



Brattleboro Area Hospice *Newsletter*

March 2008

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

FROM BETTINA....

Last winter I had the opportunity to attend a workshop in which the presenter talked about dual relationships in small, rural communities, a subject that applies directly to the work we do here at Hospice. It was a rainy, cold December morning and as I signed in, trying to hold the pen in my frozen fingers, I heard a friendly, "Hello there" over my shoulder. Turning around, I looked directly into the face of my therapist. And there it was: patient and therapist meet up in the larger community in other than our usual roles. We decided to sit together for the sheer obviousness of it. The conference was good, peppered with movie clips that highlighted the dilemmas that face all of us when our lives cross and potentially intertwine.

Despite the fact that I sometimes go out to dinner downtown and recognize few or none of the other patrons, the fact is we do live in a small community where we do know others and often what is going on with them. It is one of the reasons that many of us live here. As hospice volunteers we have made a commitment to being of service and working to support people at a very stressful time in their lives. This means that we often see and hear things which can challenge us and affect us deeply. We can not, by nature of the community in which we live,

be anonymous in work we do. What we can do, and must do in order to respect the privacy of those we serve, is to hold what we see and hear in confidence. Can I tell my partner that I am amazed by the grace with which my client is facing her death? Sure. Can I say that the beautiful old house she lives in, you know the one on Any Street, is going to rack and ruin because her children don't care about it or even her for that matter? No. Not only am I breaking confidentiality, I am making a judgment and therefore not meeting the family where they are. Can I share that yesterday I answered the phone for her and realized that we work with the same lawyer? You see the point. It looks obvious on paper. It is much less clear when we are involved in a hospice case to remember that although we feel, we learn and we are rewarded in ways that are hard to explain, in a very fundamental way, another's death is not about us.

Why we choose to do this work varies from person to person and will likely change from time to time, and each new experience teaches us something to carry into the next. Stay vigilant and keep learning. The service we provide in the community is valued and respected. Thank you for your part in making that so.



Every life
needs its altar.
It may be in a church
or quiet nook,
it may be in a moment in a day,
or a mood of the heart...
but somewhere
the spiritual life
must have its altar.
From there,
life gains its poise
and direction.

~ Esther B. York

In-Service: ETERNAL BLESSINGS CREMATORY VISIT

Tuesday March 11th, 4:45-6:30 PM

On Tuesday evening March 11, we will have the opportunity to visit Eternal Blessings Crematory. Tom Robinson and Ellen and Jim Curley are the owners of the facility which is located on the Gaines Farm in Guilford. The in-service will include a tour and a chance for questions and answers with these very knowledgeable and caring people.

Because of parking considerations at the crematory, we have been asked to bring as few cars as possible. Therefore we will meet at BAH and leave from there promptly at 4:45. If you wish to attend, please call Bettina or Jennifer at the office before March 10th. (257-0775)

THE RETURN OF THE MISSING SCARF

A Tale of Experienced Goods-Hospice Synchronicity

Written by Victoria Chertok, Shop Volunteer Coordinator

Elizabeth Pittman, our Bereavement Care Coordinator, and I were saying hello at the Shop when she told me a fabulous story about the scarf she was wearing. Here it is!

A friend of Elizabeth's wove a beautiful purple scarf for her several years ago. Unfortunately, she left it behind at Collected Works and the Café Beyond after dining there. When she went back to look for it, it was gone. Every year Café Beyond brought their lost and found items to Experienced Goods on Elliott Street.

Liza, at that time the Manager of the Shop, remembered this particular scarf, which had been sold. From then on, Elizabeth expected to see

someone walking down Main Street, wearing her scarf, but this never happened.

Almost three years later, she walked into a staff meeting at the Hospice office and Libby Garofalo, a Shop staff member, was wearing the scarf on her head. It had been re-donated to the Shop the preceding fall. Libby hadn't worn the scarf in over a month and had a strong feeling about finding, washing and wearing the scarf the day of the meeting. When Elizabeth saw the scarf, she exclaimed, "My SCARF!" and with tears in her eyes told Libby the tale. The purple scarf is now reunited with its proud owner and this Experienced Goods tale has come full circle.

IT TAKES A VILLAGE TO SAY GOODBYE

A Day Long Conference sponsored by Hospice of Franklin County (MA)

Wednesday, March 19th

The presenter is Douglas C. Smith, a long time Hospice Professional and Author. It promises to be a very worthwhile and informative day which will explore the ways that non-professionals provide caregiving to the dying and grieving. The conference is being held at the Deerfield Academy in Deerfield, MA.

There is a reduced rate of \$40.00 for Hospice Volunteers and Brattleboro Area Hospice has some "scholarship" monies available for interested volunteers. The web site to learn more about this conference and or to register is: <http://www.hospicefc.org/Village.htm>. If you have questions please contact Jennifer at the office. (257-0775)

Comforting the Comforters

(Anonymous)

You who give counsel to others must give counsel to yourself.
You to whom many turn for wisdom must turn to yourself.
You to whom others come for comfort must comfort yourself.

The comforters and consolers, the healers of others
Need comfort and consolation and healing themselves.
In sickness, in death, in tragedy, we are the same.

Let not the last hours eclipse the entire life
Let not the pain, the forgetfulness, the suffering
Negate the joy, the memory, the exaltation of life.

Nothing decent, nothing noble, no gesture of love,
No smile of encouragement is swallowed up by death.

In memory there is a resurrection of the life of the spirit
Memory is our hold on the past
Our solace in the present, our hope for the future.

Memory has a life of its own, an after-life,
A transfusion of meaning from one life to others.

You who have given heart and soul to others
You who have sheltered others from wind and storms
Guard yourselves from melancholy.

You who given wisdom to others
Open yourself to your hard-earned knowledge.

Know that the wound does not heal at once
But slowly forms protective layers.

You who have known grief and pain have also known
Deep friendships, relationships of respect and trust.

You have taught others how to survive the affliction of sorrow
You have taught others how to transcend the tragic moment.

The beloved who gave you life passed on to you a miraculous spark
May it illumine your path and brighten your way.

Brattleboro Area Hospice

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Calendar

- March 3-May 5, Monday, 6:30-8 pm.* Healing Through Writing.
Ten-week group for those who have previously been in a support group.
Facilitated by Muriel Winter Wolf.
- March 4.* Volunteer Report Forms due.
- March 4, 11, 18, 25, Tuesdays, 12:15-12:45 pm.* Quiet sitting at Hospice Office.
Information: 257-0775.
- March 8, Saturday, 10 am-12 noon.* "Second Saturdays." Make Origami
Cranes with guest facilitator and bereaved parent Ami Maglin while
socializing with other individuals and families who have experienced the
death of a loved one. For adults and children. Additional facilitation by
Elizabeth Ungerleider and Elizabeth Pittman.
- March 10-April 28, Monday, 5:30-7 pm.* Eight-Week Support Group for those
whose parent, sibling or friend has died. Facilitated by Cheryl Richards.
- March 11, Tuesday, 4:45-6:30 pm.* In-Service: Eternal Blessings Crematory
Visit. More information in this newsletter.
- March 12 & 26, 2nd & 4th Wednesday, 4-5:30 pm.* Spouse/Partner Loss Sup
port Group. Facilitated by Cheryl Richards.
- March 12, 12:30-2 pm.* Monthly Volunteer Support Meeting, BAH Down
stairs Kitchen Meeting Room.
- March 13 & 27, 2nd & 4th Thursday, 6:30-8 pm.* Bereaved Mothers Support
Group. Facilitated by Lynn Martin and Cheryl Richards. Upstairs meeting
room.
- March 13 & 27, 2nd & 4th Thursday, 6:30-8 pm.* **New:** Bereaved Fathers
Roundtable. Facilitated by Bill Warriner. Downstairs kitchen. Call to
register.
- Starting mid-March, Wednesday, 3:30-5 pm.* Good Grief Children's Program.
A six-week program for 5-7 yr olds who have experienced the death of
someone close to them. Facilitated by Elizabeth Ungerleider at Westminster
Center School. Call to register.
- March 17, Monday, 5:30 pm.* Board of Directors Meeting, Hospice Office.
- March 19, Wednesday, all day.* It Takes a Village to Say Goodbye, a Day Long
Conference sponsored by Hospice of Franklin County. More information
in this newsletter.
- Mark Your Calendar:**
- April 16, Wednesday, 1:30-5:00 pm.* "Living With Grief: Children and
Adolescents." Hospice Foundation of America's 15th Annual Bereavement
Teleconference. Marlboro College Graduate Center, Brattleboro.

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