

# ANNUAL REPORT



## **THREE YEARS AND COUNTING FOR VET TO VET MAINE A message from Vet to Vet Maine's President of the Board, Lynn White**

Vet to Vet Maine is celebrating its 3rd year as an independent nonprofit. We currently have 94 active volunteers and since becoming Vet to Vet Maine we have served 156 veteran friends, and our volunteers have logged over 15,000 hours! We have enriched the lives of the veterans that we serve and have helped them obtain the benefits that they have earned, and also have provided respite and support for family members caring for veterans.

Our Vet to Vet volunteers have helped our fellow veterans:

- Receive a VA pension
  - Move to better living quarters
  - Obtain a variety of VA and other services
  - Publish a book of memoirs
  - Obtain new hearing aids
  - Plant and harvest a garden
  - Make lifelong friends
  - Share smiles, laughter, and stories with a friend
- and several veterans said they found a reason to live because of the caring friendship of their V2VME peer companions.

Volunteers are the heart of Vet to Vet Maine... a special thank you to:

- Volunteers Wendy Mason, Gail Merritt, Angel Davis-McBride, Kathy Lavigne, and John Gold for all they do in support of our program.
- And to our fundraising committee: Adam Cote, Gretchen Evans, Susan Gold, Sam Kelley, Bill Libby, Marianne Russell, Shirl Weaver, Tom Gruber, and Mike Seavey.
- And of course to all of our veteran peer companions. Your visits, friendship, and aid and assistance are making a difference in the lives of your fellow veterans.

Thank you for the honor to continue to serve as your president. I look forward to our work together to sustain and grow our program.

Warmest regards, Lynn



# Ever Hopeful

*"Hope" is the thing with feathers -  
That perches in the soul -  
And sings the tune without the words -  
And never stops - at all -*

—Emily Dickenson

Vet to Vet Maine's third year as an independent nonprofit began as the previous year had ended, with a mix of fear for the safety of our vulnerable veterans (and ourselves) as the COVID-19 pandemic continued to rage over the globe and hope that a vaccine might soon be developed that would open doors to in-person meetings again.

That hope was realized early in 2021 as the longed-for vaccine became available. By spring, with many of our volunteers and veteran friends vaccinated and with infection rates declining, we deemed it safe enough to allow in-person visits between vaccinated peer companions and their vaccinated veteran friends. The reunions that followed reinspired us all.

The long time apart and the enthusiastic reunions made clear how deeply the companions value each other's company. Tom, 94, and his peer companion Jerry were finally able to ride their bikes to Fort Williams again, joking with each other over who was the most fit.

Throughout the pandemic, Eric and Vernon talked on the phone and Eric delivered many books to his friend, who lives at a nursing home. A longed-awaited reunion took place at the home 13 months after their separation. "There's a firmer foundation for the two of us when we're together," Eric said. "It's really good that [our reunion] happened."

It was a big day for Dave and his friend, Leo, when they visited in person after being apart for 13 months. "We had a wonderful time together," Dave reported.

Charlene, whose veteran friend Vi turned 98 during the pandemic, finally arranged an in-person visit at the Maine Veterans' Home in Scarborough, where Vi resided. "She loved it!" Charlene said. "Vi and I got to sit next to each other and hold hands." They both laughed a lot during that visit. Vi told Charlene she hadn't laughed in a long time. Sadly, Vi died on April 15, not long after Charlene's second visit. Vi and Charlene had been V2VME friends since 2016.

We continue to be cautious about COVID, especially among our vulnerable veterans, and follow CDC guidelines. But the hope remains.

Other hopeful happenings for Vet to Vet Maine during FY 21:

- Thanks to a grant from Cumberland County Community Development program and one from United Way of York County, we were able



Vi Palmacci, left, and Charlene Vaughan during a happy pre-COVID visit.

# V2VME's volunteers offer veterans assistance and friendships that can last a lifetime. Now veterans' caregivers can benefit, too



Thanks to the efforts of V2VME volunteer Kathy Lavigne, those who provide care for veterans in the Vet to Vet Maine program have their own support system. Called the Caregivers Support Network, the new V2VME program welcomes veterans' caregivers to participate in quarterly meetings (held on the second Thursday in January, April, July, and October via Zoom). The meetings feature speakers on topics of mutual interest and provide time for caregivers to share their own stories among themselves. The program is funded by V2VME's Women's Special Project Fund, established by Maine Health Access Foundation in honor of V2VME board member Shirl Weaver.

Participants, who are referred to the program by V2VME staff and peer companions, are encouraged to communicate directly with others in the Caregivers Support Network. In addition, when the veteran being cared for dies, the caregiver is invited to join other survivors for informal lunches and gatherings (when safety allows). As Kathy noted recently, "We want our caregivers to know there are those who care very much. We are one military family!"

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to hire Judie O'Malley, an experienced volunteer coordinator who worked with Vet to Vet at Southern Maine Agency on Aging, as part-time program director and volunteer coordinator. Her first day was July 9, 2020, and since that time she's proved her worth many times over.

- We continue to expand our service base in Central and Eastern Maine, adding volunteers and veteran friends in those areas. That has been made possible by the advent of Zoom as a means of training volunteers who lived too far away to attend in person before COVID.
- As part of our strategic plan to expand to the entire state and to serve as a national model in the future, Vet to Vet Maine has begun an ambitious corporate sponsorship program to attract donors from the business community. Several business leaders have expressed interest in our program and indicated a willingness to support us as we strive for sustainability and growth.

Stay tuned for more exciting advances in FY 22!  
Best regards,  
Susan Dudley Gold, Executive Director

## Our Mission

**VET TO VET MAINE** is committed to alleviating social isolation and loneliness among Maine's veterans and linking them to needed services. We accomplish this by connecting trained veteran peer companions with fellow veterans who need a friend. These volunteers provide companionship, offer assistance with benefits, support independent living, and foster friendships and mentoring with other veterans.



# Volunteers are Vet

*We pay our respects to these V2VME volunteers who died during the past year and express our deep gratitude for their service.*

## **CAROL RANCOURT, 1949-2021**

Carol S. Rancourt, Volunteer Services manager at Southern Maine Agency on Aging and inspiration behind V2VME, came up with the idea for a friendly visitor program for older vets in Southern Maine, created the VISTA position to make it happen, and supported it every step of the way. Without her, Vet to Vet Maine would not exist. When V2VME transitioned from a SMAA program to an independent non-profit, Carol became a member of V2VME's first board, serving as secretary. In 2019 the board voted to honor her as a director emeritus.



## **EDWARD ZINK JR, 1935-2021**

Vet to Vet Maine Peer Companion Edward Zink Jr, 85, served 38 years in the Air Force. Ed was a member of the first Vet to Vet team of peer companions, signing up for service when the program was in its infancy at Southern Maine Agency on Aging. He visited his veteran friend, Mark, for the past 7 years. The two veterans and their wives went out to eat together before the COVID pandemic and spent many hours together. Ed was a member of the Amvets Post 2 in Yarmouth and spent many years volunteering in SMAA's Money Minders program.



*Patrick Masters, left, meets with V2VME friend Chuck Thurber.*

## **CHARLES "CHUCK" THURBER, 1949-2021**

Longtime V2VME peer companion Charles "Chuck" Thurber joined V2VME in May 2016 and was matched with four veterans. He and Patrick Masters, Chuck's latest veteran friend, were featured on a blog written by Diane Atwood in January 2020. In the article, Pat said Chuck was "someone who understands. Without saying anything, we understand one another. The camaraderie is great." In addition to his V2VME service, Chuck volunteered with Beacon Hospice, Samaritan's Purse, and his church in Buxton.

# 2 Vet ME's Heart!



Above from left: V2VME peer companion Gerry Treadwell, Brenda Stevens (volunteer coordinator and now V2VME volunteer), and V2VME peer companion John Butler were on hand in Biddeford to distribute V2VME hats and masks thanks to a grant from Tegna/News Center Maine and Jones, Rich & Barnes Funeral Home in Portland, which paid to mail the hats to those who had not yet received one, and Marianne Russell, V2VME Board of Directors secretary who packaged the hats for mailing.

## A Fond Farewell and Gratitude for Making a Difference

**Andrea Tolbert**, longtime Vet to Vet volunteer visitor and leader in the Vet to Vet Maine organization, resigned from the V2VME board of directors in April. Andrea first signed on to Vet to Vet in May 2017 as a peer companion, visiting Marcia Farr until Marcia's death in 2020. Andrea was a member of the first V2VME board of directors, formed in 2018. She helped guide development of V2VME's social media presence and more recently facilitated virtual training via Zoom and the production of a virtual training course that will allow V2VME to expand its reach to volunteers in other regions. A veteran herself, Andrea honorably served in the US Army for 4+ years, including deployment to Afghanistan and Iraq. Thank you, Andrea, for all your contributions to Vet to Vet Maine! We'll miss you and we wish you well.



*Marcia Farr, left, and Andrea Tolbert, enjoying each other's company at the Jones, Rich & Barnes Fundraiser. Right: Andrea Tolbert*





# Vet to Vet Maine's virtual training course teaches volunteers how to succeed as peer companions.

Three new teams of V2VME peer companions completed their training in FY 21, the first to receive their V2VME training courses completely on line due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are grateful to the dedicated instructors who volunteered their time to share their knowledge: Jeannin Thibodeau, Sanford Vet Center; Becki McGhee, Maine Bureau of Veteran Services; Sharon Prosser; Tamara Moxham; Ann O'Sullivan, OTRL, LSW, FAOTA; Tracy Charette, VA; Staff from Maine's U.S. Delegation Pam Trinward (Rep. Pingree), Trevor Hus-tus (Sen. Collins), and Teague Morris (Sen. King); Doug Wilson, SMAA; Nancy Maiello, MSW, LICSW, LCSW; Vet to Vet Maine volunteers Andrea Tolbert, Susan Gold, Lynn White, Dave Back-man, Debbie Wright, Brent Rolfe, Dave Chute, Rob Sanford, Trevor Engling, Eric Mihan, and Susan Sebestyen; and V2VME staff members Judie O'Malley and Brenda Stevens.

Teams 11, 12, and 13 added 21 new peer companions to V2VME's family of volunteers ready to assist veterans who need a friend. They join 70+ other peer companions who are currently visiting veteran friends. The next team of volunteers will be trained at Zoom classes scheduled in early November via Zoom. New volunteers learn more about V2VME and its policies and

*continued on next page*

## TEAM ELEVEN July 2020



*Trevor Engling Gretchen Evans Ryan Fowler Larry Lynch Deborah Morrison John Stidd Kevin Woods*

## TEAM TWELVE October 2020



*Michael Dumas Melissa Laverdiere Bill Libby Lou MacDonald Mark Phillips*

## TEAM THIRTEEN April 2021



*James Inglis Ben Neveux Joe Rardin Michael Seavey Paul Preble*

*Photos not available:  
Patricia Larrabee,  
Don Lema, Raven  
Lian, and Conrad  
Tremblay*

# Thanks to our amazing peer companions, board members, and all the wonderful volunteers who keep V2VME running



Peer Companions bond with each other during monthly case reviews held via Zoom in these days of COVID-19. Volunteers are eager to be able to resume in-person meetings with their fellow volunteers as soon as they can do so safely. During the case reviews, peer companions share stories about their meetings with their veteran friends, seek and give advice, make referrals, and enjoy each other's company.



*Navy vets Tom Daley, left, and Leo Couture have a grand time sharing stories of World War II.*

Peer companion Eric Mihan, one of Vet to Vet's original volunteers in 2014, reported that he and his friend, Vernon Huestis, celebrated their 350th visit together recently. Other peer companions, Jerry Harkavy and David Backman, introduced their two Navy veterans, Leo Couture and Tom Daley, both of whom served in WWII in ships that at one time had been docked in Boston Harbor, side by side. The two Navy vets, who had never met, took to one another immediately, sharing a wealth of stories of that time when they were young sailors.

Bill Libby, a peer companion who also serves on the V2VME board, told of his delight in Zooming with his new friend, a 96-year-old Army veteran who served in Burma during WWII. The two are a good match, since Bill travels to Florida in the winter and his veteran prefers to Zoom rather than meeting in person. Many more stories every month!

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## *Training, continued*

other topics, including listening effectively and setting boundaries, coping with difficult situations, dealing with cognitive loss and dementia, and tips on working with other

veterans. A panel of experienced V2VME peer companions tell the new volunteers about their experiences in the program, and a second panel provides information on where to go to obtain benefits and services for veterans.

## From July 2020 to June 2021, 70 Vet to Vet ME Volunteers devoted more than 3,100 hours to 94 Veterans who needed a friend and 18 caregivers.



# Thank You to Our Supporters!

Fiscal Year 2021: July 1, 2020—June 30, 2021

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## BENEFACTORS & SPONSORS



Volk Packaging Corporation



Jones, Rich, & Barnes Funeral Home



Verrill Dana Law Firm



Custom Communications

## Grants

CARES

Cumberland County Community Dev.  
Evan Williams (American Hero)  
Maine Humanities Council  
Tegna/News Center Maine  
United Way of York County

SHIRL WEAVER WOMEN'S SPECIAL  
PROJECT FUND

Maine Health Access Foundation  
Priscilla Miller

## In-kind Donors

Aroma Joe's  
Jones, Rich & Barnes Funeral Home  
Volk Packaging Corp.

## Donors

**\$2,500 to \$5,000**

**\$5,000 funds two veteran matches for a full year**

CONSTRUCTION GOLF LEAGUE  
TOURNAMENT

Paul & Deborah Archer  
David Caprio  
Construction Golf League  
Gary Harmon  
Anthony Mancini  
Monaghan Woodworks Inc.  
R. Taliento  
Ronald Taliento, CPA  
Tee 'n Tee Golfland  
TOT Associates



**\$1,000 to \$2,499**

**\$1,488 funds background checks for 25 volunteers—  
partners for 25 isolated veterans**

Sam Kelley  
Network for Good  
Rotary Club of Biddeford & Saco  
Rotary Club of Cape Elizabeth & South Portland  
Derek Volk



**\$500 to \$999**

**\$500 funds the Honors Ceremony lunch for up to 75  
volunteers and veterans**

Russ Doucette  
Vicki Dowdell  
Susan Gold  
Valerie & Steve Hansen  
Jones, Rich & Barnes Funeral Home  
Jeff Reinold

**\$300 to \$499**

**\$360 pays for training materials for 15 volunteers**

Antiques USA  
Karl Smith  
Veterans of Foreign Wars,  
Windham Post No. 10643

**\$150 to \$299**

**\$200 covers the cost of one case review for up to 30  
volunteers**

Amico Cos. Foundation (Elizabeth Rennie)  
Marshall Archer  
Linda Lund  
Robert Ouellette  
Elizabeth Rennie  
Robert Saunders

**Up to \$149**

**\$100 funds interviews for three veterans  
who need a friend**

Peter Allen  
Amazon Smile  
David Chute  
Adam Cote  
Betsy Crone  
John Curran  
Conrad & Anne Cyr  
Angel Davis-McBride  
Thomas DiPasqua  
Denise Doyon

**Up to \$149 (continued)**

Elder Planning Advisors  
of Maine, Cliff Ryan  
Thomas Gruber  
Jane Hamblen  
Hannaford Supermarket  
Jerry Harkavy  
Elaine Killelea  
Edite Krolll & Keith  
Walker  
Steve & Pam LaRiviere  
Roger & Kathryn Lavigne  
Kathleen Lee  
Gene & Jane Libby  
Michael Marash  
Ernest & Gail Merritt  
Jeff Newick

Judie O'Malley  
Suzan & Ken Nelson  
JoAnn Palmacci  
Poetic Gold Farm  
Dog Training  
Sharon Prosser  
Carol Rancourt  
Jane Runnels  
Marianne Russell  
Robert Small  
Andrea Tolbert  
Town & Country Federal  
Credit Union  
Paul Watkins  
Marc Weiss  
Lynn White  
Rosie Wohl

**We remember and honor . . .  
our veterans and volunteers who have  
died in the past year, July 2020-June 2021**

**VETERAN FRIENDS**

Joseph Buonomo  
Richard Burgess  
Edmund Burke  
Jackson Caldwell  
Norman Chaput  
Marcia Farr  
Frank Hale  
Larry Hickman  
Peter Howell  
James Knowles  
Charles Lathrop  
Virgil Linnell

Robert Melanson  
Carmine Melito  
John O'Brien  
Viola Palmacci  
William Parker  
Peter Rich

**VETERAN  
VOLUNTEERS**

Carol Rancourt  
Charles Thurber  
Edward Zink Jr.



# Financial Statement

Unaudited Consolidated Financial Statement

Year Ending June 30, 2021

Complete nonprofit financial report is available upon request.

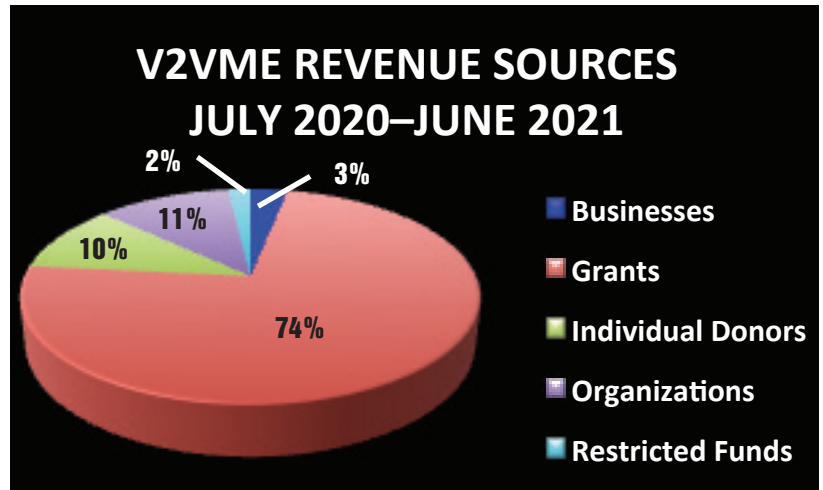
## Thank You, Volunteers & Donors!

### Where Our Funds Come From

REVENUES	Budgeted 2020-2021	Actual 2020-2021
<b>TOTAL RECEIPTS</b>	<b>\$70,050</b>	<b>\$69,617</b>
<b>Donors</b>	<b>16,100</b>	<b>18,500</b>
Businesses \$2,200		
Individual Donors \$6,761		
Organizations \$7,870		
Restricted Funds \$1,300		
<b>Grants</b>	<b>53,950</b>	<b>51,117</b>
CARES \$15,000		
Cumb. County Comm Dev \$22,717		
Evan Williams (American Hero) \$1,900		
Maine Humanities Council \$1,000		
Tegna/News Center Maine \$3,500		
United Way of York County \$7,000		

### IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS

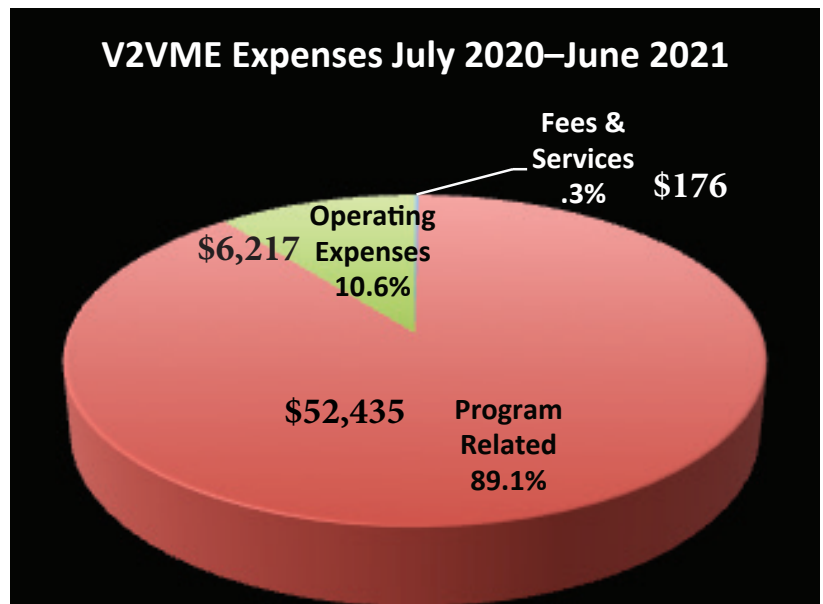
- Office storage, copying (Volk Packaging)
- Mailing (Jones, Rich & Barnes Funeral Home)
- Gift cards (Aroma Joe's)



**VOLUNTEER CONTRIBUTIONS**  
**VALUE: PRICELESS**

Hours contributed July 2020-June 2021: 5,620 hours

Our volunteers spend countless hours connecting with and assisting veterans who need a friend and performing many vital tasks to keep Vet to Vet Maine operating: photography, data entry, deliveries, IT management & operations, e-newsletters, phoning volunteers and veterans, bookkeeping, fundraising, class instruction, administration (executive director), and board membership.



# Financial Statement

continued



## How We Spend Our Funds

EXPENSES	Budgeted	Actual Expenditure
Administration	In-Kind	In-Kind
Fees and Services	235	176
Bank fees (PayPal)	100	121
Taxes & Licenses	135	55
Program Related	56883	52435
Caregiver Program	500	120
Case Reviews/Training	2150	5092
Contractors (Virtual training)	5281	2863
Employee Expense (Payroll/WorkComp)	1203	383
Labor Costs (Salary/FICA)	43103	39941
Printing & Marketing (Recruitment)	420	416
Program Software	626	662
Travel	400	16
Veteran Aid (emergency fuel, food, etc.)	2000	1749
Volunteer Appreciation (hats & masks)	1200	1193
Occupancy	In-Kind	In-Kind
Volk Packaging Corp. office space/storage and home offices	0	0
Operating Expenses	7874	6217
Conferences & Classes	150	40
Contractors (Finance review)	1000	120
Fundraising	400	75
Insurance	3800	3544
Membership	125	125
Office equipment & supplies	1200	1136
Office software	189	177
Postage	300	329
Utilities (Cell phone service)	710	671
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	64992	58828
Capacity Building/Contingency Fund	5000	5000
TOTAL EXPENDITURES/FUND	69992	63828
INCOME	Budgeted	Actual
Donations	7000	18500
Fundraisers	9100	0
Grants	53950	51117
TOTAL REVENUE	70050	69617
YEAR-END BALANCE	58	5789

# Vet to Vet Maine Leadership

2020-2021

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