

## Vernon Volunteers Collaborative

<http://vernonvolunteers.org>

Meeting with Mayor Dan Champagne – July 3, 2014

“Working Together: Lessening the Burden of Government”

### Friends of Hockanum River Linear Park

Ann Letendre

Provides supporting resources for development and maintenance of the Hockanum River Linear Park trail system; educates the public about the benefits of protecting and conserving the Hockanum River, its trails, and its water quality.

*Received \$347,000 in grant awards for Hockanum River trail development and watershed protection; raised \$148,000 of labor and materials for matching funds.*

### Friends of Valley Falls

Ginny Gingras

Owens and manages Valley Falls Farm, a local historic property; provides supporting resources for maintenance and protection of the natural resources in Valley Falls Park; educates the public about the natural resources within the Park.

*Received \$147,000 in grant awards for enhancements to Valley Falls Park, and \$355,000 in grant awards for preservation of Valley Falls Farm and development of a Valley Falls heritage center. The scenic attributes of the Park and Farm enhance area property values.*

### Friends of Vernon Arts Commission

Bobbi Orne

Promotes artistic and cultural activities for Vernon citizens; encourages arts education and appreciation; provides opportunities for artists to produce and present their work and to explore collaborative artistic and cultural ventures.

*Events attract over 500 artists and visitors per year to Rockville and the Vernon area; stimulates business for local artists.*

### New England Civil War Museum

Alex Oliphant

Preserves our Civil War heritage, and provides opportunity for the public to learn about this heritage.

*Attracts over 500 visitors per year to downtown Rockville, many from out-of-state.*

### Northern CT Land Trust

Karl Hasel

Protects and preserves important natural resources within member towns through land preservation, and careful stewardship of these lands. Enhances the opportunity for residents to enjoy the outdoor experience without expending significant Town resources. Sponsors nature and historical hikes and outings/programs to expand appreciation of our natural resources.

*Raised over \$200,000 in grant awards to preserve 100 acres in Vernon, enhancing property values and quality of life.*

**Strong Family Farm****Nancy Strong**

Is creating a historic agricultural education center where individuals, families and community groups can experience an authentic family farm environment.

*Attracted over 1000 visitors and event participants to Vernon Center in 2013; enhances property values and rural character of Vernon Center.*

**Tolland County Agricultural Center****Ginny Gingras**

Provides a center for agricultural education, ecological landscape education, family studies and leadership education for people of all ages.

*Attracts hundreds of visitors from neighboring communities to large regional events held annually on site, such as the CT Envirothon, the Four-H Fair, the Sheep and Wool Festival, and other conferences and workshops.*

**Vernon Community Arts Center****Joan Sonnanburg**

Enriches lives and enhances economic development by bringing the arts to the diverse community East of the River.

*Attracted over 8,000 visitors to its exhibits, classes, performances and events since January, 2013. Received a \$1.7 million grant to create an outstanding Arts Center – a strong selling point for professionals and young families considering a move to Vernon.*

**Vernon Garden Club****Jean Merz**

Stimulates an interest in horticulture, aids in the protection of native trees, birds and wildflowers; and promotes community spirit, beautification, and civic betterment.

*Maintains several garden areas in Vernon, two at key town gateway areas, enhancing Vernon's image and visual appeal.*

**Vernon Greenways Volunteers****Don Bellingham**

Assists the Vernon Parks and Rec Department with the maintenance and enhancement of the 30 miles of trails in Vernon, one of the town's key attractions; encourages use of the trails through organized events.

*Provides over 400 hours of volunteer time per year keeping the trails clean and safe; raises \$4500 in donations per year to support these efforts.*

**Vernon Historical Society****Barbara Muldoon / Jim Ashe**

Collects and preserves materials and artifacts from Vernon and Rockville. Stimulates interest in local history through sponsorship of local events and maintenance of a museum facility.

*Attracts well over 2000 visitors per year to exhibits and events; owns and maintains a historic facility that enhances the visual appeal and property values of Vernon Center.*