



WELCOME

Jane Ferrall, Executive Director

Needless to say, my previously cheery and upbeat letter to you all has now been supplanted by much more sobering news. And, as an agency that serves the group in the highest-risk category for the Corona virus, life here is unsettled and filled with concern for our clients and volunteers.

Although the situation on the ground is changing rapidly, as of right now IVCG is dedicated to remaining open for service for as long as we can, for as many as we can. In the coming weeks we will have to limit our medical rides to people with the highest-priority needs such as for cancer care or dialysis, but we will of course keep you posted as to any developments or emergency policy changes. All we can ask at the present time is that you take care of yourself, and bear with us as we adapt to our new (hopefully temporary) reality.

With that said, perhaps the rest of this newsletter will help you keep your mind off some of the bad news! It contains lots of interesting information about Mae's Closet, our Aging at Home/Open Door program, our new partnership with Griswold Home Care, and acknowledgements of our generous donors. Please take a look at the new program we're developing with area faith communities called Weekend Wheels. Under the current circumstances it may take us a while to roll it out, but if you belong to a church or temple in the area, you might want to think about whether this program could work for your faith community.

As the next few weeks and months unfold, please do stay in close touch. You can call the office at **(203) 230-8994** between 8 AM and 4 PM on weekdays. There is also an emergency cell phone number on the office machine in case you need to contact us during non-office hours.

We will get through this, together...with God's help.

Warmly,

Jane Ferrall

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MEMORIES OF 2019

We've had some great times in the past year! Right around Thanksgiving last year, IVCG was asked by Migdalia Castro, Commissioner of the City of New Haven Department of Elderly Services, to provide gift bags of toiletries for the folks who live at Riverview Rest Home in Fair Haven. Using funds generously supplied by the Marett Fund, we put together over 50 bags of necessary toiletries (and treats!) so the residents could have something special in time for the holidays.

The following is from a memorial to Philip Marett, provided by the New Haven Historical Society:

The great gifts of Philip Marett and his family to the charities of New Haven have made his name a familiar one, since his death. But coming here, as he did, in advanced years, and with no connection with the active business of the place, there were few of our citizens who were familiarly acquainted with him, and many to whom his very presence among us was unknown. It was my good fortune to be admitted to his friendship, when I was a young man, and he an old gentle one, but from our first meeting, his distinguished manner and gentle courtesy made a deep impression upon me, as they did, I believe, upon all who were thrown in his society.

IVCG has been so blessed over the past years to have received funds from the Marett Fund, thanks to the generosity of Mr. Marett so long ago.

As you'll learn more about in this newsletter, Aging at Home/Open Door has had a super-successful year. To the right is a picture of Marion Cahill, author and professor, who spoke at our February luncheon (together with Marilyn Bergen).

Last but certainly not least is a fun photo from last year's Volunteer Appreciation event. It's here to remind all our volunteers that, god willing, this year's reception happens on June 18 at Whitney Center from 2 to 4 PM. Like the events in the past, it's a casual, fun affair: just lots of great food, short speeches, and silly prizes for all. It's a great opportunity for our Board members to meet the folks who keep us up and running, and for our volunteers to get to know each other.



A NOTE FROM JANE

This quarter I want to address IVCG's connection with some of our most loyal and important supporters, our area's faith communities. As many of you may know, IVCG had its origin with the Downtown Cooperative Ministries project, later Interfaith Cooperative Ministries, and our programs initially ran by and through area congregations. Local faith communities established their own "Faith in Action" programs, with support provided by IVCG. As time went by, however, congregations began to take their own programs in-house, or discontinued them altogether. IVCG began to focus less on administering congregational programs, and more on connecting individual volunteers to individual clients.

Today, IVCG is no longer connected to the religious community in any official way. Our receipt of federal funding means that we cannot tie our transportation service to church membership (nor would we want to).

However, IVCG's relationship to our area faith communities remains strong. As noted elsewhere in this issue, we are hoping to re-ignite some of this congregational support and organization through our new Weekend Wheels program. And, local faith communities remain an incredibly important source of support, both financial and program-wise. I'd like to recognize the following area faith communities that play an especially prominent role in making sure IVCG can keep its doors open:

Divine Mercy Parish (Hamden)

Dunbar United Church of Christ (Hamden)

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel (Hamden)

Spring Glen Church (Hamden)

Immanuel Missionary Baptist Church (New Haven)

Trinity Church on the Green (New Haven)

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church (New Haven)

Orange Congregational Church (Orange)

Thanks to one and all! We are blessed!

AGING AT HOME/OPEN DOOR

Our "senior social" program continues serving between thirty and forty friends every month, with a hot lunch and an interesting lecture. We are fortunate to have a wonderful relationship with the Eli Whitney Technical School's Culinary Arts program, which permits us to provide a meal for our attendees at minimal cost and maximum deliciousness. The Aging at Home program committee has also attracted some much-needed "new blood" and is hard at work on the 2020-21 program year, which will be finalized over the summer. In August of the year, we send out a paper copy of the upcoming year's program book to our 175+ members, so if you're on our mailing list, or want to be, please look for that.

Please note that all Aging at Home programming has been suspended through mid-April. We hope to welcome you back at that time.

Programs in the past year have included Marion Cahill (Successful Aging Strategies); Are You in the (Financial) Know? (with People's Bank); Finding Your Balance with the VNA; a holiday sing-a-long; and Stitched Together: History Revealed Through Quilts. We are looking forward to a very special guest for our June program, the Victorian Lady herself, Kandie Karle, with her humorous and informative program on historic fashion.

Please email us at agingathome@gmail.com, or call the office at **(203) 230-8994**, to be added to the mailing list for the lunch program. Unless we have your email address, we no longer send monthly reminders of our program, so be sure to mark your calendar for the first Thursday of every month (September-June).

Ann Levison,
Chair of AAH With Open Door

THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS!

Contributions from generous, caring folks like those listed below allow us to continue to provide service in our communities. IVCG would like to thank the following for their contributions made since the beginning of 2020:

For IVCG's general program:

Anna Barbaro	Marie Carangelo
Connie Decker	Clara Esquilin
Ruth Ewaskio	Frank Farrell
Louise Fitzsimons	Marguerite Gardner
Donald Groobert	William Knight
Cheri Kobe	Lorraine LaTerza
Marcia Maresca	Joan Mongillo
Joyce Nelson	Alycyn Nettleton
Madeleine Paul	Rebecca Pender
Sandra Popp	Fred Quartiano
Waltraud Schneider	Lilian Serafino
Ann Signore	Gloria Testa
Beverly Zimmer	

In Blessed Memory of Charlie Curello:

Nancy Lyon	Rita Sasso
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In Blessed Memory of Marion Wolanic:

Tanya Bovee	Estelle McKiernan
Nancy Murtha	Robert & Judy Sembler

In support of Mae's Closet:

Our Lady of Mt. Carmel	Mary Anne Shannon
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OUR EXCITING NEW PARTNERSHIP!

It is with great pleasure that we announce a major new financial and program sponsor, Griswold Home Care. As many of you know, Griswold Home Care has been providing in-home and facility based non-medical home care in Connecticut for over 30 years. We recently connected with GHC through the Jean Griswold Foundation, which generously provided us with a grant to provide senior service and—lo and behold—the local GHC office, through owner Lesley Mills, volunteered to sponsor the cost of our Ride Scheduler software for the entire year.

But wait there's more! GHC has also agreed to make its basement space, located at 116 Sherman Avenue across from St. Raphael's Hospital in New Haven, available to Mae's Closet for use as an additional storage facility and a potential satellite location. We are currently working on acquiring funding to renovate the space and to make it safe and clean for equipment storage and lending. Being able to store more equipment will allow us to substantially expand the Mae's Closet operation as well as bring it closer to some of the folks who need equipment.

Griswold Home Care has long been committed to supporting health and artistic endeavors in our community. We are so pleased to have begun this relationship and we are looking forward to many years of working together!



MAE'S CLOSET

We are now almost nine months into our first year of operation of Mae's Closet, our new durable medical equipment lending bank, and to say the program has been a great success would be an understatement. Co-led by the very capable Marilyn Bergen and Ann Levison, the Closet makes medical equipment available to anyone who needs it for the nominal cost of \$1 per item. The program has already grown out of its Hamden space twice and we are looking at opening up a satellite location in New Haven as well.

In its first year of operation thus far, Mae's has loaned over 275 pieces of equipment to 118 people. That's a huge cost savings!

So, how does it work? If you'd like to borrow a piece of equipment, please call **(475) 414-8333** any weekday between 9 AM and noon and let them know what you're looking for. Right now the Closet has mostly "hard" medical equipment such as canes, walkers, wheelchairs, bathroom equipment such as bath chairs and commodes, and miscellaneous mobility devices such as grabbers and long shoe-horns. The folks at the Closet can also help you source equipment they don't carry, such as hospital beds.

If the Closet has what you're looking for, you'll make an appointment to go over to the physical closet, located at the Lock-Up Storage Facility, 1950 Dixwell Avenue in Hamden. Remember that somebody from the closet has to be there to meet you to give you your item and execute the paperwork. When you're done with your item, you can return it to the Closet but, again, please make an appointment to come over because no equipment can be left at the facility unattended.

Similarly, if you'd like to donate equipment, please call the above number and arrange a date and time to drop it off.

We also have a limited supply of adult continence products available. Please call the office **(203) 230-8994** to arrange to donate or to see if we have what you need.

WEEKEND WHEELS

In the fall of 2019, I was fortunate to receive a scholarship to take an online graduate level class in Senior Transportation Options through the University of Massachusetts-Boston. The class was taught by two industry veterans, Nina Silverstein and Helen Kerschner, and it covered all kinds of interesting topics, including an overview of the landscape of senior driving, the decision to stop driving, driving safely as a senior, service in rural areas and for people with mental disabilities, and much more. We were provided with resources that I have since used in "making our case" with funders and volunteer sources.

The best part for me about the class is that it challenged me to "think outside the box" about IVCG's current service model. Specifically, the class talked about the distinction between "life sustaining" activities (going to the doctor or getting groceries) and "life enhancing" activities (seeing friends, being part of clubs and groups, and going to the beach). While we can all agree that going to the doctor is important, the teachers made the point that there is so much more to life than medical care, and it might be just as important for transportation providers to figure out how to help seniors live better—more enhanced—lives. Since then, I've been pondering how IVCG might achieve this goal, given our current structure and mission.

When I recently had the opportunity to meet with volunteers from Spring Glen Church in Hamden to discuss ways in which we could serve one another, the idea for Weekend Wheels was born. Under this program, IVCG will help SGC establish and administer a rides program in which congregational volunteers will bring church members to church events – including, but certainly not limited to, Sunday services. The church administrator will have access to a dedicated portion of IVCG's ride scheduling website, and IVCG will train and insure the congregation's drivers.

SGC is our first, but hopefully not close to the last, faith community partner for Weekend Wheels. Several other area congregations have expressed an interest in becoming part of the project—so please call me if yours might be one of them!

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