

Community Currents

Keeping You Informed of How Donors Yesterday and Today Are Helping our Community

published by
**The Community Foundation
 for Greater New Haven**
*Celebrating 80 years as the
 community endowment*

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Husband's wishes honored in wife's estate plans

- Legacy of local real estate attorney and former Foundation Distribution Committee member lives on
- Wife Lucie Atwater leaves bequest of \$3.6 million in Foundation's 80th anniversary year
- Community benefits with permanent source of revenue for "public, charitable and educational uses and purposes absolutely and forever"

For those who read the last issue of Community Currents, we promised you more information about the generosity of Russell and Lucie Atwater to this community. We are grateful to Paul North, Mr. Atwater's former partner and co-executor of Mrs. Atwater's estate, for assembling scrapbooks about the family and the law firm of Clark, Hall and Peck and giving them to The Foundation.

Russell Atwater is a legend in the New Haven real estate community. If you were a buyer, seller, bank or developer between 1932 and 1972, you probably encountered the man who became a partner at Clark, Hall and Peck, like his father before him. The firm was the largest in New Haven known for title searches



Russell and Lucie Atwater

and closings, especially during the post World War II era of tremendous expansion of home ownership and commercial development.

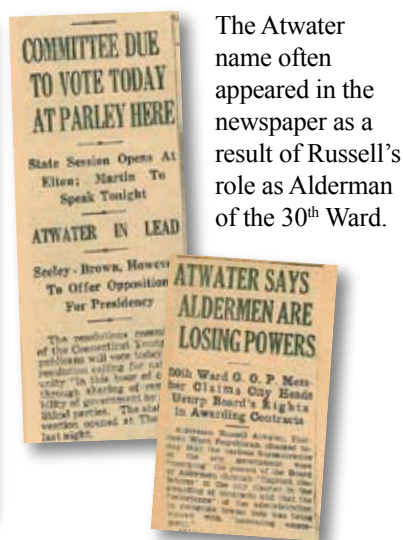
A Hillhouse High School, Yale University and Yale Law School graduate, Russell was admitted to the bar in 1932. His former law partner Paul North recalls: "Russ' monument is in the land records; when you see his name on a deed you know that a master has gone before you. He was just as zealous in protecting the rights of a small home owner as the rights of a major corporation."

Russell was also known for his leadership of many local organizations, including the Kiwanis Club, Red Cross and the New Haven Parks Commission. He served as a Director of First Federal Savings and Loan Association and a Director of the Parole Board of the CT Reformatory. He was also elected to three terms on the Board of Alderman and served as the Republican Minority leader in 1944. Between 1944 - 45, Russell was inducted into the army and served in the Military Police Criminal Investigations Unit which included time in the U.S., France and Belgium. His service earned him 4 decorations and citations. From 1949 - 1957, he was a member of the Board of what was then the New Haven Foundation.

Russell met Lucie, his future wife, while visiting a friend at Penn Hall Junior College, where she went to school. The two were married in 1934 in Lucie's hometown of London, Ohio. Early in their marriage, the Atwaters lived in New Haven. They moved to Milford



Russell served in the Military Police Criminal Investigations Unit which included time in France and Belgium in WWII.



The Atwater name often appeared in the newspaper as a result of Russell's role as Alderman of the 30th Ward.

Establishment of The Russell H. and Lucie E. Atwater Fund *continued from page 1*

in the early 50s and to Hamden in the 90s after Russell retired. Before his death in 1996, Russell applied his legal and financial acumen to insure his family would live comfortably. Their only child Russell Wilson Atwater died in 2002.

Lucie paid tribute to her husband by making plans in her will to give equal parts of her estate to The Foundation, Yale University and Yale Law School. Lucie had no heirs and knew that her husband would have been pleased with her decision to forever support the organizations he so loved in life. Upon Lucie's death last year, The Russell H. and Lucie E. Atwater Fund was created as an unrestricted fund, "to be used for public, charitable and educational uses and purposes." Earlier this year, funds from the Atwater legacy were applied by The Foundation to support Project ROOF, which helps homeowners to avoid foreclosure.

If you are considering adding a gift in your will like the Atwaters, please call Jolyn Walker at (203) 777-7067 and request information about making a charitable bequest.



The closing for the Stevens development in Church Street in 1962. L-R: Thomas Gilbane, of Gilbane Construction Co., builders in the Steven development; N.S. Potter, vice president of the Stevens corporations; Mayor Richard C. Lee and Russell Atwater.



The Atwater family: Lucie and Russell with their son, Russell Wilson. Russell met his wife while visiting a friend at Penn Hall Junior College in Chambersburg, PA.

Valley Community Foundation Awards Grants in First Competitive Application Process



Jamie Cohen, President of the Valley Community Foundation, presents a check to Shawn Fields, Huntington Branch Library Director; Elspeth Lydon, Shelton Library System Director; Barbara Glover, Chair of the Library Board of Directors.

"VCF funding is vital to the success of our Community Connections program, that delivers materials to residents who are not physically capable of visiting a library," said Shawn Fields. "The grant will provide for van repairs, maintenance costs including fuel, as well as delivery equipment."

- \$150,000 from Gates Fund supports diverse projects including teen safety program and repair to War Memorial
- Applications inspire donor advisors to supplement process with \$21,150

In its first competitive grants process, VCF recently awarded approximately \$171,000 grants to a diversity of projects. Approximately \$150,000 was awarded from the Gates Fund, which was established at The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven in the 1950s by bequest of two brothers, Frank and Ross Gates, both natives of Derby, CT. Valley leaders and The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven created VCF in 2004 to increase charitable giving and provide a permanent source of support for nonprofits in Ansonia, Derby,

Shelton, Seymour and Oxford, CT.

President and CEO, Jamie Cohen remarked, "not only did VCF fund 31 nonprofits through its first competitive grants process, but we were able to include an additional \$21,150 from 6 endowed Donor Advised Funds at VCF. We inspired these donors to join us and give to these important organizations that provide services to Valley residents. Without VCF, these Donor Advised Funds would not have existed."

Learn about the organizations and the grants they received at valleyfoundation.org.