

# COLUMBIA



*Photo Credit: Paul Ramsey*

# UPDATE MARCH 2024



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

In the month of March we are still in the budget process. 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).

## **HOP RIVER ROAD BRIDGE CLOSING:**

Hop River Road Bridge to close for bridge replacement: Motorists are advised that the required project detour of Hop River Road is on schedule to begin on April 1, 2024, allowing for the eventual opening of the bridge to vehicular traffic by the end of the 2024 construction season (December).





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

## 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

Please direct any questions to Mike Lester [mlester@columbiafire5.org](mailto:mlester@columbiafire5.org).

**MOBILE FOODSHARE:** Mobile Foodshare will be moving from the Senior Center to Rec Park (60 Hennequin Rd, Columbia CT) in April through the end of November and starting back at the Senior Center in December. Mobile Foodshare is held EVERY OTHER THURSDAY - Rain, Snow or Shine from 1:00 PM TO 1:30 PM





# TOWN OF COLUMBIA

## OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN & TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

**TOWN OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED FRIDAY, MARCH 29TH FOR  
GOOD FRIDAY.**

**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.**

3/04/24 Mon: Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission, 7:00 PM

3/04/24 Mon: Board of Education, 7:30 PM

3/04/24 Wed: Horace Porter School HVAC Building Committee, 6:00 PM

3/05/24 Tue: Board of Selectmen, 7:00 PM

3/06/24 Wed: Lake Management Advisory Committee, 7:00 PM

3/07/24 Thur: Szegda Farm Management Committee, 6:00 PM

3/07/24 Thur: Conservation & Agriculture Commission, 7:00 PM

3/11/24 Mon: Planning & Zoning Commission, 7:00 PM

3/13/24 Wed: Fiscal Policy Board, 8:30 AM

3/13/24 Wed: Economic Development Committee, 7:00 PM

3/13/24 Wed: Board of Assessment Appeals, 7:00 PM

3/18/24 Mon: Horace Porter School HVAC Building Committee, 6:00 PM

3/19/24 Tue: Board of Selectmen, 7:00 PM

3/20/24 Wed: Financial Planning & Allocation Commission, 7:00 PM

3/21/24 Thur: Open Space Committee, 9:00 AM

3/25/24 Mon: Planning & Zoning Commission, 7:00 PM

3/28/24 Thur: Zoning Board of Appeals, 7:00 PM (Canceled)

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

**ASSESSOR:** 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 2023 calendar year.

## 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 Expense 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 is open Monday through Wednesday from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m., Thursdays 8 a.m. until 6 p.m. and Fridays 8 a.m. until Noon. Our telephone number is 228-9555.

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

**FIRE MARSHAL:** Spring is here! As we embark on outdoor activities for the warmer months, let's prioritize safety by inspecting items that may have been unused for some time. Ensure all lawn equipment, gas grills, air conditioning units, and cars are free of animal nests and functioning properly. Additionally, remember to replace batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, and consider replacing any devices that are over 10 years old. If you require a burn permit or have questions about fire safety, please don't hesitate to contact the Land Use Department at 860-228-0440.

**BECKISH SENIOR CENTER:** Our event on February 14th, "Meet the Artists" was a great success! There was a total of nine artists. Seven displayed their painting and one displayed their photographs. Musicians were there to kick off the event and played for 3 hours. The Center hosted a lunch provided by Big Y, including cake and beverages. There were at least 64 people who attended. Thank you to all the volunteers, the Columbia Arts Council, and Bernadette Derring. Bernadette was presented by Kim Kordonowy with a homemade heart cake celebrating her birthday.

For more information on Beckish Senior Center Activities the [Gem](#) newsletter is full of useful information.

Bernadette Derring, Director of Senior Services  
860-228-0759  
[bderring@columbiact.org](mailto:bderring@columbiact.org)



# 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** ~ 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:** MARINE PATROL needed for the summer at Columbia Lake. The Marine Patrol is comprised of Gate Monitoring and Boat Patrol. The work includes providing nautical education, safety, and vessel inspection services on Columbia Lake and at the Town Boat Launch. The work also includes enforcement of Town of Columbia Lake Ordinances and CT Boating Regulations, emergency response calls and maintaining accurate records during each work shift. Contact the Recreation office for more details at 860-228-8513, or on the town's [website](#).





# 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):



Columbia's  
**Easter Egg  
Hunt**

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**Sunday March 24<sup>th</sup>**

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**Egg Hunt Times by Age:**  
2-5 Years at 11:30 am  
5-12 Years at 12:00 pm

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At Rec Park  
60 Hennequin Rd Columbia CT, 06250

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Bring your own Basket!

Photo ops with the Easter bunny.

Music Goodies And Fun!



# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## RECREATION DEPARTMENT (CONTINUED):



**KAREN RICARDO**

**Wednesday's from 7PM-8PM  
Located at Yeomans 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.

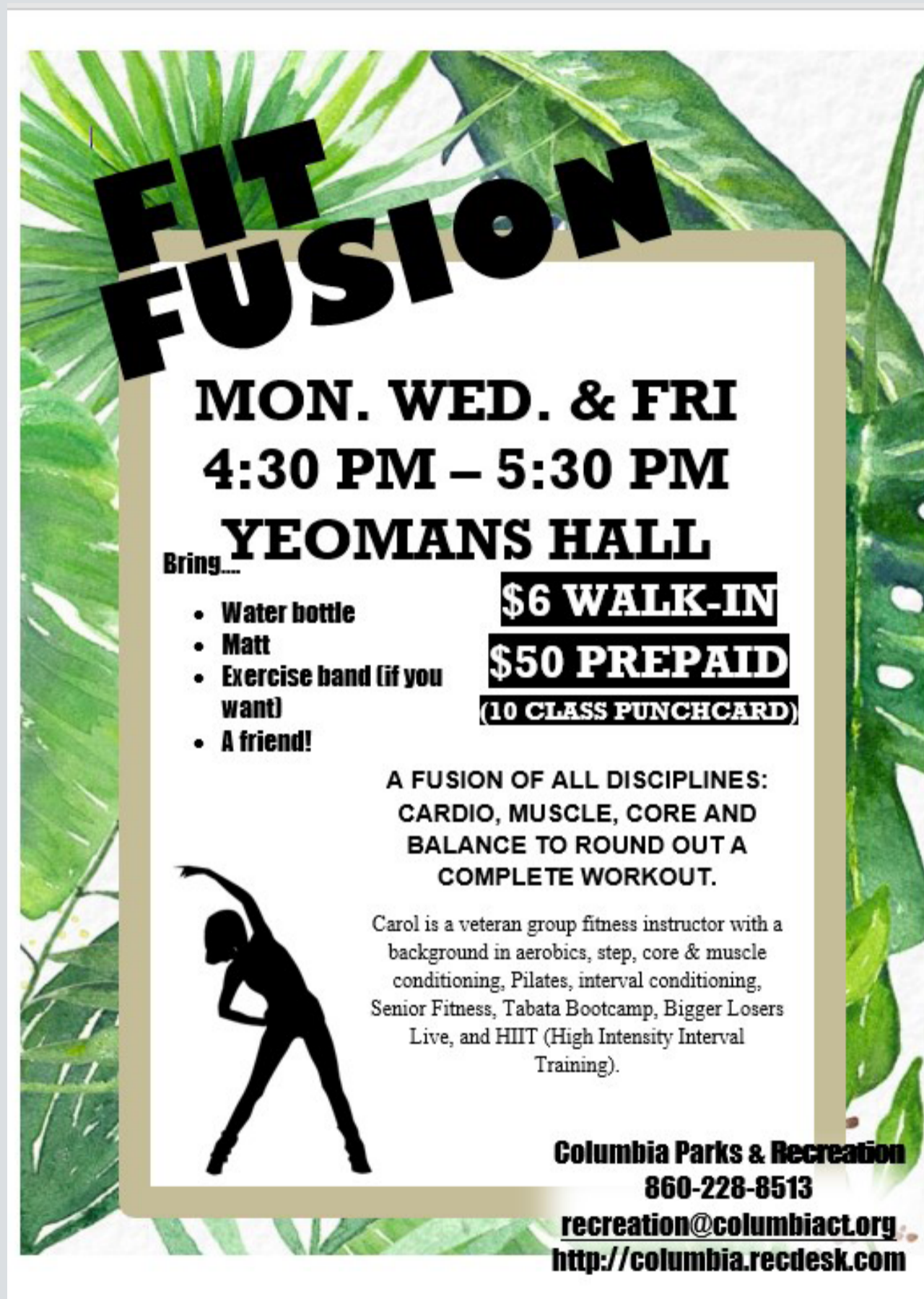
**TUESDAY 7:00 PM**

**\$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

## REGISTRAR OF VOTERS:

### Early Voting (EV) and the Presidential Preference Primary (PPP)

The Presidential Preference Primary is the first election that early voting will be available in CT. It is an election where voters in a political party vote for the candidate of that party that they would like to be their presidential candidate in the General Election in November. This year there will be both a Republican and Democratic Presidential Primary. Both will be held on the same days.

**Early Voting:** Early voting days are March 26, 27, 28 & 30th. All 4 EV days will be held at Yeoman's Hall in Columbia from 10:00am – 6:00pm.

Voter Registration for Early Voting:

- **If you are not yet registered** but want to vote during the early voting period before the PPP, you can file your voter registration application in person with the registrars of voters by noon **on the business day before the day you want to vote.**
- **If you are an unaffiliated voter** and would like to vote during the early voting period, the deadline to enroll in a party is **March 25, 2024 at 12:00pm.**

**Presidential Preference Primary:** The Presidential Preference Primary is Tuesday April 2nd at the Horace Porter School in Columbia from 6:00am – 8:00pm.

### **THERE IS NO SAME DAY REGISTRATION FOR THE PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY**

April 1, 2024 at Noon is the deadline for registering in person to vote on Primary day

To request an Absentee Ballot for the Presidential Preference Primary, go to [myvote.ct.gov/getmyab](https://myvote.ct.gov/getmyab) or contact the Town Clerk's office at (860) 228-3284.

For additional information:

<https://www.columbiact.org/registrar-voters>

[Voter Registration Information](#)

<https://portal.ct.gov/SOTS>

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## REGISTRAR OF VOTERS (Continued):

**APRIL 2, 2024**

PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY ELECTION

A Presidential Preference Primary is an election where voters in a political party vote for the candidate of that party that they would like to be their presidential candidate in the upcoming General Election.

**4**  
DAYS

**EARLY VOTING**

**MARCH 26 27 28 30**

10 am - 6 pm Yeomans Hall, Columbia

### ADDITIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION AND PARTY ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

#### January 2, 2024

Last day to switch parties prior to the April 2nd election

#### March 25, 2024 at Noon

Deadline for unaffiliated voters who want to vote during the early voting period to enroll in a party

#### Voter Registration for Early Voting

If you are not yet registered but want to vote during the early voting period before the Presidential Preference Primary, file your voter registration application (for a party holding a primary) with the registrars of voters in your town by noon on the business day before the day you want to vote

#### April 1, 2024 at Noon

Deadline for registering in person with the registrar of voters or town clerk in your town of residence to vote on April 2

Deadline for unaffiliated voters to enroll in a party in person for voting on April 2

To find your Early Voting location, and for all you need to know about elections in Connecticut, visit [MyVote.CT.gov](https://www.MyVote.CT.gov) or call **860-509-6200**



**Stephanie Thomas**, Connecticut Secretary of the State

Follow us @CTSOTS:



<https://www.columbiact.org/registrar-voters>



# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## REGISTRAR OF VOTERS (Continued):

# EARLY VOTING

## YOUR SAY. YOUR DAY.

### WHAT is Early Voting?

Early Voting allows you to vote in person safely and securely before Election Day.

### WHICH ELECTION WILL BE THE FIRST to have Early Voting available?

Early Voting will begin with the Presidential Preference Primary. The Early Voting dates for this election have been modified to reflect the Good Friday holiday and Easter Sunday. Early Voting will be held Tuesday, March 26 through Thursday, March 28 and Saturday, March 30. Presidential Preference Primary Day is Tuesday, April 2, 2024.

### WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT at the Early Voting location?

When you arrive at the Early Voting location, you will check in and be verified as an eligible voter. You will then receive your ballot with an envelope. You will complete your ballot at a privacy booth and seal it in the approved envelope. Before you leave, place the sealed envelope in the secure receptacle as instructed by the election officials. Ballots will be secured unopened until Election Day.

### WHEN will ballots be counted?

Ballots cast during Early Voting will be sealed and stored securely in each town. They will be opened and counted on Election Day.

### HOW DOES EARLY VOTING DIFFER from voting by absentee ballot?

Absentee Ballot voting requires a reason (from a list of six, found at [MyVote.CT.gov](https://www.MyVote.CT.gov)). Early Voting is available to every eligible voter without a specific reason. Early Voting may be done only in-person, not via mail or drop box.

### HOW MANY EARLY VOTING LOCATIONS will be in each city or town?

Each town or city will have at least one Early Voting location. If the population is 20,000 or more, the local legislative body will decide whether to have additional locations. Check your municipality's website in March for its Early Voting location or visit [MyVote.CT.gov](https://www.MyVote.CT.gov).

### CAN I VOTE on weekends?

Yes. Early Voting includes Saturdays and Sundays for most elections (see calendar for specific dates).

### HOW IS IT ENSURED people do not vote twice?

The election official at your Early Voting location will record that you have cast your ballot, preventing you from voting early at any other location, submitting an absentee ballot, or voting on Election Day.

### MAY I REGISTER TO VOTE during the Early Voting period?

You may register and vote on the same day during the Early Voting period before regular general elections. For Primary Election details, see detailed instructions on [MyVote.CT.gov](https://www.MyVote.CT.gov).

### DOES EARLY VOTING EXIST in other states?

Although new to Connecticut this year, 46 other states already offer some form of Early Voting.

### WHAT hasn't changed?

You can still vote via Absentee Ballot or on Election Day as usual. Elections in Connecticut are still safe and secure.



**VIEW YOUR SAMPLE BALLOT  
WHEN IT IS AVAILABLE**  
[MyVote.CT.gov/sampleballots](https://www.MyVote.CT.gov/sampleballots)



**REGISTER TO VOTE OR  
UPDATE YOUR REGISTRATION**  
[MyVote.CT.gov/register](https://www.MyVote.CT.gov/register)

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## **SOCIAL SERVICES:**

**NEW OFFICE IN THE SENIOR CENTER!** The Social Service Office is now located inside the Beckish Senior Center in the back right corner. Please stop by to see if I am free or call to make an appointment. Typically, I am working M-Thurs 8:30-4:30 and Friday 8:30-12:30. If you are just curious to learn more about what I do or if you have suggestions, I'd be happy to chat!

## **ELDERLY AND DISABLED PROPERTY TAX RELIEF**

Elderly and disabled homeowners who qualify (disabled or 65+ in 2023) can apply for reduced property taxes on their homes until May 15, 2024. If you are currently on the program the Assessor's Office will send you a letter if it is your year to reapply. This year's income limits are \$43,800 maximum for an individual and \$53,400 for a couple. All gross income is counted including Social Security benefits.

Documents you will need: Signed 2023 1040 Federal Tax form (if you file); 2023 Social Security Statement (SSA-1099); 2023 Pension Statement(1099); 2023 Bank Interest Statement(1099); Any other 2023 Income 1099. For assistance, feel free to contact Katie Wilt at Columbia Social Services 860-228-1008. Or, visit the Columbia Assessor's office to apply.

**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 860-228-100/kwilt@Columbiact.org or visit the [CT.Gov website](#) on how to apply.

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## **SOCIAL SERVICES (Continued):**

**OPERATION FUEL:** At the time of this newsletter submission, Operation Fuel is currently taking applications for help with utilities and oil. Visit [Operation Fuel's website](#) to apply.

If you have questions, please email Operation Fuel at [applications@operationfuel.org](mailto:applications@operationfuel.org) or call (860) 243-2345, or contact Katie Wilt at 860-228-1008.

Operation Fuel serves households whose income does not exceed 75% of the State Median Income Guidelines, which include, but are not limited to, the elderly, disabled, working families, or individuals facing a financial crisis.

<b>Family Size</b>	<b>75% State Median</b>
1	\$51,941
2	\$67,923
3	\$83,905
4	\$99,888

**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.

**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.

# 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/[kwilt@Columbiact.org](mailto:kwilt@Columbiact.org) or visit the [DSS Website](#).

**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. Taxes not paid on or before February 1, 2024 will be charged interest at the rate of 1½% per month (18% per year) from the due date of January 1, 2024 (4.5% for January, February, and March). The minimum interest charge 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 the postmark of the day that you drop it in the box.

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.

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## **TAX OFFICE (Continued):**

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

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.

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.

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE PRIMARY

**TOWN CLERKS OFFICE (Continued):** The Democratic and Republican Presidential Preference Primaries will take Place on April 2nd at Horace W. Porter School. Absentee ballots for the Primaries will become available on March 12th. Please contact our office if you would like to request an application for an absentee ballot.

New this year, Early Voting will be taking place on March 26, 27, 28 & 30 in Yeomans Hall. Early Voting hours are 10am-6pm each day. Please see the Registrar of Voters section for more information.

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 Karen ([atownclerk@columbiact.org](mailto:atownclerk@columbiact.org)).

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

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

In case you missed it last month, **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. This is the last month that you'll be able to vote for us – thank you again 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** continue this month! On most Fridays at 1:00pm this winter, we'll be screening new release and award-nominated movies:

- 3/1 – Wonka (PG)
- 3/8 – Next Goal Wins (PG-13)
- 3/15 – The Color Purple (2023) (PG-13)
- 3/22 – Ferrari (R)

We've got snacks, and seating is first-come, first-served. Subtitles will be on – join us!

On Tuesday, March 19th at 6:30pm, we welcome back Sandra Wheeler, professional organizer and owner of For Peace of Mind, LLC, for **Organizing Your Photos & Memorabilia**. She'll share tips on how to think about your photos and memorabilia, and how to honor your past. Give us a call to save your seat!

Join Julie, our Library Director, at **Cookbook Club** this month! We'll be discussing 5 Ingredients by Jamie Oliver. As a group, we'll meet to discuss our experiences with this book – the good, the bad, the delicious, the disappointing – it's all up for discussion. If you'd like to bring a sample of something you've made from the book, feel free – but it's not required, and neither is tasting. This meeting will take place on Monday, March 25th at 2:00pm – copies of the cookbook are available to borrow from SBL now.

**Kids** – A bunch of annual favorite programs return this month!

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

**SAXTON B. LITTLE LIBRARY (Continued):** Engineer a clever contraption in our **Build a Leprechaun Trap** event. The library will provide all the crafting materials, but the brainstorming, constructing, and decorating are up to you! This program for all ages takes place on Thursday, March 14th at 6:00pm – call the Library to sign up.

Then, it's time to **Bingo for Books!** Families are welcome at this program where you'll get to choose a free book for every game you win. Join us on Thursday, March 28th at 6:00pm to participate – seating is limited to 24, so sign up today!

This month's **Drawing Club** for kids aged five and up meets on Tuesday, March 26th at 4:00pm. Join us to practice your drawing skills through fun prompts and projects. Registration for our March session opens on 3/1/24.

**Did you know we get two daily newspapers and dozens of monthly magazines at SBL?** We subscribe to both the Willimantic Chronicle and the Hartford Courant, which can be read in-house for all your daily news needs. We also get many print magazines – some titles include Bon Appetit; the New Yorker; Family Handyman; Magnolia Journal; Consumer Reports; and so many more! Magazines (including the most current issues) can be checked-out and brought home.

We hope to see you at SBL soon!

**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

### Organizing Your Photos & Memorabilia

**Sandra Wheeler** - Professional Organizer and owner of For Peace of Mind - will share tips on how to think about your photos and memorabilia and how to honor your past.




**Tuesday, 3/19 @  
6:30pm**

Register by calling  
860-228-0350


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

## SAXTON B. LITTLE LIBRARY (CONTINUED):



Saxton B. Little Library

## Feature Film FRIDAYS



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Mar. 1 : Wonka (PG)  
Mar. 8 : Next Goal Wins (PG-13)  
Mar. 15 : The Color Purple (2023)  
          (PG-13)  
Mar. 22 : Ferrari (R)

**Fridays at 1:00pm**

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

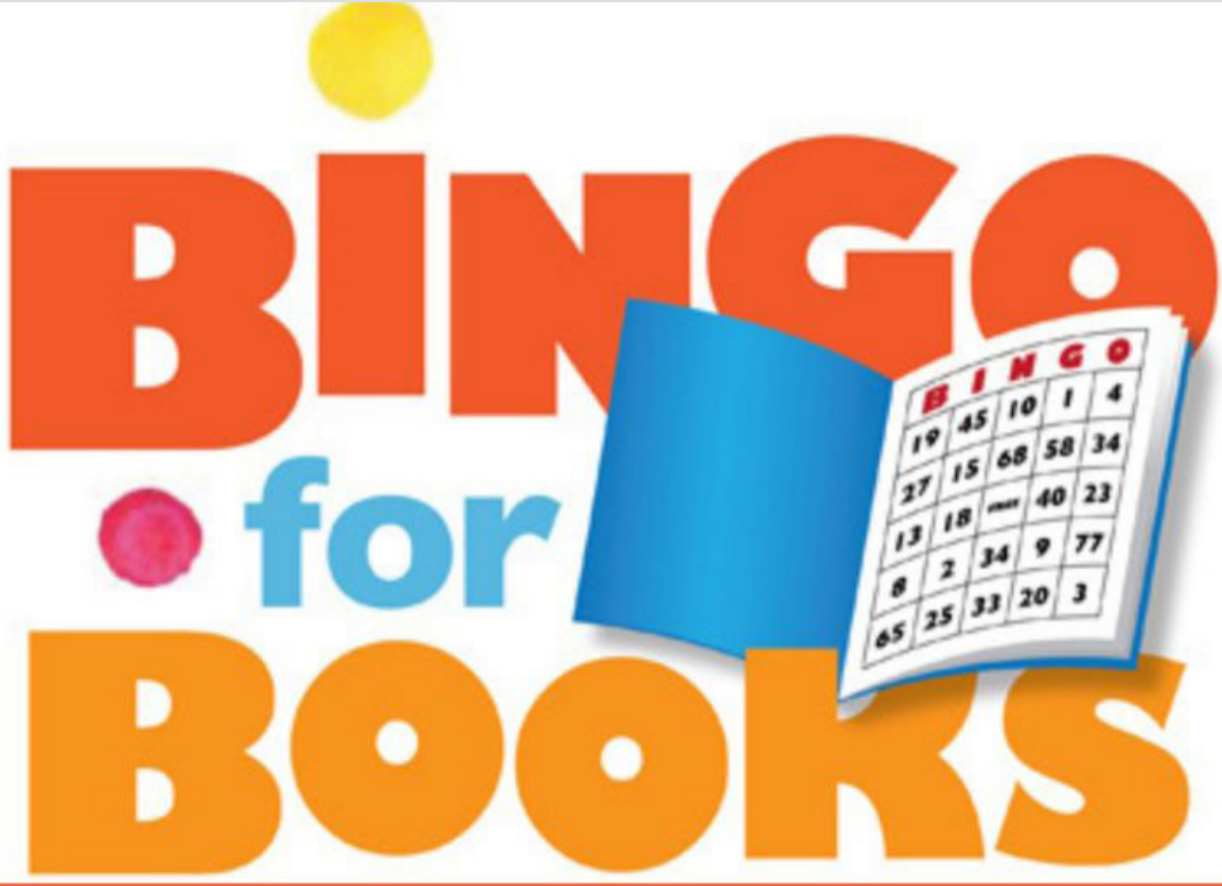
all screenings will include subtitles

no registration required / adults only / films subject to change



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


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



The graphic features the word "BINGO" in large, bold, orange letters at the top. Below it, the word "for" is in a smaller, blue, lowercase font, and "BOOKS" is in large, bold, orange letters at the bottom. A blue book is shown open, with a white bingo card on top of it. The bingo card has the word "BINGO" at the top and a grid of numbers. A yellow circle is above the "B" in "BINGO" and a pink circle is above the "f" in "for".

**Thursday | March 28th | 6 pm**  
at the Saxton B. Library

**Win a game, pick a book!**

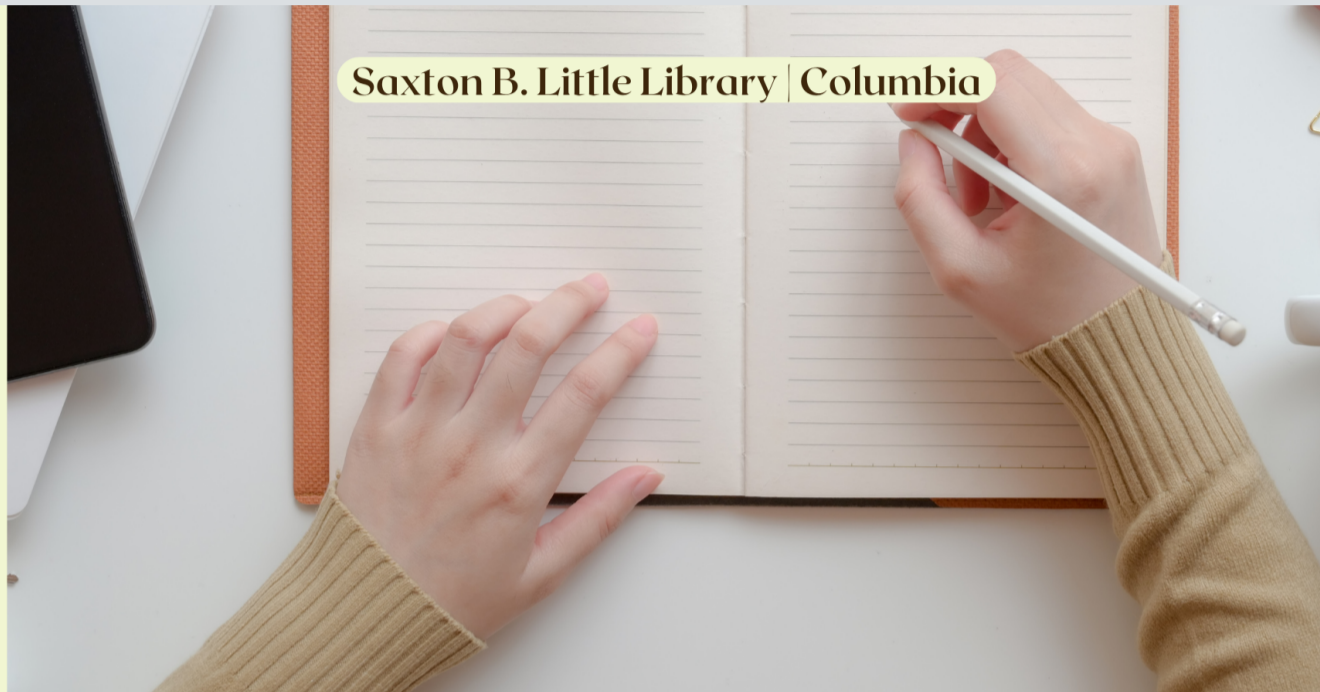


Five bingo balls are shown in a row, each with a letter and a number. From left to right: a blue ball with "B 14", a red ball with "I 21", a white ball with "N 37", a green ball with "G 52", and a yellow ball with "O 74".

Ages 5+. Families welcome. Limited to 24 participants.  
Call 860-228-0350 to register.

# 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, January 16th 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):**

## BUILD A LEPRECHAUN TRAP!

**THURSDAY | MARCH 14TH | 6PM**

Engineer a clever trap in this fun STEAM activity. The library will provide lots of crafting materials, but the brainstorming, constructing, and decorating is up to YOU!



All Ages. Limited to 20 participants.  
Call 860-228-0350 to register.



SAXTON B. LIBRARY  
319 RT 87, COLUMBIA CT



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

## COLUMBIA CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH



### 2nd Saturday Community Breakfast

Saturday Mar. 9th Apr. 13th May 11th

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!



## PASTOR'S PASTA SUPPERS

JOIN US SUNDAYS DURING LENT\*

5:30 PM SUPPER

FOLLOWED BY LENTEN PROGRAM

Pasta dish will be provided.  
Feel free to bring a side dish or dessert to share  
or just join us!

\*Sunday February 18th through Sunday March 17th

Columbia Congregational Church  
325 Rt. 87, Columbia  
860 228 9306



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

## COLUMBIA CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH (CONTINUED):

**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: [cchurchfair@gmail.com](mailto:cchurchfair@gmail.com)  
 OR Order online with PayPal at  
[https://columbiacongregationalchurch.org/?page\\_id=16952](https://columbiacongregationalchurch.org/?page_id=16952)




## EASTER SERVICES

SUNDAY MARCH 31ST

6:00 AM SUNRISE SERVICE AT CAMP  
 ASTO WAMAH, 42 RT. 87

7:30 - 9:30 AM BREAKFAST AT CHURCH

10:00 AM EASTER CELEBRATION SERVICE  
 IN THE SANCTUARY

# 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 HISTORICAL SOCIETY:**

***"To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow" Audrey Hepburn***

Do you have a passion for gardening? The Columbia Historical Society is currently planning its 4th Annual Garden and Farm Tour fundraiser for Saturday, June 22nd. Would you be willing to share your gardens with other garden lovers? Do you know someone who might want to share their gardens? If the answer is YES, please contact Millie Ramsey, Historical Society Garden/Farm Tour Coordinator. Millie may be reached at [millieramz@gmail.com](mailto:millieramz@gmail.com) or 860 729-5472.





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

**JOSHUA'S TRUST:** Join Joshua's Trust on any of the following March guided walks. Weather may cancel these events, so be sure to visit [Joshua's Trust website](#) for details, changes and cancellations.

## **3/6/24 - Wednesday Walk at Tower Hill**

**Preserve:** 9:00-10:30 AM. Tower Hill Preserve, between 96 & 154 Tower Hill Road, Chaplin, CT. Join us for an ~ 1.4 mile hike on long-abandoned farm roads through an oak forest that provides important habitat for nesting birds and mammals.

## **3/9/24 - A Walk Along the Old Connecticut Path at Madeline Regan Preserve in Tolland:**

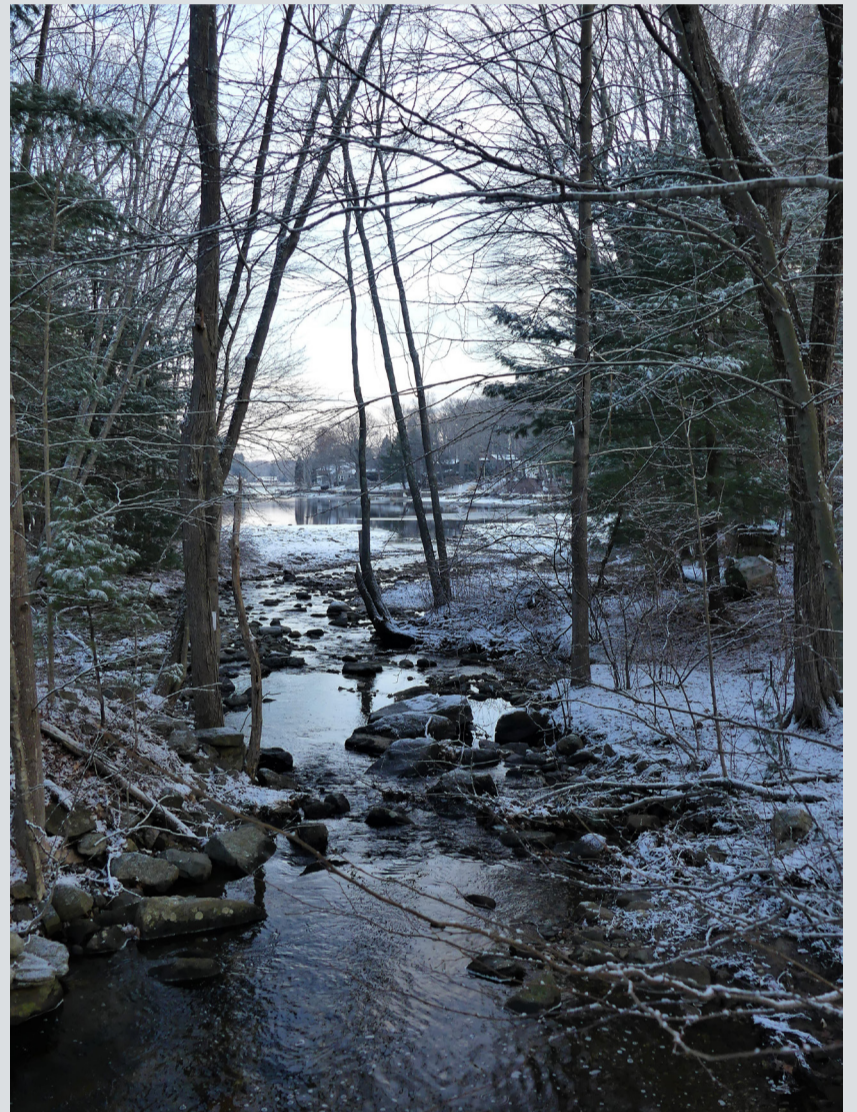
10:00 am - 11:30 am. Madeline Regan Preserve, 1274 Tolland Stage Road, Tolland, CT. Joshua's Trust blogger, George Jacobi, will discuss the history of the Old Connecticut Path, a section of which we walk. Michelle Poudrette, JT's Development and Communications Manager will point out some of the evergreen ferns and clubmosses that grow throughout the property.

## **3/20/24 - Wednesday Walk at Utley Hill**

**Preserve:** 9:00 -10:30 AM. Utley Hill Preserve, 60 Hennequin Rd, Columbia, CT. Join us for a 2.5 mile multi-habitat adventure and a little history, too.

## **3/23/24 - Long Distance Hike at Bradley-Buchanan Woods: 10:00 AM -12:00**

PM. Bradley-Buchanan Woods. Park on the south side of the Mansfield Public Library, 54 Warrenville Road, Mansfield Center. Join volunteer Dawn Heasley for a 4.7 mile hike that will take us into Mansfield Hollow State Park and back.



*Utley Creek: Photo Credit Paul Ramsey*