

# FRIENDSHIP NEWSLETTER

## Connecting Elder Neighbors

### Fun Trading Places

#### Bernie Clarke

Mercy Care Volunteer

Over a year ago I took a Viking Cruise on the Rhine River. I thoroughly enjoy keeping the memories of my trips alive with Shutterfly books.

I was having a difficult time finding anyone with the knowledge of how to make a photo book on the computer. At a Mercy Care technology workshop I mentioned my search. Immediately a suggestion was made that perhaps Aggie Pelletieri could help. Aggie is a Mercy Care volunteer. Oh the possibilities!

We texted with each other and made plans to meet. It was wonderful! We met each week for two hours and that went on until all my photos were arranged in a beautiful book on the computer.

Aggie was most patient and an excellent teacher. I practiced at home and proudly shared my accomplishments. Soon, after several meetings I hit send and off went our treasured creation.

As we were chatting one week, as we did so well, Aggie mentioned Mercy Care. Suddenly I realized I was receiving Mercy Care!

After volunteering with Mercy Care for many years, I was a recipient! I had to ponder how life changes and time flies.

It struck me how easy it was to become a recipient of Mercy Care! All I had to do was



Bernie sharing her book with Aggie

mention what I needed. We shared a most enjoyable time and I made a new friend.

I looked forward to sharing the beautiful book of my trip with Aggie. It arrived about two weeks after I hit send! Together we created a beautiful memory not only in a photo book but in the time we spent together!

Both sides of Mercy Care are wonderful!

### Age-friendly, Growing Up, Growing Older, and Living Well

"Age is simply the number of years the world has been enjoying you."

~unknown

## Vanilla Pudding

**Barbara Hofrichter**

Mercy Care Elder Friend

Since she was born, it seems that my youngest granddaughter, Nilana, has always liked vanilla. When she was very little and her Mom would take the chill off her milk, she liked it with a drop or two of vanilla. When it was time for choosing a birthday cake she tried strawberry one year and she asked for lemon another, but since then, she has always asked for vanilla.

Recently, she had some work done on her teeth and told me she could only eat soft foods. I made her some pudding from my mother's recipe for cornstarch pudding and made sure it was flavored with vanilla. I gave it to her in a little container when she visited me and since she wasn't ready to eat it then, she took it home to put in her refrigerator. I told her it was her Great Grandma's recipe for vanilla pudding. A couple of days later, I asked her how she liked the pudding. She said she hadn't eaten it because her parents had thrown it out. It wasn't labeled and they didn't know what it was.

Fortunately I had another container in the refrigerator and I let her eat it at my kitchen table. It was appreciated. Since then I have made vanilla pudding again whenever there is leftover milk or cream to use. Another day, Nilana's sister was in my house when I was dishing up some of that pudding. She thought of her sister and called her up from their house shouting "Vanilla pudding." Nilana came down and we all shared a taste of vanilla pudding.

Now there is some left over half & half in my fridge and I am thinking of using it to



Corn Starch Pudding Recipe

make another batch. This recipe of my mother's, reminds me of a moment with her cousin Grace, in Buffalo. Grace was my mother's younger cousin who had been a flower girl at her wedding. She remembers when I was born and had even been a baby-sitter for me when I was little. Since they both had the same grandmother, some of the recipes both shared came down through the matriarchs in that family. When I was visiting Grace, who does not pride herself on cooking, and was serving me Jello instant pudding, she told me this story.

She said she had been visiting us on Walnut Hill in Connecticut (where I grew up). My mother had been starting dinner when she asked Grace if she liked pudding. Upon a yes reply Mom began to heat a quart of milk on the stove and whipped up a batch of pudding from scratch. This greatly impressed Grace who would have thought it would be instant pudding, enough that she remembered it years later.

So it is with this memory and a card long living in my recipe file that I rejoice in being able to make vanilla pudding for my grandchildren.

## The Connection

### Krista Berger

Director of Elder Care & Volunteer Services

Greetings Mercy Care Friends. I am excited to join Mercy Care's Team as Director of Elder Care and Volunteer Services. I look forward to getting to know each of you in my new role and I am sharing a bit of my story with you to help you get to know me.

I grew up in Lake Placid and love it here. I have dedicated my career to improving community health outcomes, strengthening food security systems, and developing innovative programs that support families. I am bringing the same level of commitment, understanding, and empathy to our elder neighbors.

For the past 25 years I served as Program Coordinator for the NYS Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program. My work included establishing local partnerships with healthcare providers, farms, and county agencies to build sustainable and equitable food systems. Among other programs, I led development of WIC-N-Pick, children's farm programming, and home-delivered meal programs for high-need families.

The core of my work has always been in building a safe, creative, and engaging environment in my community. I am very much looking forward to getting to know each of you--Mercy Care's Volunteers and Elder Friends. As part of the Mercy Care Team, I am eager to work with all of you to inspire our Tri-lakes and surrounding communities to become good places to grow up, grow older, and live well.

Thank you for welcoming me, and I look forward to our shared journey ahead.

~Krista

### Contact Information:

**Krista Berger**

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## The Mercy Care Team



(L-R) Mike Magurk, Donna Beal, Hannah Pelletieri, Karen Rodriguez, Lexi Bevilacqua, Krista Berger, Stacey LaMountain

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### Stacey LaMountain

Director of Finance and Grant Administration

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## Technology Assistance Workshop

Mercy Care's Technology Assistance Workshop at AEC BOCES in Saranac Lake delved into accessing health care portals and applying for and managing benefits.



## Holiday Event

Mercy Care's festive Holiday Event brought together Friendship Volunteers, Elder Friends, and community members to craft beautiful, one-of-a-kind wreaths in a joyous social gathering. The room was filled with laughter and warmth, fostering meaningful connections among friends.



## Newsletter Submissions - we want to hear from you!

1. Tell us about the most incredible thing or place you have seen?
2. Share your work - a poem, a story, an experience, art, photography.
3. Share your favorite memory of your lifetime.
4. Share a story about you and your Mercy Care Friend.

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Email: [krodriguez@adkmercy.org](mailto:krodriguez@adkmercy.org)

## Social Engagement and Education Opportunities

To inquire or RSVP contact Lexi Bevilacqua at 518-523-5446 or [abevilacqua@adkmercy.org](mailto:abevilacqua@adkmercy.org) or register at [www.adkmercy.org/events](http://www.adkmercy.org/events)

### Friendship Volunteer Training

Wednesday, February 4th

9:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

The Holy Ghost Parish Center  
Tupper Lake

### Technology Assistance Workshop

Wednesday, February 25th

9:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

BOCES AEC, Saranac Lake

### Health Care Companion Advocate Training

Accompany Elders on their health care journey to access care services more effectively.

Wednesday, March 4th

Heaven Hill Farm, Lake Placid