

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 27, 2014

Vernon Volunteer Organizations Unite

Vernon, CT - Vernon Volunteers' Collaborative is a new group supporting the community organizations that make Vernon a special place to work and live.

The collaborative brings together existing independent, non governmental organizations to address common challenges. By sharing resources, experience and ideas we will accomplish tasks difficult to do separately. Working together on joint ventures will reduce staffing needs, advertising expenses and increase exposure.

The eleven current organizations, primarily staffed by volunteers, have one or more of the following missions: the preservation or beautification of Vernon's open space, parks and environment; preserving and sharing Vernon's history and historic properties or encouraging appreciation of and participation in the arts.

These organizations are the Friends of the Hockanum River Linear Park, Friends of the Vernon Arts Commission, Friends of Valley Falls, New England Civil War Museum, Northern Connecticut Land Trust, Strong Farm, Tolland County Agricultural Center, Vernon Community Arts Center, Vernon Garden Club, Vernon Greenways Volunteers and the Vernon Historical Society.

Common challenges include coordinating event schedules, creating and maintaining websites, working with the town, increasing membership, recruiting volunteers, effective promotion and advertising, fund raising, developing effective boards and property management. An initial list of possible approaches has been developed.

What makes Vernon special and gives us our unique character are our abundant open spaces, well maintained hiking trails, gardens and parks; our heritage, including both our industrial and agricultural past; and developing and showcasing the arts through exhibits, encouraging artists and classes. Our participating volunteer organizations keep this spirit alive.

At monthly meetings strategies are developed for the top priority challenges, speakers are invited and we learn more about each other's organizations. We will coordinate and work with town and state departments and commissions as well as other area organizations sharing similar goals.

The Collaborative has been meeting monthly since December at the R House Restaurant. The Steering Committee includes Nancy Strong, Ann Letendre and Jon Roe.

Working together each organization is better able to accomplish its own mission for the benefit of those living and working in town.

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