



Brattleboro Area Hospice *Newsletter*

May 2011

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

MEMORIAL PLANTING SERVICE

Sunday, June 5, 2011, 1:30 pm

Living Memorial Park, Guilford Street, Brattleboro

RSVP by calling 257-0775

You and your family (children to elders!) are invited to plant an annual or perennial to honor loved ones and hospice clients who have died in the past year. Perhaps you've stayed in touch with a hospice family member who you would like to accompany to this service. A variety of plants will be provided; if you prefer to bring your own, please leave a message at the office or email Hospice Gardener Hilary Farquhar at hmacf@sover.net so we can plan garden space accordingly. The reading of names and Hallowell's singing will be included in this simple service. If you would like to include

a name on our list to be read aloud, please call the Hospice office, 257-0775, by May 25.

As this event is outdoors, please wear suitable clothing. A few chairs will be available for those who need them; feel free to bring a blanket to sit on. We also need a collection of smooth stones on which family members can write their loved one's name or decorate as they choose.

The planting takes place at the flowerbeds on the side of the park (directly across from 150 Guilford Street, on the hillside adjacent to the road). Afterwards, refreshments will be served. Please join us!



Volunteers are needed for preparing the garden in May, providing snacks, and helping the day of the service. Please call Muriel, Joyce or Elizabeth at 257-0775 if you can help with any of these tasks. Thank you!

A Note From Hilary Farquhar, The New Hospice Gardener

Elizabeth Pittman and I visited the Memorial Garden in early April. Now that the snow has gone, what a cheerful sight to spot crocuses and green shoots poking up. I'm excited to get started and to meet Hospice's wonderful green-thumbed volunteers. Thank you all who helped out in past years; we would love to see both familiar and new friends this season.

Here are the dates and times that we have scheduled for work bees:

Wednesday May 11 from 11am-2pm

Tuesday May 17 from 10am-1pm

Thursday May 26 from 9am-12noon

I hope many of you can lend a hand preparing the garden for our Memorial Planting Service on Sunday, June 5. I can be contacted at 802-257-1501 or hmacf@sover.net.

20TH ANNUAL HOSPICE CONFERENCE
Sponsored by The Hospice & Palliative Care Council of Vermont
Thursday, June 9, 2010, 9:00 am to 4:30 pm
Lake Morey Resort, Fairlee, Vermont
Volunteer cost: \$35 for the day, includes lunch

We have limited funds to support those who cannot afford the full fee.

Workshops include:

- Keynote address from Don Schumacher, PsyD, CEO of National Hospice & Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO)
- Ethical approaches to cultural aspects of dying
- Multicultural/spiritual considerations in health care: how to discuss, assess and utilize diverse values and perspectives to enhance our practices
- Grief etiquette
- We Honor Veterans: partnership with NHPCO
- Hospice choruses: navigating the ins and outs of supporting a successful program
- Assisting multicultural rituals in after death care

Call or email our office at 257-0775 for a flyer.

New email Addresses For Hospice Office Staff:

As many of you have already learned, we switched to Sovernet for our internet services recently. Here are the updated email addresses for our staff:

bettina.berg@brattleborohospice.org

joyce.drew@brattleborohospice.org

cheryl.richards@brattleborohospice.org

muriel.wolf@brattleborohospice.org

elizabeth.pittman@brattleborohospice.org

ryan.murphy@brattleborohospice.org

jennifer.carr@brattleborohospice.org

susan.parris@brattleborohospice.org

In-service: The Simple Gift of Personal Care

Wednesday, May 18 5:30–7:30 pm

The Gathering Place, 30 Terrace Street

Light refreshments will be available

Caring for a hospice client can take many forms from listening to light touch to the more intimate work we have come to call personal care. When assisting someone with personal care, which can involve such things as transfers, positioning and simple toileting, it is important to know how to care for another while also taking care of ourselves both emotionally and practically. This in-service, led by Kris McDermet who is an O.T. with over twenty years of experience, will provide a chance to learn and review skills that

you may be asked to use at some point. Even if you are not planning to offer personal care as a volunteer, it is good to remember that unexpected things do occur in life and that having a point of reference can be helpful for you and by extension, for others. We hope you will join us for this lively and valuable class.

**Please RSVP to the office at 257-0775
by Monday May 16.**

A Note From Ellen Graham, Assistant Store Manager

As many of the shop volunteers know, I am expecting in late May. The amount of support I have received from both staff and volunteers has been amazing, and I feel blessed to work for an organization that is filled with so many kind souls. My maternity leave begins this month, and while I am anxious to be at home “nesting”, I am truly enjoying my days here, and will miss our many talented and wonderful volunteers and staff here at the shop while I am away. As spring gains momentum, I feel as if my pregnancy is also kicking into high gear. I have always loved this time of the year (and who doesn’t?). After a long, dark, winter it feels so good to open the windows and let in the fresh air. Pregnancy is a great time for reflection, and I feel in tune with the cycles of nature in a way I have never experienced before.

I began volunteering at Experienced Goods not just because it is a great thrift store, but because the mission of the organization is very important to me. When I was thirteen, my mother passed away. Although she was not in hospice care at the time, I believe that compassionate care for the dying and their bereaved family and friends is very important. Death is the final transition of life, and adjustments must be made, both by the dying and those who go on without them. Any assistance at this time is valuable beyond words. I think of my mother often and seemingly more than ever now that I am going to become a mother myself. There are times when I wish that we could communicate as two women, in a way that we never got a chance to. Luckily, she is

survived by three sisters, my aunties, who have been invaluable in sharing their own experiences as well as their recollections of my mother’s birth experience.

Life is a cycle, with people stepping in and out almost constantly. The world seems full of new life to me right now. Perhaps this is a bit of narcissism on my part, focused as I am on the business of babies. However, it is impossible to ignore the people who have recently left us. In the past few years, personally, both my cousin and grandfather passed away. Their deaths could not have been more different in circumstance, but the toll on my family was equal. My father and aunt had lost a parent, my grandmother, her partner. On the other side of my family, we collectively mourned the sudden loss of a vibrant young woman, and shared the pain of her mother. It is irrelevant to compare these two deaths, different as they were. As with any death, the loss is what remains. Experiencing both, I was struck by the feelings of love and connectedness that can come out of family, even when sharing in tragedy. When we love anything or anyone, we are opening ourselves to pain and loss, but I believe that the journey of love is worth the cost. What we can share together is more powerful than the scars that grief can bring. Remember that everything is a wheel, that spring follows winter, and to care for yourself and those around you.

Best wishes to you all,

Ellen

I wanted a perfect ending. Now I’ve learned, the hard way, that some poems don’t rhyme, and some stories don’t have a clear beginning, middle, and end. Life is about not knowing, having to change, taking the moment and making the best of it, without knowing what’s going to happen next. Delicious Ambiguity. ~ Gilda Radner

Brattleboro Area Hospice Statement Regarding Death With Dignity

Since 1979 Brattleboro Area Hospice has provided grassroots, volunteer-staffed programs to supplement and provide alternatives to the professional services utilized by dying and grieving community members. We also provide education and outreach to increase our community's understanding of and ability to cope with the issues of death and dying. All of our services and programs are free of charge.

According to Hospice philosophy, until the moment of death people have physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs. Our Hospice Care Program addresses these needs and helps dying people live as comfortably and meaningfully as possible. Our Bereavement Care Services facilitate healthy adaptation to grief. Many people avoid thinking about the cycle of life and death, and suggest that working with the dying and grieving "morbid" and "depressing." Our Education and Outreach programs seek to address this avoidance, to increase acceptance of death and grief as natural aspects of life.

This is the background we bring to the question we most often hear from people in the community these days, "Where does hospice stand on Death with Dignity?" Because our mission is to "help dying people live as comfortably and meaningfully as possible" we are bound to honor each dying person's choices at end of life within the parameters of current law. If a client has a DNR (do not resuscitate) order we don't question their judgment or try to convince them that they should or shouldn't seek resuscitation if their heart stops. Similarly, if a dying person decides to stop, start or continue artificial means of feeding, we don't question their judgment or advise them on what they should or should not do. This is not our place.

The same logic applies to taking a stand on Death with Dignity. BAH serves all in the community (those who support this issue for good moral and ethical reasons and those who do not, also for good moral and ethical reasons). As such we are honor bound to remain neutral. If we were to take a position (pro or con) which led even one member of the community to fail to seek out our services because, correctly or incorrectly, they perceive us to have a specific agenda around death, then we have failed in our most basic mission.

If Death with Dignity legislation passes, Brattleboro Area Hospice will honor client's wishes regarding this choice in the same way we honor DNR orders today. We will with equal compassion serve those clients who make this choice and those who do not. We will, as we have done for the past 32 years, provide humble service to the dying in our community. We will educate the public on the choices one has at the end of life as we do now, and we will work with grieving persons whose loved ones made this choice and those whose loved ones did not.

The unconditional compassionate assistance of neighbors helping neighbors during the difficult journey of terminal illness and grief cannot be underestimated.

I have never met a person whose greatest need was anything other than real, unconditional love. You can find it in a simple act of kindness toward someone who needs help. There is no mistaking love. You feel it in your heart. It is the common fiber of life, the flame that heals our soul, energizes our spirit and supplies passion to our lives.

~Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

Where I live

is vertical:

garden, pond, uphill

pasture, run-in shed.

Through pines, Pumpkin Ridge.

Two switchbacks down
church spire, spit of town.

Where I climb I inspect
the peas, cadets erect

in lime-capped rows,
hear hammer blows

as pileateds peck
the rot of shagbark hickories

enlarging last
year's pterodactyl nests.

Granite erratics
humped like bears
dot the outermost pasture

where in tall grass

clots of ovoid scat
butternut-size, milky brown

announce our halfgrown
moose padded past

into the forest
to nibble beech tree sprouts.

Wake-robins trillium
in dapple-shade. Violets,

landlocked seas I swim in.
I used to pick bouquets

for her, framed them
with leaves. Schmutzige

she said, holding me close
to scrub my streaky face.

Almost from here I touch
my mother's death.



~Maxine Kumin

Art Helps the Heart

Saturday, May 14, 10 am to 12 noon

At the Hospice office, 191 Canal Street

For All Ages

Make Prayer-Remembrance Flags to hang at the Memorial Garden for the Memorial Planting Service and also to take home. For the fourth year in a row, we will use cloth squares, paints and markers to create simple flags. The flags made by some of you last May have hung along the garden arbor for a year: go by the Hospice Garden and take a look! Then join us Saturday, May 14 in this fun and simple crafting of remembrance flags that honor loved ones and beautify our garden.

The Art Helps the Heart program provides an opportunity for you to socialize over an art activity with other individuals and families who are coping with the death of a loved one. Materials are provided. We appreciate **RSVPs** to Joyce at 257-0775, but drop-ins are welcomed. **Refreshments will be served.** Elizabeth Ungerleider and Elizabeth Pittman will facilitate. **Call Muriel 257-0775 x 101 if you would like to help with this event.**

Brattleboro Area Hospice

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Jean Bristol
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Ryan Murphy, *Hospice Care
Coordinator*
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Cheryl Richards
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Experienced Goods

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Karen Zamojski, *Store Manager*
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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

May 3, 17 & 31, 5:30 to 7pm. ****New**** A Grief Support Group for Adults. Meets every other Tuesday, facilitated by Elizabeth Pittman. A peer support grief group for adults whose parent, sibling, friend, or other cared-for person has died. Call Elizabeth the register.

May 4 & 18, 5:30 to 7pm. 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.

May 5. Volunteer Report Forms due.

May 9 & 23, 6:30 to 8pm. Bereaved Parents Support Group meets the second and fourth Mondays of each month, facilitated by Lynn Martin.

May 11 & 25, 5 to 6:30pm. Spouse/Partner Loss Support Group meets the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, facilitated by Cheryl Richards.

May 14, Saturday, 10 am–12pm. Art Helps the Heart: Creating prayer flags. More info in this newsletter.

May 16, Monday, 5:30pm. Board of Directors meeting.

May 18, Wednesday, 5:30–7:30 pm. Personal care inservices. More info in this newsletter.

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!

Brattleboro Area Hospice
191 Canal Street
Brattleboro, VT 05301
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