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March 2022 Volunteer Newsletter



VOLUNTEER ENRICHMENT DAY - March 10, 2022 - *Living in Abundance*

Please mark your calendars and plan to join us for this annual day of honoring all that you bring to your volunteer service and the HVHC community! The day will run from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon (may be tweaked slightly), offered online, and include four program offerings in **two** sessions - so each participant will have the opportunity to attend two program presentations. Tentative topics follow:

Session 1 (Pick only one) 9:15 -10:30 a.m.

- ★ **The Power of the Human-Animal Bond: How Pets Serve** - Join us as we learn from Jesse Haas, National Director of Programs for Pet Partners, a national organization dedicated to demonstrating and promoting the health and wellness benefits of animal-assisted therapy, activities and education. Jesse will be accompanied by a Pet Partners' volunteer who serves those in nursing homes. She will discuss the differences between Service Animals and Emotional Support Animals, and more!
- ★ **Self-Care Bingo** - Play Bingo online with friends while being reminded of many self-care options - includes prizes 🍌 Led by Beverly and Jody.

Session 2 (Pick only one) 10:45 - 12:00 noon

- ★ **Creative Spiritual Self-Care** - Rev. Dr. Bernard Richardson, Northern Light EMMC Spiritual Care Director, will be our guest for this dynamic presentation that will open our minds and hearts to spiritual and self-care options that we don't usually think of.
- ★ **Writing Your Own Obituary** - Many of our volunteers have asked for this session and we hope to provide what you are seeking. Lori Johnson will facilitate a discussion around crafting one's own obituary and ideas will be shared about what stands out to each of you on what you wish to be included in your own obituary.

The day's offerings will also begin and end with a brief large-group presentation/reflection. **Register** for Volunteer Enrichment Day by choosing one program from Session 1 and one from Session 2 and email Beverly at info@hospiceofhancock.org or call the office at 207-667-2531 **by March 3rd** (important date).

Please Mark Your Calendars for these Upcoming HVHC (and other) Events:

- ❖ **March 3 - April 7, Thursdays; Choosing Resilience series (ask FMI about future CR series)**
- ❖ **March 10 - 9 a.m.-12 noon - HVHC Volunteer Enrichment Day (see above)**
- ❖ **March 15 - 5:30-7 p.m. - Death Cafe see pg 3 (In collaboration with the MDI Adult Education Program)**
- ❖ **March 17 Happy St. Patrick's Day!!**

Looking Ahead:

April 4 - 25 (Mondays only, at noon), **Educational Programs**; topics to be announced

May 24 - HFA Annual Conference Presentation, "Living With Grief: Trauma and Loss"

This will be a pre-recorded program that HVHC will present along with our own chosen panel of professionals who will speak and answer questions on the same topic. Register for this virtual program by calling Bev at the office 667-2531 or email info@hospiceofhancock.org.

Attention Patient Care Volunteers:



March MDT Meetings (via zoom)

Tuesday, March 1st at 12 p.m. for Ellsworth

Wednesday, March 2nd at 12 p.m. for MDI

Thursday, March 3rd at 10 a.m. for Blue Hill and Bucksport (combined meeting)

Winter Education Programs Follow-ups: Following is more information on programs presented Jan 31 and Feb 14.

On January 31, 2022 we had an Educational Program on ALS with Laurie McFarren, the Care Services Coordinator for the Northern New England Chapter of ALS Association. If you were not with us that day or would like to watch the program again, please let us know and we can email the link to the recording.

One of our HVHC volunteers, Nancy Wynne, shared some additional information which may be helpful to others who have family or friends with ALS. See below:

Compassionate Care ALS Retreat Center and Sanctuary - The CCALS Heald Center, Education, Retreat and Sanctuary is a place like no other for individuals living with ALS and caregivers alike. Located in West Falmouth, MA and completed in 2019, the Center retains the natural beauty and scenic vistas of the existing landscape to encourage interaction in the form of quiet contemplation, reflection and meditation. For more information go to: <https://ccals.org/retreat/>

Follow-up on Scam Program (Feb 14 program): Here is Russell Patton's (Bangor Savings Bank's Chief Security Officer) link to the Federal Trade Commission's page on all types of Scams:

<https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/features/scam-alerts>

(More Scam resources on next page)

AARP link to scams:

https://www.aarp.org/money/scams-fraud/about-fraud-watch-network/?cmp=KNC-BRD-MC-REALPOSS-GOOGL-SEARCH-FRAUD&gclid=Cj0KCQiAmKiQBhCIARIsAKtSj-n1TEAsw2BnqVIVt8vyb6cRzm9Ej_0Wyh430VXYHFjVs0p8PXhee4aAj7hEALw_wcB&gclsrc=aw.ds

Community Program Offerings

Program on Hearing Loss at Ellsworth Library:

Hearing Loss Get-together where tips and suggestions will be shared. Do you...

- ✓ find that masks make it hard to understand what people are saying?
- ✓ hesitate to let people know you have a hearing challenge?
- ✓ try to hide your hearing aids?
- ✓ pretend to understand what people are saying rather than letting them know you didn't?
- ✓ use strategies to help you hear in difficult hearing situations like restaurants or parties?

If the answer to these questions is YES ...

- We'll share our challenges, and tips for living in a world where we're challenged by our hearing loss.
- Bring your questions and ideas, and together we'll brainstorm

Hearing Loss Evolution

Where: Ellsworth Library, 20 State Street, Ellsworth, ME

When: March 24, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.

Questions: Pat Dobbs: HearingLossEvolution@gmail.com or 973-479-8083

Pathfinders Do you know a child who is grieving? **Pathfinders** is a grief support group for children and their families or caregivers who have experienced the death of a loved one. Upcoming Spring Session will take place via Zoom on Monday evenings, March 7 through May 2, from 6-7 p.m. Participants will need a computer or tablet that can connect to the internet. There is no fee to participate, however we welcome donations to help support and sustain the program. To register and for more information, visit PathfindersMaine.org or contact Jane Cornman, 800-757-3326 or 207-275-2108. You can also email Jane at jcornman@northernlight.org

Death Cafe in collaboration with the MDI Adult Education Program

Death Café provides an opportunity for people, often unknown to others in the group, to gather (virtually) and examine matters surrounding life and death in a relaxed, open, safe atmosphere. There is no agenda, no objectives or themes. Death Café is not a grief support group, but rather a forum for open discussion. For more information on Death Cafes, please visit <https://deathcafe.com/>

On March 15, 5:30 to 7 p.m. Lori Johnson and Jody Wolford-Tucker, both experienced in facilitating Death Cafés, will facilitate the discussion. If you are interested in registering for this free opportunity, click here: <https://mdi.maineadulted.org/course/death-cafe/> Or call MDI Adult Education @ 288-4703.

***“May good luck be your friend in whatever you do
and may trouble be always a stranger to you.” ~Anonymous***

Volunteer Help Wanted: Our **Memory Heart** pin inventory is dwindling and we are looking for individuals who are interested in finishing the hearts that are partially complete (from before the pandemic :-) and possibly making more. If you are interested, you would need to be fully vaccinated, be willing to wear a mask and work in the back sunroom in the HVHC office. Alternatively, you could come to the office and pick up the supplies and work at home at your convenience. Please call Bev at 667-2531 or email info@hospiceofhancock.org if you are interested in helping or need more information.

Library News

Walking Each Other Home, by Ram Daas & Mirabai Bush (Sounds True, 2018)

(Book review by Liz Libby, HVHC volunteer)

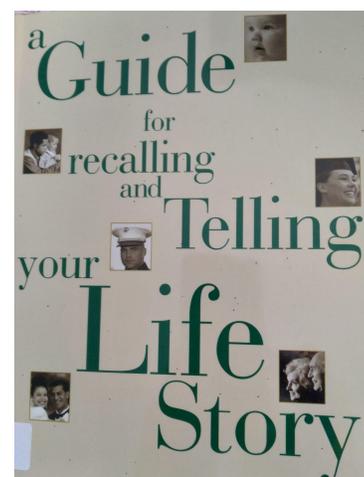
The title of this book is perfect for describing the journey of two inspirational and talented authors and dear friends. Along with their own books, this is the second one they have written together.

They met in Bodh Gaya, India. A tiny, dusty Indian village at the “House of Stillness,” a collection of monk’s cells spread around a main hall. It is here that they meditated in silence during the day. At night, they heard talks on Buddha’s ways and formed a unique relationship through sharing life experiences. One of the threads woven throughout their story is, “To Die Is To Live.” The illustrations, quotes and heartwarming conversations set the background for a peaceful way of seeing life and death.

Other people drop in to Daas’ home and add their beliefs. Mostly it was the two of them sharing times and many experiences together. The book ends with a list of meditations and helpful resources for conscious living, being with the dying and our own deaths.

I highly recommend this book. At times I felt lost in the beginning but once the conversations started, I felt like I was there with them. I was drawn in and felt I was at the table. I was able to reflect on my own experiences with death. Their get-togethers seemed similar to a support group where there was a freedom in sharing. While a lot of it is common sense, there was a unique way of presenting a very difficult subject. They did it with humor, sharing a big part of themselves and the love and respect they had for each other. **Thank you, Liz Libby, for your review!!

Tell Me About You Life Nana In a recent volunteer gathering on Zoom, the topic of this book came up and was recommended. It is a compilation of questions for a person to answer and, thereby leaving a legacy to be treasured. We don’t have this exact book in our HVHC library, but we do have this one, ***A Guide for Recalling and Telling Your Life Story***, developed by Martha Pelaez, Ph.D. and Paul Rothman, which is very similar. There is an extensive introduction, which could be seen as an invitation to enter this reflection process, and prompts and questions to bring out memories and sharing on topics including family, life experiences, growing up and growing older. It is available for checkout, and could help create a fun gift for your family.



Article

Facing Death Together at the Bedside

by Marilyn A. Mendoza Ph.D. January 14, 2018

At some point in our lives, many of us will find ourselves at the deathbed of a loved one. Being there may well be one of the hardest things we will ever do. In our Western culture, we do not openly talk about death and certainly are not given guidance as to what to do when someone you love is dying. What do we do? What do we say? It can be uncomfortable and awkward, but your presence, whether you speak or not, is the greatest gift you can give the dying. Whether you say something or simply hold their hand, your presence is felt.

We tend to treat the dying as though they are not the person we know and love. We avoid them or avoid honest communication with them. There are many misconceptions about what goes on at the deathbed and what we should and should not do.

People have the belief that they should not talk about the illness and impending death because it will upset the dying person and somehow hasten their death. Talking about death is stressful for the family and the loved one but much is missed if the opportunity is lost. Dr. Ira Byock (2004) states that there are four important things to be communicated between the dying and loved ones: "Please forgive me." "I forgive you." "Thank you." And "I love you". I would add to this, "We will be alright." Sometimes the people involved do not want to talk and there are certainly times when nothing needs to be said. It often surprises people that the dying do want to talk about what is happening to them. However, many times, they will not talk about it for fear of upsetting their loved one. Sharing thoughts and feelings at this time can be very therapeutic and healing for all involved.

Certainly not all conversation has to be so intense. There is also a place for talking about things the loved one enjoyed such as sports, movies, television shows, books, sharing stories about family members or asking them to tell stories from their own childhood. Just ask them what they want to talk about. When there is silence, you can stroke their hair, use light cream on their face, hands, or arms. Light kisses are also important. It helps if you can create a calm and peaceful atmosphere for you and your loved one. You can play calm and relaxing music that you know your loved one enjoyed or sing and hum to them. If they are religious, say prayers or sing hymns. This is not the time for you to talk about your problems. Keep family arguments away from them. High drama has no place at the deathbed.

Most of us do not want our loved one to die alone. Families will go to great lengths to see that someone is always by the bedside. However, this belief seems to be born not so much from the feelings of the dying, but out of our own anxiety and fear of death. The truth is that the dying will often wait until there is no one in the room to die. This is something that is commonly seen in hospice and in other facilities where people are dying. It happens frequently enough that it does not seem to be a coincidence. It is as though the dying are protecting their loved ones from seeing them take their last breath. Knowing this can help to decrease the guilt that many feel if they have gotten up to go to the bathroom or to get something to eat and their loved one dies while they are away. I was seeing a woman in outpatient treatment. Her father was dying. They brought him to her home so she could take care of him. A family member was with him literally every minute. He had lived much longer than the doctors had thought he would. One day when she was alone with him, the doorbell rang. She hesitated but had an important package being delivered so she decided to go to the door. She said she was only gone a few minutes. When she returned, her father had died. We cannot control when someone dies. The dying ones are in charge of that.

Joan Halifax (2008) states, “Being with dying often means bearing witness to and accepting the unbearable and the unacceptable.” It can also be the most profound and intimate of all the experiences you may have. Familiarize yourself with what happens at the end of life. There is information available from the web, hospitals, and hospices. If you are sitting vigil with a loved one, be sure you are taking care of yourself as well. It can be exhausting and emotionally draining. Try to adequately hydrate yourself, eat and get rest. If you have a spiritual practice, now would certainly be a good time to engage in it. Just remember that you are giving your loved one the greatest gift you can give by being at their bedside.

References

Byock, Ira (2014). *The Four Things That Matter Most: A Book About Living*- 10th Anniversary Edition. New York. Atria Books-Simon and Schuster.

Halifax, Joan (2008) *Cultivating Fearlessness in the Presence of Death*. Boston: Shambala Publications, Inc.

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What makes us lucky at HVHC?

Our volunteers and how you support our patients, community, staff and organization!

Thank you for making us feel lucky every day!

