



# FRIENDSHIP NEWSLETTER

Connecting Elder Neighbors

## A Place Like No Other

### Shirley Clark Elder Friend

Peace in a Strange World.

Living in Saranac Lake is so different - away from the busy world. Maybe it's the mountains, the clear and clean air, the quiet winter roads, no huge neon signs hiding the sky, or just maybe it's the people. People with different opinions, but no fighting or protests. The schools here have teenagers that really are interested in making good things happen. Oh sure, all is not perfect, but there is a quiet resistance to the awful world outside. Kids are interested in music and finding their future in peaceful things. (My opinion.)

Here, believe it or not, safe is the word. Again, there are no protests or shootings. Oh, I am sure some things are not perfect but here in Saranac Lake and close to Lake Placid, things are quiet, and people are friendly without judging new residents according to their political or religious beliefs. At least that has been my experience, just look at the acceptance.

Just look at the scenery, the beautiful tall pine trees close to the road, the deer accepting people and not running away. Here, where I live, you always see deer near your doorstep grazing and looking at you with beautiful eyes. There are ducks and geese in the ponds adding beauty for me. I find peace with all the outside world in trouble. Here everyone seems to find peaceful enjoyment of all that is offered. That is different. I noticed the difference after a trip to Plattsburgh where there were



cars everywhere and huge stores where everything is hard to find and stressful. I suppose they are necessary, but here in the Adirondacks people find what they need.

Over time, peace has ruled my life. I feel safe and comfortable. There are no problems because you are not like me. How wonderful to go outside at night and look at the stars with no loud noises or bright lights. Here my mind is at peace, friends are helpful, and competing is not necessary to prove your worth. What a wonderful place to bring up your children. I hope it all prepares them for the world and that they always want to come home.

## My Best Experience

➤➤➤ **Joan H. Crary**  
Elder Friend

I was born at home in Paul Smith's, New York. My best experience was being introduced to the love of my life by his sister, with whom I'd been friends with forever.

We went together for two years, breaking up a couple of times but getting back together, and eventually getting married and moving to Tupper Lake to make our home and raise four children - one girl and three boys. I've lost the girl and oldest boy in death.

I lost my husband in 2004 and we would have been married 73 years this coming November. I will be 92 come November. I still maintain my home - cooking, laundry and keeping a wood stove burning.

I really appreciate you teaming up my Friendship Volunteer with me. We hit it off right from the start and have so much in common.

## Finding Community in the Garden



Mercy Care Volunteers and Elder Friends are in the process of designing this year's Mercy Care Garden at the Lake Placid Community Garden site on the corner of Old Military Road and John Brown Road. We are incorporating lessons learned from last year and are developing a more accessible destination garden for everyone to enjoy.

The Mercy Care Garden will again include a source of nutritious food and, new this year, a cutting garden so that Volunteers and Elders, and Elder neighbors in the community, may cut and take home their personal choice of flowers to arrange and enjoy in the days following their visit.

Pending a grant award, the plans include a level pathway to the garden entrance, friendship benches to rest or take in the beauty of the garden, and a table with a shade umbrella all empowering more to participate in multiple ways and come together with purpose.

Mercy Care Volunteers, Elders, and friends from the community will find valuable social interactions and the opportunity to meet new friends with similar interests, allowing them to find community in the Mercy Care Garden.

For more information contact Lexi Bevilacqua at [abevilacqua@adkmercy.org](mailto:abevilacqua@adkmercy.org) or call her at 518-523-5446.

### Newsletter Submissions - we want to hear from you!

1. Tell us about the most incredible thing or place you have seen?
2. Share your work - a poem, a story, an experience, art created, photography.
3. Share your favorite memory of your lifetime.
4. Share your favorite recipe.

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**Mercy Care for the Adirondacks**  
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**12946**

**Email: [krodriguez@adkmercy.org](mailto:krodriguez@adkmercy.org)**



## A Day in the Life

➤➤➤ **Katherine Rhodes**  
**Director of Elder Care & Volunteer Services.**



Hi friends! I hope you've stayed cozy and safe during this long winter. The sun is streaming through my window as I write this at the end of February and it's giving me some hope that Spring is actually on the way. As much as I've enjoyed having a "real" winter

this year, I am ready for warmth and green leaves.

One of my favorite things to do in the Spring is to go for a walk and look for the ways Earth is coming back to life. It makes me feel like a little kid again, crawling around to see if the tulips are finally coming up. What does Spring make you think of?

A Mercy Care Volunteer who travels quite a bit sometimes brings a little memento from a past trip with him when he gives someone a ride. These small pieces of memory have prompted the telling of many stories. I love this idea and how adaptable it can be. Can you use it to get outside and share your stories this Spring?

Take a walk or sit outside with your Mercy Care friend, a neighbor, or even by yourself and look for something that sparks a memory you can share. Maybe you see a daffodil the exact same color as a bridesmaid dress you wore 50 years ago or hear a birdsong that has you excited to have your kitchen window open again.

As things get warmer, I hope you're able to get some fresh air and blow the dust off some happy memories. We all have stories worth telling, and I love hearing yours.

--Katherine

**Contact Information:**  
**Phone: 518-523-5583**  
**Email: krhodes@adkmercy.org**

## A Stroll in Spring

➤➤➤ **Frank Lescinsky**  
**Former Founding Board Member;**  
**Former Friendship Volunteer and**  
**Friendship Volunteer Trainer**

The trail deep in brown leaves.  
 So autumnal.  
 But look!  
 A bit of bright green  
 There among the brown,  
 And there,  
 And there,  
 With flowers  
 White and pink!  
 Oh, beauty of spring.

## ➤➤➤ Spiritual Care Companion

**Become a Spiritual Care Companion Volunteer or Request a Spiritual Care Companion**

The Mercy Care Spiritual Care Companion Volunteer receives training to accompany an elder on their spiritual journey who may be experiencing loss, grief, spiritual or physical distress, changing living circumstances, joy or blessings.

The Spiritual Care Companion serves as a caring presence and compassionate listener to issues of concern to the elder by being fully present in mind, heart, and soul to the elder's experience of loneliness, pain, struggle, or joy in telling their story.

Mercy Care offers spiritual care in accordance with each elder's personal desires, values, and faith community, or no faith community.

To request a Spiritual Care Companion, to become a Spiritual Care Companion Volunteer, or to further inquire, contact Lexi Bevilacqua, Director of Programs and Mission Integration, at [abevilacqua@adkmercy.org](mailto:abevilacqua@adkmercy.org) or call her at 518-523-5446.

When sending this newsletter to print, the inaugural Spiritual Care Companion Training, March 19th at Heaven Hill Farm, had seventeen registered participants.

## Technology Assistance Workshop: Internet Safety

Friendship Volunteers, Elder Friends and friends from the community brush up on basic technology skills with one-on-one instruction in Saranac Lake.



To Register for our next Technology Assistance Workshop, June 11th, contact Lexi Bevilacqua, Director of Programs and Mission Integration at [abevilacqua@adkmercy.org](mailto:abevilacqua@adkmercy.org) or call her at 518-523-5446

## An Ice Palace Excursion

### ➤➤➤ Barbara Hathaway Elder Friend and Friendship Volunteer

Barbara endured the cold temperature to experience the Saranac Lake Ice Palace with George DeChant, Friendship Volunteer.



## Social Impact Events

RSVP to Lexi at 518-523-5446 or [abevilacqua@adkmercy.org](mailto:abevilacqua@adkmercy.org) or register at [www.adkmercy.org/events](http://www.adkmercy.org/events)

### Friendship Volunteer Training

Wednesday, May 15th;  
Heaven Hill Farm  
302 Bear Cub Road, Lake Placid

### Finding Community in the Garden

**Seed Starter Planting** - April 29th;  
Heaven Hill Farm, Lake Placid

**Garden Prep Work Day** - May 28th;  
Mercy Care Garden at the Lake Placid Community Garden

**Garden Planting** - June 4th; Mercy Care Garden at Lake Placid Community Garden

### Annual Educational Forum

#### Age-friendly Growing Up, Growing Older, and Living Well

Wednesday, June 18th;  
Paul Smith's College

#### Keynote Presenters:

**Jeanette Leardi** - Author, *AGING SIDEWAYS: Changing Our Perspectives on Getting Older*

**Topic:** Aging Sideways: Let's Change How We Get Older.

**Greg Olsen** - Director, New York State Office for the Aging.

**Topic:** Value of Older Adults in the North Country.

**Julia Hotz** - Author, *The Connection Cure*  
**Topic:** *Social Prescribing - Reconnecting to What Matters!*

Register at [www.adkmercy.org](http://www.adkmercy.org)

### Age-friendly, Growing Up, Growing Older, and Living Well

"See yourself as a complete human being who happens to be aging, rather than as a person whose identity is consumed by the fact that you're getting older."

~Jeanette Leardi