

from the heart

NEWS FROM THE CENTER FOR GRIEVING CHILDREN

Our 2014 Report to the Community



“The stories you hear at the Center are heartbreaking,
but the time you spend there is heart mending.
We will be forever grateful.”

AND THAT'S BECAUSE OF YOU.
YOU BRING THE LOVE.

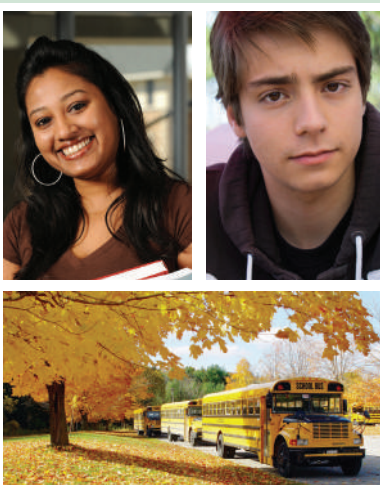
the
center for
grieving children

where families find hope and love

INSIDE:
caring. kindness.
inspiration.

Fall/Winter 2014

WELCOME



About the Center for Grieving Children

For children and families confronting loss, change, and grief when someone close to them dies or is seriously ill, the Center for Grieving Children is an oasis of loving support. Trained volunteers and the support of the local community keep our services free for families. Founded in 1987, the Center today reaches more than 4,000 people annually, and depends on funding from individuals, businesses, foundations, and United Way.

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Susan Giambalvo
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(1945-98), founder

CGCMAINE.ORG | 207.775.5216

Home: 555 Forest Ave., Portland, ME 04101
York County Site: 893 Main Street, Sanford, ME 04073

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Connect with the Center on these social networks

Cover photo, family portraits, and page 4 and 7 photos by Jane Berger Photography.

You are the reason we can be here.

From Our Executive Director

The accomplishments highlighted in our 2014 Report to the Community were made possible by people like you, the members of the community around us.

Every day, I see individuals coming together to create a breadth of grief support and resources for children and their families that no one person alone could ever provide.

Volunteers describe their work here as “life changing,” because they see the power of community to help others, and they recognize that having a role to play in that can be a “transformational” personal gift.

You are the reason we can be here. You bring the financial resources and the connections that support the Center in so many ways. You make it possible for the Center to be inclusive, collaborative, and welcoming to all.

Thank you.



Anne Lynch

Our deepest appreciation
to all who have shared their
stories on these pages.

community

Community Outreach

Community outreach throughout the year brought the Center's coaching, training, and crisis response to more than 77 schools, service agencies, healthcare settings, and more.

- In the wake of deaths among students, teachers, and parents, Center staff were onsite at more than 10 schools within Cumberland and York County. Several deaths were publicized widely over time, creating additional impacts for school communities.
- We did presentations and training for hospice volunteers, family-service groups, social workers, summer camp staff, an international student exchange program, multiple schools and workplaces, United Way rallies, and more.
- At colleges, we presented to nursing and social-work classes on how children process grief and on key considerations and awareness to bring when working with intercultural populations.



Elementary School Students

We did five crisis outreaches this month. Two for middle-schoolers after a teacher died suddenly, and a student with chronic illness died. Staff supported students at an elementary school after a parent died. We are providing support to students in a small community, following the death of a teen with elementary- and middle-school siblings. Phone support went to an elementary school principal regarding three students whose mother just died.

Center volunteers gave more than 25,000 hours of service this year.



Edward Laboke

2014 Beacon Award winner

"My ideals as an educator make me want to volunteer at the Center, to help children of fellow refugees and immigrants get better opportunities." A founding member of the Center's Intercultural Advisory Council, Edward taught in schools in his homeland of South Sudan and in Sudan before violence forced him to flee. He works in Portland Public Schools as a parent/community specialist, and is the winner of our 2014 Beacon Award, which represents the beacon of hope our volunteers shine.



Deb Henry

Peer Support Facilitator

Deb's parents died when she was a child. But it was not until she ended a long-time career and began training as a volunteer facilitator that she explored her long-buried feelings about loss. "Once you get to the Center, you can connect with people who have been there." Deb coordinates Center office recycling, and is training now to volunteer in our Multicultural Peer Support Program. "Can you imagine what it's like to be a grieving child, taken away from all you've known and brought to a completely different world?"



John Holland

2014 6 Who Care Nominee

Our nominee for this year's WCSH6/United Way 6 Who Care award is a man of exceptional and diverse talents. John has facilitated our peer support programs, volunteered for fundraising events, and led complex projects that have substantially improved our office technology. "I find all of these opportunities rewarding," he says. "I grew up in a family where the values of giving, sharing, and supporting each other were modeled and ingrained."



Danielle Alexander

Peer Support Facilitator

As a program manager with Big Brothers Big Sisters in York County, Danielle learned about the Center as a place that could provide grief support to children she knew needed it. When we opened our service site in Sanford, she trained to become a peer-support facilitator. This mother of a three-year-old son and baby girl says, "When they're old enough, I want my kids to understand that not every child has a mommy and daddy, and it's O.K. to talk about illness and sadness and death."

OUR PROGRAMS

Bereavement Peer Support

Our largest program and the cornerstone of our service to the community, **Bereavement Peer Support** promotes the resiliency of children and their families facing loss and grief by helping them feel they belong, have hope, and are supported by others. The program also offers peer-support groups for bereaved young adults, parents whose children have died, and widows/widowers and bereaved partners.

- Over the last year, the program served 300 children and adults, with one third of participants from York County and two-thirds from Cumberland County.
- With the Cancer Care Center of York County, we added a Sanford-based Bereavement Peer Support group for widows/widowers/ bereaved partners.
- Plus, we added a “Weather Room” to our Sanford site, similar to our “Volcano Room” in Portland. It’s a safe place where children can physically express feelings.
- We are deeply grateful for the 175 volunteers whose training and commitment made peer-support groups possible.



Mira and Molly Horn

The emergency crew came and took over. I went to the hospital. But he was gone. . . . I couldn’t eat. I couldn’t think. But even if your heart feels frozen in time, kids still need school lunch. Food shopping has to be done. The car needs gas. . . . We attended the Center every Tuesday night for a year and a half. It was our lifeline. . . . The Center helped the children to not feel alone, when I was at my least capable. And it helped me find my balance, again.



Our Teen Advisory Group launched during the year to help us strategize and implement communication that connects with teens “where they are,” especially online. The volunteers coaching us are teens who have received Center services in Portland and Sanford.



Peer-group facilitators in every Center program helped implement our new evaluation tool, instituted last year to guide ongoing program development. It assists individuals in reflecting on personal changes along their grief journey.



The Center’s internship program welcomed bachelor’s and master’s level students from Antioch, the University of Southern Maine, University of New England, and additional colleges. Serving in groups of about six per school year, they trained and served as peer-group facilitators, completed special projects, and assisted our events.



For extraordinary work meeting a need in the community, the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation awarded the Center its 2014 Community Hero Award. Harvard Pilgrim funding last year enabled our Multicultural Peer Support Program to serve high schoolers and create an awareness-raising video.

resilience

Multicultural Program

The Center's **Multicultural Peer Support Program** works in partnership with Portland schools to serve students resettled in Maine from countries that have experienced violent conflict. Our **Intercultural Advisory Council** ensures our programs are inclusive, community-based, and culturally relevant and empowering for those involved with them.

- The program served 40 students from Riverton Elementary School and Lincoln Middle School. Funding made it possible for 12 of them to attend a week of Maine-island summer camp that included adventure, skill-building, and grief support.
- A team of students from the University of Southern Maine won the school's public service award for working with the Center to produce *Swimming in a Culture without Water*. The video will help increase understanding of the losses and challenges of new American families making Maine their home.
- New funding also opened the program to 20 teens in Portland and Deering high schools.



Anne Donato and Lazarus Donato

Attending the program taught me a lot, and the thing it taught me about most is joy. It is a very joyful place.

– Anne

My experience having death in the family and resettling in Maine led me to become a volunteer. I've learned that helping others starts from within. And I know now that the emotions I felt in the past are O.K. to feel, and feel again. Coming to the Center has connected me to the community in new ways.

– Anne's brother, Lazarus (Intercultural Advisory Council Volunteer)

Tender Living Care

Tender Living Care (TLC) is a Center program for families living with the serious illness of a family member. From the point of diagnosis, peer support is available for the family member who is ill as well as the other adult, teens, and children in the family.

- The TLC program served 68 family members last year, at the Center and through visits made to families in hospitals and homes. Eight additional sessions offered groups training on how to support children and families living with illness.
- New program material spread the word about TLC services to 70 medical providers, faith leaders, and social service agencies. It's the Center's goal to increase the number of families this program serves.
- We said goodbye to Patricia Ellen, whose 10 years of service to Center families included coordinating the TLC program. And we welcomed Sandy Lovell, our new TLC and outreach coordinator.

My husband fought cancer for four years, and our family came to the Center's Tender Living Care (TLC) program. There was a bond among all of us. You could talk if you felt like talking, and cry without feeling like an idiot. On a few nights, when we were supposed to go to the Center, I was tired and told the kids we could stay home, watch a movie, have popcorn. But, instead, they would say, 'No! We want to go to the Center.'



*Jake and Ashley Ricker,
and Suzette Dibiase-Ricker*

OUT AND ABOUT

The Gala

"It is a joy to help create an event that celebrates what the Center does," says Center board member Gail Bruzgo, who is in her third year as chair of **Love Really Counts: Our Annual Auction & Dinner Gala**.

"During a difficult time for our family, my children never got the chance to attend the Center, because we just didn't know they could. Had I attended this event, we would have known. If one child comes to the Center and uses our services because of this event, then I consider it a smashing success."

Held at the Holiday Inn By the Bay in Portland in February 2014, the Center's largest annual fundraising event was more than a success. Grossing \$180,000 for program support, it was a record breaker created by volunteer committee members who worked tirelessly. IDEXX Laboratories, Inc. returned as Platinum Sponsor. Cindy Williams of WCSH6 reigned lovely as host. And Tom Saturley's expertise as auctioneer kept the bidding lively. It was a magical night!



Sandro Secchi, Gail Bruzgo, and Katie Hogan



Janet Letalien, Linda Labbe, Kim Simard

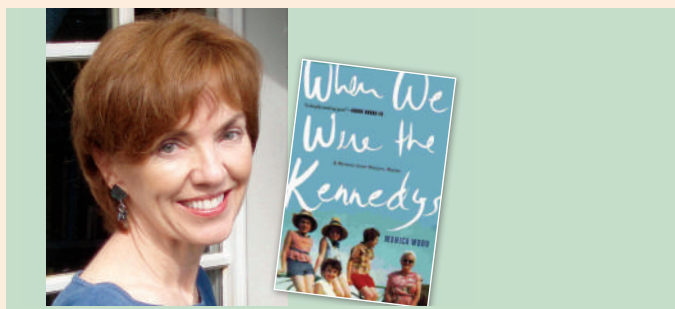


Cyndi Smith, Lana Wescott, Dan Gibbons, Ajeet Gillard, Katie Ketner



Colette Warren, Larry Wold, and Cindy Williams

Jane Berger Photography



Monica Wood

The Author

We knew she would share great insights about grief and storytelling, but how could we know she would also have us laughing so much? Held in June in Wells, our Evening with Monica Wood was made possible by committed volunteers and York County-based businesses. For the Center's first public event in York County, we were proud to host this multi-award-winning author, who said of the Center, "What a miracle such a place exists: a refuge filled with warm, responsive people whose mission is to help broken-hearted souls find their way back to joy."



United Way volunteers

The Volunteers

We're grateful to United Way for long-time support in Portland, and now proudly receive support, too, from United Way of York County. Last spring marked our first United Way Day of Caring in York County, when a group of orange-shirted volunteers lent by local employers dug and planted a flower garden at our Sanford service site.



The Pelletier family

The Game

Center Day at the Sea Dogs, sponsored by MaineHealth, was a home run! A proud Center volunteer e-mailed us: "I watched a Center family run the bases after the game, with their little peanut three-year-old in her Center T-shirt down to her ankles, running strong. What an image—a metaphor for what we're all about."

connection



The Mark

Hats off to the DJ who is most often seen wearing his! The one-and-only Mark Curdo's sixth year as ringmaster of the WCYY Markathon brought in \$43,000 for the Center over five days during the first week of December. He built awareness through recorded and live interviews with our volunteers, board members, and families who have received Center services.



Adam McGoon, loyal FundRacer

The Race

The TD Beach to Beacon 10K Road Race keeps on giving! As a past race beneficiary, the Center may purchase up to 25 of the race's coveted bibs to award to runners who pledge to be Center "fundracers." In summer 2013, they brought in \$15,000 by asking for donations to the Center in support of their race.



From left: Bill Caron (president and CEO, MaineHealth) and Vaughn Clark (president, The Thomas Agency)

The Golf

We heard it more than once: "What a great day!" Thank you to the businesses who sponsor our Paul Gray Memorial Swing "Fore" the Center at the Purpoodock Club in Cape Elizabeth. Returning in November 2013 as our Title Sponsor, MaineHealth's lead role in supporting the tournament pays tribute to Paul Gray, who served on the Center's board of directors and was a leader and friend to many at both MaineHealth and Maine Medical Center. We are grateful as well to The Thomas Agency, which in 2014 became a second Title Sponsor. And to Paul's family, big hugs! In 2013, our tournament grossed more than \$55,000.

The Surprise

A big surprise last year was being named beneficiary of the Christmas party hosted by Eimskip, the Icelandic company now shipping from Portland harbor. It generated \$30,000 for the Center, for which we're deeply grateful.



Morris Fisher and Chris Emmons



Nancy Thompson, Amy Booth, Quincy Hentzel, Jen Olszewski

The Stars



Students from our Multicultural Peer Support

Students from our Multicultural Peer Support Program created songs with musician Billy Libby's "Your Song Your Story" project. Then, when Billy toured with pop star Ingrid Michaelson's band, he introduced several of our teens to Ingrid (center) and got them into her sold-out show at the State Theater.

The Hoops

Our Hoops for Hope program, presented by General Dynamics, Bath Iron Works, brought \$15,000 to the Center, plus on-court and at-the-Center meetings among Maine Red Claws players and children in our programs.

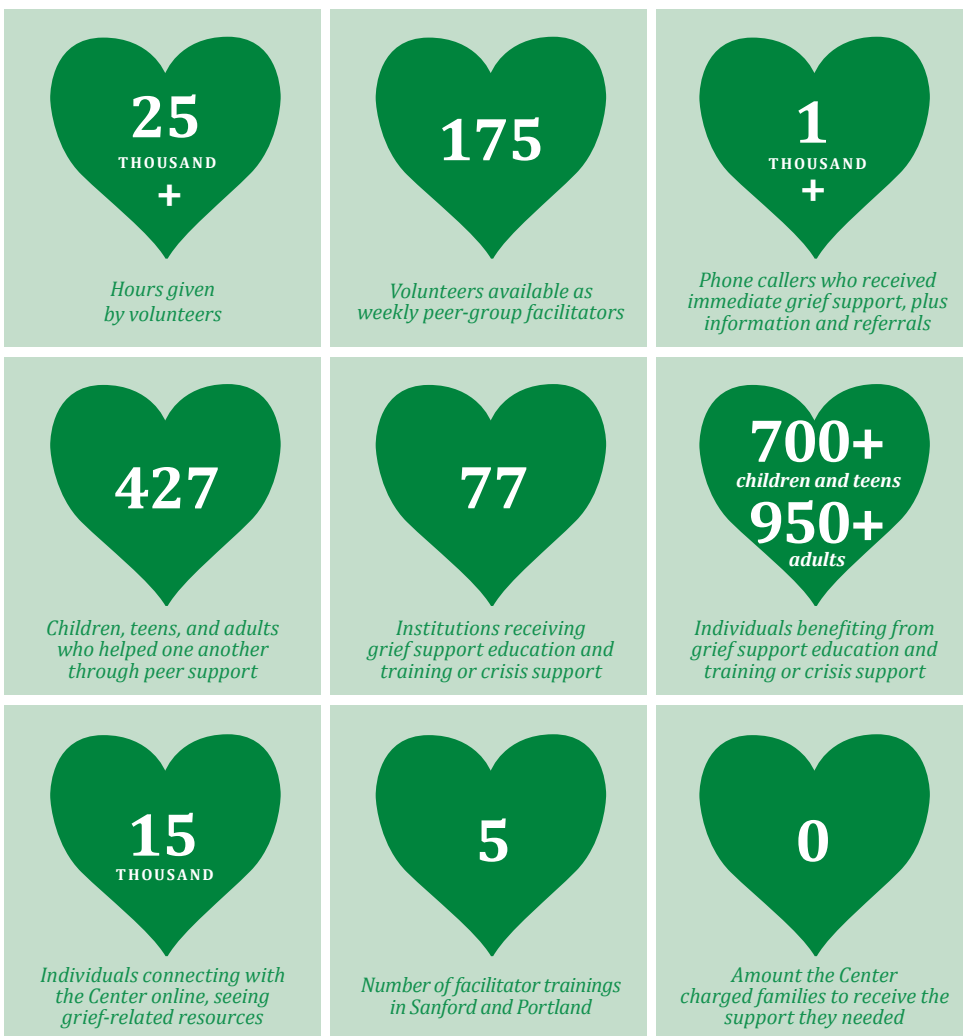


BY THE NUMBERS

July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014

love

A Year of Big Data



Places We've Been

• Sample of community outreach including crisis response, training, and education

- **Acton:**
Acton Elementary School
- **Berwick:**
Noble High School
- **Biddeford:**
Biddeford Elementary
St. James School
- **Buxton:**
Buxton Center
Elementary School
- **Gorham:**
Gorham Savings Bank,
University of Southern
Maine (USM)
- **Lebanon:**
Lebanon Elementary
School
- **Lewiston:**
Tri-County Foster,
Adoptive, and Kinship
Association
- **Long Island:**
Long Island School and
community
- **Portland:**
Barbara Bush Children's
Hospital, Catholic
Charities, CIEE, City
of Portland Public
Health, Diversified
- **Sanford:**
Sanford High School,
local parishes
- **South Portland:**
Congregation Bet
Ha'am, Memorial Middle
School, Southern Maine
Community College
- **Standish:**
Bonny Eagle High School
- **Wells:**
Wells High School
- **Westbrook:**
Westbrook Middle School,
Westbrook Community
Center
- **Windham:**
Windham Elementary
School, Windham
Primary School
- **Atlanta, Georgia:**
National Alliance of
Grieving Children

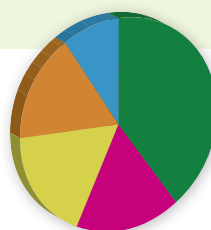
FINANCIAL STATISTICS (AUDITED)

Revenue

Revenue from Services*	\$0
Contributions, Grants, Events, Community Support ..	\$805,322
Investment Gain ..	\$7,163
Total Revenues ..	\$812,485

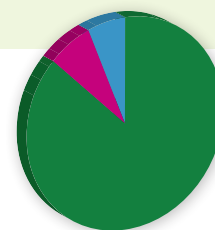
Expenses

Program Services ..	\$689,184
Management and General ..	\$50,890
Fundraising ..	\$57,534
Total Expenses ..	\$797,608
Unrestricted Margin ..	\$14,877



Revenue by Source

- Special Events 40%
- Grants 17%
- Contributions 18%
- United Way Allocation and Designated Donors 16%
- Misc 9%



Expense Allocation

- Program Services 86%
- General Fundraising 7%
- Management and General 6%

*The Center provides services to grieving children and families at no charge, through the tremendous generosity of our community.

THANK YOU

July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014

Corporation and Foundation Support



Judy Stark

"I love it," Judy says about the Center. "There's such a warm, comfortable feeling there." After attending a Center-focused "Lunch & Learn" at work, Judy began volunteering as part of Global IDEXX Volunteer Efforts (GiVE), which gives employees two paid days to volunteer. At the Center, she and coworkers have painted walls, sorted stuffed animals, and twice created an amazing Holiday Shop filled with donated toys. In Kennebunk, Judy and friends hosted a Zumbathon fundraiser that inspired generous gifts from as far as Zumba Fitness in Florida.



Doug Watts,
Peer-support Facilitator

Doug has directed matching funds from his employer as part of his many contributions to the Center. Just eight years old when his mother died in a plane crash, he "learned two survival skills: to bury my emotions very deeply, and to not discuss her loss. In my facilitator training at the Center, I learned to connect with my feelings, and bring my authentic self to be with the kids. . . . I realized my own loss was not a weight, but a light that could shine a way forward."

\$25,000 +

United Way of Greater Portland

\$20,000 +

IDEXX Laboratories, Inc.

\$10,000-\$15,000 +

Beim Foundation

John T. Gorman Foundation

General Dynamics, Bath Iron Works

Harvard Pilgrim Health Care

Ice-Time Charitable Endowment

MaineHealth

Patrons Oxford Insurance Company

Re/Max By The Bay

Virginia Hodgkins Somers Foundation

Tex-Tech Industries

Transformit

Unum

WEX Inc.

\$5,000-\$9,999

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Denovo LLC

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The Eunice Frye Home Foundation

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Rite Aid Foundation

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United Way of York County

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**We are grateful to
everyone who gives to
the Center.**

**A complete list of 2013-14
donors can be found online at
cgcmaine.org.**

\$1,500-\$2,499

Bangor Savings Bank Corporate

Giving Program

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Nova Seafood

One Day at a Time Fund of

the Maine Community Foundation

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Maine Community Foundation

Sturdivant Island Tuna Tournament

The Tyler Foundation

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Wing-Benjamin Trust

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\$500-\$999

Aetna Foundation, Inc.

Anonymous

ASAP Taxi & Courier Service

Atlantic Regional Federal Credit Union

Attention 2 Detailz

August Wealth Management

Berry Talbot Royer

Bibber Memorial Chapel

Bigelow Investment Advisors

Binga's Winga's LLC

BJC Hospice

The Baldwin Foundation

The Jessie D. Bullens-Crewe Foundation

Capital Consulting Partners

Casco Federal Credit Union

CIEE

Count and Crush, LLC

Dawson, Smith, Purvis, & Bassett, P.A.

Disability RMS

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United Way of Eastern Maine

Wright-Ryan Construction

The Yoga Center

Thank you for your loyalty and generosity in making gifts to the Center. If you have arranged through your will to make a bequest, please let us know, so that we may express our gratitude for your "forever gift."

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\$5,000-\$10,000

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Michael and Denise Dubyak
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Terry Ingram
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Steve Hart

A generous supporter of the Center, Steve has lived and worked in Utah and on the West Coast. About his service as a volunteer facilitator at the Center for more than 10 years, he says, "Of all the work I have done in my life, this is the best fit. I have found my calling in helping to support, listen to, and walk with people on their paths through grief, especially in helping people feel not alone."

Our listing takes into account gifts made through United Way, but not payments on capital campaign pledges made in previous years.

If you note an error, please call 207.775.5216, ext. 103.

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Eileen Minte (1950-2014)

An energetic Center board member from 2002-08, Eileen played a critical role in the capital campaign that created the Center's home on Forest Avenue in Portland. She also spearheaded our annual auction gala for many years, and volunteered as a peer-support facilitator. She was a woman of great strength, courage, and perseverance.

**Also volunteered for special events or office projects*

• Member of Intercultural Advisory Committee

"Financial circumstances" shouldn't prevent grief support.

Your gifts to the Center keep our services free for families.

During some of the most difficult losses, changes, and challenges imaginable:

- Your gift of \$100 gives a child one month of support.
- Your gift of \$1,000 extends that support for a year.
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You help children and families recover hope when they need it most.

Please make the maximum gift you can this year, for any child or family who needs the Center.



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Reserve your spot for a volunteer orientation. Learn about our in-depth training to become a peer-group facilitator in Portland or Sanford. You'll also hear about additional opportunities to volunteer. Times and dates at cgcmaine.org/volunteer/peer-support

Stay Connected in 2014-15



[Sign up for Hoops for Hope.](#) Presented by General Dynamics-Bath Iron Works, this program with the Maine Red Claws offers businesses visibility and season tickets. #hoopsforhope



[Listen to the WCYY Markathon.](#) Tune into 94.3 from December 1-5 when DJ Mark Curdo takes pledged donations to the Center for any songs that callers request. #markathon



[Be part of Love Really Counts: Our 2015 Auction & Dinner Gala.](#) Sponsor, buy tickets or volunteer for this magical evening, Friday, February 27. #lovegala



[Join a Community Conversation.](#) See our film, *Swimming in a Culture Without Water*, then join a discussion about loss and changes faced by international families resettled in Maine. In March. Please call for date.

[Share your energy in York County.](#) Help turn up the volume about the Center's services to York County families. We're cooking up a spring event!

[FundRace in the TD Beach to Beacon 10K.](#) In March, we'll have race bibs for runners who pledge to raise a minimum of \$500 by the race on Saturday, August 1 in Cape Elizabeth.

[Play golf!](#) How easy is that? Sponsor or send a team to our 2015 Paul Gray Memorial Swing "Fore" the Center at the Purpoodock Club in Cape Elizabeth on Tuesday, September 15.

More info is available by calling the Center at 207.775.5216 or emailing info@cgcmaine.org or checking cgcmaine.org

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