



RECIPIENTS: WOMEN UNITED AROUND THE WORLD

HERE'S ANOTHER NEIGHBOR WHO'S "MAKING A DIFFERENCE."

# Meet Val Schmitt

LET'S LEARN ABOUT HER CAUSES.

100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine | Maine Children's Home

**making a difference** Article and photos submitted by Val

## **What organizations do you volunteer with?**

I've been on the Board of Directors for *The Maine Children's Home for Little Wanderers* in Waterville for 3 years, and I started volunteering as the Information Coordinator with *100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine* last fall.

The Children's Home, founded in 1899, is dedicated to building and strengthening families and their children, instilling hope for the future and a better quality of life. We do that through our international and domestic Adoption Program, early care, and education at The Children's Place, helping young parents finish their high school education at the Sharon Abrams Teen Parent School Program, Counseling services for young and old alike, a Christmas program that provides toys, clothes, and books for over 1700 children across Maine, and a Summer Camp Program that sends over 150 underprivileged children to overnight camp for a week each year.

100+ Women Who Care Southern Maine is a group of local women who are interested in supporting our communities by contributing to Southern Maine charities *as a group* to increase the impact. We are 2.5 years old and have contributed nearly \$70,000 to 10 local charities. While we are not a part of a national organization, there are over 400 chapters of Women, Men, Kids, and People Who Care throughout the world, including the new 100 Men Who Care Southern Maine.

## **What does 100+ WWC do?**

Founded by Falmouth resident Deb Bergeron, our chapter is a very low-impact way to support Southern Maine charities. Every three months our members meet and hear presentations about local charities. We draw the name of 3 charities out of a hat, then the nominating members for those charities speak for 5 minutes with another 5-minute question and answer period. Afterward, the membership votes to determine which of those charities will receive our

grouped support that quarter. With our membership now over 200, we are able to help our chosen charities with a significant contribution, something not possible for most of our members individually.

## **Why 100+ WWC?**

While I love working with The Children's Home on their specific services, the idea of being able to have 4 charities a year receive sizable donations is so amazing! Learning about local charities from our members, not from marketing pitches, really gives us a feeling for how the charities contribute to our Southern Maine community. Checks are written directly to the charity, so 100+ WWC does not take a penny for our expenses, which are covered entirely by sponsors or separate contributions.

## **What is special about the 100+ WWC?**

The sense of community fostered by having so many motivated women together at our meetings is fantastic. We hear directly from our fellow members about amazing organizations that have impacted their lives, whether they founded the charity, receive services from it, or volunteer. Many of the charities which are not selected have also received donations when their stories have moved our members.



TYPICAL TURN OUT! PLEASE COME AND JOIN US NEXT TIME. VISIT [100WOMENWHOCARESOUTHERNMAINE.COM](http://100WOMENWHOCARESOUTHERNMAINE.COM) FOR MORE INFO



LESLIE (left) WHO REPRESENTED "SISTER'S WISH" RECEIVED THEIR "BIG CHECK" AT MAY'S MEETING. DEB BERGERON (right) IS THE FOUNDER OF 100+WWCSM



THIS IS VAL. SHE'S THE ONE ON THE FAR LEFT!



RECIPIENTS: PETS FOR VETS

### *How long have you been with 100+ WWC?*

I attended my first meeting last August and immediately realized that this was a way I could really make a difference for many local charities. I've been maintaining the database that tracks our membership, contributions, and operations since October and also work on the website and email communications.

### *How can others get involved with 100+ WWC?*

To become a member, simply fill out a commitment form on our website [<http://100womenwhocaresouthernmaine.com/membership-form/>] and then come to our meetings! Members commit to donate to the selected charity every quarter, regardless of whether they attend the meeting. To nominate a charity, members simply fill out the nomination form [<http://100womenwhocaresouthernmaine.com/membership-form/>]. Charities must have been a 501c3 for at least a year to be considered.

### *How long have you lived in the neighborhood?*

We moved to Falmouth 2 years ago after living in Central Maine for over 10 years. Previously we lived in Massachusetts, and I have also lived in California, New York, and Japan. My parents have lived in town for over 5 years, and we fell in love with it while visiting them. When we started considering the impact of school and community in a rural setting, it was an easy decision to come south!

### *Who are the members of your family?*

My husband, Rob, and I have been married nearly 20 years, and our son, Trevor, is 4.5. My parents, Sue and Hank, live just a mile from us, and we are all very close. Our cat, Hope, and dog, Zoe, round out the picture.



Do you have a cause you're passionate about? Please share, you may inspire someone else! I would love to hear about it, so we can spread the news together. [kathlene.clarke@n2pub.com](mailto:kathlene.clarke@n2pub.com)

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