Town of Fairfield News

2/5/2021 - 2.5 TOWN UPDATE



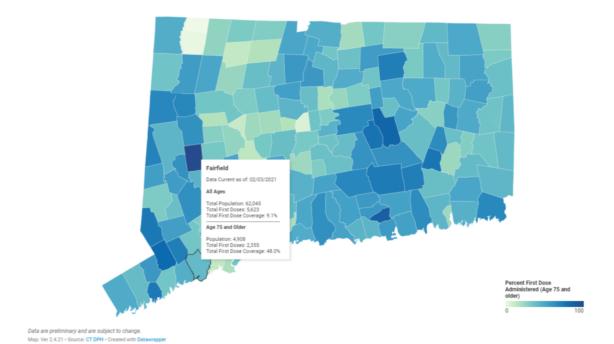
Dear Fairfielders,

We are entering the beginning of the budget cycle for our town. Over the last several weeks, I have spent the majority of my time focused on the town's 2022 fiscal year budget. I have been meeting with the department heads and my administrative team working on my reorganization plan for our town's government. On March 1st, I will present my budget proposal before the Board of Selectman followed by several days of budget hearings. The Board of Finance will then begin their process of reviewing the budget starting on March 11th, where they can reduce or add funds to the budget. The last step is for approval by the RTM in early April for final passage in May.

The overall town budget includes the town side spending and the Board of Education's budget request. It is my responsibility as the First Selectwoman to merge both budgets and make adjustments to ensure a fiscally responsible budget for our taxpayers. The final budget, and mill rate, both approved in early May, will be effective as of July 1, 2021.

COVID-19 UPDATE:

Percent of Population Age 75 and Older with First COVID Vaccine Does Administered - Fairfield (as of 2/3/21)



ALL AGES

Total Population: 62,045 Total First Doses: 5,623

Total First Dose Coverage: 9.1%

Age 75 and Older

Population: 4,908

Total First Doses: 2,355

Total First Dose Coverage: 48%

Vaccine Information:

As of the end of today, the Fairfield Health Department administered 5,856 vaccines to those eligible and they have an additional 3,300 appointments scheduled this month. The State of CT reports it has vaccinated nearly half of residents age 75 and older thus far.

The Fairfield Health Department's vaccine clinic continues to fill up their appointments. They can only schedule as many appointments as vaccines are provided by the State. Please keep in mind Fairfield residents are able to book appointments at clinics throughout the State.

If you are having difficulty scheduling your appointment through VAMS, here are some links that may be helpful: <u>VAMS Navigation Instructions</u> and How to <u>Create</u> your VAMS Account and Schedule Your First Appointment.

In addition to the Fairfield Health Department clinic here are other vaccination locations nearby.

- Yale New Haven Health If your Doctor is affiliated with Yale New Haven Health you can create an appointment through MyChart.
- Hartford HealthCare Hartford HealthCare is taking vaccination appointments for their location at St. Vincent's Hospital in Bridgeport. For more information, you can find it here.

Eligible residents for the COVID-19 vaccinations include all Phase 1a individuals and only those Phase 1b individuals who are 75 years of age and older.

Phase 1a individuals include:

- * Healthcare Personnel: all paid and unpaid persons serving in healthcare settings who have potential for direct or indirect exposure to patients or infectious materials.
- * Long Term Care Facility Residents: adults who reside in facilities that provide a range of services, including medical and personal care, to persons who are unable to live independently.
- * First Responders at risk of exposure to COVID-19 through their responses to medical emergencies such as Emergency Medical Technicians, Police, and Fire.

Phase 1b individuals:

The tiered approach to Phase 1b is as follows:

- *Scheduling now: Individuals over the age of 75
- *Scheduling next (likely early February): Individuals between the ages of 65 and 74
- *Scheduling soon (likely mid February): Front line essential workers and individuals with underlying medical conditions who have an increased risk for severe illness

If you fall under Phase 1a, you should register through your employer. For those in the Phase 1b category of 75 and older, you must complete the State form below:

State Form - 75 & Older

CT Vaccination Phases & Eligibility

Fairfield's COVID-19 Vaccine Call Center at 203-256-3082. In order to help with the large volume of calls coming into my office and the Health Department, our Town has launched a Vaccine Call Center. With thanks to our new Director of the Bigelow

Center for Senior Services, Brenda Steele, and many selfless volunteers, the phone line is targeted to provide support and guidance for eligible vaccine recipients. The call center is open Monday through Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and voicemails will be returned when calls come in outside the operating hours.

If you are a Fairfield resident who is currently eligible but does not have the ability to schedule an appointment via the computer, you can call our COVID-19 Vaccination Call Center where a volunteer will assist you in obtaining an appointment.

We will continue to post the latest information on the <u>Town website</u>, and the social media pages for the Health Department, the Town of Fairfield and my office. For a full listing of those social media pages, <u>click here</u>.

<u>Town Data:</u> The Town of Fairfield has had 3,818 cases to date, and 192 of Fairfield residents have sadly lost their lives. Charts and data on Fairfield cases, including daily & weekly changes, age, gender, nursing home statistics, testing results, different trends, and university statistics, can be found at www.fairfieldct.org/covid19data. The Health Department updates this page daily.

The Health Department also updates the COVID-19 <u>School Data page</u>, which details the school-related metrics and is updated each week as the State releases the data. The Fairfield Board of Education also has a dashboard on their homepage at https://www.fairfieldschools.org.

Drive-Through Testing Location: Fairfield will soon have a drive-through COVID-19 testing location thanks to a partnership with Yale New Haven Health. The location will be open for testing seven days a week at the Mill Plain Road Commuter Parking Lot, with an anticipated March 1st opening. You can view other COVID testing locations by clicking the "Testing Locations" button below.

Testing Locations

FAIRFIELD TOWN GOVERNMENT

Fairfield Revaluation:

Residents who feel that their revaluation needs to be adjusted can apply for a formal appeal with the <u>Board of Assessment Appeals</u> (BAA). Applications to appeal can be accessed through the blue "Assessment Appeal Information" box below. **Appeal applications must be received in the Assessor's Office no later than Friday, February 19th**, post marks cannot be accepted. Everyone who files an appeal by February 19th will be granted a hearing with the BAA. Visit <u>fairfieldct.org/assessmentappeals</u> for more information.

Check back for updates and information posted at fairfieldct.org/taxassessor.

Assessment Appeals Information

Elderly and Disabled Homeowners Program Update:

The Governor recently issued Executive Order <u>10</u>, which includes a provision to eliminate the refiling requirement for those applicants due to refile this year.

If you are due to refile this year, you will not need to reapply and your benefits will continue at the same level. The Tax Assessor's office will be sending you a postcard to confirm this the week of February 8th.

If you are seeking the benefit for the first time you will need to apply, please contact the <u>Tax Assessor's office</u> at 203-256-3110 and the office will work with you on the process.

The Executive Order did not extend the final date to apply of May 14, 2021. If you cannot apply by this date you will need to request an extension from the Office of Policy and Management by August 13, 2021. The Tax Assessor's office will be able to provide residents the instructions on how to request an extension.

For more information, visit here: fairfieldct.org/taxrelief

COMMUNITY NEWS

Fairfield University: This Wednesday, after 55 years of service at Fairfield University, Assistant Vice President of Auxiliary Services Jim Fitzpatrick retired. During his tenure, he received multiple awards and was inducted into the Fairfield

University Athletic Hall of Fame in 2012, after serving as the court-side announcer for the men's basketball games since the fall of 1971. In addition to his mentoring, Jim spearheaded and developed a weekly volunteer project that serves meals at Bridgeport's Prospect House that has been occurring for over 30



successful years, developed the Ignatian Residential College Program more than 20 years ago, and has revitalized the annual spring break immersion service trip to Kentucky. I wish Jim, his wife Phyllis and their family all the best.



Harbor Management Plan: The Harbor Management Commission is seeking public input to help with its efforts to update the Harbor Management Plan. Adopted by the RTM and the State of Connecticut in 1995, the plan guides beneficial use of Southport Harbor and protection of its coastal resources. Please take a few minutes to answer the questions available at: www.surveymonkey.com/r/SouthportHarbor

February is **National Black History Month**, a time to reflect, educate, and celebrate the many accomplishments and contributions of African-Americans in our country both past and present. Unfortunately COVID-19 has canceled statewide events honoring Black History Month. PBS shared a 28 Black History Makers in 28 Days,

you can read here.



As a town, state and nation, we are still grappling with the pandemic and its impact on town services, the schools, and the economy. There are resources available to residents and businesses who may need it, and I continue to share them below in the bottom of this newsletter. I hope you will take some time to review the helpful information below.

We are all looking forward to Superbowl Sunday, but I want to remind our residents to please avoid gatherings with those outside of your household to ensure our community stays safe.

SUPERBONIL

Brenda L. Kupchick

Fairfield First Selectwoman

LOVE LOCAL E-GIFT CARD PROGRAM

The Town of Fairfield and the Chamber of Commerce are continuing our buy local initiative with the Fairfield Community e-Gift Card program, which is exclusive to Fairfield businesses only. This is a great gift for Fairfield residents for both holidays and special occasions. More information here.



It's Game ON To Help Bring Even More Love to our Small Businesses

this February!

Introducing our Love Local Bingo Contest for the month of February! It's easy to play: make BINGO on one of two game cards by visiting and making purchases at one of 47 participating Fairfield businesses during the month of February. Once you have BINGO, take and upload a picture of your winning game card and fill out an entry form at ExperienceFairfieldCT.org/Bingo. You will



stamped receipts via the link provided as proof of purchases in order to have a chance to win a \$250 shopping spree and other great prizes. For a complete list of contest rules and to download your game board, go to ExperienceFairfieldCT.org/Bingo.

WINTER WEATHER

Resident Snow Shoveling: Per Town ordinance, Fairfield property owners are responsible for removing snow and ice from the sidewalk along their property line within 24 hours after the storm and keeping the sidewalk clear of snow and ice. Heavily used sidewalks near schools and public buildings, and the commercial areas are particularly important. Property owners may be fined and/or charged the cost of removal if the property owners do not comply.

Following the recent snow storm I have received calls from residents concerned about sidewalks that are not shoveled. In many instances, those sidewalks are in front of elderly or disabled resident's homes. The town will continue to do our best to remind residents of their responsibility while



taking into consideration that it may not always be possible for all residents to shovel within the 24 hour time period.

If you have snow removal concerns or would like to request a street be re-plowed, please enter a <u>Citizen Service Request</u> and select 'Snow Removal Issues' or call the Town Garage at 203-256-3177. For more information on Fairfield plowing and snow removal policies, <u>click here</u>.

It is also state law in Connecticut to remove snow and ice from your vehicle before driving on roads. When you fail to remove snow and ice from your vehicle you are putting yourself and others at risk. Penalties can be as much as \$120 fine.

2021 BEACH STICKERS

The 2020 Beach/ Transfer Station Sticker expired 12/31/20. Don't wait to buy your 2021 Sticker. **RENEW** your sticker online for 2021. You can also renew by fax, mail or in person at Parks & Recreation.



FAIRFIELD PARKS & RECREACTION 2021 SPRING BROCHURE

Check out some of the programs and events coming up this Spring... HERE!



BEACH BUNNY 5K: A Virtual Event

March 27, 20121-April 3, 2021. Registration opens 1/1/21, More information can be found here.



STRATFIELD VILLAGE ASSOCIATION BRICK CAMPAIGN

The Stratfield Village Association (SVA) is a certified 501 c3 non-profit organization, which aims to preserve, protect and improve the character of the Stratfield Village neighborhood in Fairfield. On January 13th they announced the launch of a brick fundraising campaign to supplement funding to the Four Corners renovation project.

Individuals and businesses will be able to purchase a brick with a customized engraving to be included in the new brick sidewalks that are part of the project.

The engraved bricks will be made available for purchase during two, five-week periods – the first starting Friday, January 15, and the second starting Monday, April 19. There are a limited number of bricks available because of space constraints.



The SVA's personalized sales page is

at <u>bricksrus.com/donorsite/stratfieldvillageassociation</u>. Bricks can be purchased in two sizes – 4"x 8" for \$100 with up to three lines of text, or 8"x 8" for \$200 with up to 6 lines of text. Lastly, a corporate sponsor may purchase an 8"x 8" brick with 3 lines of text and include a company logo.

The SVA has raised \$900,000 of its \$1 million goal for the project to date.

TAX DEFERMENT

Governor Lamont's recently signed Executive Order No. 9R allows towns to again

offer deferment for property tax payments. This past spring the Town of Fairfield approved a tax deferment program (for taxes due April 1st and July 1st) that Governor Lamont authorized in response to the pandemic. The new Executive Order allows towns to offer deferment for taxes due January 1. The extension will be for a total of 90 days, (an additional 60 days beyond the normal grace period). The revised due date is April 1. Anyone who fails to

FAIRFIELD TAX DEFERMENT PROGRAM

Governor Lamont signed Executive Order 9R allowing deferment for property taxes due January 1.

The extension will be for a total of 90 days, (an additional 60 days beyond the normal grace period). The revised due date is April 1.

More information & eligibility for commercial landlords at:

www.fairfieldct.org/taxcollector

pay by the new April 1 deadline would have to pay three months of interest added along with his or her existing bill. Escrow accounts are still ineligible for deferment. For more information and eligibility for commercial landlords, visit fairfieldct.org/taxcollector.

BLACK ROCK CHURCH HOT MEAL DRIVE-THRU

Black Rock Church will resume its Hot Meal Drive-thru beginning Tuesday, January 12. Each Tuesday through March, between 5:00 - 5:30 PM, individuals and families can receive up to six hot meals for their families, along with a bag of groceries for the rest of the week. Reservations are not required, and the dinners and groceries are free. Black Rock Church is located at 3685 Black Rock Turnpike in Fairfield. For more information please call the church at 203-255-3401.

GET INVOLVED! TOWN BOARD AND COMMISSION VACANCIES

Interested in giving back to our community? Want to have a voice in shaping Fairfield? The Town relies on the hard work of citizen volunteers who are appointed to provide guidance and governance on various Boards and Commissions. The list of vacancies for Boards and Commissions are on the Town Website. Be sure to check back often as the list is updated as positions become

available. https://fairfieldct.org/vacancies

You can also visit our Boards and Commissions page to learn more about roles and responsibilities: https://fairfieldct.org/boards

To learn about the application process click

here: https://fairfieldct.org/appointmentprocess

EMERGENCY ALERTS | WHEN IT MATTERS MOST

Get alerted about emergencies and other important community news from the Town of Fairfield, CT, by signing up for the Fairfield Alert system. This system enables us to quickly provide you with critical information in a variety of situations, such as severe weather, unexpected road closures, missing persons, evacuations of buildings or neighborhoods and other emergency situations.

You will receive time-sensitive messages wherever you specify, such as your home, mobile or business phones, email address, text messages and more. You pick where, you pick how!

If you were previously registered with us on the CodeRed system, you must sign-up again by following the instructions below, in order to continue receiving Emergency and Community alerts from the Town of Fairfield.

How to sign up? Click here.

FEELING IN CRISIS?

When you're feeling overwhelmed, know that there are free options to help you talk through your crisis--and to send help when necessary. Fairfield Social Services is here to help. Call 203-256-3170 for more information.

Being a parent or caregiver during COVID can be extremely stressful. It is perfectly normal to be experiencing varying emotions and feel overwhelmed. No matter what you're feeling, we're here to listen. Parents and caregivers can call the toll-free Talk It Out line to discuss their feelings in a judgement-free environment. Call: 1-833-258-5011 or Visit: www.talkitoutct.com

Resources for Mental Health:

If you or a loved one is struggling:

- CT Information Hotline 211 or go to www.211ct.org for mobile crisis support for

individuals and/or children.

- **The Hub CT** is Southwest Connecticut's Regional Behavioral Health Action Organization. Check their website for useful resources for mental health, prevention and wellness. https://www.thehubct.org/
- Mental Health Crisis Text Line Text "SHARE" to 741741
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 800-273-TALK (8255)
- Kids in Crisis also has a 24-hour hotline for assistance 203-661-1911.
- **NAMI** (National Alliance on Mental Health): If you need to talk to someone, text NAMI to 741741 or call the NAMI Helpline at 1-800-950-NAMI (6264).
- **Alcoholics Anonymous** Please contact your site to see if meetings are continuing in your neighborhood.
- **Bridgeport Hospital's REACH Program** is an intensive outpatient program (IOP) for children, adolescents, adults and seniors. REACH is accessible to anyone, and covered by Medicare, Medicaid, and most commercial insurance programs. Please <u>click this link</u> to learn more about the extensive range of treatment options available

Help for Domestic Violence Victims

The Center for Family Justice has hotline numbers to those who are in crisis and need our free and confidential services

The Center for

Family Justice

The hotline numbers are:

Domestic Violence: 203-384-9559 Sexual Violence: 203-333-2233

BIGELOW CENTER AND SOCIAL SERVICES:

Transportation services to medical appointments and shopping have been suspended. We will reassess in the New Year when it is safe to allow passengers on the buses. If you are unable to get to the market, the Mobile Food Pantry is available every other week and lunch delivery is available for those who are homebound. Please call Social Services for more information about the Mobile Food Pantry or Dial-a-Ride services through Greater Bridgeport Transit: 203-256-3170.

Our Snow Shoveling for Seniors program is not accepting registrations at this time for residents who need assistance. When we have volunteers for shoveling, we will let you know how to register. If you are a student and would like to volunteer to shovel snow for seniors and people with disabilities, please contact Social Services by calling 203-256-3170 or sending an email to socialservices@fairfieldct.org.

BUSINESSES

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has now re-opened the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) to all participating lenders. The SBA has revised the PPP website with updated forms, guidance and general information. If you plan on applying for a forgivable PPP loan, the Department of Economic and Community Development encourages you to review this new information and begin working with a lender as soon as possible.

5 Top Tips on PPP and its Re-Opening

SBA has re-opened the Paycheck Protection Program loan portal to ?????? participating PPP lenders. The Paycheck Protection Program provides loans to help businesses keep their workforce employed during the COVID-19 crisis. As of January 19, the SBA is accepting applications from all participating lenders. Learn about who qualifies for First and Second Draw loans, what the terms are, and how to apply.

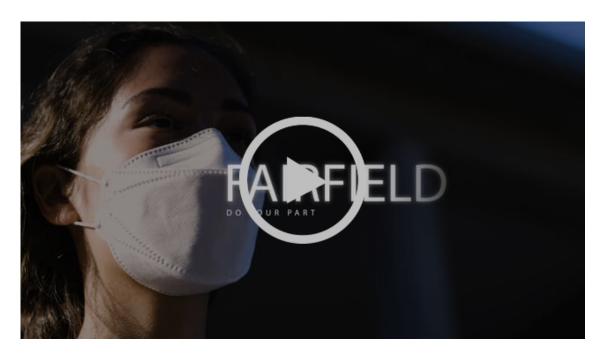
- Small Businesses can begin to submit applications borrowers can apply for a First Draw PPP Loan until March 31, 2021. <u>Lender Match</u> can help businesses find a participating lender.
- If a Small Business didn't access a PPP loan prior to 12/27/2020, they
 may be eligible for a First Draw PPP loan. See <u>First Draw PPP Loan</u>
 Overview for more details.
- SBA will ensure increased access to capital. The Economic Aid to Hard-Hit Small Businesses, Non-Profits, and Venues Act (Economic Aid Act), includes set asides for new and smaller borrowers, for borrowers in low and moderate income communities and for community and smaller lenders (<u>Guidance</u>).
- Second Draw PPP Loans are available. Second Draw PPP Loan
 Overview for more details. Translations available in <u>Spanish</u> and <u>16 other languages</u>.
- FREE Business Resources. For a complete list see Connecticut's SBA Resource Guide.

First Draw PPP Loan eligibility now includes additional types of entities and covered eligible expenses have been expanded. Additionally, organizations may qualify for a Second Draw PPP Loan if they can demonstrate at least a 25% reduction in gross receipts between comparable quarters in 2019 and 2020.

Learn more about eligibility and covered expenses <u>here</u>.

As a reminder, The Fairfield Chamber of Commerce office is open. You can reach them at 203.255.1011 or by emailing beverly@fairfieldctchamber.com.

FAIRFIELD PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT



What's your story? What's your reason? **DO YOUR PART**...Wear a mask!

APPLY FOR ENERGY ASSISTANCE

The Connecticut Energy
Assistance Program is for families in need of energy assistance, Fairfield Social Services coordinates with Alliance For Community Empowerment to help to obtain necessary energy services for Fairfield residents in need. To make an appointment to see if you're eligible, or if you have



questions, please call Social Services 203-256-3170.

FAIRFIELD BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN COMMITTEE:

The <u>Town of Fairfield Bicycle and Pedestrian</u>
<u>Committee</u> has been working to encourage
walking and biking for transportation, recreation,
exercise and quality of life.



Working with multiple town departments we have established <u>bicycle</u> <u>routes</u>, installed <u>bicycle repair stations</u>, worked to improve pedestrian infrastructure, and authored the <u>Town of Fairfield Complete Streets Policy</u> (approved by the Board of Selectman in 2018).

With more and more of our citizens using our roads, we would like to provide you with some important safety reminders for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers. View the document here.

TOWN GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Sullivan Independence Hall and Old Town Hall are open to the public by appointment only for the safety of employees and residents. Please visit this summary page for an overview and follow links to specific departments for more information.



'

Fairfield's Operations During COVID-19

FAIRFIELD COVID-19 SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Help is available to Fairfield small businesses that are struggling due to the pandemic. The Fairfield COVID-19 Small Business Assistance Program was established to provide limited, one time direct financial assistance to eligible Fairfield small businesses that have no more than five full-time employees and that have been adversely affected by the public health emergency. Applications

are still being accepted by the Office of Community & Economic Development. To learn more or to apply, please visit the website: www.fairfieldct.org/covidsbr.

Eligibility & Application



The Fairfield COVID-19 Relief Fund was established to provide limited, one-time assistance to Fairfield residents who have been adversely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Use of the funds must be directly related to the effects of the virus. Donate to the fund or apply for relief by clicking below.

Donate or Apply to the Fairfield COVID-19 Relief Fund

COVID CONTACT TRACING

One of the key tools we have to contain the spread of COVID-19 is Contact Tracing. For this initiative to be successful, the Health Department needs the cooperation of residents who test positive for COVID-19. Both Universities were trained and assisted by our Health Department to manage their own contact tracing for their respective campuses.

The primary purpose of contact tracing is to identify and notify direct contacts of confirmed cases as quickly as possible and to ensure those exposed are self-quarantining. The information provided in the interviews with confirmed cases helps reduce the potential spread of the virus in our community.

Any Fairfield resident who tests positive for COVID-19 and has not received a phone call from the Fairfield Health Department or the Connecticut COVID Tracing system within 24 hours of receiving their result is urged to contact the Fairfield Health Department at 203-256-3022. Calls received after hours or on weekends, will be returned by the next business day.

OPERATION HOPE FOOD PANTRY

Operation Hope wants to make sure residents of Fairfield are aware that the food pantry remains open and is ready to help by providing food and other basic needs to community residents, as they have for nearly 35 years.

Hours of Operation: Monday, Wednesday, Friday from 10:00-12:00; Thursday from 4:00 -6:00. Visit operationhopect.org.

FAIRFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Fairfield Public Main Library is open for quick browsing and checkout Monday-Saturday afternoons 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm and Tuesday and Thursday evenings 5:00pm – 7:00pm. Learn more about <u>Library Express</u> service.



Please visit <u>fairfieldpubliclibrary.org</u> for full details regarding <u>Curbside Pickup</u> at the Main Library and Woods Branch Library. Fairfield Public Library continues to offer 24/7 access to their digital collection of books, music, magazines, movies and databases. Visit the <u>Library Event Calendar</u> to find a wide and varied assortment of Virtual Programs.

Need a library card? Follow this link <u>fairfieldpubliclibrary.org/my-fpl/library-cards/</u> and get started today! Sign up for the library newsletter <u>here</u>.

We are excited to announce that **Punching the Air** by Ibi Zoboi and Yusef Salaam is our One Book One Town pick for 2021. Please check library website for all the OBOT events.



PEQUOT LIBRARY: WE'RE HERE, WE CARE

Pequot Library offers curbside pickup and limited browsing hours from 3-6pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays; and from 2-4pm on Saturdays. During browsing hours visit us to check out a book or view our display *John James Audubon's* Birds of America: *A Return to Pequot Library*, on view from February 4 - May 2.



Outside of browsing hours, enjoy digital programs like story times, author talks, book clubs, and more! Get details on our <u>website</u> and social media: <u>Facebook, Instagram, Twitter</u>, and <u>YouTube</u>. Sign up for Pequot Library's <u>Digital Digest eNewsletter</u> or contact our <u>Chief Librarian</u> for personalized book recommendations.

Important COVID-19 Links:

Fairfield Health Department coronavirus website: fairfieldct.org/covid19

For the latest numbers of cases, deaths and those recovered <u>click here</u>

For additional data and graphs of activity click here

For guidance and updates on Connecticut's coronavirus preparedness efforts, visit: ct.gov/coronavirus

Contact Information:

For general questions you can call 211

<u>Hartford HealthCare's</u> COVID-19 Clinical Command Center hotline, staffed by healthcare professionals, is now available to the community. To reach the 24-hour hotline, call <u>860.972.8100</u> or (toll-free) <u>833.621.0600</u>.

YNHH has a call center number it's 1-833-ASK YNHH that's open from 7am - 7pm.

PREVIOUS UPDATES:

January 22

January 15

January 8

December 23

December 18

December 12

2020 Archives

Archives