

International Harp Therapy Program



Winter Newsletter 2014

*"To play a wrong note is insignificant;
to play without passion is inexcusable."*

-- Ludwig van Beethoven

*Congratulations to ALix
Colin...winner of the IHTP's Most
Outstanding CD of 2013!!!*



Each year, the IHTP selects one person to feature as the winner of the most outstanding CD of the year. Alix Colin took that award this year! Please take a moment to view a youtube video of the wonderful work that Alix is doing with new mothers each week...and also a beautiful traditional Christmas carol from Belgium (Wallonia)...filmed by her daughter Carole.

Congratulations, Alix!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqXJLgt26Q>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KSPmy5qIvkM>



Share Your News With Us!

Happy 2014 everyone! Hope all of you had a wonderful holiday season and are out in the world sharing your gift of the harp...or sailing with ease through the amazing IHTP program toward certification...or celebrating your recent graduation from the International Harp Therapy Program! This newsletter is a way for prep

students, current students, finishing students and graduates of the IHTP to keep each other informed, connected, inspired and educated on what is happening out in the world as we spread the benefits of harp therapy.

Please share your stories and experiences as harp therapy practitioners or students with us! If your activities have been featured in recent media such as newspaper articles, radio, television or online stories, and you would like to share with your fellow IHTP members, please submit your information to me, Beth Brown, at

properprophetmusic@gmail.com or

to Jennifer Tucker, my right hand “wing-woman” at

jltucker@mac.com. Also, if anyone

has any helpful tips on fundraising, acquiring grants, harp practice or harp education, or any other topics of interest or inspiration pertaining to our work as harp therapy practitioners, please share with us!

Anyone interested in writing an article for the newsletter please contact me with a brief email for

consideration to be included in the IHTP newsletter. We really want to hear from you and support you in what you are creating for yourself, your community and the world through harp therapy!

As a finishing student, I have been really practicing patience, awareness, grace, compassion for myself, and courage as I continue toward my certification. I consider it such a blessing to have found the IHTP and to be on this sacred path with you all as a “bridge builders” through our gift of music to those who are suffering, in pain, or transitioning. Here’s to an incredible new year! May every string that we pluck make a profound difference in someone’s life. And, as always, thank you, Christina Tourin, for all that you continue to do in spreading harp therapy across the planet!

With love & gratitude...Beth



Featured IHTP Graduate:

Amanda Odish is Using gofundme.com to Raise Money for a Rainbow of Sound Collection. Let's Help Her!

Hello! My name is Amanda Odish, founder and owner of Helping Harps and Certified Therapeutic Harp Practitioner. I play therapeutic harp music & sing at various facilities around San Diego. I have experience playing for Alzheimer's patients, the actively dying, and even for babies in the NICU. This is part of what I consider my life purpose and soul mission—to provide therapeutic music as a relaxing, beautiful modality for soothing physical, emotional, and mental pain. I also seek to utilize harp music as an educational tool to promote social interaction, increase cognitive abilities, and to foster pure joyfulness in both children & the elderly.

Sharing therapeutic music as a service to humanity is something very close to my heart. I began singing classical music at 5 years old and currently sing many traditional Celtic songs, lullabies, 1950's classics, Christmas favorites, and an array of patriotic songs with my harp. I also improvise through the different "modes of music" that I learned through my training at the International Harp Therapy Program. These improvisations help me connect in a therapeutic context to each individual's unique needs by responding musically to their emotional, physical, and mental states. This service is about promoting relaxation, safety, comfort, and compassionate interaction through music.

One of my favorite ways to serve others is through group harp therapy, where groups of seniors or children actually get the opportunity to play the harps themselves! I got a taste of these wonderful experiences through my time as an intern with Apreva Hospice. Therapeutic harp interns from around the world and I played multi-colored harps for Alzheimer's and non-Dementia residents at different facilities. When they received their harps and the instructions on how to hold and play them, their faces lit up with joy. These experiences solidified my motivation to one day obtain these multi-colored harps for their continued use with children and the elderly here in San Diego.

The reason for raising this money is to purchase 6 small harps (Harpsicles) and 6 cases for each harp so that I can carry them around to all of the facilities. Each small harp costs \$399 and weighs only 4 pounds (thank heavens because I am a little woman!). Six harps cost \$2394 and each case costs \$85, totaling \$510. My goal is to begin by offering therapeutic & educational harp programs to small groups of Dementia patients, along with other seniors, in San Diego's facilities. It would be a dream come true to be able to offer this service to them!

Also, I would be offering educational programs to teach young children in preschools, elementary schools, etc. how to play the harp. Music has been shown to have amazing benefits on all levels for the youth and my hope is to inspire children to play music and have fun! Many children do not even get the opportunity to see a harp, let alone play one, so it would be phenomenal to give these children the chance to make beautiful music! The activities we do when we are young have an impact on the rest of our lives. It would be amazing if even one of these children became inspired to play the harp as their life path!

<http://www.gofundme.com/HelpingHarps> Please click on link to help Amanda raise funds for her Rainbow of Sound collection!

For more information about on Amanda and Helping Harps, please visit her website at www.amandaodish.com



Helpful Harp Tips, Hints, Inspiring Links...etc.

Check out this is a wonderful video on The Miracle of 528 Hz Solfeggio and Fibonacci numbers: <http://youtu.be/9oSePXRbW9o>

Tami Simon interviews Joan Halifax, who is an anthropologist, Buddhist teacher, and the author of *The Fruitful Darkness*, *Shamanic Voyages*, and *The Human Encounter with Death*, co-written with Dr. Stanislav Grof. In 1994, Joan created a project called "Being with Dying" to help health care professionals learn how to care for dying patients in a compassionate, mindful fashion. In this interview, Joan speaks about the powerful insights on living that she has learned from her years of caring for the dying—including the greatest gift that we can give another person. Click on the link below to listen to interview or download a transcript of the interview.



<http://www.soundstrue.com/weeklywisdom/?source=podcast&p=3340&category=IATE&version=full>

Non-profit organization **Music & Memory** is committed to creating and providing personalized playlists using iPods and related digital audio systems that enable those struggling with Alzheimer's, dementia and other cognitive and physical challenges to reconnect with the world through music-triggered memories. Here a **Music & Memory's** article on bringing iPod's and headphones for personalized music to Alzheimer and dementia residents of the Schlegel Village in Ontario, Canada.

<http://musicandmemory.org/2013/06>

Dr. Diane Schneider is doing wonderful work with the vibrations of the harp. Please take a look at her website at <http://www.harpofhope.com/>

Want to give your harp a little more magic? Light up your harp with lights! Click below for the link!

http://www.harpkit.com/mm5/merchant.mvc?Screen=CTGY&Category_Code=harplights

Harp Talk Radio...yes, there is a harp podcast out there! Here's the link: <http://harptalk.podomatic.com>

Ahhhh...the didgeridoo! Here's an interesting video on "Sleep Apnea relieved by playing Didgeridoo"... <http://youtu.be/qxDYY3xWnlg>

"The World Sends Us Garbage: We Send Back Music"

<http://www.forbiddenknowledgetv.com/videos/independent-film/the-world-sends-us-garbagewe-send-back-music.html>

This is a wonderful article on music and medicine. It even notes the importance of "musical prescription" based on the patient's heart rate, respirations and vital signs.

<http://spirtualityhealth.com/articles/playing-heartstrings>

Harpist Rhett Barnwell was asked: **What is something about our attitude towards ourselves, or harping in general, that we may all need to know?**

"People will forgive mistakes, and most of the time, they don't even notice. However, they immediately recognize a lifeless, heartless, dry performance. I'd much rather hear someone play with passion and perhaps miss a few notes here and there, than hear a note-perfect performance that was devoid of life and spirit. As I always tell my students, "Play it like you mean it!" Rhett Barnwell's website is: www.seraphimmusic.com

IHTP Family News

Harp Adventures in Ireland

by Jayne Demakos



This past June, I found myself on a plane headed for Ireland. For this, I credit my work in hospice where the lessons I learn weekly of the precariousness and preciousness of life amplified my dream of travel and a sense of ‘carpe diem’. Ireland. I’ve always wanted to go to Ireland. With the blessings of my husband and with my small harp in tow, I was on a plane to Shannon Airport.

Ireland is a land full of music and I joyfully participated in pub sessions and gatherings where music making was as natural as eating. My itinerary included six days at Glenstal Abbey soaking up the Gregorian Chant sung at Hours; the small coastal town of Doolin, where every evening pubs overflowed with music; and the magical island of Inis Mor, the lapping waters and ancient stones inspiring my own poetry and song. The highlight of my trip, however, was my visit to LauraLynn Children’s Hospice, in Dublin.

I had contacted LauraLynn Hospice before my trip, inquiring about volunteering my services as a Certified Therapeutic Harpist on behalf of my agency, Hospicare and Palliative Care Services of Tompkins County. I was met with an enthusiastic “Yes!” from Thomas Bagley, the hospice Chaplain who, upon my arrival, rolled out the red carpet for me, giving me a grand tour of the campus and talking me through their history and programs.

LauraLynn House is situated on the southern outskirts of Dublin. The campus is a handful of buildings devoted entirely to the children and their families. There is also a large spectacular playground with colorful, soft asphalt and every plaything to accommodate any handicap. The campus also has fountains, gardens, areas of sanctuary for parents, apartments for families and caregivers, an examining room with a light show of stars on the ceiling, stuffed animals everywhere, and of course, a beautiful, big hearted staff caring for the children.

The LauraLynn Children’s Hospice is the only children’s hospice in Ireland. It was founded by Jane and Brendan McKenna who lost both of their daughters, 4-year old Laura and 15-year old Lynn, to illness. LauraLynn House is their namesake and legacy, offering medical care and support to many of Ireland’s children in need of hospice services. Much broader than hospice in the United States where people are locked into a six month terminal diagnosis limit, LauraLynn Hospice serves children with what is described as “life limiting conditions”. LauraLynn offers transitional care, respite care for children, as well as for their parents and siblings. Home support, medical and emergency care, sibling support groups and activities, end of life care and bereavement care are also offered.

After my tour, and brief, but thorough introduction, with my harp strapped around me, I was guided to a circle of children ranging from three to eight years old who were neither mobile nor verbal, but who were certainly alert and curious. I moved from bed to bed (or wheel chair) and each responded in turn to the harp, the vibration of the strings, the soothing sounds of both the harp and my voice. The room became very still. It was clear the children were responding to the presence of the harp, which seemed to be calming agitation or stimulating movement, bringing smiles or just eye contact and following my navigation around the room. This was followed by another session with an older group of children where I played some Irish tunes I had learned for my trip, provoking smiles and laughter among the children.

As I left the hospice in the late afternoon to catch my tram back to Dublin center, I felt that not only had I made a friend in LauraLynn Hospice, but that my own agency was now connected through this visit. What better way to visit a country than to have such an exchange as I had had this day at LauraLynn in Dublin? It is really a win-win of giving and receiving.

Here are some recent words from LauraLynn Chaplain, Thomas Bagley:

"We were very privileged to have Jayne come and visit us at LauraLynn, Ireland's Children's Hospice in Dublin in June of 2013. By their responses and reactions, the children who met her and heard her play her beautiful majestic music were entranced and spell bound. Music is the medium that reaches the soul and Jayne, by her music, touched more than the children soul's....the staff who heard her and watched her interact with the children were very impressed by her gentle approach."

For more info on the work of Jayne Demakos, please check out her website at <http://jaynedemakos.com>



Cheryl & several San Diego ESM mates!

A recent IHTP graduate's reflection on completing the program...IHTP FINALE

by Cheryl Kissling

It is November 12, 2013 at 0722 and a huge shout is going out from Toddville, Iowa to my mentor, Bambi Niles, in upstate New York! I have told her to get ready for it many times, but today it is going to happen! I'm writing my final note as an IHTP student!

As I look out my dining room window to the south, there is a beautiful contrasting scene. Our first snow lies scattered on the tufts of grass that peek through and the sun is bright from the east, casting shadows on the ground while waking up other sunny areas.

Both of my paragraphs remind me of my three years, two months and 12 days since I signed on with this wonderful harp music therapy course. Some times were filled with the energy of very high or very low emotions. Other times were ever-so-peaceful. I'm remembering the excitement of reaching San Diego for my ESM, meeting the amazing wonder-woman - Christina Tourin (program founder and director), followed by my sweet and oh-so-helpful roommate and all of my compassionate classmates. Then there was the tear-filled session of sobbing at my computer as I worked through the Transaction Analysis exercise with the discovery of "Being Strong" just wasn't working for me. I think the most peaceful times were during my internship when I was matching the tempo with my client's slow, snoring breathes, letting the harp strings resonate in beautiful tones as only they can do.

Even though I was wading through the most dissonant time in my life...Okay, for my own therapy, I will tell the events on the timeline again, lest I forget how God's grace held me up. Between July 2010 and September 2013, the following events occurred: Dad fell and broke his neck bone with prostate/bladder problems during recovery; my left shoulder froze; I had an 8-hr, stress-induced amnesia episode; I had left shoulder surgery; Dad had open heart surgery and came to live with my husband and me (this is when I quit my 33-year career as a hospital nurse); Dad had a left total knee surgery; Dad had a right total knee surgery; our son (who is in kidney failure and is on the transplant list) was diagnosed with a brain tumor; Dad nearly died with complete heart block and congestive heart failure and he developed a bladder infection that delayed his pacemaker surgery; our son had brain surgery with complications, so his 5-day stay turned into 23 days; my 2012 EMS and internship were postponed; our son got back to work after the benign brain tumor surgery, then had his port installed for dialysis (his numbers are high, but he is still able to function, so no dialysis yet and still praying for a kidney); Dad went to respite for this past summer so that I could do my EMS, internship and finish IHTP; Dad continued falling more and more throughout the summer; Dad's last fall on 9/11 led to his final day on this earth - September 29, 2013. As I was saying, even though I was wading through the most dissonant time in my life, today I am ready to move from an IHTP finishing student to an IHTP graduate!

During this month when we think of things we are thankful for, my heart is overflowing! Thank you to Bickford Cottage and Milestones Adult Day Care for making it possible to finish my IHTP course this year. And thank you to the gracious flexibility Christina has granted with the program and for Bambi, who is the most encouraging person with just the right balance of "Rah-Rah-Sis-Boom-Bah", guidance to improve and loving-kindness. Thank you, thank you everyone! It is because of ALL of the people around me that I will soon be a graduate of the International Harp Therapy Program! Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

Congrats, Cheryl! We celebrate you and all of the other recent IHTP graduates! Let us celebrate and support one another on this most sacred journey that we are traveling together to spread the "cradle of sound."

From IHTP Grad....

Julie Darling...A Celebration of Brighid...

Brighid - archetypal symbol of new life and light, goddess of poetic inspiration, healing, midwifery and smithcraft; Celtic saint of wisdom and peace, bringing her light to the people of the world. Imbolc - or Candlemas - falls around the time of February 1st. Our ancestors would have looked to the earth and the sky, rather than the calendar, reading the language of nature to know when the time had arrived. Newborn lambs arrive and suckle at their mothers' breasts, snowdrops appear and the light grows.

“Beautiful Brighid - her footprints, the snowdrops, light the way towards dawn.....

On Brighid's Eve - February 1st - Brighid carries her lamp throughout the world, bringing light and hope to all those who have the eyes to see it. A scrap of blue silk flutters in the branches of a young silver birch tree. The breath and light of Brighid anoints the cloth with her healing light, as she passes through the woods at the foot of Ben Ledi - God's Mountain.

A sacred essence is made - with the light and breath of Brighid, the Ninefold One, as she breathes upon the crystal waters that fill the small bowl in the cleft of the tree.

I lean my back against the silver birch, and let my fingers rest upon the harp strings, to be led to the notes and chords that are needed for this precious vibrational essence, on this holy morning.

And so, the Brighid Harp Essence was made ..containing the healing light of an Imbolc sunrise in an ancient forest and the vibrations of harp music, the morning breeze and birdsong. By taking this essence, we can bring the energy of Brighid and the vibration of new life and light after dark days, into our own energy field. Love and hope stir in our hearts, and this essence enfolds us in the light of unconditional love. We feel loved and protected as we bring to birth the hopes and dreams of our true nature, and express the truth of our souls in our lives.” ~ Julie



Click on links below for Julie Darling's offerings of Brighid Essence Mist...with essential oils, Brighid Essence Music download...and more

<http://www.spiritualharp.com/brighid>

<http://www.spiritualharp.com>

Christina Tourin & Bambi Niles...as
they celebrated in Iona...
wishing us all a joyous and happy
2014!!!!

