

# Legacy *Matters*



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# Smart Investment: Senior Programs



Studies show that programs for seniors can help prevent health problems: Social and physical activities prevent depression. Exercise programs prevent falls and keep seniors physically strong enough to age in their homes instead of a costly nursing home.

It's in everyone's interest—the senior, their family and society—to keep seniors living independently at home for as long as possible.

“The number one thing people say they want when they get older is to remain in their homes, and we want to accommodate people's wishes” says Beverly Kidder, director of the Aging and Disability Resource Center at the Agency on Aging of South Central Connecticut.

“Also, it's an economic issue,” says Kidder. “If people are not living independently at home they're living elsewhere and someone else is taking care of them. The cost is astronomical.”

Connecticut taxpayers spend more than \$2 billion (13% of the state's budget) annually on long-term care supports and services for the elderly through Medicaid, according to the state Commission on Aging.

Much of that \$2 billion supports the roughly 26,000 elderly living in nursing homes, says State Senator Kevin Kelly (R-Shelton, Seymour).

“If we don't change the way we do things that \$2 billion could triple in the next 15 years” because of the aging baby boomers, says Sen. Kelly.

One way to curb costs is by supporting programs that keep seniors healthy enough to age in place. In the Valley there are programs that help healthy seniors stay healthy and others that help homebound seniors stay home.

The town-supported Senior Centers offer exercise classes to help seniors maintain balance (to prevent falls) and other programs to keep their minds active, such as games, computer classes and creative outlets. The centers also offer information sessions on topics like elder law, driver safety and how to maintain your vision.

Going to the Derby Senior Center improved Linda Joyce's physical and emotional health.

After 12 years of living in Derby she hadn't made a single friend due to crippling social anxiety. Joyce reluctantly joined the center's crochet group, which she now leads.

Before, Joyce says, she could feel her muscles

deteriorating from inactivity. Now, she does aerobics three times a week and regularly attends Senior Center events.

“I still have arthritis, but I don't worry about ending up in a wheelchair anytime soon,” she says.

While Senior Centers are helping mobile seniors stay active, other area organizations are addressing the needs of homebound seniors.

TEAM Inc. delivers hot lunches to seniors through Meals on Wheels; offers rides to medical appointments and grocery stores; and provides housework and yardwork through their Homemaker program.

TEAM's Homemakers and Meals on Wheels drivers may be the only person a senior sees all week, says TEAM Inc., Vice President and VCF Board member Diane Stroman. Social contact is critical for the elderly: it helps ward off depression and keep minds sharp.

The Valley Parish Nurse program at Griffin Hospital provides referral services, education and screenings to help keep seniors at home safely.

Some seniors will need long-term medical care, but it may not need to be provided by a nursing home. Home- and community-based services are cheaper than institutional care, according to the Commission on Aging.

“We need to make sure services are available in the home,” says State Sen. Joseph Crisco (D-Ansonia, Derby). “Not only is there a cost-benefit to the state, but it also prevents pain and suffering.”

Both Senators Crisco and Kelly run free, annual fairs for seniors in Ansonia and Shelton, respectively, that offer important health and safety information. “Our objective is to get more information to seniors and their families to help them have a better quality of life and to avoid costly medical care,” says Sen. Crisco.

## How you can help:

- Advocate for issues that help seniors, such as a more robust public transportation system or zoning regulations to allow in-law apartments
- Support programs that help seniors
- Help elderly neighbors with house or yardwork
- Stay mentally and physically active yourself!



*“The number one thing people say they want when they get older is to remain in their homes, and we want to accommodate people's wishes,”*

*— Beverly Kidder, Agency on Aging of South Central Connecticut*



# Donor Spotlight: Jane Cohen



Jane Cohen began volunteering in Derby when her husband David joined the Army during World War II.

Jane and David Cohen met and married in New Haven. The young couple moved to his parents' home in Derby shortly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. After Pearl Harbor, David was drafted into the Army, serving in France and Germany while Jane stayed behind.

Jane started volunteering as a nurse's aide at Griffin Hospital. She also volunteered to patrol New Haven Avenue during the nighttime air raid drills. Armed with a flash light and hard hat, Jane made sure all the homes along the avenue were dark during the drills.

Jane eventually became President of the Derby Griffin Hospital Auxiliary. As an avid reader, she got involved with the Derby Public Library, serving on the board for 30 years. Jane also served as Chairwoman of the Valley Red Cross Blood Drive.

David and Jane always acted philanthropically: When David returned home from the war, he restarted his legal practice and did a lot of pro bono legal work for area nonprofits. Later, David joined the board of Griffin Hospital and served as president.

The couple had two children, Andy and Jamie. Jamie recently retired as the President & CEO of the Valley Community Foundation, where he worked from 2005 to 2012.

Jane has two funds at the Valley Community Foundation. She initiated the first even before the Foundation was founded. For her mother- and father-in-law's 40th wedding anniversary "no one could think of what they needed. They had everything they wanted. So I thought, let's give \$40 to the library to buy books in their name."

Family and friends continued donating to the library for birthdays and anniversaries. "It just grew and grew," says Jane. When the Valley Community Foundation opened in 2004, the Cohens moved the "Cohen Family Book Fund" to VCF.

The success of that first fund inspired Jane to start a second. "The first started with only \$40!," she says. "It proves that you don't have to start big. Slow and steady, as they say."

Her second fund was established in memory of her late husband, David. "When David died I realized we had nothing permanent for him," says Jane. That fund is named after the couple, the "Jane C. and David B. Cohen Fund."

The funds are Donor Advised Funds, meaning that grants are made from the funds with Jane's advice. She likes how easy the arrangement is and that she doesn't have to worry about writing checks or keeping track of paperwork.

The "Jane C. and David B. Cohen Fund" is set up to benefit Derby, but Jane's giving has focused on the library. The whole family loves to read, and before he passed, she and David frequently donated to the library. The fund will continue to honor the couple's long history of involvement and commitment to Derby and its library.

## You Made The Great Give Great!

Valley donors gave three times as much during The Great Give 2013 as in 2012!

Donors made 708 gifts to 27 Valley nonprofits; more than \$115,000 went to Valley nonprofits, including prizes and matching grants.

Center Stage Theatre (artistic directors Fran and Gary Scarpa, pictured below) stole the show with \$30,000 in donations and \$4,000 in prizes. TEAM Inc., won a \$2,000 prize for the most Valley donors and the Shelton High School Robotics Team (pictured) won a \$2,000 prize for the most new donors!

Plans are already underway for The Great Give 2014, scheduled for May 6, 2014.

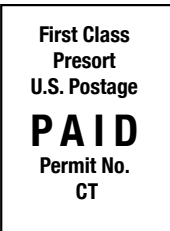
Way to give!





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# Good News About the Valley

**Our Board of Directors recently awarded \$754,325 (including multi-year grants worth \$391,200\*) to the following nonprofits providing Valley residents with services.**

## Kudos to our grantees!

-General operating support for **Area Congregations Together** to provide food, shelter and support services to Valley residents in need; \$40,000\*

-To support the **Ansonia Charger Club**, an after-school program for grades 6-8 through Ansonia Public Schools; \$25,000

-General operating support for **BH Care** to provide behavioral health, prevention and domestic violence services to the Valley; \$52,000

-Support for the **Community Outreach and Valley Parish Nurses** through Griffin Hospital; \$15,000

-To support the establishment and development of **CT Brownfields Land Bank** through Valley Council of Governments to serve the Valley; \$46,500

-To provide free vision screening and services for preschool children in low-income communities through **Healthy Eyes for Connecticut Kids Project**, Healthy Eyes Alliance; \$20,4000

-To support technology enhancements to the **Interventional Radiology Suite** at Griffin Hospital; \$200,000\*

-Support for the **Kathleen C.B. Semela Memorial Food Bank** through Christ Episcopal Church; \$10,000

-To hire a Business Integration Consultant for **Lower Naugatuck Valley Parent Child Resource Center**; \$45,000

-To support **Massaro Community Farm's** educational programming about locally grown food and sustainable living; \$7,425

-To support the development of a **Maternal Health Coalition** to address availability of reproductive health ser-

vices in the Valley, through the Naugatuck Valley Health District; \$33,000

-Support for **Outpatient Psychiatric Clinic for Children**, a program of the Family Service Center in Ansonia, Catholic Charities Archdiocese of Hartford; \$60,000\*

-General operating support for **Salvation Army, Greater Valley Corps** to provide emergency assistance in food, clothing, utilities and furniture; \$30,000

-Support for **Valley Diaper Bank Initiative** via TEAM, Inc. to provide diapers, wipes, information and referral services to Valley families in need; \$45,000\*

-To purchase cardiac monitoring replacement equipment for **Valley Emergency Medical Services**; \$40,000

-General operating support for the **Valley YMCA**; \$75,000\*

-General operating support for **Women's Business Development Council** to help women start and grow businesses and achieve economic self-reliance; \$10,000