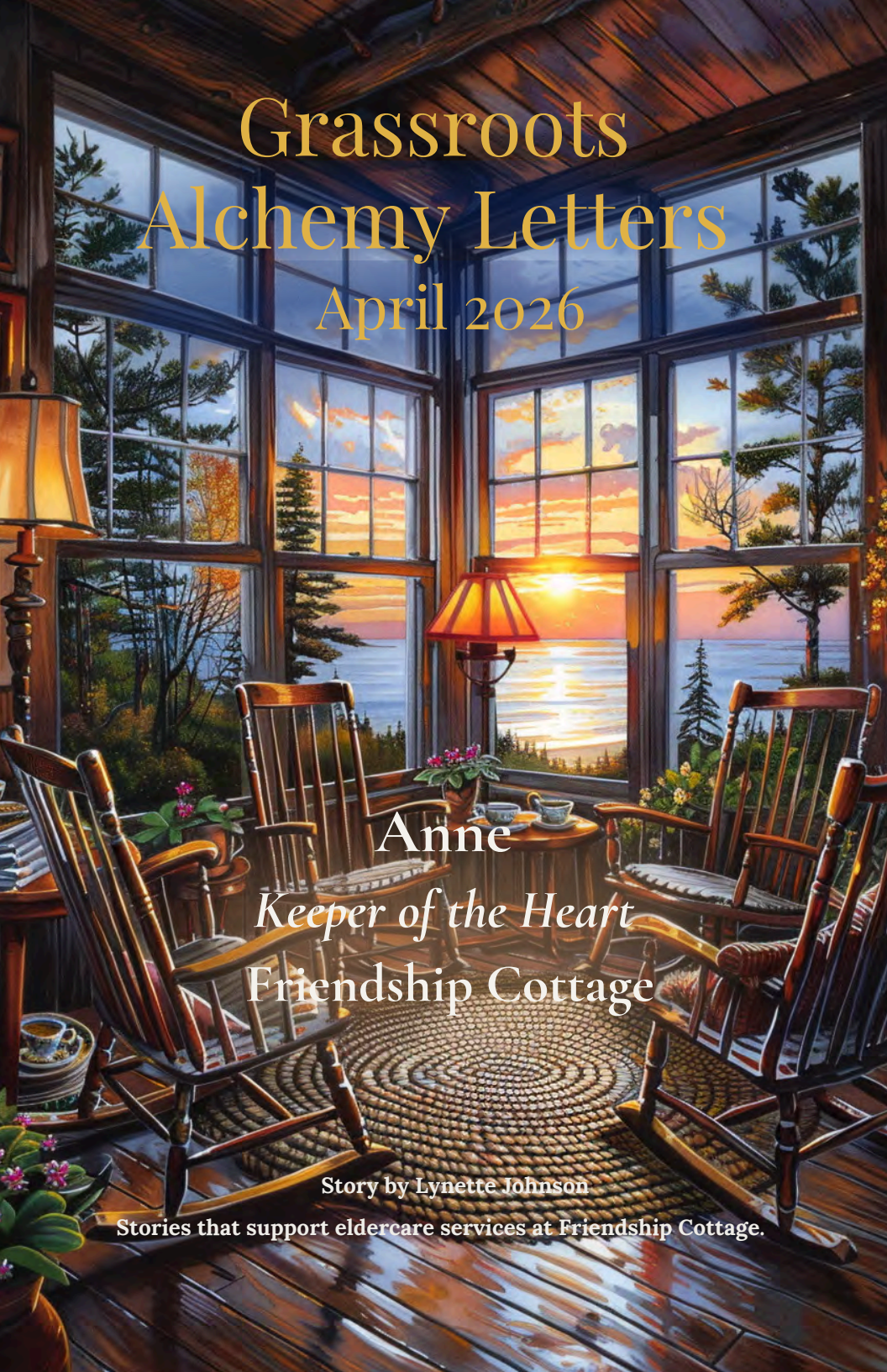




# Grassroots Alchemy Letters

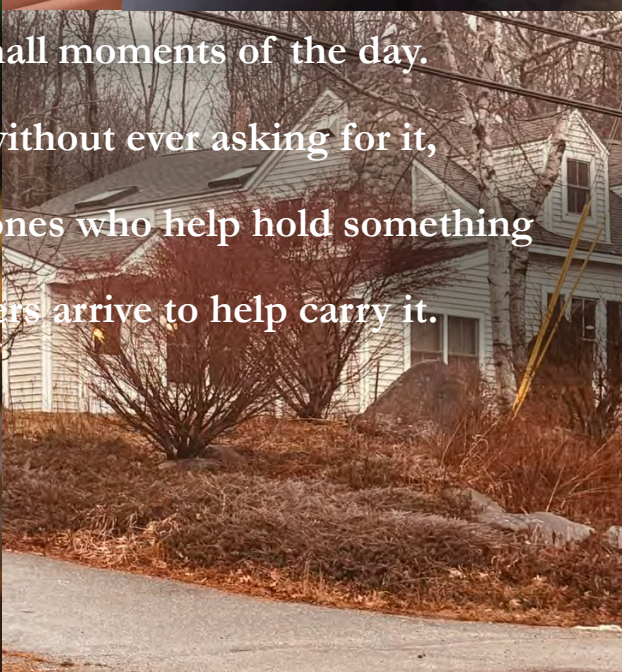
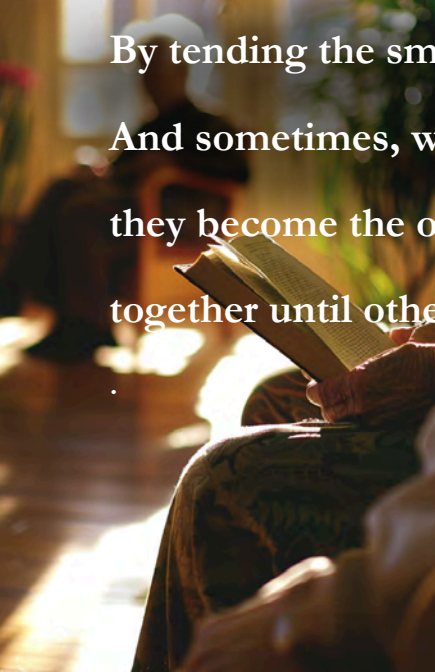
April 2026

Anne  
*Keeper of the Heart*  
Friendship Cottage

Story by Lynette Johnson

Stories that support eldercare services at Friendship Cottage.





Some people lead by noticing.

By paying attention to what others need.

By tending the small moments of the day.

And sometimes, without ever asking for it,  
they become the ones who help hold something  
together until others arrive to help carry it.

# WHERE CARE BECOMES COMMUNITY

## *The spirit of Friendship Cottage*

Friendship Cottage is a place where people are welcomed exactly as they are.

Where care becomes companionship and presence becomes connection. Where, over time, something deeper begins to take shape.

Each day, individuals arrive carrying the unique rhythms of their lives — experiences shaped by memory, resilience, challenge, and strength.

Here, every person who walks through the doors is met with respect. Conversations unfold slowly, friendships form naturally, and moments of laughter often appear when they are least expected.

What begins as care does not remain care alone. It becomes something more.

A sense of familiarity. A rhythm of connection. A community that forms day by day.

A living circle of people who come together — to ensure no one carries life's harder chapters alone.

And in that environment, something simple and powerful happens.

People feel that they belong.

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# A PLACE OF CARE AND CONNECTION

*Serving adults and families in our community*

Friendship Cottage, located in Blue Hill, Maine, provides adult day services for individuals who may be coping with physical, cognitive, or memory challenges.

For many, it offers a place to spend the day in a safe and supportive environment, surrounded by caring staff and meaningful companionship.

For families and caregivers, it brings reassurance — knowing their loved one is engaged, supported, and part of a community that understands what they are navigating.

Throughout the day, participants share meals, activities, conversation, and moments of rest.

What begins as care often becomes something more.

A circle of familiarity.

A rhythm of belonging.

A place where people continue to participate in life together — and where that participation is recognized, valued, and supported.

And increasingly, that sense of belonging extends to the community that surrounds them.

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# THE RHYTHM OF THE DAY

*Life unfolding at Friendship Cottage*

Each day at Friendship Cottage begins with a familiar rhythm.

People arrive and are greeted by name. Coats are hung, conversations begin, and the room slowly fills with the warmth of shared presence.

Coffee is poured. Breakfast is served. Stories from earlier years often find their way back into the room.

Throughout the morning and afternoon, the day unfolds through activities, conversation, music, laughter, and shared meals.

Some moments are lively. Others invite a slower pace. But beneath it all is something steady — a consistency that people come to rely on.

And through that rhythm, something steady has taken root — a place worth protecting.

At Friendship Cottage, the day is not rushed.

It is lived.

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# MEET ANNE

## *Guiding the daily life of Friendship Cottage*

Every place has someone who helps hold its spirit.

At Friendship Cottage, that person is Anne.

As the administrator, Anne helps guide the daily life of the program — supporting the participants who attend each day and the staff who care for them.

But those who know Friendship Cottage understand that her role reaches beyond schedules and coordination.

Anne notices the small things.

When someone needs encouragement.

When a caregiver needs support.

When a moment simply needs patience.

Her work is not only about managing the day.

It is about tending the atmosphere where care and connection can grow.

And helping ensure that what has taken root here continues.



# ANNE'S STORY

*In her own words*

Hi, I'm Anne, and I have the privilege of helping guide the daily life of Friendship Cottage.

People often ask what drew me here.

The truth is simple. I've always believed that how we care for the most vulnerable among us says everything about who we are.

I grew up watching people who understood care instinctively — the neighbor who checked in before storms, the aunt who remembered every preference, the adopted grandmother who never rushed anyone's feelings.

Care was simply part of how life was lived. It was woven into the everyday.

When I first walked into Friendship Cottage, I felt that same thread — a place where people are honored for who they are, and where everyday kindness shapes the rhythm of the day. It felt familiar.

And I knew I had found a place where that kind of care still lives.

I didn't realize then how much this place would come to mean — beyond those who attend, to all of us who are connected to it.

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# LISTENING TO THE DAY

## *The work of noticing*

Helping guide a place like Friendship Cottage isn't really about managing the day.

It's about listening to it.

Noticing when someone's spirit feels a little lower than usual.

Recognizing when a caregiver needs a moment to breathe.

Understanding what cannot always be said, but still needs to be tended.

Some days are lively and full of conversation.  
Others unfold at a slower pace.

But every day carries signals about what people need — comfort, patience, reassurance, or simply someone willing to sit beside them.

Leadership here shows up in small ways.

And I try to meet those moments as they come.

Because how the day is met shapes how it is experienced.

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# THE POWER OF CONNECTION

*Moments that bring people together*

One of the most meaningful parts of Friendship Cottage is watching how connections form.

Sometimes it happens through conversation — a shared memory, a familiar story, a laugh that spreads across the room.

Other times it appears in simple gestures.

Someone offering a hand when another person needs help standing.

A familiar song that brings a smile to someone's face.  
A moment of recognition between people who have come to know one another over time.

These moments may seem small, but they carry meaning.

They remind people that they are not alone.

And over time, those moments begin to build something lasting — a sense of connection that people come to rely on.

And in those moments, something essential is restored.

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# A COMMUNITY OF CARE

*Many hands supporting the work*

Friendship Cottage is sustained by the people who show up each day with care and intention.

Staff members bring patience, skill, and compassion to their work.

Volunteers offer time, companionship, and a willingness to sit beside someone who needs company.

Families trust the program with the people they love.

And supporters throughout the community help ensure that Friendship Cottage can continue serving those who rely on it.

No single person carries this work alone.

It is shared.

Each person contributing in their own way to the environment of dignity, connection, and belonging that defines it.

And over time, that truth has become more visible.  
A community stepping forward.

Each person adding something — time, resources, belief — until something meaningful begins to take shape.

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# CONTINUING TO PARTICIPATE

*Honoring the lives people bring with them*

Each day, people arrive here who may be navigating changes in memory, health, or independence.

Yet within this environment, they remain participants in the life around them.

They bring with them decades of experience, stories, and relationships that continue to shape who they are.

Some have raised families.

Some have built businesses, served their communities, or cared for others in their own time.

What matters most is not what has changed, but the lives they have lived and the presence they continue to bring to each day.

Here, people are recognized for who they are.

They are welcomed as part of the life unfolding around them.

And that connection continues to matter, even as life changes.

Because every person deserves to remain connected to the world they helped shape.

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# THE CIRCLE CONTINUES

*Extending beyond the walls*

What happens within Friendship Cottage does not stay contained within its walls.

It extends outward — into the lives of families, caregivers, and those who come to understand what this place makes possible.

Over time, people begin to recognize what is here.

It isn't just a program.  
Or a service.

But something essential.

A place that supports not only those who attend, but the many people connected to them.

Because once you see what it makes possible, it is difficult to imagine it not being here.

You begin to understand how much it holds — for individuals, for families, and for the community itself.

And as that understanding grows, so does the desire to ensure it continues.

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# JOINING THE CIRCLE OF CARE

*Becoming part of the community*

Places like this do not exist by accident.

They continue because people choose to care for them.

Over time, individuals become part of the story that unfolds here.

Some offer their time.

Some offer their presence.

Some offer support in ways that help sustain the work.

Others simply step forward — ready to help and contribute.

Each act may seem small on its own.

Often, it begins with simply recognizing what this place means to someone else.

A moment of understanding becomes a willingness to help.

And that willingness begins to move — from one person to another.

Together, they begin to form something powerful.

A shared commitment to the people and the purpose Friendship Cottage holds.

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# ANSWERING THE MOMENT

*When a community steps forward*

There are moments when circumstances suddenly ask more of us.

When reality shifts and tests what we know — about ourselves, and about the communities we are part of.

They bring clarity to what matters.

Then they ask us to step forward to protect what we value.

This has been one of those moments.

And across the community, people have stepped forward.

Some are closely connected to Friendship Cottage. Others have recognized what we make possible.

What has stayed with me is not only the generosity itself, but the shared understanding behind it.

A recognition among us that what we are doing here matters.

And that it is something worth carrying forward together.

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# IN MY EXPERIENCE

*What this moment has shown me*

Care like this exists because people believe it matters.

But there are moments when that belief becomes visible.

When people move beyond appreciation and into action.

What I have witnessed over these past months is not just generosity, but a shared willingness to step in and help carry something meaningful.

People giving what they can. In ways they can. It has been humbling.

To see how quickly a community can respond when something meaningful is at risk.

It reflects something deeper about who we are, and what we choose to stand for.

That places like Friendship Cottage are not guaranteed.

They continue because people choose to sustain them.

And that is something I will never, ever, forget.

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## CONTINUING THE STORY

Anne's work is not only her own.

It reflects the care of many people who help sustain Friendship Cottage each day — staff members, families, volunteers, and a community that has stepped forward in a remarkable way.

In a short period of time, something meaningful has taken shape.

Through the generosity of many, Friendship Cottage is stepping into its next chapter.

A chapter made possible through many hands.

By people who chose to give, support, and ensure it continues to exist for the next family who will one day need it.

This is what community looks like.

Many hands, coming together to carry something that matters.

Friendship Cottage stands — ready to continue its work, and ready to welcome what comes next.

For that, we are deeply grateful.