TOWN OF VERNON

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 25, 2022

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Vernon Social Services Department Seeks Public's Help to Ensure All Families Can Celebrate the Holidays

(**VERNON, Connecticut**) – Vernon's Social Services Department is working to ensure all Vernon families have a happy holiday season and is asking the community to help support those efforts.

There are two programs the Social Services Department supports to assist families. The first is Social Services' Toy Shop, which serves children 2 to 15. The second is the Vernon Fire Department's annual Toys for Tikes program, which provides toys to infants through 12-year-olds.

"Every year I am both astonished and moved by the generosity of the people and businesses of our community," Vernon Mayor Dan Champagne said. "Vernon consistently comes through for our friends and neighbors who need a hand providing holiday gifts for their children."

Families can sign up to receive gifts for their children by calling the Vernon Social Services Department at 860-870-3661, Ext. 9. Families can sign up for only one of the gift programs in Vernon.

The Toy Shop will be in the Social Services Department at Town Hall. Parents and guardians can select items for their children, ages 2 to 12, or gift cards for teens 13 to 15.

The Toys for Tikes program collects new toys and monetary donations from the community. Drop off locations for toys are set up around town. Firefighters then deliver age-appropriate toys to families that have signed up through the Social Services Department.

"Families can sign up for either program from November 1st through December 1st," Social Services Director Matt Hellman said.

Unwrapped toys for the Toy Shop can be dropped at the Social Services Department at Town Hall, 14 Park Place, Vernon. Donors who choose to purchase gifts cards are to buy them in the amount of $25 from stores that will be accessible to local families, such as Kohl's and T.J. Maxx. "Charitable gift cards" from Walmart, available only through Walmart.com, are another option. Both toys and gift cards should be dropped off by Dec. 1.

Unwrapped toys for the Toys for Tikes drive can be dropped at collection boxes placed around town through Dec. 16. Drop off locations include: Rocky's Ace Hardware, the Rockville Public Library, Big Sky Fitness, Casey's Café in Ellington and the Vernon Police Station. For additional drop off locations, please visit the Fire Department website: vernonfire.com.

Financial donations can be mailed to the Vernon Volunteer Firefighters Association, P.O. Box 951, Vernon, CT 06066.

About the Town of Vernon

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

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

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