



2025 ANNUAL REPORT OF DUMMERSTON CARES

July 1, 2024–June 30, 2025

The mission of Dummerston Cares is to strengthen the Dummerston community through support of all residents with health and other wellness needs through services, programs and resources of its own and those of related, local, regional and state organizations and agencies.

The Cares board is a hard-working group, with each member committed to helping our neighbors thrive and to enhancing the quality of community life that we all share. During 2024–2025, our board members and community volunteers teamed up to provide Dummerston residents of all ages with the impressive array of free programs that are described in this report.

One group of volunteers deserves special mention—the ten steadfast drivers who make up Cares’ Rides Program: Akara Draper, Catie G. Berg, Connie and Norris Evans, David Evans, Gurudharm Khalsa, Linnie Jones, Susan Daigler, Susan Read-Smith, and Roger Turner. “Rides” is our most requested service—and last year, demand skyrocketed. These same ten volunteers provided 138 rides to Dummerston residents (up 60% from the previous year) and the amazing 5,590 total miles they logged was an increase of 69%. Our sincere thanks to Program Coordinator, Susan Daigler, and to each of the drivers for going the distance!

Much of what Cares is able to accomplish occurs because local partners collaborate with us throughout the year to make good things happen in our community. We’re grateful for their support and expertise, especially, Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA), West Dummerston Volunteer Fire Department (WDVFD), the Putney Foodshelf, Dummerston School, Green Mountain RSVP, and Senior Solutions.

Heading into a new year, we are excited to be laying the groundwork for two new health and wellness programs:

- In late September of 2025, residents will be invited by Cares and Dummerston School students to contribute shelf-stable items to our first Community-Wide Food Drive to Benefit Dummerston’s food pantry, the Putney Foodshelf.
- For those over 55, we are working with Green Mountain RSVP to offer a free Bone Builders Class. This is a strength training and balance class that improves bone density and can help prevent falls.

As always, we welcome your ideas about how to better serve our community's health and wellness needs and encourage residents to join us in volunteering. There's something for everyone! Please feel free to speak with a board member or call our Message Line.

COMMUNITY SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

MESSAGE LINE. Residents may contact Cares through our telephone line (802) 257-5800 or by email at info@dummerstoncares.org to request information or help, that is not an emergency, and also to register for a Cares' program or event. These sites are monitored daily, and messages are forwarded to the volunteers who can respond in a timely way. A total of 213 phone, and 17 email messages were logged during the year. Everyone received a return call or email.

Coordinators: Shawn Bracebridge (Phone Messages), Cindy Levine (Email Messages)

CHORES CORPS. Volunteers help with simple home repairs, household chores, occasional yard work, snow shoveling, grocery shopping, and also make referrals to licensed tradespeople. This service is mainly for residents who require help for immediate needs that can be provided by a friendly volunteer. This year 46 requests were received and met.

Coordinator: Steve Mindel

Volunteers: Catie G. Berg, Susan Daigler, Akara Draper, Alan Gallup, Shane Gangloff, Meg Lyons, Pam McFadden, Dennis Mewes, Dave Shaw, Keith Short

EMERGENCY HOME-HEATING-FUEL ASSISTANCE. Cares manages a Fuel Fund that helps qualified residents pay for home heating fuel. Cares also coordinates with Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) and the Dummerston Congregational Church's Wood Pantry Program to respond to this basic need. Five residents received assistance this year.

Coordinator: Bill Schmidt

EXERCISE CLASSES

- **Gentle Yoga.** About four to six residents participated in the original class that began in 2019. When Covid hit, the class met weekly, through August of 2024, via Zoom. A new class with four to six students started in May and met weekly, with some breaks, through August. These classes did not continue, due to logistical challenges.

Coordinator: Bill Schmidt

Instructor: Judy Carpenter

- **Tai Chi.** Four participants from the original Tai Chi class, launched by Cares in 2019, continued meeting weekly on their own at the Dummerston Congregational Church. They met inside or out, depending on the weather. Cares offered two new classes, each consisting of ten weeks, with instructor, Helen Hawes. The first class began in May and the second, in August. The first class had nine participants and the second, 11. Classes were held at the Community Center and continued into 2025. With such a good response, Helen decided to organize classes on her own, no longer needing Cares' support.

Coordinator: Bill Schmidt

Instructor of New Classes: Helen Hawes

FLOWERS AND CARDS. This program supports residents who can benefit from some extra sunshine in their lives, as well as those recovering from illness or surgery, or grieving the death of a loved one. This year, 28 residents received a card and/or a bouquet of flowers from Cares.

Coordinator: Pam McFadden

FRIENDLY VISITS AND CALLS. Cares connects volunteers with homebound seniors and other residents through social visits, phone calls, and other types of assistance. During the year, Cares' volunteers made 75 home visits and 104 calls to residents, many on a regular basis.

Coordinator: Pam McFadden

Volunteers: Catie G. Berg, Deb Carpenter, Susan Daigler, Akara Draper, Phyllis Emery, Pam McFadden, Steve Mindel, Bill Schmidt

MEDICAL EQUIPMENT LOAN PROGRAM. This program provides durable medical equipment, such as a walker, shower chair, commode, toilet riser, or wheelchair, to residents recovering from an injury, surgery, or illness. The equipment is available for whatever length of time is needed. Last year, Cares lent Dummerston residents 27 pieces of equipment.

Coordinator: Shawn Bracebridge

Volunteer: John Dunham

PUTNEY FOODSHELF. The Putney Foodshelf is Dummerston's community food pantry! We are grateful to the Foodshelf for providing free fresh produce and household items, especially as the number of residents experiencing food insecurity continues to grow. The Foodshelf is a welcoming place located at the Putney Community Center on Christian Square. Hours of service occur on Fridays, from 12:30 to 3:30 P.M. and Saturdays, from 9:00 to 10:30 A.M. Last year, Dummerston residents visited the Foodshelf 450 times. Twenty Dummerston households visited for the first time. To publicize this vital service, Cares maintains two sandwich boards—one in West Dummerston and one in Dummerston Center.

Coordinator: Phyllis Emery

RAISE THE ALARM FIRE SAFETY PROGRAM. During 2024-25, Cares continued its partnership with the West Dummerston Volunteer Fire Department to help keep local families safe from house fires. Cares purchased the smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors, while trained firefighters installed the devices at no charge for any resident living in an owner-occupied, single-family house. This year, 20 Dummerston families either had their first devices installed or their current devices upgraded, bringing the total number of families served since the program started to 70.

Coordinators: Susan Daigler, Meg Lyons

RIDES. In a rural community such as ours, this is one of Cares' most valuable services. Vetted volunteers provide rides for residents to medical appointments and other necessary destinations, both locally and in the wider area. Last year, ten dedicated drivers provided 15 passengers with 138 rides, covering a total of 5,590 miles.

Coordinator: Susan Daigler

Volunteers: Catie G. Berg, Susan Daigler, Akara Draper, Connie and Norris Evans, David Evans, Linnie Jones, Gurudharm Khalsa, Susan Read-Smith, Roger Turner

SCHOOL SUPPORT. This varies depending on the needs of students and families, as well as requests from the school nurse, social worker, counselor, and principal. Food cards and gas cards were made available for some families. Planning also began with Dummerston School for an All-Community Food Drive in 2025 on behalf of the Putney Foodshelf. Students will partner with Cares' volunteers.

Coordinator: Meg Lyons

SOCIAL TEAS. Cares continued to host Afternoon Teas at the Congregational Church for residents to socialize with old and new friends while enjoying delicious sweet and savory treats, plus of course, a cup of tea. Eighty-nine guests attended the six events that were scheduled in August, October, December, February (cancelled due to weather!), April, and June. Volunteers with Cares' Rides Program provided round-trip transportation to the event, upon request.

Coordinators: Catie G. Berg, Phyllis Emery, Pam McFadden

Volunteers: Deb Carpenter, Judy Carpenter, Pearl Doubleday, Ken Emery, Connie Evans, Dave Evans, Cassie Freese, Susan Leuchter, Meg Lyons, Lou Nelsen, Bill Schmidt

SPECIAL NEEDS. Local families sometimes face home emergencies that have an impact on their physical and mental health and safety—requiring a timely response. Residents often contact Cares directly and we help with rent payments, food cards and gas cards, car repairs, etc. In cases that involve significant resources, such as a roof or ground well that needs replacing, we rely on our partners at Southeastern Vermont Community Action (SEVCA) to vet applicants and oversee construction projects. During the past year, Cares responded to six requests of a special need with financial support.

Coordinators: Susan Daigler, Meg Lyons, Bill Schmidt

VALENTINE BOXES. On Valentine's Day, 13 volunteers fanned across Dummerston to "spread the love" by delivering beautiful, hand-crafted Valentine boxes at the homes of 67 delighted residents. Nine were first-time recipients!

Coordinator: Meg Lyons

Volunteers: Julie Bacon, Catie G. Berg, Sheri Bolster, Deb Carpenter, Susan Daigler, Akara Draper and Linnie Jones, Phyllis and Ken Emery, Cassie Freese, Frances Herbert, Jim Johnson, Susan Leuchter and Steve Mindel, Eileen Lyons, Pam McFadden, Linda Rood and Roger Turner

VOLUNTEER RECOGNITION AND THANKS. For each issue of *The Views of Dummerston*, Cares presents its tribute to the "Volunteer(s) of the Season." Recognized this past year were: Michelle Cherrier, Dummerston's Representative to the Windham Solid Waste Management District; the Dummerston Community Chest Board (now disbanded), as well as many who served on the Board from 1941 through 2024; ALL the many residents of Dummerston who as "volunteers" provided helping hands to their neighbors.

Coordinator: Catie G. Berg

DONORS

Our volunteers and donors are our most valuable assets and we are deeply grateful to each of these generous individuals for making Cares' programs and services possible.

Cliff Adler & Lynn Levine
Sarah Bedichek
Kathryn & Alan Berta, BertaVenture, LLC
Catie G. & Bruce Berg
Betsy Cox
Daniel Daigler
Pearl Doubleday
Dummerston Community Chest
Carolyn & Hugh Goldsmith
Linda Ives
Meg Lyons & Jim Johnson
Jean Momaney
Ellen O'Beirne

Mary Louise Nelsen
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Lew & Gail Sorenson
Sorg-Vogt Charitable Fund
Steve Tavella
Muriel & Bob Taylor
Town of Dummerston
Kathleen Ann Wall & Susan Fields
Margaret Wilkinson

Donors of In-Kind Services or Goods

Catie G. Berg
Sheri Bolster, Sheri B's Chocolates
Shawn Bracebridge & John Dunham
Deb Carpenter
Susan Daigler
Pearl Doubleday
Akara Draper & Linnie Jones
Phyllis & Ken Emery
Connie & Norris Evans
David Evans
Laurie Frechette
Cassie Freese
Shane Gangloff

Gurudharm Khalsa
Cindy Levine
Eileen Lyons
Meg Lyons
Sallie May
Pam McFadden
Steve Mindel & Susan Leuchter
Kristina & Kelt Naylor, Sidehill Farm
Alan Pike & the WDVFD
Linda Rood & Roger Turner
Susan Read-Smith
Bill Schmidt
Keith Short

2024-25 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meg Lyons, President
Bill Schmidt, Vice President
Deb Carpenter, Secretary
Susan Daigler, Treasurer
Catie G. Berg
Phyllis Emery
Norris Evans
Pam McFadden
Steve Mindel

HOW TO CONTACT DUMMERSTON CARES

**Dummerston Cares, Inc.
P.O. Box 302
West Dummerston, VT 05357**

**Message Line: (802) 257-5800
Email: info@dummerstoncares.org
Website: www.dummerstoncares.org**

Dummerston Cares, Inc.
Annual Financial Report
June 30, 2025

	Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025
General Fund	
Cash Balance at beginning of period	\$ 10,359.27
Receipts:	
Contributions & bequest	4,957.13
Other revenue	850.00
Program fees	1115.00
Town support	750.00
Interest	4.96
Total Receipts	<u>7677.09</u>
Disbursements:	
Program expenses:	
Flowers, baskets & cards	715.22
Fire safety program	1,454.10
Program facilitators	1855.00
Program space	1,400.00
Food Aid	1,500.00
Direct relief	3,143.88
Messageline telephone	136.15
Chores supplies	78.11
Total Program expenses	<u>10,282.46</u>
Administrative expenses:	
Postage	322.31
Post office box	120.00
Office supplies	111.60
Equipment Purchases	276.76
Total Administrative expenses	<u>830.67</u>
Total expenses	<u>11113.13</u>
Cash Balance at end of period	\$ <u><u>6923.23</u></u>

	Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025
Edward Jones Account	
Beginning Balance	15,420.74
Contributions	964.08
Dividend income	439.66
Market fluctuation	82.09
Ending Balance	<u>16,906.57</u>

	Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025
Heat Fund	
Cash Balance at beginning of period	\$ 7,083.25
Receipts:	
Contributions received	200.00
Transferred from general fund	0.00
Interest Earned	3.41
Total Receipts	<u>203.41</u>
Disbursements for fuel	<u>1,119.80</u>
Cash Balance at end of period	<u>\$ 6,166.86</u>