

NEWSLETTER

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- AGM date 14 March 2009
- Advocacy Training for new volunteers 29th April 2009

NEW YEAR GATHERING AND THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Hello and welcome to the first Oxfordshire Befriending Network newsletter of the New Year. Our volunteer and befriending partner's New Year gathering took place in Headington on 24 January.

We had a record turn-out this year with approximately 45 volunteers and befriending partners present. The afternoon felt warm, welcoming and connecting. Over an abundance of tea and cake, many creative spirited volunteers entertained us with poems,

stories, songs and tunes. The heart of befriending was shining brightly that afternoon.

Soon it will be time for our Annual General Meeting on 14 March at the Headington Community Centre.

If you have any queries about the AGM or want help to get there please get in touch with us at the office.

REGISTER YOUR INTEREST

We have approached SPECAL ('Specialized Early Care for Alzheimer's'), a local charitable organisation with an

innovative approach to the care of people with dementia, to arrange a bespoke training for the staff and volunteers of OBN.

The training would involve an introduction to the Photograph Album, a tool to understand dementia

REGISTER YOUR INTEREST

The proposed day is Monday 27 April from 9.30 a.m.- 2 p.m. at Burford where SPECAL is based.

Are you interested?

If so, please register by emailing Linda on linda.ridgway@oxonbefriending.net or telephoning 01865 791781 x23 by 16 March.

Volunteers may be asked to make a donation to the cost of running this day.

*Link up with a
volunteer*

DEATH AND DYING COURSE

Volunteer Nora Machin has enrolled for the Open University's course on Death and Dying that was advertised in an earlier OBN newsletter.

If any other volunteers have signed up for the course Nora would like to link up with you.

You can contact her on nmachin@waitrose.com.

OVER 50S DANCE

Ex-befriending volunteer Hilary Kneale is running weekly 5 Rhythms dance classes at the Corner (East Oxford Community Centre), every Wednesday from 11.45 a.m. – 12.45 p.m. for anyone over 50.

“Bring out the dancer in you! There are no steps to learn, however you feel, whatever your age, whatever shape you are in, you are welcome!

Each of us moves differently, come and step into the adventure of your own dance.” For further information contact Hilary on 07799 694546.

REMEMBERING

We were saddened to hear of the death of Wendy Harris, Befriending Partner of West Oxon volunteer Cheryl Kwilas. Wendy had been diagnosed with lung cancer some 18 months ago, she also lived with emphysema. Despite these serious conditions Sri Lankan-born Wendy had remained active and

demonstrated an evident love for life until the final weeks when she was cared for at Freeland Nursing Home. Despite only being introduced to Wendy in the summer, she and Cheryl had felt an immediate connection and a strong bond had formed between them. We are grateful that Cheryl was able to

offer both practical and emotional support during Wendy's final months. Our thoughts are with her and Wendy's sons at this sad time.

REMEMBERING

Joyce and Gerald Merrett have been known by OBN since 2003, and have had three befriending volunteers during that time. In January 2009 Gerald's life came to an end. Gerald spent the last few months of his life being looked after in a care home, prior to

this Joyce was Gerald's main carer. Both Joyce and Gerald have been befriended by Valerie Jones since June 2007. Joyce and Valerie have formed a strong befriending relationship, with Valerie 'stepping up' the support during Gerald's last few months of

life. Joyce and Valerie will continue their befriending journey for the time being. Thank you Valerie for your heartfelt befriending

"To catch the reader's attention, place an interesting sentence or quote from the story here."

Oxfordshire Neurological Alliance

Do you or someone you know, love or care for someone with a neurological condition? Then please alert them to the establishment of the Oxfordshire Neurological Alliance (ONA). The ONA aims to be an umbrella organisation which plans to lobby

and inform key bodies such as the Primary Care Trusts, local and national politicians and the public regarding the main generic issues affecting people living with a range of neurological illnesses. Two general meetings are planned for 22 January and 4

March from 2 – 4 p.m. in Northcourt Hall, Northcourt Road, Abingdon OX14 1NS prior to the ONA launch at the end of March. For more information email open-day@msoxford.org.uk or ring 01865 725410.

LOOKING AFTER ME

If you are a 'significant carer' then this 6 week free course is for you. The course will run on six Tuesdays from 3 March to 24 March and from 7 to 14 April (excluding 31 March) The course starts at 10.30 a.m. and includes a free lunch. The day finishes at 2 p.m. and cover for caring and travel

expenses will be paid for by Oxfordshire County Council. The course aims to help carers organise their lives, reduce stress, improve their own health and reduce feelings of guilt. If you are interested contact The Oxfordshire Carer's Forum on 01993 706543.

You can email them at

admin@oxoncarersforum.org.uk

or write to them at Oxfordshire Carer's Forum, Freepost (SCE9038) Witney OX28 4GZ.

Lunchtime concert at the Jacqueline du Pre Music Building

LUNCHTIME CONCERTS FOR PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA AND THEIR CARERS

The next concert is by the OSJ Ensemble conducted by John Lubbock on Wednesday 25 February 2009 at 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. AND 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Jacqueline du Pre

Music Building, St Hilder's College, Cowley Place, Oxford OX4 1DY.

Admission to either one of the concerts is free for day care

centres, carers, stroke patients and local charities with links to dementia but reservation is essential.

NEWS ROUND-UP

Urban Garden

The OBN's small urban garden in front of the office is in need of some tender loving care. Would you like to spend a couple of hours giving this area some seasonal attention? If so please contact Ally by email: Ally.stott@oxonbefriending.net or 01865 791781.

Back Issues

For new volunteers, or for anyone else that wants to, back issues of the news letter can be found on our website www.oxonbefriending.net

Advocacy Training

Date 29th April Advocacy training for new volunteers. Contact Jan Penrose at the OBN

office

Multi-faith Calendar Dates

9 March – Mawlid-al-Nabi, commemorates the birth of the prophet Muhammed - Muslim.

20 March – Spring equinox, a turn in the seasons when day and night are of equal length, new life emerges as the earth awakens - Pagan.

The Oxfordshire
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The Oxfordshire Befriending Network aims to improve the quality of life for those with life-threatening and terminal illnesses. We do this by providing trained volunteers in the capacity of befriender, advocate or counsellor to give support in the home, the hospice or the hospital, For more information about our services, to make a referral , to help us raise funds or to find out about our volunteering opportunities,

contact us

enquiries@oxonbefriending.net

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