



News and Events

May 2020

Coronavirus Update

As your First Selectman, my number one goal is to stop the spread of this deadly virus, by insisting that everyone stay home and stay safe. Please only go out for essential items, hopefully for only food and medicine. This is not a time to “catch up” with friends we have not seen in a while, socialize while out on daily walks, or begin new projects involving hiring people to come into our homes. Please keep in mind that you and others may be carrying and spreading this disease without having symptoms, or before feeling ill. It is incredibly important for us to stay home to save lives.

My heart goes out to all families who have been touched by this illness and those who have lost loved ones. My gratitude goes out to all those working on the front lines to keep us safe and healthy including our first responders, our town staff, medical and hospital staff, grocery store staff and more. We are encouraging Woodbridge residents to make and display hearts as a show of thanks and solidarity. Read more about this on page 2.

Town buildings remain closed to the public and have been since mid-March. In April, I closed the Town playgrounds, our athletic fields and tennis courts. The Dog Park Cooperative chose to voluntarily close the dog park, to further minimize resident interaction.

The Governor has mandated that everyone wear a mask while in public and our Human Services Department is doing a wonderful job of collecting and providing masks for residents. Read more about this on page 2.

On April 20, 2020, we held the Preliminary Budget Hearing (virtually) in order to comply with Governor Lamont’s Executive Order #7I and Executive Order #7B. The preliminary budget was drafted prior to the pandemic. People are suffer-



ing in Woodbridge. Paychecks are not coming. Small businesses are hurting. I have asked our Finance Director to work with the Board of Finance to search for further cost savings to help our taxpayers. While there is no guarantee, I am cautiously optimistic that the Board of Finance WILL be able to find additional expense reductions from the preliminary budget that was mailed to all taxpayers, that could lead to tax savings in the final budget. Another change related to the pandemic, is that the July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021 Budget will be determined by a vote of the Board of Finance in lieu of convening the Annual Town Meeting. Despite the fact that we are convening by phone or internet, our

Town’s charter and its institutions endure.

Although our buildings are closed, staff continue to work. Please join me in thanking all Woodbridge employees, and especially our town residents for being flexible and understanding during these unprecedented times. We are working so hard to keep each other safe, and informed, and to provide a safe workplace for our staff so they can continue to serve our residents.

Things are changing very quickly every day. To stay up to date, I encourage all residents to follow the Town of Woodbridge Facebook (facebook.com/WoodbridgeCT), sign up for CTAlerts (ctalert.gov) and sign up for the Town’s newsletter (tinyurl.com/WoodbridgeEnewsletter).

I am so very proud of all our townspeople. The caring and hard work everyone has shown to keep us safe is unprecedented. I remain hopeful that we will get through this — we are staying apart now so we can come together later!

—First Selectman Beth Heller

Selectmen Approve Tax Relief Deferral Program

The Coronavirus has sadly not only affected the health of many in our community but also caused financial hardship for many Woodbridge families. In an effort to provide financial relief to eligible taxpayers, the Board of Selectmen unanimously approved participation in the tax relief program established by Governor Lamont’s Executive Order 7S at their April 22 Special Meeting.

Eligibility to the Tax Relief Deferral Program requires that an application be filed with the Tax Collector no later than July 1, 2020 by those whose income was affected by COVID-19. With regard to this program:

- Tax deferral will not apply to any taxes due before

July 1, 2020.

- Taxes escrowed with a mortgage company cannot be deferred.
- If you participate in the deferral program, tax payment is due in full by October 1, 2020. If payment is not received by this date, interest will apply at 1.5% per month back to the due date of July 1, 2020.

Applications will soon be available at WoodbridgeCT.org on the Tax Collector page or by calling the Tax Office at 203-389-3425 or 203-389-3474. Completed applications must be returned to the Tax Office by mail or dropped off at Town Hall by July 1, 2020.

Town News

Mask Making for the Community— Spearheaded by Human Services

Woodbridge resident Alice Lippman wears one of the masks she created. Alice and others in Woodbridge are busy making masks with donated fabric. Adults and students of all ages can make masks to keep Woodbridge safe as there are two patterns for manufacturing masks — a 'sew' and 'no-sew' version. Patterns can be provided or go to the Town website for instructions: WoodbridgeCT.org.



ty service hours approval or donate clean elastic, please call 203-389-3429.

Many thanks to Ellen McDonald, Geri White, Nancy Cavallaro, Alice Lippman, Monica

Kaczmarczyk, Alyssa Letis, Wendy Frieden and Lillian Malcus for their commitment to the safety of our community.

To receive a mask, please call 203-389-3430. Masks will be delivered to you as soon as they become available.

To volunteer, receive communi-

Show Your Heart

Residents are encouraged to participate in two community projects to make people feel connected while being forced to be apart.

Beecher Road School Librarian Larissa Crocco and art teacher Ashley Wagner are asking students and residents to participate in a community building project: create and display a heart in windows, mailboxes, doors and/or yards so others could notice the hearts as they take walks or drive through town.

Hearts can be constructed from

whatever materials people have at home. "At a time when we are forced to keep our distance, it is a way for us to come together as a town," says Crocco.

Several residents, including Kay Robinson, suggested to First Selectman Beth Heller that the Town encourage everyone to ring a bell each night from 8 to 8:02 pm. This is "an old English tradition to show solidarity and support for each other," writes Robinson. "It is a way of connecting all of us in this time of isolation."

Fire Department's COVID-19 Protocol

Being on the COVID-19 pandemic frontline, we are taking steps to prevent exposure/spread to not only our firefighters but also the citizens we protect.

- We are responding to all calls 24/7 as we always have and will continue to do so.
- Please don't be alarmed if we respond to a medical call dressed in personal protective equipment (PPE) such as gloves, mask, goggles, gown, and face shields. This is strictly precautionary.
- 911 dispatchers will ask related COVID-19 questions to callers.
- Out of an abundance of caution, we may use PPE even if all COVID-19 criteria aren't met.
- You may be asked to meet our members at your front door or

even outside.

- Initial evaluation may be done at a distance of 6' until we can further assess the situation.

- Depending on symptoms, we may ask you to wear a face mask.

Again, these measures are out of an abundance of caution while we limit potential exposure. Please continue to follow recommendations from our local, state, and federal officials along with the CDC guidelines.

If you have any questions, please call the Fire Department's non-emergency number, 203-389-3441. Thank you for your patience, cooperation, and sense of community as we work together to maintain a safe and healthy environment.



Leslie Marsh, ECC

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Human Services Assists the Community

Woodbridge Human Services will assist qualifying seniors and families with non-perishable Food Pantry items and Stop & Shop gift cards for perishable items. Please call 203-389-3429.

Monetary contributions and gift cards are needed. Non-perishable donations are welcome — please ensure donated items are not expired. Call to arrange a no contact, drop-off appointment.

Human Services continues to provide wellness outreach calls to residents 70+ years old. Please call if you would like to reach out to us.

The Woodbridge Center is providing essential transportation to Woodbridge residents, 60+ and disabled residents. Call 203-389-3430 for transportation.

Woodbridge seniors may reserve fresh flash-frozen, prepared meals with home

delivery on Tuesdays. Meals cost \$4; call for meal choices.

The Center is now offering an online method for staying in touch. Call for details on playing cards virtually through the internet on a computer, tablet or smartphone. Other boredom busters include books, puzzles and word searches — call to arrange for home delivery. For updates, follow us on Facebook @ The Woodbridge Center, Woodbridge CT.

Youth Services urges students of all ages to help keep our community safe by making masks (see p. 2). For community service hours approval or additional details, call 203-389-3429.

Students, ages 5-18, can show they care by connecting with community seniors (age 70+) through a letter, poem

or artwork. Your notes will be forwarded to our older friends who will appreciate the love. To schedule a no contact, drop-off, please call 203-389-3429 or email: npfund@woodbridge.org.

New virtual classes are now available for teens. To register, please email npfund@woodbridge.org or call 203-389-3429. You must have a valid email address for a Zoom invitation to join these classes.

Youth Yoga for Teens (11-15) with Bill Banick - four free classes to stretch and relieve stress; dates include 5/8, 5/11, 5/15, 5/18, 1:15-2:00 pm.

Zoom Into Mindfulness (13-18) with Dr. Jen Botwick for Teens - four free classes to 'De-stress this COVID-19 Mess'; dates include 5/7, 5/12, 5/14, 5/19, 3:30-4:30 pm.

The Library Is Accessible From Home!

There have been many new resources and changes to the Library — even though the building remains closed to the public, staff continues to work remotely.

A new fresh, updated website has been launched which features mobile optimization (better smartphone visuals) and ease in navigating. Be sure to visit the same address: woodbridgetownlibrary.org. A huge thank you goes to the Friends of the Woodbridge Library for their support in this undertaking. You can thank the Friends too! When you shop Amazon, go to smile.amazon.com, select the Friends of the Woodbridge Library as your designated charity, and shop as you normally would! The Friends receive a small amount of your purchase.

The Friends also support the Library's expanded electronic media subscription services offered to Woodbridge families. Due to their generosity, the Library now offers patrons 10 items/month via hoopla. See the Library website to learn more about hoopla, which released a set of bonus borrows that do not count against the 10 item limit. OverDrive/Libby and Kanopy are two other digital media products also available to residents through the Friends' year-round efforts.

While browsing our new website, take a look at our database collection. A trial subscription to ReferenceUSA has been added, which has useful information for small business owners, job seekers, students, and more! Test it out — you will need your library card to access this resource. (A training session will be offered next month; stay tuned.)

Another popular library subscription is Ancestry, allowing anyone to search their genealogical roots, but it has always

been a library-only product. Ancestry has graciously allowed libraries to offer this service to patrons, so that they may conduct research while stuck at home. Your library card is needed to log in; see more details on the library's website.

"Join us" online for children's programs brought to your homes by Turtle Dance. See our website for event descriptions, registration details, and other preparation required by you. Two different morning programs are offered at 11 am.

- **Music, Bubbles, & Comedy** (ages 2-7), Sat., May 9
- **Space Show: The Cosmos for Kids** (ages 7+), Sat., May 16

Be sure to keep an eye out for special projects and storycraft sessions from Ms. Beth on our website and in our eblasts.

Updates and other library news will be posted on our website and on our Facebook page. Please check them regularly. You can also follow us on Instagram! If you have any questions or need help with digital media, we are here to help — simply email us at: askus@woodbridgetownlibrary.org. For other important library reminders, check out the April Newsletter on the Town website at WoodbridgeCT.org.

Need a Library Card — No Problem!

Residents can apply for a library card online or request their barcode if their physical card is lost. Cardholders have access to ebooks, movies, music, and more; all for free. Email askus@woodbridgetownlibrary.org and include your full name, birth date, address, phone, and email. You will receive a barcode to begin using electronic resources immediately. Physical cards may be picked up when the Library reopens.

Online Recreation Programs are Available

The Recreation Dept. will continue to offer distance learning/online courses, some of which are no charge, and for all ages. Check the "current programs" webpage of the Recreation Dept. for weekly updates. Programs include but not lim-

ited to: sports talk, stretching, arts & crafts, short stories, first aid, yoga, T'ai Chi, and more. To register, contact Theresa at: woodbridgetown pool@gmail.com.

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