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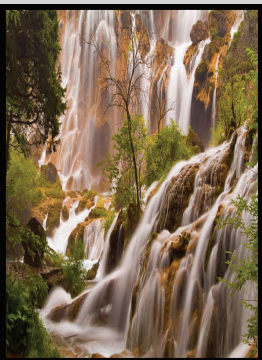
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BRAVE HEART VOLUNTEERS

Compassionate Caregiving, Respite & Education Services

SUMMER 2010

P.O. BOX 6336 * SITKA, ALASKA 99835 * 747-4600



End of Life Training Attendees- from bottom left: Dora Newport, Kate Swanson, Jay Stelzenmuller, Sharyn Ferrick, Bearnear Kimbell, Janice Bushnell, Lori Petersen, Helen Dangel, Willow Moore, Tama Beven, Erika Knox, Kara Knox, Carrie Hisoka, Bill Payton.

Greetings from Brave Heart Volunteers! We've been busy this new year with three trainings. Our 13th and first volunteer training for this year was held in February. A month later, in March, our 8-week End of Life training began. And then somewhere in between, we had a surge of requests from our community of elders in need of assistance. Our volunteer base was stretched to its max. We needed more volunteers! Finally in late May we were able to squeeze in one more Volunteer Orientation and Training. It was the first time Brave Heart Volunteers completed two new volunteer trainings before summertime!

This spurt of growth for elder care is not an uncommon trend across the nation, our state and community. Who's responsible for this surge in growth? The number of adults over the age of 65 in America has increased 11 times since 1900. Right now 1 in 8 Americans is over the age of 65. By 2030, the number of Americans over the age of 65 is predicted to double.

Currently in Alaska, only 6.8% of Alaskans are over the age of 65. Although it is a lower figure than the rest of the U.S. (12.4%), Alaska's over 65 population grew by 50% from 1996-2006. It is believed that it will double by 2020, and triple by 2030. And, although we had the smallest 65+ aged population in the nation, we have the greatest proportion of baby boomer population in the US (32%). The baby boomers are reaching that next level of aging and care, and the limits and solutions are being tested. This is so true here in Sitka, where our demographics veer towards an elder population. All of this means that there are more opportunities than ever to Volunteer!

During the early 2000's, the Alaska Commission on Aging adopted eight guiding principles as a philosophical frame of reference for its work. Four of the principles express the Commission's vision of older Alaskans' quality of life:

1. Seniors will live with dignity and respect and have an opportunity to receive

(Continued on Page 8).



Pictured bottom left to right: Janie Hall, Christie Williams, Carin Adickes, Suzan Brawnlyn, Ruth Culp, Lori Petersen, Rosie Manning, Carol Vorst, Bearnear Kimbell, Jay Stelzenmuller.

OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE COMPASSIONATE HOME-BASED, COMMUNITY-WIDE, VOLUNTEER CARE, VISITING & RESPITE SUPPORT TO THOSE INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES IN NEED.

INTRODUCING, ERIKA KNOX

BOARD MEMBER AND CO-PRESIDENT...



Erika first learned about Brave Heart Volunteers (originally Sitka Faith in Action) from Auriella Hughes, when it was just a new idea and possibility. Erika and Auriella were both potters working in the studio together. Auriella explained she was interested in starting an organization that would assist families dealing with illnesses and end of life care. The services would be available to anyone, no matter what religion or belief system, and would provide them with respite care and compassion and the service would be free. Erika thought it sounded like a great idea, but she just didn't quite understand the need for services like that. Each time she and Auriella met, Auriella would try to deepen her understanding, but Erika said "I still didn't get it."

Then in 2005, Erika's dad was scheduled to have heart by-pass surgery. It seemed like a fairly routine operation so she stayed behind, while her mother accompanied him to Seattle. Following the surgery there were complications. Erika, her husband and son Kobi, immediately flew down to join the rest of the family. Because hospitals and ICU's are focused on the medical care of their patients, families often feel emotionally unsupported. Erika's family struggled to find connections for this void. Erika did not want her dad to end his life this way. Finally, he was moved to a private room before he passed away. Ironically, her dad had been a surgical nurse; the surgical suite at Sitka Community Hospital was dedicated to him. He was respected and admired for his service and comfort he gave to his patients.

It was in these dark moments, Erika remembered Auriella speaking about Sitka Faith in Action, its purpose and mission, and that's when she finally "Got it". The services SFIA had to offer were what she wanted for her Dad. She finally understood why someone being present for an individual who was dying was so important. Someone present with compassion and understanding, to provide respite and words of reassurance to and for the family.

When she returned to Sitka, she was in a deep state of grief. She immediately came to Auriella and SFIA to ask for resources and assistance. She left with videos, books and came back regularly for talks with Auriella. Erika kept asking about grief support group; Auriella said it was in the future but not quite ready yet.

Erika's introduction to Brave Heart Volunteers was a radical one, but it deepened her gratitude for the services it provides. She can not fathom what a community does without something similar to Brave Heart Volunteers, "What do they do without these services?" She has appreciation and admiration for BHV volunteers who sit with our care receivers and volunteer their time. It is the ultimate self-less act.

Erika was asked to join the Brave Heart Volunteer Board in 2008. She is currently Co-President with Ruth Culp. Her focus for Brave Heart Volunteers is for it to be sustainable, with a solid financial footing. Her hope for BHV is to have strong community awareness of its mission and services it provides. She is also focused on BHV's funding whether it is grants or fundraising events. "BHV needs to worry about the people we are serving, not just to try to survive ourselves."

Erika was born and raised in Sitka. She left in 1992-2000 to attend college and explore the rest of the world. Now she and her husband, Peter Weiland, live here with their two boys Kobi, 7 and Anan, 4. Her brother, Kevin, recently moved back to Sitka, and her mother Kara still resides here. Erika's uncle moved to Sitka in 2009 for the summer and then decided to stay. Six months ago, her family moved her grandfather to live here as well. The family decided to do this for the services Sitka provides its elder community, including BHV.

Although she was originally a potter, Erika is now busy with her two boys, her position of Office Manager at Mt. Edgecumbe Preschool and her small business. When she gets a chance she loves to bike, run, garden, and can be found baking and cooking for family and friends. She enjoys adventures outdoors with her family, flies with the herring fishery, brines fish and makes fruit leather for her boys. Erika has a very rich and full life, and she brings this amazing energy to serve on the BHV Board of Directors.

I asked Erika what she loved about Brave Heart Volunteers. She said it was the intimacy that she experienced in the Bereavement Group: her connectedness with others also in this deep grief state, their sharing and bonding through their healing. At Brave Heart Volunteers we are fortunate to have her empathy, vision and energy to serve on our board. Thank you Erika!

Welcome to Our Newest Staff Member and Americorps Volunteer!

Hi, I am Bonnie Cottrell, your new AmeriCorps Volunteer, and I'd like to tell you a little bit about myself. This will be the third time that my husband, Max, and I have lived in Sitka, so when we stepped off the ferry in early June it was like coming home. Seven years ago, in 2003-04, I worked for the adult education program at UAS and Max was a math tutor there. During that year I became involved with Faith In Action and volunteered at the Pioneer Home. Then in 2005 we spent about 6 months working as VIMS at SJC. At that time I was able to go through the End of Life Training, which was so valuable when I returned to Illinois and started working as a Hospice volunteer.

A little about my background: I was an elementary school music teacher for a total of eleven years, I have been a church pianist since high school, and for many years I directed children's choirs. Recently, visiting nursing home residents under Hospice care, I have continued to use music. To give you a glimpse of the volunteer work that I left behind in Illinois, here is the motivational statement that I wrote for the AmeriCorps application.

"Over 40 years ago I went to a nursing home to play the piano for a church service, and that was the beginning of my work with the elderly. Why, so many years later, am I still a nursing home volunteer? Here are some of the reasons. Ruby is blind. She knows the words to almost every song I play, and when she feels up to it, she sings along in a strong, deep voice. Alice is often sleepy, but when she's having a good day we talk, and she smiles. John is usually in the hallway. I shake his hand, and he's glad to see me. Lavina is always sitting at her place at the table, and when I say, "hello" she laughs. Maggie sits beside her husband, and they hold hands watching TV. Mary has a doctorate, and at one time she was a nun. She recommended a book that I'm now reading. Gloria is an artist who, among other things, created a sculpture that stands in Shanghai. She gave me an art lesson last week. Ethyl and Richard were here for several months before Richard died. Ethyl is still grieving. Pauline used to talk, but now she can't seem to find the words. I never know if Nancy will smile and let me hug her or if she'll frown and push me away. Oscar likes to dance. And there is a woman that stands at her door whispering "sh, sh, sh" when I walk by. I don't know her name. Ruby, Alice, John, Lavina, Maggie, Mary, Gloria, Ethyl, Richard, Pauline, Nancy, Oscar, and the woman that stands at her door. These are the residents that I see

every week when I visit the dementia unit. They are the reason that I am a nursing home volunteer."

Other information that might be of interest: Max and I met in college and have been married for almost forty-seven years. We have two children and two grandchildren. We raised our children in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and then lived in Phoenix, AZ for a number of years. Now we live in rural Illinois.

As you can imagine, I am very excited about living in Sitka for another year. I will be doing what I have heard described as my "heart work." To be able to do it in this incredible place – that's a perfect combination!! Or, as my grandchildren would say, "Awesome!!"



4th of July... Was a huge success! Thank you so much to everyone who donated, worked the booth and bought our wonderful, "buttery" crepes. 2010 was the best year yet!





A Heart Connection

By Jude Reis

I was most honored and deeply humbled to witness the passing of a beautiful lady on February 16, 2010. It just happened I had skipped my exercise class that day and was home resting when Willow called from Brave Heart Volunteers to ask if I could sit with an End of Life recipient (we'll call her "Beth") for a while at the Pioneers' Home. I ended-up being with her for the hour of sunset over Sitka Sound as she lay quietly in her bed, breathing steadily.

After I arrived, the other volunteer left. When I introduced myself to Beth, her eyelids flickered, and I knew she realized my presence. I sat next to her bed and read the sweet, beautiful blessings of different traditions from a book that had been left by her bedside and sensed that she was hearing all the lovely, reassuring words. I think she liked it when I sang "Just a spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down" and "Swing low, Sweet Chariot" from the book. Sometimes, I would hear a tiny moan from her, but when I gently stroked her hair, she grew peaceful again. Toward the end of my hour there, I thanked her for the many things she had given me during our time together. When she made a sound with great effort and feeling, I said, "You're welcome", because I knew she had thanked me in the best way she could. I had other commitments that evening and didn't want to leave her, so I was very grateful when Fr. Gordon Blue walked in just then and was ready to sit with her awhile.

When my meeting was over, I really wanted to go home, but I'd told Beth I would return.

When I entered her darkened room, it was quieter than it had been earlier, and no one else was around. I sat down silently next to Beth and watched her, as I wasn't sure what else to do. I had never had an experience with another human being so close to death. To my relief, Patti, one of the night nurses, entered the room and turned on a back light to check on how Beth was doing. She sat on Beth's bed while we chatted and got to know each other. When we heard a small sigh from Beth, we gathered near her, and I stroked her cool forehead while Patti checked her pulse. Then she was still, and we knew she had passed peacefully. I could see one tiny last tear coming from the corner of Beth's eye, as my own mingled with hers. Jeff, the other night nurse who had been involved with Beth and her family through the whole process, came into the room to make the final determinations. We called Beth's daughter in Anchorage then and all talked with her, so that she could share in this moment also. Fr. Blue appeared once again, and the four of us all prayed in a circle around Beth.

Afterward, I walked out on the porch of the Pioneers' Home into the dark and peaceful night. The air was fresh and sweet. I breathed it in deeply and felt this deep connection with Beth, even though I had only just met her a few hours before her passing. Now I want to see the pictures and hear the stories of her life and maybe even meet her family. I think that may just happen-- because I know that we are all truly connected.

Important Dates to Remember

- *July 29, 2010 Bereavement Support Group*
- *August 18, 2010 Caregiver Education and Support Training "Housing Options"*
- *August 21, 2010 —Volunteer Orientation and Training*
- *September 12, 2010 Holland America Raffle Drawing*

The Year of Magical Thinking by Joan Didion

In this insightful and engrossing account, Didion relates her experiences of grief following the sudden and unexpected death of John Gregory Dunne, her husband of over thirty-nine years. On the evening of December 30, 2003, Didion and Dunne return home from visiting their daughter, Quintana, who is in an induced coma at New York's Beth Israel North Hospital. While talking over supper, Dunne slumps in his chair, dying so suddenly that Didion briefly believes him to be joking. In addition to confronting her newfound bereavement, Didion must maintain focus on her daughter's survival and recovery. The day after Dunne's memorial service, which Didion delays until their daughter can attend, Quintana suffers another medical crisis and is once again in a coma.

While the experiences Didion describes in this memoir are tragic, the book is not a 'downer'. She counters the sadness of her topic with injections of deadpan humor and compels the reader with her journalistic investigations into death, grief, and mourning. Indeed, research is one of her primary coping methods—she reminds herself when Quintana is once again in an ICU, "Read, learn, work it up, go to the literature. Information is control." Didion references psychiatric and other texts, some invoking her disdain for their inadequacy and ignorance. She quotes perhaps the most helpful text, "Persons under the shock of genuine affliction are not only upset mentally but are also unbalanced physically. No matter how calm and controlled they seemingly may be, no one can under such circumstances be normal." Emily Post wrote this passage in her 1922 book of etiquette; it is followed by practical step-by-step instruction for the care of the bereaved. Didion notes that Post wrote at a time when death often occurred in the home and mourning was allowed rather than hidden. In modern society, death has been 'professionalized', and grieving is now viewed as self-indulgent.

Another coping mechanism Didion employs is the 'magical thinking' from which the book derives its title. On page 32, she states, "Of course I knew John was dead . . . Yet I was in no way prepared to accept this news as final: there was a level on which I believed that what had happened remained reversible. . . . I needed to be alone so that he could come back." Despite being aware of the illogicality of her thoughts, Didion needs to be alone in their apartment to enable his return, will not give away his shoes because he will need them when he comes back, and cannot let the Los Angeles Times become aware of his death. If they were to publish an obituary, then his death, in her mind, would become final.

One of the most poignant moments of the book is when Didion realizes she has not only lost her husband and their joint memory, but his view of her. "Marriage is not only the passage of time," she states, "but the denial of time. For forty years I saw myself through John's eyes. I did not age. This year for the first time I saw myself through the eyes of others . . . I realized that my image of myself was of someone significantly younger."

Didion has written a treatise that not only engages the reader but also provides a multi-faceted portrayal of grief to which anyone who has lost a loved one will relate. It is masterfully written in a spare yet effective style, laying out facts and observations for the reader's perusal without becoming dry or weighty. Because of the tragic nature of the events at its core, this book may not be the best read for those early in the grieving process. Those further along, however, will find it interesting and may even realize some comfort and shared experience in its honest depiction of grief.

Get Tickets Now! Holland America Raffle to Benefit Brave Heart Volunteers

"Oooooee, baby... won't you take me on a sea cruise"! Yes, it's our Holland America Raffle!... Win a 7 day cruise for 2 with Holland America... or Win a cruise for 2 with Allen Marine Lines, or a round trip water taxi ride. You could win a gift certificate to Ludvig's Bistro or Agave restaurant... or more... but the important thing is to sign up for the Raffle... and better yet help sell Raffle Tickets... All proceeds will go to assist Brave Heart Volunteers with its work to assist families dealing with long term illnesses and End of life transitions. Tickets are \$10.00 each, and are in books of 10. Please lend a hand and help us sell our 1,000 tickets by September 12, 2010. Thank you!



Many Thanks to All Who Contributed

January 1, 2010 to July 31, 2010

Business/Organization Pledges

Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
Allen Marine Tours
ALPS Credit Union
Cadmus Professional Writing Services
First Bank
Law Office of Brita Speck, LLC
Ludvig's Bistro, Inc.
Pioneers of Alaska Igloo #22
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Sitka Lutheran Women of ELCA
Sitka Moose Lodge #1350
Sitka White Elephant Shop
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United Way of Southeast Alaska

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Lenora Notti
Tom Rogers
Rosemary Sheldon-Kalenze
Andrea Thomas

Quarterly Pledges

Patricia Atkinson
Ruth Culp
Carolyn Hammack
Anne Pollnow
Lisa Sadlier-Hart

Annual Pledges

Harriet & Ron McClain
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Lawrence and Patricia Beaber

In Memory Wilma Ash

Pamela Ash

In Memory of Joe Buchholz

Anonymous Donor

In Memory of Betty Caldwell

John and Bobbie Sherrod
Trish White

In Memory of Scott and Kerry Chambers

Mary Chambers
Phyllis and Mark Hackett
Colin Herforth

In Memory of Georgina Dapcevich

Aleeta Bauder
Libby Stortz
Frank and Cathy Sutton

In Memory of Millie Enloe

Margaret Andrews
Marian Blankenship
Larry and MaryAnn Calvin
Fr. Dave and Bonnie Elsensohn
Jean Frank
Auriella Hughes
Virginia Lutz
Mardelle and Cheryl Westover
Whites' Pharmacy

In Memory of Rocky and Betty Gutierrez

Christine and Charles Horan

In Memory of Neil Haavig Jr.

Neland and Joyce Haavig

In Memory of Joseph Anthony Marcello

Jody Smothers Marcello

In Memory of Russell Mills

Monica B. Mills

(Continued from Page 1).

services to promote and enhance their physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional health.

2. Seniors will attain and maintain personal and financial independence at the highest level for as long as possible

3. Seniors will be able to age in place, remaining safe in their own homes, in their chosen communities or regions of the state in the least restrictive setting possible

4. Seniors will remain connected as valued members of their families and communities with opportunities for maximum mutual benefit and harmony between generations.

5. Services will provide satisfaction to seniors and caregivers, and demonstrate positive outcomes in the lives of seniors.

6. Services to seniors will be provided in as culturally relevant a manner as possible.

7. Services will be planned and provided in collaboration with other groups and organizations in order to make maximum use of existing resources while ensuring that seniors receive the range of services they need.

8. Service providers will receive adequate training and professional guidance.

At Brave Heart Volunteers, we are meeting the challenge, not only with our trainings, but with the quality of work and service from our volunteers. Volunteering with the elder population can be one of the most rewarding and enriching experiences of one's life. It can deepen your own understanding and appreciation of our human uniqueness, stories, history and spirit.

The charity that is a trifle to us can be precious to others. —Homer 9th –8th Century B.C.

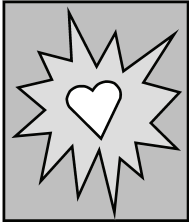
An Exciting Development for Brave Heart Volunteers...

BHV has been offered a generous donation to create a much-needed Endowment Fund. However, we must collect matching funds to receive it. This endowment will ultimately allow Brave Heart Volunteers to be more sustainable, have continuous funding and ensure the viability of our organization. In 2010 our goal is to raise \$5000.00. Raising \$5000.00 is our first step in raising the much larger amount necessary to receive the generous offer.

There are two main ways to assist us in creating BHV's Endowment Fund. One way is to make a donation directly to the fund. A second way to assist us with the Endowment Fund is through planned giving. Planned giving is not only an act of laudable generosity, it is also a way to create a link between us and those who will come after us. This allows us to pass down the values we believe in and acts as a testament to the feelings that were important to us during our lifetime. The most frequently made planned gifts are through your will.

A bequest may provide for a specific dollar gift, a percentage of your estate or specific asset to be given in support of its various programs and endeavors. A bequest may also be in the form of a gift of the remaining assets of one's estate. Planned gifts can provide valuable tax benefits as well.

Please consider donating to Brave Heart Volunteers through our Endowment Fund. With your support we can reach our goal of creating financial sustainability and ensure longevity for Brave Heart Volunteers.



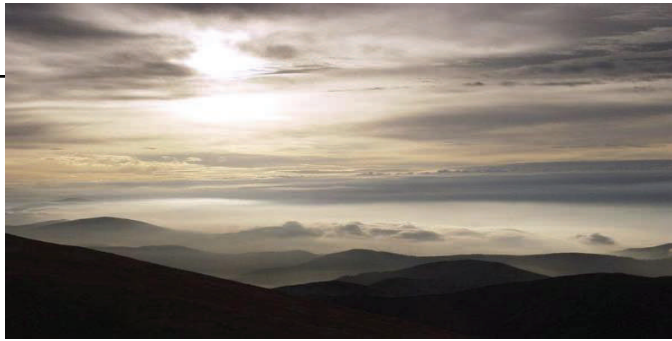
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747-4600

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Manager's House - 2nd Floor
On the Alaska State Pioneers' &
Veterans' Home grounds

Mailing Address
P. O. Box 6336
Sitka, Alaska 99835

Email us at:

willow@braveheartvolunteers.org
suzan@braveheartvolunteers.org

Visit our web site: www.braveheartvolunteers.org

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Many Thanks to All Who Contributed

January 1, 2010 to July 31, 2010 (Continued from Page 6).

In Memory of Milliree Morgan

Anonymous

In Memory of Yvonne Mozee

Nancy Gustavson & Jerry Deppa
Libby Stortz

In Memory of Marc Todd Moats

Jerry Barber
Aleeta Bauder
Linda Hoven
Auriella Hughes
Martina Kurzer
Tom Rogers

In Memory of Betty O'Donnell

Libby Stortz

In Memory of Kavanaugh Horner Raffaele

Heidi and Karla Horner Raffaele

In Memory of Christina M. Russell

Drs. Susan and Robert Carlson

In Memory of Ronald Welsh at Easter

Muriel Reed

In Memory of John and Ruth Westphal

Norm and Barbara Richards

Service of Lunch for Caregiver Education and Support Group

Amy Underhill

Greta Ryan

We'd like to thank these generous people for donating books, cds or dvds to our BHV library

Sharon Cox

Contribution of 20 bowls to the 2009 Brave Heart Bowls event

Marge Steward

Fourth of July Crepe Booth Donations

Val Barkhoffer	Aleeta Bauder
Jean Frank	Amelia Gage
Donna Hebbler	Betty Henning
Highliner Coffee	Suzie Howey
Beverly and Melvin Holmgren	
Kim Hunter	Jill Johnson
Connie LaPerriere	Sheri Mayo
Christine Littlefield	Willow Moore
Jay Stelzenmuller	Fredi Young

Contribution to the Brave Heart Yard Sale July 2010

Anonymous	Wendy Alderson
Aleeta Bauder	Suzan Brawnlyn
Tiffany Bryner	Maria Guthrie
Susan Padilla	

Did we forget something you donated to Brave Heart Volunteers?

Please remind us so we can make record of it



4th of July Crepe Booth Photos



Carin and Carol setting up!



Erika making Crepes



Betty handles BHV's first customers!

Thank you so much everyone! The 2010
Crepe Booth was our most successful
fundraiser yet!