



Meet Sandy - February Woman of the Month

The day started like any other when Sandy picked up the local neighborhood newspaper and started reading an article about the Trauma Intervention Program (TIP). Before she finished the paragraph and before she knew it, she was on the phone volunteering. TIP works with police and rescue workers as well as hospitals to provide comfort and support to people who find themselves in the throes of sudden tragedy.

So what **does** Sandy do? When her pager goes off, she drops everything she is doing, jumps in the car and goes to the site of the tragedy. She is there to give comfort and aid to the family and friends of people who have died suddenly, the wives, the husbands, the mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers, sons and daughters who just found out that their loved one was killed in a car crash or murdered or died from a sudden heart attack.

In the fourteen months that Sandy has been volunteering (by the way she had never volunteered for anything before), she has spent Christmas with relatives of a man who died suddenly from a heart attack, she sat with a little boy at a homicide scene helping him to deal with the shock and fear by using the coloring book and crayons she carries in her emergency response bag.

Sandy says “You just go with empathy and compassion. You’re there to help a fellow citizen go through one of the worst times of their life.”

What she does can be emotionally draining but Sandy says that she has returned from every call knowing that she has made someone’s nightmare a little less scary. “You come away feeling that you helped, that you made a difference. It humbles you”

Sunflower Hill salutes Sandy for her courage, caring and compassionate spirit!

TIP is a national program founded 21 years ago in San Diego by Wayne Fortin. Sandy is with TIP chapter that works with Portland, South Portland and Gorham, ME. It is a program of Community Counseling Center and is the product of a partnership between Community Counseling Center and the Junior League of Portland. To volunteer for this area you may call, 207.874.1030 and speak with Lynn Shattuck. To find a chapter in your area or start an affiliate, go online to <http://www.tipnational.org/>