

News, Views & Entertainment

Alcam Writing & Admin LLC
• Writing and Editing services
• Design, Layout
• Newsletters, Pamphlets,
• Public Relations, Digital Content, SEO
Patricia Villers, Ralph Villers
Call: 475-228-1221, 203-751-6484
Web: thevalley-voicect.net/alcam
E-mail: Alcamwriting@yahoo.com
P.O. Box 85 * Derby CT 06418



More of the Best of the Valley

February 23, 2018

Disability advocates plead for restoration of state funding

By Ralph Villers

HARTFORD - HARTFORD - It is always instructive to visit the Legislative Office Building.

Despite the impressive architecture, marble, and glass (see photo essay on P. 3), the reason for my being there Wednesday was more important.

I was there to petition my cause with the state government.

My cause is restoration of funding for the five Centers of Independent Living in the state to their full funding of \$529K.

Along with other advocates of the five CILs, the place to petition our plea was a public hearing with the Appropriations Committee on the Governor's Budget Adjustments for State Human Services Agencies.

Given the large numbers of people scheduled to speak, the hearing was split into two rooms for petitioners to address legislators.

The state budget issues that led to funding cuts and rescissions are well known. However, why cuts are proposed are not what the CIL advocates spoke about - why funding needs to be restored is what they discussed

I am focusing on a friend and former co-worker of mine, Sandy Roberts.



Sandy Roberts, CDR

She was employed at the Center for Disability Rights (CDR) in West Haven from November 1990 until August 2016. Given the financial constraints imposed on CDR by state budget cuts and impending surgery she offered to take a layoff.

Roberts worked as the Senior Advocate prior to her layoff. She has been rehired by CDR on a part-time basis (two days/week).

She said CDR had served consumers in New Haven, Middlesex, and Fairfield Counties - and had to discontinue services to consumers in 37 towns in their catchment area. Only five towns now are eligible to receive independent living services.

The following is part of her recorded testimony and it clearly expresses the funding issues faced not just by CDR, but by all CILs in Connecticut:

Continued on P.2

Disability advocates plead for restoration of state funding

Continued from P.1

“I’m in a very difficult position because we have callers all the time who look to us to be opened up for services and I have to tell them I’m sorry, we’re no longer servicing anyone in your town.

“My fear is that because I’m telling them this that some of these consumers are in very precarious positions and if they do not receive services from us there’s no one left to fill that gap.

“And what happens is some of them wind up back in nursing homes. And the state ends up paying a whole lot more money by keeping them in the nursing home rather than having them out in the community.”

CILs provide important services including independent living skills, training, and individual advocacy.

All CIL advocates made the same point paramount in their pleas the Appropriations Committee legislators: To please restore the funding that has been taken away from the Centers for Independent Living.

It was an important hearing to attend to witness those most affected by budget cuts petitioning elected officials for legislative redress.

Please note the reduction in services for CDR services have been cut in the towns of Ansonia, Derby, Seymour, and Shelton.

Please see CIL advocates in the CT-N video at <http://www.ctn.state.ct.us/ctnplayer.asp?odID=15014>

Villers is a member and past president of the CDR board.

Centers for Independent Living provide real savings to Connecticut

Last March, [the Valley-Voice newsletter](#) posted the savings to the state by the five CIL's in CT. We are reprinting this data to showcase the value that CIL's provide. This exzmples uses the West Haven based Center for Disability Rights data for 2014 and 2015.

In 2015, CDR conducted 4,182 Information & Referrals for people looking for information or help. We provided intensive one- to-one long term advocacy and other services to 147 people.

CDR transitioned 64 individuals out of nursing homes back into the community. Not only did we help these folks get their lives back, but we saved the State a minimum of \$2,743,026 in Medicaid money on just these transitions.

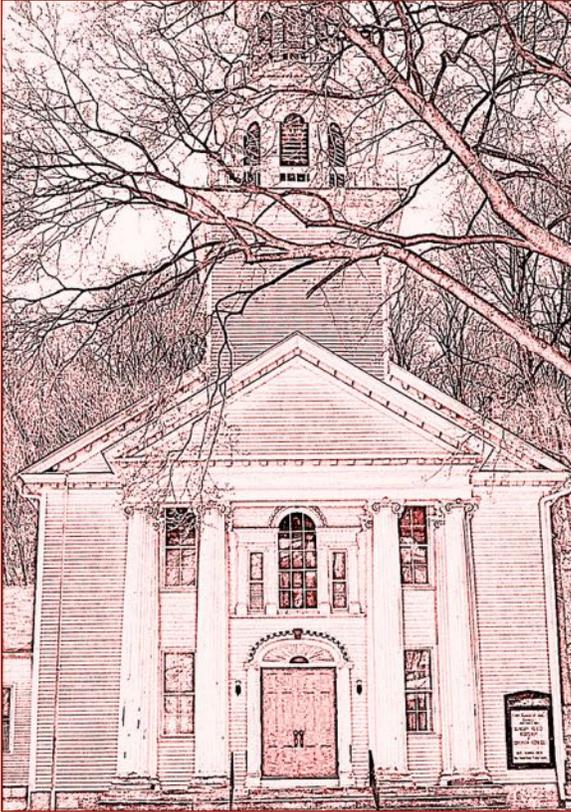
CDR received \$372,000 in funding for Nursing Home Transition Coordinators and Housing Coordinators. In Addition, we re- ceived \$101,000 in funds for CORE operations and supports. This State investment of \$473,000 resulted in at least \$2,743,026 in returns - or put another way, each \$1 invested in CDR returns \$5.80 to the State. This is a bargain, and that is not even con- sidering the hundreds of other services CDR provides to people with that same money.

In 2015, CDR provided 572 hours of technical assistance, training, and community advocacy at no charge bene ting munici- palities; Stateagencies; community non-profits; businesses; public schools; and individuals. The dollar value of these services is \$20,020.

Below are the following savings to taxpayers in 2015 vs. 2014 for nursing facility consumers transitioned to the community.

CDR Medicaid Savings 2014, 2015		
Year:	2015	2014
Months:	12	12
Total Nursing Facility Consumers Transitioned:	64	47
Total Medicaid Savings:	\$2,743,026	\$1,573,560
Avg. Monthly Savings to CT Medicaid per Transaction:	\$3,572	\$2,790

Taking time to reflect is its own reward



By Patricia Villers

I've always been sorely lacking in my knowledge of the Bible.

But it's never too late to improve my familiarity with the stories and messages contained within. And that's my goal.

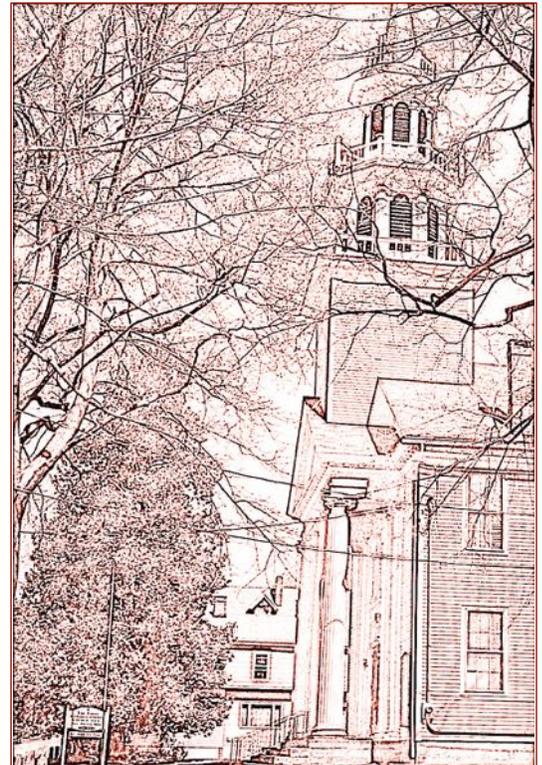
Last year the Rev. Jim Tudesco, pastor at First Congregational Church in Derby where I'm a member, offered bible study after Sunday morning services. I was amazed at how much I learned from him, or rather how much I didn't know or understand.

That experience got me to start thinking more about what the Bible tells us.

The past two years have been full of changes. In May 2016 my mother passed at age 92, and in May 2017 I was extremely fortunate and forever grateful to receive a kidney from an altruistic donor.

Both experiences inspired me to look at life in a more spiritual way.

Fast forward to this week, when a friend from church invited me to accompany her to a women's prayer group



meeting Wednesday at a church in the Valley. I was intrigued and agreed to go.

I didn't know what to expect. What I found was three women - two of whom are sisters - who welcomed me and made me feel cared about.

And since everyone seems to know everyone here in the Lower Naugatuck Valley, I have mutual friends with two of them.

We talked about many things, including the passing of Billy Graham earlier that day, and we prayed about what weighs on our hearts and minds.

When the meeting ended I was surprised to learn we had been there for three hours. I also was surprised the three of them had been a part of the group for 15 years, with many others also participating over the years. That's dedication.

And there were snacks!

I hope to see the ladies again. It was an interesting evening that certainly got me thinking.

TOWN-WIDE



Tag Sale Hosts & Shoppers, don't miss the Seymour Town Wide Tag Sale this spring - 5/12 8 a.m.-4 p.m. with a rain date of 5/19.

Stop in Lizzie's Corner [Consignment and Gifts] or call to register your address, 203-415-4387.

To help with advertising, a payment of \$15 is needed before May 1. Early birds, pay \$13 before April 1.

State Senator Kevin Kelly & State Representatives Jason Perillo & Ben McGorty
 Invite you to attend a



SHELTON LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Please join us as we discuss the 2018 legislative session.

Mon. • Feb. 26, 2018 • 6 – 7:30 pm*
Richard O. Belden Cultural Center
 (Raymond Lavietes Conference Room located in Valley United Way)
54 Grove Street • Shelton, CT

Event Is Open To The Public

For more information contact:
 Chris Diorio at Chris.Diorio@cga.ct.gov
 or 1-800-842-1421

* Due to the possibility of the legislature being called into session or the risk of inclement weather, please check www.SenatorKevinKelly.com for any cancellations prior to the scheduled meeting date.



FRIENDS OF THE DERBY NECK LIBRARY PRESENT 

St. Patrick's Day Celebration

The Kerry Boys

SAT, MAR 24

2:00 PM

FREE MUSIC, FOOD, & FUN FOR ALL AGES!

NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED



PIEROGI SALE!

Potato with Cheese
 Sweet potato with cheese
 Sauerkraut

Cost: \$6 a dozen

Available
 Friday's 9 to 11 am
 Sundays 11 to noon

Until Good Friday

Seymour Congregational Church
 203-888-6729
 45 Broad Street Seymour, CT