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Dear Friends

As I sit down to write this introduction we are in the midst of our instant Vermont summer (just a couple more weeks and the days start getting shorter!) You will read in this newsletter about several exciting new projects we're engaged in, including the planned expansion of our assisted living. You will read about beautiful gardens tended by our residents and volunteers. You will learn about the broad range of engaging activities available to our residents. And you will also be reminded by our Care Director, Andi Baker (*see back cover*), of the close-knit caring community that has sprung up here in the short time we have been in operation. As the Executive Director, I am pleased by the quality care and housing we provide and tremendously proud of our staff who do such fine work. It is heartening to work with such truly kind caring people.

Bob Crego
Executive Director

A Note from our Board

We have accomplished a great deal in our four short years since opening in October of 2007. Most importantly, our residents and staff have created a community which shares and promotes the values of dignity, respect, care, and fun. The last of these is a distinguishing marker for anyone who walks in the door. For myself, I know that when I enter, Dakota will shake her fist at me, share some laughs about the Marines, as I get a big hug.

The Board of Directors, while keeping its eye on the existing well managed operation, is now looking over the horizon. What are the challenges and the opportunities for the next four years, and beyond? Our next newsletter will report this in greater detail. We know now that to secure our future, long term giving and estate plans that recognize Valley Cares will be significant. Please review the enclosed brochure. If this opportunity matches the direction of your generosity, know that you will be an important part of our future.

John Nopper, Board President

“Heading Towards No More Oil..”

Such is the proclamation from our business partners at Housing Vermont!

This spring we learned that West River Senior Housing will be awarded federal and state funding to install solar panels to heat our domestic hot water. As we went to press, plans were almost complete for a July bid. The work will be done in September, with the panels adorning the roof of the Independent living. We anticipate that this project will provide over 50% of all the hot water we will need on site. When coupled with the workings of our wood pellet boiler, we plan to save about \$10,000/year in costs.

Project Development News

Valley Cares Hopes to Expand West River Valley Assisted Living

“Build it and they will come”—an oft repeated phrase that was validated in late 2007 when Valley Cares completed its senior housing in Townshend. In just 3 months, all 52 units of independent and assisted living were filled and the complex has essentially not had a vacancy since.

Now Valley Cares is proposing to expand the 28-unit West River Valley Assisted Living. The proposed expansion will add an additional 12 one-bedroom units and common space in a wing extending to the northeast of the existing building. The existing dining room and kitchen will also expand accordingly. This expansion will create 4-6 new jobs for caregivers and

kitchen assistants. In order to improve the efficiency of organizational operations, staff offices will also move inside the assisted living building.

Preliminary operating and staffing projections for the project suggest that an expanded facility would have long-term viability by lowering the overall operating cost per apartment. A market assessment

performed by John Ryan of Development Cycles also illustrates a supportive market for the additional assisted living units.

Preliminary design work and site assessments suggest that the addition of a two-story 9,900 ft² wing is viable with minor changes to the existing water and sewer.

Having shared our plans with the Townshend Planning Commission and Select Board, our next step will be to obtain a Vermont Community Development Program grant to help leverage the roughly \$2.5 million in funding we will need to build.



Valley Cares, Inc. Board of Directors

John Nopper (President), Putney
 Rick Chapin (Treasurer), Guilford
 Greg Record (Secretary), Newfane
 Terry Ward (ILF Rep.), Townshend
 Edith Serke, Windham

Jean Allbee, Brookline
 Maggie Bills, Townshend
 Maggie Bills, Townshend
 Mick Brant, Londonderry
 Sally Wadsworth, Stratton

Project Development News (cont.)

Valley Cares Working on Enhanced Senior Housing in Putney

In late April Valley Cares signed a four-month option agreement on a 10-acre parcel on Spring Hill Road in Putney. We are assessing the site for permitting and infrastructure issues related to developing 24 units of enhanced independent senior housing. This project would be targeted to seniors who are independent but want to downsize and have the op-

“we remained interested in addressing the substantial need for senior housing...”

tion of purchasing care and supportive services. There would be on-site service coordination, property management and maintenance.

We are in discussions with a nursing care provider which could offer wellness and rehab services.

One of our next steps will be to meet with a focus group of potential clients to get their feedback regarding design amenities and cost—hopefully by late June or early July.

This potential project comes on the heels of a feasibility study last winter that considered purchasing the Putney Inn to develop licensed assisted living. Though we were unable to come to terms on a purchase agreement for the Inn, we remained interested in addressing the substantial need for senior housing with services in the area.

Senior Housing Organizations Work Together Valley Cares Helps Hilltop House Secure \$30,000 Planning Grant

As is part of our mission, Valley Cares not only develops and manages senior housing, we also provide consulting services for other senior housing organizations and groups. Over the past months, Valley Cares has been working closely with Hilltop House, a Level III Residential Care facility in Brattleboro, VT to help guide their process of organizational reflection and planning for future renova-

tions. As Hilltop House' statuesque Victorian building is in need of essential renovations, this senior housing organization is evaluating whether they should continue to provide Residential Care or switch to a higher support level, such as assisted living.

As hired consultants, Valley Cares secured a \$30,000 planning grant for Hilltop House through the Vermont

Community Development Program. These funds will be sub-granted to Hilltop House by the Town of Brattleboro.

At the time this newsletter goes to print, we will be reviewing proposals from local architecture firms for the pre-development design work needed for this planning process. We will also continue to explore other funding opportunities for Hilltop House's project.

Words from our 1st Centenarian

I have written many words describing major events in my life: some sad, some happy, and some extremely vital to my health, my character and to my present-day respect among family and friends. I firmly believe that I have had a Guardian Angel watching over me and guiding me throughout my life. The chain is indisputable. Here are a few illustrations:

“Too Close for Comfort” When in high school, I was delivering bottled milk in my father’s car during the Depression of the 1930’s. It was to be at the customer’s doorstep before breakfast. One day I fell asleep at the wheel and landed in a ditch missing a telephone pole by inches. I was so close I could not open the car door. A passing motorist stopped and pulled me out.

“A Fateful Meeting” I went to night school after graduating from a college prep high school because I knew there was no chance of my going to college, and I needed to learn something I could use in the working field. There I met my future wife and mother of our four children. She was there because she had left high school to care for her disabled mother and wanted a diploma.

There are many more examples but, as a result, I firmly believe that my Guardian Angel destined me to lead this life. I believe that I was destined to become a resident of the West River Valley Cares housing and to celebrate my 100th birthday here.

Warren S. Patrick, Birth date: June 13, 1911



“The Balloon Man”

Born June 13th, 1911, Warren Patrick is our first resident to turn 100 years old. Old? Let me re-phrase...Warren has aged so gracefully for the past 100 years, perhaps I should say “100 years young.”

Warren’s engaging curiosity with the world around him is reflected on the faces of all who meet him—young and old alike. A nature enthusiast, he loves to take walks outside to observe wildlife.

He is known as “the balloon man” to children who visit West River Valley Senior Housing because he always keeps balloons and other tricks close at hand, ever ready to seize the opportunity to bring a smile to someone’s face. Warren exudes the mischievous good humor and exemplifies the meaning of the saying, “young at heart.”

We could not be happier to celebrate Warren’s 100th birthday this June. Let’s all raise a balloon in his honor!

Strawberry Rhubarb Pie

1 Pie Crust (or 2 if you prefer pie with a top crust)
3 cups sliced Strawberries
3 cups sliced Rhubarb
3/4 cup sugar or Splenda
1/2 tsp. Cinnamon
2 Tbs. Cornstarch

Preheat oven to 375. Place all ingredients except crust in a saucepan and cook until heated through. Roll crust into 9-inch pie plate. Pour filling mixture over crust. If using top crust, add that now. (Don’t forget to cut slits in the top crust for steam to escape.) Crimp crust edges as desired and cover edges with foil.

Bake for around 45 minutes. (Remove foil from crust for the last 15 minutes of baking.)

At West River Valley Assisted Living, we enjoy this ala mode!

If you would like to help feed the seniors of the West River Valley, stop by and share your favorite recipe or volunteer to deliver Meals on Wheels. We’d love to hear from you.

We Love Fresh Produce!

Local produce is all the rage these days, and at West River Valley Senior Housing we certainly agree that fresh is best.

That's why we are pleased to be participating in the Senior Farm Share Program again this year. An example of one of the innovative efforts that make Vermont such a wonderful place to live, this program is part of a collaboration between Vermont's Northeast Organic Farming Association, UVM Extension, the Vermont Dept. of Disabilities, Aging & Independent Living, and the Vermont Dept. for Children and Families. Through the Senior Farm Share Program, income-eligible residents of our West River Valley Independent Housing can receive around \$50 worth of fresh fruits and vegetables from Walker Farm this season. We are looking forward to experiencing the growing season through the weekly shares of fresh produce.

The on-site gardens are also flourishing here at West River Valley Senior Housing. Thanks to hard work by residents of both the independent housing and the assisted living, staff, family and friends, we have a beautiful array of flower and vegetable gardens. The kitchen staff of the assisted living has already started harvesting fresh lettuce and beet greens, with much more to come!



I smell something cooking...

...in the West River Valley Assisted Living kitchen, that is! Or perhaps you smell what we are barbecuing out on the grill. The warmer weather is here, and we are wholeheartedly welcoming the influx of fresh ingredients. From salmon with a homemade maple-citrus glaze to burgers straight off the grill and fresh salad (from mixed greens picked right outside), our menu can make anyone's mouth water. Our dedicated kitchen staff loves to cook and please, and with attention to every little detail, it shows!

In addition to cooking for residents of West River Valley Assisted Living, we gladly feed family, friends, and any residents of the Independent Housing who come over for meal. Add in the meals prepared for two dozen area Meals on Wheels participants, and the kitchen regularly prepares meals for 70+ people – an impressive feat for a small housing facility like ours!

Of course, we couldn't do all this without the support and assistance of our residents, our compassionate care-giving staff, service-learning students from Leland and Gray High School, and several kindhearted community volunteers. We sincerely thank all of you for the role you play!

Activities Abound!

Spring was a busy season in the Activity department here at the West River Valley Assisted Living. Over the past few months the Residents enjoyed numerous interesting presentations on a multitude of subjects ranging from antique quilts, to local bird enthusiast Chris Petrak's presentation on Sexy Tropical birds. Charlie Marchant treated us to a fascinating presentation about Townshend's involvement in the Civil War. And that's just to mention a few.

The upcoming summer activity season promises to be equally jam packed with events, celebrations and presentations. We will once again be hosting our annual dog show and classic automobile show. There will also be an end of summer luau party for residents, families and volunteers on August the 28th. As always, we look forward to listening to the talented musicians who perform for us each week. You can pick up a monthly calendar of upcoming events in the Assisted Living building.

Many of these activities and programs are made possible through the generosity of our terrific group of volunteers. If you or someone you know is interested in sharing your time or talents with the residents of The West River Valley Assisted Living, please contact Dawn Slade at 365-7190 ext 107 or email dslade@svcable.net

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As you plan for the future
think of Valley Cares...

*Because our senior years are
a time to revel in the company
of friends and family—not to
move away from them!*

Visit us on the web!

www.valleycares.org

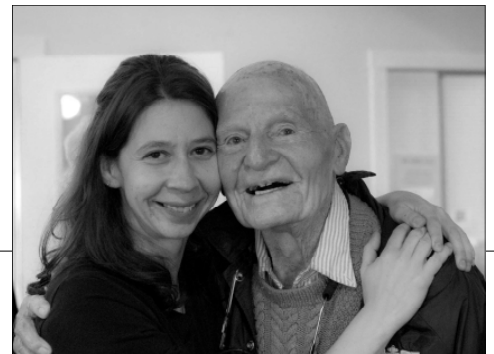
A New Way to Give

Now in our fourth year of operation, we are unveiling our planned giving program to guide anyone interested in including Valley Cares in their estate planning. With the tasteful expertise of Avocado Designs graphic designers and assistance from People's United Bank to cover printing costs, we created the new planned giving brochure accompanying this newsletter.

Whether you make a gift now or after your lifetime, planned giving allows you to make a difference for the future of our senior housing while also enjoying financial benefits for yourself and your loved ones. There are almost as many ways to give as there are needs to be met. Depending on your age and personal circumstances, your financial adviser will help you come up with a plan of giving that is right for you.

Valley Cares is extremely grateful for the generous support of family and friends who recognize the value in what we do and show their appreciation in the form of gifts to our organization.

To have a confidential conversation with our Executive Director, call Bob Crego at (802)365-4115.



A Community Formed

One of the definitions of “community” that can be found in Webster’s Dictionary is “an interacting population of various kinds of individuals in a common location”. If we take this fairly academic wording and infuse it with color and light and warmth, one might begin to be able to picture West River Valley Assisted Living.

We are truly greater than the sum of our parts. Within our community you will find superb caregivers who provide all the services one would expect to find in any family household~ personal care assistance, laundry, and housekeeping, all with an intimate knowledge of each resident’s preferences. Caregivers use their own time to take residents shopping on their day off, to come in to help with an art project, and to celebrate a resident or staff member’s birthday. You will find a multi-talented cook who also trims a male resident’s hair. In exchange, he’ll keep our kitchen knives sharpened. Another kitchen employee has taken on the task of picking up pet care items for our resident cat owners. Our walls are graced with the artwork and photography of residents, families, and volunteers.

In less than four years we have grown and matured from a “population of various kinds of individuals” to a living, breathing community. It’s a wonderful place to be.

Andi Baker RN
Care Director