



# Neighborhood News

October 2022

The latest news from Neighborhood Connections, Inc.

[www.neighborhoodconnectionsvt.org](http://www.neighborhoodconnectionsvt.org)

## Did you know?

*Our annual appeal makes up about 1/3 of our yearly operating budget!*

*See our appeal on page 6.*

## Mountain Town Circus a Success!

Our first-ever Mountain Town Circus to benefit Neighborhood Connections was a hit! Troy Wunderle and his Big Top Adventures certainly delivered! Children and adults enjoyed two circus shows and in-between there were circus workshops, face painting, and balloon twisting. In addition, the Silent Auction table saw a lot of activity. Thank you to all the local businesses and services who donated to the auction.

Folks enjoyed the food from Jamaica Jewelz and the Hound Dogs trucks; the Tri-Mountain Lions Club served free popcorn; and the Wantastiquet Rotary handled the parking. We could not have had such a success without the help of so many volunteers! This will be an annual event. For the day in pictures, see page 5.



*Troy Wunderle  
Big Top Adventures*



## Delores Barbeau Mobile Unit Dedication, Flu and Covid Vaccines on October 29

All are invited to the official unveiling of the Dr. Delores Barbeau Mobile Health Unit at Neighborhood Connections on Saturday, October 29th from 10am—2pm. Flu and Covid Vaccines will be available. A health benefits specialist will also be on hand to answer your questions about Medicare, Medicaid, prescription assistance, and other programs.

Generously funded through a grant from the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), the Dr. Delores Barbeau Mobile Unit is the brainchild of its namesake, Dr. Delore, who set the standard in so many ways for what it means to be a community health physician. Fully-equipped, this new “healthcare on wheels” option expands North Star Health’s ability to fulfill their mission “to connect with and care for our community so everyone may enjoy health and wellness.”





### Barbara Dailey

Barbara joined NC as Programs Coordinator in June 2022 after nearly 16 years working in administration at Brown University. She is responsible for managing the organization’s social services programs, including *The Mountain Town Connector* and *The School Partnership* initiative.

Barbara lives in Jamaica in the house she and her husband, Tom, built. They have recently relocated from their 1804 homestead on the RI/CT line. Barbara enjoys family, friends, music, and hiking in the mountains.



### Lois Schram Osnow

Lois joined NC in June, 2022 as a licensed clinical social worker. Prior to moving to VT, she was co-founder and owner of LS Gerontology Seminars, where she instituted culture change projects in more than 25 long-term care facilities in the NY tri-state area.

Lois and her husband, Stuart, have 22 year old twins, Bennie and Anna Rose. She occasionally brings Jack, her golden retriever, who is now a retired service animal, to the office.

### Why we wear costumes

No doubt you have seen the staff wearing silly costumes even when it’s not Halloween! It might seem frivolous when so many serious things are going on around us. So why do we do it? The clients we assist everyday often deal with devastating, life-altering problems— homelessness, financial insecurity, or substance abuse, to name a few. Dressing in funny costumes gives us a break from the weight of the heavy work we do, and gives us a chance to come together and smile. So next time you see us in costume, come on in, we might be celebrating the birth of a new grandbaby, a graduation, birthday, or simply cheering someone up. And occasionally, we even get the volunteers and board members in on the fun!



## How We Help

Activism has always been a part of Mia Feroletto’s journey. In NYC, she worked tirelessly to address the homeless situation.

Mia now lives in Vermont, and makes an annual trip to the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota to work with the Oglala Sioux Tribe—a band of the Lakota nation. She has spearheaded, since December 2021, the effort to return to the Lakota people the artifacts and remains stolen from the dead killed at Wounded Knee, now housed in a small Massachusetts museum. Each year the Lakota people ask for their return—only to be rebuffed.

While preparing for her annual South Dakota trip, her car was declared unsafe for travel. She was referred to Neighborhood Connections and met with Lois Osnow, one of our social workers, who provided her with assistance in finding an inexpensive vehicle that could safely transport her to the Reservation. Through grants, gifts, and a loan from the agency, Mia was able to locate a car. She returns to South Dakota this month.

**Our services have doubled since last year!**

### Food Security

Prepared meals and grocery support; Food stamp assistance.

### Health Services

Regular wellness and safety checks; Mental health and substance use.

### Transportation

On-demand and group rides.

### Aging and Disability

Social and emotional support; Referrals to more intensive services like dementia care.

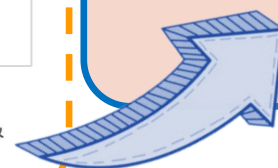
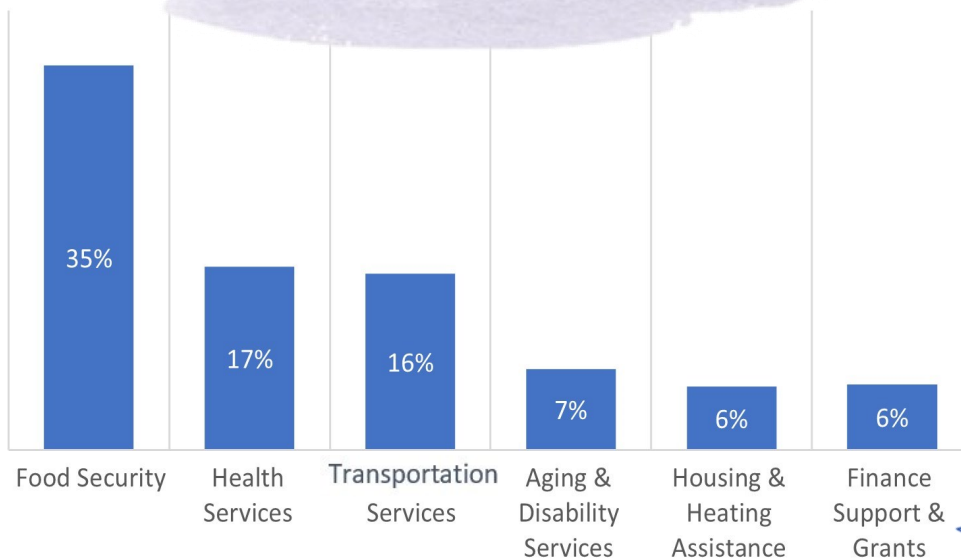
### Housing and Heating

Advocacy for affordable housing; Financial support and referral for heating assistance.

### Financial Support

Finance management; Grants and loans.

## Top Social Services Year-to-Date





**From our riders....**

*"Thank you very much for the many rides you have given me. They made it possible for me to get the surgeries I needed."*

*"This is a wonderful service for those of us that do not drive."*

*-Doris Hastings*

*"I work at Mountain Valley Health Center and frequently arrange medical appointment rides to the clinic, specialists, and hospital visits. This partnership (with NC) has been very beneficial and appreciated. It helps patients get the medical care they need and they are transported by someone they know and trust."*

*-Sherri Foster*



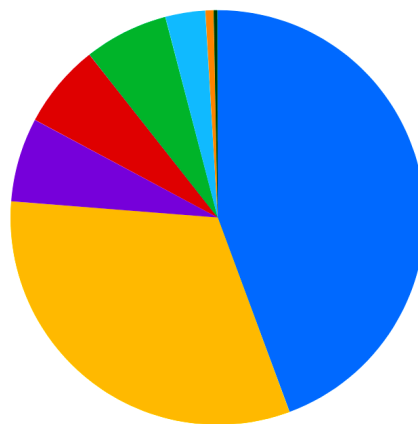
## Mountain Town Connector on the Move!

Our wheelchair-accessible van ferries riders to important appointments and events—improving access to medical services, nutrition, education, recreation, exercise, and social interactions. Following a slow start due to pandemic-related challenges, The Mountain Town Connector has quickly become one of our most utilized services! After evaluating our year-to-date data, it was our third most-accessed service in 2022, and we only expect that to grow as we ratchet up outreach efforts.

A rider who has primarily accessed the service to attend social activities and to pick up essential items like groceries, says, "I love this program, and it would be terrible if we didn't have it anymore!" She specifically mentioned door-through-door service that our driver provides, and says she enjoys group social trips, particularly the outing to the Northshire Bookstore and lunch with seven other participants. She wants to be included in future group trips.

### Rides by Service Category

Over 75% of the rides we have provided this year were for important medical appointments and to provide access to food and/or essential items, such as prescriptions.



- Medical: 44.4%
- Food Security/Essential Item: 31.9%
- Socialization: 6.6%
- Social Services: 6.6%
- Education: 6.6%
- Other: 3.1%
- Recreation/Wellness: 0.6%
- Housing: 0.3%

**THANK YOU to the Holt Fund for their continued support!**  
**NEED A RIDE? Call 802-824-4343**

# The Mountain Town Circus in Pictures



The 2nd annual Mountain Town Circus is scheduled for Sunday, September 10th, 2023!

## OUR BOARD

Dwight Johnson  
*Chairman*

Ed Magee  
*Treasurer*

Carolyn Partridge  
*Secretary*

Jim Linville  
Susie Wyman  
Bob Wells  
Skip Raymond  
Pat Cherry  
Rusty Davis  
Mark Reffner  
Charma Bonanno

## OUR STAFF

Nicole Wengerd  
*Executive Director*

Maggi Royle  
*Finance Manager*

Katey Doyle  
*Social Worker*

Lois Schram Osnow  
*Social Worker*

Barbara Dailey  
*Programs  
Coordinator*

MC Schwartz  
*Events &  
Communications*

Elisa Donato  
*Development*

Buddy Stevens  
*Transportation*

Pat Roberts  
*Front Desk*

# Annual Appeal 2022

*Make a Difference!*  
**DONATE**

As the year draws to an end, we know that you have many choices when putting your charitable gifts to work and a host of opportunities to give to many worthy organizations. We want you to know that at Neighborhood Connections, the impact of your donation is measurable. It funds the invaluable programs and services that help so many in our community facing not just hardship but often times, devastating circumstances.

Year-to-date, the services we have delivered have doubled compared to last year. Yes, doubled! The demand for vital services like counseling, advocacy, and on-demand rides for medical and essential appointments continues to rise. In addition, we saw an uptick in demand from our seniors for exercise classes like Bone Builders, assistance navigating confusing applications, and meeting food security needs. The rise in need this year tells us that there has never been a more critical time to support your neighbors. We depend on your investment to continue serving our communities— *free of charge*.

Thank you for your consideration and thoughtfulness in supporting Neighborhood Connections!

## HOW YOU CAN DONATE:

**By Mail:** P O Box 207, Londonderry, 05148

**Venmo:** Venmo @neighborhoodconnections

**Text-to-Donate:** Text GIVENC to 44-321

**Online:** [www.neighborhoodconnectionsvt.org](http://www.neighborhoodconnectionsvt.org)

**Stock Transfer and Planned Giving:** Email [Maggi@ncvermont.org](mailto:Maggi@ncvermont.org)



venmo



## HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT NEIGHBORHOOD CONNECTIONS

There are so many ways to support Neighborhood Connections and our mission to promote the health and well-being of the people in Southern Vermont's mountain towns through advocacy, education, and social services.

### Financial Support

In 2022, community donations accounted for 70% of our operating budget. Some of the many ways to give include:

- **General Donation:** You can donate at any time via cash, check, stock transfer, or on our website.
- **Monthly Sustaining Donor:** Set up a monthly giving plan.
- **Annual Appeal:** Our year-end appeal is crucial to sustaining our services and programs. To donate to this year's appeal, use the envelope inside this newsletter.
- **Tribute Gifts:** Give in honor of a loved one or donate to the Delores Fund in memory of our co-founder.
- **Program Sponsorship:** Donate to sustain a specific program. This can be a one-time or monthly donation. Contact us for more information.

*Thank You!*

### The Delores Fund

After Delores' passing, the Delores Fund was established with the intent of using the money to address clients' immediate needs—just as Delore had requested.

One example that demonstrates how these funds are used concerns Nancy, an area resident. Nancy suffered a stroke and learned she would need a special wheelchair to continue her daily activities. She wished to maintain as much of her independence as possible. However, she didn't qualify for any governmental assistance programs, and the prohibitive cost of the chair she needed almost caused her to give up hope.

A neighbor referred her to us, and the Delores Fund made it possible for Neighborhood Connections to outfit Nancy with a specialized electric wheelchair that she would otherwise be unable to afford.

### Volunteer

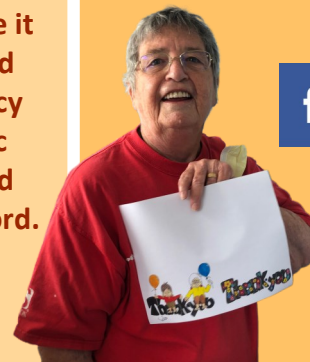
Volunteers are the heartbeat of our organization! Our volunteers help organize events, operate the front desk, and drive community members to essential appointments. If you would like to volunteer, call us or stop by the office.

### Community Ambassador

Tell everyone about the great work we do! Like us on Facebook and share our posts! Refer community members to our organization! To learn more about the work we do, head to our website.

Like us on

**facebook**



*Our Mission is to promote the health and well-being of the people in Southern Vermont's mountain towns through advocacy, education, and social services.*



PO Box 207 Londonderry, VT 05148

*We proudly serve our neighbors in the towns and villages of Andover, Bondville, Chester, Jamaica, Landgrove, Londonderry, Peru, South Londonderry, Weston, Windham, and Winhall.*



Clean and Sober, a 12-step recovery program for those struggling with alcohol and/or drugs, meets at NC on Wednesdays at 5:30 pm.

### **Make An Appointment During the Annual Healthcare Enrollment Period**

Peg Lochner, an independent insurance broker dealing primarily with Medicare products, is here weekly at Neighborhood Connections, by appointment, to answer all your questions about Medicare coverage.



During the Annual Enrollment Period, between October 17th and December 5th, Peg will be available every Monday and Friday. Call Peg directly at 802.379.4518 to schedule an appointment for your Medicare review.



