29th. All deposits are non-refundable.

Monday Men's D League
Tuesday Men's C League
Monday/Wednesday/Thursday Men's C League
Tuesday Women's League (some games played with Glastonbury Women's League)
Wednesday Coed League

Registration Fees:

Early Bird; \$800 per team if full balance received by 4:30 pm March 9th
\$850 per team if paid after March 9th.

TRIPLE 5 ADULT SOFTBALL LEAGUE

How about five vs five vs five! 10 players in the field, five players hitting, once you make your outs the five members team switches with one of the five member defensive teams.

All players must be at least 18 years old; teams can have up to 15 players on a roster. There are no additional fees for non-resident players. Schedule games are on set nights (make-ups may need to be different nights). 10 game regular season schedule, all teams make the single elimination playoffs. Season begins the week of April 16th.

Thursday Men's League
Thursday Coed League

Registration Fees:

Early Bird Registration; \$575 per team if full balance received by 4:30 pm March 9th
\$625 per team if paid after March 9th.

FREE AGENTS

All adult softball registration is done by teams; we do not take individual participant registrations. However, if you are an individual interested in joining a team please e-mail your name, contact information, preferred playing position, preferred league(s) and previous playing experience to parksandrec@vernon-ct.gov This information

will be sent to the team captains. Team captains will contact you directly if they are in need of players.

DISC RENTAL

Discs to use at Ecker Hill Disc Golf Course are available to rent from our office located at 120 South Street in Henry Park. The rental is FREE, however a valid driver's license or state issued ID is required.

SLEDDING HILLS

HENRY PARK

Henry Park is located at 120 South Street. The sledding hill begins at the tower and goes downhill towards the Hartmann Pavilion. Snow permitting, the hill is lighted seasonally until 9:00 pm each night.

VERNON CENTER MIDDLE SCHOOL

The sledding hill is located behind VCMS near to the Community Gardens. Snow permitting, the hill is open seasonally until sundown.

ICE SKATING

Valley Falls Pond located at 300 Valley Falls Rd. & Walkers Reservoir on Reservoir Rd are available seasonally for ice skating. Participants should call the Vernon Parks and Recreation office for a condition report PRIOR to stepping onto the ice.

SPECIAL EVENTS

HOLIDAY HOUSE DECORATING CONTEST

The Vernon Parks and Recreation Department, in conjunction with the Vernon Community Network (VCN), is holding the annual Holiday Decorating Contest for all residential houses and commercial buildings located in Vernon. Registration forms available at the Vernon Parks & Recreation Dept

Entry Information:

- Entries must be submitted by 12:00 pm, December 15th, 2017.
- Judging will take place after all entries are in.
- Recognition will be given out to the top winners in each category.
- Participants may only enter in ONE of the following categories:
Overall Best Display; Best Commercial Building; Best Door;
Best Holiday Themed House

SNOWMAN/SNOW SCULPTURE CONTEST

The Vernon Parks and Recreation Department is holding the annual Snowman/Snow Sculpture Contest for all residents in Vernon. To enter in the contest, you must email a picture of your snowman or sculpture to the Vernon Parks & Recreation Dept at: parksandrec@vernon-ct.gov.

Please be sure to include the photo, your name, address, and phone number in the email. If you do not have access to email, you must take a picture and bring a copy of the photo to the Parks & Rec office at 120 South Street. Judging will take place as entries are submitted. Entries must be submitted by March 2nd. Winners will be announced mid-March.

FISHING DERBY



SPONSORED BY: JT'S FLYSHOP; UNION, CT
53rd annual Fishing Derby Saturday May 5th 8:00 am-11:00 am. Valley Falls Pond will be stocked with plenty of trout, take this opportunity to introduce

your children (Ages 15 and under) to fishing when the odds are stocked in their favor. This is a free event. Prizes will be given to the top 3 in each division. The John M. Gessay Award will be presented to the participant who catches the heaviest trout. Registration is taken on site starting at 7:30 am.

MOTHER'S DAY DASH

45th Annual 5K Mother's Day Dash on Sunday May 13th. The start and finish will take place in Henry Park (120 South St; Vernon, CT 06066). There are 16 different age divisions and a special mother-daughter, mother-son division. The top three in each division will receive prizes. There will be a free raffle for all runners that stay for the awards ceremony. There will be plenty of water, bagels and fruit available to the runners. Race proceeds will benefit the Vernon Teen Center, the Police Explorers and Send-A-Kid to Camp Fund. Registration opens in February, please visit our website for the registration form.



PICNIC/PAVILION/LODGE RENTALS

Vernon Parks & Recreation has a variety of picnic areas and pavilions available for public use. Use of these sites is on a first-come, first-served basis and they are available to the general public during park hours. These areas, as well as the beautiful Newhoca Lodge, the Showmobile, and rooms at Center 375 are also available to reserve for family or organizational events & parties. Please visit our website at www.vernonrec.org for more details regarding rules and fees for reservations.

GENERAL RENTAL INFORMATION

Please visit our website at www.vernonrec.org for specific details regarding rules and fees for reservations. Fees are per hour. Full payment for the reservation is due up front in order to reserve a date. Reservation time must include set-up and clean-up time, and renters are responsible for cleaning up and disposing of garbage. Refunds will ONLY be granted in the event a cancellation is made with written notice 30 days or more prior to the reservation. A \$25 cancellation fee will be charged. NO refunds will be issued for cancellations made with less than 30 days notice.

VERNON TOWN DEPARTMENT DIRECTORY

Administration	860-870-3670
Assessor	860-870-3625
Animal Control	860-870-3558
Building Department	860-870-3633
Cemetery Office	860-875-3158
Collector of Revenue	860-870-3660
Data Processing	860-870-3646
Economic Development	860-870-3637
Emergency Services	860-871-3142
Employment Opportunities	860-870-3605
Engineering	860-870-3664
Finance	860-870-3690
Fire Department	860-871-7468
Fire Marshal	860-870-3652
Health Department	860-872-1501
Library	860-875-5892
Parks and Recreation	860-870-3520
Planning and Development	860-870-3640
Police Department	860-872-9126
Public Works	860-870-3500
Senior Center	860-870-3680
Sewer Treatment Plant	860-870-3545
Social Services	860-870-3661
Town Clerk	860-870-3662
Water Pollution Control	860-870-3699
Youth Services Bureau	860-870-3555
Zoning Administration	860-870-3636

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Parks & Recreation... continued from page 16

Alcohol is not allowed on any Vernon Parks & Recreation property. Please visit our website for additional restrictions and rules.

HENRY PARK

The majestic Memorial Tower at Fox Hill makes a picturesque setting for a wedding and may be reserved in three-hour time blocks. The picnic groves and the Russell G. Hartmann Pavilion can be rented for family gatherings, baby showers, birthday parties, and business events year-round. The Showmobile, a mobile stage, is ready for local or out of town rental, with the option for multi-day rentals available. Athletic areas, including softball fields, a volleyball court, tennis courts, and basketball court are also available to rent. The Horowitz Pool is available to rent for pool parties during the aquatics season.

NEWHOCA PARK

The beautiful Newhoca Lodge is a beautiful place to hold meetings, baby showers, receptions, business events, memorial services, and family parties. With heating and A/C, a kitchenette, and bathrooms this picturesque lodge on Bolton Lake is our most popular rental site. Newhoca Park also has a Pavilion that is available for rent.

VALLEY FALLS PARK

Picnic groves and the Valley Falls Pavilion are available to rent at this scenic park that includes hiking trails and a lake with a small beach front.

TEEN CENTER

The Teen Center is the perfect place to have a meeting, birthday party, shower or family gathering. Rooms available to reserve are:

Big Community Room:

Holds up to 75 people
Booth style seating
Four 6' tables available upon request
60 folding chairs available upon request
Pool table, foosball table & air hockey table
Food allowed
Fee: Residents \$35
Non-Residents \$45

Gymnasium:

Holds up to 300 people
(Holds up to 175 with tables)
2 Basketball hoops
No food allowed
Fee: Residents \$50
Non-Residents \$60

Fees are PER HOUR. After 2 hours, additional time may be added in half hour increments if desired. Your reservation must include set-up and clean up time. Renters are responsible for cleaning up.

SPONSORSHIPS

Do you see a program or event that coincides with your organization's mission? We have sponsorship opportunities for almost every program, event and field. Your organization can be front and center on shirts, fliers, field billboard and even

on our webpage! Please contact us at 860-870-3520 to find out how you can increase your organization's awareness.

MOTHER'S DAY DASH

This 5k averages 300 runners! We have several sponsorship packages available. Benefits can include items such as your logo on the event shirt, a recognition plaque to display at your business or an information table at the event. Contact Rich at 860-870-3520 for details on the sponsorship packages.

FIELD SIGNS

Any business interested in having a 4x8 sign displayed, year round at the Henry Park softball field are asked to contact the P&R office regarding details. Henry Park has over 200,000 participants that use the Park. There are numerous special events that take place in the Park. There isn't a more visible place in Vernon! Take advantage of this opportunity!

DISC GOLF SIGN SPONSORS

The opportunity to sponsor a sign on the brand new Vernon Ecker Disc Golf Course, located on the Ecker Hill property is available. To sponsor a tee sign which is 6x18 would cost \$200 for two years. Your business will be on the tee sign along with a visual design of the hole and the number of the hole. There are only a few tee signs left, so if you're interested, please contact Steve Krajewski at the P&R office at 860-870-3520.



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Department of Public Works



Director Robert Kleinhans is proud to announce that four Vernon Public Works employees were recently recognized at the Connecticut Technology Transfer Center's graduation ceremony on November 16, 2017.

Equipment Operator Mark Rizzo successfully completed the Road Master program which is a series of workshops designed to provide municipal highway personnel with knowledge of the fundamentals of modern road maintenance, management procedures and techniques. Required workshops include:

- Basics of a Good Road
- All About Asphalt Pavements
- Principles of Drainage for Local Roads
- On-the-Job Safety and OSHA Regulation for Local Road Personnel
- Work Zone Safety for Maintenance Operations on Local Roads
- Planning and Managing Local Road Snow and Ice Control Activities
- Effective Communication Skills
- Planning and Managing Local Road Snow and Ice Control Activities
- Effective Communication Skills (formerly Managing, Motivating, and Communicating Your Way to Successful Supervision)

Laborers Colton Garrison, Luis Simoes and Nick Petrolito successfully completed the Connecticut Public Works Academy which is an educational program designed to provide both new and current public works employees with a broad overview of the fundamental skills needed to be a public works professional. The program

is comprised of a series of six (6) weekly sessions aimed at providing education on those core competencies necessary to be a successful public works professional. These sessions cover the following topics:

- Professionalism & Communication Skills
- Chainsaw Safety & Storm Clean-up Issues
- Road Fundamentals
- Operational Safety for Public Works
- Basic Work Zone Safety and Flagger Certification
- Safe Operation of a Snow Plow and Winter Operations and Sander Calibration

Congratulations to our recent graduates on their hard work!

Robert Kleinhans
Director - Department of Public Works

Snow Removal Information

General Info

The primary responsibility for keeping Vernon streets open and the transportation network alive during winter storms rests with the Town of Vernon Public Works Department. The State Department of Transportation takes care of the state roads (generally any road with a route number) and can be reached at 860-875-4993.

The State DOT is responsible for the following routes in Vernon:

- RT 30 - Hyde Avenue, Hartford Turnpike
- RT 31 - Grove Street, Reservoir Road, Mile Hill Road
- RT 74 - Tolland Avenue, East Main Street, Union Street, Windsor Avenue, Windsorville Rd
- RT 83 - Talcottville Road, West Road (parts of Hartford Turnpike & Windsor Avenue)
- RT 527 - West Street
- RT 533 - Tunnel Road, Lake Street (from Tunnel Road to Bolton town line)
- RT 541 - South Frontage Road
- RT 542 - Whitney T. Ferguson Road

When winter precipitation starts, the Town of Vernon Public Works Department dispatches trucks throughout the Town to plow, lay salt and sand over 26 separate plow routes. Within each plow route, certain streets are designated as primary streets to be "opened up" first so that all areas of the Town can be reached by snow removal crews and emergency vehicles. Secondary streets are then opened. This means that one or two passes will be made

so that the road is open for traffic. Residents can help by parking vehicles off the street at all times during the winter months.

After all streets are opened, the drivers will begin to "widen out" so that the maximum width of the traveled way will be usable. Widening out may require four or more additional passes to move the accumulated snow to the gutter line. Cul-de-sac residents are encouraged to be patient with the removal of snow from these areas as large snow removal equipment cannot appropriately clear the entire area and alternate equipment may then be utilized when the storm subsides. The plow operator has little choice as to where the snow will be deposited; many times the snow will be deposited into driveway openings.

It is suggested that when clearing your driveway you shovel the snow to the right when facing the street, this way what you have shoveled will not be deposited in your driveway by the plow. The parking ban may be enforced by the Chief of Police if the storm warrants it.

Sidewalks

Sidewalks must be cleared of all ice and snow within eight hours of the end of the storm, or eight hours after sunrise if the storm ended during the night. When plowing or clearing driveways and

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sidewalks snow may not be deposited onto the roadways. Plowing contractors and homeowners should take notice that violators may be subject to a fine of up to \$50 for each offense. Our department has free sand available to residents only for sidewalks. Call the Public Works Office at 860-870-3500 for the locations.

Mailboxes

While plow truck drivers make every effort to avoid mailboxes, they do, on occasion, hit or knock one over. Operators must report these incidents to their supervisor. It is also possible that mailboxes can be knocked over by heavy snow without the operator's knowledge.

It is the Town's policy to replace a mailbox struck by a Town vehicle if the mailbox was mounted on a sturdy post and located according to U.S. Postal Service standards. Once it has been determined that the Town is at fault, the mailbox will be replaced with either a plain white or black regulation mailbox and a pressure-treated post (if applicable). Under some weather conditions a temporary mailbox may be utilized until a permanent post can be installed. The post office will not deliver mail until the mailbox is replaced. These standards are summarized as follows:

- The box should be 3½ - 4 feet from ground level to the bottom of the box.
- The face of the box should be flush with the back of the curb or set back 6 - 12 inches from the edge of the road.
- All mailboxes should have a handle, a flag, and the house number on the right hand side as you face it from the street.
- Residents must keep the approach to their mailbox clear of obstructions to allow safe access for delivery. If USPS employees are impeded in reaching a mail receptacle, the Postmaster may withdraw delivery service.
- Curbside mailboxes must be placed to allow safe and convenient delivery by carriers without leaving their vehicles.

Fire Hydrants

Owners of property and occupants of buildings that have a fire hydrant are required by Town Ordinance to clear a 4-foot area in all directions around the hydrant and a 3-foot wide path from the street to the fire hydrant. Failure to comply with this ordinance may result in a fine. The Fire Department counts on hydrants being cleared of snow to help protect your safety.

Catch Basins

Help minimize street flooding by shoveling snow and ice from in front of the catch basin nearest your house. This includes keeping catch basin grates free of leaves and other debris all year long!

Basketball Hoops & Poles

The Town will not be responsible for basketball hoops and poles placed on town property, either at the edge of the road or on a

cul-de-sac. Basketball hoops or poles damaged by town vehicles, especially during removal of refuse, recycling, snow, slush, etc. will not be repaired or replaced. These items should be placed on private property.

Refuse & Recycling Collection

- Have your cart(s) at the curb by 6 am on your scheduled collection day.
- Face the lid opening toward the street - handle toward the house.
- Leave 3 feet between each cart or place cart(s) on either side of driveway.
- During winter months, please keep cart(s) clear of snow, snow banks, parked cars, and other obstructions.

Ash Disposal

Under no circumstances are ashes to be disposed of in the refuse and recycling cart(s). Wood ash retains enough heat to ignite other combustible materials for several days. Sparking embers are a fire hazard. There is a designated container located at the Public Works Garages at 375 Hartford Turnpike.

Robert J. Kleinhans
Director of Public Works

SOME WINTER TIPS

- * Put good snow tires on your car and keep a shovel in your trunk.
- * Drive courteously according to road conditions and watch out for the safety of pedestrians.
- * Pay close attention to weather forecasts.
- * Keep refuse and recycling carts out of harm's way. Storm conditions can sometimes bring high, winds that can toss cans into the road.
- * Keep hands out of snow blowers.
- * Deposit snow to the right side of the driveway (facing the road) to prevent it from being pushed back into the driveway.
- * Clean walks after the final pass of the plows.

HELP US HELP YOU

- * Please do not leave your vehicle on the street during snow or ice storms.
- * Please limit travel to trips that are absolutely necessary.
- * Please do not place snow into streets. Remember, you are responsible for your contractor's actions.
- * Please keep a safe, minimum distance of 50 feet back from snow control vehicles.
- * Please keep your mailbox 42" above the curb and slightly back from the edge of pavement and keep the post and hardware in good repair.
- * Please remove all basketball hoops for the winter months to prevent damage to equipment and reduce liability.
- * Keep refuse and recycling carts at the edge of the driveway, NOT in the roadway.

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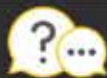
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Friends of the Hockanum River Linear Park: Connecting Communities



The Dart Hill Trails are Vernon's section of the Hockanum River Linear Park.
Photo by Jon Roe



The interpretive signs next to the marsh on Dart Hill North were created by Tom Ouellette.
Photo by Jon Roe

The Hockanum River is born in Shenipsit Lake and runs through the four towns of Ellington, Vernon, Manchester and East Hartford on its way to the Connecticut River. In 1969, the Conservation Commissions from the four towns began to talk about a river park along the entire length of the river as part of the movement to clean up the country's polluted rivers.

In 1988 the State provided funding to the four towns to initiate development of the river park. Vernon used a portion of its funding to develop a plan for our park. The 'Hockanum River Linear Park Master Plan' was presented to the Town Council in 1991. It was a detailed maze of trails and bikeways, displayed on four large 6-ft high panels. Impressive - but it spelled dollars. The question was, "Who's going to pay for this park"? Out of that question the non-profit organization Friends of the Hockanum River Linear Park of Vernon, Inc. was born. Its purpose was to provide the resources needed to develop and maintain the river trails, and to engage the community in the building of the park.

In the early 2000s, the Friends began to seek grant funding to develop the river park master plan. Since that time, they have been awarded 7 grants totaling \$235,330 for trail construction. By the mid-2000s trail sections along the Hockanum were being completed, and needed maintenance. The Vernon Greenway Volunteers took on that role.

The most recent - and largest - grant award provides funding to connect the Vernon river trail to the Ellington and Manchester trails. Two structures were needed to complete the connections: a suspended footbridge over the river on the old rail bed off Windsorville Road, and a boardwalk to get through the marsh area on Pleasantview Drive.

Both the suspended bridge and the boardwalk are a first in Vernon and will enhance the experience of trail users. Most importantly, their completion marks a major milestone of the Friends: connection of our Hockanum River trail to the Ellington and Manchester trails. Member Vernon Volunteers' Collaborative.

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