



Meet Sharon – Woman of the Month for May 2007

Sharon is a Registered Nurse currently working in Hospice. In addition to working as a Hospice nurse, Sharon volunteers her time working behind the scenes to support those who are struggling with grief and loss. She works at fundraisers and appreciation dinners. She has also volunteered as a group facilitator for grieving teens and for families who have survived suicide. For everyone who comments, “how can you do that work, it must be so depressing?” Sharon has this explanation for you.....

It was more than thirty years ago that six year old Kevin, the son of a very close friend, died unexpectedly. In the days, weeks, and months following Kevin’s death Sharon spent many hours with his family. She witnessed Kevin’s eight year old sister, his mother and his father struggle with their loss, each in their own way. The pain was obvious; what to say to the family, elusive. Unfortunately, open discussion about anger, guilt, depression, loss, and grief were not a part of this family’s mourning. Sharon certainly wasn’t willing to open the dialogue; after all, talking about Kevin might remind them he was gone!

The lessons learned from that experience would not be evident to Sharon for many years. However, once acknowledged, they are never ending. Whenever she works with families who are caring for loved ones nearing end of life, or with those who have lost a loved one, the memory of Kevin’s family and the indescribable pain they endured are never far from her thoughts; nor is the hope that she and the Hospice team can give to others the support she was not able to give to Kevin’s family so many years ago.

Her tribute to Kevin and his family for the gift they gave to her? Every year in December, at the town commons in Gardiner, a luminary glows with Kevin’s name. It is placed there with hundreds of others, all in memory of loved ones lost and all by people whose lives have been forever changed by the person who has died.

Sunflower Hill salutes Sharon for her caring, loving gift to others.