



Brattleboro Area Hospice *Newsletter*

February 2011

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

Valentine to Volunteers

by Ellen Graham

There once was a group of volunteers
Who worked so hard for their peers
With so much to give
To serve is to live
They deserve all our cheers!
Volunteers give comfort and care
Hold your hand when life isn't fair
They listen and sing
To give help is the thing
Their hearts are so big they must share
Whether minding the drawer
Or keeping an eye on the floor
Volunteers at the shop
Are the cream of the crop
And keep work from being a bore
Our volunteers are the best
They have zeal and zest
You have answered the call
So thanks one and all
Because of you Hospice is blessed!



February In-Service: *Whose Death is it Anyway?*

Wednesday, February 9, 5:00–7:00pm

Snow date: Wednesday, February 23, 5:00–7:00 PM

This two hour in-service will include watching an hour program entitled *Whose Death is it Anyway?* which examines issues such as advance directives, palliative care and family conflicts around end-of-life decisions. The program features a studio audience, hosted by Dr. Nancy Snyderman, and includes people who have dealt with difficult end-of-life treatment issues—physicians, lawyers, nurses, social workers and members of the clergy. Journalist Betty Rollin introduces profiles of real families in the midst of difficult decisions. The program's goal is to increase and improve discussion among patients, families and health care providers and to help people ensure that their wishes are heard and honored. The viewing will be followed by discussion and a chance to look at Vermont's Advance Directive forms.

Thank you to our generous hospice community

Thank you so much to everyone who has donated to the 2010 Holiday Appeal. As I reflect on the year that has passed, I feel deeply moved by the support that this community has shown for the work we do to provide quality end-of-life and bereavement care to families and community members during their times of greatest need. Your generosity as both donors and volunteers is the reason that we can keep all of our services free and I can't thank you enough for the dedication that you all have shown for our work. Please feel free to contact our office any time if you ever have questions about how you can stay actively engaged in supporting our programs. I am grateful to each of you in our hospice community for all that you do and wish you the best for the upcoming new year.

~Susan Parris, Executive Director

HELPING, FIXING, SERVING

Service is not the same as helping. Helping is based on inequality, it's not a relationship between equals. When you help, you use your own strength to help someone with less strength. It's a one up, one down relationship, and people feel this inequality. When we help, we may inadvertently take away more than we give, diminishing the person's sense of self-worth and self-esteem.

Now, when I help I am very aware of my own strength, but we don't serve with our strength, we serve with ourselves. We draw from all our experiences: our wounds serve, our limitations serve, even our darkness serves. The wholeness in us serves the wholeness in the other, and the wholeness in life. Helping incurs debt: when you help someone, they owe you. But service is mutual. When I help I have a feeling of satisfaction, but when I serve I have a feeling of gratitude.

Serving is also different to fixing. We fix broken pipes, we don't fix people. When I set about fixing

another person, it's because I see them as broken. Fixing is a form of judgment that separates us from one another; it creates a distance.

So, fundamentally, helping, fixing and serving are ways of seeing life. When you help, you see life as weak; when you fix, you see life as broken; and when you serve, you see life as whole.

When we serve in this way, we understand that this person's suffering is also my suffering, that their joy is also my joy and then the impulse to serve arises naturally—our natural wisdom and compassion presents itself quite simply. A server knows that they're being used and has the willingness to be used in the service of something greater. We may help or fix many things in our lives, but when we serve, we are always in the service of wholeness.

~Rachel Remen, from *Zen Hospice*

LETTING GO

Letting go doesn't mean we don't care. Letting go doesn't mean we shut down. Letting go means we stop trying to force outcomes and make people behave. It means we give up resistance to the way things are, for the moment. It means we stop trying to do the impossible—controlling that which we cannot—and instead, focus on what is possible—which usually means taking care of ourselves. And we do this in gentleness, kindness, and love, as much as possible.

~Melody Beattie

TIME

by Lisa Spezi

Mercy VNS Homecare & Hospice, Muskegon, MI
Winner of First Prize, Poetry division
2010 National Hospice & Palliative Care Contest

When I was young,
I could live a lifetime in an afternoon of scaling
mountains and saving the world.
I could get lost for hours watching a butterfly or reading a book.
Later, I lost decades while I wasn't looking...
while I was mesmerized by my own children's daydreams
and the sweet music of laughter and conversation with loved ones...
while I was carried on the current of work deadlines, phone bills and housework.
Then, one day, time froze in my doctor's office,
when I heard that my body had betrayed me.
When I found the breath to speak, I asked,
"How much time do I have to live?"
"Every moment of the time you have left," came the reply.
As I sat curled up on my special spot on the sofa,
I pondered the preposterous notion that I still had power and choices.
I reached out and picked up the phone.
I slowly met the gaze of the nurse who had joined me next to my special spot on that couch,
and said,
"I asked my doctor how much time I had left to live, and I don't think I got an answer".
"Every moment of the time you have left" was her reply.



SPLASHES IN LIFE

"My grandfather took me to the fish pond on the farm when I was about seven, and he told me to throw a stone into the water. He told me to watch the circles created by a the stone. Then he asked me to think of myself as that stone person. "You may create lots of splashes in your life but the waves that come from those splashes will disturb the peace of all your fellow creatures," he said.

"Remember that you are responsible for what you put in your circle and that circle will also touch many other circles. You will need to live in a way that allows the good that comes from your circle

to send the peace of that goodness to others. The splash that comes from anger or jealousy will send those feelings to other circles. You are responsible for both."

That was the first time I realized each person creates the inner peace or discord that flows out into the world. We cannot create world peace if we are riddled with inner conflict, hatred, doubt, or anger. We radiate the feelings and thoughts that we hold inside, whether we speak them or not. Whatever is splashing around inside of us is spilling out into the world, creating beauty or discord with all other circles of life.

~Author Unknown

Brattleboro Area Hospice

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Home Furnishings

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Karen Abel
Sharon Dunn
Tom Harris
Store Assistants

Calendar

Saturday, January 29, 10:30 am to 12 noon (Snow date: February 5, 10:30am to noon), Art Helps the Heart, at Experienced Goods Home Furnishings, 51 Elliot Street. MAKE-A-VALENTINE! Create a commemorative valentine to hang on the Remembrance Tree at our 51 Elliot Street Experienced Goods Home Furnishings shop or to take home. Materials will be provided but you may want to bring copies of your loved one's picture. We appreciate RSVP's to Shirley at 257-0775, but drop-ins are welcomed. Refreshments will be served. Elizabeth Ungerleider and Elizabeth Pittman will facilitate.

February 2 & 16, Wednesday, 5:00–6:30 pm. Suicide Loss Support Group. This group meets the first and third Wednesdays of each month facilitated by Andrea Edwards. This group is co-sponsored by The Samaritans, Inc. Visit their website at <http://www.samaritansnh.org/> Call Winnie or Elizabeth to register.

February 4. Volunteer Report Forms due.

February 9 & 23, Wednesday, 5:00–6:30 pm. Spouse/Partner Loss Support Group meets the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month facilitated by Cheryl Richards. Call Winnie or Elizabeth to register.

February 9, Wednesday, 5:00–7:00 pm (snow date: Feb 23). Inservice: "Whose Death is it Anyway?" More information in this newsletter.

February 14 & 28, Monday, 6:30–8:00 pm. Bereaved Parents Support Group. This group meets the second and fourth Mondays of each month facilitated by Lynn Martin. Call Winnie or Elizabeth to register.

February 21, Monday, Hospice Office closed for holiday.

February 28, 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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