

# The BUZZ WORD

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2023



*A father is someone you look up to  
no matter how tall you grow.*

[www.vvh.vermont.gov](http://www.vvh.vermont.gov)



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 ensuring 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:*

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**802-447-6523**



<http://vvh.vermont.gov>

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## *From the Administrator—Melissa Jackson*



Greetings,

In typical fashion, the summer has flown by. It has been wonderful to see the return of many of our pre-COVID community activities.

As we approach fall, we are planning our annual Flu clinics for Veterans, Members, and staff. For Veterans who are unable to provide informed consent, you should have received an email with a letter from Dr. King, information on this year's Flu vaccine, and a consent form. If you have not received this email, please let us know as soon as possible.

We are still awaiting word on the next COVID-19 booster and will share this information with you once received. We will send out consents for this booster via email.

COVID-19 is once again making its presence known at VVH and in Bennington. I strongly encourage you to wear a mask during your visit, even if you and your loved one are symptom free. Please do not visit if you are experiencing signs or symptoms of COVID-19. Social Services can arrange for video or telephone visits.

Donna is settling in well to her role of DNS and is working closely with her staff and other departments to continue to improve the care and services we provide.

*Take Care, Melissa*

Melissa A. Jackson, MBA, FACHCA

Chief Executive Officer

[www.vvh.vermont.gov](http://www.vvh.vermont.gov)



## **DONNA RICHARDS—NEW DIRECTOR OF NURSING SERVICES**

Hi, my name is Donna Richards.

I am excited to accept the position of Director of Nursing Services at the Vermont Veterans' Home (VVH). I started at VVH as a Licensed Practical Nurse in June of 2002. I worked the night shift as a charge nurse for many years. When needed, I would fill in for the MDS Nurse, quickly learning the role and being promoted to the position. This led me to pursue my certification in MDS.

While continuing to work at VVH, I went back to school and in 2009 earned my Associate Degree in Nursing. In 2019, I accepted the position of Unit Manager for Brandon Boulevard, returning to college, once again, I obtained my Bachelor of Science in Nursing in 2022.

I was born and raised in Bennington, Vermont and I have always lived here. I enjoy working at the Vermont Veterans' Home and I appreciate the uniqueness of each Veteran and member that we are fortunate to serve. We serve Veterans from all branches of the service, their spouses and Gold Star Parents. The stories that they share are inspiring, and sometimes sad, and I am honored to listen and learn.

*From the Deputy Administrator*  
**Asa Morin**



To Our Veterans' Home Families:



With Covid rearing its ugly head again, it was with great sadness that we had to cancel our upcoming visit from the Traveling Therapy Pigs! However, we will be rescheduling for September and will also have some wonderful musical performances this month as well.

In other news, the security project is reaching completion. For several years we have had an agreement with the Bennington County Sheriff's office who have had a Sheriff's Deputy stationed here overnight. With the ability to secure the building, as well as having the emergency call centers outside, we will no longer have the Sheriff department on property. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this, please reach out to Melissa Jackson or me.

**Asa**

Asa Morin, MSW, LICSW, LNHA

Deputy Administrator/COO/CCO

(802) 447-6544

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## GUN SAFETY TRAINING FOR THE ACTIVITIES STAFF



L-Kelly and Michelle learn the proper techniques to load the firearm and the different methods for shooting in preparation for assisting Vets & Members at the shooting range.



R-Sara aims at the targets, standing and sitting.

L-Ginny locks & loads, takes aim.



Christelle practices small & large firearms.

R: Jamie Percey, Env. Serv.; Detective Sergeants Benjamin Barton and Jamie Wright from VT Sheriff's Department; Sara & Ginny from Activities; Christelle from Behavioral Health; Kelly and Michelle (both kneeling) from Activities.

(Not pictured: James Kinney)





LET'S  
GO  
FISHING



A Great  
Day for  
Fishing and  
a Picnic



## Hope for Broken Lives



You and I live in a world filled with brokenness. With all the hurt and heartache in our world, it can be easy to start wondering, “Is there any hope?”

Like us, the prophet Jeremiah lived in a time of great hopelessness. God’s people had turned away from Him, the nation faced political upheaval and many Jews had been sent off in captivity to Babylon. Brokenness, heartache and pain were everywhere... sound familiar?

We find a living illustration of hope for broken lives in Jeremiah 18: *“Arise, and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will let you hear my words.” So I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was working at his wheel. And the vessel he was making of clay was spoiled in the potter’s hand, and he reworked it into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to do.*

Pottery is one of the oldest, most ancient arts and remains virtually unchanged from its earliest conception and is passed down through generations. The potter puts a lump of clay on the wheel and turns it and shapes it into a vessel. The clay represents you and me. Clay is drab and is basically worthless in and of itself. There’s no beauty in the clay but when God gets His hands on it, He breaks us, shapes us, and makes us valuable and beautiful and useful.

God’s potter’s wheel represents the daily turns and twists of life. When we, the clay, are tossed onto the wheel of life and begin to turn, the Master Craftsman begins to shape us sometimes speeding up the wheel, sometimes slowing it down. We are not simply going around in circles because God is guiding us through our life’s journey and you can be certain that none of your experiences are wasted but are part of God’s plan.

If there is a defect that shows up in the vessel, you can imagine the frown on the potter’s face. The wheel slows and his hands cease moving as he finds something in the clay, a stiffness or brittleness, that is a defiance to the potter’s plans. Maybe this defect represents a resistance to God’s plan and you are holding back, pushing Him away which is affecting His design for your life.

Thank God that is not the end of the story. The Master Craftsmen has a tool up his sleeve – grace. When the vessel was spoiled, what did God do? Did He throw it away? No! He reworked it... He reshaped it into another vessel. He did not simply mend it. He made it anew into something beautiful and unimagined. You do not just get a fresh start, you get a brand-new life in Christ! It is that marvelous grace, that majestic, magnificent grace, that remakes you from the inside out.



So my friend, be encouraged today - the divine Potter making all things new! He will do that in you because failure in your life never has to be final when you put your life in the Master’s hands.

**Chaplain Rick Setzer**



The USS Bennington CVS-20 P.A.C.T. not only sponsored a picnic at the VVH but the members also volunteered to serve hot dogs, cheeseburgers, burgers, chips and side salads.

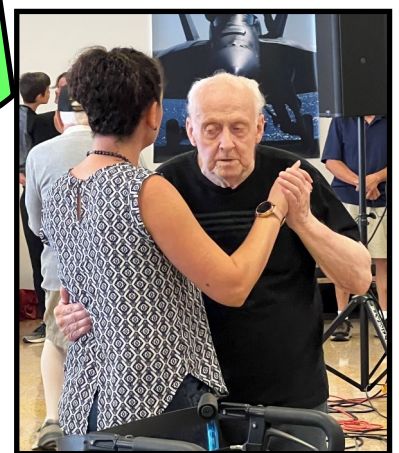
What great service... and they didn’t even ask for tips!

# “THE PRESCRIPTION WITH SIDE EFFECT HORNS”

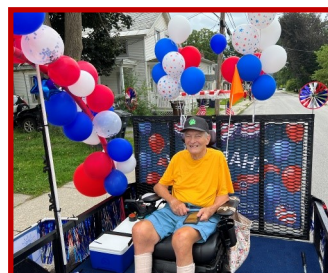
(Dr. King's band) played to a packed house!



**Movin' and Groovin'**



# Battle Day Parade



I LOVE A PARADE



Above and above R: Staff pose for before & after pictures of VVH's interpretation of a side-by-side.

In 1987, The Veterans' Home won the 1st Place Trophy in the Float Division. Even though there weren't any flatbed trucks this year, VVH put on quite a display of decorated vehicles for the celebration.



Callanan's Courier Service organized, and numerous local businesses help sponsor, a cookout for our Veterans, Members and staff. All proceeds were donated to the VVH Resident Council.

**Thank You, Niles!**





***Jessica**, 4th from left (Audrey's niece from California), sang a medley of songs for Audrey, her family, and VVH Residents.*



On behalf of the  
Veterans and Members,  
we sincerely thank the  
following for their very  
generous donations:

**Thank  
You**

Phyllis & Rhonda Roberts  
Marilyn Ficalora

District 1 VFW of Vermont

Bennington County VFW Post 1332

Rutland County VFW Post 648

Robert L. Johnson VFW Post 771

Carl M Dessaint VFW Post 1034

Harned-Fowler VFW Post 6471

Love, Cody & Company, CPAs, P.C.

Shea Family Funeral Homes

VNA & Hospice of Southwest Region

Harold Rowe

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 13

American Legion Post 49

VFW District 1— Pawlet

American Legion 4th District

Elizabeth A. Abustan

Doreen & Gary Kinney

1st Special Service Force Assoc. - WWII

Christopher Vadnais

## VVH Staff Recognition Years of Service

### ACTIVITIES

Michele Burgess — 47 years

Leslie Bayetis — 2 years

### ADMINISTRATION

Robyn Boland — 6 years

### BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Anthony Andrea — 4 years

### CLEANING, HOUSEKEEPING, LAUNDRY

Terry Belville — 35 years

### HUMAN RESOURCES

Tonya Goodell — 16 years

### NURSING

Judy Ann Baker — 26 years

Donna Ottaviano — 18 years

Kyleen Norse — 14 years

Heather Daigneault — 7 years

Mary Baillargeon — 4 years

**TEAM EXCELLENCE**



Members of the VFW District I of Pawlet made  
a very generous donation to the VVH.

L-R: CEO Melissa, Tom Jackson, COO Asa,  
Thomas Stone and Stephen Leach.

### **In Memory of Frances “Fran” O’Neill**

The Pharmacy  
Jill & Andy Nolan

### **In Memory of John Hamilton**

Patricia Hadlock  
Sandra Hamilton  
Elinor Hyjek

### 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 The Buzz Word

- ♦ Email
- ♦ Mailing List (postal)

To be added to our lists please contact:

The Buzz Word  
Vermont Veterans' Home  
325 North Street  
Bennington, VT 05201

Robyn Boland  
(802) 447-6523

Email: [robyn.boland@vermont.gov](mailto:robyn.boland@vermont.gov)

### VVH WISH LIST

#### **"Music and Memory" Players**

A monetary donation of \$30.00 provides a customized music player to a Veteran or Member

**We are now accepting  
only new or like-new**  
Books and Puzzles

Fidget Blankets  
Craft Items or Kits  
Neck Pillows  
Aromatherapy Lotions  
Relaxation Oils



#### **THANK YOU**

Your donations are gratefully accepted.

Please make the check for monetary donations to:

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

Please include the purpose in the "memo".

**We are still not accepting: CDs or used clothing.**

**PLEASE NOTE: WE WILL NO LONGER ACCEPT  
DVDs due to modern technology of TV's and  
streaming availability.**

We will keep you posted when changes are made.  
Thank you for your patience and understanding.

### MONETARY 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 in the memo area of the check 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:**

Memory Music Players

#### **Veteran's Mobility Trail:**

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

#### **Wreaths for Veterans:**

Donations will go towards the purchase of  
wreaths for the wreath-laying ceremony

#### **Freedom Park:**

Cardinal Point outdoor area  
enhancement and improvement

Did you hear about the guy who got a walk on  
part in a silent movie?  
He was speechless.

**When a mime gets  
arrested, do they tell him  
he has the right to remain  
silent?**

welcome  
to the  
groan  
zone

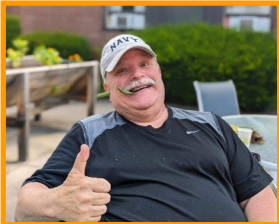
Police arrested a group of  
mimes and jesters for starting a fight.  
After questioning the 2 gangs, the cops were  
convinced the jesters were just acting like  
fools, but the mimes have yet to make a  
statement.



Vermont Veterans' Home  
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Bennington, VT 05201



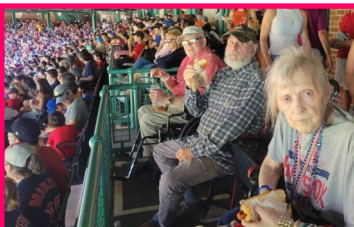
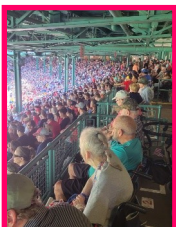
***“FULFILLING THE PROMISE: Caring for the Veterans of Vermont and their families”***



Rick says: "Green beans or wax beans, what's your fancy?" They can both be found in the North Village courtyard. Get them while they're good!! Bob samples one of each.



**Top R:** Putting Green in the Cardinal Sportsman's Club



**L:** Fenway Park, Red Sox and Hot Dogs



**R:** Enjoying Indiana Jones Movie Matinee & popcorn



**L:** The Rainbow trout never had a chance...

