



# Monthly Newsletter

March 2023

*"March" is named for the Roman god of war, Mars. This was the time of year to resume military campaigns that had been interrupted by winter.*



## News and Information for Everyone

Did you know that the Senate passed the Sunshine Protection Act by unanimous consent and approved the bill recently that would make daylight saving time permanent beginning in November 2023? According to the text of the bill, the new time will go into full effect in 2023, with clocks not rolling back in November 2023 after springing ahead for daylight saving time in March 2023. After March 2023 spring forward, no more time changes will take place in most of the United States.



March's full moon, the Worm Moon, reaches peak illumination on the morning of Tuesday, 3/7/23. Look for it in the evening of Monday, March 6, as the Moon rises above the horizon!



This year, St. Patrick's Day will be observed on Friday, 3/17/23. Although the holiday originally started as a Christian feast day celebrating the life of St. Patrick and the spreading of Christianity to Ireland, today, it is a day of revelry and a celebration of all things Irish. Don't forget to wear green!



March 20 brings about the March equinox—also called the vernal of spring equinox in the Northern Hemisphere—marking the beginning of spring. At this time, the sun crosses the celestial equator on its way north. **Also on this day, the Sun rises exactly in the east and sets exactly in the west—a good thing to know if you get lost in the woods.**



You may have heard the weather proverb, "If March comes in like a lion, it will go out like a lamb," which means that if the month starts off stormy, it will end with mild weather. There is, however, a different interpretation: The constellation Leo, the lion, rises in the east at the beginning of March and thus the month "comes in like a lion," while Aries, the ram, sets in the west at the end of the month, and hence, the month "will go out like a lamb."



However, March 29-31 are also known as the Borrowing Days. According to lore, the last three days of March have a reputation for being stormy. We shall see!



**For those who like to fish** (and boy are there lots of places to enjoy fishing in Portland), the best Fishing Days in March are 1-7 and 21-31.



**How about that garden?** There are many benefits to sowing seeds indoors:

1. It gives you a head start on the growing season, which can lead to more fruitful harvests. It's actually necessary for plants such as tomatoes. They can't be planted too early in the spring, as the soil is too cool. In New England, there aren't enough growing days for those plants to get to harvest if they're started outside. Starting seeds indoors allows you to gain a few precious weeks of growing time, which can make a big difference.
2. If you don't seed indoors, you will need to buy young plants called "transplants" or "starts" at the garden store or nursery. While some nursery starter plants are grown nicely, others may be of poor quality and don't thrive once they're home. When you plant your own seeds, you tend to have healthier starts, since you can care for them from day one. There is also a much wider range of varieties available as seeds—things you would never find in a six-pack at the local garden center, and seeds are much less expensive than buying plants at the garden store.
3. You will know how they have been raised—organically instead of bathed in a wash of chemicals. You can time the plants to be ready for when you want to plant them.



For more gardening information, check out the website:

[2023 Planting Calendar: When to Start Vegetable Seeds](#) | [The Old Farmer's Almanac](#)

## Event Calendar

Daylight Saving Time  
Sunday, March 12, 2023

Board Meeting  
Monday, 3/20/23  
Chatham Court  
Community Room

## Main Office (860) 342-1688

**Carol Diaz, ext. #110**  
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**Susan Nellis, ext. #113**  
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**Dan Rafaniello, ext. #112**  
Staff Accountant  
[drafaniello@portlandha.org](mailto:drafaniello@portlandha.org)

**Jeffrey Costa, ext. #114**  
Maintenance Staff  
[jcosta@portlandha.org](mailto:jcosta@portlandha.org)

**For Maintenance Emergencies**  
Call: 860-519-3251

## Hours of Operation

Monday-Thursday  
8:30-4:30 p.m.

Friday  
8:30-1:30 p.m.

**Please call before visiting**

## Resident Corner

Join the Town  
of Portland  
Mailing List:  
Sign up to get  
town alerts,  
news, and announcements  
delivered straight to your inbox.



Official | Town of Portland  
[portlandct.org](http://portlandct.org)

## News and Information for Everyone, continued

In last month's newsletter, it was mentioned that Eversource estimated the average home has seen an approximate increase of \$80/month on electric bills as of 1/1/23. Well, that is true. Housing knows that many residents are suffering greatly from the increase in Eversource's charge for electricity. If you have an Eversource account, up until December 31, 2022, your kilowatt hour kWh cost (the amount of energy you would use if you kept a 1000-watt appliance running for an hour), was \$.12050/kWh. As of January 1, 2023, that price increased to \$.24172/kWh. You may want to consider researching competitors. It's also a good way to make sure you're getting a good deal if you're thinking of switching your electricity provider. By looking at the exact cost of electricity or gas per kWh, you can compare different tariffs like for like.

**Here's what Housing found at the time of this newsletter printing:**



Town Square services Connecticut and the rate for a 22-month term is currently \$.1480 with no cancellation fee.



Constellation's rate for 36 months is \$.1599 with a \$75 gift card bonus and no early termination fee.



Rates change quickly with suppliers and there are many more competitors than just the 2 above-referenced companies. You may want to research and see if you can get that utility bill down to a reasonable cost. But beware when the 22 months or 36 months are up, that price may increase (maybe even drastically). So, paying attention to your monthly bill is critical.



When you look at prices for energy plans and tariffs, or at your energy bills, you'll see electricity and gas measured in kWh. Understanding kWh, or kilowatt hours, is a big part of making sense of your bill and keeping an eye on your energy costs.



If you know what a kilowatt hour is (and how much it costs), it's much easier to understand how your energy supplier works out your bills, why some appliances use much more gas or electricity than others, and how much individual appliances use. You can then use that information to help you monitor your gas and electricity use and cut the cost of your bills. It varies a lot between appliances – some are more energy-efficient than others. Here are some (estimated) examples of what might use 1 kWh:

- **Running an electric shower** (10,000 watts) for 6 minutes
- **Keeping an immersion heater** (3,000 watts) on for 20 minutes
- **Cooking in an oven** (2,000 watts) for 30 minutes
- **Using an iron** (1,000 watts) for 60 minutes
- **Running a dishwasher** (1,000-1,500 watts) for less than an hour
- **Keeping a fridge-freezer** (200-400 watts) on for about three hours
- **Watching a 42" LED TV** (80 watts) for 12 and a half hours
- **Keeping an electric blanket** (130-200 watts) on all night
- **Using a laptop** (20-50 watts) all day
- **Keeping a broadband router** (7-10 watts) on for five days

Some appliances still use energy in standby mode. If you leave a TV or computer on standby, it's still using a small amount of power and adding kWh to your energy bill. This is also referred to as **vampire power, vampire energy, or phantom power**, the electricity that flows into your devices when you're not actually using them. Did you know that your computer is using power even when it's in standby mode? And your mobile phone charger is using electricity when you leave it plugged in after your phone has finished charging? That's vampire power. It's a sneaky source of energy use because you might not realize that devices are using power when they appear to be idle. Of course, there are some appliances that you need to leave switched on all the time. Things like your fridge-freezer and landline phone need constant power to function. Which devices use the most energy in standby mode? Check out the article [\*Standby energy: how much electricity do your devices use when they're sleeping?\*](#) By Aimee Tweedale (11/30/21) [\*Standby Energy: How Much Electricity Do Your Devices Use?\*](#) | [OVO Energy](#) for detailed information.



**Free bussing with CTtransit is set to end March 31, 2023, and fares will be reinstated the beginning of Aril 2023. So, for those of you who depend on CTtransit for transportation, you may want to book your appointments before free bussing expires.**



### Local Medication Drop-Box

Located at the Portland Police Station front lobby at 265 Main Street, Portland, CT 06480

What can and cannot be discarded in local medication drop-boxes:



Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Over-the-counter medications, prescription medications, and medication samples</li><li>✓ Medicines for household pets</li><li>✓ Medicated lotions or ointments, patches, and vitamins</li></ul>
No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ Needles or other "sharps," thermometers, or hazardous waste</li><li>✓ Hydrogen peroxide, inhalers, aerosol cans, and illicit drugs</li><li>✓ Personal care products (shampoo, etc.)</li></ul>

## Chatham Court News



Come to the information session on 3/8/23 and hear about 2 great scholarships for Housing residents who are already in college/technical school or graduating high school June 2023 or 2024, planning on applying to college or technical school, and are interested in applying for scholarships to assist in financing your education. Pizza served.

Unfortunately, the **2022 Income Tax Assistance Workshop** was cancelled due to lack of registrants.



### Portland High School

#### **Opioid Awareness Prevention Program for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Grade**

**Students on: April 4, 2023**

**Time: 8:55 - 9:55 (during Mentor)**



### Great information for You and Your Children

Youth & Family Services is glad to sit down and discuss social service options, resources, referrals, and needs with anyone and everyone. Please contact Jesse at:

(860) 342-6758 or [jrevicki@portlandct.org](mailto:jrevicki@portlandct.org)



Also check out the site: **YFS Resources | Town of Portland ([portlandct.org](http://portlandct.org))**

### Portland Public Library

#### **Middle School Art Show:**

Thursday  
March 16, 2023  
4:00-6:00 p.m.

In the Mary Flood Room  
For details call: 860-342-6770



#### It has useful information on:

1. Prenatal Healthy Futures
2. Youth 0 – 5 Healthy Futures
3. Mental Health
4. Substance Use

#### And more Information on:

1. 211 Childcare
2. Birth to Three
3. Help Me Grow
4. Husky Insurance
5. CT State Department on Early Education
6. Raising Children Network
7. National Association for the Education of Young Children
8. Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations of Early Childhood
9. CT Parenting Advocacy Center

### The YMCA

#### **Check out the Jobs at the YMCA:**



[Job Opportunities | Northern](#)

#### **Check out the benefits of working at the YMCA:**

[Work at the Middlesex YMCA  
\(midymca.org\)](http://midymca.org)

#### **Free Swim Lessons:**

The YMCA are proud to offer free swim lesson classes at the Northern Middlesex YMCA. Funding provided by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) administered by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP).



Swim lessons at the YMCA provide important life skills that could save a life and provide benefits for a lifetime.

Instructors are highly trained in their nationally recognized swim lesson curriculum. Lessons are held in the swimming pool. Students learn personal water safety and achieve basic swimming competency. Spring 2 runs 4/24 - 6/18 (classes meet 1x/week for 8 weeks) Lesson availability may vary based on swim level indicated. For more information:

[DEEP SWIM LESSONS 2023 | midymca](#)  
(860) 347-6907

Portland Parks and Recreation

# Kids' Blast

## After School Program

### 2022-2023



Scan the QR Code to sign up for Kids' Blast!

**Location: Brownstone Intermediate School**  
**Grades: K – 6**  
**Time: 3:00pm – 6:00pm**

(Children from Valley View and Gildersleeve will be bused to B.I.S. at the end of the school day)

Visit Our Website!  
<https://portland.recdesk.com>

For more information call 860-342-6757 or email [adionne@portlandct.org](mailto:adionne@portlandct.org)

Registration for our Kids' Blast After School Program is done on a month-to-month basis. There is a cost to join; however, there is financial assistance available.

## Quarry Heights News

Since the TEAM Mobile Feline Spay/Neuter Clinic began in 1997, more than 225,000 cats have been spayed or neutered and vaccinated on-board. Their small but dedicated veterinary staff has spent over 25 years on the road in Connecticut, bringing affordable spay/neuter and vaccination services for cats to residents statewide.



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The TEAM spay/neuter package includes a brief exam, vaccinations (rabies, distemper, upper/lower respiratory infection), nail trim, and ear mite treatment (if needed).

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They also offer a kitten package, booster vaccines, and parasite prevention and treatment to ensure the cat's health and well-being.

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They visit many cities and towns and any Connecticut cat, domestic or feral, is welcomed aboard the mobile clinic. For their schedule, information, or an appointment, please call 1-888-367-8326.

### From the Portland Senior Center

Free hearing Screening: Virginia Duclos with "All Ears" located in Portland, comes to the Senior Center for free hearing screenings on the second Tuesday each month at 11:00 a.m. The screenings are held on the lower-level Nurses Room and no appointment is necessary.



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Portland Footcare Clinic is postponed until further notice.

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**Portland Senior Van:** (860) 342-6761, 1 to 2 weeks' notice preferred. Fee: \$5.00 per passenger.

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**Dial-A-Ride:** (860) 347-3313, 48 hours advance notice required. Call to register and for free information.

**A GOOD BACKUP PLAN!**

### Goings On

If you have United Healthcare Advantage insurance and get their news publications, you might want to open the magazine and glance at some of the great events they host on a regular basis. Here's an example:



**Stress Management on Wednesday, March 15<sup>th</sup>:** Join the interactive class right from the comfort of your phone, computer, or tablet and learn more about what stress truly is (and three types of stress), how our bodies respond to stress/distress, and different relaxation techniques. Plus, a Q&A will follow the presentation. This workshop will be presented by Christine Solimini-Swift, exercise physiologist, Hartford HealthCare, GoodLife Fitness. Registration Required: Call 1 (855) 442-4373 or go to the website: [Virtual Classes & Events | Hartford HealthCare | CT](#). Upon registration, you'll receive an email with easy instructions on joining the virtual class.

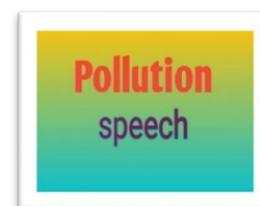
**Cynthia Hamlin**, nurse practitioner at Acorn Family and Primary Care in Cromwell, will be in the QH Community Room to talk of her practice Tuesday, 3/14/23 @4:00 p.m. Bring your appetite as pizza will be provided.

On Tuesday, 4/4/23 @10:30 a.m. in the QH Community Room, we will play Fraud Bingo, an interactive way to learn to avoid banking scams, identity theft, and fraud. Come join in the fun.



### Resident Noise Pollution

There have been several complaints by residents regarding **after hours** "noise" and abusive language by other residents. The Quarry Heights lease specifically states a resident must: **"reasonably conduct himself/herself and cause other persons who are on the premises with the resident's consent to conduct themselves in a manner which will not disturb other residents' reasonable peaceful enjoyment of their accommodations..."**



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The lease also states residents must "act in a cooperative manner with neighbors and Authority's staff... to refrain from and cause members of Resident's household or guests to refrain from acting or speaking in an abusive or threatening manner toward neighbors and Authority's staff. Abusive or violent behavior includes verbal as well as physical abuse or violence. Use of expletives that are generally considered insulting, racial epithets, or other language, written or oral, that is customarily used to insult or intimidate, may be cause for termination or denial."



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In chapter 12 of the Code of Ordinances for the Town of Portland in the Section, "Offenses and Miscellaneous Provisions," it states that nighttime hours are between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. In the Declaration of Policy, it also states "excessive noise must be controlled by the Town to protect, preserve, and promote the public health, safety, and welfare. The Board of Selectmen recognizes the fact that people have the right to and should be ensured an environment free from excessive sound...that may jeopardize their health, safety, or welfare."

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In other words, not only are after hours noise and abusive language a lease violation, but after-hours noise is also a Town of Portland Ordinance violation. Please, for the sake of everyone's health, safety, and welfare, take a deep breath and count to 10 instead of verbally unloading on another resident, especially after hours. It is hard enough to sleep with a tanking economy, "noise pollution" exacerbates the problem for neighbors who just want to rest, relax, and enjoy Quarry Heights as it is meant to be. Thank you.