



Brattleboro Area Hospice *Newsletter* December 2006

Brattleboro Area Hospice • 191 Canal Street • Brattleboro, Vermont 05301
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FROM BETH...

Once again, the Winter Solstice is upon us. The earth's axis is tilted somewhat off the plane of the earth's revolution around the sun. Without this tilt of the earth's axis, we would have no seasons. The sun's rays would be directly overhead of the equator all year long. During this season, we are invited to honor the closing of circles, the Northern Quadrant of the Medicine Wheel, the Ancient Spirits and Wisdom among us and within us.

This season nature always reminds me to honor the darkness without losing faith, to recognize seeds of growth and nurture them in my own inner warmth until the light returns. Even in the darkest moments, health, serenity, and healing energy are available when we focus on them with positive intent.

There are many ways to honor this time of transition and change in our lives:

- ~Remember happy childhood winter memories
- ~Honor an elder who has passed on and re-establish your spirit bond with him/her.
- ~Walk outdoors, and honor the winter season.
- ~Honor the living creatures that survive the winter season because of their own efforts and ingenuity.
- ~Welcome the returning sun, every morning or evening, as the days lengthen.
- ~Look for the first signs of spring growth, and rejoice.
- ~Bring into your home, as decoration in food ingredients, edible plants that have stayed green and alive all winter. They have absorbed the energy of the earth and rain and wind and sun. Now you can absorb that energy as well, with gratitude.

Take some time to design and carry out a ritual, no matter how short or "trivial." Have some fun with it if you like; ritual need not be serious to be meaningful.

Rituals need only to be meaningful to be effective.

Know that you are blessed.

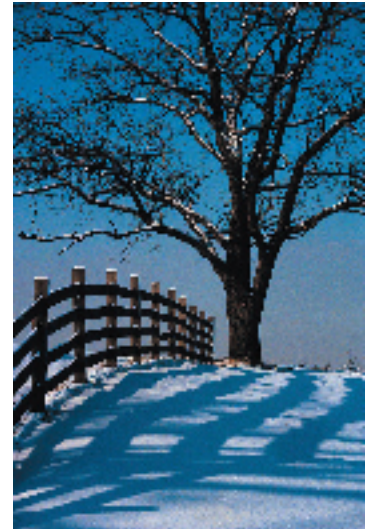
May your celebration

Of this season of holidays

Draw deep from the abundant joy

Fierce hopes and enduring traditions

Of all our ancestors.



WELCOME SARAH!

We are happy to welcome Sarah Swift to our BAH staff. Sarah is our new Hospice Care Assistant, and will be at extension 101 on Thursdays and Fridays. Sarah has trained in London, England with Cicely Saunders at St. Christopher's Hospice, the In-sight photography project, the Gathering Place and the Make a Wish Foundation. Sarah brings great passion, creativity and commitment to our community and we look forward to all of our work together.

WINDOW OF MISFIT TOYS

Come to Experienced Goods and adopt an orphan from the Window of Misfit Toys. We have a window full of precious toys that just didn't make it to Santa's sleigh. Won't you give them a home and support the Brattleboro Area Hospice at the same time. The adoption process will begin at 5:30, first come first serve, on Friday, December 1st during Gallery Walk, and run through December 21st. You can come and pick up your Misfit Toy on Friday the 22nd and Saturday the 23rd.



HEFTY and the CINCH SACKS (A Country, Punk, Ska, Hip-Hop band) will be entertaining us at Experienced Goods on Friday, December 1, from 5:30-7:30 pm. Cider and sweets will be sold to benefit Hospice. We will be participating in the Downtown Window Decorating Contest—come check it out and VOTE FOR US!

NEW FACES BRING DELIGHTFUL TREATS

If you have been into Experienced Goods lately, you may have noticed a new face, you may even have noticed four or five! New energy, new stories, new food. April brings all three. She has become instantly famous for her apple-crisp (which no one can resist, and is used by some staff as a carrot to get through boxes of stuff). She is also great to work with. Quick to pick up the ins and outs of textile management at the shop, definitely. Good place to find a story or an opinion when you need one, definitely. Above all (or at least ranking up there with the apple-crisp) is April's sense of humor, which keeps us all going

when the bags and boxes pile high.

April was born in Greenfield and moved to Southern Vermont when she was twelve. She most recently worked for Vermont Color Lab, and when they closed down, April came to us. The Photography lab was a good match as she got to pursue one of her passions as an avid photographer. Experienced Goods is a great match for she believes in the work of Hospice and has a knack for finding the perfect outfit for any occasion. Apple-crisp or no apple-crisp, she is definitely a positive addition to the crew.

CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW VOLUNTEERS

This fall Brattleboro Area Hospice ran two Patient Care Volunteer Trainings, one in Wilmington facilitated by Beth and the other in Brattleboro with Bettina. A total of 20 new volunteers completed the 33 hour training and will be joining BAH as active volunteers. We are pleased to welcome them. They are: Jennifer Audette of Springfield, Connie Baxter of Brattleboro, Jean Bristol of Brattleboro, Jean Ciannavei of Brattleboro, Elayne Clift of Saxtons River, Grace Cloutier of Jamaica, Noel Dery of Wilmington,

Andrea Eshelman of Spofford, N.H., Linda Evans of Putney, Trudi Flannery of Jacksonville, Geraldine Golet of West Dover, Judi Mills of Westmoreland, N.H., Greg Moschetti of Brattleboro, Ursula Nadolny of Guilford, Sandra Powers of Wilmington, Karen Pratt of Jacksonville, Jan Terk of East Dover, Donna Trumbull of Williamsville, Haunani Wallace and Ralph Wallace of West Wardsboro. Congratulations to all!

BEREAVEMENT VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Tuesdays 6:00-9:00 pm

January 16 to February 27

Application deadline: December 15th

Bereavement Volunteers offer emotional and practical support to individuals and families who have experienced the death of a loved one. If you or someone you know would be interested in becoming a Bereavement Volunteer, please call Melissa at ext. 108 for information and an application. (Reminder: completion of the Patient Care Training is not a requirement.)

ALL ABOUT INSERVICE

As volunteers you do a lot for those we serve, and we want to support and nurture you with in-service offerings that are interesting and useful. Towards that end, we welcome your ideas for topics you would like to see addressed in the future. Your input would be most welcome. Please e-mail <bettinahospice@adelphia.net> or call 257-0775 x102.

In December, volunteer Suzanne Weinberg will offer an introductory presentation about a new health care system called BodyTalk. Developed in 1995 by Dr. John Veltheim, BodyTalk sessions are conducted without a practitioner agenda and are thus completely safe and noninvasive, as well as supportive of, and complementary to, other modalities. The aim is to discern "priorities" (rather than diagnose "problems") for a particular client, and to then synchronize and balance the bodymind in its physiological and biochemical functions; emotional and mental interactions; environmental influences; and hereditary and genetic restrictions. This clears away impediments to our natural ability to heal.

Suzanne will present about BodyTalk on Monday, December 11 from 12:15-1:30 pm over a brown bag lunch. So, bring your lunch and an inquisitive mind and join us on the 11th. Please call the office at 257-0775 if you are planning to attend.

On Wednesday evening, December 13, from 6-8 pm you are invited to BAH to explore the topic of Spirituality through choosing objects and discussing how they symbolize what is meaningful in your

life. To prepare, we ask you to make a list of 2-5 objects to place on a small table. These objects would symbolize what is most important in your life, what gives your life meaning and purpose, what you most cherish about your life. The objects might be described as the glue that holds your life together. (These could include books, photos, religious artifacts, mementos, artwork, items from nature, letters or other personal papers.) You may bring the objects with you if you wish. Be assured that many of us might choose something different at other times in our lives. Please call the office to let us know if you will attend. 257-0775.

Beginning in January, we will offer a monthly gathering for any and all volunteers, whether currently on a case or not, as a way to get together to share with and support one another. On the second Wednesday of each month from either 12:30-1:30 pm or 4:30-5:30 pm, (let us know which you prefer and we will pick the more popular time slot as the permanent time) we will gather to share concerns, relate joys or sadnesses, honor the clients we have served by remembering them, or perhaps seek advice from each other and staff about a current case. Led by Hospice staff, the meeting will provide a time for volunteers to meet one another and to participate in what we hope will be an engaging and lively discussion. Please call by December 16th if you are interested and let us know your preferred time. 257-0775.

A VERY SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISING WEEKEND!

We would like to thank all of you who supported us on the night of November 4th, on which there were two fundraisers for BAH: the talent show at the American Legion and the Marta Gomez concert

at The Church. Both were extremely successful, due to the hard work of Legion members, our volunteers and staff, and also due to all of you who came out and supported us at one of these two events.

When I am liberated by silence,
when I am no longer involved
in the measurement of life, but in the living of it,
I can discover a form of prayer in which
there is effectively no distraction.
My whole life becomes a prayer.
My whole silence is full of prayer.
The world of silence in which I am immersed
contributes to my prayer.

~ Thomas Merton

Brattleboro Area Hospice

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Rachel-Storm Heasley
Heather Lane
Niles Laughner
Imelda Reilly
April Sommerville

Calendar

December 4. Volunteer Report Forms due.

December 4, Monday 5:30-7:00 pm. General Grief Support Group with Elizabeth Pittman and Flynn Johnson. Final session—potluck meeting.

December 5, 12, 19, 26, Tuesdays, 12:15-12:45 pm. Silent sitting in Hospice Library. Information: 257-0775.

December 7, 14, 21 & 28 Thursdays, 5-6:30 pm. Loss Writing Group facilitated by Muriel Winter Wolf.

December 11, Monday 12:15-1:30 pm. Hospice volunteer Suzanne Weinberg will offer an introductory presentation about a new health care system called BodyTalk. More information in this newsletter.

December 11, Monday 5:30-7:00pm. Holiday Discussion and Dessert Potluck. Open to anyone grieving a death loss, whether or not you've previously attended support groups. Facilitated by Elizabeth Pittman.

December 13 & 27, Wednesday, 4-5:30 pm. Spouse/Partner Loss Support Group. Facilitated by Cheryl Richards.

December 13, 6-8:00 pm. Volunteer inservice: Exploring Spirituality. More information in this newsletter.

December 14, Wednesday, 5-6:30 pm. Bereaved Parents Holiday Support Meeting. Facilitated by Linda & Graham Gordon.

December 18, Monday, 5:30-7:30 pm. Board of Directors Meeting.

December 25. Office closed.

January 1. Office closed.

"It is not the end of the physical body that should worry us. Rather, our concern must be to live while we're alive—to release our inner selves from the spiritual death that comes with living behind a facade designed to conform to external definitions of who and what we are."

~Elisabeth Kubler-Ross

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