



AUTUMN 2011

A Community Newsletter
for Middlesex United Way

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Roster of Members

Leadership Circle Roast of
Biff & Jean Shaw

GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER. LIVE UNITED®



Middlesex United Way

VOLUNTEERS INSTALL BORN LEARNING TRAILS ON DAY OF CARING

Middlesex United Way's annual *Day of Caring* was held on September 28, 2011, and teams of volunteers from local companies installed Born Learning Trails throughout the county. Born Learning is a national public awareness campaign sponsored by United Way and the Ad Council providing tools and activities for parents and caregivers to make the most of early learning moments with children.

The Born Learning Trails are an early learning tool featuring a series of signs on posts with fun, physical activities for parents and children to do together. They are installed in a public setting such as a park or schoolyard for everyone in the community to enjoy.

Middlesex United Way's goal in **Education** is to increase children's readiness to learn by school entry. This *Day of Caring* project is one step in which United Way is progressing towards this goal.

On *Day of Caring*, teams of volunteers cemented posts into the ground, attached signs to the posts, and painted stencils with letters, numbers, and shapes on the ground. Volunteers were from Aetna, Brewster

Elementary School, Comcast, Liberty Bank, Rolls Royce Naval Marine, Inc., and Webster Bank. In addition, many of the Early Childhood Councils (ECC) provided volunteers. The ECCs are United

Way funding partners in each of the fifteen Middlesex County towns and are part of United Way's school readiness initiative.

"Our sincere thanks to all of the local businesses and volunteers for

installing these Born Learning Trails in our communities," said Kevin Wilhelm, Executive Director of Middlesex United Way. "What happens in a child's critical early years will impact their readiness for school and ultimately their success in life. Born Learning Trails are a valuable early learning tool that will aid in children's development in addition to being a fun activity for families."

Locations of the Born Learning Trails installed on *Day of Caring* are:



Liberty Bank volunteers install the Born Learning Trail at Pierson Park in Cromwell on Day of Caring.

Visit us online at
www.middlesexunitedway.org.

Like us on facebook:
www.facebook.com/middlesexunitedway

Story continues on page 9

Day of Action Diaper Drives Yield 43,000 Diapers

The United Way *Day of Action* takes place each year on June 21, the longest day of the year and a perfect time to inform and inspire the community to take action in support of an issue or cause.

In 2011, local businesses and organizations were encouraged to run diaper drives leading up to the *Day of Action* to help the 3,000 babies living in Middlesex County in families struggling to make ends meet. Then on June 21 volunteers collected all of the diapers outside of the five Stop & Shop stores in Middlesex County. More than 43,000 diapers were collected and delivered to The Diaper Bank (TDB).

In 2010 our county became a TDB partner, enabling us to receive a total of 120,000 diapers each year which are distributed through four local programs working with families in need. The diaper drives along with the Mothers Day-Fathers Day appeal help us to continue to strengthen our partnership with TDB.

Many thanks to Stop & Shop, our *Day of Action* partner, FCP Groton, Enterprise Rent-A-Car, and the following businesses and organizations that ran drives, contributed diapers and/or volunteered on the *Day of Action*: The Day Club Adult Day Center – Middletown; Middlesex YMCA; Wright-Pierce; Tower Laboratories; The Altrusa Club; The Middlefield Federated Church; Liberty Bank; GKN Aerospace Engineers; Godiva; Clinton Public Schools; Cooper-Atkins Corporation; CL&P and Northeast Utilities; Roberts Physical and Aquatic Therapy; Old Saybrook Youth & Family Services; Karen Heck of Aetna; United Way Women's Initiative; United Way Young Leaders Society; Emblem Club; Pratt & Whitney / I.A.M.A.W. #700; and many other individual volunteers!

See photos at www.middlesexunited-way.org/2011-day-action.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

GARY SIMONSEN

MIDDLESEX UNITED WAY BOARD PRESIDENT



At the core of every worthwhile endeavor are individuals whose leadership set the course for others. Middlesex United Way's affinity groups enable you to learn more about opportunities for social change and see for yourself the difference United Way makes in your community.

The Women's Initiative (WI) consists of members who are accomplished women leaders and volunteers. They want to take active roles to make our community a better place to live through volunteering, raising and distributing funds, networking, and giving back. They recently held their second annual free financial literacy workshop at Middlesex Community College titled "Understanding Your Credit Report" and are in the midst of a book drive to support local early learning programs.

The WI holds a bimonthly networking breakfast for area women at Middlesex Health Care Center and hosts *Power of the Purse*, their annual fundraiser. Over the summer, the WI collected and distributed toiletries and hundreds of "gently used" purses to several programs that work with women and teens in need, helping them to get back on their feet.

United Way also recently launched the Young Leaders Society (YLS). This unique and dynamic group provides an opportunity for young professionals who live and work in Middlesex County to connect, learn, volunteer, and lead.

The YLS will hold monthly events that provide a chance to: network and form new partnerships with area businesses and community leaders who know the importance of civic engagement; learn through opportunities designed to inform members about local issues or professional development; and volunteer with service projects that improve neighborhoods and strengthen our community. You can read more about the YLS on the opposite page.

I invite you to advance the common good for everyone in our community by getting involved with one of our affinity groups. Live United!

This issue of our newsletter is generously sponsored by:



UNITED WAY YOUNG LEADERS SOCIETY KICKS OFF

Group brings together young professionals to advance the common good



Members of the Young Leaders Society volunteering at H.O.P.E. Middletown, assisting with the program's home restoration project.

On Thursday, October 13, more than 70 people gathered at The Shadow Room in Middletown to formally kick off the Young Leaders Society (YLS). Guests enjoyed an inventive networking event that brought together current and future Middlesex County leaders. Among the community leaders was Chandler J. Howard, President & CEO of Liberty Bank, who was the night's featured speaker.

"I have a strong belief that all of us as individuals, as career professionals, can benefit greatly from being involved in the communities where we work and where we live," said Howard. "All of you as young professionals are to be congratulated for taking the time and the interest to do something like you're doing tonight; to come, to be involved, to network, to talk to other people about something that is important – and that is the health of our communities."

The Young Leaders Society will offer just that, an opportunity to connect young professionals who are seeking to celebrate and strengthen the power they bring to become leaders in our organizations and create positive change in our community. This group will provide community involvement, personal development, and networking for individuals or couples forty years of age or younger who live and work in Middlesex County.

"The Young Leaders Society is a great opportunity to recognize the potential that those in their 20s and 30s have to contribute while also finding ways to build our capacity to be leaders in the future," says YLS Chair Justin Carbonella, Youth Services Coordinator at Middletown Youth Services Bureau. "Rather than waiting for our turn, it's about recognizing the immediate impact we can have in our community."

The group transcends a financial contribution. It's something more akin to a way of life. "The Live United motto really speaks to me," continues Carbonella, "as a call to action and a way of giving in whatever way you can give. It's beyond just giving money. It's about investing yourself into your community."

There will be a monthly event that will cycle between Social, Learning, and Service events. Some of the group's goals include: volunteering as a group and identifying individual volunteer opportunities at nonprofit organizations; working with high school students; and hosting events featuring prominent local business leaders.

The first event cycle included a Service event on Saturday, October 22, where a group of 20 Young Leaders volunteered to support H.O.P.E., Inc's housing restoration projects in Middletown's North End. The first Learning event, hosted by Dr. Michael Roth, President of Wesleyan University, will take place in November.

For more information and to keep updated on YLS events and activities, visit the group's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/MUWYoungLeadersSociety.

2011 Leadership Circle

The members of Middlesex United Way's Leadership Circle are advancing the common good through their annual gifts of \$1,000 or more. These generous individuals truly Live United by giving, advocating and volunteering on behalf of our work. United Way extends its sincere thanks to the following individuals and companies for their support.



United Way Tocqueville Society

Membres de la Société
\$10,000—\$24,999

The Burr Family
The Director Family
HJ Promise Foundation
Chandler J. Howard
*Jaqueline Hubbard &
Norman Needleman*
Thomas & Raquel Hutton
David & Judith Reynolds
The Whelen Family

We would also like to extend our gratitude to two members of the United Way Tocqueville Society who wish to remain anonymous.

United Way Leadership Circle

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Bold names indicate first time members.

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Middlesex Hospital.....	16	Giuffrida Engineering, Inc.	1
Citizens Bank	5	Harding Development Group	1
Connecticut State Employees' Campaign	5	Howard & McMillan	1
Webster Bank.....	5	IBM.....	1
City of Middletown.....	4	ING	1
Dominion Nuclear Conn., Inc.	4	Keller Crescent	1
First Niagara Bank	4	Konowitz, Kahn & Co. PC.....	1
Middlesex United Way, Inc.	4	Lifestyle Financial Strategies, LLC.....	1
Bristol-Myers Squibb, Co.	3	Mahoney Sabol & Company LLP	1
Colebrook Financial	3	Merrill Lynch	1
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Inaugural Leadership Circle Roast Held in Honor of Volunteers Biff & Jean Shaw

Biff & Jean Shaw have provided years of commitment and service to the Middletown community. They embrace the spirit of volunteerism, giving of themselves to numerous organizations without need for recognition. As longtime and generous volunteers for Middlesex United Way, they have helped shape our own organization's direction and ensured it remains viable, relevant, and effective.



At left, Middlesex United Way Executive Director Kevin Wilhelm with Jean and Biff Shaw at the inaugural Leadership Circle Roast at the Inn at Middletown. Below, guests received masks of the Shaws.

The Shaws were honored at our first ever Leadership Circle Roast, held on October 27, 2011, at the Inn at Middletown. The event was sponsored by Liberty Bank.

Although it may seem odd to recognize some of our closest friends by roasting them, the Shaws were incredibly gracious about the honor. They agreed to participate because it's all for a good cause.

Roasters for the event were: Joe & Diane Bruno; John Biddiscombe; Mark Masselli; Harry E. Burr; Bobbie Fergione; and Patti Vassia. Kevin Wilhelm, Middlesex United Way Executive Director, served as master of ceremonies.

Chandler Howard, President & CEO of Liberty Bank, spoke about Liberty Bank's and his own commitment to community and how volunteerism and giving back helped set a course for his future in the banking industry.

In addition, Buddy McDowell of Middlesex Hospital, 2011-12 United Way Campaign Co-chair along with Harry E. Burr, encouraged the audience to support the campaign through leadership giving.

No one was spared from the good natured ribbing. A fun time was had by all at this lively and festive event, and it's the start of a tradition we plan to continue each year!

See the video highlights of the inaugural Leadership Circle Roast at www.middlesexunitedway.org/roast.



The Middlesex United Way Women's Initiative (WI) is running a book drive to benefit local early learning programs. One of the WI's goals is early childhood development, ensuring that parents and children have the resources they need for healthy development. The books will encourage parents and caregivers to read with their children.

If you would like to donate new or "gently used" books, they can be dropped off at United Way, 100 Riverview Center, Suite 230, Middletown. All books should be in good condition and appropriate for children ages four and under.

For more information about the WI and how you can get involved, visit our website at www.middlesexunitedway.org/wi.

You can also join the "Middlesex United Way Women's Initiative" group on LinkedIn to stay updated on our events and activities.

Born Learning Trails Continued

from page 1

- Clinton at the Indian River Recreation Complex at 201 Killingworth Turnpike;
- Cromwell at Pierson Park on West Street near the Police Department;
- Durham at Brewster Elementary School at 126 Tuttle Road;
- East Hampton at Seamster Park at 20 Smith Street;
- Higganum at Regional School District 17's regional office building on Little City Road;
- Old Saybrook at Goodwin Elementary School at 80 Boston Post Road; and
- Westbrook at Daisy Ingraham Elementary School at 105 Goodspeed Drive.

Born Learning Trails already exist in the towns of Middletown at Snow Elementary School and in Portland at the park located on Freestone Avenue. Lowe's Home Improvement in Cromwell donated their time to pre-build all of the wood posts and cement footings for the trails.

To learn more about Born Learning Trails, as well as view photos and videos from all of the *Day of Caring 2011* trail projects, visit our website.

For photos: www.middlesexunitedway.org/day-caring-2011.

For video: www.middlesexunitedway.org/video.

On facebook: 'Like' us at www.facebook.com/middlesexunitedway.

For more about Born Learning: www.bornlearning.org.



Above right, an Aetna volunteer sands the wood backings at the trail in East Hampton at Seamster Park. Above, a teacher from Brewster Elementary School attaches the signs to wood backings at the trail in Durham-Middlefield.



Above, employees from Rolls-Royce Naval Marine, Inc. fill in the hopscotch stencil on the ground at the Born Learning Trail at Daisy Ingraham Elementary School in Westbrook on Day of Caring.



Above, Comcast employees and volunteers from Best Beginnings paint stencils on the ground at the trail in Clinton. Comcast installed Middlesex County's first Born Learning Trail in April 2010 at Snow Elementary School in Middletown. Right, volunteers from Webster Bank dig holes for the posts at the Haddam-Killingworth trail.





Middlesex United Way

100 Riverview Center, Suite 230
Middletown, CT 06457
(860) 346-8695

Save the Date:

Women's Networking Breakfast
Wednesday, November 30 at
Middlesex Health Care Center

United Way Annual Meeting
Tuesday, January 24, 2012 at the
Riverhouse at Goodspeed Station

Campaign Awards Breakfast
Tuesday, May 1, 2012 at the
Crowne Plaza

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