

Newsletter of the
Oregon Holistic Nurses Association
State Chapter of the
American Holistic Nurses Association

Leading Oregon in the new specialty of Holistic Nursing

Director's Note

Toni Gilbert, RN, MA, HN-BC

Our first ***Annual Breitenbush Healing Retreat*** was a great success. Most of us were strangers to each other but the group, Sierra Bassett, Leigh Biscarret-Pochect, Dawn Garcia, Beverly Hollander, Crystal Luster, Christine Newberry, Marilyn Watkins, Scott Webb, Karen Widmer, Laurie Wilson, Deonne Wright and I found common ground and camaraderie quickly. As a result of our laid back experience, several members volunteered for duty in next year's retreat. Additionally, we proudly announce our new **OHNA Council** . Also see the **website** for the slideshow of our experience and the Breitenbush fall colors.

Next year's annual Healing Retreat will have an area or areas where nurses and other practitioners can practice their healing arts free of charge and also a system of payment for those healers who want to charge for their services. The event will be open to members and non-members (with the option of the non-members becoming members free of extra charge). This year's event brought our membership to 25; most are holistic nurses but also include a massage therapist and radiologic technologist.

During our yearly business meeting, a graphic logo for the OHNA organization was discussed and ideas will be gathered throughout the year. Next year we will adopt a logo idea and have a graphic artist develop it so that we can put it on items such as shirts, bags, mugs and bumper stickers. Tattoos anyone? Earrings? Hats? Bring your ideas to next year's meeting at Breitenbush.

OHNA members at the meeting came up with the following goals for 2009:

1. Support each other in holism.
2. Nurture our growing community.
3. Grow our membership.
4. Plan for next year's retreat.
5. Find balance between the personal and the professional.

Here's hoping we see all of you at next years retreat. Invite your friends to Breitenbush in October 09 **www.breitenbush.com** for a healing experience that you will take home with you.

Toni Gilbert, director of OHNA, lives in Jefferson Oregon with her husband Lewis Judy and many children and grandchildren including one great-grandchild. You may reach her at toni@tonigilbert.com

Astrology: A Gift of Healing

Karen Widmer, RN

As a mother of 4 children, two grown with lives of their own, and two little ones just learning to grow, I've found myself often trying to "sneak" nutrients and medicinals into their lives. Broccoli has been an old stand by, hidden in spaghetti, omelets, and soups. A little cod liver oil in apple juice and maybe lavender oil in the evening bath...prayers in the songs on the walks in the woods. We mothers can't seem to ever let go of wanting to guide our children to be healthy, happy and whole.

These past few years, I've watched my older children, in their mid-twenties, seeking, growing, stumbling, failing, sometime flailing, and sometimes falling down. My role has changed. In this time of their lives, I'm challenged to find how I can guide them and comfort them. How may I help to bring them closer to knowing their paths in this world? Do I graduate from meddling motherly advice, to letting go? How do I allow my children to be who they are... to be comfortable in their persons and to be confident in their decisions? And how can I hide this medicine in their soup?

This year, I gifted the two grown children with astrological readings with Dr. Robert Volkmann. It was planned as a sibling get-together-fun-event during the Thanksgiving weekend visit. I suppose I may have disguised it just a bit as a fluffy dessert....when my intentions were in actuality more of a hearty nutritional meal. And, I must admit, for years I have discussed various forms of counseling, or guidance for Each of them. And Each would say, "Mom, I'm fine...don't worry." Yet, I'd worry, just a bit, and then maybe send a book, and some vitamins, and say prayers on my walks in the woods. I sighed with gratitude, when they agreed whole heartily to come to Dr. Volkmann's counseling.

Dr. Volkmann's approach is open and accepting, and gets right down to the bones. He allowed each of my children to decide who they wanted present during the interpretations. My son wanted to share with all, my daughter chose privacy. My son's reading was thick medicine, full of definitive advice. His natal chart showed a path that seemed to me like an epic battle. It showed a young man wrestling with his own mind. It showed brilliance, and struggle. It showed my son.

Dr. Volkmann explained that the astrological wheel chart, with planet positions at the time of birth, maps out which life lessons we are born into. He says that these lessons are our presents....perhaps to ourselves....to help us to reach our goals of this lifetime. I cringed a bit, as I visualized my son, knee deep in the mud and rain, with a walking stick as his comfort, on his thick murky path through this life. And I questioned, how could my child deserve such challenges? Yet Dr. V, again helped me to understand that if a path is

easy, it may be terribly uninteresting, with not much to learn along the way. He counseled that when one survives the greatest travesties, one gains the most in gratitude and awareness.

Healing happened for me, that day, even though my reading was not done. I was able to take a step back and observe my children in a different light. I suffered from mother's guilt for much of my son's young adult life. His struggles have been all too obvious. And often I would try to blame myself for not providing him the right tools he needed to make life "easy". Yet understanding that, this life *IS* his gift, and the challenges he faces are what will bring him to his strength....brought me quite a bit of comfort. I can now step back and watch it all unfold now with much more peace in my heart.

My son is private with what he shares. But I have noticed that perhaps he shows a bit of pride that he has been honored with such a great responsibility. And, in situations where he might find himself the victim, he's now observing more and judging less. Ahhh...Makes a mother proud!

My daughter left the session vibrant and fresh, as if a good long cry helped wash away some fears. She, too, is a bit private, and really didn't want to share much with me, which was OK too. Although she did share that she is ready to meet her own special challenges....and not to worry...she's "fine". As long as her healing is happening, I know I've succeeded as a Mother and as a Nurse.

In all, I liken the experience with Dr. Volkmann to being educated about the pain of childbirth. When we know what we're up for, we prepare ourselves to the best of our abilities. I'm now looking forward to making an appointment for myself, and possibly for my husband for a good hearty meal of enlightenment with Dr. Volkmann.

Karen Widmer, RN lives at Gates, Oregon with her husband and two younger children; she works part time at Silverton Hospital. You can reach her at karenwidmer@gmail.com

Dr. Robert Volkmann, Transpersonal Counselor lives in Salem and works for Breitenbush Hot Springs. Keep in mind that 20% of the price of the session for referrals is sent to OHNA. He can be reached at rmvolk@comcast.net

HAPPENINGS

Here are several conferences that the membership might find interesting:

Jan 23-24 - Applied Meditation Intensive - Seattle area, contact Margo or Bill @ 206-392-2201 or www.toolsforchange.org.

Feb 19-21 - Integrative Health Symposium in New York - www.ihsymposium.com

March 25-28 The American Academy of Hospice & Palliative Medicine Annual Assembly, Austin TX www.aahpm.org

April 3-5 Phase I of the Certificate Program in Imagery in CA - www.integrativeimagery.com or 650-570-6157

Enjoy! Bev Hollander

Please print and post or e-mail to a friend.