

Goshen Community Care

Report to the Community | June 2026



A Note from the President

Greetings from Goshen Community Care!

It's been another great year for our community-focused organization. Our newest team member, Judy Lambert, has brought us fresh energy as our outreach program coordinator! With her extensive background in community and volunteer programming, she's made a noticeable impact since starting in January. Lauren Marano has taken on more and more on the operational side of GCC; still pursuing vital grants to keep us going while also managing our media publications, and bookkeeping. Impressive! I'm continually amazed by the dedication and hard work our board members and coordinators put in year-round to provide better services to those who need us most.



This past year has been full of brainstorming and collaboration! With the guidance of Fio Partners, our board of directors adopted a refreshed mission statement and strategic plan, which outlines future objectives to guide our work. Coming up soon, we'll kick off a board development initiative aimed at enhancing our board of directors. We're also excited to collaborate with Alyssa Fabbri, the new Community Services liaison for the Town of Goshen, who is already making a wonderful impact. Each new partnership strengthens GCC as we focus on our core services and solidify our vision for the future.

We've kept all our traditional programs – hot and boxed luncheons, Tuesday socials, community outreach, referrals, visits to shut-ins, fitness class offerings, bereavement support, ride coordination, support services, medical loan closet and educational opportunities – while adding a community dinner at least twice a year and expanding our grief support program. Our core offerings are extremely important to us; they have molded us into a trusted community hub throughout the years.

We extend a heartfelt thank you to all the current and past volunteers, donors, board members, employees, and all the unsung heroes of the Town of Goshen. You've paved the way for everything we do, and we couldn't be more grateful.

If you'd like to join our mission to help neighbors in need, share ideas, or support our organization in any way, call us at 860.491.4673 or visit goshencommunitycare.org. Stay tuned for more exciting updates from Goshen Community Care as we look ahead to celebrating 40 years of giving back in 2027!

With appreciation,

~Sarah Leonard

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Annual Goshen Fair Water Sale



Did you know? *Goshen Community Care* is the exclusive water vendor at the Goshen Fair each year. All proceeds from water bottle sales go directly towards our programs and services!

Our Annual Water Sale Fundraiser at the Goshen Fair will be taking place **September 5-7, 2026**. We are looking for volunteers to sell water at our booth. Please email lmarano@goshencommunitycare.org if you are interested in helping this year!

Outreach Coordinator's Corner

What Goshen Means to Me

Warm and welcoming. Home. Acceptance. Great neighbors and friends. New friendships. A caring community. The best place to live. A strong community in a beautiful place. These were the words shared by neighbors at a community gathering this Spring. As a recent transplant from Massachusetts and the new Outreach Coordinator for Goshen Community Care, I can personally attest to the truth behind every one of them.



Goshen Community Care's mission is reflected every day through the kindness, support, and generosity shown by our neighbors. GCC remains true to its roots of personalized connections, where neighbors truly care for neighbors. In a world where genuine personal interaction can sometimes be hard to find, GCC continues to create opportunities for people to come together, build friendships, and support one another. Kindness will always matter here.

Over the past months, I have had the privilege of seeing firsthand how much GCC means to the community. Whether it is neighbors gathering during Tuesday Socials, sharing a meal through Table Talk Hot Lunch or Good Company Boxed Lunch, participating in Balance & Strength classes, or quietly helping someone during a time of need, every interaction reflects the caring spirit that makes Goshen so special.

GCC's strength comes from neighbors helping neighbors — people who volunteer, participate, donate, provide rides, prepare meals, visit neighbors, and simply show up for one another. Our volunteers truly are the heart of this community. As GCC continues to grow, we are always looking for neighbors who would like to become involved. Whether you can volunteer occasionally, lend a helping hand, or even join a game of Mahjong or dominoes, there is a place for everyone here.

Thank you for welcoming me so warmly into this community and for continuing to support Goshen Community Care. I like to think of it as kindness in action. It truly is neighbors helping neighbors, and Goshen is a wonderful place to call home.

Happenings: Please Join in the Fun!

Tuesday Socials: Tuesdays | 1:00–3:00 PM

Pull up a chair and join neighbors for games, laughter, conversation, and friendship. Mahjong and dominoes players are always welcome — whether you are a seasoned player or ready to learn something new!

Table Talk Hot Lunch: 2nd Tuesday | 12:00–3:00 PM

Enjoy a delicious catered lunch, an engaging guest speaker, and a few fun surprises. Stay afterward for even more social connection!

Good Company Boxed Lunch: 3rd Wednesday | 12:00–1:00 PM

Good food, great conversation, an interesting speaker, and a fun activity make this a favorite afternoon with friends and neighbors.

Neighbors Night Out: Community Dinner

A fun-filled evening for all ages featuring delicious food, games, raffles, laughter, and plenty of community spirit. Come reconnect with old friends and meet some new ones, too!

Balance & Strength Classes

Feel stronger, stand taller, and improve balance and flexibility in these welcoming classes led by certified Pilates instructor Agata Parrott. Every participant is welcomed and supported at their own pace.

Follow Us!

 [facebook.com/GoshenCommunityCare](https://www.facebook.com/GoshenCommunityCare)

 <https://www.instagram.com/goshencommunitycare/>

 <https://www.linkedin.com/company/goshen-community-care>

SAVE THE DATE



Goshen Community Care will host our annual **Light Up A Life** celebration on **Sunday, December 6th** at Goshen's Church of Christ Congregational. There will be a non-denominational service where we will recognize and honor loved ones who are no longer with us. The evening will conclude with a festive tree lighting and small reception.

Sources of Income

As a small community-based nonprofit, Goshen Community Care relies largely on the generosity of our neighbors and local businesses. Many contributions are sent in memory of a loved one, to celebrate someone special, or as general support for our work.

We extend a special thanks to:

- **Local foundations** that provide grant support: Archdiocese of Hartford, Berkshire Taconic Foundation, Civic Family Services, Connecticut Community Foundation, Crosswicks Foundation, Rona Jaffe Foundation, Northwest Community Bank Foundation, Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation, and Torrington Savings Bank Foundation.
- All who purchased water at the Goshen Fair, with special appreciation for the **American Legion (Donald Sage)** and **The Dawg Tour Hot Dogs (Matt Saccoman)**, who both graciously sold water to benefit our organization.
- **Rhonda Gelormino** for generously donating to our families in need during the holiday season.
- These generous donors during the recent **2026 Give Local Greater Waterbury and Litchfield Hills Campaign**:

Judi Armstrong
Cindy Barrett & Paul Collins
Seth & Susan Breakell
Monika Brendel-Visokay
The Caco Crew
Linda Castro
Martin Connor
Eileen Coyne
Chelsea Donaldson
Lucinda Donaldson
Robert Donaldson
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Frances Krozek
Darlene & John Krukar
Vance & Jennifer Kusaila
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Jack & Vicki Lynch
Lauren Marano
Janice & Bruce Martin
Marc McCarthy
Joyce Mowrey
The O'Neill Family
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The Poirier Family
Thomas Rafalsky
Toby Richards
Chris & Patty Sanders
Darlene & Tom Stansfield
Mary Steinberg
Devin Stilson
Marianne Arancio Stilson
Erin Strouse
Kathy Taylor
Gary Vitiello
Charlotte Jones Voiklis
Joseph Welsh
Robert Wolven
Tim & Kit Wright

Donors to Goshen Community Care: April 2025– March 2026

\$10,000+

Rona Jaffe Foundation

\$1,000 – \$9,999

American Legion Auxiliary
Archdiocese of Hartford
Berkshire Taconic Foundation
Connecticut Community Foundation
Kathryn & Steven Connolly
Crosswicks Foundation
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Anne & Ken Green
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\$500-999

Dotty Bates
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Kim Andrusia
James Barber
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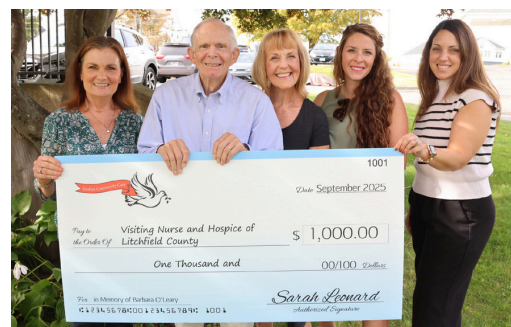
American Online Giving Foundation
Beth & Don Andersen
Beth Anstett
Richard Assenza & Elizabeth Mark
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Valeria Goodwin
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Glen Guilman
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Kenneth Auerfeld
James and Christopher Davis
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Judith Armstrong
Cathy & Richard Binkowski
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Joanne & John Buslewicz
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Denise Cloutier
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Catherine & Richard Felten
Faye Garofano
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Kathe Skibisky
Jeanne Vaill
Don and Sarah Vallera
Meredith L. Vandenhandel
Kathleen Vitiello
Catherine Vlasto
Charles & Rosellen Waiveris
Dawn & Don Wilkes
Pam & Wink Wilson
Brenda & Jeffrey Zampaglione
Janice Zampaglione



Volunteer Spotlight: Q&A with a Few of Our Dedicated Volunteers



What made you decide to volunteer for Goshen Community Care?

I have always enjoyed helping others, meeting new people, and being part of my community. These are the reasons I decided to volunteer with Goshen Community Care. I care a lot about this community and wanted to show my children how important it is to help others and give back.- Katlin Marchand

I recently retired after 40 years from the Healthcare field as a Respiratory Therapist. I wanted to continue to be connected to a community where I could enrich peoples daily lives. I had the opportunity to meet Janice Connor. She shared with me the opportunities of GCC. It felt like a good match for me.- Amy Hadden

In the past I have volunteered in the community I lived in, therefore it was natural for me to volunteer in this community when I moved here. I know that the cornerstone of a good environment is the people who live there, and those who give of their time for the betterment of the place we call home.- Helene Andrews

What do you love most about volunteering with Goshen Community Care?

What I love most about volunteering with Goshen Community Care is being part of such a fun and welcoming committee. I enjoy helping the community whenever there is a need. One of my favorite things each year is working at the Goshen Fair and selling water. I also really enjoy meeting and socializing with people.- Katlin Marchand

I relish the opportunity to continue to be part of a team. I have met so many wonderful people who have shared their life stories and the history of our beloved town. I appreciate being welcomed with open arms and hugs. - Amy Hadden

I enjoy getting to meet the people who live in Goshen, and listen to their concerns, and show interest in their lives. I find that volunteering provides me with a sense of purpose, a way to improve my community, and allows me to improve my sense of well being.- Helene Andrews

Our Volunteers: The Heart of Goshen Community Care

We thank ALL of our wonderful volunteers who have: given rides to those who were unable, visited homebound residents, assisted with our monthly lunch programs, participated in our fundraising events, and helped in so many, many ways to enhance our work!

Thank you to:

Helene Andrews, Kim Andrusia, Judi Armstrong, Cindy Barrett, Randy and Pam Carocci, Linda Castro, Paul Collins, Chris and Betty Cosgrove, Laura Day, Rose Demaria, Donna Devanna, Rita Dziedzic, Pat Goldberg, Robert Goldberg, Martha S. Guidolin, Amy Hadden, Pamela Hicks, Jordana Hood, Janet Hooper, Henrietta Horvay, Josephine Jones, Mary Ellen Kennavane, Johanna Kimball, Alan Kinsella, Jean Korner, Louise Krozek, Darlene Krukar, Janice Martin, Cathy Nygren, Mary Orlando, Ed Osborne, Bruce Oslin, Lynn Perlotto, Patrick Reilly, Erin Reilly, Toby Richards, Jan Riley, Jo Radocchio, Donald Sage and American Legion, Patti Schumacher, Holly Simpson, Katheryne Spallone, Lynn Steinmayer, Devin Stilson, Marianne Stilson, Brandy Summerlin, Mary Tracy, Don Vallera, Sarah Vallera, Darleene Wadhams, Burt Welte, Leni Welte, Jim Withstandley, and Kit Wright.

We'd also like to acknowledge Rhonda Gelormino for her amazing Christmas Drive, Sepples Tree Service of Goshen for hanging our holiday lights, Kristen Orr of CHORE Service, Charlene Dutka of Ciesco Catering Services, Goshen Pizza, Anita from Milk and Honey Grill, Greg from Goshen Wine and Spirits, Cara and Richard Weigold Northern Farm and Flowers, Village Market of Goshen, Kimberly Thorn of Thorncrest Chocolate and Mark Dalke – Just Tents LLC for supporting our work throughout the year!

To anyone who has helped our organization recently that we have mistakenly omitted... we thank you and appreciate you!

Why Grief Support Matters

with Karen Jax Giarnese, RN and Sarah Leonard

Karen Jax Giarnese has been a familiar name within the walls of Goshen Community Care (formerly Goshen Hospice and Goshen Community Care & Hospice) for the past 40 years. She has been called upon year after year for her expertise in grief counseling, grief support services, and overall grief education.



If you have ever experienced the loss of a loved one, it becomes evident rather quickly that the journey through grief is a very personal one. Having someone assist in this voyage can be extremely helpful and aid in the path to healing, acceptance, and the therapeutic release of emotions.

It is truly inspiring that Karen has the knowledge, soothing demeanor, and determination in this specialized field. To make this a lifelong passion and career, it takes a unique individual. Karen holds a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, is a registered nurse, a certified grief counselor, and a grief educator. Those of us at GCC are fortunate to know her and consider her a friend.

It is important to all of us at GCC to highlight and THANK Karen this year. In addition to providing support multiple times a year with her grief groups, Karen was also the first 'coordinator' within our small but mighty organization. She pioneered the way for us and continues to give back to the community even after 40 years. Here are some highlights from our latest chat with the famous Karen Jax Giarnese!

Sarah: Karen, can you tell us about some of the things you implemented when you were GCC's first ever coordinator?

The grief support was obviously my baby and I was the one to implement it back in the day. Having the mission of bringing comfort and care in any variety of ways was our singular focus. With so many ideas, I couldn't claim to have any credit for the many things we did. This was a new idea, helping people; we had so many thoughts on how to help. In terms of grief support, we started out asking some friends at the catholic church how they supported parishioners, and they had a program called 'new day'. I became a trainer for that program, but there was a lot more that we could do. I just starting putting together a curriculum. I tried to weave in grief education always, but was conscious to meet people where they were in their path to healing.

Sarah: You obviously have a deep desire to help people. What do you love about helping with grief support? Why is it important, and how did it become your calling?

Early on in my life I realized how prevalent change was in our lives. That the only constant in our existence is change. I realized that I didn't feel that I could cope with change well, and when a big change happened in my family—my dad dying— I thought maybe there were a lot of people in this same position. Could other people have a hard time with this like myself? We are not taught to ask for help; we are not taught resilience. We are not taught how to handle that vulnerability that hits us during grief, we're not prepared. It was so important to provide guidance during these times, and it seemed to me that someone ought to be doing something about this! Goshen Community Care gave me an important commitment and a platform for that to be addressed.

It's all about connecting to other human beings, it's about supporting each other and it's about community.

Sarah: You helped us this past year with a town-wide grief support gathering. Goshen saw a lot of loss during the early winter months, and the community needed love and care. How did you feel that gathering was received, and would you be open to doing that again?

Yes, I absolutely would be interested in doing that again. I have some individuals who are continuing to come to my programs that were either present (at that event) or heard about that gathering. I don't know that I was able to address the full community loss, I was more focused on the individual losses and treating people with their singular loss. Everyone in that group had a specific loss, and I attempted to hone in on those people individually. The majority of the people there exemplified that every day, people are experiencing losses and may feel alone. They feel like they don't know what to do, and I was able to normalize that for them. You are not crazy and this is something that happens in life, it is ok that you're not back to your normal life 100%. I was blessed to be a part of it, and I feel terrific about the outreach that we did.

Sarah: What's next in your forever-evolving repertoire of doing-good-deeds in the northwest corner?

I have two current projects that have been brewing for a while. In addition to being a certified grief counselor, I am also a certified pet loss facilitator. It's something (the loss of a pet) that is diminished in the community and again we don't realize that as human beings we make very important emotional connections to people, animals, causes or groups.

Within my role at Visiting Nurse and Hospice of Litchfield County, I am trying to implement a new approach to bereavement groups. I'd like to train a group of volunteers to do grief support on the 'road' so to speak for people who cannot get out of their homes. Essentially, bringing the grief support to them with trained individuals who can assist in bereavement services.

Sarah: Thank you so much for all that you've done for us as an organization, and for all the lives you've touched Keep up the AMAZING work.

By the Numbers: Measuring Our Impact

In the first 5 months of 2026 we:

- Loaned out necessary medical items to **34** residents
- Delivered **50** meals to homebound residents
- Served **213** Boxed Lunches
- Visited **43** neighbors in need
- Served **293** hot lunches
- Referred **21** of our neighbors to important services
- Provided our residents **59** rides to programs and medical appointments
- Provided grief support to **32** residents
- Welcomed **166** weekly social attendees for coffee, connection, and games/activities
- Improved the physical fitness of over **20** residents with a total of **204** in attendance to our weekly Balance Class (since March 2026)



In addition, our dedicated volunteers devoted over **350 hours** of their time to Goshen Community Care!



Looking Ahead

Goshen Community Care has been focused on making investments in our small organization that will allow us to grow and expand our community impact. Through grant funding, strategic planning, and collaboration with our staff, board and volunteers, we are excited about the years ahead, and are looking forward to what we will accomplish in the wonderful town of Goshen, CT!



Our plans for the near future include:

- **Board Development Project:** Due to an increase in grant funding this year, we were able to invest in the development of our Board of Directors. We hired two experienced consultants in the greater New England non-profit space who are going to lead us in identifying ways to improve our already strong team of directors to ensure an impactful future for Goshen Community Care.
- **Grand-Pals Program:** A brand new initiative will be introduced this Fall. We will be partnering with Goshen Center School to bring together students and older adults as a way to bridge the gap between generations and strengthen community bonds. More to come on this exciting program!
- **Fall Community Dinner:** Our last two community dinners were a huge success. It is wonderful to see so many smiling faces from our community come together and enjoy a night of delicious food, games, activities, and fun for all ages. Our next Community Dinner will be held Wednesday, October 28th.
- **40th Anniversary Celebration:** We are celebrating our 40th year of Goshen Community Care! We can't wait to share our plans for this fantastic celebration to honor forty years of community support and neighbors helping neighbors. Stay tuned for details!



Neighbors Helping Neighbors

OUR MISSION



To ensure Goshen residents, particularly older adults and neighbors facing hardship, have access to meaningful social connections, trusted support, and coordinated services that help them remain independent, engaged, and rooted in community across all stages of life.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES



ENGAGING PROGRAMS



- Weekly socials providing coffee, games, and connection
- Monthly luncheons, providing balanced meals, an informative guest speaker, games, and socialization
- Inclusive fitness classes to help improve physical health and well being
- Community gatherings bringing together multiple generations for socialization, friendship, and fun

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES



- Medical loan closet
- Grief support groups
- Meal trains for those facing difficulties
- Check-ins for home-bound residents
- Transportation to/from programs and local medical appointments
- Connecting residents to trusted resources as needed