



Fall 2017 / Issue No. 26

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atHome

with Seniors in the Eastern Monadnock Region



A Visit to the Villi Poni Farm

By Sandy King, MaH Newsletter Chair

On October 3rd, a group of Monadnock at Home members, staff and volunteers visited the Villi Poni Farm located at the base of Mount Monadnock, in Jaffrey, New Hampshire. Villi Poni, meaning "Wild Pony" in Finnish, is dedicated to saving the critically endangered Newfoundland pony. These ponies are a mix of Irish, Scottish and English horses that were bred as work horses; they love to plow, haul wood etc. They are also the last indigenous pony breed on this continent that hasn't had its genetics purposely manipulated.

Once numbering in the thousands, there are only about 400 Newfoundland ponies left worldwide. Of those, approximately 40 reside in the United States with 16 currently under the responsible and loving care of Villi Farm. Not only are these ponies provided with a safe haven but Villi Farm is also committed to perpetuating the breed. Currently there are two stallions at the

farm, Ammy age 11 and Lucky Ace, age 1 ½. These ponies are so gentle and friendly that both stallions hang out together in the same fenced area!

Our group was met by Executive Director Emily Chetkowski and Board President George Aho, who not only gave us a historical overview of the breed but also brought us to the various paddocks to meet each and every pony. Having adapted to their original cold climate of Newfoundland, Emily pointed out that these ponies have thick ears to resist frostbite, hooded eyes to keep the snow and ice out and dropped tails so the snow will fall off of their bodies. We couldn't help but have renewed respect for nature's way.

The ponies at Villi Farm are a calm but curious sort and welcomed our group by coming to greet us in the paddock and readily allowed us to pet and admire them. We left the farm feeling calm and tranquil. We also left with a profound

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Driving Phil

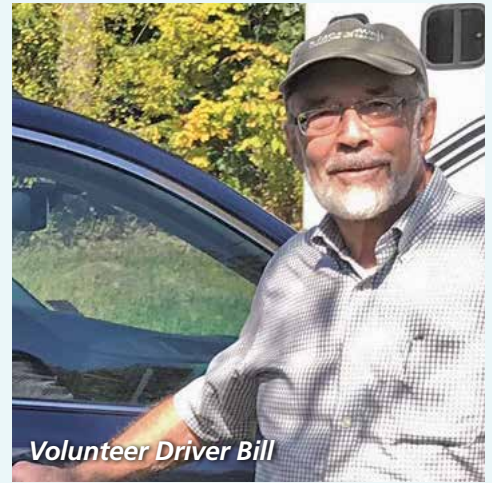
By Bill Graf, Board Member and Volunteer Driver

One of the rewards of being a volunteer driver is getting to meet some wonderful people. Such was the case with Phil Paquette and his wife Sandra. I met them in the Fall of 2015 when Phil's three weekly trips to the dialysis center in Manchester became too much for the family to handle alone. As a consequence, they sought assistance from Monadnock at Home and CVTC (Community Volunteer Transportation Company). Rides were needed twice a week, every Tuesday and Thursday, with family and friends handling the Saturday visit. In addition, treatment was moved to the dialysis center in Keene for convenience.

My first driving trip was on November 23, 2015, when I picked up Phil in Keene for the ride home. As with every new rider, I try to assess their capability: how much assistance they require, and how much assistance they want. From the beginning Phil and Sandra were easy, as they were most appreciative and accepting of my help, and we settled into a routine that

would continue for nineteen more one-way trips. Phil's treatment began around 11 in the morning and ended about 3:30 in the afternoon. Frequently one driver would take him and another would return him home.

One thing a driver establishes early on is how much the rider wants to converse and on what subjects. Some are rather quiet and private; others want to talk about their medical conditions. Phil wanted to talk about life. I began to look forward to our time together. Over the next year and two-thirds I learned about Phil's family, his honeymoon in Quebec, his work career, his

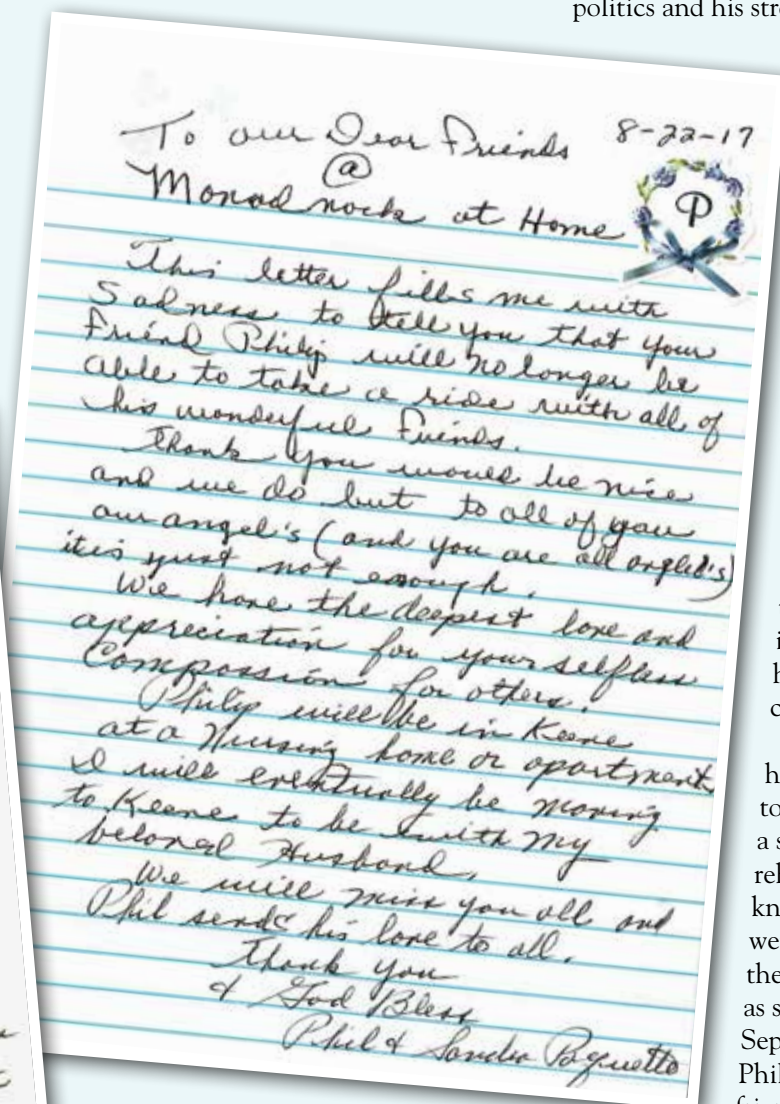
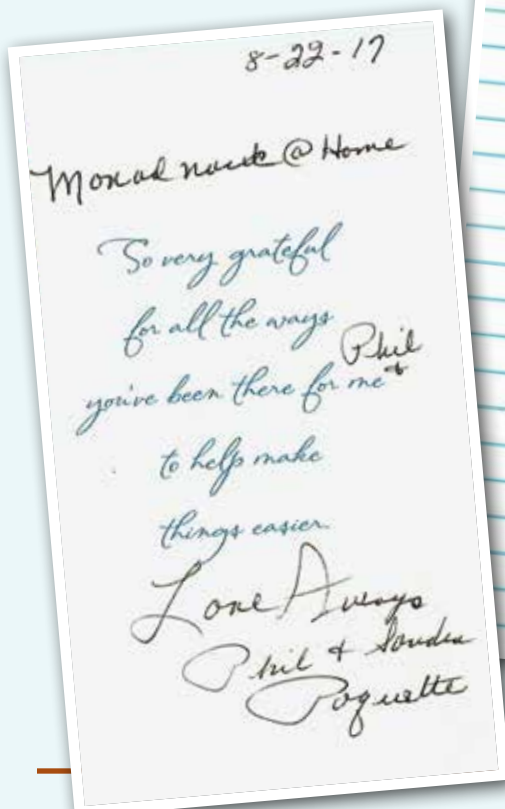


grandchildren, his hobbies, thoughts on politics and his strong religious faith.

Being almost the same age, it was easy to relate.

The morning trips were the most relaxed, as Phil was well-rested and more talkative. On return trips he was tired and often took naps. But what is most notable is that Phil never complained about his situation, and he continued to be optimistic despite the progression of his illness. He taught me humility through his courage.

When Phil finally had to be admitted to Westwood Center, a skilled nursing and rehabilitation facility, I knew our rides together were over, and I miss them. We started out as strangers, but on September 13, 2017, when Phil passed away, I lost a friend.



Cindy's Corner

By Cindy Bowen, Executive Director



Hello everyone and welcome to the Fall 2017 issue of *at Home*! It's hard to believe that the holidays are just around the corner!

As you are aware, I'll be leaving Monadnock at Home at the end of this year. Since having informed the MaH Board of Directors in August of my decision, I've had a lot of reminiscent thoughts rolling through my mind. I remember vividly Wednesday, September 22, 2010. Although we officially opened our doors on September 1st, the 22nd was our Grand Opening Celebration! The packed room of over 100 people at Bass Hall in Peterborough was buzzing with conversation and laughter. MaH's founders, newly recruited members, service providers and

volunteers, community representatives and other interested folks attended.

I stood in front of the crowd with knees knocking and sweat on my brow. I began to address the group by telling them about all of the plans we had for MaH's service to area seniors in the months and years ahead. The room was filled with excitement as we embarked upon a new adventure—a brand new non-profit serving seniors in the eastern Monadnock Region; the first of its kind in New Hampshire!

Now after 7+ years, thousands of phone calls and countless emails, home visits, volunteer/service provider referrals, speaking engagements, special programs/events, board and

committee meetings, I will leave feeling very proud of all that has been accomplished by MaH. Many thanks to the board, volunteers, service providers, community partners and last but not least, Sandra Faber, our Member Services Coordinator, for all of their support over the years. I have many fond memories as I begin a new chapter.

I am very pleased that our own Sandra Faber has been hired by the Board to become MaH's new Executive Director on January 1, 2018. Sandra has been wonderful to work with and has my full confidence going forward! I wish her nothing but the best in her new position!

Best wishes always and be well!
Cheers! 🍷

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organization if you have an **account with TD Bank**. The bank will donate \$10 annually to MaH for every **existing** checking account held by our members or non-members interested in supporting MaH. They will also donate \$50 for every **new** checking account. If you already have an account (or are willing to open one) please give us a call so we can help you enroll in their "affinity" program (603-371-0809).



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Memberships are now being accepted. For more information call 603-371-0809 or visit our website monadnockathome.org



OUR MISSION The Mission of Monadnock at Home is to provide seniors of the Monadnock Region with the support and practical means to live and thrive in their homes and communities.

A Message from our New Chair, Ed Walker

Now that the seasons are transitioning from summer to fall, Monadnock at Home is also undergoing a few transitions. Not only am I transitioning into the role as Board Chair, but our founding Executive Director, Cindy Bowen, will be retiring at the end of the year.

With respect to my new role as Chair, I am very excited to be given the opportunity to take the reins of such a vibrant and vital organization in our communities. This past summer, former Chair Russ Armstrong highlighted many of the great achievements that have been brought to you, our members, by our dedicated volunteers and staff. It is my goal to continue this tradition of assisting our seniors in new and innovative ways so they may continue to live and thrive in their homes and communities.

As for the Executive Director, I cannot say enough about Cindy and the extraordinary work she has done over the

past seven years. As our first Executive Director, Cindy has had the opportunity to leave her mark on Monadnock at Home as nobody else ever will and I wish her the best as she moves toward "retirement." At the board level our greatest concerns in replacing Cindy were ensuring a smooth and seamless transition while finding somebody who holds the same level of passion and commitment to our members as Cindy. I am excited to report that we have met all of these goals.

I am pleased to announce that effective January 1, 2018 our new Executive Director will be Sandra Faber. All of you know Sandra as our Member Services Coordinator for the past five years. During this time Sandra has shown herself to be completely dedicated to our members and our mission. As we head toward January, Cindy, Sandra, and I will be working through the transition including the hiring of a new Member Services Coordinator



and making sure that all of the great work that they accomplish every day continues.

Members should feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. I can be reached through my email at chair@monadnockathome.org or my personal cell phone, 781-727-2187. 📞

Member Spotlight: Hank Drury and Lilla Lyon

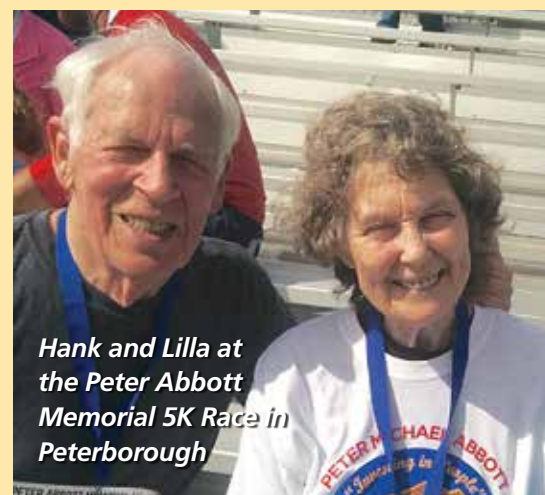
By Sandra Faber, Member Services Coordinator

Hank Drury and Lilla Lyon have not only been with Monadnock at Home since the beginning, but they also helped get us started by bringing in members and providers. Before I began working for Monadnock at Home, I knew Hank and Lilla from different happenings in Hancock. I started running The Run for the Honey, a 5K road race, on Old Home Day in Hancock several years ago and I remember seeing Hank running many times. This year, like the past few, I have not run due to various injuries but stood cheering on the runners feeling like I really should be out there too. As I watched, I spotted Hank crossing the finish line again and taking home first place in his age group! I congratulated him and asked if I could sit down to talk with both he and Lilla at their home. I thought they would be a great inspiration to our members.

Staying fit is something they both value and as Lilla explains, "It's something we

can do together." Hank and Lilla recently completed the Peter Abbott Memorial 5K run in Peterborough; Hank runs, Lilla fast walks. At that event, they both took home medals! Lilla talked about taking part in a Cheshire sponsored run in Keene. She loves it because people really come out to support the runners and walkers, standing on the front porch cheering and clapping as you go by. "It's such a great feeling," she says. I know that feeling. The first time I ran The Run for the Honey I heard people yelling my name as I ran down Main Street to the finish. It feels like the community is rallying behind you and helping you run those last hard steps.

They are both members of the Wellness Center and would love to see more Monadnock at Home members use the center. We had a great discussion, tossing back and forth ideas for MaH programs and member and community involvement. They both are active, stay busy and have a



Hank and Lilla at the Peter Abbott Memorial 5K Race in Peterborough

great outlook. Hank likes to joke that they won their age group in these races, but they were the only ones in the bracket! Clearly, that is not a factor. They are an inspiration! They have both inspired me to get out there and run down Main Street again and I hope they have inspired you too!



*Learning About the
Newfoundland Pony*



Member Kathy Meets One of the Ponies

Continued from page 1

appreciation for all the good work Villi Farm is doing to preserve this important breed.

For more information about the farm and its ponies, including an informative video by WMUR's *New Hampshire*

Chronicle, visit the Villi Farm website at www.newfoundlandponies.org 



Live Webcast with Dr. Atul Gawande


By Sandra Faber, Member Services Coordinator

On September 25th nearly 50 of us gathered to watch a live broadcast featuring an interview with Dr. Atul Gawande, MD, MPH, author of the book *Being Mortal*. Beacon Hill Village in Boston hosted the live event to celebrate its 15th anniversary and the Village movement it inspired. The event was live-streamed to Villages across the United States.

Dr. Gawande spoke of the value of community and how the village model assists its members as they grow older. He explained how his approach to patients has changed since the beginning of his career. When faced with a medical decision, patients would often ask him "what would you do?" At some point, he realized that asking patients about **their own** health goals allowed him to present options that aligned with their personal wishes. This realization was a major shift in caring for his patients, as it addresses how they want to live and thrive instead of merely focusing on length of life.

Dr. Gawande also touched upon the role reversal of the parent and child as we age. Often the adult child's number one concern is that their Mom or Dad is safe, not taking into account that their parent has hopes and dreams and is still living their "story." Gawande explained

that with the village model, a person is reassured that their needs such as transportation and household maintenance will be met, while also providing the social connections and cultural experiences necessary to live the life they desire.

At the conclusion of the broadcast, our three panelists—Dr. Mike Lindberg, Chief Medical Officer for Monadnock Community Hospital; Chris Gallagher, retired social worker for Cheshire Medical Center; and Reverend Jamie Hamilton, Rector of All Saint's Episcopal Church in Peterborough—gave remarks on the broadcast and answered questions. Communication was a running theme of the discussion. We talked about doctor/patient interaction and what gets in the way such as time constraints and technology. Reverend Hamilton spoke of encouraging open and frequent conversations about end of life with her patrons and the importance of advance directives in communicating your wishes. Those in the room seemed to feel that Dr. Gawande's sentiments really resonated with their thoughts and agreed that more conversation is needed. According to Gawande, *"Our ultimate goal, after all, is not a good death but a good life to the very end."* 

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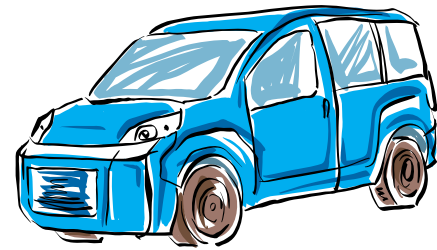
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