

# THE MONTHLY TEA

The Official Monthly Newsletter for  
Employees of the Town of Bloomfield



**FEBRUARY 2025**

**VOLUME 14**

## CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

### AFRICAN AMERICANS AND LABOR: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

As we celebrate Black History Month this February, we reflect on the powerful contributions of African Americans to our nation's history, culture, and progress. This year's theme, "African Americans and Labor: Past, Present, and Future," highlights the essential role that African American workers have played in shaping our economy, communities, and society. It is a timely reminder of the strength, resilience, and determination that has driven the workforce in all areas of life, from agriculture to industry, education to public service.

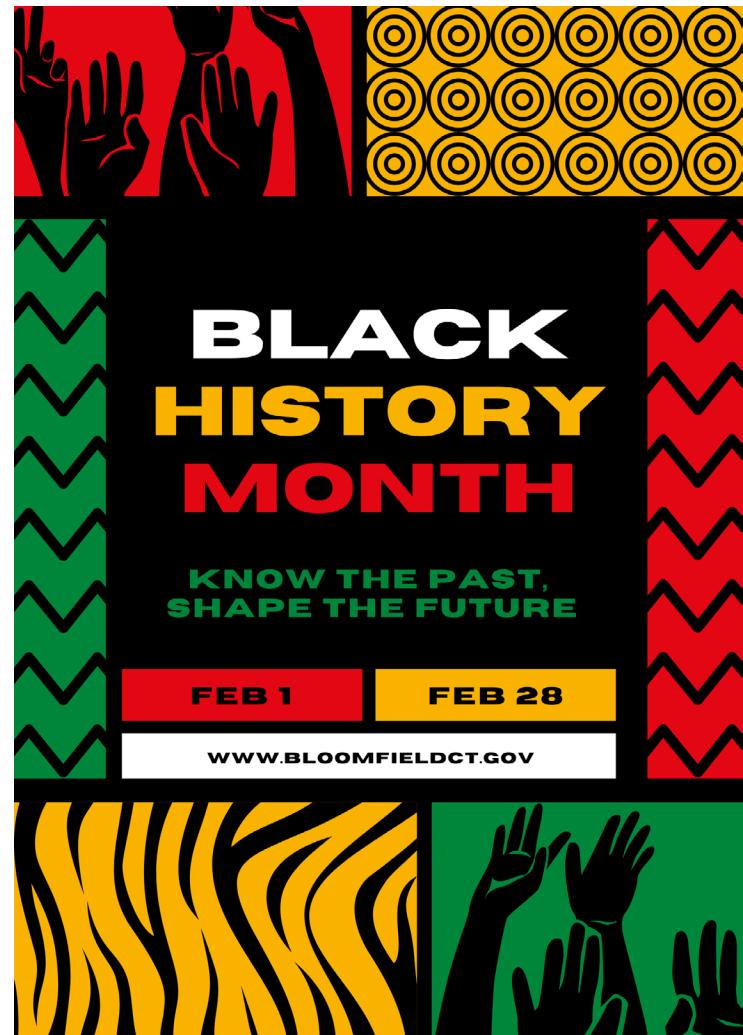
In Bloomfield, we are proud to honor the legacy of African Americans who have not only contributed to our nation's labor force but have also made significant impacts within our own community. As we reflect on this theme, we recognize that the dedication and perseverance shown by so many African Americans, both historically and today, directly shape the work we do as town employees and as a community.

Whether through public service, education, healthcare, or community building, the contributions of African American employees within the Town of Bloomfield are vital. Their work continues to strengthen our town's commitment to progress, unity, and inclusivity, embodying the values that make our community such a unique and thriving place.

This month is an opportunity for all of us to celebrate these contributions, learn more about the ongoing impact of African Americans in labor, and reflect on how we can continue to foster an environment of equity and opportunity in our town. Together, we can honor this rich history

while looking forward to a future where every member of our community is empowered to succeed and contribute.

Let's take time this month to acknowledge the vital role African Americans have played, both in Bloomfield and beyond, and renew our commitment to building a community where all individuals are valued, respected, and given the opportunity to thrive.



## MESSAGE FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

Hello Team Bloomfield,

As we step into the month of February, a time traditionally associated with reflection, love, and community, I want to take a moment to express my gratitude for the dedication and hard work each of you contributes to our vibrant town. Your efforts are what make Bloomfield such a unique and thriving place, and I am constantly inspired by your commitment to our residents and each other.

February is not only about celebrating relationships with our loved ones, but also about reinforcing the bonds we share as a team. As we move through the year, let's remember that our collective strength lies in our collaboration, diversity, and support for one another. Just as we work to foster a welcoming, inclusive community, it is essential that we extend that same spirit within our workplace.

This month also offers us an opportunity to reflect on the important historical and cultural events that have shaped our nation. As Black History Month unfolds, we can honor the achievements of those who have paved the way for justice, equality, and opportunity. Let us also celebrate the values that Bloomfield holds dear – unity, resilience, and progress.

I encourage all of you to take part in the upcoming community events, engage in meaningful conversations, and continue to bring your unique



perspectives to the table. Together, we'll make this a month of growth, connection, and forward-thinking progress for Bloomfield.

Thank you once again for your dedication to making our town a better place for all. I look forward to the continued success we will achieve together in 2025! One Team, One Fight!

Warm Regards,

Alvin D. Schwapp, Jr.  
Town Manager

## Random Acts of Kindness Week (Feb. 9-15)

*Imagine a world where you can succeed by being nice.*

*Where we all pay it forward.*

*Where people look out for each other.*

*It all starts with an act.*

**make  
kindness  
the norm.**  
randomactsofkindness.org

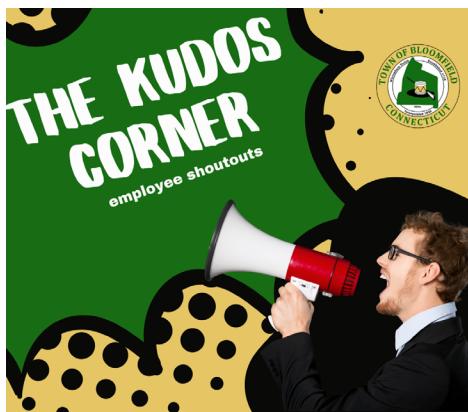


Leading up to Random Acts of Kindness Week, step outside of your comfort zone and perform at least one random act of kindness for someone each day.

If you're wondering how to celebrate Random Acts of Kindness Day, here are 10 ideas for random acts of kindness that you can do for the benefit of those around you.

1. Offer to help a neighbor with chores or errands.
2. Pay for someone's meal or coffee.
3. Leave a kind note for someone to find.
4. Volunteer at a local charity, homeless shelter, animal shelter, or other nonprofit organization.
5. Donate items to a shelter or food bank.
6. Offer to give someone a ride or help with transportation.
7. Listen and offer support to someone who needs it.
8. Compliment a stranger and make them smile.
9. Hold the door open for someone or offer assistance when their hands are full.
10. Write a positive review or recommendation for a local business or service provider.

**Foodshare**  
**February 4 & 18**



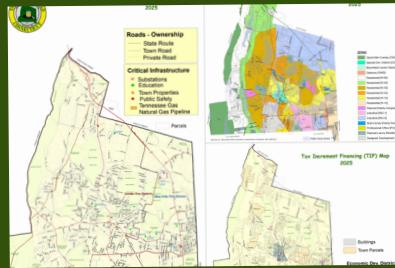
We are excited to announce the launch of **The Kudos Corner**  
- Employee Shoutouts!

The Kudos Corner is a dedicated space for employees to recognize and celebrate the incredible contributions of their fellow co-workers. Whether it's going the extra mile, lending a helping hand, or finding ways to make the Town of Bloomfield even better, this is your chance to give them a well-deserved shout-out!

Use the link below to nominate your fellow co-workers. Let's continue to uplift and inspire one another as we work together for our amazing community.

<https://bloomfieldct.gov/FormCenter/General-Forms-4/Employee-Recognition-Accomplishments-78>

## THANGU NARASIMHAN Information Technology & Innovation



Thangu is the Town of Bloomfield's GIS Specialist. As an employee of this organization, she holds tremendous information when it comes to the mapping layers of the town. Even before she was fully utilized, Thangu has kept up with the responsibilities of her position. After working with her over the past year, she's been very professional and diligent when it comes to her line of work. She has taken her time to explain what she does and has demonstrated how she's always in-tune with departmental needs while being cost conscientious for the overall organization. She's proven time and time again on how valuable she is for the Town of Bloomfield. As quiet as she is, she's IT's best kept secret.

Nominated by  
Warren Plummer

## LYNN WEISEL Strategic Communications & Government Affairs



The L.Y.N.N. is an absolute ROCKSTAR!!! As one of the Recording Secretaries that I supervise, Lynn has been an invaluable asset to our team since she joined us in June 2022. Her meticulous record-keeping skills and ability to accurately document meeting minutes have been crucial in ensuring that our Town operates smoothly and efficiently. Lynn's dedication to her work is unparalleled, and she consistently goes above and beyond to ensure that all tasks are completed accurately, in a timely manner whether assigned or not. In addition to her work performance, Lynn's positive attitude and willingness to help her colleagues make her a pleasure to work with.

Nominated by  
India Rodgers

## IVETTE VARELA Public Works



Ivette juggles a range of departments and tasks, including payroll and invoice entry. She processes more invoices than any other department, including Finance, and handles the most payroll as well. She's like the resident 'mom' (or big sister?) to her team, always maintaining a positive and pleasant demeanor. I honestly can't think of anyone else [other than me! :) ] who deserves recognition more than she does. She exemplifies our core values of accountability and respect.

Nominated by  
Christine Russo

## TERRI BLASSO Tax Office



I wanted to nominate Terri and acknowledge her efforts in organizing the Tax Collectors Office's first-ever DMV community outreach event, which took place on January 28th. She went above and beyond her role and recognized the value it would bring to our residents to hold this event in Town. She truly is selfless and always willing to go above and beyond to help others.

Nominated by  
Ashley DeJesus

# TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD

Last month, we proudly celebrated one year of The Monthly Tea! What started as a way to share important updates, recognize our amazing employees, and keep everyone informed has grown into something truly special—a newsletter that reflects the spirit of the Town of Bloomfield team.

To mark this milestone, we gathered on January 16th for a celebration filled with tea, delicious food, and, of course, cake! It was wonderful to see so many of you come together to share in this moment, reinforcing the sense of community that makes our workplace so strong.

The success of The Monthly Tea wouldn't be possible without all of you—our dedicated employees who take the time to read, contribute, and engage. Whether you've shared news, given feedback, or simply looked forward to each edition, your support has made this newsletter a success.

Over the past year, we've highlighted employee achievements, town initiatives, upcoming events, and moments of fun, all



while strengthening our internal communication. As we step into another year, we look forward to bringing you even more valuable content, stories, and ways to stay connected.

Thank you for making this first year such a success! Here's to another year of sharing, celebrating, and keeping the conversation going. Cheers!

## TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD REPRESENTED AT JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT READINESS DAY



The Town of Bloomfield HR department was represented at the CREC Academy of International Studies (Bloomfield) for their Junior Achievement Career Readiness Day on January 15, 2025.

Adilen Valentina, Human Resource Generalist facilitated interactive presentations on how to develop soft skills and what employers look for in interviews to various 7th grade classes in a rotation from 8:00am- 11:00 am; there were over 100 students in total!

## MARCH IS EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION MONTH

Employee Appreciation Day falls on the first Friday of March—it'll be on **Friday, March 7th in 2025!**

On this day, employers around the world make the extra effort to appreciate their employees' effort and dedication.

Here at the Town of Bloomfield, we will use the month of March to celebrate our employees and everything you do for our residents and our local businesses on a daily basis.

What would you like to see for Employee Appreciation Month? Have a co-worker you would like us to spotlight?

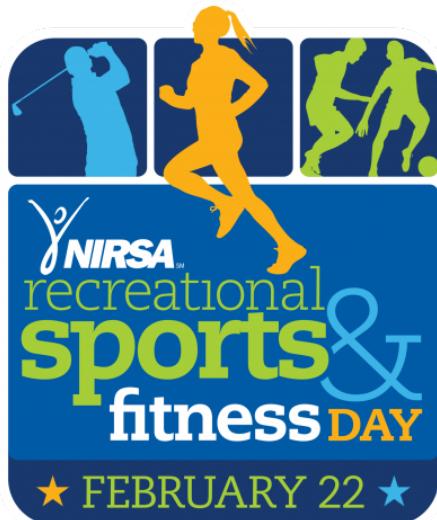


Contact India Rodgers (irodgers@bloomfieldct.gov) and Brian Wolff (bwolff@bloomfieldct.gov) with your ideas.

## CELEBRATING OUR TOWN'S TEAMS: NATIONAL WEEKS IN FOCUS

On Friday, February 21, we celebrate Government Communicators Day, a nationwide recognition sponsored by the City-County Communications & Marketing Association (3CMA). This day honors the vital contributions of public sector communicators who work tirelessly to keep residents informed, engaged, and connected.

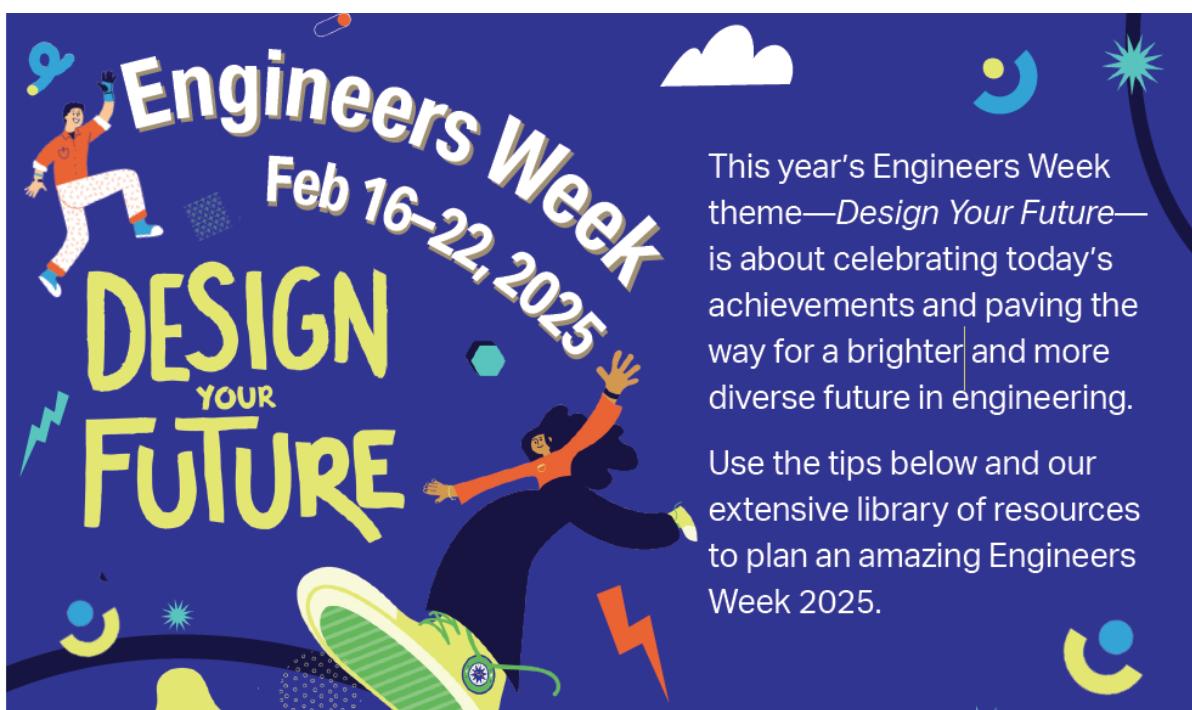
Join professionals across the nation in celebrating Government Communicators Day, let's take a moment to reflect on the significance of our work and the impact we have on our residents' lives. Thank you for your dedication to upholding the values of clarity, consistency, and accessibility in every communication.



Since 1999, National Recreational Sports & Fitness Day has highlighted the importance of staying active and promoting well-being through sports and fitness. This day was founded by the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (NIRSA) to celebrate the positive impact of recreation on individuals and communities.

Whether you're hitting the gym, joining a sports league, or simply taking a walk, today is a perfect reminder to stay active and prioritize your health.

A huge **THANKYOU** to the dedicated professionals who make recreational sports and fitness accessible to all—your work inspires healthier, happier communities!



This year's Engineers Week theme—*Design Your Future*—is about celebrating today's achievements and paving the way for a brighter and more diverse future in engineering.

Use the tips below and our extensive library of resources to plan an amazing Engineers Week 2025.

## HAIL WELCOME TO THE TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD



### New Employee Biography

#### NERTALIA BORGES



**Building Permit Specialist  
Building & Land Use**

**January 13, 2025** - We are pleased to welcome Nertalia Borges to the Town of Bloomfield's Building and Land Use Department as the Building Permit Specialist. She brings four years of experience in the administrative services field. Nertalia previously held the position of Senior Field Representative with the City of Hartford. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Finance from Albertus Magnus College in New Haven, Connecticut.

**“** I am excited to work for the Town of Bloomfield because of its vibrant and diverse community. This role aligns perfectly with my passion for Construction and Economic development and will allow me to work alongside a group of dedicated individuals while growing both personally and professionally. -Nertalia **”**

**WELCOME TO TEAM BLOOMFIELD!**



### New Employee Biography

#### DANIEL BONILLA BONILLA



**Payroll Specialist  
Finance**

**January 21, 2025** - We are pleased to welcome Daniel Bonilla Bonilla to the Town of Bloomfield's Finance Department as the Payroll Specialist. He brings twenty plus years of experience in financial services. Daniel previously served as a Payroll Specialist with the Board of Education in Canton, CT. He holds two Bachelor of Science degrees in Business Administration from the University of Puerto Rico, with majors in Industrial Management and Accounting.

**“** I am excited to be a part of the Town of Bloomfield Team. In the short time I have been here the people have been amazing and friendly. -Daniel **”**

**WELCOME TO TEAM BLOOMFIELD!**



### New Employee Biography

#### JOSE CARRERO



**Maintainer II  
Public Works**

**January 27, 2025** - We are pleased to welcome Jose Carrero to the Town of Bloomfield's Public Works Department as a Maintainer II. He brings eight years of experience in the infrastructure industry. Jose previously served as a Tunnel Construction Worker with Kenny Construction in Hartford, CT. He has attended and completed course work at Capital Community College.

**“** I am very enthusiastic and motivated to begin my journey with Team Bloomfield. I come from a diverse background of professions. I served in The United States Marine Corp for 10 years with many deployments to include two combat tours in Iraq. I've also served the State of Connecticut as a corrections Officer for 16 years and have also worked in the construction industry as a construction laborer. I look forward to bringing my experiences from my past professions and combining them with the new skills that I will obtain with my brothers and sisters of my new Bloomfield Family. -Jose **”**

**WELCOME TO TEAM BLOOMFIELD!**



### Employee Promotion Biography

#### ANTHONY GRANT



**Promoted**

**Heavy Equipment Operator  
Public Works**

**December 30, 2024** - We are pleased to announce that Anthony Grant has been promoted to the position of Heavy Equipment Operator with the Public Works Department after successfully serving as a Maintainer II for the past three years. Where he expanded his expertise to include infrastructure maintenance and operations.

**“** For the past three years, I've proudly served as a Maintainer II for the Town of Bloomfield, continuing my commitment to excellence in public works. My background reflects a deep dedication to ensuring vehicles, equipment, and infrastructure function at their best, contributing to the safety and efficiency of our community and will continue to do so in my new position. - Anthony **”**

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### February 2

Groundhog Day

Since 1887, Phil has predicted more winter 107 times and an early spring just 20 times. Over the last decade he has called the forecast correctly only 3 times out of 10.

### February 7

National Wear Red Day – Heart Disease Awareness

*The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute and many groups around the country observe National Wear Red Day® each year on the first Friday in February to raise awareness about heart disease as the leading cause of death among Americans, especially women.*

### February 7

All Town Staff Meeting – [Microsoft Teams](#)

### February 9 – 15

Random Acts of Kindness Week

*Random Acts of Kindness Week is a perfect reminder of how thoughtful gestures can spark joy, inspire change, and create lasting impact. Let's celebrate this week as a chance to embrace kindness as a daily habit and a way of life.*

### [7 STEPS TO CREATE KINDNESS IN THE WORKPLACE](#)

### February 9

Super Bowl Sunday

*Philadelphia Eagles vs. Kansas City Chiefs*

### February 14

Valentine's Day

### February 17

President's Day – Town Facilities Closed

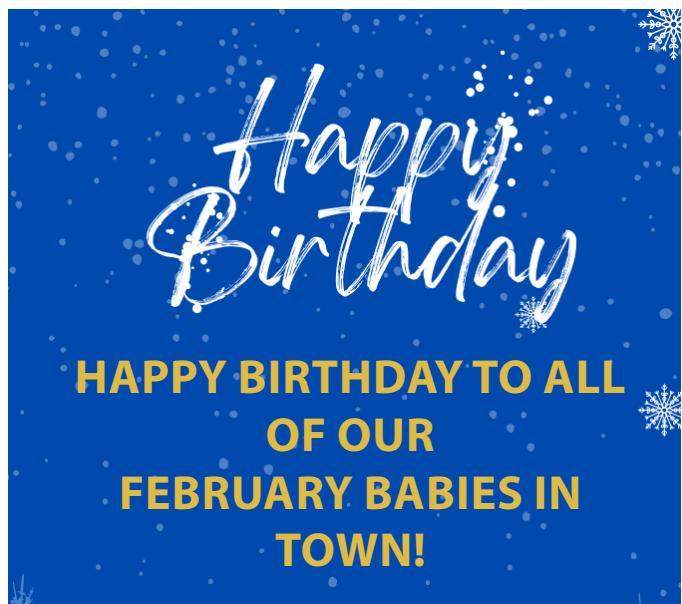
## February PAY DATES

FEBRUARY 13

FEBRUARY 27

## WORK ANNIVERSARIES

NAME	YEARS OF SERVICE	DEPARTMENT
Warren Plummer	2/12/13 - 12 years	IT
Ramon Flores	2/9/09 - 16 years	Leisure Services
Shaun Gallant	2/10/11 - 14 years	Police
Rohan Green	2/12/02 - 23 years	Police
Wendy Taylor	2/3/14 - 11 years	Police
Ellen White	2/14/00 - 25 years	EMT
Carol Walters	2/15/00 - 25 years	Library
Michael Giroux	2/14/05 - 20 years	Public Works
Davin Thomas	2/9/09 - 16 years	Public Works
Tonya Mullin	2/21/23 - 2 years	Senior Services



## TIPS & IDEAS FOR NEWSLETTER CONTENT

Have a great idea for an upcoming newsletter? Please let us know by submitting the webform by clicking this link:

<https://ct-bloomfield.civicplus.com/FormCenter/General-Forms-4/The-Monthly-Tea-Employee-Newsletter-Cont-72>

Or contact India Rodgers at [irodgers@bloomfieldct.gov](mailto:irodgers@bloomfieldct.gov) or Brian Wolff at [bwolff@bloomfieldct.gov](mailto:bwolff@bloomfieldct.gov)



CONNECTICUT PUBLIC EMPLOYER LABOR RELATIONS ASSOCIATION

## UPCOMING EVENT-REGISTER TODAY! *SUPERVISING IN A UNIONIZED ENVIRONMENT*



WITH ATTORNEY PATRICK J. McHALE OF KAINEN, ESCALERA and McHALE, P.C.



This workshop will educate supervisors about how to effectively manage union-represented employees. It will address the due process rights of employees protected against discipline/dismissal except for "just cause". The workshop will also focus on the importance of the specific terms of the applicable collective bargaining agreement, personnel policies and "past practice" in making personnel decisions. Attendees will be invited to participate in the discussion and ask questions. Attorney McHale will share real world examples in reviewing these concepts.

THIS EVENT IS SUITABLE FOR BOTH SUPERVISORS AND HR PROFESSIONALS.

**Date: Thursday, February 27, 2025**

**Time: Registration/Coffee - 8:30 am**

**Program - 9:00a to 12:00p**

**Location: Milford City Hall - 110 W. River Street, Milford, CT**

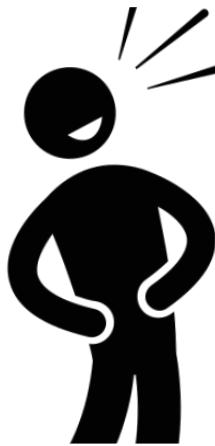
**RSVP BY: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2025**

**COSTS \$35 FOR ConnPELRA MEMBER TOWNS, \$50 FOR NON-MEMBER TOWNS.**

**CLICK HERE TO RSVP: [HTTPS://WWW.NPELRA.ORG/1247/CONNECTICUT](https://www.npelra.org/1247/CONNECTICUT)**

Parking available at the Wasson Field Parking Lot located on Constitution Drive and W. Main Street, the Parsons Government Complex parking lot off Constitution Drive or street parking on W. River Street.

## JOKE CORNER



Q: What do French groundhogs see on Feb. 2?

A: Their chateau

Q: What did the paper clip say to the magnet?

A: I find you very attractive.

Q: Did you hear that Campbell's is one of the main sponsors of the big game this year?

A: Talk about a Soup-er Bowl!

DATE: SUNDAY, FEB 9,  
TIME: 06:00 PM  
LOCATION: NEW ORLEANS, LA

## RECIPE CORNER

### Caprese Stuffed Chicken

This stuffed caprese chicken breast dish is easy to put together and so impressive! Perfect for any meal whether for family or company.

#### Ingredients

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 2 cups baby spinach
- 1 cup drained oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, oil reserved
- 4 slices fresh mozzarella
- 1 1/2 Tbsp. Italian seasoning
- 1/2 tsp. of garlic and onion powder
- Kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper

#### Directions

1. Preheat oven to 400°. On a work surface, cut a pocket into thickest side of chicken breast, being sure not to cut all the way through. Stuff each with spinach, tomatoes and their oil, and mozzarella. Season chicken all over with Italian seasoning, salt, and pepper. Secure with toothpicks.
2. In a large heatproof skillet over medium-high heat, heat reserved tomato oil. Sear chicken until golden brown, about 3 minutes per side.
3. Transfer skillet to oven and bake until no longer pink and an instant-read thermometer inserted into thickest part registers 165°, about 15 minutes.
4. Remove toothpicks. Arrange chicken on a platter. Pour pan juices over.



*Serve with your favorite flavored rice, potatoes, noodles and grilled or roasted vegetables.*

## COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS AROUND TOWN

### Bloomfield Humanities Committee Presents **BLACKS IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT PAST, PRESENT, AND BEYOND**

#### To Participate:

- Local Businesses
- Vendors
- Informational Booths

Fee for vendors is \$30 and they can register at [bloomfieldct.myrec.com](http://bloomfieldct.myrec.com)

**Contact:** Meredith Johnson at 413-626-9357 or Eunice Medwinter at 860-478-1459

**Email:** [Bloomfieldhumanities@gmail.com](mailto:Bloomfieldhumanities@gmail.com)

**Community Event Location:**  
Alvin and Beatrice Wood Human Services Center  
330 Park Avenue, Bloomfield, CT 06002

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2025  
9:00 AM - 3:00 PM**

**Speakers**  
Honorable Judge Charles Groce, III  
Julius Preston, Staff Representative  
CSEA / SEIU Local 2001  
Local Businesses & Vendors



### SAVE THE DATE!

Join us for a presentation of the Draft of the Town Center Master Plan with Public Comment!

Bloomfield  
Centered & Strong  
Town Center  
Master Plan

Alvin & Beatrice  
Wood Center

330 Park Ave  
Tuesday, February 11  
6:00 pm to 7:30 pm

Light Refreshments  
will be served!

**TOWN OF  
BLOOMFIELD**

For more information visit:



or contact:  
[afleming@gomanyork.com](mailto:afleming@gomanyork.com)

### Bloomfield: Centered & Strong

Bloomfield is excited to present the transformative vision and plan for the future of our Town Center.

- Where Are We Today?
- Where Do We Want to Be in the Future?
- How Will We Get There?

**African Drumming (330 Park)**  
Saturday, February 1  
1PM (All Ages)

**Storytime on the Go!**  
Celebrating Black History Month (Atrium)  
Tuesday, February 4  
5:30PM (Children 3-6)

**The Black Perspective in Film and Television: Beyond the White Gaze (Virtual)**  
Tuesday, February 4  
6:30PM (Adults/Teens)

**Black History Month Picture Book Biographies & Mosaic (Atrium)**  
Wednesday, February 5  
3:00PM (Children 6-11)

**Mystic Seaport Presents The Story of the Amistad (Virtual)**  
Friday, February 7  
1:30PM (Tweens/Teens)

**Celebrating Black Artists: Wadsworth Virtual Tour (Virtual)**  
Tuesday, February 11  
6:30PM (Adults/Teens)

**Wintonbury Book Discussion:**  
*The First Ladies* by Marie Benedict and Victoria Christopher Murray (Virtual)  
Thursday, February 13  
5:30PM (Adults)

**Portraits of Love with TimeFrozen Photography (Virtual)**  
Tuesday, February 18  
6:30PM (Adults)

**Social Justice Book Club:**  
*The Three Mothers: How the Mothers of Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and James Baldwin Shaped a Nation* by Anna Malaika Tubbs (Virtual)  
Tuesday, February 25  
6:30PM (Adults)

**Without Money or Moneyed Friends:**  
Mark Twain, Charles Ethan Porter, and Art Patronage in the Gilded Age (Virtual)  
Wednesday, February 26  
2:00PM (Adults)

## CELEBRATE BLACK HISTORY

**FEBRUARY 2025**

**REGISTER @ BPLCT.ORG  
EVENT CALENDAR**



**The Harlem Renaissance Librarians Who Changed American History (Virtual)**  
Monday, February 24  
7:00PM (Adults/Teens)



### FILLEY PARK POND

#### ICE SKATING

Bloomfield Parks, Recreation & Leisure Services Announces  
Ice Skating at Filley Park Pond

Bloomfield Parks, Recreation & Leisure Services is excited to announce the return of ice skating at Filley Park Pond! Ice skating at the pond has been a beloved local tradition for residents and neighbors for many years.

With the help of Bloomfield Public Works and the Center Fire Department, the pond is officially safe for skating as of Thursday, January 16, 2025. It will be prepared for public use, and the ice will be open from dawn until dusk.

Please note that skating is unsupervised and at your own risk. Signs are posted within the park to inform visitors when the pond is open for skating. To check current ice conditions, please visit [Bloomfieldct.gov/215/Parks-Recreation-Leisure-Services](http://bloomfieldct.gov/215/Parks-Recreation-Leisure-Services) or contact the Parks, Recreation & Leisure Services department at 860-243-2923.

For the safety and enjoyment of all, please adhere to the following guidelines:

- Safety and courtesy should always be a priority.
- Sleds, skis, and other non-skating equipment are not allowed on the ice. However, milk crates may be used for teaching purposes.
- Hockey playing is not permitted.
- Excessive horseplay and unsafe behavior are prohibited.
- Alcohol and recreational or illegal drugs are not allowed.
- In case of an emergency, dial 911 for assistance.