



Brattleboro Area Hospice *Newsletter*

July 2007

Brattleboro Area Hospice • 191 Canal Street • Brattleboro, Vermont 05301
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***WE COME FROM THE EARTH, WE RETURN
TO THE EARTH,
AND IN BETWEEN WE GARDEN.***

~AUTHOR UNKNOWN

HOSPICE MEMORIAL GARDEN UPDATE

Cheers to the stonewall builders who spent three Saturdays in May constructing two stone walls under the able tutelage of Dan Snow. Thank you Dan for sharing your talents and expertise with us!

Activity resumed mid-June with Edwin de Bruijn from Holland's Bloom and his crew putting the finishing touches on the garden plan: from a distinctive arbor over a new patio flanked by large stepping stones to the "We Remember Them" bench being perfectly placed near fresh garden beds fluffed up and ready for planting. The potted perennials many people helped dig out in the fall will be snuggled in their new beds by the end of June adding blossoms and foliage.

Volunteer help is welcomed on garden tending work days: Wednesday, July 11, at 9:00 am, and Wednesday, August 8, time TBA. The August date will be a time to tidy the garden for our

Garden Grand Opening, an "Open House" affair, Saturday, August 11, 2-4 pm.

The Hospice Memorial Garden is unique as are those who invested their muscles, minds and hearts in creating this long lasting monument. We are so grateful to all who have made this long, marinating dream come true. Soon visitors will stroll down winding paths and pause as they feel the power of caring that created this memorial.

Feel free to brag about this garden, about the good work Hospice does and about your important involvement in making it all possible.

Sincere thanks to you all.....and special thanks to Edwin and Dan for hard work in making the garden vision a reality!

Elizabeth, Frances, Melissa, and Susan

Dan Snow's Stonewall Crew:

Joan Bennyann
Marta Bernbaum
Jan Chaillou
Penfield Chester
Chuck Eblacker
Ceacy Henderson
Frances Herbert



Gretchen Horton Kuebler
Greg McAllister
Michael McCauley
Greg Moschetti
Carol Ortlip
Hannah Pick
Mary Rivers

From Beth...

One recent day I found myself on a road trip of sorts, traversing the old newsletter files of BAH. I quickly became so engaged, easily transported into stories and information; time just slipped away. I resurfaced feeling as though I had just taken a long cool bubble bath. I read such rich experiences and thoughts in these stories; talk of self care, courage and kindness. Noree's old columns, Elizabeth's, Patricia's.....I sat immersed in history, creativity, and deep compassion. It reminded me of a recent drive to a home visit, where I passed a man pulled off to the side of the road playing his saxophone, flowers blooming, and a moose who led my way down the middle of the road on my way in to work not long ago.

One of our patients recently spoke of a moose who paid him a visit in his backyard, just days before

he died. Another patient we recently had the honor to serve hung on for what seemed like some time. Her family gathered around her with so much love and so much kindness, while her husband found his way through denial, remoteness and fear; into the expanse of acceptance and peace. She died a few days later. A woman we provided care for in the last months of her life, so frail and weak, became non-responsive and quiet, just one day after her son, whom she hadn't seen in some time, arrived from out of state. She died peacefully three days later. Life is such a wonder, death is so mysterious. What a privilege it is to bear witness, to be open for compassion and tenderness, to be invited into such sacred moments.

Volunteer Support Meetings

Since January, we have been offering monthly volunteer support meetings, from 12:30-2 pm, the second Wednesday of each month. These have become intimate, lovely conversations on many topics. The format is open, meetings are casual and supportive, with volunteers choosing what they would like to gain support around, and what information would be helpful.

Topics have ranged from struggles and rewards of volunteering, confidentiality-how it applies and its importance, boundaries and how to serve family members (non-clients), aging and

hospice work, the differences when on a long term vs. short term case, and managing family dynamics. Volunteers have provided support for thoughts and questions about cases for one another, and many have met for the first time. As a result of questions asked, new information is often shared, providing helpful guides as we walk this path of service.

Please bring a lunch and join us, come early, late or as you can. We look forward to seeing you.

As you all know by now, in the month of July, Bettina Berg will be leaving her position of Hospice Volunteer and Education Coordinator. Bettina has worked with us for two and a half years, providing guidance and support to our volunteers and community. She has led trainings, workshops, in-services, and many conversations with and for us. She has been a dear and sweet gift and we will miss her greatly. We wish Bettina joy and delight on her journey, for whatever life holds next for her. Thank you Bettina, for all you have given and shared.

Blessings and thoughts of peace, Beth

Experienced Books...

Behind the clothes, and the housewares, and even the kids' puzzles and toys, lies the book corner of Experienced Goods. There are comfortable chairs, in case you want settle in a bit while you leaf through a book or two. Sometimes it is full of people, sometimes it is the quiet corner of the shop. It has a great selection of books: gardening and geography, politics and parenting, foreign languages and fiction, coffee table books, "How to" books, and travel guide books...the list goes on. All organized each week by our book expert Kristin Haislett. She comes each Sunday, when all is quiet on 77 Flat street, and spends hours going through the books that have come in during the week, putting aside those that are extra special, categorizing the rest and putting them out on the shelves in their appropriate place.

Kristin has been volunteering her time every Sunday at Experienced Goods now for over half a

dozen years. You probably wouldn't recognize her from the shop, as she does all of her work when the shop is closed, but many of you might know her from the Brattleboro Food Co-op where she works in three different departments. When she is not at the Co-op (or here) she may be found outside, hiking, biking, kayaking, or gardening--especially during these lovely days of spring and summer.

Because of Kristin, and because of you all who donate books, Experienced Goods has a great book section. If you have books that you no longer need but are still in good condition (no mold please) bring them in! We take kids' books and all varieties of adult reading (with the exception of condensed Reader's Digest, text books, and religious books). And when you have a moment, come in and browse, there is something for everyone!

A Thank You...

I would like to thank BAH for the many educational workshops it offers to the public and for the special opportunities it offers volunteers, including the recent poetry workshop led by Verandah Porche. It was a pleasure to experience her engaging facilitation of word play. Ever since the night of poetry together, I've been toying with my poet's eye and ear more, enjoying the fresh perspective of looking with more

curiosity and wonder. Verandah reminded us to look for surprises. I have found that BAH workshops have something for everyone and are a safe and wonderful space to learn about and try something new. Thank you to the BAH staff for all the layers of support that you organize and offer.

Elizabeth Harlow

Volunteer Poetry

In May, a group volunteers gathered for an in-service with local poet Verandah Porche. Verandah led the group through a number of exercises in poetry writing including what she sometimes calls cartwheel poems. They composed the following poem together before trying their hands at individual pieces.

We are violets
struggling in cracked soil.
We are soil
loosened by tender fingers.
We are fingers
reaching out, caressing
possibility.
We are possibility
bursting at the seams.
We are seams
reinforced with crimson thread.
We thread our way
through lives
rooted in soil.

The in-service was rich with words, ideas and laughter. In the future, Verandah would be willing to work with volunteers who would like to explore helping clients create poems of their own. Please let Beth know if this is something you would like to have scheduled.

Brattleboro Area Hospice

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CALENDAR

July dates TBA, Thursday, 5:30-7 pm. Bereaved Parents Support Group.
Call Elizabeth or read July-August SEASONS for date and place.

July 2. Volunteer Report Forms due.

July 2, 9 & 16, Monday, 6:30-8 pm. Loss Writing Support Group.
Facilitated by Muriel Winter Wolf.

July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31, Tuesdays, 12:15-12:45 pm. Quiet sitting at Hospice Office. Information: 257-0775.

July 11, Wednesday, 9:00 am. Memorial Garden Tending with Frances Herbert, BAH Garden Coordinator.

July 11, Wednesday, 12:30-2 pm. Monthly Volunteer Support Meeting,
BAH Upstairs Meeting Room.

July 11 & 25, Wednesday, 4-5:30 pm. Spouse/Partner Loss Support Group.
Facilitated by Cheryl Richards.

July 16-20, Monday-Friday, 9 am –noon. Creative Ways to Deal with Grief
for 13-18 year olds. BAH and Insight Photography Collaboration. Facilitated by Elizabeth Ungerleider. We have flyers and a *NEW TEEN SEASONS* with further info.

July 16, Monday, 5:30-7:30 pm. Board of Directors Meeting.

July 31, Tuesday, 6-8 pm. Labyrinth Walk at the McDermet's. RSVP to Jennifer. Meet at BAH office 20 minutes early to carpool.

SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, August 11th, 2:00-4:00 pm: Hospice Memorial Garden Open House.

Come see the beautiful renovated garden! (Rain date: September 9th, 3:00 pm)

Sunday, September 9th, 1:30 pm: Annual Memorial Garden Service of Remembrance

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