



Virginia Going, far right, is a willing volunteer as she positions her hand as part of the process of creating a detailed plaster rendition. Denise Gregory guides the effort, while Dr. Mark McClure looks on. At left is a finished product of Ms. Gregory's two hands. New Visions will bring the molding process to patients at Rex Hospital Cancer Center.



THE HEALING POWER OF ART

New Visions Board Member Denise Gregory, who has survived cancer, gratefully relates her first-hand experience of the healing power of art in its many forms.

"The day one hears a diagnosis of life-altering illness remains indelibly imprinted in memory," she says. "Those who cope with it all too quickly become familiar with the vocabulary of cancer. But do we really know how to express what is happening? Do we feel safe doing so?"

"I knew about the phases of grief: anger, denial, acceptance: I cried, I screamed, I pulled myself up by the bootstraps and got on with the process. I spoke with other patients and wrote in my journal. My mind and emotions were engaged. I attended an InterPlay workshop at Rex Hospital and realized that, as odd as it sounds, a key element was being ignored: my body.

"In the weeks that followed, I found our predecessor organization, Waking Dreams of the Triangle and its workshops, and my healing truly began. All that I did not have words for, all that I had kept inside—finally it was out.

"Through the art of creating and body movement, I was able to reach those buried, dark places inside. Not only was light shed on them, but there was a sacredness about the process. At last my body had found a way to tell its story."

For more information about the New Vision Center for Art and Healing, visit our web site at www.newvisioncenter.org, or contact us by email at info@newvisioncenter.org.

new visions for healing through art

With a new name and a broader mandate of service, New Visions Center for Art and Healing—formerly Waking Dreams of the Triangle—has come to life with energy and passion.

Says its chairman, Dr. Mark McClure of Landmark Urology and Complementary Medicine, "Waking Dreams was a wonderful idea, modeled on a successful national program headquartered in Rhode Island. We found it inspirational in its activities to integrate the arts with medicine for the benefit of cancer patients.

"Now we have taken that experience and broadened our mission to introduce the healing power of the arts to all people here in the Triangle who are experiencing serious life challenges, certainly including but no longer limited to cancer. We see as our mission and purpose expansion of the boundaries of healing through the power of art, creative play, and community."

To fulfill this purpose, says Dr. McClure, "We need to actively engage with the community to learn more about specific, important needs that we may be able to address. To that end, we're planning to have a retreat this fall for the seriously ill, including cancer patients, to seek guidance in how best to bring art, creative play, and joy into the lives of people facing these challenges."

THE ART CART

Even as longer-term plans are being developed, other programs are quickly taking shape. One of them is creation of an Art Cart for use in the Rex Hospital Cancer Center.

"This is our Hands of Hope project," says Dr. McClure with a smile. "We've come across a product that makes it possible to fairly easily make a plaster cast of hands, beautiful to behold, that could be a treasured keepsake for patient and family alike.

"Rex Hospital staff and volunteers are helping us design our Art Cart, which will be wheeled right into a patient's room. It will offer many different options for creative play: making puppets, perhaps, or mobiles to hang over the patient's bed. Creating the plaster hands will be a more ambitious project for those who are moved to do so (see photos).

"Each year, we plan to have a Celebration of Life gathering. People who have joined with us, as patients and as volunteers, will be invited to bring their works of art to the celebration. For the living and for those who have departed, this will be an opportunity to celebrate the joy and meaning of individual lives and of our collective life, as well.

"At the same time, other New Visions people are working with Wake Medical Center seeking to develop an appropriate, creative, fun program for

women who are confined to bed, sometimes for months, because of high-risk pregnancies.

"And so with great joy we share the fact that we do, indeed, have New Visions of how, through love, art, creative play, and community, it is possible to promote healing on every level, the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual. We invite all those who may be interested in joining with us to contact us through our web site, www.newvisioncenter.org." **hkh**

THE DIRECTORS

Guiding development of the New Visions Center for Art and Healing are seven members of the board, each of whom, says Board Chairman Dr. Mark McClure, "brings a passion for service, for easing pain, and for celebrating life that will be reflected in all of our programs and activities." Others on the board include Virginia Going, vice-chair; Cheri Elliott, RN, secretary; Denise Gregory, newsletter editor; Jacqueline Floreen, Jane Parker, and Donna Boyd.