

# Living with Grace and Passion

A Seasonal Newsletter from Peggy Patenaude  
Spring 2007

## Coming Up

Peggy will be leading the following two spring retreats at Genesis Spiritual Life Center in Westfield, MA:

### Keeping Your Love Alive:

#### A Couples Retreat

Saturday, March 31,  
9:30 AM to 6:00 PM  
Cost: \$75 per couple

### My One Wild and Precious Life:

#### A Women's Retreat

Friday, April 27, 7:30 PM to  
Sunday, April 29, 1:00 PM  
Cost: \$175 residents  
Commuters and lunch: \$140  
Commuters and snacks: \$100



For information & registration:  
E-Mail: [genesis@genesiscenter.us](mailto:genesis@genesiscenter.us)  
Website: [genesiscenter.us](http://genesiscenter.us)  
Phone: 413-562-3627

### Keeping Your Love Alive: Couples Retreat in Falmouth

Spring 2007 ~ Date: TBA  
If interested, contact Peggy at  
508-548-9149  
or email:  
[timeoutretreats@comcast.net](mailto:timeoutretreats@comcast.net)

### Easter Service on Cape Cod

On April 8, Peggy will be the guest speaker for the 10 AM Easter Service at One Light: A Center for Spiritual Transformation in West Yarmouth, MA.  
[www.peaceoncapecod.org](http://www.peaceoncapecod.org)

## Peg's Ponderings: Soaring High

It helps now and then to take the time to reflect on who and what matters most to us. *Who inspires you? Why does that person inspire you? What are you passionate about? What gives you great delight and joy? If money, time and personal commitments were not obstacles, what new thing would you like to try? Do you have any unfulfilled dreams?* In the silence of your heart, lie your answers.

In the spring of 2003 while flying SWA to Florida, I asked myself, "What am I passionate about?" I was amazed just how freely and quickly I could respond. What I wrote that day while soaring high above the clouds spoke volumes to me about myself and the direction in which I was being led.

Not long afterwards, I found myself acting on what I was passionate about when I proposed "The Spirituality & Wholeness: Living Well Series" to Eleanor and Dick Grace of the Brain Center in Mashpee. That meeting led to a three year relationship with The Brain Center – a truly graced period in which I learned much and met many wonderful people, no doubt, many of you who are now reading this newsletter. I am ever grateful to the Grace's for the opportunity to have facilitated so many retreats in such a special environment.

Sadly, Dick Grace was called home on January 30th of this year, but what a homecoming it must have been – because Dick was also a person who lived passionately. At his funeral he was described not only as a light, but as a "bonfire" because of his passion for life and the impact he had on so many people. Dick truly dreamed dreams and then made them happen. Though no longer here, Dick continues to inspire me.

Mary Oliver, the poet, said "Tell me. What is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?" Life is short and we are invited to live it with as much gusto and passion as possible. Oliver's idea is hardly new. The ancient Greeks did not list accomplishments and memberships in their obituaries. They were only interested in whether the person lived with passion or not.

It makes no difference whether we have lived our passions up until this point in our lives. The past is past, unchangeable. What does make a difference is whether we live our passions today and tomorrow. Why not take the poet Rumi's advice, and "Let yourself be silently drawn by the stronger pull of what you really love?" Most assuredly, only good things will follow. So, grab that piece of paper and write down *your* passions. Then, find simple ways to live them. I guarantee your soul will take flight, and your spirit will soar!



## Passing It On

*Want to live with more passion and grace? Check out the following books:*

### ***I Will Not Die an Unlived Life: Reclaiming Purpose and Passion***

by Dawna Markova

With tremendous insight and candor, Markova leads the reader on a journey from wounds and rut thinking to wisdom and freedom. Her personal story and lessons learned inspire and teach us how we each can live our own lives to the fullest. Markova poses a very thought-provoking question or two at the end of each chapter that could serve as excellent journaling material.

### ***Excuse Me, Your Life Is Waiting: The Astonishing Power of Feelings***

by Lynn Grabhorn

With the recent wave of excitement over the video, *The Secret*, Grabhorn's book is a natural follow-up and must-read. Through many examples of lived experience and specific steps to take, Grabhorn illuminates *The Law of Attraction* for the ordinary person. With a great deal of earthiness and humor, she motivates and clearly explains how to get what we want in life. This easy-read is an exciting experience in itself!

### ***Heart Steps: Prayers and Declarations for a Creative Life***

by Julia Cameron

Creating the life we want is possible if we are willing to take risks and try new things. In *Heart Steps*, Cameron, the author of *The Artist's Way*, offers a non-traditional form of prayer in the style of affirmations and declarations. These brief but powerful prayers acknowledge us as co-creators with a power greater than ourselves. Carrying one of these prayers in our hearts through the day can empower each of us to become all that we are meant to be.

## Recent Events

### **Gay Couples Retreat Weekend**

In January, I had the privilege of facilitating my first retreat for five gay couples. It turned out to be an affirming experience for all. I was very moved by the warmth, goodness, depth and genuineness of these ten women. The fact that they were so receptive and appreciative confirmed for me the need for such programs in a world that is not always kind to minorities.

It was gratifying to see how much the participants enjoyed and benefited from the weekend. "The retreat exceeded my expectations. It gave us the opportunity to take time out to focus on *us* and our relationship which means so much to us," commented one woman. Another added, "The retreat was very helpful. It helped my partner and me to communicate better." The gratitude of all ten women for the supportive and respectful atmosphere was obvious. As one retreatant said, "We are just people in love...like any other couple." I am humbled and grateful for the opportunity to have assisted them in keeping their love alive.



Catechists from North American Martyrs Parish in Auburn greeting the day with a hike to The Knobb in Woods Hole.

## A Little Soul Food

*It is one thing  
to be given  
life by God.  
It is another thing  
to live it in a way  
that is a tribute to  
the possibilities in life.*

Joan Chittister



*What in your life is calling you?  
When all the noise is silenced,  
the meetings adjourned,  
the lists laid aside,  
and the wild iris blooms  
by itself in the dark forest,  
what still pulls on your soul?  
In the silence between your  
heartbeats hides a summons.*

*Do you hear it?  
Name it, if you must,  
or leave it forever nameless,  
but why pretend it is not there?*

Terma Collection

