



VERMONT VETERANS' HOME

VOLUME 13, ISSUE 3

MARCH 2019

# The BUZZ WORD



“We didn't realize  
we were making  
memories  
we just knew  
we were having  
fun.”



VERMONT VETERANS' HOME

*Fulfilling the Promise*

**The Vermont Veterans' Home was established in Bennington in 1884. It is governed by a Board of Trustees appointed by the Governor. The VVH offers a complete range of specialized care services for its residents. VVH goals focus on insuring the dignity, independence, and the highest possible care and quality of life for each resident.**

**VVH is licensed to meet all levels of care for its residents and the VVH's departments and staff work together to provide those levels of care.**

*For any Further Questions Please Contact:*

**Robyn Boland, Executive Assistant**  
**robyn.boland@vermont.gov**  
**802-447-6523**



<http://vvh.vermont.gov>

## Administration and Department Directors

Melissa Jackson, CEO/Administrator  
447-6533  
[melissa.jackson@vermont.gov](mailto:melissa.jackson@vermont.gov)

Col. Al Faxon, COO/Deputy Administrator  
447-6544  
[allan.faxon@vermont.gov](mailto:allan.faxon@vermont.gov)

Steven McClafferty, Business Manager  
447-2732  
[Steven.mcclafferty@vermont.gov](mailto:Steven.mcclafferty@vermont.gov)

Patricia Crossman, Director of Nursing Services  
447-6565  
[Patricia.crossman@vermont.gov](mailto:Patricia.crossman@vermont.gov)

Cindy Rankin, Food Service Director  
447-2815  
[cindy.rankin@vermont.gov](mailto:cindy.rankin@vermont.gov)

Michele Burgess, Activities Director  
447-6520  
[michele.burgess@vermont.gov](mailto:michele.burgess@vermont.gov)

Christina Cosgrove, Social Services Director  
and Admissions Coordinator  
447-2792  
[christina.cosgrove@vermont.gov](mailto:christina.cosgrove@vermont.gov)

Jon Endres, Environmental Services Director  
447-6528  
[jon.endres@vermont.gov](mailto:jon.endres@vermont.gov)

Patti Parker, Housekeeping and Laundry Supervisor  
447-2731  
[patricia.parker@vermont.gov](mailto:patricia.parker@vermont.gov)

Jen Morrison, Program Manager of Rehab  
447-6548

Karen Divis, Quality Assurance Nurse  
447-2888  
[karen.divis@vermont.gov](mailto:karen.divis@vermont.gov)





## *From the Administrator... Melissa Jackson*



February has been a month of legislative visits. Al and I attended the National Association of State Veterans Homes Winter Conference in Washington D.C. this month. We met with representatives from our federal delegation and provided them with an update on the Home. During the first day of the conference, VA Secretary Robert Wilkie spoke to the group. He expressed support for the State Veterans Home program and is looking for ways for us to have a stronger partnership.

After returning from DC, our next stop was Montpelier to provide budget testimony to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees, the House Committee on General, Housing, and Military Affairs and Senate Institutions. We also had the opportunity to meet briefly with the Governor during his weekly coffee hour. We were able to provide him with an update on the activities of the Home and to thank him for his continuing support. We will not know the final decision regarding our operating and capital budget requests until the end of March. It is never too late to contact your local legislator and express your support for the Home.

*Melissa*

*Melissa A. Jackson, BSW,  
LNHA  
Chief Executive Officer  
[www.vvh.vermont.gov](http://www.vvh.vermont.gov)*



CEO Melissa Jackson addresses the members of the National Association of State Veterans Homes (NASVH) during the February winter conference in Washington D.C.



## Chaplain's Corner

Howdy Folks,

I want to share with you a wonderful experience Elaine and I had recently at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery near Washington DC.

Our American Legion Commander Department of Vermont, David Woodward, arranged for the Department to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on 25 February 2019. He invited members and spouses to go as well.

Nine of us arrived at the amphitheater just before 4 p.m. right after the changing of the Guard. Elaine and I were the last to climb the stairs as we were slower than the rest. We were about 60 or 70 feet from the others when the wreath laying ceremony was about to start.

Commander Woodward walked over to me and said, "Ken, come with me to lay the wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier." I was flabbergasted, but he did not give me a chance to think about it. Then he said "Come, we need to get instructions from the Host" (a member of the Old Guard). We went to the top of the stairs where the Host gave us specific instructions, then we marched down the stairs in unison to a spot about 10 feet from the wreath tripod. Another Host handed us the wreath and we walked forward and placed the wreath, stood back and hand saluted while Taps was played. We then returned to the top of the stairs where the Host told us we done good. It was over.

Needless to say, this was the most emotional and exhilarating experience I have ever endured. Holy Moly, I just shared in laying a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. It was awesome.

The entire amphitheater was stone silent during the wreath laying ceremony. It is hard to describe the emotions that permeated my head. I will never forget those few seconds in front of the Tomb. I thought of all my fellow Veterans here at the Vermont Veterans' Home and wished each one of you could experience this event.

We all need to remember that these Unknowns, the 400,000 laid to rest here at Arlington National Cemetery and the 1.3 million active duty members now serving are the reason we enjoy our freedoms.

Let us pray we will never forget the sacrifices they made and are making so we can enjoy our everyday choices.



Pray that those who were stricken and are now sick with the flu are soon all well again.

God bless America.

Chaplain Ken



**Louise Gauthier** gives an organ recital for the residents on Cardinal Point. She is well known for her musical talent as an organist for many, many years at a local Catholic Church.





Valentine  
Dance  
Music by the  
Harmonic Duo



**On behalf of the Veterans/Members, we sincerely thank the following for their generous donations.**

Rolling Thunder VT1, Brattleboro VT  
Harned-Fowler Post No. 6471 VFW,  
Manchester Ctr. VT

Janet Nido

Ruth Grandy

Michael & Linda diMonda

American Legion Auxiliary Dept. of VT  
Deb Ulrich

Living Sober, Bennington VT

Berkshire Bank, Arlington VT

VFW Ladies Auxiliary, Bennington VT

Mr. & Mrs. Winthrop Roberts

LedgEnd Farm

Church Pension Group

Pownal American Legion Auxiliary-Unit 90

VFW Post 1332 Bennington

DAV Auxiliary, Bennington Chapter #4

VFW District #4, Milton VT

Phyllis & Rhonda Roberts

DAR, Brattleboro VT

Diane & Bob Lustenader

Rebecca Healy

Natalie Caylor

Hoosac School Art Students

Shelburne Community School

American Legion Aux Unit 87, W Rutland

American Legion Auxiliary, Ludlow VT

The Family of Kathleen Kelley McAllister

Robert Flanders

**In Memory of Bogdan Kowalik**

Naomi & Larry Kirsch

17

# Events

**March Air Force Ensemble**

2:00 in Patriot Hall

**24 March—Las Vegas Day**

1:30 in Patriot Hall

Sponsored by the Bennington Elks #567



**Show your Support at the  
VVH Apparel Store!**

T-Shirts-\$15

Sweatshirts-\$25

Sweatpants-\$20

Zip Hoodie-\$35

Polo Shirts-\$25

Baseball Cap-\$20

Winter Hat-\$12

Scarf-\$12

Ornaments- \$8

VVH Pens-\$3

Small Totes- \$15

Large Totes-\$20

Wind Breakers: Unlined-\$23-\$27

Lined—\$27-\$31

*From Quality Assurance—Karen Divis, QA Nurse*

## QAPI CORNER

Have you heard about the Quality Assurance Performance Improvement Plan (QAPI) at the Vermont Veterans' Home? Well, we now have one!

Our Plan is composed of: Mission Statement, Statement of Purpose, Guiding Principles, QAPI Goals, QAPI Scope, Guidelines for Governance & Leadership, Feedback Data Systems and Monitoring and Guidelines for Performance Improvement Project (PIP) teams.

Each time there is a QAPI Corner, I will discuss an area of our QAPI Plan.

We will start with our **Mission Statement:**

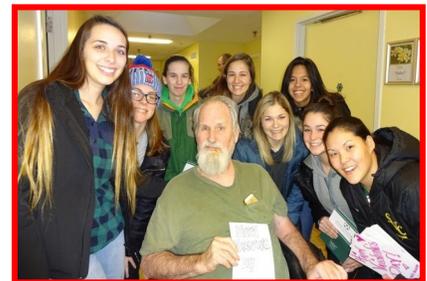
The Vermont Veterans' Home provides best of class healthcare services to Veterans, their spouses and Gold Star parents while honoring their choices and respecting their right of self-determination.

Every day our staff honors the Veteran or Member choices by asking them what they want to do, what they want to eat and much more. We encourage the Veterans/Members to be a vocal part of the healthcare team and tell us what is important to them. We try to provide the best of class healthcare services and we are judged by two different agencies to ensure we are providing the very best care. Both the Veterans Administration (VA) and Licensing & Protection conduct annual surveys and those findings are used with other factors in Nursing Home Compare. We are a 5-Star facility which is the highest rating a nursing home can achieve. We are always trying to improve and that is what QAPI is about: looking at our processes and systems and analyzing what improvements we can make.

The next QAPI Corner will discuss our Statement of Purpose.



Womens' Soccer  
Team Delivers  
Valentine's Day  
cards



## THE BUZZ WORD

Three ways for you to receive the Vermont Veterans' Home monthly newsletter:

- ♦ Vermont Veterans' Home website:  
[www.vvh.vermont.gov](http://www.vvh.vermont.gov)  
Click on About Our Home  
Click on Newsletters
- ♦ Email
- ♦ Mailing List

To be added to our lists please contact:

The Buzz Word  
Vermont Veterans' Home  
325 North Street  
Bennington, VT 05201  
Anne Baruzzi  
(802) 447-6510  
Email: [anne.baruzzi@vermont.gov](mailto:anne.baruzzi@vermont.gov)

## VVH WISH LIST

Mittens  
Pinball Machine/Game  
Neck Pillows      Body Pillows  
I-Pods & I-Tune Cards   or   CD Players  
Newspaper Subscriptions  
Costume Jewelry   or   Stamps  
(New) Men's Belts and Suspenders  
Earphones for TV and Music  
Outdoor Benches

**Your donations are gratefully accepted.**

**Please make check for monetary donations out to Vermont Veterans' Home:**

Vermont Veterans' Home  
Business Office  
325 North Street  
Bennington, VT 05201

**THANK YOU**

We are looking for people with music talent and or special talents of any kind who would like to give time to our veteran's and members on our special care unit. Please contact Michele Burgess at [michele.burgess@vermont.gov](mailto:michele.burgess@vermont.gov) or call 802-447-6520.

## DONATION INFORMATION

Your donations are gratefully accepted. Please make check out to Vermont Veterans' Home:

**Vermont Veterans' Home  
Business Office  
325 North Street  
Bennington, VT 05201**

Please indicate to which fund(s) you are donating:

### Members Assistance:

Directly to Veterans/Members  
Furniture, Haircuts, Clothing  
Other personal needs

### Namaste Program Fund:

Oils for relaxation  
Supplies, Equipment

### Unrestricted Fund:

Facility equipment  
Large purchase

### Activities Fund:

Entertainment

### Music & Memory Fund:

iPods, Headphones, iTunes cards

### NEW: Veteran's Mobility Trail

Monetary donations toward  
a paved walkway around  
the perimeter of the VVH

PLEASE NOTE:

**\*\* We will NOT BE ACCEPTING books, magazines, VCR tapes or clothing at this time. THANK YOU to all who have donated to our Veterans at VVH.**

## TWIG REMEMBERS...Darwin Dokum, Jr.

He was raised in the same building his dad was, 1 Caernarvon Street. The front door was on High Street, a U-shaped street that bent around a corner and back on to Fourth St.

Down Caernarvon from the north is a brick house, on the left-John and Mary Beede, and next door after was a huge field that went with the old French Church that was home to Bob Laramie (Pie) who had been to the spring training sessions with the NY Giants.

All the neighborhood kids were always out there playing ball. They turned out some pretty good players, best of which were All Star First Baseman Paul Laramie, All Star 3rd Baseman Bunt Beede and a very good pitcher, youngest of the Dokum boys, Jeff.

Now, I really got to know Dar best when he and his cousin, Cliff, used to do Saturday country style breakfast at Dot's Diner on Main St. in Poultney and stop in next door and visit and raise hell with Twig next door who was working at Williams Hardware. At work, they were right after me, double trouble. We all three had a great time and couldn't wait till the next Saturday.

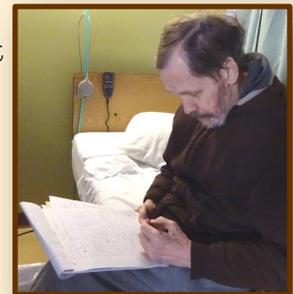
He was into his 90's when his legs weakened and he couldn't get up and out. God sent a bit of an angel, his neighbor, Mark Barsalow (a successful HS basketball coach). They were both history buffs and Mike would go over every late morning and the buffs came back in the afternoon for more of the local old days in Fair Haven.

God bless you, Mike.

God bless old Dar Dockum. If I ever had a historic question about Fair Haven, I'd check with Run Stockweil and Dar.

Dar, you know you are a hero to me. I was born November 30, 1943 and I was one of those little kids you were preserving all these freedoms and rights for as a U.S. Marine battling the Japanese on the Pacific Islands. God bless.

You get what I mean... "Twig Remembers"



Robert "Twig" Canfield



### Henry Duval joins the Germ Team

The Germ Team is pleased to announce their newest member, Henry Duval. Henry is a Vietnam Veteran who served in the U.S. Marine Corps. He stepped up to the plate to help with the Hand Sanitizer Project.

Henry states: "I enjoy sitting by the door to be sure all the Veterans and Members cleanse their hands before eating. It seems like more are doing it because I am there to remind them."

Thank you Henry and welcome to the Team!



## CEO & MARY SMITH INFORMATIVE PRESENTATION AT WHITE RIVER VAMC



VA



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs

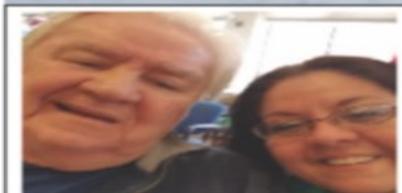
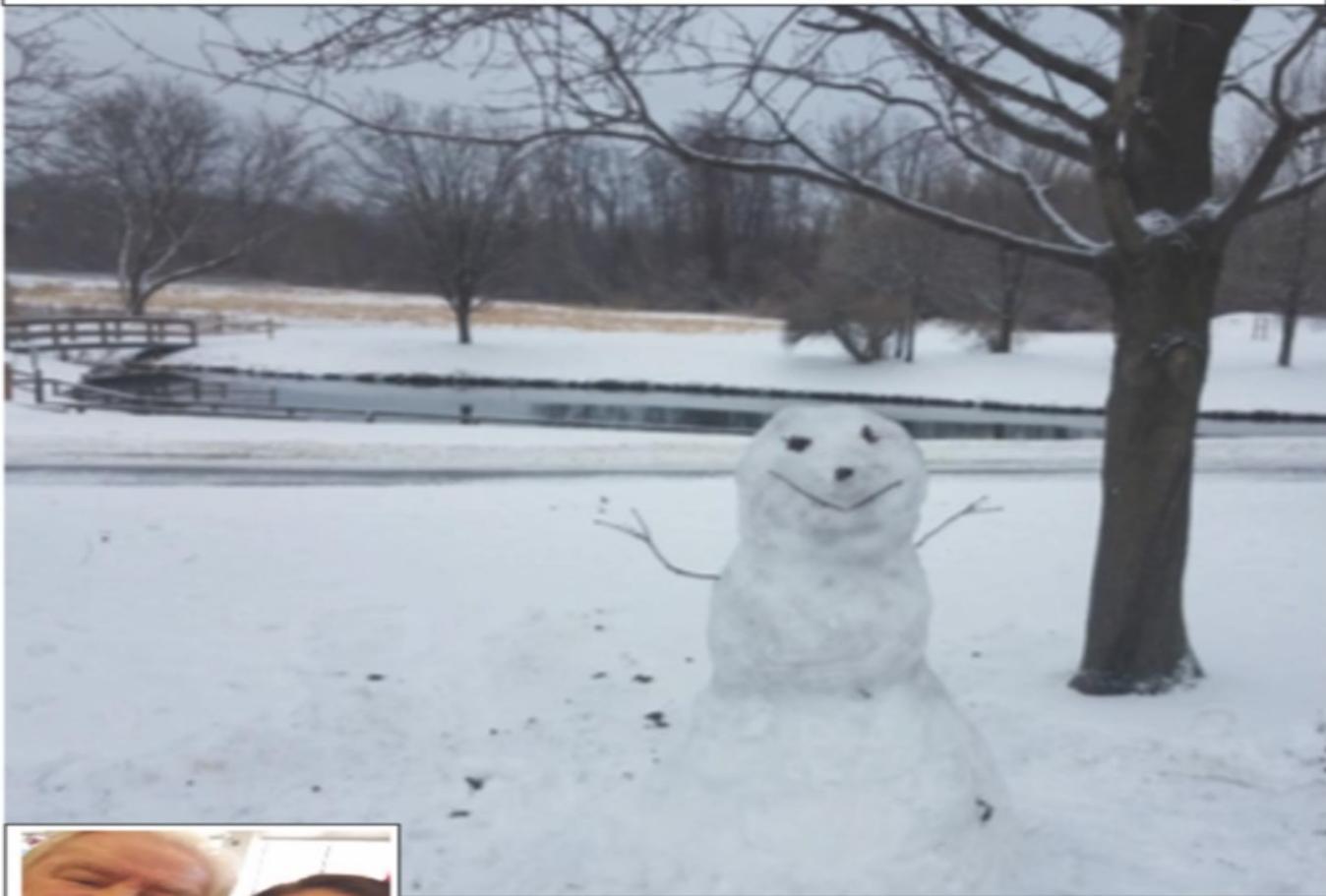
SOCIAL SERVICES & CASE MANAGERS DEPARTMENTS

Melissa Jackson and Mary Smith, Nurse Case Manager, met with staff and members at the VA Medical Center in the White River Junction VA Medical Center to introduce the variety of services (medical, rehab, religious, activities, dietary and laundry, etc.) provided at the Vermont Veterans' Home.

Melissa Jackson, Al Faxon, Steve McClafferty, Gary Yelle and members of the Board of Trustees Capt. Brenda Cruickshank, Col. Gary DeGasta and Charly Dickerson, spoke with Vermont Senators and Representatives on behalf of the VVH during an event at the State Capitol.



♥ I want to thank the Vermont Veterans Home & all those involved for the wonderful opportunity to utilize the guest room. I travel from California & without this option, I am unsure I would be able to visit my father with the frequency that I have been. I spend a week with my father, in its entirety, from morning til night, attempting to make up for lost time. My father enjoys the visits, hates to see me leave, but knows I will visit again. Having the option to stay at the facility makes visiting him easy and stress free. ♥



♥ I would like to also thank the hardworking nurses, aides and support staff that care for my father daily. You are all truly appreciated. Thank you! Dawn Schultheis and of course, my Daddy'O! ♥

## THE EAGLE HAS RETURNED

After a long absence, the eagle has been returned to its post on the front porch to welcome visitors to the Veterans' Home. Dick Frantz, Vietnam Veteran, donated his time and resources for the restoration of the sculpture.

If he looks familiar, it may be because Dick volunteers every day helping to serve breakfast to our Veterans and he had been the department head for Environmental Services at the Home for many years. Pictured with Dick is Melissa Jackson, CEO of the VVH.

Thank you, Dick, for your unending commitment to our Veterans and Members.

