

For the Week of October 26, 2020

Manager's Message
Aaron Frank, Town Manager

On behalf of the Selectboard, thanks to the volunteer fundraising group, Friends of Burnham Memorial Library for their efforts in expanding the library's digital collection. Since the pandemic, the library has seen a 50% increase in demand for these types of books. The Friends dedicated this year's Annual Appeal to increasing this collection by 160 new ebooks and 65 new audiobooks. They are hoping to raise approximately \$8,500 to cover the cost.

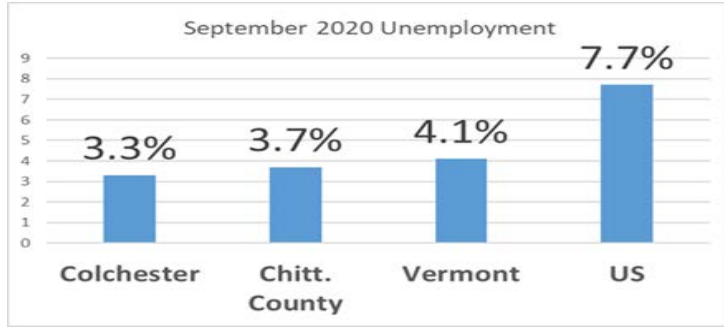
The Friends and their donors are a vital part of the Burnham Library providing resources beyond the primary property tax funded building, staff and collection.

Support the Annual Appeal by donating online at <https://colchestervt.gov/256/Friends-of-the-Library> and click on Donate Here. Donations may also be mailed to: FOBL, P.O. Box 134, Colchester, VT 5446.

COVID Update

Unemployment: During the current economic crisis caused by COVID-19, the unemployment rate rose extremely fast—but is now declining quickly, at least in Vermont and Colchester. Initially, the Colchester unemployment rate rose from 1.9% to 13.3% in two months. We are now at 3.3% unemployment. This is well below the 6.3% peak of the 2007-2009 recession. Info on past downturns: <https://colchestervt.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/693>

The 3.3% unemployment rate only represents people who are actively looking for a job. The unemployment rate would not include people who cannot work due to lack of childcare or a variety of other reasons. In September 2020, 7.9% or 868 fewer Colchester residents were working or looking for work than in September 2019. Unemployment definitions: https://www.bls.gov/cps/cps_htgm.htm. National, State, County and Colchester Unemployment: <http://www.vtmi.info/laus.pdf>



Unemployment Rates (%) in Current Economic Downturn

Month	Colchester	Chitt. County	Vermont	US
Feb 2020 (for perspective)	1.9	1.8	2.6	3.8
Mar 2020	2.6	2.5	3.4	4.5
April 2020	13.3	14.2	16.8	14.4
May 2020	10.6	11.7	12.7	13.0
Jun 2020	7.7	8.7	9.5	11.2
July 2020	6.8	7.6	8.2	10.5
August 2020	3.8	4.3	4.8	8.5
September 2020	3.3	3.7	4.1	7.7

In Colchester and Vermont we have been careful about the virus. Our unemployment is more than twice as low as the country as a whole.

Dr. Levine’s Advice:

As we head into the holiday season re-center, step back from pandemic fatigue and rededicate to doing everything we can to keep the virus from spreading.

Think carefully about travel, and know that if you do, you will most likely have to quarantine upon your return.

Take a hard line if you are not feeling well. Even a headache or a runny nose – things you wouldn’t think of as symptoms – could be a sign of the virus.

Double down on prevention, and not roll the dice on risk.

We have been a model for the nation, and if together we stay *Vermont Strong*, we can keep it that way

Covid-19 and Surfaces: In the early days, we furiously scrubbed, afraid we could get sick from the virus lingering on objects and surfaces. What do we know now?

<https://www.wired.com/story/its-time-to-talk-about-covid-19-and-surfaces-again/>

Saint Michaels College: On 10/22, Saint Michaels College announced six positive COVID cases. They worked with the State Department of Health to conduct contact tracing and augmented their already strong testing program to include testing of all students last week. These efforts yielded additional cases and as of Sunday 10/25, there were 26 active COVID cases, all in isolation and all identified contacts are in quarantine.

Saint Michaels College has extended their transition to remote classes, take out dining, and cancellation of in-person activities until Sunday, November 1, with retesting of all on campus students on Saturday October 31st. Saint Michaels is transparent about their efforts. <https://www.smcvt.edu/return-to-campus/updates-and-community-messages/>

Cases in Colchester: 77 as of 10/21/2020. This increased by five since last week. This is total known cases, not current cases.

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/response/coronavirus-covid-19/current-activity-vermont#town>

Colchester Rescue
Chief Scott Crady

- There were 175 emergency medical calls in the last 30 days, compared to 150 calls last year for this time frame.
- Vermont remains lower in newly reported cases of COVID-19 than other states and communities should be proud of their efforts that has helped to keep Vermont safe. However, there is a greater potential for the spread of many winter time colds and viruses as the temperature drops and more activities are held indoors. We at Colchester Rescue are continuing to stay alert and prepared to serve everyone in the community as safely as we can. Rescue personnel are constantly aware of their contacts throughout their daily lives when they are away from Rescue. Our providers know just how easily pathogens can spread to patients and the community if they let their guards down. So, Colchester Rescue providers continue to stay aware of whom they have come into contact, monitor themselves for signs and symptoms, clean and disinfect regularly and wear the proper protection needed. Through these efforts and help from the community Colchester Rescue is confident in providing quality, safe, and compassionate service to everyone.

Colchester Rescue: <http://colchestervt.gov/rescue> or call (802) 264-5990.

Planning & Zoning
Sarah Hadd, Director

The Colchester Planning and Zoning Department would like to remind the community that seasonal camps must be vacated by November 1st. There is a process to convert to year-round occupancy; contact our department for details.

- The Colchester Development Review Board will meet on November 18th via Zoom.
- Construction has begun on a new office building at 2209 Main Street and a commercial storage building at 35 Clay Point Road.
- The winter shut down period has begun for construction related land disturbance. Active sites must employ approved stabilization methods and new land disturbance over 10,000 sq. ft. must apply for a winter shut down waiver through our department showing an erosion control plan.
- As you prepare for winter, please consider locating your septic filter and cleaning it. Most newer onsite systems have filters located just under the tank cover that should be cleaned once or twice a year. These cylinders can be pulled out, hosed off, and reinstalled by a homeowner. YouTube videos can be used as a guide or a septic provider can assist with this maintenance.
- The Department requests permit applications be submitted online at www.tinyurl.com/ColchesterApply and request inspections and other information via email at pzinfo@colchestervt.gov

Visit <http://colchestervt.gov/planningz> or call (802) 264-5600.

Colchester Fire Department
Chief Stephen Bourgeois

In the last month, our Department has responded to 78 call for service in Colchester and several incidents outside of Colchester for mutual aid.

The members are continuing to train 2 nights a week getting to know the apparatus and working with one another as one Department. The Department is also hosting a State Firefighter 1 class with 14 of our members participating. This class will conclude sometime in early May 2021. We also have 4 members enrolled in a State Emergency Medical Technician class. These two classes will improve the level of service we provide to the citizens of Colchester and the safety of our members.

We are continuing to work on maintenance and repair of our apparatus, buildings, and equipment with the Town staff.

The heating season is upon us; please keep in mind the following:

- Install smoke detectors on every level of the home, including the basement. In addition to having a smoke detector inside every bedroom, make sure there is one outside every sleeping area.
- Make sure you have working Carbon Monoxide detectors on every level of your home.
- Keep anything that can burn at least three feet away from heating equipment.
- Have your heating equipment and chimneys cleaned and inspected every year by a qualified professional.
- Test your smoke alarms at least once a month and change the batteries when you change your clocks twice a year.

Visit <https://colchestervt.gov/3245/Fire-Department> or call 802-862-4415.

Upcoming Town Meetings

Agendas available at: <https://clerkshq.com/Colchester-vt>

- **Planning Commission:** Next meeting: TBA
- **Development Review Board:** **Development Review Board:** Next meeting: November 18 at 7:00 PM via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/9359846003>; Zoom Webinar ID: 935 984 6003
 - **Live stream:** <http://catv.org/live-stream-2>
 - Mail or email public comments prior to the hearing (Iriddle@colchestervt.gov or Town of Colchester, c/o Development Review Board, 781 Blakely Road, Colchester, VT 05446) or participate at public comment periods during the zoom meeting.
- **Recreation Advisory Board:** Next meeting: TBA
- **Conservation Commission:** 3rd Monday of the month. Next meeting: November 16 6:30 PM in the Kirker Room at the Colchester Police Department.
- **Library Board of Trustees:** 3rd Thursday of the month, 4:30 PM. Next meeting November 19 via Zoom. Dial in: (929) 205 6099. Meeting ID: 987 2676 0728. Passcode: 477087.
- **Selectboard:** Next meeting: Tuesday, October 27, 6:30 PM. Third Floor Outer Bay Room, 781 Blakely Road



Colchester Town News

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Colchester – What do you want to do today?

- Residents are welcome to attend the meeting or alternatively send a note to TownManager@colchestervt.gov with “Citizens to be Heard” in the Subject and their name. As with in-person Citizens to be Heard we ask that you **SHARE YOUR ADDRESS**. The email will be shared with the entire Selectboard prior to the meeting and included in the information packet at the next meeting (as the information packet for the current meeting is sent out along with the agenda).
- Live stream: <http://lcatv.org/live-stream-2>
- Selectboard Agenda: bit.ly/Colchester-SB-Agendas

Subscribe to the Town Newsletter: <https://www.colchestervt.gov/list.aspx>

For more information or comment: 802.264.5509 or townmanager@colchestervt.gov