



MERCY CARE

FOR THE ADIRONDACKS

A Mission Sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy

Enhancing the Fullness of Life of Elders Living in their Community

Newsletter • Spring 2023

The Circle of Mercy includes not only the elders we assist but also our kind and generous volunteers who help their elder neighbors age in place more successfully.



ERRANDS OF MERCY - LOVE IN ACTION

Mercy Care's vision is for people everywhere to nurture, respect, and foster caring relationships with their elder neighbors to build more inclusive and thriving communities. Mercy Care assists older adults in the Adirondacks to age in place more successfully, be less lonely, and be more connected to their communities. Mercy Care's impact is best illustrated by our Elder Friends and their Volunteers:



From an Elder: "My Volunteer is more like a sister to me; we share almost the same thoughts and background. I could not have found two such special people as Darlene, my Volunteer, or Penny, my Parish Nurse. They are above the standard and wonderful, and I hope you tell them so."

From a Volunteer: "I love the things that I have learned from my elder friends and their families. I also really like to see what an important addition a Friendship Volunteer can make to an elder's life and to their families."

On September 8, 2022, Mercy Care held its Friendship Picnic at Guggenheim Lodge on Lower Saranac Lake. Sr. Catherine Cummings, Mission Director, announced Mercy Care's Volunteer Recognition Awards presented by Melissa Eisinger, Mercy Care's Board President.

MERCY CARE VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD

The Volunteer of the Year receives the Catherine McAuley medallion. Catherine McAuley founded the Sisters of Mercy in Ireland in 1831. She reached out with courage and love to people in need in her time, as Mercy Care reaches out with courage and love in our time.

Mercy Care remains deeply grateful to all of our volunteers, with some contributing over 100 hours over the past year to enhance the lives of their elder friends and caregivers. **To Paul Guerrette, Alanna Fox, Darlene Donnelly, Sr. Denise Wilke, and Martha Holmes,** we say a special thank you for your commitment and dedication.

Several volunteers have been part of Mercy Care for years. Melissa Eisinger, Board President, thanked these volunteers for their kindness and friendship to their elder



Melissa Eisinger, Mercy Care Board President
Presents Volunteer of the Year Award to Jill Zagrobely

friends. **Alanna Fox, Martha Holmes, Bob Gardner, Jacci Gardner, Michelle Dunworth, Judy Meagher, George Morawetz, Kathy Strack, Paul Cassot, and Ed Cassot** received five-year service pins.

Linda Jones, RN, Kathy Lamb, RN, Claire Thayer, Mary Welch, Rip Allen, Susanne Praeger received a ten-year service pin.

Sheila Venezia, Sr. Denise Wilke, and Barbara Erickson received a 15-year service pin.

Several “above and beyond” awards were presented to: **Margie Gallagher - Appreciation Award, Catherine Johnston - Novice Volunteer of the Year, Alanna Fox - Caring Heart Award, and Roger Gorham - World of Difference Award.**

GIFTS OF MERCY ARE IN ABUNDANCE

Over the past year, Mercy Care recruited and trained new Friendship Volunteers, where they are expressing their gifts of generosity, compassion, and kindness to their Elder Neighbors.

New Friendship Volunteers trained in Saranac Lake in October 2022

L -R: Joan Stuart, Tom Connors, Sally Reynolds, Ann Turek, Aggie Pelletieri, George DeChant, Sue Lackmann



L -R: back row - Deacon Ken Lucia, Robin Licari, Cindy Santerre, Dan Santerre, Eileen Hayes; front row - Jonathan Kaplan, Stacey Dodd, Sally Bogdanovitch, Margaret O'Leary. ➤

FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER TRAINING MAY 24, 2023 IN LAKE PLACID PLEASE JOIN US!



Mercy Care invites people of all faiths or no faith to become Mercy Care Friendship Volunteers. If you are interested in becoming a Mercy Care Friendship Volunteer, please contact our Program Director, Lexi Bevilacqua at abevilacqua@adkmercy.org or by calling her at 518-523-5446.

New Friendship Volunteers trained in Tupper Lake in January 2023



MERCY CARE ANNUAL EDUCATIONAL FORUM AT PAUL SMITH'S COLLEGE JUNE 7, 2023

Keynote Presenters to discuss Ageism and Master Plan for Aging in New York



**Keynote Presenter,
Ann Monroe**
**President Emeritus,
Health Foundation
of Western and
Central New York**
Topic: Ageism

Ann Monroe is President Emeritus of the Health Foundation for Western and Central NY. Ann has over 40 years of experience leading public and private sector programs in mental health, community health, managed care, and philanthropy. She is currently a Board and Executive Committee member of the Center for Elder Law and Justice, and a member of the Executive Council of New York's AARP. Ann continues to invest her time in important community health initiatives across New York.



**Keynote Presenter,
Greg Olsen**
**Director,
New York State
Office for the Aging**
**Topic: Master Plan
for Aging in
New York**

Greg Olsen is Director of New York State Office for the Aging. Working with public and private partners at the state and local level, Greg is leading the effort to combat ageism, generalizations, and stereotypes about what aging is and demonstrating value in addressing social determinants of health and their role in helping older adults maintain their independence with dignity. Greg speaks regularly, across the nation, about how New York frames aging, and the way New York serves older New Yorkers.



**Keynote Presenter,
Adam Herbst**
**Deputy
Commissioner,
New York State
Department of
Health**
**Topic: Master Plan
for Aging in
New York**

Adam Herbst is Deputy Commissioner of New York State Department of Health. Adam oversees New York's long-term care industry and serves as counsel to the Governor on a range of health policy. He manages the Department of Health's long-term health systems and serves as the State's spokesperson for aging and outpatient care. Adam helped launch, and now leads, the State's Office for the Aging and Long-Term Care.

To register for the Forum, please visit Mercy Care's website at www.adkmercy.org or contact Karen Rodriguez, Mercy Care Project Manager at krdriguez@adkmercy.org or call her at 518-523-5685.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

For the period July 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023, 92 Mercy Care Volunteers provided friendship and assistance to 181 Elders in our Tri-Lakes communities where they donated 2,095 hours of service, drove 16,871 miles, and completed 1,588 requests for assistance.

The errands of mercy provided by our Volunteers are best illustrated in the words of Mercy Care's Elder Friends, their Families, and their Volunteers:

- From a family member: ***"Today is my mother's birthday, and I am celebrating it by donating to the organization that gave her joy and meaning. Thank you for the good work you do within the community."***
- From a Mercy Care Elder Friend: ***"Thank you so much for Mercy Care. I have a very blessed lady helping me in so many ways—groceries, Dr.'s appointments, and friendship. I truly do appreciate Mercy Care workers."***



COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

What are Age-friendly Communities?

- Age-friendly communities are healthy communities, making healthy lifestyle choices easy and accessible for all community members.
- Age-friendly communities address the eight domains of livability defined by the World Health Organization and AARP including Outdoor Spaces & Buildings, Transportation, Communication and Information, Housing, Respect and Social Inclusion, Social Participation, Civic Participation and Employment, Community Support and Health Systems.

MERCY CARE FACILITATES AND HOSTS THE CAREGIVING WORKING GROUP OF ESSEX AND FRANKLIN COUNTIES AND THE AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES EDUCATION NETWORK



(L – R) Mayor Jimmy Williams, Saranac Lake; Melissa Eisinger, Mercy Care Board President; Mayor Paul Maroun, Tupper Lake; and Mayor Art Devlin, Lake Placid

Mercy Care's guest presenters at its fall 2022 Caregiving and Age-friendly Communities meeting included the Mayors from Lake Placid, Saranac Lake, and Tupper Lake. **Mayor Devlin, Village of Lake Placid**, discussed the Age-Friendly components of the Lake Placid Main Street Project and Lake Placid Destination Management Plan. **Mayor Williams, Village of Saranac Lake**, discussed the Age-friendly components of the Saranac Lake Downtown Revitalization Initiative, and **Mayor Paul Maroun, Village of Tupper Lake**, discussed the Age-friendly components of the Park Master Plan, as well as the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program.

Creating more Age-friendly Communities for people of all ages across the lifespan requires broad objectives to carry on the long-term, on-going process of assessment, engagement, and collaboration.

AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES MISSION EXTENSION INITIATIVE

Mercy Care has received significant grant support from the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation to extend the successful model of its Age-friendly Communities Initiative in the Tri-Lakes region to other communities in the North Country. Mercy Care has signed Memoranda of Understanding with Community Health Center of the North Country, a Federally Qualified Health Center in St. Lawrence County, with Elizabethtown Community Hospital, a critical access hospital, and its health centers in southern Essex County, St. Alexander's Church in Clinton County, and the Greater Massena Ministerial Association in St. Lawrence County. Mercy Care is providing technical assistance, training, and tools to help each of our Mission Extension project partners establish and operate their own Age-friendly Community Initiatives.



St. Alexander's Stakeholder and Partner Meeting to Announce the Establishment of its Compassionate Companion Volunteer Program in Clinton County

PARISH NURSE RETREAT – FALL 2022

Mercy Care hosted a one-day retreat for Parish Nurses, our Age-friendly Communities Mission Extension partners, and those who care for Elders on the topic of **COVID's impact on the hearts, minds, and spirits of our Elders**. We were blessed to have Retreat Leader Jo Ann Paradise, MA in Theology, D. Min. in Spirituality facilitate the Retreat. Parish Nurses from throughout the North Country and Mercy Care Volunteers attended.



Parish Nurse Retreat held at Guggenheim Center in Saranac Lake

PARISH NURSE PROGRAM

MercyCare has trained more than 50 Parish Nurses throughout the North Country. Sr. Catherine Cummings, RSM, Ed.D, R.N. directs Mercy Care's Parish Nurse Program in coordination with Parish Nurse Educator Consultant, Jane Stratton. Parish Nurses are licensed registered nurses who facilitate holistic health of body, mind, and spirit. They promote health and spiritual healing. They serve as health educators, advocates, health counselors, facilitators, and spiritual caregivers. Parish Nurses do not perform direct or hands-on care, and they do not duplicate other nursing or medical services in the community.



MISSION INTEGRATION PROGRAM

Sr. Catherine Cummings, RSM, Ed.D, R.N., Mission Director, is leading and further developing Mercy Care's Mission Integration Program to ensure the charism (gifts of mercy) of the Sisters of Mercy is sustained in perpetuity. Sr. Catherine leads our Team weekly in "Mercy Minute." Mercy Minute is sent to Volunteers and posted to Mercy Care's Facebook Page. Each Mercy Care Board meeting begins with the agenda item, "Spirit of Mercy."



Margie Gallagher, Friendship Volunteer
and Sr. Catherine Cummings, Mission Director

AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES EDUCATION NETWORK



Volunteers have asked for an informational session on health insurance, how to navigate the system, and how to find the best plan for themselves and the Elder Friends they assist.

On May 10, 2023 from 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Mercy Care is hosting a Volunteer In-service Program and luncheon on the topic of Health Insurance at Mount Pisgah Lodge in Saranac Lake. Sarah Weilacher, Coordinator of Services for the Aging and Coordinator of the Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP), and Devon Caban, Case Manager, Franklin County Office for the Aging, will present and serve as experts to help Volunteers understand more fully health insurance plans and options. There

is no cost to attend this program, but preregistration is required. **Please RSVP to Lexi Bevilacqua, Program Director, at abevilacqua@adkmercy.org, or call 518-523-5446.**

As part of its Age-friendly Communities Initiative, Mercy Care has launched its newly created **Age-friendly Education Network in the Adirondacks**. We provide in-service and education programs to Volunteers and host workshops to inspire *Creativity in Aging* for Volunteers to help the Elders they assist have happier and fuller lives. We invite and include our Mission Extension collaborating partners and their Volunteers and Elder Friends in the Network to share knowledge, experience, and mercy.



Mercy Care presented three Creativity in Aging Workshops at Mt. Pisgah with a goal to provide Volunteers with new ideas and strategies to help the elders they assist have fuller lives:

- **“Creative Writing with Older Adults,”** offered by Tyler Barton, ADK Center for Writing, Saranac Lake, NY.
- **“Tupper Tale Tellers: Tupper Lake Oral History Project”** presented by Christine Campeau Project Manager; Hayley Denis, original T3 member/alum; and Courtney Carey, Library Director, Goff Nelson Memorial Tupper Lake Public Library.
- **Yoga** offered by Beth McNally, Earthshine Yoga, Saranac Lake, NY



In September 2022 Scott Van Laer, Director of the Paul Smith’s College Visitor Interpretive Center (VIC), made a presentation to Mercy Care Volunteers and their Elder Friends on age-friendly recreational opportunities at the VIC and at John Dillon Park.

In November 2022, Mercy Care hosted a Creativity and Aging Seasonal Tea & Craft Social at Paul Smith’s College

Visitor Interpretive Center. Volunteers and their Elder Friends enjoyed a presentation by a Paul Smith’s College Student on Bird Watching and constructed their own birdhouses. A Volunteer remarked, *“I enjoyed the setting - looking out at the birds, trees, etc. - while talking with others and listening to the presentations. The activity was fun. Too bad they didn’t have more hammers and longer nails. But, I guess the sharing tools and talent was all part of the fun.”*



MERCY CARE BOARD LEADERSHIP

Mercy Care is sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy and governed by a local Board of Directors which includes: Melissa Eisinger, President, Art Devlin, Vice President, David Aldrich, Ann Cantwell, Jerry Hayes, Cathy Johnston, Judy Meagher, Jack McGill, Paul O'Leary, Kathryn Reiss, Kathleen Trainor, Mary Welch, Sr. Denise Wilke, RSM, and Rev. John Yonkovig.



DEEPEST GRATITUDE - RECENT GRANTS RECEIVED

Mercy Care is most grateful to the following foundations, which have recently awarded generous grants of \$1,000 or more to help support Mercy Care's work to enhance the fullness of life of elders in our community.

Adirondack Foundation
Aseel Legacy Fund
Adirondack Foundation
Joan Grabe Family Fund
Adirondack Foundation
Meredith M. Prime Fund 2
Adirondack Foundation
Stefy Holderied Charitable Fund
Anonymous – Schwab Charitable Fund
Frances L. Carpenter Foundation
Chapel Hill Foundation

Chur Family Foundation
Cloudsplitter Foundation
The Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation
The Edelweiss Foundation
Infant Jesus of Prague, Inc.
The McCutchen Foundation
Mother Cabrini Health Foundation
Joseph C. Nugent Family Charitable Trust
Jacob L. Reiss Foundation
Charles R. Wood Foundation

To make a donation on-line, visit www.adkmercy.org and click on Donate.



*“The Circle of Mercy
is timeless—
it holds us in God’s
loving care.”*

The Circle of Mercy honors friends who have named Mercy Care for the Adirondacks in their estate plans. Gifts may include bequests, trusts, life insurance policies, annuities, real estate, and pension plans.

Mercy Care expresses its deep gratitude to the following individuals who have made a commitment to the future through their statement of generous intent to include Mercy Care for the Adirondacks in their wills or estate plans:

David Aldrich & Chandler Ralph
Anonymous
Jack and Pauline Crahan
Judith Meagher
Bengt & Polly Ohman
Albert Pozzi
Paul & Rosemary Reiss
Ellen Vopicka

If you wish to receive more information about the Circle of Mercy, please contact Donna Beal, Executive Director at 518-523-5581 or by e-mail at dbeal@adkmercy.org

