

Thomas and Sandra Stone's Story...

Connecticut Center for Healthy Aging provides free information and referral services to people who need assistance. There are two locations within the Hospital of Central Connecticut at Bradley Memorial and at New Britain General.

In February 2010, the center received a \$10,000 grant from the Catalyst Fund of the Community Foundation of Greater New Britain for a kiosk. The kiosk travels into the community with a team from the center, and introduces people to the many ways the center can help. So far, the center has reached thousands of people.

For Thomas and Sandra Stone, an ordinary grocery shopping outing turned out to be a serendipitous event when they met Marc Levesque and the Center for Healthy Aging kiosk. As caregivers over the last 14 years for both of their mothers and Thomas's step-father, the Stones approached the kiosk for information and found a lifeline.

Dealing with the Alzheimer's and dementia issues of Thomas's 89-year-old mom was proving difficult for the Stones, and they needed help.

"Marc was nice enough to explain what was taking place," Thomas said. "He guided us through it and helped us along the way."

In addition to information and referrals, the Stones were buoyed by continued follow up calls from Levesque. After a lot of research and discussion, Thomas and Sandra and their family members found the best place for mom was Mulberry Gardens.

"Now the time we spend with her is fun, and not stressful like it used to be," Sandra said.

Beverly Pacchioli was shocked by her mother's unexpected diagnosis of ovarian cancer. In addition to dealing with the diagnosis and following treatment, Pacchioli's parents were also caring for her aunt.

"I remember sitting there in the lobby of New Britain General and thinking 'where do I turn,' and 'who do I call,'" Pacchioli said.

One of her relatives found the Center for Healthy Aging, and Pacchioli was put in contact with Marc Levesque. He helped Pacchioli get information on facilities for her aunt, and attorneys to help with legal issues. "He was very helpful in pointing me in the right direction," she said. "It's like one-stop shopping."

Pacchioli's aunt now lives at Jerome Home, and her mom is doing well with treatment. For Pacchioli, who lives in Pennsylvania, being far from her parents is difficult, but having the Center for Healthy Aging is like having a life line. "It got us through a difficult time," she said.