

Promise of a New Dawn Shines Through Mosaic



More than 100 aspiring artists helped Pam Watroba create the mosaic piece titled “A New Dawn,” a symbolic message of hope that reminds all who see it that there is promise in every new day.

A therapeutic art workshop originally designed for campers at Camp New Dawn evolved into a more universal message of hope and healing for children, teens and adults grieving the death of a loved one.

Camp New Dawn is an annual summer retreat offered through the Compass Regional Hospice Hope & Healing Center. The children, teens and families who participate honor the memory of their departed loved ones and learn healthy coping skills.

One of the new therapeutic workshops offered to the children and teen campers in 2016 entailed creating a mosaic, a work of art created by placing together broken pieces of colorful tiles, glass and other recycled materials.

“The mosaic workshop offers lessons about grief that they can take away from the experience,” explains Rhonda Knotts, Compass Regional Hospice bereavement coordinator and Camp New Dawn director. “Before they are added to the mosaic the broken pieces don’t appear to hold any value. People who are grieving often feel the same way about their feelings of brokenness. By creating the mosaic campers begin to see that something beautiful and meaningful can come out of their experience of loss.”

When Rhonda and the Camp New Dawn committee got the idea for the mosaic workshop they needed an artist to help them design the experience. Rhonda remembered seeing the stunning mosaic work created by Pam Watroba, a nurse and clinical manager for Compass Regional Hospice. When asked to spearhead the therapeutic art workshop Pam was thrilled to be able to combine her artistic talents with her passion for helping families through the hospice experience.

“When Rhonda asked me to help with the mosaic workshop I had a vision that encompassed the serenity of our Eastern Shore and the figurative meaning behind the name of Camp New Dawn,” Pam explains. “The promise in each new day symbolized by a sunrise over the Chesapeake Bay came to mind.”

The vision for the mosaic titled “A New Dawn” was not quite finished after the 97 Camp New Dawn artists chose their materials and placed them into the template Pam had designed. Rhonda suggested that the adults who participated in the HALOS (Healing After a Loved One’s Suicide) support group and teens from another support group put the finishing touches on the mosaic.

“Including participants from other Hope & Healing Center support groups allowed the mosaic to become a more universal message of hope,” Pam explains. “What we were creating was reminder that there is promise in every new dawn.”

Within the mosaic are 97 small pearls placed in the reeds, representing each of the children who attended Camp New Dawn in 2016. The pearls surrounding the sun signify everyone who rises each morning to a life full of purpose thanks to what they learn at the Hope & Healing Center. The red glass heart symbolizes the love and support that surrounds these individuals. A small watch denotes that it takes time to heal. The butterflies represent the members of the Hope & Healing Center professionals, who work tirelessly at Camp New Dawn and throughout the year. Each artist who contributed to the project signed the back of the mosaic.

“After witnessing firsthand the dedication and compassion that Rhonda has for those she works with I wanted to add something special for her in the mosaic,” Pam says. “The dragonfly ruling over the reeds, symbolizes Rhonda, who, along with her team of counselors and volunteers, has built the Hope & Healing Center programs into what they are today.”



To share this message of hope more widely a package of 10 note cards featuring the mosaic will be available for purchase for \$20. To purchase, contact Kenda Leager, Development Officer, 443-262-4106, kleager@compassregionalhospice.org.

For more information about programs and services available through the Hope & Healing Center, call 443-262-4100 and visit www.compassregionalhospice.org/hopeandhealing.