

Legacy *Matters*



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**Smart Investment:
Conservation Efforts
in the Valley**

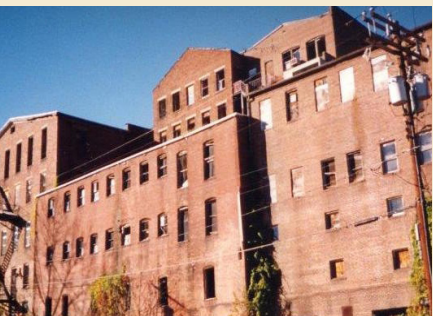
**Donor Spotlight:
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Smart Investment: *Conservation Efforts in the Valley*



A public/private partnership formed in August 2014 at the 44-acre parcel that was home to the former Ansonia Copper & Brass Co. This site is now being demolished and remediated in stages.



The CT Brownfield Land Bank is dedicated to remediating and redeveloping brownfields and other environmentally damaged sites located in the Valley region and along the Route 8 corridor.



The Valley's industrial past is being reclaimed, as old factories along the Naugatuck River are transformed.



Recapturing industrial land adds recreational opportunities like this location at the north side of the Derby Greenway.

The Environmental Protection Agency classifies brownfields as real property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence, or potential presence, of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. The Lower Naugatuck Valley is largely dependent on reviving these sites for development and future growth. In fact, remediation, reclamation, and redevelopment could be considered the 3Rs of economic expansion when it comes to brownfields.

James Ryan, President of Shelton Economic Development Corporation, says, "If one embraces and understands the State of Connecticut's Smart Growth principles, one will instantly realize there is no downside to brownfields redevelopment, as underperforming assets are restored to productive reuse, and [made] safe for public or business use."

Ansonia Director of Economic Development, Sheila O'Malley, says, "Reclaiming contaminated properties in Ansonia is one of the biggest opportunities for growth. Reuse is critical to the economic prospects of the city."

According to O'Malley, there is little developable space left in Ansonia. "Officials are working to find creative solutions to revive existing parcels of land. The city is assessing, remediating, and demolishing structures that have been contaminated to create a level, clean plot of land ready for development. This effort requires forming partnerships, funding from federal, state, and local agencies and, most importantly, time."

In May of 2016, the Connecticut congressional delegation announced federal funding for brownfield cleanups. The Environmental Protection Agency grants included \$400,000 for the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG) to assess properties with suspected contamination.

NVCOG Executive Director Rick Dunne explains, "Our organization receives the funding and decides how to invest it. Municipalities that are part of our 19-town region can request assistance for brownfields cleanup."

Dunne says that companies often times seek new land to develop but it makes more sense to remediate brownfields, and not take more open space to exploit economic development imperatives.

"Since most brownfields needing remediation are located along the river, taxpayers are already invested in the infrastructure of roads and sewers installed when the factories were located on the river," said Dunne.

For years, the Naugatuck River was polluted from waste discharged from nearby factories. "Historically the river was used for fishing and travel; later it served a mercantile purpose, followed by industrial use," says Jack Walsh, Valley United Way President & COO.

"If the Naugatuck River revitalization is not one of the best cleanup stories in the country, I don't know what is," he continues. "Anyone who grew up in the Valley remembers how the river used to be. It marks another change in the history of the river."

The Naugatuck River cleanup has spurred recreational activity, which Walsh calls the river's next phase.

Greenways are another component resulting from the ongoing regional cleanup efforts. Existing greenways, and those that are being planned, are connecting municipalities along the Naugatuck River, preserving watershed areas, and creating recreational space. Looking ahead, long-range plans are in place to connect municipalities along the Naugatuck River by 44 miles of paved pathways, bringing further revitalization to the area.

Donor Spotlight: The Future Fund



"I want to thank the VCF Board and its staff for their dedication. Their vision has established a resource to help keep the Valley and its people growing stronger each day," says Arthur Bogen.

Derby native Arthur Bogen has spent much of his life protecting and preserving the environment.

As the President of Down to Earth Consulting, a business he founded in January 1996, Mr. Bogen works with municipalities and private developers in resolving issues with brownfield sites. He also serves part time as the Environmental Planner for the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments.

Mr. Bogen's most recent endeavor includes the creation of the CT Brownfield Land Bank in 2013. Land banks are

public entities created to acquire, manage, maintain, and re-purpose vacant, abandoned, and foreclosed properties in a manner consistent with the community's values and needs.

The CT Brownfield Land Bank is the first in the state solely dedicated to remediating and redeveloping brownfields.

The older communities in the Valley have a tremendous need for brownfield remediation and recently, the Land Bank was awarded a multi-year grant from the Valley Community Foundation (VCF) for its work in the Valley. As a result of the funding, the CT Brownfield Land Bank succeeded in establishing a dialogue with State Environmental and Economic Development staff and private developers, as well as with representatives from the Environmental

Protection Agency and the CT Department of Public Health

"The environment has not had an easy time of it," says Bogen. "We need to look beyond what we can see right now, do no harm, and make a contribution that will help others in the future."

In the fall of 2006, when Mr. Bogen approached VCF to establish a preference fund known as the Future Fund, no one was surprised that he wanted to support projects that help in the restoration and preservation of the environment. What they didn't know is that he was also

interested in supporting programs to help people who suffered childhood trauma to restore their sense of self, and give them hope for a brighter future.

"I know first-hand the effect abuse can have on people, especially children," says Bogen. "Those impacted need to know that, no matter what they've been through, they can trust in life. Hopefully this Fund will make a difference for them and help restore their self-esteem."

The Future Fund is able to support either or both of these personal and very different areas of interest in perpetuity. Having been very pleased with the stewardship of his Fund over the past decade, Bogen hopes to grow the Fund over time to support more causes. Like all funds at VCF, anyone can contribute to the Future Fund.

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*- Arthur Bogen
The Future Fund*

The Great Give® 2016 and VCF

Valley residents and workers again proved generous during The Great Give® 2016

The Valley Community Foundation announced that gifts made by Valley residents, employees and VCF donor advised funds during The Great Give® 2016 resulted in more than \$312,600 for nonprofit organizations located in Ansonia, Derby, Oxford, Seymour or Shelton, and includes \$25,000 in matching funds and prizes provided by the Valley Community Foundation.

The news was shared during VCF's fourth annual celebratory ice cream social on May 26, when Grand Prize winners were also announced.

Center Stage Theatre was a Valley-serving nonprofit that won a Grand Prize for raising the most dollars and a second place Grand Prize from The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven for attracting the most donors during the event, overall.

The Great Give® is the annual giving online event on giveGreater.org®, created in 2010 by VCF's partner in philanthropy, The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven. Over 8,000 donors gave more than 11,500 gifts to support local nonprofits as a result of the event.

To see participating nonprofits and prize information, please visit www.thegreatgive.org

Planned Giving

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Good News About the Valley

Valley Community Foundation Awards Nearly \$25,000 to Support Local Programs

VCF has awarded \$24,805 in its Community Grants Program to 12 community groups serving the Valley. These grants will support food distribution to families in need, the hearing impaired and tours of college campuses.

"VCF is proud to support these 12 organizations with nearly \$25,000 in Community Grants," said Sharon Closius, President & CEO. "Community Grants are responsive to groups that are volunteer or nonprofit in nature with very limited staffing capacity and serve our five-town region. Using this grant support, these small, dedicated organizations can work on issues that make a big difference in our community."



Annual Thanksgiving - \$2,000 to support the purchase of perishable and non-perishable food items for distribution of Thanksgiving baskets to fifty families in need.

City of Derby, Youth Service Bureau - \$2,500 to support "Before You Text," a new sexting prevention curriculum for Derby middle and high school students.

College Access for All Kids, Inc. - \$2,500 to support access to colleges, universities and other higher education possibilities to middle and high school students in Ansonia and Derby.

House of Prayer - \$1,550 to support the distribution of food and clothing in the Valley.

Restoring Hope Ministry - \$2,100 to promote family-focused activities and experiences designed to build strong bonds and relationships.

Seymour Soccer Association - \$2,000 to support the cost of providing Futsal training to youth in the Town of Seymour and surrounding communities to help develop soccer.

Shelton Farmers Market Association - \$2,000 to support awareness building.

Southford Falls Quilt Guild - \$2,500 to support classes, team workshops, speakers and instructors who will educate members and enhance quilting skills.

St. Joseph Catholic Church - \$555 to support CPR and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) training, a Heart Wellness Education program and the purchase of an AED replacement battery.

St. Thomas Parish Nurse Program, Oxford - \$2,100 to support the purchase of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED), CPR AED training and Health & Wellness Education programs & screenings.

Valley Deaf Club - \$2,500 to support expanding programs for sports and workshops for Deaf Club members.

Youth 2 Youth - \$2,500 to support the cost of sending as many high school students as possible to the Youth 2 Youth National conference in RI.