



Brattleboro Area Hospice Newsletter

August 2009

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

Brattleboro Area Hospice's Thirtieth Anniversary Party For All Current and Former Volunteers and Staff at the Brattleboro Museum and Arts Center

Tuesday Evening, September 1, 2009, 6:30-8:30 PM

RSVP Required by August 14

On Tuesday evening September 1, the BMAC will be the backdrop for our Thirtieth Anniversary Party. Yes, it has been 30 years since Brattleboro Area Hospice began serving the community with care to the dying and the bereaved, and this party is a way to come together and celebrate all past and present volunteers and staff who have been a part of the journey.

In the spirit of celebration, you and one guest are invited to this special event which will feature a dessert bar generously donated by local businesses and an accompanying glass of sparkling wine.

There will be a performance by our own Hallowell Singers as well as music by Ned Phoenix and his band. In addition, there will be a number of activities designed to suit both your reflective and creative moods.

- Perhaps you would like to dress up in a costume from the shop and have your picture taken? You'll walk away with a photo in hand just like when you were a kid visiting the seashore or the old west. It can even be sepia toned!
- Maybe you would like to add a note of remembrance or congratulations to an 11 foot mural which will take shape and grow over the course of the evening.
- Or why not share your reminiscences of hospice on camera—volunteer Greg McAllister will be roaming the party with a video camera interviewing guests.
- Perhaps listen to a story—local storyteller Becky Graber will perform a hospice-themed folktale and afterwards invite those who are interested to share a short anecdote of their own experience with hospice as part of a memory circle.
- And of course there is the opportunity to have a luscious dessert, enjoy the museum's new fall exhibition, listen to music and meet new or reconnect with old friends.

We hope that you will join us as we mark this impressive milestone in BAH's history.

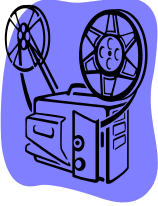
If you are planning to attend, you must RSVP by August 14th: call 257-0775.

Pictured is a 1980s group of Brattleboro Area Hospice staff and volunteers at our first office



Brattleboro Area Hospice is a non-profit, community supported, United Way agency.





Bereavement Volunteer Potluck and Movie Night

Wednesday, August 19, 5:30-8:30 pm

Bring a dish to share. Drinks and popcorn provided.

There will be time to eat and mingle before showtime. You'll have a chance to reconnect with the volunteers you trained with and to meet Bereavement Volunteers from other trainings. (This event is also open to anyone with an interest in bereavement issues, whether or not you've taken the training.) We'll watch a movie with a bereavement theme, after which we'll take some time to share reactions and observations on the grieving process as it was portrayed in the film. Please call Melissa at x108 to RSVP.

From Melissa: Help with Seasons Mailing

I could use some help with the mailing of the bereavement newsletter on Friday, August 28th. If you have an hour or so to gather around the kitchen table with a few other volunteers for taping and labeling. Please give me a call at 257-0775 x108.

Fall Volunteer Trainings Offered

Brattleboro Area Hospice will be offering two evening Volunteer Trainings this fall. The Bereavement Volunteer Training begins Tuesday, September 14th and ends October 27th. The Hospice Volunteer Training runs from Thursday September 16th to November 19th. Both trainings run from 6-9pm and are held at BAH, 191 Canal Street, Brattleboro. Applications are due August 17th.

Hospice Volunteers help and support neighbors and their families who are living with life-threatening illnesses throughout Windham County. Help may range from errands and gardening to emotional and physical support. Training topics include Hospice philosophy, nuts and bolts of volunteering, ethical issues, personal attitudes toward death and dying, and grief issues.

Bereavement Volunteers work with individuals who are grieving the death of a loved one. Volunteers offer companionship and emotional support through phone calls, visits, and outings. Some of the topics covered in the training include support skills, the grief process, family dynamics in grief, the role of the volunteer, and self-care for the caregiver.

If you are interested in taking one of the trainings, please call Hospice for an application form at 257-0775. Also, if you know people who would make good volunteers, please share this information with them.

Annual Appeal Update From Greg, Development Director

We are at the half way point in the annual appeal and well on the way to reaching our 2009 goal of \$15,000. But we still need your help. To date we've received \$10,600 in donations. \$2,250 was in new or increased donations, which leaves \$2,750 yet to be claimed from the matching funds challenge grant.

If you've already sent in a donation, thank you. If not, there is still time to put the appeal over the top. For every \$1 over what you gave last year, the matching challenge grant will donate an additional \$1 to hospice. It's that easy. And remember, all of our services are free of charge because of you!

From Elizabeth

Ah, Gardens! They are a glorious part of what keeps birds, bees, me, and I bet you too, happy in this season. It's getting to be that time in the summer when we could use more help at the Memorial Garden. Note the August 3rd workday, but any day you feel like pulling weeds, especially from the gravel path, is fine and do, just stop by and revel in the garden's restful beauty. Also note

the times we'll meet for labyrinth walks/garden visits at the McDermets. And, if heat presents a reason to sit in a cool place and read about gardens, check out (literally) a new volume in our library called *A Garden of Love & Healing: Living tributes to those we have loved and lost* by Marsha Olson; an excerpt by Dan Gill follows. Enjoy.

Elizabeth

Tomorrow There Will Be Flowers

There is solace in the garden. For grief or disappointments, the garden provides a place of refuge and healing. People are often moved to plant a garden upon the loss of someone they love. Gardening is an act of creation – an affirmation of life continuing on despite what has happened.

I think the human spirit is most fulfilled when we create and nurture. Gardeners somehow understand that gardening is so much more than growing plants. It fills a deep yearning for the connection we need to something beyond ourselves. A gardener comprehends the life in plants and their quiet struggle to live. I believe this connection to green life can be part of what sustains us in time of emotional stress.

I have heard gardening called a pastime or hobby. But gardeners know the truth. Gardening is a partnership between the plants and the gardener to the benefit of both. We often focus on what we do for our gardens, but stop and think of what you receive in return. Go out into the garden and touch a leaf or smell a flower. You will feel the life-giving power that waits only for you to notice it, and it will fill your heart with what you need most.

Gardening is nothing if not a belief in tomorrow – that seeds sown today will germinate and grow, and in their own time the plants will bloom to brighten our lives. Sometimes the belief that tomorrow will come is so important. And even more important is the desire to be there and see what life has to unfold – to know that no matter how terrible things are now, tomorrow there will be flowers.

From Jennifer, Office Manager

I can't believe it's been 4½ years since I came to work at Brattleboro Area Hospice. I can't believe I am now saying "good-bye" ... didn't I just say "hello?" The time certainly has flown by and not only because there's a never ending pile of things to do every day, although there was and still is; but also because the people involved in this wonderful organization are the kindest, most supportive people I know. It was a joy to come to work each day. Everyone has a smile; everyone takes time to acknowledge your presence, your talents, your essence, your "you"! What a wonderful place to work!

For those of you who do not know, my husband and I have decided that the winters in New England should be left to those who actually like them; those who probably enjoy skiing, skating, and

getting cold! We want to go somewhere warmer in the winter months and hopefully move completely within a couple of years to a gentler, but still seasonal climate. Anyway, that's the plan. (We all know how those go!) I expect to still volunteer while I am in the area and hope to see all of you around town, especially at the shop.

I would like to say that working here has taught me patience, but most of you would only laugh at that. Yes, VRF will still be due the first week of every month! I can say it has taught me to appreciate a good listener, and hopefully to be one.

Thank you again for making me feel part of the family and letting me share your space.

Letting go..... Jennifer

Brattleboro Area Hospice

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Dana Renault
*Shop Volunteer
Coordinator*
Hannah Curtin
Ellen Graham
Eric Morgan
Assistant Store Managers
Christopher John
Imelda Reilly
Karen Zamojski
Store Assistants

Calendar

August 3. Volunteer Report Forms due.

August 3, Monday, 1:30-4:30 pm. Hospice Memorial Garden Workday. Bring drinking water and hand tools.

August 12 & 26, 2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 4:30-6:00 pm. Spouse/Partner Loss Support Group. Facilitated by Cheryl Richards. Call Melissa or Elizabeth to register.

August 13 & 27, 2nd & 4th Thursdays, 6:30-8 pm. Bereaved Parents Support Group. Facilitated by Lynn Martin. Upstairs meeting room. Call Melissa or Elizabeth to register.

August 13, Thursday, 9am-12 noon and August 25, Tuesday, 5:45-8 pm. Seventh Annual Summer Garden Visits/Labyrinth Walks if there is sufficient interest—please RSVP by phone or e-mail. Meet at BAH office 20 minutes early to car pool.

August 17, 5:30-7:30 pm. Board of Directors meeting, at board member's home; contact Susan for more information.

August 19, Wednesday, 5:30-8:30 pm. Potluck and Movie Night for Bereavement Volunteers and others interested in bereavement issues. Upstairs meeting room. RSVP to Melissa x108.

Volunteer Gatherings to meet Ryan and Muriel, will not happen in August; they will resume in September.

September 1, 6:30-8:30 pm. 30th Anniversary Party—info on page one. Be sure to RSVP! 257-0775

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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