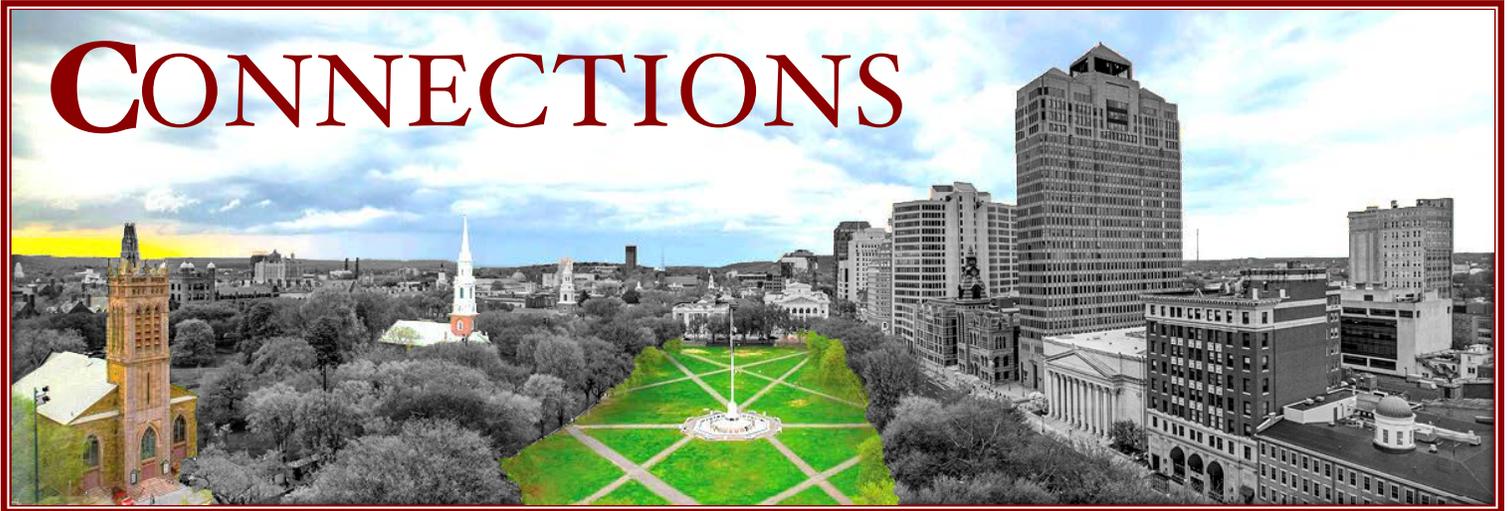


INTERFAITH VOLUNTEER
CARE GIVERS *of* GREATER NEW HAVEN
FALL 2020



WELCOME

Jane Ferrall, Executive Director

My Dear Friends,

Once again, adopting a chipper and upbeat tone in this newsletter seems a somewhat tone-deaf thing to do. We are acutely aware of the challenges facing our clients. Every day, we speak to folks who are isolated, bored, scared, lonely, and sincerely sick and tired of our current reality. We are all doing the best we can to comply with safety and health directives, but it's also human nature to wonder, when is it all going to end? And since none of us can know this, it feels like there is a constant backdrop of uncertainty and stress.

Here at Interfaith, it's been our saving grace to continue to operate throughout the pandemic. This work has given meaning and purpose to our staff and volunteers, and has helped us feel that we are doing our best to help out in this miserable time.

This issue of Connections introduces you to some of the new folks whom we've been privileged to welcome on board in the past months. Our new Program Associate, Elantra James, has stepped up to fill the position so ably filled by Anna Alber, who has now returned to her fellowship at Yale University. Serving this year as well will be social work interns Jenna Dearborne and Zhian Saeed, both of Southern Connecticut State University.

We've also welcomed three new wonderful Board members, all of whom are profiled in this issue, while bidding a fond farewell to retiring Board members N.L. "Skip" Borgerson and Marianne and Al Fontana. Finally, we've welcomed several new volunteers for both driving and shopping, which is such a blessing for us and our clients. Please join me in welcoming Rebecca Starble and Keitra Thompson, new drivers, and Peggy and Lewis Britt, Kelly Li, Faith Lundt, and Burt Westermeier, new grocery volunteers.

As I am sure does not come as a huge surprise, and although it is a disappointment for everyone, the Thanksgiving for All meal delivery program has been cancelled for 2020.

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WELCOME ELANTRA!



“ I have a Bachelor's degree from Central Connecticut State University in International Studies. I love traveling and playing games on the computer in my spare time. I began working at Interfaith Volunteer Care Givers in August 2020. During my short time here, I have already met so many wonderful people, both clients and volunteers. I have learned about the importance of elderly care and service and will continue to grow with the organization. ”

Elantra is a life-long New Haven resident who will be splitting her time between office duties and driving, at least in short term until we are able to resume our full volunteer complement. Her beautiful smile and helpful attitude are very much appreciated!

THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO KNOW...

The Agency on Aging of South Central has recognized IVCG's "outstanding commitment to [our] clients during the COVID-19 Pandemic" and in support of our ongoing work has awarded the agency additional CARES Act funding. This will enable us to continue to serve you (plus we're kind of proud of ourselves!).

WELCOME NEW INTERNS!



Jenna Dearborne is a Senior at Southern Connecticut State University, majoring in Social Work with a minor in Psychology. She was born and raised in North Haven and in her free time she likes to be with friends and family, as well as read and do arts and crafts.



Zhian Saeed is also a Senior at Southern Connecticut State University, majoring in social work. "Z" is originally from Kurdistan and came to the United States in 1999. Fun fact: Z studied English literature in Kurdistan for three years. She spends most of her time with family and cousins, and would definitely love to travel around the world one day.

Thank you Bruce Levison for serving as our interns' Field Work Supervisor!

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THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS

As most of you know, IVCG is a true grass-roots undertaking. Although we receive funding for our transportation service through the Agency on Aging of South Central Connecticut, as well as institutional funding from area faith communities and civic organizations, without YOUR community participation and financial support we could not run our other programs or fully support all the costs required to maintain our operation.

I am always so impressed by the generosity of our riders, other clients, and friends. Please accept our sincerest thank you!

Jodi Basilicato
Marian Cahill
Marie Carangelo
Susan Cole
Connie Decker, *in blessed
memory of Vinnie Decker*
Frances Farrell
Irma Hammer
Irene Jenkins
Geraldine Licciardi
Carol Mitchell
Marie Natalino
Madeleine Paul
Fred Quartiano
Leonara Russo
Lillian Serafino
Sally Stopka
Linda Towbin

Paula Biondello
Aurelia Cannata
Philip Carter
Eleanor Corazzini
Becky Dix
Rose Dubin
Mabel French
Patricia Harris
David Juliano
Marian Mahl
Joan Mongillo
Joyce Nelson
Diane Petaway
Audrey Richards
Amy Salvati
Roenia Smith
Sheila Thomas
Kate Walton

Barbara Bretko
Carolyn Cantara
Nancy Casapulla
Richard Davies
Henry Dreher
Ada Epps
Carol Galanter
Kathy Highman
Patrick Leveille
Laverne McKenzie
Diana Munro
John O'Donovan
Marie Picarello
Jaclyn Rosetti
Nick Sepesko
Janice St. Hilaire
Nancy Thomsen
Dorothy Young

Mae's Closet

Richard Edwards
William Melin

Jackie Faraclas
Carolyn Pierson

Rev. John Marsh

HAVE YOU HEARD?

Just a few comments from our clients:

"You don't realize how much better this makes me feel, not to worry about getting to the doctor"... "All the riders that came to assist my husband were very kind and understanding to his needs, very present at all times"... "I don't drive and this really helps me, Interfaith is a wonderful organization" ... "you are a blessing in my life" ... "this is such a wonderful organization providing a needed service to our senior citizens" ... "God Bless! All of you for everything you all do for us" ... "P.S. Your drivers are wonderful."

We don't "do what we do" so people will say thank you, but it does feel so good to know we're making our clients' lives just a little bit better. Thank YOU for giving us the opportunity to be of service!

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SERVICE UPDATE

Here are the latest updates regarding IVCG's services and programs:

~ We continue to provide **ride service for medical appointments**; because our volunteer driver numbers have been reduced by at least 50%, we are having to do "more with less" and cannot provide service at the same level as prior to the pandemic. When we accept a ride we are committing to providing it, so we do close specific weeks or days once we've reached capacity. We appreciate your patience and understanding.

~ **Mae's Closet**, our durable medical equipment lending bank, is open for loans. Please call 475-414-8333 for loans; you may call 203-230-8994 with items to donate.

~ We are providing **personal grocery shopping** service (twice a month maximum); call the office to arrange this. Clients pay for their own groceries.

~ If you would like to enroll in the Agency on Aging's **Grocery Bag free home delivery program**, please call the AOASCC at 203-785-8533. IVCG delivers groceries under this program but does not enroll clients.

~ **Friendly calling** continues.

~ Friendly visits and Aging at Home are suspended until at least 2021, at which point we will re-evaluate taking current medical conditions into account.

MEET THE NEW BOARD MEMBERS

We are so excited to welcome three new Board members to IVCG, all of whom bring special gifts and talents.

RICHARD DAVIES



Richard spent over three decades as an ABC News Correspondent, reporting from 35 states and 4 continents! He is now enjoying a highly successful second (or is that third Richard?) career as a

podcaster, hosting "How Do We Fix It?" and providing podcast expertise and know-how. Richard will help guide IVCG's social media and internet efforts.



GEORGE GUERTIN, ESQ.

George is a long-time North Haven resident, a partner in Guertin and Guertin, LLC, a specialist in estates and trust planning, and last but not least, a PEZ expert! George has returned to our Board and will lend his expertise to our planned giving function.

REV. CAROLYN YOUNG



Carolyn Young

is retired clergy from the United Church of Christ. She was ordained in 1984 in the Chicago Metropolitan Association, Illinois Conference, UCC. She completed training in Clinical Pastoral Education and has served in several hospitals as a chaplain.

Carolyn served as a chaplain at Yale New Haven Hospital and then accepted a position at Connecticut Mental Health Center as its Chaplain until 1993. Carolyn accepted the call to serve as the Pastor of Whitneyville UCC., Hamden, CT.

Currently she serves as Sunday Supply Preacher at Olivet Congregational Church, UCC in Bridgeport.

A NOTE FROM JANE

As many of our clients are finding out to their chagrin, and as the COVID pandemic continues to keep so many of our drivers on the sidelines, IVCG cannot provide the same service as before. We're working as hard as we can to find new volunteers, but it's a heavy lift these days for sure.

So a lot of the "old rules" don't apply anymore. We used to be able to guarantee a ride if the appointment was made at least a week ahead of time; now we're lucky if we don't have to close bookings two or even three weeks out.

Please try to understand that if we can't provide you with a ride, it's absolutely not because we don't care – it's because we just don't have a driver for you and we don't want to make a promise we can't keep. As you know, if we accept your appointment, you're going to get a ride. Unless something extraordinarily unusual were to happen, we're going to be there to get you to your doctor and you can take that to the bank.

Guaranteeing rides also means that when we start getting close to our maximum, we close bookings – this is why we do it! Once we close bookings, we start turning away new requests, sometimes lots and lots of them.

This is also why it's critically important that if there are any changes or cancellations in your appointment, you must contact us as soon as you can. When you cancel and it's too late to fill your ride with another rider, that usually means we didn't serve someone else that we could have ... in effect, a ride gone to waste.

As one of the very few senior transportation providers that has stayed "on the road" throughout the entire pandemic, both our staff and our volunteers have been struggling. We need our clients to do their part too, by respecting our time and our efforts, and keeping us as well informed as you possibly can.

GUEST PIECE: HEROES AMONG US

There's certainly heroes among us, but most don't consider themselves as such. They are heroes to so many, and bring brightness to someone's day. Heroes offer kind words, a smile, give up their seat to let others sit down, they open a door to let the person go first, they help put their groceries in a bag.

Heroes are all over the place. They buy you that cup of coffee and or a meal anonymously. They cook a meal, bake a dessert, or buy a bag of food and drop it off to you. They offer an ear and the time to listen when you need them. They are the calm in the midst of a storm.

Look at all the heroes during this pandemic, they seem to come out all over the place eager to help even if only in some small way. They call to check on you, ask if you need anything, listen if you need to talk, understand, care. They are there to make your day a little brighter.

Human kindness of the heart is the best of all, they show such pure compassion. That's what everyday heroes are. Just take a good look around and you'll truly see them each and every day. Be kind to one another walk in the light and you'll see the brightness.

Angels walk among us every day.

Thank you to all the everyday heroes. We appreciate everything you do.

Mary Comfort

COVID PROTOCOLS

Until further notice, all clients are required to wear a face mask (covering the mouth AND the nose) at all times while being transported. Please do not put your driver in a difficult position by pulling it down or refusing to wear it. If you have breathing difficulties and cannot wear a mask, you must make alternate transportation arrangements as we will not be able to drive you.

INTERFAITH VOLUNTEER CARE GIVERS

of GREATER NEW HAVEN

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Hamden CT 06517-2113

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OR CURRENT RESIDENT



**VOLUNTEERS
NEEDED!**

**VOLUNTEERING WITH IVCG IS FUN, EASY, AND VERY SPECIAL!
CALL (203-230-8994) OR EMAIL (jferrall@carenewhaven.org) TO
SIGN UP OR FIND OUT MORE!**