

News from West River Valley Senior Housing



SPRING/SUMMER 2021

News from West River Valley Senior Housing

Valley Cares Board of Directors

John Nopper (President)

Judy Ferenbach
(Vice President)

Jessica Emerson
(Secretary/GCH Rep.)

Roger Allbee (Treasurer)

Genevieve Rowell
(Resident Rep.)

Susan LeCours
(Town Rep.)

Jean Allbee

Pete Carlson

Kathy Stover

Janet Sherer

Bill Monahan

After much time without sending a regular newsletter out, we are happy to reach you with this one! It feels so good to be at this juncture. Residents are able to have visitors again—we just ask that visitors schedule ahead of time. We are accepting new residents in both buildings. Contact us!

There are many new faces at Valley Cares, and together with those who have been here for many years, they are making a wonderful team. We look forward to introducing some in this newsletter.

Welcome, JoAnne! By Judy Ferenbach

Valley Cares is exceedingly lucky to have JoAnne Blanchard as its new Executive Director. JoAnne comes from Springfield, VT. She attended Trinity College and earned a Bachelor's degree in psychology with a minor in art. Her career path has included being a case manager at Senior Solutions, working at Visiting Nurse and Hospice for Vermont and New Hampshire, and running the Springfield Area Adult Day Service for ten years. These experiences led her to want to work in assisted living, so she completed the Residential Care Administrator Course and went to work at Cedar Hill Continuing Care Community in Windsor, VT. JoAnne joined Valley Cares' team last fall. Her desire to be in the not-for-profit sector while working with seniors makes her a perfect fit for Valley Cares.



JoAnne Blanchard,
Executive Director

With all of her experience in eldercare, JoAnne is well prepared for the unique challenges she faces as an executive director of a nonprofit, affordable assisted living and independent living. We are thrilled to have her at the helm during this COVID pandemic as well as during the more normal days that are on their way! She attributes her positive attitude about finding solutions to her staff, who function as a team under her leadership. With everyone's collaboration in working towards the same goals, answers come easier, and as John Nopper (a founding board member of Valley Cares) has observed: "JoAnne brings out the best in all of us."

JoAnne values interacting with residents to make sure they feel heard and she is up to date on their needs. Creating a positive culture is a signature trait for her. For fun and relaxation, she turns to outdoor activity with her husband and fifteen year old son, or paints watercolors and makes things out of objects from nature that she finds interesting.

Welcome, JoAnne! We all look forward to your leadership!



Welcome, Eileen Ogden, RN By Jean Allbee

Valley Cares is happy to welcome Eileen Ogden, RN, as the new Health Services Director at Valley Cares who joined the team this past January.

Walking into Eileen Ogden's office is like entering an early spring garden. It's alive with welcoming yellow and green accents. Several attractively potted plants, a guest chair and a view of the broad east facing lawn welcome you to sit down and chat.

Speaking with Eileen, you get the same sense of warmth and energy. She is fun, energetic and caring, with a can-do attitude. You get the feeling you can talk to her about anything and really rely on her.

Eileen is a Registered Nurse and comes to us with a wide range of experience including several years as a nurse at The Brattleboro Retreat, Bradley House of Garden Path Elder Living, and Bayada Hospice. Eileen lives in Guilford. She is a graduate of Brattleboro Union Middle and High School, Thompson School of Nursing and Vermont Technical College.

As is the case with many who work at Valley Cares, Eileen had a close relationship with her grandmother. She enjoys working with the elder population and was drawn to Valley Cares because of its

homey and quaint atmosphere and its relatively small size which allows her to get to know each of the residents personally.

Eileen is the proud mother of three grown children, one of whom works at Valley Cares as a Resident Assistant. Eileen is expecting her first grandchild, a girl, in July. (Congratulations!)

When asked, "What is the best part of working at Valley Cares?" Eileen enthusiastically responded, "It's the team. The whole team. The director, the nursing and caregiving staff, HR, the activities director. Everyone. I think we have a great rapport with each other and work really well together!"

We are delighted Eileen is sharing her capable leadership and skills as a dedicated member of Valley Cares team.



Eileen Ogden, RN,
Health Services Director

Wish List

We greatly appreciate the generosity of donors. Our small non-profit couldn't do it without you!

Tax-deductible donations may be made out to "Valley Cares, Inc". If you wish to donate something specific, here are a few items we would LOVE:

Carstens 3-inch Medical Charting Binder—yellow

- ◆ Quantity Needed = 19
- ◆ Price = \$19.99 each at carstens.com

Carstens 3-inch Medical Charting Binder—blue

- ◆ Quantity Needed = 23
- ◆ Price = 19.99 each at carstens.com

Carstens Assisted Living Tab Dividers for Charts

- ◆ Quantity Needed = 42
- ◆ Price = 13.99 each at carstens.com

EasyPAG 5-Tier Wall Mount File Organizer

- ◆ Price = \$22.99 at amazon.com

Lenovo Yoga 7i 14" Laptop Computer for Staff Training

- ◆ Price = \$1,299.99 at lenovo.com

Plants for our Gardening Club

- ◆ Perennials
- ◆ Vegetable Starts
- ◆ Annuals

Craft Supplies (various)

Folding Wooden Tray Tables

Questions? Call Becca or JoAnne at (802) 365-7190.
Thank you!

Welcome, Mary Jo Dansereau, LPN By Judy Ferenbach

In December, Mary Jo Dansereau, LPN, joined the team at Valley Cares as the new Nurse Supervisor. She brings excellent nurse and managerial skills, and was even named the Vermont Healthcare Association’s “Assisted Living LPN of the Year” in 2019.

Mary Jo believes in seeing the best in each individual and fostering their potential so that they can truly grow—and thrive—at any age. This is true of the work she does in long-term care as well as her many years working with youth at Kurn Hattin Homes and as a Diversion Board Member with the Windham County Judiciary.

She grew up as part of a large family - one of eleven children - in Hillsboro, NH. Growing up, she enjoyed a special relationship with her grandmother, who was famous for dispensing time-tested wisdom down to following generations. Her interest in geriatrics is a natural progression from this special bond.

Mary Jo is a “family person” through and through, who has had as many as four generations living with her at one time! Both her son and daughter and their families live close by, and Mary Jo takes advantage of her weekends to spend quality time with them.

She describes the staff at Valley Cares as “wonderful to work with”, making working here “feel like family”. Mary Jo says the residents at Valley Cares are “always smiling.” My bet is it’s because of her!



Mary Jo Dansereau, LPN,
Nurse Supervisor

Activities Update By Dawn Slade

As I sit down at my desk to write this piece, I realize how excited I am to be heading into the spring and summer season with a robust activity calendar. It has been 14 long months with many activity limitations due to COVID, and needless to say this has challenged us all. I am thrilled to share that we will now be able to have our wonderful volunteers returning to Valley Cares! The ability for the residents to participate a full variety of scheduled events that they have missed so much over the past year cannot be undervalued.

In addition to our regular weekly programs we have some exciting upcoming activity highlights planned including: outings to Sunset Lake, a porch picnic overlooking the Rock River, a trip to the Magic Wings Butterfly Conservatory, and of course a multitude of musical performances both indoors and out. We have a great group of musicians that liven up our spirits every weekend here at Valley Cares, and as restrictions are lifted we will be able to allow for even more variety. The following quote truly speaks to me, “Music replays the past memories, awaken our forgotten worlds and make our minds travel.” I am so looking forward to a summer filled with programs that allow us to do exactly this!

For a full list of events, please check our Facebook page for the monthly Calendar. www.facebook.com/ValleyCaresVT/

Mark Your Calendar

**Aug 21, Saturday,
Concert on the
Common**

Circumstances permitting, we plan to hold a benefit concert on Townshend Common this summer!

**Sept 5—Sept 12
Valley Cares’ “By Your Side” Run/Dog Walk**
Join in virtually! A run or walk with a nod of the hat to those furry, four-legged companions who get us outside no matter what. Support Valley Cares by participating in this fun event!

Volunteer Opportunities

We have terrific group of people who volunteer their time and talents to the West River Valley Assisted Living community. We would like to invite you to join this group. Some of our volunteer opportunities include:

- ★ **visiting** or reading with residents
- ★ front door greeter/receptionist
- ★ transportation to appointments and special outings
- ★ drivers for Meals on Wheels deliveries
- ★ gardening
- ★ musical performances
- ★ assisting with arts & crafts groups
- ★ basic computer instruction
- ★ playing cards

If you are interested in one of these opportunities or have other ideas of ways you would like to be involved with our community, please contact Dawn Slade at 802-365-7190. Thank you!



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

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

www.valleycares.org



SASH Expanding to Marlboro & Dummerston

Our Support & Services at Home (SASH) program at Valley Cares, Inc. is so excited to be able to see our participants in person again! As Covid restrictions lessen we have begun expanding our service area, we welcome the towns of Marlboro and Dummerston. If you know of any older adult in these areas or in the local community that could use support, please refer them to Jessy Cudworth, our SASH Coordinator, at 802-365-4115 x108. We are a no fee program intended to help older adults in this community who can benefit from a caring team of local health professionals. Happy Spring!

“It sounds like Valley Cares is in good hands. I’m glad because when my mother resided in Valley Cares she received the most excellent, compassionate care. My sisters and brother were all so grateful and felt that she was in the best possible place for her. We will always be grateful that Valley Cares existed then for her and I’m happy it will be there for those who will need it.” — Jeanne Bristol, daughter of Lucinda Fournier

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.