



VNA at Home

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LAKE SUNAPEE REGION
VNA & HOSPICE

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Kearsarge Good Day Respite: Caring for Caregivers and Their Loved Ones

By Kristina Stalnaker, *Colby-Sawyer College student*

Living with dementia or memory loss is difficult for both the individuals afflicted and their loved ones. Sharing their own story, Priscilla and John Ohler, of New London have personally experienced the effects of dementia. A retired physician, John began experiencing symptoms of dementia about 12 years ago at the age of 73. Having a medical background, John was able to inform his wife of the changes he was experiencing such as loss of memory and inability to perform familiar tasks. They sought out medical care and further testing. After receiving confirmation that John did indeed have dementia, Priscilla learned about the **Kearsarge Good Day Respite Program**. After a visit, John began attending the program and did so weekly for three years. Priscilla told us that “John was a well-loved man who got along with everyone he met.” He was able to enjoy many of the program’s activities including music and singing, lifelong interests and sources of a great deal of joy.

Respite care is defined as an opportunity for caregivers to emotionally, physically and mentally recharge, providing vital time off for caregivers of loved ones with memory impairment while offering a safe, secure and supportive environment for participants.

Experiencing sun-downing tendencies, Priscilla noted that the 10am to 3pm schedule was a beneficial time as it allowed for active socialization and

participation by John and the others in the program. With a clientele capacity of 12 individuals at a time, Priscilla commented on the exceptional ability of the volunteers and staff to effectively accommodate the wide variety of client personalities and needs.

As a caregiver of an individual with dementia, Priscilla found the respite time to be very helpful for her own health and well-being. As Priscilla noted, “A caregiver is no good to their loved if they destroy their own health in the process of taking care of the other individual”. Priscilla found that having respite available and easily accessible truly helped her have the personal time she needed. She remains thankful for all of those who supported her and acknowledges that many individuals do not realize how much respite care can benefit the caregiver. “Had it not been for the supportive community around me, this would have been a much more difficult role to take on myself” Priscilla told us.

Because dementia requires a significant amount of supervision and care, being a caregiver is a difficult task, one that is made harder when it is someone you love and care about. For many caregivers, there may be no established support system available. Kearsarge Good Day Respite is here to help caregivers get the necessary rest and relaxation so essential to



John and Priscilla Ohler

- 🌿 ‘Good Day Respite’ started in 1994 as a collaborative community effort hosted by and at the Kearsarge Community Presbyterian Church.
- 🌿 In December 2008 the program was licensed by Lake Sunapee Region VNA & Hospice, thereby allowing for expansion.
- 🌿 This transition was fully endorsed by the Good Day Respite Program Advisory Board.
- 🌿 Staffed by a Licensed Nursing Assistant from the VNA trained to be the Program Facilitator.
- 🌿 Offered every Thursday from 10am - 3pm at the Kearsarge Community Presbyterian Church in New London.
- 🌿 Provides a supportive and safe environment for all participants.
- 🌿 Promotes social interaction and hands-on projects and activities.
- 🌿 Offers caregivers vital ‘time off’ to address their personal needs.
- 🌿 Contributions from the public are needed and appreciated.

cont’d on page 4



A Special President's Message: The "4077"



*Scott Fabry
President*

I suppose it's just a coincidence but did you ever notice that the last four digits of our phone number (526-4077) are also the unit number of a famous fictional mobile army hospital from the Korean War? That hospital, M*A*S*H 4077, had a slogan: *The best care anywhere.* It has occurred to me that Lake Sunapee Region VNA (LSRVNA) shares more than just the number 4077 with that fabled M*A*S*H unit.

Like the M*A*S*H team, the LSRVNA team has a terrific sense of humor and does like to joke a lot. Because we tend to develop close bonds with our co-workers and patients, we become comfortable around them and aren't afraid to share that side of our personalities. In many cases, staff use humor as a therapeutic tool to help themselves, their co-workers and – sometimes – patients and their families, to help cope with the stressors that accompany illness and some aspects of aging in today's society.

This segues nicely into the other thing that LSRVNA has in common with M*A*S*H 4077. Because we truly want to help, we are absolutely committed and this leads to the best care anywhere. This commitment is evident throughout LSRVNA – in the office, in the homes and everywhere else you might find our staff and volunteers. I remain extremely grateful to be part of such a valuable, wonderful team that truly provides the *"Best care anywhere!"*

With gratitude,
Scott Fabry, President



Jan Sahler (left) after presenting the "Women Who Make A Difference Award" to Andi Steel at the 2008 luncheon.

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Our Mission

To provide comprehensive health care services that support the dignity and independence of individuals and families in partnership with physicians and other health care providers.

PHILANTHROPY

Join us for two very special events that benefit the vital services of Lake Sunapee Region VNA & Hospice!

10TH ANNUAL WOMEN WHO MAKE A DIFFERENCE LUNCHEON

*May 20, 2009 • Colby-Sawyer College,
New London*

Join us as we honor all award winners since 2000 and announce the 2009 awards to be given to one extraordinary area woman, high school student and community organization.

Raffles, door prizes and inspiration for all!
Seating is limited.
\$40 per person.



"OVER THE MOON...UNDER THE STARS...AN AFFAIR TO REMEMBER" GALA

July 8, 2009 • Home of Bill and Sue Rowett under tent, New London

Elegant dining, musical entertainment and exceptional live and silent auction items under the stars featuring auctioneer extraordinaire, Emory Sanders. An evening that will indeed be one to remember! \$75 per person.

Please contact Cathy Raymond for general information, sponsorship opportunities and to RSVP.

603.526.4077 x231

craymond@lakesunapeevna.org

VOLUNTEER FOCUS: Respite Care

By Jennifer Pine, *Colby-Sawyer College student*



(l-r) Herbert Spencer; Joyce Teele, RN, COO; Jan Sahler, RN; Scott Fabry RN, CEO make the official transfer of the management of the Good Day Respite Program to Lake Sunapee Region VNA & Hospice. Herbert Spencer, a long-time respite volunteer, also handled the program's finances.

A volunteer at the Kearsarge Good Day Respite program for the past eight years, Jan Sahler is also a registered nurse with experience in pediatrics and emergency nursing. Working with memory impaired clients at the respite program was a new experience for her. Over time, Jan's enthusiasm and passion for the program has brought in other volunteers, including her husband. Each volunteer brings something unique to the program, and no previous experience or specialized skills are required.

Jan enjoys listening to the stories that people at the respite program share with her. The stories she hears from the caregivers and clients who struggle with the disease process clearly demonstrate the necessity of the program. Jan stressed that clients at the respite program are more than memory impaired patients, they are people with stories who have worked many different jobs and enjoy a variety of hobbies. Volunteers have the opportunity and privilege to learn about the lives of these clients. This information allows volunteers to initiate meaningful conversation and activities that the clients can actively engage in.

Jan says that there is also strong camaraderie among the respite volunteers themselves. They come from many backgrounds and bring different experiences, but they are all there because they want to help. Some volunteers participate because they have cared for a family member with memory impairment and others because they simply have a desire to give back to the community.

cont'd on page 4

Staff News

Advanced Certification: Ensuring Excellence Through Education



Patti Koscielniak



Joanne Farrar

Successfully receiving advanced certification is a rigorous process requiring a strong professional and personal commitment. It is with pride that we congratulate Patti Koscielniak and Joanne Farrar for their accomplishments.

Certified Case Manager: Patti Koscielniak, RN, CCM, currently

the Community Health Services Manager, became a Certified Case Manager in January 2009 through the Commission for Case Manager Certification (CCMC). Case Managers are advocates who help patients and clients understand their current health status, accept responsibility for and manage their own health, and provide vital education about available options to achieve health care goals effectively and efficiently. National certification determines that the care manager possesses the education, skills and experience required to render appropriate services based on sound principles of practice.

ATP Certification: Joanne Farrar, OT, APT, currently an Occupational Therapist, has earned an Assistive Technology Professional certificate from the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA). This certificate reflects specialized knowledge about adaptive equipment, positioning solutions or wheelchairs needed to optimize a patient's ability to perform daily activities. It demonstrates a level of expertise to safely guide consumers in determining how assistive technology can meet their needs. Joanne, who has seven years of experience ordering wheelchairs prior to this certification, also has training to assist doctors with Medicare guidelines when ordering wheelchairs for patients.



Lake Sunapee Region
VNA & HOSPICE

LSRVNA Services. . .

from prenatal to end of life care

- Skilled nursing care
- Infusion therapy
- Telemedicine & Lifeline technology
- Oncology care
- Psychiatric care
- Wound car, diabetes management and other specialty areas
- Pediatric Services including care for acutely ill children
- Cardiac assessments
- Rehabilitation therapy including physical, occupational, and speech
- Home safety appraisals and nursing assessments
- Health education
- Clinics including blood pressure, foot and immunization
- Medical social services
- Licensed Nursing Assistants
- Homemakers and companions
- Non-Medical Assisted Living at Home services
- Respite care
- Nutrition counseling
- Hospice and Palliative care for adults and children
- Bereavement Support
- Spiritual Care
- Support groups

In This Issue

A Special Message
from the President •
Upcoming Events • Good
Day Respite • Listing of
Services



1-800-310-4077 • (603) 526-4077 • www.lakesunapeevna.org
Medicare Certified • New Hampshire Licensed • A United Way Agency

KEARSARGE GOOD DAY RESPITE *cont'd from page 1*

maintaining their own health.

Common and normal emotions among caregivers of memory impaired individuals are anger, denial, and sadness. With chronic diseases that progress over time, such as dementia and Alzheimer's, many caregivers find themselves experiencing an increase in frequency and intensity of these emotions. Having a respite program available was both beneficial and difficult for Priscilla because she knew the benefits of the program but found it hard to come to the realization that her loved one needed this program.

Kearsarge Good Day Respite Program not only allowed John to continue interacting with community members, it provided Priscilla with the relief that enabled her to provide a loving and safe environment for herself and John.

VOLUNTEER FOCUS *cont'd from page 3*

"I walk away feeling good that I have been there and because of what the each client gives back to me. Working with these wonderful people provides you a far better understanding of the disease process" says Sahler. Since the program was licensed by the VNA in December 2008, clients also become more aware of the multitude of resources available at the VNA should they need additional services. Jan sums up: "When I see caregivers that are struggling, it means so much to them that the program is available. But in no way is this a somber group. Rather, we do our best to celebrate occasions and create a happy and supportive environment for clients. In fact, sometimes we laugh so much that my stomach hurts when I leave!"



ON-LINE GIVING NOW AVAILABLE

You can now make a donation to the VNA on-line! Simply go to www.lakesunapeevna.org and click the On-Line Giving button on the homepage to access a simple and secure form. Because "home care matters" we appreciate your support!

***"It's comforting to
know you have a choice."***

Selecting which home health agency best meet your needs is *your choice and your right*. We thank everyone who has chosen Lake Sunapee Region VNA & Hospice for care.