

# COLUMBIA



Photo Credit: Nancy Millerd

# UPDATE FEBRUARY 2024



# TOWN OF COLUMBIA

## OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN & TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

**FY 24/25 BUDGET SEASON:** Now begins the time and commitment of our Board of Selectmen, Board of Education and Financial Planning and Allocation Commission working with our employees to prepare a budget to present in our public meetings.

Budget presentations by the Superintendent of the Horace W. Porter School and the Town Administrator to the Financial Planning and Allocation Commission (FiPAC) will be held on 3/20/24 at 7:00 PM. FiPAC will have a budget workshops on 3/27/24 and 4/3/24 (tentative) at their scheduled Special Meeting. The Public Hearing on the budget with a FiPAC Special Meeting to follow will be held on 4/24/24.



The Annual Town Budget Meeting will be called by the Board of Selectmen per the Charter between the 2nd Tuesday of May and the 1st Tuesday of June. The date of the Annual Town Budget Meeting will be posted on the town's website at [www.columbiact.org](http://www.columbiact.org) and at the Town Clerk's Office.

We encourage you to attend the Board of Selectman (BOS) and Financial Planning and Allocation Commission (FiPAC) meetings to engage in the budget process and we welcome your input. Meetings are held both in-person and virtually. Please visit our website and click on the Calendar tab for login information. You can also send in your input to [PublicInput@columbiact.org](mailto:PublicInput@columbiact.org).

**COMINGS AND GOINGS:** We bid farewell and best wishes to Gail McGrath, Assistant Town Clerk on her retirement. Gail has worked for the town for over thirteen years providing a very important service to the town. As the Assistant Town Clerk, Gail was responsible for receiving and recording important documents for land transactions, births, deaths, and marriages, helping residents register to vote, issuing absentee voter ballots and maintaining voting records and so much more. We wish her all the best in her retirement and thank her for her dedication to the town.



# TOWN OF COLUMBIA

## OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN & TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

**COMINGS AND GOINGS (CONTINUED):** We welcome Karen Butzgy to the position of Assistant Town Clerk. Karen has served as the Democratic Registrar since 2014. Karen has also worked for the town as a Floater for many years and has assisted in the Town Clerk's office as well. Karen will be stepping down as the Democratic Registrar and Nelisa Regan will be filling that position at the beginning of February.

We also would like to wish Debbie Fiske, Director of Parks and Recreation a fond farewell. Debbie will be the new Recreation Director for the Town of Windham. We would like to thank Debbie for her dedication and enthusiasm in providing a wide range of recreational activities for the residents of Columbia.



### **SUSTAINABLE CT - VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

#### **KICK OFF MEETING FEBRUARY 29TH AT 6:00 PM AT THE TOWN HALL**

We are looking to restart our Sustainable CT Initiative and we are looking for volunteers! Sustainable CT is a voluntary certification program to recognize thriving and resilient Connecticut municipalities. An independently funded, grassroots, municipal effort, Sustainable CT provides a wide-ranging menu of best practices. Municipalities choose Sustainable CT actions, implement them, and earn points toward certification.

Sustainable CT also provides opportunities for grant funding to help communities promote economic well-being and enhance equity, all while respecting the finite capacity of the natural environment. The program is designed to support all Connecticut municipalities, regardless of size, geography or resources. Sustainable CT empowers municipalities to create high collective impact for current and future residents.



# TOWN OF COLUMBIA

## OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN & TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

**SUSTAINABLE CT (CONTINUED):** Ace Riker, Sustainable CT Equity Coach will be available to speak to us on **February 29th at 6:00 PM** in the Conference Room at Town Hall regarding the **Optimize for Equity** portion of the Sustainable CT initiative.

The Equity Coach can help us achieve the goals of optimizing for equity:

- Broaden community connections and work together.
- Value all voices and include the interests of all members of the community in decision making.
- Create a community where all can thrive and where race, gender, age, economic status, religious affiliation, or sexual identity do not determine opportunities or predict outcomes.
- Recognize and embrace the strengths that all community members bring to our cities and towns.

Please consider volunteering your time. To learn more about Sustainable CT please visit their [website](#) or call Jennifer LaVoie, Executive Administrative Assistant at 860-228-0110.

### **2024 FRED GIFFORD MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION**

COLUMBIA VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT INC.  
167 ROUTE 66/P.O. BOX 26, COLUMBIA, CT 06237  
860-228-9602

The Scholarship consists of four (4) individual awards of \$1000.00 each.

All applicants must be residents of the Town of Columbia, CT, seniors attending secondary school or home-schooled, with plans to continue their education at an accredited post secondary school or institution. The Scholarship Committee looks for students with a good balance of grades, involvement in school activities, outside school activities, community service and family values.

Applications must be submitted no later than April 15th, 2024. The winners will be contacted by the committee and may be asked to attend a regular meeting of the Columbia Volunteer Fire Department Inc. Click [HERE](#) to complete and submit the 2024 application



# TOWN OF COLUMBIA OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN & TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

**TOWN OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19TH  
FOR PRESIDENT'S DAY.**



**EVERBRIDGE NOTIFICATIONS:** We will from time to time issue an Everbridge Notification with a message from the First Selectman, Steven M. Everett to help keep you informed. If you would like to sign up for [Everbridge Notifications](#) please go to the Town's website and on the Everbridge Notifications tab.

**EMAIL NOTIFICATIONS:** To receive Town news please go to the Town's website and click on the [Email Notifications](#) tab. If you need assistance please do not hesitate to call the Town Administrative Office or the First Selectman at 860-228-0110 or email us at [townadministrator@columbiact.org](mailto:townadministrator@columbiact.org).

Thank you and please be safe!

Steven M. Everett, First Selectman

[severett@columbiact.org](mailto:severett@columbiact.org)

860-228-0110

Mark B. Walter, Town Administrator

[townadministrator@columbiact.org](mailto:townadministrator@columbiact.org)

860-228-0110

# UPCOMING TOWN MEETINGS

**Many meetings will be held by utilizing remote access; however, some meetings are being held in-person or hybrid (both in-person and virtual). Please check the Town Calendar and the Agenda posted for directions on login information. Each board or committee will provide the information needed to join using an on-line conferencing platform. Please check the Town of Columbia's [website](#) for updates.**

2/05/24 Mon: Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission, 7:00 PM

2/05/24 Mon: Board of Education, 7:30 PM

2/05/24 Wed: Horace Porter School HVAC Building Committee, 6:00 PM

2/06/24 Tue: Board of Selectmen, 7:00 PM

2/07/24 Wed: Lake Management Advisory Committee, 7:00 PM

2/12/24 Mon: Planning & Zoning Commission, 7:00 PM

2/14/24 Tue: Economic Development Committee, 7:00 PM

2/14/24 Wed: Fiscal Policy Board, 8:30 AM

2/15/24 Thur: Open Space Committee, 9:00 AM

2/19/24 Mon: Horace Porter School HVAC Building Committee, 6:00 PM

2/20/24 Tue: Board of Selectmen, 7:00 PM

2/20/24 Tue: Hop River Preserve Committee, 5:30 PM

2/21/24 Wed: Financial Planning & Allocation Commission, 7:00 PM

2/26/24 Mon: Planning & Zoning Commission, 7:00 PM

2/22/24 Thur: Zoning Board of Appeals, 7:00 PM

Public Comment will be accepted by our dedicated email at [PublicInput@columbiact.org](mailto:PublicInput@columbiact.org) or by USPS mail to 323 Route 87, Columbia, CT 06237 and must be received prior to the meeting (public comment received after the meeting will be shared at the next meeting).

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## RECREATION DEPARTMENT:

**ADULT EXERCISE PROGRAMS:** The weather has turned wintry. Looking for exercise options indoors? Here are a few:

**MEN'S BASKETBALL:** Monday evenings; Check Rec Desk for times as start time changes due to gym demands. Registration can be done online through RecDesk or a walk-in option. Online: <http://columbia.recdesk.com>

**FIT FUSION** ~ Mondays/Wednesdays/Fridays, 4:30 - 5:30 PM; Join instructor Carolyn Ritchie for a total body workout for all fitness levels.

**YOGA** ~ Gets back into action, January 22nd!

Mondays, 6:30 – 7:30 PM; Join Instructor Laura Jacques for an hour of Yoga that will have you feeling relaxed, stress free, and glad you took the time for YOU. All levels welcome.

**ZUMBA** ~ Tuesdays, 7 - 8 PM. Join instructor Martin Ricardo for an exhilarating, heart pumping dance class. Fun & Fitness all in one!

**COMMIT** ~ \*\*Will start again in February\*\* Wednesdays, 6 - 7 PM; Join Instructor Karen Ricardo for a fun, high intensity interval training style dance class from music all over the world. All ages, fitness levels and abilities welcome!

For more dates and offerings, please visit our Website, follow us on [Instagram](#) and/or [Facebook](#).



**RECREATION BUSINESS:** LIFEGUARDS needed for the summer at Columbia Lake. Yes, it is January, but summer will be here before you know it. Start planning for your summer job now. Not certified? We will provide training and certification. Call the Rec office for more details at 860-228-8513.

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## **RECREATION DEPARTMENT (CONTINUED):**

**SPONSORS:** Looking to partner with Columbia Parks & Recreation? Being a sponsor is a great way to not only promote your business but provide financial support to enhance programming and positively impact the community. Call the department for partnership opportunities: 860.228.8513



Thank you,

Anyka Fegan, Assistant Recreation Director ~ 860.228.8513; [Recreation@columbiact.org](mailto:Recreation@columbiact.org)

### **Office Location:**

18 Lake Rd. (Murphy House at the Town Beach)

Columbia, CT 06237

### **Hours:**

Monday - Wednesday: 8 am - 4 pm

Thursday: 8 am - 6 pm

Friday: 8 am - 12 pm



# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## RECREATION DEPARTMENT (CONTINUED):



**COMMIT**<sup>®</sup>  
DANCE FITNESS

**KAREN RICARDO**

Wednesday's from 7PM-8PM

Located at Yoemans Hall

\$6 Walk-in

\$50 Pre-Paid (10 Class Punch Card)

\$90 Pre-Paid (20 Class Punch Card)

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## RECREATION DEPARTMENT (CONTINUED):



**ZUMBA**  
With Martín.

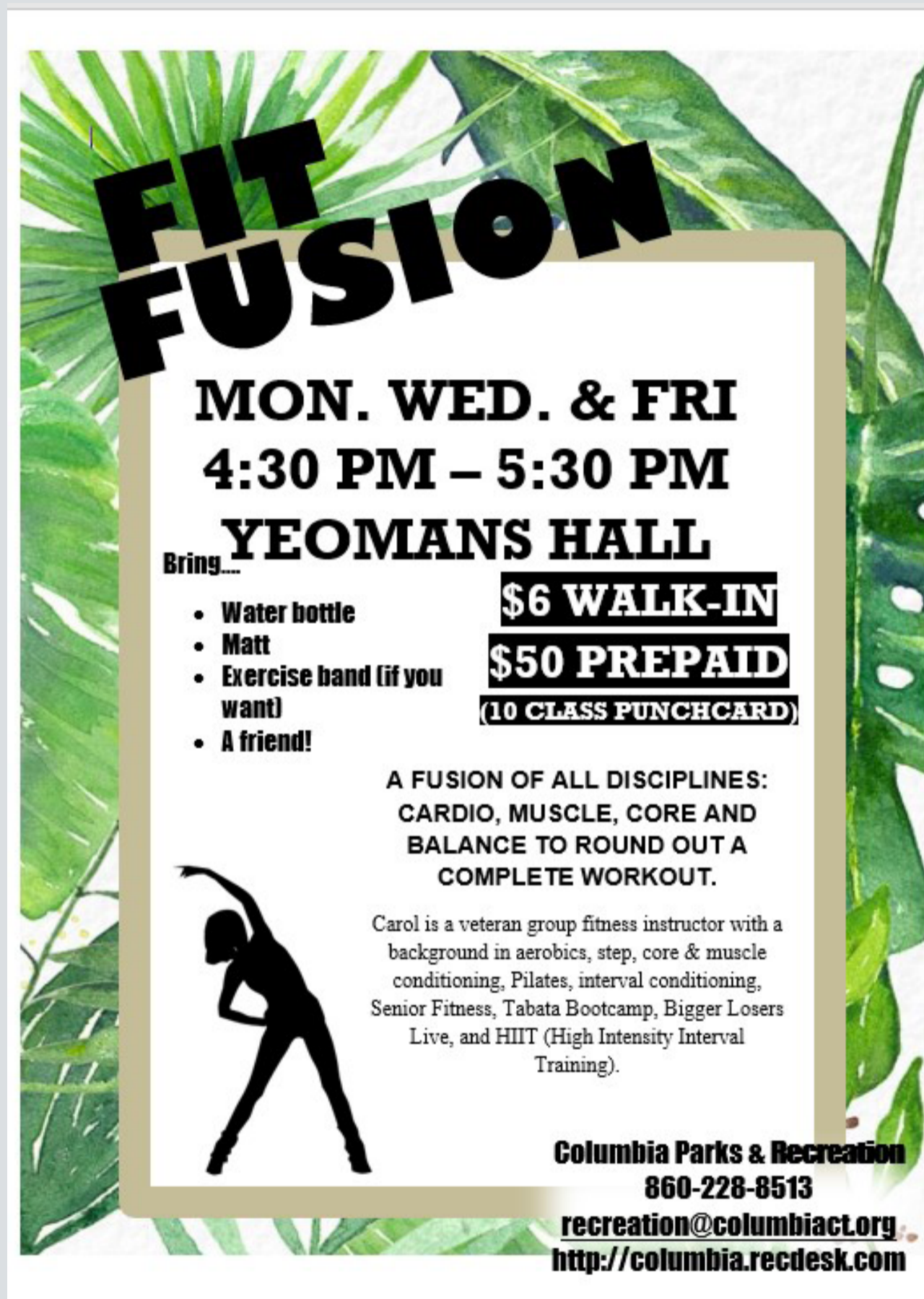
**TUESDAY 7:00 PM**

**\$6 Per Class.**  
**\$50 Ten Class Punch Card.**  
**\$90 Twenty Class Punch Card.**

Dance away with Zumba® and experience the exhilaration of Latin-inspired and globally-inspired beats while getting fit and staying active! All skill levels are invited and encouraged to join in the fun!

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## RECREATION DEPARTMENT (CONTINUED):



# **FIT FUSION**

**MON. WED. & FRI**  
**4:30 PM – 5:30 PM**  
**YEOMANS HALL**

Bring...

- Water bottle
- Matt
- Exercise band (if you want)
- A friend!

**\$6 WALK-IN**  
**\$50 PREPAID**  
**(10 CLASS PUNCHCARD)**

**A FUSION OF ALL DISCIPLINES:  
CARDIO, MUSCLE, CORE AND  
BALANCE TO ROUND OUT A  
COMPLETE WORKOUT.**

Carol is a veteran group fitness instructor with a background in aerobics, step, core & muscle conditioning, Pilates, interval conditioning, Senior Fitness, Tabata Bootcamp, Bigger Losers Live, and HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training).

**Columbia Parks & Recreation**  
**860-228-8513**  
**[recreation@columbiact.org](mailto:recreation@columbiact.org)**  
**<http://columbia.recdesk.com>**

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## RECREATION DEPARTMENT (CONTINUED):

### **Yoga** **At Yeomans Hall**



**Mondays**

**6:30-7:30 pm**

**September 11<sup>th</sup> – November 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Walk-in \$ 10**

**Pre-pay: \$85 for the entire session**

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## BECKISH SENIOR CENTER:

### EN PLEIN AIR ARTIST EXHIBITION



January through the beginning of March our Artist will be displaying their art work throughout the center. Stop in to check it out!

#### **"Meet the Artists"**

**February 14th from 12pm to 3pm**

Music Band & Special Luncheon: Pizza, Grinders & Chicken Tenders Lunch starts at 12pm & \$8 per person Please sign-up ahead of time!

AARP TAXES


# AARP<sup>SM</sup>

## Tax-Aide<sup>TM</sup>

Welcome to TAX Season!!!  
Every other Thursday at the Beckish Senior Center

**February 1st & 15th & 29th**  
**March 14th & 28th**  
**9am to 12pm**

Please sign-up and pick up your intake form. The form needs to be completed prior to your appointment time.  
We will be making reminder calls the day before.  
Bring your last 2 tax returns



**AARP<sup>®</sup>**  
Tax-Aide<sup>™</sup>

**FREE**  
Tax Help

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## **SOCIAL SERVICES:**

**TOWN OF COLUMBIA FOOD BANK:** For Columbia residents in need of non-perishables and to check availability of toiletries, please contact Katie Wilt at 860-228-1008 to make an appointment.

**SNOW REMOVAL GRANT PILOT PROGRAM:** If you are a Columbia resident who is a senior 55+ or disabled and have an emergency where you needed to get your driveway and or walkway snow plowed and are having trouble paying the bill please contact Columbia Social Services at 860-228-1008 or [kwilt@columbiact.org](mailto:kwilt@columbiact.org) to apply to the Pilot Snow Removal Grant Program.

Income eligibility is 60% of CT's state median income (household of 1 is \$41,553 and household of 2 is \$54,338)

Required documentation includes gross income (or current Energy Assistance approval), proof of age or disability, completion of the application and release, and invoice from a vendor with a W-9. Household must be willing to share why the service was needed as part of the application.

**HEATING ASSISTANCE:** The State of CT Energy Assistance Program: Applications for the 2023-24 energy assistance program are underway. This program is available regardless of heating source. Gross income cannot exceed \$41,553/year (single) and \$54,338 (couples). There is no asset limit. Documentation needed: last four weeks of gross income and utility bills, as proof of rent/mortgage. If you are receiving cash assistance or SNAP you can provide benefit documentation instead of proof of income. If you are new to the program DSS requires your Identification and Social Security cards for everyone in the household as well as income and utility bills.

To apply please contact Katie Wilt at 860-228-1008/[kwilt@columbiact.org](mailto:kwilt@columbiact.org) or visit the [DSS Website](#).

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## **SOCIAL SERVICES CONTINUED:**

**SENIOR WELLNESS SERIES:** "The More You Know" Wellness Series meets every second Friday of the month at the Senior Center. This free program has covered topics such as integrating hope into our thoughts when we feel concern, coping strategies when feeling stress, how to keep an open mind when communicating, tips on talking to a loved one who may be misusing substances. We are building a community that believes in "being kind to your mind" and "mental health is just as important as physical health". Come join us!

To make suggestions, share ideas or get involved in future prevention work for the Town of Columbia please contact Katie Wilt at 860-228-1008 or [kwilt@Columbiact.org](mailto:kwilt@Columbiact.org).

Thank you,

Katie Wilt, Community Social Services Coordinator

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

**TAX OFFICE:** The last day to pay the second installment of the Real Estate, Personal Property and the Supplemental Motor Vehicle taxes without a penalty was February 1, 2024.

If taxes are not paid on or before February 1, 2024 interest will be charged at the rate of 1½% per month (18% per year) from the due date of January 1st (1.5% for January and 1.5% for February) The minimum interest charged is \$2.00 (per vehicle). Failure to receive a bill does not invalidate the tax or interest per CT State Statute. Bills are not sent for the second installment. Please be aware that using the official US blue post office box may not guarantee a Feb. 1st postmark.

Regular office hours beginning February 2, 2024 for the TAX OFFICE: Monday through Wednesday 8:00-2:00, Thursday 10:00-6:00 and closed on Friday.

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 taxes online. Service fees for tax payments are .95 cents to use a bank account and 2.99% for credit and debit cards.

To find your tax bills online:

- go to [www.columbiact.org](http://www.columbiact.org) and click on the pay taxes online tab.
- on the next page click on the square that says view/pay tax bills.
- The search criteria will need to be entered exactly how the tax bill is written. last name, space, and your first initial.



# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

**TAX OFFICE:** You can also utilize this site to look up your payment history. Locate your bill using the instructions above, then hover over the icons in the option column and select tax payment history. If you have any problems using the online system, please contact the Tax Office at 860-228-0230 or [taxcollector@columbiact.org](mailto:taxcollector@columbiact.org) and we will gladly assist you.

**For those seeking an immediate clearance for DMV** due to delinquent 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 tax office hours for assistance.**

Carol Price, Tax Collector

**TOWN CLERKS OFFICE:** It is business as usual in the Clerk's office for all those services that you might need – Recording and Searching of Land Records, Marriage licenses, Certified copies of Vital Records, Fishing and Hunting licenses, Dog Licenses, Transfer Station stickers, etc.

For your convenience, there is a large white drop box outside the doors to Yeoman's Hall. This box can be used to drop off items for the Town Clerk and is shared with other offices in Town Hall.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call us or reach out to us by email – Robin ([townclerk@columbiact.org](mailto:townclerk@columbiact.org)) or Gail ([atownclerk@columbiact.org](mailto:atownclerk@columbiact.org)).

# NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## **FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY: BOOK SALE FEBRUARY 9TH, 10TH AND 11TH**

To start of the New Year, we would like to remind you of our upcoming Book Sale (weather pending of course)

Friday, February 9, 5-8 pm -  
members free, non-members \$5

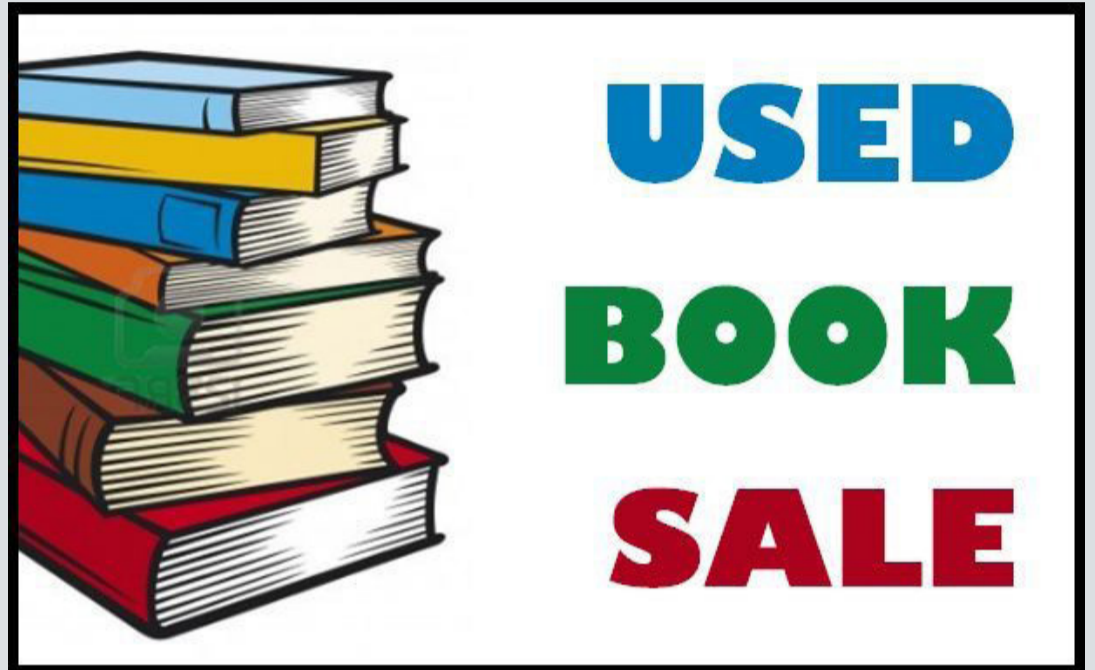
Saturday, February 10, 9am-3pm  
free to all

Sunday, February 11, 11am-3pm free to all

We are located at the Chapel on the Green next to the Library and in front of the Town Hall.

Hope to see you all there!

Laurie Rogers - Friends of the Library



# NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

**SAXTON B. LITTLE LIBRARY:** Welcome to February at your local library!

The big news of the month is we're participating in the Target Circle program! You can vote for us and help direct Target's giving to benefit the Library. To vote for us, head to your Target app; click on "My Target;" tap on "Circle;" Select "Vote for Nonprofits;" and cast your vote! Note: you may need to temporarily change your Target store location to the Lisbon, CT store to have SBL included in the Nonprofit list. Thanks in advance for your support!

**Adults** – Join us for a program this month! As always, all programs are FREE and open to the public.

**Feature Film Fridays** have returned! On most Fridays at 1:00pm this winter, we'll be screening new release and award-nominated movies:

- 2/2 – The Holdovers
- 2/9 – Barbie
- 2/16 – The Hunger Games: The Ballad of Songbirds & Snakes
- 2/23 – Oppenheimer

Snacks are served, and seating is first-come, first-served. Subtitles will be on – join us!

On Tuesday, February 20th at 6:30pm, sign up to attend **Get Organized: Managing Your Paper**, led by Sandra Wheeler, professional organizer and owner of For Peace of Mind, LLC. We'll talk about everything you need to keep your paper organized– how to sort it, what to keep and for how long, and where to put it so you can find it. Give us a call to save your seat!

We also had to postpone our **Intro to Journal Writing workshop** due to a snow date, and we have seats still available for the new rescheduled date on March 5th at 6:30pm. Call us to register!

**Kids** – We have lots of fun planned this month!

# NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

**SAXTON B. LITTLE LIBRARY (CONTINUED):** Our ever-popular **Little Hands Art Workshop** takes place this quarter on Wednesday, February 21st at 10:30am – the theme is The Snowy Day! This open-ended process art class is for ages 18 months to four years old and fills up quickly, so call the Library at 860-228-0350 to save your little one's seat. Registration opens on 2/1.

We still have some space left in our **Love Prints** crafting program on Thursday, February 8th with drop-in seating from 4:00-7:00pm. Experiment with printmaking and create fun Valentine's Day art. Dress for a mess! This program is for ages four and up, and registration is required. Call us to save your child's space!

Love LEGO? Join us for fun STEAM-based activities using LEGOS in our **LEGO STEAM Lab!** Apply physics principles to create LEGO mazes, zip lines, and a mini parachute for a LEGO person. This program on Thursday, February 29th at 6:00pm is for ages 5+ and has limited seating. Call us to sign up!

This month's **Drawing Club** for kids aged five and up meets on Tuesday, February 27th at 4:00pm. Join us to practice your drawing skills through fun prompts and projects. Registration for our February session opens on 2/1/24.

**Did you know that SBL offers a variety of book groups for both adults and kids?** For grown-ups, we host a Fiction Book Group, a Nonfiction Book Group, the Sip & Stitch Book Group, and our new Cookbook Club. For kids, they can join us for Mother-Daughter Book Club, Middle Grade Book Club, and Teen Book Club. Visit our website for all the details.

**We hope to see you at SBL soon!**

Saxton B. Little Free Library  
319 Route 87  
Columbia, CT 06237  
860-228-0350  
[columbiactlibrary.org](http://columbiactlibrary.org)

# NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## SAXTON B. LITTLE LIBRARY (CONTINUED):



Saxton B. Little Library



## Feature Film FRIDAYS

- Feb. 2 • The Holdovers (R)
- Feb. 9 • Barbie (PG-13)
- Feb. 16 • The Hunger Games: The  
Ballad of Songbirds &  
Snakes (PG-13)
- Feb. 23 • Oppenheimer (R)

### Fridays at 1:00pm

Please arrive early to grab a seat  
and a snack before showtime!

all screenings will include subtitles

no registration required / adults only / films subject to change



# NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## **SAXTON B. LITTLE LIBRARY (CONTINUED):**



## **Intro to Journal Writing workshop with Jane Rossi**

*Jane is a seasoned instructor and lifelong journal-keeper. As a certified Journal to the Self® instructor and a member of the International Association for Journal Writing, Jane's expertise is your guiding light on this transformative journey.*

*Participants in the class will:*

- *Receive engaging writing prompts to inspire their journal entries.*
- *Learn and practice a variety of journaling techniques.*
- *Experience a supportive and accepting environment.*
- *Learn about the therapeutic benefits of journaling.*

*This 2-hour workshop is designed for adults aged 18 and over. To get the most from the experience, please bring your favorite journal or notebook along with a pen.*

## **Tuesday, March 5th from 6-8pm**

*Limited to 12 participants!  
Pre-registration required by calling 860-228-0350.*

# NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## **SAXTON B. LITTLE LIBRARY (CONTINUED):**

A colorful poster for a LEGO STEAM LAB event. The title 'LEGO STEAM LAB' is written in large, bold, black letters. To the right of the title is a yellow LEGO minifigure head with a blue smile and eyes. The background is white with scattered colorful LEGO bricks (green, red, blue, yellow) and a yellow minifigure head. The event details are presented in colored boxes: a green box for the description, a yellow box for the date and time, a red box for the location, and a blue box for registration information. The bottom of the poster features a border of various colorful LEGO bricks.

# **LEGO STEAM LAB**

Join us for fun STEAM-based activities using LEGOS! Apply physics principles to create LEGO mazes, zip lines, and a mini parachute for a LEGO person.

**Thursday  
February 29th  
6:00pm**

**Saxton B. Little  
Free Library  
319 Route 87,  
Columbia CT**

**Ages 5+. Registration limited to 20.  
Stop by the Library or call 860-228-0350  
to register.**

# NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## **SAXTON B. LITTLE LIBRARY (CONTINUED):**

Saxton B. Little Library | Columbia



## Get Organized: Managing Your Paper

Sandra Wheeler – Professional Organizer and Owner of For Peace of Mind, LLC – will give useful tips on how to Organize Your Paper:

- How to sort it
- What to keep and for how long
- Where to put it so you can find it

Bring your questions. Walk away motivated to make changes in how you handle the paper in your life. Don't miss this session!

**Tuesday, 2/20 @ 6:30pm**

Limited seating - registration required.  
Call 860-228-0350 to save your space!



# NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

**SAXTON B. LITTLE LIBRARY (CONTINUED):**



*SBL Reading Journal  
Fundraiser*

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*\$15*

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*includes space for 200+ entries,  
plus reading lists from  
SBL patrons & staff*

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*Available now! See Staff  
for details*

# NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## **SAXTON B. LITTLE LIBRARY (CONTINUED):**



## **LOVE PRINTS**

at the Saxton B. Little Free Library

**Thursday | February 8th | 4-7pm**

Experiment with printmaking and  
create fun Valentine's Day art.

**Dress for a mess!**

Ages 4 and up. Drop in between 4:00 - 7:00. Registration limited to 20.  
Stop by the Library or call 860-228-0350 to register.

# NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## COLUMBIA CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH



2nd Saturday Community  
**Breakfast**  
Saturday February 10th

Share Food and Joy with  
Family and Friends

**7:30 – 10 AM**

All you can eat \$12; Special Rates for  
Families with Children

Buffet includes design-your-own omelets, Belgian waffles, corned beef hash and two other meats, hash browns, scrambled eggs, fruit and home baked goods. Lots of choices!



## Bible Study

Thursdays 10:30 AM

In the Lounge and on Zoom

All are welcome!

Bibles available there or bring  
your own favorite version.

# NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

**COLUMBIA CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH (CONTINUED):**

## Circle of Trust

Enjoy a moment of peace, a quiet comfort.

The Church Sanctuary will be open  
Each Tuesday Morning from 8 AM to 8:30 AM  
Each Wednesday Evening from 7 PM to 7:30 PM  
Beginning Tuesday January 9th  
Columbia Congregational Church

325 Rt 87



## Dance Classes



Sundays

7:00 – 8:30 PM

Community Hall Columbia Congregational Church

Joe Belanger, Professional Dance Instructor &

Physical Therapist

No experience needed

\$15 at the door

# NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

**COLUMBIA CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH (CONTINUED):**

## Men's Game Dinner



Saturday February 17th

6:00 PM

Community Hall

Columbia

Congregational Church

325 Rt 87

For Tickets or information

Contact Tim Bassett or

the church office

860 228 9306

Ccchurch@snet.net

## SIMPLE SUSTENANCE OFFERINGS 2023-2024

Nov	19	Butternut Squash Soup	Cranberry Apple Bread
Dec	17	Chicken Rice Veggie Soup	Eggnog Bread
Jan	28	Chicken Brunswick Stew	Corn Bread (Incl. GF)
Feb	25	Mulligatawny	Mozzarella Parmesan Bread
Mar	24	* Pierogis, Apple Sauce, Carmelized Onions *	
Apr	28	Corn Chowder	Molasses Brown Bread
May	26	Zuppa Toscana	Sun-Dried Tomato Basil Bread

ORDER and PAY one week prior to PICK UP date above

ORDER forms available at church or email: [ccchurchfair@gmail.com](mailto:ccchurchfair@gmail.com)

OR Order online with PayPal at

[https://columbiacongregationalchurch.org/?page\\_id=16952](https://columbiacongregationalchurch.org/?page_id=16952)



# NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

**PORTER PALS PRESCHOOL LOTTERY REGISTRATION:** If you have a child who will be turning 3 or 4 years old by September 1, 2024 and would like them to be considered for the lottery, please go to [www.hwporter.org](http://www.hwporter.org) and click on Preschool Pals Registration in the middle of the page. Then please click on Preschool Lottery Form and complete the form. Registration for the lottery will close at 3:30pm on Wednesday, March 27, 2024. We will be holding the lottery on Thursday, March 28, 2024. If your child will be turning 5 prior to September 1, 2024, then your child is eligible for Kindergarten and not Preschool. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Deborah Dupuis at (860) 228-0585.

**COLUMBIA LIONS AND LEO'S:** Become a Columbia Lion! – We are looking for new members and fresh ideas. Become part of the team that gives Columbia its annual 4th of July Parade, Chicken BBQ, College Scholarship Campaign, and the yearly fun-filled Golf Tournament fund-raiser, to name just a few. If you are interested in joining the Columbia Lions, send a note to Lion VP Wes Burnham ([wesleyburnham2000@yahoo.com](mailto:wesleyburnham2000@yahoo.com)) or Lion Mike DiRaimo ([md6966@gmail.com](mailto:md6966@gmail.com)). Your Lions Club is an integral part of community life here in Columbia. Please help us keep the spirit of service alive! Join us!



**COLUMBIA LEO'S:** The Columbia Leos collected \$100 for The Town of Columbia Fuel Assistance Program in January. Thanks to everyone who gave! We will be back at The Columbia Congregational Church Breakfast on Saturday February 10 from 8-10 AM collecting cash or checks made payable to The Town of Columbia, Fuel Assistance in the memo. We will also be accepting nonperishable food items for the Columbia Food Pantry.

# NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## COLUMBIA BOARD OF EDUCATION:



### BOARD OF EDUCATION COLUMBIA, CONNECTICUT

Michael Maziarz, Chairperson  
Stephania Dawiczki  
Lauren Habeman  
Leah Osborn  
Rachel Riendeau  
Christine Sposito, V. Chari, Secy  
Paul Zator  
Barbara Wilson, Interim Superintendent  
Scott Leslie, Interim Asst. Superintendent

*The Columbia School District is a community of leaders providing rigorous programs to ensure that each student can excel as an individual*

January 31, 2024

Dear Columbia Families, Staff, and Community,

I hope this message finds you and your family safe and well.

I am excited to officially announce Barbara Wilson as the Superintendent of the Columbia Public Schools. At the Board of Education meeting on January 9, 2024, the Board unanimously voted to remove the title of "interim" and officially appoint Barbara Wilson as the Superintendent effective February 1, 2024.

Throughout her time in Columbia, first as the Director of Pupil Services and most recently as the Interim Superintendent, we have seen first-hand Barbara's knowledge and skill as an educator and a leader. She has prioritized academics and consistently supports the outstanding staff and students we have at Horace W. Porter. She has worked closely with the Board of Education, FiPac, and the Board of Selectmen to develop budgets over the past two years that provide our staff and students with what they need to be successful while being fiscally responsible to our town and its citizens. This work has included writing grants, sitting on committees, working with the state, and neighboring towns to provide ongoing improvements to the building to provide a safe learning environment for all. She has engaged with families and stakeholders to address the needs of our district through collaboration and communication. She has done so in times of peace, and in times of crisis, all the while maintaining a positive, calm, professional demeanor and having the utmost compassion for others. For all of her successes to be possible, she has relied on her most important attribute of all, that she loves our students, our staff, and our community, and is invested in the future of Columbia through the foundation of building positive relationships.

All members of the Board of Education were in full agreement that there was no need for the town to spend money on acquiring a search firm, nor was it necessary to waste months of time on a search when we already had the right person. That person was already doing the job, and doing an exceptional job at that. Barbara Wilson has the respect of our staff, our students, our families, and our community, and she has the full support of the Board of Education. We often say that "every decision is made in the best interest of the kids". Along with our staff, and families, Barbara Wilson exemplifies that sentiment.

We look forward to having Barbara lead our district for many years to come and congratulate her on this well-deserved appointment.

Sincerely,

Columbia Board of Education

# NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## **MAKE YOUR LAND AVAILABLE FOR FARMING FREE WEBINAR SERIES FOR LANDOWNERS**

Farming and non-farming private landowners and their representatives (real estate agents, etc.) are welcome to attend. As a landowner, when you make land available for farming you help secure a future for farming in your community. Farmers are looking for land—from a small vegetable plot, to livestock or crops. Productive, sustainable uses for all or parts of your property can bring many rewards!



Feel empowered and prepared to share your land as an important piece of the crucial farmland base in New England. This virtual workshop series will help you understand your land's potential for farming and what goes into a good farming arrangement, explore motivations, strategies, and mechanics for making any amount of land available to a farmer.

- WHY make land available to a farmer? What are the primary motivations and benefits to a landowner?
- WHAT does your land have to offer? Explore soils, acreage, infrastructure, and other assets, and how to adequately convey your offer.
- HOW to have your land farmed. Learn about leasing, selling, and other strategies, as well as tools for getting these processes started.
- WHO is interested in farming your land? Hear from farmers and landowners on what they are looking for, what challenges they have faced, and ways you can anticipate a farmer's needs.



# NON-MUNICIPAL SERVICES PROVIDERS AND NON-PROFIT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## MAKE YOUR LAND AVAILABLE FOR FARMING FREE WEBINAR SERIES FOR LANDOWNERS

Click to [REGISTER](#) for the Workshops!

Series will take place on Thursdays at lunchtime, from 12 - 1:30pm (EST).

- **Session 1 - February 22nd**

What are the benefits and potential challenges of making your land available to farming? What are the details a landowner should expect to address? In this session, participants will hear from a guest speaker, who will share about their experience leasing land for their farm. We will also share "tips & tricks" for posting your property on New England Farmland Finder. Webinar attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions.

- **Session 2 - February 29th**

In this session, the New England Farm Link Collaborative will share different methods to provide farmland access, including leasing, selling, and more. We will also discuss tools for evaluating your land's agricultural potential. Webinar attendees will have the opportunity to ask questions.

*"Thank you for this seminar. The resources and guidelines were great. It was very helpful and thought-provoking to hear from landowners and farmers in the final session," shared a participant.*

Workshop recordings will also be made available to all who register to watch at your convenience.

*Note: If you are particularly interested in succession of your land, check out the Farm Succession Planning webinar series for in-depth information.*

Hosted by the New England Farm Link Collaborative, a partnership of farm link programs and land access services in New England that provide a variety of farmland access support services, including **Connecticut FarmLink, Maine FarmLink, Vermont Land Link, and Land For Good.**