

It is with great pride and pleasure that I present to you our Newsletter for 2024

Our mission at Stephy's Place is to provide a safe place for people who have lost a loved one, to share their love story with others who "get it". While friends and family can be loving and supportive, there is no match for sitting with others who have walked or who are walking the same path. Our group facilitators are trained to "companion" the bereaved. Our hope is that participants will eventually navigate through this journey called life, holding the joy and sorrow together in their hearts at the same time. We remind our participants: we do not choose the "trials" that will be thrown into our path however, we can make a choice on how to navigate them. We are honored that so many have chosen Stephy's Place to help navigate their path.

In September of 2024, we celebrated our 9th year. I look back and can't believe the growth we have experienced. We are doing God's work here and he presents himself always in all ways!

Stephy's Place is one of a kind, literally. There is no other grief facility around that offers consistent on-going peer support for those adults who have lost a loved one. Participants at Stephy's Place are provided caring support from their first phone call or email. Stephy's Place prides ourselves in the way we "Companion our Bereaved". We do not lead or follow, rather we walk side by side with our participants.

We also realize that we would not be able to provide this needed service, if it wasn't for the kindness and generosity of all who give to us. There are many ways to give, and while monetary donations are key to our success, the gift of time & talent are just as important. Our donors and our volunteers alike are beyond measure. They are our greatest gifts.

I thank you in advance for taking the time to read this newsletter.

*Sheila Martello, Founding Director,
Certified Grief Services Provider*

2024 at a glance



- Continuing to serve 500 people per week
- Hosted a Gratitude Gathering Dinner for all Volunteers
- Lori Jarck received her certificate in Grief from The Center for Loss and Life Transition
- Groups were invited to participate in a wellness hike hosted by Monmouth County Parks & Rec
- Our Director joined the grief & loss committee of the Development Hub of Monmouth County
- Represented Self Care for Grieving Students at the Henry Hudson Mental Health Awareness Day
- Held our annual Mourning Walk on Sunday, Sept 10 at Seven Presidents Park
- Stephy's Place was the beneficiary of several events:
9/11 Hockey Outing | Sip & Shop J. McLaughlin, Rumson
"Inside-Out" presented by In Good Company | Rock Night @ The Red Bank Elks | The Rumson Firemen's Fair - Dining Staff - "Our Fair Ladies"



Ways to Give



- Choose Stephy's Place as the Beneficiary of your event
- In lieu of sending flowers make a donation in memory of someone who has passed
- Corporate Matching Gifts
- Recurring Gift Support
- Planned Giving
- Annual Giving
- Appreciated Stock
- Charitable Remainder Trust
- Donations in honor or memory of someone

If you have any questions or need more information about any of the ways to give, please visit www.stephysplace.org/sp/Donate/

IT TAKES THE HEARTS & MINDS OF MANY

Executive Board Members

President: Sheila Martello

Vice President & Director of Media and Public Relations: Patricia Wotton

Secretary: Trish Straine-MacGregor

Treasurer: Tara Butler

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Megan Pelino

Director of Fundraising:

Kerry Batting

Director of Special Events:

Kathy Cesario

Director of Special Projects:

Pete Jarck

Director of Resources:

Patricia Wotton

Legal Advisor:

Christinta Hardman O'Neal

Mental Health Advisor:

Dr. Jean Hager, DSW, LCSW, LCADC, Clinical Social Work/Therapist

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Administrative Assistant

Mairead Clifford,

Administrative Assistant

Ashley Hadar, Social Media Representative

Lori Jarck, Suicide Prevention/ Education Representative

Mary Magee,

Administrative Assistant

Barbara Mattone,

Office Manager

Office Caregivers

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Tara Butler

Toni Demeo

Christine Fernandes

Karen Gelzeiler

Lynn Karinja

Darrah Kenny

Tracy Shallcross

Madeline Tripodi

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Mary Alcock

Kerry Batting

Sarah Blades

Karen Britton

Suzanne Berger

Kim Calafiore

Maddie Caram

Michelle Caravella

Kathy Cesario

Nicole Cooper

Christin Cosimano

Lou D'Alotto

Rupa Das Gupta

Lori DeLeonardis

Joan Denton

Christina Durney

Brian Ericson

Raquel Falotico

Dianna Farrell

Dawn Gambacorto

Kristine Gunningham

Dr. Jean Hager, DSW,

LCSW, LCADC, Clinical

Social Work/Therapist

Nancy Hamilton

Jill Harrington

Angela Harris

Amanda Hintelman

MB Hodgkiss

Eileen Hocy

Ed Holmes

Tony Ianaconne

Lori Jarck

Meredith Kasun

Kevin Keelen

Denise Kelleher

Debbie Lada

Carol Laino

Janice Lawler

Marc Lobell

Claudia Lucey

Trish Straine-MacGregor

Sheila Martello

Jessica Martinsen

John McManus

Dan Mendoza

Lucy Milan

Katie Morgan

Jenn Munson

Felicia Natale

Debby Palumbo

Cindy Panck

Marilyn Pozzutto

Megan Pelino

Lisa Purdon

Maureen Raisch

Joelyn Rios

Cheyenne Santoro

Judy Schurgin

Bette Scott

Karen Shearly

Jeanette Sheffer

Alexandra Smith

Pat Swaroop

Lori Wilson

Liam Winters

Wellness Caregivers

Angela Harris, Meditation

Specialist

Dr. Jean Hager, DSW, LCSW,

LCADC,

Clinical Social Work/Therapist

Retirees

Thank you for your service to Stephy's Place

Denise Gebrian

Marilyn Halverson

Nancy Neidemeyer

Christine Reynolds

What we offer

At Stephy's Place, we offer peer grief support. We are not therapists. We are trained grief support group facilitators that have experienced loss. We have found that healing in "Community" having a place to sit with others that "get it" can be truly beneficial.

Our social media presence, as well as our monthly meditation classes, monthly written reflections and resource center for therapist referrals are a welcomed addition to one's mourning process.

Groups offered:

- Loss of Spouse
- Loss of Parent
- Child loss to fentanyl poisoning
- Loss of Child
- Loss due to Divorce
- Loss due to addiction
- Loss of Sibling
- Suicide loss survivors

Our Volunteer Spotlight shines on Raquel Falotico

At Stephy's Place, we are incredibly grateful for the dedication and generosity of our volunteers. This year, we are shining a spotlight on Raquel "Rocky" Falotico, whose passion for our mission goes far beyond donating time. Since 2021, Rocky has not only been a devoted volunteer but has also inspired other to give back. She has rallied a group of women known as The "Our Fair Ladies" from the dining room at the Fair Haven Fireman's Fair to donate their hard-earned tips in excess of \$4000 each year to our organization - an act of kindness that has made a significant impact on Stephy's Place. *Thank you Rocky!*

Special mentions

- | | |
|------------------|-----------------|
| Eileen Luby | Jill Harrington |
| Mary Fitzgerald | Kerry Batting |
| Joann Westgate | Jaime Moreno |
| Mairead Clifford | Patty Pomp |
| Jeanette Sheffer | Tony Iannacone |

These people have given that little but extra to Stephy's Place this year and deserve the recognition. We truly appreciate them. Whether it is their donation of time, talent or treasure or simply stepping up when needed, their impact is felt in so many ways. Thank you!!!

Most Distinguished Charitable Supporters

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| 9/11 Hockey Outing | Cathleen Dell'Anno | Guaranteed Landscaping | The Luby Family Charitable Foundation | The Navesink Foundation | Richard J. Dell'Anno Family Foundation |
| Geralyn Behring | The Devlin Family Foundation - Nancy Devlin | In Good Company | Mary Magee | Navesink Wealth Management | The Rockwell Foundation |
| Carlson Family Foundation | John & Liz Devlin | Denise Kelleher | Mission Belles | Debby Palumbo | Rosemarie Rolan |
| Community Outreach Group, Middletown | Jon Paul Dorney | Darrah & Joe Kenney | Christy & Richard Morford | Frank & Kathy Pezzuti | Stelair Designs |
| Bobby & Lucille Composto | Joe Ercolino | Barbara & Joseph Liberi | Heather & Jim Mulvihill | Tom Rapp, <i>CLU, ChFC, MRFC, AEP</i> | Madeline Tripodi |
| Betty Cortese | Ken Feldman | The Lighthouse Financial Advisors | Nancy Spofford Yerkes Foundation | Red Bank Elks | Mario Venancio |
| Cups & Cakes | Mary Fitzgerald | Eileen O'Hern Luby | | | Ralph Verdiglione |

What's happening in 2025

- Gratitude Bowling Gathering - January 22
- Wellness Day - Nurturing your Grieving Self - February 22
- Rumson St. Patrick's Day Parade - March 9
- Create Your Way to Calm - March 21
- Shred Event - May 17
- Speaking Event - Legatus - April
- A Mourning Walk - Sept 7
- Dr. Wolfelt: "Understanding Your Grief" - October 1
- Dr. Wolfelt: "The Art of Companionship" *specifically for those who companion the bereaved* - October 2

Fundraisers

Stephy's Place is honored to be the beneficiary of the proceeds raised by others' events. We have been honored to receive funds from Sip & Shops, memorial runs/walks and donations made in memoriam. Of course we are thrilled to receive donations from private or family foundations and individuals. It is all truly appreciated.

At Stephy's Place, we serve 500 people per week with a volunteer staff of almost 100. Our commitment is to our participants, to be present to them in a safe and welcoming environment. It doesn't allow much time for fundraising. Several years ago, it was decided to put all of our efforts into one major fundraiser per year. This event is our Annual Mourning Walk. It is an absolutely glorious morning that never disappoints. We have always experienced a beautiful butterfly release, a spectacular sunrise (even when it's cloudy in nearby areas) and all the unexpected "gifts" our loved ones seem to send to us. It is imperative that this event raise the majority of our operating budget. Please join us this year on **Sunday, September 7th at Seven President's Park.**

Please consider sponsoring us and our participants by walking and or donating. Information on how to get involved will be on our website. We need your help! A special thank you to Geryl Behring, Dr. Jean Hager, Pure Hockey, John E. Day Funeral Home, Team Vienna - SUDC Awareness, Wooley- Boglioli Funeral Home/Holmdel Funeral Home - Bill Boglioli, Brennan's Deli, Rumson, Phoenix Rails, Kathy & Frank Pezzuti, The Jimmy Straine Invitational, Tom Rapp, Mario Venancio, and Denise Kelleher who have sponsored every year since inception!!



Save the Date:

Dr. Wolfelt, *world renowned Grief Counselor and author*, will be speaking on behalf of Stephy's Place on Oct.1 and 2, 2025