

Stay Connected

A publication of the West Haven Community House
227 Elm St., West Haven, CT 06516

Disability Services Quarterly

West Haven Community House Has Served the Needs of West Haven and its People Since 1941



Air & Space Museum delights its visitors

“New York City’s Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum Complex is a dynamic, interactive and educational journey for all ages,” according to its web site. “The museum’s mission is to honor our heroes, educate the public and inspire our youth” – and that certainly was the case for residential program client, Susan, and staff member, Sharon, who traveled to the city on April 27 to visit the museum.

Among the museum’s main attractions are the World War II aircraft carrier, USS Intrepid, a submarine, the USS Growler, and a Concorde supersonic jet. In the Space Shuttle pavilion, the Enterprise sits just 10-feet off the ground, allowing visitors to walk underneath. And with dramatic lighting and accompanying video, the visit is an experience to be enjoyed by everyone. The local visitors enjoyed lunch served aboard the Intrepid, and then visited the 911 Memorial that has the names of everyone who lost their life in that 2001 attack on the World Trade Center in NYC inscribed in bronze around twin memorial pools.



Susan is pictured at left, and below, while on a recent visit to New York City

Two in Disability Services cited for length of service

At the Community House’s Board of Directors Annual Meeting on June 20, 15 long-term employees with more than 15 years service at the agency were recognized, including two from Disability Services. Cynthia Scully, an IDS Life Skills Coach, and Michelle Cofield, Assistant Director of Disability Services, have 18 and 22 years with the agency, respectively, and were among those recognized. According to Disability Services Director Marie Watson, Scully is “dependable, knowledgeable and always willing to help.” Scully is also the agency’s unofficial weather person. According to Executive Director Patty Stevens, “If I want to know the weather, I go to Cynthia.”

Cofield began here part-time in the residential program. She went back to school and earned a degree in social work, and followed that with an MSW, which Stevens said really stands for “Most Sensitive Worker,” a tribute to her “always doing what is best for clients.” Cofield is now working on obtaining her license to be a social worker. In her 18 years here, among the titles she has held are: Residential Counselor, Savin Supervisor, Disability Service Specialist and her current title of Assistant Director of Disability Services.

Congratulations to both for your long-time service and dedication.

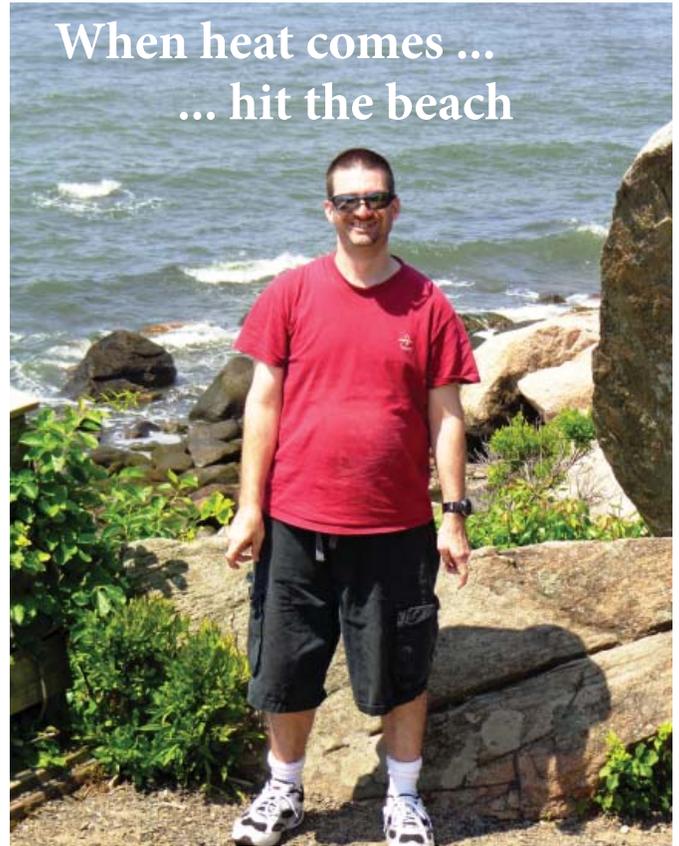


Michelle Cofield is third from the left, and Cynthia Scully second from right, in this picture of 15+ year employees cited at the agency’s Annual Meeting.

Have car - will take picture



It does not matter whether it is a 1950s Willys Jeepster, a '68 Camaro or a 2013 Nissan Altima, our day program clients love checking out vehicles of all kinds. A contingent of participants toured Napoli Motors in Milford in April where they were allowed to view some beautifully maintained vintage cars as well as dream about some of the latest models that are on the market for sale today. As always, Carlos took his photo with his current dream car, adding the picture to his growing collection.

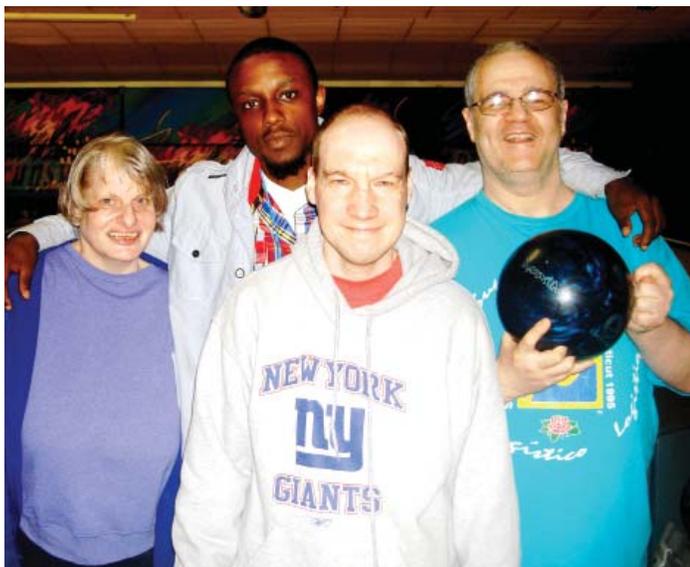


When heat comes hit the beach

There are a few ways to effectively deal with a late Spring or early Summer heat wave, and one of them is to take a visit to the beach, which is exactly what Community Connections clients and staff did in June with a trip to Hammonasset State Park in Madison. Two separate day program groups took some time to visit the sand and surf at one of the state's premier shoreline state parks. Whether you enjoyed walking along the beach like Brent did in picture above, or sat under the covered patio like Allison, pictured at right, everyone had a great time together while beating the heat.



Getting ready for bowling Olympics



Practice makes perfect, and even if not exactly perfect, residential program clients have been honing their bowling skills on Saturdays starting last February at the Colony Lanes in Wallingford. And with some practice under their belts, clients Dennis, Andrew and Lucille are ready to start competing in a Special Olympics bowling league.



Daffodils!

The daffodils were in full bloom on April 27 at the Daffodil Festival in Meriden attended by clients Rose and Virginia, at left. The bright yellow daffodil blooms are always a harbinger of warmer days to come.

Rooting on the Yankees



Day clients and staff made their annual pilgrimage to their favorite baseball park to cheer on their favorite team (at least for some) – the New York Yankees – at a game played on June 5 at the Stadium in the Bronx. Clients including Edwin, Brent, Joe, Carlos and Russell arrived nice and early to watch the pre-game warm-ups and batting practice. And although the Yankees were not playing Joe's favorite team, the Boston Red Sox, the home town team beat the Cleveland Indians, 6-4. It was a very hot day at the ballpark, mitigated of course by soda and hotdogs. So while no one was fortunate enough to catch a baseball this visit, maybe next time!

Foxwoods fun

A three-day trip to the Foxwoods Resorts Casino in eastern Connecticut was enjoyed by Rose, pictured at right, accompanied by staff last April. Rose had a wonderful time enjoying the shopping and the stores, and listening to the music.



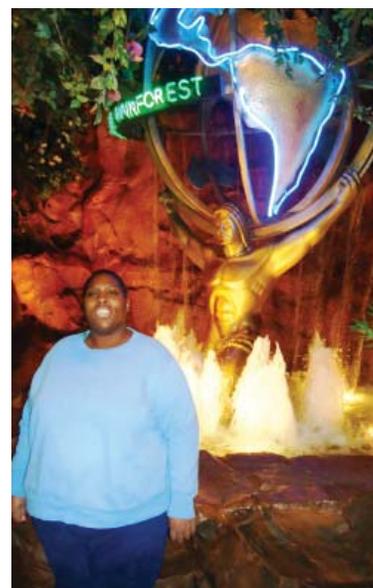
Dennis celebrates 40th birthday with residential clients and staff

A great big "Happy Birthday" to residential program client Dennis, who marked his milestone 40th birthday on April 10 with a party in the Garden Room at App's Restaurant in West Haven. All agency residents attended, along with many staff members including Paula, Deneen, Cheryl, Verisa, Gwen, Dianna, Cathy, Marie, Cathy and Davaul. In addition to clients and staff, members of Dennis' family attended, including his mother, aunt and uncle, and some friends, too. Everyone enjoyed the buffet-style meal, with the celebration being capped off with the traditional singing of "Happy Birthday" and the opening of birthday gifts. Congratulations, Dennis, and many happy returns!



Shopping, lunch highlight outing

In May, a group of day program clients including Chuck, Lasaundria (pictured at right) and Shawn enjoyed window shopping and lunch while visiting the sprawling West Farms Mall in West Hartford. Clients enjoyed the sights and sounds of the Rainforest Café, which was exciting and fun and featured interactive displays and features that everyone enjoyed.



Volunteers assist city's ongoing beautification efforts



Despite the rain, high heat and humidity in May and June – our Community Connections day program clients have made a valiant effort to contribute to the beauty of the city of West Haven by planting and maintaining flower pots placed along Campbell Avenue.

Among the planters they are taking care of is the one located just outside of West Haven City Hall. With a little luck and the cooperation of Mother Nature, all the volunteers' hard work should soon begin to spill over in waves of colorful flowers. Community Connections clients participating in the planting initiative are proud of their work and enjoy hearing the praises of people passing by.

The work will continue throughout the summer months and into the early fall.

SMILES is keeping it meaningful



The Community Connections program for older adults, SMILES, continues to develop into a program that combines fun and meaningful activities within a warm and nurturing environment. The SMILES program is held in the Upper Lang room located at 227 Elm St., and staff remains proud and excited as this program continues to grow and expand to meet the various needs of older adults with developmental disabilities.

Lots to do at Gillette Castle

Gillette Castle in Haddam, CT, was the destination in April for Community Connections clients and staff. The castle was originally the private residence of William Gillette, a famous American actor who is best known for his portrayal of Sherlock Holmes on stage. Today, it is a favorite tourist destination including walking paths in the scenic Connecticut river valley region, as well as the castle itself. Clients, including Charlene, Desiree and Annette, enjoyed touring the various nooks and crannies of the castle, as well as exploring the hiking trails. And of course, clients and staff all enjoyed a picnic lunch. It was a wonderful way to start off the warmer spring season.



Little Italy! It was an evening of fun and dancing at the Little Italy themed event at the auditorium at 227 Elm Street recently.