



# News from West River Valley Senior Housing



FALL 2017

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## Valley Cares Board of Directors

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- Rob Rowell (Treasurer/  
Vice President)
- Ann Allbee (Secretary)
- Stan Adams  
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- Ruth VanHouten  
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(Town Rep.)
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- Sally Wadsworth

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

On a November day 10 years ago, Valley Cares opened the doors to its senior housing here in Townshend— providing beautiful, affordable senior rental apartments and assisted living in our rural Valley. It had taken years to get to that point. Community members knew there was a need for this housing; but how did we get from “point A” to “point B”, from knowing the need to having the housing?

It is a daunting task, turning a dream into reality. Many people would just throw up their hands in bewilderment. In our case, it took a dedicated team of individuals doing the research, proving the need, speaking with political representatives and tirelessly fundraising to create this housing. Valley Cares’ founding Executive Director, Bob Crego, and founding Board President, John Nopper, deserve the most credit for enormous undertaking. Without the two of them, it is safe to say the dream of our housing may never have come to fruition. There were many other community members who played key roles, but I am afraid I would run out of room to name them all here. I hope they will attend our Anniversary Celebration on October 29th and share their stories with me.

In ten years, we have become more than housing providers; we are a community! Our employees, volunteers, residents, family members, donors and friends make Valley Cares the wonderful organization it is. We help local seniors remain safe in their own homes as long as possible, and we are here for them if they are ready to move. Our kitchen has provided over 60,000 meals for the local Meals-on-Wheels program. We have loaned out durable medical equipment to any community member in need, free of charge. (over 1,500 such rentals!) And in that time, our independent, supportive and assisted living housing has been “home” to 219 residents. Wow!

To mark our 10 year anniversary, we are unveiling our new logo. Although the logo has been years in coming, the sentiment was first expressed by Mr. Warren Patrick back when we opened our doors. “Valley Cares for you and me”—simply put and 100% true!

On Sunday, October 29th, 2-4pm, Valley Cares will host a

10th Anniversary Celebration at  
West River Valley Assisted Living  
461 Grafton Rd, Townshend, VT 05353

There will be live music provided by The Moon Dogs, refreshments, tours of our housing and, of course, good company! All are invited. I hope to see you there!



“Valley Cares for you & me” shirt on Warren at Opening in 2007



## Resident Highlight: Genevieve Rowell By Jean Allbee

"When I was a little girl I had a white, pet, cosset lamb on my grandparents' farm. Her name was Betty. I fed her from a bottle and led her around the farm by a rope. When my parents gave up farming, up the hill from my grandparents' farm in Braintree, we moved to Randolph, Vermont, where my father started a blacksmith shop. He even went to surrounding farms working his farrier business out of his pick-up truck. But I missed the farm, and I loved being with Grandma and Grandpa. When I was old enough to go by myself, I would ride my pony, Prince Charming, to their farm on Friday afternoons, and not go back home to Randolph until late Sunday. My mother told the story of needing to buy me school shoes and clothes before school started in September. My mother said,

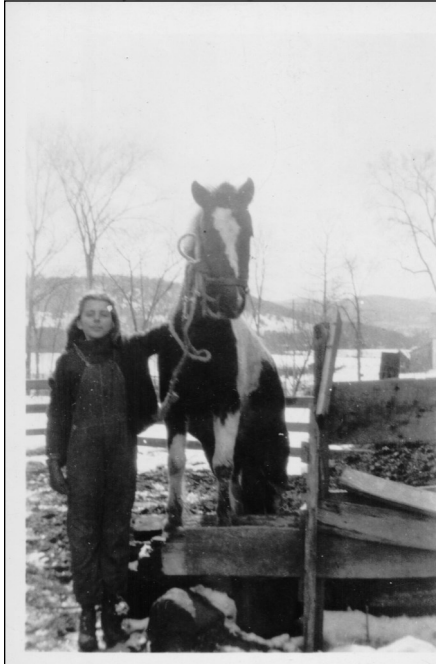
'I'd have to come to the farm to get you, take you shopping and then take you back to the farm so you wouldn't have to come home until the very last minute before school started!'"

Genevieve and her companions, including eight girl cousins, had the run of Braintree. Sometimes they would harness a pony to a two wheeled gig and be gone for hours at a time around Braintree Hill even following old logging roads into the woods. However, they were never far out of sight of the many watchful relatives and neighbors who were the "village" that helped raise the children of that era in rural Vermont.

She first met her future husband, Wayne Rowell, when

his family brought their horses to be shod at her father's blacksmith shop. Genevieve tells the story of going to visit Wayne's sister in Tunbridge one day.

"His sister wasn't there so Wayne was assigned to entertain me in his sister's absence. He did a darn good job! Having so many girl cousins I had little experience being around boys. Talking to me that day he made me very comfortable alone in his presence; we became friends and stayed that way for all our lives together." After the war they were married in her parents' living room in 1946.



Genevieve and Prince Charming

"We farmed in Tunbridge for ten years, but it was becoming obvious that small herd dairy farming was on the way out. It was go big or get out!" They got out.

"Copper mining was the big employer in Orange County, Vermont at the time, but Wayne

said no way could he work underground."

He trained to become a game warden which took him all over Vermont and away from home much of the time. Genevieve cared for the beef critter, the chickens and four children by herself during his absence. Miraculously, Genevieve's driveway was plowed or the lawn mowed and the family checked on periodically in Wayne's absence.

Upon passing the game warden's exam Wayne and his family moved to Wilmington.

"Wayne was a game warden for thirty-two and a half years; thirty-one and a half in the middle third of the state." Genevieve explained.

For many years Genevieve worked as a clerk at the Wilmington Post Office where she eventually became head postal clerk. She retired just in time not to become postmistress, a job she did not wish to take on although she had passed the exam many years before.

In their retirement Genevieve and Wayne bought a succession of ever larger travel campers ending with a motor home with two slide-out expansions. "We had a wonderful time touring and camping across the United States. We made many new friends and created lots of happy memories together."

Since moving to Valley Cares Genevieve keeps busy in her living room workshop which is filled with the art and craft supplies needed for creating beautiful, hand cut and hand

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## Quilt Raffle is Great Success

painted, one-of-a-kind greeting cards. Genevieve has a warm smile, and readily welcomes visitors into her studio. She enjoys talking about her long and varied life experiences and was willing to share some of them for this newsletter.

"Looking back, I've had a very good life," she said.

Thank you to everyone who purchased raffle tickets for our annual Quilt Raffle. This year's raffle raised over \$450 for the Activities Program (almost double the yield from last year's raffle)! That means more musical performances, outings and other special activities that are so enjoyed by residents.

We thank Helen Short for establishing this wonderful fundraiser. Helen, Genevieve Rowell's daughter, initiated the annual raffle by donating her beautiful handmade quilts. This is the third such quilt we have raffled for the Activities Program.

This year's winners are:

Suzanne Sylvester - 1st place - the beautiful quilt  
Terry Arciszewski - 2nd place - the "cabin essentials" basket  
Congratulations to them both!

This year's 1st place prize was a quilt called "Indian Summer Revised," which incorporated beautiful shades of green, blue and purple. It was the perfect size for a full bed. Longarm machine quilting was done by Stonehurst Quilting. This quilt won the Vendor's Choice Award from the Franklin County Quilters Guild. ...To see the quilt, you could understand why! We know Suzanne will get many years of enjoyment from this prize.

The 2nd place prize was a "cabin essentials" basket filled with maple syrup, pancake mix, cocoa, a mug, pot holders and more, donated by Clara Robinson.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this raffle a success. The Activities Program is an especially important part of life at our rural housing. Thanks to the kindness and generosity of our community, we are blessed to enjoy a wealth of musical and cultural entertainment and other fun and enriching activities.



Quilt Winner, Suzanne, with Genevieve

## Employee Highlight: Becca Schaefer

I am the Human Resources & Outreach Director at Valley Cares, which means I wear many hats. I've worked here for 7 years. When I started, I worked part-time in the kitchen and also assisted our previous Director with project development both for Valley Cares and other community groups. These days I am in charge of human resources for our organization, having earned my PHR certification a couple years ago, and I do various behind-the-scenes tasks, such as producing newsletters, maintaining our Facebook page, updating our website, and having a hand in much of the written word that comes from our organization.

When not at Valley Cares, my days are full of the joys that come from new parenthood. My husband and I had our first child eight months ago, and we are thrilled and amazed by this beautiful baby boy every day. Like his parents, he loves to be outside. So we spend many hours enjoying the natural surroundings of our Brookline home.

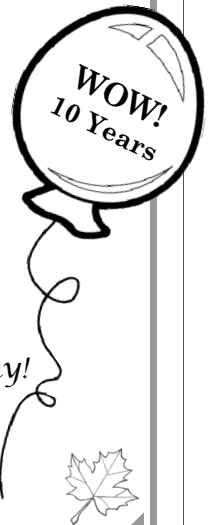
If you ask around at the assisted living, you might get the sense that our son is Valley Cares' baby, as his arrival was much anticipated around the house, and his visits are so endeared. It is wonderful to share this delight with—and glean knowledge from—so many grandparents and great-grandparents!



HR & Outreach Director



You are cordially invited to Valley Cares'  
**10th Anniversary Celebration!**



Sunday, October 29, 2017  
 2pm-4pm

Live Music performed by The Moon Dogs ★ Good Food ★ Tours ★ Great Company!

At  
 West River Valley Assisted Living, 461 Grafton Rd, Townshend, VT 05353



P.O. Box 341  
 457 Grafton Rd.  
 Townshend, VT 05353

Phone: 802-365-4115  
 Fax: 802-365-4910

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



**Resident & Family  
 Overall Recommendation of  
 WRV Assisted Living**



**Survey Results are In** By Becca Schaefer

Each year at Valley Cares we ask our assisted living residents and their primary family contacts to fill out a satisfaction survey. This is a key tool in identifying our strengths and opportunities to improve and assessing how well we are serving our mission. This year, we received 42 surveys from residents and family members. Every opinion counts! Survey results are anonymous, but here are a few comments we received:

- ★ ***"This is the most immaculate facility I've ever been to!"*** - Family
- ★ ***"... My children are happy and relieved I am spending my senior years in a warm, friendly, well cared for environment. All my needs are met & then some. Thank you VC team."*** - Resident
- ★ ***"I want to put myself on the waiting list! (still a couple decades before I could move in)"*** - Family

*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.*