



# Brattleboro Area Hospice *Newsletter*

June 2007

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

## ANNUAL VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION PARTY

*For all patient care, bereavement, shop, garden, board, and administrative volunteers. Your partners and children are also welcome.*

**Sunday, June 24, 5:30-7:30 pm**  
**Solar Hill Mansion**  
**229 Western Ave, Brattleboro**

**Please RSVP by Wednesday, June 20**



After several years of graciously hosting our Volunteer Appreciation Party, Sarah Edwards has sold her lovely home so we will not be gathering there this year. But don't fret! We're moving from one beautiful mansion to another.

We look forward to appreciating you, feeding you, and entertaining you at Solar Hill. There will be the usual spread of scrumptious hors d'oeuvres, dinner dishes, desserts and drinks donated by local restaurants. The Hallowell singers will sing for you, as will the ever-captivating Hospettes.

## FROM BETTINA

When any of us accept a volunteer assignment, we do so with the knowledge that the time we have with a client may be long or short. The expectation, generally realized, is that it will be time well spent whether sitting quietly or being more actively involved during a person's last months or days. The amount of time spent with someone does not necessarily correlate to the degree with which he or she may impact our lives.

After a great deal of thought, I have decided to leave my position here at Brattleboro Area Hospice at the end of June. Though I have only been here for two and a half years, I can say that the job has indeed been significant in my life. From working with the staff at the office and at the shop, to training some wonderful new volunteers and meeting veteran volunteers whose experience and knowledge of caring for the dying and the

A drawing will be held for Experienced Goods gift certificates.

Directions:

~Coming from town: Go west on Western Avenue and turn right just after the Sunoco station.

~Coming from I-91: Get off at Exit 2 and go east on Western Avenue. Soon after Greenhill Parkway look for the Solar Hill sign on the left.

~Take the long driveway up to Solar Hill and follow the traffic flow arrows to the large parking lot.

bereaved far exceeds my own, I have learned a great deal and grown in many ways. I look forward to continuing my connection to BAH as a volunteer and hope to see you all at in-services and other events. What comes next for me is a bit uncertain but, to keep the hospice analogy going, isn't that always the case? With a little faith, a positive attitude and good friends around, it will be okay.

Thanks to all who have made my time here meaningful. Whether you took the training, came to an in-service, presented at a class, spoke at the teleconference, offered advice, lent a listening ear, kept my computer going or laughed at my bad jokes... I appreciate it all. My best to all of you as you continue the work of making BAH a respected and valued part of the community.

*Bettina*

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# The Hospice & Palliative Care Council Of Vermont

## 16th Annual Conference

Thursday, June 7, 2007, 7:30 am to 4:30 pm

Lake Morey Resort, Fairlee, Vermont

Volunteer cost: \$45 for the day, includes lunch

### Workshops include:

- Dementia and Anticipatory Grief
- The Green Way of Death
- Caring for the Caregiver
- Teens Surviving
- Hospice in Nursing Homes—Challenges & Opportunities
- Fallen Heroes—and Bereaved Families of Vermont Soldiers
- Music in Hospice & Palliative Care
- Cultivating Hope
- When Healing Hands Harm

## CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW VOLUNTEERS

This spring 11 new volunteers completed the 33 hour training Patient Care Training and will be joining BAH as active volunteers. We are pleased to welcome them. They are: Raven Burchard of Brattleboro, Clare Emhiser of Marlboro College, Melissa Hays of Brattleboro and BAH, Lisa Holabird of Dummerston, Carolyn Kasper of Brattleboro, Janet King of Wilmington, Edmund Maloney of Brattleboro, Jess Mannai of Putney, Lorna Mitchell of Guilford, Janisse Ray of Brattleboro and Justine Trowbridge of Brattleboro. Congratulations to all!

## Grief/Joy

from [gratefulness.org](http://gratefulness.org)

“We look before and after,  
And pine for what is not:  
Our sincerest laughter  
With some pain is fraught;  
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.”

- from “To a Skylark” by Percy Bysshe Shelley

Grief and joy are more like twin sisters than the sworn enemies we often take them to be. Both speak to listening hearts. Both contain unfathomable depths of feeling. And both point towards gratefulness: Grief comes from a heart-rending appreciation of what matters most to us; while joy reawakens us to life’s wonder even when we’ve discovered how precarious it is.

“Precarious” comes from the same Latin root as the word “prayer.” Here prayer does not mean pleading with a distant deity who may or may not pay attention. It may not even be a request at all. Prayer in this sense means rather that we reconnect with the very Source from which we come. We open the eyes of our heart to the inner light abiding in everything. We feel connected to this Source—through a hovering hummingbird, a toddler’s giggle, the aroma of fresh-baked bread—yet in a flicker, the connection seems gone and we are plunged into grief. This teaches us to let go, courageously, again and again. None of us

would have the heart for this task if we did not begin to see that the light has a steady presence in spite of appearances. With joy we realize that the radiance we glimpse flows steadily and illumines all creation in an everlasting glow.

And so we come to see these twins, grief and joy, as playing with each other, teaching each other, caring for each other. We recognize their exchanges and moods. A sudden gladness can unexpectedly shine forth in a time of great sorrow. Then again, even in our greatest joy we are apt to hear the not-so-distant wailing of the suffering world.

A full life turns neither from grief nor from joy. A full life becomes like that of Zora Neale Hurston, who wrote, “I have been in Sorrow’s kitchen and licked out all the pots. Then I have stood on the peaky mountain wrapped in rainbows, with a harp and a sword in my hands.” To lick out all the pots of sorrow and still rejoice in rainbows: Could we hope for a more profound expression of gratefulness?

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## SHOP TALK

Spring is here, the doors are open, people are coming and going, bringing in donations, taking away treasures. It is nice to have the energy of spring after a bit of a hibernation. There are lots of staff coming and going and although we have a communication board up in the kitchen, we are expanding that with a wall of fame so that everyone will know who everyone is! Many of the volunteers on the cash register are here once a week to help us out, but may not know who work on the other days, so this is one way to see who's who.

### HELP!

We also need a few good men or women to be on the cash register, either on a weekly schedule (a four hour shift) or as a substitute for when someone is away or sick. If you are interested, or know anyone else who might enjoy volunteering at Experienced Goods, either stop by or call 254-5200 and talk to Betsy, or fill out a volunteer form.

### Bedside Manners

How little the dying seem to need  
A drink perhaps, a little food,  
A smile, a hand to hold, medication,  
A change of clothes, an unspoken  
Understanding about what's happening.  
You think it would be more, much more,  
Something more difficult for us  
To help with in this great disruption,  
But perhaps it's because as the huge shape  
Rears up higher and darker each hour  
They are anxious that we should see it too  
And try to show us with a hand-squeeze.

We panic to do more for them,  
And especially when it's your father,  
And his eyes are far away, and your tears  
Are all down your face and clothes,  
And he doesn't see them now, but smiles  
Perhaps, just perhaps because you're there.  
How little he needs. Just love. More Love.

Christopher Wiseman

## Opening From Heart

Right now, and in every now-moment, you are neither closing or opening. You are either stressfully waiting for something--more money, security, affection--or you are living from your deep heart, opening as the entire moment, and giving what you most deeply desire to give, without waiting. If you are waiting for anything in order to live and love without holding back, then you suffer. Every moment is the most important moment of your life. No future time is better than now to let down your guard and love.

Everything you do right now ripples outward and affects everyone. Your posture can shine your heart or transmit anxiety. Your breath can radiate love or muddy the room in depression. Your glance can awaken joy. Your words can inspire freedom. Your every act can open hearts and minds. Opening from heart to all, you live as a gift to all. In every moment, you are either opening or closing. Right now, you are choosing to open and give fully or you are waiting. How does your choice feel?

~ David Deida

## Brattleboro Area Hospice

### Board of Directors

Connie Baxter  
Penfield Chester  
*Co-President*  
Victoria Collins  
Sarah Edwards  
Tim Gerdes  
*Treasurer*  
Greg McAllister  
Kris McDermet  
*Co-President*  
Greg Moschetti  
Ann Switzer  
*Secretary*

### Hospice Office

Bettina Berg  
*Hospice Volunteer &  
Education Coordinator*  
Jennifer Hall  
*Office Manager*  
Melissa Hays  
*Bereavement Volunteer  
Coordinator*  
Beth Newman  
*Hospice Care Coordinator*  
Susan Parris  
*Executive Director*  
Elizabeth Evans Pittman  
*Bereavement Care Coordinator*  
Sarah Swift  
*Hospice Care Assistant*

### Experienced Goods

Gretchen Horton-Kuebler  
*Store Manager*  
Betsy Hall  
*Store Volunteer Coordinator*  
Gemma Champoli  
*Special Projects Coordinator*  
Hannah Dancing  
Tracy DeCell  
Rachel-Storm Heasley  
Niles Laughner  
Imelda Reilly  
April Sommerville  
*Store Assistants*

## Calendar

June 1. Volunteer Report Forms due.

June 4, 11 & 28, Monday, 6:30-8 pm. Loss Writing Support Group.  
Facilitated by Muriel Winter Wolf.

June 5, 12, 19, 26, Tuesdays, 12:15-12:45 pm. Silent sitting at Hospice Office.  
Information: 257-0775.

June 7, Thursday. Hospice office closed—staff attending conference at Lake Morey.

June 7, Thursday. Hospice & Palliative Care Council of Vermont Annual Conference at Lake Morey. More information in this newsletter.

June 13, Wednesday, 12:30-2 pm. Monthly Volunteer Support Meeting,  
BAH Upstairs Meeting Room.

June 13 and 27, Wednesday, 4-5:30 pm. Spouse / Partner Loss Support Group. Facilitated by Cheryl Richards.

June 18, Monday, 5:30-7:30 pm. Board of Directors Meeting.

June 24, Sunday, 5:30-7:30 pm. VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION PARTY.  
Solar Hill Mansion, 229 Western Ave.

“The cloud weeps, and then the garden sprouts.  
The baby cries, and the mother’s milk flows.  
The Nurse of Creation has said, Let them cry a lot.

“This rain-weeping and sun-burning twine together  
to make us grow. Keep your intelligence white-hot  
and your grief glistening, so your life will stay fresh.  
Cry easily like a little child.”

~ Rumi, translation by Coleman Barks

Brattleboro Area Hospice  
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Brattleboro, VT 05301  
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