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Letter from the President

Dear Care Center friends,

As I write this, I’ve just come from leading a discussion group at the Care Center, a monthly event that it’s been my privilege to be part of for nearly six years. Actually, “leading” is probably not quite the right term; “sitting back and helping it happen” would be more properly descriptive. But no matter; it’s a gift to be able to take this small part in the life and growth of the community that is the Care Center.

And incidentally, I’m sandwiching this writing between that discussion group and the Community Harvest Supper happening tonight at the United Church of Craftsbury. I’ve been in and out of the church building today; every return sharpens the mouth-watering scents of a meal in preparation. Students at Craftsbury Academy made bread; students from Sterling College have been cutting vegetables for a beef stew that, as it nears being ready, leaves me having a hard time concentrating on my task.

But all this makes me think about “community;” how it doesn’t just happen. It takes people giving of time and treasures; it takes people understanding that the self only flourishes in a place where shared labor, recreation, conversation – and meals - are the most treasured currency. Community is always forming, never settled in a staid way of being, and always welcoming new members, new treasures, and new opportunities to nourish itself and the people who sustain it.

The conversations we have at the Care Center help us to know and trust each other better; that growth in shared sympathy is the benchmark of a healthy community. The shared monthly community meals do the same in the wider community of which the Care Center is a part; our sense of common purpose grows only in response to our contributions to that community, whatever size it may be.

You’ll note elsewhere in this newsletter that we are about to undertake our Annual Giving campaign. As we’ve said often, we – the community of the Craftsbury Care Center – rely on the generous gifts of those who are able to help us build financial reserves to help underwrite the un-covered costs of our commitment to affordable housing of the people who live at the Care Center.

Many of you give of your time as volunteers here; some as families of residents; and all as cherished friends of this community-within-a-community. We are so grateful for all such gifts, and we hope that you, in the spirit of this community, will think and act generously as we do the nuts and bolts work of assuring that the Care Center continues to foster a community that is always growing, and always warm and welcoming.

With deepest thanks to all,
 Alan Parker, Board President, (on behalf of the entire Board, staff, and residents)

Craftsbury Community Care Center, Inc. is a 501(c)3 organization and Equal Housing Opportunity Facility.

Our mission is to provide a caring, homelike affordable residence for seniors, in a setting that encourages independence, activities and involvement with families, friends and the larger community.

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In Memory of George Piché

George Piché was born in 1925 in the northern New Jersey town of Bloomfield, and he grew up there with his parents and sister, Betty. He attended Bloomfield High School, and at age 17, George joined the Navy during World War II. He was in the Pacific theatre on a destroyer escort ship, working with sonar. After the war, George returned to Bloomfield. He attended college as an engineering major.

In 1948, while commuting by bus to work in New York City, George met Dorothy. And something clicked! Their romance grew, and in 1950 they were married. They had two daughters and a son. George and Dorothy have 6 grandchildren and (thanks to their son's progeny) 7 great-grandchildren!

While living in New Jersey, George was very active in their local Presbyterian Church – as superintendent of the Sunday School, Elder and Deacon. He also devoted time in the Boy Scouts, and he was honored for his work in training adults about setting up and running Boy Scout troops. His strong dedication to the environment led him to become a member of the area's flood control commission in the 1970's. He was instrumental in crafting flood mitigation regulations.

At the end of his work career, George was a field engineer for a high frequency induction heating company. He worked with laboratories in adapting this technology for various applications in the real world. He also worked with a dairy in applying this technology to sealing caps on milk products. In the early 1980's, Tylenol capsules were laced with poison, killing several people. George worked with McNeil Pharmaceuticals to adapt the technology and equipment to seal medication bottles, so that further tampering could be prevented and/or identified. This technology soon became a pharmaceutical industry standard.

George used his carpentry skills to build a houseboat!. After their retirement, he and Dorothy moved to southern New Jersey near Toms River and the Jersey shore - and they took their houseboat with them! They became members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary, and they used their houseboat to patrol Barnegat Bay.

Photography was one of George's hobbies. After he suffered a major heart attack in the early 1970's, he needed something relaxing to do while he recuperated. A family member gave him a camera. He found that he enjoyed taking pictures, and as his skills in his new hobby increased, George became quite a good photographer. Then, he branched out into developing his film by setting up a darkroom in his own home.

In the early 1990's, George and Dorothy moved to Johnson, Vermont to be nearer to their family who all lived in New England at the time. George set up a darkroom in their new home as he continued his photography hobby, and he taught darkroom techniques to one of his grandsons there, too. Eventually, Dorothy needed more care than could be provided at home, and she moved to a nursing home facility. While George was living alone, the family noticed that his health began to decline. Meals were forgotten or left burning on the stove. Taking his medications properly became a challenge. He was lonely, too.

So, about two years ago, George moved to Craftsbury Community Care Center. His daughter says, "He improved dramatically after he moved to the 4C's." With the 4C's providing regular meals, medications, monitoring by staff, and the company of other residents, George's health stabilized. "He appreciated the Care Center, and he had a couple of healthy years at the end of his life," she explained.

Sadly, George passed away recently at the age of almost 88. We send our deepest condolences to his family, and we hope that their fond memories of him will bring them comfort.

George will be deeply missed by residents and staff. His quick wit and quiet demeanor (most of the time) will be remembered by all.

—Submitted by Janney Johnston



Staff Spotlight

DOTTIE COUNTS HER BLESSINGS

Dottie Marckres has pitched in and helped at Craftsbury Community Care Center ever since it opened 18 years ago. She was originally hired as a housekeeper, but has also worked in the kitchen over the years. Even though she considers herself retired, Dottie still comes in to help at the 4Cs on a per diem basis.

She was born in Eden, Vermont 73 years ago and previously worked in Stowe as a chamber maid and in factories. Dottie married Eugene 49 years ago, and they have lived in Craftsbury all their married life. They have three children – 2 sons (Steve is Craftsbury's Road Commissioner) and a daughter, nine grandchildren, and 2 great grandsons. She considers herself lucky that all of her family live nearby, and that the whole family is able to get together about once a month. "It really fills up our house when we're all together!" she says.

Dottie applied for a position at 4Cs initially because it was close to home. "And I love older people," she explains. She found that she enjoyed being a caring, listening ear when residents want to talk. Dottie understands the big adjustment residents make when leaving their homes, downsizing, and entering an apartment at 4Cs. Sometimes, having someone to talk with helps as they adjust to their new surroundings "I like helping people. I guess it comes from being a middle child and taking care of my younger brothers and sisters," says Dottie. "If you can't be at home, the 4Cs is a good place to be," she says." Dottie goes on to say, "We're fortunate to have the Care Center in our town. The 4Cs has a good staff with caring people."

Dottie is excited about the construction happening at the 4Cs. "The old back porch had good sun, but we couldn't use it in cold weather. It will be great to be able to use it year-round!" No more clearing out the dining room furniture for activities!

In her spare time, Dottie likes to read a lot, and she enjoys walking in the beautiful outdoors. And she helps out her older brother and sister, too.

Dottie has lots to be thankful for. "I count my blessings every day," she exclaims.

Kim states that Dottie is always willing to lend a hand whenever we ask her to. Her knowledge and passion for the 4C's and all its residents is greatly appreciated!!

—Submitted by Janney Johnston

Celebrations and Challenges

This is a time of celebration and challenges for CCCC. We celebrate the outstanding improvements that we have been able to make to our facility because of the generosity of our friends and community to the Capital Campaign. If your last visit to the Care Center was for our Cookout in July, a visit now will show a big change. Two major projects, scheduled for completion before the end of the year, are currently in process. The exterior painting, which provides a crisp new look, is nearly finished and the transformation of the rear sun porch into a year-round solarium is well underway. When the solarium is finished, we will invite you to come see the beautiful new space ready for activities of both residents and the community. These significant projects, added to the new carpeting, upgraded computer system and other necessary improvements are truly a cause to celebrate.



The challenges that remain stem from the fact that the funds raised to date for our Capital Campaign, \$165,000, while a wonderful accomplishment, remain slightly above the halfway mark of our \$300,000 goal. In order to keep the building safe and welcoming, other needs identified by the Capital Campaign must be addressed: replacement of some original furniture, a new roof, interior decorating and exterior paving were all identified in our needs assessment. We hope that community members will continue to remember and help with these priorities.

—Submitted by Jenny Stoner

Spotlight on Volunteers

THE MUSIC MAN

Bill Eisner is a regular Sunday visitor to CCCC. He follows in his father's footsteps; for many years Bill, Senior, entertained residents with his keyboard and joyous renditions of sing-a-long favorites. Young Bill brings his harp but on occasion he will surprise everyone with a bagpipe concert. The first time he came with bagpipes, he suggested playing them outside because of their volume. After several selections, the residents noted they weren't that loud so Bill moved inside only to discover that the audience thought "yes, they are very noisy".

I interviewed Bill as he was seasoning his bagpipes with a solution to keep the bag both soft and well-conditioned. Music has always been an integral part of his life having been influenced by his father's own talents. Growing up in New Jersey, Bill began studying the guitar in high school and then added the flute to his repertoire. A number of years later, after moving to Greensboro and marrying he took up performing with the harp and bagpipes.

Always a summer resident of Greensboro, he moved here permanently after finishing his schooling. His variety of work experiences rivals his eclectic interest in musical instruments. Beginning with bottling and delivering milk, to plucking turkeys for the 'best employer ever', Johnny Brochu, on Center Road, he moved on to bookkeeping and later to cooking lunches at Lakeview School. The cooking stint inspired him to spend a year taking courses at New England Culinary in Montpelier. This experience eventually led to becoming the Highland Lodge luncheon cook / baker and later the dinner chef, spending a total of 18 years there. More recently Bill was a Home Health personal care attendant and trained as a Hospice volunteer, a calling in which he is still very much involved. Following hurricane Katrina, Bill and his wife spent two weeks in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi helping with the relief efforts. He characterizes the town's residents as both welcoming and fun but stingy with their local recipes.

Meanwhile his ever expanding interest in music was never far from his focus. After having mastered the guitar and flute, he moved on to the harp. He became aware of the healing properties of that instrument, and hopes that his time at CCCC is therapeutic to the residents. His fascination with the bagpipes was inspired by Derek Bell who played with the Irish group called The Chieftains.

Bill has an infectious sense of enthusiasm and, clearly, shows sensitivity to those around him. His music is just one of the ways he can connect and bring pleasure to the CCCC community. He knows many of the residents personally; they have been lifelong friends so spending time with them is filled with memories. He says that they are a "good audience" and his Sunday visits are always meaningful. Thank you, Bill, for your music and exuberant companionship.

—Submitted by Anne Cassidy



Building of the New Solarium



CCCC Activities

A highlight of activities during the summer was a trip to Crystal Lake in Barton. We enjoyed a BBQ under sunny skies, a light breeze, and beautiful views! Later, another picnic here at the center was also well attended and enjoyed; the ice cream cones were a favorite! As Autumn approached, we had a visit from the Continua Choir; who lifted our spirits, as 16 volunteers sang songs of comfort, healing and joy. They are directed by Suzanne Rhodes from Lyndonville area.



Rosalie desGroseilliers is a local watercolor artist who volunteers here monthly. Rosalie encourages residents to paint along with her, as she brings in objects and creates artwork before our eyes, explaining the how, why, and techniques she uses as she paints. It's inspiring to watch her work!



John and Jane Neilson brought their alpacas to visit us from their Log Cabin Farm in Irasburg. They shared a wealth of information about the care, purpose, and origin of the alpacas. Residents had the opportunity for an up close encounter with the alpacas!



As the leaves changed colors, we borrowed the van from Greensboro Nursing Home and went on fall foliage rides. After one of the rides, a group of seniors attended a concert at Craftsbury Academy with the Vermont Youth Orchestra. The large group of young musicians played beautifully!

October highlights include a community poetry reading, sponsored by the Vt. Humanities Council, on Sunday Oct. 20, 3-4 PM. East Craftsbury Church members are hosting a tea in later Oct., with Cody Michaels, playing the piano for background music. The month ends with a lively Halloween Party, hosted by volunteer Linda Scott, and music by Ned Houston and Don Houghton. Costumes and dancing are encouraged!

Upcoming Events:

- Enjoy a "Tea" with residents on Friday Oct. 25 at 3 PM with Cody Michaels on piano
- Halloween Party on Thursday Oct.31 at 6 PM with music from Don Houghton and Ned Houston
- Photography Exhibit in November by Chip Toriano with photos of Australia
- Community Poetry Reading Sunday Nov. 24 at 3 PM

Cookout and Auction Thank You!

This July's Cookout and Auction was the most successful in many years. Helped by perfect weather, sunny but not too hot, and a gathering that was larger than in the past, CCCC netted approximately \$8,800.



First and foremost, we wish to acknowledge the outstanding generosity of all the individuals and businesses that contributed to the meal and to the live and silent auctions. Pete Johnson supplied a bounty of his colorful potatoes and plenty of fresh salad greens. Alan Parker, our Board President, baked the delicious potato rolls and the Bone Builders outdid themselves with a plentiful and enticing variety of cookie bars. We owe a special thanks to Clara Massey who is retiring as our esteemed baked bean cook.

Both auctions benefited from the diversity of intriguing and noteworthy items. Landscaping equipment, bedroom furnishings, a canoe, firewood, artwork, jewelry, award-winning maple syrup and cheese comprised some of the vast array of items that piqued the interest of those present. Ron Sanville did a superb job as our auctioneer, corralling his audience and encouraging people to bid and bid higher. The CCCC staff was instrumental in keeping everything running smoothly. The volunteers who helped pitch tents, ferry and set up tables and chairs were truly indispensable. We, particularly, appreciated the enthusiastic assistance of the Craftsbury Outdoor Center Green Team. Thank you, too, to the willing volunteers who worked during the event.

Last but not least, we are so grateful for the gathering of friends who came for the noon meal and stayed to enliven and raise their paddles at the auction.



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