



# Sanctuary



A place to share our grief so that we might heal one another

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## A note from the Chaplain



Do you love exercise? When I was in college a good friend of mine, who was an early bird, suggested that we get up at 6 a.m. on a regular basis to meet for a power walk. Never in a million years would I choose to get up before dawn, but her case was logical—it was healthy and it was the only time that our schedules matched up. Michele was one of my favorite people, so to my surprise I said, "sure."

I grumbled when the alarm clock went off and sneered as I pulled on my clothes in the dark. It would have been better to sleep in. I had to walk ¼ mile from my dorm to even start our "real" walk. When I got there she looked as tired as I did, and she confessed that maybe this wasn't the best plan, but as the sun crept up we found ourselves sharing things we didn't know we needed to share and laughing at the things that were stressing us out. Before we knew it

four miles and an hour had passed and we were planning our next walk. Life and grief can be easier to carry in the company of others who care. We can do things we never would have left to our own initiative and we can find answers that we weren't looking for. The experience of losing a loved one, especially in the early months, can cause us to "cocoon" or stay to oneself because it costs too much to have to be around friends and family that want to see something other than we feel. Cocooning is natural and even necessary for a time, but other safe spaces with people who can listen without agenda or judgment need to be found. My hope is that this Sanctuary will let you read experiences that connect with your own and discover opportunities to be carried by others on a similar path.

*Allison DeLaney,  
Chaplain,*

*Hospice House & Support Care of Williamsburg*

## Annie's Beauty

By Joan Gilkison,

Hospice Volunteer



Miss Annie is the epitome of beauty  
There is an innocence to her nature  
That at 97 brings a smile to everyone's  
Face when they meet  
As I watch her sleeping, so quietly  
All I can see is a Child of God  
Waiting for her turn at Eternity  
Her arms are crossed and lying  
Beautifully across her chest  
As if in prayer  
Like a sleeping Princess  
If I could paint her portrait  
This would be her pose  
Wisdom and Beauty hidden behind  
Every crease on her face  
Brings back memories of Playful Times  
Shuffling down the halls at Hospice  
She is with us now - giving us the chance to  
Say "goodbye"

**To the Beautiful Miss Annie.**

*~ Miss Annie died that evening ~*

## About the Artist

The conte crayon portrait of Miss Annie is by Virginia artist and Hospice House on-call nurse, Sarah Kobezak. Ms. Kobezak writes:

"Above all expressions, I've found the deepest connection to art through my calling to work as a hospice nurse. I have met the most incredible people as patients and family members. I am so respectful of the intimate time in their lives that they have shared with me. Each day that I spend with them, I remind myself just how lucky I am to be a part of their journey. Their faces will always remain with me, some even on paper. I feel the most reward in drawing the elderly, with their beautiful lines and stories in their faces. My most meaningful portraits are those that are done for memorial tributes."

## Music and Hospice

By Kathy Kasley, Music Volunteer



***"Music is one of the ways we make sense of our lives, one of the ways in which we express feelings when we have no words, a way for us to understand things with our hearts when we cannot with our minds."***

***From the Dir. Of Music,  
Boston Conservatory***

Current research is showing that music can be extremely beneficial in a healing environment. Healing can be the restoration, realization and/or maintenance of physical, mental, emotional & spiritual wholeness. And, yes.....healing occurs even for the guests and families in hospice!

Therapeutic healing music benefits the hospice guests by relaxing them and reducing stress, relieving anxiety, affecting respiration and heart rate, reducing muscle tension, stimulating a feeling of well being, providing companionship and a way to release emotions and facilitate the transition process. Since hearing is one of the last things to go, it is a pleasure to provide calm, soothing music for the guests.

Healing music not only benefits the patient but can also help family and friends deal with emotional pain, stress, anxiety, anger and the grieving process.

For the past year and a half, I've been volunteering at Hospice House, playing therapeutic harp music for guests, families and staff. In the hospice environment, I play at about normal heart rate, or slower, because this seems to be more restful, peaceful and relaxing. I usually try to match the guest's breathing rhythm, if I am playing at their bedside. Soft, beautiful melodies, but not necessarily music that would be familiar to the listener, work best, as the person transitioning is detaching from memories and emotions as a natural aspect of the dying process.

The music can have a profound affect, especially on family members who are tense, anxious and worried. In a few instances, the family members began to cry profusely as I played, releasing emotions. Once, in a very quiet, tense room, visitors visibly relaxed with the music, and began to talk to each other and interact with the guest. Almost always, everyone is very appreciative of the music. Any of us who have played music at Hospice House have felt this gratitude, and surely consider it a privilege to play here.

So, "Why music and hospice?" Because, simply, music is healing.



One song can spark a moment  
One flower can wake the dream  
One tree can start a forest  
One bird can herald spring  
One smile begins a friendship  
One handclasp lifts a soul  
One star can guide a ship at sea  
One word can frame the goal  
One vote can change a nation  
One sunbeam lights a room  
One candle wipes out darkness  
One laugh will conquer gloom  
One step must start each journey  
One word must start a prayer  
One hope will raise our spirits  
One touch can show you care  
One voice can speak with wisdom  
One heart can know what's true  
One life can make a difference  
**That difference starts with you.**

*Photo by Bell-Jo Rogers, BSN, Nurse Consultant  
Hospice House & Support Care of Williamsburg*

*Poem submitted by Ursula Murden  
From the book, One, by Dan Zadra & Kobi Yamada, Compendium, Inc., 2010*

## A Gift of Tears

By Joan K. Warnke

Triggered by a song, a word, a thought,  
Or sometimes by nothing at all,  
Those priceless memories come unbidden  
Especially at holiday times they overwhelm me,  
Even as I try so hard to capture the spirit of the sea-  
son.

Perhaps those unstoppable tears are a precious gift,  
And a very dear person is quietly whispering  
In the silence of my heart,  
Yes, I still remember, and yes, I love you too.

## Meditation Group

By Judy Mehegan

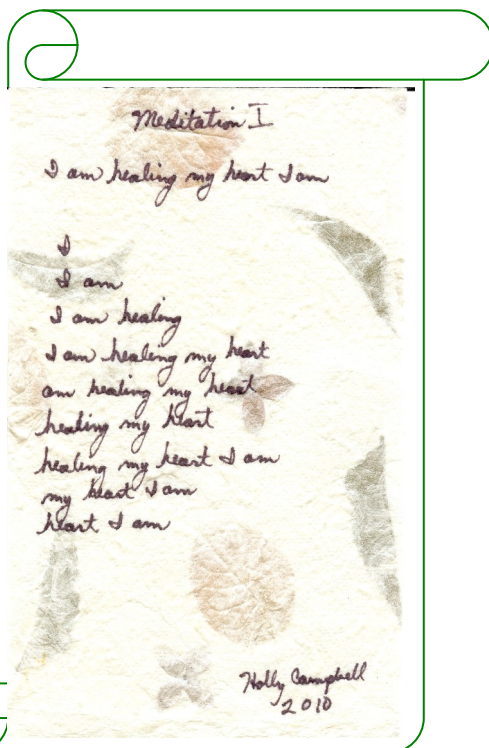
I joined the meditation group looking for a place to go for an hour, a thing to do for an hour. A hope for comfort for an hour. I found these things. I, as many others, have lost my safe haven, my friend, my husband. I wanted to give my sorrow a time-out. I wanted to find a place to rest and to go to find my "new normal."

The meditation group offers a safe haven among people who are totally understanding of wanting to find rest, a time out. I found to my surprise I could be still for an extended period. I still find it very difficult to clear my mind, but I am learning mainly by concentrating on my breathing. I'm crying less, I am calm for short periods of time. I'm hoping to extend that time. It's a learning process that I'm grateful for.

## Meditation I

By Holly Campbell

Hospice House Volunteer



*After my sister's suicide in the spring of 2009, I had a very difficult time falling to sleep. My thoughts would just not slow down. I would often repeat childhood prayers, as well as The Lord's Prayer, over and over again, just to have "better" thoughts. Eventually I would mentally repeat what I wanted to happen in my life. I thought of several meditations. I hoped my desires would sink into my spirit and help bring me comfort. The following is one of those meditations."*

I  
I am  
I am healing  
I am healing my heart  
Am healing my heart  
Healing my heart  
Healing my heart I am  
My heart I am  
Heart I am

## Reflections from Saturday Walks

I recently got the opportunity to sit and have a cup of coffee with Allison Delaney, and she asked me, "Is it what you expected?"

The question was in regard to the Saturday morning group walk. Just over a year ago, I was asked if I would like to take over coordinating the walk by sending out an email, informing people that there was a group that met a little later in the day, and during the weekend. Everyone that walks with us has lost someone very close to them. Most have had a spouse pass on. I had my parents pass when I was younger, and that is what brought me to the group as a volunteer.

As for Allison's question, my answer was a resounding "YES." You see, I wanted to reach out to my community

and meet some new and interesting people. Our town is full of great men and women, and I am pleased to tell you some of the brightest of them are part of our Saturday morning group walk.

I have had the pleasure to meet some very interesting folks from the area. When you meet someone, you may think that they are fun, or smart, but most of the time you never get the chance to hear the back story about the lives behind the stories. I get that chance every Saturday morning. Our group is usually pretty small, between four to ten men and women. The more people, the richer the stories get. We all share our loves, and some of the losses, from our different pasts. The conversations flow like endless intriguing rivers.

You may want to ask, "What are these wonderful tales?" I won't mention any here, but I will invite you to join us, Saturday mornings at 11 a.m., in front of the C. W. Barnes & Noble. We walk for about an hour and then have lunch at anyone of the downtown eateries. It may be the best experience you have on any given Saturday; I know that's how I feel afterwards.

*Paul Haynes  
Saturday Walking Group Leader*



Walking Group  
Photo by Jean Babb

## Compassionate Friends

The Williamsburg Chapter of The Compassionate Friends is part of a national self-help organization for families grieving the loss of a child of any age or circumstance. Parents, grandparents or siblings are welcome at our meetings, where they can share stories of our children and ways of coping in a comfortable environment. Meetings are held at Hospice House on the 2nd Monday, 7-8:30 p.m., of every month.

An annual candlelight remembrance service is held on the second Sunday of December to observe The Compassionate Friend's annual Worldwide Candle Lighting. This year the service will be held on Sunday, December 11th, at 7 p.m. at the Williamsburg United Methodist Church, 500 Jamestown Rd. The public is invited to this ceremony. No reservations are required. For further information, please contact Julie Stanton, 757-258-5166.

## More Than a Walking Group

*Compiled by Bob Fichter & Jean Babb,  
Walking Group Members*

This walking group continues to enjoy walks at CW on Tuesdays, followed by coffee at Aromas, and on Saturdays, followed by lunch. Since the inception of the walking group over two years ago, members recognized that one was more apt to participate in basic activities such as movies etc. if they had others to share the experience. Recently, several of the group have been attending movies at the Kimball Theater on Sunday evenings, followed by dinner at a local restaurant. This has been quite popular with many members.

The Williamsburg Regional Library offers classic movies on the big screen every Thursday -- admission free.

Other recent activities have included dinner in August at the home of one of our members, Rhea Woloszynski, Celtic music at St. Martin's Episcopal Church by a group of young musicians including the granddaughter of Pat Peters, The Peninsula Pops Orchestra at WRL, The Virginia Symphony at the William and Mary amphitheater, the Williamsburg Consort Concert at Warhill High School, and the Theater in the Dark at WRL.

For the third year, several members of the Tuesday walking group participated in the Karene O'Hare Ovarian Cancer Memorial Run. John O'Hare began walking with the group at our very first walk in August of 2009. He began the Hare and Tortoise Walk/Run in honor of his wife Karene and it has grown into quite a popular event. And, several in our group worked as volunteers at the "Gallery Crawl" and CW's Occasion of the Arts weekend.

The group has grown in numbers, and all find solace in being with others who are also working through their personal grieving and enjoy each others company in the many social activities.

If you would like to be added to the contact list please e-mail Jean Babb: [jean-babb@cox.net](mailto:jean-babb@cox.net) or call: 509-0469.

## Meditation for Those in Grief

*By Joyce White,  
Hospice House Volunteer*

On the first Thursday of each month from 5:00 to 6:00 pm, Shomer Zwelling leads a meditation here at Hospice House, geared especially for those who are grieving the death of a loved one. Some are coping with recent loss; others are struggling with unresolved issues related to a more distant loss. The group includes individuals of varying faith groups, who come together to experience the regenerative benefits of meditation. Shomer brings extensive experience leading meditation groups in multiple settings, and we are fortunate to have his wisdom to guide us.

The session usually follows a pattern that includes an initial, voluntary sharing of experiences over the past month followed by a 20-minute period of silence during which participants focus on the breath. At the close of this period, individuals who wish to do so may share new insights gained as a result of the meditation. In addition, participants are sometimes directed to focus for 5-minute periods on a theme, such as what we are thankful for, and then share those thoughts with the group.

Meditation is a way of getting in touch with our inner selves—sometimes referred to as the kingdom of God within. Sustained concentration on the cool inward breath and the warm outward breath allays turmoil, pushes away sad thoughts, and brings a moment of peace. Participants often report that their load of grief lessens as they join with others also seeking solace. This group provides a safe setting in which feelings can be shared with others who fully understand what it means to lose a loved one. In this accepting, non-judgmental atmosphere, those in the depths of grief have an opportunity to work toward renewal.

For more information, call Allison DeLaney at 757-253-1220.



## Recommended Resources

*by Bell-Jo Rogers, BSN, Nurse Consultant,  
Hospice House & Support Care of Williamsburg*

*Grief books are as numerous as our own experiences. Different books will speak to us at different times throughout the grief process. Our grief is very personal but we share many similar emotions and experiences. The first weeks after the death of a loved one, it is often difficult to concentrate on a book. It is often easier at this time to read short articles or pamphlets. We have a number of Care Notes and books in the Library at Hospice House to help during your grief journey. Please feel free to stop in and ask about them.*

**Weaver, Frances.**  
**The Girls with Grandmother Faces.**  
New York, NY: Hyperon, 1996.



This is one of those books we recommend as you begin to ask yourself the question, "What will the rest of my life be all about?" Frances, a mother of four, became a widow at the age of 55. Her book is all about the choices **we** make. She uses humor and common sense in her approach to life. She talks about friends, travel, family, support, and living alone. It is done with an up-

beat outlook. She says:

"Widows are not sick. We just need a sense of direction, a way to get rolling again in this new phase of our lives."

In this book, Frances show how she was able to "get rolling" and she gives suggestions on how we may do the same.

*In Loving Memory  
Richard Oropeza, Jr.  
1949-2011*

*I'd like the memory of me to be a  
happy one,  
I'd like to leave an echo whisper-  
ing softly down the ways,  
Of happy times and laughing  
times and bright and sunny days.  
I'd like the tears of those who  
grieve, to dry before the sun of  
Happy memories that I leave  
when life is done.*

*Helen Lowrie Marshall*




Richard Oropeza, Jr.


*"No one wants to die. Even people who want to go to heaven don't want to die to get there. And yet death is the destination we all share. No one has ever escaped it."*

Steve Jobs, CEO  
Apple Computer & Pixar  
Animation Studios  
Stanford University Com-  
mencement  
June 12, 2005

# Williamsburg Bereavement Resources

Group	Start Date	Description	Contact
<b>Compassionate Friends</b>	2nd Monday of the month, 7-8:30 p.m.	Monthly support group for parents who have lost a child.	Julie Stanton 757-258-5166
<b>Walking Towards Hope</b>	Every Tuesday, 7:30 a.m., Saturday, 11 a.m. Usually meet in CW, but call ahead to confirm. Regular Sunday night movies/dinner.	Ongoing informal group to meet others who are finding life despite loss. Need not walk to join!	Jean Babb 509-0469 or Allison DeLaney 757-206-1177
<b>Life with Grief</b> (Drop-in Group)	4th Tuesday of the month, 3:30-5 p.m.	Monthly drop-in support group for bereaved. A mix of information and sharing.	Allison DeLaney 757-206-1177 allysimone@hotmail.com
<b>Meditation Group</b>	1st Thursday of the month, 5-6 p.m. at Hospice House.	No experience necessary, just an openness to learning how to quiet the mind. Instructor: Shomer Zwelling	Allison DeLaney 757-206-1177 allysimone@hotmail.com
<b>Williamsburg Hospice House &amp; Support Care Bereavement Workshop</b>	Begins again in January 2012 	6 sessions. Meets every other week. <u>Registration required</u> . Focused resources and conversation on finding meaning through grief.	Allison DeLaney 757-206-1177 allysimone@hotmail.com

To access this on the web: [williamsburghospice.org/News](http://williamsburghospice.org/News)



**HOSPICE HOUSE**  
*and Support Care of Williamsburg*



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