

Living with Grace and Passion

A Seasonal Newsletter from Peggy Patenaude
Summer 2010

Coming Up in 2010

Couples Retreat

Follow-up to "Keeping Your Love Alive"
September 18-19
Falmouth, MA

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### Fall Mini-Retreat Series

September 15: Come to the Quiet  
October 20: Autumn Reflections  
November 17: Blessings in Abundance  
December 15: Love Is the Answer  
Sacred Hearts, Wareham, MA

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Keeping Your Love Alive
Couples Retreat ~ October 2
St. Mary's, Jefferson, MA

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**My One Wild and Precious Life**  
**Women's Retreat**  
October 29-31  
La Salette Retreat Center,  
Attleboro, MA

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For information & registration:
Contact Peggy at (508) 548-9149 or
timeoutretreats@comcast.net

One Light Service

On July 11 and August 22
Peggy will be the guest speaker for
the 10AM Sunday Service at
One Light: A Center for Spiritual
Transformation, W. Yarmouth.
www.peaceoncapecod.org

For Peggy's complete calendar
and program descriptions visit
www.timeoutretreats.com.

Peg's Ponderings: Wisdom of the Years

In May, I participated in a women's weekend retreat on the theme of growing older. In preparation for it, each woman was asked to write a "legacy letter" to someone of the younger generation with the intention of passing on our wisdom. We were asked to choose one event of our lives that had a major impact on us, describe the event and the lessons it provided, and then express our hopes for whomever we wrote.

Without doubt, this assignment proved to be a highlight of the retreat for me. Sharing my wisdom and dreams for my sister's three sons ages 22-33 felt good. The exercise not only helped me articulate what life has taught me, but it became an endeavor of love. I felt passionate about what I had to say and in spite of a bit of awkwardness, I took the risk and mailed my letter to each nephew.

The whole experience was powerful and has prompted me to ponder my responsibility to teach and to mentor. The African proverb, *It takes a village to raise a child*, made popular by Hilary Clinton in 1996, holds meaning that is perennial. Especially in a culture where families are fragmented and strained, other caring and wise adults have the opportunity to step up and support parents struggling to raise their children. We all have wisdom to pass on, even if only by example.

Though wisdom is often associated with elders, we all have the capacity to be wise. *It's in every one of us to be wise. Find your heart; open up both your eyes* go the lyrics to a David Pomeranz song. Unlike book knowledge, wisdom comes from reflection on our lived experience. Life is full of lessons if we but stay awake, pay attention and have the courage to allow our hearts to be penetrated. Life itself is our classroom and we can all be lifelong learners . . . and even teachers.

So, what about you? What wisdom have you gained over the years? What life lessons would you most want to pass on? Does anyone need your guiding presence? Slow down and take some time out this summer to reflect on your life experiences. Savor and trust the wisdom they offer. Maybe you'll end up writing a legacy letter too.



Passing It On

The Wisdom of America's Elders www.wisdomofelders.com

Senior advocate Harris Sherline says, "Most of America's seniors have a great deal to say about living and life and the important lessons they have learned on their individual journeys. All too often we are ignored or passed by, in spite of our experience and knowledge. Seniors are, without a doubt, America's most underutilized asset." Sherline gives seniors the opportunity to share their wisdom by inviting them to visit his website. You might want to contact him yourself at hrs100@verizon.net and join in this project.

A Walk on the Beach by Joan Anderson

Best selling author of *A Year by the Sea* and *An Unfinished Marriage* shares her serendipitous meeting and ensuing friendship with Joan Erikson, wife of the famous psychoanalyst, Erik Erikson, in this moving memoir. At a time of struggle and transition, Anderson discovered a true mentor in an elderly but vibrant and wise Erikson. A Reading Group Companion with nine discussion questions is included.

A Mother's Legacy: Your Life Story in Your Own Words by Thomas Nelson

Need a guide to help you leave a legacy to your children? This journal, designed to be your own memoir upon completion, consists of 12 chapters that include questions with space to write personal answers. Questions address a wide-range of topics such as childhood memories, family traditions, favorite people, life lessons, dreams, love, marriage, success, spirituality. *A Father's Legacy* and *A Grandparent's Legacy* are also available and all three journals can be found on www.amazon.com.

Special Events in the Fall

September 10-12: "In God's Womb: Your Soul Journey with God" led by Edwina Gateley at Genesis Spiritual Life Center, Westfield, MA. Information: 413-562-3627. Registration: <http://www.genesiscenter.us/registration.html>.

September 25: "Embracing the Heart of Compassion" led by Joyce Rupp at One Light in West Yarmouth, MA. Contact Kevin York at 508-428-6248 or on-cape@comcast.net or visit www.peaceoncapecod.org.

October 24: "Being All You Can Be" with Sarah Doherty at One Light in West Yarmouth. Contact Kevin York at 508-428-6248 or on-cape@comcast.net.

Recent Events

Live, Laugh, Love: May 4, 2010 Sacred Hearts Retreat Center, Wareham, MA

What a joy it was to spend the day with the 23 men and women who came for a unique experience of living, laughing and loving! The Bouchard's, pictured on the right with Fr. Stan Kolasa, celebrated their 40th anniversary on retreat.



Jubilee Women's Retreat: May 14-16, 2010 Falmouth, MA

My "Jubilee Group" of six women has been gathering for 13 years to share spirituality and friendship. Each of us had a hand in facilitating our spring retreat, "The Gift of Years: Growing Older Gracefully," based on Joan Chittister's book of the same title.



A Little Soul Food



*A man came to Buddha
and asked him,
"Are you the Messiah?"
"No," answered Buddha.
"Then are you a saint?"
"No."
"Then are you a teacher?"
the student persisted.
"No."
"Then what are you?"
asked the student,
exasperated.
"I am awake,"
Buddha answered.*

*He is happiest
who hath power
to gather wisdom
from a flower.*

~ Mary Howitt



*Be generative.
Pass on what you know.
In sharing
there is real delight.*

~ Joan Erikson.