

MONADNOCK

www.monadnockvolunteercenter.org

Email: rsvp@mfs.org



FROM THE DIRECTOR

Winter greetings RSVP Friends!

Now that we are on the other side of the winter solstice, I hope you are enjoying the couple minutes of light we gain each day as we get closer to spring.

No matter what time of year it is, one of my favorite things to do is cook. But one of my challenges is cooking the right quantity for two people. I have an aversion to throwing away food, especially knowing that so many people go hungry and don't have the privilege of healthy food choices.

At the end of each school year, RSVP surveys our America Reads volunteers about their experience. Most of the surveys speak to positive things. But there are always a few that make my heart break. In response to a question that asks volunteers to share a creative idea that other volunteers might benefit from, a volunteer wrote that for the Kindergarten kids she always uses an ice breaker topic to get acquainted and to start their work together. She begins by asking them what they had for breakfast, then she shares what she had. She continues to say how humbling it is to realize that some kids eat NOTHING before they start the school day or eat something we wouldn't dream of eating ourselves or giving to our kids. In spite of the fact that Winchester School has a full grant in place to provide breakfast to all students and staff, some of "her kids" tell her they aren't dropped off at the school in time to get anything for breakfast.

According to the N.H. Kids Count Data Center, 14.7% of children under 18 in Cheshire County lived in poverty between 2012 -2016. Many kids who live in poverty are food insecure, which means they don't know when or from where their next meal will come. This becomes even more problematic during school breaks and on weekends, when children don't have access to school breakfasts and lunches. It comes as no surprise that without enough food at home, children return to school on Monday mornings sick, have disruptive behaviors and cannot concentrate.

Within the last couple of years, two programs have emerged in the Monadnock region to combat childhood hunger. One such program is End 68 Hours of Hunger – Conval, an all-volunteer organization that puts nourishing food in the hands of school children to carry them through the weekend. Each bag of food provides two breakfasts, two lunches, and three dinners for a child.

The other program is Feeding Tiny Tummies, which began at the Swanzey and Ashuelot Head Start. It has now expanded its reach to the Winchester School and all four Head Start locations in Cheshire County, serving approximately 175 children. In addition to non-perishable food, lots of snacks, fruit and yogurt, they include an academic item such as activity pages, crayons, or a notebook.

Like the two boys described by the volunteer, there are many other children who have weekends without hunger because of "Backpack" programs who can, then, return to school on Monday ready to learn. Overall, it increases the likelihood of them having healthy development across the entire spectrum and that they will stay on track to remain in school and graduate, pursue postsecondary education and training, and become productive, contributing members of society. After all, it takes a village to raise a child!

Kathy Baird

"Do your little bit of good where you are; It's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world." - Desmond Tutu

WELCOME NEW RSVP VOLUNTEERS!



Alice Astle
 Judy Britton
 Mary Maggio
 Rebecca Moussa

Lee Porter
 Kenneth Whitson II

Spread the word: RSVP is asking for your help! Please pass along our newsletter to a friend to help get the word out about our program and service opportunities.

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STAFF

Kathy Baird
Program Director
 Phone: (603) 283-1549
 kbaird@mfs.org

Jazmin Belcoure
Program Coordinator
Peterborough/
Neighbors-In-Deed
 Phone: (603) 283-1681
 jbelcoure@mfs.org

RSVP OFFICES

In Keene:
 64 Main Street, Suite 212
 Keene, NH 03431
 Phone: (603)357-6893
 Fax: (603)352-5698

In Jaffrey:
 22 North Street
 Jaffrey, NH 03452
 Phone: (603) 924-7350
 Fax: (603) 532-2429



THE TAX-AIDE PROGRAM BEGINS IN FEBRUARY!

The AARP Tax-Aide program provide free tax preparation and e-filing in the Monadnock region. Assistance is provided for low and moderate income tax payers, especially those who are 50 and older, who must file a tax return. One does not have to be a member of AARP to take advantage of this free service.



Those who desire assistance should bring a Social Security card or other official documentation for themselves and each dependent that show the taxpayer identification number; all W-2s, 1099s and all other information concerning income; last year's return; records of any federal and state taxes paid, any itemized deductions, and any information regarding healthcare insurance for the 2018 tax year. This is a requirement of the Affordable Care Act. For a comprehensive list of documents, go to <https://www.aarp.org/money/taxes/info-01-2011/important-tax-documents.html?intcmp=AE-FOU-TAXAIDE-LOCATOR-IL-DOCS>

The following locations hosting sites will be open beginning in early February: Please note that site hours are subject to change on a weekly basis. Therefore, please check again the day before you plan to go to the site.

KEENE FAMILY YMCA
 200 Summit Road
 Open Mondays from 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
 Starting Feb. 4 to April 15.
 For an appointment, go to nhtaxhelp.org. 352-6002.
 Handicap accessible.

CHAMBERLAIN LIBRARY
 65 Main Street, Greenville
 Open Fridays from 9:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
 Starting Feb. 1 to April 12.
 Appointments are required. Please call 878-1105.
 Handicap accessible.

KEENE PUBLIC LIBRARY
 60 Winter Street
 Open Tuesdays from 3:30 – 7:00 p.m.
 Starting Feb. 5 until April 16.
 Appointments are required. Please call 352-0157.
 Handicap accessible.

NEW IPSWICH PUBLIC LIBRARY
 6 Main Street, open
 Open Wednesday 2:00 – 6:00 p.m.
 Starting Feb. 7 to April 11.
 Appointments required. Please call 878-4644.
 Handicap accessible.

JAFFREY PUBLIC LIBRARY
 38 Main Street
 Open Thursdays from 1:30 – 5:00 p.m.
 Starting Feb. 7 to April 11.
 Please call 532-7301.
 Handicap accessible.

More sites can be located by following this link:
https://www.aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp_taxaide/

MONADNOCK RSVP VOLUNTEER CENTER

Volunteer Coffee Hour

MEET THE STAFF • CHAT WITH VOLUNTEERS • BRING A FRIEND

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 20TH | 10:00 - 11:00 AM

64 MAIN STREET, 2ND FLOOR SUITE 212, KEENE NH



Senior Corps helps keep *New Hampshire* healthy!

Last year, Senior Corps volunteers served **330,000 hours** in New Hampshire.



After two years of service, first-time Senior Corps volunteers* reported **improvements in health, decreased depression, and less social isolation.**

SeniorCorps.gov/HealthyVolunteers
*Foster Grandparent & Senior Companion Volunteer

A new independent report sponsored by the Corporation for National and Community Service offers some good news: Senior Corps provides the access, structure, and financial support for low-income, at-risk Americans 55 and older to live happier, healthier lives while making a difference in their communities.

SENIOR CORPS VOLUNTEERS FEEL HEALTHIER

Senior Corps volunteers reported much higher self-rated health scores, compared to older adults in similar circumstances who do not volunteer. Self-rated health has been determined to be a valid marker of actual health

84% of older adults reported improved or stable health, after two years of service in Senior Corps.

32% of Senior Corps volunteers who reported good health at the beginning of the study reported improved health at the two-year follow-up

SENIOR CORPS VOLUNTEERS ARE LESS DEPRESSED, LESS ISOLATED

Senior Corps volunteers reported feeling significantly less depressed and less socially isolated compared to non-volunteers. Social isolation is associated with depression and health issues including mortality.

78% of those who reported 5 or more symptoms at the beginning of the study said they felt less depressed two years later.

88% of Senior Corps volunteers who first described a lack of companionship reported a decrease in feelings of isolation after two years.

SENIOR CORP PROVIDES ACCESS, STRUCTURE, FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Senior Corps provides older adults with important opportunities to serve their community.

80% of Senior Corps volunteers serving through the Foster Grandparent or Senior Companion programs report household income less than \$20,000 a year.

34% report long-lasting condition that limits basic physical activity.

Visit <https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/senior-corps/senior-corps-and-health-benefits> to view the whole report.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

THROUGHOUT THE MONADNOCK REGION

Monadnock Habitat for Humanity - Building Committee

Construction Manager (CM) – The CM will be directly responsible for the hands on construction of a new home to be built on Prospect Street in Troy, NH next year. The responsibilities of the CM will include but is not limited to the following: Help in finalizing the design of the project; assist in preparing and monitoring the budget; assist in scoping the work of necessary subcontractors and scheduling them; help with soliciting and selecting subcontractors; schedule the build; order materials and equipment and see that they are on-site when needed; collect receipts and invoices; identify and recruit experienced crew leaders; work with the volunteer coordinator; assign daily tasks to regular skilled volunteers; provide guidance to less skilled volunteers; coordinate inspections; and monitor quality and safety.

The schedule is flexible, but somewhat dependent upon the partner family. However, the preference would be to have construction occur 2

weekdays and most Saturdays. Ultimately, the schedule will be dependent on the CM's availability and that of our volunteers.

Ideal candidates will have professional/managerial/leadership backgrounds, ability to reach out to the community as needed, knowledge of the construction industry and practices, and possibly experience with Habitat builds.

Recognizing that the CM will need to put forth substantial time and effort, and will incur travel expenses to and from the job, the MHFH chapter has allocated \$5,000 to cover the CM's expenses, with partial payments to be made as the job progresses.

Building Committee Member – The members help to plan and execute the project. The project could be construction of a new house, rehabilitation of an older home, or a home repair project. The position involves, but is not limited to, the following tasks: Look at potential new home build sites and older homes that might be suitable for rehabilitation; meet with homeowners in need of help with small home

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES CONTINUED

improvement projects; help decide upon architectural style, location and orientation on the site; consult on the budget and design of the project; help in preparing a materials list; make contact with prospective subcontractors and assist with selecting them through a competitive bid process; maintain inventory of Habitat owned tools and equipment and make recommendations when purchases are necessary; contact local suppliers for tools/material pricing and request donations, discounts and in-kind gifts of building materials from national companies who have an affiliation with Habitat for Humanity; obtain building permits; participate in the build itself; get tools and equipment to the project site and returned when completed.

Ideal candidates will have professional/managerial/leadership backgrounds, ability to reach out to the community as needed, knowledge of the construction industry and practices, and possibly experience with Habitat builds.

The time required of Building Committee members will vary, dependent upon the complexity, stage in the construction process, and your level of expertise and commitment. You should expect meetings relative to new home construction or rehabilitation projects to be monthly, possibly becoming 2 meetings a month as the build approaches. Your level of commitment will dictate the amount of time required. The goal is to complete at least one home improvement project every three months, with each project taking not more than 2 weekends from start to finish of construction, subject to difficulty and volunteer staffing.

Volunteer Committee Leadership

Volunteer Chair: guide and direct the activities of the committee members; represent the committee at board meetings; submit a monthly report of committee activities; interface with the Building Committee to establish and update work schedule and the number of volunteers needed; maintain schedule of build site volunteer lead person of the day; assist during builds and MHFH fundraising events as needed.

Committee members and their roles are listed below. Recently, these roles have been dormant due to lack of project activity, but will need to be re-engaged by the Volunteer Chair with the commencement of our Troy build this summer. MHFH has past volunteers with experience who are expected to be able to advise in this area.

Each of the following positions can be filled by several people. In addition, committee members are most welcome to be part of more than one committee group.

Computer Administration: Maintain and update the Volunteer Up program, an on-line registration and daily scheduling program; respond to or forward inquiries that are generated through the website and the Facebook page; send monthly email blasts during build; send email blasts about upcoming or current activities; provide a volunteer summary at the end of a project using data from

Volunteer Up.

Build Site Volunteer Lead of the Day: Greet and register volunteers; provide safety equipment and a safety talk; set up food and beverage for morning break and lunch; pack up and secure the volunteer and food related items at day's end.

Team Day Recruiter: Contact local companies, schools, churches and social organizations; schedule Team Days

Public Relations: Work with the Public Relations Committee to design a build brochure and to post information on the website and Facebook page; assist with Team Day recognitions (frame photo, news release); write and submit letters or press releases to local media regarding need for volunteers and food donations.

"Lunch Ladies": Solicit lunches from delis, restaurants, churches, youth and adult organizations, and individuals; solicit donations of ground coffee from local coffee shops; schedule the donations; deliver or arrange for delivery of lunches; update sign at build site daily (lunch provided by, coffee provided by).

If you are interested in any of these roles, please let us know and we will connect you with a Habitat member.

Provide comfort to someone approaching the end of their life's journey - Bayada Hospice

Bayada Hospice is looking for volunteers to provide companionship and support to those nearing the end of their life's journey, as well as for their loved ones. Volunteers can provide this support in a myriad of ways including but not limited to: meditation, house work, running errands, playing music and simply visiting. Volunteers can choose the activities they wish to do depending on their own personal abilities and comfort level. Those interested in volunteering through Bayada will go through 10 – 16 hours of training before being asked to commit to the program. If you have an interest in volunteering or would like to learn more about the program, please reach out to the Monadnock RSVP Volunteer Center.

Blood Drives - American Red Cross

Drives are held on an episodic basis throughout the Monadnock region during weekday business hours and on Saturdays. Time commitment is typically a 2 1/2 hour shift. The following positions are essential to make each drive run smoothly and efficiently:

- Registration - Welcome donors and enter registrations into computer.
- Canteen - Keep an eye on donors for adverse reactions and keep refreshment area replenished.

Give Someone a Lift! Become a Volunteer Driver - CVTC

Do you have some time now and then to give a ride to someone in your town? Volunteer drivers are needed throughout the entire region to assist people who do not have access to transportation because of age, ability, economic situation or other limiting circumstances. Trips may include local and long distance medical appointments and other basic

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES CONTINUED

needs. Volunteers can choose the ride requests that work with their schedules.

Change a young person's life - Big Brothers Big Sisters

The single most important factor in determining whether or not children reach their potential is the existence of a caring adult in their lives. Mentors are needed in the Monadnock region! Big Brothers, Big Sisters of NH promotes long term, impactful, one-to-one mentoring matches between a Big (an adult 18 years+) with a Little (a child 6-17 years old). The average commitment for the community-based program is 2 hours/2 times a month and for site based opportunities one hour/one day a week. If you are looking to be a positive role model and make a difference in the life of a child, please give us a call.

Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) volunteers are needed!

Become part of a community of vibrant, committed volunteers who are getting tremendous satisfaction making a difference in a child's life. Our volunteers tell us that they love putting their skills to use in a meaningful way with challenging, stimulating, emotionally rewarding work. While we cannot provide any financial compensation, our volunteers enjoy intangible benefits such as stimulating work, ongoing support, new social connections and – above all – doing something that directly impacts a child's life.

CASAs, in advocating for the best interests of children in abuse and neglect cases within the court system, strive to provide better outcomes for children so they grow up in safe, permanent homes. The hope is they can help break the cycle of abuse.

Volunteers visit assigned children monthly, they complete court reports, and they interact with parents, extended family members, attorneys, social workers, foster care providers and judges all the while advocating for the best interests of the children.

Qualifications, skills and training required:

- Undergo screening and 40 hours of pre-service training
- Commit to the life of the case (averages 2 years)
- Time commitment of 15 hours per month
- Flexibility to attend court hearings
- Transportation
- Written and oral communication skills
- Comfortable with word processing, email, and internet research
- Ability to relate to a diverse population
- Confidentiality and objectivity

Cases are assigned out of Keene CASA Office - could report to Jaffrey/Peterborough or Keene Courts, children typically located in the area where the case originates.

For more information, please contact:

Diane Valladares

Director of Recruitment

diane@casanh.org

603-626-4600, ext. 2106

Volunteer to bring cheer to our local seniors! - Senior Day Centers and Retirement Homes

Do you have some time and interests you'd like to share? Would you like to brighten the day of a senior in your area? Many of the agencies in the Monadnock region who provide care to our senior citizens are looking for help running or assisting activities.

Activities include things such as baking, arts and crafts, music, knitting, art, socializing, or possibly a unique hobby you would like to share.

Volunteers can expect to both give and receive enthusiasm and happiness and often become like extended family to the participants. If you are interested in learning more about a volunteering with seniors in our area please consider reaching out to one of the following agencies.

Jaffrey - Monadnock Adult Care Center (MACC): The Monadnock Adult Care Center offers supportive and structured care during the day to adults with physical, emotional, or social challenges. Our mission is to improve the quality of life of our members, their families, and caregivers while we support an individual's efforts to remain independent.

Our program helps older adults remain in their homes as long as possible. It provides respite care for families. We offer activities that maintain or improve the physical, mental, and social well-being of our members.

MACC is a partner agency of Monadnock RSVP if you are interested in volunteering with MACC please contact Jazmin Belcoure at jbellecoure@mf.org or by calling 924-7350

Peterborough - Pheasant Wood Nursing Home: Pheasant Wood Center offers short-term rehabilitation, as well as long-term care and Alzheimer's and dementia care. Pheasant Wood Center's team of professionals is committed to maintaining or improving the quality of an individual's life through the care we provide.

If you are interested in volunteering at Pheasant Wood Nursing home please contact Judy Rousseau at Judy.A.Rousseau@gmail.com

Keene - The Castle Center: Why stay at home when the Castle Center at HCS' Keene office is just around the corner offering entertainment, socializing, cards, games, arts and crafts, as well as peace and quiet.

The Castle Center is available on weekdays from 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. for those who just need a little help, as well as those with more specific needs.

Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays are the days volunteers are most needed and the minimum commitment is for three months.

For more information or to volunteer, please contact Catherine Braught, Nurse Manager at 355-8281.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES CONTINUED

Disaster Training Opportunities - American Red Cross

The American Red Cross and the Greater Monadnock Public Health Network offer a variety of training opportunities to provide area residents with knowledge of specific health issues and challenges as well as disaster training - to ensure more area residents are ready to help in the event of a local disaster. Great opportunity to learn new skills, use your experience, and have flexibility.

Help your local library

Keene: The Keene Public Library is seeking volunteers to serve as a Greeter and Wayfinder. In this role you would be the first point of contact for library visitors - welcoming them, providing directions and referring them to the appropriate area for specific assistance, and answering general questions about the library. Training is provided. Volunteers should be able to sit for an extended period of time, stand and walk for short periods, and be able to lift/move up to 25 pounds occasionally.

Volunteers are needed Monday through Saturday during regular hours. Shifts are 9 a.m. – noon, noon – 3 p.m., 3 – 6 p.m. and 6 – 9 p.m. Volunteers are asked to commit to six months. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Tammy Parrott at 603-757-1846.

Jaffrey: The Jaffrey Library needs “watchers” for the second floor. Due to limited staff the second floor and Historical section can only be opened during periods of time when volunteers can be present on the floor. Come spend a two hour shift working on a personal project or reading a book while being available to offer help and guidance to anyone who ventures upstairs. If you're interested in volunteering please contact the Director, Julie Perrin at jperrin@townofjaffrey.com

Monadnock United Way - Investment Team Member

The Monadnock United Way (MUW) is currently looking for individuals who would like to join their Investment Teams, which work to decide how MUW campaign funds are distributed to non-profits in our region.

Team members make a 2 year commitment (approximately 70-80 hours annually). 60-65 hours of this commitment falls between May-August. Responsibilities include: reviewing applications from area non-profits who seek MUW funding, visiting non-profit applicant sites, providing feedback to both the non-profit applicants and the MUW, and determining recommendations for funding.

People who have skills and interests or the desire to develop skills in the areas of: non-profit operations, finance, program evaluation, data collections and analysis, positive communication practices, and/or social issues pertaining to children, education, financial stability and basic needs (food, housing, heat and transportation) are encouraged to pursue this opportunity. Please contact Kate Cote at MUW at 352-4209 or kate@muw.org if you would like more information.

Business Savvy? - Monadnock SCORE

Monadnock SCORE is committed to provide quality business counseling, without charge, to local residents and businesses. They are seeking individuals with business experience in any and all phases of business operations, especially those who have retail or legal experience. Depending upon your interest, you may mentor small business owners, help develop business plans, address financial matters or operational problems, and assist with start-ups or marketing. Times are mutually agreed upon by the mentor and client. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Edward Merrell at 352-8738 or main10@myfairpoint.net.

WITHIN CHESHIRE COUNTY

Keene Community Kitchen

Hot Meal Prep: Help ensure that community members have a hot, nutritious meal by helping with food preparation at the Keene Community Kitchen. Weekday hours from 10:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Wrap silverware for meals: The Keene Community Kitchen is looking for volunteers to help wrap silverware in preparation for meals on Monday and/or Friday mornings. The process takes only about an hour and volunteers are asked to come in to do the work any time before 11 a.m.

Give your time to people who are working towards recovery! - Serenity Center

As our community raises its concern about the opioid crisis and individuals ask the question, “how can I help on a local level?”, RSVP is pleased to announce that we are taking steps to partner with The Serenity Center in Keene.

The Center is a 501c3 non-profit membership organization founded in June of 2013. They were one of the first new Recovery Community Organizations (RCO) in New Hampshire to recognize that there are many paths to successful recovery from addiction. They welcome people from all paths to recovery, their families and friends. The Center provides Peer to Peer Recovery Support Services to the Eastern Monadnock Region and a Recovery Club House that is a safe haven to help initiate and maintain long term recovery.

Currently, The Serenity Center is recruiting volunteers for two roles.

1. Recovery Coaches work one on one with people in recovery from addiction to help remove obstacles and find pathways to recovery. Recovery Coaches receive training and continued support through the Recovery Coach Academy program and SC's Orientation and Volunteer training programs. Topics covered include ethical considerations, HIV/AIDS, and suicide prevention.

2. Front Desk Support volunteers greet visitors, answer the phone, provide light administrative support to staff (filing, copying, collating), and provide light cleaning/organization. Front Desk Support volunteers receive one-on-one training from the volunteer

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES CONTINUED

coordinator and SC staff. The Center is open Monday – Friday from 9am – 5pm and volunteer shifts are 2-4 hours or are project based. Front Desk volunteers are asked to make a 3 month commitment.

Linda's Closet Volunteer Clothing Consultant

Do you have a flare for clothing and fashion? Linda's Closet, a resource for free clothing and career advice in Keene, is seeking volunteer consultants to assist clients with clothing choices. Available times are Wednesday 6:00-8:00 p.m., Thursday 11:00a.m.-2:00 p.m. and Saturday 9:00 a.m. – noon and volunteers are asked to commit to a regular schedule. You will get to help other women of Cheshire County look and feel good about themselves - and while you're there you may find something pretty for yourself! If you are interested in this opportunity, please contact Kathleen Birch at 603-357-1015 or kbirch@cswg.com. To learn more about them, visit www.lindascloset.org or on Facebook.

Front Desk Volunteer needed in Keene - Keene Senior Center

The Keene Senior Center - serving vibrant older adults ages 50+ - has a new volunteer opportunity for someone who would enjoy using their customer service skills.

They are looking for a volunteer to staff the front desk at the 70 Court St. facility on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 8am - noon. Volunteer duties will include greeting members, using and adding members to the "MySeniorCenter" computer database, taking payments for membership and meals, and answering phones and directing calls.

Interested in what it takes to organize the Cheshire County Fair?

The Cheshire Fair Association is looking for an Executive Board Member and Chair of the Finance Committee. The length of commitment is 1-2 meetings per month for a term of 1 year.

The Executive Board Member and Chair of the Finance Committee helps to manage the finances of the organization and provides monthly financial reports to the board. They also act as Head of Treasury Operations for the duration of the Fair. If you have experience working with QuickBooks, balancing a budget, tax preparation, and the signing and/or approval of checks and other payments, this may be just the right opportunity for you!

If you are interested in this opportunity please reach out to: Wendy Hildreth, VP at 603-852-8832 or liberty4a11@comcast.net.

WITHIN WESTERN HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY

Monadnock Community Hospital Volunteers

Monadnock Community Hospital has an opportunity or a schedule to fit almost every interest or need. Volunteers can serve in the gift shop

not only by helping customers to shop but also providing comfort and reassurance to patients and/or their families as they fill their down time. You can also provide guidance to visitors at a number of greeting desks, or support to the staff in the mail room, HR or by putting your handyman skills to use. Schedules can be regular or vary as needed. For more information about volunteering with the Monadnock Community Hospital contact Jazmin Belcoure at jbelcoure@mfs.org or by calling 352-5698.

Volunteers are needed at a therapeutic riding program – Touchstone Farm

Touchstone Farm in Temple depends on the generosity of our volunteers for many programs. Volunteering there comes in many ways - you can work with their Therapeutic riding students, do some gardening, help with light maintenance, assist during special events, or help in the office doing administrative tasks. Volunteers are needed every day between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and time commitments and scheduling is flexible. At Touchstone Farm, focus on mutual respect, safety, and most importantly, fun, is paramount! For more information or to volunteer, please call Emily Garland at 654-6308.

Help someone get back on their financial feet – The River Center

Become a money coach with The River Center. Volunteers should be comfortable working with people who need a great deal of support and enjoy problem solving individual situations. Volunteers will need to be good listeners, comfortable discussing financial matters with clients, detail-oriented and focused on customer service. Volunteers will train using the "Your Money Your Goals" Curriculum.

Schedule: One Wednesday each month from 12:30-2:00 and other times as mutually agreed upon.

Length of Commitment: One year

Be a summer mentor for middle schoolers – BEST Summer Camp

BEST summer camp is held every summer during the month of July on the Franklin Peirce campus. It is free for campers to attend and serves over half of the Jaffrey/Rindge middle school children. Camp volunteers take a three hour shift either in the morning during academics or the afternoon during camp activities. BEST's goal is to have a ratio of one adult per five students to provide as much of a "grounding adult presence" as possible. If you're interested in learning more about volunteering with the BEST summer camp please reach out to Tonya at Tonya.groupone@gmail.com

"Loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted is the most terrible poverty." – Mother Teresa

Monadnock Family Services

MEN WHO COOK

A delicious feast prepared by the best cooks in the Monadnock Region!



Zorn Dining Commons on the campus of Keene State College

Saturday, March 9, 2010 at 6:00 PM

Tickets:
Adult \$25
Child \$7 (age 10 & under)

Seating is limited.
Reservations: Mary Delisle
283-1568 / mdelisle@mfs.org

Purchase your tickets at
Prime Roast Coffee Company
16 Main Street, Keene

Beneficiary: America Reads, a Monadnock RSVP Volunteer Center program serving:
891 children
98 volunteers
16 elementary schools
16 towns
11 early learning centers



SUCCESS BY SIX AWARD

THANK YOU Success By Six for your support!

Monadnock RSVP was thrilled to receive a \$1,000 Success by Six grant award from the Elm City Rotary and the Rotary Club of Keene to help support our annual America Reads Book Fair!

We are very grateful for their partnership and the opportunity to, once again, put books in the hands of our community's children. Let the book ordering begin!

"I do believe something very magical can happen when you read a good book." – J.K. Rowling

AMERICA READS BOOK FAIR!

**THURSDAY
APRIL 25TH**

NOON-3PM

**FRIDAY
APRIL 26TH**

9AM - NOON

PICK OUT A BOOK FOR EACH STUDENT YOU WORK WITH!



**@THE
MONADNOCK
RSVP
VOLUNTEER
CENTER**

NEIGHBORS-IN-DEED

Neighbors-In-Deed matches volunteers one-to-one to seniors, adults with disabilities, and veterans and military families for ongoing friendship and support to help them remain living independently in their homes. So many of our volunteers tell us that they get more out of volunteering than what they give, and we've seen some friendships develop. If you can spare one to two hours a week you can make an enormous difference in someone's life, and still have flexibility in your schedule to do the things you enjoy. Won't you consider giving the gift of your kindness and time to a neighbor in need?

DUBLIN

At the age of 82 this woman just retired as the head of an area school last year! She currently has macular degeneration and recently had a hip replacement. She would like somebody to help her go through her mail, go to the store and just provide some company. She is a lively conversationalist and currently uses a cane or a walker. Her apartment is connected to her son's house, however he is very busy and she tries not to rely on him for everything. She believes strongly in the power of the love of God, and would consider it especially lucky to find someone to occasionally accompany her to services.

FITZWILLIAM

This 95 year old gentleman lives in Fitzwilliam and is in need of assistance grocery shopping and picking up his meds every other week, along with the occasional ride to doctors appointments. He is still able to get around well with a cane and enjoys spending time with lively conversationalists. He has bred and raised show horses much of his life and was driving until only a few years ago.

KEENE

A 71 year old man would like a volunteer for companionship. He has a lot of supports during the day: homemaking 7 days/week, does in-Shape 3X week, and has a case manager weekly to help with paperwork. He enjoys his 3 parakeets, likes going to lunch at the Pub and having coffee at McDonald's, and loves bluegrass. A volunteer who could bring other interests would be welcome. He is looking for a Christian male volunteer.

This almost 60 woman is very difficult to understand her on the phone because of a severe speech impediment. But it is much easier in person. Her apartment is small and she has a lot of things, including a Raggedy Ann collection, but it is clean. She uses a rollator if she goes out with someone in a car. But she uses an electric wheelchair to get around town, in addition to the Friendly Bus and Diluzio for medical appointments. She is looking for a volunteer for socialization and to do activities with. She is pretty much open to anything. She enjoys cooking, especially Italian, making jewelry, going to the Dollar Store, camping, fishing, the YMCA (hopes to get in the pool), craft fairs, and would like to try new things. She has a great sense of humor and is very appreciative.

This 77 year old woman lives in Keene with her husband who works full time. She was an avid outdoors person who loved to hike, and snowshoe. However due to a string of severe health issues she is now legally blind and having a hard time getting out of the house. She loves animals and has one small dog and two cats in the house. She retired from being a Librarian Assistant from the Keene Public Library after 15 years, and also enjoyed selling at area flea markets. This woman is hoping to find somebody to provide her with some company and help her to get out of the house, when out she walks with a cane and is now restricted to walking on sidewalks or other smooth surfaces. She and her husband are the caregivers for one of their sons, who does smoke, but only outside of the house. She would prefer a female volunteer.

This 77 year old woman is originally a transplant from Illinois, however has been living in New Hampshire long enough to no longer be considered a flat lander. She was an avid hiker and at one point would lead guided hikes with her alpaca's up Mt. Washington. She enjoys going to the Senior Center, the Colonial Theatre, and out for easy walks when the weather is nice. She is living with dementia and because of it is no longer driving. Her family is hoping that a volunteer can help them keep her active and engaged with some company and fun outings. She is currently living in an apartment in Keene with her friendly old beagle.

This 86 year old woman is living on her own in Keene and looking for some company. She is still very independent but starting to experience signs of dimension. While talking with her she'll need to stop and search for words. There are times when she'll use the transportation provided by the Monadnock Adult Care Center to go over a few times a week, and she likes to walk around town and chat with people. She's hoping to find somebody who would like to go and grab a cup of tea and sit for a nice visit once a week.

PETERBOROUGH

This 65 year old woman lives in Peterborough. As a side effect to a few strokes she now has tunnel vision that comes and goes in severity and she is considered to be legally blind. She has a son in the area who works long hours and another in New

NEIGHBORS-IN-DEED CONTINUED

Jersey. She is a retired nurse's assistant who has lived in the area for most of her life. She has a love for crafting jewelry making, and she is hoping to start using her lap loom again. She is also an animal lover and has plans to adopt a cat soon. This woman is looking for companionship and help getting back out into the community. She gets around with a walker, but in a store would hope for a motorized scooter. Her sons have set her up with an account at a local grocer where they will put together her order and she is hoping that a volunteer would be able to pick it up for her on their way to visit.

RINDGE

This woman is her mid 70's and is in need of regular weekly assistance - groceries, farm stand, pharmacy. She is a very positive person with a good attitude and is easy to talk to. She keeps herself busy and is trying to maintain her health ever since a surgery/hospital stint she had about 3 years ago. She quit smoking at that time and she now tries to get healthy foods when she grocery shops. She gets around easily and only uses a cane as a "security blanket" when she is traversing unfamiliar territory. She walks on her street and doesn't use the cane in stores. She has no preference for gender in terms of a volunteer.

SWANZEY

This 57 year old woman lives in Swanzeay with her husband. He leaves the house for work by 5:00 am and isn't home until just before dinner and then goes to bed by 8:00. She says the days are long and lonely and is hoping for a female companion to share a cup of coffee with and develop a friendship. She has emphysema, diabetes and congestive heart failure and uses a walker to get around. She told me that she takes pride in her house and loves to sit in the sun and enjoy their property. She would enjoy being able to get out occasionally for a fun outing. She does have 2 cats in the house and would like somebody who is comfortable with her talking about her faith in Jesus.

This gentleman in his 60's lives at Cityside housing. He has chronic heart failure, seizures, high BP, and has mobility issues that require him to use a cane and a walker, and he can no longer drive. His need is for transportation for shopping (Market Basket and Walmart for cat treats) and errands. For 25 years he worked as a machinist at a printing company. He owned classic cars, enjoys oldies music, and plays solitaire on the computer. No preference of volunteer gender.

This 80 year old woman has just moved into a ground floor apartment in the same building as her daughter. She has just been released from a nursing home after rehabbing from a series of falls. She is now pretty much confined to a wheelchair,

and hoping for visitor to provide some company. She has 11 grandchildren and 6 greatgrandchildren, enjoys NASCAR and has a shy kitty who you would probably never see.

TEMPLE

This 91 year old woman is living with her son in Temple and has progressed in her dementia to the point that he no longer feels comfortable leaving her alone. They are making further arrangements for her care, but are hoping for a visitor during the week to provide her with some company, and possibly to bring her to the Bond Wellness center. She is an accomplished artist and artisan who concentrated on watercolors and braided rugs. She currently spends most of her time working on her Sudoku.

WALPOLE

This 101 year old woman lives in Walpole, she has a daughter who lives nearby who was coming daily but has come into some health issues herself. The care recipient does have some home keeping services and meals-on-wheels but her family would like to find somebody who could check on her in the middle of the day. She does have significant short term memory loss and would need to meet a volunteer with one of her family members present until she becomes comfortable. She can still walk but is fairly unsteady, a wheelchair would be necessary for going out.



SAVE THE DATE

**NEIGHBORS-IN-DEED
PICNIC!**

Wednesday, June 12th

Keene State Camp on Wilson Pond

Eyes and the End of Life: Why Spend Time With the Dying?

BY ALDIS PETRICEKS

Almanacnews.com: Feb 11, 2019

A not-insignificant number of people have asked me, in the past year or so, why I spend so much time around the dying. They never put it that way, but that's usually what they mean. And they ask this often enough that I have felt compelled to find new ways, new ideas, to express what hospice work means to me.

My original answer—which still holds true today—is one of deep moral conviction. Suffering and mortality, as I understand them, are universal human experiences, burdens which we are called to shoulder for others. I came to hospice not on any journey of self-understanding, peace, or fulfillment, but with a burning desire to live out my deepest values—to comfort the suffering in my own small way—or not hold them at all.

But like many of our most important endeavors, there is no single reason to serve in end-of-life care. Indeed, I have witnessed an inspiringly diverse collection of hospice volunteers in the past eighteen months: retirees galvanized to benefit society, even after their careers had ended; family members driven by the memories of loved ones; volunteers in their tenth decade of life, and those younger than myself. In all of this I have come to believe there is something inherently powerful, universally compelling, in end-of-life care. The question is not, therefore, whether end-of-life care is relevant to any individual member of a community or society. The question is: “Why?” Why might a person in our modern Western culture—one which pathologizes death; which places comfort and pleasure on sky-high pedestals—want to spend time with the weak, the sick, the dying?

I have already gestured towards my own reasons: human dignity, self-giving love, the reality of suffering. But when asked why someone else might want to volunteer in hospice, I take a different angle. I imagine end-of-life care not only as a fulfillment of sacred human values, but also a means of living the good life in our modern world. Ironically, this comes about through a rearrangement of our modern dispositions. Service of the dying asks us to embrace vulnerability, to run towards suffering, to cultivate the “don't-know” mind. These social contradictions are, at first glance, stunning. But very much like staring into another person's eyes for minutes at a time, they represent the tremendous gift that hospice care is, even to the healthy. Yet this is not a quick, transactional, or even concrete sort of gift. The gift which should drive any person to hospice care is a gift of openness, of radical vulnerability—the gift of being known.

Susan (name and identifying features changed for privacy) was a kind and gentle woman, old enough to be my grandmother,

with six months to live. A whole life's narrative behind her, she now faced the concluding chapter, feeling seasick and unprepared. I remember our earliest visits, when I was a brand-new hospice volunteer. Having finished several weeks of training, I was both nervous and excited. More than anything, I was eager to fulfill those lofty principles which drove me to hospice care in the first place. So I gallantly, passionately, and most of all naively, walked into Susan's room for that first visit, intent on solving her problems with wisdom and compassion.

“I'm going to die,” she told me in tears, minutes into our visit. “And I feel so alone.”

Silence. Utter silence. Armed to the teeth with platitudes and the wisdom of inexperienced youth, I felt incompetent. As if I had no conception of what this person was really thinking, really feeling, but had only entered that room in the same way a young child enters the bedroom of his parents, generally understanding the layout and purpose, yet completely floored by the magnitude and reality of it all. What could I offer Susan? What did principles and ideals mean in the face of raw, messy suffering?

I suddenly realized that all my thinking, all my convictions about human suffering, meant nothing to a human being who was actually suffering. If anything, those thoughts were simply barriers. They were intellectual formulae, concocted so that I would always have an answer—an answer to Susan's questions, yes, but mostly to the awkward and uncomfortable silence. The silence which would tell me that, for all my thoughts and experiences, I, too, was a fragile and vulnerable human being. That I lacked the solutions not only to this woman's struggles, but to the messy surprises of my own life.

Fear of that silence—of raw, unfiltered openness—prevented me from being truly present with Susan. I felt that there might be a gift in the silence, a profound lesson, if only I could glean it. But in order to do that, I would have to stare those speechless moments straight in the eyes.

As the quietude drew taut against my patience I slowly, staggeringly, drew backwards in time: back to my hospice training sessions where I, and eleven others, prepared to comfort the dying. I was a long-haired, naïve 21-year-old then, with a potent awareness of his own fragility and imperfections. A young man looking to heal myself, and hopefully others, through that fragility and imperfection. So there I was, every Saturday morning and early afternoon, bearing my fears and griefs with a roomful of

wiser, humbler, and (mostly) older strangers.

For those precious few hours each week, it was as if I had entered a different world, a world where I could use my words, my experiences, my readings, to explore suffering in a safe and supportive context. At least, that is what I thought I was doing. Vulnerability was intuitive for me, but mostly in the abstract. I could talk about my struggles—with body image, for instance, or my fixation on achievement—but only because I knew what to say. Only because I had thought deeply about these issues and was, in some sense, in control of the narrative. But what if I lost control?

“Alright everybody,” our vibrant volunteer coordinator announced, after an hour-long session on family bereavement. “We’re going to do something different now. I want you to turn towards your neighbor: you’re going to spend the next two minutes staring into one another’s eyes, without saying anything.”

The directive seemed nonsensical. Here we were, grappling with big ideas of life and death—and now what? Had our training manual been switched with the New York Times Modern Love column? I turned towards my partner, a quiet software engineer in his mid-thirties, and looked into his cavernous pupils. His irises were like the bulb of some deep-forest flower, rounding towards an apex opening, reminiscent of the Pantheon. “Go,” the coordinator said, as my skepticism turned instantly to nervousness. There was no reason for me to be nervous, but I was. I was unsettled by the silence, by this engineer’s robotic focus. Over the course of the next two minutes I passed through a psychological and physiological labyrinth, from fear to fascination to comfort to understanding. Understanding first of myself; and then, with time, of the person before me.

Throughout the training sessions, our volunteer coordinator, whom I’ll call Jared, would tell us stories from his own days as a volunteer. One particular Saturday he described a meditative practice which he would employ prior to his visits: “Before knocking on the door,” he said, “I would just take five minutes to breathe, and calm myself down. Because when I’m with someone who’s suffering, I don’t want to be thinking about my kids, or my work. Those things are obviously important, but I’ll never be present to help if I’m wrapped up in them.”

A fullness of compassion necessitates a fullness of self, he implied; and if we are to be of any value to the suffering, we need both. But how do we find that fullness? As Jared’s pre-visit practices showed, we could do so through conscious decision: concerted efforts to stay—and not run—when we lose control of a situation. Once we accept the fact of our discomfort, we can finally do something about it.

And that, I realized, was the core purpose of those two minutes of torture: to place us in a state of total openness, total vulnerability. We could not hide behind our own eyes; we had to learn to see through them. If we could do that, we could look

clearly—yet compassionately—into the eyes of a dying person. Moving forward from that lesson, we would need only recall those two minutes of orchestrated discomfort to find a truer, more intuitive presence and peace.

So what could I offer Susan? Only the promise that she could be seen, could be stared in the eyes, and that I would not run. Our first visit, as it turns out, would therefore end much like it had begun: in silence. But far different from the awkward and uncomfortable silence—the searching, seeking silence—this one was slow, reposing. I had stopped thinking about what I wanted to say, stopped thinking about my actions and whether they could resolve Susan’s suffering. Instead my gaze shifted completely to the person before me: the subtle flickers of her personality, the tarp-like pull of skin across her cheekbone. My desire to say something useful all but dissolved; and in dissolving that desire, I said the first useful thing that entire visit.

“That sounds really, really hard, Susan. Can you tell me more?”

Dropping the veil of false wisdom for true curiosity, I came nowhere close to understanding this woman and her struggles. But I was now on the right path. And indeed, for months afterwards, the two of us grew closer each visit, revealing a bit more of ourselves, healing a bit more through that shared, radical vulnerability.

This was the gift hospice has given, and continues to give, throughout all my moments in end-of-life care. A deep openness, manifest in the undemanding and unprotecting relationships between my patients and me. With that gift I have found a new richness to all my relationships—a deep comfort while talking about unresolved struggles, or listening to those of another. Staring into the eyes of a patient, a fellow volunteer, or whoever it may be, I have learned to bear my full self in humility and joy. That, in turn, has taught me to be a better caregiver, friend, and human being.

With the realities of suffering all around us, I remain firmly convinced that we ought to uplift the downhearted. But moral imperatives aside, I know that we are all searching, yearning, for relationships where we can be fully known and fully present. Volunteering in hospice will not fulfill that yearning in the snap of a finger. But if one can embrace the silence, the discomfort of not-knowing, one might just find a new aspect to one’s self and world.

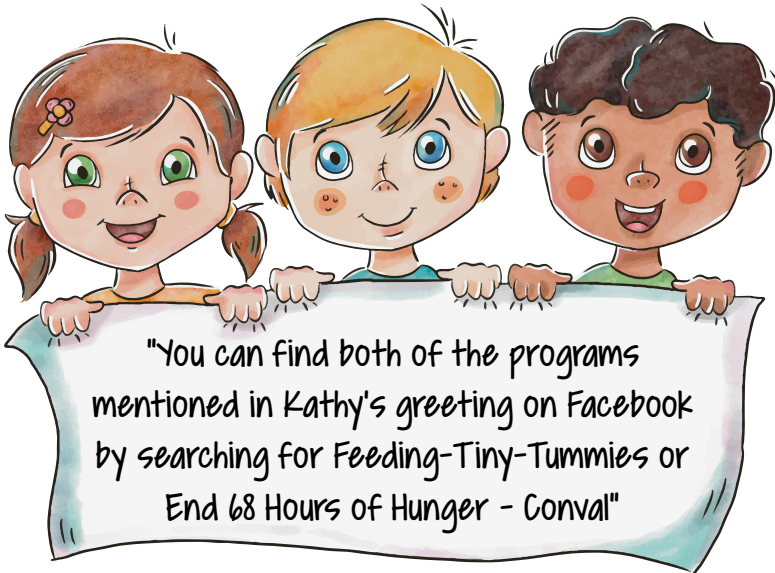
Author's Note: The patient described in this essay has had her name and all identifying features changed or removed for privacy.

A note from Monadnock RSVP Volunteer Center: If you're interested in becoming a hospice volunteer we have recently partnered with Bayada Hospice. Details can be found in the Volunteer Opportunities section of this newsletter, or by emailing Jazmin at jbelcoure@mfs.org

Age-Focused Planning Study

The Southwest Region Planning Commission is conducting a survey to collect information as part of an age-focused planning study for Southwest New Hampshire. Through this project, they will examine current and projected demographics as well as the wants and needs of residents. Current trends indicate a rapid increase in the older population combined with a decline among younger residents. A balance of all ages is important to be able to maintain a healthy and vibrant community. Some communities are finding it increasingly difficult to fill volunteer positions on local boards and for critical services such as firefighters. To assist with this effort, they need to gather information from residents from each of the 33 communities in the Monadnock region. Your participation in this survey will provide the important information they need regarding housing, transportation, employment, social engagement and civic participation. They also ask that you share this survey link with others in your household as well as friends, neighbors, and co-workers. The link to the survey is: www.surveymonkey.com/r/SWRPCAge-Focused

If you would prefer to complete a hardcopy of the survey rather than the on-line version, or if you have questions regarding this project, please contact Lisa Murphy, Southwest Region Planning Commission at lmurphy@swrpc.org or by calling (603) 357-0557.
Thank you for participating in this survey!



RECIPES TO SHARE

Zuppa Toscana

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pound bulk mild Italian sausage
- 1 ¼ teaspoons crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 5 (13.75 ounce) cans chicken broth
- 6 potatoes, thinly sliced
- 1 cup heavy cream
- ¼ bunch chopped Kale

DIRECTIONS:

Cook sausage with red pepper flakes in pot until browned, about 10 – 15 minutes. Drain and set aside. Add onion and garlic and sauté until translucent, about 5 minutes.

Pour the chicken broth into the pot and bring to boil over high heat. Add the potatoes and cook until fork tender, about 20 minutes. (The potatoes will break down and thicken the soup.) Reduce the heat to medium and stir in heavy cream and the cooked sausage. Just before serving add kale.



JOIN OUR TEAM

WE'RE
HIRING

Monadnock RSVP Volunteer Center is seeking a person with a vibrant and engaging personality for their Program Coordinator II position. Ideal candidates will be enthusiastic about growing and nurturing RSVP's America Reads program which matches 98 experienced adult volunteers with struggling students in 16 schools and 11 early learning programs, as well as placing volunteers in partner agencies that align with their skills and interests. Candidates should possess an excellent customer service ethic, ability to multi-task, high-level speaking and writing skills, and a strong sense of initiative. Extensive telephone and computer use are essential components of this position. Associate's degree and a minimum of three years' experience in program/volunteer management, community outreach or customer service. Experience working in a nonprofit organization with older adults or volunteers is desirable. This 28 hour/week position is Keene based. Hourly rate: \$12.86 to \$14.67 and it is benefit eligible. This 28 hour/week position is Keene based. If you thrive in an environment where the work impacts the lives of others, please submit your resume with a cover letter to Monadnock RSVP at 64 Main Street Keene, NH 03431.