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Dear Friends and Neighbors:

Welcome to the first issue of our new Vernon Voice Magazine. We are very excited to resume sending you updates, sharing important information and informing you about coming events and happenings around town.

I hope this letter finds you healthy and safe. The coronavirus pandemic has changed all of our lives in different ways and we are doing our best to navigate this new world with fresh, exciting ideas to keep in touch with you. We continue to be creative and innovative in the development and administration of the programs and services offered to our community. Our hope is that people of all ages can stay connected in this ever changing world.

Your local town government remains open, as it has throughout this pandemic. We work diligently every day to make Town Hall and other town offices accessible to those who still need to visit us in person. We are committed to providing a COVID-safe environment in all town facilities.

COVID-19 vaccinations are a priority and if you are interested in being vaccinated, please call our Vernon Regional Call Center at 860-896-4568 for scheduling and questions. We are very fortunate to have such talented and dedicated town employees working to make the vaccination process convenient and easy. We are also grateful to the

many people who have volunteered to serve at our clinics and call center. They play a crucial role in our nationally-recognized vaccination program. Special thanks to Dr. Daksh Rampal of Priority Urgent Care for partnering with the Town of Vernon. His medical expertise and clinical guidance have been instrumental in delivering life-saving vaccine to our community.

To serve our community during this difficult year, we reimagined traditions to engaged people of all ages. Halloween Trunk or Treat and Winterfest were huge successes that delighted our community. We also completed the transformation of a blighted area into the beautiful Gene Pitney Memorial Park to honor one of Vernon's greatest sons. Through a partnership with the federal government, we distributed fresh healthy produce from farms directly to the tables of our seniors and others in our community experiencing food insecurity. We worked with local supermarkets to provide groceries to people during the early and uncertain days of the pandemic, distributed hand soap, bottled water and hand sanitizer we received from the state, and gratefully accepted donations of personal protective equipment that went to our first responders and schools. We also ensured that our residents' voices were heard by implementing a safe and innovative drive-thru voting process. We



appreciate the contributions and collaboration that have enabled us to respond to the pandemic and keep our community safe!

It is important to remember that we are all in this together. We will work to keep our doors open to all who need us, and to continue our vaccination program until everyone who wants to be vaccinated is vaccinated.

Enjoy the magazine!



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Spring is in the air and the fish are biting – hopefully! Fishing season opened on March 4, 2021, per an Executive Order by the Governor. Social distancing is encouraged. Be sure to visit the State's website at <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Fishing/CT-fishing> to answer any fishing questions you may have or purchase your license online. Of course, you can always make an appointment to see us for your license or current Fishing/ Hunting guide.



June is licensing month in Connecticut, and all pups 6 months of age must be legal beagles. A valid rabies certificate and spayed or neutered certificate is required. The fee for an altered dog is \$8.00 and \$19.00 for unaltered, plus \$1.00 per month late fee after June 30th. All new licenses and renewals will be done this year by mail only.



The Town Clerk's Office is, and always has been, open for all services, but an appointment is required. Please call 860-870-3662 to schedule a time to come in.

Summer Concert Crowd



Activities



Newhoca Lifeguards



Showmobile

The Town of Vernon Assessor and staff are in the process of inspecting one- to four-unit residential properties that have not been physically inspected in the last ten years. Properties that will be inspected include those sold between January 2020 and October 2021, those that have recently had improvements made to them, and those that have had building permits taken out within the last five years. Additionally, properties for which the owner did not respond to an Assessor's Office mailing seeking confirmation of Assessor records of the property will be inspected.

Because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, only exterior inspections will be made.

State law requires property inspections to ensure the accuracy of the assessor's records for tax purposes.

Assessor's staff wearing identification badges will ask to inspect only the exterior of a dwelling. The goal is to assure that records are correct and to encourage the owner to be involved in and part of the inspection process.

Property values for revaluation are typically derived from sales occurring between January 2020 and October 2021. Sales data should reflect the actions of buyers and sellers in the current real estate market. Property owners are encouraged to make the Assessor's office aware of all

property conditions that could affect value.

Additional information will be published in the Journal Inquirer. Information will also be included in July tax bill statements and on the Town webpage. Property owners can always call the Assessor's Office at 860-870-3625.

Submitted by: David A. Wheeler,
CCMA II, CRA, Assessor



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Why do I need building permits and inspections?

Many homeowners ask themselves this question when beginning a project on their house. While the primary purpose is to safeguard public safety, health and welfare, they are also a means to protect your investment. Getting work properly permitted and inspected not only assures it meets the minimum requirements of the State Building Code, but it may also impact a homeowner financially.

The first consideration for homeowners is consequences with their insurance company. When an unpermitted addition or renovation is damaged by a flood or fire, claims may not be covered. A common example of this is a basement that was finished without obtaining permits and is flooded by a burst water pipe. Insurance companies may not recognize the work as ever being performed because it was undocumented, installed illegally, and therefore doesn't exist to them.

A second consideration is in the sale value of your home. With the current real estate market booming in Connecticut, a routine stop for real estate agents, attorney's offices, and prospective buyers is the local Building Department. They review files to verify projects

such as additions, remodels, finished basements, and decks have been permitted and inspected before finalizing the sale. When discrepancies are found with unpermitted work, or incomplete inspections and open permits are discovered, the sales are oftentimes delayed until the permitting issues are corrected. While some of these issues are a simple fix, others are more financially burdensome and are used to negotiate a lower sale price to account for the corrections.

I found there are open permits or missing permits...What now?

Most importantly don't panic. The Building Department staff will work with you to determine what needs to be done to get your project properly permitted and finalized. Many times, with open permits, it's as simple as having a final inspection. In cases where missing or no permits have been pulled or work has been concealed, we will work with you and your contractors to find the least intrusive manner to make the corrections. Please reach out to the Building Department at any time to determine if a permit is required or if you have any other building related questions.

Submitted by: Steve Prattson, *Building Official*



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Rockville High School's Unified Sports program was honored by the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference as one of the best programs in Connecticut. The team received the **Michaels Jewelers' Unified Sports Cup Award**, which recognizes the team and its athletes for what they achieve both on and off the court. RHS's program also won a National Unified Champion School banner from Special Olympics. Unified Sports athletes compete in soccer, basketball, bowling, and tennis. The athletes, student mentors, and coaches also host an annual Snowflake Dance for area Unified Sports programs and sponsor an annual bowling tournament.



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For nearly a century and a half, the Berlin Iron Works Elliptical Trusses have provided this community with a safe and secure way to cross the Tankerhoosen River as Main Street connected Talcottville with Vernon. This ingenious design became popular throughout New England and the Mid-west as steel began to replace wood as the material of choice for bridges. Ours is one of the few remaining in service. When the Interstate turned Main Street into a cul-de-sac, this bridge continued to link homes and families to their neighbors. Some years ago, the bridge was modified to retire the old trusses from active service and provide an improved deck until such time that the bridge could be reconstructed.

This is the year for that reconstruction. The Town of Vernon has selected NJR Construction LLC of Torrington



to execute the project designed by GM2 of Glastonbury. A key feature of the new structure will be the preservation of the historic trusses as link to the past, with new modern bridge elements placed between them. A new foundation will be provided to carry the load, but the original stonework will be preserved/repared as part of this project. A single lane for traffic and a designated area for pedestrians will be installed. The old ironwork will be cleaned and repainted to insure many more years of continued service.

This work is intended to commence in April with a completion date of November 2021. During that time, access to the cul-de-sac for the property owners, contractor, emergency and routine services will be provided via a temporary access drive extending from Hartford Turnpike to the end of Main Street. While not prohibited, we request that the public not access this area via the temporary road due to the very limited area for unauthorized vehicles on Main Street and the need to maintain a safe and orderly construction site.

The Construction cost of this project is \$1.7 million. This project including design, construction, and inspection is part of the Federal / Local Bridge program administered by the CT Department of Transportation. The program provides 80% of the cost and the Town of Vernon provides the remaining 20%.

Anyone with questions or comments about this project is encouraged to contact the Vernon Engineering Department.

Submitted by: David Smith PELS, *Vernon Town Engineer*



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In September of 2017 the Vernon Historical Society was approached by a neighbor who explained that after purchasing a home in Vernon Center, she discovered there was a headstone in her patio. Upon further investigation it was confirmed to be that of prominent Old North Bolton/Vernon resident David Allis (1720-1789). The monument was listed on the WPA Hale study in 1934 as located in the North Bolton / Bamforth Road Cemetery. Through further investigation the location of Mr. Allis' family lot was found in the southeast corner of the cemetery.

David Allis was instrumental in forming the first meeting house in North Bolton which later petitioned the legislature to

become the Town of Vernon. He helped to provide the temporary meeting house and to secure the first pastor Ebenezer Kellogg. During the Revolutionary War, Allis was a selectman and the town moderator of Bolton and later became a state representative. He owned many acres of land, two houses with barns, a sawmill and a gristmill.

Due to the condition of the monument, it was decided that the monument could not be successfully repaired and should be re-created. Money was raised through private donations from the community and grants to have the stone reproduced. Local carver Randall Nelson of Nelson Architectural Restoration was commissioned to re-create

the monument. In the summer of 2020 the monument was completed and installed back to its original location in Bamforth Cemetery (180 Bamforth Road. Vernon)

The Bamforth Cemetery has some of the oldest, most historic monuments in Vernon dating back to 1751 and was an active burial ground for over 100 years. There are more than twelve Revolutionary War Veteran's buried here and many founding families of Vernon. This cemetery is maintained by the Town of Vernon Cemetery Commission and is open to the public to visit.

Submitted by: Travis Clark, Cemetery Superintendent



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National trends, regional pressures, and local demand all play a role in our local economy. It is common to see businesses flow in and out of town as businesses grow and face different opportunities as well as problems. Local economies undoubtedly perform better with increased employment and equity, but the reality is, the effects of globalization can hit hard especially for small shop owners in smaller towns, like Vernon.

It can be a challenge to find new business owners who are looking for a suitable place to rent or own in town because of the national struggles we face. It is essential to have a strong local economy and the ability to offer many business opportunities with competitive advantages, to support our local economy. The Town strives to create an environment to support various businesses and give them an optimistic chance to succeed. It is important to the Town to create strong relationships with residents, businesses owners, and the community.

Over the last few years we have seen the following changes in local properties:

- **421 Talcottville:** Was- Thortons Gas Station; Now- 360 Federal Credit Union
- **560 Talcottville:** Was- Santander Bank then Scranton Power Sports ; Now- Enterprise Rental Car

- **56 Talcottville:** Was- Exxon/ Mobil; Now- Economy Car Wash
- **200 West Main:** Was- a former textile Mill; Now- Kaplan Cycles and the New England Motorcycle Museum.
- **550 Hartford Turnpike:** Was- Sacred Heart Church; Now- Strong Foundations School for people with Autism.
- **101 Industrial Park Road:** Was- Logrite Tools; Now- L & S Equipment
- **60 Industrial Park Road:** Was- Beauregard Trade show booths; Now- Logrite Tools
- **274 Talcottville:** Was- Little Marks BBQ; Soon to Be- Square Peg Pizza
- **73 East St:** Was- Natures Grocer; Soon to Be- Lucky Taco
- **95 Hartford Tpke:** Was- Golf Land; Soon to Be- a new and improved version of Golf Land
- **35 Talcottville:** Was- Price Chopper; Now- Shop Rite and Home Sense

The town continues to work to bring in new businesses to fill the vacant buildings, while energetically pushing the community in a positive direction with new opportunities of growth.

Submitted by: Shaun Gately, *Economic Development Coordinator*




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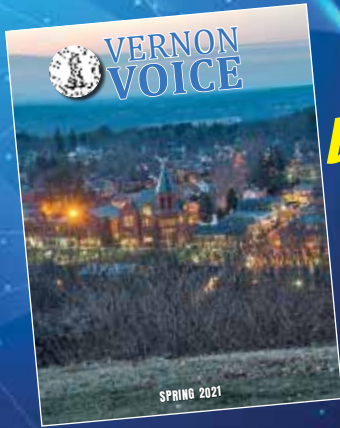
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In September 2020, U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos recognized Vernon's Northeast School as one of the National Blue Ribbon Schools for 2020. The recognition is based on a school's overall academic performance and progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. The coveted National Blue Ribbon Schools award (given to only 367 schools in the nation) affirms the hard work of educators, families, and communities in creating a safe and welcoming school where students master challenging and engaging content. Congratulations to students, parents, teachers, staff,



and administration at Northeast School for their efforts and accomplishments in being named a 2020 "Blue Ribbon School". The National Blue Ribbon School

recognition is one of the highest accolades in the field of education. This award is a testament to the teaching and learning work at Northeast School.

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We spend more time indoors with the windows closed tightly and the heat turned on high during the winter months. In order to keep our families safe and our heating systems working properly, there are a few tips to keep in mind. Every fuel burning appliance in your home, including a gas furnace, produces some level of carbon monoxide. Normally those gases are carried out of your home through the chimney or exhaust pipe. Carbon monoxide is an odorless and colorless gas which can cause serious illness or even death. You can prevent exposure to carbon monoxide by having your heating system cleaned every year and installing a carbon monoxide detector in the home. Another often overlooked piece of our heating system is the outside air intake or vent pipe. In an older home, a boiler or furnace would often get enough oxygen from its surroundings to keep a furnace ignited-but in newer airtight buildings, that oxygen is harder to come by. To keep a flame ignited, oxygen must be drawn in from outside the house; that's what the air-intake pipe is for. When snow begins to accumulate on the ground, keeping these pipes clear is very important.

- **Find them**-To find your vent, go to the boiler or furnace. If the system vents through the chimney, you will see an aluminum pipe going into the chimney

itself. If your system vents through an exterior wall, you should see a 3 inch diameter PVC pipe (intake and exhaust) coming off the top. Simply follow those pipes to see where they leave the building.

- **Mark them**- Once you have located your vents, it is a good idea to mark them so they can be easily found in heavy snow.
- **Clear them**- Shovel around your vents.

Here in the Fire Marshal's Office we often receive phone calls from residents about the proper placement of a carbon monoxide detector. Here is a good guide to placement in your home.

Carbon monoxide detectors placement: Do's

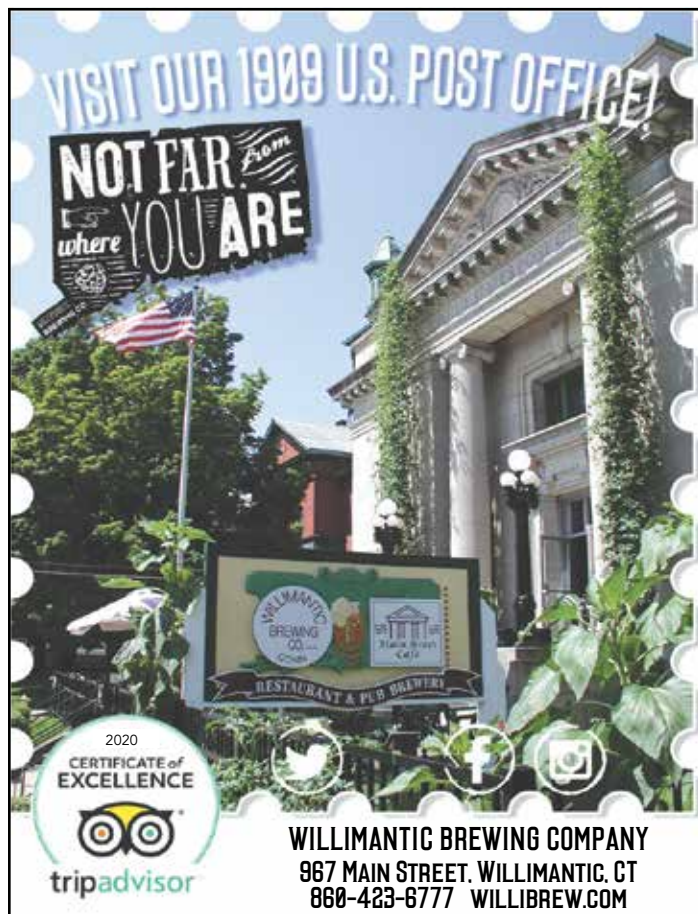
In order to maximize the protection of your home from excess levels of carbon monoxide, place your detectors in all of the following places:

- On every level of your home. In order to ensure that your home has maximum protection, it's important to have a CO detector on every floor.
- Five feet from the ground. Carbon monoxide detectors can get the best reading of your home's air when they are placed five feet from the ground.
- Near every sleeping area. If your CO levels get too high during the nighttime, it's important that detectors can be heard by everyone sleeping in your home. Place your detectors close enough to every sleeping area so that they can awaken everyone in the case of an emergency.
- Near attached garages. Cars produce carbon monoxide any time they are running. If you have an attached garage, those gasses can quickly spread to the rest of your house. A CO detector near your attached garage will warn you if that becomes a problem.
- Where the manufacturer recommends. Every model of carbon monoxide detector is tested according to manufacturer specifications. It's important to take those specifications into account when you're deciding where to place your detectors.

The following locations can either create a false alarm or avoid your detector from properly identifying the CO levels in your home:

- In close proximity to any fuel-burning appliance.
- In excessively humid areas such as your bathroom.
- In direct sunlight.
- Near any sources of blowing air such as a fan, vent or open window.

Submitted by: Daniel Wasilewski, *Fire Marshal*



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One of the staples of fire prevention week in the schools was the firefighter in full gear with air pack and mask to teach children what they look and sound like and not to be scared and hide from them. These days you will see us wearing a different kind of mask on and around the emergency scene. Our goal in the fire and EMS service has always been to protect and save lives and we continue to do our part during this pandemic by assessing each situation that we are called to. You may notice some of these changes on our initial interaction with the public when we are called.

Upon the Fire Department or EMS arriving, you may be asked

some questions related to COVID symptoms and quarantining of household members, there may be a minimal number of emergency responder entering the residence or building or approaching a vehicle involved in an accident while others wait outside and away, we may talk to you through the storm door or outside the residence with social distancing and we will be wearing face masks. We are doing these things to protect both you and us from this highly contagious disease. We ask that you do your part to help us as well. Please maintain social distancing and wear a mask when you are interacting with us. Please answer our questions openly. The questions have nothing to do with the emergency service and care we provide, they simply allow us to determine the proper level of personal protective equipment we need to wear for our safety. This in

turn helps us conserve the personal protective equipment supplies we have.

Just as important to understand, these COVID procedures will never slow us down or interfere with lifesaving or critical emergency situations. Only if the situation is stable, we will follow these processes in an effort to keep everybody safe.

Your understanding and cooperation as we do this is very much appreciated. Together, as a community, state and nation, we will get through this pandemic. Information on local COVID testing and vaccination can be found of the Town of Vernon website, www.vernon-ct.gov.

Submitted By: Chief Steve Eppler,
Town of Vernon Fire Department



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Vernon Parks & Recreation (VPR) has been working hard to provide a variety of programs online and in-person during the pandemic. Following the ever changing State mandates both Valley Falls and Newhoca beaches were kept open this past summer for swimming. In addition, VPR was able to offer two very successful concerts as part of Mayor Daniel A. Champagne's Summer Concert Series in August.

At the beginning of the school year with continued restrictions, the Department was able to continue offering activities for families and children such as our After School Club, Beyond Dance, Pee Wee Track, Youth Basketball, a Virtual Vacation Day, Paint Nights, online Coding Class and even a dog costume contest.

The fun didn't stop there, all of the town's events were reimagined under the thoughtful guidance and creative imagination of the Mayor, Administration and implemented by the great team at Parks and Recreation, Public Works and many of our other departments. One such spectacular event was the "Trick or Trunk Drive Thru", with lots of community and town departments sponsoring booths and giving out goodies as participants drove from booth-to-booth.

During the winter holiday season 2020, we were able to collaborate on a second event known as "Winterfest", an all free event to kick off the winter season. This event is highlighted by Mayor Champagne's lighting of the town's tree and the arrival of Santa Claus. COVID

didn't stand in the way of Vernon celebrating this event, it just changed the way it was provided. Mayor Champagne put a committee together to brainstorm ideas, develop a plan and recruit participants. Once in place a reimagined event became a reality. Cars were lined up for miles to enter Henry Park on the night of the event and believe it or not, more people participated in the drive thru event than normally participate in the traditional event. All in all a successful fall/winter season.

Keep an eye out for upcoming spring and summer events on our web and Facebook sites such as Mother's Day Dash, a virtual 5-k & our annual Fishing Derby which will be held on April 24th. Visit the Vernon Parks and Recreation Department website, www.vernonrec.org for registration information.

Submitted By: Martin
Sitler, Parks & Recreation
Director





Vernon Mayor Dan Champagne, right, at the Park dedication stands with Lynne Pitney, and Bob Terry, far left, and Dick Spurling, members of Gene Pitney's original band.

Gene Pitney's brilliance and influence on rock and roll cannot be over-stated. The son of Rockville rose to international fame as a singer, songwriter, music legend, and 2002 inductee into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

There has always been a core of people who appreciated Pitney for what he did and who he was. And certainly, Vernon residents are proud to claim Pitney as one of our own.

Gene Pitney Memorial Park compliments the display established in Town Hall by fans and friends of Pitney, and a bench that sits in Central Park in front of Town Hall that honors Pitney. The new park, at a place Pitney wrote music, helps drive home the point that such a seminal figure in rock and roll history hailed from Hammond Street in Rockville.

The park at 19 Grove Street was formally dedicated October 20th, 2020. It sits along Paper Mill Pond near the headwaters of the Hockanum River, which powered the textile mills that developed in Rockville in the mid-19th Century.

When Mayor Dan Champagne was elected in 2013, he made it a goal to clear 19 Grove Street of collapsing buildings and debris, and to create a park. Mayor Champagne made a deal with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to remediate the site, and then the Town of Vernon obtained the property.

Employees in Vernon's Parks and Recreation, Engineering, Public Works and Water Pollution Control departments then went to work transforming the land into Mayor Champagne's vision.

"This is the gateway to the Rockville historic downtown district," Mayor Champagne said. "And there's no better way to honor such an iconic son of Rockville."

What no one knew at the time was that Paper Mill Pond was one of the places Pitney would go to write music.

The two surviving members of Pitney's original band, Gene & the Genials, said the park was a "significant place" in Pitney's musical journey. Pitney used to sit on the banks of Paper Mill Pond and write music, Genials lead

guitar player Rob Terry said.

"A lot of people didn't know that he would come down here to write music," Terry said. "Maybe only us band members did." The land was then home to several businesses, including a lumber yard and an auto body shop.

Pitney would go places to think, to contemplate and to write, Terry said. "He was something else, that's all I can tell you," Terry said.

Vernon Town Administrator Michael Purcaro said it was clear to him and others in town government that transforming the park was a priority for Mayor Champagne and the Town Council.

"The hard work by Vernon public works, parks and recreation, engineering and water pollution control workers to create this beautiful park is akin to Pitney's devotion to giving the maximum effort in every performance for his fans," Purcaro said. "It is also a testament to Mayor Champagne's vision of transforming the land into a place for people to enjoy today and for many years to come."

(to the beat of Lin-Manuel Miranda's "My Shot" ©2015 Hamilton)

Vernon Vaccines 2020-2021

Science gotta get a Covid – shot!
We just gotta get a Covid – shot!
We're distancing and masking,
sacrificing and we're asking,
will there ever be a Covid – shot?

Fearful friends and families crying.
Without a cure, deaths keep climbing.
No sports, live tunes, fine dining.
We really need a Covid – shot!

We're straining with crazy schooling,
losing jobs, our homes, our cool and
we're starving – we ain't fooling!
Hurry up with that Covid – shot!

Warp speed vaccine, but mumbling –
too many too fast – there'll be bungling.
Leaders silenced most of the grumbling
by stepping up to take their – shot.

Science has a couple Covid – shots!
We just gotta get our Covid – shots!
We're distancing and masking,
sacrificing and we're asking,
when and how to get a Covid – shot?

Number one: hero doctors and nurses,
first responders, healthcare workers,
surely had to be the *firstest*
to get their Covid – shots.

Number two: crowded homes with habitees:
some already with disease,
the aged, ill, and special needs,
had to get their Covid – shots.

Feds and states, where's the planning?
Who comes next? Who's been manning
VAMS websites, phone lines jamming
with the rest of us needing – shots?

Vernon gathered surrounding towns to
help the elderly, rural, and poor who
lacked laptops, internet, and rides to
arrange for their Covid – shots.

The library filled with volunteers
taking calls, calming people's fears
in 36 languages, making it clear
that everyone will get their – shots!

With healthcare networks, Vernon could
run mobile vaccine clinics that would
hit churches, centers, neighborhoods
to deliver the Covid – shots.


Then word got out to TV crews
and Vernon landed on national news
showing America different ways to
get everybody Covid – shots.

Pharma's gotta make more Covid – shots!
Cause we gotta get our Covid – shots!
We're still distancing and masking,
sacrificing and we're asking,
when will the rest get Covid – shots?

Number three: Connecticut teachers next.
(we're indebted, they're forever blessed).
But essential workers and sick folks stressed
they desperately need Covid – shots.

Our turns will come, so heed the guides.
After all, we're on the same side.
Where the least of us breathes, we all abide.
With patience, we'll get our – shots.

No one's sure how long it will take
to conquer Covid's many strains.
Friends, stay vigilant, kind, and safe.
and make sure you get your Covid – shots.

 Words © 2021 Pegi Deitz Shea, *Vernon Poet Laureate* 

Vernon Public Schools Receives CIRMA Award of Excellence in Risk Management for New and Innovative Risk Management Initiative

Ian M. Havens, ARM, Team Leader, CIRMA Risk Management, presented to the Vernon Board of Education, at their meeting on February 8, 2021, the CIRMA Award of Excellence in Risk Management for New and Innovative Risk Management Initiative.

In the wake of a global health crisis, educators were challenged to reimagine the world they once knew. And during a time of considerable duress, the Vernon Board of Education (BOE) would prove that while they can't predict the future, they can help control its impact.

The Vernon BOE sought out the District Health and Safety Committee's expertise and worked tirelessly throughout the summer months to construct a Reopening Plan for the 2020-2021 school year. The Vernon BOE also capitalized on its partnership with CIRMA. Recognizing the value of their bespoke expertise, Vernon worked closely with CIRMA's Risk Management Team to implement critical health and safety protocols in preparation for the re-opening.

Due to their ongoing commitment to engaging strategic partners in unique and innovative ways, the Vernon BOE orchestrated a remarkably successful district-wide re-opening that others would widely emulate. The district has not experienced a single claim related to COVID-19 exposures or its handling of the pandemic response.



Board Chairperson Anne Fischer receiving the CIRMA Award.

You're ALL invited to be part of the Tolland County Chamber TAG SALE TRAIL!

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Rockville Public Library continues to serve Vernon residents young and old. While we have not yet returned to our pre-pandemic levels of activity, staff have found creative ways to provide services and materials virtually, in-person, and through contactless pick-up. Here's

a rundown of our current offerings:

- 1. Checking out materials:** Card holders may request books, DVDs, audiobooks, CDs, and launchpads for curbside pickup or make an appointment to browse the collection. Each appointment is 30 minutes. In addition to our regular collection of circulating items, we are currently providing federal and state tax forms and will be opening our Seed Lending Library on March 8th.
- 2. Technology:** Patrons can also book half-hour appointments to use the library's computers. As ever, we offer printing, copying, and faxing services. Those who need assistance with computers, devices, or resume services can Book a Librarian for a phone or

Zoom appointment.

- 3. Children's:** Though the children's room remains closed to the public, our children's staff have worked hard to maintain services. Patrons interested in kids' materials can call the children's department (860-875-5892 ext. 150) to set up a virtual visit or to have a bespoke cart of materials put together. Ms. Kara's Lil' Bookworms Storytime is posted online on Facebook Monday mornings at 10:30 a.m.. Additionally, artists and makers of all ages can keep their creativity flowing with Grab n' Go crafts and art projects available by curbside pickup.
- 4. E-Content:** As more residents have opted to borrow e-books and e-audiobooks from the comfort of their homes, RPL has made sure to purchase additional copies of new books and bestsellers just for them! E-materials can be downloaded to your device using the Libby app or the SimplyE app. Alternatively, patrons can use their library cards to access free shows and movies through Acorn TV and IndieFlix and research their family history using Ancestry.com. To access these resources and more go to rockvillepubliclibrary.org.
- 5. Upcoming Programming:** In April, RPL will celebrate National Poetry Month by hosting a Blackout Poetry contest with categories for children, teens, and adults. On April 7th, patrons can attend "Librarians Who Write," a virtual reading. On April 18th, RPL will partner with Vernon Poet Laureate, Pegi Deitz Shea, on a "Green Poetry Café" held in Henry Park Pavilion, featuring CT State Poet Laureate Margaret Gibson.

To learn more about Rockville Public Library's services, materials, or programming, please visit us at rockvillepubliclibrary.org, email rockvillelibrary@vernon-ct.gov, call us at 860-875-5892 ext. 100, or check out our Facebook page.

Submitted by: Caitlin Kelley, Assistant Library Director

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Vernon's Nationally-Recognized Community Vaccination Program Reaches the Most Vulnerable Residents

Ever since the coronavirus pandemic hit our nation, shut down our economy and caused people to stay at home, town leaders have been focused on keeping the community safe while continuing to provide essential services.

That focus on serving and protecting our community also encompassed the rollout and distribution of life-saving vaccine to the Vernon region. Thousands of people have received COVID-19 vaccine from Vernon's Community Vaccination Program and Mobile Clinics, which reach deep into the community to the home-bound, people with disabilities and those who lack transportation, and residents who because of language, technology and other barriers cannot access the federal online vaccination system.

Vernon's efforts to overcome barriers to vaccination was recognized by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the nation's premier health protection agency. The Town's Community Vaccination Program was recognized as a "Vaccine Success Story" during the CDC's recent National COVID-19 Vaccine Conference.

"We knew defeating COVID-19 would require a team effort by local, state and federal partners," Vernon Mayor Dan Champagne said. "State government plays an important role with large-scale mass vaccination sites, but grassroots initiatives led by local government and the North Central District Health Department are how we are reaching our most vulnerable and at-risk residents."

Town Administrator and Emergency and Risk Management Director Michael Purcaro and Vernon Police Lt. William Meier have co-managed the Town's emergency response to the pandemic, and Meier has taken the lead in organizing the Town's vaccination program.

"It's truly a team effort," Purcaro said. "We have staff from across all town departments, including the Board of Education, and an

army of volunteers from our community. We have established best practice systems and processes that are effectively and efficiently getting vaccine into the arms of people who want it and who are qualified to receive it."



Our Mission

Opportunity Works Connecticut (OWC) is a non-profit agency that supports people with intellectual and physical disabilities in Eastern Connecticut. We are committed to providing the best individualized supports to assist everyone to find meaningful vocational activities and/or gainful employment opportunities that fit with their personal goals. We work together to foster a sense of respect and dignity which enables our participants to work and live with quality of life.



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If you, a family member, or someone you know, has been injured, please contact us immediately. We want to help you protect your rights and guide you through the legal maze to a successful recovery.



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