

Healing



RICK'S PLACE

Providing Support to Grieving Children and Their Families

Hearts

Spring 2008 · Issue 1 · Number 1

35 Post Office Park, Suite 3514 Wilbraham, MA 01095

Greetings! It is with great pleasure that we introduce *Healing Hearts*—the bi-annual newsletter that will help you learn more about *Rick's Place, Inc.*, and the work that is done in supporting grieving families.

Rick's Place, Inc. pays tribute to our dear friend, Rick Thorpe who died in the south tower of the World Trade Center. In Rick's memory of helping others, *Rick's Place, Inc.* provides bereavement support, free of charge, to families with young children who have experienced the death of a close family member. Families come together every other week from September to June to meet others who share their experience. While kids work on activities that are designed to support them in their grief process, their parents learn about how to support their grieving children.

In this inaugural issue of *Healing Hearts* we take great pleasure in introducing to you the caring and committed volunteers and staff who co-lead the groups of children and adults. We are honored to have such a wonderful group of volunteers and staff from Wilbraham and beyond. Their collective skills and compassion are incredible!

As adults we can all remember that as kids having fun—playing, making things and even learning was our main priority. The kids at *Rick's Place, Inc.* are no different, but unfortunately they have been thrown a fierce curve ball! With the developmental needs of kids in mind our committed volunteers lead activities that are fun, that involve making things and even learning something new. We don't make the death of a loved one go away but instead offer a safe place for kids to talk, share and even have fun.

It is our hope that *Rick's Place, Inc.* will be here for years to come. Please join us in this commitment!

Sincerely, *Bill*

What one participant said about Rick's Place, Inc....

*"It gave us that 'safe' place where
we all had our loss of someone we
loved in common—it was fun...It's
nice to know your feelings are
normal and shared by others."*

At Rick's Place, Inc. children and parents learn that one's grief

- ***changes from moment to moment***
- ***is unique to each individual***
- ***is a normal response to loss and change***

We don't make the death go away, but offer a range of opportunities for everyone to express their emotions and thoughts about the death in a safe and non-judgmental way.

Board of Directors: Bill Scatolini, *President*

Glen Garvey, *Vice President*

Rick Hill, *Secretary*

Dave Barry, *Treasurer*

**For more information about Rick's Place, Inc.
please contact: Shelly Bathe Lenn, Director or
Carole Mangels, Program Coordinator
call 413 348 3120 Visit our website www.ricksplacema.org**



Carole A. Mangels of South Hadley, Massachusetts is the bereavement coordinator for *Rick's Place, Inc.*. Carole holds orientation meetings with all new families and volunteers. She plans and leads the volunteer training and she co-leads the adult caregiver support group.

Carole holds a master's degree in psychology and is a nationally certified bereavement facilitator. She has been a clinical counselor with Brightside for Families and Children for over ten years. Carole is excited to be at *Rick's Place, Inc.* to help children in their healing journeys. She writes, "most of the children with whom I have worked over the years have suffered a myriad of losses. They are often disenfranchised and healing is a slow process. But at *Rick's Place, Inc.* I have seen children make progress in one or two sessions simply because they have a safe place to share their feelings. They are with other children who truly understand because they have been in the same place."

Meet the Staff:



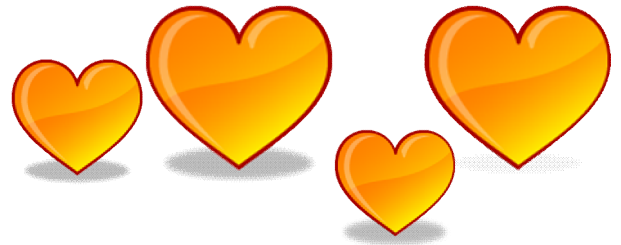
Shelly Bathe Lenn is the executive director of both *Rick's Place, Inc.* and The Garden: A Center for Grieving Children and Teens in Northampton. As director she supports Carole through consultation and supervision, and also works behind the scenes in the area of marketing and development. She is also available for community presentations.

Shelly holds a master's of education and certificate of advanced graduate study in school counseling from UMASS Amherst and a bachelor's degree in women's studies and education from the University of California at Santa Cruz, CA. She lives in Easthampton with her husband, David and four year old son, Evan.

About her experience at *Rick's Place, Inc.* she writes, "opening up *Rick's Place, Inc.* for grieving families has been very rewarding. Knowing that this is one of the only places where all the kids can understand each other better because of their shared experience is testament to why this program is so important."



Show us Your Heart...



We are so appreciative of the outpouring of support from the community in opening up Rick's Place, Inc.

Here are a few key supporters...

Kathy Cardinale, Cardinale Designs;
Ken Furst, Momentum Group; Glen Garvey, Garvey Group;
& Judi LaBranche, Scantic Valley YMCA

Thank you so much!



Volunteers are absolutely essential to *Rick's Place, Inc.* They are trained to work directly with the participants

facilitating games, activities and projects. Community members are invited to become volunteer facilitators at *Rick's Place, Inc.* Interested volunteers must submit an application and complete 15 hours of training.

Introducing some of this year's dedicated and creative group of volunteer facilitators...

Joan A. Blomberg retired from the field of Education after 35 years of teaching. She is enjoying some of her leisure time by volunteering. She writes that "Rick's Place, Inc. is special, since it is in memory of a dear friend of my son. He and his family were neighbors for many years in town. Remembering Rick Thorpe's high school days at Minnechaug and the many visits he and his close knit classmates made to our home is a valuable memory that keeps a candle in his memory going at all times in our window. It is rewarding to be part of a dedicated team, and now working with Carole this year in the adult support group, with a common goal to help with grief and the loss of loved ones."

Christine Niederpruem has been married to, Mark, for 25 wonderful years and has three children Adam 24, Clare 21 and Luke 19. "I have been a school nurse for the last eleven years at Memorial School in Wilbraham. With my kids away at college, and Adam out on his own I found I had more time and thought Rick's Place, Inc. would be a wonderful opportunity". "I am new to the program so have only been with the kids for a few weeks. Although they are quite young (ages 5 and 6) they can give you pause. 'I love being a kid', and 'I stopped talking for two years after my dad died' are just a couple of the tender moments shared together at Rick's Place, Inc.. I see the opportunity for the children to let time go lightly on their little hearts."

Continued...

Tara Rizzolo is originally from Brooklyn, New York and has been living in Western Massachusetts for the past two years. She has her M.S. Ed in Counseling and Personnel Services and is currently the School's Out Director with the Scantic Valley YMCA. Tara genuinely enjoys working with and helping children. She is volunteering with Ricks Place because she feels this program will have a strong impact on the children and families who participate, and she believes in the importance of giving back to the community she lives in.

Barbara Saint Jacques of Ludlow is recently retired and has worked with children of all ages as a registered and certified art therapist, and as a licensed social worker. She is an adjunct professor at Springfield College, teaching Introduction to Art Therapy and supervising students in Community Service, Practicum, and Pre-Practicum classes in art therapy. She also has a small private practice.

She has been married to her husband, Bob, for 46 years. They have 3 sons and a grand daughter, Krystal. She spends as much time as possible with her 4 year old godchild, Jasmine.

Barbara writes, "I am enjoying volunteering at Rick's Place, Inc., as it affords me the opportunity to work with children and to share my experience with others."



Upcoming Events at Rick's Place, Inc.

September 12 & 13, 2008: New Volunteer Training

September 20:

Rick Thorpe Memorial Fund hosts 7th Annual Rick Thorpe Golf Classic

September 23: Rick's Place opens for 2008-2009

**Check us out online:
www.ricksplacema.org**

Ways You Can Help...

Rick's Place, Inc. Wish List: Rick's Place, Inc. is ever grateful for all of its donations received this year! We gladly accept in-kind donations that can be useful in our groups. Below is our current wish list of items that will be used in the planned activities and projects. For specifications, please contact Shelly Bathe Lenn at 413 348 3120.

3-Ring Binders (1 1/2" red and white)

Disposable cameras with film developing, digital movie camera

Gift cards from: Michaels, Staples, Target, Barnes & Noble and Home Depot

Paper Products (i.e. cups, napkins)

Hand puppets

Painting easels and supplies



Yes, I would like to make a financial commitment to supporting the mission of *Rick's Place, Inc.*! No matter how big, your tax-deductible donation will make a **HUGE** difference in the lives of children we serve throughout the community!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

This gift is _____ in honor of _____ in memory of _____

Name(s): _____

If your gift is in honor/memory of, please indicate whom you would like informed:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Yes! My company will match my donation.

Company name: _____

Your tax deductible check is payable to:
The Rick Thorpe Memorial Fund
 c/o The Bank of Western Mass
 P.O. Box 4950
 Springfield, MA 01101-4950

Some additional ideas for showing your support to Rick's Place, Inc.:

Become a Volunteer!

Volunteers can help with planning events or facilitating groups (facilitator training provided). Call today to receive a volunteer application and job description.

Host a House Party!

Contact several of your closest friends and family to attend a gathering in your home. Inform them that a brief presentation about *Rick's Place, Inc.* will be given. Your help in soliciting more support for *Rick's Place, Inc.* will help us continue to help children from Wilbraham and Greater Springfield.

Speaking Engagements!

Make arrangements for *Rick's Place, Inc.* staff or volunteers to speak to groups with whom you are affiliated—business colleagues, community service groups. This will expose more individuals to *Rick's Place, Inc.*



RICK'S PLACE

Providing Support to Grieving Children and Their Families