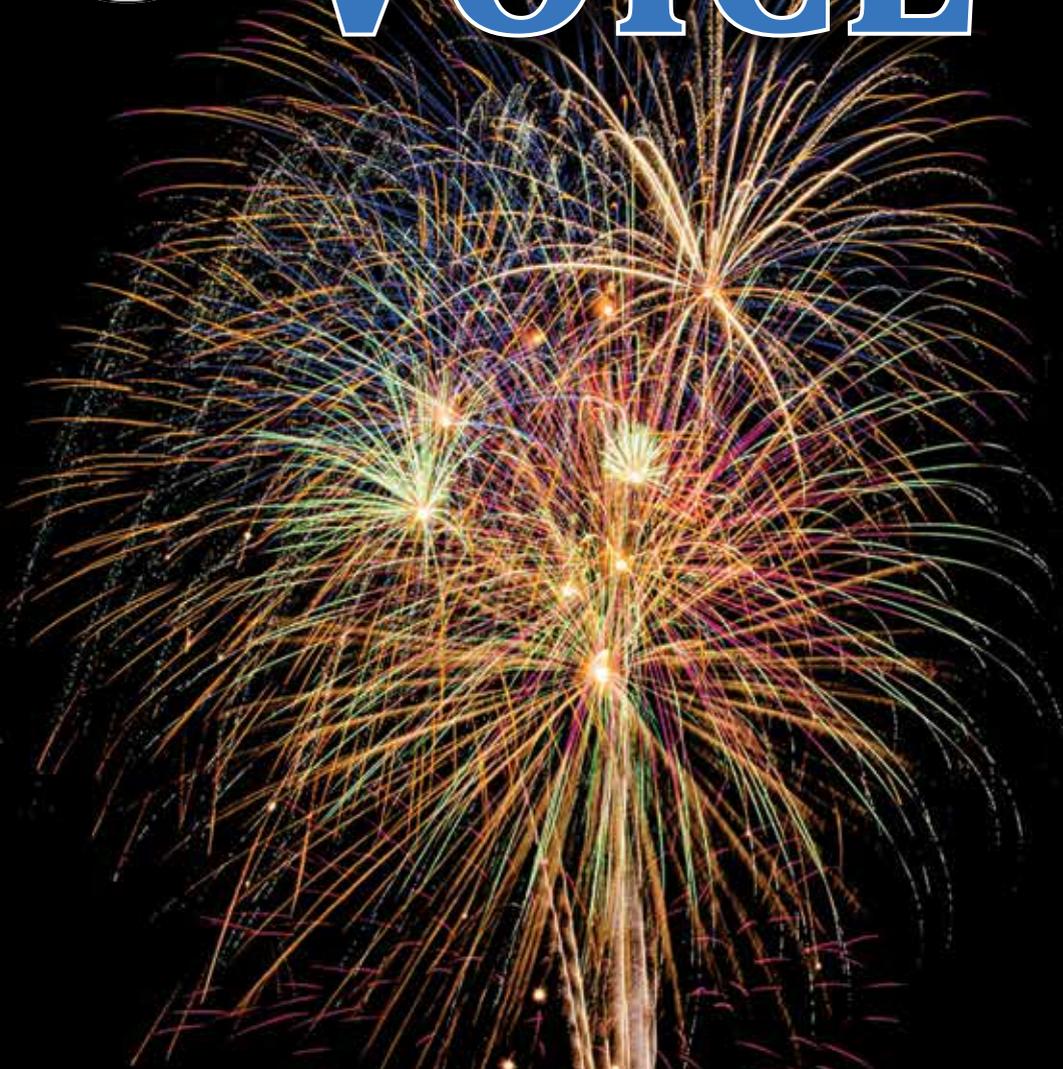




# VERNON VOICE



## July *in the* Sky

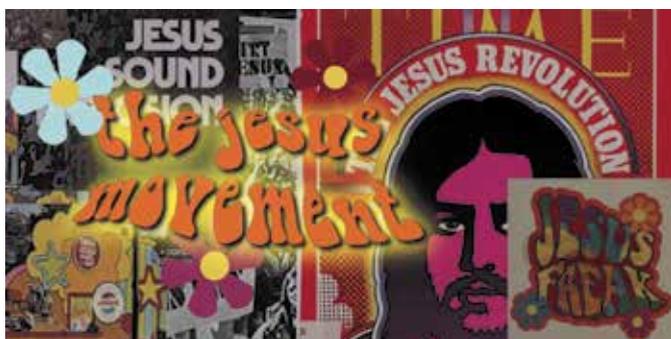
**JULY 12, 2022**

*\*rain date July 13, 2022\**

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



Drone photo by Tyler Gagnon



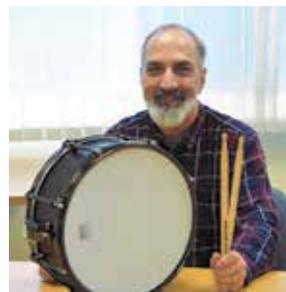
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Drew Crandall, President



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Dear Friends:

Happy Summer! We are just a week away from one of Vernon's largest annual events, July In The Sky. This year the Town of Vernon will partner with the Rockville Downtown Association to put on a celebration of our country's birthday!

This year the event is scheduled for July 12, 2022 with a rain date of July 13, 2022.

All kinds of fun things will be happening: food vendors, booths, bounce house, Fun Zone, a parade and of course our long awaited Fire Works Display from Fox Hill Tower.

You can take in all the sights, sounds and tastes of the event by going to Henry Park or Central Park in Downtown. Come early, the events begin at 6:00 PM until dark when the fireworks begin. This has become not just a town event but a regional event with attendees from all over Tolland County and beyond. Hope to see you there!

You should also know that the National Night Out celebration is planned for the first Tuesday in August in the Courthouse Plaza parking lot. Lots of fun, games, food and friendship to be

enjoyed that evening as well. The Vernon Police Department sponsors the event to connect to the community in a positive way. The event begins at 5:00 PM and concludes at 8:00 PM, and the event is totally free.

Thank you to Luz Photography by Paula for our cover photo of 2021 July in the Sky. The Studio is located directly across from Rockville General Hospital for all your photography needs. Give them a call or visit their website for more information. It's important to support our local businesses.

Finally, this edition of the magazine provides lots of important information for you and your family to use over the summer and into the return to school. Programs, reminders and safety tips are just a few of the articles you will enjoy reading.

Have a Happy and Safe Summer 2022!



*Daniel A. Champagne*

Daniel A. Champagne  
Mayor, Town of Vernon



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**UCONN  
HEALTH**



July 12, 2022

Vernon's premier summer event, July in the Sky, returns Tuesday July 12 with a host of family-friendly activities, music and food in Downtown Rockville and Henry Park. The rain date is July 13.

Activities begin at 6 p.m. in both locations and the evening culminates with a spectacular fireworks display fired from Fox Hill Tower in Henry Park. The best spots to watch are in Downtown Rockville and Henry Park.

The Vernon Parks and Recreation Department, in partnership with the Rockville Downtown Association, is organizing this year's events. The Parks and Recreation Department handles events in Henry Park and the Rockville Downtown Association is organizing events in Downtown Rockville.

There will be bounce houses, a rock climbing wall and other attractions.

In addition to Rockville's restaurants, a variety of food vendors will set up booths and serve a variety of treats. Food vendors will also set up in Henry Park.

Admission to Henry Park is \$10 per car and \$2 per walker. There is no charge to enjoy the fireworks from Downtown Rockville and there are prime viewing spots along East Main Street, St. Bernard's Terrace, Park Place and in Central Park.

No pets, alcohol, bicycles, skateboards, fireworks or sparklers are permitted in Henry Park, or in Downtown Rockville. Bicycles and other non-powered vehicles are permitted in Downtown Rockville if they are participating in the "Push, Pull and Pedal Patriotic Parade."

Submitted by: David Owens, Communications Specialist



The Town of Vernon Fire Department, like all fire departments, has multiple companies within its organization, each with its own job function. For example, an Engine Company has specific duties that it performs on the fire ground different than that of an Aerial Company. Together, all the companies work in unison to get the emergency mitigated quickly, effectively and safely. Although not engaging in traditional firefighting or rescue activities, the Fire Police Company plays an important part in ensuring both the safety of the firefighters working as well as the public on and around the emergency scene.

Fire Police Captain Chris Prue, provided the following information on the roles and responsibilities of the TVFD Fire Police Company:

"Our job is to keep first responders and the public safe by setting up safe work areas and enforcing crowd control when necessary. During an emergency it is our duty to keep the public away from any hazards so that the other fire department members are able to focus on their task without having to keep an eye on the public. During events such as July in the Sky and other community happenings, our company is utilized to assist the police department with controlling traffic so they can focus on other tasks and community relationship building. Fire Police officers are certified in traffic control and traffic incident management systems to allow us to understand traffic patterns and flow. Our company is made up of a Captain, two Lieutenants, and nine officers."

Captain Prue also wants the community to remember: "If there is a fire incident in the road or neighborhood you live in with the road blocked off, please stop and speak with the Fire Police member or police officer about how you can get home. Many times once we can verify your address we may be able to allow you to get closer to the scene as long as it is safe to do so."

We know emergency scenes can be a disruption that may cause you delays and inconveniences but please be mindful of our Fire Police members and follow their

See Fire Company, p. 15



The Vernon Fire Company

**H**ave you ever wondered about the quaint white farmhouse located on the corner of Valley Falls Road and directly across from the red barn? Many people assume the circa 1850 house and scenic property are a private farm. However, it is actually owned by the Friends of Valley Falls, a non-profit that will soon open a Heritage Center on the eight-acre property.



Valley Falls farmhouse. Photo by Friends of Valley Falls

The Friends started in 1972 when a group of seven Vernon women began taking nature walks in Valley Falls Park. The park was not well known, and its landscape was wild and untouched. The group met weekly to compare notes and share discoveries, and realized the park held many natural treasures that should be protected.

As more residents discovered the park, its popularity grew, as did the Friends organization. In 1977 the Friends became an advisory group to Vernon's Recreation Commission and monitored park conditions. During the '80s and '90s it worked with the Parks and Recreation Department and sponsored environmental studies, organized nature walks,

and developed a park management plan. In the late 1990s the Friends restored the red barn and guided the installation of a Braille Trail by Eagle Scouts.

In 2000 Valley Falls Farm was put up for sale. Concerned that the farmhouse and its historic outbuildings would be razed by a developer, the Friends undertook a successful fundraising effort and purchased the property with its farmhouse, stable and outbuildings.

In 2012, the State of Connecticut provided \$150,000 to help restore

the buildings and create a Heritage Center in the stable. Furnished with agricultural and household items once used at Valley Falls Farm, the Center and its outbuildings tell the story about the people who once lived there and how they used the land.

The Friends of Valley Falls is always seeking new members and active volunteers to help at the farm. Yearly membership levels include: Individual, \$15; Family, \$25; Contributing, \$50; and Benefactor, \$100. To assist in preserving this scenic and historic property, donations to the "Valley Falls Farm Fund" endowment fund are also welcome. The Friends is non-profit so donations are tax-deductible.

Valley Falls Farm offers unbeatable vistas and a fascinating look at history. Help preserve this town treasure by becoming a member, contributing, or volunteering your time. For more information, visit [FriendsOfValleyFalls.org](http://FriendsOfValleyFalls.org). Member Vernon Volunteer's Collaborative.

**Submitted by:** Nancy Steffens,  
*FOVF Secretary*

## TAX COLLECTOR

### Important Reminder: Tax Payments Due July 1, 2022

*Collector of Revenue, Town of Vernon*

Taxes are due July 1, 2022 on the Grand List of October 1, 2021. If you have not received your bill(s) by July 1, 2022 please check online or contact the Collectors Office for assistance.

### MOTOR VEHICLE TAXES

Motor Vehicle Taxes must be paid in full on or before August 1, 2022 after which the tax becomes delinquent, subject to interest and will be reported to the Commissioner of Motor Vehicles as provided by Law.

### REAL ESTATE AND PERSONAL PROPERTY

Each Real Estate and Personal Property bill totaling \$100.00 must be paid in full on or before August 1, 2022. Taxpayers whose tax bills are over \$100.00 have the option of paying the full amount due or the First Installment by August 1, 2022. Failure to pay by August 1, 2022 renders the installment delinquent and subject to interest. Taxpayers must pay the second installment due January 1, 2023 on or before February 1, 2023 to avoid penalties.

Failure to pay on or before August 1, 2022, will render bills delinquent

and subject to interest at the rate of 1 ½% per month from the due date of July 1, 2022. Minimum interest charge is \$2.00.

Please pay online at [www.vernon-ct.gov](http://www.vernon-ct.gov), ECHECK option is free of charge for your convenience. Debit and Credit payments are accepted online. Mail payments to: P.O. Box 387, Vernon CT or in the Office, 8 Park Place, Vernon, CT Monday through Wednesday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; and Friday 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**Submitted by:** Terry Hjarne, *CCMC Collector of Revenue, Town of Vernon*

# Vernon Agriculture Science and Technology Students Grow Fresh Produce to be Served in Rockville High School Cafeteria

*You've heard of 'Farm to Table.' How about 'Farm to Cafeteria Tray?'*

The Vernon Public Schools are taking the "farm to table" movement to a new level. Students in Rockville High School's Agriculture Science and Technology (ASTE) program are growing cucumbers and lettuce their classmates will enjoy in the school cafeteria.

You might call it farm to cafeteria tray.

Project Homegrown is a partnership between the Vernon Public Schools' Food and Nutrition Department and the ASTE program, and in addition to growing fresh produce includes the composting of kitchen scraps from the cafeteria. The compost is added to the soil used to grow the fresh produce.

"I have been thinking a lot about the ASTE program and how we could work together," said Elizabeth Fisher,



Junior Troy Balsewicz carries a tray of lettuce from the ASTE greenhouse.

Director of Food and Nutrition for the Vernon Public Schools. "I reached out to Erika Bahler, who is the director, and asked if they'd be interested in starting a collaboration and Erika said 'absolutely.'"

The impetus was a grant program through the North Central District Health Department to encourage farm to school programs and to help cover costs, which consisted largely of vegetable seeds, bins for vegetable scraps, and other supplies.

On May 4, 2022 Rockville High Senior Jessica Donovan harvested the first cucumbers. Junior Troy Balsewicz made a first cutting of the lettuce he and his teachers and classmates grew.

When the weather gets warmer, the ASTE students will also grow cherry tomatoes in a garden they have prepared. The garden club will continue to grow food through the summer and fall for the Vernon Schools nutrition program.

"I can't think of a better way to reinforce for the Rockville High School community the important contributions of the ASTE program and agriculture in general," Vernon Schools Superintendent Dr. Joseph Macary said. "Our students will be enjoying fresh vegetables grown by their friends just a few hundred feet from where they are eating. This is great for everybody."

Bahler said students in horticulture classes and the after school garden club are enthusiastic about providing classmates with hyper-locally sourced lunches in the



Rockville High ASTE Teacher Erika Bahler shows students Jessica Donovan and Troy Balsewicz how to harvest lettuce.

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**A**t Rockville High School, students in the Culinary Arts Program, led by Chef Lessard, have the opportunity to have hands-on experiences in the kitchen which teach the students skills that they are sure to use daily.

Last year, Chef Lessard began hosting “Guest Chefs” to come into the kitchen to teach students how to make a dish of their choice. On April 26th, they had the pleasure of hosting their very own Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Macary. Students worked alongside Dr. Macary to make chicken kabobs. The class enjoyed getting to work and speak with their Superintendent.



They appreciated that he took time to prepare and eat a meal with them but they especially valued the one-on-one conversations that they had with him.

These “Guest Chef” experiences are not only wonderful opportunities for Rockville High School students but also for the staff members. It’s rewarding to see the students apply skills they have learned in other classes. The connections and memories that the staff and students make together in the kitchen at Rockville High School are key ingredients for a successful high school career!

Follow the culinary arts department on Instagram to see what’s cooking! @rockvillehighculinary

**Submitted by:** Amy Lessard, *Rockville High School Culinary Arts Program Chef*



Rockville High School Senior Jessica Donovan displays the cucumbers she just harvested.

cafeteria and showing off what they do at ASTE.

“They’re excited about the fact that what they are growing is going to be in their school lunch, that they’re going to find it in the school cafeteria when they get lunch each day,” Bahler said.

“It’s great to have fresh produce that is locally grown,” Donovan said, adding locally-grown food is easier to transport and helps reduce air pollution and greenhouse gases. “You get to see where the food you grow goes and

the affect it has on your community. Other students also get to see what we’ve been doing in the ag program.”

Donovan snipped the cucumbers from their vine, which is growing in an ASTE greenhouse. Teacher Erika Bahler helped her determine which cucumbers were ready to be picked and which need some more growing time.

Bahler showed Balsewicz how to cut the lettuce, also grown in a green house, then he finished the job, placing the mixed greens in a bucket for delivery to the cafeteria.

“It’s a really nice opportunity to be able to do this,” Balsewicz said. “We’re able to provide something for the school and our fellow students get to see what the ag program is doing. Many of the people over there really don’t know what goes on over here.”

And while the Vernon Public Schools Food and Nutrition Department uses locally grown produce as much as

possible, the produce grown by the ASTE students takes it a new level.

“You can’t get any fresher than next door,” Bahler said.

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

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The organizations of the Vernon Volunteers' Collaborative have a variety of primarily outdoor events planned for summer and fall.

**Tolland County 4-H Fair at Tolland County Agricultural Center, Aug. 12-14 (Fri.-Sun)**

The Tolland County 4-H Fair is a fair the whole family can enjoy. It connects us to Vernon's agricultural roots and allows us to enjoy animals, contests and the outdoors. (TollandCountyAgriculturalCenter.com)

**Talcott Ravine History and Nature Hike, Sept. 24 (Sat.)**

This popular three-mile Northern Connecticut Land Trust hike begins in historic Talcottville, then visits the NCLT's Talcott Ravine, the Dobson Mills, the Hop River Rail-Trail, and the Talcottville Civil War Monument. 1 p.m. (Tankerhoosen.info/Recreation/Talcott\_Ravine\_Hike.htm)

**Friends of Valley Falls Annual Meeting, Sept. 24 (Sun)**

Held in the Red Barn the program is to be announced. 1 p.m., Valley Falls Farm. (FriendsOfValleyFalls.org)

**Revolutionary War Reenactment, Oct. 1-2 (Sat.-Sun)**

Bolton is planning to host two days of Revolutionary War Reenactors with a variety of activities at Heritage Farm in Bolton. This event was postponed from the cancelled 2020 Tricentennial.

**Webster Preserve Hike, Oct. 15 (Sun.)**

The Northern Connecticut Land Trust leads this hike from the Valley Falls Park parking lot. Hike through the Andrew Webster Knapp property above the Rail-Trail, then up to the ridge overlooking Valley Falls Park for some beautiful scenery. 9 a.m., Valley Falls Park. (NorthernCTLandTrust.org)

**The Band of Steady Habits, Oct. 16 (Sun.)**

The Vernon Historical Society welcomes back State Historian Walter Woodward and The Band of Steady Habits, a group of six local musicians who combine their musical talent with their interest in the past to teach history through music and song. 2 p.m. (VernonHistoricalSoc.org)

**Farm Harvest Festival, Oct. 21 (Sat.)**

The annual Strong Family Farm festival returns and includes children's activities, pumpkin decorating, and the farm's annual scarecrow contest. Apple sales, hay bale maze, animals, vendors, music and a farewell to the farm's summer chickens. (StrongFamilyFarm.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).

Submitted by: Jon Roe, VVC Facilitator

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# Foundation Testing Program Available for Homes Built Between 1983 and 2015 in Vernon, Ellington and Stafford

*Testing can Provide Confirmation of Pyrrhotite or Peace of Mind*

A free program that tests foundations for the presence of the mineral pyrrhotite has been extended through February 28th, 2023 and is available to qualifying residents of Vernon, Ellington and Stafford.

The Regional Crumbling Foundations Testing Program covers the cost of testing a foundation for the presence of pyrrhotite, which when exposed to water and air causes the expansion and deterioration of surrounding concrete and can cause structures such as home foundations to fail.

As many as 34,000 homes constructed in northeastern Connecticut between 1983 and 2000 may have concrete foundations containing pyrrhotite and are at risk of cracking or crumbling. The testing program covers the \$3,500 cost to test the concrete in a foundation for the presence of pyrrhotite.

“Testing can confirm that you have a problem and allow you to begin the process of correcting it,” Vernon Mayor Dan Champagne said. “It can also confirm that you do not have a problem and give you both peace of

mind and an official determination that your foundation is not affected by pyrrhotite.”

Under the testing program, homeowners receive comprehensive visual and core testing of the foundation and a written report about the results.

Funding for the program comes from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and is administered through the State Department of Housing through the Small Cities Community Development Block Grant program. The funding is available as a public service program which requires that 51 percent of the participants be low to moderate income households. A household of four people must have an income of less than \$89,400. The income for a three-person household must be less than \$80,500, and for a two-person household it must be less than \$71,550. The figure is \$62,600 for a single person household.

Households that exceed that income limit can also apply, but can only represent 49 percent of the program’s participants. Vernon currently has a number of such households waiting to receive testing because more low-

moderate income households are needed to apply.

“People who are thinking about selling their home are going to have to have their foundation tested and this program is an opportunity to have the grant cover that cost,” said Matt Hellman, Vernon’s Director of Social Services. “Obtaining a negative test result will give you the comfort of knowing this is not an issue you need to worry about and will give you the official determination you can pass on to a person buying your home. With funds only guaranteed through next February, people who want testing should contact us immediately.”

More information about the testing program and an application form can be found by visiting [www.vernon-ct.gov/crumblingfoundations](http://www.vernon-ct.gov/crumblingfoundations).

Information about replacing a foundation with pyrrhotite can be found by visiting the Connecticut Foundation Solutions Indemnity Company, Inc., (CFSIC) at [www.crumblingfoundations.org](http://www.crumblingfoundations.org). In order to qualify for assistance from the CFSIC, you must first have your foundation tested.

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

## Summer Counselor in Training (CIT) Program

## YOUTH SERVICES BUREAU

### August 1 - August 11th

- Professional Skills

This summer, the Vernon Youth Services Bureau will offer a two-week Counselor In Training Program for youth ages 13 - 15 interested in a future job working with kids. Through classroom and hands-on experience youth will build skills in:

**Dates:** August 1- August 11

**Times:** 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

**Location:** Vernon Youth Services Bureau, 9 Elm St. Vernon. Youth will also be travelling to Vernon Park and Recreation Department camps for hands-on experience.

**Cost:** \$125

There is an optional fee of \$50 for those interested in participating in a Red Cross CPR and First Aid

certification class on August 5th.

**TO APPLY:** Youth must e-mail a brief statement explaining why they are interested in participating in the program and one thing they hope to learn from the experience to [jhalpin@vernon-ct.gov](mailto:jhalpin@vernon-ct.gov)

Space is limited. For questions or more information please call 860-870-3555 or email Julie Halpin at [jhalpin@vernon-ct.gov](mailto:jhalpin@vernon-ct.gov).

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

- Child Development
- Conflict Resolution
- Activity Planning
- Leadership

## SENIOR CENTER

Join us for an enjoyable summer at the Vernon Senior Center. The beautiful outside pavilion, with picnic tables, is a wonderful venue for our summer programs, including concerts, and social events. We're celebrating summer with an evening concert by Cobblestone Road on July 6, 2022. Watch the monthly newsletter "Out & About" for a listing of other special events being planned for August and September.

The outdoor recreational courts are open. The game of pickleball is increasing in popularity and members are enjoying playing on the outdoor pickleball court. The horseshoe, bocce, and shuffleboard courts are also available for team play. We enjoyed our first Corn Hole tournament in May and look forward to scheduling more tournaments throughout the summer. Court reservations are required and all equipment is provided.

Summertime is a great time of year to travel. We have partnered with Friendship Tours for several summer day-trips. On July 20, we're traveling to Kennebunkport, Maine for delicious Maine lobsters at the Bull N' Claw restaurant in Wells. Shopping in the quaint town of Kennebunkport and a guided driving tour of Kennebunk and Kennebunkport are also included in this coastal Maine trip. We'll also be traveling to The Museum of Modern Art in midtown Manhattan on August 25. The museum is world renowned for its collection. In September, we'll travel to Dutch's Spirits at Harvest Homestead Farm, which will take travelers back in time to the prohibition era. During this trip, travelers will explore the underground bunker complex, and the farm distillery, located on a 400-acre farm in the Hudson Valley.

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 more 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.

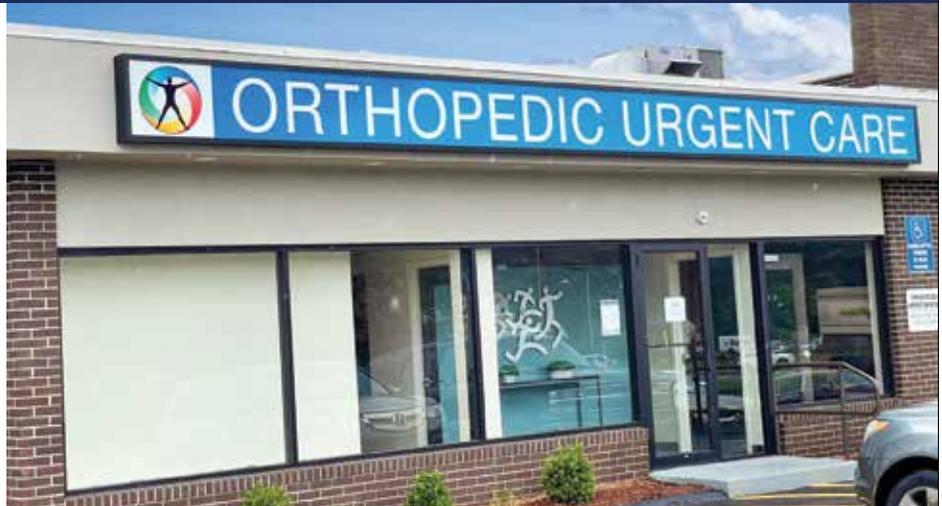
Come celebrate summer at the Vernon Senior Center!

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

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The Parks and Recreation Department is excited to announce the upcoming 2022 Summer Events & Camps! Full details and more information on other programs, activities, events and rentals is available online at [www.vernonrec.org](http://www.vernonrec.org)

## JULY in the Sky: Tuesday July 12

Mark your calendar for fireworks! The Vernon Parks and Recreation Department in partnership with the Rockville Downtown Association is excited to announce that the 76th Annual July In the Sky Celebration will be on Tuesday, July 12. The rain date is July 13. Exciting activities, entertainment, food vendors and more will be held at Henry Park and in Downtown Rockville. The evening culminates with the magnificent fireworks display, which launches from Fox Hill Tower in Henry Park. Bring chairs and blankets and find your viewing place early.

## Henry Park Event Site- 120 South Street

Henry Park will close early at 4 p.m. to allow for event set-up. The gates open at 6 p.m. for the event. Arrive early to select a preferred seating location.

- For event access, parking is \$10 per car and walk-ins will be charged \$2. Note: Once parked, you CANNOT LEAVE until the fireworks show is over at approximately 10 p.m. because cars will be boxed in.
- Musical entertainment will be provided on the portable stage in the food court starting at 7 p.m.
- The Food Court will feature all kinds of goodies, including ice cream, Kona Ice, wraps, pizza, fried dough, barbeque sandwiches, wings and kettle corn.
- Glow toys and balloons will be sold throughout the park.
- "FunZone" is located on the McCoy Baseball Field and guaranteed to generate fun and excitement for kids of all ages. FunZone bracelets will be sold for \$15 (cash or check only) which will give people access to activities.
- Face Painter Laurie will be doing face painting and glitter tattoos for an additional fee.

## ROAD CLOSURES AT HENRY PARK:

Spruce Street, Tower Road after 10 a.m. (also closed to foot traffic), Henry Park portions of Thomas Street.

**NO PARKING:** Vernon Avenue, McLean Street, South Street.

**ONE SIDE PARKING:** High Street, Howard Street, Fox Hill Drive, Reed Street, Kevin Drive, Hale Street Ext extension, Earl Street and Crown Street.

**NO PETS** allowed in the park.

**NO BICYCLES or SKATEBOARDS** allowed in the park.

**NO FIREWORKS OR SPARKLERS** allowed in the park.

**NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES** allowed in the park.

**NO SMOKING** allowed in the park.

## Downtown Rockville Site - 14 Park Place

The Downtown festivities kickoff at 6 p.m. All are welcome to enjoy this family-friendly evening of music, food, games, activities, a Push, Pull and Pedal Patriotic Parade and more.

- **PUSH, PULL AND PEDAL PATRIOTIC PARADE:** Kids of all ages can bring any non-motorized mode of transportation to participate in the parade. If you can push it, pedal it, or pull it, we want you to participate in this fun event. Wagons, strollers, bikes, trikes, roller blades, skateboards are welcome. No motorized vehicles are permitted. This is so much fun to be in or to just watch the kids enjoying themselves.
- Activities include Rock Climbing, the Rocket Launch bounce house, the Spider Man bounce house, the 18-foot Giant Slide, Backyard Obstacle Course and the Bubble Machine. Tickets and all-access bracelets will be available. Bracelets are \$10 per person.
- Face painting will be available. See your imagination come to life on your face for all to see.
- Novelties will be for sale.
- In addition to Downtown Rockville's restaurants, food vendors will offer popcorn, Mexican food, ice cream and other items.
- Local businesses and charities will

have booths to show what they offer.

**Note:** Due to safety issues and large crowds, the Vernon Police Department will only permit bikes, scooters and skateboards, etc., in the festival area during the parade. Please plan accordingly.

**ROAD CLOSURES IN DOWNTOWN ROCKVILLE:** East Main Street will be closed at 6 p.m. St. Bernard's Terrace, Park Street and Park Place will also be closed to traffic.

**NO PARKING:** Court Street (east side only between East Main Street and Brooklyn Street). North side between entrances to Rockville Professional Center and Vernon Avenue; West Main Street, between Vernon Avenue and Union Street.

## Mayor Daniel Champagne Summer Concert Series

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

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

- **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

## Community Pool Luau Party

Parks and Recreation is excited to host the Luau Party once again this summer. Saturday, August 6 (rain date August 7) bring the family for music, games, swimming and more. This event is sure to be fun for the whole family. Tickets will be available for purchase online soon

## SUMMER OFFERINGS: Parks & Rec Aquatics

Cool off this summer at Community Pool or Newhoca Beach. Community Pool will open for the season starting Monday, June 27th. For the exact schedule please visit our website, [www.vernonrec.org](http://www.vernonrec.org), as times may change throughout the summer.

See Events, p. 17

Vernon residents have several opportunities in the coming months to safely and responsibly dispose of hazardous materials they have in their homes. Household hazardous waste can be dropped off on the following Saturdays, between 8 a.m. and 1 p.m., at the Capitol Region East Hazardous Waste facility, 321 Olcott St., Manchester: August 27, September 24, October 29 and November 12, 2022. There will be another household hazardous collection day on Saturday, October 15, 2022 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Stafford Highway Department garage, 210 East Street (Route 19), Stafford. This collection is open to Vernon residents. Online appointments are now required to drop off items and can be made by visiting: <https://mdjdmz.townofmanchester.org/WasteAppointments/>.

Items that can be disposed of at the event include paints, stains, acids, automotive fluids, insecticides, herbicides, fertilizers

and household cleaning products. For full listings of what materials are and are not acceptable at the household hazardous waste collection events, visit the Town of Vernon's website at [www.vernon-ct.gov](http://www.vernon-ct.gov) and search for "hazardous waste." Items should be left in their original containers. People should bring a driver's license, tax bill or car registration to prove they are a Vernon resident. Used and waste motor oil and antifreeze can be dropped at the Vernon Transfer Station located on Hockanum Boulevard (off Talcottville Road).

On Wednesday, July 20, 2022 from 3 to 7 p.m. there will a collection event for paint products only at the Olcott Street, Manchester facility. To learn what can be dropped at this event, please visit: <https://www.paintcare.org/products/>. The Capitol Region East Operation Committee (CREOC) serves Vernon, Glastonbury, Hebron, Manchester, Marlborough, Somers, South Windsor

and Stafford for the collection of household hazardous waste. Holiday Refuse And Recycling Schedule

**Independence Day Refuse & Recycling Schedule** - The Public Works Department will be closed on Monday, July 4, 2022 in observance of Independence Day. Refuse and recycling will not be collected on that day but instead will be collected on Tuesday, July 5, 2022 along with that day's collection. The Transfer Station located on Hockanum Boulevard will be closed on Sunday, July 3, 2022.

**Labor Day Refuse & Recycling Schedule** - The Public Works Department will be closed on Monday, September 5, 2022 in observance of Labor Day. Refuse and recycling will not be collected on that day but instead will be collected on Tuesday, September 6, 2022 along with that day's collection. The Transfer Station located on Hockanum Boulevard will be closed on Sunday, September 4, 2022.



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The Rockville High School **As Schools Match Wits** team is in its thirteenth year! The trivia team competes on the television program that is produced at the studios of Westfield State University and broadcast on PBS channel WGBY 57 on Saturday evenings at 7:00 PM. As Schools Match Wits is a classic high school quiz-show which focuses on well-rounded knowledge about the following categories: Arts & Entertainment, Literature, Math & Science, General Knowledge (includes sports), Social Studies (includes civics, geography), and World Events (history & current events).

The team practices several times throughout the season and is currently coached by VCMS teachers Deborah Halpryn and Regina Lee. Team members this year are RHS students Caitlin Chatterton, Clarissa Halpryn, Jayson Rhoades, Lillian Westerberg, and Paul Westerberg, and VCMS 8th grader Kyle Shalaev as a member-in-training.

This year’s season was a particularly exciting one. The RHS team finished in the top 5 of 36 teams in the regular season, narrowly missing a spot in the finals. We are already planning for next year and will be looking for new members who love trivia and a challenge!

**Submitted by:** Regina Lee, *Gifted and Talented Teacher*



### Fire Company, continued from p. 6

directions, they are there to protect the firefighters working and to ensure your safety in getting around the incident.

If you are interested in joining the Vernon Fire Department family or to learn more about the various companies please visit [www.vernonfire.com](http://www.vernonfire.com).

**Submitted by:** Steve Eppler, *Chief*



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

The Northern Connecticut Land Trust (NCLT) is dedicated to preserving and protecting natural resources in the northeastern region of Connecticut; sponsoring outdoor activities to enjoy the protected lands; and supporting efforts to improve local habitats, maintain farmland and extend recreational opportunities.

NCLT was formed in 1997 from the merger of the Vernon Land Trust and the Four Town Land Trust, both of which started in 1987. Today it serves Andover, East Windsor, Ellington, Enfield, Somers, Stafford, Tolland and Vernon and currently owns more than 1,800 acres valued at more than \$7 million.

In Vernon NCLT owns and maintains more than 100 acres on seven properties, including Eckers Pond behind Vernon Center Middle School, the Webster Preserve above Valley Falls Park, and the beautiful Talcott Ravine. Most are open to hiking and enjoyment of nature and are contiguous with other town or state open areas.

NCLT leads an annual May canoe outing on Upper Bolton Lake, a fall walk at the Webster Preserve (October 17 this year) and after three years our Talcottville/Talcott Ravine Hike will be held on Saturday, September 24.

This very popular three-mile history and nature hike begins at the parking lot of the Talcottville Congregational Church in Talcottville and includes the Talcottville Historic District, NCLT's Talcott Ravine, the Dobson Mills, the Hop River Rail-Trail, and the Talcottville Civil War Monument. The hike will be led by Gail Faherty from NCLT, Susan Barlow, Manchester Town Historian and local historian Jon Roe.



Webster Preserve overlooking Valley Falls. Photo by Jon Roe

The entirely volunteer organization accepts gifts of land or other assets (which are tax deductible), raises funds for property acquisition, and sponsors hikes and other activities primarily associated with the outdoors and nature subjects.

The Trust is always looking for volunteers to help with efforts in those areas plus trail development and maintenance, public relations, program planning, and fundraising.

Visit our website at NorthernCTLandTrust.org to find activity schedules, volunteer opportunities, and property descriptions for the

areas under trust protection. Contact us to volunteer or become a member, and help preserve Vernon's wonderful resources. Member of the Vernon Volunteers' Collaborative.

**Submitted by:** Karl Hasel, NCLT, *Vice President*

## CROSSING GUARDS NEEDED

*The Town of Vernon needs school crossing guards. Post times are:*



**7:45 AM – 8:15 AM**

**8:15 AM – 8:45 AM**

**2:45 PM – 3:15 PM**

**3:15 PM – 3:45 PM**

The pay is \$9.25 per ½ hour post. Working both ½ hour posts in the A.M. or P.M. is equivalent to \$18.50/hr. For example, if you work all four ½ hour posts during a day, your pay would be \$37.00 a day or \$185 a week. Crossing guards have summers off and posts are only on school days. Please apply through the Town of Vernon website or Google search "Crossing Guard-Town of Vernon"

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

Vernon Social Services has a number of programs available to serve individuals. Some are available now and others will be available in the near future.

## Renters' Rebate

The State of Connecticut 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, are eligible. The rebate amount is based on a graduated income scale and the amount of rent and utility payments (excluding telephone) made in the 2021 calendar year. Vernon renters age 65 and older, or 18 and older and receiving Social Security Disability, should call (860) 870-3661 for information. The program runs April through September.

## Back to School Program

This program supports families in need who have Vernon Public School students in grades Pre-K through eighth. Gift cards are provided to purchase new clothes for the upcoming school year. Sign-ups began at the end of June

and run through the middle of August. People wishing to make gift card donations are asked to contact Social Services by phone or by email at [socialservices@vernon-ct.gov](mailto:socialservices@vernon-ct.gov).

## Farmers' Market Vouchers

The Town of Vernon is a local coordinating agency for the distribution of the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) check booklets to eligible participants who are 60 or older and meet income guidelines. The program runs July through October. Look for more information in the coming months on the town's website, [vernon-ct.gov](http://vernon-ct.gov).

## Energy Assistance

This federally-funded program, which helps low to moderate income residents with heating costs during the winter months, will begin in mid-August. Starting in August, residents can call Social Services to get information about materials needed to complete the application process.

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

### Events, continued from p. 13

**Facility admission:** Ages 12 and under, \$3; Ages 13 and up, \$5.

We have a few helpful tips to remember before visiting an aquatic site this summer.

- Anyone 12 and younger must be accompanied by someone 18 or older.
- Swim suits are required. Non-swim clothing is not permitted in the water.
- Inexperience swimmers should be accompanied in the water by a parent or guardian at all times. Flotation devices are not permitted.
- If you are planning to visit with a group of 10 or more please email us at [parksandrec@vernon-ct.gov](mailto:parksandrec@vernon-ct.gov) at least one week prior to ensure we can accommodate your visit.

If you would like to sign up for a group swim lesson, please visit us online for dates and times. Groups lessons maintain a maximum ratio of one instructor to eight participants. Private and semi-private swim lessons are also available.

**Parks & Rec Summer Day Camps** run in 1-week sessions June 27-August 12

for children ages 4 to those entering 8th grade. Camp locations are Center 375 and Newhoca. Visit the website for detailed information.

### Speciality Camp Offerings:

**Dance Camp (Ages 5-7 and 8-12)** is a fun-filled, high energy camp with staff from Beyond Dance. Participants enjoy dancing to numerous styles of modern music, do Zumba, create cool crafts, sing and more.

**Mad Science (Grades 1-6)** - Set your future space explorers on a trajectory from Earth's atmosphere to the outer reaches of the 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.

**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.

### 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. Detailed information and the 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' x 25' are available to reserve, \$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)

*When the warmer weather hits, there's nothing better than the smell of food on the grill.*

Seven out of every 10 adults in the U.S. have a grill or smoker, which translates to a lot of tasty meals. But it also means there's an increased risk of home fires.

In 2014-2018, fire departments went to an annual average of 8,900 home fires involving grills, hibachis or barbecues per year, including 3,900 structure fires and 4,900 outside or unclassified fires.

**Grilling fire facts**

- July is the peak month for grill fires (18%), including both structure, outdoor or unclassified fires, followed by June (15%), May (13%) and August (12%).
- In 2014-2018, an average of 19,700 patients per year went to emergency rooms because of injuries involving grills. Nearly half (9,500 or 48%) of the injuries were thermal burns, including both burns from fire and from contact with hot objects; 5,200 thermal burns, per year, were caused by such contact or other non-fire events.
- Children under 5 accounted for an average of 2,000 or 39%, of the contact-type burns per year. These burns typically occurred when someone, often a child, bumped into, touched or fell on the grill, grill part or hot coals.
- Gas grills were involved in an average of 8,900 home fires per year, including 3,900 structure fires and 4,900 outdoor fires annually. Leaks or breaks were primarily a problem with gas grills. Ten percent of gas grill structure fires and 22% of outside gas grill fires were caused by leaks or breaks.

• Charcoal or other solid-fueled grills were involved in 1,300 home fires per year, including 600 structure fires and 600 outside fires annually

**8 Grilling Safety Tips for Summer Barbecues**

Grilling is a popular way to enjoy the nice summer weather, but grill fires can start easily and spread quickly when the gas or charcoal grill is placed too close to any fire hazards. Learn how you can help keep your home and family safe by following our grill safety tips.

**1. Only use grills outside**

It may be tempting to set up your barbecue grill inside of your open garage or under a covered balcony, but propane and charcoal grills are strictly designed for outdoor use where there is plenty of ventilation. Any combustible materials that surround or hang over the grill when it's in use can catch fire easily and quickly. Make sure that the area over top and around your grill is clear and unobstructed.

**2. Place your grill away from your home**

Barbeque grills are often placed just outside the back door or on the back deck against a railing. You should avoid placing your grill in these areas because it can pose a potential fire hazard. Grills that are placed too close to the house or other wood structures can heat up adjacent materials and cause a fire to start. Be sure to keep your grill at least 10 feet from your home or other structures.

**3. Make sure your grill is located on a flat, level surface**

Grills that are placed on slopes or other uneven surfaces can tip over easily and cause a fire. Make sure that your grill is set up on a stable surface such as a concrete pad so that it remains level while cooking food.

**4. Check your grill for leaks**

If you store your grill inside during the winter months, it's important to check it over thoroughly when grilling season begins. A leak in the gas lines can cause propane or natural gas to build up inside the BBQ when the lid is closed. Check the gas lines to make sure that they are free of leaks before using your grill, and always open the lid of your barbecue before lighting.

**5. Always clean your grill after use**

Barbecuing regularly causes grease to build-up on the grill plates and collect inside the grease tray. If not cleaned, the build-up can then act as fuel and catch fire while the grill is in use. Clean your charcoal or gas grill after each use with a grill brush and empty the grease tray when it begins to fill up.

**6. Never leave your barbecue grill unattended while in use**

Never leave the grill unattended while you are cooking food. You should never walk away from your barbecue while it's in use. Barbecues use high heat and open flames to cook food, and when left unattended can become a safety and fire hazard. If you must leave the grill, ask another adult to watch the grill for you.

**7. Wear appropriate clothing**

Articles of clothing that have long sleeves or pieces that dangle can catch fire easily when too close to an open flame. When grilling food, wear clothing that won't interfere with the cooking process and make sure that any apron strings are tied back away from your front. If a piece of clothing does catch fire, remember to stop, drop, and roll to extinguish the flames quickly.

**8. Keep a spray bottle on hand**

It's common for grills to flare up as fat drips from meat as it cooks, and this can cause a section of the grill to remain on fire as it burns away. If left alone, the flames will continue to burn and cause excess smoke to billow out from under the lid. Keep a spray bottle filled with water beside your grill so that you can quickly extinguish smaller flames before they spread.

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**Come See What's POPPIN' at The 4th of July Event "July in the Sky"**



Summer is coming, with *Oceans of Possibilities*! Take a look at what we have planned for the upcoming months. We hope you will join us in reading, learning, and having fun!

## 2022 Summer Reading Program for all Ages

### Children:

**Read & Record your Books, June 20th - August 6th**

Help your child avoid the “summer slide” by reading consistently! We encourage families to make reading a joy, not a chore or a punishment! Use the reading log to record the date, titles and authors of the books you read. Participants should read at least 20 minutes per day or more! Grades K-5.

### 7 Weeks of Fun & Prizes

Visit the library each week with your completed reading log to receive your weekly prizes and be entered into our bi-weekly raffles. Raffles will be held on July 16, July 30 and August 6.

**June 1:** sign-up begins

**June 20-25:** Begin to log Daily Reading

**June 27-July 2:** Week 1 Prize Pickup

**July 5-9:** Week 2 Prize Pickup

**July 11-16:** Week 3 Prize Pickup

**July 18-23:** Week 4 Prize Pickup

**July 25-30:** Week 5 Prize Pickup

**Aug. 1-6:** Week 6 Prize Pickup  
(last week to read & log books)

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

### Tweens & Teens:

Earn weekly reading rewards. Registration starts June 1. Summer Learning runs June 20 - August 6.

**Log your reading for 30 minutes each day.** Show your log to library staff to earn weekly rewards and enter the bi-weekly raffle.

**Rewards include:** Library Loot\* to redeem free items, sweets and treats, enamel pins, laptop stickers, Sharpies and more.

**Raffle prizes** include gift certificates, puzzles, games and more.

\*Each week, earn Library Loot that you can

redeem for free books, manga and more during the last week of Summer Learning, August 1-6.

### Adults:

Be sure to stop in this summer for the **Adult Summer Reading Program** (June 20 - August 13). Pick up a Bingo Card, fill 5 spaces and turn it in to be entered to win some great prizes.

## Programs & Events

### Children:

**Mermaid & Pirate Party - July 21, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.**

Sing, dance, stories and games with professional costumed actors. Come dressed in your finest costume.

**Can You Sea? Challenge - July 1 - Aug. 13**

Visit anytime to play a Search & Find game with ocean creatures and sea shells.

**Make a Jawsome Shark - July 1 - Aug. 13**

Drop by anytime to make your shark. Ask for it at the Circulation Desk downstairs.

**Ribbon Wands Program - Sept. 1, 10 a.m.**

Music, movement and fun craft. Ages 2-4 with an adult. Outside, weather permitting.

**1000 Books Before Kindergarten - Birth to Kindergarten**

Register anytime. It's never too early to read to your child. Please stop in to obtain your start-up packet, or to collect your prizes.

**Playdate @ the Library - Babies, Toddlers & Pre-Schoolers - 10 - 11 a.m.**

July 18, Aug. 1, Aug. 15, Sept 19

**Lil' Bookworms Outdoor Storytime - 10:30 a.m.**

July 13, Aug. 17, Sept. 14

**Coloring Club & Tabletop Toys - Anytime**

Drop In, Hang Out to color, craft or play whenever it's convenient for you. Always something new to discover.

**Read to a Therapy Dog - Saturdays, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.**

July 16, Aug. 6, Sept. 10. Register in-person at the event.

**Saturday Series for Families and Children**

September 24 - Playdate @ the Library, Saturday Edition (Babies, Toddlers, Pre-School only) 10 - 11 a.m.

**Fun Grab 'n' Go Kits for Kids (while supplies last)**

**June 20-July 1:** 3D Paper Sculpture Fireworks.

**Aug. 15-27:** Floating Ball Experiment STEAM Kit.

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

### Teens:

## SPECIAL PROGRAMS

**Marine Biology Day with Mystic Aquarium** (grades 6-12)

July 7, 12-12:45 p.m. - squid dissection, 1-1:45 p.m. - invertebrate lab. Seats are limited. Email [dmurray@vernon-ct.gov](mailto:dmurray@vernon-ct.gov) to register.

**K-Pop Appreciation Night**

(grades 7-12) - July 21 at 6 p.m.

**Anime Night** (grades 7-12) - August 11 at 6 p.m.

## MONTHLY CLUBS

**Chess Club** (Grades 5-12), July 12, August 16, 4-5 p.m. Learn the game or play a match with old and new friends.

**Teen Manga Club** (Grades 7-12), June 1, July 6, August 3, 4-5 p.m. Get ready to geek about your favorite manga and anime. Trivia, games, snacks and prizes included!

**Digital Art with Danielle** (Grades 7-12), July 20, August 24, 4-5 p.m. Bring your creations to the digital realm. Email [dmurray@vernon-ct.gov](mailto:dmurray@vernon-ct.gov) to register.

**Unplugged Game Night** (Grades 7-12), July 27, August 31, 4 p.m. From Magic to Unstable Unicorns, unplug and play.

**STEAM-Powered** (Grades 5-12), July 14, August 18, 4-5:30 p.m. Learn a new STEAM craft or complete an engineering challenge. Email [dmurray@vernon-ct.gov](mailto:dmurray@vernon-ct.gov) to register.

**Brain Flex Trivia** (Grades 7-12), July 28, August 25, 4-5 p.m. Challenge your trivial knowledge! Topics include: pop culture, world mythology & more!

**Teens Create** (Grades 7-12), July 22, August 19, 3:30 p.m. Let your creativity roam. Spend an hour unwinding with friends & a new art project of your own.

**Take-and-Make Kits**

**July 1-16:** Paracord Keychain

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

### Adults:

## SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Representatives of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) will talk about bald eagles (in July) and black bears (in August). Check the library's website and social media for details and dates.

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