

In speaking with the workers about feelings and friendships, many of our workers expressed their sadness over the loss of a co-worker that took place not so long ago. Some shared their disappointment that they had not had the opportunity to attend his funeral or say goodbye to their friend. As is often the case, such a topic brought up many emotions and remembrances of others who have passed on; siblings, parents, grandparents, relatives, friends, and even pets. Listening to the thoughts and concerns being expressed, some members of the NW Works Staff, along with our friends at “A Place to Be”, organized a “Balloon Release” to help our workers address their feelings of loss and grief.

Tom, from A Place to Be, and his team helped the workers make a “Wall of Love” poster displaying the names of those loved ones who have passed on. On April 22, 2011, a large group of workers, staff, and friends gathered together outside for the Balloon Release ceremony. Balloons were given to the workers, the Wall of Love was displayed, and the poem “We Remember Them” was read. Upon the conclusion of the prayer, the workers released the balloons into the air as the names on the Wall of Love were recited.

The balloon release was a way for our workers to come together in support and to let go of some of their heartache and set their feelings free. Everyone then adjourned inside for music and dancing to celebrate life and the new beginnings that each day brings.

It was truly an “uplifting” experience for all involved.



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As long as we live, they too will live;  
For they are now a part of us:

At the rising sun and it's going down;  
We remember them.  
At the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter;  
We remember them  
At the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring;  
We remember them  
At the blueness of the skies and in the warmth of summer;  
We remember them  
At the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of the autumn;  
We remember them  
At the beginning of the year and when it ends;  
We remember them

As long as we live, they too will live;  
For they are now a part of us:  
As we remember them!

When we are weary and in need of strength;  
We remember them  
When we are lost and sick at heart;  
We remember them  
When we have decisions that are difficult make;  
We remember them  
When we have joy we crave to share  
We remember them  
When we have achievements that are based on theirs;  
We remember them

As long as we live, they too will live;  
For they are now a part of us:  
As we remember them!

- from *Gates of Prayer*