



Hope Grows Newsletter

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**Issue 1
Winter 2014**

From the Hope Grows Garden...



On behalf of all of us at Hope Grows, I would like to wish you a happy New Year. As we put the gardens to bed for the final season before winter set in and rescued the salvageable plants for rebirth in the green house, I reminisced over the past year's growth towards the mission of Hope Grows. 2013 was a blossoming year: Hope Grows was successful in planting a strong root system organizationally,

implemented two programs, Life After Caregiving and Short Break, and held its first fundraiser, Hike for Hope.

On a monthly basis, our new programs are serving on average 25 people, while many individuals have made a difference in helping to plant the seeds of hope. Our board members, staff, volunteers, interns, and donors have and continue to make a collective contribution in reaching the population we serve.

The New Year promises to be exciting as we continue to cultivate growth moving into the Spring planting season with ongoing awareness, programs, and zoning approval for the Hope House while expanding the healing and restorative gardens. We will continue to establish relationships with the communities able and willing to help with our sustainability. Creating initiatives that will insure respite for the caregiver and to cultivate ways for caregivers to cope with the challenges and demands of their role will be at the forefront of cultivation this spring. Here's to strengthening faith so that hope can grow.

Sincerely,

Lisa Story
Executive Director

Hope Grows in the Community...

Upcoming Activities

- Hope Grows is planning an educational tea fundraiser for end of May/early June 2014.
- Caregiver Story Campaign to launch in April. (See newsletter for details.)
- Watch for further development of the Caregiver Focus Groups. Check the website for updates.
- 2nd Annual 'Hike for Hope' tentatively scheduled for October 12, 2014.

Check for updates on
www.hopegrows.net

Founded in 2010, Hope Grows is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization with the mission to restore the lives of those impacted by the role of caregiver and to inspire wellness of mind, body, and spirit through the use of counseling, overnight retreats, education, supportive services and healing and restorative gardens.

All donations are tax deductible to the full extent as allowed by law.

In nature, what is the purpose of winter?

The purpose of winter is subjective. It can merely be the survival of the fittest when it comes to the animal world. For certain plants it provides a time of rest, for other plants it is a time of death. For some people winter can be a time of rest, searching for meaning and re-evaluating one's purpose. For some, it can be frustration and a test of patience and tolerance. Trees lose their leaves, plants go dormant, except the Evergreens which stay bright and strong.

So, what is the soul purpose of winter? Perhaps it is just merely growing hope!



Featured Story...Hope Grows in the News

(printed in the Pgh Post-Gazette West edition Nov 4, 2013)

Caregivers for the chronically and terminally ill rarely get a break. Many are also caring for families and working full-time jobs. And all the attention is usually on the person who is ill. That can exhaust and stress the caregiver. Even worse, when they lose their loved one, they suffer from bereavement and the loss of that caregiver role.

Lisa Story, a spiritual and bereavement counselor in the hospice care field, has seen it first hand. She also knows about losing a loved one.

When her father, Raymond Werwie, died of pancreatic cancer in 2005, it was a difficult time for her.

"I really struggled with his death. It was the second parent that I had lost and I was lost," she said.

Mrs. Story's father was an avid gardener and had passed on this passion to her.

In her grief, she turned to gardening.

"I found it to be so therapeutic. The process of planting and caring for the garden brought me so much peace," she said.

Mrs. Story, 50, who lives in Moon, was working on her bachelor's degree in psychology at Chatham University at the time and started thinking about a career in therapeutic horticulture.

"I thought I had discovered something new -- then when I researched it, I found out there were whole degrees in it," she said.

*"The first thing I
thought of was
'hope grows'"*

After she graduated from Chatham, she began her graduate studies in counseling and also studied and received certification in the Horticulture Therapy Institute through the University of Colorado.

"I was thinking that I would want to be a horticultural therapist at the time," she said.

Instead, Mrs. Story began working in the hospice field, but still kept the idea in her mind.

Still working through the grief of losing her parents, Mrs. Story said she would often "talk" to her late

father and mother, Betty Jane, asking them for advice.

"I asked them, what should I be doing with my knowledge and interest," Mrs. Story said.

Mrs. Story said she would often dream of her parents and wake up sad, but one night, she dreamt of her father and woke up happy.

"The first thing I thought of was 'hope grows,'" she said.

It was also a good name for the idea that was growing in her mind -- starting a nonprofit to help people grieve, particularly those who had been caregivers.

"It took me a couple of years to put it all together...," she said.

Hope Grows received 501(c)(3) nonprofit status in late 2012. The mission, Mrs. Story said, is to provide counseling, support and retreats for those going through bereavement, especially caregivers....

Seasonal Feature

In the season...

The beauty of the poinsettias continue as we watch the Christmas Cacti drop their last bloom, the true dormancy of the winter season is setting in. The celebrations of the holiday are just behind us as we settle in and answer the knock on the door of life's garden. I try to push back the melancholy of inactivity and activate my senses. I look out at the snowy terrain as I see the evergreen so beautifully holding the snow. I listen to the birds singing as they flutter and eat at the bird feeder. I open the door and smell the crisp morning air with the cold chill on my skin and I tell myself this rest is necessary for new growth. Anticipation of spring occurs as I tend to my houseplants, a time to plan for the spring growth. I reach for the garden books, the seed catalogs, and look for a garden to visit. Then I rub my hand on the Rosemary plant and breathe in the fragrance and reminisce...



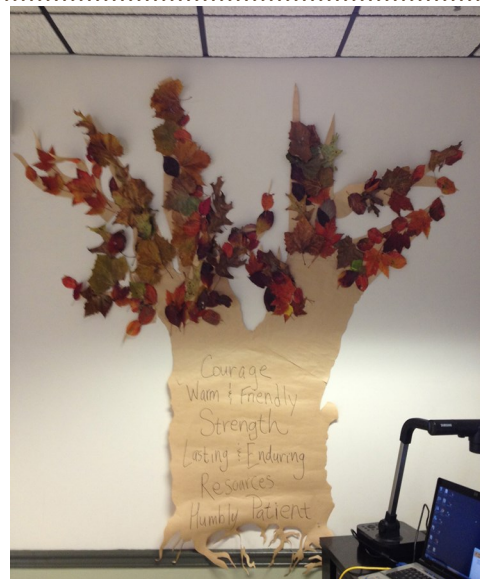
Get some Rosemary (fresh or a plant) from the grocery store and breathe in the fragrance. If your lucky, you will know someone with a plant, ask for a cutting and root your own. Herbs are known to provide natural healing and carry therapeutic elements. The history of Rosemary has been known to assist with memory, bring a sense of overall wellbeing, boost energy and soothe the nerves. Rosemary has been known to relieve headaches, muscle and joint pain, and stimulate the liver. Rosemary always gives me a sense of being content while providing an uplifting feeling. I like to use fresh Rosemary in cooking, sprinkle fresh on roasted veggies, oven fries or over a chopped fresh salad. Whatever your preference with Rosemary, seek a medicinal herbalist if using for therapeutic healing.

Caregiver Tips

Accept help, set goals and get connected with support!

Baptist Homes - The Intertwined Root (Mt. Lebanon)

In October, the residents learned about the tree's root system during the dormancy of winter while learning coping skills for their own healthy root system. Residents worked in teams to create branches for their tree, which was assembled and displayed on the wall of the activity room. The activity department became inspired to incorporate some of the lessons for their Christmas tree project. The lessons Hope Grows brings to Baptist Homes consist of plant and life lessons along with hands on involvement that follows a social/wellness program/model.



Hope Grows provides monthly horticultural therapy activities for the residents of Baptist Homes. The 'Short Break' Program consists of Hope Grows bringing their 'classroom' to your facility while the professional caregivers take a short break. Horticultural therapy is the process of using plants, gardening, and the closeness we all feel towards nature to cultivate a sense of wellbeing by utilizing a therapeutic/medical, social/wellness, and/or vocational/rehab program/model. Contact info@hopegrows.net to inquire how the short-break program can be implemented at your facility.



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Thank you...to everyone who participated in the Hike for Hope, the 1st fundraiser for the organization. Hikers, Donors, and Volunteers helped to raise \$3500.00. Special thanks to the RMU Undergraduate Psych Club students and mentor, Dr. Samantha Monda for your 'early' morning start of volunteer support. Thank you to the following company sponsors, Magee Plastics Company and John Paul Piccolo, D.M.D.

Consider Supporting the Hope Grows General Funds & Sponsoring a Caregiver

Give online at www.hopegrows.net or by mail to have an impact on the lives of caregivers.

Levels of Donations:

Hope Level	\$1,000 +
Almond Level	\$500 +
Respite Level	\$250 +
Compassion Level	\$100 +
Garden Level	\$50 +

Wish List...

- Call for Volunteers
- Mailing Supplies
- All Purpose Soil
- Office Color Copier
- (labels and seals)
- Paper Cutter
- Laptop Computer

If you would prefer our e-newsletter, go to info@hopegrows.net and send us your email address.

Caregiver Story Campaign...

(To launch in April)

Caregivers and friends/family of caregivers.

Time to get your pens out and submit your personal caregiver story of strength, hope and courage. Contact info@hopegrows.net for more information regarding submission of your caregiver story and to be entered into a quarterly drawing for a respite weekend.

The snow lying on the dormant plant outside, take notice! for... "There are moments when all anxiety and stated toil are becalmed in the infinite leisure and response of nature."

-Henry David Thoreau