

Thoughts from the Chair

Did you know that during the early 19th century, the Asylum Hill and Hartford area was a center of [abolitionist](#) activity? An abolitionist is a person who favors the abolition of a practice or institution, especially capital punishment or (formerly) slavery. The most famous abolitionist family was the Beechers. The Reverend [Lyman Beecher](#) was an important Congregational minister known for his anti-slavery sermons. His daughter, Catherine Beecher founded the Hartford Female Seminary, [Harriet Beecher Stowe](#), wrote the famous [Uncle Tom's Cabin](#), while her brother, the Reverend [Henry Ward Beecher](#), was a noted clergyman who vehemently opposed slavery and supported the temperance movement and women's suffrage. Harriet Beecher Stowe's sister, [Isabella Beecher Hooker](#), was a leading member of the [women's rights movement](#). As we know, the Harriett Beecher Stowe's homestead still stands today in Asylum Hill, where yearly people from all over the world come to visit.

Where are the abolitionist in Asylum Hill today? Where those who know poverty is wrong and are willing to take a stand with others to help its end in Asylum Hill? Where are those who are determined to stand with others to abolish unfair health care, education and housing practices in Asylum Hill? Who will help develop the skills of the un- and under-employed in Asylum Hill that they too can gain sustainable employment? Where are the abolitionist who are opened to the idea of living in a community that consists of all people, no matter the color of their skin, their culture or country they were born? The works of the Beechers helps us to realize that even today it is possible that a neighborhood, city, state and even a nation where all lives matter and where all can live freely as equals in harmony can exist.

Let's find the area where we are most passionate and support the organizations in Asylum Hill as well as the city of Hartford who are working diligently to end poverty, unemployment and unfair quality of life practices. Together, let's search our hearts, forgive and not keep a list of wrongs; find love for our neighbors as we love ourselves and share and support those who are working tirelessly, that we can live together equally in harmony peaceably in Asylum Hill.

Blessings...

Yours in the mission,

Yvonne Matthews, Chair