



Habitat Happenings
Newsletter for Habitat Families
March 2021

Thought of the Month: “I’m a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work, the more Luck I have.”

Hartford Habitat Announcement

Applicant Information Meeting (AIM)

Location: **Virtual- Video Posted on HartfordHabitat.org**

Date: **March 1-5**

Please contact Family Services at 860-541-2208 ext. 2210

Office Hours

Family Services office hours will be **9am-3:30pm by Appointment ONLY!** Contact Family Services 860-541-2208 ext. 2210

- Please contact Family Services to update any changes regarding:
 - Phone Number and Email Contact Information
 - Home Insurance Policy Information
- Hartford Habitat is your Mortgage Company. You may contact us for information about:
 - Mortgage Payments
 - Home Insurance Coverage & Payments
- You should contact your town/city hall regarding:
 - Mortgage Documents
 - Property Lines
- If you have been in your home over a year, we suggest contacting home repair resources such as:
 - Electricians
 - Plumbers
 - Handyman

Senior Advice

Based on conversations we have had with families across the US, it can be an overwhelming and heartbreaking time; and there are many questions since every situation is unique. We created a detailed guide to help families find the **Best Memory Care Facility** in Connecticut. You can find our memory care guide here:

<https://link.edgepilot.com/s/d1d9d39c/3HUHxV2wzkW9PnfNzdB34A?u=https://www.senioradvice.com/memory-care/connecticut>

Assistance with Utility Bills

If you need help paying your Heat and/or Electric Bill, Please contact CNG or Eversource to set up a Budget and/or Payment Plan. Other resources include:

CRT

1. **Energy Assistance Program** 860-560-5800
2. **CNG**
 - Payment Arrangements
 - Financial and Medical Protections
 - Matching Payment Plans
 - Programs to help you lower your bills
3. **Operation Fuel:** If eligible, this program can provide year-round emergency energy assistance for low to moderate-income households. This program also offers assistance with repair/replacement of older furnaces, boilers, and water heaters.
4. **One-time Water-Assistance Grants Now Available!** CRT is working with Operation

Fuel to provide water-assistance grants to households in need. Applications accepted July 21, 2020 – May 28, 2021

Tax Season 2021

Free Tax Preparation in Hartford, CT

1. VITA Program (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance)

- **BASIC ELIGIBILITY FOR VITA:**

The VITA program is for individuals who generally make \$56,000 or less, persons with disabilities and limited English speaking taxpayers who need assistance in preparing their own tax returns. Also, individuals who are self-employed should have business expenses less than \$25,000, and individuals should not have income from a rental property.

- **HOW TO LOCATE A FREE VITA TAX PREPARATION SITE:**

Option 1: Dial 2-1-1 (available 24/7) – press option ‘3’ and then ‘6’ – and speak with a contact specialist who can help connect you with a VITA site or an appointment. Please note that if there is a wait when you call, there is an option to opt for a call back instead.

Option 2: To search for and view a list of VITA sites in your area, click [HERE](#). Once you click on the link, remove ‘Connecticut’ from the location box and instead enter your own address, town, or zip code and click the magnifying glass to search for a site near you.

Option 3: OR BOOK YOUR OWN APPOINTMENT ONLINE, If you want to go to a site in one of the towns listed below, click [HERE](#) to book your own appointment online. **If you’re not sure how to book your own appointment online, click here to watch a brief instruction video**

2. WHAT ARE OTHER FREE TAX PREPARATION OPTIONS IF I’M NOT ELIGIBLE FOR VITA?

- **MyFreeTaxes:** If your income was greater than \$56,000 last year or you prefer to do your taxes on your own, you can prepare your taxes yourself online for free at <http://www.myfreetaxes.com>
- **AARP Tax Preparation Sites:** If you are over the age of 60, you can use a free AARP Tax-Aide Site. From February 1

through April 15, dial 2-1-1 to get the location of an AARP Tax-Aide Site near you or click on the link to the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide Site

Locator: <http://www.aarp.org/applications/VMISLocator/searchTaxAideLocations.action>

- Tech savvy filers with an annual income of up to \$62,000 can file online for free at www.myfreetaxes.com/unitedway

For Your Information

Family Services will be conducting monthly maintenance checks on Hartford Habitat properties.

Home Repair Recommendations

We constantly get request for a handyman. We are pleased to re-introduced Hayvon Simon. He specializes in all home repairs and have completed projects for properties managed by Habitat. **Handyman:** Hayvon, 860-874-1670

Giving Back

- Family partners are needed. If you are interested in partnering with a prospective family please contact Family Services: **860-541-2208 ext. 2210**

Free Credit Report

To get a free credit report once a year

- Call (877) 322-8228
- www.annualcreditreport.com



**CONNECTICUT HIGH SCHOOL
COACHES ASSOCIATION:
JOHN J. FONTANA SCHOLAR-
ATHLETE SCHOLARSHIP**

Guidelines

1. All Supporting information must be attached before the application is reviewed. All information must be attached/inserted to the nomination form. Do not include an academic transcript.
2. Do not include any school/community names on the data forms that will identify your school or community. This information can only be located on the official nomination form (page 1). Failure to follow this practice will invalidate the nomination form.
3. Qualifying student-athletes must participate in a CIAC sanctioned sport.
4. Qualifying student-athletes must have participated and completed at least two varsity seasons.
5. Must have earned at least one varsity athletic letter in a CIAC sanctioned sport.
6. Must have achieved a minimum of 3.0 academic average - over all marking periods - Grades 9 thru 12 (inclusive of 1st & 2nd marking period 2020-21)
7. Have demonstrated exemplary citizenship and leadership on campus and in the community.

Supporting Qualifiers: The CHSCA would encourage applicants to submit their highest achieved ACT and/or SAT score and senior class rank if designated by their high school.

**Check Yourself: 8 Home
Maintenance Tasks You Should
Tackle in March** By Lisa Gordon

The month of March—when temps are beginning to rise but *before* those April showers—is the ideal time to get down and dirty with those maintenance projects.

1. Clean the gutters

Task: Remove leaves, pine needles, and other debris that have accumulated over the winter so your gutter system is ready to handle spring showers. Overflowing gutters and blocked downspouts can damage siding and foundations.

Shortcuts: Install gutter guards—screens, foam inserts, surface tension covers—which help to keep debris out of gutters. In general, [screen types work best](#), according to the folks at Consumer Reports.

Call in the pros: A gutter cleaner charges **\$100 to \$250** to clean 200 linear feet of gutter on a two-story, 2,500-square-foot house. Professional installation of gutter guards runs **\$7.50 to \$10** per linear foot.

2. Clean the AC condenser

Task: Remove dust and debris that have accumulated on the AC condenser (the big metal box outside your house) so that the AC works efficiently.

Shortcuts: Hook up a garden hose and spray the outside of the condenser. The water will melt away the gunk. Don't use a brush, and be careful if pressure washing—you could damage or bend the fins.

Call in the pros: Having a pro service your AC system costs **\$100 to \$250** and includes cleaning the condenser and lubricating the fan motor.

3. Prep the yard

Task: Start bringing your yard back to life now, before temperatures warm up for real.

Shortcuts: Remove branches and stones, and use your lawn mower with a catch bag to make short work of dead leaves and twigs. Got roses? For full,

beautiful blooms, most landscaping experts will tell you to prune your rose bushes [just before the plant breaks dormancy and after the final frost](#)—around mid-March for much of the country. If any buds are diseased, bag and toss them in the trash to avoid spreading fungus and infestations.

Call in the pros: A lawn service charges [\\$65 to \\$90](#) for mowing and leaf removal on an average-size lot.

4. Clean the siding

Task: Get rid of dirt and grime that can cause mildew and shorten the life of your siding. As a bonus, the exterior of your home will look fresh and clean for spring.

Shortcuts: There's no need for fancy cleaning solutions or power washers; a bucket of warm, soapy water and a long-handled brush are all you need. Rinse with water from a garden hose.

Call in the pros: Cleaning the siding on a two-story, 2,500-square-foot house runs [\\$900 to \\$1,150](#).

5. Clean and repair outdoor decks

Clear the decks!

Task: Cleaning your deck of leaves and debris—especially between deck boards—prevents staining and reduces the chance of rot. Check for loose boards, and reset protruding nails to keep your deck safe.

Shortcuts: Use a flat-bladed screwdriver to pry gunk out from between boards. Use a deck cleaning product to revive faded and stained boards.

Call in the pros: A deck-cleaning company charges [\\$80 to \\$480](#) to clean a 16-by-20-foot deck.

6. Caulk around windows and doors

Task: Inspect the caulking and repair any that was battered during the winter. Check around your windows, doors, and corner trim to prevent water infiltration and avoid costly repairs.

Shortcuts: Feel like you're always caulking? You can cut down on the frequency of this task if you buy high-quality siliconized acrylic latex caulk

rated for exterior use. It has good adhesion and flexibility, cleans up easily with water, and is paintable, too.

Call in the pros: A professional caulking job on an average-size house costs [\\$178 to \\$410](#).

7. Inspect walkways and driveways

Task: Winter is tough on concrete and asphalt—freeze and thaw cycles can break apart stone and concrete. You'll want to seal cracks with sealant made for the specific material of your driveway or walkway to prevent further damage.

Shortcuts: Stuff [foam backer rods](#) in large cracks to reduce the amount of sealant you'll need.

Call in the pros: You can hire a handyman to repair cracks and holes for anywhere from [\\$100 to \\$250](#).

8. Inspect the roofing

Task: Take a close look at your roofing to check for loose and missing shingles, worn and rusted flashing, and cracked boots around vent pipes.

Shortcuts: Make it easy on yourself by checking your roof with a pair of binoculars while standing firmly—and safely—on the ground.

Call in the pros: A professional roofing contractor will inspect your roof for free, but will charge for repairs: [\\$95 to \\$127](#) to replace broken or missing asphalt shingles; [\\$200 to \\$500](#) to replace boots and flashing.



March 14



March 5



March 27-April 5

