

## For the Week of December 11, 2023

### Manager's Message

Aaron Frank, Town Manager

**Wishing Seth Lasker a Happy Retirement!** Assistant Fire Chief and Special Projects Manager Seth Lasker will be retiring on December 21, 2023. Seth has been an invaluable employee to the Town, taking on a variety of roles during his time here, helping to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, merge and create a Town-wide Fire Department, and assist in the services provided by several other departments, including Rescue, Planning and Zoning, and the Town Manager's Office. His mastery of emergency management, strong interpersonal skills, and calm, adaptable demeanor has been instrumental in all his roles of Assistant Fire Chief, Interim Fire Chief, Health Inspector, Building Inspector, Special Projects Manager and more. We thank Seth for his many years of dedicated service to this community and wish him a well-deserved retirement!



**Vermont's Labor Market Update:** While Vermont's labor market was stable before the pandemic, according to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Vermont has now been categorized as having a severe worker

shortage. Before the pandemic, Vermont had an unemployment rate far lower and a labor force participation much higher than the national rates. As of August, these rates have not recovered, and now, for every 100 open jobs, there are only 36 available workers in Vermont. These trends are important to be aware of and consider. To learn more, please visit:

<https://www.uschamber.com/workforce/understanding-vermont-labor-market>



**Colchester Historical Society:** The Colchester Historical Society is a local nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving Colchester's history. They share historical information and hold history-related events within the community. If you'd like to learn more or become a member, please visit: <https://colchestervt.gov/3050/Member-Application-Form>. Everyone is welcome at events and to become a member, and membership fees and donations help support their mission to preserve and share Colchester's wonderful local history.

### You're Invited!

**Annual Holiday Choral Concert and Party**

**Tuesday, December 12, 7 p.m.**

**900 Main Street**

**Colchester Village**

The Colchester Historical Society and the United Church of Colchester are pleased to announce the return of the Annual Holiday Choral Concert and Party. Music for this event will feature the beautiful and festive musical styling of Colchester High School choral groups. Fellowship and a variety of refreshments will immediately follow the concert.



\*\*\* Members, please note: Our members are invited to bring along savory snacks, if possible. (The United Church will furnish sweet treat items). Examples could be meatballs, cheese and crackers, celery stuffed with cheese, individual pizza bites, little sandwiches, etc. We can heat items in the church kitchen oven if needed. Of course, you are welcome to bring whatever you wish. Just remember that these young singers will have not yet been home from school for supper so they will be hungry! \*\*\*



“Colchester is very fortunate to have the beautiful United Church of Colchester in our community,” said Bonnie Potter, Historical Society President. “That it continues to be actively used and appreciated nearly 200 years after it was built is a wonderful added bonus. These talented high school students have been working diligently in their music practice and are excited to bring us their presentation.”

This event is free and open to the public. Free parking is available at the church, the library, the Meeting House, Historical Society, and overflow parking at Our Lady of Grace Church. Due to the increasing number of recent thefts, please be sure to lock your vehicle.

### **Building history:**

The First Congregational Church of Christ was organized September 14, 1804, at first in a schoolhouse on the Farrand farm, standing on the west side of East Road near the railroad. From there, the church held its meetings in various schools, barns, or homes. In 1838, the brick church was built by the Congregational Church and shared with the Baptist Church until 1861 when the Baptist Church was built.

In 1919, it became the United Church of Colchester. Electricity was installed in both the parish house and the brick church in 1921. Some remodeling also occurred at that time, including installation of the stained-glass windows. The kitchen, restroom, and a coat room were added in 1927, as well as a furnace in the main room, and the horse sheds were torn down. Later, a new furnace was installed in the cellar.


The United Church of Colchester is Christ-centered and family oriented. The pastor is Reverend Doctor Russell E. Willis. For more information about this church, please visit <https://www.churchofcolchester.org>.



## Department Updates

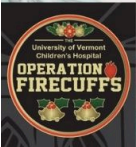
**Colchester Police, Rescue, and Fire Departments**, along with many surrounding emergency services agencies, are participating in Operation Firecuffs again this year. Operation Firecuffs is a joint effort to collect toys for the children at the University of Vermont Medical Center. This is the 12th year of the annual event.

Drop-off locations include the Police station at 835 Blakely Rd (open 24/7) and the Town Offices at 781 Blakely Rd (M-F, 7:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.). **Donations can be dropped off any time before Thursday, December 21<sup>st</sup>.** That afternoon, all of the participating agencies will send an emergency apparatus filled with toys to the hospital to deliver the toys with Santa Claus.



**Thank you for supporting The University of Vermont Children's Hospital.**  
We have listed some ideas below to best support all age groups.  
Currently the teen and infant population are in the highest need of donations.

<b>Infant Items:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toys</li> <li>• Books</li> <li>• Board Books</li> <li>• Sound machines</li> <li>• Bath toys</li> <li>• Diapers</li> </ul>	<b>Wish List Items:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legos</li> <li>• Games (Uno, Connect 4)</li> <li>• Slime Kits</li> <li>• Playdoh</li> <li>• Board Books</li> <li>• Kinetic Sand</li> <li>• Magnatiles</li> <li>• "Little People" Toys</li> <li>• Playsets (Bluey, Paw Patrol)</li> </ul>	<b>Teen Items:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gift cards (Walmart &amp; target)</li> <li>• Wireless speakers</li> <li>• Wireless headphones</li> <li>• Remote control cars</li> <li>• Legos</li> </ul>
---	---	--



### Upcoming Town Meetings

**Selectboard Meeting:** Tuesday, December 12, 6:00 p.m. (public portion beginning at 6:30 p.m.) at the Colchester Town Offices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road. Alternatively, send a note, up to 1,000 words, to [TownManager@colchestervt.gov](mailto:TownManager@colchestervt.gov) with “Citizens to be Heard” in the Subject and your name. As with in-person Citizens to be Heard, we ask that you SHARE YOUR ADDRESS. The email will be shared with the entire Selectboard prior to the meeting and included in the information packet at the next meeting.

- Watch the Meeting Online via Live Stream: <http://lcatv.org/live-stream-2>
- Agenda: [www.bit.ly/Colchester-SB-Agendas](http://www.bit.ly/Colchester-SB-Agendas)

**Recreation Advisory Board:** Wednesday, December 13, 7:00 a.m. at the Colchester Town Offices, 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road.

**Development Review Board:** Wednesday, December 13, 7:00 p.m. at the Colchester Town Offices, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Outer Bay Conference Room, 781 Blakely Road. Residents are welcome to attend the meeting or public comments can be submitted prior to the hearing by email to [zmaia@colchestervt.gov](mailto:zmaia@colchestervt.gov) or by mail to Town of Colchester, c/o Development Review Board, 781 Blakely Road, Colchester, VT 05446.

**Library Board of Trustees:** Thursday, December 21, 4:00 p.m., in the Burnham Room of the Burnham Memorial Library.

**Agendas available:** <http://clerkshq.com/Colchester-vt>

**Note:** Agendas are posted at least 48 hours before the meeting, so you may find past agendas when clicking the link. Revisiting the link closer to the date of the meeting should provide you with the current agenda.

**Subscribe to the Town Newsletter:** <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/jkMAO2v>

For more information or to comment, call 802-264-5509 or email [townmanager@colchestervt.gov](mailto:townmanager@colchestervt.gov)