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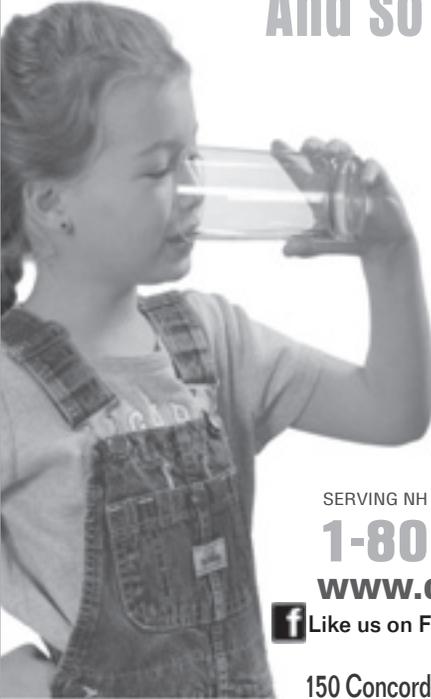
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Irene Jewett Honored with Vaughan Award for Volunteer Service

She says she's going to cut back some ... maybe.

Press release

New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Commissioner Nicholas Toumpas and Governor Maggie Hassan joined with the State Committee on Aging and EngAGING New Hampshire to recognize this year's recipients of the Vaughan Awards. These awards are presented annually to a couple or individual from each county who are 60 or older and have demonstrated outstanding leadership and volunteer service on behalf of senior citizens across New Hampshire.

"New Hampshire citizens have a long tradition of coming together and working with one another to improve our communities," said Governor Hassan. "The Vaughan Award winners are a shining example of that tradition, proving that when we care for each other, we all get stronger."

"We are very fortunate here in New Hampshire to have so many seniors who make volunteering a part of their lives," said DHHS Commissioner Toumpas. "It is so important that we recognize efforts of the Vaughan Award recipients and all of our senior volunteers. All that they do has helped to strengthen our communities and the network of programs and services available for seniors in our State."

This year's recipient from Merrimack County is Irene Jewett of East Andover.

This year's awardees will be honored in a ceremony on Monday, May 6, at 1:30 PM in the Executive Council Chamber at the State House. This award was initiated in 1962 to memorialize the Honorable Joseph D. Vaughan, who was instrumental in creating a State agency dedicated to the well being of senior citizens. For more information, contact event coordinator Roger Vachon at 223-6903 or Skeeter4us@aol.com.

Honoring Irene
By Charlie Darling, Beacon staff

Irene was nominated for the Vaughan Award by New Hampshire State Representative Mario Ratzki of

Andover. Many people and organizations from Andover strongly supported her nomination. Larry Chase wrote the nominating letter to the award committee, which neatly sums up much of Irene's service to the community:

"She's been called 'the glue that holds the town together' ... 'the Mayor of East Andover' ... and 'awesome.' There are few in town who do not know her name, her face, her work.

"About to turn 92, Irene Jewett is saying she may cut back some on her volunteer activities – well, maybe in a year or two. Her friends and colleagues find that hard to believe.

"A native of Andover, where she currently lives, Irene has what many would consider a full volunteer plate. For the Andover Congregational Church, she's the chair of the restoration committee, which recently rebuilt the graceful steeple of that historic structure and is rehabbing the next-door Highland Lake Grange Hall, also a church property. She hosts a weekly Bible study group in her home, a few doors from the church. She arranges church weddings, receptions, and funerals. She has memories of her roughly 50-year service as church clerk.

"But that's not all.

"For the Town of Andover, Jewett is a 22-year member of the Supervisors of the Checklist, an elected board responsible for registering town voters, assuring the accuracy of the voting list, and tallying the votes. (In March of this year, she put in 12 hours on Town Meeting day.)

"She is a longtime member and past chair of the town's Fourth of July Committee, which organizes the major community event of the year. She currently has two committee tasks: arranging the fireworks display and selling ads in the printed program.

"Then there's the Labor Day Flea Market on the Village Green. She's co-chair of that event as well. And in her spare time she bakes birthday cakes for Proctor Academy boarding students and serves on the Andover Historical Society Board of Trustees.

"But wait. There's more

"Though she has stepped down from her volunteer work with the East Andover Fire Precinct and the Andover Rescue Squad (she retired as an EMT when she turned 75), she maintains an active interest in helping local individuals in need of assistance and support. Ongoing activities include driving friends and neighbors to medical and other appointments, preparing food for local shut-ins, and cat-sitting while neighbors are on vacation.

"Asked what she had in mind when she mentioned relinquishing some of her responsibilities, Irene is momentarily silent. Then she says, 'You know, I'm perfectly healthy. I like working with people. Maybe I'll just keep on doing what I'm doing.'"



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