



# HOSPICE LIGHT

## from the office:

A new class is concluding which means new volunteers will be joining our ranks. It is always an exciting time for them and I hope many of you volunteers will be attending the Support Meeting in December to help welcome them. This is a good time to remind you that if you have a case, you need to either attend the Support Meeting or call the office to make a monthly report.

We are experimenting with a new and innovative approach to nursing home visits and by "we" I mean Beacon & ourselves. As there are increasing numbers of clients at Varney Crossing in No. Berwick we have created the Varney Crossing Team. This team consists of four volunteers who have split the number of clients and are covering all at the home. It is hoped that we can also have some Support Meetings up there just for them. The

numbers of referrals at nursing homes has increased dramatically in the last few years so we need to find ways to efficiently cover those needs. If the V. C. Team approach works well, perhaps we will soon see a Durgin Pines Team, who knows?

It is so exciting to be entering this season of holidays. Celebrating Thanksgiving, Channukkah, &/or Christmas is normally a wonderful time of family get-togethers, lots of food, laughter and joy. I hope it is that way for all of you and that the spirit of caring and sharing fills your heart.

And then ...  
Happy New Year  
to everyone!

Love, Dee



*November is  
National Hospice  
Month!*

*Many thanks to all of you  
who contribute your time  
and talents to advance  
the goals of  
Hospice of York.*



## Thoughts from the President:

When you're affiliated with Hospice, you can't help but contemplate the existence of God.

I believe in God but I'm not practicing any particular religion. Early on in life I decided learning about this relationship was best undertaken alone. Not that I disagree with any of the religions of the world; all paths to God are sacred.

My first Holy concept was **TRUST**. Funny, I couldn't really find trust anywhere. Most people aren't deliberately untrustworthy; it's just hard to live up to. But I found once I trusted in God, it was easy to trust everything else. Trust feels like the huge mountain inside that stays steadfast even against the tears of pain and wind of doubt. It was the perfect foundation for my new awareness of God.

Next was a lesson in **JUDGMENT**. I loved judgment; it was my constant companion. I judged everyone and everything, never caring about the consequence, until one day when I thought my judgment was especially true and it wasn't. It was a small incident involving a key and a safe deposit box—how could I be so wrong? It shattered my whole ability to judge. If I could be wrong about that small thing, then certainly I

could be really wrong about the bigger things. I realized only God had the know how to judge; He sees things from all angles, from beginning to end, forward and back; and He knows about my lesson with the key.

**HONESTY** was another hurdle for me. People lie all the time, don't they? White lies are a part of life—they make the world go round. I was pretty good at lying, too, until I couldn't keep up with it. Lying requires a good memory; it creates spider webs of deception that can snare you at any time. Honesty became a much better choice; it eliminated the stress lying caused in my daily experiences. Now, my honesty is a treasure; I keep it close to my heart. I share it with myself, God, and others if they ask for it.

Then **KINDNESS** crept into my life. I didn't really notice the benefits of at first—you do a few nice things and suddenly you feel a sense of appreciation from those

you served. You can't decide for sure if you're just helping for the admiration; it seemed a little selfish. What I learned about kindness is when it becomes a way of life, the recognition from others is small in comparison to great changes in your well-being. I dare say you cannot stay in a state of anger, sadness, or depression when you practice kindness. I've decided one of God's greatest inventions is kindness.

As I made my way to the finish line in my relationship with God, I discovered **JOY**. Joy is the most important aspect of life. It reinforces your connection with all that is divine. Every moment becomes a rediscovery of the blessings found when living with God in joy. Joy inspires, enlightens, and vibrates from the inside out; its mere presence awakens the soul.

Love,

*Julie Perreault*

*From the Bereavement Coordinator:*

I love this time of year because we get to go inside ... literally and figuratively. Being inside can be tough territory especially if you are grieving. If you or someone you know would like to take part in our **HOLIDAY DROP-IN BEREAVEMENT SESSIONS**, please come. You do not need to register ... you can come to one or all three sessions.

The dates are Wednesdays, December 8, 15, and 22.

Time is 6:30—8:00 pm

Location is Conference Room #1 in the basement of the Medical Office Building, 16 Hospital Drive (close to the Hospice Office)

Remember to be good to yourself and to remember those who may need extra support through these holiday times.



Be well,

Níkkí Hopewill



It is time to think about the dark nights of December and a very special way to lighten the darkness.

Hospice of York offers you a way to brighten the holidays. You may sponsor a **LIGHT TO REMEMBER** shining on a tree in the towns of Eliot, York, South Berwick, Ogunquit, Wells, or York. The **LIGHTS** are to remember loved ones who have died or to honor the life being lived by someone special, and are \$5.00 apiece.

The trees will be lit from December 1—December 31, and requests will be accepted through December.



### HARVESTFEST 2010

We want to thank a lot of people for their part in our Harvestfest success.

First: huge thanks go to the folks that bought tickets for our raffle. The winners are **Jean Frisbee** and **Michelle Wilson**. Our congratulations to them!

Second: big thanks to the Hospice Volunteers who held fast against the howling winds to sell all those tickets. **Jackie, Kathy & Joe** you did a great job!

Third: our sincere thanks to those merchants who donated gift certificates & items to make up the raffle. They are: **The Meat House, Guac-n-Roll Burrito Grill & Cantina, The Stolen Menu Café, Terra Cotta Pasta Co., Stonewall Kitchen, Noel's Café & Coffee House, Yummies Candy & Nuts, Fogarty's Restaurant & Bakery, The Bagel Basket Café & Coffee House, The Atlantic House & Blue Sky on York Beach Restaurant.**

Fourth: we had a surprise donation from **Holly Piche, who donated the proceeds from her Pony rides to Hospice. Thank you so much, Holly!**

Lastly, we can never thank enough the talented kids from **Berwick Academy** who filled in for our crew and painted faces for us. You are a wonderful bunch of kids who do yourselves & your school proud.

Working together, all these wonderful folks made a grand total of \$885.75 for Hospice of York!

### **YOU ARE INVITED TO HOSPICE OF YORK'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY!**

TUES. NOVEMBER 30TH

REGATTA ROOM, ELIOT

5:00 pm DRINKS, 6:00 pm DINNER

(cash bar)

COST IS \$15.00

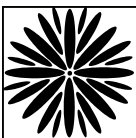
(please pay ahead if possible)

FOLLOWING DINNER WILL BE THE YANKEE SWAP

(GIFTS NOT TO EXCEED \$10.00 PLEASE)

RSVP (363-7000) NO LATER THAN

FRIDAY, NOV. 27 AT 3:00 PM



### Please come to HOSPICE OF YORK'S ANNUAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

A very special time to remember those we have loved and lost.

York's First Parish Church, 180 York Street  
Sunday, November 21 at 3:00 pm

There will be music, a candle lighting, and multi-cultural readings.

Come, bring family and friends, and share together.

Light refreshments will follow.

(Questions? Call Hospice of York at 363-7000)



The 2010 ANNUAL MHC RETREAT was a great time for all 13 folks who went from Hospice of York. Everyone went to workshops, enjoyed the extra events, laughed at the Loose Leaf Talent Show, and enjoyed the company of the other 70+ people attending from all over the state.

The Retreat Team asked the question: "How would you feel to have the Retreat at the end of September?" Sugarloaf asked if we would be interested in that change; they commented on the better leaf color, the ability to ride the chair lift, get a thrill on their zip line & not to have to bring winter coats. The decision will be forthcoming ... stay tuned!



A Big Thank-you to DAISY JANE'S in York Village for opening their doors to us on Tuesday November 16 for an evening filled with SHOPPING and FUN, and donating 15% from the evening's sales to Hospice of York. Big thanks also go out to Lynne Tocci, who coordinated this event for us!



### **UPCOMING EDUCATIONAL EVENT:**

Wednesday, Dec. 8, 6:30—8:30 pm

York Public Library

#### ***"The Place of Prayer in the Hospice Volunteer's Practice"***

We hear a lot about prayer but what do each of us mean when we use that word. Is it thanks, is it an ask, is it quiet meditation? How and when is prayer helpful, or not, in our hospice practice? It is certainly a ripe topic for conversation. Rev. Brad Hirst will help facilitate this non-denominational, thoughtful discussion.



I'm so happy to share with you all that Barbara Perkins wandered into the office the other day looking terrific. As you may recall, it was not that long ago that we were on stand-by to do Hospice for her and now she is out and about. Barbara shared with me that thought she doesn't feel quite back to "her normal" she is still maintaining her "boss-standing" within her family. It was wonderful to know she was out and about, running errands, and sharing her wonderful smile.



*New Board Member Lisa Aubin has volunteered to serve in three positions: Fund Raising Chairperson, Website Coordinator, and Photographer. Thanks for stepping up, Lisa!*

As anyone who works with dementia patients knows, we caregivers are often mistaken for someone else ... or not remembered at all. I have walked up to a patient for the first time, and had him or her greet me as a lifelong friend; I have also reintroduced myself to a patient on a daily basis for months. That's just the way it is—but my experience one particular day was an honor and privilege that I will long remember.

I had visited Paul for several weeks. His verbal ability was limited; usually, I'd get "word salad" or inappropriate answers. Sometimes he could get across what he wished to talk to me about, but usually not using the correct words. He usually seemed to recognize me, although he didn't know exactly who I was.

One day as I approached him, his face broke into a huge grin and he expressed that he hadn't seen me in such a long time. As he sat down so we could visit, he carefully parked his walker next to his chair. To my amazement, Paul began to carry on a coherent conversation. He was able to tell me what he had for breakfast and that everyone in the place kept reminding him to use his walker.

His speech was clear, understandable, and made sense. He related that he had hit a rough spell a couple of weeks ago—a series of falls had occurred around that time—but he was doing well right now. As we talked, he smiled and laughed and I accomplished my "nurse stuff". As I finished my assessment, I knelt down beside his chair and put my hand on his. I asked if there was anything else I could do for him today. That is when the transformation began.

Paul took my hand in both of his and said, "No, it's nice just to be able to sit here and hold hands for awhile." Slowly, tears began to well up in his eyes and he remarked, "You have never asked how old I am, and I have never told you. I'm 91." As he then began to cry, he said to me, "There's still so much left to see." We just stayed like that for a while, letting him release the tears and speaking gently. As he cried, he lifted my hand and softly kissed it. When he looked at me again, his eyes were different, and I knew it was not me that he was looking at.

"You don't know the real me, and I will never let you. I want you to stay just as sweet and dear as you are. I don't want to hurt you." His tears were running freely down his cheeks as he added, "You are the only one that could ever have made me cry." He spoke other words—words of one who was having to say goodbye to perhaps the love of his life. It was my hand he held, but it was not my face he saw. It was that of his lost love.

I was honored to be present and be an instrument—that conduit—as he told his love those things he needed to say. Maybe it helped him achieve some closure that was long overdue. Gradually his tears subsided, and I was able to get him redirected. It was hard to leave him since I knew he was seeing in me his special lady, not his hospice nurse, and watching her slowly back away. I told him I would be back. He told me he didn't think he'd be there.

When I left Paul, I visited another patient at this facility and then sat at the end of the hallway to complete a chart. As I sat there, Paul shuffled by with his walker, glancing at me with no indication of recognition. The brief window of communication had closed; in a way, he was not there any longer, and that presence of mind had gone.

People have often asked me over the years how I could do hospice work—being around death and dying, tending to those with terminal illnesses, it must be so taxing, and so on. My answer to them has always been the same: How can I not?

(Note: The patient's name in this article has been changed for confidentiality purposes.)

Written by Jacque Panza, RN, OCN, CHPN, in CARING magazine, June 2010

"Live every day as if it is your last chance to make someone happy." ~ unknown





A BIG "THANK YOU" TO  
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*Your donation is greatly appreciated!*

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