



*Columbia*

# VIEWS

Volume 7 • Issue 2  
Spring 2023

*Your Hometown Connection • Columbia, CT*



# Hebron Center DENTISTRY

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welcoming new patients



The new Disc Golf Course is in its final stages and completion should be in early June. This nine-hole disc golf course weaves along the outside of Rec Park. The course is family friendly and offers both beginners and disc golf enthusiasts an opportunity to enjoy getting out and connecting with friends and family while getting in some exercise.



The Tennis Court will be getting a makeover this spring with final completion by the beginning of July. The project will expand the size of the court, a new base and resurfacing, new tennis court lines and pickleball court lines, new posts, and netting.

Two new Pickleball Courts will be added to the refurbished tennis courts with moveable nets. The third pickleball court will be completed by mid-summer.

The installation of a new scoreboard for the Little League field will be installed this spring, made possible by the generous contributions of \$6,000 from the Lions Club and \$1,200 from the Columbia Little League. The gift was headed by Lions Club President Mike DiRaimo as part of his President's Project. The current scoreboard was terrific throughout the many years it served the Little League, but it is no longer functioning properly. The new scoreboard will still maintain the sign that honors Jerry Dunnack. Mr. DiRaimo was adamant Jerry Dunnack's memoriam would continue to bless the Little League field.



*Recreation Director Debbie Fiske and First Selectman Steven Everett receive a Lions Club donation for a new scoreboard from Lions Club President Mike DiRaimo (center).*

In addition, the Lions Club Pavilion at Rec Park will be getting some sprucing up of the gables.

Also in Lions Club news, it's never too early to start planning for the 4th of July Parade. We are extending an invitation to any organization to join in celebration of our nation's independence. The theme this year is Let Freedom Ring. The cash prizes that will be awarded for the floats that best represent this year's theme. First prize \$250, second \$150, and third \$100.



*Members of Columbia Volunteer Fire Department accept HeartSafe Certification. From left: Assistant Chief Jeff Lewis, Lieutenant Kara Bowen, Steve Hotchkiss (CT Department of Health Office of Emergency Medical Services), Deputy Chief Scott Haddad, Chief Steve Postemsky.*

In lake news, the lake is filling up nicely for boaters and swimmers. Beach passes will be available May 1st and boat launch gate keys can be purchased at the Recreation Department Office located at the beach. Summer boating will be starting soon and as just a reminder gate monitoring is enforced at the boat launch, located at Columbia Town Beach. Prior to launching a watercraft, it is inspected for the presence of Aquatic Invasive Species. Help us to keep our lake clean by preventing the spread of 'aquatic hitchhikers' from being transported to Columbia Lake. Before leaving a boat launch of another water body, clean, drain, and dry or disinfect your boat.

In other lake news, the town has received a generous gift from Eastern Highland Health District to encourage active living with three new paddle boards. They will be available to rent for FREE this summer.

And lastly, the Town of Columbia has met the requirements of a designated HEARTSafe community. This designation recognizes our community's commitment to provide improved cardiac response and care to our community utilizing the "Chain of Survival" of early 9-1-1 access, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, defibrillation, and advanced care. A big thank you goes out to the Columbia Volunteer Fire Department for hosting the free CPR training for Columbia residents and to our residents that became CPR certified. We will be installing a 24-hour access defibrillator at Rec Park by the original Little League Concession Stand across from the Pickleball Court.

Thank you and please be safe.

Steven M. Everett, First Selectman  
 severett@columbiact.org  
 860-228-0110

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On the cover: *Millie's Brook Garden*  
Photo by Paul Ramsey

## 2023 VIEWS Magazines Schedule

### 3rd Q/23

**COLUMBIA:** Ad Deadline 7/7/2023  
Mailed Week of 8/7/2023

**HEBRON:** Ad Deadline 8/4/2023  
Mailed Week of 9/4/2023

### 4th Q/23

**COLUMBIA:** Ad Deadline 10/2/2023  
Mailed Week of 10/23/2023

**HEBRON:** Ad Deadline 11/3/2023  
Mailed Week of 12/4/2023

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The Board of Selectman have voted to support an application with the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to list our Historic Mill Site on Hop River Road for the designation of the historic mill ruins along the Hop River as a State Archaeology Preserve. SHPO understands that the Town of Columbia recently acquired a 3.6-acre parcel between Hop River Road and the Hop River.



Representatives from SHPO recently toured the parcel and observed the remnants of a thriving industrial community. We understand that the first mill constructed in this area dates from the early eighteenth century and that it was used until the early twentieth century. These ruins recall an often-repeated story across the State of Connecticut that have been largely lost to development. This small section of Columbia reminds us of the American entrepreneurial spirit, the use of hydropower to spur production, corporate investment in worker housing, support through rail infrastructure, investment in community services, and flexibility in production to meet changing demands.

SHPO administers the State Archaeological Preserve program – Connecticut’s flagship program for preserving significant archaeological finds, locations, and regions. The process often entails listing in the State Register of Historic Places. This honorary designation is the official list of structures and sites that characterize the historical development of the state. Although a site does not need to be listed in the registry for designation as a State Archaeological Preserve, the nomination paperwork creates a standard for conveying the significance of the site and listing comes with the additional incentive of being able to apply for several grant programs administered by SHPO to help interpret or protect the site. It is important for our sense of history and identity that archaeological sites be protected, but archaeological resources are rarely seen or experienced by the public so the current opportunity to create a preserve in Columbia is an exciting addition to the other 37 State Archaeology Preserves.



*Hop River Preserve road with gate*

We are also excited to open the right side of the park as a picnic and camping area to be managed by our Recreation Department. The access to the Hop River is very relaxing and would be a wonderful place to read, bird watch and enjoy the sounds of the river.

Please thank Joan Hill, Tom McGrath and our Public Works Department for all the work they have done clearing this land and opening up the access.

Mark B. Walter  
Town Administrator  
Columbia, CT

## HORACE W. PORTER SCHOOL

### *Horace W. Porter School Kindergarten Registration*

Horace W. Porter School is collecting registration for students entering Kindergarten for the upcoming 2023/2024 school year. Parents/guardians of children who will be 5 years old by December 31, 2023, are asked to register their child by completing the online Kindergarten Registration by visiting our website at [hwporter.org](http://hwporter.org). Once your online registration is complete you will receive information in your email regarding Kindergarten Orientation. If you have any questions, contact Tammy Nye at (860) 228-9493 ext. 161.



## TAX OFFICE

Real Estate taxes on the October 1, 2021 Grand List that were due July 1, 2022 and January 1, 2023 that have not been paid in full by May 31, 2023 will have a continuing tax lien filed in the land records as required by law.

Any delinquent tax not paid by June 30, 2023 will be listed by name and amount in the annual Town Report.

**Regular office hours for the TAX OFFICE: Monday through Wednesday 8:00-2:00, Thursday 10:00-6:00 and closed on Friday.** The Tax Office has extended hours in July and August 1, 2023: Monday through Wednesday 8:00-4:00, Thursday 10:00-6:00 and Friday 8:00-12:00.

Mailing address for tax payments:

Town of Columbia  
Dept # 347  
PO Box 150512  
Hartford, CT 06115-0512

Drop boxes for payments and correspondence are located at the right side of the entrance of the Town Hall and in front of Yeoman's Hall. The drop boxes are emptied at 8:00AM each weekday, weekend tax payments are processed on Monday. Please be aware that tax payments put in the drop box after 8:00AM will be processed the next day the Tax Office is open.

You can view and pay your tax bills online; Go to [www.columbiact.org](http://www.columbiact.org) and click on the Pay Taxes Online tab on the home page. On the next page click on the View/Pay button (square) to go to a search screen. Type your last

name, space, first initial of your first name (as is written on the bill). The service fee for online payments are as follows: 95 cents to use a Bank account and 2.95% for PayPal, credit and debit cards. To look up your 2022 tax payments go to [www.columbiact.org](http://www.columbiact.org). On Columbia's home page, click on the Pay Taxes Online tab. The directions will be listed on the next page.

Tax bills for the 2022 Grand List will be mailed at the end of June 2023 with a due date of July 1, 2023. The last day to pay without a penalty will be Tuesday August 1, 2023. Bills will be available online on July 1, 2023. **By law this office uses the USPS postmark as the payment date. If you are waiting until the last few days to pay, it is recommended that you have your envelope hand stamped in the Post Office. Putting your envelope in a blue postal box may not guarantee an on-time postmark.**

If you are coming to pay in person in July and on August 1, 2023, please be aware that there may be a line and you may have to wait for service. Please plan your visit accordingly.

**For those seeking an immediate clearance for DMV** due to delinquent Motor Vehicle taxes please contact the Tax Office at 860-228-0230 or [taxcollector@columbiact.org](mailto:taxcollector@columbiact.org) for information on the process. **Paying the tax bill online does not clear you immediately at DMV. You will need to contact the tax office during the tax office hours for assistance.**

## SAXTON B. LITTLE LIBRARY

With such an odd winter, many of us were afraid Spring would never arrive! We are glad the weather has turned and Summer is on the horizon. In the Library we are gearing up for our Summer Reading Program. This year the national theme is, "Finding Your Voice". We have many exciting things planned. From learning about dog DNA to local history, from trying one's hand at theater to print making, there's something for everyone! Look for sign up to start in June!

But before then, we still have plans. The Columbia Writer's Connection welcomes all established and new writers. Our Stitchers group meets every Wednesday afternoon. All of our five (yes count them, 5!) adult book groups are welcoming new members. Fiction or non-fiction, we do it all. Our Adult Picture Book group focuses

on story and illustrators, but requires very little homework. This winter this group even took a field trip to the Eric Carle Picture Book Museum. The free pass for this great museum is available at the Library.

Finally, this reminds me to share with you – the Library has just gotten a new museum pass: The Mattatuck Museum in Waterbury. A small art museum that is offering unique exhibitions. Go check them out for free with the Library Museum Pass. And more good news as we enter summer? The Connecticut Science Museum has also reinstated their museum passes. Stop by the Library for a 20% off coupon.

Su Epstein  
Library Director

*Welcome to Spring!*

**JUNE is dog licensing month in Connecticut.** Dog license renewals will be mailed out in the month of May to all owners who registered their dog(s) the previous year. New licenses must be obtained before July 1, 2023 to avoid a penalty. **The license year for your dog runs from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024.** Whether you are renewing your dog's license in person, through the mail or by drop box, if their rabies vaccination has expired, please provide us with a copy of their current rabies vaccination certificate. If your dog has been spayed or neutered, include a copy of the veterinarian's certificate as well.

**NOTE - If your dog's RABIES VACCINATION expires in the month of JUNE, you will not be able to renew the dog's license for the new year (which begins on July 1, 2023) until we receive a current rabies certificate.**

For your convenience, the following options will be available when licensing your dog in Columbia. We will be accepting registrations **by mail, by drop box** or in person. If you are mailing your renewal or using the drop box, make sure to **include a stamped self-addressed en-**

**velope with the appropriate amount of postage** for the return of your dog's new tag. Remember to make your check payable to: **Columbia Town Clerk.**

If you are new to Town and have not registered your dog, contact us. Dogs six months of age or older need to be licensed. License fees are \$8 for altered dogs and \$19 for unaltered dogs. Licenses will be considered late as of July 1 and a late fee of \$1 per month per dog thereafter will be assessed.

**Sports Licenses** for Fishing and Hunting for **2023** are available for purchase online at [www.ct.gov/deep/fishing](http://www.ct.gov/deep/fishing) and [www.ct.gov/deep/hunting](http://www.ct.gov/deep/hunting). For further information or assistance, contact the Town Clerk's office.

The DEEP has a **Family Fishing Day** on **May 13, 2023** – no license required. There are also Free Fishing License Days on June 18 and August 12, 2023 – You can get a one day license to fish for free on these days!

Please contact us at 860-228-3284 if you have questions.

Robin M. Kenefick, *Columbia Town Clerk*

Gail C. McGrath, *Columbia Assistant Town Clerk*



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My passion is matching people & families with homes they can live & grow in. Thinking of moving, buying, or both? I would be happy to help!

Born and raised in Columbia, I know the value of what our town has to offer. I am full of knowledge and I am ready to help strategically guide you through the entire buying and selling process.

If you ever have any questions about buying, selling, or investing I would love to chat!

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The **Renter's Relief program** will begin April 1 and will run through October 1st. You will need proof of rent payments and utilities paid in the 2022 calendar year.

**Homeowners elderly relief program**

If you filed for the Homeowners elderly relief program in 2022, You do not need to file this year. Persons who filed in 2021 will need to apply by May 15th. Please call our office and we will instruct you on what you need to supply our office and how to get that to us.

**Motor vehicle adjustments**

In order to have a motor vehicle bill adjusted we need two forms of proof because the tax is a car tax not a road tax.

- The first is a copy of your motor vehicle plate return receipt
- The second is something proving you got rid of the vehicle. For a list of accepted proofs look on the assessor's website or call the office.
- If you traded a vehicle and kept the same plate do not bring us any documentation because DMV will automatically process the adjustments.

**Income and Expense Forms**

Connecticut General Statute 12-63c requires all owners of rental real property to annually file an Income and Ex-

pense form with the Assessor's Office by June 1st.. The information filed and furnished with this report will remain confidential and is not open to public inspection. Any information related to the actual rental and operating expenses shall not be a public record and is not subject to the provisions of Section 1-19 (Freedom of Information) of the Connecticut General Statutes. All properties that are rented or leased, including commercial, retail, industrial, land and residential properties, except "such property used for residential purposes, containing not more than six dwelling units and in which the owner resides" must file and in the case of a non-residential property that is partially rented and partially owner-occupied.

In accordance with Section 12-63c(d), of the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended, any owner of rental real property who fails to file this form or files an incomplete or false form with intent to defraud, shall be subject to a penalty assessment equal to a Ten Percent (10%) increase in the assessed value of such property.

The Assessor's Office personnel is available Monday through Wednesday from 8 a.m. until noon, Thursdays 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. and Fridays 8 a.m. until Noon. Our telephone number is 228-9555. Email is mhawley@columbiact.org.

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Columbia Senior and Social Services has continued to partner with CT Foodshare by hosting a mobile site every other Thursday at the Beckish Senior Center. Rain or shine throughout the seasons 100+ individuals come through mobile Foodshare to receive surplus fruits, vegetables, and other food free of charge that otherwise could be wasted. Senior and Social Services would like to thank Foodshare and the volunteers (some pictured here!) for their reliable and caring help to make this program possible. We'd also like to acknowledge the folks who have empowered themselves to utilize this program as a way to do their best to eat healthy and provide for themselves during difficult times that include massive increases in costs of basic things that we all need to live. It is not always easy to access assistance. But in this life, it sure takes a village- both in reaching out for resources and being there for each other to help when we can.

If you are looking to get involved, volunteer, or more information on food resources please contact Katie Wilt, Community Social Services Coordinator at 860-228-1008.



## THANK YOU FOR GENEROSITY

Greetings and Happy Spring! We would like to say a big thank you for the generous support of local families through the Columbia social service program. Through your donations we were able to provide holiday meals, food gift cards and candy to 33 children, their parents, and 12 seniors.

We would also like to thank the volunteers who helped with sorting, distribution, and delivery to the families. This undertaking would not have been possible without all of you, and we greatly appreciate your willingness to be a helping hand for the families in Columbia.

Donations were made by, The Parks Family community collections, The Columbia Congregational Church, Saint Columba Church and the many, many generous Columbia residents. Our hearts have been touched by your readiness to fill the gap where it needs to be filled. We will be continuing outreach through 2023 with back to school, Thanksgiving, and Christmas. We look forward to and appreciate your continued support.

On Behalf of the Families we serve,  
Debby Smith & Nancy Millerd

## HORACE W. PORTER SCHOOL PTO

**FUN RUN**  
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## LOCALS HELP E.O. SMITH WIN GIRLS BASKETBALL CHAMPIONSHIP

March Madness is a high school as well as college phenomenon. In their version of March Madness, the E. O. Smith (EOS) High School Varsity Girls Basketball team earned the school's 'first ever' Basketball State Championship. Five Columbia young ladies contributed to the team's success throughout the 2022-2023 season that culminated in a 24-4 win-loss record and the Class L State Championship.

Congratulations to Madison Hughes, Jenna Boardman, Riley DeForest, Jill Dingle and Anne Tigeleiro. Maddy, a senior captain and versatile inside/outside player led EOS in scoring at 16 points per game. She earned All-Conference and All-State honors and will continue her academic and basketball career at Southern New Hampshire. Jenna and Riley, both Juniors, contributed valuable minutes on both ends of the court. Jill, a Sophomore, became EOS's floor leader spearheading the team's offense and defense. And Anne, a Freshmen gained valuable experience as a Varsity player demonstrating her hard work, effort and 3-point shooting prowess.

EOS was seeded third in the Run to the Sun aptly named as the championship game is at the Mohegan Sun. They had impressive early round wins against Farmington (56-32), Bristol Eastern (58-38) and St Joseph's (65-34) in the Elite Eight. In the Final Four game versus Holy Cross, they overcame a 17-point deficit to defeat Holy Cross 66-60 setting up the championship match versus Pomper-



*Columbia girls contributing to E.O. Smith's varsity basketball championship were (top row, from left) Anne Tigeleiro (in pigtails), Jenna Boardman, Maddy Hughes, Jill Dingle and Riley DeForest. Photo courtesy CT GameTime.*

aug. On March 19th EOS earned a resounding win by defeating the #1 seed, Pomperaug 58 - 46.

One of our town's strongest attributes is our commitment to youth's sports as exhibited in our boys and girls youth sports program from elementary through middle school. From these programs our youngsters can choose to go on to compete at the high school level. These five Columbia young ladies certainly exemplify their dedication and success from the youth programs. All play multiple sports at EOS.

Congratulations State Champions - Maddy, Jenna, Riley, Jill, Anne and the entire EOS team! We are proud of your accomplishments. And we are proud of all our Columbia youngsters competing at the high school level.

## BECKISH SENIOR CENTER

The Beckish Senior Center is gearing up for new programs this Spring.

We have **Clancy HIIT & FIT classes** beginning April 3 for the following:

**Dance Fit** - Monday and Wednesday, 8:45 -9:45 am

**All Level Gentle Yoga** - Monday Afternoons, 1:30-2:30 pm

**Strength & Mobility** - Friday Mornings, 8:45

Our **Line Dancing Class** should resume in April.

Many trips have been planned to start in April through the end of the year. Please check our newsletter, The Gem, for further information.

The Columbia Senior's Organization has many activities planned for 2023. A Tag Sale, a BBQ, Soup and Game Day, and a Dinner Dance featuring The Columbia All Stars! The newsletter will have all the information.

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*Farm, Stable and Garden Tour*

Mark your calendars now. On Sunday, June 25th from 10:00AM to 3:00 PM. in addition to visiting lovely home gardens, this year's tour offers a unique opportunity to see behind the scene operations at Cloverleigh Farm: a certified organic vegetable, herb and flower producer; Bramble Creek Farm: a pasture to table provider; and Bellfree Farm, a private equestrian stable.

Weather permitting, some locations will have plein air painters to observe. Wagon rides to the upper fields of Heartstone Vineyard may also be available. More information on those will be available the day of the tour.

The tour is held rain or shine. Ticket sales will be limited to 75 so as not to overcrowd our unique properties located within a 15-minute drive from the center of town.

Advance ticket sales of \$20.00 per person will be available beginning May 15th. The last day to purchase advance tickets will be June 20th. A limited number of tickets may be sold the day of the tour for \$30.00.

To purchase Advance tickets electronically, go to the Society's website at [www.columbia-history.org](http://www.columbia-history.org). Click on SUPPORT US then DONATE and follow the prompts.

Tickets may also be purchased by mailing a check (on the memo line please indicate farm/garden tour tickets) to: Columbia Historical Society P.O.BOX 551 Columbia, CT. 06237 ATTN. GARDEN TOUR.

Tickets along with farm and garden location information will be available for pick up the morning of the tour at the Beckish Senior Center from 9:30AM-10:00AM.

Visit the CHS website at [www.columbia-history.org](http://www.columbia-history.org) for additional information. Or contact Millie Ramsey at [millieramz@gmail.com](mailto:millieramz@gmail.com) or 860 729-5472

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POSITIONS FOR FIREFIGHTERS & PUMP OPERATORS

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NOTE: Our office has relocated to 45 Laurel Lane Columbia, CT from the Landmark Building



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**AHM YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES**

Meet Christina Burdzy Herrick! Christina is the AHM Student Support Services Counselor based at Horace Porter School. She is available to support children, young people, and their families by providing mental health intervention services, positive youth development activities, and Juvenile Review Board Case Management. A few of the wonderful programs that Christina oversees at Porter include: Social Emotional Learning (SEL), the Wingman Middle School Group which focuses on leadership and overcoming challenges, and PBIS, a school-wide initiative for positive behavioral intervention and support.



**Programs and Fundraisers**

Thank you to everyone who stopped by Nature and Adventure Day during Hebron's MapleFest! We had a blast and hope you did too!

AHM's annual golf tournament will take place on Friday, July 21, 2023 at the beautiful Blackledge Country Club in Hebron. Grab a foursome and join us for a fun filled day of golf and giving!



In addition to our school support services, AHM offers many well-rounded programs for residents of Columbia. The Health Matters program provides art, cooking, and fitness classes. Our popular youth theater instruction is available for kids in grades K-12! Check out our website to stay up to date on the upcoming Summer Programs! [ahmyouth.org](http://ahmyouth.org)

**Family Resource Center**

AHM's Family Resource Center is a place for children ages birth-5 and their caregivers to grow and learn. Columbia families are encouraged to explore our parenting workshops and lectures, as well as an array of wonderful classes. First Steps in Music, Fun with Dinosaurs, and Messy Hands Sensory Play are just a few!

**Services**

AHM's Clinical Services include individual therapy, family therapy, crisis intervention, opioid treatment & services, and more!

Thank you to the Columbia community for your continued support of AHM Youth and Family Services!



Great news – The Transfer Station Book Bin has finally been reopened!!! You can drop off your book donations during Transfer Station hours on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Please note that we do NOT take:

- VHS tapes
- Magazines
- Photo Albums
- Anything that is NOT a book - other than music CDs and DVDs

We would like to welcome our new volunteers. We have been busy training them the past couple of months and are thrilled to have them onboard with us!

Our membership drive is coming up soon so be watching the mail for your form or you can pick one up at the Library. Over the past 20 yrs through your memberships, monetary donations and our sales from your book donations Friends of the Library has donated \$168,887.00 to support Library programming, the Library Expansion, necessary Covid supplies amongst other things. You are VERY important to our continued success in supporting the Saxton B. Little Free Library so we'd like to thank you in advance.

We are in the process of turning over our inventory by purging books we have had since before our Covid shut-down and taking in new donations. Please be patient

with us as we go through this process.

Our next Book Sale will be Friday, June 2, 5-8 pm free to members and \$5 non-members, Saturday, June 3, 9am-3pm free to all and Sunday, June 4, 9am-3pm free to all.

As always, the Book Nook is open at the Library during Library hours. We look forward to what the Summer will bring and seeing you at our Book Sales. Thank you for your patronage!

Laurie Rogers, Friends of the Library

## ARTISTS OPEN STUDIOS

At least one or more artists are needed to participate in the Columbia group of the Artists Open Studios this Fall. For more information please contact Paul Ramsey at Ramzphoto@gmail.com.



At least one or more artists are needed to participate in the Columbia group of the Artists Open Studios this Fall. For more information please contact Paul Ramsey at Ramzphoto@gmail.com.



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## NEW RECREATION DIRECTOR

Columbia has a new Recreation Director and her name is Debra Fiske whose resume includes a variety of recreational related activities. In addition to being a Coach at Saint Joseph College and an Athletic Director at Kingwood Oxford and a Color Analyst on UConn IMG Learfield Sports Radio Station, she was in Geno Auriemma's 3rd recruiting class for the Women's UConn Basketball team. Ms. Fiske will be utilizing her previous skills as she develops programs and hosts activities in Columbia that will attract Columbia residents of all ages.

Ms. Fiske was a student at UConn between 1988 and 1992. She is from Pennsylvania and was recognized as a star basketball player in high school. Geno Auriemma was building his women's basketball team at UConn and recruited her in his 3rd class. At that time UConn was completing the construction of Gampel Pavilion. There was also an unsuccessful Women's Basketball program at UConn and due to Geno's skills as a coach and recruiter, the team started winning games and Championships. UConn won their first Big East Championship in 1989 and went on to earn consecutive NCAA tournament appearances and another Big East Championship over the next four years. In 1991 this evolving UConn team was highlighted because they made their first ever Final Four appearance. Ms. Fiske was a four-year starting point guard on the team during those years.

Geno started coaching at UConn in 1985 at the age of 31 with no previous head coaching experience. Ms. Fiske feels that Geno can accurately assess which young student-athletes have the discipline, drive, and skills for bas-



*Debra Fiske, left, shown working with UConn sports radio, is Columbia's new recreation director.*

ketball. He also needs to assess the personalities of each recruit and determine how they will work with his current team. They must be able to trust and support one another and respect each other's individual differences. He would say "We do not get it right all the time, but we get it right a lot of the time". His associate coach, Chris Dailey, has worked with him for 38 years and together they have maintained a cohesive team.

Geno recruited Rebecca Lobo in 1991 and was a freshman when Ms. Fiske was a Senior at UConn. At the beginning, Ms. Lobo had to work hard to develop her skills but, under the leadership of Geno Auriemma, was able to lead the team to victory in 1995 where they won their first National Championship.

Athletics and recreation have always been a passion for Ms. Fiske. She worked for 22 years at the University of St. Joseph as a Fitness and Recreation Director, head Tennis and Basketball Coach, senior women's administrator and associate athletic director. After that job, she worked at Kingswood Oxford for 5 years as an Athletic Director. For the past 10 years, she has worked as a Color Analyst on UConn IMG Learfield Sports Radio. All her experiences have helped her to recognize the importance of creating team building activities. She has also learned that each person has different interests and skills and hopes to develop varied programs that will be of interest to all the residents of Columbia. Keep an eye out for the different programs that she will be developing during the spring, fall and winter. I am sure you will be pleased.

-Judy Ortiz

An advertisement for Country Tree Experts. The background is a photograph of a white truck with a large hydraulic lift bucket extended, with a worker in a high-visibility vest on the bucket. The scene is outdoors with trees. On the left, there is a testimonial in white text on a dark background. On the right, the company logo "Country Tree Experts" is displayed in a stylized font with green lightning bolts above it, and the website "www.countrytreeexperts.com" is listed below.

**"Amazing team of professionals!**  
Started promptly at 8:00am and worked all day until the job was complete. They worked delicately around our pool, gazebo and fence with ease and every scrap of tree including sawdust that landed on our concrete area was removed. It was as if our trees just magically disappeared. In addition, their price beat every arborist in the three surrounding towns. I would highly recommend this tree company to give you the best result at the best price." Amston, CT

**Country Tree Experts**  
www.countrytreeexperts.com

When it comes to entertainment, summer and live outdoor music go hand in hand. Columbia's Summer Concert Series is back by popular demand and promises to be bigger and better than ever.

### Summer Concert Series Lineup

June 14 – Bruce John @ the Town Green

June 27 – Nightshift @ Rec Park (Rain date: July 5th)

July 12th – Audacity @ Rec Park

Sponsored by the Town of Columbia Board of Selectmen

August 16th – Cover 2 Cover @ Rec Park

Thank you to our Platinum Sponsors: Discovery Learning Center, Columbia CrossFit, and Titan Energy for helping make the Summer Concert Series possible.

The season opens June 14th on the Town Green with a Columbia tried and true favorite, Bruce John. Pizza and beverages will be provided. June 27th, the concert series heads to Rec Park where Nightshift will take 'center stage'. Nightshift is a five-piece cover band that covers well-known songs from the 60s, 70s and 80s. The band boasts you will enjoy every song they play, and all will be wanting to dance from kids to grandparents!

Audacity, a six-piece band with a unique combination of both Modern Country Rock and Top 40/Classic Rock, will be the entertainment on July 12th. They cover artists

such as Luke Combs, Jason Aldean, Carrie Underwood, Lady Antebellum, Journey, AC/DC, Bon Jovi, Elton John and more.

Concert goers will not want to miss the dance party band, Cover2Cover, when they play at Rec Park on August 16th. C2C is celebrating their 15th year entertaining CT, MA, RI, and Block Island and has been recognized as CT's premier dance party band playing all the hits from the 60s 70s 80s.

All concerts are 6:30 – 8:30 p.m. and are FREE and family friendly. Participants are encouraged to bring lawn chairs and blankets. In addition to live music, the three concerts held at Rec Park will have food vendors and a beer garden provided by Columbia Package Store. If you have been thinking about partnering as a sponsor on this outstanding event series, now is the time to commit.

For information on sponsorship, contact Debbie Fiske: [recdirector@columbiact.org](mailto:recdirector@columbiact.org) or 860.228.8513.

Additional details for the concerts will be announced on the town website ([www.columbiact.org](http://www.columbiact.org)) and via social media.

Don't forget to check out the Columbia Parks and Recreation website to learn more about summer swim lessons, Beach Family Fun Days, Swim and Road Races and more.

## RANKED #1 IN 2022!



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The Agents at Countryside Realty credit their success to a deep understanding of the market, and their relentless focus on customer service.

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Happy spring from the Columbia Leos! Even though the winter of 2022-23 may have been mild, it's so awesome to see the flowers blooming as we enjoy the longer, warmer days! The club is looking forward to marching in the Parade on July 4th and helping The Columbia Lions at The Chicken BBQ in August!

The Leos held their Annual Variety on April 29. It was at Yeoman's Hall and it was great fun! We had some really talented performers! What a show! Thanks to the many generous performers, sponsors, advertisers and ticket buyers who helped us to achieve our goals. We will be able to give checks to Smilow's Children's Life Center, Camp Rising Sun and Relay for Life. All of these worthy charities will benefit from your generosity. Thank you so much!

As the school and Leo Year winds down, we will, with regrets, say goodbye to our outgoing President Elle Gaucher. President Elle was an awesome leader and a great Leo. She has been with the club since she was in 7th grade at Porter! Other graduating seniors with 6 years (!) of tenure are First Vice President Luke Woodward and Past President Madeline Ross. Leo Amanda Ross served for three years. Her artistic talents will be missed! Although

these members may be moving to the next phase of their lives, they have left quite a mark on this club and will be missed! They have each served with distinction in a variety of roles. We wish them much success as they take on the next part of their journeys! Good luck Leos!!

So, of course The Leos are always looking for new members! If you would like to work in your community, meet new people and be part of the largest service organization in the world, Lions International, we would love to have you! Our only requirements are that you must be between 12-18 years of age, and a Columbia resident. The Leos meet on the first and third Monday's of the month in the Porter Band Room. Please email Advisor Jim Blair at [jbland15@earthlink.net](mailto:jbland15@earthlink.net) if you would like to participate.

The Columbia Leos wish to thank all who have stepped up and helped us with our causes. Our club is inspired by those in our community who help us to live by our motto: "We serve". Thank you so much for your support! Working together we hope to make our community better.

Lion Jim Blair, Advisor  
860-428-2916 • [Jbland15@earthlink.net](mailto:Jbland15@earthlink.net)



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### Lions Club donates to town

The Columbia Lions Club made generous donations to the Town of Columbia in the month of March in support of important local projects.

The Commission on Aging received \$1,000 from the Club to initiate a fund to help seniors with snow removal during the winter months. The crucial need for this service was explained by Cathy Rowe and Marjorie Golden-Mossberg at a Lions dinner meeting in March. Lion Ralph Bemis, who recommended the donation, presented the gift to Town Administrator Mark Walter.

The Columbia Lions also contributed \$6,000 to the Town toward the purchase and installation of a new scoreboard for the Little League field at Rec Park. This gift was given under the auspices of the annual Columbia Lions President's Project, the same project that in the past funded the gazebo on the Town Green, the American flags mounted along Route 87 from Memorial Day through July 4th, and the Buzz Burnham Pavilion at Rec Park, to name a few. Recreation Director Debbie Fiske worked alongside the Lions to design the new scoreboard and find an appropriate placement for the Lions logo.

Lions President Mike DiRaimo presented the check for the project to Director Debbie Fiske and First Selectman



*Lion Ralph Bemis presents a \$1,000 check to start a fund to help seniors with snow removal to Town Administrator Mark Walter.*

Steve Everett on March 28, 2023. (See photo, Page 1.)

### Lions to sponsor July 4th parade

The Town of Columbia and the Columbia Lions Club are sponsoring the Annual July 4th Independence Day parade here in Columbia. We are extending an invitation to your organization to join us in celebration of our nation's independence. As usual it is our goal to make this year's parade "the biggest and best ever" and to do this we need your participation.

The theme for this year's parade is "Let Freedom Ring". We have increased the cash prizes that will be awarded for the floats that best represent this year's theme! First prize is \$250, second \$150, and third \$100. The parade will commence at 10:00 am on the morning of TUESDAY, JULY 4TH 2023. The parade route is approximately 1.1 miles long, beginning at Porter School and proceeding west along Route 87, ending at Lake Road.

Please email confirmation as soon as your group has decided to participate. We look forward to having a great parade and would love to have you be a part of it!

Marc Czarnowski, Parade Chairman  
(860) 942-0471 • ColumbiaCtLions@gmail.com

## FIRE MARSHAL

### Spring Safety Tips

Springtime is upon us and hopefully everyone is starting to enjoy more outdoor activities. Here are a few spring-cleaning tips to ensure your home is safe and ready for the warmer weather.

Inspect all your outdoor power equipment for any animal nests or leaf debris. Not only will this decrease the potential for a fire, but it will also help keep the engines of your machinery running at safe temperatures.

Gas grills can be another area of concern if not properly cleaned. Check your grills for nests and debris as well. Make sure to scrub away loose ash and build up from the grill's interior and grates. It is also a good idea to check

the grill's hoses for cracks. Listen for possible leaks at the regulator when you turn on the gas and be sure that your tank is within the hydro limit date of 12 years.

Check to make sure your clothes dryer exhaust vents are clear. These exhaust hoses should be cleaned at least once a year or more frequently as needed. Lint build-up is a potential ignition source for a fire. In addition, a clean vent helps your dryer operate more efficiently.

If you have any questions on fire safety around your home, please contact the Fire Marshal's Office in the Land Use Department at 860-228-0440.

Mike Lester  
Fire Marshal



# Donations Needed

A Fundraiser will be held on Thursday, August 17, at the Heartstone Winery in Columbia for the benefit of The Trust for Public Land and its effort to build out Mono Pond State Park.

Donations are needed for a Live Auction.

Examples Include:

- Original Artwork
- A Weekend or a Week at a Vacation location
- That Antique Car in your garage you will never finish

Donations are tax deductible.

For more information, contact **Millie Ramsey, [Millieramz@gmail.com](mailto:Millieramz@gmail.com)**.

## SENIORS ON THE GO

Spring is in the air, and we love it. It is great to be outside and enjoying all the things that we have in Columbia. We have had some great winter activities. We had a wonderful time at our holiday, potluck, enjoyed some great movies, and loved getting together for a games and soup night.

We have some great events coming up. In May we will have our annual barbeque. We love getting together for hamburgers, hot dogs and some of our famous and delicious potato salad. We will be able to renew acquaintances after the winter season. This will take place at the Beckish Senior Center on May 25th at noon. The cost will be \$7.00 and there be a sign up sheet at the center desk.

Our spring dance is the highlight of our year and this year it will take place on Saturday, June 3rd. It will feature The Columbia All Stars Honky Tonk Band with our own Bob Oxenhorn. The meal includes appetizers, entrees, and dessert. This year our primary caterer will be Ted's in Hebron. We will have salad, pasta with sauce,

meatballs, sausage and peppers, potatoes, chicken and bread and butter. The dinner will begin with appetizers at 5:00, meal at 6:00 and dancing from 7:00 -10:00. The price is \$22.00 and tickets are required and need to be purchased before May 30th.

Also, in June we are planning another game night. This time we will feature sundaes for our refreshments.

In July we will host our multigenerational movie event. Bring your children, your grandchildren, even your great grandchildren to enjoy a family movie and make your own sundae.

There are so many other weekly activities that the Columbia Seniors' and the Beckish Senior Center provide, we hope to see more and more of you. Please check the Senior Center's newsletter, The Gem, for up-to-date information about special events, meals, card games, social groups, and trips. It is so important that we keep contact with one another, establish new relationships, and socialize with new friends.



**Saturday July 8, 2023, 8:00 am-3:00 pm**

Organized by By The Pond and Notions Finds ReCreations and Design

All proceeds to benefit Columbia Food Bank

**So How Does this Work?**

Simply submit your \$20 (non-refundable) donation and registration form. You just set up at your home and sell, we will do the rest. Your sale and address will be added to a town map to highlight your sale to shoppers. Maps will be available the day of the sale to list and show all of the available sales.

Have a local business you want to highlight? For a \$30 donation we will gladly add your business card to the map.

Questions? Contact: Nelisa Reagan at nelisareagan@sbc-global.net

Send in the following information: Name/Business Name, Email, Phone, Address & Brief Description of Items for Sale. Mail registration form (and business card if applicable) and check payable to The Beckish Senior Center to Notions Finds ReCreations and Design, 4 Szegda Rd, Columbia, CT 06237.



*Edith Prague bench dedication*

The Columbia Commission on Aging would like to invite you to the dedication of a bench in honor of our beloved Edith Prague at Rec Park on May 24th at 9:00am. The bench is located near the new pavilion and the playground area. All are welcome to join us in remembering Edith for her many contributions to the State and more importantly to our town and its citizens.



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## SCOUTS BSA TROOP 162

Columbia Scouts BSA Troop 162 is excited to share their ability this year to attend Philmont, a high adventure camp in New Mexico this summer. Included is a group picture from 2016, the last time our town was able to send scouts on this great adventure. Troop 162 will be leaving Columbia, immediately following the 4th of July parade, bound for a 60+ mile hike traversing trails ranging from 7,313' to 11,038' of elevation.

The Troop started fundraising for this trek last year and it will cost just under \$2,000 per person. Physical training began for these 11 scouts and 4 leaders earlier this year as well—honk or wave when you see them out and about hiking our local trails with their packs fully loaded.

The 12-day trek they will be taking this year will summit Mt Phillips (11,736 ft), Comanche Peak (11,303 ft), Shaefer's Peak (9,414 ft) and Tooth of Time (9,003 ft); in comparison, Mt Washington here in the northeast is 6,288



ft. Their specific trek will include a lot of program time as well for them to enjoy: rock climbing and rappelling, blacksmithing, gold panning, tomahawk throwing, rifle shooting, ammunition reloading and some horse riding. All Scouts attending Philmont are expected to participate in some volunteering or conservation projects—their specific trek will allow for some new trail building. Their views and experienc-

es will be outstanding!

The Scouts have a few short months left to be ready for sure they will be busy hiking, skills training and of course more fundraising – be on the lookout for some remaining Munson's chocolate bar sales and local car washes for sure. We will do our best to bring back lots of good memories, stories and pictures to share for future articles. We wish you a happy and safe summer and we'll see you real soon along the parade route!!

Ad TK

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


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