



TOWN OF VERNON

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Vernon Emergency Service Leaders to Bag Groceries at ShopRite to Help Fight Hunger

(VERNON, Connecticut) – Five of Vernon’s emergency service leaders will bag customers’ groceries Thursday, September 16th, 2021 at ShopRite of Tri-City Plaza, 35 Talcottville Road (Route 83) in Vernon as part of the store’s “Help Bag Hunger Day” and to raise awareness about food insecurity.

Police Chief John Kelley, Fire Chief Stephen Eppler, EMS Coordinator Jean Gauthier, Fire Marshal Dan Wasilewski and Town Administrator and Director of Emergency and Risk Management Michael Purcaro, will bag groceries from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Under the leadership of Mayor Dan Champagne, the Town of Vernon distributed more than 10 tons of fresh produce to families experiencing food insecurity, and partnered with ShopRite to provide curbside pick-up of essential household supplies and groceries during the pandemic. Thursday’s event is another way the Town is working with community partners to assist individuals and families in need.

“ShopRite of Tri-City Plaza and owner Jordan Coe have been valuable partners to the Town of Vernon in our comprehensive response to COVID-19,” said Purcaro. “We are pleased to participate to not only raise awareness about food insecurity and hunger, but to do something about it.”

Throughout the day Thursday, cashiers will be asking customers to donate to help fill the shelves of local food banks, and local leaders will assist in bagging customers’ groceries.

“This is my second year bagging groceries at ShopRite and I’m looking forward to it,” said Fire Marshal Wasilewski, who along with EMS Coordinator Gauthier got their colleagues involved in the effort. “It’s a great opportunity to meet residents and to help people.”

The local ShopRite has a strong partnership with Cornerstone in Rockville to channel donations to its food pantry.

“The folks at ShopRite have been wonderful to Cornerstone,” said Sharon Redfern, the organization’s Executive Director. “They started a program where they have \$5 and \$10 bags of food that customers can buy that go to our food pantry. We have received more than 28,000 items through that program. And they lend us a hand in so many other ways. They’re really good people there at ShopRite.”

September is National Hunger Action Month and ShopRite works to raise money through an initiative called *Partners in Caring* to feed the hungry in the local community, said Coe, President/Owner of Waverly Markets, which operates ShopRite stores in Vernon, Manchester and East Hartford.

“Here at ShopRite helping those who are hungry is always on our minds,” Coe said. “Through our partnership with Cornerstone and the Town of Vernon, we know we are reaching local families and providing them with easy access to good nutritious food.”

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.

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