

# COLUMBIA



Hop River Mill Preserve  
Photo Credit: Paul Ramsey

UPDATE NOVEMBER 2023



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

Did you know that November is National Gratitude month? And with that we would like to extend our gratitude and thanks to all of our volunteers who serve on our Town Boards and Commissions, Columbia's Volunteer Fire Department, The Lions Club, Scouts, PTO, Friends of the Library, and many more.

Volunteering on any number of our boards, commissions, and committees is an excellent way to contribute your voice and ideas on community issues. One of the committees we are highlighting this month is the Commission on Aging. Columbia's Commission on Aging is currently seeking new members to fill 3 vacancies.

Per State Statute, the Columbia Commission on Aging (CONA) makes recommendations to the Columbia Board of Selectmen concerning the needs of Columbia senior citizens. CONA has three major areas of responsibility. These are:

- Determine the needs of the elderly.
- Recommend action.
- Act as an advocate for the elderly by being their liaison to both the municipal agent and the general public.

Columbia's Commission on Aging Mission Statement (CONA): Our mission is . We maintain the priority of supporting and advocating for our elderly and their families in all aspects of life by providing social services, transportation, education, health, recreation, and resources that support their wellbeing and independence.

Please visit the Town of Columbia's website to learn about our [Boards and Commissions](#). If you are interested in serving please submit a [Boards & Commission Volunteer Application](#). You can also contact Jennifer LaVoie, Executive Administrative Assistant at 860.228.0110 for assistance. Please consider volunteering your time!





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

The Columbia Volunteer Fire Department is also looking for more volunteers. For more information please visit the [CVFD website](http://www.columbiafire5.org) or call 860-228-9602.

A recruitment poster for the Columbia Volunteer Fire Department. The background is a dark scene with bright orange and yellow flames. In the foreground, a firefighter's silhouette is visible, wearing a helmet and breathing apparatus. The text "BECOME A VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER" is at the top. Below it, "Columbia Volunteer Fire Department" is written. The main text "RECRUITING MEMS AND FIREFIGHTERS" is in large, bold letters, with the "R" being red. To the right is a detailed illustration of a red firefighter's helmet with a clear face shield. At the bottom, there is text about visiting the website and calling for more information.

BECOME A  
VOLUNTEER  
FIREFIGHTER

Columbia Volunteer  
Fire Department

**R**ECRUITING  
MEMS AND  
FIREFIGHTERS

Learn how you can become  
involved with your local Fire  
Department and serve your  
community.

Please visit the CVFD Website at  
[www.columbiafire5.org](http://www.columbiafire5.org)  
Or call 860-228-9602.

A graphic for a used book sale. On the left is a stack of five books with colorful spines (blue, yellow, blue, green, red). To the right of the books, the words "USED", "BOOK", and "SALE" are stacked vertically in large, bold, blue, green, and red letters respectively.

**USED  
BOOK  
SALE**

**FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY:** Book Sale at the Chapel on the Green will be;

Friday, November 10, 5-8 pm free to members and \$5 non-members,

Saturday, November 11, 9am-3pm free to all

Sunday, November 12, 9am-3pm free to all.

For more information please go to page 28 in this Newsletter.



# TOWN OF COLUMBIA

## OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN & TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

**VETERANS DAY:** Please join us in honoring our Veteran's on Friday, November 10th at 11:00 AM on the Town Green/Yeomans Hall. Luncheon for Veterans, their families and friends will be served at 12:00 PM at the Beckish Senior Center. All Are Welcome!!!



**A MESSAGE FROM EVERSOURCE - How to Take Control of Energy Costs:** As it did last winter, the cost of energy supply is expected to once again increase when we transition from summer to winter rates on January 1. We're encouraging customers to take control of their energy costs by shopping for a third-party supplier at [EnergizeCT.com](https://www.energizect.com).

We recognize the financial burden that high energy prices place on our customers, especially as the costs of other goods and services have increased. We're reaching out to all our stakeholders to make them aware of the likely increase and encourage them to take action and help make their residents and constituents aware of the ways they can shop, sign up, and save.

We've launched an educational campaign to reach as many people as possible through digital advertising, media and social media, customer emails, billboards, and website messages to encourage customers to compare rates offered by third-party suppliers on [EnergizeCT.com](https://www.energizect.com). Eversource customers who've never shopped before can find help navigating the process by going to [Eversource.com/supplier](https://www.eversource.com/supplier).



# TOWN OF COLUMBIA

## OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN & TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

As you know, Eversource does not produce electricity. We purchase power for our Standard Service rate on behalf of our customers on the open market and directly pass those costs on without any markup. International factors continue to affect the seasonal winter cost of natural gas, which is used to produce roughly half of New England's electricity. While we do expect the electric supply price to rise this winter, it is not expected to increase as much as it did last winter. We'll file proposed rates with PURA in mid-November, and the approved new rates will take effect January 1, 2024, for customers on Standard Service.

In addition to shopping for a third-party supplier, customers can visit [Eversource.com/manage-cost](https://Eversource.com/manage-cost) to learn about the other programs and services that are available, including:

- Our **Budget Billing Plan** helps avoid seasonal spikes on their energy bill by letting customers pay a fixed amount each month based on their average annual usage.
- **The Matching Payment Program** can lower the amount customers owe on energy bills. For every dollar they pay and every dollar they receive from the Connecticut Energy Assistance Program, we will subtract a dollar from the amount owed.
- **The New Start Program** forgives overdue balances for electric customers as on-time monthly budget payments are made. (For example, if your budget payment amount is set at \$150 per month and your past due balance is \$1,200, for every month you make your required \$150 payment towards your bill, we will reduce your past-due balance by \$100.)
- **Payment Plans** are available to all customers to help pay their past-due balance over time.
- A new **Low-Income Discount Rate** will take effect December 1, which can give customers with financial hardship either a 10% or 50% discount off their electric bill per month. Customers can qualify to receive the discount based on household income or receipt of a public assistance benefit. For example, if a customer has a \$100 monthly bill, it would be \$10 less if they receive a 10% discount or \$50 less if they receive the 50% discount.
- Residential customers are encouraged to take advantage of seasonal energy-saving tips, offers, programs and rebates to help reduce energy use leading up to and during this winter.



# TOWN OF COLUMBIA

## OFFICE OF THE FIRST SELECTMAN & TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

### EASTERN HIGHLAND HEALTH DISTRICT:

#### **AWARENESS, PREVENTION AND IMMUNIZATION**

Respiratory infections peak in the fall and winter months and prevention is key to slowing the spread and staying healthy. Prevention tools you can use this season:

- Stay up-to-date with vaccines: flu and COVID vaccines are updated for current strains and recommended for everyone; RSV is a new vaccine for special groups (very young and over 60)
- Stay home when sick (and the first 5 days after symptoms start for COVID)
- Wash your hands frequently
- Remember respiratory etiquette (cover your cough, preferably not with your hands)

[CDC Respiratory Illness: Protect Yourself](#)

[FDA resources for the Fall Respiratory Illness Season](#)

### A NOTE FROM THE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR:

**TURN YOUR HEADLIGHTS ON:** Please turn on your vehicle's headlights during the day when there is bad weather occurring. Rain, snow, or fog can make the visibility of your vehicle less than desired, especially to larger trucks, buses and vans who rely on their mirrors to see other motorists. If your windshield wipers are on don't rely on your day running lights (if vehicle equipped) to increase your visibility but turn your headlights on, which will also turn your rear lights on giving a full circle of illumination. Connecticut law requires motor vehicles to display their headlights during any periods of precipitation.





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

**COLUMBIA LAKE FISH SURVEY:** CTDEEP will be conducting Statewide Lake and Large River fish survey. DEEP will arrive tomorrow evening, November 2nd between 5:30 & 5:45 PM in Columbia Lake. They anticipate starting the sampling at 6:15 and it is a four hour journey. For more information on the warmwater fish monitoring program please visit the [CT DEEP website](#).

*"Connecticut anglers spend over three million trips per year fishing for largemouth and smallmouth bass and other warmwater fish species (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2011). Prior to the 1980s, it had been 25 years since a major statewide lake and pond fisheries survey had been conducted. Therefore, the Connecticut DEEP Fisheries Division (FD) implemented a statewide night boat electrofishing survey of nearly 200 lakes, ponds and large rivers between 1988 and 1995. This survey provided fisheries management staff with invaluable information on fish populations throughout Connecticut. However, lakes are dynamic systems and information on parameters such as fish population structure, growth and mortality must be current to make informed management decisions."*

**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.





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

**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).

**TOWN OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED FOR VETERANS DAY, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10TH AND FOR THE THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY, THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 23RD AND FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 24TH.**



Happy Thanksgiving 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.**

- 11/01/23 Wed: Horace Porter School HVAC Building Committee, 6:00 PM
- 11/01/23 Wed: Lake Management Advisory Committee, 7:00 PM
- 11/02/23 Thur: Szegda Farm Management Committee, 6:00 PM
- 11/06/23 Mon: Horace Porter School HVAC Building Committee, 6:00 PM
- 11/06/23 Mon: Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission, 7:00 PM
- 11/06/23 Mon: Board of Education, 7:30 PM
- 11/08/23 Wed: Fiscal Policy Board, 8:30 AM
- 11/08/23 Wed: Economic Development Commission, 7:00 PM
- 11/08/23 Thur: Columbia Conservation & Agriculture Commission, 7:00 PM
- 11/13/23 Mon: Planning & Zoning Commission, 7:00 PM
- 11/14/23 Tue: Board of Selectmen, 7:00 PM
- 11/15/23 Wed: Columbia Commission of Aging, 9:00 AM
- 11/15/23 Wed: Financial Planning & Allocation Commission, 7:00 PM
- 11/16/23 Thur: Open Space Committee, 9:00 AM
- 11/16/23 Thur: Zoning Board of Appeals, 7:00 PM (CANCELLED)
- 11/21/23 Tue: Board of Selectmen, 7:00 PM
- 11/21/23 Tue: Hop River Preserve Committee, 5:30 PM
- 11/27/23 Mon: Planning & Zoning Commission, 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

## REGISTRAR OF VOTERS

**Municipal Election  
November 7, 2023  
6am-8pm  
YEOMANS HALL  
323 Route 87, Columbia CT 06237**

### Voter Registration:

- The last day to register to vote is Tuesday, October 31, 2023.
- Register online at [voterregistration.ct.gov](https://voterregistration.ct.gov), stop in the Town Clerk's office during normal business hours, or contact the Registrars of Voters.
- The Registrars of Voters will be holding a voter registration session in Yeomans Hall on Tuesday, October 31st from 9am – 8pm. ID and proof of residency required.
- If you miss the registration deadline, Election Day Registration will be available at Yeomans Hall on November 7th, 6am-8pm. ID & proof of residency will be required.



### Absentee Ballots:

- Absentee Ballots are available now through close of business on November 6th. To obtain an Absentee Ballot, you must first fill out an application. You can find an application on the [Registrars of Voters website](#), or contact the Town Clerk at (860) 228-3284.
- Completed Absentee Ballots must be received by 8pm on November 7th. They can be returned via mail, Ballot Drop Box outside Town Hall, or to the Town Clerk's office. Absentee Ballots cannot be accepted at the polling place.

Please contact the Registrar of Voters or Town Clerk with any questions.

Registrars of Voters

Karen Butzgy – Democratic

Gayle Mulligan – Republican

(860) 228-6843 x113

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

[columbiact.org/registrar-voters](https://columbiact.org/registrar-voters)

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## **ASSESSORS OFFICE:**

### **PERMITS**

If you have taken a building permit out from 10/1/2022 to 9/30/2023, please send pictures with a paper stating the date on it, to show that either the work has not been performed, or at what status the work currently is. This includes work that was COD. Please submit pictures to mhawley@columbiact.org by November 1, 2023. This is in lieu of physical inspection. If you prefer a visit just email me and we can schedule a date and time. Please be patient with my reply as I am inundated with responses this time of year. I will reply.

### **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

This notice is to remind all taxpayers who file a declaration for personal property to please do so no later than November 1st annually. If not filed in a timely manner, per state statute a 25% penalty shall be applied. If you own a business or have unregistered motor vehicle(s) that are not currently on our list, please let us know and we will email, fax or mail you a declaration.

Please contact our office if you have any questions. 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.

## **DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS:**

Drainage improvements and partial road reconstruction have begun on Whitney Road. Construction is anticipated to continue until the first week of December. Expect one way traffic and delays during construction.



# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

**RECREATION DEPARTMENT:** As we close out October, the frost is on the pumpkins and Turkey Time is right around the corner. Here is a look back at some of our October fun:

Pre-Season Basketball Training with E.O. Smith Boys Basketball Coach Jeff Belanger: Girls and boys, 3rd – 8th grade, attended clinics to work on basketball skills to prep for the season ahead. Ball handling, shooting, rebounding and footwork was covered while enforcing the mindset to 'don't be afraid to fail'. Go outside your comfort zone to practice skills that do not come easy and keep working on it. The reward will come! All proceeds for the clinics were donated by Coach Belanger to use for Parks and Recreation Basketball. New game balls for all divisions were purchased with the funds collected.



In addition to the pre-season clinics, Coach Belanger also gave his time to provide a Coaching Clinic for our Youth Recreation Basketball League coaches. Practices get underway mid-November, with games beginning in December. Thank you to Coach Belanger and all our volunteer coaches, K – 8th grade for giving time and energy to our youth program. We couldn't do it without you!

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## RECREATION DEPARTMENT (CONTINUED)

Disc Golf Clinics and Tournament: Disc Golfers, new and veteran, found delight in learning and teaching skills with one another. With Columbia's new 9-hole course at Rec Park barely four months old, the goal was to encourage all takers to try the game regardless of skill or age.



*Learning the basics*



*Our wonderful volunteers! Carl Molatoris, course designer, instructing*



**STORYTIME WALK ~ TRICK-OR-TREAT EDITION THROUGH REC PARK** ~ The walking path around Rec Park was transformed into a live 'Story Walk'. Kids were dressed in costume and traveled the path to hear the story come 'alive' and trick-or-treat as the Halloween story unfolded. Games, cider, arts and crafts courtesy of AHM and Ann Marie Drury, and more candy by Olivia Owens, Realtor and Platinum Sponsor, were enjoyed at the pavilion following the walk. Thank you to all our volunteers who helped make the evening a success. A shout out to our first selectman, Steven Everett who participated too. Can you guess which one he is in the photo? Our guess the Candies contest winner (closest without going over) was Regina, age 6 who guessed 203 (actual was 236).

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## RECREATION DEPARTMENT (CONTINUED)

### STORYTIME WALK ~ TRICK-OR-TREAT EDITION THROUGH REC PARK (CONTINUED) ~



**Reminder:** Our Story Walk will continue and change as the seasons change. If you missed our Halloween edition, be sure to stay tuned for future stories, brain teasers and programming along the walking trail at Rec Park. The perfect way to exercise both your mind and body at the same time!

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## RECREATION DEPARTMENT (CONTINUED):

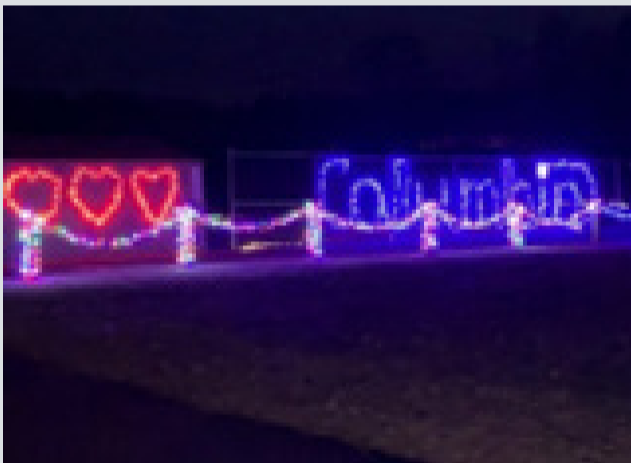
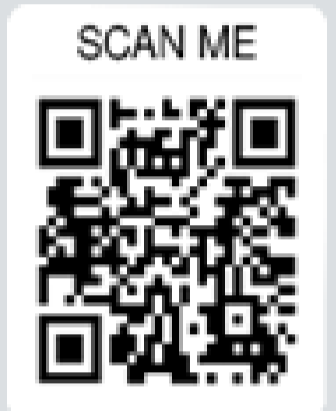
### UPCOMING EVENTS:



November 15th 6:30 p.m. ~ Adult Paint and Sip evening with Artist Ann Marie Drury. Bring your own goodies to eat and drink and enjoy community as you create a painting to take home for the holiday. No experience needed. You will be amazed with your final product!

When we have a photo of the painting, we will be creating that night, we will post it on our social

media. If you don't follow us, scan the QR Code.



**WINTER WONDERLAND** ~ Coming in December Rec Park will be decorated with holiday lights; Santa will visit, and marshmallows toasted. Stay tuned for date, time and more details to follow.

**JANUARY 21ST ~ POLAR PLUNGE:** Looking for a little fun this winter that will also be a good deed? Join our polar plunge at Columbia Lake. More details to follow.



# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## RECREATION DEPARTMENT (CONTINUED):

### UPCOMING EVENTS CONTINUED:

**ADULT EXERCISE PROGRAMS:** The weather is starting to get chilly. 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>

### ADULT FITNESS CLASSES AT YEOMAN'S HALL:

**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 a workout that will have you relaxed and energized all in one.

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

**COMMIT** ~ 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](#).



# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## RECREATION DEPARTMENT (CONTINUED):

### AROUND TOWN



*Enjoying the beach on a warm October day  
Gardens at Murphy House*



*Pickle Ball Courts in use*



*Rec Park alive with action*



*Baseball*

Have a wonderful November

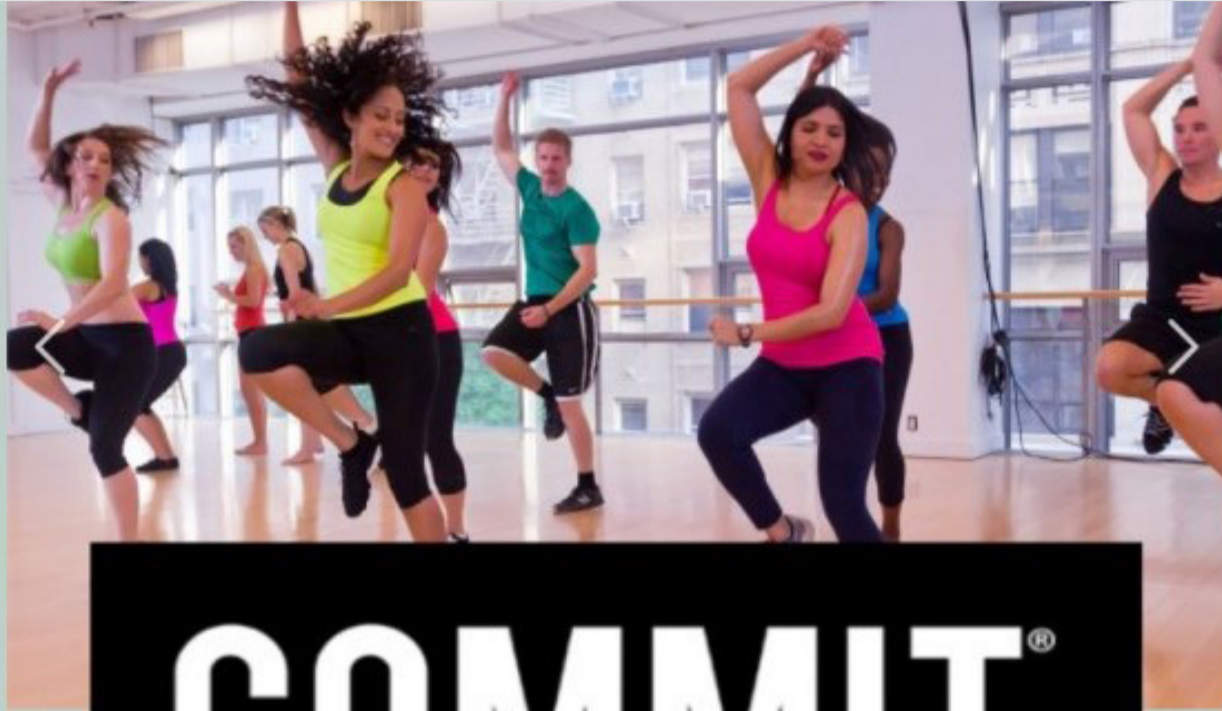
Debbie Fiske, Parks and Recreation Director

860.228.8513

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

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## RECREATION DEPARTMENT (CONTINUED):



**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.

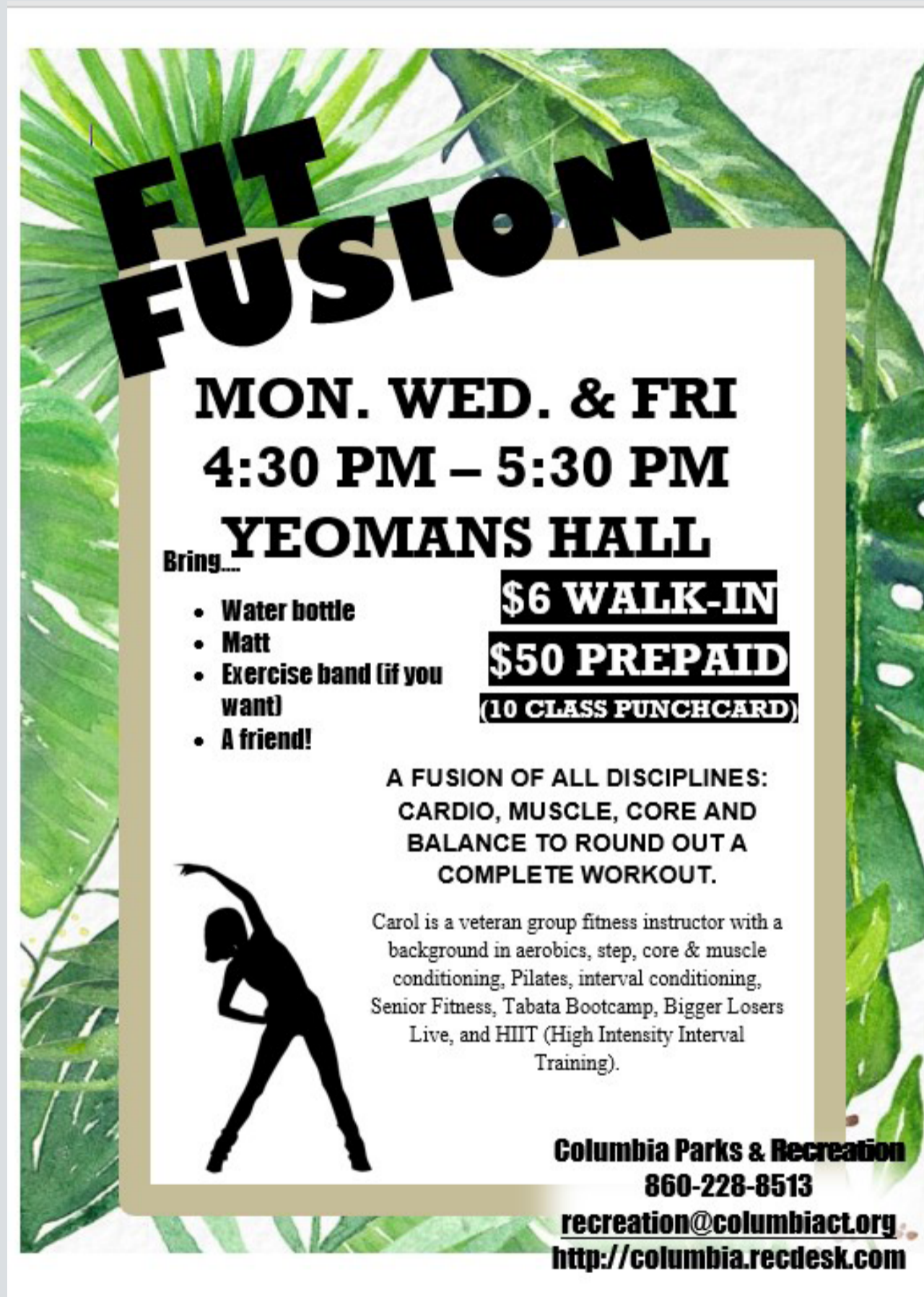
**TUESDAY 7:00 PM**

**\$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

## **SOCIAL SERVICES:**

**NEW: CT ELECTRIC DISCOUNT RATE:** With the winter season approaching, a reminder that there are resources for heating assistance:

A bill discount will be available for residential electric customers who qualify starting in December 2023.

You must have financial hardship status on your electric account. To apply visit [Eversource](#)

There are two tiers of discount (10% or 50%) depending on your annual household income or receipt of a public assistance benefit.

### **HOW TO GET THE CONNECTICUT 10% DISCOUNT RATE**

#### **Step 1: Apply for or Verify Your Financial Hardship Status on Your Electric Account**

There are two ways you can apply for or verify your hardship status. You can either provide Eversource with receipt of eligible public assistance benefits, or submit proof of income documents that verify you meet the income eligibility requirements.

#### *Public Assistance Benefit Qualifiers for the 10% Discount*

You must have at least one person in the household that can show receipt of a public assistance benefit from one of the following programs.

- Medicaid or Access Health; HUSKY B
- State HUSKY B
- Connecticut Energy Assistance Program (CEAP)
- Section 8 Housing, Rental Assistance Program
- Medicare Savings Programs (MSP)
  - o Additional Low-Income Medicare Beneficiary (ALMB)
  - o Special Low-Income Medicare Beneficiary (SLMB)

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## **SOCIAL SERVICES (CONTINUED):** Income Eligibility Requirements

If you don't receive one of the public assistance benefits listed above, the following guidelines determine how much all household members over 18 can make to be at or below **60% of the state median income** and qualify for a 10% discount on your electric bill.

FAMILY SIZE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
INCOME LEVEL	UP TO \$41,533	UP TO \$54,338	UP TO \$67,124	UP TO \$79,910	UP TO \$92,695	UP TO \$105,481	UP TO \$107,878	UP TO \$110,275

If you meet these income requirements, you must submit one of the following verification documents for all household members over 18.

- Unemployment benefit letter or most recent bank statement
- Employment (last four weekly pay stubs, last two bi-weekly paystubs, last monthly paystub)
- Self-employment (most recent year 1099 Tax Form)
- Social Security benefit letter
- Child support, pension, retirement, or other benefit letter or most recent bank statement showing direct deposit

### **Step 2: Submit Documentation to Eversource**

After confirming you receive one of the eligible public assistance benefits or meet the income eligibility requirements, you may submit your documents securely in several ways.

- Log in to your account to [upload your documents](#).
- Send them via U.S.P.S. mail at Eversource, Attn: Credit Dept., P.O. Box 270, Hartford, CT 06141.
- Submit documents via fax at 866-438-6476.
- Call us at 800-286-2828.
- Contact your local [Community Action Agency](#).
- Eversource will review and verify your information within 10 business days. If you are eligible, you will start to see a discount on your bill in December 2023.

### **How to Get the Connecticut 50% Discount Rate**

Starting in December 2023, you may be eligible for a 50% discount on your monthly electric bill if you have a financial hardship status on your electric account. For example, if you have a \$100 monthly bill, it would be \$50 less.

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## **SOCIAL SERVICES (CONTINUED):**

### **Step 1: Apply for or Verify Your Financial Hardship Status on Your Electric Account**

There are two ways you can apply for or verify your hardship status. You can either provide Eversource with receipt of eligible public assistance benefits, or submit proof of income documents that verify you meet the income eligibility requirements.

#### Public Assistance Benefit Qualifiers for the 50% Discount

You must have at least one person in the household that can show receipt of a public assistance benefit from one of the following programs.

- Supplemental Security Income (SSI)/Social Security Disability Income (SSDI)
- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)/Temporary Family Assistance (TFA)
- State Administered General Assistance (SAGA)
- Department of Social Services State Cash Assistance, State Supplement
- Women, Infants and Children (WIC)
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Medicaid or Access Health; HUSKY A, C, D
- State HUSKY A
- Refugee Cash Assistance and Refugee Medical Assistance
- Connecticut free or reduced lunch program
- Head Start
- Medicare Savings Programs (MSP)
  - o Qualified Medicare Beneficiary Program (QMB)

#### *Income Eligibility Requirements*

If you don't receive one of the public assistance benefits listed above, the following guidelines determine how much all household members over 18 can make to be at or below **160% of the federal poverty guidelines** and qualify for a 50% discount on your **electric bill**.

FAMILY SIZE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
INCOME LEVEL	UP TO \$423,325	UP TO \$31,552	UP TO \$39,776	UP TO \$48,000	UP TO \$56,224	UP TO \$64,448	UP TO \$72,672	UP TO \$180,896



# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## **SOCIAL SERVICES (CONTINUED):**

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- Submit documents via fax at 866-438-6476.
- Call us at 800-286-2828.
- Contact your local [Community Action Agency](#).

Eversource will review and verify your information within 10 business days. If you are eligible, you could start to see a discount on your bill in December 2023.

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).

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

**TAX OFFICE:** Don't forget!! The second installment of the Real Estate, Personal Property and the Supplemental Motor Vehicle taxes will become due on January 1, 2024. The last day to pay without a penalty is February 1, 2024. **Bills are not sent for the second installment, please put a reminder on your calendar!** Please feel free to leave payments or correspondence in the drop box at the right side of the entrance of the Town Hall or in the drop box 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 (see hours below).

**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 the month of January and February 1, 2024: 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

Columbia residents can view and pay taxes online, service fees for tax payments apply, .95 cents to use a bank account and 2.99% for credit and debit cards.

- Go to [www.columbiact.org](http://www.columbiact.org)
- On the home page click on the pay taxes online tab.
- On the next page click on to view/pay tax bills.
- The search criteria will need to be entered exactly how the tax bill is written. Enter the last name, a space, and then the first initial of the first name.

You can also utilize this site during income tax time to look up your payment history. Locate your bill using the instructions above, then hover over the icons in the option column and click on the one that says tax payment history. You will also find written instructions on the pay taxes online page. 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.

Happy Holidays!

# TOWN DEPARTMENT NEWS AND INFORMATION

## **TOWN CLERKS OFFICE:**

### **MUNICIPAL ELECTION**

Municipal elections will take place on November 7, 2023. Voting will be at Yeoman's Hall between the hours of 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. Absentee ballots became available in the Clerk's office on October 6, 2023 and are still available through the close of business on Monday, November 6, 2023. Absentee ballots can be returned in the Official Ballot Drop Box located outside the doors to the Administrative Offices entrance to Town Hall.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

The Town Clerk's office is fully open to the public. We are here in 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:**

Hello Columbia!

As a reminder, our next Friends of the Library Book Sale at the Chapel on the Green will be;

**Friday, November 10, 5-8 pm free to members and \$5 non-members,**

**Saturday, November 11, 9am-3pm free to all**

**Sunday, November 12, 9am-3pm free to all.**

Please come and browse our inventory, remember your purchases help our community as funds raised from our sales support Library programming. We look forward to seeing you there!

At the end of November, we will be turning the Book Nook over to include our Holiday Books and as always, it is open at the Library during Library hours, so be sure to stop by to pick up a Holiday read for you or the kids, a book of Holiday recipes or crafts to do with your family, a CD of Christmas songs or a Christmas movie

Thank you for your patronage!

Sincerely,

Laurie Rogers - Secretary, Friends of the Library

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

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

Hello Columbia! I am very excited to join the team at Saxton B. Little Library. So far, I'm impressed by the staff, the collections, and the robust programming at the library. As I get to know the town and the community, I hope you will stop by to share what you'd like to see at your library. Our job is to help you live your lives—whatever that looks like for you. So, let us know how we can best do that. Feel free to stop by to chat, or shoot me an email – [jstyles@columbiactlibrary.org](mailto:jstyles@columbiactlibrary.org) – anytime.

- Julie Styles, Library Director

**Adults** – As of this writing, we still have some space available in our **Fisher of CT** program on Tuesday, November 7th at 6:30pm. At this event, Paul Colburn, a CT Master Wildlife Conservationist, will teach us all about the fisher (also known as the fisher cat), including how to live an optimum coexistence with our wildlife friends. Seating is limited, so please call the Library at 860-228-0350 to save your space.

Are you participating in the Read Around the Library Challenge? In the Fiction Challenge, you'll read books from authors with last names beginning with each letter of the alphabet. In the Nonfiction Challenge, you'll read a book from each Dewey category of the Nonfiction section and a variety of books from our Biography section. Upon completion of either challenge, you'll receive a Saxton B. Little pint glass exclusive to this program. Complete both Fiction and Nonfiction challenges and earn an additional glass to make a set! At the end of the calendar year, we'll draw a grand prize from all of the previous year's winners, and they will win gift cards to local area businesses. Stop in to SBL for more info and to grab a tracking sheet.

**Kids** – This month's Drawing Club for kids aged five and up meets on Tuesday, November 28th at 4:00pm. Join us to practice your drawing skills through fun prompts and projects. Registration for our November session opens on 11/1.

Our kids' craft of the month are Veggie Print Tea Towels. You'll make a unique and useful homemade gift, perfect for Thanksgiving and fall soup season. We'll hold two sessions of this program on Thursday, November 9th at 4:00pm and 6:00pm – please call the Library to sign up.

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

## **SAXTON B. LITTLE LIBRARY**

**(CONTINUED):** Did you know that Megan, our Children's Librarian, hosts weekly Baby Bees lapsit and Story Time programs? Baby Bees is an early literacy program designed for babies and caregivers, geared toward children from birth to 24 months, and is held every Friday morning at 10:30am. Story Time, presenting books and interactive fun, takes place on Tuesday mornings at 10:30am, geared toward ages two to five. The last Tuesday of each month is Storyyoga, which features stories, songs, yoga poses, and breathing exercises. Siblings and families are welcome at both of these programs. Visit the libraries [website](http://columbiactlibrary.org) for more information.



***A few of the projects completed by the SBL Drawing Club  
over the past few months!***

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):**

**DRAWING CLUB**  
**AT THE SAXTON B. LITTLE LIBRARY**

Join us to practice your drawing skills  
through fun prompts and projects.  
Ages 5+.

Drawing Club will meet on the last Tuesday of  
each month at 4:00, except where noted.  
Registration opens for each session on the first  
of that month. Call 860-228-0350 to register.

**2023 Dates:**  
June 27th  
July 25th  
August 29th  
September 26th  
October 24th (4th Tuesday)  
November 28th  
December 26th

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

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



Saxton B. Little Library

## FISHER OF CT

Join Paul Colburn, a CT Master Wildlife Conservationist, to learn about the history of fisher in Connecticut, as well as an overview of their habitat, diet, behavior, and reproduction. He'll also provide practical recommendations for optimum coexistence with our fisher friends.

**Tuesday, November 7th @ 6:30pm**

Registration required. Call 860-228-0350 to sign up today!



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

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



**SAXTON B. LITTLE  
LIBRARY KID'S CRAFT:**

# **VEGGIE PRINT TEA TOWELS**

**THURSDAY, NOV. 9TH**  
**2 SESSIONS: 4PM & 6PM**

**SPACE LIMITED. STOP BY OR CALL  
860-228-0350 TO REGISTER.**

**A UNIQUE  
AND USEFUL  
HOMEMADE  
GIFT!**

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

## COLUMBIA CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

Save the Date!

### Bell Choir Christmas Concert

**Sunday December 17th** 2:00 PM

Columbia Congregational Church, 325 Rt 87

Followed by Crafts Cocoa & Candy Canes

Holiday food & fun for all Ages!



Join us for one or both of these free events!



### 2nd Saturday Community Breakfast Saturday November 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!



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

**COLUMBIA CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH (CONTINUED):**

**Church School**  
will be meeting  
**EVERY SUNDAY**  
during the 10 a.m. service.

**Once a month, we will have a special activity!**

If you have any questions, please contact the church  
office at 860 228 9306 or [ccchurch@snet.net](mailto:ccchurch@snet.net)



**Crafts    Bake Sale    Corn Chowder**  
**Take-a-Chance Baskets**



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

## COLUMBIA CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH (CONTINUED):



### Simple Sustenance Sunday, Nov. 19th



Order **Butternut Squash Soup & Cranberry Bread** to go!  
ORDER and PAY BY Nov 12<sup>th</sup> & PICK UP Nov 19<sup>th</sup>



Order online using QR Code or at

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

Or

Pick Up An Order Form At Church

Any questions? Email us at [CCChurchFair@gmail.com](mailto:CCChurchFair@gmail.com)



The profits from Simple Sustenance support both the church and local charities.



325 Route 87  
PO Box 177  
Columbia, CT  
06237

860 228 9306  
[ccchurch@snet.net](mailto:ccchurch@snet.net)

[Columbiacongregationalchurch.org](http://Columbiacongregationalchurch.org)

Find us on Facebook

## WELCOME! NOVEMBER HAPPENINGS



**Services 10 AM Sundays with Rev. MaryAnn Purtil**  
Live & on YouTube  
**Church School** every week during the service

**Bible Study**      Thursdays      10:30 AM

**Holiday Craft Fair**      Saturday Nov. 4th      10:00 – 3:00

**2nd Saturday Breakfast**      November 11th      7:30 – 10 AM

**Simple Sustenance**      Order by Nov. 12th      Pick up Nov. 19th

Coming In December – Join Us Dec. 17th 2:00

**Bell Choir Holiday Concert** – Free

Followed by **Crafts Cocoa & Candy Canes**

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

## COLUMBIA CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH (CONTINUED):

Cchurch@snet.net  
Columbiacongregationalchurch.org

Rev. MaryAnn Purtil



325 Route 87  
PO Box 177  
Columbia, CT 06237  
860 228 9306

Season's Greetings!

November 2023 marks the 48th year of the annual **Columbia Cardless Holiday Fund**. Many families have benefited from your donations in the past, and your continued generosity is greatly appreciated.

The idea behind the **Cardless Holiday Fund** is to contribute to the fund instead of sending cards to your friends and family in town. Your name will then be listed in the Town of Columbia quarterly newsletter Columbia Views.

The purpose of the **Cardless Holiday Fund** is to help Columbia families in need. These situations present themselves more often than we would like to believe, and as government programs have been reduced, the need for the local community to respond has become greater. Join your neighbors in continuing or even increasing your support

This past year alone the fund has been used to help with holiday food baskets for Easter, Thanksgiving and Christmas, back to school supplies, Christmas gifts, supermarket gift cards and holiday supplies..

Thank you for your continued caring and God Bless You!

Sponsored by the Columbia Congregational Church

-----  
Mail to:  
Columbia Cardless Holiday Fund  
c/o Mark Smith  
P.O Box 177  
Columbia, CT 06237

Please accept my donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the "**Columbia Cardless Holiday Fund**"

Donations accepted online at the following link

[https://columbiacongregationalchurch.org/?page\\_id=1335](https://columbiacongregationalchurch.org/?page_id=1335) please check the box for specific fund and choose and the Cardless Holiday Fund from the list.

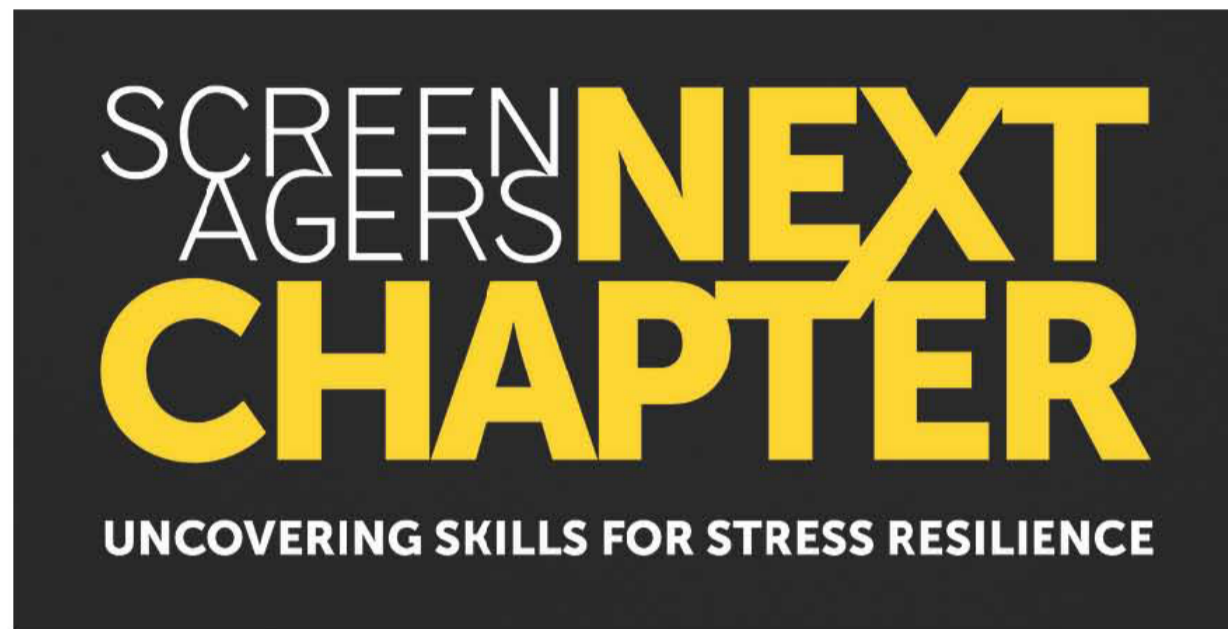
\_\_\_\_\_ Do not list my name in the Columbia Views **OR**  
\_\_\_\_\_ I would like my listing in the Columbia View to appear as (names only please):

-----  
*(Please print clearly)*

Please make checks payable to the "**Columbia Cardless Holiday Fund**"

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

**AHM:**



## Impactful Film for Parents & Their Child/ren in Grades 6 - 12

AHM Youth & Family Services is proud to offer a free movie screening of the 63-minute documentary **Screenagers NEXT CHAPTER** that explores challenges in our current screen-filled society, and how we, as parents, caregivers and educators, can empower teens to overcome mental health challenges and build emotional agility, communication savvy, and stress resilience.

AHM invites you to listen to personal stories of families from an array of backgrounds with a spectrum of emotional challenges and observe approaches in schools that provide strategies relevant beyond the classroom setting. Both are interwoven into the stories that offer surprising insights from brain researchers, psychologists, and thought leaders that reveal evidence-based ways to support mental wellness among our youth. The impact of social media and other screen time is incorporated in all the topics raised in Screenagers NEXT CHAPTER, how it may be impacting our teens' mental health, and what we can do to help foster youth in the face of struggles.

This documentary was created for parents and their children in grades 6 – 12 to watch together. Please join us at AHM on Wednesday, November 8, 2023 at 6:30 PM to view this extremely well-done documentary. Please direct questions to Jenn Boehler at 860-228-9488 Ext. 22. Classic movie-style popcorn will be available for all!

**DATE:** Wednesday, November 8, 2023    **LOCATION:** AHM Youth & Family Services

**DOORS OPEN:** 6:00 PM    25 Pendleton Drive, Hebron

**FILM BEGINS:** 6:30 PM

**APPROPRIATE FOR:** 6 - 12 graders with their parents or caregivers

**RSVP TO:** [jenniferb@ahmyouth.org](mailto:jenniferb@ahmyouth.org) with number of adults and youth attending

