



# CONNECTION

A Monthly Newsletter to Keep Our Volunteers & Bereaved Connected

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## THIS MONTH'S CONNECT EVENT

### *Martha's Place*

Sommerset Shopping Center  
7798 Atlanta Highway



Thursday, January 15th  
11:30 AM

(Will leave from Hospice at 11:10 if you need a ride)

Please let us know if you plan to attend so you can be added to count.  
Call Clara at 271-4924

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Happy Birthday!

Meg Burritt 1/18  
Bobbie Roland 1/20  
Deborah Beard 1/28



### ***DO YOU KNOW WHY BLACK-EYED PEAS ARE LUCKY ON NEW YEAR'S DAY ?***

Black-eyed peas are perhaps the most well-known New Year's Day dish in the South.

The origins of the black-eyed pea itself date back to prehistoric times. The pea, which is technically a bean and not a pea, is believed to have been domesticated in Africa 5,000 years ago. Later, the beans reached the Americas via slave ships. The beans were utilized as food for enslaved passengers aboard the ships.

One of the earliest records of black-eyed peas being planted in colonial times in the United States dates back to the early 1700s in the Carolinas. Black-eyed pea plants were often planted along the border of fields to enrich the soil with nitrogen. Cattle could also graze on the plant stem and vine, leading to the alternative names of field peas and cow peas for the plant. Eating black-eyed peas on the first day of the year is believed to bring good luck in the coming year. Although exactly how the black-eyed pea became associated with good luck and prosperity is in question, it is believed that the tradition began during the Civil War. (continue page two)

*Volunteer Opportunities***Let Clara Know If You Can Help****Two Volunteers Needed Immediately**

To prepare a couple of individual dinners that can be frozen for the spouse of one of our patients.

The patients does not eat solid food and the spouse has recently broken her hip.

We will be taking food and visiting spouse twice a month. The aides can also deliver foods .

**Thursday, January 22  
Community Service Project**

BINGO  
(FACILITY TBA)

10:00 –11:00  
Leave from Hospice at 9:30

Volunteers needed to help collect prizes, wrap prizes, and to prepare refreshments.

**Week of January 26 – 29****SOUP MAKING**

Volunteers needed to pickup containers from Hospice and prepare 2-4 containers of soup.

Frozen Soups will be delivered to Meals on Wheels at 1:00 PM on January 29th.

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Black-eyed peas were the only food spared by Gen. William T. Sherman and his Union troops during their destructive march through the South. Union troops found the beans to be fit only for use as animal fodder. Thus, black-eyed peas helped save surviving Confederates from starvation and were thereafter regarded as a symbol of good luck.

The tradition of consuming black-eyed peas in honor of the New Year may also be tied to Jewish culture. The Talmud lists the small white bean as a food to be eaten during Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, for good fortune. Sephardic Jews arrived in the American South in the early 18th century. Their culture and traditions likely mingled with those of African slaves and other colonial residents to spread the practice of eating black-eyed peas in celebration of the New Year. According to Wikipedia, the tradition dates as far ancient Egypt. During the time of the Pharaohs, it was believed that eating a meager food like black-eyed peas showed humility before the gods, and you would be blessed to the Babylonian Talmud, which dates to 339 CE, instructs the faithful Jews to eat black-eyed peas at Rosh Hashanah. The belief was similar: those who ate the peas showed their humility and saved themselves from the wrath of God

How do you eat the peas? Some people believe you should cook them a new penny or add to pot before serving. The person who receives the coin in their portion will be extra lucky. Some say you should eat exactly 365 peas on New Year's Day. If you eat less, you'll only be lucky for that many days. My family puts catsup on them and serves them over rice!

***SO EAT UP THIS NEW YEAR'S DAY !!***



*Bereavement Corner**It's A New Year....But I Still Grieve*

By: Fay Ellis Jones Eller, PH.D.

The holiday celebrations are coming to an end...everyone is making New Year's resolutions. I can picture it in my mind every year, a clean slate, offering a year full of promise and optimism. For a brief moment I am almost excited at the prospect. Then, before I know what has happened, my old companion has joined me to remind me that for me at least, all is not perhaps shiny new and bright. My old companion is grief.

This story was related to me by one of the bereaved whom I saw in my work as a grief counselor with Hospice. Some might consider "the old companion known as grief unresolved grief. But in the context of this life story, this was not the meaning at all. Quite the contrary, this spry lady in her late 70's had suffered many losses. She had lost two husbands, one early in life and one recent; had lost two children, one at birth and one in mid life, was dealing with the illness of her contemporaries and her own declining health. Her losses stretched over a lifetime. She had successfully faced each loss, working with her faith community and professionals to adapt.

While she had adapted and accepted the loss of her loved ones and she was in the midst of acceptance of her declining health, there were moments where grief visited. Be it picking up an anniversary card which evoked memory via a lump in the throat, or a song playing that conjured a bittersweet memory of a dance together, or the feel of a baby blanket that was never used. But the key is that grief came only for a brief visit. This is not unresolved grief, but rather a gentle reminder that we loved and still love despite the absence of our loved ones. Love endures beyond death. These brief visits from grief remind us that we are human.

As for the New Year, the slate may not be quite as shiny and bright as this courageous lady might have expected, nor for any of us who have lost loved ones for that matter. After loss, perhaps the slate is a bit aged from knowledge and wisdom. But it is this knowledge and wisdom that leads us eventually to healing and compassion.

That knowledge and wisdom comes, however only to those who manage to work through their grief, confronting the issues as they arise. We often hope that once this "grief work is done" we will return to normal; that our lives will be righted and that life as we knew it will be restored. Veteran grievers know this is not the case. Once we have lost a loved one, our lives are indeed transformed to a new normal. This transformation takes place very slowly, almost without our understanding. But it does occur.

*Wishing you a transformative New Year  
full of happiness, healing and a compassionate heart!*

## *Best Wishes for a Happy New Year”*



T’is the season of giving..... I’m blessed to be a part of a movement that gives year round!

Thank you Hospice for caring and sharing 365 days of a year. Often your work goes unnoticed, quietly touching lives and lifting spirits, providing comfort and compassionate care to the most vulnerable among us.

Thank you for allowing me to be part of your support system, providing resources for training volunteers to be part of your caring team.

There is a saying that volunteers are the heart of hospice. They truly give & share as a gift from their heart. But, it takes every discipline to provide the holistic care that makes Hospice very special for patients and families alike.

It is this diverse Team approach, combining people with many different gifts and talents that make Hospice complete.

I hope that in the year ahead we will experience Peace. But, if and tragedies and loss of life occurs, I am hopeful that many local hospices will step up and support their communities when they need it most.

Thanks you all for sharing the gifts of peace, love, joy, and compassion year round! Whether you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Winter Solstice, or any other holiday, enjoy the season and “Best Wishes for 2015”.

### ***From: Pat Carver***

Pat Carver Media and producer of the Hospice Volunteer Training Series used by Hospice of Montgomery.

#### **Pecan Pie Muffins**

1 cup packed light brown sugar  
½ cup all purpose flour  
1 cup chopped pecans  
½ cup melted butter  
2 eggs, beaten



Combine sugar, flour and pecans. In a different bowl, mix butter and eggs. Stir into flour mixture just until moistened. Fill greased regular or mini muffin tins 2/3 full. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 – 20 minutes, until muffins test done. Remove from pan immediately; cool on wire rack. Yield 24 mini muffins.

## January In-Service: Guidelines for Preventing Falls

Falls are the leading cause of accidental death in the United States and the 7<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death in people over age 65. Falls are generally caused by an interaction of factors like age, disorders, adverse drug effects, environmental hazards, and activities like rushing to the bathroom. For hospice patients, many of these factors may be present on a daily basis making fall prevention a greater challenge. The hospice volunteer can help by observing the patient's surroundings and noting if the home adheres to the following guidelines. Remember each hospice home situation is unique and not all these guidelines may apply.

Remove all obstacles to moving around, like trash, cords, wastebaskets, or floor litter.

Tape down carpet corners and put non-skid pads under throw rugs.

Install handrails, especially by stairways.

Make sure there is adequate lighting, often more lighting than needed for younger persons.

Use non-skid treads on non-carpeted stairs.

Use chairs with strong armrests and high backs for supports.

Consider using a lift chair.

Keep a walker or cane near wherever the patient is seated.

Make sure a telephone is within reach.

Install a raised toilet seat for easier use, seating and rising.

Install grab bars near toilets, bath tubs and showers.

Install nonslip strips on the bottom of the tub or shower.

Use non-skid bathmats in the bathroom.

Avoid using bath oils that can cause slippery conditions.

Use a shower curtain rod that is screwed into the wall for stability.

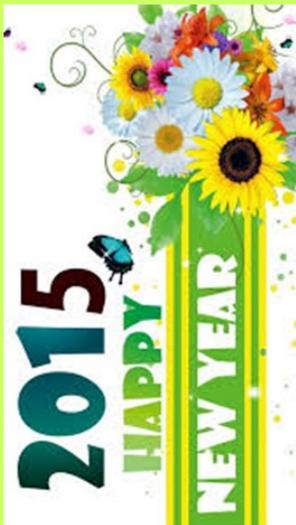
January is a common time to make New Year's resolutions that we often let fall by the wayside. Consider starting 2015 by reviewing fall prevention guidelines and resolving to apply them to your own home, as well as your patient's home. Make fall prevention a year long resolution.



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## ***Follow-up to Feasibility Study Report***

In an effort to keep our friends and supporters informed, we wanted to share with you the outcome of our recently concluded capital campaign feasibility study, and consequently what Hospice of Montgomery's next steps will be.

The board of directors of Hospice of Montgomery engaged the Atlanta-based firm of Sinclair, Townes & Company to conduct a study to test the community's support for the building of a River Region Hospice Home. Our proposed plan involves renovating the historic Standard Clubhouse, graciously gifted by the Jackson family, for administrative offices and small community events, and building a 10 bed patient care wing that will include all necessary support.

In an overwhelming response, we were heartened by how positively our constituents assessed our image, our board and administrative leadership, as well as the quality of care we provide to our patients and families.

According to your responses, there were also areas which we need to focus on strengthening and/or improving: (1) fundraising and 2) keeping our supporters and potential donors up-to-date and informed about the planning and activities going on at Hospice of Montgomery.

Through this process, please know that your suggestions and input have been heard. After receiving the report and processing its findings, the board and administration has agreed to develop an action plan that will enable us to stay better engaged and connected with our friends and supporters, as well as members of the River Region about the important work we are doing in the community, and our plans to make a much-needed Hospice Home a reality for the River Region.

Additionally, a solid majority responded that our proposed campaign is a worthy project; however, there were some who expressed concern regarding the cost of this endeavor.

With this said, we will initiate stronger communication efforts by addressing the cost of our Hospice Home project. It is important for you to know that the expense of our project is in-line with other healthcare facilities being built (yes, they are all expensive!). We will share a more in-depth assessment of these costs, as well as additional updates in the coming months.

Thank you for participating in the study process. We are grateful for everyone's interest in and support of this important project.

We invite and encourage you to contact us at anytime to further discuss this endeavor.

Sincerely,

*Arthur Mazyck, M.D.*  
President, Board of Directors

*Jenille Ball, R.N.*  
Executive Director