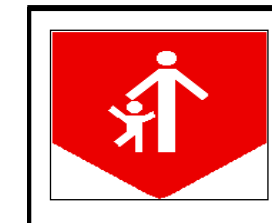




Green Mountain Foster Grandparent Program
6 Court Street
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FGP News!



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Meet Henry Lebo

Henry was born in Proctor, Vt and grew up and attended schools in Rutland.

After 8th grade, Henry moved to MA to live with his aunt and uncle and while there he worked in the Cranberry bogs (his worst job—he says he was out in the cold water and bad weather) and in a silver factory. Eventually he moved back to VT and then to Maryland where he was a cook at various restaurants, including a 50's themed diner, for the next 40 years.

Henry was the third child in a family of 7 children, 6 boys and 1 girl. His father was a foundry worker and worked for Vermont Marble and Howe Scale. His mother stayed at home and took care of the children. Henry has two living brothers left, one in Alabama and the other in Maryland.

His sister lives here in Rutland.

Henry's favorite companion is his 12 year old Shih Tzu, Homer.

After his retirement, Henry moved back to VT and became a Volunteer Foster Grandparent. For the past five years he has been at Northeast School and is currently in Mrs. Kaymk's first grade classroom. "I love being around the kids. Not only does it give me something to do every day, but I get to watch them grow and how much they have learned from last year," says Henry. He considers volunteering with the children his most important accomplishment in his life.

Henry says his life changed greatly when he got his dog, Homer. "I'm healthier. I do



Henry Lebo

more things. Before I didn't want to socialize or go anywhere. Now with Homer I am more active," he notes.

As a child Henry says he always enjoyed helping his Mother cook and that he wanted to grow up to be a chef.

His favorite toys as a child were Mr. Potato Head and "Cooties." "My mother used to say she didn't want me to have Mr. Potato Head because I took all her potatoes!" he laughs.

"The purpose of life is not to be happy - but to matter, to be productive, to be useful, to have it make some difference that you have lived at all"
~Leo Rosten



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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.

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Henry Lebo (cont. from page 1)

Mrs. Dailey at Park Street School was his favorite teacher. She was firm by had a good attitude and took time out of school to be with Henry. "She always told me about the good things. She taught me right from wrong. One day I was walking with her and she told me to walk on the inside in case a brick or something fell off the building." She went out of her way to spend time with him.

Henry says the craziest thing he ever did was to attempt to drive in a bad snow storm with his cousin and they went off the highway over a ditch. Thankfully a big semi tractor-trailer came along and pulled them out.

His biggest mentor and closest friend is Jeanette Colburn, a lifelong friend who has always been there for Henry when he needed help. They even go camping to Maine together.

What lessons has Henry learned in life? "Be honest, share and be kind to others," says Henry. Sounds like lessons that are pretty pertinent in today's world and that many could try to be better at doing.

Thank you, Henry for being willing to share your time and talents with the children at Northeast School. You are appreciated and valued by them and by us here at the Foster Grandparent Program!



Hobbies: crafts and crocheting

Likes: Christmas, camping

Dislikes: Smokers

Favorite Actor: James Dean

Favorite Music: Country, Dolly Parton

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.

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

VAC — Red Room (2 year olds) and Brown Room (4 year olds) Blue Room (3 year olds). Very active children need loving, consistent grandparent as role models and mentors. Patience, kindness and tolerance a plus.

Grace Preschool—Preschool age children need two caring, attentive grandparents who take initiative and work well with staff and others.

RCPC—Brandon and Rutland sites need active grandparents willing to volunteer with pre-school, 2-3 year olds and younger children. Lots of play, action and up and down abilities involved! Patience and flexibility a plus.



Holiday Party 2018

Our annual holiday party took place December 13th and once again the Mill River Singers performed their beautiful music for us. Our Foster Grandparents very generously donated lots of non-perishable items to the Community Cupboard and we had appetizers and good conversation with the new table set up in groups of 10. We thank you for your generosity and hope that you have a wonderful 2019!



Carol O'Dell & Donna Belluzzi



Marlene Quinn & Betty Woodard



Marit Lewis & Donna Crichton



Grandparents enjoyed listening to the Mill River Singers performance of holiday music.



Non-perishable items donated by our Foster Grandparents to The Community Cupboard

November Veteran's Day In-Service



Jeanne Schmelzenbach



Jeanne Schmelzenbach, former Army veteran during Desert Storm, was the guest speaker at our Veteran's Day Celebration in-service in November. Jeanne spoke very eloquently and personally about her experiences in Iraq during Desert Storm as a nurse in a tent city hospital. Many of our volunteer Foster Grandparents were very moved by her stories and everyone commented that Jeanne was the best speaker we have had at our in-services. Jeanne brought photos and a poster board depicting Iraq's landscape and the hospital in Iraq along with some of the staff. We were also fortunate to have the American Legion Post 31 Honor Guard present the colors and demonstrate the folding of the flag and the meaning of the 13 different folds, which many of us did not know about. Thank you to Jeanne Schmelzenbach, Ron Fairbanks and the Honor guard for their service to our country and for being willing to present to our volunteer Foster Grandparents.



The Healing Power of Pets for Seniors

Let's face it. Getting older can be very lonely. Loved ones and friends move or pass away, and it becomes increasingly difficult to leave the house and participate in once-loved activities. But there is one source of comfort and companionship that benefits seniors in countless ways: pets.

Animals can help reduce stress, lower blood pressure, and increase social interaction and physical activity. Pets provide other intangibles, too. "Dogs and cats live very much in the present," says Dr. Jay P. Granat, a New Jersey-based psychotherapist. "They don't worry about tomorrow, which can be a very scary concept for an older person. An animal embodies that sense of here and now, and it tends to rub off on people." Pets can also have an astounding effect on symptoms of depression and feelings of loneliness. "Older pet owners have often told us how incredibly barren and lonely their lives were without their pets' companionship, even when there were some downsides to owning an active pet," says Linda Anderson, who founded the Angel Animals Network in Minneapolis with her husband, Allen, to spread awareness of the benefits of pet ownership.

"I've seen those with memory loss interact with an animal and regain access to memories from long ago," she explains. "Having a pet helps the senior focus on something other than their physical problems and negative preoccupations about loss or aging.

Animals benefit from adoption, too, particularly when seniors adopt older pets. "These lucky animals go from the pound to paradise. Retired adopters tend to have lots of time to devote to a previously unwanted pet, forming a lasting bond." So think about getting a furry friend for lots of health benefits!

Notes from Alix

Happy Holidays! I am wishing peace to you all this season. As you head into your school vacation week, don't forget to take time for yourself to relax and unwind.



I would like to take a moment to thank you for your patience and understanding as we comply with the Corporation for National and Community Services' request to perform new criminal history background checks. We will be reaching out to you in January to let you know how and when we will be meeting to carry out these checks. We are looking forward to putting this behind us and putting our focus back on making a difference in children's lives.

Lastly, as we head into winter, please make sure to take care of yourself. Vermont winters are beautiful, but they also require a bit of planning and awareness. Ice, snow, and cold temperatures can make life challenging for anyone. Make sure to wear shoes with good traction and non-skid soles. Cold temperatures (even indoors!) can also lead to hypothermia so, don't let indoor temperatures go too low and dress in layers. Winter storms can sometimes lead to power outages. Make sure you have easy access to flashlights and stockpile warm blankets. Also, please check the batteries in your carbon monoxide detector because using a fireplace or gas heater can lead to carbon monoxide poisoning.

All the best,
Alix

Christmas Week

The Foster Grandparent Office will be closed from December 24th through December 28th. You may leave a message on voicemail and we will return your call on January 2nd when we return. We will see you in the New Year!

