



the Community Voice

CHARTER OAK COMMUNITIES

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR COC RESIDENTS

Vincent J. Tufo

Executive Director and CEO

Donna Starzecki, PHM, SPHR

Chief Operating Officer

Jonathan Gottlieb

Vice President, Rippowam Corp.

Lisa Reynolds, Contoller

Mark Zimany

Director of Facilities & Building Systems

Mary Beth Henry, Editor

Fairgate Farm

Fairgate Farm is committed to promoting responsible farming involving the community. Fairgate Farm will work towards this goal by creating opportunities for residents to positively engage with their neighborhood through the operation of an urban farm.

Fairgate Farm is located at 129-143 Stillwater Avenue in Stamford's West Side neighborhood. The property lots were previously occupied by old buildings. The land has been transformed into an urban farm. Urban farms improve city environments and reconnect urban communities. The improvements will benefit the neighborhood through beautification and local economic activity as they contribute to an overall healthy community and environment. Thanks to support from Charter Oak Communities, the land has been made available for this undertaking.

The mission is to increase access to healthy, safe, affordable and locally grown food by operating an urban farm while educating youth, adults and seniors. It will provide food to the community, create meaningful volunteer opportunities and generate local economic activity.

Since local food markets offer very few organic choices, there is a need for improved understanding of our food system to protect the health of the community and the environment. The Fairgate Farm philosophy is based on the following principles: Everyone has a right to affordable, healthy, quality and culturally appropriate food that

is accessed in an environmentally friendly method.

Fairgate Farm will implement its mission through two main objectives: (1) Improving access to healthy locally grown food and (2) Farm-based learning programs.

Fairgate Farm will produce a wide variety of produce which will be distributed locally through direct marketing and charitable donations. Fairgate Farm will sponsor seasonal farmer's markets, making fresh produce available to the immediate community at affordable prices. The farmer's market will also invite area farmers to participate. In addition, an on-site market stand will bring visitors to the farm itself and connect consumers with the source of their food. Fairgate Farm will partner with Stamford Hospital, local restaurants, food pantries and businesses to ensure that patients, customers and employees have access to fresh and responsibly grown local produce.

Fairgate Farm will be an education center providing hands-on learning opportunities for the neighborhood by hosting community events, farm tours, field trips and workshops while supporting community gardeners. It will be an ideal place to learn about food systems.

We will hold a Harvest Festival at Fairgate Farm on Saturday, September 24th starting at 11:00 AM and hope to see residents there to join in the celebration.



Above: Bill Callion, Farm Manager at Fairgate Farm, gives a lesson to a group of children on planting.



Remaining Board Meetings for 2011:

- *Wednesday, September 21st*
- *Wednesday, October 26th*
- *Wednesday, November 16th*
- *Wednesday, December 14th*

All meetings are held at Post House, 40 Clinton Avenue in the first floor meeting room unless otherwise noticed.





COC Employee Profile



Charlie McCadden joined Charter Oak Communities in November 2000 as a Maintenance Mechanic II. Charlie was primarily responsible for plumbing, electrical and carpentry work in the apartments on the West Side.

Charlie worked as a state automotive technician at the U.S. Army National Guard Reserve from 1977 to 1997 until he retired after an honorable discharge. He is skilled in the repair and maintenance of military vehicles with advanced skills in diagnostic analysis. Charlie rebuilt diesel and gas-fueled engines, adjusted carburetor systems and serviced fuel and cooling systems during his time in the national guard reserve.

Next, Charlie worked at Southwood Square BCJ Management in Stamford as an Assistant Supervisor where he oversaw four maintenance workers that provided support for unit turnovers and work orders. Charlie provided general maintenance as well as routine inspections for 315 apartments. He did everything from installing and repairing plumbing fixtures to installing washer/dryers, central air units and water heaters to replacing electrical outlets and installing doors.

In 2000 when he came to COC, he worked on apartment turnovers, maintained and repaired kitchen and bathroom plumbing fixtures and performed troubleshooting on hot water heaters, clogged drain systems and heating systems. Charlie also assists in the repair and installation of gas boilers, has experience in snaking backed-up sewer lines and operating sewer-cleaning equipment. Charlie is adept at working in all types of weather conditions and is accustomed to working in confined crawl spaces.

In addition, he is involved with making necessary repairs in order to prepare for REAC (Real Estate Assessment Center) inspections according to HUD specifications. In February 2010, Charlie was promoted to the position of Maintenance Mechanic III. In this role, Charlie leads a team that helps in the day-to-day maintenance and repair of COC facilities.

Charlie has an extensive maintenance background. He is a hard-working individual with excellent communication skills. Charlie received many Army Achievement Medals as well as multiple awards for job performance. Charlie has received training in REAC as well as the remediation of mold and mildew.

Update on COC Projects

Several projects that Charter Oak Communities has been working on over the past months are finished. These include the elevator replacement at Rippowam Manor, the fire panel replacement at Glenbrook Manor and the roof replacement at Quintard Manor. Only the masonry and concrete restoration work at Stamford Manor is left to complete. All the balcony work has concluded and the coating and painting work remains to be done. The building with its new color looks almost brand new.

Of the newer projects we have been working on, the elevator replacement at Glenbrook Manor is about three quar-

ters complete as is the entry door replacement job at Czescik Homes.

New items that are just getting underway include the exterior façade repairs to the EIFS (Exterior Insulation Finish System) at both Rippowam Manor and Glenbrook Manor, and the elevator replacement at Stamford Manor (Elevator #2). Contracts have been signed for these projects and we are just awaiting material delivery and a start date.

Charter Oak Communities continues to work hard to make improvements to its developments and in turn improve the living environment for our residents.

At the Beach, In the Sea

Fairgate was the welcoming site for a science program called "At the Beach, In the Sea," which was presented to third graders in the Stamford Achieves Educational Summer Program. It was designed to inform children about the wildlife at the beach and in the Long Island Sound. In collaboration with Soundwaters, the students boarded a schooner, and circled the Long Island Sound. Many species of animals were dredged from the bottom of the sea. The children had an opportunity to touch, see and learn about the animals that inhabit this body of water. This exciting study was extended in the classroom by reading and doing a vari-

ety of activities in which children actively participated. Creating art projects, doing experiments, writing poetry and stories and presenting a play were the activities that made the children realize that learning could be fun! This enriching educational summer experience helped the children realize the importance of the Long Island Sound.

The children were lucky to have two excellent teachers from Stamford Achieves, Elaine Braus and Sue Pianin. See photos of the children participating below (experimenting with jellyfish) and on left side of page 3.





Resident Corner



George Donella was born in Stamford, CT but moved to Fairfield, CT when he was 7 and grew up in the vicinity of Fairfield University. In his youth, he enjoyed playing semi-pro basketball. His family was involved with chartering sail boats which is responsible for his love of the beach and water.

After serving in the Air Force for four years, George moved to New York City in 1971. It was there that he ran an ice cream business. In 1986 he moved back to Fairfield, CT to be near his family and remained there until 1997. He spent time caddying at Woodway Country Club in Darien.

George moved to Florida to work with his brother who sold boats. On December 20, 1999, he was in a car accident in Tampa, Florida. George was in a coma for two months. When he woke up on Valentine's Day, February 14, 2000, he learned that he had 18 breaks in both legs. His nephew, Chris Fletcher, helped him to move back to Connecticut to the VA hospital in West Haven. He spent one year in a nursing home in a wheelchair where he was told that he would never walk again. George had no nerves remaining in his left foot due to the accident. He learned to maneuver quite well in a wheelchair but was determined that he was going to walk again. His legs and feet were virtually reconstructed during his stay in the hospital.

This whole ordeal was quite emotional for George. He had always been a very active person up until this point. He loved sports and played golf and liked to run as well. After his stay in the VA Hospital and much rehabilitation and physical therapy, George was able to walk and went to live at Scofield Manor in April 2001. He loves the staff at Scofield Manor as they were very helpful and supportive of him. George feels lucky to have had a wonderful roommate during this time at Scofield Manor.

George has a sister, "Bunny" who lives in the Springdale section of Stamford as well as several aunts that live in the area. His nephew, Chris Fletcher and his wife, Timea, live in Wilton but rent a cottage in Watch Hill, Rhode Island during the summer months. George recently had a visit with them where he enjoys boating and fishing. He goes to Watch Hill on many a weekend.

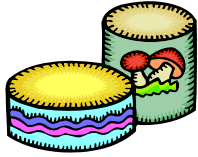
George moved to Wormser Congregate in June 2011 and is thrilled with his new apartment. He is very appreciative to Marie Johnson at Senior Services in Stamford for her assistance in getting a new bed and bedroom set for his apartment. Timea helped him decorate his home in a nautical theme which reminds him of his passion for fishing.



Above: Sharing our haiku jellyfish poetry.

Below: Mural about life on Long Island Sound.





Preparing for a Storm



Hurricane season goes until November 30th. To stay safe in a storm, see the following tips:

1. Stock up on water, non-perishable goods and batteries for three days;
2. Make sure your car is filled up with gas;
3. Withdraw cash because in the event of power loss, ATMs will not function;
4. Take pictures/videos of valuables in case they are damaged by the storm.



Palmer Square



Above are recent photos of the construction activity at Palmer Square (courtesy of Azad Kareem).