**Allbee Takes the Reins**

Roger Allbee, who has served on the Grace Cottage Hospital Board of Trustees since 2003 and on the Grace Cottage Foundation Board for the past seven years, is the new Interim CEO at Grace Cottage Hospital, effective January 1st.

Roger was Vermont’s Secretary of Agriculture, Food, and Markets from 2007 to 2011 under Governor Jim Douglas; prior to that, he was Vermont’s Executive Director of the USDA Farm Service Agency. He has served on the U.S. House Committee on Agriculture for then-Congressman Jim Jeffords, and he was a VP of Farm Credit Banks (Northeast). Currently an advisor to the president of Vermont Technical College on the creation of a Vermont Institute for Agriculture and Food Systems, he has a bachelor of science degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of Vermont and a master of science degree from the University of Massachusetts.

Roger’s association with Grace Cottage dates from his birth, when he and his brother, Ron, were the first set of twins delivered by Grace Cottage Hospital founder, Dr. Carlos Otis. Roger and his wife, Ann, live in Townshend and have three grown children and four granddaughters.

**Grace Cottage Community Health Team Is Here to Help**

A very exciting new development at Grace Cottage this past year has been the Community Health Team, part of Vermont Blueprint for Health, a state-led initiative that transforms the way health care and health services are delivered. The Community Health Team at Grace Cottage, composed of skilled health care professionals, has already had over 500 visits with patients to help them develop plans to meet their personal health-care goals. Services are free of charge to Vermont residents, and help includes: chronic disease management, nutrition & exercise education, mental health/substance abuse assessment, connections to community & financial resources, diabetes education, health education, medication management, weight management, home visits, and a wide variety of educational programs. For more information, call (802) 365-4331.

Grace Cottage’s Community Health Team works one-on-one with patients to help them reach their personal health goals. Clockwise from top right: Heather Chaudoir (MSW, Behavioral Health Specialist), Crystal Mansfield (Director, Community Wellness), Liz Harrison (Health Coach), and Melody Lively (RN, Care Coordinator). Houghton Smith (RN, Certified Diabetes Educator, not pictured) completes the team.

**Shared Services Study Update**

Grace Cottage Hospital, Brattleboro Memorial Hospital (BMH), and Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center (DHMC) continue to work on identifying and assessing opportunities for more efficient coordination and collaboration of services.

“Helms & Company of Concord, New Hampshire, has completed a Shared Services Study, and the results are being carefully evaluated,” said Roger Allbee, Grace Cottage Interim CEO and board member. “Grace Cottage’s relationship with both BMH and DHMC has been extremely strong and interactive for many decades, and we’re all carefully assessing the needs of our patients and the communities we serve as we look ahead. Health care is moving entirely in the direction of what Grace Cottage provides: high-quality primary care with a focus on wellness and disease prevention, and on geriatric care. We plan to continue Grace Cottage’s leading role in the delivery of this care to all of our patients.”
YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION AT YOUR FINGERTIPS!

If you are a patient of any of Grace Cottage Family Health’s medical providers, you now have the option to request secure electronic access to your medical records via Grace Cottage Connections 24 hours a day, seven days a week, from any computer that has an Internet connection.

To sign up for Grace Cottage Connections, go to www.gracecottage.org and click on the Enrollment Form. Once you return the form and the information is entered, you will receive an invitation via e-mail to sign up, with step-by-step instructions. You create your own user name and password, not to be shared with anyone. You will then be able to view your medical records, look at any recent test results, renew prescriptions, and send messages to your doctor’s office. (Mental Health services are excluded.) Grace Cottage Connections is fully compliant with state and federal laws regarding your privacy.

SUE CLARK ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT AS DR. BACKUS’S NURSE

A member of the Grace Cottage staff for almost 46 years, Sue Clark has announced that she has decided to retire, although not completely… at least not yet. Sue is no longer Dr. Robert Backus’s nurse, as she had been for over 30 years, but she will continue to work part time in the Grace Cottage Family Health Call Center.

Sue started at Grace Cottage Hospital as an RN in May 1968, after graduating from Elliot Community Hospital’s School of Nursing in Keene, New Hampshire. With the beloved Madeline Abbott as her supervisor, Sue first worked the night shift, eventually switching to evenings, and then to days, as she married and had children. In 1980 she became Dr. Backus’s nurse.

“No family doctor can do his or her job well without the help of a good nurse,” said Dr. Backus. “Nurses for family doctors must, by design, have a hard shell, a soft heart, and know when to tuck in their necks. Sue has the full monty. She is an exceptionally bright, mature, sensible, very hard-working nurse, sensitive to patients’ needs.

I was blessed and Grace Cottage is blessed to have her here.”

Gail Coleman, who has been at Grace Cottage for “only” 27 years, is now Dr. Backus’s nurse—the transition has been seamless.

A grateful patient writes:

“We were so very pleased with the exceptional professionalism of all those who helped us in your hospital. Keep up the GREAT work!”

Janet Kirby
Agawam, MA
**Wishes Granted...**

- Margaret Bernache donated funds to purchase a camera and printer for the Emergency Department, for the documentation of wounds and trauma.
- Merchants Bank funded a grant application for the purchase of laptop computers to teach patients how to access Grace Cottage Connections.
- Michael & Eileen Sweeney made a donation for the purchase of a portable pulse oximeter and a Doppler monitor attachment.
- Bock & Kim Yeo donated funds to purchase three lead aprons for the Diagnostic Imaging Department.
- Lisa’s Love Charitable Association made a donation for the purchase of three new chairs for the Grace Cottage Family Health waiting room, in memory of Lisa Young Noble.
- Richard & Carol Steiner made a donation for the purchase of two reclining chairs for use by hospital patients and their visitors.
- Pete & Linda Hoag donated the funds for the purchase of TV remotes with pillow speakers for hospital patient use, and cassette covers for the Diagnostic Imaging Department.
- Two anonymous donors made donations to purchase a commercial mop bucket for Housekeeping, in honor of Eloise Winot.
- Price Chopper’s Golub Foundation made a donation for the Diagnostic Imaging Department.

**Wishes Made...**

- Mount Lebanon Order of the Eastern Star #89 donated the funds for the purchase of a walker basket for use by hospital patients.
- Norm & Carol Pacun donated funds for the purchase of a mirror box for Rehab patients.
- Ernie & Sheila Friedli donated funds to purchase a variety of equipment for hospital patient use for the Diagnostic Imaging Department and for the Dietary and Housekeeping Departments.
- Catherine Dauchy made a donation to fund the purchase of a foil and plastic wrap dispenser for the Dietary Department, in memory of Stuart Dauchy.
- Frank & Helen Short made a contribution towards patient wireless Internet access, in honor of Wayne Rowell.
- Bill & Dorothy Doyle made a gift for the purchase of a blood pressure cuff for use by the Rehab Department, in honor of Messenger Valley Pharmacist Greg Dean.
- John & Sue Eastwood made a donation for the purchase of a wide variety of equipment for hospital patient use, and for use by patients of the Diagnostic Imaging Department.
- Ted & Nan Danforth donated funds to purchase four bed alarms to warn the nursing staff when a patient is at risk of falling, in memory of John Newton.
- Dr. Marvin & Connie Wool made a gift for mental health services at Grace Cottage Hospital.
- Galen Pinkham made a donation for the purchase of beverage cups for the Dietary Department.
- An anonymous donor contributed funds to purchase a wide variety of Wish List items. Since we don’t know who you are, we can thank you only via Cottage Door!

**A Visitor Says Thanks**

“Every visit I have made to the Grace Cottage Hospital Emergency Room – and there have been a few over the years – confirms what a very special place it is.”

Carol Pacun
Grafton, VT

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**Rehabilitation at Grace Cottage**

Patient Janet Kierys of East Dover is all smiles with rehab therapist Teresa Castro, just one week after a double knee replacement performed by Dr. Elizabeth McClarney at Brattleboro Memorial Hospital.
Volunteer Positions

“Volunteers are not paid, not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless.”

This quote certainly sums up how Grace Cottage employees and patients think of our many volunteers. Thanks to a flourishing volunteer program that includes: 1) Grace Greeters (one three-hour shift which begins or ends with a free lunch; the only time commitment is that you take one shift per week, month, or season, it’s up to you!), 2) Couriers (drive with items from Townshend to Brattleboro and back in the middle of the day, doing your own personal errands along the way, if you wish), 3) Clerical help (on a project or as-needed basis, completely flexible hours), 4) Grace Gardeners (spring, summer, fall, to plant and/or weed, whatever hours and time suit you in the Garden of Grace and Hospice Garden); 5) Event volunteers (2014 events include the 5K on May 10, Tee Up for Health on June 21, Tour de Grace on July 12, Fair Day on August 2, and Community Health Festival on September 20).

For more information about any of these opportunities, make an appointment with Volunteer Coordinator Liz Harrison (365-3738; eharrison@gracecottage.org). We’ll treat you to lunch as we talk about what suits you and your schedule best.

A volunteer writes:

“When I’m volunteering as a Grace Greeter I’m so busy that I never know what time it is,” said Elaine Murray (a former owner, with her husband, Charles, of the Three Mountain Inn in Jamaica, Vermont). “I’d like to continue as a Grace Greeter for the next 20 years, and I hear the same thing from just about all the Greeters!”

Elaine Murray
West Townshend, VT

Grace Cottage’s fifth annual Spring into Health 5K will be held on Saturday, May 10, starting and ending on the Townshend Common. Registration begins one hour prior to the 8:30 a.m. start time. Runners, walkers, sprinters, and strollers are all welcome. $15/adults, $10/children (ages 13 and under) includes a race shirt for the first 150 registrants. Registration forms are available at www.gracecottage.org/events. Last year’s 158 participants ranged in age from two months to 102 years old!

Fifth Annual Tee Up for Health

Grace Cottage’s fifth annual Tee Up for Health golf benefit will be on a different day of the week, date of the month, and at a new location this year. Mark your calendar for Saturday, June 21; tee-off time at 1 p.m. at The Hermitage Golf Club at Haystack Mountain in Wilmington, Vermont. Last year’s event raised over $25,000 for the Grace Cottage Patient Care Fund. Registration, which includes greens fees, cart, lunch, and dinner, is $125 per golfer; an online auction will again be part of the fundraiser. Go to www.gracecottage.org/events for more information.

Tour de Grace

The 9th Annual Tour de Grace bicycle ride (17.7 mostly downhill miles from Stratton to Grace Cottage Hospital) will be held on Saturday, July 12. Save the date; more information will follow in the June issue of Cottage Door, or go to www.gracecottage.org/events to learn more and to register. 85 riders of all ages participated in last summer’s Tour de Grace—a great time was had by all.
Held the first Saturday of August, Grace Cottage Hospital Fair Day includes not only an all-day auction (see below), but also 22 bargain booths (collectibles, plants, books, jewelry, art, children’s costumes, cotton candy, baked goods, homemade ice cream, lemonade, dunking booth, and more), plus free pony rides and entertainment all day. Free parking, free admission.

Inspired by the arrival of seed catalogs this month, the Grace Cottage Hospital Fair committee is beginning its planning for the 64th Fair on August 2nd. Ideas are germinating to make this another notable event. Returning after a few years’ hiatus is the Art Show headed by several local artists. The show will again be held in the Townshend Church rooms where there is lots of space for display and browsing.

The Fair Committee welcomes two new members, Karen Emerson and Laura Smith. Laura will be heading up the book booth and will be looking for book-lovers to help with the sorting.

**Needed:** Auction items (furniture, collectibles, etc.) and Volunteers

**Contact:** Stan Holt at 365-4455 or spenholt@svcable.net

Stan Holt, Auxiliary President

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**Auxiliaries of the Year**

Grace Cottage Hospital Auxiliary awarded the Ruth W. Pelsue Auxilian of the Year Award to two volunteers who are crucial to the success of Fair Day every year: H.K. “Kit” Martin and Art Monette.

Kit and Art are very well known locally; they’ve owned and operated the Townshend Auction Gallery for over 25 years. Kit started in the auction business at the tender age of eight, offering items for sale at his family’s home in Newfane (with his parents’ permission, one would hope!). Art’s grandmother, Lelah Boomer, was a collector of old bottles, which inspired her grandson to be an early bird at auctions, estate, and tag sales.

Art and Kit donate their considerable talent and a great deal of time and energy to make the auction the focal point of Fair Day every year. The auction begins at 9:30 a.m. on the Townshend Common on Saturday, August 2, and runs until about 4:30 p.m., depending on the crowd. With sweat pouring down his brow, Kit uses his sharp wit to tease, berate, and cajole the audience into buying, with a lot of laughs throughout the day. It’s great entertainment complete with the opportunity to purchase wonderful bargains which support a fabulous cause, so don’t miss the auction this year.

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**Thank You**

The Grace Cottage Hospital Auxiliary donated almost $56,000 to Grace Cottage Hospital from Fair Day 2013 proceeds, thanks to fairgoers, those who donated items, and those who volunteered time, energy and expertise before, during, and after the Fair. This year’s proceeds were used to purchase the following items: an EKG Machine ($12,575), two new inpatient beds ($16,000), a replacement nurse cart ($5,000), laptops and docking stations ($9,600), a sheetrock sander ($300), and a telemedicine system ($12,000).
We Are Humbled…

...grateful, and overwhelmed by the donations that have been pouring in since the beginning of our fiscal year (October 1, 2013); more than 850 individual gifts totaling over $360,000. We’ve called and written all of you to thank you for your contributions, but we want to take this additional opportunity to let you know how greatly these gifts are appreciated. Your donations enable this small, rural hospital to care for patients in a highly professional, and, as one patient said, “off-the-charts” personal way. On behalf of all employees (75% of whom donate to Grace Cottage Hospital annually, an extremely high percentage for any hospital) and the patients we serve, thank you.

The Gift of Giving

Grace Cottage Hospital recently received a bequest of $10,000 from Sylvia Gnazzo, in thanks for the wonderful care she received from Dr. Timothy Shafer and Family Nurse Practitioner Louise McDevitt. Sylvia’s niece, Polly Philbrook, provided the following description of Sylvia to share with Cottage Door readers:

Sylvia was born in 1915 in Plainville, Connecticut, where she lived for over 60 years until her retirement from TRW Corporation. Her interest in skiing prompted her to invest in a bond in Stratton Mountain and to buy a home in South Newfane, which she shared for many years with two of her six siblings and her mother. She was an avid golfer, tennis player, skier, and skater, and although she did not have children of her own, she enjoyed teaching these activities to her 12 nieces and nephews. Sylvia had a wonderful sense of humor and mischief, and all of her nieces and nephews would refer to her as “The Fun Aunt.” She loved to sit in the sun, and did this until she became confined to bed; she died of natural causes in February 2013 at the age of 97.

Fortunately, Sylvia had let Grace Cottage know about this bequest over a decade ago, when she checked the box on her donation envelope that says, “Yes, I have remembered Grace Cottage in my will or other estate planning,” so we were able to thank her for this gift while she was still alive.

If you would like to let us know that you have left a bequest to Grace Cottage Hospital, or would like to establish a charitable annuity or another planned gift, contact Andrea Seaton at (802) 365-9109 or aseaton@gracecottage.org.

Paintings Inspired by Grace Cottage Visits

Susan Potter Smith, of West Wardsboro, died unexpectedly on Friday, October 4, the morning after she’d completed hanging an exhibit of her artwork at the Martha Canfield Library in Arlington, Vermont. Susan’s husband, Fred, in expressing thanks from her family to all Grace Cottage employees for the incredible care delivered, arranged for her words below to be read aloud at her funeral.

“Wherever I go, wherever I am, I look for the next picture. A well-used canvas bag brimming with painting gear is packed and on the back seat, ready when the picture comes into view. I enjoy drawing and painting from the road; getting to know and appreciate the place. During the past few years, these watercolors have evolved. Simply said, Grace Cottage Rehab has played a big role in my discovery. Fred and I travelled to the Rehab Center twice a week for several months. While Fred kept his appointments, I looked for pictures in the neighborhood. I found them in every direction. These paintings have become my personal diary of these visits. They are stories of a busy yet quiet place solely devoted to the wellness of others.”

Susan’s family requested that donations in her memory be made to Grace Cottage Hospital and these gifts totalled over $2,500.

The Dennison House and barn across the street from Grace Cottage Hospital were the subject of this watercolor by Susan Potter Smith, created when her husband was in physical therapy. The Otis family donated these buildings to Grace Cottage Hospital last summer.

We Are Humbled…
A grateful patient writes:

“We all have many roads we travel. Lately, mine has had a lot of stays in hospitals. I am pleased to say that of all the places I’ve been on my journey, Grace Cottage is without question the best!”

Gary O’Neal
Ashuelot, NH

Gifts were recently received in honor of:

Dr. Robert Backus  Dewey Barry
Francis Capen    Kerry Capponcelli
Dr. Kenneth Chao  Greg Dean
Grace Cottage Doctors & Staff  Dr. Maurice Geurts  C.J. King
Dr. Ronald Klinger  Phyllis Krisher
Dr. Moss Linder  Dot Maggio
Theresa Maggio  Dr. Ajay Misra
Messenger Valley Pharmacy Staff  Tom & Catherine Nemchek
Howard Osgood  Pirie Family
Wayne Rowell  Dr. Tim Shafer
Eloise Winot

Donations have been received between September 15th and January 15th in memory of the following individuals:

Lester Allbee  Alwin Ameden  Gene & Marie Avenia  Frances Baccile
Chris Ballou  Larry Ballou  Russ Barber  Bob & Ginna Barrett  Mollie Beattie
Raoul Bedard  Jack & Shirley Benson  Cecil Bills  Stan & Margaret Bills
Richard Brackner  Edwin Bristol  Herbert & Ilene Brooks  Norm Brooks
Phyllis Brown  Charlene Clayton Carey  Nancy Chard  Raymond Clayton
Jean Clouse  Bill Cobb  Chris Coleman  Phil Coleman  Phyllis Coleman
Harry Conklin  Neva Corse  Edward Coughlin  Wendell Covey  A. Luke Crispe
Ruth Crowley  Stuart Dauchy  Dr. Forbes Delany  Elsie Detjen  Richard Dexter
Lucina Dippel  Ken & Stella Dowley  Richard Dowley  Ida Dutton  Lorena Eaton
Lilian Ebeling  Marjorie Eginton  Mary Eginton  Blanche Berry Ekstrom
Don Elliott  Jennifer Ellis  Brian Evans  Bryan & Ruby Evans  Doug & Alice Evans
Jim Faas  Ronald Feldman  Bud Field  Nat & Irene Fillow  Debra Kay Fish-Diette
Bea Fisher  Jean Pratt Fisher  Richard Flynn  John C. Follett
John & Dorothy Fornuto  Mary Evans Fox  Bertha Frothingham
Catherine Atwater Galbraith  Marilyn Gates  Alexandra Giallella
Sylvia Gnauso  Louise Godt  Roland Gould  Greenleaf family members
Ellis Greenwood  Louis Gross  Richard Haas  Alexander Hadden
David Hamilton  Jack Hill  George & Thelma Holden  George Holden, Jr.
Helen Holmes  Bert & Louise Howard  Andrew Huddock  Edward Hurley
Silver Husky  Ruth Jacobs  Ann Johnson  Joseph & Joan Keefe  Eda Kent
Melba Harlan King  Dorothy Kingsley  Don Kissel  Otto & Beatrice Kleppner
Charles & Ruth Knights  Gerda Krajewski  Warren Kronemeyer  Norman Lake
Jack Lambert  Richard & Barbara Lamprey  Bea Landers  Richard Lapan
Maurice Laselle  Merrill Lawrence  Don Leigh  Barbara Litchfield
Howard Lott  David Lowe  Eleanor Lowe  Jack & Ruth Lyman
Gertrude MacDougall  Fannie Mantel  Dr. Bill & Joan Martin  Gary Martin
Larry Martin  Lucille Martin  Lester Mayer  Joan McConnell
Jim & Barbara McMennamin  Betty Merrill  Mary Meyer  Bessie Miles
Elden Mills  Carolyn Moon  Florence Moore  Kathy Moore  Connie Nelson
John Newton  Thomas Nicholson, Sr.  Lisa Young Noble  Mavis Oliver
Herbert & Evangeline Osborn  Dr. Carlos & Ruth Otis  Marion Parks
Phyllis Patrick  Jeremy Paulus  Charles (Red) Pearson  Neil & Ruth Pelsue
James Perry  Kim Perry  Iver Peterson  Oliver & Esther Peterson
Irene Phelps  Earl Pickering  Oscar & Bernadette Plumley  Richard Plunkett
Elaine Prouty  Janet Puglisi  Jim Quillard  Betty Radens  Irene Reagan
Carol Rees  Lois Riley  William & Florence Rounds  Margaret Ryan
Hank Sanders  Sandy Saunders  Margaret Savanella  Fred & Cicely Scherer
Joyce Scheuerman  Evan Schilling  Beverly Scott  Patricia Seaton
Charles Slover  Mildred Smith  Susan Potter Smith  Jean Sorientino
Eric & Gertrude Spafford  Dr. Houston Stevens  Della Stowell
Soja Kruedener-Streuve  Jakov & Iva Sucic  Ken & Joan Swan
John Temple Swing  George Tagariello  Walter Tarbell  Harry Trask
Dr. Jim & Dr. Marjorie Trousdell  Dr. Bill Wallace  Euphemia Wallace
Alan & Barbara Webster  Alma Welker  Wanda Welker  Mona West
Arlene P. White  Harry & Phyllis Wolff  Milton Wolinsky
Margaret Woodruff  Joan Zully

We extend our sympathy to the families and friends of these loved ones, and our appreciation to those who have given in their memories. When memorial gifts are received by Grace Cottage Hospital, the donor is thanked, and the next of kin is notified of the gift. (The amount given is never divulged.)

Grace Cottage Hospital & Grace Cottage Foundation are 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. The mission of Grace Cottage Foundation is to raise funds on behalf of Grace Cottage Hospital. Donations to Grace Cottage Foundation are tax deductible to the extent allowable by law. Grace Cottage Foundation’s Federal Tax ID # is: 03-0343282. Donations may be made by cash, credit card, check, stocks, bonds, or other tangible assets. Call Andrea Seaton, Executive Director, at (802) 365-9109. An audit of Grace Cottage Hospital & Grace Cottage Foundation is available upon request.
I just finished filling out your standard assessment of my stay at Grace Cottage in October. I found that there was no way that this form could convey my appreciation for the wonderful treatment I had received, and wanted to add a more personal thank you.

First, I found that Grace Cottage was not at all a conventional hospital. I felt that I had been taken in by a very caring, talented family and friends.

I was heard; not just listened to. I was respected, but also held accountable for learning how to heal and avoid further injury. I was expected to thrive, and yet there was great genuine caution shown by the staff who feared that I would take on too much.

Because I was there primarily for Rehab after a fall, I developed a singular respect for your PT [Physical Therapy] and OT [Occupational Therapy] staff – for Bill, Wendy, Teresa, Diane, to name just a few. They trusted my motivation, schooled me in what I could do safely and corrected me gently when I failed to follow their instruction. They stepped back when necessary to allow me my independence, while setting reasonable goals for continued success.

However, this still fails to really convey my gratitude. Your staff are real people, who have real feelings. Real people who shared their real lives and were interested in mine. They made me as comfortable as was possible in my very uncomfortable position. They were constant in their professional care.

Overall, I realize that Grace Cottage does the impossible. It’s not a fancy place like many modern hospitals, and it certainly doesn’t put on airs, but it certainly does more with what it does have. It has incredible talented people who actually care. It has food that is delicious and healthy. It has a program that is intense and speeds healing. It even provided me with roommates who were friends – one was an old college classmate I hadn’t seen since 1959.

In short, thank you. I find that I can’t sing Grace Cottage Hospital’s praises loudly enough.

—Jeremy Birch, Putney, VT