



Hospice Currents

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HOSPICE DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

by Charlene Thurston, RN, ANP

The past year has been one in which we've continued to offer our long-standing services, while continuing to expand our offerings to help fill some of the gaps in healthcare services for Nantucket residents. In addition to providing our full, traditional hospice services to 32 patients & families, we have provided counseling to approximately 45 additional clients, and, through our new Caregivers' Connections Program, have provided education, counseling, and support to 65 family caregivers of persons with chronic (not necessarily life threatening) illness or disabilities. We've also expanded our volunteer services, through a training program last fall, in order to provide practical assistance, companionship, and respite breaks for family caregivers.

Increasing opportunities for education for both the professional healthcare community and the public at large, continues to be a major goal for us. Last fall, we again participated with the Nantucket Institute for Spirituality & Health in sponsoring its annual conference. We also sponsored the Annual Bereavement Teleconference in April, which focused on the grief of having a loved one with Alzheimer's Disease. Additionally, over the past year, we've invited several members of the staffs of other departments and organizations to attend both on-island and off-island workshops related to end of life care, and supported their attendance through our Hospice Foundation.

Reaching across the water to acknowledge the desperate struggle of the people in Africa who are dealing with unbearable suffering with the AIDS epidemic has been an endeavor which seems crucial to address. We are pleased to have joined the national effort in a small way, thus far, by raising \$1900 for this cause at our Dreamcatcher Auction this year, money

Letter from the President - 2004

On September 10th the twentieth year of the Hospice Care of Nantucket Foundation came to an end at our Annual Meeting.

Along with our regular business, we elected two new Trustees to the Board and I am very pleased to welcome Nancy Chase and Geoffrey Silva. I look forward to their participation in the years to come and know that they will be a great asset to the Board. And, of course, we also said farewell to two of our current Trustees: Martha Butler and Dr. Les Ottinger. On behalf of the Board of Trustees I would like to thank them for their dedication and contribution to the Foundation over the years.

On the financial side, we have had a very successful year – despite the rather uncertain financial climate. Our Treasurer, Gene Collatz, reported that fiscal year 2003 was an excellent year for Hospice thanks to the funds donated through memorial gifts, our annual appeal and our Dreamcatcher Dinner and Auction. He pointed out that 88% of the expenses of Hospice accrue to the patients, reflecting a very efficient organization.

After the business part of our meeting, we all enjoyed hearing from our guest speaker, Judith Oliver, MA, MS, NCC Director of The Children's Room, Center for Grieving Children and Teenagers in Arlington, Massachusetts and look forward to collaborating with other community organizations in addressing the needs of grieving children in Nantucket.

In June, our 11th Dreamcatcher Dinner and Auction was held at the Galley on Cliffside Beach and again it was a great evening – our third year with perfect weather. Thanks to all of the volunteers from the community as well as our Trustees who helped to make this a tremendous evening for all. I would also like to thank the community – full-time and seasonal – for its continued support of our main fundraising event – not only those who attend but also all of our local businesses who year after year donate many of our wonderful auction items.

One of the traditional highlights of the evening is our auctioneer's own idea for a Memorial Sunset. Rafael asks for donations of \$1000 for the sunset in memory of a loved one and this year 10 bidders donated a total of \$14,000. The generosity and emotion that was expressed by each bidder as they dedicated their donation was wonderful to see and hear.

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which has been directed to Cradock Hospice in South Africa. We look forward to continuing a relationship with them in the future.

Over the coming year, we will continue our work in caregiver support, and we were fortunate to have been chosen to receive a small grant from Elder Services of Cape & Islands, to partially fund an in-home training program for caregivers of persons with Alzheimer's Disease. We also will be evaluating what we might offer to further support the needs of grieving children. And, lastly, we have joined with the Nantucket Institute for Spirituality and Health in co-sponsoring a major 2 day workshop, entitled "Being a Com-

passionate Companion," led by Frank Ostaseski, founder of the Zen Hospice Project in San Francisco. Frank is internationally known and respected as an expert in end of life care, and it is a great privilege for us to have him speak in our community.

We could not conclude this annual report without acknowledging the recent death of Dr. Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, an internationally known pioneer in bringing the plight of the dying to the forefront. Her 1969 landmark book, On Death and Dying, became a standard text in every health profession's curriculum, and her continuous work throughout the years has revolutionized how

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Support for Alzheimer's Caregivers

Hospice Care of Nantucket has been awarded a grant from Elder Services of Cape Cod & the Islands to help fund an Alzheimer's Caregiver's Education program for family caregivers.

While most other hospices usually provide care only to persons with terminal or life-threatening illnesses, Hospice Care of Nantucket continues to broaden its outreach and offers services for many other types of clients as well.

In this new program, education and counseling will be provided in the home to caregivers of persons with Alzheimer's Disease. This consultation will be provided by an Alzheimer's Nurse Specialist who will be able to discuss a range of topics such as, the disease process; individualized instruction on care-giving, with particular attention to nutrition, hygiene, safety, handling difficult behaviors; importance of advance care planning; importance of self care for the caregiver; available resources, etc.

Following the educational sessions with the specialist, ongoing education & support will be available to caregivers through our *Caregivers' Connections Program*, a wellness and support program aimed at providing education, support, and respite for family caregivers of persons with any chronic illness or disability. In addition to the consultations to families, the Alzheimer's Nurse Specialist will also educate professionals in our community to enable us to carry on this service in the future.

Our ultimate goal for this new program is to enable family caregivers of persons with Alzheimer's Disease in Nantucket to feel supported, empowered, and to enjoy optimal well being. All services provided by Hospice Care of Nantucket are free of charge. Caregivers who are interested in arranging for consultation sessions may call the Hospice office at 508-825-8325, or email hospice@ackhosp.org

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the dying are cared for throughout the world. I was truly privileged to have studied with her and her staff for a week's workshop at her farm in Headwaters, Va. several years ago, one of the most profound experiences any of us who participated had ever had. She will be sorely missed.

As always, we express our sincere gratitude and respect for the patients, families, and colleagues with whom we work, and again thank the Foundation for all it does to support and fund our hospice program.

Charlene Thurston

Visit our website @
www.hospiceofnantucket.org

Private Home Assisted Living

Representatives from Cape Cod Hospital's *Family Care Program* and several of Nantucket community agencies have recently met to plan extending that program's resources to the island.

The Family Care Program offers assisted living in private homes of carefully screened caregivers for adults with chronic health problems that interfere with their ability to live alone. The program's experienced clinical staff of Social Workers and nurses screen, match, supervise, and support the caregivers and the participants. Provider families receive a daily stipend to cover expenses and for the care they provide.

This successful award winning program has been bringing people together for over 27 years, is used as a model in other states, and has been described by Tom Brokaw as "a solution that works". Participants become an integral part of a caring household with a surrogate family, which often serves as a "port in a storm" enabling adults to adjust to changed circumstances.

If you or someone you know could benefit from this program, or if you are interested in becoming a provider family, please call NCH Social Services 508-825-8195

Children's Grief Support

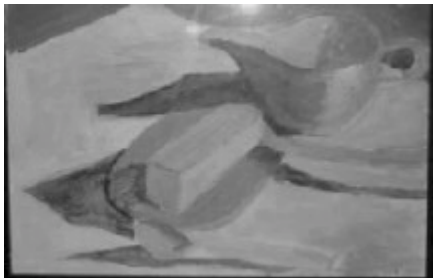
Developing a program in Nantucket to help support children in grief has long been a goal of ours at Hospice Care of Nantucket, and this year's Annual Meeting Speaker, Judith Oliver, was invited to share "The Children's Room" model of care with our board, staff, and invited guests.

The Children's Room, in Arlington, Mass., is a very successful support center for grieving children and teens, and Judy's presentation sparked much enthusiasm among meeting participants, which included counselors invited from Nantucket Behavioral Health Services and the Nantucket Public Schools. Plans are now underway to collaborate on developing a program for Nantucket's youth, based on The Children's Room model. Anyone interested in learning more about this project or in joining the effort is invited to call us at Hospice.

The Power of Art Therapy

The healing effects of the creative and expressive therapies have been well known by those who've utilized them instinctively, but are becoming much more widely appreciated by mainstream healthcare organizations. Art therapists are now frequently included on the staffs of hospitals, nursing homes, counseling programs, and hospices. Having long had an interest in the use of such therapies, we have recently begun exploring opportunities for patients we serve.

During this past year, we were fortunate to have met Mary Filingeri, a certified art therapist with a private practice in Nantucket. When Mary expressed an interest in working with Hospice patients, we suggested she take the Hospice Training Program, which she did, and we've since informed interested patients about her services. Below is an example of the what can happen when we dare to try things that push us beyond our comfort zones. These paintings were created by John Van Lieu, a Hospice patient who had a brain tumor, and who had never painted before trying art therapy with Mary. The pictures are just two of twelve which were created in weekly sessions over the past 8 months, and are shared with our readers with the express permission of John and his wife, Hildegard. We hope that they encourage others to try using the arts to create and express from the core of their being, a process which connects us to the right side of our brain, from which creativity and soul work emerge.



Upcoming & Ongoing...

November is National Caregivers' Month & National Hospice Month

Tree of Remembrance Service - November 21 at 4 PM in the Jared Coffin House Garden

Caregivers' Connections Group—2nd Thursday Monthly 1:00 PM

Coping with Cancer Support Group - every other Monday, 1-2:30 PM, for persons with cancer and those who love them.

Teleconference: "Ethical Dilemmas at the End of Life" - April 2005

Marla Lamb fundraiser - Mothers' Day Weekend 2005

Hospice Dreamcatcher Dinner & Auction - June 2005

Tree of Remembrance Service



This year's annual memorial service, will be held on Sunday, November 21st, at 4PM, in the gazebo garden of the Jared Coffin House. As we share music and companionship during a brief ceremony, placing scallop shell ornaments with names of those we wish to memorialize on the tree, we find a place, at the start of the holiday season, in which to honor and remember loved ones who've passed on. Following the service, we will gather for refreshments in the Living Room of the Jared Coffin House.

All members of the community are invited to participate in this very special event.

Scallop shell ornaments will be provided, but other weather-proof ornaments are welcome as well. We hope you'll join us.

6th Annual Spirituality & Health Conference

This year's October conference was attended by a large and diverse group of people from on and off island. The 2-day workshop, *Being a Compassionate Companion*, was presented by Frank Ostaseski, founder of the Zen Hospice Project in San Francisco. Honored by the Dalai Lama and featured on the PBS series, *With Eyes Open*, Mr. Ostaseski focused on the mindful and compassionate care of the dying. He shared with attendees his experiences and lessons learned from those who have allowed him to accompany them during this sacred time. The workshop was sponsored by the Nantucket Institute for Spirituality & Health & Hospice Care of Nantucket.

