



# Brattleboro Area Hospice *Newsletter*

November 2009

Brattleboro Area Hospice • 191 Canal Street • Brattleboro, Vermont 05301  
802-257-0775 • E-mail: brattleborohospice@myfairpoint.net



*Last year's Community Altar*

## COMMUNITY ALTAR

for *Day of the Dead*  
To Honor Our Loved Ones

At our new location:

***Experienced Goods Home Furnishings***  
*51 Elliot Street*

The Altar opens on  
November 6th, 5:30 pm

Hallowell will sing at 6:30 pm

**D**ia de los Muertos is a wonderful event in many Latin countries for remembering and honoring those we love who have died. We encourage you to bring an item for the altar. (**Note: please bring xeroxed pictures and/or objects of no great concern as items cannot be returned**). Call the Brattleboro Area Hospice for more information: 257-0775.

## The Day of the Dead in Mexico & Guatemala

**A collaborative photography exhibit to benefit Brattleboro Area Hospice**

**A**ccording to popular Latin American belief, the dead are not really dead. They continue to exist in another dimension where they have God's ear and can curry favor for their loved ones. To keep in touch, they return to earth once a year on All Souls Day, November 2nd - a miraculous occurrence, supported by a mix of Prehispanic custom and Catholic rite.

In a collaborative photography exhibit opening Friday, November 6 at the Latchis Theater, 50 Main Street in Brattleboro, VT, Putney residents Kate Cleghorn and Torie Olson provide two windows onto this living tradition.



*By Kate Cleghorn*

---

**Kate Cleghorn**, a former photography instructor, traveled to Mexico in 1995, 1997 and 2001 to document the Day of the Dead ceremonies in Cuetzalan, Oaxaca, and Patzcuaro, a town set on a lake believed to be the doorway between heaven and earth by the region's Purepecha inhabitants. Cleghorn's black and white images celebrate the joyful reunions of friends and relatives who "live" in different realms. They are filled with expectant faces illuminated by the candles that will guide the spirits home. Aromatic trails emitted by pots of copal incense, freshly baked pan del muertos (bread of the dead), and orange marigolds (used to commemorate the deceased since Aztec times) also serve the traveling souls as age-old forms of GPS. In Cleghorn's work, one can also see the offrendas, flowered archways through which the spirits will arrive to spend a night catching up on the news, feasting on their favorite foods, and listening to petitions for divine assistance.

**Torie Olson**, a contributing editor at *Wild Fibers* magazine, traveled to Guatemala on assignment in the fall of 2007. By day, she photographed the colorful, month long preparations for All Souls Day. Her images depict highlanders carrying floral offerings to the cemeteries as well as buckets of plaster and pastel paint to touch up the tombs. Unable to afford elaborate monuments to their dead, many are shown blanketing simple earthen mounds with fragrant pine needles, considered sacred among the Maya. Olson was particularly moved by the people of Santiago de Atitlan, a Tzutujil Maya town on another beautiful lake, this one ringed by volcanoes. There she spoke with an elderly couple bent over the resting place of their daughter, Elena, a victim of La Violencia on December 2, 1990 when Guatemalan soldiers shot into an unarmed crowd. She also listened to the story of the woman standing all alone beside a pink tomb, the only member of her family to survive the mudslides that followed Hurricane Stan in 2005.



Olson was particularly moved by the people of Santiago de Atitlan, a Tzutujil Maya town on another beautiful lake, this one ringed by volcanoes. There she spoke with an elderly couple bent over the resting place of their daughter, Elena, a victim of La Violencia on December 2, 1990 when Guatemalan soldiers shot into an unarmed crowd. She also listened to the story of the woman standing all alone beside a pink tomb, the only member of her family to survive the mudslides that followed Hurricane Stan in 2005.

"Whether one leaves the world due to violence or old age, the separation of loved ones is always tragic," Olson says. "But for centuries in Latin America, this sadness has been mitigated by a belief that one day each year, past and present fuse and those who dwell in different dimensions have the chance to reconnect." (Picture by Torrie Olson)

## **1000 Lillies generated over \$250 Donation to Hospice so far!**

The opening of my show, *1000 Lillies... A Journey through Grief* was a great success! Thank you to everyone who came! I sold over 42 items the first night and more in the following weeks, so by gifting \$5 of each sale to Brattleboro Area Hospice the total donation came to \$250. I am so excited that the *Lillies* are not only a personal growth milestone for me, but also that their success is allowing me to happily give my appreciation to Hospice in the form of money!

And I am not the only one—on opening night, Ken, the owner of The Blue Moose Café, where I displayed the show, announced that because Hospice was his mother's favorite non-profit he was going to donate most of the food for the evening (which he made especially for the show...so good!) and give a portion of the proceeds of the beverages to Hospice as well. All night I was overwhelmed with the goodness of everyone who came to see the *Lillies* and the sweet generosity of both of the owners of the Blue Moose Gift Store. Thanks again to everyone who enjoyed the show.

## **Calendars and Water Coloring Books Are Still Available to Benefit Brattleboro Area Hospice!**

There are a few art calendars (\$29.95) and water coloring books (\$14.95) left. They make great holiday gifts. If you are interested you can view them and some of the original *Lillies* on my blog site at <http://1000lillies.blogspot.com> and purchase them by emailing me. With the sale of every item \$5 will continue to be given to Hospice.

~S. Rose Watson

---

## Support our work!

Join us at our only fundraising event of the year,  
the Gospel Night at the Latchis, on November 7, 7:30 pm.



We'll have a wonderful evening of uplifting music from the Montpelier Gospel Choir, Moonlight Davis and the Gospel Stars, the BUHS Madrigals and returning after an amazing performance last year: the Kuumba Singers of Harvard College. Tickets range from \$10 (student), \$15 (balcony), \$18, \$25, and \$50 (front row supporter) and are on sale at Experienced Goods, the Latchis Hotel and brattleborotix.com.

**Come and enjoy this fun, upbeat experience!**

### **\*\*VOLUNTEERS NEEDED\*\***

#### **Library Volunteer:**

Are you fond of books and libraries? Can you volunteer ½ -1 hour per week or every other week or monthly? Pick the weekday and time that work best for your schedule and help us keep our books and card catalogue in order, so we can continue to make this fine resource available to our community. Call Shirley, 257-0775 x105.

#### **Childcare Volunteer:**

So that widowed parents of preschool children can attend our Partner/Spouse Loss Support Group that meets 4:30-6 pm every other Wednesday starting Nov. 4. If once rather than twice monthly would work, let us know that as well. Call 257-0775 Melissa x108 or Elizabeth x104.

### **PAUSE AND REFLECT**

by Cheryl Wilfong

Since the leaves have blown off the trees, revealing bare wooden skeletons, we can now see farther into the forest. November, which begins with Dia de los Muertos--the Day of the Dead--is a time to pause and reflect before the holidays distract us with busy-ness.

Come share silent meditation at the Hospice office on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month at 5:10 p.m. On November 10th and 24th, Mary Quinn leads a 20-minute period of silence followed by 30 minutes of discussing a short reading that she brings. These periods of shared quiet enable us to simply pause and reflect—on the present moment, our day, or this season of the year.

---

## Experienced Goods Thrift Shop News...Introducing Chris John

Shop Assistant Chris John was born in Brattleboro and graduated from BUHS in 2009. He has had many roles here at Experienced Goods and worked in the clothing department over the last four years. It all started with having to do Court Diversion community service hours after getting into a bit of trouble. When he was finished with those few 10-15 hours, he decided he liked the place well enough to work his high school community service hours with us. As he worked his way through the 40 community service hours required to graduate high school, he was hired as part-time Saturday help. As his commitment and dedication to Experi-

enced Goods grew he added more part-time hours during the week. This summer Chris was hired as full-time staff for the clothing department. Hannah Curtin, Clothing Manager, says that she has always been impressed by how willing Chris is to deal with the many trials and tribulations of what ends up being mostly women's clothing. Chris has a very upbeat and positive attitude and is a very attentive learner. He feels that Experienced Goods has helped him grow out of being the careless young man he was when he first started with us into the responsible person he is today. We are so happy Chris has decided to join us as full time staff!

## News from Experienced Goods Home Furnishings

**Karen Zamojski** joined the volunteer crew after seeing an ad looking for volunteers and having a family member who used Hospice. She completed one volunteer shift, and then was hired to work Mondays. She worked herself up to full-time at Experienced Goods Thrift Shop on Flat Street. Now she'll be managing Experienced Goods Home Furnishings on Elliot Street.

**Tom Harris** came to Experienced Goods Thrift Shop via Vermont Associates (VA), an organization that places Vermonters into organizations where one can gain the skills to return to the workforce. Once he finished his training through VA he continued working for us at Flat Street as a volunteer. Now Tom has been hired to be a store assistant at Elliot Street. Although he'll be a staff member at the Elliot Street store, you'll still be able to see him on Friday afternoons at the Flat Street store volunteering his time at the register.

**Sharon Dunn** was a shop volunteer on Elliot Street when we were still hooking clothes with safety pins, not pricing guns. She was part of a group of six women that went by the 'Sortin' Sisters.' She did that for about six years and then was elected to the BAH Board of Directors where she served for three years. As a Board requirement, she took the Hospice Volunteer Training. Following that, she was a hospice volunteer with one patient for three years. Now she's coming back to us on Elliot Street after retiring from 24 years at the Brattleboro Post Office. Sharon has been hired on as one of the new staff at Experienced Goods Home Furnishings.

**Karen Abel** is currently one of Hospice's board members. She volunteers her spare time at the Flat Street Shop and is also involved in volunteering at the Brattleboro Retreat. She has been hired on as a store assistant for the Elliot Street store, although just as Tom, you will still get a chance here and there to see her tending the till at the Flat Street shop.

**Emily Freeman** just graduated with a double major in French Language and Literature and French History from Smith College in Northampton, MA. She grew up in Brattleboro and, upon graduating, decided to return here to her roots. She is yet another face we will get to see as a shop assistant at the Elliot Street store.

Our new store on Elliot Street features not only another fundraising opportunity for Brattleboro Area Hospice, but also affordable quality furniture, linens and other home decor with an emphasis on reuse, recycle, and refurbish.

---

## From Ryan, Hospice Care Coordinator

Hello All,

Many Brattleboro Area Hospice volunteers have sat vigil with people actively dying and have found it to be a singularly special experience. Most of our vigils occur within skilled nursing facilities, although they can be at home or in the hospital as well.

We have a new team of volunteers in place that will be coordinating the assignment of volunteers to sit vigil when requests come to us. Muriel and I are very appreciative of these volunteers who are so deeply caring and committed to be of service to the dying. Our new vigil volunteer

coordinators are: Suzette Theodorou, Mary Quinn, Stewart McDermet, Carol Greenberg and Carrie Walker.

Over the next few weeks a member of this coordinating team will be contacting all active volunteers and inquiring as to their interest in and availability for vigil work. We will be conducting an in-service which will cover various aspects of this very special work and allow for questions, concerns and discussion.

Please look in next months' newsletter for the in-service date.

Thanks,  
Ryan

### ***For Grief***

When you lose someone you love,  
Your life becomes strange,  
The ground beneath you gets fragile,  
Your thoughts make your eyes unsure;  
And some dead echo drags your voice down  
Where words have no confidence.

Your heart has grown heavy with loss;  
And though this loss has wounded others too,  
No one knows what has been taken from you  
When the silence of absence deepens.

Flickers of guilt kindle regret  
For all that was left unsaid or undone.

There are days when you wake up happy;  
Again inside the fullness of life,  
Until the moment breaks  
And you are thrown back  
Onto the black tide of loss.

Days when you have your heart back,  
You are able to function well  
Until in the middle of work or encounter,

Suddenly with no warning,  
You are ambushed by grief.

It becomes hard to trust yourself.  
All you can depend on now is that  
Sorrow will remain faithful to itself.  
More than you, it knows its way  
And will find the right time  
To pull and pull the rope of grief  
Until that coiled hill of tear  
Has reduced to its last drop.

Gradually, you will learn acquaintance  
With the invisible form of your departed,  
And when the work of grief is done,  
The wound of loss will heal  
And you will have learned  
To wean your eyes  
From that gap in the air  
And be able to enter the hearth  
In your soul where your loved one  
Has awaited your return  
All the time.

*From To Bless the Space Between Us by John O'Donohue;  
available in the Hospice Library*

## Brattleboro Area Hospice

### Board of Directors

Karen Abel  
Connie Baxter  
Judy Carpenter  
Penfield Chester, *Co-President*  
Victoria Collins, *Secretary*  
Tim Gerdes, *Treasurer*  
Kris McDermet, *Co-President*  
Greg Moschetti  
Mike Welch

### Hospice Office

Bettina Berg, *Hospice Volunteer & Education Coordinator*  
Melissa Hays, *Bereavement Volunteer Coordinator*  
Shirley Kasanoff, *Office Manager*  
Ryan Murphy, *Hospice Care Coordinator*  
Susan Parris, *Executive Director*  
Elizabeth Evans Pittman  
*Bereavement Care Coordinator*  
Muriel Wolf, *Hospice Care Coordinator*

### Experienced Goods

#### Thrift Shop

Gemma Champoli, *Store Manager*  
Sarah Rice, *Shop Volunteer Coordinator*  
Hannah Curtin  
Ellen Graham  
*Assistant Store Managers*  
Megan Corry  
Christopher John  
Jen Reichman  
Brandi Lyn Younger  
*Store Assistants*

### Experienced Goods

#### Home Furnishings

Karen Zamojski, *Store Manager*  
Karen Abel  
Sharon Dunn  
Emily Freeman  
Tom Harris  
*Store Assistants*

## Calendar

*November 4 & 18, Wednesdays, 4:30-6:00 pm.* Spouse/Partner Loss Support Group. This group meets every other Wednesday. Facilitated by Cheryl Richards. Call Melissa or Elizabeth to register.

*November 5.* Volunteer Report Forms due.

*November 6th, Friday, 5:30 pm.* Community Altar to remember our loved ones opens during Gallery Walk, at Experienced Goods Home Furnishings, 51 Elliot Street. Hallowell sings at 6:30 pm.

*November 6th, Friday, running all month.* The Day of the Dead in Mexico & Guatemala. A collaborative photography exhibit by Kate Cleghorn and Torie Olson to benefit Brattleboro Area Hospice, at the Latchis Theater.

*November 7th, Saturday, 7:30pm.* Gospel Night at the Latchis—a fundraiser for Brattleboro Area Hospice.

*November 9 & 23, Mondays, 6:30-8 pm.* Bereaved Parents Support Group. This group meets every other Monday in November-December. Facilitated by Lynn Martin. Upstairs meeting room. Call Melissa or Elizabeth to register.

*November 10 & 24, Tuesdays, 5:10-6pm.* Silent Sitting & Reading/Discussion, Hospice office.

*November 11, Wednesday, 5:30-7 pm.* Coping with the Holidays. A support meeting open to any adult who has experienced a death loss. Facilitated by Cheryl Richards.

*November 16, Monday, 5:30-7:30 pm.* Board of Directors meeting, at the Hospice Office.

*November 24, Tuesday, 12:00-1:30 pm.* Hospice Care Volunteer Gathering—bring your stories and questions.

*November 26 & 27,* Hospice office closed for Thanksgiving holiday.

*Experienced Goods Home Furnishings* is now open at 51 Elliot Street, Tuesday to Saturdays, 10-5:30 pm. **We need gently used furniture and housewares for this new fundraising venture. We can come to you:** Contact Sarah at 254-5200, ext. 105 to arrange pickups.

U.S. Postage Paid  
Non-Profit Org.  
BRATTLEBORO, VT  
05301  
PERMIT NO. 109

Brattleboro Area Hospice  
191 Canal Street  
Brattleboro, VT 05301  
Return Service Requested