

## **Caring for the Memorial Kiosk**

The current kiosk was built by a master craftsman, puzzle maker and wizard, Stuart Pearlman. This meant that assembling it every year required the team to put together a large, heavy puzzle. There is an open request to replace the current structure with a more modular, easy to put up and take down kiosk. (The kiosk has been erected upside down for years now. Someone marked the inside with arrows to help, but they are opposite the intention of the designer. The little boxes on the outside for pens and papers should have the deep side at the top.)

Once the kiosk has been retrieved from winter storage and assembled, the Care Team decorates it with a background foam core. We have used either white or black in past years. There is a sign for each side describing the purpose of the kiosk, inviting folks to put their beloved's name on an index card and embellish it with memories. The papers, pens, and push pins are provided in the attached little boxes or zip bags so that the cards can be displayed around all three of the kiosk sides. There are also artsy paper hearts, ribbons and artificial flowers to complete the decorating.

In years past there was a project for folks to make cloth prayer flags. These were strung on a long rope. This very long display of memorial prayer flags is attached to the fence along the river across from the Still Living Room.

The Care Team provides the supplies and checks the kiosk at least twice a day to replenish them. These are stored in the big wooden box nearby. There is also a frequent culling of the "non-memorial" materials that some people attach to the kiosk. There are so many actual, heartfelt messages that there is not room for the "Call this number for a good time" cards.

On Sunday night as things are closing down, the Care Team gathers all of the cards and then helps take the kiosk apart for storage. The cards are then reviewed again in a sacred way, honoring each memory. In the past the cards were then given to an archivist to store for history's sake. There is some question in the current Care Team's thinking that storage may not be the most honoring path. There are other ways to let go of these cards with an honoring ceremony, through burning in a sacred fire with the prayers going out to the Universe in the smoke. Another way is to have a burial, returning the papers and their memories to Mother Earth in a sacred way.