

Anne Rouse Sudduth inspired to do good works

By JIM KOZUBEK

Special to the Union Leader

PORTSMOUTH — Anne Rouse Sudduth is founder and chair of the Seacoast Women's Giving Circle, a 70-member group that each year selects an issue important to the region, and then seeks a means to make a beneficial change for people affected by the challenge.

She also volunteers for Big Brothers and Big Sisters of the Greater Seacoast and the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation Piscataqua Region, nearly all of her available hours going to charity. Her father, a Philadelphian, and her great uncle were "deeply engaged in civil life," she said.

Ever involved in good works, her husband, who works at Fischer Scientific, says his wife has a "Change the World" gene, according to Sudduth. She called the need to donate her time "extremely gratifying" and also "an urgency" ... "to make the Seacoast a better place to live."

Her Giving Circle consults experts to build knowledge; then makes a charitable donation, usually between \$20,000 and \$40,000 to a single organization that is doing constructive work on the issue; and then the group follows up with five to six group projects throughout the year to pitch in labor.

"There are two things: what people need today, things such as assistance and heat, and people in food lines, and then, more systemic issues down the pipeline and how we can change policy," she said.

Sudduth started the circle in 2006. The next year, her group took on the environment and gave a sizeable donation to the Conservation Law Founda-

tion, which seeks to change environmental policy.

The group in 2008 took on affordable housing and homelessness, pitched in to set up the 80-bed Cross Roads House, Inc., a homeless shelter that opened a new facility, and donated \$21,000 to Health Care for the Homeless, which enabled the Portsmouth chapter to take on a health-care coordinator.

"They operate the mobile 'Helen' van that visits the local shelters, soup kitchens and other locations where the homeless congregate, and they provide medical care to the homeless," she said.

It turns out health care is "a key component to people getting their lives back on track," she said.

Then in the past year she took to the challenge of children at risk. The Giving Circle donated \$40,000 to general operating expenses and helped set up a mentoring program at New Heights, a Portsmouth-based after-school center. Sudduth said adolescent drug and alcohol abuse in the state is among the highest in the U.S.

The group this year will focus on women's economic stability. Each member of the group gives a minimum of \$200 a year to donate as well as countless hours, and the single monetary donation the group makes each year is subject to a competitive process.

Sudduth has a degree in literature from Brown University. She said literature is something that has stayed with her ever since college, and she usually has two or three books going at once.

She worked as the na-

tional director of community involvement for accounting and consulting firm Deloitte Development, LLC from 2000 to 2005, and as a vice president for Partnership for New York, a group of 200 leaders in New York City who have a "vested interest in the quality of life" in the city.

She is married to Matthew Sudduth and has two daughters, ages 3 and 7. The family likes hiking and ice skating. Sudduth on her own time puts on her Asics running shoes and laps New Castle island on road runs. "I started late in life, and I'm slow, but I'm happy," she said.



Anne Rouse Sudduth, 38

Home: Portsmouth

Birthplace: Philadelphia

Family: Husband, Matthew; two daughters, ages 7 and 4 3/4

High school: The Shipley School

College/post grad degrees:
Brown University

Current job: Founder, Seacoast Women's Giving Circle

Key past positions held:
National director of community relations, Deloitte; senior vice president, Education and Workforce Development, Partnership for New York City

Volunteer activities: Vice president of the board of directors, Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Seacoast; advisory board member, Piscataqua Region, New Hampshire Charitable Foundation

Most admired person (outside your family): Dr. Paul Farmer, founder, Partners in Health

Key current professional challenge: Raising awareness of the needs of adolescents on the Seacoast and galvanizing support from community members for the programs that build healthy habits amongst this vulnerable population

