



Green Mountain Foster Grandparent Program
6 Court Street
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Mrs. B received the Golden Falcon award for excellence at the Fair Haven Elementary School.



Green Mountain FGP



National Senior Service Corps

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Our Sponsor:



Green Mountain Foster Grandparents are people age 55 or over who provide one to one and group assistance with children. Grandparents serve as mentors, tutors and role models to youth. Foster Grandparents provide 15–40 hours of volunteer service each week. They receive a modest stipend and other benefits. Foster Grandparents provide services in a variety of settings. These include daycare, elementary schools, high schools, Head Start Programs, libraries, after school programs and recreation centers. This program serves Rutland, Addison and Bennington Counties. It is the goal of the program to enable limited income persons 55 and over to remain physically and mentally active and to enhance their self-esteem through continued participation in needed community service. In addition, this will enable children to achieve improved physical, mental and social development, as well as assistance with their educational needs. The Foster Grandparent program is funded through the Corporation for National & Community Service and the United Way of Rutland County.



FGP News!



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Meet Shirley Cook

Shirley was born at home in East Pittsford, VT and grew up in Rutland. Her mother was a homemaker and her father installed and repaired oil burners all around the Rutland area. She has two older sisters.

After high school, Shirley joined the Army where she met her husband. They lived in San Francisco for a while and then he got transferred to Chicago.

Shirley was married for 21 years and in 1976 was divorced and returned to Vermont after her youngest girl finished college.

At the age of 32, Shirley started college at a Junior College in Glen Ellen, Illinois. She went to school at night for 15 years. After finishing her Associates degree, she transferred to a 4 year College in Elmhurst, IL for another year and half. During that time, she took a special library course which led to the best job she ever had. Assistant Li-

brarian at the Research & Development Lab in Oakbrook, IL. "I've done many different things, including my worst job as a chamber maid at a motel in Brandon—what a back breaker!" she says.

Shirley has three daughters, Lenore, who lives in Wisconsin and is disabled; Yvonne, who lives in Kansas and has run a daycare for 25 years; and Paula, who lives in Brandon and is a rural mail carrier and works for VT Country Store. She has 6 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren.

Shirley has a 10 year old, 12 lb. cat named Boots and a 7 year old 5 lb. Chihuahua, named Kiki. She says they are a real comfort to her.

Shirley is an avid reader and likes authors James Patterson and John Grisham. "At this point in my life I try to go with the flow. I really enjoy my home," Shirley notes.

Shirley says she joined the Foster



Shirley Cook

Grandparent Program to give her something to think about besides herself. "Also, it gets me up in the morning. I never expected to get so much in return from the kids and my wonderful teacher, Linda Clark," she smiles. Shirley has been a volunteer grandparent at Lothrop school in Pittsford since September 2013. She and Mrs. Clark have developed a wonderful relationship and Mrs. Clark says she couldn't do without Shirley. Shirley is very proud to have served her country during the Korean conflict. She was

"That is what learning is. You suddenly understand something you've understood all your life, but in a new way."

Doris Lessing

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part of a headquarters company in the Signal Corp at Ft. Monmouth, NJ. She processed recruits from basic training to Korea and those coming back home.

Shirley says the thing that changed her life the most was her divorce. She discovered a strength she didn't know that she had. One thing that Shirley says she has always wanted to do was to drive an 18 Wheeler! As a child she would watch them driving up Woodstock Avenue and think that they looked like a lot of fun. "I hope it's not too late!" she laughs.

Her favorite toy as a child was an African American doll that she loved before she was "politically correct"—seems to us she was ahead of her time! She always had cats as a child and she would dress them up and push them around in her doll carriage. "Once I took one of my cats to the vet. I was about 6 and he had a sore on his leg. When I got home, I found out that you needed an appointment and it cost money! My Mom saved me and handled the details," she grins.

The one thing in life she has learned is that "when the rubber hits the road, the only one you can depend on is yourself. I also know that I need friends to make me happy and animals to comfort me." All good things to learn in life!

Shirley says, "At my age, to feel needed and appreciated is so valuable. The Foster Grandparent Program gives me that. Thank you!" Well Shirley, you are certainly appreciated by us, the children you serve each day, your teacher, and the Lothrop School. We love your spirit and are grateful that you decided to become a volunteer grandparent with our program!

Hobbies: Reading, Sudoku, Bingo

Likes: Historical Fiction, Civil War

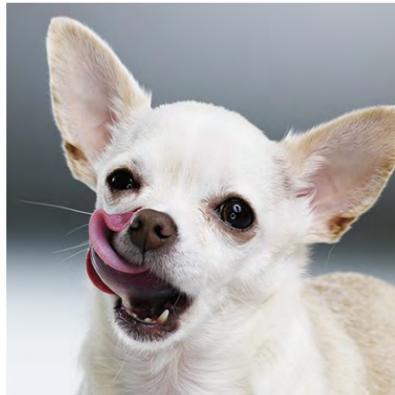
Dislikes: Spinach, icy roads, nosy neighbors

Favorite Movie: Gone with the Wind

Favorite Authors: James Patterson & John Grisham

Favorite Book: To Kill a Mockingbird

Favorite Music: Country, Grand Ole Opry



FGP Openings

Tapestry—After School Programs West Rutland 3:00 to 5:30 & Proctor Elementary 2:15 to 5:15

Castleton Elementary School—Library position to include shelving books, helping children find books, computer assistance.

Sacred Heart School—Bennington, positions available in classrooms. Must complete safe environment protocol and background checks through the school.

Otter Creek Child Center—Middlebury, Infant and Toddler rooms need a grandparent

Grace Christian School—Bennington, Combined 3rd/4th Grade classroom needs grandparent to work with students

West Rutland School—West Rutland Kindergarten class needs active grandparent for fast-paced classroom of 5 year olds.



Our holiday Message to all:

"This Christmas, mend a quarrel. Seek out a forgotten friend. Dismiss suspicion and replace it with trust. Write a letter. Give a soft answer. Encourage youth. Manifest your loyalty in word and deed. Keep a promise. Forego a grudge. Forgive an enemy. Apologize. Try to understand. Examine your demands on others. Think first of someone else. Be kind. Be gentle. Laugh a little more. Express your gratitude. Welcome a stranger. Gladden the heart of a child. Take pleasure in the beauty and wonder of the earth. Speak your love and then speak it again."

Howard Hunter

Aging & Alcohol In-Service



Kelli Wilson Young, Evergreen Clinician and Crisis Worker from RMHS, presented at our November in-service. Kelli is the Eldercare Substance Use Disorders clinician at Evergreen. She broke our group up into small groups and had them discuss people or situations where alcohol or drugs were a concern in the lives of people they knew or a neighbor or colleague. They were not to use names for confidentiality reasons. After the small groups met, a discussion followed and questions were asked about where seniors might get assistance for their friends, relatives or people they know who might need help with substance abuse issues. Council on Aging and Evergreen were mentioned as resources as well as the crisis line at RMHS. Thank you Kelli for the info.

New Grandparents



Dianne LaMoria

← Dianne started October 16 at the Therapeutic Continuum Program at Northwest School and currently volunteers at the Rutland County Parent Child Center on Chaplin Avenue. Dianne worked previously at the Department of Social Services (DCF) and the Rutland County Women's Network doing social work. She was also employed with the Sheriff's Department and in that position worked with prisoners at the jail.

Linda has worked for three → years with Everybody Wins at Shoreham Elementary School. Before that she worked in construction. She started volunteering as a volunteer grandparent in the Head Start classroom at Mary Hogan School and will soon be volunteering at Otter Creek Children's Center.



Deb Suttle

← Deb started December 12 at Clarendon Elementary School in Jamie Therriault's 4th Grade classroom. Deb is a retired teacher who moved to VT from Florida recently. In Florida she taught K-2 grades. She is proficient in Spanish, and loves reading, writing, math and science.

Welcome Dianne, Linda & Deb!



Linda Laberge



Notes from Nan



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all! I hope everyone has a wonderful, warm holiday season. I know mine will be special with our two granddaughters here as well as our three sons and their respective loved ones. Having little ones in our home again after so many years, makes Christmas come alive in a way we have not enjoyed for years! What a wonderful reminder of the true meaning of this time of year and the wonder it brings out in all of us.

So as I have shared with all of you, 2018 will be my last year as your Director. My plan is to retire in the fall of 2018 so I will relish and enjoy each of our get togethers and inservices in the coming year, knowing they will be my last ones. I am privileged to have had so many years to work with and for you. I look forward to spending this final year with each and every one of you!

As I like to do as our year winds down, I must add my sincerest appreciation for Debbie and her dedication, patience, and efficiency as our Program Coordinator. What she accomplishes is the work that 2 or more would have trouble producing! Thanks as well to Lynn Bosworth our Addison County FGP Coordinator. Lynn's kind and caring approach with all of those involved in the FG Program have increased our numbers there consistently.

I also want to say a word about bequests to FGP. We have had some folks ask about how they might do that. It is really very simple. You can designate in your will that you would like to have folks donate to FGP in lieu of flowers or as a preference along with any other charitable options you may offer. Or, you family may make that determination if you would like them to. FGP is a non profit organization just like the American Cancer Society or RAV-NAH and as such, we rely on grants, donations, etc. to operate and provide our services. Donations can be made in memory of a loved one or to honor a former or current volunteer grandparent. We welcome such a tribute and hope you will consider FGP as a potential recipient of such a bequest or donation.

Finally, stay safe this winter. That means keep an eye on the roads and sidewalks when driving/walking to avoid ice. Be sure to wear safe footwear with a good tread that will grip the sidewalks to help with slippery situations. Better still if you are questioning the wisdom of going out, chances are you shouldn't! We want to hear that everyone has had a safe, accident free, winter. — Nan

Mill River Chamber Singers & Holiday Party



Despite a snowy day, our holiday party went on as scheduled (we tried to reschedule it, but at this time of year, space, catering and our singers could not all be accommodated on any date!). The singers were fabulous and received a standing ovation! A big thank you to Kristin Cimonetti, their director for arranging to have them come to our event.



The appetizers were yummy (thank you East Creek Catering) and there were plenty left over to take home. Thank you to Grace Church for always hosting us and to Ken Willis for the perfect table set up every time. Our craft auction netted \$201 to donate to the Vt. Food Bank! YAY FGP's!