Enjoying The Great Outdoors.

April and May saw way too much rain for most of us so when the sun finally broke through, individuals in our Day program decided to get out and enjoy some fun in the sun on the West Haven Green.

Everyone enjoyed being outside playing games like hopscotch, checkers and ring toss while others chose to recreate some scenes from the move “Sandlot” by practicing their batting skills.

Casino Comes to SMILES

Individuals at our SMILE program strengthen their money skills, number recognition and just have some good ole fun playing roulette. Pictured above is Georgia collecting her winnings along with Tallance, Robert, Mike and staff Yolanda.

Expressing Themselves

A few members of the Community Connections’ program enjoyed designing their own t-shirts while paying homage to Jackson Pollock, the inspiration behind the designs. Pollock was an American painter who contributed to the Abstract Expressionism Movement in the 1940’s. The opportunity to learn about, appreciate, and creatively express their own artistic perspective keeps our individuals up and coming in a culturally diverse and interesting world. Pictured with their own creations are, from left to right, Bryan, Russell, Mark and Nick.
New Beginnings at The Avenues Program

The Avenues program has a new curriculum, a new worksite and a new graduate!

Our new curriculum is designed to give individuals the skills they need to become community-conscious, independent adults. Our curriculum covers a myriad of subjects from technology and digital citizenship to career skills to mind/body wellness.

Over the past few months, the young men and women in the Avenues program have been working on understanding about what it means to advocate. They are practicing how to present themselves and run their own Individual Education Planning meetings. They were able to introduce themselves, introduce their teams, ask for a report on their progress, and discuss how they felt they did for the year.

The Yale Sustainability program, Meriden Humane Society, Dan Cosgrove Animal Shelter and The Family Resource Center have been added to the list of our work exploration partners.

Yale’s Sustainability program uses farm practices to teach agriculture and its importance in the community. Yale students will be working with Avenues members to help facilitate care for their academic farm, which produces dozens of varieties of vegetables, fruits, herbs, and flowers, and is home to free-range laying hens and honeybees. Both the Animal Shelter and Humane Society are animal rescue shelters needing help with custodial projects, animal socialization, and clerical assistance. The Family Resource Center will provide custodial work and classroom set-up with opportunities to read and interact with the children. We are excited to collaborate with these amazing organizations.

Finally, we want to congratulate and wish farewell to our new Avenues graduate, Robert Reiss. Robert has been an amazing addition in our program. He lights up a room with his personality and presence. We are very proud of Robert and wish him the best.

Two Residents Celebrated Milestone Birthdays

We celebrated two milestone birthdays in May at Apps Restaurant in West Haven. Evette Gore (left), a resident at our Elm Street house, celebrated her 60th birthday in style with her aunt by her side and her close friends around her. The party also honored Sharon Boyer (right) of Wood Street as she celebrated her 70th birthday. Her brother and sister-in-law attended the party which only widened her already large and infectious smile. Both ladies had a wonderful time celebrating and being showered with gifts and well wishes.
Spring Fling: An Oscar Worthy Event

Our Spring Fling, a Red Carpet Event, was held in May this year. Everyone dressed to impress and arrived on the red carpet to the paparazzi eager to get their photo! After everyone made their entrance the guests of honor were treated to an award winning meal and Grammy-worthy tunes. Those who took a break from dancing could find their name on a star on the “walk of fame” dance floor.

Saying Goodbye To Two Long-Time Residents

We are deeply saddened to say goodbye to two of our long-time residents.

Rosemary “Rose” Tango, who passed away on May 27, 2019, was a resident of Community Connections since 1995. In 2004, she moved into her first apartment where she was able to dance to her favorite music of Michael Jackson, attend outings to Foxwoods, go bowling and take strolls at the beach. Rose often enjoyed the Arts & Crafts and Social Club, especially when jewelry making was the project. Her love for jewelry always showed through her large watch collection, bracelets, and rings that she wore each day. Rose touched so many lives over the years. She was a team member of the Walking Warrior’s where she participated in many events that raised money to help others. Her feisty personality and love of comedic banter will be missed by everyone.

Enaida Colon passed away on May 21, 2019. She came to Community Connections in 1984 at the age of 27. She was employed at the Goodwill of Southern New England for many years working at Greenbrier and the Westville Goodwill Store before retiring into the SPICE program. She was a proud graduate of Adult Education, a member of the Art Expressions Program through Step Associates and was also a longtime member of Team West Haven Special Olympics. Enaida loved to travel and was able to cruise the east coast up to Canada and then through the Eastern Caribbean, she enjoyed her Camp Horizon Days, visiting Myrtle Beach, Lake George and Block Island. However, the trip she held most dear was her experience at the happiest place in the world, Disney! Enaida will be remembered for her fancy dance moves and the energy she brought into a room.
Tradition held strong at our annual Family & Friends event at Anthony’s Ocean View this year! The theme was “35 years of Celebrations”. Members of each house wore a designated color for the event. The Wood Street ladies dazzled in their royal blue, the Elm Street crew showed off their crimson best, the Savin Avenue, Atwater Street and IHS gang mixed it up with greens and yellows. It was a colorful scene and everyone looked fantastic!

The food was wonderful as it always is and DJ Bob kept everyone boogying on the dance floor until late into the evening.

Our “original residents”, Sharon Boyer, Barbara Bridge, Enaida Colon and Michael Roche were honored with gifts commemorating 35 years living within West Haven Community House.

Residential Program Hits 35th Anniversary