

MESSAGE FROM MONICA

November 10, 2022

Dear Darienites,

Tomorrow, November 11th, we celebrate and honor all American veterans. It's a day to reflect on the dedication and service of the men and women who have, and continue to, serve in the armed forces to protect our country and the ideals of our democracy. I hope you will join me in thanking and recognizing all of our veterans and their families for their service and sacrifice.



At 10:30 AM tomorrow, the Monuments and Ceremonies Commission of the Town of Darien will be hosting its annual Veterans Day Observation at Veterans' Circle, located in front of Darien Town Hall at 2 Renshaw Road. Please join us for this brief, yet moving ceremony that concludes with placing wreaths on the veterans' monuments.

Please continue to keep in contact with me with your thoughts, questions, and concerns.

Sincerely,
Monica McNally

DATES & INFORMATION

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

VETERANS DAY OBSERVATION

11.11.22 10:30 AM

ADVISORY COMMISSION ON COASTAL WATERS

11.14.22 7:30 PM

RTM

11.14.22 8:00 PM

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD

11.15.22 7:00 PM

BOARD OF FINANCE

11.15.22 7:30 PM

PLANNING & ZONING

11.15.22 7:30 PM

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

11.16.22 7:00 PM

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

11.16.22 7:30 PM

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

11.21.22 7:00 PM

The complete meeting schedule of all Boards and Commissions is available [here](#).



VETERANS DAY OBSERVATION CEREMONY

The Monuments and Ceremonies Commission of the Town of Darien invites you to participate in its annual Veterans Day Observation tomorrow. The ceremony itself will begin at 10:45, and last 20 minutes. Members of VFW Post 6933 will raise the flag, then lower it to half-staff. There will be a brief reading of the history of Armistice Day/Veterans Day, along with a reading of Canadian Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae's poem- 'In Flanders Field.' This will be followed by placement of memorial flowers and wreaths on the veterans' markers.

Parking will be in the lower lot in front of Town Hall, or in the lot to the rear of the building.

RESIDENT REMINDERS, NEWS, & TIPS

DARIEN FARMERS MARKET

The Darien Farmers market is a great place to order fresh items for Thanksgiving. [Ox Hollow Farm](#) is currently taking orders for fresh turkeys, [Newgate Farms](#) has fresh pies and pastries, and [Wave Hill Breads](#) has fresh bread and rolls available. Orders for baked goods should be placed no later than November 16th. All of your items will be available for pick up on November 23rd, which is the final day of the 2022 Farmers Market Season.

TRAIN STATION PARKING PERMITS

Parking permit renewals were due on Monday, October 31, 2022. As of November 1st all renewals are being assessed a \$25 late fee. Renewal questions and changes should be emailed to Anne DiCeglie, Parking Administrator, at adiceglie@darienct.gov.

SUSTAINABLE CT

Sustainable CT is a statewide, voluntary certification program that promotes best practices in sustainability in Connecticut. A total of 24 municipalities met the high standards for certification in a broad range of sustainable accomplishments, but Darien



is one of only nine communities in the State to earn a Silver level certification. This is an outstanding achievement for the Advisory Committee on Sustainability.

Sustainable CT offers support to help towns implement actions that build community connection, social equity, and long-term resilience. Certified communities demonstrated significant achievements in at least twelve sustainability impact areas, ranging from thriving local economies and vibrant arts and culture to clean transportation and affordable housing. In addition, certified municipalities addressed issues of equity and inclusion when implementing sustainability actions. For more information on Sustainable CT, please click this [link](#).

Thank you to the committee members who worked so hard to implement action items and compile the substantial supporting data that was required to apply for, and earn, this impressive certification.

DARIEN POST OFFICE TEMPORARY RELOCATION

Beginning tomorrow, November 11, 2022, the retail services and Post Office Boxes from the Darien Post Office on Corbin Drive will temporarily relocate to the Noroton Heights Post Office. Although there is no set timeline for the Darien Post Office to reopen, this is a temporary move and the Darien Post Office will return to the downtown community in 2023.

During this temporary change, hours of operation at Noroton Heights Post Office are Monday through Friday, 8:30 AM – 5:00 PM, Saturday 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM, closed Sundays. Extended holiday hours may be announced.

Important information for Darien Post Office Box customers:

- Any mail not picked up by the customer by November 10th will be safely and securely moved to Noroton Heights Post Office. This includes Post Office Box mail and packages.
- Post Office Box customers will pick up new Post Office Box keys (no additional cost) at the Noroton Heights Post Office. Government-issued identification will be required.
- There will be no change to the Post Office Box numbers.
- This move will not affect door-to-door mail delivery and the routes will remain the same. There will be no interruption of delivery service.

LOOKING AHEAD TO THE HOLIDAYS

Darien Parks and Recreation is collaborating with the Darien Chamber of Commerce, the

Darien Sport Shop, and others to bring back Darien's "Spirit of the Season" which will include a shop local stroll with Festival O' Wreaths, the Annual Tree Lighting at Darien Sport Shop, Parks and Recreation's Old Fashioned Holiday and the Menorah Lighting in Grove Street Plaza. Festivities commence Thanksgiving weekend and run through December 25th. Detailed information on all "Spirit of the Season" events can be found on the Darien Chamber of Commerce website www.darienctchamber.com.



In addition to the "Spirit of the Season" events, Wreaths Across America will be placing wreaths on all of the grave markers in Spring Grove Cemetery and hosting a ceremony on December 18th. The committee is still in need of more wreaths, if you would like to donate a wreath and learn more about Spring Grove Cemetery and Wreaths Across America, please click this [link](#). The last day to order is November 27th.

WATER MANAGEMENT

Although it seems to be convenient, lawn clippings and leaves **may not** be deposited in any wetlands or watercourses in the Town of Darien. Deposits of yard debris impacts and degrades wetlands over time, by creating filled areas over the soil that impair the wetlands' natural functions. Wetlands act as natural sponges that help control drainage and flood waters during periods of heavy rainfall and slowly release water which lessens the effect of droughts. The use of these areas as dumpsites also prohibits the growth of valuable plant species. Leaf material and lawn clippings once deposited in a watercourse, such as a pond or a stream, begin to decompose. The decomposition process introduces excess nutrients and depletes the oxygen levels in the waters. This is a form of pollution that negatively impacts vegetation and wildlife in the waters of Darien and waters downstream, including the Long Island Sound. Other pollutants, such as fertilizers and pesticides, may also be contained within the leaf and lawn clippings and will be released into the waters upon decomposition of the parent material. Dumping within streams, not only causes flood problems for downstream neighbors but also contributes to the need for high-cost dredging projects.

It is illegal to discharge or deposit any material into the wetlands or watercourses of the Town, pursuant to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Regulations of the Town of Darien. Such activities are defined as regulated activities under Section 2.1y of the Town Regulations. Residents are requested to dispose of their lawn clippings and leaves in an environmentally safe and legal manner.

Property owners are cautioned to find proper methods of yard waste disposal or to speak with and correctly advise their yard maintenance contractor. Residents may also utilize the Town leaf pick-up program. The leaf pick-up schedule can be viewed [here](#).

GOVERNMENT 101

FINANCE AWARD

For the 31st consecutive year, the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA) has awarded the Town of Darien the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for its comprehensive annual financial reports. This year Darien received the award for fiscal year ending June 30, 2021. As stated by the GFOA: "The Certificate of Achievement is the highest form of recognition in the area of governmental accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its



Government Finance Officers Association

Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting

Presented to

Town of Darien Connecticut

For its Annual Comprehensive Financial Report For the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2021

Christopher P. Morill Executive Director/CEO

management.”

The GFOA represents public finance officials throughout the United States and Canada. The mission of the organization, which has over 20,000 members, is to advance excellence in public finance.

The Town of Darien report has been judged by an impartial panel to meet the program's high standards, which includes demonstrating a constructive "spirit of full disclosure" to clearly communicate its financial story and motivate potential users to read the report.

Municipalities throughout the US and Canada choose to submit their financial reports to the GFOA to be judged. Darien always participates in the review, not to receive the award and recognition, but because the peer review can lead

to minor changes and enhancements in reporting and practices.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED

The HHR Committee is seeking an additional volunteer interested in serving on the committee. Candidates with construction or related experience are preferred. Details and information about the HHR Committee can be viewed [here](#). Interested candidates should contact Linda O’Leary in the First Selectman’s Office, loleary@darienct.gov.

MENTAL HEALTH

SURVIVOR DAY PROGRAM

The Mental Health Task Force, along with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), will host a SURVIVOR DAY program on Saturday, November 19th. Survivor Day is an event where suicide loss survivors can come together to find support, understanding, and hope through their shared experiences. To register to attend, please click [here](#) for the AFSP Connecticut page.



QUESTION, PERSUADE, REFER (QPR) SUICIDE GATEKEEPER TRAINING

The QPR mission is to reduce suicidal behaviors and save lives by providing innovative, practical and proven suicide prevention training. People trained in CPR and the Heimlich maneuver help save thousands of lives each year, people trained in QPR learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to help. On Tuesday, November 29th, at 7:30 PM, The HUB will be offering a free virtual QPR training to Darien residents. To register, please email aramsteck@darienct.gov. Registration will be capped at 30 individuals.

HUMAN SERVICES

2022-2023 CONNECTICUT ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

The Connecticut Energy Assistance Program helps eligible Darien residents with home heating costs. Darien Human Services is accepting applications for the 2022-2023 program. Residents must meet the following income restrictions:

Maximum Household Income

Household Size	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Annual Income	39,761	51,996	64,230	76,465	88,699	100,933	103,227	105,521

Proof of income is required, including:

- Social Security benefits
- Pensions or annuities
- Dividend and interest income
- Employment income
- Child support and/or alimony payments
- Unemployment, workman's comp. or disability payments

For 2022-2023 there is no liquid asset limit.

November 1, 2022, was the first day for fuel deliveries eligible for payment by the program. March 15, 2023, is the deadline for fuel authorizations or deliveries. May 31, 2023, is the last day households that heat with electricity, gas or propane can apply.

This program is not designed to pay all heating bills for the entire heating season (November-March) nor does this program pay outstanding bills.

Please contact Darien Human Services at 203-656-7328 with any questions or to schedule an appointment. The office is open Monday through Thursday 8:00 AM to 5:15 PM.

HOLIDAY GIFT GIVING PROGRAMS

Thanksgiving gift card donations

Now more than ever, our neighbors need help. Food insecurity is becoming more prevalent in our area. With food prices increasing, it is getting difficult to put food on the table for some neighbors. Darien Human Services welcomes donations of gift cards to local grocery stores (*Stop & Shop, Palmers, Shop Rite, Trader Joe's*) and distributes them to Darien families and seniors in need. Residents are asked to drop off the gift cards at Town Hall Room Room 109, or mail them to Darien Human Services 2 Renshaw Rd.

Adopt a Family: Celebrate the holidays by bringing joy to a struggling family. Adopt a family on your own or with friends, book clubs, or church groups. Families range in size from 2-6 people. We are asking for donations of gift cards (family-specific guidance will be provided by Human Services). Drop off the gift cards to Darien Human Services and we will get them to the "adopted" family.

Adopt a Senior: Help a senior rediscover the true meaning of the holidays. We'll choose a Darien senior who could use a little extra cheer this holiday season. We are asking for donations of gift cards (you will receive gift ideas to make things easier and more personal). Drop off the gift cards to Darien Human Services and we will deliver them to your "adopted" senior just in time for the holidays!

Please contact our office at 203-656-7328 to participate, or with any questions. Town Hall hours are Monday through Thursday 8:00 AM – 5:15 PM. Thank you for helping to make a neighbor's holiday a little brighter!

HIGHLIGHT

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT: Gina Gromelski, Human Services Commission

Gina was appointed to the Human Services Commission in 2018 and is currently serving her second term. "After having the privilege of working closely with Human Services Director, Ali Ramsteck, on the Tokeneke Pumpkin Carnival, I soon learned how critical this department is to the community. When Ali informed me of an opening to work with her, I jumped on it!"

The Department of Human Services provides a wide variety of services, including supportive counseling, assessment for benefits and program eligibility, as well as case management for any Darien resident. In addition, the staff provides crisis intervention, mental health resources and support including access to providers, substance abuse and domestic violence counseling and emergency financial assistance.

Prior to becoming a Commissioner, Gina had volunteered extensively through her children's schools and organizations that focused on Darien's surrounding communities in need. After meeting Ali and learning about the various services offered through the Department of Human Services, Gina was compelled to do more to help people in need within Darien. "I am so proud of the hard work and compassion set out by this wonderful, trusted department, year-round. On any given day, you will find this wonderful staff assisting anyone from veterans to families to teens to seniors, sometimes visiting them in their homes. How could you not want to be part of something so special?"

EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHT: Beth Paris, Director of Senior Programs at the Mather Center

Beth has been working for the Town of Darien since 2009, first as coordinator of Darien Senior Activities Center, now as Director of Darien Senior Programs at the Mather Center. She has been working in the field of aging for over 35 years, specializing in Cognitive Impairment and Community Based Services. Prior to joining Darien she was the Social Services Coordinator for Community at Risk Elderly Services for the Town of Stratford. This included directing a Social Model Adult Day Program, facilitating family meetings, providing information and referrals, as well as one to one supportive counseling for caregivers. She has been a Support Group Leader for the Southern CT Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association since 1991 and was part of a 4 part series Caregiver Course. Beth served on the Advisory Board for Southwest CT Area Agency on Aging for over 10 years. She is currently a member of the Statewide Senior Center Workgroup and is also on the Statewide Senior Center Working Group representing Senior Center Directors and Centers in Fairfield County. She earned her BS in Gerontology and BA in Mental Health from the University of Bridgeport.

MATHER SENIOR CENTER

The Mather Senior Center is running full steam ahead with numerous activities for our older residents. When seniors participate in programs at the Mather Center it reduces isolation and gives members a connection to their community in big and small ways - it is all about the quality of life at every age. At every age there are challenges and struggles, beginnings and endings. We need each other to get through, and keep evolving and growing! As we head into the winter and the holiday season, senior residents are strongly encouraged to get involved in activities that will enable them to connect with others. To learn more and to register for programs, go to the Senior Center page of the Town website [here](#).

PLANNING & ZONING

The annual Planning & Zoning Commission meeting schedule is posted on the Town website. The Commission holds its meetings in person on scheduled Tuesdays at 7:30 PM at Town Hall, Room 206. The meetings are live-streamed and recorded by Darien's TV79. Meeting agendas are published 72 hours before the scheduled meeting (Thursdays before the Tuesday meeting). For an application to be included on the meeting agenda, applications must be submitted to the Planning & Zoning Department 2 weeks before the scheduled meeting. Applications can be submitted online or in person at Town Hall.

The Planning and Zoning Commission meetings are public, and allow for public comment. The application review process during a meeting is the following: presentation of the application, Commission member questions, and then public comment.

The next Planning and Zoning Commission meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 15th. During this meeting the Commission is scheduled to review the applications for the proposed renovations of Hindley and Royle schools, in addition to 5 other applications. Based upon application submissions, the Holmes School renovation application will be reviewed during the November 29th meeting. To view the entire meeting schedule and agendas, once they are posted, please see the Planning and Zoning Commission page of the Town website [here](#).

RESTAURANT INSPECTIONS

The Region One Health Departments work closely together to create public safety announcements (PSAs) and other public communications. The most recent video is about restaurant inspections. It was filmed in Darien at Papa Joe's Restaurant and is narrated by Mindy Chambrelli from the Darien Health Department. The video is available to view [here](#).

LET'S TALK TURKEY: SAFE TURKEY PREPARATION

Last year, more than 46 million turkeys were carved and eaten at Thanksgiving. Turkey is typically accompanied by a host of side dishes and desserts, making the Thanksgiving meal *by far* one of the largest meals most people will cook all year. Here are some Turkey preparation "safety tips" from the Health Department.

- Do not wash or rise a turkey as it can spread germs throughout the kitchen - place it directly into the roasting pan.
- Do not buy fresh pre-stuffed turkeys. If not handled properly, any harmful bacteria that may be in the stuffing can multiply very quickly.
- Keep the turkey stored in the refrigerator until you're ready to cook it.
- All turkeys should be placed on a tray or in a pan to catch any juices that may leak.
- Frozen turkeys should remain frozen until you're ready to prepare it
- If thawing a frozen turkey in the refrigerator, allow approximately 24 hours for every 4 to 5 pounds, it can remain in the refrigerator 1-2 days before being cooked
- If thawing a turkey in cold water, allow approximately 30 minutes per pound. Wrap it securely making sure the water is not able to leak through, submerge it in cold tap water, and change the water every 30 minutes. The turkey needs to be cooked once it is thawed
- Turkeys should be roasted at no less than 325 degrees
- If you choose to stuff your turkey, the ingredients can be prepared ahead of time; however, keep wet and dry ingredients separate. Chill all of the wet ingredients (butter/margarine, cooked celery, onions, broth, etc.). Mix wet and dry ingredients just before filling the turkey cavities. Fill the cavities loosely. Cook the turkey immediately.
- A whole turkey is safe when cooked to a minimum internal temperature of 165 °F as measured with a food thermometer. Check the internal temperature in the innermost part of the thigh and wing and the thickest part of the breast.
- Remember to always wash hands, utensils, sink, and anything else that comes in contact with raw turkey and its juices, with soap and water.

If you are interested in detailed information about how to properly thaw and roast a turkey, please visit the Health Department page on the Town [website](#).

Sign up here to receive the
newsletter



Town of Darien | 2 Renshaw Road, Darien, CT 06820

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