Spring Lake Ranch has a new vision for the future following a unanimous decision by the Board of Trustees on January 13 to adopt a three-year action plan, known as Vision 2020.

The action plan is meant to strengthen the things the Ranch does well, and to introduce some new ideas that will advance the Ranch's mission of supporting and empowering people with mental health and substance abuse issues by providing opportunities to grow and thrive.

In support of the Spring Lake Ranch mission and core values, the action plan has four parts: a new continuum of care, expansion of work opportunities, reaffirmation of the role of community, and a sustainable model. Spring Lake Ranch drew from trends in mental health care needs, changing population characteristics, and family and social structures to inform the initial direction of the plan, along with input from trustees, members, and staff.

The new continuum of care will provide us with the ability to better support individuals upon admission. We find that, more often than not, the step from short-term hospital stay to the Ranch is too great. We also find that preparing for the transition to a new community and meaningful work can benefit from an interim period of varied support and services. The new continuum of care will be a phased approach, with transition through the phases driven by the progress of the individual resident.

With the help of our Employment Specialist, the expanded work opportunities include additional volunteerism, connecting residents with diverse supported employment, opportunities for higher education, and close integration with the phased continuum of care.

The plan reaffirms that, for the Ranch, community is the context within which recovery takes place. Community has been the bedrock of our values and approach for more than 85 years. Vision 2020 is a way to recommit ourselves to those core values.

The sustainable model is perhaps the most complex piece of the plan. We believe that the development of the above initiatives, along with other investments in the program, will create greater demand for Ranch services. To increase access, however, we will embark on the exploration of the Commission on the Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) accreditation process, establishing measures that would allow the Ranch to meet insurance reimbursement requirements and continue to seek out partnerships with government agencies and local mental health providers with the goal to increase access.

The highlights above are surely not the plan in its entirety. They are, however, some that we feel are important, and the ones we are most excited to share with you all. We look forward to updating you in the months (and years!) ahead.
The 2020 Vision and Action Plan Addendum was unanimously approved by the Spring Lake Board of Trustees at their January 2018 meeting. The vote was the culmination of a process of examining issues of sustainability and changing trends and plotting a way forward, which began in the fall of 2016. The 2020 Vision Plan is a roadmap for our future, and the work is yet to be done, but it is a direction we’ve collectively agreed upon containing what we believe are the key elements for meeting rapid changes in health care, societal trends and needs, and issues of accessibility and affordability.

The Plan’s objectives are to increase the number of residents and clients participating in and benefitting from our program; to enhance the pathways and opportunities for recovery; and to provide greater accessibility and affordability while ensuring a sustainable business model. Ultimately, all of these objectives will be viewed through the lens of our mission.

A few things in the Plan will be implemented immediately. Most of the work, however, will be done in committee. These working groups will report out quarterly to the broader community of staff, members, and trustees, to articulate progress and issues. Full accountability and transparency in the process, as well as buy-in and support, are key to its success. An oversight committee made up of Jim Alic, Linda Berryhill, and Graham Parker will further aid in keeping us on track.

Spring Lake Ranch enjoys a tremendous breadth and depth of support. We have helped thousands of grateful individuals and their families whose lives have been transformed for the better through their Ranch experience. We have an amazing, dedicated, and passionate staff who believe in the mission and come to work every day to create a community of hope and recovery for the people who seek care here. And, last but not least, our members, trustees, and donors provide long-term support in myriad ways with time, money, and talent. Thank you for your support and for working together to realize the success of the 2020 Vision Plan – and our future.
**From the Kitchen - Korean Beef**

**BARBARA FAVREAU**

**INGREDIENTS**
- 1 cup beef broth
- ½ cup soy sauce
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 4 garlic cloves
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- 1 tablespoon rice wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon grated ginger
- 1 teaspoon Sriracha (or more to taste)
- 1 cup diced onion
- ½ teaspoon ground pepper
- 3 pounds beef chuck (cut into 1” cubes)
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1 teaspoon sesame seeds
- 2 green onions (thinly sliced)

**INSTRUCTIONS**
In a large bowl, whisk together beef broth, soy sauce, brown sugar, garlic, sesame oil, rice wine vinegar, ginger, Sriracha, onion, and pepper.

Place beef chuck into pot; stir in beef broth mixture until well combined.

Cover; bring to a boil before turning temperature down to simmer and cook 2-3 hours, until meat is fork-tender.

In a small bowl, whisk together corn starch and ¼ cup water; stir mixture into the pot and cook until thick.

Garnish with green onions and sesame seeds.

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**Enni’s Legacy Circle**

Enni’s Legacy Circle honors individuals who are part of the Spring Lake Ranch community and support it by making a planned gift through a bequest, life-income gift, or gift of retirement plans. Making a legacy gift can be as simple as including Spring Lake Ranch as the beneficiary of a checking or savings account.

Enni’s Legacy Circle is named after Enni Ahonen, an immigrant from Finland, who came to Vermont in the early 1940s. She met Elizabeth Sarcka, who hired her as the Ranch’s cook, a role she served in for more than 30 years. She is best remembered for her warm cinnamon buns, delicious cheese soufflé, and her exceedingly modest lifestyle. When Enni passed away in 1992, she surprised the Ranch by leaving a gift of $46,000. By naming our Legacy Circle after Enni, we hope to honor her contribution to Spring Lake Ranch and her example of giving.

For more information on how to become a member of Enni’s Legacy Circle, contact Rachel Stark, Director of Admissions & Outreach, at Rachel@springlakeranch.org or 802.492.3322.

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**Wish List**

The Ranch’s wish list consists of items that we do not currently have but could really use, or items that have been well loved and need to be retired. With your tax-deductible in-kind donation (or a monetary donation to purchase items), you help us achieve our mission. Contact Elicia at eliciam@springlakeranch.org or 802.492.3322 to learn more about how you can help!

- 48” pipe wrench *(Value: $350)*
- STIHL MS391 fuel-efficient chainsaw *(Value: $600)*
- Protective chaps *(Value: $150)*
- 3200- or 3500-watt generator *(Value: $400)*
- Cordless drill *(Value: $400)*
- Fisher Poly Hopper Spreader *(Value: $6,000)*
- Welding helmets *(Value: $100)*
- Chairs for Rutland Meeting Room *(Value: $2,000)*
- Filter Press for sugaring *(Value: $1,500)*
I arrived at Spring Lake Ranch in January of 2014. At the time, I was in my early 30s and living with my parents, having just been kicked out of yet another halfway house. Addiction and depression had been the predominant narrative of my life since my early teens and, once again, I felt I had failed at confronting these demons. I felt dejected and hopeless.

At the urging of my parents, I spoke with Rachel about the SLR program - with an expectation that I would go, but with a sense of obligation to those who, seemingly against logic, loved me. In relaying her own experience, Rachel reminded me that recovery was possible. I had little confidence in confronting my addiction and depression, but felt that attending the Ranch couldn't make my struggles any worse.

From those first days at SLR, I felt relief. Everyone was so friendly. I didn't feel pressured to be anyone other than myself. I was amazed at the sense of community. As is often noted by the residents, one characteristic of the Ranch is that, at least during those first few weeks, I wasn't sure who was employed by SLR and who was a resident! Anywhere else I had ever been there was a distinct separation between the “employees” and the “clients,” which only served to reinforce an idea of inadequacy and division. At Spring Lake Ranch, I felt like a peer, with strengths and struggles, no better than or less than anyone else. With some surprise, I even discovered that I had qualities that could be helpful to others. Slowly, through living in the Ranch community and participating in the Work Program, I developed a sense of personal value and self-esteem.

Another characteristic of Spring Lake Ranch with healing power is the setting. As a child, I enjoyed being outside in the natural world but had forgotten what that felt like. At the Ranch, I started to feel the simple pleasure and awe of nature again. I found myself on clear nights staring up at a sky covered with stars, feeling fortunate to have been born to experience such beauty and gratitude, which I hadn't experienced in a long time.

After nine months on the “hill,” I transitioned to the Rutland Program, where I continued to strengthen my recovery by attending AA meetings and returning to the “hill” several days a week for the work program. I was fortunate to take part in a program where I worked on the Gardens Crew as the Weaving Intern during the winter. As my self-confidence grew, so did my appreciation for the Ranch. Staying sober, asking for help, and staying close to people in the community continued to create opportunities. When the winter ended and Gardens Crew returned to the garden, I took on another role as the Farm Assistant. Each new opportunity came with increased responsibility. In a little over a year and a half of being connected to the Ranch, I was doing things I could never have imagined!

It's been more than three years since that first summer of working on Farm Crew, and for each consecutive summer, I've been hired as the Farm Assistant. During this experience, I operated and maintained tractors and farm equipment with Carl Mancivalano, a wonderful mentor and the Department Head of Farm Crew. My enjoyment and success in this role led to an interest in learning more. I began to explore opportunities for a more formal education and discovered Vermont Technical College, a school about two hours away, that specializes in large engine repair and maintenance.

It felt like forever since I had been in school and was unsure if I had what it took. But, with the support and encouragement of my family and the Ranch, I took the placement tests, faced my fears, and applied.

It was tough at first, being in formal classes with men and women half my age. During this period, I reached out often to my support network, who encouraged me to have faith that I could do it. I have just started my second semester, and have secured a paid summer internship with one of the top heavy-equipment retailers in the state.

It is not all rosy all the time. I still struggle. There are days and weeks when I feel depressed, and it dawns on me that my recovery is only a day at a time and that I am only a drink or a drug away from going right back to where I started. It's tough and can be exhausting. But I have learned to reach out at those times, as tough as it can be. I have people close by who will rally around and encourage me.

I have much to be grateful for. I have my own apartment, and I am a responsible and loving dog owner. I have re-established close family ties and have a network of friends who love and believe in me. I am a student and a good uncle. I am responsible and show up, even when I don't necessarily want to. I've been in an honest and committed relationship. I am clean and sober and living life on life's terms. I don't visit as often as I would like, but I consider the Ranch community family. I continue to feel grateful for my experience and know that Spring Lake Ranch will be a part of the rest of my life.
What’s New with Crews

It has been a busy winter for Spring Lake Ranch crews!

Gardens Crew had a busy couple of months, once they finished harvesting from the garden, making holidays at the Ranch fun and festive. They spent time baking and cooking in the Crew Kitchen, making pies for Thanksgiving, cutting veggies for Christmas, decorating the Yule log cake for Yule, and making latke (potato pancakes) for Chanukah. They decorated the inside and outside of the Main House, putting up fall decorations for Thanksgiving – including dried flowers grown in the garden, festive winter decorations for Christmas, and led a wreath-making workshop, where crews came and helped make wreaths that were hung around the Ranch. Gardens Crew also spent time in the PK making birthday cakes and snacks for the community. They also made sure that we had plenty to bring to the Rutland Farmers’ Market! They made delicious granola, dyed yarn to sell, and began weaving scarves and rugs to sell at market.

This winter saw a combined Woods and Shop Crew – affectionately referred to as “Shoods” or “Shwoods” Crew – which offered residents the best of both crews. Time was spent in the shop working on the old navy trucks and building a new prototype for dining room chairs. The combined crew is continuing work on the Lake House throughout the colder months. With the main structure finished, Shop/Woods Crew is working to prefab the changing area in the shop, which would allow them to put it up in the spring. They are also getting creative with the inside wall, recognizing the generous donors who made the project possible. We look forward to inviting you to an opening reception in the late spring! Woods Crew shipped oodles of syrup for the holidays, sent in bags sewn by the Gardens Crew. While there is still syrup left from last season, the crew has been getting ready for the upcoming season by checking the lines in the sugar bush and doing a few repairs.

Farm Crew has stayed busy with chores and taking care of all of Spring Lake Ranch’s animals. They added piglets to the farm’s roster this fall and are looking forward to the birth of calves and lambs in the spring. To prepare, the crew spent the winter performing maintenance on the electric fence lines. Farm Crew also spent time getting wool ready for spinning, including shearing, sorting, and carding.
Diane Northrop – Resident Services Case Manager & Employment Specialist

Where are you from?
I am a Vermonter. I was born in Rutland.

What did you do before working at Spring Lake Ranch?
Before I came to the Ranch, I worked at Stafford Technical Center in Rutland and also at Heritage Family Credit Union.

What made you want to work at the Ranch?
I went to college in my 50s and got a Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology. I decided that I wanted to help people with mental illness.

What is it like to work at Spring Lake Ranch?
I worked in the Rutland Program for seven years before moving to the Cuttingsville Program in December. I liked working with clients in the independent living program and was able to see and applaud their progress. Now that I work on the “hill,” I see the treatment from a different perspective: I see residents in the beginning stages of their treatment.

What aspects of your job do you find the most interesting?
What I find most interesting is the appreciation that residents have for the staff and the Ranch as a whole. It is obvious that residents feel safe here.

What is the most challenging thing about your job?
It is difficult when a client struggles, but the amount of support and love that surrounds them makes it easier for all involved.

What are the day-to-day activities in your position?
My job is to be a Case Manager for the clinical team. I do things that would keep them from doing their clinical work, such as keeping track of insurance, helping with employment goals, assisting residents with finding classes, schooling, etc.

What are you passionate about?
I am most passionate about working with people where they are, keeping the stigma down, and reminding our residents that we know they are “normal” people with struggles.

Elicia Mailhiot – Outreach & Admissions Coordinator

Where are you from?
I grew up in Chittenden, which is a small town about 40 minutes from the Ranch. It’s in the mountains and is home to a reservoir, so being at the Ranch very much reminds me of my roots.

What did you do before working at Spring Lake Ranch?
Before joining the Ranch in December, I spent a year as Associate Director of Communications at College of St. Joseph in Rutland and was Marketing/Communications Associate for two years prior to being promoted.

What made you want to work at the Ranch?
I was nervous to apply for this job at first because while I have several years of communications and development experience, I have no experience working with individuals with mental illness or substance abuse. However, after spending a day on work crew during my visit, I immediately felt like this was where I should be.

What is it like to work at Spring Lake Ranch?
Working at the Ranch is just good for your soul. It is fun and no two days are ever really the same. It is very rewarding and very humbling.

What aspects of your job do you find the most enjoyable?
I find the most joy in the time I get to spend with residents. I always appreciate the opportunities I have to learn more about them and their background. I also really enjoy reading the cards and letters that come in with donations from grateful families and friends of the Ranch.

What are the day-to-day activities in your position?
On any given day, I might be writing an article for a newsletter, in a development committee meeting, posting on Facebook, or processing donations.

What are you passionate about?
I am very passionate about empowering women. I grew up with a strong mother who always told me that I could be anything I wanted; so I think it’s kind of in my DNA at this point.
The Rutland Program had a unique and special Thanksgiving at Grace Church this year. The parents of a discharged client surprised us with a quick visit and delicious dessert that we would always look forward to when they joined us each Thanksgiving in prior years. We also had a few unexpected guests, including a gentleman named Mike. Since there was so much food, we decided we'd let him remain with us.

Mike was very pleasant and thankful, talked about football, and then thanked us and left. Low and behold, two other guests came to the kitchen as we were putting food away and asked if we were still serving. We informed them that this was a private affair, and asked how they'd heard about us. “Mike told us.” They proceeded to stand in the door. Andy and I smiled at each other knowingly and started making plates. One of the fellows left, but the other stayed and quietly ate. As he was leaving, he said, “I hardly ever leave my house; it’s hard for me to get out. I’m a veteran. Thank you for the food.” And then the unnamed man was gone. It felt like the true meaning of Thanksgiving to give open-heartedly to the unexpected in need.

Rutland Program celebrated Christmas with a delicious brunch in the morning, a hike at Pine Hill Park, and giving and receiving gifts. The group found a small, decorated tree on their hike, which seemed like a magical Christmas gift!

In December, we said goodbye to long-time Rutland Program staff member Steve Harrington. We will miss his outside-of-the-box thinking, his knowledge, his writing skills, and his witty sense of humor. We also said goodbye to Diane Northrop, who transitioned to Cuttingsville in December to serve as Case Manager and Employment Specialist.

Wendy Currie, Cuttingsville Program Nurse, led a Zentangle® workshop on New Year’s Day. Zentangle is known to many artists as a way to create structured designs through drawing various patterns and has been applied to stress reduction, education, and therapy.

Why Zentangle? Like most repetitive, creative work, it can be calming and self-soothing with measurable relaxation benefits. Also, it’s so simple you can do it anywhere. It allows makers to not get caught up in judgement, but to be in the here and now and to simply enjoy the creative process.
Spring Lake Ranch Therapeutic Community supports and empowers people with mental health and substance abuse issues by providing opportunities to grow and thrive. Through shared experience, meaningful work and active participation in an accepting, diverse community, we help each person develop the confidence and skills to recover.

**Telephone** 802-492-3322  •  **E-mail** info@springlakeranch.org  •  **Online** www.springlakeranch.org

Staff Notes

- Assistant Business Manager Ingrid Wisell and her husband, Jason, will welcome their first child in April.

- Molly Scanga and Kevin Molloy have been named Lead House Advisors.

- Diane Northrop has transitioned to the Cuttingsville Program. She is now working as Resident Services Case Manager & Employment Specialist.

- Barbara and Pete Favreau welcomed a new addition to their family, a puppy named Jade!

- Spring Lake Ranch welcomed new House Advisors Emma Hileman and Sarah Olds this winter.

- Terry Hanley joined Spring Lake Ranch as the Nurse for the Rutland Program’s Royce Street House. He worked for more than a decade at El Camino Hospital in Mountain View, California and in inpatient psychiatric care at Rutland Regional Medical Center. He is excited to work with clients who are engaged in their recovery and life goals.

- Elicia Mailhiot joined SLR in December as the new Outreach & Admissions Coordinator.

- The Ranch said goodbye to House Advisors Chris Berry and Theo Goodell this winter. We are grateful for all of their hard work, and they will be missed dearly!