

theSteward

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Love Is Service

One Couple's Philosophy of Life Manifests Itself as Historic Fund

As a decorated war veteran, the late Colonel James L. Draper, Jr., knew the meaning of service. And when he retired from the U.S. Army, in 1965, Jim and his wife, Shirley, who preceded him in 2000, carried on the tradition by devoting their lives to serving the community they cherished.

Jim's final—and perhaps grandest—act of charity came in the form of **The Draper Foundation Fund**, a \$30-million endowment entrusted to the Foundation. The new fund, which represents the largest single gift in the Foundation's history, will benefit mainly local charitable organizations by making yearly awards to 19 nonprofits named by the Drapers, as well as through annual donor-advised grants.

"Jim and Shirley were well-known in Colebrook, and indeed throughout the area, for their love of community," Foundation President Guy Rovezzi said. "This endowment reflects their passion for particular causes—such as education and the welfare of children and animals—and will forever serve as a testament to their compassion for others."

"The historic proportions of Jim and Shirley Draper's philanthropy will forever be felt in northwest Connecticut. The significance of The Draper Foundation Fund is profound on many levels; however, it does not change the fundamental nature of our work, which is to promote the common good of all who reside in the 20 towns served by the Foundation. For that, we must now—and always—rely on the generous support of our donors." —Foundation President Guy Rovezzi



PHOTO (CIRCA 1960) COURTESY OF SUSAN CAUFIELD

Jim and Shirley Draper devoted their lives to serving the community they cherished. The newly established Draper Foundation Fund, one of the largest single gifts on record to a community foundation in the state of Connecticut, will benefit mainly local charitable organizations by making yearly awards to 19 nonprofits named by the Drapers.

The Draper Foundation Fund: A Lesson in Inspired Philanthropy

The Draper Foundation Fund has forever changed the face of philanthropy, both for The Community Foundation of Northwest Connecticut and for the 20 communities it serves.

To be sure, a gift of \$30 million from the estate of Shirley and Jim Draper, of Colebrook, means additional resources can now be brought to bear on critical local issues. And in terms of catalytic philanthropy, our community foundation is better positioned to play a leadership role in the region, working across sectors to solve complex problems and maximize impact.

But beyond that, The Draper Foundation Fund has the potential to inspire future philanthropy, which is perhaps the greatest impact of all. Donors and fund-holders alike will appreciate ensuing advantages such as:

- Technological advances and staff augmentation yielding improved donor services;
- Increased economies of scale in operational overhead;
- Heightened portfolio sophistication and opportunities for increased investment benchmarking;
- More resources deployed locally to causes important to our donor community.

"This community gave Jim and Shirley their closest family and friends, and they wanted to return the favor by sharing their good fortune," Susan Caufield, a longtime family friend, said. "This fund is their way of reaching out to those who need a helping hand, and perhaps inspiring others to do the same. Inspiring good works in others—that was important to them."

As legacy gifts go, The Draper Foundation Fund is in a class by itself. One of the largest single gifts on record to a community foundation in the state of Connecticut, it will forever immortalize Jim and Shirley Draper as two of the area's foremost benefactors. And what is more, there's no telling how many others it will inspire.

PHILANTHROPY FACT

Philanthropy Potluck recently reported that community foundations are currently the fastest-growing sector in philanthropy. According to the Minnesota Council on Foundations blog, "**Community foundations go beyond simply making grants to identify current and emerging issues, channel resources to address their communities' needs and help their regions prepare for the future.**" In addition, the blog revealed that U.S. community foundations grant more than \$31 billion in charitable funds in more than 700 communities and regions. According to the Connecticut Council for Philanthropy, **community foundations in Connecticut granted more than \$75 million to charitable causes in 2010.**

Written by staff of the Minnesota Council on Foundations, Philanthropy Potluck offers varying perspectives on topics of interest to the philanthropy community.

Be What's Possible

Our commitment to the vitality of northwest Connecticut is strong, but **your ongoing support is what makes good things possible.**

Together, we're bringing hope and opportunity to those less fortunate; we're ensuring the future of our local libraries, cultural organizations and conservation groups; and we're advancing the educational goals of our youth.

We're your Community Foundation—your partner in improving the public good.

Thank you for your continued support. Please use the enclosed envelope or donate safely and securely online at www.cfnwct.org.

For the Love of Animals

Torrington Couple Bring Passion for Pets to Foundation

With deep roots in Torrington, Jim and Sandra Thibault know the value of giving back to the community where they live and work. It's a commitment they both share, so when they turned their volunteer sights to the Foundation, they knew it was a perfect fit.

"Community Foundations make giving back easy," Sandra said. "By supporting the well-being of the communities they serve, they enable people to support the causes they're passionate about."

One such passion shared by the couple is animal welfare, and their time and talent are helping to bring attention—as well as financial support—to a Foundation initiative known as **The Critter Fund**.

"Animal advocacy is our primary charitable effort, so we're naturally interested in doing what we can to help The Critter Fund," Jim said, adding with a smile, "Over the years, we've become unofficial ambassadors for the fund."

Jim and Sandra earned that recognition, at least in part, by serving on planning committees for the 2008 Hare Ball—touted as a barn dance for animal lovers—as well as last fall's New Leash on Life, which helped more than a dozen abandoned dogs find new homes while raising awareness of the plight of homeless pets. As organizers of both well-attended local events, their names have become synonymous with animal-related causes.

But their contributions to the Foundation don't end there. As managing partner of the Torrington-based investment advisory firm Barron Financial Group, Jim was an ideal candidate for the Foundation's Investment Committee, assuming chairmanship in 2008.

"The Investment Committee is charged with overseeing the Foundation's investments, selecting portfolio strategists and upholding the organization's fiduciary responsibilities," Jim explained. "I enjoy this role because it allows me to use my professional knowledge and team-building skills to benefit the Foundation."

But Jim and Sandra, who serves as Barron Financial Group's operations coordinator, don't limit their generosity to community service. Each year, the firm recognizes its clients by making a sizable contribution in their honor to the **Northwest Connecticut Philanthropy Fund**. This endowed fund, comprised of undesignated gifts to the Foundation, is used to support emerging community needs.

With a successful business to run, Jim and Sandra have learned to direct their volunteer efforts where they can do the most good. A newly elected Constable in Torrington, Jim also chairs the city's Economic Development Committee and serves on the Torrington Charter Review Committee. Sandra, as one might expect, serves on the board of The Little Guild of St. Francis, a humane organization based in West Cornwall.

"Although I love all animals, I'm particularly concerned about the plight of homeless dogs and cats," Sandra said. "I hope the future holds many more opportunities for us to be involved in planning events that support The Critter Fund."

Established by the Foundation in 2005, The Critter Fund supports charitable organizations in northwest Connecticut dedicated to animal welfare. The fund assists with shelter, rescue and adoption, training, prevention of cruelty, spaying and neutering, elderly companionship, services to the disabled and wildlife preservation.



Pictured with 4-year-old Toby, a recent addition to the Thibault family, Jim and Sandra are staunch advocates for pet adoption. Over the years, they have put their passion into practice, rescuing ill-fated dogs from city pounds in Torrington and Bridgeport. Toby's proclivity for snuggling makes him a likely candidate for the Canine Good Citizen award, something Sandra believes helps to dispel negative stereotypes associated with certain breeds. The Thibaults' active lifestyle wouldn't be complete without a dog or two, says Jim, who hopes the couple's advocacy work will help to spread their "rescue a mutt" philosophy.

PHOTO: JENNIFER ALMQUIST

Giving Back Helps Communities Get Ahead

Growing up in Norfolk, Karen O'Connor forged many ties with the people and places in northwest Connecticut. So when it came time to update her estate plans, Karen knew the causes she wished to support. But it wasn't until she read a story in this publication that the idea of a legacy gift came to mind.

"I happened to read about Gail and Charles Olsen deciding to include the Community Foundation in their estate plans," Ms. O'Connor explained. "Having grown up in Norfolk and attending grammar school with Charlie, I found the article inspirational."

By including a gift to charity in her will, Ms. O'Connor can be certain that the Foundation will honor her wishes in perpetuity. "A bequest has so many benefits," she said. "And giving through the Community Foundation ensures that the funds will forever be directed where they can do the most good."

For information on how to include The Community Foundation of Northwest Connecticut in your estate plans, or to let us know that you have already done so, please contact us at 860.626.1245 or info@cfnwct.org.



PHOTO: JENNIFER ALMQUIST

A bequest to the Foundation ensures that communities in northwest Connecticut will have tangible, lasting evidence of Karen O'Connor's generosity.

Change the World: Get Our New Guide to Legacy Gifts

Have you ever wished you could make a difference in the world? Well, you can. And it's easier than you might think. Simply include a charitable gift in your estate plans. It's a sure way to make a positive impact on the causes, charities or communities that matter most to you.

A bequest could be the most important charitable gift you ever make. That's because an endowed fund established through your Community Foundation becomes a powerful and true legacy—one that will ensure that your generosity becomes a lasting tribute.

Call us to learn more about making a bequest for charity. We'll send you our new guide to legacy gifts, ***Estate Planning and the Common Good***. You'll learn why charitable bequests are gaining in popularity and get step-by-step advice about your options.



Let us help you make the most of your charitable giving. Together, we can bring more hope, caring and goodness into the world.

Legacy Gifts and You

More and more people are including charitable gifts in their estate plans. Why? Because it's a sure way to make a positive impact on the causes or communities that matter most to them. Whatever you choose to do with your endowed bequest, you can be sure it will bring more hope, caring and goodness into the world.

A bequest can be made in the form of a stated sum of money, stocks and bonds, a percentage of an estate or valuable artwork. Or you can name the Community Foundation as beneficiary of a life insurance policy, a qualified retirement plan or an IRA.

Sample language for a bequest: "To The Community Foundation of Northwest Connecticut, Inc., I give ___% of my residuary estate." Or you can name a fixed dollar amount.

To include a charitable gift in your estate plans, please consult your professional advisor or attorney. For more information about bequests, please contact us at 860.626.1245 or visit www.cfnwct.org.

PHOTO BY ANNE DAY COURTESY OF THE HOUSATONIC YOUTH SERVICE BUREAU



The annual Bearcat 5K Cross Country Challenge is one way the Housatonic Youth Service Bureau is helping to promote family health. Initiated by The Hotchkiss School in 2010, the community-wide event also includes a variety of educational and entertaining activities. Last year's race attracted over 150 runners of all ages and raised more than \$5,000 to benefit the youngsters and families served by the Falls Village-based nonprofit.

Serving six rural towns in northwest Connecticut, the Housatonic Youth Service Bureau provides a variety of innovative services that promote the overall health and well-being of area children, teens and families. Critical-needs grants from the Foundation help to advance the organization's mission of promoting positive youth development and strengthening families.

Shallow Pool of Public Funding Hampering Human Services

According to an article in the *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, the long-term outlook for government funding for human services is bleak. "The sobering reality is that nonprofits will have to be even more entrepreneurial in their funding models, efficient in deploying their resources and vigilant in serving their mission to make headway," authors Daniel Stid and Willa Seldon, of The Bridgespan Group, said.

Given the authors' grim assessment that "these organizations are left to cobble together their own resources from other funding sources to make up the difference," grants like those from the Foundation's **Marion Wm. and Alice Edwards Fund** are more critical than ever.

"We are extremely grateful to The Community Foundation of Northwest Connecticut," Kit Wright, coordinator of LARC's Transitions School to Community program, said. "Your ongoing support of the area's residents and organizations makes so much positive impact."

Learn more about how human service nonprofits can advance their missions while contending with government cutbacks at www.ssireview.org.

Source: The Bridgespan Group and *Stanford Social Innovation Review*/Winter 2011

Basic Needs Met by Year-End Grants

Faced with dwindling government support, charitable organizations serving some of the area's most economically distressed residents are struggling to advance their missions. This year, much of the \$20,150 in critical-needs grants from the **Marion Wm. and Alice Edwards Fund** will be used by local nonprofits to provide the most basic of necessities—food, warm clothing and shelter.

With its grant, the Litchfield Hills Elderly Nutrition program run by the Edward E. Sullivan Senior Center will continue to provide nutritious meals to homebound seniors in northwest Connecticut.

"Nationwide, and right here in Litchfield County, seniors are struggling to obtain the basic necessities of life, including nutritious food and basic health care," program supervisor Joel Sekorski said. "Our assistance helps many remain independent in their own homes for as long as possible."

Likewise, the Torrington Chapter of FISH will use its grant to assist some of the area's most disadvantaged families. "Federal and state funding is being reduced, and donations are down from previous years," Executive Director Kevin Purcell said. "We have had as many as 13 children living in our shelter—the youngest being just two weeks old—which clearly demonstrates the dire need in our community."

Likely a result of the economy, year-end grant applications continued to trend upward in 2011. "These grants are intended to help our area nonprofits provide essential services at a time of year when the need is greatest and budgets are tight," Foundation President Guy Rovezzi said.

Nobody knows more about need than Susan Leigh, who coordinates the services provided by Goshen Community Care & Hospice to town residents, many of whom are elderly. "We thought it would be nice to surprise some of our homebound seniors with a gift of a new sweater or warm blanket," Ms. Leigh said. "This grant helps in so many ways, from simple home repairs to a holiday meal ... it allows us to go a step beyond and make more of a difference."

In December of 2011, 42 area charities received grants intended to help them meet the critical needs of area residents.

"This grant ... allows us to go a step beyond and make more of a difference."

—Susan Leigh, Coordinator, Goshen Community Care & Hospice

In addition to awards for critical needs made annually in December, the Foundation makes grants to local nonprofit organizations three times a year, in early spring, late June and late fall. Last year, combined grants and scholarships totaled over \$1.2 million.

Community Mourns a Local Legend

It would be safe to say that Fred Bruni savored every one of his 92 years. And to the Torrington community he cherished, he leaves an impressive legacy befitting his exceptional generosity and profound civic pride.

With Fred's passing on November 2, 2011, the community lost an incomparable friend and benefactor. A recipient of the Rotary Club's prestigious Paul Harris Fellow award, Fred was as well-known for his civic contributions as he was for his indefatigable goodwill.

Honored by the Chamber of Commerce and LARC for his exemplary service, Fred also contributed his time and talents to the local Salvation Army, YMCA, Lions Club, United Way and B.P.O. Elks, to name a few.

In addition to a decades-long career in the banking industry, Fred was a successful entrepreneur, founding, in 1946, the Fred Bruni Nut & Candy Company. Those close to Fred say he was a man who personified his motto: "It doesn't cost anything to be nice to people."

"Fred has left an indelible mark on the community he loved as well as on the countless organizations that benefited from his generosity," Foundation President Guy Rovezzi said. "The establishment of the **Fred and Josephine Bruni Scholarship Fund** at the Foundation honors his beloved wife of 65 years and will forever pay homage to Fred's remarkable legacy."

FOUNDATION FOCUS Dinneen Named Program Officer



PHOTO: JENNIFER ALMQUIST

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Heather Dinneen as Program Officer. In her new role, Heather will oversee the Foundation's grant-making process, including all discretionary and programmatic awards.

A Cornwall native, Heather holds bachelor's degrees in social work and international relations from Concordia College. She also earned master's degrees in social work, from Fordham University, and in strategic fund-raising and philanthropy, from Bay Path College.

"Heather has extensive experience in the nonprofit sector, both here and abroad, and her expertise and global perspective are sure to invigorate our grant-making," Foundation President Guy Rovezzi said.

In addition to her work as a crisis clinician for families in the U.S. experiencing homelessness, Heather served as grants manager for a \$10-million capital campaign conducted by The Meeting Waters YMCA, in Brattleboro, Vermont.

Heather's humanitarian efforts include founding and directing the Ghana Fund, in Accra, Ghana, a nonprofit organization that supports the Christ Faith Foster Home. Her international experience also includes a development post with Payap University, in Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Heather and her family currently reside in Cornwall.

Fund Supports Women Facing Economic Hardship

It was an enlightening—if unsettling—afternoon for supporters of **The Women & Girls Fund** gathered at the Torrington Country Club just days before Thanksgiving. Kara Dowling-Roraback, chair of the fund's executive committee, surprised many of the 130 women and men in attendance by citing some grim statistics about the economic status of women both nationally and right here in Litchfield County.

"Eighty-eight percent of those living in shelters throughout the region are single-parent, female-headed families," Ms. Dowling-Roraback said. "These are very tough times and ... the need ... has never been greater."

The Women & Girls Fund, established by area civic-minded women in 1999, supports programs that address women's needs and contribute to the welfare of children, and it promotes the activities of nonprofit organizations that share its goal of improving the quality of life for women and girls in the Northwest Corner.

This year's grant recipients were among those considering remarks by University of Connecticut President Dr. Susan Herbst, whose new book investigates the way young people discuss politics, in general, and how they treat each other during debates, in particular.

With its \$1,000 grant from The Women & Girls Fund, the Salisbury-based after-school program known as Extras will continue to provide a safe environment for children aged 5 to 12, where they can get help with homework and hone their social skills.

"We want full-time working mothers to have a place for their children to come and not have to worry," Extras Director Rachel Tory-Grant told fund supporters.

According to Winsted Area Child Care Center Director Paige Corey, her agency's \$2,000 grant will assist working mothers with child-care expenses. "We provide a place for children between the ages of 5 and 12 to have positive interactions in a safe environment," Ms. Corey explained.

Through grants to local nonprofit organizations, The Women & Girls Fund supports programs that provide opportunities for women and girls to develop real-life skills, enhance economic self-sufficiency, build positive self-esteem and promote personal growth.



UConn President Dr. Susan Herbst (left) and Kara Dowling-Roraback, Women & Girls Fund executive committee chair. Dr. Herbst, who delivered remarks at the fund's annual meeting, is the University's 15th president and the first woman to hold that position.



State Auto Farm Product Assistant Manager Susan Chiovitti (left) and Nancy Rogers, development director for Susan B. Anthony Project, which has received multiple Women & Girls Fund grants. As part of its commitment to advance the economic self-sufficiency and general welfare of women and girls in northwest Connecticut, the State Auto Insurance Group has contributed \$10,000 over two years in support of The Women & Girls Fund.

The Women & Girls Fund, initiated by the Foundation in 1999, provides a unique philanthropic opportunity for community-minded women in northwest Connecticut who are committed to improving the lives of area women and girls by raising awareness and pooling resources. By supporting the fund, women:

- Help to advance the welfare of local women and girls;
- Network with women who share similar interests and values;
- Help women and girls make strategic and informed decisions about their philanthropy;
- Join a dynamic group that empowers other women.

In a generous show of support, the State Auto Insurance Group has contributed \$10,000 over two years to advance the mission of The Women & Girls Fund. This funding is helping to advance the welfare of local women and girls by meeting their real-life needs and by identifying opportunities to transform their lives.

For more information about The Women & Girls Fund, or to learn how you can support its mission, visit www.cfnwct.org or call 860.626.1245.

Making Ends Meet: Foundation Helps Charities Navigate the Fiscal Crisis

With public funding for essential services markedly constrained, nonprofits must cast wider fund-raising nets to stay afloat. Annual grant-making opportunities offered by the Foundation are helping area charities bridge the fiscal gap.

During the third grant cycle of 2011, nonprofit organizations serving northwest Connecticut received discretionary awards totaling nearly \$50,000. Among them were:

\$4,475 grant to Literacy Volunteers on the Green to purchase English-language textbooks and instructional materials for local non-native speakers.

\$2,200 grant to Girl Scouts of Connecticut for a program designed to reduce bullying among girls in Torrington grammar schools.

\$3,000 grant to Music in Common, Inc., to support an educational program for high school students in Torrington, which focuses on the community-building power of music.

\$5,000 grant to Civic Life Project to develop a replicable program that engages high school students in civic life.

\$6,800 grant to Police Athletic League of Torrington to support a girls' basketball program serving children from low-income families.

\$1,600 grant to Aton Forest, Inc., in support of a community awareness and information campaign to protect the Sandy Brook Conservation Corridor.

In addition to grants like those noted above from unrestricted—or flexible—funds, donor-advised, designated and field-of-interest funds helped to boost the Foundation's impact in 2011 through individual grants to nearly 90 local nonprofits, including the following from the **Borghesi Family Fund**:

\$1,250 matching grant to Torrington Early Childhood Collaborative to create a user-friendly, interactive online community resource guide enabling local families to access essential child care and early education services.

The Foundation makes grants to area nonprofit organizations three times a year, in early spring, late June and late fall. Find a complete listing of recent grants online by clicking "News" at www.cfnwct.org.



THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
of NORTHWEST CONNECTICUT

Here for good.

32 City Hall Avenue
P.O. Box 1144
Torrington, CT 06790
www.cfnwct.org
T 860.626.1245
F 860.489.7517
info@cfnwct.org

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