

Legacy *Matters*



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Smart Investment: *Disaster Response*

Our donors address Valley problems & solutions

You should know:

With the help of our donors, Valley Community Foundation grants support:

- comprehensive emergency services provided by the Salvation Army;
- Emergency Services Week and an emergency response training by the Seymour Ambulance Association;
- TEAM, Inc. in providing case management and rehousing assistance to the victims of the Jan. 6 Shelton fire;
- the replacement purchase of a state-of-the-art Cardiac Monitor Defibrillator for the Valley Emergency Medical Services.

In an emergency, you know to call 911 for help.

But what do you do during and after a disaster?

Fire and police departments have protocols on how to respond in a disaster. With so many disasters it's becoming increasingly important to have a disaster response protocol.

Preparation is key, says Scott Andrews, Seymour Ambulance Association's Executive Director.

Last summer, Seymour Ambulance Association organized the area's first mass casualty incident training of its scope in 30 years including Seymour's fire and police departments as well as departments from Ansonia, Oxford and Beacon Falls.

Since the Newtown shootings and Boston Marathon bombing, Seymour has "been aggressively training and rethinking how to respond to mass casualty incidents" Andrews says.

"If such a tragic incident should occur, this training will better prepare us for more positive outcomes," he says.

There are several local and area organizations that help people through a disaster. Often times the Red Cross is called in first.

"We work on a great scale of need: everything from a single-family house fire to Superstorm Sandy," says Paul Shipman, the Chief Communications Officer for the Red Cross of Connecticut and Rhode Island.

The response could involve something as simple as providing on-site snacks to something as costly as putting up families in a hotel and providing victims with gift cards to buy items that meet their immediate needs, such as diapers, clothing or prescription medicine.

"It's designed to get people through the first few days," Shipman says. After that, the Red Cross connects people with local service providers based on their needs.

In the case of the Jan. 6 fire in Shelton that meant most fire victims were connected to TEAM Inc., which helped find replacement clothing, furniture and apartments and funding to cover security deposits for those new apartments. Depending on the scope or nature of the disaster, other organizations might have been tapped for assistance.

To help TEAM cover those unexpected costs, the Valley United Way, Katharine Matthies Foundation and the Valley Community Foundation made grants to the organization.

Often times, dealing with the economic and emotional fallout from a disaster lasts significantly longer than the disaster itself.

More than a year after Superstorm Sandy, the Salvation Army's long-term case managers are still supporting storm victims whose homes were damaged, says Brenda Downing, the Salvation Army's Director of Social Services for Connecticut and Rhode Island.

Long-term case managers, Downing says, are available to help local victims of major disasters deal with the stress, emotional and financial burdens caused by disasters.

Community foundations and other philanthropic organizations across the state and nationally are discussing how to collaboratively use philanthropy to efficiently and effectively help individuals, organizations and communities deal with disasters.

"We know that the government process may cause delays in aid to disaster victims, and local philanthropic institutions familiar with the community can respond quickly in times of need," says Valley Community Foundation CEO & President, Sharon Closius.

Valley United Way CEO & President Jack Walsh says there is also talk of creating a formalized local nonprofit response to disasters. "The Valley is better positioned than a lot of communities because we have networks that work and we can respond quickly because we all communicate," says Walsh.

A local response plan to disasters could be modelled on the reaction to the Jan. 6 fire in Shelton, Walsh says, where volunteer firefighters, the Red Cross, TEAM and philanthropy all came together seamlessly to help.

What you can do:

-Volunteer with or donate to area nonprofits that respond to disasters.

-Be prepared! Discuss a plan with your family on what to do in a disaster.

-Call us to learn more about how to use your philanthropy to support disaster and emergency recovery efforts in the Valley.



Above: Seymour Ambulance Association Executive Director, Scott Andrews. "Preparation is key," says Andrews.

Great Donors, Great Grant

Donors fund a Disaster Initial Response Trailer



Left to right: Dorothy Palazzi of the Palazzi Family Fund; the Haywood Family of the Joseph A. Pagliaro, Sr. Family Fund; Greg Stamos, of the John and Paraskeve Vartelas "Agape" Fund.

The Valley is better prepared to face disaster, thanks to three VCF families.

The Red Cross of Connecticut and Rhode Island has stocked and placed a Disaster Initial Response Trailer in Ansonia, thanks to the Palazzi Family Fund, the Joseph A. Pagliaro, Sr. Family Fund and The John and Paraskeve Vartelas "Agape" Fund, all Donor Advised Funds at the Valley Community Foundation.

There are 37 trailers strategically placed across the state that allow the Red Cross to respond quickly to large-scale emergencies. Now the Valley has one, too!

The trailers are weather resistant, easy to move and are filled with cots, blankets and comfort kits used to set up emergency shelters for 25 people or more during events such as a major power outage, flood, tornado or large fire.

When an emergency arises, the Red Cross will deploy the trailer to help set up a shelter; it will return to Ansonia once the shelter is dismantled.

To better protect the Valley, the Red Cross approached the Valley Community Foundation for a grant. In turn, the Foundation looked to donor advised fund holders whose interests align with the grant request.

Donor advised funds are designed to be flexible to meet the donors' passions and the community's needs, and the VCF staff frequently connects donors with appropriate grant requests.

VCF's Program Officer, Valerie Knight-DiGangi,

reached out to the three donors about the trailer and its importance to the Valley.

"Val suggests funding opportunities to us, and she is always right on target with what resonates to us," says Greg Stamos, one of the founding family members of the Agape Fund (Greek for "love"), a sub-fund in the Vartelas-Stamos Family Funds, created by more than 40 family members to honor their grandparents.

"We know that this piece of equipment will be helping people here in the Valley for years to come," says Greg.

"I keep reading about these disasters happening all across the country, and I'd like to make sure the Valley is prepared," says Dorothy Palazzi, who created the Palazzi Family Fund to honor her family.

"Because the Valley is such a tight-knit community, when there's a problem it really hits home and you can relate," Dorothy says.

Supporting the trailer was appealing because "we want to help keep people in the Valley safe," said Michelle Pagliaro Haywood who, with her brother Joseph Jr., started the Joseph A. Pagliaro, Sr. Family Fund to continue their father's philanthropy.

"You don't plan to be in a situation like that, and it's nice to have something available to help the community in case of a disaster," she says.

"We certainly see this as an asset to the community" says Red Cross chief communications officer, Paul Shipman, "and it's the generosity of the donors that makes this possible."

Grant Deadline Approaching

The Valley Community Foundation is currently accepting applications for the 2014 Responsive Grant program. Responsive Grants are intended to be a source of flexible funding and are open to all requests from non-profits serving VCF's five-town region of Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour and Shelton and meet the eligibility criteria.

The deadline to apply is March 28 at 5 p.m.

Responsive grants may be used for general operating support, project support or capacity building support. Organizations may also apply for multi-year support.

VCF donors are welcome to participate by contributing to the pool of money available for responsive grants.

These grants are based on the Foundation's commitment to support the Valley's nonprofits that strive towards providing the highest quality services and advance ideas, innovations and techniques that improve the quality of life for area residents.

The process is done in partnership with The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven so nonprofits need to only fill out one application.

The Responsive Grants program is the largest and most competitive of the Foundation's grant programs and includes a community review, site visits conducted by staff and further review by the Board of Directors.

Grant decisions are announced in October.

Visit www.valleyfoundation.org for more information and to apply.

You're Invited!

Please join us on
April 3, 2014 for the
Valley Community
Foundation's
Annual Meeting at La
Sala, 73 High St., Derby
(formerly Sons of Italy).
Please RSVP to Beth
Colette at 203-751-9162.



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Good News About the Valley



Year-Round Soccer

The Seymour Soccer Association offers winter soccer clinics despite the weather. Thanks to a sponsorship grant from the Valley Community Foundation, the association offered an 8-week-long soccer clinic for more than 100 kids.

The association takes the sport indoors to keep kids physically active over the winter and teach skills like ball handling, says Board president Al Bruno. The grant helped defray the association's cost to rent the indoor gym, which reduced the cost of student participation to \$50 per child.



Protecting Books

The Derby Public Library bought protective blinds for several rooms of the library containing books and other items of historical value, thanks to a grant from the Selma L. and Harold B. Yudkin Fund at the Valley Community Foundation. The Yudkin fund supports students and organizations in Derby. The Derby library held a special place in Harold's heart.

The blinds will protect the Library's collection from sun damage. Pictured are Derby Public Library Director Cathy Williams and Mary Bisaccia, Derby Public Library Local History Coordinator.



Kids' Concerts

The New Haven Symphony Orchestra performed a series of three kid-friendly concerts this winter at Shelton Intermediate School including "Peter and the Wolf," a "Tales and Tunes" program about rhythm and a "Simply Strings" program focused on chamber music.

An "Instrument Discovery Zone" preceded the concerts and encouraged children to touch, tap or toot on orchestra instruments.

The concert series was sponsored by the Valley Community Foundation.