

INTERFAITH VOLUNTEER
CARE GIVERS of GREATER NEW HAVEN
SUMMER 2021



HAPPY 2021 AND A HALF!

Jane Ferrall, Executive Director

I think this is the first time in over a year that I've written a welcome letter that isn't directly addressed to the ongoing pandemic crisis. And how good that feels! Happy 2021-1/2! Even though life isn't fully back to what we would think of as "normal," it certainly seems to be well on the way. And just in time to start getting out, enjoy the summer weather and the chance to be with family and friends again. I can hardly wait, and I'm sure you can't either! Life does go on.

IVCG now has a new Board chair, **Marcie Dimenstein**, and a new Vice-chair, **Richard Davies**. **Bob Serow**, who ably served as Chair for the past three years, has retired from that position but will remain on our Board. We also welcome new Board member **Rev. Hiram Brett**, the spiritual care coordinator at Connecticut Mental Health Center, and bid a fond farewell to **Mary Dansinghani** who has retired and moved on to other things. God speed to all, and thank you for a job well done.

IVCG welcomes new medical drivers **Maggie Fogarty**, **Joe Hannon** and **Jon Katz**, and new grocery delivery drivers **Tamia Brockenberry**, **Kurt Fritz**, **Victor Jimenez**, **Margot Sarkozy** and **Mary Grace Wright**. All of them have stepped up to give of themselves to serve others and we salute them.

During my tenure as IVCG's Executive Director, we have focused on one of the greatest unmet needs in our area: door through door medical transport. To the best of my knowledge, we're the only provider in our area of free, personalized rides for seniors, which remains our core activity. Despite the grave difficulties presented by the pandemic, this has also been a time of growth and innovation for IVCG. Some new initiatives were time-limited, such as Masks in the Mail and Vaccine Buddies. We hope that other collaborations, such as Grocery Bag, will continue. Several new projects are in the works to address the needs of the people we serve. Stay tuned for our Fall edition for more updates, and in the meantime, be well!

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HALF A MILLION DOLLARS....

There's a remarkably valuable fact that I just learned, and I wanted to share it with you.

Together we already know that Interfaith provides services that are, in so many ways, priceless. But you could have knocked me over with a feather when I learned that the hourly going rate in our region for escorted medical transport (NOT ambulette travel, just the kind of thing we do) is \$100! Can you believe it?

IVCG, mostly through its fabulous volunteer drivers, provided just over 5,000 hours of free medical transport this past year. This means we are offering a cool half million dollars just in ride benefits to the elders in our county.

I find that pretty impressive - and exciting -that our hard work is such an bargain and benefit. I don't know about you, but I'm proud to be part of something that gets so much bang for the buck.

When we let our clients and volunteers know about this exciting news, here are some of the responses we received:

Wilbur M., East Haven: *Thank you very much for writing to me about the (Blessings) of Interfaith Volunter Caregivers of Greater New Haven. I am sincerely so proud of you and the volunteers and the immense value of your organization! I tried every way to locate a service (taxi cabs, medical persons/after work or day off for transportation as well as Connecticut Limousine) and everyone was unable to help drive me to serious medical appointments. Taxi service to Bridgeport and Connecticut Limousine transport to Bridgeport costs were over \$100.00. Aetna, my insurance company gave me your name and the telephone number of Interfaith Volunteers ... You and Interfaith Volunteers saved me then and again thereafter.*

Sandy K., New Haven: AMEN, AMEN, AND AMEN!!!

Marianne I., Branford: *Your services are priceless to Rob and I. You have amazing people volunteering for Interfaith and we are so grateful that you have provided transportation during Covid. Thank you Jane and Nancy!*

Cheryl L., Orange: *Your service is spectacular. I am able to get out and about some on my own now but the help I received from your service for the past few years will never be forgotten. I thank you with all my heart!*

Beverley B., Milford: *Wow! God bless each and every one of you for the assistance you provide us!*

Diane P., New Haven: *That is just AMAZING. I knew what we do is valuable but never to that extent.*

*Thank God Thank God Thank God.
Thank you for sharing. Have a great day.*

“YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHAT THIS MEANS TO ME... IT’S A HUGE BLESSING!”

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WELCOME, MARCIE DIMENSTEIN AND NANCY ELLIOTT!

As of May, **Marcie Dimenstein** is the newly elected chair of IVCG. She has served on IVCG's Board of Directors since Summer 2019.



Ms. Dimenstein received her Master's Degree in Social Work in 1982 from Fordham University. She is licensed as a Clinical Social Worker by the State of Connecticut and is a trained Support Group leader for the Alzheimer's Association of CT.

As a licensed clinical social worker, Marcie has provided clinical, management and fund development activities for not-for-profit organizations for over thirty years. Her commitment to meeting people's needs through the development and administration of services has brought her into contact with the varied and changing aspects of organizational planning and program development in health, substance abuse, mental health, housing, and vocational and recreational therapies. This has included assisting disenfranchised groups in accessing housing and jobs, including the development of a consumer run janitorial service, and the development of a Home Health Agency specializing in services for people with behavioral health disabilities. She has been employed by a local hospice and the Agency on Aging.

Her fund development experience has included successful grants, special events, direct mail

campaigns, and individual solicitation. Her public speaking and outreach have included television, radio, legislative lobbying and large and small group speaking. She has extensive experience working with Boards of Directors both in a staff role as Executive Director of two health services organizations and as a board member and officer for community and association boards. She has also managed statewide and national quality improvement projects for a CMS funded agency.

Her life changed dramatically when her husband was diagnosed with Early Onset Alzheimer's and Vascular Dementia. After Jerry's death it became her mission to assist Elders and their families to find the joy in their lives when they have become frozen while looking for resources and trying to manage and coordinate care. This led her to start Elder Pathways, a Geriatric Care Management and psychotherapy service.

Please also join me in welcoming **Nancy Elliott**, who is our new program associate as of March!



Nancy is a retired social worker with experience in social services, mental health, case management, special education, and vocational counseling. She is active in her neighborhood civic association and has enjoyed many years volunteering in literacy and meal delivery. She has a faithful beagle companion and lives in Hamden, CT. Now that she is vaccinated, she is looking forward to seeing films and live theater shows.

YOU GAVE...GREATLY!

IVCG's major fund-raiser of the year, which also serves as our Annual Appeal, is the **Great Give**, a 36-hour giving event sponsored by the **Community Foundation for Greater New Haven**. The Community Foundation is a major supporter of our work, having stepped forward to support IVCG's projects large and small throughout this whole year. We are so grateful to the Foundation!



A very exciting aspect of this year's Great Give was the matching funds provided to us through the Griswold Foundation. **Griswold Home Care** matched donations up to \$3,000 which is a wonderful boost for our agency. Again, we are so thankful that Griswold puts its "money where its mouth is" in supporting senior care in our region.

We are also grateful to the following wonderful people who stepped up to support us and our work through the Great Give:

Marilyn Bergen
 Rev. Hiram Brett
 Peggy Britt
 Barbara Brown
 Robert Caplan
 Marcie Dimenstein
 Joe Donroe
 Joseph Ferrall
 Kathleen Ferrall
 William R. Ferrall
 Marianne & Al Fontana
 Rev. Robin Franklin
 John Goldin

Rhea Hirshman
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 Talia Marinaccio
 Josephine Marra
 Albert May
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 Joan Mongillo
 Nini Munro-Chmura
 Victoria Pantalone
 Maribeth Pennoni
 Diane Petaway
 Dr. Gary Rappaport
 Michael Riordan
 Ruth Risberg
 Lorraine Salerno
 Melanie Seyarath
 Judy Selakoff
 Bob Serow
 Ben Soltoff
 Linda Towbin
 Kate Walton
 Thurman Whitley
 Carol Withers
 Ann & Art Yost



WE TREASURE EACH ONE OF YOUR LOVELY NOTES!

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THANK YOU TO OUR SPRING DONORS!

We so appreciate all the wonderful support of our riders, clients, volunteers, and friends. Your help keeps our doors open and our volunteer drivers on the road. Our sincerest thanks to all who gave since March:

Mae's Closet Donors

Robin Caron
MaryAnne Davis
Patricia and Rich DePonte
Kay Lighthill
Yasmine Marino
Dorothy Quarterman
Cynthia Tupoli

General Program Donors

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Marian "Penny" Lesco
Patrick Leveille
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Nicholas Sepesko
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Miriam B. Simpson
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Gloria Jean Testa
Sheila Thomas
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David P. Zella
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