

*Columbia*

# VIEWS

**Volume 3 • Issue 1  
Winter 2019**



*Your Hometown Connection • Columbia, CT*



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The year is now behind us and it is time to look to the future and set a course for a better tomorrow. I am confident that we will continue to govern the Town of Columbia in the best possible light and continue to provide a quality of life that we all can enjoy while maintaining financial responsibility. When I was elected, I set a priority to bring in a budget that reflected the quality of life in our Town and yet maintain the fiscal responsibility that we have come to expect. I must give credit to every department head who brought me a detailed and legitimate budget for the fiscal year.



Although we continued to watch our finances, I am pleased to tell you that we accomplished several key projects and initiatives that contributed to the growth and quality of our Town. Projects of note include:

- Major reconstruction of REC Park began in the fall that included the construction of the new girls' softball field. The new field will provide general equity for all our children. In addition, a new entrance road is being constructed to provide a better traffic safety route for the park.
- Saxton B. Little Library has lived up to last year's expansion. Numerous new programs have been added and are enjoyed by a growing number of residents. Director Su Epstein and her staff are to be commended for the dedication they deliver to all who enter through their doors.
- The new History Place opened its first exhibit, Columbia Lake - Through the Years, that traced the history of the Columbia Lake Watershed. The featured exhibit was a great success and enjoyed by many residents and town visitors. Our Town Historian, Ingrid Wood has been instrumental in the success of the History Place and is always happy to share a detail of yester-

year with any interested person.

- The completion of the renovation at the Town beach was marked by the dedication of the new lifeguard welcoming station in honor of past First Selectman, Carmen Vance. Visitation increased measurably as more residents enjoyed the new beach layout and easy access.
- The Parks and Recreation Department under the direction of Marc Volza continues to increase the number of new programs that Columbia residents can enjoy throughout the year. Normally seen as the center of youth sports, our Parks and Recreation Department offer a variety of programs for residents to enjoy.
- Upkeep of the old firehouse that will be a shared maintenance facility.
- New solar panels on Horace W. Porter school which will save thousands of dollars in energy costs.
- We are also getting closer to the badly needed new salt shed that will be housed at the Department of Public Works yard.
- Finally, the new senior transportation van is in full swing to meet the needs of those who otherwise may have difficulty getting groceries, visiting doctors or just enjoying time away from home for an afternoon.

What we have done this past year reflects the hard work from all our elected officials and volunteers alike. Under the guidance of the Town Administrator, Mark Walter and with the support from various Town departments that provide exceptional service to Columbia and its residents, Columbia continues to be a wonderful place to live and raise a family. I wish to say thank you to each of them—they make my job easy.

Steven M. Everett  
First Selectman

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COVER PHOTO: PAUL RAMSEY

## 2019 VIEWS Magazines Schedule

**2nd Q/19**

**COLUMBIA:** Ad Deadline 4/6/2019  
Mailed Week of 5/6/2019

**HEBRON:** Ad Deadline 5/10/2019  
Mailed Week of 6/3/2019

**MANSFIELD:** Ad Deadline 6/7/2019  
Mailed Week of 7/1/2019

**3rd Q/19**

**COLUMBIA:** Ad Deadline 7/5/2019  
Mailed Week of 8/5/2019

**HEBRON:** Ad Deadline 8/2/2019  
Mailed Week of 8/26/2019

**MANSFIELD:** Ad Deadline 8/30/2019  
Mailed Week of 9/23/2019

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## FROM THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

The Town of Columbia's website traffic is a good way for us to measure the effectiveness of our communication to residents. In one month, we had over 45,000 views – seems like a lot, but we think we can do better. I keep hearing that it is hard to find information on our website. We would like to add a modern design and mobility standards that would make finding information easier. We will be securing proposals for a new website design for this upcoming budget process and will be looking for your input to help shape the redesign of our website.

With the support of our Board of Selectmen, Columbia has joined Sustainable CT. This started with a request from Ann Dunnack and the Conservation Agriculture Commission. The program helps to foster civic-minded sustainability by providing municipalities with resources and tools to implement sustainable actions. The actions include providing watershed management plans, supporting arts and creative culture, developing agriculture-friendly practices, and many more. There is a total of 55 actions across 10 categories.

The first step in the process required the First Selectman, Steven M. Everett; Andrea Drabicki; facilitator for Sustainability CT for Columbia and myself to attend the



first training session at Three Rivers Community College in Norwich. Our goals will be to save money, promote health, and increasing residents connecting and sense of place in Columbia. The challenge will help to cross the silos of Boards and Commissions to look at our community, our local economy, by promoting the health and well-being of current and future residents.

The program is independently funded by the Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation, Hampshire Foundation, and the Common Sense Fund, and it is administered through the Institute of Sustainable Energy of Eastern Connecticut State University. Help us show that Columbia cares about the environment, their citizens, and their future. To learn more about Sustainable CT, please visit the website [www.sustainablect.org](http://www.sustainablect.org).

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Town of Columbia employees for their dedication and hard work in the past year and I look forward to another great year.

Stop by and introduce yourself, my door is always open!

Mark Walter  
Town Administrator



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*Reminder and Notice  
from the Assessor's Office*

The Homeowners program will start accepting applications again as of February 1, 2019. If you are already in the program you will receive a letter from us reminding you to file. If you are not already in the program you will

need to bring a copy of your completed 1040 income tax forms for 2018 to our office. If you do not file income tax returns, please bring in your W2 or 1099. This year's maximum income limit for married couples is \$43,900, and for unmarried filers it is \$36,000 that includes all income including your social security income. If you have any questions, feel free to call us at 860-228-9555.

FROM THE TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

*Happy New Year  
from the Town Clerk's Office!!*

**Fishing and hunting**

Sports licenses for 2019 are available for purchase in the Town Clerk's office and on the DEEP website as well.

Opening Day for Fishing is April 13, 2019.

Robin M. Kenefick  
Town Clerk

Gail C. McGrath  
Assistant Town Clerk

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# TOWN DIRECTORY

DEPARTMENT		OFFICE HOURS	PHONE
<b>Administrative Office</b>		Mon-Thur 8 am - 4 pm	860-228-0110
First Selectman	Steven Everett	Fri 8 am-Noon	
Town Administrator	Mark Walter		
Executive Assistant	Jennifer LaVoie		
<b>Assessor's Office</b>		Mon-Wed 8 am -4 pm	860-228-9555
Assessor	Mary Lavallee	Thur 8 am -6 pm	
Assistant Assessor	Marcy Littlefield	Fri 8 am -Noon	
<b>Beckish Senior Center</b>		Mon-Fri 8-3	860-228-0759
Director	Bernadette Derring		
Social Services	Yolanda Irizarry		860-450-7400 x7418
Van Dispatcher/Program Asst.	Margaret Verrizzi		
<b>Building Department</b>		Mon-Wed 8-4	860-228-0440
Building Official	Jason Nowasad	Thur 8-6	
Zoning Enforcement	Connie Kisluk	Fri 8-Noon	
Town Planner	Paula Stahl		
Sanitarian	Glenn Bagdoian		
Inland Wetlands Agent	John Valente		
Administrative Assistant	Cindee Hodge		
Board Secretary	Terri Lasota		
Fire Marshal/Burning Official	Michael Lester		
<b>Animal Control</b>	Nancy Yale		860-337-1222
<b>Finance Department</b>		Mon-Thur 8 am - 4:30 pm	860-228-8423
Finance Director	Beverly Ciurylo		
Accountant/Payroll Specialist	Lisa Rose		
Accounting Assistant	Jill Swenson		
<b>Fire Department</b>			
To report a fire			911
Non-emergency calls			860-228-9602
Fire Chief	Peter Starkel		
<b>Public Works Department</b>		Mon-Fri 6:30-3	860-228-4270
Director	George Murphy		860-234-2195
Facilities Manager	Bud Meyers		x111
<b>Recreation Department</b>		Mon-Wed 8-4 Th 8-7	860-228-8513
Director	Marc Volza	Fri CLOSED	
Recreation Assistant	Aleza Potter		
<b>Registrar of Voters</b>		Varies	860-228-0110
Republican	Kate Morrison		
Democrat	Karen Butzgy		
<b>Resident State Trooper</b>			
	Gregory DeCarli	Mon-Fri 6:30-3	860-228-9846
	Dispatch		860-465-5400
<b>Tax Collector's Office</b>		Mon-Wed 8-2	860-228-0230
Tax Collector	Carol W. Price	Thur 8-6 Fri CLOSED	
Assistant Tax Collector	Lisa McDonald	<i>extended hours in January and July</i>	
<b>Town Clerk's Office</b>		Mon-Wed 8-4	860-228-3284
Town Clerk	Robin M. Kenefick	Thur 8-6 Fri 8-12	
Assistant Town Clerk	Gail McGrath		
<b>Transfer Station</b>		Wed 8-4	860-428-1482
Attendant	Michael Stewart	Sat 8-4	



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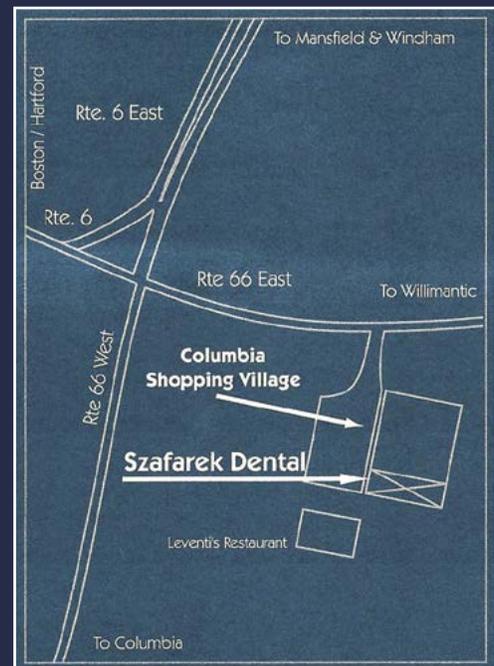
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Thur: 7:00 am–4:30 pm

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## PUBLIC WORKS

Please check your mailbox before the winter snow plowing operations begin. The town's policy is that if the snowplow itself hits the mailbox it would be repaired, replaced or offer the resident a check for \$25.00 toward its replacement. However, if the snow that is discharged from the snowplow knocks down your mailbox the Public Works Department will not repair or replace it as determined by the Director of Public Works.

Residents who need sand during the winter months may obtain it at the Transfer Station on Wednesday and Saturdays from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. Residents may take a maximum of two five-gallon pails per storm event. The sand box and a shovel are located behind the swap shop.

- Snow plowing regulations are governed by state statute Sec. CGS 52-558 which cover liability for placing obstructions in roadways. Residents should be aware of the following regulations.
  - A. No person shall lay, throw, blow, place or plow or cause to be laid, thrown blown, placed on or into any public street or way any snow or ice from any private property, or public right-of-way. If, in the removal of snow or ice from any such property, sidewalk or way, it is necessary to temporarily place snow or ice on any public street or way, such snow or ice shall immediately be removed from the public street or way by and at the expense of the person causing such deposit.
  - B. No person in the process of clearing any property, or way as defined above shall:
    - 1.) Leave the surface of adjoining public ways any

less clear of snow and ice than such person found the public way just previous to commencement of clearance.

- 2.) Plow or deposit snow or ice on the side of embankments to public ways to narrow or decrease the width of the traveled portion of the public way as it existed just previous to such person's clearance.
- 3.) Plow or deposit snow and ice on that portion of the public way right-of-way that adjoins another persons' property without the consent of the Town.
- 4.) The provisions of this section shall not apply to the official snow removal operations of the Town of Columbia and the State of Connecticut.
- 5.) The penalty for each violation or offense shall be \$75, and each and every twenty-four-hour period of failed or neglect to comply with the provisions of this section shall be deemed a separate offense or violation.
- 6.) Please do not place Recyclables or Trash cans for collection by a contractor in the road during snow events.

Lastly, all residents are reminded to refrain from allowing children to play in snowbanks on the side of the road. They make an attractive environment for children to play, but plow drivers may not see the presence of small children playing, especially if it is snowing. This also applies to joggers during snow events. Please, let the plow drivers do their job without the worries of seeing pedestrians during a snowstorm.



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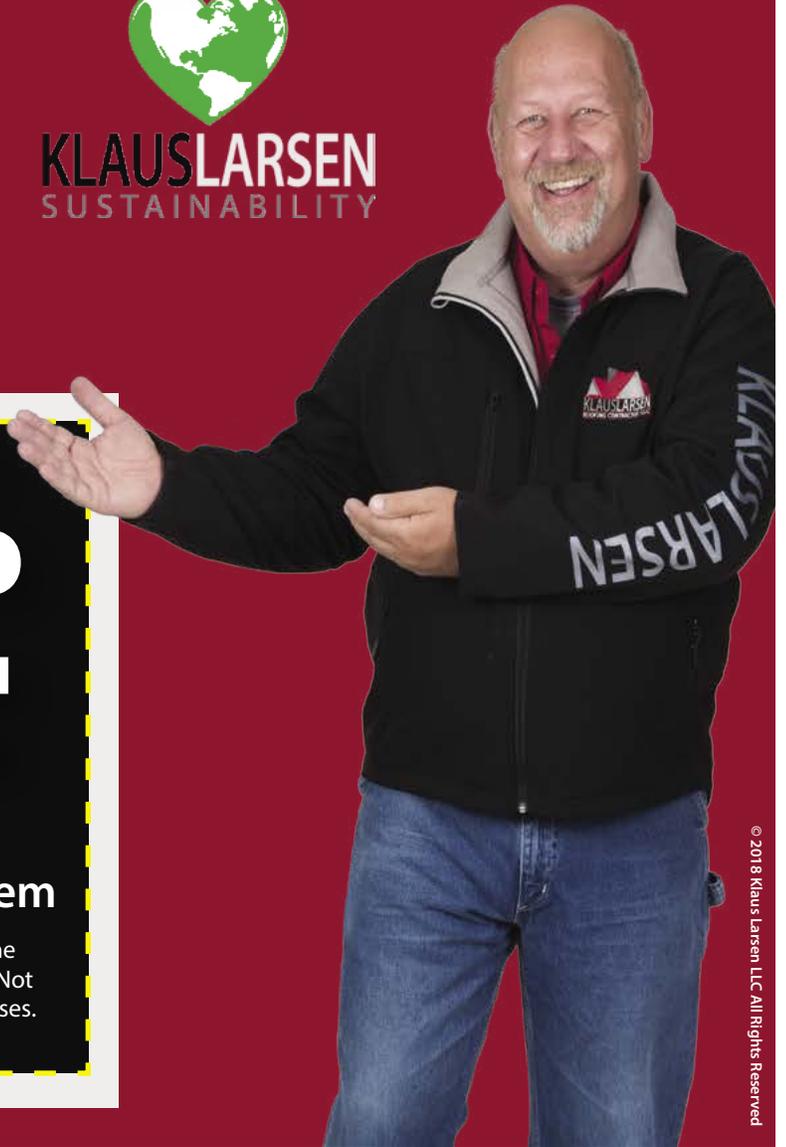
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## Preparing for a House Fire

Install appropriate smoke alarms throughout your home. Test these alarms once a month and change the batteries at least twice a year. Any devices that are 10+ years old should be completely replaced.

Teach children what smoke alarms sound like and what to do when they hear one.

Have a household exit plan and establish a family meeting spot outside of your home.

Teach household members to STOP, DROP and ROLL if their clothes should catch on fire.

Consider storing copies of your current insurance policies and other important documents in a secure, remote location. Having an extra set of car keys at this location may be helpful as well.

In the unfortunate event of a house fire, get out of your home immediately.

- Priority is you get yourself and your family members

out as quickly as possible – do not attempt to collect your valuables.

- Notify all other occupants and account for everyone once outside.
- Call 9-1-1 and give the dispatcher as much information as possible.
- Never re-enter your home for anything.
- When the Fire Department arrives, communicate if everyone is accounted for and if there are any special hazards, e.g., guns, ammunition, propane gas, or lost pets.
- Try to remain calm.

After the fire, there will be an investigation to determine the cause and origin of your house fire. You will need to contact your insurance company. Be mindful when signing any contracts for cleanup services.

Please feel free to contact the Fire Marshal or Fire Department if you ever have any questions or concerns regarding fire prevention and safety.

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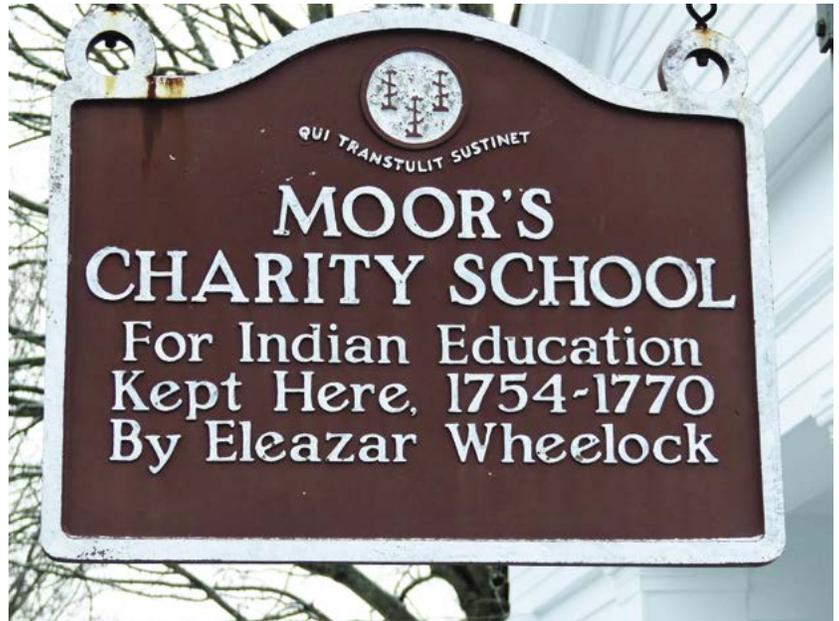
*Moor's Indian Charity School  
(1755–2019) – Columbia's Gem*

Tucked away near a corner of the Town Hall parking lot, Horace W. Porter School, and Columbia Congregational Church is a newly re-painted 18th century schoolhouse known as the Indian Charity School from 1755 - 1769. It was rededicated 50 years ago as Moor's Indian Charity School. But in 1769 Reverend Eleazar Wheelock moved his students, family, and library from Lebanon Crank, Connecticut to the Hanover, New Hampshire frontier to re-create a new vision for the Indian Charity School; and to found the Colony of New Hampshire's very first college of divinity, Dartmouth College.

The school building was sold to the Town of Lebanon Crank in 1773. So, from 1773 - 1948, this one-room schoolhouse was a public school. It served many generations of Columbia's youth as Center School, in District #1. Over the centuries, this schoolhouse building was moved four times from its original site near Collins Garage and Route 66, to this current site in 1948. This one-story building was remodeled with a Greek Revival portico and painted white in the mid-1800s except for the back side, which retained the original dark red pigments until 1916. The schoolhouse building was used for Columbia Night School in the 1920s, as Horace W. Porter School's book repository after 1948, and as an overflow classroom in 1955.

In the late 1960s architectural historians and preservation architects confirmed this schoolhouse was used by Wheelock. Town of Lebanon deeds reveal a school or shop building on a two-acre parcel purchased by farmer Joshua More of Mansfield, Connecticut from Master Moses Barret on October 24, 1753, for 500 pounds. The parcel included an associated dwelling house (dormitory) for Indian students. Joshua More also bequeathed an adjacent 200-acre farm he had bought from John English in 1755. Together these properties constituted a campus for More's and Wheelock's vision for the education for the "salvation of Indian Nations and other poor persons... in reading, writing, and liberal arts and sciences and the practices of the Protestant Christian Religion", recorded in Town of Lebanon Deeds, May 10, 1765.

On the 200th anniversary of the founding of Dartmouth College, Moor's Indian Charity School was rededicated



by Dartmouth College officials and alumni, the State of Connecticut, the Town of Columbia, and Columbia Historical Society, witnessed by 1,200 participants on May 17, 1969. Today this building is on the National Register of Historic Places in Columbia Green Historic District. It will re-open for visiting later this spring in time for Dartmouth College's 250th Anniversary Day. Special recognition is due to the Town of Columbia Board of Selectmen, the Town of Columbia residents, and Columbia Historical Society for maintaining this gem. Additional thanks are due to private and corporate donors, most recently Enbridge Corporation of Edmonton, Canada.

Ingrid Wood  
Town Historian

*It's winter!*

We in Library Land have very mixed feelings about this season. It's not so much the season, or the snow, but the cold that we just don't like. It was nice to have some time off with family for the holidays. As you're reading this, we wish you all a Happy Valentine's Day. Soon it will be St Patrick's, and before too long, flowers will be sprouting.

Over the past few months, the Library was busy with movies, book groups, and, of course, our annual Gingerbread House program. Our wait list for this program was equal to our participants! We thank you for this enthusiastic interest and are already planning multiple sessions of this program next year to accommodate all. We also wish to thank you for your generous support of our annual giving campaign and our Saxton Mouse Calendar. The funds raised through these initiatives primarily help us to support new materials and programs.

Speaking of such, we have some exciting events coming up. To beat the winter blues, our Stitchers group invites you to attend a program to create fleece blankets for

Project Linus. Baseball season will be upon us soon, and the Library has upcoming programs for both Yankees and Red Sox fans. For the little ones, we'll soon be making fairy gardens and leprechaun traps, watch for dates to sign up. Be sure to stop in the Library for our annual Peep diorama contest – make a scene, or at least vote for one! We look forward to seeing you in the Library.

Su Epstein  
Library Director

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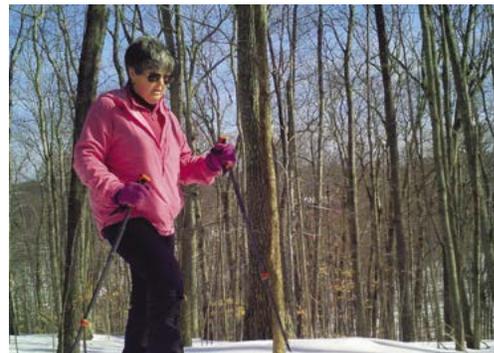
*Winter in Beautiful  
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Take advantage of Columbia's Open Space during the winter months. There are multiple opportunities for outdoor activities whether snow covered or not.

Hiking, mosquito free, with leaf free enhanced views is an activity that can be shared by everyone. Mono Pond preserve, Rec Park/Utley Preserve and Szegda farm all offer excellent x-country skiing, snowshoeing and hiking opportunities. Sledding at Szegda farm would be a fun family activity as would skating on Mono pond. Ice fishing is a very popular activity once the ice is safe.

Checking out animal tracks in new fallen snow can be eye-opening, especially for children. Deer, turkeys, coyotes, beavers, squirrels, rabbits all leave distinctive marks. You might even find a track that your do not expect in Columbia.

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### Preschool Open House

On the evening of January 15th, Horace W. Porter School will be holding an Open House for Preschool programs in the area. This is a drop-in event where you can ask questions and compare the different programs. The Open House will run from 6:00 pm to 7:00 pm.

### Preschool Screenings

The Early Childhood Team of Horace W. Porter School is pleased to announce that we will conduct Preschool Screenings for Columbia 3-year old's (turning 3 by December 31, 2019) and any 4-year old's not previously screened (and not turning 5 by December 31, 2019).

**Screening dates:** Monday, January 29, 2019  
Monday, March 25, 2018

All public-school systems in Connecticut are responsible for the identification of children who may be eligible to receive special education services. The early childhood team in Columbia offers preschool developmental screenings for current resident children. The purpose of this screening is to collect information about each preschooler's early development in the areas of cognition, communication, motor functioning, and social interaction. This will help us to determine whether your child needs

any special services in order to prepare for school success.

If you have concerns about a child that has not yet turned 3, please contact Birth-to-Three program at (800) 505-7000.

If you have any questions regarding the preschool program or registering for a screening, please feel free to contact Deborah Dupuis, Administrative Assistant to the Director of Student Services, at (860) 228-0585.

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## Columbia Green – Then and Now

This September's improvements near the Adella Urban administrative complex, Library, and Columbia Congregational Church, includes parking lot resurfacing, new flagpoles at the Memorial Garden, and repainting Moor's Indian Charity School. This prompts one to think about Columbia Green's subtly changing landscape.

Few local town greens have survived into the 21st century, intact. But Columbia's Green and surrounding structures were part of an early 19th century pre-industrial village center long before routes 87 and 66 ever existed. This village center, two cemeteries, and several 20th century monuments, were designated as Columbia Green Historic District, a National Historic District in 1990. Today it includes 45 significant elements contributing to the special historic character of our town center in some attribute of exploration/settlement, religion, politics/government, architecture, and landscape architecture. The building styles we see today are all jarringly different, reflecting a timeline of architectural taste in rural Connecticut. The styles include early Colonial, Federal, Greek Revival, Queen Anne, Italianate, Egyptian Revival (monuments mostly), Bungalow, Colonial Revival, Spanish Revival, Mid-century Modern, and Victorian reproduction, as in the 1970s gazebo which sits in the middle of Columbia Green.

But not all the original buildings remain; the first Yeomans Hall (c. 1900) burned in 1940. Others were removed for State Roads 87 and 66 or to make way for newer structures. Notable missing buildings are horse sheds (yes, horse sheds) once shared by the church, grange, and town in what is now the newly resurfaced parking lot. Also missing is the town's Hearse House, once located near today's Finance Annex.

Some structures remain but have been moved or their institutional use has changed over the years. The



Reproduction horse sheds (c. 1980) near the Meeting House (c.1832) at Old Sturbridge Village, Massachusetts. The former horse sheds near Columbia Congregational Church in the newly surfaced parking lot may have once looked something like this. (Photograph courtesy I. Wood.)

1883 library was moved and repurposed as a private home to make way for the 1903 Saxton B. Little Free Library (renamed The History Place in 2017). Lebanon Crank's animal pound, a relic of the town's 18th century agricultural history is still here but hidden from view. Houses that once served dual functions as town offices, the Post Office, doctor's office, church rectory, or general store are private homes again. The ancient Landmark building once served many public, private, and commercial functions. A central square part of it may have been erected as the Crank's first meetinghouse by the Clarke's in the early 1720s. It was later enlarged to serve as an inn and stagecoach stop in the 1750s.

So, what additional changes are in the offing? A future stated goal is to better integrate the surrounding public walking trails with Columbia's Historic town center and Green.

Ingrid Wood  
Town Historian

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The Columbia Historical Society and the Town Historian share a new home at the History Place. The first town-wide exhibit in the History Place this past summer was “Columbia Lake Through the Years”. Many Columbia residents and out-of-towners visited and shared stories about living on Columbia Lake, being a member of the Columbia Canoe Club or sunning at picturesque Columbia Beach.

During its 50 plus years, the Historical Society has relied on membership dues, bequeaths and small grants to enable the creation of exhibits, presentations of special programs and curation of its collection. Columbia has a rich history that is being researched and recorded by members of the Society. An exhibit is being planned to open in April, 2019. The exhibit will highlight Columbia’s “Dartmouth Connection”. Visitors will learn about life as it was in Columbia when Eleazar Wheelock was pastor and teacher at the Congregational Church during the mid-1700’s. You will discover why Reverend Wheelock chose Hanover, NH to house Dartmouth College rather than Columbia.

Exhibits and programming are expensive. Would you consider donating to the Columbia Historical Society: a non-profit organization under the IRS laws 501C3? Donations may be tax deductible. All contributions should be made out to the Columbia Historical Society and mailed to CHS, PO Box 551 in Columbia, CT.

Columbia’s history is an ever-evolving story with every resident being an integral piece of the puzzle. Please contact the CHS by email [ColumbiaCtHistoricalSociety@gmail.com](mailto:ColumbiaCtHistoricalSociety@gmail.com) or on our website [columbia-history.org](http://columbia-history.org) if you would like to become a member, have an idea for a future exhibit, have Columbia memorabilia or stories to share, or would like to volunteer at one of our worthwhile events.

Columbia Historical Society Donation Form

I/We wish to make a tax-deductible donation in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the Columbia Historical Society for the purpose of enhancing exhibits/programs/The History Place.

- A check made payable to the Columbia Historical Society in the full amount of the gift is enclosed.
- I/We pledge to make this gift in  monthly/ annual installments of \$\_\_\_\_\_. A check made payable to the Columbia Historical Society in the amount of the first installment is enclosed.
- Please contact an Officer or Director to discuss including the Columbia Historical Society in my/our will(s)
- Please contact an Officer or Director if you have any other questions that you would like to discuss.

Print name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Numbers \_\_\_\_\_

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- I wish to volunteer and work with the Columbia Historical Society.

Feb.2019

Our Officers: Justin Holbrook, Judy Ortiz, Jeanne Nuhfer and Bev Ciurylo along with Board of Directors: Janice Knight, Tom McGrath, Millie Ramsey, Don Schofield, Andrea Stannard, Carmen Vance and Town Historian: Ingrid Wood THANK YOU



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I hope that this edition of *Columbia Views* finds you with virtually no snow, reasonable temperatures and a wonderful beginning to 2019. But I am probably dreaming... Even if the weather does not cooperate, we will still have some great activities at the Senior Center.

On Thursdays during the months of January and February, the Columbia Seniors Organization will be showing some classic musical movies. Please come and join us for the movie and some goodies. We started with *Singing in the Rain* on January 3rd at 1:00. If the weather is bad, we will cancel the movie for that day.

Keep up with all our upcoming events in the Beckish

newsletter. We will have our annual spring BBQ in May and our spring dinner dance in June. Also, in May we will have our tag sale. This is an important fundraising event for us. Please consider how you can help, either donating gently used items for sale, or working on that weekend to help the sale run smoothly.

We hope to see you for these events. We also sponsor trips, movies, a quilting group, and other opportunities. The Beckish Senior Center also has many exercise groups and additional activities. You can check on dates, times and the occasional cost by calling the Senior Center at 860-228-0759 or checking in the Beckish newsletter, *The Gem*.

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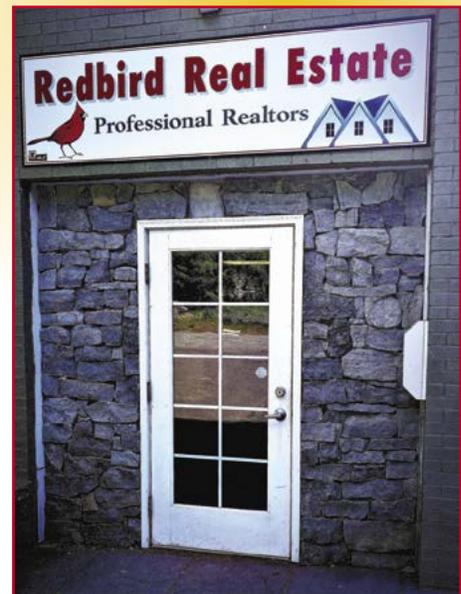


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The Beckish Senior Center has had many successful trips this year traveling to: Friesians of Majesty in Vermont, A Lobster Bash in Rhode Island, Newburyport Massachusetts, Newport Dinner Train in Rhode Island among other destinations as well. The last trip of the year was to the Governor's Mansion in Hartford where the seniors enjoyed the festivities and decorations at the historical mansion.

We are proud to announce a partnership with Friendship Tours beginning January 1, 2019. Friendship Tours has been in the travel industry since 1977. Friendship Tours goal is to provide memorable travel experiences for everyone. They specialize in tours and cruise packages. They plan customized daytrips, overnight trips, cruises, special events and shows, sport events, and more. We will announce them in the GEM as soon as we know what trips are planned.

Beside the trips, we offered various special events at the center from The Seniors Tag Sale, Woodcarvers Day, annual CSO BBQ, CSO Dinner Dance, Men's Group Dinner, and more. The Harvest to Holly Fair, sponsored

by our seniors, was our best fair ever. Sheryl Faye, of Sheryl Faye Presents Historical Women, presented a one woman show about Eleanor Roosevelt in December and was wonderful! The response to the show was overwhelming and we hope we can get Sheryl for a second show presenting Helen Keller in 2019.

Another December presentation was hosted by Janice Thibodeau on Chinese Brush Painting. Janice discussed the types and origins of brush painting and how the Chinese traditions and superstitions influenced the choice of subject matter and methodology.

We are grateful and thankful to all who contributed to our food pantry this past year.

We hope to see you this year for many of the events and trips. The Beckish Center offers many exercise groups, a quilting group, book group, and additional activities. You can check dates, times, and any occasional cost by calling the Senior Center at 860-228-0759 or checking in the Beckish newsletter, The GEM located on-line at [www.columbiaact.org](http://www.columbiaact.org) or you may also obtain the GEM at the center.

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Boy Scout Troop 162, and other volunteers, with a grant from Eastern Connecticut Conservation District, Inc., constructed a Rain Garden at the Columbia Town Beach in September. It will help to filter storm water, and keep Columbia Lake clean, as well as prevent erosion of sand into the Lake. By choosing native pollinator plants, the garden will also benefit pollinators and birds. What beautiful way to help the environment!

If you would like to learn more about planting Rain Gardens in your yard, please go to [www.nemo.uconn.edu/raingardens/](http://www.nemo.uconn.edu/raingardens/) or [www.epa.gov/soakuptherain/rain-gardens](http://www.epa.gov/soakuptherain/rain-gardens) or [www.raingardennetwork.com](http://www.raingardennetwork.com).

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## 300th Anniversary Thank You

On behalf of the 300th Anniversary Committee of the Columbia Congregational Church, I would like to thank members of the community that participated in the worship service that kicked off the celebration on November 18th. State Historian, Walt Woodward presented a sermon in the personage of Rev. Eleazar Wheelock. A pot luck luncheon was enjoyed following

the service. This event was the kick off to a two-year celebration. The next event will be held on February 24, 2019 with Rev. Bernard Hinckley of Trinitarian-Congregational-Church-Norton, Massachusetts. Rev. Hinckley was ordained at the Columbia Congregational Church. A pot luck lunch will follow the service. There will be other events over the coming months which the community is invited to participate in. Stay tuned!

## Calendar

### February

#### Saturday, February 9th

Community Breakfast - Parish Hall  
8:00AM - 11:00AM

#### Sunday, February 24th

Rev. Bernie Hinckley Preaching - 300th Anniversary Celebration  
10:00AM

### March

#### Wednesday, March 6th

Ash Wednesday Service  
7:00PM

#### Saturday, March 9th

Community Breakfast - Parish Hall  
8:00AM - 11:00AM

### April

#### Saturday, April 13th

Community Breakfast - Parish Hall  
8:00AM - 11:00 AM

### Holy Week

#### Thursday, April 18th

Maundy Thursday Service  
7:00PM

#### Friday, April 19th

Good Friday Service  
7:00PM

### Easter

#### Sunday, April 21st

Easter Sunrise Service  
6:00AM - Camp Astowamah  
Easter Service - Sanctuary  
10:00AM (Special Music)

## Columbia Cardless Holiday Fund 2018

The following people made donations to the Columbia Cardless Holiday Fund 2018 in lieu of sending holiday greeting cards. We thank them for their generosity in helping their neighbors in need. This fund is sponsored by the Columbia Congregational Church and is used year-round to help Columbia residents regardless of church affiliation.

- Jim & Peggy Cobb
- Rick & Elaine Carone
- The Coley Family
- Cathy & Mahlon Gilbert
- The Narkawicz/Bourque Family
- Ralph Noli
- Mike, Maria, Meadow & Alex Pallein
- The Pearce/Maheu Family
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## Columbia Lake Trivia

Columbia Lake is a wonderful asset for our community. Let's have some fun and increase the awareness of our lake through some trivia questions. Answers can be found at the bottom (upside down).

1. Our lake is man-made. Do you know what was originally present on the site?
2. When created, the lake was first owned by?
3. The lake was first created for what purpose?
4. Who owns the lake now? When did that occur?
5. If the town owns the lake, who owns the docks?

6. How many docks are currently on the lake?
7. Who owns the sea walls?

Thanks go to Mary Roickle, Phyllis Dunn, Sharon Ladd, Bob Powell, and Dan O'Neil for supplying the answers. The Columbia Lake Association serves to promote and protect Columbia Lake as a natural and recreational resource. We hope that these trivia questions helped you to become more knowledgeable about Columbia Lake. Membership in the association is open to all town residents. Information can be found by contacting our Secretary, Sharon Ladd at [columbialakeassociation@gmail.com](mailto:columbialakeassociation@gmail.com).

Compiled by Mark Desrosiers

## Answers

7. Property Owners. The Town grants permission to residents to place their seawalls on the lake bottom.
6. 182.

3. To provide water to run the Mills.
4. Town of Columbia - 1932 for \$25,000.
5. Residents of the Lake own the docks. The Town grants permission to residents to place their docks on the lake with a reported 2000 visitors on some weekends."
2. The Willimantic Linen Company - Later known as American Thread. "When steam power replaced the need for water power in the 1930's, the Willimantic Thread Company offered Columbia Lake to the town for \$25,000. That was a considerable amount considering the impact of the Great Depression. Thankfully the 350-acre lake was purchased and then became a source of ice for the town residents. In 1910 Hartford Center Church leased 35-acres for a camp, which they then purchased in 1914. From 1915-1933, Columbia Lake was used mainly as a weekend excursion destination
1. One side of the lake was all pastures. The Center was a farm owned by the Watson Family.



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