

Asks you to 'C.A.R.E.'

Author(s): Susan Shultz; Times Reporter **Date:** September 4, 2008 **Section:** News
This fall, along with **the** leaves changing and temperatures cooling, you may find your neighborhood a little nicer. **The Community Fund** of Darien is kicking off its C.A.R.E.

Darien campaign on Friday at noon at Town Hall.

C.A.R.E. stands for "A **Community** of Accountability and Respect for Everyone." **The** concept for **the** campaign came about in discussions in February with **the** Human Services Planning Council of **the Community Fund**. Questions arose regarding accountability and welcoming others differences.

The council developed **the** C.A.R.E. campaign to proactively address these issues and others to begin this September.

Some upcoming C.A.R.E. initiatives

Darien programs include: - **The** Darien Youth Commission will be showing "To Kill a Mockingbird" at Weed Beach Friday night, Sept. 5. No beach sticker will be required.

- Child Guidance of Southern Connecticut will be planning three sessions of workshops on active parenting to begin in September. Visit ChildGuidanceCT.org.

- In January, **the** Darien Library will sponsor "One Book, One **Community**" for a town-wide reading of "**The** Book Thief."

- Person-to-Persons Youth Group will be hosting a food drive on Saturday, Sept. 13, from 9 a.m. to noon at Palmers Market and Stop and Shop.

- **The** C.A.R.E. Darien Web site created and maintained by **the** Darien Library will have a calendar of additional programming throughout **the** year. Visit care.darien.org.

Fifty **community** organizations have signed on as co-sponsors of **the** C.A.R.E. Darien campaign, including **The** Darien Times and **the** Darien School District.

The school district would be promoting **the** values of **the** C.A.R.E. campaign in order to "elevate hearts and minds" according to a memo to **the** board from Schools Superintendent Donald Fital. Fital attends **the** Human Services Planning Council meetings on behalf of **the** school system. "These are **the** kinds of things that **the** board advocates within **the** school district and connects us even more to our own **community**," he said last month.

Fital said it is a statement that we are a wonderful **community**. "We want **the** best of what we are to shine through," he said.

Palmers Market has donated \$5,000 to help with printing posters and banners in addition to other local businesses who have contributed. **The** Darien Times photographer Lauren Vellante and columnists Rebecca Martorella and Kathy Lake are all working with **the** council on **the** campaign.

Some examples of random acts of kindness that exemplify **the** campaign include: Various efforts by local volunteer firefighters, such as recruiting blood donors for **the** "Bravest for Blood" drive, shoveling out driveways and walkways for **the** elderly during snow storms, and educating **the** public about maintaining smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors and chimneys American Red Cross volunteer coordinator Joe Delle Fontaine was praised recently

in a letter received from a former volunteer, saying that his contribution is "extraordinary." Nicholas Troilo of Nicholas Roberts Fine Wines on **the** Post Road is using his "Turning Wine into Water" fundraisers to raise money for clean water in Zambia.

A patient who recently finished her appointment at a busy doctor's office returned with lunch for **the** staff when she heard they had worked through **the** meal.

A family on vacation was called by their neighbors to tell them they had left their garage door open. **The** neighbors checked for any signs of entry and closed **the** door.

These are all examples of how **the** C.A.R.E. campaign, which is currently scheduled to go on indefinitely, can make a difference in town.

"As we work with young people on issues of accountability, this is just a way of reflecting that it is not just in school that this matters, it is a part of life and **the community**," Fiftal said. Fiftal said that this is a "unique campaign."

"I love **the** spirit of it and I see so many groups in **the community** on board," he said.

The Darien Times invites you to share acts of kindness you've been a part of or seen in town.

E-mail to editor@dariantimes.com or post a comment on DarienTimes.com.

For more information about C.A.R.E. Darien, please contact **the Community Fund** of Darien at 655-8775. sshultz@dariantimes.com