



# VERNON VOICE

**Memorial Day Parade**

**MAY 30 • 11AM**

**SUMMER 2022**



# In today's distressing world, join us year-round for good music and GOOD NEWS.

Drone photo  
by Tyler Gagnon



Above, left to right: 4/30 Mitch McVicker; 5/6 The Sky Family; 6/3 Emily Hawley; 7/1 Marger Geraldo & Friends



Above, left to right: 8/5 Terce; 9/2 David Coate; 10/7 Love On Band; 11/4: Walter Santos



Above, left to right: 12/9 Bob Stanhope; 1/6 Patrick O'Connors; 2/3 Soul's Desire

Founded in 1995, Jacob's Well is one of the oldest, most popular Christian coffeehouses around. Admission is free and dress is casual. Join us in-person or online! Call Drew Crandall for info at 860.871.6500 or visit [JacobsWellCoffeehouse.com](http://JacobsWellCoffeehouse.com)

**Jacob's Well**  
Christian Coffeehouse



Mayor.....	4	Vernon Cemetery.....	13
Town Clerk.....	6	Library.....	14
Social Services.....	6	Registrar of Voters .....	15
Record Number of Awards .....	7	Fire Marshal .....	16
Community Calendar.....	8	Youth Services Bureau .....	16
Tax Collector .....	8	Arts Center East.....	19
School Community Partnerships .....	9	Parks & Recreation Department .....	18
Vernon Senior Center .....	10	Buy Local Campaign .....	20
Creative Writers.....	11	Vernon Public Schools .....	21
Prevent Motor Vehicle Burglaries .....	11	Vernon Volunteer Collaborative .....	22
Strong Family Farm.....	12	Fire Department.....	23
Social Media.....	12	Friends of Rockville Public Library .....	23

Produced by  
**the Chronicle**

**Publisher:** Michael Schroeder  
**Advertising Manager:** Jan Koivisto  
**Production Manager:** Lynn Coleman  
**Cover Design & Layout:** Heidi Graf

**Next edition: JULY 2022 | To advertise please contact:**  
Jean Beckley, *Sales Representative* 860-423-8466 x3305  
Jackie Gottlieb, *Sales Representative* 860-423-8466 x3348  
**Cover photo courtesy of the Fire Department.**

**KKC** KAHAN  
KERENSKY  
CAPOSSELA, LLP  
ATTORNEYS

Aging comes with a variety of legal and financial transitions. With a KKC elder law attorney by your side, you can help ensure each one is as smooth as possible. We'll put our decades of experience to work for you - not only helping to protect your assets now, but also what you leave for your children and grandchildren in the future.

**Call our Estate Planning Coordinator today at 860.812.1749 to schedule an appointment.**

**Helping to protect your most valuable assets:**

**Your future and your family.**

**ESTATE PLANNING SERVICES:** Wills | Trusts | Powers of Attorney  
Health Care Directives | Living Wills | Estate Tax Planning

**ELDER LAW SERVICES:** Long Term Health Care Planning  
Asset Protection Planning | Medicaid - Title XIX | Conservatorships

Offices in Vernon & Storrs  
**KKC-law.com/elder-law**



Dear Friends:

Spring is finally here and we are gearing up for a lot of events we have missed the past two years because of COVID. The Fishing Derby returns in April and the Mother's Day Dash in May. We will also once again be able to observe Memorial Day with our traditional Memorial Day Parade at 11 a.m. on May 30.

COVID restrictions are slowly decreasing and we expect to be able to experience a relatively normal summer of day camps, family vacations and activities and events we have been otherwise forced to forego. This edition of the magazine is full of events and activities for you and your families to enjoy this spring and summer. If you know of anyone who is looking for a summer job we have openings of all kinds. Please contact the Parks and Recreation Department 860-870-3520 or apply on-line at [vernon-ct.gov](http://vernon-ct.gov).

We also focus on the ways you can stay in touch with what is happening in Vernon via social media and the community calendar. Check out the article that gives you all the information needed to follow us. We also hope to raise your awareness of the benefits of Buying Local, and how that helps you, our local economy and the many wonderful businesses in Vernon. It has never been more important to support our local business community. Buying local is truly a victory for Vernon! If you are a local business owner or manager, please consider visiting [www.vernonbusinessdirectory.com](http://www.vernonbusinessdirectory.com) and listing your business or updating your business information.

Now that our boards, commissions and committees



are meeting in-person again, we are stepping up our efforts to find volunteers for open positions. If you are interested, please call my office at 860-870-3601 to request a resume form. You can also find it on our town website under the "Government" tab. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,



Daniel A. Champagne  
Mayor, Town of Vernon

## Monet's Table

Restaurant and Catering

**\$5.00 OFF**

Your Purchase of \$25 or more

**WITH THIS COUPON!**

Not to be combined with any other special offer.

Expires 6/30/22

167 Tolland Stage Road, Tolland CT

860.875.7244 Debra@monetscatering.com

Wed - Fri 11:30-2:30  
Saturday Brunch 9-2 [www.MonetsCatering.com](http://www.MonetsCatering.com)

## County Line Septic LLC

INSPECTIONS • INSTALLATIONS • REPAIRS • PUMPING

**Full Service Septic  
Company Serving  
Central and Eastern CT.**

**860-331-0444**

[www.countylineseptic.com](http://www.countylineseptic.com)

# UConn Health in Storrs

Comprehensive and convenient health care for the whole family in your neighborhood.

## ORTHOPEDICS AND SPORTS MEDICINE

The region's premier choice to maximize your mobility and overall health.

- Joint preservation and replacement
- Hand and wrist conditions
- Foot and ankle conditions
- Neck and back pain
- Concussions and more

**860-487-9200**

## OBSTETRICS AND GYNECOLOGY

Compassionate care from our women's health experts.

- Comprehensive reproductive care
- Annual screenings
- Pregnancy planning and prenatal care
- Endometriosis and fibroid treatment
- Menopause management

**860-487-9200**



## URGENT CARE

Injury and illness can't be planned. When you need care now, we've got your family covered.

*Walk in 7 days a week.*

Monday to Friday: 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Weekends and Holidays: 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**860-487-9300**

One Royce Circle, Suite 104  
[health.uconn.edu/storrs](http://health.uconn.edu/storrs)

**UConn  
Health**

## TOWN CLERK

**APRIL** The Annual Town Meeting for Fiscal Year 2022-2023 budget is April 26th.

**MAY** Municipal Clerk's Week is May 1-7.

**JUNE** License your dog this month and make sure we have an updated rabies certificate. The fee is \$8 for spayed or neutered dogs and \$19 for unaltered.



The Town Clerk's office recently placed Vernon's land record index on the Town's website. This gives our residents the ability to check their property records for liens, releases or any other transactions affecting their real estate. Best results are achieved by searching by last name rather than property address, as some documents reference lots on a map rather than the actual street address. Come to the Clerk's office to view or obtain copies of your documents.

**Submitted by:** Karen Daigle, *Town Clerk*

## TOLLAND VETERINARY HOSPITAL

**Dr. Laura Roy • Dr. Eran Shemer  
Dr. Shaleighne McKiernan**



70 Hartford Turnpike  
Tolland, CT

Monday-Friday: 9am-6pm  
Saturday: 9am-1pm

**860-875-5748**

**TollandVetHospital.Com**

**Proudly Serving the Community  
for Over 50 Years!**

## SOCIAL SERVICES

### Energy Assistance, Camperships, Renter's Rebate, Back to School, Farmers' Market Vouchers

Vernon Social Services has a number of programs available to assist individuals. They include:

#### Energy Assistance

This is a federally funded program that helps low to moderate income residents with heating costs during the winter months. Residents can call to get information about documents needed to complete the application process. May 2nd is the deadline to apply for deliverable fuel (oil, propane) heated households, and May 31st is the deadline for utility (gas and electric) heated households and households with heat included in the rent.

#### Camperships

In partnership with Vernon Parks and Recreation, "camperships" are available to income-eligible children for the town's summer camps. Residents can call for information on how to complete an application and determine eligibility. Donations are also accepted to help fund the camperships.

#### Renters' Rebate

State law provides a reimbursement program for renters who are elderly or totally disabled, and whose incomes do not exceed certain limits. Persons renting an apartment or room, or living in cooperative housing or a mobile home may be eligible for this program. The renters' rebate amount is based on a graduated income scale and the amount of rent and utility payments (excluding telephone) made in the calendar year prior to the year in which the renter applies. If you are a renter age 65 or older or a person receiving Social Security Disability and reside in Vernon, you may be eligible for a rebate. Please call 860-870-3661 for information. The program runs through September.

#### Back to School Program

This program provides families of children in need with gift cards to purchase new clothes for the upcoming school year. It begins at the end of June and runs through the middle of August. Persons wishing to make a gift card donation should contact Social Services.

#### Farmers' Market Vouchers

The Town of Vernon is a local coordinating agency for the distribution of Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program check booklets to eligible participants. The program runs July through October.

**Submitted by:** Matt Hellman, *Director*



# Rockville High School Creative Writing Students Win Record Number of Awards

Rockville High School will have 10 Platinum Published Pieces, 10 Gold Awards, 24 Silver Awards, and 26 Honorable Mentions in the University of Connecticut's 2022 Connecticut Student Writers Magazine. That's a record 70 awards! Rockville High School had winners in every category (fiction, poetry, non-fiction) and our students won more awards than any other school in Connecticut. Congratulations to our young and talented writers! We are very proud of your accomplishments.



**The Platinum Award winners are:** Kaylin Maher, grade 12, nonfiction; Cali Miville, grade 12, poetry; Dakota Ouellette, grade 12, nonfiction; Abigail Ursin, grade 12, nonfiction; Caitlin Chatterton, grade 11, poetry; Joey Gorski, grade 10, fiction; Lauren Tedford, grade 10, poetry; Kimberly Yankson, grade 10, poetry; Madison Frank, grade 9, fiction; and Athena Lavigne, grade 9, fiction.


**The Gold Award winners are:** Kaylin Maher, grade 12, poetry; Dakota Ouellette, grade 12, poetry; Abigail Ursin, grade 12, poetry; Kyle Schambach, grade 11, fiction; Anaya Tolton, grade 11, fiction; Natalie Crowley, grade 10, poetry; Natalie Crowley, grade 10, fiction; Gabby Mckayle, grade 10, fiction; Piper Jones, grade 9, fiction; and Athena Lavigne, grade 9, poetry.

**The Silver Award winners are:** April Bartolotta, grade 12, fiction and poetry; Ryan Harvey, grade 12, fiction and poetry; Kaylin Maher, grade 12, fiction; Samara Mercado, grade 12, fiction; Natalie Tolman, grade 12, fiction; Clarissa Halpryn, grade 11, fiction; Mikayla Leskey, grade 11, poetry; Victoria Mitchell, grade 11, poetry; Kameron Pacheco, grade 11, fiction; Gracie Sorrow, grade 11, poetry; Jerelis Deleon, grade 11, fiction; Abby Aggarwala, grade 10, fiction; Joe Bradford, grade 10, fiction; James Custer, grade 10, fiction; Grace Dehnel, grade 10, poetry; Sarah Ellefson, grade 10, poetry; Morgan Fischer, grade 10, poetry; Bee Hermanson, grade 10, fiction; Jordyn Karpoff, grade 10, fiction; Katherine Larson, grade 10, nonfiction; Gabby Mckayle, grade 10, poetry; and Miles Tolman, grade 10, fiction.

**Those receiving honorable mentions are:** Olivia Crowley, grade 12, poetry and nonfiction; Athena Diaz, grade 12, fiction; Dakota Ouellette, grade 12, fiction; Victoria Prignano, grade 12, poetry; Muriel Stankeviciute, grade 12, poetry; Madalyn Behrmann, grade 11, fiction; Clarissa Halpryn, grade 11, poetry; Nathan Kay, grade 11, poetry and fiction; Mikayla Leskey, grade 11, fiction; Gracie Sorrow, grade 11, poetry; Joe Bradford, grade 10, poetry;


James Custer, grade 10, poetry; Grace Dehnel, grade 10, fiction; Amelia Dykstra, grade 10, poetry; Morgan Fischer, grade 10, fiction; Bee Hermanson, grade 10, poetry; Jordyn Karpoff, grade 10, poetry; Jenna Michaud, grade 10, fiction; Kaylen Nearine, grade 10, poetry; Kimberly Yankson, grade 10, fiction; Makenzie Fox, grade 9, poetry and fiction; and Katherine Morey, grade 9, fiction.

**Submitted by:** Victoria Nordland, *Creative Writing Teach at RHS*



**Come in Today to See Why Dunbar Jewelers is so Highly Recommended.**

When you want to experience the amazing magic of jewelry come and see us at Dunbar Jewelers. We're here for the long haul. Doing business honestly and ethically is the only way we'll ever operate. Ask us about 0% financing for up to 12 months. We customize jewelry and do engravings and repairs. We have two gemologists on the premise. Appraisals done on site by a Gemologist GIA.



**Hours:**  
Mon, Tues, Wed, and  
Fri. 10-5  
Thur 10-7, Sat 10-4  
Sun closed

Shops at 30  
435 Hartford Turnpike  
Vernon, CT 06066  
860-872-2425  
[www.dunbarjewelers.net](http://www.dunbarjewelers.net)

## Post Your Organization's Events to Vernon's Community Calendar

One of the many features of Vernon's municipal web page is a community calendar that is open to community organization to post information about upcoming events.

The calendar is for municipal, school, non-commercial and non-profit community events in Vernon, or that are nearby and open to Vernon residents.

Have a special event at your church, such as a rummage sale or dinner? Fill out a calendar submission request. Have a Girl Scout or Boy Scout troop event? Post it.

Looking for an event at Arts Center East, or special events at the Rockville Public Library? Check out the calendar.

The guidelines are simple:

- Calendar items should be one-time special events, not regularly scheduled activities.
- Events must be open to the general public.
- Events must have a contact email and phone number.

And all events must include the following:

- The name of the group or organization sponsoring the event.
- A concise description of the event.


- Date and time.
- Location.
- If there is a cost, it should be stated in the posting.

Some events cannot be listed on the Community Calendar, including:

- Anything promoting illegal activity.
- Postings that promote commercial services, products or political organizations.
- Third-party retail programs, such as fitness or cooking classes.
- Anything that violates Town of Vernon policies.
- Individual garage/tag sales.
- Private parties or events.
- Anything containing profanity or that promotes discrimination in any manner.

You can visit the calendar on the Town web page. Scroll down to the "Town of Vernon Events" heading, then click on "Full Calendar" below that to go to the calendar page. Follow the on-screen directions to post an event. You can email [communications@vernon-ct.gov](mailto:communications@vernon-ct.gov) with questions.

**Submitted by:** David Owens, *Communication Specialist*



**Hebron • Mansfield**

**Roa Alammari**  
MD, FACOG

**Robert Gildersleeve**  
MD, FACOG

**Lesley Gumbs**  
MD, FACOG

**Veronica Helgans**  
MD, FACOG

**Yvette Martas**  
MD, FACOG

**Lindsay Collins**  
CNM, DNP

**Stephanie Welsh**  
CNM, DNP

**Lindsay Collins, CNM**


**Shannon Morgan, CNM**


### Lifelong Women's Healthcare

Adolescence • Pregnancy • Menopause

860-450-7227 (phone) • 860-450-7231 (fax)

A member of





Find us on Facebook  
[www.Mansfieldobgyn.com](http://www.Mansfieldobgyn.com)

## TAX COLLECTOR

Connecticut towns and cities are required to operate on the uniform fiscal year, commencing July 1 and ending the following June 30. Municipalities collect real estate, personal property, and motor vehicle taxes to fund the fiscal year budget. These taxes become due and payable July 1st. Town of Vernon real estate and personal property tax bills over \$100 may be paid in two installments; motor vehicle taxes are due in full in July.

State law dictates the procedures for the billing and collection of taxes and the record keeping involved. The law is strictly construed and towns can do only what is specifically outlined in the law.

The law provides various means of collection enforcement that may be used by municipal tax collectors for delinquent property tax collections. These include tax sale, foreclosure and lien assignment. Collection of delinquent motor vehicle and personal property taxes, and sewer use fees can be enforced by a state marshal or collection agency.

Towns charge 18 percent annual interest on delinquent

**See TAX COLLECTOR, p. 20**



## 12th Annual Ready, Set, School Fair set for Friday, May 13th at Henry Park

The Vernon Public Schools will host the 12th Annual Ready, Set, School Fair on Friday, May 13th, from 4 to 6 p.m. at Henry Park.

Families with children starting kindergarten in the fall are invited to learn about registering for kindergarten and to make connections to activities, camps, sports, services and the Vernon Public Schools. The rain date is Friday, May 20th.

Families can also pickup an Activity Pack for their child if they register in advance by visiting:

<https://forms.gle/1kKnF8hFkKqg75567>

You can also visit the Ready, Set, School Fair family resource page at:

<https://www.vernonpublicschools.org/departments/family->

## engagement/ready-set-school-fair-virtual

The annual event celebrates the kickoff of kindergarten registration for the following fall. The Vernon Public Schools Office of Family School & Community Partnerships gathers in one place many of the resources a young family might find helpful.

Past participants have included:

- Local Child Care Providers
- Town of Vernon Fire Department
- Vernon Parks and Recreation
- Rockville Public Library
- MOMS Club – Bolton-Vernon
- ECHN's Family Resource Center
- Strong Family Farm
- First Student Transportation
- EASTCONN Early Childhood Programs
- Vernon Lions Club-KidSight USA
- Vernon Soccer Club

- Vernon-Rockville Little League
- Lutz Children's Museum
- CHET – 529 College Education Trust
- Vernon School Readiness Council
- Tudor Doctor
- Peace At Home – Parenting Solutions
- Vernon Education Foundation
- CT CHIP
- Vernon Public Schools and Food Services
- Local Dance Studios
- Local Martial Arts Schools
- 211 – Child Development
- First Choice Health Center & Dental Care

Questions? Please contact Allison Altieri, Coordinator of Family Engagement, at [aaltieri@vernon-ct.gov](mailto:aaltieri@vernon-ct.gov) or 860-896-4651.

**Submitted by:** Cynthia Zingler, *Director*

## If you are thinking about listing your home, there has never been a better time!

The median sales price in CT is UP and the low inventory is creating competition on most properties.

The low interest rate that is enabling buyers to pay over asking is predicted to be short lived, making this the ideal window for you to sell your home.

## • Listing • Buying • Rentals

### Nelson Foss

REALTOR®

*Serving all of CT*

Cell: 860-539-6413

Office: 860-313-0700

[Nelsonfoss@kw.com](mailto:Nelsonfoss@kw.com)

**kw** GREATER HARTFORD  
KELLERWILLIAMS REALTY

10 Higgins Hwy. STE #8  
Mansfield, CT 06250



Each Office Independently  
Owned And Operated

Please get in touch with me if you are looking to sell your home in the near future. I would love to talk to you about what I can do to present your home in its best light and maximize your returns.

**I'm not only a Vernon resident, I work and specialize in the Vernon area.**

**W**ith the arrival of spring, and summer soon to follow, it's the perfect time of year to explore what's happening at the Vernon Senior Center. We have a very busy and exciting spring and summer season planned with several new programs and special events.

Fitness classes are a great way to stay healthy and fit. In addition to our chair yoga, tai chi, strength and balance classes, we will be offering beginner and regular line dancing classes, starting in April.

Sound meditation is becoming a popular form of awareness meditation. We will be exploring this type of meditation with the Tranquility Zone. This unique meditation uses metal hand drums, gongs, and bells to create a soothing, peaceful and renewing experience for listeners. Check the Senior Center newsletter for dates and times.

We look forward to a visit from the Vernon Police Department for a presentation highlighting its K-9 unit. Officer Condon and K-9 Tengo will be here for the April 26th presentation. Officer Condon will explain what's involved in K-9 training, the amazing work they accomplish, and the strong bond between handler and K-9.

We're traveling again! On May 25th, we're offering a cruise of the Thimble Islands with lunch at the Chowder Pot III restaurant. An overnight trip to picturesque Bar Harbor,

Maine is scheduled for June 1- 3. Acadia National Park, a lobster dinner, and seal watching are a few of the highlights of this two-day trip. Other summertime trips include: Theatre by the Sea in Kingstown, R.I., in June, Kennebunkport, Maine in July, and the Museum of Modern Art in New York City in August.

The outdoor recreational courts will be opening in April. The game of pickleball is increasingly popular and the court is getting busy. The horseshoe, bocce, and shuffleboard courts are also available for team play. Court reservations are required and all equipment is provided.

Creative art classes are a great way to broaden a creative spirit. Acrylic and watercolor painting, jewelry and card making, along with the monthly "Crafty Creations" class, are just a few of our creative art programs.

The "Ladies Tea" is a spring-time tradition at the Vernon Senior Center. This May 4th luncheon includes delicious finger sandwiches, delicate desserts, and a selection of piping hot teas. Rhonda Larson will provide entertainment with her violin. This event is a perfect way to celebrate the arrival of spring.

Summertime is for outdoor grilling and picnics, and we've planned several wonderful outings to enjoy in June and July. We're kicking off summer on June 22nd with a traditional

## *Enjoy Life with Better Hearing!*



Call today to schedule a comprehensive hearing evaluation and consultation.

**800-835-2001**

Does your insurance cover hearing aids? Let us check for you. We work with Anthem BCBS, United Healthcare, Hearing Care Solutions, Amplifon, Nation's Hearing, American Hearing Benefits, and CT Medicaid.

***amplisound*** 

HEARING CARE CENTERS

351 Merline Road, Vernon, CT







barbeque in the outdoor pavilion, and Noah Lis will join us with his musical talents. On July 6th, we've planned a patriotic picnic with cookout offerings of hot dogs, hamburgers and picnic salads. Musical entertainment will add to the festivities of these outdoor events.

A variety of programs and services including: cards and games, educational lectures, creative arts programs, health and wellness programs, a nutritional lunch program, transportation to shopping and medical appointments, book clubs, support groups, and more are offered weekly. For information please call 860-870-3680, or visit the website: <https://www.vernon-ct.gov/departments-services/senior-center>, or the Facebook page: Vernon Senior Center at Bolton Road.

Membership to the Vernon Senior Center is easy. New members are required to complete a Membership Information Sheet and submit it with a lifetime membership fee of \$10 for Vernon residents or \$15 for non-Vernon residents.

Come celebrate spring and summer at the Vernon Senior Center!

**Submitted by:** Cynthia Maheu, *Administrative Assistant*



## Rockville High School Creative Writers

Twenty-nine Rockville High School students are winners in the 2022 Scholastic Art and Writing Awards presented by the Alliance for Young Artists and Writers. RHS Creative Writers received 49 awards this year, including 10 Gold Keys, 16 Silver Keys, and 23 Honorable Mentions, the highest number of any participating high school in the state of Connecticut. Muriel Stankeviciute received a 2022 American Voices Nomination for Best in Show. Kaylin Maher and Dakota Ouellette earned Gold Keys for their writing portfolios

**Submitted by:** Victoria Nordlund, *Teacher*

## VERNON POLICE DEPARTMENT

### Police Urge Residents to be Proactive to Prevent Motor Vehicle Burglaries and Thefts

With auto thefts and burglaries on the minds of many, there are things vehicle owners can do to reduce their chances of becoming victims.

We urge residents to lock their cars, take their keys and key fobs with them and remove belongings from a vehicle. A backpack left in the rear seat may not seem like much to you, but a burglar may see it as an opportunity to find something valuable, such as a laptop computer or a wallet. Do not leave loose change in your cupholder, or leave your vehicle running in your driveway or at gas stations and convenience stores. A criminal will

not pass up the opportunity to jump in your vehicle and drive off.

That said, Vernon has not experienced the number of vehicle thefts and burglaries as some nearby towns. In 2020, Vernon experienced 50 motor vehicle thefts and 28 in 2021. So far, there have been three in 2022.

Likewise, in 2020 there were 208 motor vehicle burglaries, 117 in 2021 and 10 so far this year.

We have officers conduct proactive patrols in neighborhoods, apartment complexes and car dealerships to try to prevent these kinds of crimes. You can help protect yourself by parking

in well-lit areas and installing motion activated lights. Cameras can help too.

Should you interrupt or find someone burglarizing your vehicle, call 911 immediately and provide a description of the burglar and any vehicle they may have with them. Do not approach or attempt to intervene. Car thieves have shot at homeowners.

The Vernon Police Department will continue to work diligently protecting the community. We ask residents to help us protect your property.

**Submitted by:** Det. Lt. Christopher Pryputniewicz

## STRONG FAMILY FARM

## Come Join Us at Strong Family Farm

**S**trong Family Farm is in full operation again, bringing back many favorite programs and offering many new activities for all. The past year has been challenging, but farmers are used to facing challenges.

The outdoor season kicks off with the 9th Annual 5k Chicken Run and Walk on Sunday, May 22nd, one of the first town-wide family fun events of the spring. Far more than just a road race (although there is that, too), it's a farm event for the whole family as it includes a children's race and animals.

Strong Family Farm connects us to Vernon's agricultural roots with a variety of events planned for the coming season. Returning programs include the backyard chicken program, the Civil War kids camp, the raised bed gardening program, scarecrow contest and the Harvest Festival. Sundays will be filled with special themed activities for all ages.

The Farm Store will be offering only Connecticut Grown and produced items starting June 16th. The new hours for this year will be Thursday and Friday 1-6 p.m. and Saturday & Sunday 10am- 3pm.



The stand was funded in part through a Connecticut Department of Agriculture Viability Grant for the purpose of selling only Connecticut Grown and produced items. Some of the featured items in June are local fresh strawberries, Fish Family Farm milk, Walt's Bees honey from our bees, LuAnn's bakery items, farm jams, pickles and relishes and much more.

The farm is partnering with Mon Soleil Farm in Union to offer a CSA produce pick up at the farm on Thursdays and Saturdays. To sign up go to [www.monsoleilct.com](http://www.monsoleilct.com). Mon Soleil Farm's Deborah Winicki will be on hand Sunday afternoons to answer gardening questions.

Special membership discounts are being offered this year, with up to 50 percent off programs offered at the farm along with a 10 percent membership discount on Sundays. Become a member today!

Strong Family Farm is located at 274 West Street in Vernon Center. For more information on programs and to become a member go to [www.strongfamilyfarm.org](http://www.strongfamilyfarm.org) or like us on Facebook and Instagram. Strong Family Farm is a member of the Vernon Volunteers' Collaborative.

Submitted by: Nancy Strong, Strong Family Farm



631/2 Windsor Ave.  
(behind NAPA)  
Rockville  
**860-872-6198**  
Serving Rockville since 1978



# Celebrating 50 Years!

## Thank you to our loyal customers!



**Come in and save**  
**\$50 off** a set of 4 tires  
**Hurry! Offer ends May 31, 2022**  
see store for details

115 W. Main St., Stafford Springs, CT • 860-684-7182 • [www.mapletire.com](http://www.mapletire.com)





**T**his year we will observe Memorial Day on Monday, May 30th, the last Monday in May.

Memorial Day is a federal holiday during which we remember, honor and mourn those who have died while serving in our nation's armed forces. In cemeteries across the United States we will pay tribute to these heroes.

What we now know as Memorial Day was originally called Decoration Day and began in May 1868. An organization of Union Veterans called the Grand Army of the Republic established the holiday for people to decorate the graves of war dead with flowers.

The date of May 30 was selected for Decoration Day because it was



expected that by then flowers would be in bloom all over the country.

After World War I, the holiday was expanded to honor all American who died in wartime.

Congress recognized Decoration Day as a federal holiday in 1938.

After World War II use of the name "Memorial Day" became more common.

The federal government adopted the name Memorial Day in 1967 and in 1968 moved the holiday to the last Monday in May.

At 3 p.m. on Memorial Day is the National Moment of Remembrance. People are asked to spend a moment remembering the sacrifices of those who died in service to our nation.

When a veteran passes away they

are afforded at no charge an upright marble monument or a flush granite or bronze marker to be installed on their grave. The monument may include their name, military branch, rank, date of birth/death and a personalized message. This program is run through the United States Department of Veteran Affairs.

Grove Hill Cemetery, located on Cemetery Avenue, has two fields specifically for the internment of veterans. They are Stanley Dobosz Field, which is historic, and Lugg Memorial Field, which is available for burials. These spaces are reserved solely for Vernon veterans and in some cases their spouses. Lugg Memorial Field also has a memorial walkway with the names of veterans engraved on bricks. For more information on burial eligibility and memorial bricks please contact the Town of Vernon Cemetery Department.

**Submitted by:** Travis Clark, *Superintendent*

# SEPTIC SYSTEM SERVICE



## INSPECTIONS - REPAIRS - INSTALLATIONS

### 860-462-3926



**SepticologyLLC**

**septicology.com**

## Children's Programs & Events

**1000 Books Before Kindergarten** - Birth to Kindergarten. Register any time. It's never too early to read to your child! Please stop in to obtain your start-up packet or to collect your prizes!

**Passport to Connecticut Libraries - April 2-30.** Show us your library card to receive a passport, then visit at least 5 Connecticut libraries to be entered in a drawing for a \$100 Visa gift card.

**Summer Reading - June 20-Aug. 13.** Join us for seven weeks of reading fun, prizes and raffles!

**Can You Sea? Challenge: Ocean Creatures & Sea Shells - July 1-Aug. 13.** Visit anytime to play!

**Make a Jawsome Shark - July 1-Aug. 13.** Drop by anytime to make your shark!

**Ribbon Wands - Craft & Play - Sept. 1, 10 a.m.** Ages 2-4 with an adult. Outside Weather Permitting.

**Coloring Club & Tabletop Toys** - Drop In, Hang Out at your convenience!

**Fun Grab 'n' Go Kits for Kids:** *While supplies last*

**April 18-23** - Upcycled Spin Drum Instrument for Earth Day. Pick up in the Children's Department.

**May 2-21** - Mixed Media Flower Garden. Pick up in the Children's Department.

**June 1-10** - Create Your Own World Under the Sea. Pick up in the Children's Department.

**June 20-July 1** - 3D Paper Sculpture Fireworks. Pick up in the Children's Department.

**Aug. 15-27** - Floating Ball Experiment STEAM Kit. Pick up in the Children's Department.

**Sept. 1-9** - DIY Ribbon Wands Kit. Ages 2-4. Pick up in the Children's Department or attend the program.

**Lil' Bookworms Storytime:** *Zoom or*

## Outside Weather Permitting

May 11, June 15, July 13, Aug. 31, Sept. 21 at 10:30 a.m.

Email [rockvillelibrary@vernon-ct.gov](mailto:rockvillelibrary@vernon-ct.gov) to register. We will let you know when we start outside!

## Oceans of Possibilities Summer Reading for Children:

**June 1** Sign up begins.

**June 20-25** Reading log begins. Read for a minimum of 20 min. per day, 5 days per week.

**June 27-July 2** Week 1 Prize Pick Up

**July 5-9** Week 2 Prize Pick Up

**July 11-16** Week 3 Prize Pick Up

**July 16** RAFFLE #1 Drawn

**July 18-23** Week 4 Prize Pick Up

**July 25-30** Week 5 Prize Pick Up

**July 30** RAFFLE #2 Drawn

**Aug. 1-6** Week 6 Prize Pick Up (last week to read and log books)

**Aug. 6** RAFFLE #3 Drawn

**Aug. 8-13** Week 7 Prize Pick Up (final week to pick up prizes)

## Teen Programs & Events

### Chess Club (Grades 5-12)

Tuesdays, 4-5 p.m.\_ May 17, June 14, July 12, August 16

Learn the game or play a match with old and new friends.

### Teen Manga Club (Grades 7-12)

Wednesdays, 4-5 p.m.: May 11, June 1, July 6, August 3

Get ready to geek about your favorite manga and anime. Trivia, games, snacks, & prizes included!

### Digital Art with Danielle (Grades 7-12)

Wednesdays, 4-5 p.m.: April 20, May 18, June 22, July 20, August 24

Bring your creations to the digital realm.

### Unplugged Game Night (Grades 7-12)

Wednesdays, 4 p.m.: April 27, May 25, June 29, July 27, August 31

From Magic to Unstable Unicorns, unplug and play.

### STEAM-Powered (Grades 5-12)

Thursdays, 4-5:30 p.m.: May 19, June 16, July 14, August 18

Learn a new STEAM craft or complete an engineering challenge.

### Brain Flex Trivia (Grades 7-12)

Thursdays, 4-5 p.m.: April 28, May 26, June 30, July 28, August 25

Challenge your trivial knowledge! Topics include: pop culture, world mythology & more!

### Teens Create (Grades 7-12)

Fridays, 3:30 p.m.: April 22, May 20, June 24, July 22, August 19

Let your creativity roam. Spend an hour unwinding with friends & a new art project of your own.

### Take-and-Make Kits:

**May 2-14:** Make Your Own Comic

**June 1-18:** DIY Cardstock Notebook

**July 1-16:** Paracord Keychain

**August 1-13:** Unplugged Coding Kit

## Adult Programs & Events

**Felting with Angelina: Strawberry Fairy** - Thursday, May 19 at 6 p.m. Registration is required.

**BOBCATS!** Certified Master Wildlife Conservationist Paul Colburn presents a program on Bobcats - Thursday, May 26 at 7 p.m. Registration is required.

### Crafts for adults:

*All crafts are in-person - drop in any time between 5 and 6:30 p.m.*

**May 3:** DIY Bird Bath

**June 9:** Rainbow Pom-Pom

**July 12:** DIY Seashell Picture Frame

**August 11:** Sculpey Bead Bracelet

Be sure to stop in this summer for the Adult Summer Reading Program (June 30 - August 13). Pick up a Bingo Card, fill 5 spaces and turn it in to be entered to win some great prizes!

**Submitted by:** Jennifer Johnston, *Director*



Changes are coming this fall for some Vernon voters in terms of where they will vote and for whom they will be voting for in state representative races. That's because the state legislature has redrawn the lines of some state House and state Senate districts across the state as part of the redistricting process.

Redistricting occurs every 10 years, following the completion of the federal census. The adjustments are made in an effort to keep all state house and senate districts approximately the same size in terms of population. House districts have about 24,000 citizens and senate districts about 100,000.

Congressional districts are also often changed during redistricting but not this time for Vernon voters.

Right now, all of Vernon is part of the 35th state senate district. That will not change. What will change is Vernon's state House districts.

Vernon is now split into two House districts, the 56th and the 8th. The 56th Assembly District comprises the vast majority of Vernon. The 8th Assembly District is essentially everything south of I-84.

This fall, Vernon will be split into three House districts, the 56th, the 53rd and 57th. Most of the town will remain part of the 56th Assembly District. The section of town that is now in the 8th Assembly District will move into the 53rd District. And the northwest corner of town, essentially what is the Skinner Road area and is east of the Hockanum River, will be part of the 57th District.

Voters in what is now the 57th District will continue to vote at Skinner Road School.

Voters in what is now the 53rd District will continue to vote at Vernon Center Middle School.

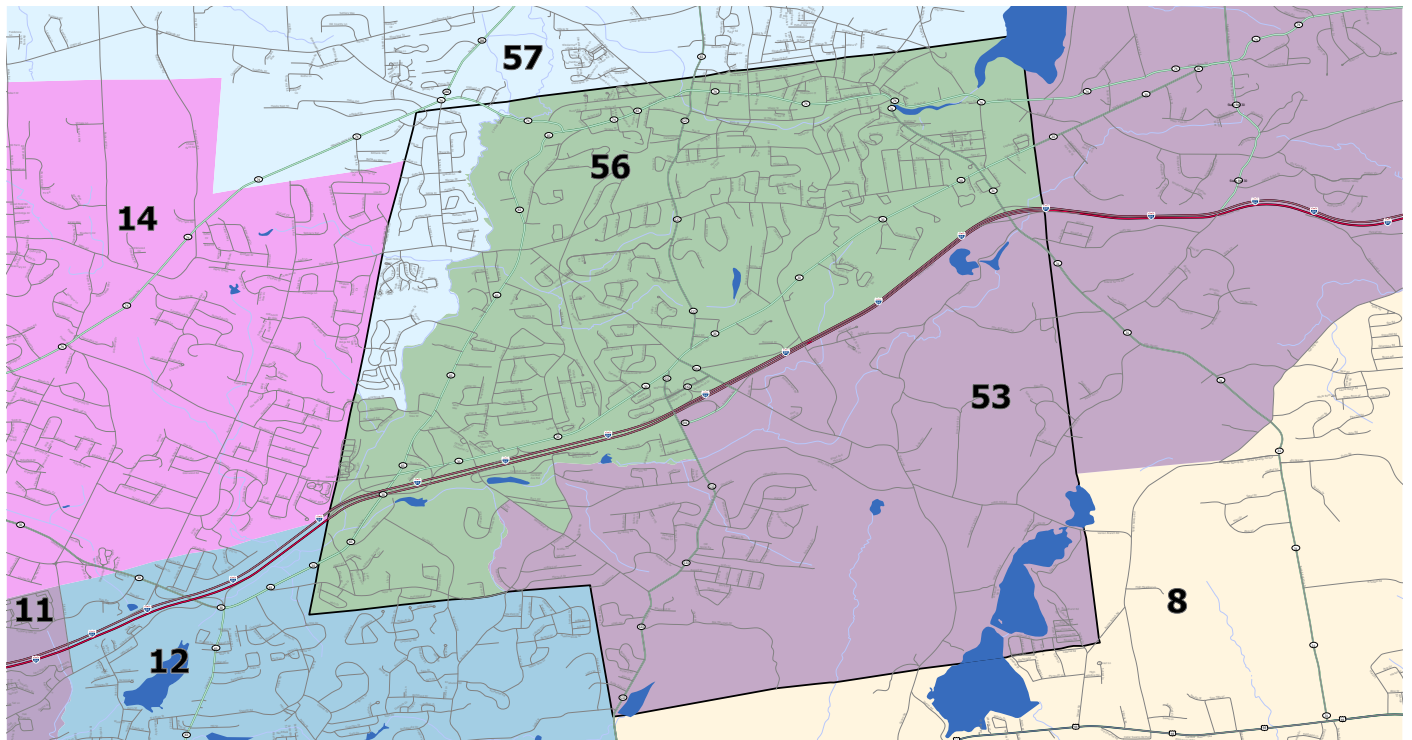
A portion of what was the 8th District

— south of I-84 and in the Washington Street/Lake Street/Campbell Avenue areas — will become part of the 56th District. These voters will vote at Skinner Road School. Most of these voters have voted at Skinner Road School before, but there are several dozen voters who will now be voting at Skinner Road School instead of VCMS.

We know this may seem confusing, but looking at the new voting map should make it clearer. Also, remember that we had no choice in these decisions. The actions were taken by the state Legislature and its Reapportionment Commission. We have done our best to minimize disruptions to our voting or poll locations. Affected voters will be receiving a letter in the coming weeks letting them know where they will vote and what State House District they are in.

**Submitted by:** M. Lisa Moody, *Republican Registrar* & Chris Prue, *Democratic Registrar*

### State House of Representatives Redistricting Plan 2021 - Vernon House District(s)



## Inside your home:

- Check and clean your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and change batteries.
- Check your fire extinguishers to confirm good working condition.
- Check for overloaded or damaged extension cords.
- Check and clean filters above the stove.
- Prepare for storm related outages. Make sure your flashlights and portable radios have batteries and that other supplies, such as bottled water is stocked and available.
- Practice exit drills with your family so everyone knows what to do in case of an emergency.
- Properly store household chemicals and never mix cleaning agents.
- Pull refrigerator out and vacuum or dust the coils.
- Recycle: get rid of old newspapers, magazines and junk mail. These items tend to pile up and can contribute to the severity and spread of fire.
- Windows should be checked to ensure they open and close properly, in case they are needed as an exit.
- Always keep stairs and landings clear for safe evacuation in event of an emergency.

## Outside and around the yard:

- Make sure your address numbers are up and visible from the street.
- Clean up yard debris. Cut back dead limbs and grasses.
- Maintain a clear 'fire zone' of 10 feet around structures. Clean up leaves and debris and consider using stone or non-combustible mulches.
- Check outdoor electrical outlets and other electrical appliances.
- Get your BBQ grill cleaned and serviced. Check all propane tanks and lines for leaks and damage.

## In the garage or shed:

- Clean up and properly store paints, pool and yard chemicals
- Check fuel containers for leaks and make sure they are properly stored.
- Have all power equipment cleaned, serviced and ready for use.
- Let power equipment sit for approximately 30 minutes before placing it inside.

**Submitted by:** Dan Wasilewski, *Fire Marshal*

## YOUTH SERVICES BUREAU

The Vernon Youth Services Bureau in partnership with Capitol Workforce partners, Connecticut's North Central Workforce Development organization, will offer the Summer Youth Employment and Learning Program (SYELP) for eligible Vernon youth age 16 to 21 beginning this July.

The purpose of SYELP is to expose and connect youth to career pathways through paid work-based learning and to build a talent pipeline that meets employer needs. The program is intended to provide youth with career competency development and work readiness training, as well as real-world experiences aligned to their interests. Work-based learning supports and supplements academic learning and promotes development of transferable skills that will serve participants well as they transition into the professional world.

Vernon youth who are selected for the program are placed at a local paid work site matched to their interest for approximately 20 hours a week and totaling 180 hours for the summer. Work site options may include, but are not limited to, town departments, local retail businesses, and youth programs. Students also receive employability skills training, along with emotional health support and learning throughout the program. Youth Services Bureau program staff conduct regular weekly

**See YOUTH SERVICES, p. 17**



**FOCUS ON FIRE SAFETY**

## Spring Cleaning & Fire Safety

As you are cleaning out this spring, don't forget about fire safety.

- Test your smoke alarms, and replace any alarms that are 10 years old or older.
- Test your carbon monoxide alarms, and replace any alarms that are 7 years old or older.
- Check your dryer vents and clean the hosing.
- Clean clutter inside and outside your home.
- Check the cords on your appliances. If any are cracked or frayed, repair or replace them.
- Practice your home fire escape plan.

For more information and free resources, visit [www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov).

*Spring Clean!  
Think  
Fire  
Safety*





**A**s we move into spring and summer, here are some reminders on what you need to do to dispose of yard waste.

Yard waste is not collected curbside and cannot be disposed of in either refuse or recycling carts. Residents are allowed to bring small amounts of brush as well as one bag of tree trimmings, twigs, weeds, pinecones and pine needles to the Transfer Station on a weekly basis. Larger amounts of yard waste will require a permit and punch card, which can be obtained from the Collector of Revenue.

Under state law, grass clippings cannot be collected with refuse or recycling. The Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) suggests that residents recycle or compost grass clippings. Leaving grass clippings on the lawn reduces the need for watering, thatching, and applying fertilizers. Composting is layering various vegetative wastes, including grass clippings, kitchen scraps and other yard trimmings in home compost bins to produce mulch, which can be used in gardens and around shrubs.

The leaf bin at the Nye Street Firehouse is open for spring cleanup for leaves only. No grass clippings or brush can be placed there. Contamination caused by disposal of any other type of yard waste or debris will result in the area being closed. People are asked to remove any bag or container they use to transport leaves. Plastic bags can be left in the trash barrel provided at the site. Lawn-sized paper bags are recyclable and do not need to be emptied.

**Submitted by:** Dwight Ryniewicz, *Director*

## ACE Honors Vernon Artists

## ARTS CENTER EAST

**I**n April, Arts Center East will present an exhibit of contemporary still lifes and feature the work of renowned still life artist Charles Ethan Porter.

Porter lived in Rockville for most of his life and created much of his art here during the 19th and early 20th century. Porter studied art at the National Academy of Design in New York City and was one of the first Black artists to exhibit there. He was the only Black artist at the turn of the century who painted still lifes. His work can be found in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the Wadsworth Atheneum, and others.

With this exhibit, ACE is shining a light on Charles Ethan Porter and celebrating artists who are working in the style of still lifes today. As part of the exhibit, Arts Center East will also host a series of talks about Charles Ethan Porter, his family, his work, and his connection to Rockville.

This exhibit is made possible by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving Vernon Greater Together Community Fund.

In May, Arts Center East welcomes the Academic Artists Association back to the gallery. The organization's 72nd Annual Exhibition of Traditional Realism will be on display in the gallery May 12-June 5.

In August and September, the gallery will host a



celebration of the career of rock 'n' roll legend Gene Pitney, who grew up in Rockville and came to be known as one of the most iconic voices in America music history. Known by locals as the "Rockville Rocket," Pitney charted 16 top 40 hits in the U.S. Four of his songs reached the top 10. In the United Kingdom he had 22 Top 40 hits. This new exhibit is of Gene Pitney memorabilia. See snapshots of his life and career and get a glimpse behind his song writing process. And look for other events during the exhibit, including live performances of the Rock & Roll Hall of Famer's best-loved songs!

As always, exhibits at Arts Center East are free and open to the public. Follow us on social media and check our website, [www.artscentereast.org](http://www.artscentereast.org) for regular updates.

**Submitted by:** Liz Bologna, *Director*

### YOUTH SERVICES, continued from p. 16

check-ins with the students and work site supervisors to provide support and address any challenges.

Youth who are interested in participating must complete the online application at <https://capitalworkforce.org/syelp/>. For more information or for local businesses who may be interested in serving as a summer work site, please contact Michelle Hill at Vernon Youth Services, [mhill@vernon-ct.gov](mailto:mhill@vernon-ct.gov).

**Submitted by:** Michelle Hill, *Director*





## Events:

### Egg Hunt – Thursday, April 14

The Vernon Parks and Recreation Department and Santini Villa Apartments are excited to welcome back the annual Egg Hunt at Henry Park, 120 South St. The Hunt is open to children ages 2-8. Come and hunt for the plastic candy filled eggs on the ball fields. Please bring a container to collect the eggs. Pre-registration is NOT required. NO dogs are permitted on the field. NOTE: This event is being held on a new day and at new times.

### THURSDAY, April 14, 2022

- Age 2 -** 5:30 p.m. - Softball Field
- Ages 3-4 -** 6 p.m. - Softball Field
- Ages 5-6 -** 5:45 p.m. - McCoy Baseball Field
- Ages 7-8 -** 6:15 p.m. - McCoy Baseball Field

### Fishing Derby – Saturday, April 30

Valley Falls Pond will be stocked with plenty of trout. Take this opportunity to introduce your children, ages 3-15, to fishing when the odds are stocked in their favor. The John M. Gessay trophy will be given to the participant who catches the heaviest trout. Pre-registration required. Event held on April 30, 8–11 a.m.

### Mother's Day Dash – Sunday, May 8

We are excited for the in-person return of the Mother's Day Dash 5K in Henry Park on Sunday, May 8th. This is a USATF Certified 5K course and averages over 250 participants. The start and finish line are in Henry Park. The Mother's Day Dash offers 16 different divisions and a special

Mother/Daughter and Mother/Son division. Proceeds from the race benefit the Vernon Police Explorers and the Send-A-Kid Scholarship Fund. Pre-registration is available online. There is limited space for registration on the day of the race. Check-in begins at 8 a.m. Awards are provided for each division. Free T-shirts for anyone pre-registered by April 17th. Every pre-registered runner will receive one ticket for the prize raffle. Additional tickets will be available for purchase on site. This event is made possible by support for our generous sponsors as well as the Vernon Police and the Town of Vernon Fire Department.

### Mayor Daniel Champagne Summer Concert Series

Held in Henry Park on McCoy Field from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Special thanks to our sponsors:

*Santini Villa Apartments, Scranton Motors and Clay Furniture.*

### SCHEDULE:

- July 28** (rain date Aug 2)  
102nd Army Band
- August 4** (rain date Aug 9) KICK
- August 11** (rain date Aug 16)  
Shaded Soul
- August 18** (rain date Aug 23)  
Nightshift

## Summer Day Camp Offerings:

**All Summer Day Camps run in 1-week sessions, June 27-August 12**

### Camp Newhoca (Entering Grades 1-8)

This camp is located in a wooded setting with a lodge, activity cabins and pavilion on picturesque Middle Bolton Lake. Activities include arts and crafts, table games, swimming in the lake, kayaking, canoeing and paddle boating, basketball, hiking, field games and much more. Offered weekly 9 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Fee per session is \$175 for Vernon

residents and \$220 for non-residents.

### Center 375 Camp (Entering grades 1-6)

This location is held in an indoor, air-conditioned facility with a gym, game room and activity rooms. The outside features a swimming pool, playground, field for games, basketball court and picnic area. Campers enjoy fun theme days, physical fitness, arts and crafts, swimming and much more! This camp is at Center 375 from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Fee per session is \$155 for Vernon residents and \$180 for non-residents.

### Kiddie Camp (Ages 4-5)

Kiddie Camp is split into a morning session and afternoon session. If you chose to register for both, we offer Lunch Bunch to meet in-between the two sessions. Lunch Bunch is ONLY available for those attending both time sessions within the same week. This location features a field, kiddie pool and playground. Children do activities that focus on interaction with peers, have theme weeks, physical fitness, educational learning, arts and crafts and much more. The camp is at Center 375 from 8:30 a.m.-noon or 12:30 – 3 p.m.

Fee per session is \$100 for Vernon residents and \$125 for non-residents. Lunch Bunch is an additional fee.

**Extended AM** is available to those attending Camp Newhoca, Center 375 and Kiddie Camp in the morning from 7:30–9 a.m. for \$25 for Vernon residents and \$31 for non-residents.

**Extended PM** is available to those attending Camp Newhoca, Center 375 and Kiddie Camp in the afternoon from 3:30-6 p.m. for \$40 for residents and \$50 for non-residents

## Speciality Camp Offerings:

**Dance Camp (Ages 5-7 and 8-12)** is a fun-filled, high energy camp with staff from Beyond Dance. Participants will enjoy dancing a variety of styles, from modern music

to Zumba, create cool crafts, sing and more! Wear appropriate clothes and shoes to comfortably move around and dance. Bring snacks and plenty of water. The camp will be Center 375. Two sessions are being offered, June 20-24 and Aug. 15-19. Ages 5-7 runs 8:30-11:30 a.m. and ages 8-12 runs noon-3 p.m.

Cost is \$80 for Vernon residents and \$90 for non-residents.

**Mad Science (Grades 1-6)** - Set your future space explorers on a trajectory from our Earth's atmosphere to the outer reaches of our solar system! This hands-on program brings them closer to the stars, planets, comets, and more. They learn about living in space, getting away from gravity, looking for space phenomena, and they participate in a rocket launch! Camp runs June 27-July 1 at Center 375, 9 a.m.-noon. The cost is \$189.

**Art-venture (Grades K-5)** - This inspiring week of art-ventures sparks creativity, engagement, exploration and individual expression. Learn



about the fascinating underwater world of seahorses, sea turtles and other wonderful creatures while exploring original art forms and techniques. Design beach hats, sunglasses, and T-shirts. Create ocean slime and discover the art of mosaics while creating sea shell boxes. Sculpt shimmery coral and goofy clay octopuses. Paint ceramic fish banks, and design ocean creature stuffed animals. Experience painting, printmaking, stained glass, ceramics, collage, mosaics, fabric art and working with clay. Camp runs July

25-29 at Center 375 from 9 a.m.-noon. The cost is \$189.

## Rentals

Looking to have a picnic? Party? Meeting? The Vernon Parks and Recreation Department rents out a variety of facilities that can fit your needs. Offerings include, but are not limited to, Community Room, Pavilion, Picnic Areas, Lodge, Athletic Areas and more. All detailed information and rental application are available online at [www.vernonrec.org](http://www.vernonrec.org)

## Community Gardens

Harvest beautiful flowers, lovely plants, healthy fruit and fresh vegetables! Garden plots 25-feet by 25-feet are available to reserve. The fee is \$25 for Vernon residents and \$35 for non-residents. Plots are located at Vernon Center Middle School via the West Street entrance. More information and registration is available online [www.vernonrec.org](http://www.vernonrec.org)

**Submitted by:** Amy Watt, *Assistant Director*



Are you at least 62 years old and looking for a new, safe, affordable apartment to live in?

## Welcome to Access Housing at Parker Place

100 Old Post Road, Tolland, CT



ACCESSIBLE

### Affordable Senior Housing



Immediate 1 & 2 Bedroom  
Income Eligible Apartments Available  
\*One pet allowed\*



860-454-4300  
959-929-7985



[Parker-Place.org](http://Parker-Place.org)



Encouraging consumers to think “buy local” every time they need a product or service is an ongoing process and thanks to the ever-expanding Vernon Business Directory, it is getting easier.

About 500 local businesses have free listings on the website, [vernonbusinessdirectory.com](http://vernonbusinessdirectory.com), and all Vernon business leaders are welcome to add their businesses.

“Buying local and supporting local businesses builds community, helps keep a community unique, creates economic opportunity for business owners and employees, strengthens the local economy by reinvesting dollars locally, creates a sustainable future and ensures a better value for local consumers,” said Shaun Gately, Vernon’s Economic Development Coordinator. “Our local business community is worth supporting because it supports us by providing necessary services, sponsoring youth sports teams, employing local people, paying local taxes and so many other intangibles. A strong, unique business

community builds vitality and truly benefits everyone.”

Drew Crandall, a Vernon business owner who has worked to build the “Buy Local Vernon” program, said pausing before making a purchase and asking, “Is this something I can buy locally” has a compounding benefit in the community.

“We’ve got to get this idea to go viral – buy local because doing so is a ‘Victory for Vernon,’” Crandall said. “Chances are, that purchase you are making online or through a national retailer can be made locally. Even if you shift just a few purchases to a local business, you are helping and we all are making progress.”

Crandall has been working to spread the word about the campaign on social media, including Vernon-oriented Facebook groups. You too can lend a hand with downloadable campaign graphics, which can be found on the Town of Vernon’s “Buying Local is a Victory for Vernon!” page, <http://www.vernon-ct.gov/buy-local>, and posted on social media, websites, emails and elsewhere.

“The goal is to get businesses, organizations, families and individuals to share this ‘buy local’ messaging on websites, in social media and email, printed flyers, menus and even inserts in mailings,” Crandall said. The Town Economic Development office also has free posters, window clings and businesses cards that can be placed at point of purchase locations in local businesses.

“Our goal is to have Vernon residents increase their spending with local businesses by 10 percent,” Gately said. “That is something that is achievable and will have a real and positive impact on our business community, and on Vernon.”

**Submitted by:** David Owens, *Communication Specialist*



Thank you for buying local! Vernon has hundreds of businesses that invest in our local economy, offer unique products and services, create and sustain local jobs, hire local suppliers, pay local taxes, help local citizens, donate to local non-profits, sponsor local events, and enhance our community. **It's a win-win for everyone.**

For details, please scan the QR code or visit [VernonBusinessDirectory.com](http://VernonBusinessDirectory.com) today.



#### TAX COLLECTOR, continued from p. 8

taxes. The charge is intended to be a penalty for late payment. Delinquent Motor vehicle taxes are also reported to the state Department of Motor Vehicles and will prevent a vehicle owner from registering a vehicle. Payment in cash or by money order is required for overnight DMV clearance.

Tax Payments can be made online at [www.vernon-ct.gov](http://www.vernon-ct.gov) by visiting the Department of Collector of Revenue, or selecting “Tax Payments” from the home page. Payments can be made in person at 8 Park Place Monday-Wednesday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Friday 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Payments can also be mailed to PO Box 387, Vernon, CT 06066.

**Submitted by:** Terry Hjarne, *Collector*



## 2021-22 : A re-focusing year for students, families, teachers, and staff

We started the 2021-2022 school year with high hopes for a “more normal year,” however that quickly became a false expectation. In reality, the 2021-2022 school year proved to be more challenging than the previous year. Quarantining students, keeping schools open and teacher/staff shortages became daily challenges. We worked to maintain an optimal learning environment by focusing on high standards of teaching and learning, and creating an optimal educational environment in and out of school.

We never wavered from our core beliefs: *advocate a “whole child” approach to student learning, maximize student performance, set high expectations, and integrate family and community with the education system.*

Despite the challenges of 2021, there is much for which we can be proud.

- State officials highlighted Vernon schools for strong improvement in the four-year graduation rate at Rockville High School over the past five years, to 84.8% from 80.4%.
- Although state assessments were not a priority in 2021 because of the pandemic, Vernon schools outscored all 30 Connecticut Alliance Districts. For Grades 3 through 8 in both English/Language Arts and Mathematics. Vernon students were first in SBAC results.
- By June 2021, 143 Rockville High School students received college credit for their academic work. Students received credit on Advanced Placement exams and for college courses through UConn, Goodwin University and Manchester and Middlesex community colleges.
- More than 78 percent of the RHS Class of 2021 are furthering their education at the college level at institutions such as Fordham, UConn, Penn State, Rensselaer Polytechnic and the Rochester Institute of Technology.
- Twenty-two Rockville High School students won 2021 Scholastic Art and Writing Awards, including 5 Gold Keys, 10 Silver Keys, and 20 Honorable Mentions. Also, RHS Creative Writing Teacher Victoria Nordlund won the Connecticut Gold Key teaching award.
- Rockville High School students Caitlin Chatterton, Kaylin Mayer, Victoria Mitchell, and Cali Miville were selected to read their award-winning poetry at the Connecticut Literary Festival in October at Real Art Ways in Hartford. They were the only high school students reading at the event. This is an incredible honor for these poets, and for RHS.
- Clarissa Halpryn of RHS finished 9th in Senior Group Performance in the National History Day Contest. Clarissa and teammate John Margelony have worked so hard over the years and their outstanding placement is testament to that.
- Vernon elementary students received statewide recognition. Chase Kopcza from Lake Street School won 1<sup>st</sup> place in the 2021 State Fire Prevention Poster contest. This is quite an honor as thousands of students participated. Charles Guida from Center Road School won the Lincoln Financial President's Award at the statewide Invention Convention contest. Recipients' inventions are focused on accessibility, safety, and creativity.
- Congratulations to Regina Lee for being named a 2022 Connecticut Teacher of the Year finalist. Regina, the Talented & Gifted teacher at Vernon Center Middle School, was one of only four finalists in the state. Just being named a district 'Teacher of the Year' is an honor, however, to be named a finalist out of the 169 top teachers in the state is an exceptional distinction for Regina and Vernon.
- Rockville High School's Football

Team was the State runner-up in the CIAC Class M playoffs this fall. The 2021 Football Team finished with 10 wins and 3 losses, were the Pequot-Uncas League co-champions and qualified for the Class M CIAC playoffs as the second seed. The team won two playoff games at home to advance to the Class M Finals for the first time since 1995. This team is the definition of resilience and fortitude.

- In the summer, a new track and artificial turf field were installed at RHS. This \$1.5 million investment to improve our athletic area for students, families, and the community was thanks to the Board of Education and Town Council. The new facility will be used by the football, soccer, lacrosse, and track teams, the band and physical education classes. The track is also used by walkers throughout the year.
- In June 2021, the district conducted an 'end of the year survey' of over 540 people. The vast majority, 89.4%, gave the Overall Education in Vernon a grade of “A” or “B.” Ninety five percent say they received favorable services from our teachers. Also, 93.5% said the Vernon Public Schools are heading in the right direction in terms of educating their children.

We should be proud of these accomplishments as they clearly demonstrate the potential of the Vernon Public Schools. Students, parents, families, teachers, staff members, administrators, and board members together work toward educational excellence every day and make our district a better place for all children. I am proud to be a part of this culture and I can say that though 2021 was a difficult and challenging year, we got through it together and we are a stronger school district for it.

**Submitted by:** Superintendent Dr. Joseph Macary

**A**fter two years of cancelling events, the Vernon Volunteers' Collaborative is rebounding to our pre-COVID schedule. This spring you can sample a variety of programs, including music, races, book and flower sales, hikes, and talks. Come out and celebrate our resilience!

**Rachel Carson Speaks - Apr. 18, 7 p.m.**

The Vernon Garden Club presents Terri Cusson, president of the Connecticut Herb Association, who will teach us her herbal recipes. Vernon Congregational Church.

**Vernon Historical Society's Annual Book Sale - Apr. 29, 30 & May 1, 6, 7**

This popular annual event features a wide selection of used books, DVDs and books on tape. See the society website, [www.vernonhistoricalsoc.org](http://www.vernonhistoricalsoc.org), for times.

**Vernon Garden Club's Spring Plant Sale - May 7, 8-11:30 a.m.**

Garden Club members will have for sale, perennials, annuals and unusual plants from their gardens at the Vernon Center Middle School. Rain date is May 14.

**Canoe & Kayak Paddle of Upper Bolton Lake - May 7, 9 a.m.**

Northern Connecticut Land Trust's annual water tour. [www.NorthernCTLandTrust.org](http://www.NorthernCTLandTrust.org)

**The Friends of Valley Falls Three Walk Weekend at Valley Falls Park - May 7-8**

**May 7, 7:30 a.m.** - "Birds of Valley Falls" - Biologist Denise Anamani will introduce you to the birds in the park.



**May 7, 1 p.m.** - "Rocks, Rails & Industry" - Jon Roe will lead a geology and history walk.

**May 8, 1 p.m.** - "Tree Identification Walk" - Identify and learn about the trees of the park. [www.FriendsOfValleyFalls.org](http://www.FriendsOfValleyFalls.org)

**5k Chicken Run - May 22, 8 a.m.**

More than a road race, this Strong Family Farm event is a family activity. See the Strong Family Farm article for more information. [www.StrongFamilyFarm.org](http://www.StrongFamilyFarm.org)

**Talcottville Memorial Day Parade - May 29, 9 a.m.**

One of the state's shortest parades takes place in Talcottville each year the Sunday before Memorial Day. Marchers proceed to the Civil War monument in the Mount Hope cemetery, where ceremonies are held. The parade assembles at 8:30 a.m.

**The Vernon Chorale's June Concert - June 11, 7:30 p.m.**

The Chorale closes its season with "A Chorale Tapestry" at St. John's Episcopal Church. [www.VernonChorale.org](http://www.VernonChorale.org)

**A Newspaper's View of Progressive-Era Rockville, 1911-1913 - June 12, 2 p.m.**

Program by Donald Rogers for the Vernon Historical Society. [www.VernonHistoricalSoc.org](http://www.VernonHistoricalSoc.org)

To learn about these events and others that will be added, visit [VernonVolunteers.org](http://VernonVolunteers.org). To receive email announcements, join our free MeetUp group at [Meetup.com/Making-Vernon-Special](http://Meetup.com/Making-Vernon-Special).

**Author:** Jon Roe, *Vernon Volunteers' Collaborative Facilitator*

**Submitted by:** Jon Roe, *VVC Facilitator*

**ADMINISTRATION**

**Stay Connected to Your Town via Social Media**

**T**he Town of Vernon is working to connect with town residents through the town website and a variety of social media accounts.

Town government shares information via Facebook and Twitter, as do the Vernon Public Schools, the Vernon Police Department, the Parks and Recreation Department and the Senior Center. What's the benefit to you?

Important news and announcements are shared via the social media accounts, such as school closings for weather, road closures, and other useful and important information.

"Many people spend time on social media and it is a great way for us to reach residents with important information," Mayor Dan Champagne said.

Social media accounts are not monitored at all times should never be considered a substitute for calling 911 in the event of an emergency, or seeking information about Town matters from a Town department.

The Town of Vernon can be found on Twitter at @TownVernon, the Vernon Schools can be found at @VernonSchools and the Police Department at @VernonCTPolice.

On Facebook, the Town can be found at @TownofVernonCT, the Schools can be found at @VernonPublicSchools and Police can be found at @vernonctpolice.

The Vernon Senior Center, Parks and Recreation Department, Vernon Rocks Coalition and Vernon schools also maintain social media accounts.

For links to more Town of Vernon social media accounts, please visit: [vernon-ct.gov/socialmedia](http://vernon-ct.gov/socialmedia)

**Submitted by:** David Owens, *Communication Specialist*

The Town of Vernon Fire Department is proud to partner with Rockville High School to support its Fire Technology course. The course has been available for 20 years and during that time multiple students have completed it and are now in fire service careers across the state or serving as volunteers here in Vernon.

Leah Leach, who teaches the Fire Technology class, offered the following summary:



- Do you have a high school-aged student interested in a career related to firefighting or the emergency medical service? Rockville High School's Fire Technology class is in full swing. The course is available to all RHS students and gives each a taste of what it is like to be a firefighter.
- The class is offered twice per school year, and takes place over one block period. The course is taught by a Rockville High School teacher who is a certified firefighter/EMT, which gives students an opportunity to learn from professional currently working in the field.
- Students are assigned their own set of fire gear for the duration of the course and learn a variety of skills related to firefighting. The skills include how to properly put on and take off firefighting gear and air packs, how a fire engine is connected to a fire hydrant,

how firefighters operate hose lines, and the search and rescue skills firefighters use to find people trapped in a structure fire.

- Students also experience the emergency medical field and learn what it takes to be an EMT or paramedic in Connecticut. Students learn how to properly assess a patient, perform CPR and render basic first aid.

The class works in a close partnership with the Town of Vernon Fire Department and fire trucks and ambulances come in regularly so students can develop hands-on skills and talk with other professionals in the field. The class is an excellent opportunity for students to take a non-traditional class during the school day that can help prepare them for a career in a field related to emergency care and firefighting.

Giving students the opportunity to engage in real world learning and demonstrating the different career paths in the emergency services is a win-win for Rockville High School, the Fire Department and most importantly, the students. To learn more about the Town of Vernon Fire Department and how to join our volunteer family visit us at [www.vernonfire.com](http://www.vernonfire.com)  
[www.vernonpublicshools.org/rockville-high-school-home](http://www.vernonpublicshools.org/rockville-high-school-home) for more information

**Submitted by:** Fire Chief Steve Eppler

## Friends of Rockville Public Library

The Rockville Public Library is an important asset to Vernon and provides books, audio books, movies, computers, adult and children's crafts, programs, museum passes, and quiet places to study or read.

The Friends of Rockville Public Library (FRPL) is a nonprofit volunteer organization that advocates for and supports the library. We purchase annual museum passes and, when our funds allow, purchase the Book Page guide for readers, which can be obtained at the circulation desk. We also work to fill other requests.

To support the library, we raise money in several ways.

The friends conducts a popular holiday cookie sale that brings our community

together. We make phone calls to bakers, we bake holiday cookie and put platters together. We reluctantly skipped the cookie sale the past two years, but have high hopes for December 2022.

We also raise funds by asking that bottle return receipts, addressed to the Friends of the Rockville Public Library, be brought to or mailed to the library.

The friends continue to sponsor the library's museum passes which can be obtained from the library website, [RockvillePublicLibrary.org](http://RockvillePublicLibrary.org) under "collections." We also provide delivery for homebound people, a service that can be obtained by calling the library or checking its website.

We plan to hold a tag sale this spring with place, date, and time to be determined. Keep an eye on local papers, Vernon Patch, the library's website Vernon's Community Calendar on the town website for details.

The Friends of Rockville Public Library is back to having monthly meetings on the first Thursdays of the month at noon in the first floor meeting room at the library. We do not meet in July, July and August.

If you would like to support us, applications can be obtained on the Rockville Public Library website or at the library circulation desk.

Learn more at our web page: [RockvillePublicLibrary.org](http://RockvillePublicLibrary.org)

**Submitted by:** Donna Barnas, Member



**Town of Vernon**  
Memorial Building  
14 Park Place  
Vernon, CT 06066

STD  
US POSTAGE PAID  
HARTFORD, CT  
PERMIT NO. 5126

\*\*\*\*\*ECRWSS\*\*\*\*\*

**POSTAL CUSTOMER**

Vernon, CT 06066

# **New England Arborists Tree Care, llc**

**A Higher Standard**

**Conservation ♦ Preservation ♦ Restoration**

**Large, Small and Tall Tree Removal**

**Bracing & Cabling**

**Corrective Pruning**

**Diseased Trees**

**Fertilization**

**Insect & Disease Control**

**Organic Soil Treatments**

**Residential & Commercial Services**

**Storm & Wind Damage Repair**

**Stump & Root Grinding**

**Tree Installation**

**Bucket Truck / Crane Service**

**Technical Climbing**

**Risk Assessment of Hazardous Trees**

**Year-Round Services**



**Damon Collins**

Office: 860.454.7866 • Mobile: 860.985.6034

Tolland, CT

Or Visit: [www.neatc.net](http://www.neatc.net)



**Our Consultations Are Always Complimentary**

License S-5664 / B-2706