



December 2008

Volunteer Newsletter

In Mid Coast Maine

Letter from the Director

As we approach the holidays I am grateful for so much. Our lives are made so rich by each other. In spite of the global economy, wise choices made here in Maine make it possible for most to be *comfortable enough* this season. This year in the director's seat at Hospice Volunteers has been busy, challenging and rewarding. We continue to develop the bereavement programs, enhance our direct care services and fine tune operations. Since we have our house in order, my focus for 2009 is to concentrate on outreach and community education. More people could avail themselves of our services if they knew about them. With all the pressures of the economic downturn, grief and loss are magnified and compounded with other conditions. Hospice Volunteers are so unique, multi-faceted and evolved and with them as a resource it is my hope that we can help. I remain grateful to work for this agency and for your support. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Betsy Elder

HELP!! Volunteers are needed to assist with library operations. If you have skills in this area, please contact Betsy Elder at 207-729-3602.



On Saturday, September 20th Bowdoin College Common Good Day Volunteers spruced up the Hospice House by weeding, planting bulbs and power-washing the building. Thanks go out to these volunteers, especially John Fitzgerald, and to Chuck Frohmiller who lent the power washer.

Hospice Volunteers Spring Raffle Win seen as a Signal from the Afterlife

Due to budget constraints, Hospice Volunteers has not sent out a newsletter since last spring. For this reason there is old business which some, who only hear our news through this letter, may not have heard. Our spring raffle, where two randomly-drawn lucky people could win grand prizes of \$1000 worth of heating oil, gasoline or groceries, was very successful in finding worthy recipients. Sandra Kent of Lisbon Falls, whose husband, Frank, died in March, received \$1000 in credit at Down East Energy for heating oil. Frank was a social worker who helped the homeless at Tedford Shelter and grieving people at Hospice Volunteers. This money from Hospice to face the long winter without him was viewed as a gift from the grave. "It's like my husband is looking out for me still," Sandra said. Lynde Heath of Topsham gave his \$1000 winning ticket to his daughter, Lisa Hanna, to buy heating oil at Dallas Oil. Both of these recipients were grateful for the funds. The raffle was successful in raising roughly \$7000. for Hospice Volunteers' operational budget. Watch for a raffle in '09.

PLEASE HELP.....Huge THANKS to all who have already made their gifts to the 2008-09 Annual Appeal. If you haven't sent in your donation yet, we hope you will consider sending it in now. The wonderful work of our dedicated volunteers supporting the community is able to happen because of your generous contributions.

2008 Memorial Service



On November 2nd, Hospice Volunteers in collaboration with CHANS sponsored the 3rd annual Interfaith Memorial Service at the United Methodist Church in Brunswick. *A Time for Remembering* was a moving opportunity to honor our Hospice clients who died this past year. 1000 colorful paper cranes for peace and healing graced the shrine covered with photos of loved ones remembered that day. The First Parish Chamber Choir sang *Requiem aeternam* and *The Souls of the Righteous* under the able direction of Ray Cornils. Reverend Jeff Hunt gave the invocation and diverse offerings from a variety of spiritual traditions were shared including Native American, Buddhist and Christian prayers. The names of those who died were recognized by Earl Redman and Chris Coriveau while Susan Scarborough softly played in minor keys on the harp. Cantor Daniel Leeman gave an inspiring Benediction and Burt Brewer wrapped up the service with *Amazing Grace* on his wooden flute. It was a moving experience worthy of being tradition every year. The most well-attended memorial service yet with almost 120 attendees, Hospice Volunteers and CHANS are grateful to all who were involved in the planning and production of this event!



Dr.'s Herb Rowen & Susan Carter



Burt Brewer & Chris

Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

On November 14, 2008 about 75 volunteers, Board members, staff and spouses gathered at the United Methodist Church in Brunswick for homemade soups, salad, desserts, bread (donated by Wild Oats Bakery) and celebration of our common devotion to end of life care. Kathy Goddu's drumming troupe, Kulu-Ba, performed to welcome and energize everyone. A Silent Auction was again very popular and volunteers used their funny money to bid on 25 items donated by staff and Board members. The dinner and silent auction provided a nice opportunity for volunteers to get acquainted with one another and, in some cases, to have light-hearted rivalries about certain desired auction items. After dinner, the Volunteer of the Year Award was presented to two very deserving volunteers; Kristen Poeraatmadja (in absentia) and Abbie Morin. Our 2nd annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner was a multi-faceted evening enjoyed by all and promises to be a tradition.



Linda & Board President Tony Belmont



Cindy Baumgartner & Ann Hough



George & Abbie Morin



USM Intern Amy Wescott



Susan McComb/Mary French



Elaine Blakemore



Carol Kinkade Glenda Farrar

Fall 2008 Hospice Volunteer Training Graduation Class



Standing from left to right; Dennis Pelletier, Angie Buxton, Caroline Russell, Amy Wescott, Ginny Beauregard, Karen Balicki, Becky Hagan, Kathy DeCourcy and Linda Hornbeck. Seated from left to right; Kathy Goddu, Tenzing Lama, Lisa Hunt, Jonathan Waldo Missing; Susan Scarborough-Chipman

From the Director of Volunteer Services- Kathy Goddu

Since our last newsletter, many procedures have been altered and forms updated in hopes of making our work more efficient. Last summer nursing home administrators, CHANS hospice nurses, social workers and volunteers met for breakfast and reviewed referral and reporting process and forms. We now have an easier, more efficient process. As with anything, new processes need constant reviewing, but all in all it is working well.

It's been an extremely busy fall. On November 13th, a group of 13 amazing individuals graduated from fall volunteer training. Each bring unique skills and gifts as they join our team of caring, compassionate volunteers. Congratulations! Already four have been put into service! Thank you all for walking into our lives. As the communities we serve become aware of our services, the demand for volunteers increases. If you or someone you know have benefited from Hospice Volunteers, please give some thought to joining us in caring for your friends, family and community. The next training session begins next spring on March 7th. For more information call or visit the website. Have a peaceful, warm and healthy new year!

Kathy Goddu

From the Director of Bereavement Services -Lynn Ellis

Warm greetings to each of you as we enter this Season of Light - Winter Solstice. As I sit here writing these remarks, I look outside at tree limbs coated with ice... Beautiful and yet fragile. I think this is an apt metaphor for living as well. I am a firm believer in life as a precious gift and one to be lived fully each and every day until death comes. I've often heard the expression that doing hospice is a "calling" and I couldn't agree more. I have been blessed with the opportunity to work in hospice as my profession for the past 6 years as a hospice social worker and now, here at Hospice Volunteers, as Director of Bereavement Services. My husband Dan and I moved to Brunswick in May of this year and one of my strongest desires was to find employment here as well. I was delighted to be hired on October 17th and join the awesome staff of this wonderful organization.

I have the great pleasure of working with the grief support group facilitators whose dedication and caring translates into service to those who are grieving the loss of loved ones through death or those who are anticipating loss. We are just finishing a grief facilitator training which will add more wonderful facilitators to our team. In addition to grief support groups, we also offer support to the community - homecare & hospice programs, schools, nursing homes, hospitals, churches, and anywhere else we can offer support. We currently have a schedule of drop-in support groups and will be adding several new groups in 2009. (See schedule on page 4)

I am deeply grateful to be of service offering grief support and bereavement services in the mid-coast region. Wishing you peace on your journey,
Lynn

Endowment Fund As the end of the calendar year approaches, are you looking for a tax shelter, IRA non-taxable distribution locale or other place to make a charitable donation? Hospice Volunteers' Endowment Fund is currently at 30% of our goal. Actively trying to augment this fund, we welcome your participation in helping us to reach \$800,000. Please consider this as you wrap up year-end financial plans and see **Help Us Help Others** on the website.

Care for the Care-giver Spa Day

Hospice held a Care-giver Spa Day on October 18th at the United Methodist Church for its own volunteers, those from Respite Care, CHANS Hospice nurses and Home Care Aides. Leisurely activities included; Yoga, Qi Gong, Authentic Movement, *Writing Your Story* and being pampered by the staff from Sweet Water Day Spa. Many enjoyed writing *Messages from the Heart* to be used in an international project called "Woven Voices" that Sarah Haskell initiated. Those present enjoyed a wonderful lunch of homemade soups, salad and bread. Special thanks goes to: Mona Corro and staff of Sweet Water Day Spa for providing free massage treatments for the entire day, Sharon Spencer, Rob Elder and Don Weatherbee for teaching ways of relaxing, finding balance and personal awareness, Kathleen at Women's Fitness Center for loaning us yoga mats and Margaret Tripp for coordinating use of the church.

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IN MID COAST MAINE**

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Hospice Volunteers in Mid Coast Maine

STAFF

Betsy Elder- Executive Director
Lynn Ellis- Director Bereavement Services
Kathy Goddu - Director Volunteer Services
Elaine McGuire- Administrative Assistant

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Warm greetings and holiday wishes to all! I am pleased to join Hospice Volunteers as a social work intern. Dr. Cicely Saunders told her dying patients, "You matter until the last moment of your life, and we will do all we can, not only to help you die peacefully but also to live until you die." Acting on this core principle, Hospice Volunteers is partnering with Respite Care and Brunswick High School's service-learning program to implement Maine's first Memory Bridge Initiative (MBI). A national intergenerational program, MBI's goals are to provide socially enriching interactions and improved quality of life for people with Alzheimer's disease. Students experience a transformation where they grow to see themselves as capable explorers and contributors in a world rich with interdependent connections among diverse people of all ages. The innovative, award-winning MBI curriculum challenges fear-based, stigmatizing social constructions by teaching listening skills, anatomy, journaling, communication, neurobiology and other subjects which empower students to be caring, informed companions to people with Alzheimer's disease. Complementing classroom lessons, students engage in visits with their elder "buddies" in the Respite Care program and create commemorative life maps from images, words or music. Hospice Volunteers and its Memory Bridge partners anticipate that our pilot implementation of MBI will start a chain reaction among other Maine communities, giving lasting life to a project that holds tremendous potential to benefit students, elders, families, care-givers, health care and the global community at large. I am honored and grateful to be a part of the MBI and of Hospice Volunteers. Thank you. -Amy Wescott

Current and Upcoming Grief Support Groups

Hospice Volunteers offers the following groups. Most groups are drop-in with no time frame requirement. We will begin offering two additional 6 week groups in 2009. Please call Lynn Ellis, Director of Bereavement Services to sign up for existing and new groups. A pre-attendance intake is required before attending any of our groups so that we can be sure to match you up with the most supportive group based on your individual needs.

Transitions - Mid Coast Grieving Children's Program -- Grief support for children, teens and families- Mondays 6:00-7:15PM (NEW 6 week class starting March 2nd)

Living Loss, Living Hope -- Anticipatory grief support for individuals or families facing life-threatening illness/divorce/ other losses 1st & 3rd Tuesday, 5-6PM

NEW! 6 week daytime group for caregivers beginning Wednesday, Feb.4th or on 1st & 3rd Wednesdays, 1-2PM

Adult Grief Support Groups -- Open to any adult whose loved one has died- 2nd & 4th Tuesday, 7-8:30PM or 2nd & 4th Wednesday, 12:30-2PM **NEW 6 week structured adult group** to start in the Spring

Grieving Parents Support Group-- For Parents who have lost an infant or adult child 1st & 3rd Wednesday, 7-8:30PM