



# 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 2022

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

As we write this newsletter, our service area and people of all ages are beginning to emerge from two years of pandemic-related isolation and loneliness. Mercy Care Volunteers have been pursuing a pandemic of hope and kindness throughout, as they assist their Elder Friends to help them age in place more successfully.



On September 9, 2021, Mercy Care held its Friendship Picnic at Guggenheim Lodge on Lower Saranac Lake. Sr. Catherine Cummings, Mission Director, and Sarah Kane, Elder Care Manager, announced Mercy Care's Volunteer Recognition Awards presented by Jerry Hayes, Mercy Care's Board President.

Sr. Catherine began by saying: "Each of our volunteers has made a difference in the life of an elder or several elders in our community. We cannot thank you enough."

### MERCY CARE VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR AWARD PRESENTED TO MARTHA HOLMES, TUPPER LAKE

Mercy Care's **Volunteer of the Year award** is presented to the volunteer who has served for two or more years, has given outstanding service and exemplifies the values of Mercy Care. 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 those in need in her time and Martha gives the same to her Elder Friend in our time.

In this past year, during a pandemic, some Volunteers have given over 100 hours of assistance. Jerry Hayes presented 100-hour awards to: Sr. Denise Wilke, Alanna Fox, Darlene Donnelly, and Martha Holmes. Jerry presented the "Most Hours of Service in the Past Year" to Sr. Denise Wilke, who gave over 200 hours of friendship to the Elders she assists.

Mercy Care honors those Volunteers who have given five years of assistance to Mercy Care's Elder Friends. Five-year pins were presented to Margaret Daby, Judith D'Andrea, and Leo Demong.



L-R: Sr. Catherine Cummings, Mercy Care Mission Director; Sarah Kane, Mercy Care Elder Care Manager; Martha Holmes, and Jerry Hayes, Mercy Care Board President

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Mercy Care expressed special thanks to Volunteers who have given 10 years of service to Mercy Care's Elder friends. Volunteers receiving the 10-year pin were: Larry Lee, Penny McGill, Barbara Rottier, Sally Stoerr, Joan Storey, Shannon Stratton, and Phil Thayer.

**The Appreciation Award** was presented to Mary Merrill of Lake Placid. Mary reaches out to share her courage and love, as she assists multiple Elders in the community.

**Making the Difference Award** was presented to Paul Guerrette of Saranac Lake. Paul has served Mercy Care Elders as a Friendship Volunteer, a Caregiver Friend, Parish Nurse, and In-take Specialist. Paul provides compassionate care and shares community resources with elders in need.

**Compassionate Companion Award** was presented to Patricia Francisco of Tupper Lake. Patty has been a compassionate friend to elders in Tupper Lake and a passionate supporter of Mercy Care since its beginning in 2007. Patty reaches out to other Elders in her community with caring phone calls and notes. Her service to others helps to support Mercy Care's Mission to help ease loneliness and isolation. Patty is in the "Circle of Mercy." 🌿

## GIFTS OF MERCY ARE IN ABUNDANCE

Mercy Care was established in 2007 by the Sisters of Mercy to help relieve the isolation and loneliness of elders living in their community. The COVID-19 Virus has only amplified the need to relieve isolation and loneliness for many of our elder neighbors.

A record number of new Volunteers were recruited and trained over the past year. Twenty individuals in our community expressed their gifts of generosity, compassion, and kindness to their Elder Neighbors by becoming new Mercy Care Friendship Volunteers.

Three new Volunteers were trained virtually in January 2022. They included: Tracy Klossner, DeDe Renaud, and Connie Rockefeller.



L - R: Marilyn Duffy, Chris Crane, James Crane, Jodi Gibbs, Paul Brannigan, Katie Byrne, Kay Pauquette, Steve Sonnenberg, Donna Walsh, Ruth Israeli, and Kathy Kernan

6 new Volunteers were trained in Lake Placid in October 2021: L-R: Nancy Duncan, Jenifer Deming, Mary Blair, Barbara Benway, Marnie Crane, and Cathy Johnston

## FRIENDSHIP VOLUNTEER TRAINING MAY 25, 2022 IN LAKE PLACID PLEASE JOIN US!



Hannah Pelletieri, Mercy Care's Program Director, in conversation with Friendship Volunteers

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 Education and Volunteer Training Manager, Lexi Bevilacqua at [abevilacqua@adkmercy.org](mailto:abevilacqua@adkmercy.org) or by calling her at 518-523-5446.**



## EDUCATIONAL FORUM AT PAUL SMITH'S COLLEGE – MAY 18, 2022

Keynote Presenter: Alexandra Drane  
CEO and co-founder ARCHANGELS

Keynote Presenter: Beth Finkel  
Director, AARP New York



Unpaid Caregivers:  
Caring for, Honoring, and Supporting Them

**Alexandra Drane is CEO and co-founder of ARCHANGELS.** Alex served as Wellness Expert for Prudential, sits on the Board of Advisors for RAND Health, the Leadership Council for the Rosalynn Carter Institute, serves on the Board of Advisors for Open Notes, and was named one of Boston Globe's Top 100 leaders. She believes communities are the front line of health, that caregivers are our country's greatest assets, and that we need to expand the definition of health to include life.

**Beth Finkel serves as Director of AARP New York.** Beth is a results-driven leader who combines community organizational skills and marketing acumen to support the AARP vision throughout New York. She utilizes her extensive community experience and team-oriented approach to leverage New York's core strengths and achieve excellence in

programming, advocacy and engagement. Beth leads the development and delivery of the organization's community programs, advocacy, and information for its over 2.5 million members age 50+ across New York State.

An expert panel will present and engage in dialogue with participants and includes: Greg Olsen, Acting Director, New York State Office for the Aging, Becky Preve, Executive Director, Association on Aging in New York, Becky Leahy, President & CEO, North Country Home Services, Valarie Drown, Director Alzheimer's Disease Caregiver Support Initiative, SUNY Plattsburgh, and Melissa Eisinger, Mercy Care Board Member and Friendship Volunteer.

**For registration information, please contact Lexi Bevilacqua, Mercy Care Education & Volunteer Training Manager at [abevilacqua@adkmercy.org](mailto:abevilacqua@adkmercy.org) or call her at 518-523-5446 or visit Mercy Care's Web Site at [www.adkmercy.org](http://www.adkmercy.org).**



*The Doors of Mercy are always open*

### COMMUNITY IMPACT

For the period July 1, 2021 – February 28, 2022, 65 Mercy Care Volunteers provided friendship and assistance to 89 Elders in our Tri-Lakes communities where they donated 1,365 hours of service, drove 11,940 miles, and completed 1,202 tasks.

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: "My mother was an elder in your care for six years. She would not have been able to age in place as long as she did if it weren't for your dedicated, compassionate volunteers. She developed an entire circle of friends through your network which most certainly enriched her life."
- From an Elder: "I am writing to express my appreciation for the help Mercy Care gave to me by taking the time to arrange for my vaccinations."
- From an Elder describing her Friendship Volunteer: "An angel on earth."
- From an Elder: "Volunteers have been so caring and friendly and have added happiness and friendship."

#### **Quotes from Volunteers when asked, what do you like best about volunteering with Mercy Care?**

- "Being helpful to those in need. Gives me purpose and fulfillment."
- "The sense that doing small things make such a big difference in an elder's life."
- "I love the things that I have learned from my elders and their families. I also really like to see what an important addition a Mercy Care volunteer can make to an elder's life and to their families."



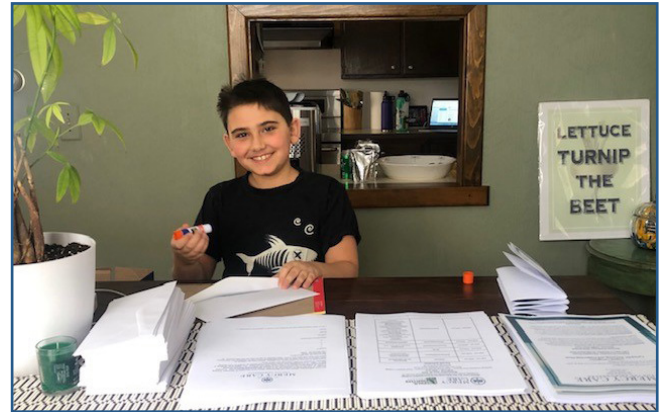
# COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT

## AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES COLLABORATIVE IN THE ADIRONDACKS

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 8 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.

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 collaborations. Mercy Care's Age-friendly Communities Initiative helps elders age in place more successfully and empower our communities to become more Age-friendly. Mercy Care's direct service area is the Tri-Lakes region of the Adirondacks and surrounding communities. It is only with your generous volunteer and charitable donation support that Mercy Care has been able to carry out its mission and programs for our elder neighbors.



People of all ages are supporting Mercy Care to help their elder neighbors. Milo David helps his mom, Lexi Bevilacqua, Mercy Care's Education & Volunteer Training Manager, prepare a mailing to Mercy Care Volunteers.

## 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. A new initiative is Mercy Care's weekly "Mercy Minute." Our Staff Team meets weekly where reflections are offered and conversation follows to deepen our mercy commitment.

Mercy Minute is sent to Volunteers and posted to Mercy Care's Facebook Page. Each Board meeting begins with the agenda item, "Spirit of Mercy."



Sr. Catherine Cummings, RSM

## PASTORAL CARE PROGRAM COMMITTEE



Sr. Denise Wilke, Chair, Pastoral Care Program Committee

The Pastoral Care Program Committee provides board leadership and oversight for the pastoral care and assistance needs of those served by Mercy Care for the Adirondacks. The Committee gives its members the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of Mercy Care's overall programs to assist elders and contribute to program development and assessment. Committee members include: Sr. Denise Wilke, RSM, Chair, Ann Cantwell, Melissa Eisinger, Kathryn Reiss, Sr. Camillus O'Keefe, Jamie Whidden, and Fr. John Yonkovig.

## AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES MISSION EXTENSION INITIATIVE



New Elizabethtown Community Hospital Community Friendship Volunteers trained in Moriah. November 2021

Mercy Care for the Adirondacks has received significant grant support from the Mother Cabrini Health Foundation, for which we are most grateful, to extend the model of its Age-friendly Communities Initiative to other communities in the Adirondacks and the North Country. The Mother Cabrini Health Foundation is making possible the dream for Mercy Care to assist more North Country older adults age in place more successfully by helping new communities to establish and operate their own Community Friendship Volunteer programs based on Mercy Care's model of informal social supports.

Mercy Care is providing technical assistance, tools, and training to community partners to achieve the goal. Mercy Care signed a Memorandum of Understanding to assist Community Health Center of the North Country in St. Lawrence County establish its own Age-friendly Communities Initiative serving the communities of Ogdensburg, Massena, Potsdam and Canton. Mercy Care assisted the Health Center with conducting two training classes for Volunteers and developing and participating in a Community Friendship Volunteer Training Program for St. Lawrence University Students. Mercy Care signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Elizabethtown Community Hospital to assist it in establishing their Age-friendly Communities Initiative to help elders age in place more successfully in southern Essex County. And Mercy Care is in the beginning planning stages to assist an organization in Clinton County to establish and operate their own Age-friendly Communities Initiative.

The Mother Cabrini Health Foundation grant is leveraging and honoring the investment by current donors to Mercy Care for the Adirondacks. Mercy Care will continue to need current and new donor support to further develop and sustain its model of direct service and community empowerment in its

core service area of the Tri-Lakes region of the Adirondacks. It remains and will remain Mercy Care's only operational program of direct service to elders, which must be community based to succeed. ☞

## PARISH NURSE TRAINING IN THE NORTH COUNTRY

With support from Mother Cabrini Health Foundation, and following a successful Parish Nurse Training in Ogdensburg conducted by Mercy Care in spring 2021, four Parish Nurses were commissioned by Bishop Terry LaValley. Mercy Care conducted a virtual Parish Nurse Training Program in March and April 2022.



Bishop Terry R. LaValley Commissioned New Parish Nurses in Ogdensburg

The Parish Nurses Commissioned in Ogdensburg included Judy Elsbury, Church of the Holy Family in Watertown, Cathleen Bell of Our Lady of Grace Parish in Morristown, Mary Blackburn of St. Mary's Cathedral in Ogdensburg, Linda Scagel, St. Raphael's in Heuvelton, and Mary Kleinhans of the Catholic Community of Alexandria Bay. The Parish Nurses trained virtually in March and April 2022 were: Margo Boylan, Linda Giles, Katherine Godley, Heather Hageman, and Jennifer Lucia.

Sr. Catherine Cummings, RSM, Ed.D, R.N. directs Mercy Care's Parish Nurse Program. Mercy Care's Parish Nurse Training Program is open to people of all faiths. We are thrilled to welcome Parish Nurse Educator Consultant, Jane Stratton, to teach Mercy Care's Parish Nurse Training Classes.

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.



Jane Stratton, Parish Nurse Educator Consultant



## CAREGIVING WORKING GROUP OF ESSEX AND FRANKLIN COUNTIES



July 2021 Caregiving Working Group Meeting  
of Essex and Franklin Counties

Mercy Care hosted and facilitated meetings for the Caregiving Working Group on January 20, April 21, July 21, October 27, 2021 and January 19, 2022. Presenters included Director of the NY State Office for the Aging, Executive Director of Association on Aging in NY, NY Statewide Senior Action Council Executive Director introducing the proposed Master Plan for Aging included in Governor Hochul's State of the State address, New President and CEO of Adirondack Health, Essex County Director of Public Health on COVID-19 Healthcare Impacts, Caregiver COVID Impacts by Alzheimer's Disease Caregiver Support Initiative, SUNY Plattsburgh, and reports from the Directors of the Offices for the Aging in Essex and Franklin Counties.

Health, Human, and Aging Services professionals from several different counties gather at the quarterly meetings of the Caregiving Working Group to share knowledge and expertise on top-of-mind issues as concern elders.

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## AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES EDUCATION NETWORK CREATIVITY IN AGING VOLUNTEER RETREAT - JUNE 16, 2022

With support from Mother Cabrini Health Foundation, Mercy Care is developing an Age-friendly Communities Education Network to provide in-service and education programs throughout each year to Mercy Care Volunteers and Volunteers and staff serving with our Mission Extension Collaborating Partners. On March 29, 2022, Mercy Care held a virtual in-service program on Social Isolation and Loneliness.

We are excited to announce our upcoming Volunteer Retreat featuring an in-person opportunity to meet other Volunteers from throughout the North Country and share knowledge and experiences through our Volunteer Creativity in Aging Retreat. Volunteers will be able to choose from several workshops in which they wish to participate. Lunch will be served. **To request registration information, please contact Mercy Care's Education & Volunteer Training Manager, at [abevilacqua@adkmercy.org](mailto:abevilacqua@adkmercy.org) . There is no cost for Volunteers to attend but registration is required.**





## VOLUNTEER CAREGIVER FRIEND PROGRAM

Mercy Care for the Adirondacks has developed a Caregiver Friend Program. The emphasis of the program is to benefit the Caregiver.

Jerry Hayes, Mercy Care's Board President remarked, "Mercy Care's Board of Directors saw a need to fill and responded by developing a program to assist caregivers who are often struggling with so many responsibilities—in essence managing all of the household chores while at the same time providing loving care to their family member."

### How a Caregiver Friend Volunteer can help:

- Family support.
- Social and spiritual enrichment for caregivers.
- Weekly respite care up to 4 hours during the daytime hours.
- In-home supports - meal preparation, light house work, laundry assistance.
- Grocery shopping and running small errands.
- Assistance in locating and accessing community services and resources.



If you are a caregiver who would like to request a Caregiver Friend, **please contact Sarah Kane, Mercy Care's Elder Care & Volunteer Training Manager, at 518-523-5585 or by e-mail at [skane@adkmercy.org](mailto:skane@adkmercy.org)**

## MERCY CARE BOARD LEADERSHIP



Mercy Care is sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy and is governed by a local Board of Directors which includes: Jeremiah Hayes, President, Melissa Eisinger, Vice President, David Aldrich, Ann Cantwell, Art Devlin, Cathy Johnston, Judy Meagher; Jack McGill, Paul O'Leary, Sr. Camillus O'Keefe, Kathryn Reiss, Mary Welch, Jamie Whidden, 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 – Joan Grabe Family Fund
- Adirondack Foundation – Meredith M. Prime Fund 2
- Adirondack Foundation Frances Douglass Silleck UMC Fund
- Adirondack Foundation
- Robert and Kathleen Trainor Family Fund
- Frances L. Carpenter Foundation
- Thomas and Agnes Carvel Foundation
- Chapel Hill Foundation
- Cloudsplitter Foundation

- The Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation
- The Edelweiss Foundation
- Infant Jesus of Prague, Inc.
- Kingsley Foundation
- Mother Cabrini Health Foundation
- The McCutchen 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](http://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:

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](mailto:dbeal@adkmercy.org)**

David Aldrich & Chandler Ralph  
Anonymous  
Jack and Pauline Crahan  
Judith Meagher

Bengt & Polly Ohman  
Albert Pozzi  
Paul & Rosemary Reiss  
Ellen Vopicka

**MERCY CARE’S MULTI-GENERATIONAL  
STAFF TEAM**

(L to R): Lexi Bevilacqua, Sr. Catherine Cummings, RSM., Sarah Kane, Donna Beal, Hannah Pelletieri, and Stacey LaMountain



**CALENDAR OF EVENTS – APRIL 15, 2022 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2022**

MC Event	Date, Time, Location
Caregiving Working Group Meeting	April 27, 2022 – Virtual - 9:30 – 12:00
Educational Forum – Unpaid Caregivers— Honoring, Caring For, and Supporting them	May 18, 2022 - 9:30 a.m. – 3:00. In-person; networking lunch included; Paul Smith’s College; registration link on Mercy Care’s website.
Mercy Care Friendship Volunteer Training	May 25, 2022: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.; Lake Placid
Volunteer Retreat – Creativity in Aging; Mercy Care Volunteers and Collaborating Partner Community Friendship Volunteers	June 16, 2022: 11:00 – 3:00 p.m. In-person; location: TBD
Caregiving Working Group Meeting	July 20, 2022 – 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon - In-person; location TBD
MC Volunteer Friendship Picnic	September 8, 2022 – 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. Lunch served; location TBD