



# TOWN OF VERNON

## Office of the Mayor

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### **MEDIA ADVISORY**

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## **Rockville Elks Donate \$5,000 Worth of Gift Cards for Back to School Clothing for Vernon Children**

**(VERNON, Connecticut)** – The Rockville Elks Lodge has donated \$5,000 worth of gift cards to the Town of Vernon for distribution to local families to purchase back to school clothing. The cards are distributed by the Vernon Social Services Department.

The Social Services Department has already received donations of \$3,500 worth of gift cards from the community and \$1,000 worth from the Salvation Army.

For nearly 20 years, the community has generously contributed to assist Vernon families with back to school clothing. In past years donors often helped families shop for clothing. Last year, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the program transitioned to gift cards donated to the Town and then distributed to families.

In 2020, the families of 71 students in kindergarten through eighth grade received nearly \$7,000 worth of gift cards.

“Vernon residents can always be counted on to assist those in our community who need a hand. This is who we are,” Mayor Dan Champagne said. “The Rockville Elks consistently step up when they see a need and help make Vernon the special place it is.”

With the donation from the Rockville Elks, more children will have new clothes to begin the new school year.

For families already struggling to make ends meet, providing new clothing for the start of school can be a hardship. Children who are dressed well and feel good about themselves have the confidence they need to do well in school.

“Having nearly \$10,000 to assist families with back to school clothing will go a long way toward meeting the need,” said Matt Hellman, Vernon’s Director of Social Services. “We often have children on the waiting list and

new families arriving in town who need assistance. This generous gift from the Rockville Elks will be a great help to families and to many children in our community.”

“Charity and brotherly love are among the founding principles of the Elks,” said Dennis Cartier, the president of Rockville Elks Lodge No. 1359. “Nationally, the Elks donate \$208 million a year to community-minded programs and we are proud to be able to make this contribution to families in Vernon.”

Additional gift card donations are welcome and can be mailed to Vernon Social Services, Town Hall, 14 Park Place, Vernon, CT 06066. They can also be dropped off at the Social Services office at Town Hall during business hours.

### **About the Town of Vernon**

The Town of Vernon is a celebrated place to live, work and visit. From its beautiful parks and lakes, to its vast trails and historic homes and buildings, Vernon is a resilient and thriving community that promotes the health and wellbeing of its residents and values the natural environment. With a resident population of approximately 30,000 and occupying 18.03 square miles, Vernon combines a balanced appreciation of history, and a strong economic base for growth, both residential and commercial. Located 15 minutes east of the Connecticut capital of Hartford, and 25 miles from the City of Springfield, Massachusetts, the Town of Vernon is strategically located in “New England's Knowledge Corridor” with close proximity to some of the top colleges and universities in the country.

Designated a certified Sustainable Community, the Town of Vernon offers a wide range of benefits and services to its residents. The Town of Vernon is a full-service municipality that practices a management philosophy of continuous quality improvement. To learn more about the Town of Vernon, please call (860) 870- 3670 or visit [www.vernon-ct.gov](http://www.vernon-ct.gov).

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