

# News from West River Valley Senior Housing



SUMMER 2019

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## Valley Cares Board of Directors

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### Dear Friends A word from Susanne Shapiro, ED

This spring our Board of Directors and a dedicated group of staff members engaged in a workshop with Andy Robinson, a professional consultant from Marlboro College who specializes in board development and fundraising for nonprofit organizations. It was an invigorating day that sparked great conversation and a lot of ideas. We enjoyed taking the day to realize just how special Valley Cares is, how lucky we all are to be a part of it, and *why* each of us loves our organization. We love our location—we are rural but close to medical services. We love our beautiful apartments and the way that our housing feels like "home." But perhaps most of all we love the LOVE that is here. As one staff member put it, "you can't help but give and receive love" when you walk through the doors, and that is very special!

## Quilt Raffle Time!

We are holding our annual quilt raffle to benefit the Activities Program at West River Valley Assisted Living. Tickets are \$2 each or \$5 for 3. The drawing will be held on Labor Day, 9/2/2019.

Valley Cares is in its 5<sup>th</sup> year of holding this raffle thanks to the generosity and skilled creativity of Helen Short, who has created and donated the quilts. Each year the raffle brings in hundreds of dollars toward activity programming. Funds raised have gone toward bringing in more musicians for live performances, entertainment equipment upgrades and special presentations. Helen's mother, Genevieve Rowell, lives at Valley Cares and helps to sell raffle tickets. As a handcrafted card-maker, Genevieve is also a very skilled and creative craftsman, so it comes as no surprise that her daughter can produce such masterpieces.

Measuring approximately 72" x 89", this year's quilt is entitled "On Ringo Lake" and is made of bright and cheery shades of coral, turquoise, white & brown. Machine piecing was done by Helen Short, and longarm machine quilting was done by Stonehurst Quilting.

To get your chance at this year's beautiful handmade quilt, contact Dawn Slade, Recreation & Volunteer Coordinator, at (802) 365-7190 x107.



Genevieve & Dawn display Raffle Quilt

## Resident Highlight: Ed Kennedy By Jean Allbee

“When I was in Army Intelligence, one thing I’ll always remember was observing the Koreans collecting ‘Night Soil’ [human excrement] which they carted away for use as fertilizer for their crops.”

Ed served during the Korean War. He was recruited directly from ROTC training from St. Michael’s College in Burlington.

“I was interviewed by two men; they give me a 38 Special and told me I would mostly wear civilian clothes for which I was given an allowance. My job was to observe and ask questions of both soldiers and civilians.

After the war I looked for jobs suited to my military training. The FBI required an accounting degree so I thought maybe border patrol would be a good fit, but when I learned I would have to start out by patrolling the Mexican border I gave up that idea.”

Ed became a high-school biology teacher, and taught in northern Vermont for forty years, but that was just his day job. In his spare time Ed built an authentic Revolutionary War Kentucky Rifle from scratch.

“I had to order the different parts I needed to fit to the stock I made and finished by hand.”

Ed’s handmade rifle is proudly displayed on the living

room wall of his apartment. His lifelong interest in firearms also led him to become heavily involved in Revolutionary War re-enactments. It turns out that he and the son of another resident have similar interests, “But the problem is, the other person is on the British side,” he says with a twinkle.

“I took on many different roles in the re-enactments: Company Commander, Company Cook, and Regimental Surgeon. As the Regimental surgeon I had to triage the casualties. One time I treated a wounded soldier who had taken a musket ball in his belly. He asked for a Chaplin. I knew a Chaplin, a friend of mine; he was the wrong

denomination, Lutheran, but at least he was protestant. I kept telling the wounded soldier he would be alright, but he knew he was going to die and so did I, that’s why he asked for the Chaplin. There is a caregiver at Valley Cares who was a Navy Nurse for many years. We have had long conversations about triage since we both understand the term, especially as it applies to military casualties.”

Also, because of his interest in firearms, Ed coached a Jr. High School Rifle Team.

“I preferred teaching the girls,” he said. I sensed he wanted me to ask why, which I did. “Because the boys were all deer hunters and therefore thought they already knew all there was to know about rifles.” This was a familiar fact for me having grown up in Vermont deer hunting culture.

Ed is very happy with his decision to move to Valley Cares. He finds plenty of opportunities to become involved with different goings on: a variety of music, different trips to choose from, lunch excursions, crafts, movies, games. He is happy to talk about his life and his interests. A Bernie sticker and a 1965 Vermont license plate prominently adorn his sporty wheeled walker!

“It has a very homey atmosphere. It’s the best of all the places I visited.”



In his Revolutionary War uniform

## Staff Highlight: Nancy Joslin By Becca Schaefer

It's 6:30am. A fried eggs sizzles in the pan as Nancy Joslin gets ready for her day. The smell of toast wafts through the kitchen. Nancy is busily getting ready for her day as a full-time housekeeper at Valley Cares. She packs her bag with clean rags, plenty of water, some almonds... The toast pops up. Nancy dishes it up along with the egg and sets the plate on the... floor.

No, it's not that Nancy is averse to dining at a table like you or me. This breakfast is part of her daily ritual to lure in – and feed – her giant, fluffy, white Great Pyrenees, “Bernie.” Bernie is a sweet, playful and smart dog who has no problem staying outside until just the right food has been presented to entice her into coming back inside. Nancy loves her dog! She loves all dogs. But ask her about Bernie, and she can't help but grin from ear to ear as she tells you about her latest antics.

There are a couple other strong females in Nancy's life that make her smile in that way; Nancy has two grown daughters of whom she is incredibly proud. Her daughter, Sam, works as a painter, and other daughter, Robin, works as a park ranger. Both of them have grown up also working in different capacities at the ski mountains. As I struggled to come up with a word to describe them the other day, Nancy smiled and said, “they're not wimps.” Exactly. They have seen their mom work hard their entire lives, and they too have become independent, hard-working women.

Nancy Joslin is just about the last person to want the spotlight on her, although there are a lot of people who are glad to share their admiration of her. She is a down-to-earth, humble soul with a big heart. Nancy has worked at Valley Cares for over nine years, first as a homemaker out in the greater community and then as a full-time housekeeper in the assisted living. Since our housekeepers also help bring residents to appointments, she often has one-on-one time with residents. Nancy loves getting to know the people who live here and helping them out in any way she can. She says she's lucky to get to work somewhere where she gets to know so many wonderful people. We're the lucky ones - we get to spend time with her.



Nancy with her Daughters

## A Note from Susanne

Thank you to everyone who has reached out to us to say “farewell” to our Nurse Manager, Deb Rodgers. In May, Deb and her husband left Vermont to be closer to their adorable grandbaby in Connecticut. We miss her dearly - she is a wonderful colleague, nurse, supervisor and friend.

Deb will still be here on a per diem basis, and we are actively seeking and reviewing candidates for the Nurse Manager position. Our RN team - consisting of Asst Nurse Manager, Kathy Krasnow, Per Diem Nurse, Amy Burmester, and myself - are here to ensure residents receive superb nursing care and, of course, our caregiving team continues to provide care that is second to none.

# Mark Your Calendar

By Becca Schaefer, HR & Outreach Director

**JULY:** Valley Cares will host its annual **Benefit Concert on Townshend Common** on Saturday, **July 27** from 5-7:30pm. Concert admission is free, but donations are appreciated. There will be food for sale on site. This is a family-friendly event that will be fun for all ages.



**SEPTEMBER:** Come out to the 99 Restaurant in Brattleboro on **September 10** from 5:00-10:30pm. Valley Cares will receive 15% of each meal sold when the diner brings a "**Valley Cares - Dining for a Cause**" coupon. Coupons will be available to pick up at Valley Cares. Or we would be happy to mail or email them to you!



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[www.valleycares.org](http://www.valleycares.org)



## SASH at Valley Cares

By Jessy Cudworth, SASH Coordinator

Valley Cares SASH (Support & Services at Home) is busy planning programs and visiting with our participants. Currently, the SASH program is running a Great Course® titled *Mayo Clinic's Guide to Pain Relief* at Grace Cottage Hospital. We also continue to run our **Living Alone Group** at the Heins Building on the 3rd Wednesday of each month from 10:15-11:45 a.m. and our **Life Story Writing Group** at the Townshend Library on the 2nd Monday of each month directed by Jean Albee.

We are happily continuing our participation with the Senior Farm Share program this summer. This program is supported by federal funding from the USDA Senior Farmers' Market Program. Seniors who are income eligible receive fresh produce grown at a farm in their community for 10 weeks. In the past we have had the pleasure of working with Walker Farm in Dummerston.

If you or someone you know in the community is in need of support to be able to live a healthy, independent life in their own home please give SASH a call: 802-365-4115 x108. We currently serve the in the towns of Townshend, Newfane, Wardsboro, Williamsville, Brookline, Athens, Grafton, Chester, and South Newfane.

*Valley Cares Inc. is an independent community-based 501(c)(3) organization committed to providing high quality, affordable, housing and compassionate care allowing seniors to age in place with respect and dignity.*