

Celebrating the 2022 Older Adult Volunteer Award Winners



This year marks the 3rd Annual Older Adult Volunteer Awards from the New Hampshire State Commission on Aging and EngAGING NH. This award is built upon 59 years of Governors of the State of New Hampshire celebrating the contributions of older adults through an award for their volunteerism in the Granite State during the nationally recognized Older Americans Month.

Older Adults are a resource for our communities. The people being honored for their service through this award have demonstrated that any one of us can make a difference at any point in our lives. They have shown outstanding leadership or demonstrated meritorious achievement as volunteers in New Hampshire. Through their engagement, they have woven connections that contribute to and strengthen our communities.

Program

Welcome - Chair of the New Hampshire State Commission on Aging, Polly Campion

Opening Remarks - Governor of the State of New Hampshire, Chris Sununu

Celebration of Award Winners – Members of the Award Committee

Comments – Volunteer Representative of EngAGING NH, Roger Vachon

Closing Remarks – Executive Director of the NH State Commission on Aging, Rebecca Sky

2022 Honorees

Dotty Perkins and David Currier

Belknap

Dotty and David are the “embodiment of what it means to be fully present in one’s community.” Five community members along with the entire Tilton Board of Selectman nominated these two. Dotty and Dave ensure that local older adults not only have a home away from home at the Tilton Senior Center, but a means to get to that home, and to medical appointments and other community events. Dotty works tirelessly to make sure every Center activity is a success - whether it be daily meals, the exercise classes she started, special activities, or fundraisers. David is the engine behind the volunteer driver program serving Tilton, Sanbornton, and Northfield, often driving 5 days a week. David regularly makes home repairs, clears snow, and does other maintenance to help people to remain in their homes. They bring joy and meaning to many people’s lives.

Charlie Macomber

Carroll

Charlie has devoted hundreds of hours as a leader of the Mount Washington Valley Age-Friendly Community initiative. He has talked to individuals and attended meetings to gather ideas, engage people, and build commitment to make change. The results to name a few include a comprehensive Age-Friendly Resource Guide distributed to all libraries, 12 town halls and many service organizations; a Senior Resource Kiosk for libraries; a home window winterizing program; and a Garden Bucket program with tools, soil, and seeds for summer planting. Charlie has the vision and incredible people skills so that everyone feels welcome and has a chance to participate, lend their skills, and find possibilities. He is a treasure.

Arnold Newman

Cheshire

Arnold participates in the NH Alliance for Healthy Aging advocating for state and federal policies that support the wellbeing of older adults. He provides testimony at the State legislature on bills that will impact us all as we age. Arnold participates in community decision making forums to ensure the voice of an aging person is heard. He works to engage his neighbors in his senior housing complex to learn about public issues and share their voice. He has helped them Zoom and has organized online public forums. Arnold is kind person and approaches aging in New Hampshire with great humor.



Peter Higbee**Coos**

Berlin is extremely lucky to have Peter doing his part daily to make Berlin a great place to live. Peter served on the Berlin City Council for 10 years and is on the City's economic development board and master plan committee. He is a board member of the Nansen Ski Club, a previous board president. He still grooms trails at the club's home at Milan Hill State Park. Peter can also be found dressed as a penguin, welcoming spectators to Nansen Ski jumping events! He is a founding member of the Androscoggin Food Co-op Board and is currently board president. Peter is extremely passionate about bringing better food choices to the Androscoggin Valley.

Camille Roy**Grafton**

Camille Roy has volunteered to bring meals to residents of his community who cannot leave their home and/or are in need of better nutrition for about 20 years. Last year Camille drove approximately 430 miles per month and gave 190 hours of service. He seldom declines extra routes when there is need. He is a person who will go the extra mile -- such as bringing someone's mail to their door or other odds and ends that bring ease. His long-standing dedication to the people of his community and his incredible dependability-- are rare things.

Patricia McGuigan**Hillsborough**

Since 2016 Patricia has volunteered at the William Cashin Senior Activity Center in Manchester as a receptionist. Patricia has a way with people, whether it a member of the center, the community, or staff. She can calm the frustrated people, settle the angry people, put a smile on the melancholy people and compose the nervous people, in-person and over the phone. She is missed by all when she is unable to come in. She has mobility issues and deals daily with pain, but these things have yet to stop her from contributing to her community.

John Benham**Merrimack**

John has a great love of community and service and has served on many civic councils, committees, and boards in the city of Franklin. Yet this honor is to recognize his current efforts at the Franklin VNA and Peabody Place. As a VNA trained hospice volunteer, he visits families in social and pastoral capacities, allowing caregivers time out of the home. He is a godsend to those laboring under the heavy mantle of the 'thirty-six hour day', a well-documented phenomenon in the world of in-home caregiving. John is a respite beacon for those that truly need him. He comes to the Peabody Place with his therapy dog Siri, bringing comfort and calm. John used his carpentry skills to create a Sensory Box for cognitively impaired residents and creates one-of-a-kind seasonal wooden decorations to bring joy to all. On top of this he was the committee chair to the Peabody Building Project galvanizing action to improve this local option for senior living.

Gary Schmottlach**Rockingham**

Gary gives 150% to everything he does. Gary was appointed to the Salem Council on Aging by the Salem Board of Selectmen and has been a very active board member since 2015. He founded the Corn Hole program at the Ingram Senior Center in 2016 and continues to lead it, also pitching in to make bingo and card games happen. He is on the Senior Center's Trip Committee, often going the extra mile. He is a natural leader who sees what needs to be done and steps in. He makes many positive things happen for the enjoyment of all.

Joyce Bourget**Strafford**

Joyce has volunteered her gift of time 4 days a week for 5 hours each day over the last 5 years (over 1000 hours per year) working with older and disabled adults at the Easterseals Adult Day Program in Rochester. She spends additional hours researching and preparing program crafts with potential physical and cognitive benefits for participants. The participants are so proud of the artistry they produce under Joyce's imagination and creativity. Joyce is a great listener – kind and caring - which exponentially grows her impact.

Sandy Cornish**Sullivan**

Since 2015 Sandy has been a board member and the treasurer for the Newport Senior Center. Sandy worked diligently to overcome the many challenges over the past two years to raise funds to keep the center solvent even through these chaotic times when program revenue and typical fundraising could not be relied upon. She was instrumental in organizing Grab-N-Go dinners and establishing intergenerational opportunities for all ages. Sandy can also be found answering phones or planning activities to keep people's bodies and minds active – including a cardio drumming class! She is a continuous learner who never stops striving to improve our center.



2022 Special Acknowledgment

The Friends Program RSVP Volunteer Driver Team

The Friends Program operates a volunteer driver program providing transportation to medical appointments for people 60 and over who do not have access to transportation because of age, ability, economic situation or other limiting circumstances. This program utilizes AmeriCorps Seniors volunteers who serve in Friends Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP).

The Concord Area Friends RSVP team of 18 drivers provided over 650 rides to medical appointments for 35 vulnerable older adults in the Concord area last year. These volunteers were resilient, continuing to serve in order to meet a critical need during the worst of the COVID pandemic - even as volunteer driver programs across the country were seeing a significant drop in volunteers. They provided over 360 hours of service to the Concord community. They had to learn and practice infection prevention strategies to keep themselves and their riders safe. They had to continually adapt as the course of the pandemic changed practices and removed predictability. Because of their efforts, older adults were able to get to dialysis appointments, eye doctors, physical therapists and receive much needed medical care. This service is available at no charge thanks to the caring and dedicated team of volunteer drivers.

The Friends Program mission is to strengthen communities by building relationships that empower people, encourage community service, and restore faith in the human spirit. RSVP has the dual purpose of engaging those 55 and over in meaningful volunteer service to meet critical community needs. RSVP volunteers have a lifetime of experience and are using their skills and talents to strengthen their own community in a variety of ways beyond the role of volunteer drivers. The Friends RSVP volunteers know they strengthen social ties, reduce isolation, and create new and diverse forms of community support.

The New Hampshire State Commission on Aging and EngAGING NH chose to call out this program for special recognition because of the high need for transportation alternatives for older adults in New Hampshire, the limited number of volunteer driver programs in our state, and the challenge existing programs have recruiting committed volunteers. This meaningful work needs all our support.

**OLDER
AMERICANS
MONTH**



AGE MY WAY: MAY 2022