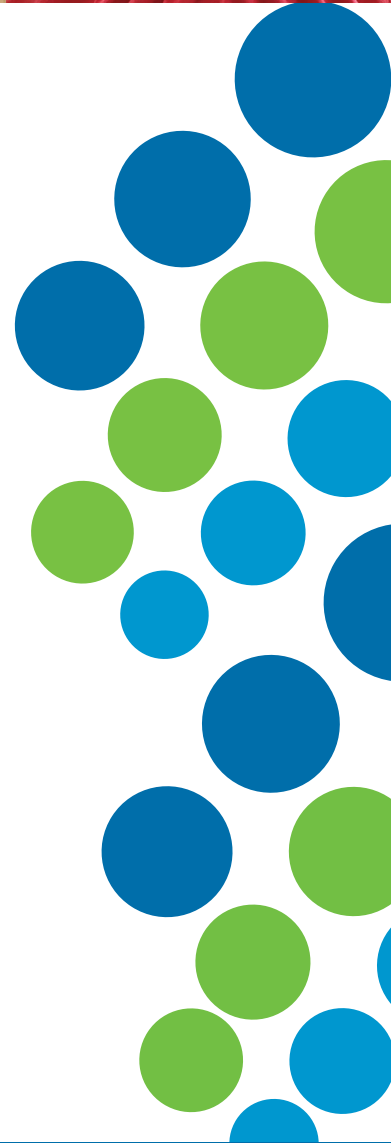




50 Over 60



Celebrating the Power, Value,
and Voices of Older Adults



A Message from Joan



AgeSpan is excited to recognize our milestone anniversary by celebrating “50 Years of Inspiring Aging: Celebrating the **Power, Value, and Voices** of Older Adults.”

The communities in the Merrimack Valley and North Shore are fortunate to have so many older adults whose lives inspire us every day. In their honor, we have created this 50 Over 60 List, highlighting people aged 60 and over through their personal stories that encourage positive attitudes, healthy aging, intergenerational experiences, community service, activism, and caregiving.

We know there are countless others who do amazing things every day to lift others up, demonstrate positive aging, and give back to their communities. When we put out a call earlier this year for people to tell us about the inspiring older adults they know, we received an impressive number of submissions and narrowing the list to just 50 was challenging.

We hope you enjoy reading about these older adults who are caring for grandchildren, families, and neighbors, or are writing, creating, and publishing artistic works. They have gone back to school, pursued new careers, or are selflessly donating their time and talents volunteering at churches, senior centers, shelters, schools, and community organizations.

On behalf of myself and our Board of Directors, we say thank you to every one of those individuals. We are humbled by their contributions, commitment to others, and passion for life. We are incredibly grateful to celebrate their individual accomplishments and support their choices to age their way.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joan Hatem-Roy".

Joan Hatem-Roy
AgeSpan Chief Executive Officer

50 Over 60 List

Celebrating the
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of Older Adults



Katy Abraham, 81, Methuen

Katy Abraham is committed to assisting older adults. She dedicated numerous years to teaching courses for AgeSpan's Healthy Living Center for Excellence on chronic disease treatment, pain management, diabetes control, and balance enhancement. Katy also gives back to her community as a board member at the Methuen Council on Aging and through her church, St. Anthony's Maronite Church in Lawrence. She is a member of the Daughters of St. Anthony and is active on their Sunshine Committee, visiting shut-in parishioners. She has also become a prize-winning author and poet.

- *Submitted by Marie Kissel*

Lucia Abreu, 72, Lawrence

Since relocating from the Dominican Republic to Lawrence four years ago, Lucia Abreu has immersed herself in the local community. Volunteering for both Lawrence CommunityWorks and AgeSpan, she contributes to community development. Throughout the pandemic, Lucia played a key role in the COVID-19 vaccine campaign and assisted individuals in voter registration efforts. She lives with her daughter and plays a vital role in raising her grand- and great-grandchildren. Notably, back in the Dominican Republic, Lucia managed to earn degrees in law and psychology while being a single mother of four. - *Submitted by Wanda Piña*



Ed Arsenault, 86, Haverhill

Ed Arsenault embraces retirement while maintaining his meaningful involvement with Meals on Wheels. He has delivered meals for more than 20 years. After retiring from AT&T, he realized he needed something else to do so when his wife, Nancy, decided to retire from her route, he stepped up and has been doing it ever since. Five days a week, he takes to the road, loading up his car and delivering 18 meals to recipients in the Haverhill area. Beyond his route, Ed's generosity extends to covering routes for fellow drivers when needed. - *Featured in Aging Unbound*



Brenda Atkinson, 68, Lowell



With an extensive nursing career spanning over 45 years, Brenda Atkinson continues to contribute to her community in many ways. Balancing part-time work in adult day health, she dedicates her free time to volunteering with Matthew 25, a program that delivers meals and supplies to the unhoused people of Greater Lowell and is a member of the Lowell Coalition for the Homeless. She is passionate about this work and is pursuing a nurse practitioner degree so she can offer medical care and assessment to members of that community. Brenda leads by example in all that she does and continues to find ways to share her time and talent with people in need.

- *Submitted by Karen Garrigan*

Fred Baumert, 74, Westford

Fred Baumert's journey as a volunteer in Westford has transformed from tending to plants at the town's senior center to assisting nearly 2,000 individuals with their Medicare coverage. He started volunteering shortly after he retired because he wanted to find a way to give back to his community and put his skills to use. For more than 15 years, Fred has committed at least one day each month to serving as a counselor for the SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone) Program with AgeSpan. In this role, he meets with people and fields many calls to explain how Medicare works, its many options and assisting people with the enrollment process. Fred has also served as a Friendly Visitor, providing companionship to other older adults in his town.

- *Submitted by Jennifer Claro*



Maxa Schutzbank Berid, 81, Lowell

Maxa Schutzbank Berid's love for global travel is matched only by her passion for community service. At 81 years old, she assumed a role on the Advisory Council at AgeSpan, following her years of service as general counsel. Maxa dedicates her time to volunteering at the Cor Unum Meal Center in Lawrence and the Joppa Flats Education Center in Newburyport. She played a crucial role in establishing Merrimack Valley Legal Services (now Northeast Legal Services), serving as its director for an extensive period. - *Submitted by Marie Kissel*





Joseph J. Bevilacqua, 71, Haverhill

Joseph J. Bevilacqua has devoted his life to business and community activism. He was a five-term member of the Haverhill School Committee, director of Haverhill Economic Development and Planning, and recently retired from the Haverhill City Council. Joseph is also the former national chairman of the Board of the National Association of State Workforce Board Chairs and state chair of the Massachusetts Workforce Investment Board. He's led the Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce for 32 years and serves on the United Way Merrimack Valley Advisory Board, and the North of Boston Convention Visitors Bureau. - **Submitted by Michael Bevilacqua**

Denise Boucher, 73, Andover

For more than two decades, Denise has led fitness classes at the Andover Senior Center. She currently conducts six weekly classes, including an orientation to running class and a dance class. Denise has also customized fitness programs for the Andover Supportive Day Program and has adapted her fitness routine to meet their needs. One unique aspect of Denise's fitness classes is she incorporates trivia and games into her routines to keep her students mentally and physically sharp. Beyond her fitness endeavors, she's involved with the Andover Village Improvement Society, Alzheimer's Association, and the Appalachian Mountain Club. You can also find her out and about town with her Nordic walking group.

- **Submitted by Kelly McShane**



Beverly Brown, 80, Methuen

Beverly Brown's commitment to education and devotion to community service has persisted beyond her retirement from teaching. Beverly serves as a literacy volunteer at the Nevins Memorial Library in Methuen, assisting immigrants who are learning English. She participates in book groups at both the library and St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, contributes to the local food pantry, acts as the church's liaison to Communities Together, helps with the Methuen Festival of Trees, and lends her voice to the Methuen Senior Center's Happy Hearts Chorus. - **Submitted by Elecia Miller on behalf of The Vestry at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church**



Carmenza Bruff, 75, Haverhill



Carmenza Bruff is a champion for local education efforts. She teaches English as a second language classes at the Greater Lawrence Community Action Council and continues to educate people about and provide resources on sun safety, cancer care and prevention, civics, and lead poisoning prevention. She is involved with the Si Se Puede Scholarship of the Merrimack Valley Columbian Cultural Committee, the Haverhill Arts Council, and the Feria del Libro in Lawrence, a book fair held annually in Lawrence to highlight Latin literature and writers. She seeks out the companionship of younger people as a way to share her experience and remain energized in her work and volunteer activities. - **Submitted by Elecia Miller**

Joellen Camarato, 64, Haverhill

Taking on the role of primary caregiver for her granddaughter since December 2019, Joellen has become an advocate for grandparents facing similar challenges. She is a member of a support group in Newburyport and participates in AgeSpan's Family Caregiver Support Program. Through her involvement, Joellen provides valuable resources and support to fellow grandparents. She was also instrumental in putting together the first traveling memory café at Ironstone Farm. Her dedication extends beyond her immediate family, making her an inspiring advocate for others. - **Submitted by Lyn Brennan**



Russell V.J. Chaput, 92, Haverhill

After serving his country in the Army, Russell has devoted decades to supporting his community. He is a member of several veteran organizations and has assumed leadership roles in Disabled American Veterans; Veterans of Foreign Wars; Korean War Veterans Association; Haverhill Korean War Memorial Committee; and AMVETS Post 147. Russell takes charge of organizing wreath placements at soldiers' graves during holidays, participates in local parades, and led the cleanup of the vandalized Korean War Memorial in Haverhill. - **Submitted by Keith Gopsill**





Lynda Coffill, 76, Salem

With 15 years of service, Lynda Coffill has been an integral member of the Salem Council on Aging (COA), serving as its chairperson for 12 years. Lynda played a pivotal role in formulating the initial ordinance for accessory dwelling units and worked towards obtaining funding to prevent the eviction of older adults facing housing challenges. Amid the pandemic, she actively contributed to the setup of vaccination initiatives and continues to engage in dance and exercise classes at the COA. – **Submitted by Teresa Arnold**

Jan Conole, 66, Dracut

Jan Conole tirelessly gives back to the community of Tewksbury through her role as the Director of the Council on Aging (COA). Leading by example, she makes it a priority to listen to the concerns of the residents and works to fulfill improvement requests. Jan’s efforts have resulted in the creation of a safe, inviting space for all older adults to socialize and learn about resources in the community. She takes pride in her job and makes herself available when people have concerns or suggestions. Jan doesn’t hesitate to improve, innovate, or provide whatever it takes to make a program, class, or event go smoothly. Her caring approach has helped keep the Tewksbury COA an exceptional place to visit.

– **Submitted by Brenna Conole**



Marcy Consalvo, 88, Peabody

Retired engineer, Marcy Consalvo has been a dedicated advocate of the arts and volunteer at the Torigian Senior Center in Peabody for almost 30 years. He has taught model shipbuilding and painting classes to hundreds of older adults, many of whom had never built a model or painted before. Marcy, an artist who never met a hobby he didn’t like, says he embraces healthy aging by keeping active in body and mind and staying socially connected through volunteering. He is an active member of the Guild of Beverly Artists and of the Danvers and Peabody Art Associations and has served as a board member for both organizations.

– **Submitted by Carolyn A. Wynn**



Karen Coppola, 64, Georgetown



Following her own experiences with caregiving, Karen Coppola took time away from her career as a dental hygienist to become a Certified Dementia Practitioner and works with several organizations on a professional and volunteer basis that support the work of caregivers. As the widow of a veteran, she joined the Veterans Administration Caregiver Support program as a peer mentor and advisor to people across the country. She combines her love of animals and desire to help those living with dementia and those experiencing caregiver stress as a horse handler with Challenge Unlimited at Ironstone Farm. The Georgetown resident is also a contributor to the “Caring for Caregivers” series at the University of Massachusetts’ Medical School and a caregiver support specialist at Massachusetts General Hospital. - **Submitted by Nicholas Valentini**

Nicholas Costello, 88, Amesbury

Nick Costello demonstrates visionary leadership in the care of older adults, pioneering a meal program for seniors even before the enactment of the Older Americans Act. His contributions include spearheading the opening of the Amesbury Senior Center and representing the state as a senator or representative from 1978 to 1991. He holds the positions of President at the Maudsley Art Center and is a member of the Amesbury Council on Aging Board of Directors. His record of service encompasses past roles as Director of Link House, Board of Selectmen, and School Committee. - **Submitted by Doreen Arnfield**



Albert Croteau, 80, Andover

Throughout his life, Albert Croteau’s commitment to helping others has remained unwavering. In the Vietnam War, he played a pivotal role in a mission that rescued over 100 troops stranded behind enemy lines. Today, his selfless nature continues to shine through his work as a mediator and Chairman of the Advisory Committee at the Greater Lawrence Technical School. Albert’s love for the outdoors is reflected in his membership in both the Hickory Hawks Ski Club and the Andover Sportsman Club. - **Submitted by Leigh Hartwell**





Ramona Cruz, 70, Lawrence

Ramona Cruz immigrated here 30 years ago from the Dominican Republic with a 2-year-old child and another child on the way. Since coming to this country, she has devoted herself to caring for her family and many others in need. Through hard work and dedication, she was able to buy a home where she could raise her family, and it served as a refuge for many people over the years who needed a safe space. A cancer survivor, she is always willing to lend a hand and continues to care for others as a grandmother, aunt, sister, cousin, and friend in the community. - **Submitted by Stephanie Cruz**

Pat Dennehy, 70, Haverhill

With a dedication to service spanning over 30 years, Pat Dennehy has been the driving force behind the Community Action, Inc. Drop-In Center in Haverhill. She started this organization to assist those in need in the community and continues to work part-time for the center. The center provides essential services like clothing, limited medical aid, counseling, and referrals to older adults, people in need, and those facing illness. In addition, she also continues to work part-time as a housing manager for the Haverhill YMCA's residential program. - **Submitted by John Cuneo**



Nicholas DePasquale, 73, Tyngsboro

Nicholas DePasquale's love for the arts spans decades. He extends his passion by offering free photography classes in Tyngsboro, Lunenburg, Pepperell, and Groton. As the frontman of the band "BootScam," Nicholas lends his talents to fundraisers without charge. He was director in both the Northeast and Suburban Pony Baseball Leagues and currently serves as the Vice President of the Middlesex Domestic Violence Services Network. Nicholas and his team of photographers donate their services to events like the Emerson 5K, Hero's Hockey Tournament, and Boston Marathon for Alzheimer's. - **Submitted by John Cuneo**



Helen Devlin, 81, Billerica

A retired social worker, Helen Devlin continues to channel her expertise to assist her fellow residents at Kennedy Meadows in Billerica. She oversees a stress support group to help older adults manage stress and anxiety in a healthy way. She also co-leads a Bible study class with her husband, Lou. Beyond these roles, Devlin is an integral member of the Meadow Larks Chorus at the site, contributing to the group’s performances in plays and concerts. - **Submitted by Kathy Devlin**

Ray, 80, and Kay DiFiore, 81, Methuen

For more than 50 years, Ray and Kay DiFiore have had a long history of public service and engagement with their church and community. Ray, a Navy veteran, held the position of director for the Department of Public Works in Lawrence and Methuen and earned recognition as “Person of the Year” in 2021 by American Training in Andover. He sits on the board at Creative Living in Andover. Kay, a founding member of the Festival of Trees, serves as an Emeritus Board Member, and was involved with Creative Living. The couple volunteers their time to Holy Rosary Church, Holy Rosary Shrine, and the St. Alfio Society of Lawrence. - **Submitted by Tony Palmisano**



Rhina Espailat, 92, Newburyport

A globally recognized poet, Rhina Espailat has embarked on her 22nd book, adding to her illustrious literary career. Her work has earned her prestigious awards, including two Howard Nemerov Sonnet Awards, the Richard Wilbur Award, the T.S. Eliot Prize, and the Tree at My Window Award from the Robert Frost Foundation. Boston College, acknowledging her literary impact, dedicated a room in its library to Rhina’s work last fall. She is also a founder of the Powow River Poets, the local chapter of the Massachusetts State Poetry Society. - **Featured in Aging Unbound**



Carol Fullerton, 90, Marblehead

Carol Fullerton continues to volunteer in her hometown of Marblehead as a member of the Cottage Gardeners and volunteers for the Marblehead Historic Commission archiving documents into a digital format. She has been active in her church and community throughout her life and continues to be involved with the Friends of the Marblehead Council on Aging, Gut'n Feathers Club, and the Edith Dodge Foundation.
- **Submitted by Laurie Fullerton**

Larry F. Giordano, 79, Methuen

Larry Giordano has dedicated most of his life to championing foster children and imparting his passion for karate. In 1968, he initiated the Methuen Karate Association, and, at 79, he remains an active instructor. In 2005, Larry extended his advocacy by founding Foster Kids of the Merrimack Valley – a cause close to his heart since he was a foster child. His life is marked by civic duty, including roles as a Methuen police officer, Methuen City Councilor, State Representative, Public Safety Commissioner for Massachusetts, member of Kiwanis International, the Sons of Italy, and St. Alfio Society, and volunteers at St. Lucy Catholic Church.

- **Submitted by Patricia Gilmore**



Kathy Gould, 72, Billerica

Kathy Gould is an amazing advocate for her fellow residents at Talbot School Apartments. She organizes a monthly grab-and-go meal to be brought in by a community group, the Sunshine Gals, and often cooks and organizes meals for all residents. Always willing to lend a hand, Kathy welcomes new residents, helps her neighbors with their recertification and benefits paperwork, and puts her nursing skills to work triaging their aches and pains. Kathy went above and beyond driving a neighbor to Salem, NH, several times a week for several months so he could continue working.

- **Submitted by Deb Imperioso**





Deborah Hartman, 92, Andover

Beyond being the friendly face that welcomes visitors at the Robb Center in Andover, Deb Hartman plays a pivotal role as a key organizer for all the volunteers at the senior center. Ensuring the volunteer team stays well-informed about town programs, services, and ongoing renovations in Town Hall, she draws upon her background in health administration to establish efficient systems for the volunteer desk. Deb managed to fulfill these responsibilities despite facing multiple hospitalizations and dealing with storm damage to her home, maintaining a positive and friendly demeanor.- ***Submitted by Ashley English***

Charlotte Jackson, 75, Peabody

Charlotte Jackson was a caregiver for her husband, Bill, who had Alzheimer's for many years and became a true advocate for Alzheimer's awareness. Bill passed away in 2018, but Charlotte continues to volunteer with the Alzheimer's Association, raise funds for the Walk to End Alzheimer's as well as work with local agencies to support current caregivers. She stays active at the Torigian Senior Center in Peabody and is a supporter of the VA Hospital.

- ***Submitted by Teresa Arnold***



Dr. Caren Jacobson, 71, North Andover

Dr. Caren Jacobson's dedication to community health is unmistakable through her long-standing commitment to the Greater Lawrence Family Health Center. Since 1990, she has welcomed hundreds of newborns into the world, cared for thousands of patients, and provided treatment to tens of thousands in her clinic. In addition to her clinical work, Caren excelled as a teacher in the center's residency program. In addition, she participates in the annual Feaster Five road race in Andover. - ***Submitted by Mary Lyman***



Andrew LaPointe, 69, Salem



Andrew LaPointe is dedicated to serving seniors and those living with disabilities. For more than 20 years, he has been involved with the Friends of the Salem Council on Aging (COA), serving as vice president and president and now as a member of the board. Andrew, who has vision loss, has taught Braille classes at the COA, served as chair of the Commission on Disabilities, and as vice president of the Independent Living Center of the North Shore and Cape Ann. He is editor of the Safe Disabled Traveler Notebook, now featured on the Talking Information Center within the Massachusetts Reading Network. Since 2004, he has provided the Commission Commuter Update every weekday to keep people updated on cancellations and delays. - **Submitted by Teresa Arnold**

Joanie Lawrence, 67, Methuen

Joanie Lawrence, who teaches fitness and meditation classes at the Tewksbury Council on Aging (COA), stepped up during the pandemic so she could continue to support others. During that time, she recorded her fitness classes for the Tewksbury cable station, offering an avenue for people to stay active and connected. Joanie was also the first to resume in-person classes, and teaches fitness, yoga, and meditation at other councils on aging. She finds time to collect and deliver clothing for people who are unsheltered, spending time with them to listen to their stories and make them feel seen and hopeful. She also volunteers with the Kindness Collaborative and Methuen Arlington Neighborhood, Inc. - **Submitted by Diane Dunlevy**



Sothara Ly, 75, Lowell

Sothara Ly has been a driving force in the Lowell community for many years. She is and has been a volunteer for multiple organizations, including Coalition for a Better Acre (CBA), the Lowell Senior Center, Mill City Grows, DIY Lowell, Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association, Eliot Presbyterian Church and more. She volunteers at CBA's food pantry weekly and can often be found at the senior center participating in activities and encouraging her peers to sign up and register for events and classes. Sothara is a friendly face at community events, always willing to share her energy and enthusiasm for making Lowell a place where all community members feel welcome and included. - **Submitted by Sanary Phen**





Katherine “Kay” Maher, 94, Tewksbury

Kay Maher has been a driving force at the Tewksbury Senior Center despite never obtaining a driver’s license. At the age of 94, she works three days a week at the center’s reception desk and helps with the consignment shop intake each month. Kay manages the whist and cribbage games, and she participates in bingo. She is a member of the Golden Age Club and Friends of the Elderly, always helping with yard sales and bake tables and their fundraising efforts. Previously, she lent her volunteer efforts to the Tewksbury/Wilmington Elks, baking snacks for Tuesday night bingo games.

- **Submitted by Jan Conole**

Nancy, 77, and Jack, 63, McKenna, Haverhill

Nancy and Jack McKenna are dedicated to spreading joy, raising funds, and championing numerous causes. The couple volunteers for AgeSpan’s Annual Golf Classic, Haverhill Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Charity Golf Tournament, VFW Santa Parade, Christmas in April, Rebuilding Together Greater Haverhill, Inc., All Care Charity Golf Open, Wine Tasting Charity Auction, Pentucket Kiwanis of Haverhill, and Let’s Make a Difference. They also support organizations such as Lazarus House Ministries, Emmaus House, Ruth’s House, and the Salvation Army. - **Submitted by Bonnie Sisson**



Manuel Luis Melo, 63, Lowell

In the fight against food insecurity, Luis Melo stands out for his significant contributions, helping to provide free groceries to almost 400 older adults each month. His dedication is evident through volunteering at the AgeSpan Mobile Market in Tewksbury and taking the initiative to organize the market at the Portuguese Club. Luis’ commitment extends beyond distribution, as he personally delivers food to individuals unable to attend and ensures a smooth replacement process when he cannot be present at a market. In 2021, Luis was named Volunteer of the Year by the Daughters of the American Revolution. A native of Portugal, he came to this country with his family at the age of 12. In honor of his roots, he orchestrates group trips to Portugal.

- **Submitted by Ruth Ortiz and Christina Penna**



George “Russ” Moran, 74, Andover

George “Russ” Moran served as the original Executive Director of AgeSpan, known then as Merrimack Valley Home Care Center, opening the doors in 1974. He played a pivotal role in advocating for older adults and shaping the agency’s name and reputation during his 10-year tenure. Over the last 18 years, George has been a professor at Northeastern University’s D’Amore-McKim School of Business. He is on the Andover Council on Aging Board of Directors, where he spearheads the council’s Educational Speakers Forum. He also founded golf and photography clubs in town. – **Submitted by Bonnie Sisson**



Dove Morisette, 61, Haverhill

Dove has become an advocate for Afghan refugees and works with the International Institute of New England to assist two families who were relocated to the area in 2022. She supports the four parents and 11 children by helping with English classes, doctor appointments, job interviews, driving lessons, and other daily tasks. An Army veteran, she serves on the board of the Universalist Unitarian Church of Haverhill, where she dedicates her time to collecting clothes for Ruth’s House and helping families in need. Dove showcases her musical talents as part of the singing duo, Sing Like a Bird, and is the drummer for the band, Fake Leather Jacket.

– **Submitted by Jim Falzone**



Ralph Natola, 75, Billerica

Ralph Natola decided to give back to his community by fulfilling transportation needs after his retirement from a teaching career that included a stint as principal of North Street Elementary School in Tewksbury. He taught driving lessons for AAA and now works part-time driving a van for the Tewksbury Council on Aging, where he goes above and beyond his duties. Ralph not only drives people to essential appointments but also brings them to things like activities at the senior center or a haircut. He also does his best to connect riders with local resources like bereavement groups or tax help when needed. One other place he helps at is AgeSpan’s monthly Mobile Market in Tewksbury.

– **Submitted by Diane Dunlevy**





Lucinda Nolet, 84, Haverhill

For 14 years, Lucinda Nolet has led a diverse group of 21 members as president of the Haverhill Community Action Board of Directors. Involved in staff-related activities, she plays a role in bridging the gap between the Board and the organization's staff. Lucinda is also a member of the Griffin White Foundation, Sons and Daughters of Italy, and Breakfast Exchange Club of Greater Haverhill. While she previously served on the Haverhill Housing Task Force, Lucinda is a part-time Service Coordinator at the AHEPA Apartments in Haverhill. - **Submitted by John Cuneo**

Jed Power, 75, Danvers

Even in the face of a life-altering stroke, Jed Power refused to let adversity hinder the completion of his work. He was writing the sixth installment of a crime series when he had the stroke. Undeterred, the determined author, using mostly one finger, persevered to finish the last book of his Dan Marlowe series. Jed did not let the stroke define him and participates in the Spaulding Stroke Survivors and Neurofit support groups. His love for writing and will to live is an inspiration to all. - **Submitted by Courtney Cassidy**



Felicita "Puchy" Rodriguez, 74, Lawrence

Nicknamed "Puchy," Felicita Rodriguez of Lawrence, is a devoted grandmother, mother, and daughter who isn't shy about helping others or even being part of a TikTok video promoting a local business. You will find her at the Mi Casa Adult Day Health Center, helping out at Bread and Roses Housing, Lazarus Ministries, and at the Getsemani and Fellowship Bible churches. She is an advocate for those who don't have a voice and isn't shy about encouraging others to get involved in their communities. - **Submitted by Lidia Rivera Garcia**





Barbara Shaer, 75, Amesbury

Barbara Shaer has transformed her love for horses into a source of benefit for others. After a long career in education, she went back to school at age 40 to become an ultrasound technician. At age 59, Barbara purchased a miniature horse named Rosie and officially registered for equine therapy. For many years, she and Rosie provided pet therapy services at locations on the North Shore and Merrimack Valley. She is also a member of the Essex County Trail Association and Northeast Icelandic Horse Club.

- **Submitted by Karen Holliday-Simone**

Susan Stott, 82, Andover

Susan Stott, founder of the Andover Community Trust, has dedicated her time and talents to numerous community-based causes and civic organizations over the years. Her many efforts have been on behalf of people of all ages from her support of the Andover Center Playground, Meals on Wheels, and the establishment of an all-persons' trail. Susan served on the Andover Village Improvement Society, Open Space Task Force, and served as treasurer of the Finance Committee for the Essex Art Center in Lawrence, among other roles. She is committed to diverse causes and uses her connections to help organizations such as Greater Andover Indivisible and Andover Housing Coalition. – **Submitted by Kay Frishman**



Kevin Sullivan, 63, Chelmsford

Kevin Sullivan's life has been marked by decades of commitment to triathlon competition and community service. Diagnosed with scoliosis and later with a cardiac condition necessitating a pacemaker in his 20s, Kevin has remained dedicated to physical fitness and pain management throughout his life. Even after enduring the loss of his son in 2014, he continued his volunteer work, assisting students with mock trial preparation and serving on the Board of Assessors in Chelmsford until 2023. He volunteers for Table of Plenty, St. Vincent de Paul Society, and the TriFury triathlon team. – **Submitted by Patsy Sullivan**





Agnes Takvorian, 90, Methuen

Agnes Takvorian is known for her upbeat and positive outlook on life. A life-long learner, she has always embraced understanding current events, history, art, and many cultures. Agnes has long been a calming influence in challenging situations with her selfless dedication to others. Her ability to overcome obstacles makes her a source of inspiration for many who praised her kindness and gentle spirit. During her time as an AgeSpan employee, she frequently participated in many of the agency's special events. Agnes donated many hours volunteering for community organizations in the Methuen area and for her church. - **Submitted by Rosanne DiStefano**

Ralph 92, and Diana, 87, Titus, Rowley

Devoted advocates for their parish and the local council on aging, Ralph and Diana Titus have consistently contributed to their community. Their impactful efforts include preparing meals for their church, including baking bread for the Topsfield Fair. Additionally, the couple generously provides meals for various events organized by the Rowley Council on Aging and gatherings honoring veterans. - **Submitted by Timothy Morris**



Klara Vajda, 81, Andover

Born in Hungary, Klara Vajda and her family lost everything to the communist regime and came to America in 1982. Klara, who is helping to raise her granddaughter, went back to school at age 57 and worked as a paralegal while devoting time conducting outreach activities at St. Augustine's Parish in Andover. She is a Court Appointed Special Advocate in the juvenile court, a member of Saint Vincent De Paul Society, and past board member of Communities Together of the Merrimack Valley. - **Submitted by Shelley DeSimone**



Daisy Verula, 74, Tewksbury

Giving back is second nature to Daisy Verula, who has been repaying the kindness she says was shown to her since she arrived here from Cuba in 1967. After a distinguished career as a bilingual customer service professional, she found her greatest pleasure and satisfaction has come from volunteering. Post retirement, she teaches English as a second language to students at the Pollard Library. Daisy stepped up and became certified to help others with their taxes through the Billerica Council on Aging and volunteered with AgeSpan in the Senior Medicare Patrol Program to prevent Medicare fraud, waste, and abuse. In addition to being a caregiver for her husband, she also volunteers with the Power of Flowers project.

- Submitted by Bonnie Sisson



Geoffrey H. Walker, 77, Newbury

Geoffrey Walker has been a fixture at Newbury Town Hall for the past 20 years, dedicating his time to various town roles. He served on the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, and sits on the Select Board. Beyond his civic engagements, Geoffrey has a passion for revitalizing the Great Marsh, working to control invasive grasses. He continues to embrace his interests, remaining a Harley Davidson enthusiast, enjoying hunting and fishing, and running a shop where he sells intricately hand-carved decoys of ducks, geese, and other shorebirds. - Submitted by Tracy Blais



Support older adults in your community

Thank you for celebrating 50 years of inspiring aging with us!
If you would like to support AgeSpan in our efforts to better serve older adults in the communities we serve, please consider making a gift by visiting www.agespan.org/inspiring-aging/ or mailing a check payable to AgeSpan, 280 Merrimack Street, Suite 400, Lawrence, MA 01843. To discuss giving opportunities or a future bequest, call Maria Gudinas, Chief Development Officer, at 978-651-3051.





AgeSpan

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