



Brattleboro Area Hospice *Newsletter*

April 2011

Brattleboro Area Hospice • 191 Canal Street • Brattleboro, Vermont 05301

This the poem of goodbye.
And this is the poem of don't know.
My hands touch the lilies
then withdraw;
my hands touch the blue iris
then withdraw;
and I say, not easily but carefully—
the words round in the mouth, crisp on the tongue—
dirt, mud, stars, water — I know you as if you were myself.
How could I be afraid?

~ Mary Oliver

*In loving memory of Pam Mayer, 1920- 2011, a founder
of Brattleboro Area Hospice, an inspiration and friend
to so many, and a dear companion to hospice clients
on their journeys.*



BELIEVERS IN SMALL GRACES

There are those who search God in the quiet places—no churches, no public displays of piety, no dramatic or flamboyant rituals.

They may be found standing in humble awe before a sunset, or weeping quietly at the beauty of a Bach concerto, or filled with an overflowing of pure love at the sight of an infant in the arms of its mother.

You may meet them visiting the elderly, comforting the lonely, feeding the hungry, and caring for the sick. The greatest among them may give away what they own in the name of compassion and goodness, while never once uttering the word “God” out loud. Or they may do no more than offer a smile or a hand to someone in need, or quietly bow their heads at a moment of beauty that passes through their lives, and say a simple prayer of gratitude to the spirit that has created us all.



They are the lovers of the quiet God, the believers in the small graces of ordinary life.

Theirs is not the grand way, the way of the mystic or the preacher or the zealot or the saint. Some would say that theirs is not a way at all. All they know for certain is that life has beauty and a joy that transcends all the darkness that surrounds us, that something ineffable lives beyond the ordinary affairs of the day, and that without this mystery our lives would not be worth living.

I honor those who search for the quiet God, who seek the spirit in the small moments of our everyday life. It is a celebration of the ordinary, a reminder that when all else is stripped away, a life lived with love is enough.

~ Kent Nerbern

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION

By Sarah Rice, Shop Volunteer Coordinator

April 10–16 is Volunteer Appreciation Week for 2011. Although volunteers should be appreciated all year round, this is a good time to make a point of it. As a volunteer based organization, we rely heavily on volunteers to fulfill our missions. Volunteers are our hospice care workers, our bereavement care workers, our gardeners, and our shop helpers.

Here at the Flat Street shop, it's hard to get through a day without our volunteers. They share cashiering shifts, help to keep the floor tidy, bring out new product, and greet customers and donors with warm, friendly smiles. They lend us their backs and their trucks for furniture pick-ups, recycling, and shuttling goods between the stores. Some of them organize and price our books and others fill in extra shifts when a co-volunteer is sick. They all make us smile, they treat us like family, they bake us treats and try to fatten us up, and they bring their extraordinary personalities to the shop and positively influence the atmosphere. Without our volunteers the shop

would be dull and accomplishing all our work would be impossible.

At the Elliot Street shop, the volunteers are to the shop like the shoe elves to a cobbler. They get all the little (and big) details done that mean so much. Whether it is washing housewares, polishing jewelry, steaming linens or even restoring furniture, they all are the magic that makes it happen.

For all you volunteers out there, know that you are appreciated. We take note of everything you do for us. You are kind and thoughtful and incredible human beings.

This year for Volunteer Appreciation Week, the staff at the shop has been compiling recipes from staff and volunteers alike to create a cookbook to share with shop volunteers. We will be presenting the cookbooks to the volunteers at a small volunteer appreciation party on Wednesday, April 13th from 5:30–6:30pm at the Flat Street shop.

SPIRITUALITY AND END-OF-LIFE CARE

Eighteenth Annual Living with Grief Teleconference

Wednesday April 13, 1:30 – 5:00 pm (doors open at 1:00)

Marlboro College Graduate Center

At end of life individuals inevitably encounter issues of meaning, connection, sources of hope and transcendence. With this in mind, spirituality and end-of-life care is the broad topic for this year's HFA Teleconference. The program will provide information about the ways in which people working with the dying may best assess and respond to their spiritual needs.

Following the recorded program, participants will have a chance to ask questions and engage in discussion with a panel of local professionals including Helen Daly, Psy.D., Rabbi Tom Heyn and Kathy Leo who have experience in our community supporting people's end-of-life spiritual concerns.

There is no charge for the program and anyone interested in the topic is welcome.

Registration is required as seating is limited. To register for this free event, call Brattleboro Area Hospice at 257-0775. Light refreshments will be served and CEUs are available.

Declaration to the Dying

We know these are difficult times, challenging times,
unwanted times, grievous times.
We believe those who are dying have much to teach us in these days
and we need to listen.
We need to listen to the words, to the emotions, to the gestures,
to what is not said.
We believe those who are dying have rights
and we need to advocate for those rights.
We need to advocate for the opportunity to die well,
for the authentic expression of emotions,
for the full participation in decision making,
for the management of pain.
We believe in the individual as well as the community
and we need to understand how death changes both.
We need to understand that death does not conquer us unless we allow it,
that death does not separate us; unless we allow it,
that death does not control us; unless we allow it,
that death does not have the last word; unless we allow it.
We believe in the sanctity of life, the sacredness of each breath,
the blessedness of relationships, the holiness of love.
We celebrate life and express joy for the cry of the infant,
for the dance of the butterfly, for the warmth for the warmth of the sun.
Mostly, we believe in you.
And if you believe in us,
we can believe together that there is a path through this dying
that will allow for the completion of life to occur with grace
and provide the opportunity for all of us to renew our faith and love.

By Timothy Nickel
Masonic Village Hospice, Elizabethtown, PA

I turn my head and look towards death now.
Feeling my way through the tunnel with the space of emptiness and quiet.
That shimmering silence that awaits me.
This is my direction now; inward to the green pastures. . .
The cares of the world concern me no longer.
I have completed this life. My work is done, my children grown.
My husband is well on his hero's journey.
I have loved much and well. . .
Those I leave behind, I love.
I hope I will remain in their hearts as they will in mine. . .
Thank you for taking such good care of me. . .
And all of you who have been my friends, thank you for teaching me about love.

~ Karen Vervaet, from "*Karen's Journal, 3 April 1993*"

Brattleboro Area Hospice

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Experienced Goods

Thrift Shops

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Karen Zamojski, *Store Manager*
Sarah Rice
Shop Volunteer Coordinator
Ellen Graham
Assistant Store Manager
Store Assistants Flat Street
Christopher Gabriel
Christopher John
Jayml Mistry
Jen Reichman
Brandi Lyn Younger
Store Assistants Eliot Street
Karen Abel
Tom Harris
Liza King

Calendar

April 5. Volunteer Report Forms due.

April 6th and 20th, Wednesdays, 5:30–7 PM. Suicide Loss Support Group meets the first and third Wednesdays of each month, facilitated by Andrea Edwards. This group is co-sponsored by The Samaritans, Inc. www.samaritansnh.org

April 11th and 25th, Mondays, 6:30–8 PM. Bereaved Parents Support Group meets the second and fourth Mondays of each month, facilitated by Lynn Martin.

April 13, Wednesday, 1:30–5pm. Living with Grief: Spirituality and End-of-life care. More info in this newsletter.

April 13th and 27th, Wednesdays, 5–6:30 PM. Spouse/Partner Loss Support Group meets the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, facilitated by Cheryl Richards.

April 13, Wednesday, 5:30–6:30pm. Experienced Goods Shop Volunteer Appreciation Party at the Flat Street Shop, more info in this newsletter.

April 18, Monday, 5:30pm. Board of Directors meeting.

All of our services are free because of you!

We rely on donations from the community to keep our services free of charge. Help support our work by sending a donation to: Brattleboro Area Hospice, 191 Canal Street, Brattleboro, VT 05301. Thank you!

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191 Canal Street
Brattleboro, VT 05301

CONNECTIONS

Volume 1, Issue 1

April 2011



Hospice Care Volunteer & Former Board Member Penfield Chester

The Generosity of Our Supporters

We are deeply grateful to all of the community members who supported the work of Brattleboro Area Hospice by donating to our year-end appeal in 2010. All of your donations, large and small, make a vital difference and help ensure that we can keep our services free of charge to everyone in need of our assistance. Along with all of the supporters of this appeal, we would also like to recognize the generosity of the local foundations that also gave support in 2010. We are grateful to the Thompson Trust, the Willard Trust and also the Vermont Community Foundation for helping fund our work. Since we do not receive any State or Federal funding, we rely on all of your donations in order to serve our community. Thank you very much for your support!

Thank You to Board Member Penfield Chester

Penfield has been a devoted Hospice board member for the past six years and it is with great appreciation and sadness that we say good-bye. She served on the board at several very crucial times, both when Hospice was deciding on expanding and moving our Experienced Goods Thrift Store and when we opened our new store on Elliot Street. She has worked hard in so many areas, such as the Dia de Los Muertos celebrations, our 30th birthday party at the Brattleboro Museum & Art Center, planning several fundraisers at her home including a horse trail ride into Massachusetts, baking cookies and cooking for various events, and last but not least jumping into the West River at the Marina restaurant to raise money for Hospice! She has been involved with the Memorial Garden for many years and is currently a hospice care volunteer, having worked with a number of hospice clients over the years. Penfield brought an excellent background and commitment with her to Hospice through her board experience on the Co-op Board of Directors. Her knowledge of fair salaries and benefits was very helpful to our Personnel Committee. Penfield has great spirit and a good sense of humor. Thank you Penfield for your years of service! ~By *Kris McDermet, Board Co-President*

***Save the Date!* BIG Night on the Catwalk: An Entertainment Experience at The Factory**

Brattleboro Area Hospice is in the planning stages of one of Southern Vermont's most unique fundraisers. Slated for Saturday, November 12th at the former Book Press factory building in Brattleboro, this runway extravaganza with outrageous one-of-a-kind fashion creations promises to be the event of the year! While raising money for Hospice programs in Windham County, this event will dramatize the recycling aesthetic with an extraordinarily different runway show featuring local and regional designers along with professional models, hairdressers and make-up artists. The theme of our show will be expressed through the re-purposing of used fashion 'treasures' into new and amazing runway creations. With fabulous re-couture fashions, great food, a silent auction, and after party with a live DJ and dancing, we hope to generate support for Hospice programs and also encourage people to shop for used clothing at our Experienced Goods Thrift Shops. The funds raised from this event will directly support our hospice care and bereavement services that are completely free of charge to our friends and neighbors living in Windham County. The event promises to be a creative, fun-filled evening for the entire community, so mark your calendars now! If you are interested in learning more about the event and how you can volunteer on the planning committee, **contact Hospice Board Member and Committee Co-Chair, Karen Abel at 802-257-0879.**

Brattleboro Area Hospice Welcomes Three New Board Members

Jean Barrett Bristol and Gordon Eugene Bristol are life-long residents of Windham County who lived in Brattleboro until ten years ago when they moved to family property in Williamsville and built a home. Jean is a Registered Nurse and works at World Learning (School for International Living) in the Health Center. Her specialty is international medicine immunization and student general health care. She enjoys gardening, stamping and traveling with her girl friends. Jean is a Hospice volunteer. Gordon Eugene Bristol has his own consulting business specializing in construction management. He has acted as the owner's construction representative on a number of prominent local projects including the Delta Campus for Omega Optical and the renovation and addition to the Hinsdale (NH) High, Middle and Elementary School. Gordon enjoys weight training and mentoring young businesspersons in the local area. Jean and Gordon jointly own and manage the local Veterans Affairs Community Based Outpatient Clinic located at Exit One Industrial Park. This "totally green" facility provides ongoing health care needs for returning and established local veterans. Jean and Gordon have two grown daughters living in the area.

For many years *Ann Fielder* worked at a Senior Vice President level at Planned Parenthood of Northern New England (PPNNE) a three state agency with about 250 employees. For a time she oversaw the program services side which administered to over 100,000 visits. Later she was Senior Vice President of External Affairs, which included Marketing, Education, Development and Public Affairs. In her final position at PPNNE she served as the Senior Advisor for Organizational Development. Ann has a Masters in Organizational Psychology. Since retiring from PPNNE she has done some coaching with Executive Directors in non-profits and has also joined various boards and committees including the Vermont Women's Fund (serving as chair), the Brattleboro Town Human Services Committee, the United Way Grant Impact Committee, and the Brattleboro Retreat Advisory Board. Ann is also a board member on the Rural Woman's Leadership Institute of Vermont and has been a Hospice volunteer for two years seeing five clients in that time.

Charitable Bequest Alternatives

Leaving a bequest to Brattleboro area Hospice is an excellent way to perpetuate the annual gifts that you have been donating over the years to support our work. Charitable bequests provide important stability to our organization and help ensure that our services will be available to the community for many years to come. As a simple alternative to amending your current will to support our work you may want to consider naming Hospice as either a full or partial beneficiary in your retirement plan. This can be easily done by contacting your plan administrator for a change of beneficiary form. You can also make a similar bequest through an existing life insurance policy by naming Hospice as either the sole or partial beneficiary of the policy. Important tax benefits are available when you leave a bequest or bequest alternative to Hospice, plus you will feel satisfied knowing that your gift will support our mission even beyond your own lifetime. For more information please feel free to contact our Development Director, Jen Carr, at 802-257-0775, x.109.



The current Hospice Board of Directors with Executive Director. Front row left to right: Susan Parris, Executive Director, Board Members Patti Pusey and Connie Baxter. Back row left to right: Board Members Theresa Masiello, Greg Moschetti, Jean Bristol and Karen Abel. (Missing from photo: Board Members Kris McDermet, Judy Carpenter, Ann Fielder and Gordon Bristol.)