

The BUZZ

WORD

Volume
May

Issue 5
15
2024



I think I need a bigger basket.



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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<http://vvh.vermont.gov>

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HAPPY
Mothers
DAY

From the Administrator – Melissa Jackson



Greetings,

The week of April 8th VVH was visited by 6 inspectors from the VA for our annual Nursing Home and Domiciliary surveys. There were no clinical deficiencies found and 3 life safety areas were identified - we are in the process of correcting these now.

National Nursing Home Week is from May 12th to the 18th. We will have several theme days to help us celebrate the week's theme of "Radiant Memories, A Tribute to the Golden Age of Radio." Our big event will take place on May 15th at noon with a facility-wide (Veterans, Members, their families and staff) barbeque by the fishing pond. Invitations were sent via the PointClickCare Connect messaging service. If you did not receive an invitation and would like to join us, please notify the receptionist as soon as possible. (802-447-6510)



May is also when we honor those who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. As with previous years, the Bennington Memorial Day parade will end at VVH out by our monuments. Interested Veterans and Members can observe the remembrance ceremony. You are welcome to join your family members at this event.

Take Care, Melissa

Melissa A. Jackson, MBA, FACHCA

Chief Executive Officer

www.vvh.vermont.gov



**ACKNOWLEDGING CHRISTINA COSGROVE
and NAMASTE**

Christina Cosgrove, LICSW, (left), Behavioral Health Director, has been invited to present at the Namaste Care International's annual conference in London, England, regarding our internationally recognized Namaste Program.

Christina was instrumental in establishing Namaste Care in 2001 at the Vermont Veterans' Home (VVH) along with Rae Anne Woods (right) and Mary Longtin (retired LNA, not pictured). Namaste is a Hindu greeting which means "to honor the spirit within" and was developed for people with advanced dementia to improve their quality of life. The Namaste practitioner embodies love and through gentle touch fosters a personal connection that is provided in a lightly scented room with soft music creating a peaceful and soothing environment.

Namaste Care, which started at VVH, is now practiced in 14 countries. Christina was presented with a Board of Trustee Challenge Coin in recognition of her creativity and dedication to enhance the quality of life and joy of the Veterans/Members at VVH.



Tina Cole (center) is our amazing Namaste practitioner who provides TLC and loving touch to our Veterans and Members in Namaste.

From the Deputy Administrator
Asa Whitcomb



To Our Veterans' Home Families:

You may or may not have met "Mr. Big Dog" but he has quickly become an excellent administrator in training. Big Dog couldn't be happier than when he is visiting with everyone at the Veterans' Home.

As a reminder, we love having pet visitors and welcome them (from dogs to cats to goats to pigs)!

We would like to share a few reminders:

- Please remember to drop off vaccination records at reception when your pet first visits and then annually.
- Please be sure to pick up after your pet.
- With the exception of service animals, pets are not allowed in dining areas during mealtime.

If you would like to bring any "special" animals (i.e. non household pets), please call Marjorie LaFountain at 447-6520 to help arrange your visit!

Asa



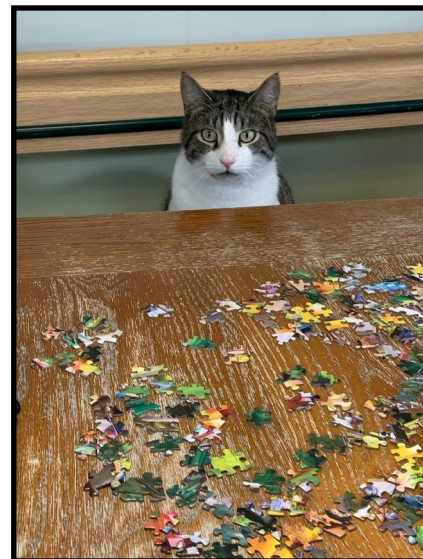
Asa Whitcomb (formerly Morin), MSW, LICSW, LNHA, CPM, CDS

Deputy Administrator/COO/CCO

(802) 447-6544



The Springfield Elks made a very generous donation to the Home. Several of our Veterans, along with Marjorie from Activities, are on hand to accept the check and thank them for their generosity and continued support of our Veterans and Members.



It's Prrrr-zle Time.

Caption by Ed

photo by Alexis



ROAD TRIP To RIVERS CASINO

Looks like they had a great time and we hope Lady Luck was on their side



What did the baker's son do over spring break?

Not much, he just loafed around.

A ghost walks into a bar.

The bartender looks at it and says:

“We don't serve spirits here.”

What beverage does a tree drink the most?



ROOT BEER



The American Legion Auxiliary Unit 13 brought in a generous donation of Easter goodies and candy for the Veterans and Members.

Our Veteran, joined by Sam and Marjorie from Activities, and Melissa our CEO (center), accept the gifts from Auxiliary members

(l-r) Donna Stone, Vice President, M.J. (3 VVH Staff), Paula Colbert and Darlene Cumm, President of the American Legion Auxiliary. We thank you!

“Never Again will One Generation of Veterans Abandon Another”
the motto of the Vietnam Veterans of America



It began when a contingent of Marines, 3500 strong, came ashore at Da Nang on March 3, 1965, and it ended when the last combat Veterans, known POWs and support staff returned home to the USA on March 29, 1973, now known as the National Vietnam Veterans’ Day. The Vietnam War had ended taking lives of 52,000 troops. It was now time to heal the country and the returning troops. Many soldiers returned home with visible wounds, some with psychological and emotional wounds, and some who had no idea that they were “wounded” until decades later.



Vietnam is a small Asian country with a tropical climate including monsoons, mountains and dense impenetrable jungles. It was difficult to fight the enemy if they could not be seen so Operation Ranch Hand was born, a new strategy to defeat the Viet Cong. From 1961 through 1971, Agent Orange spewed forth over the jungle from low flying planes. Agent Orange is a cancer-causing chemical called dioxin. The toxin would destroy vegetation and crops. “The goal was to destroy crops, defoliate rural and forested land, and deprive the enemy guerrillas of food and cover.”



Twenty million gallons of Agent Orange were spread. More than 2.6 million soldiers were exposed to this deadly toxin. Returning soldiers died and were buried, suffered lost limbs and lost minds, were awarded combat medals, and many fell victim years/decades later to the Agent Orange chemicals that had penetrated their skin and disrupted their genetic makeup. The many illnesses caused by their exposure include many types of cancer, heart problems, liver problems, diabetes etc. and even subsequent generations have been affected.

Today, about 600,00 Veterans are living with the effects of Agent Orange. They have not received a Purple Heart for being wounded in combat even though they were indeed wounded in combat. Because these Veterans should not be forgotten, the Orange Heart Medal Project was born “to bring recognition to Veterans who were affected by Agent Orange.” Ken Gamble, US Navy who is suffering from the affects of



Agent Orange, designed the Orange Heart Medal which is presented to all Vietnam Veterans who were and are “still suffering the effects of Agent Orange exposure.” His 501c3 is also fighting in various legislatures to have dioxin (Agent Orange) declared chemical warfare never to be used again.



Paul Yerke, Food Service Supervisor and a Vietnam Veteran, stumbled upon an article honoring Veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange during their tours in Vietnam.



That set the wheels in motion to acknowledge the VVH Veterans who met the criteria to receive the recognition.

With assistance from Asa, COO, and Melinda, Marketing Coordinator, a ceremony was planned for March 29 during which time Melissa, CEO, and Paul distributed a Medal as well as a commemorative T-shirt to twenty-two Vietnam Veterans.



“Remembering Their Sacrifice”

**CHAPLAIN
RICHARD SETZER
CORNER**

May 27th is Memorial Day, and on this solemn day, we gather to honor the memory of those who gave their lives in service to our great nation. Memorial Day is not just a holiday; it is a sacred opportunity to reflect on the ultimate sacrifice made by our fallen heroes. As we bow our heads, let us remember their courage, their valor and their unwavering commitment.

Scripture: John 15:13 (NIV)

“Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”

The Silent Heroes: Our fallen Soldiers, Marines, Sailors and Air Men are the silent heroes who stood tall in the face of danger. They faced the storms of battle, the loneliness of distant lands and the uncertainty of each day. Their sacrifice was not in vain; it echoes through time, reminding us of the cost of freedom.

Names Etched in Stone: As we walk among the rows of white crosses and granite memorials, we see names—names of sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers. These names represent lives cut short, dreams unfulfilled and futures sacrificed for a cause greater than themselves.

The impact of their sacrifice extends far beyond the battlefield. It ripples through generations—the children who grew up without a parent, the spouses who held onto memories and the comrades forever changed by loss. Let us honor not only the fallen but also those left behind.

Today, we stand on hallowed ground. Let us remember their faces, their laughter and their unwavering resolve. May their stories be etched in our hearts, inspiring us to live with purpose, gratitude and a commitment to preserving the freedoms for which they fought.

Closing Thoughts

As we place flowers on graves and raise flags to half-mast, let us remember that freedom is not free. It is purchased with blood, sealed with tears and guarded by the brave. May we carry their legacy forward, cherishing the gift of liberty and may their sacrifice inspire us to be better, kinder and more compassionate.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we lift our hearts in solemn prayer. We thank You for the brave souls who laid down their lives for our sake. May their sacrifice never be forgotten. Comfort their families, surround them with Your love, and grant them peace. And may we, the living, honor their memory by living lives worthy of their sacrifice. Amen.



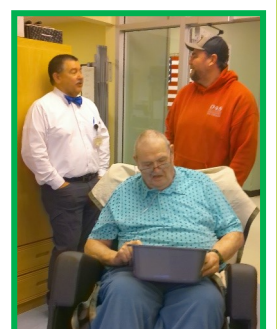
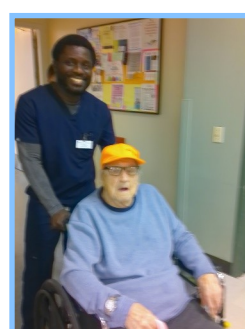
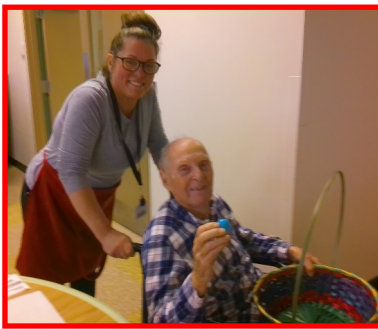
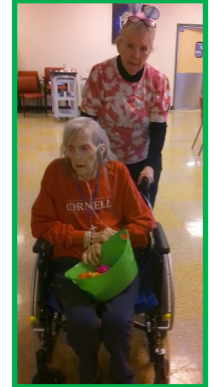
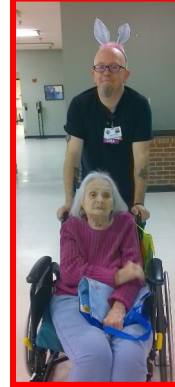
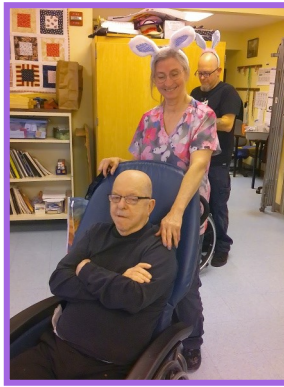
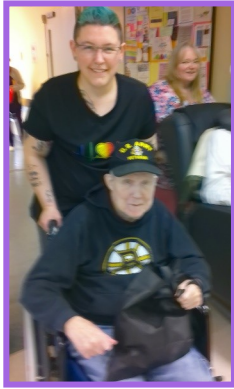
By popular vote, and the decision of the Resident Council, the eagles were named

George and Martha

Thank you to all who participated and submitted entries.

**“My mom smiled at me.
Her smile kind of hugged
me.”**

—R.J. Palcio, “Wonder”



Easter EGG HUNT





Partial Eclipse April 8, 2024

Veterans, Members
and staff observe
the phenomenon
from all areas of
the Home

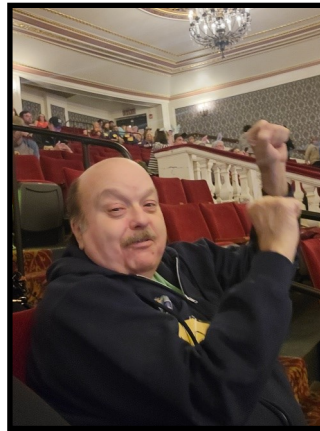


AMAZING!



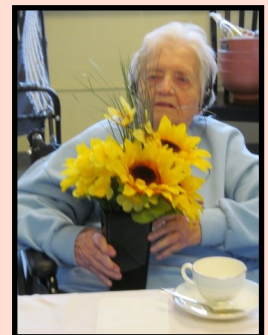
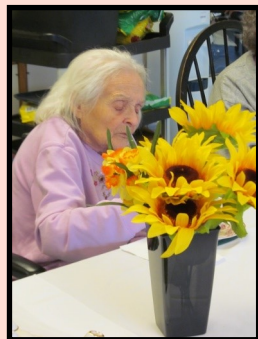


Ollie (third from left) had dreamed of being in the audience of the Price is Right. The Home's Vision statement is "Fulfilling the Promise", and after 52 years, his dream came true! Activities members Sam, Danielle and Supervisor Marjorie got the ball rolling and brought Ollie and Stephen to Proctors Theater. They were joined by staff members Sharon & Sarah (far right).



Sunflower Ladies Tea

Tea, chocolate-covered strawberries, cream puffs and sunflowers brighten up a rainy afternoon.



Enhanced Barrier Precautions How We Keep Our Residents Safe



What's New

We are using Enhanced Barrier Precautions to help protect our residents from infection. You may notice:

- New signs throughout the facility
- Staff wearing gowns and gloves for high-contact care activities

Why We're Making These Changes

We are taking action to protect our residents from dangerous germs. These germs can cause infections that are hard to treat.

Enhanced Barrier Precautions allow us to provide safe, high quality care and help stop the spread of germs within our facility.



More than
50%
of nursing home residents carry a
multidrug-resistant organism.

How to Help When You Visit

You can help stop the spread of germs by cleaning your hands with alcohol-based hand sanitizer or soap and water.

Learn more about Enhanced Barrier Precautions:
bit.ly/PPE-NursingHomes



THANK YOU

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

Phyllis & Rhonda Roberts

American Legion Auxiliary Unit 13

VFW Post 1332

William & Rebecca Burke

Springfield Elks #1560

Nancy Coseo

Mary Doyle

Hannaford Supermarket

Amy Bull

North Bennington Congregational Church

IN MEMORY of ELMER BURGESS

Rose Fitzgerald Wolfe

IN MEMORY of CARL EBBETTS

Sue & Richard Tefft

IN MEMORY of RAYMOND SMITH

Carissa & Jared Smith



**VVH Staff Recognition
Years of Service**

ACTIVITIES

Danielle Record — 10 years
Samantha Caron — 7 years
Alexis Coderre — 1 year

ADMINISTRATION

Marion Ryberg — 12 years
Asa Whitcomb - 10 years

BEHAVIOR HEALTH

Aisling Taft — 3 years

CLEANING, HOUSEKEEPING & LAUNDRY

Rick Cottrell — 19 years
Belinda Matte — 13 years
Jordan Ross — 2 years

DIETARY

Carla Lambert — 11 years

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Anthony Antonio — 7 years
Steve Bennett — 5 years
Robert LaBrake — 3 years

FINANCE

Althea Kane — 7 years

NURSING

Melissa Hurt — 31 Years
Jessica Goodspeed — 10 years
Shannyn MacVicar — 5 years
Tara Bills — 4 years



FIVE STAR RATING



THANK YOU

**Hannaford
Supermarket
for the
donation of beautiful
Easter lilies.**

THE BUZZ WORD

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

- ♦ Vermont Veterans' Home website:
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

VVH WISH LIST

"Music and Memory" Players

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



Due to your overwhelming generosity, we no longer need blankets, lap blankets or afghans.

We will accept **only new or like-new** Books and Puzzles

Appreciated by Veterans and Members:

Craft Items or Kits Neck Pillows
Aromatherapy Lotions Relaxation Oils

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 Fund:
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:
Music and Memory Players

Veteran's Mobility Trail Fund:
Monetary donations toward a paved walkway around the perimeter of the VVH

Wreaths for Veterans Fund:
Donations will go towards the purchase of wreaths for the wreath-laying ceremony

Freedom Park Fund:
Cardinal Point outdoor area enhancement and improvement

May Events

May 5 Elks Dinner
May 12 Mother's Day Tea
May 6-12 Nurses Week
May 12-18 ... Nursing Home Week
Memorial Day Parade ending ceremonies

June Events

June 15 Father's Day Car Show
June 17-23 ... Nursing Assistants Week
June TBA First Fishing Derby
June 29 Vietnam Veterans of America picnic

Board of Trustees Awards Challenge Coin

Sarah Sigsbury, (2nd from left), was presented a Board Challenge Coin by Gary De Gasta, Board President and by Melissa, CEO. Sarah was nominated by Melinda Crowl (right) extolling her commitment as the Admissions Nurse and for the support she provides to the residents, family members and staff.



SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHALLENGE COIN

Challenge coins are cloaked in a bit of mystery although nobody knows for certain when and where challenge coins originated. They are beautiful souvenirs, each with its own story, but what exactly is the significance of being a recipient? The only way to truly get a challenge coin is by earning it.

Challenge coins have a special way of instilling pride in its recipients and serve as a token of appreciation to honor and recognize outstanding service and the unique journeys of those who carry them. Being the recipient of a challenge coin is a high honor; it shows not only that actions were worth recognizing, but that membership means overcoming a very high barrier to entry and is a piece of identity of shared spirits of a kindred group. To receive a Board (of Trustee) Challenge Coin, individuals must be nominated for this distinction and they carry a piece of one's identity and the shared spirit of the Vermont Veterans' Home.

WalMart provided landscaping supplies and volunteers that joined VVH residents and staff to beautify the courtyards and outside areas around the Home.



Thank You





Vermont Veterans' Home
325 North Street
Bennington, VT 05201



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

DIFFERENCES

The Green Mountains of Vermont
The White Mountains of New Hampshire
The Rocky Mountains of the West
Differences are what make us great!
Differences are what make us strong.
Why do people want to divide us?
Their weakness will not prevail
For We The People will have our votes
heard.
Democracy will prevail in the land.
Democracy will win in the end.

Poems by O. C. Allen

FREEDOM

Freedom is a precious thing
It speaks of love, life and everything
It gives us all our rights to express
Yet at times it can cause an awful mess
Like the apple Adam bit from
Freedom can be good or bad
It's all in how you use it.
So use it well and guard it safely.

