



Mercy Care for the Adirondacks

A Mission Sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy

*Offering Friendship and
Companionship for
Elders in the Tri-Lakes*

Newsletter • Spring 2013

"If we wish to sow the seeds of real hope in the world, this is the way we must do it, one opening of the figurative door, one embrace of the stranger, one welcoming of the other...one person at a time."

Catherine McAuley, the Foundress of the Sisters of Mercy

"Caregiving in the Adirondacks"

In further development of its strategic plan for the next five years, the Board of Directors has identified the need for attention to *Caregiving in the Adirondacks*. Beyond the individual attention given by volunteers to individual elders, Mercy Care has launched a community planning initiative, "*Caregiving in the Adirondacks*."

Many elders get to a point where they cannot continue to take care of themselves in their own homes. They must move at great cost to a nursing home or other form of institutional care, if available, unless someone can assume general responsibility for the elders' at home care. Given this type of situation in our own communities,

Mercy Care is engaged this year in conducting a study of caregiving in the Adirondacks to determine what might be done by Mercy Care and others to foster loving caregiving for those elders for whom it is essential, if they are to age in place in the own homes for as long as possible.

A Caregiving Working Group of community volunteers and professionals has been established. A set of goals and objectives have been adopted. A planning tool, "*Guide to Successful Aging*" has been created by Mercy Care's Tri-Lakes Aging in Place Task Forces, and is being disseminated throughout the Tri-Lakes Communities. Focus groups of elders and their caregivers and a community-wide survey are planned. We invite elders, their caregivers, and anyone in the community with interest in caregiving to join Mercy Care's working group.



Mercy Care Volunteer Margo Cooper and Friend at the Saranac Lake Library

Lakes Aging in Place Task Forces, and is being disseminated throughout the Tri-Lakes Communities. Focus groups

Caregiving Working Group

Caregiving Working Group Member	Affiliation
Sandy Hayes	Essex County Office for the Aging
Barbara Rottier	Mercy Care Board Member
Nathan Cox	Executive Director, Tri-Lakes Center for Independent Living
Sr. M. Camillus O'Keefe, RSM	Vice President, Mercy Care for the Adirondacks
Paul Reiss	President, Mercy Care for the Adirondacks
Patricia Beneshan	Mercy Care Parish Nurse
Sr. Catherine Cummings, RSM	Program Director, Mercy Care
Penny McGill	Mercy Care Parish Nurse
Fr. Bill Cooper	Pastor, St. Thomas Episcopal Church, Mercy Care Community Council
Frank Lescinsky	Mercy Care Board Member
Becky Leahy	Executive Director, North Country Home Services
Ann Merkel	Liaison, Public Health
Becky Preve	Director, Franklin County C.A.R.E.S, NY CONNECTS
Fr. John Yonkovig	Pastor, St. Agnes Catholic Church, Mercy Care Board Member
Ginny Cuttaia	Director Patient Services, Franklin County Public Health
Jamie Whidden	Executive Director, Saranac Village at Will Rogers, Mercy Care Community Council
Lee Vera	Eastern Adirondack Health Care Network, Alzheimer's Disease Assistance Center
Margaret Brown	High Peaks Hospice & Palliative Care
Linda McClarigan	Director, Patient Care, Adirondack Health
Patty Bashaw	Essex County OFA
Sarina Nicola	Essex County Public Health
Shari Holmlund	Franklin County Nursing Service
Susan Wilson-Scott	Director, Franklin County Office for the Aging
Tracy Posdzich	High Peaks Hospice & Palliative Care

*Touching the
Adirondacks
with Mercy*

18 New Parish Nurses Trained

In a Dedication Ceremony held at the Sisters of St. Joseph in Watertown on November 3, 2012, Bishop Terry LaValley commissioned 18 Parish Nurses who completed the “Foundations in Faith-Community Nursing Workshop” offered by Mercy Care for the Adirondacks.

Under the direction of Sr. Catherine Cummings, RSM, Ed.D., R.N., Mercy Care worked in collaboration with Catholic Charities to bring parish nursing to the northern part of the Diocese of Ogdensburg. Mercy Care has trained

more than 40 parish nurses in northern New York since its establishment in 2007. There are currently 12 active Volunteer Parish Nurses in the Tri-Lakes region of the Adirondacks, Mercy Care’s direct service area. Parish Nurses, sometimes called faith-community nurses, are registered nurses who practice holistic health for individuals and the community, using nursing knowledge combined with spiritual care.

Bishop LaValley remarked: “Parish Nurses are treasured ministers in our parishes that are blessed to have them. In



Bishop Terry LaValley and Sister Catherine Cummings, RSM with new parish nurses and their pastors

their attentiveness to the needs of the whole person: body, mind, and spirit, they live out the Gospel mandate to give reverence and dignity to each and every human person. Professional skill and faith merge in the heart of the parish nurse and God visits His people through their presence among us. I am so grateful to Mercy Care for the Adirondacks and to Sr. Catherine Cummings, RSM, who trains our parish nurses for this valued ministry. Our parish families are so blessed to have these individuals who care for their health.” Parish nurses trained by Mercy Care represent many different faith communities and denominations.

The Parish Nurses commissioned included:

St. Cecilians, Adams	St. James, Carthage	St. Marys, Clayton	Community of Lacona	Concordia Lutheran, Watertown	Holy Family, Watertown	St. Patricks/ St. Anthonys, Watertown
Sherrie Estal						
Patricia Greco	Nancy McBride	Jean Heady	Jill Soule	Sonya Holloway	Robin McAleese	Doris Brown
Niki Henry		Fran Lynch			Rita Brancheau	Penny Clark
Linda Hurley					Maureen	Barbara O’Brien
Rosemary LaLone- Kirsch					O’Donnell	
Patricia Simpson					Beverly Shepard	

Mercy Care Friendship Volunteers join together...

Mercy Care Volunteers joined together for lunch, sharing, and an in-service program on “Caregiving in the Adirondacks,” Mercy Care’s new community-planning initiative.



Tupper Lake Parish Nurse and Friendship Volunteer Luncheon on February 19

New Friendship Volunteers Trained in Tupper Lake



(L to R) New Mercy Care Friendship Volunteers Linda Perrigo, Kathleen Taylor, John Taylor, Vincent Connors, Betsy Clark and Diana Savard

On February 19, 2013 Mercy Care for the Adirondacks commissioned new Friendship Volunteers Betsy Clark, Vincent Connors, Linda Perrigo, Kathleen Taylor, John Taylor, and Diana Savard. The training and commissioning ceremony were held at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Tupper Lake.

Mercy Care has recruited and trained more than 96 Friendship Volunteers who have contributed over 12,600 hours of volunteer service in the Tri-Lakes area since January 2008.

Friendship and Companionship

Each year Mercy Care invites its volunteers and their elders they serve to join together at a Friendship Picnic. The reciprocal friendships developed between Volunteers and the elder friends they assist are what make Mercy Care's Volunteer Programs unique—their friendships complete the *circle of mercy*.



Volunteers and their elder friends socialize together at Mercy Care's annual Friendship Picnic at Guggenheim Center, September 2012



Lake Placid and Saranac Lake Friendship Volunteers at March 12 luncheon

First "Mercy Care Family" Pot Luck Supper

Many of Mercy Care's volunteers have expressed a desire to get the "Mercy Care Family" together informally. The Board of Directors and Staff are inviting Mercy Care's volunteers, the elders they assist and their caregivers, and members of the community who would like to join the gathering for a Pot Luck supper on May 22 at 5:00 p.m. The Supper will be held at St. Luke's Episcopal Church Parish Hall in Saranac Lake. Beverages and dessert will be provided by Mercy Care. Each volunteer attending is asked to bring a dish to share. If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Sheila Schneck, Mercy Care's Office Manager, at 523-5583 or by e-mail at sschneck@adkmercy.org

Recent Sharing from Mercy Care Friendship Volunteers

- I took my elder friend to the Wild Center for a special exhibit. She exclaimed, "Oh my goodness, I forgot how I like being around little children." The Wild Center staff was very helpful—they assisted me with helping my friend who used a walker to get across the snow into the building and helped me get her into a wheelchair.
- Over the summer, I took my elder 98-year-old friend out for a ride through the Childwold and Piercefield area. He said, "This is such a surprise—just so nice—turn left, turn right..." I brought him to see his 101 year-old lady friend.
- My elder friend is 82. I help her with yard work, we have tea, and we go berry picking sometimes.
- As a Parish Nurse, I accompany a gentleman to his doctors' appointments. He has several children who are very interested in his well-being. His daughters wanted someone to provide some health education about his medications. He no longer drives, so I take him to visit his wife in the nursing home, where I also visit a member of my own family. He is delightful.
- I visit an elder couple. They live in a very isolated area—not a lot of full time neighbors around. The gentleman has had some health issues and can no longer drive. His wife learned how to drive and assumed many new responsibilities.

Friendship Volunteer Training in Lake Placid May 14 and May 21, 2013

Mercy Care for the Adirondacks is recruiting new volunteers and has scheduled a Friendship Volunteer Training Program in Lake Placid for the mornings of May 14 and May 21. Both mornings are required to complete the training. Anyone in the Tri-Lakes area who is interested in becoming a Mercy Care Friendship Volunteer is invited to take the training in Lake Placid. Mercy Care's Friendship Volunteer Training Program is free of charge but pre-registration is required. To request registration information, please contact Sheila Schneck at Mercy Care by calling 523-5583. Volunteers of all faiths are encouraged and invited to participate.

New Friendship Volunteers Trained in Saranac Lake in October 2012



L-R: Suzanne Fitzsimons, Michelle White, Jody Deal and Susanne Praeger.

Education and Advocacy

Mercy Care for the Adirondacks offers educational forums to increase knowledge in the community about the evolving needs of elders. It is committed to bringing national and State experts on Aging topics to help inform elders, their caregivers, community members and leaders, and agency and professional staff about emerging issues and trends. Mercy Care has held 10 forums over the past five years:

Topic

Creativity and Aging—Promoting Elder-friendly Communities

Communities for All Ages

Transformative Aging

Aging in Place

From Isolation to Integration--Helping Elders Stay Connected to Their Communities.

Building Healthy Communities for Active Aging

Building Your Personal Independence Plan to Age in Place Successfully

Aging in Place in your Own Home

Harnessing the Power of the Built Environment to Enable Older Adults to Age in Place Successfully

Building a Stronger Voice for Crafting Livable Communities in Rural, Small-town Settings

Presenter

Gene D. Cohen, M.D., Ph.D., Director of the Center on Aging, Health & Humanities at George Washington University

Nancy Z. Henkin, Ph.D., Founder and Executive Director of the Intergenerational Learning Center at Temple University

Sr. Ann Billard, OLM, PhD, Sister of Charity of our Lady of Mercy

Susan Hunter, Ph.D., Senior Associate, IDEA Center, State University of New York at Buffalo

Msgr. Charles Fahey, Marie Ward Doty Professor of Aging Studies, Fordham University

Lenard W. Kaye, D.S.W., Ph.D., Director of the UMaine Center on Aging

Greg Olsen, Deputy Director for the Division of Policy Management and Public Information for the New York State Office for the Aging

Jonathan White, Architectural Research & Design Associate, Center for Inclusive Design & Environment Access, University of Buffalo

Esther Greenhouse, Environmental Gerontologist

Richard Iannello, Director of the Albany Guardian Society, and **Michael Burgess**, Senior Policy Consultant for New York StateWide Senior Action Council

Invitation to May 16, 2013 Educational Forums

Mercy Care for the Adirondacks will host two educational forums on May 16, 2013 at Paul Smith's College from 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. The emergent topics of caregiving for elders in rural communities and elder access to justice will be addressed by national and state experts.

Morning Forum: *Aging, Longevity, and the Law*

9:30 a.m. – 12:00

Vera Prosper, PhD, Senior Policy Analyst with the New York State Office for the Aging, will introduce the State's new Legal Services Initiative, explaining its intent and the strategies employed to increase availability and affordability of legal services to help older adults, individuals of all ages with disabilities, and their caregivers.



Vera Prosper, Ph.D.

Robert Abrams, Esq. will speak on the topic of Aging, Longevity, and the Law. Over 100 million Americans are at least 50 years old. Many will live well into their 80s and beyond. Bob Abrams will share what all Americans must do to prepare for the elder years. He will share his nationally-recognized experience as a well-respected practitioner and advocate in the field of elder law to raise awareness about the legal issues often faced by elders and some of the potential strategies to overcome obstacles to justice. Mr. Abrams served as Chair of both the Elder and Health Law sections of the New York State Bar Association. His latest book is titled, *Be a Planner, Not a Gambler: What you Need to Know and Do to Prepare for the Elder Years*. He has presented educational programs to many prestigious organizations including the American Healthcare Association, the National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys, and the American Bar Association.



Bob Abrams, Esq.

Afternoon Forum: *Elder Caregiving in Rural Communities*

1:15 – 3:00 p.m.

Linda Davis, RN, PhD, ANP, FAAN, Ann Henshaw Gardiner Professor of Nursing at Duke University, will discuss community-based chronic illness challenges and describe practical strategies for caregivers and care partners of chronically ill elders in rural communities. Dr. Davis is a nationally recognized expert and her *R.U.R.A.L.* model for community-based elder care programs has been used by the U.S. Administration on Aging to guide the development of elder care programs in rural communities.



Linda Davis, RN, PhD, ANP, FAAN

Registration is \$15 and includes attendance at both forums and lunch. To register, please send a check for \$15, made payable to Mercy Care for the Adirondacks, to the attention of Sheila Schneck, Office Manager, Mercy Care for the Adirondacks, 185 Old Military Road, Lake Placid, NY 12946. For more information, please call Sheila at 518-523-5583 or contact her by e-mail at sschneck@adkmercy.org. (A limited number of registration fee scholarships are available for elders with financial hardship. To request a registration fee scholarship, please contact Sheila.) Registrations will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis.

Aging in Place in the Adirondacks

***“By collaborating with others in the works of Mercy
we continually learn from them how to be more merciful.”***

Constitutions of the Sisters of Mercy



Planning for aging in place successfully



March 2013 Tri-Lakes Aging in Place Task Forces Meeting

A New Planning Tool for Couples and Individuals: “Guide to Successful Aging”

Facilitated by Mercy Care, Aging in Place Task Forces in Lake Placid, Saranac Lake, and Tupper Lake have been working to empower communities to become more aging friendly. Since September, Task Forces have renewed and updated goals and objectives to help communities become better places for people to age in place more successfully.

The Task Forces have developed a Guide to Successful Aging—a tool to be used and adapted by individuals of all ages to help them plan for how they want to age in place as they grow older. If you are 40, 50, 60 or older, this is a planning tool you can use to be sure your plans and wishes are understood by family, friends, and advisors. It is also a great conversation opener about the future with your spouse, partner, or other family members about what it means to you to age in place successfully. The most important reason to complete the questions in the “Guide” is to make decisions before a crisis arises.

Some of the probing questions the “Guide to Successful Aging” prompts you to think about are: What will I do to stay active and engaged in my community for as long as I am able? Where should I turn if I need services or home modifications in order to age in place in my present home? Where do I want to live if I can no longer continue to stay in my present home? What will I do if I need a caregiver? If you would like a copy of the “Guide to Successful Aging,” please contact Donna Beal at dbeal@adkmercy.org or by calling 518-523-5581.

Fostering Intergenerational Relationships

The Aging in Place Task Forces in each of the Tri-Lakes Communities are collaborating with community service programs at Lake Placid Central School, Northwood School, National Sports Academy, and Tupper Lake Junior/Senior High School. As part of their community service requirements, and to foster intergenerational relationships in the community, student volunteers are available to help elders with fall, winter, and spring outdoor chores or yard work.

If you are an elder and need assistance with snow shoveling, raking leaves, other yard work or outdoor chores, please contact Patti McConvey, Lake Placid Central School 523-2474, EXT. 4130 or at pmconvey@lpcsd.org; Katie Weaver, Northwoods School 523-3357 or at weaver@northwoodschool.com; or Peter Fish, National Sports Academy 637-1595 or at pfish@nationalsportsacademy.com; or Diane Helms, Tupper Lake Junior/Senior High School 359-3322, ext. 206 or at dianeh@tupperlakecsd.net

Donna Beal, Mercy Care’s Executive Director remarked, “It is just wonderful to see our schools serve people of all ages in our community. It is also an opportunity for our older and younger generations to get to know each other better. The School Community Service Programs are going above and beyond by taking calls directly from elders in the community who need assistance.” The Community Service Program Director in each school matches the elder’s need for assistance with a student who is performing his or her community service requirements.

Social Adult Day Care

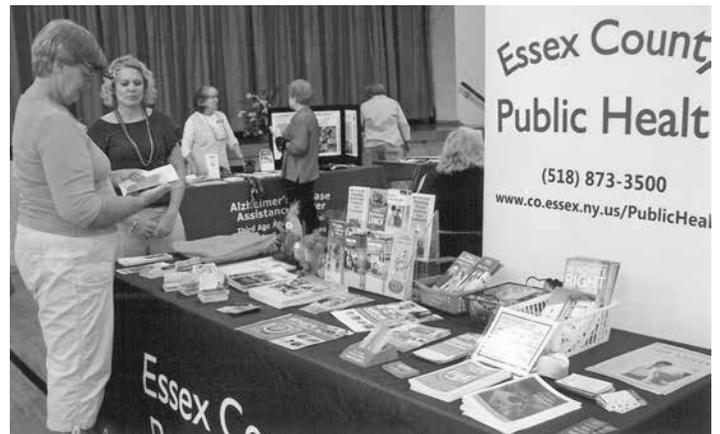
An objective of the Tri-Lakes Aging in Place Task Force was to raise awareness about the need for Social Adult Day Care in the Tri-Lakes. A social adult day care program has been established at the Saranac Lake Adult Center affiliated with the Northeastern New York Alzheimer's Disease Assistance Center, SUNY Plattsburgh. Third Age is a social day program for individuals who have cognitive and/or physical impairments that require supervision. Services include personal care, medication assistance, counseling, support groups, education and training. The Center provides respite for caregivers, therapeutic, social, and cognitive activities for participants, with a goal to maintain each individual at his or her highest level of functioning and to delay the need for nursing home placement. Third Age participants enjoy a wide range of social and recreational activities which include music, exercise, gardening, crafts, and pursuing special interests. Referrals are accepted from medical professionals, family members, and other caregivers. To schedule an intake interview or to receive additional information about Third Age Services, please contact Kathy Scott, Program Manager, at 518-569-5887 or the Main Office at 518-564-3377.



Elder participants from the Saranac Lake Social Adult Day Care Program enjoy a winter outing

Community Resources to Age in Place Successfully

Aging in Place Task Forces in all three Tri-Lakes communities have developed magnetic cards to place on refrigerators to assist elders in connecting to community services. The cards have been distributed to elders through churches, pharmacies, medical offices, the hospital, Adult Centers, Offices for the Aging, Public Health offices, nutrition sites, and senior housing facilities. Funding to print the cards was provided by Mercy Care for the Adirondacks, an anonymous donor, NBT Bank, and the Tupper Lake Town Board. If you would like an Aging in Place Services card, please contact Mercy Care's Office Manager Sheila Schneck at sschneck@adkmercy.org or at 518-523-5583.



Mercy Care's Aging in Place Community Empowerment Model Recognized Statewide

The model Mercy Care has developed to help people age in place successfully is being recognized throughout New York State.

At its 40th anniversary convention in Saratoga Springs, on October 10, 2012, the New York StateWide Senior Action Council awarded Mercy Care's President of the Board, Paul Reiss, Ph.D., its first Community Service Award for a lifetime of service to the community, particularly for older persons and children. "Dr. Reiss was selected because of his exemplary way he leads his life in service to others," according to Maria Alvarez, the Executive Director of StateWide. Dr. Reiss was given the award to honor someone who remains active in his senior years as an advocate for older persons but who has spent his entire life working to educate, serve and uplift the people in every community he has lived. In addition to his work with seniors, he has, through a family foundation, brought inner city youth to the Adirondacks for many years for a summer experience.



Paul Reiss, PhD

In November, Donna Beal, Mercy Care's Executive Director presented "*The Power of Communities Working Together*" to the Warren, Washington, Hamilton Counties Long Term Care Councils at the Crandall Public Library in Glens Falls. The presentation was made to approximately 50 human services providers that serve people with disabilities and those who are aging in the community. The focus of the presentation was to highlight the power of communities coming together to create change.

In April Mercy Care Staff Members Donna Beal and Sheila Schneck will present "*Helping our Communities Respond to Aging in Place*" to the NYS Chapter of the American Association of University Women who will be hosting their annual convention in Lake Placid. The AAUW is a national organization that supports equity for women and girls.

Touching the Adirondacks with Mercy



Circle of Mercy



Mercy Care
for the Adirondacks

Recent Grants Received

Mercy Care is most grateful to the following foundations, which have awarded generous grants since July 1, 2012 to help support Mercy Care's work to enhance the fullness of life of elders in the Adirondacks.

Adirondack Community Trust –
Frances Douglass Silleck Uihlein Mercy Center Fund
Adirondack Health Foundation
Frances L. Carpenter Foundation
Thomas and Agnes Carvel Foundation
Catholic Charities
The Max and Victoria Dreyfus Foundation
Jacob L. Reiss Foundation
The McCutchen Foundation
Sisters of Mercy Mid-Atlantic Community Ministry Fund
The Kingsley Foundation
Vopicka Family Foundation

**To make a donation on-line,
visit www.adkmercy.org
and click on **Donate Now**.**



Annual support from generous individual donors has helped to support Mercy Care in its first five years to extend loving care to many elders living in their own homes and to also develop a program to empower each of the Tri-Lakes communities to become more elder friendly. We ask you to consider the various ways you might be able to provide some longer-term support. We invite you to join the *Circle of Mercy*, which honors friends who have named Mercy Care for the Adirondacks in their estate plans. A bequest to Mercy Care in your will or a planned legacy gift through a donor-advised fund will leave an enduring gift of love and friendship for your elder neighbors to help them overcome the obstacles to living full and dignified lives as they age.



Mercy Care
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