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Patricia Villers, Ralph Villers
 Call: 475-228-1221, 203-751-6484
 Web: thevalley-voicet.net/alcam
 E-mail: Alcamwriting@yahoo.com
 P.O. Box 85 * Derby CT 06418



More of the Best of the Valley

July 31, 2018

Ansonia celebrates beautification of Armory grounds

By Patricia Villers

ANSONIA - The Ansonia Armory grounds have been beautified thanks to generous donations from local businesses that sponsored the landscaping work.

Mayor David S. Cassetti Friday thanked sponsors at a ribbon-cutting ceremony in front of the Armory to celebrate Phase I of the project.



The State Street landmark was built as the National Guard Armory in 1921.

Cassetti and sponsors were joined by state Sen. George S. Logan, R-Ansonia, state Rep. Linda M. Gentile, D-Ansonia, former Mayor Tom Clifford, local officials, Greater Valley Chamber of Commerce President Bill Purcell, and residents.

Sponsors include Regional Water Authority, Southern Connecticut Dental Group, and ION Bank. Each business contributed \$2,500 toward the landscaping project performed by D&J Landscaping of Trumbull.

Invasive vegetation was removed, 15 trees were planted including flowering pear, cherry, weeping cherry, crabapple, dogwood, Rose of Sharon, redbud, maple, and brandywine maple trees. Rose bushes were planted around a cannon on the hill.



The grounds will require occasional maintenance of ivy edging, tree pruning, and light gardening.

“For decades, maintaining the Armory grounds has been a resource drain on Public Works and, quite frankly, an eyesore,” said Cassetti. “This is a first major step in upgrading the appearance of an historic and highly visible city property.”

Phase II is slated to continue an additional 150 feet along the side of the Armory along North Main Street to Assumption Church. Vertical banners saying Ansonia Armory and Gordon-Visselli Post 50 will be added to the building.

Musicians revisit 1968 in performance at Derby Public Library

By Patricia Villers

DERBY - A small but enthusiastic group of Baby Boomers - myself included - enjoyed traveling back 50 years last week as Willie and Jan Nininger sang oldies at Derby Public Library.

The couple got audience members clapping and singing during an hour-long performance featuring the music of 1968.

One woman got up and, with a big smile, danced to many songs that no doubt brought her back to a different time and place.



From The Beatles' Here Comes the Sun to Happy Together by The Turtles and Get Together by The Youngbloods, the Niningers delighted the audience with a varied repertoire.

Everybody's Talkin,' written by Harry Nilsson and featured in the movie Midnight Cowboy, was one of the tunes that sparked memories of the music and the movie.

The Niningers are residents of Woodbury. Their website says they "perform theme shows such as Irish, Country, Holiday, Tropical, TV & Movie Songs, Famous Duets, Oldies, Originals and tributes to such performers as the Beatles, Paul Simon, Simon & Garfunkel, Leonard Cohen, Phil Ochs, and many more.

See more about the duo: www.willienininger.com/-ARPages/WillieJanBand.html


See a video sampler of Willie and Jan here: <https://youtu.be/oRNF9hc3R34>

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The Hops Company

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connecticut
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Valley Community Foundation awards over \$23,000 to support local programs

The **Valley Community Foundation** (VCF) has awarded a total of \$23,090 in its Community Grants Program to 11 community groups serving the Valley.

These grants will support youth, seniors, and wellness initiatives in the region.

“VCF is proud to support these 11 organizations with more than \$23,000 in Community Grants,” said Sharon Closius, VCF President & CEO.

“Community Grants are responsive to volunteer groups or nonprofits with very limited staff, and support civic and community efforts in our five-towns. With this grant funding, these small organizations can have the potential to make a big impact in the Valley.”

- **Adam Wysota Foundation** - \$2,500 to support the next phase of the Adam's House Memorial Garden and Walkway.
- **Annual Thanksgiving Basket Committee** - \$2,500 to support the purchase of perishable and non-perishable food items and supplies for distribution of Thanksgiving baskets to 50 families.
- **City of Derby, Youth Services Bureau** - \$2,000 to support a program to help students recognize consequences of poor decisions and provide opportunities to make amends.
- **College Access for all Kids, Inc.** - \$2,500 to support urban youth access to colleges, universities and other higher education possibilities.
- **Derby Green Farmers Market** - \$1,400 to support the innovative Power of Produce Club program, which provides participating children with education and experience in purchasing and using healthy fruits and vegetables at the Derby Farmers' markets.
- **Derby Historical Society** - \$2,500 to support transportation assistance for Valley schools to visit the General David Humphreys House.
- **Shelton Farmers Market** - \$2,500 to support the Valley Sprouts Club, provide more local music at the market, reach out to Valley schools, and provide health related services for visitors.
- **Southford Falls Quilt Guild** - \$2,500 to support “Quilting Outside the Box” programs which focus on new quilting trends, tools and techniques.
- **St. Joseph Parish Nurse Program** - \$600 to support education and wellness programs on CPR and AED use, heart disease and stroke prevention, and the importance of advanced care planning.
- **Town of Seymour** - \$1,590 to support the Senior Fit & Strong exercise program.
- **Youth 2 Youth** - \$2,500 to support the cost of sending students to



Volunteers and supporters of Adam's House, a 2018 VCF Community Grant Recipient, work on the organization's memorial garden and walkway.

About The Valley Community Foundation

Established in 2004, the Valley Community Foundation distributes hundreds of thousands of grant dollars each year to support the local nonprofit sector and the people it serves. In addition to grantmaking,

VCF works in strong partnership with The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven (TCF), to promote philanthropy in Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour and Shelton and receives funding from The Gates Fund and other preference funds at TCF.

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