

## Introducing Leslie White



Rangeley Health and Wellness is pleased to announce the appointment of Leslie White as the organization's next Executive Director. Leslie has been serving as RHW's Deputy Director and will assume the lead position from Jeanne Thorvaldsen who is transitioning to become the Director of Development. The change is happening at a very critical time in the organization's history as it seeks new ways of delivering services and funding operations.

Both Leslie and Jeanne share a strong passion for improving the health and wellness of the region and bring incredible energy to their new posts.

Leslie comes to RHW with a master's degree in Public Health and extensive experience in healthcare administration. She is also a registered dietitian with expertise in clinical nutrition and program design. Leslie says, "I am thrilled to assume this new role on the team. By refining and continuing to expand our health services and programming to the community, we will truly create a powerful force improving overall health in our region. I am looking forward to building on RHW's great foundation and outstanding achievements that have been established over the last few decades."

## A Year of Transitions



This past year has been one of challenge and change. We have all had to be resilient, nimble, and willing to think creatively to navigate these uncertain times. Each and every one of us has had to make changes to our normal routines to protect their health and the health of those around them. RHW has certainly been part of this evolving process. We recognize the importance of being a good neighbor, a community partner, a fiscally responsible leader, and a voice for the well-being of all in our community. I am proud to be part of a community that has stepped up to these challenges and continues to thrive.

At year's end I will be stepping down from my position as Executive Director and assuming a part time role as Development Director for the organization. I am looking forward to my new role and will continue to make sure that the support we receive will always come back to the community through all the vital services we offer and the partnerships we have will remain relevant and strong. Thank you to all for your continued passion and support for all that we do.

~ Jeanne Thorvaldsen, Executive Director







## Behavioral Health: Partnering During a Pandemic

It is both staggering and humbling to reflect on what RHW's Behavioral Health program has accomplished over the past year. When the program was implemented in 2018, we never could have predicted the events of 2020. But one thing is for certain...with Joanne Dickson serving as the Behavioral Health Coordinator, RHW stands ready and able to address our community's existing and emerging health needs.

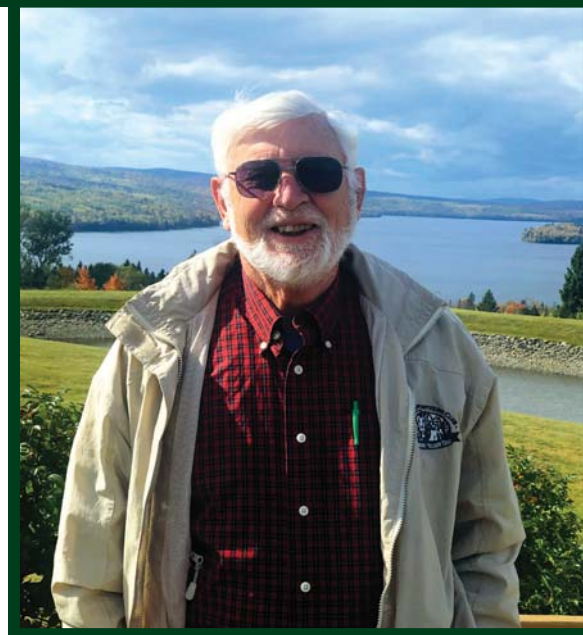
When the pandemic broke in March, our first priority was to ensure residents had access to food. Local restaurants banded together to provide hot meals while RHW helped deliver them to those unable to leave their homes, including seniors, shut-ins, and at-risk adults. With assistance from Moose Alley, RHW also assembled and distributed boxes full of fresh and shelf stable food to 50 households each week for eight weeks. By taking these measures, RHW forged new relationships with regional partners such as Good Shepherd Food Bank and Meals on Wheels to ensure our seniors and at-risk adults have ongoing access to nutritional meals well into the future and beyond COVID-19.

Working in this capacity with the seniors shed a light on other challenges this vulnerable population faces while trying to remain safe and healthy in their homes. Joanne works closely with our physical therapists, local paramedics and other service providers to conduct home safety checks to prevent falls and accidents. She also does regular check ins with seniors to make sure they are healthy and not feeling the effects of isolation.

As always, children remain a priority of RHW's Behavioral Health program. Joanne meets regularly with students in grades K-8 to coordinate and teach Second Step, a social/emotional learning program. She also checks in on children participating in RHW's summer and afterschool programs. Understanding the importance of collaboration, Joanne has nurtured a valuable relationship with WIC, (Women, Infants and Children) a national nutrition program, helping local families and their children receive the nutrition education and resources they need to grow up strong and healthy.

We know we cannot do it alone. Seeking relationships with others who share our vision is a pillar of RHW's Behavioral Health program. Although the events of the past year have unveiled unforeseen challenges for our community, with meaningful partnerships and regional support we will emerge stronger than ever.





## ASCENT RANGELEY LAKES REHAB Wellness Services

When Rangeley native Gary Priest underwent back surgery on February 25, 2020, he knew he would not miss summer in Rangeley. With the approval of his Massachusetts surgeon, Gary consulted with our ASCENT therapists who mapped a 3-month course of world class post op therapy at our rehab facility, allowing him to continue the tradition of summer shared with his family on the shores of Rangeley Lake.

In a recent interview with Gary post treatment, he was aglow with praise for our facility, our therapists and our staff. "The treatment I received at Rangeley Health and Wellness was top notch, the therapists kept the routines purposeful and creative, I never got bored and am happy to report that I'm now as good as new. This is my second post op experience with Ascent and my wife

rehabbed here in 2017 after a full knee replacement. The professional care and the results were beyond reproach each and every time. Rangeley Health and Wellness is an outstanding facility, and their services are truly a blessing to this community."

RHW is committed to offering professional rehab care for acute and chronic conditions, right here in town, with no need to drive 'down the mountain' or miss out on quality time in our Region. Ascent professional therapists and knowledgeable support staff are accredited in all major therapy formats utilizing state of the art equipment.

In addition to traditional rehabilitation therapies, we also offer private, no-referral, goal-oriented Wellness Therapy treatment plans including routines to enhance flexibility, posture, balance, circulation and mental alertness to minimize risks of future injury and stress. With snow season fast approaching and uncertainty surrounding pandemic restrictions, there is no better time for the benefits of our Wellness Therapy to prepare your body and your mind for the long winter ahead.





# Fitness For Your Well-being

*"Even in the worst times, beauty can be found." Author: Unknown.*

COVID-19 has changed nearly every aspect of our lives, forcing us to alter our daily routines and overcome countless hardships. At Rangeley Health and Wellness, we faced our own set of challenges as we adjusted our schedule and implemented new cleaning and safety protocols.

For many, exercise, eating, and emotions went downhill, and they missed their regular fitness routines and group classes. Rather than wait out the storm, we knew we had to adapt. Initially, we created short wellness clips on social media to provide exercise and nutrition tips plus some words of encouragement. In May we began teaching outdoor classes. With the warmer temperatures and one of the best views in town, hosting outdoor classes on our lawn should have been a no-brainer. We were shocked that we didn't consider this option years ago! We incorporated the landscape around us seamlessly by using the apple trees on our property as TRX mounts. We hosted our popular Loga (Lindsay Yoga) class on the memorial patio overlooking both the pond and the lake. With soft meditative music, a fresh warm breeze, and the mountain views, we were easily able to clear our minds and restore our bodies. Being forced to change our norm actually allowed us to provide a better class experience in the end.

Although cold weather is on the horizon, we have no plans to stop being innovative with our schedule. Our classes will soon be available online, allowing members to tune in from just about anywhere— including their own living rooms. This platform will allow us to answer questions, ensure proper form, and keep the social aspect of class while still physically distancing ourselves. We look forward to seeing you soon!



## Introducing Becca Trayner, Coordinator of Children's Programs



I am new to the Rangeley region and am thrilled to be getting involved in this community. I come from a background working in school systems, childcare services, and mental health services with a focus in arts and mental health. I've recently completed a master's degree in Art Therapy in Cork, Ireland and believe that "art" is a very broad term that expands beyond sitting at a desk with colored pencils or markers. I hope to bring this expertise, along with a passion for the outdoors and physical exercise, to the new and enhanced Children in Action (CIA) program here at RHW.

This year in CIA we have a different approach, aiming to support the children's cognitive and emotional health in addition to their physical health. At the start of each day we will provide a healthy snack and a grounding activity before moving into the more rigorous physical activity of the day. Each daily activity will focus on the theme, highlighting one or all of our three key elements: physical exercise, creativity, and nutrition. This provides children the foundation needed to grow physically, cognitively, and emotionally – exercising their minds and bodies!

When working with young people, I aim to give autonomy and independence while also providing a safe and nurturing environment for them to grow. I am most looking forward to creating a strong and active group of young people who work together in games and play! The Rangeley area is such a close-knit community, and these children play a huge part in that community. My hope is that Children in Action will give children the skills they need to be strong members of their community.





## RHW Fitness Center Award

### Funder Spotlight

The Ellis A. Gimbel Trust has been helping to fund RHW's children's programs for over twenty years. Dedicated to improving the lives of all youth, the Trust supports both summer and afterschool programming, festivals and entertainment including play through games, music, art, fitness and nutrition. We are grateful to have this generous support allowing all children in our community the opportunity to thrive.

We also would like to thank Janet and George Bodman, longtime supporters of RHW and the programs and services we offer. The Bodmans have always responded to the needs of our community by supporting both operations and capital expenses as well as services dedicated to seniors, children, and behavioral health. Their philanthropic service to our organization and community is truly appreciated.

Rangeley Health and Wellness has been awarded Best Gym/Fitness Center in Maine by Down East Magazine's Best of Maine 2020. RHW caught the attention of Down East's editors and readers from across New England for its state-of-the-art fitness facility, modern equipment and unrivaled lake view resulting in this prestigious award. An anonymous donor has taken notice of the award and RHW's continuing community responsiveness throughout the pandemic and matched all donated funds, dollar for dollar, up to \$25,000. We are happy to report that we have met this challenge and these funds will be invaluable as the wellness center continues to respond to ongoing community needs.



Fiscal responsibility has always been a tenet of RHW. This year, more than ever, we relied on our keen ability to remain nimble and diversified. As you will see in the illustrations above, our income is largely dependent on charitable gifts and fundraising events. Thankfully we were able to hold our annual duck race without spectators and our summer auction virtually, but the loss of revenue from our summer concert was significant. Thanks to generous donors and income from sources such as ASCENT, the Fitness Center, and municipalities we were able to continue providing children, seniors, and those at risk with vital programming at low or no cost. As the needs of our community grow, we are seeking new income sources by building an endowment and working with donors on planned and estate gifts. We thank you for using our services and for your continued charitable support.

# Every Donation is a gift. Thank you for your generous

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Communities Inc.  
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## A Letter From the President

As an organization whose mission is to improve the health and wellness of the Rangeley community, RHW undoubtedly faced its most daunting challenge this past year as COVID-19 disrupted life as we know it in this beautiful and peaceful region. This year, more than ever, our community needed us. And we needed you. We cannot thank you enough for trusting us and giving us the ability to fulfill our mission during this most distressing time.

Over the past year we have not only had to look at our own financial stability but also rethink how we grow and serve the Rangeley region. In general, with modifications, reduced numbers and new health protocols we were able to continue most of our regular fitness and children's programs. We also maintained critical physical therapy services with no disruption.

However, the worldwide pandemic has exposed some very real and unmet needs in our community. Our seniors need services to stay healthy in their homes, families need additional support for children learning remotely, and people of all ages face emerging behavioral health needs exacerbated by new stressors.

RHW has the expertise and experience necessary to respond to these evolving needs. We have tightened our belt, opened our hearts, and stand ready to meet the challenges of the year ahead. We know we cannot do it alone, but this community has demonstrated what unity looks like in a time of need. We thank you for your continued support despite all the uncertainty and upheaval in your own lives. It means more to us than ever. Rest assured, you can count on us to continue working every day on behalf of all those seeking a healthy and safe community for all. ~Patti Butler

