

West Springfield

Heart to Heart Healing Connection offers energy healing

By **Natasha Clark**

Reminder Assistant Editor

WEST SPRINGFIELD – Michelle McCarthy has been to rock bottom. On the outside she'd been in the dog grooming industry for 30 years, running a successful dog grooming salon in Indian Orchard; a full staff, wonderful customers, but on the inside she was suffering. In 1996 McCarthy, in depths of depression, was seriously contemplating suicide. A friend would expose her to something that would not only give her a reason to live, but would change the course of her life forever.

The sign that reads Heart to Heart Healing Connection is so simple on the outside of McCarthy's business that it is easy to miss when driving by its Elm Street location.

Inside McCarthy has transformed the upstairs of a second-story building into a welcoming, calm environment. Here with the help of more than 11 people, McCarthy hopes to help other people heal whatever is ailing them.

"I knew something changed, something was different," she told *Reminder Publications* inside her office.

McCarthy is referring to the life-changing incident she had back in 1996 when she was suffering severe symptoms of depression. A friend of hers was a massage therapist and McCarthy would often go to be treated.

During one of McCarthy's sessions she asked "Can I do something other than a massage?"

"She placed her hand in various locations," McCarthy recalled. "By the third hand placement I was crying. I cried for an hour. I had no clue what happened."

McCarthy said this is Reiki.

She described Reiki as a hands-on method of stress reduction and relaxation that heals on several levels, the spiritual, the emotional, the mental and the physical.

Refreshed and anew from her encounter with Reiki, McCarthy began to take Reiki classes and learn about its origin. Trusting in its benefits, she closed her salon and pursued the new avenue in front of her – sharing the benefits of Reiki with the world. Initially she ran the business out of her home, but in November 2002, she settled into her current West Springfield location – where she now also offers IET (Integrated Energy Therapy), a technique that is considered the next-generation, hands-on, power energy therapy system that gets the "issues out of your tissues."

McCarthy also teaches Reiki with those who are not able to come her. She has frequented the Hampshire County House of Correction sharing Reiki techniques with inmates.

"It's really gratifying to see the change in them," said McCarthy.

McCarthy said energy healing is a great stress reducer and that it aids individuals in sleeping better and living life with more ease. She also wants people to know that the body has "an innate ability to heal itself."

"I don't want people to rely on me," McCarthy said. "All healing is really self-healing."

In addition to the services she offers there are also various workshops and events that take place at Heart to Heart Healing Connection. Other practitioners also operate out of the location, making it a unique center that offers everything from Reiki practitioners to dieticians.

"Laura Franko and Maddy



Michelle McCarthy, owner of Heart to Heart Healing Connection is seen above in one of the healing rooms at the businesses Elm Street location.

MetroWest Reminder photo by Natasha Clark

Orozco are our massage therapists; Maddy is also a Trigger Point Myotherapist. Jackie Griswold is a Reiki Master Teacher who sees clients on Thursday afternoons," McCarthy explained. "Jackie (along with her sister) teach Reiki. Jennifer Wilson and Colleen Connery are both Reiki and Integrated Energy Therapy Practitioners. Karen Kulakowski is our Registered Dietitian. She is also a Reiki practitioner whose client base is primarily our 4-footed friends (children)."

"We have Jess Steinman as our Tarot Reader – one Saturday a month. Russell Canedy is a Certified Master Hypnotist, specializing in Past Life/Age Regression, Future Life Progression, Spiritual Healings and Readings; Russ is available on Sundays," McCarthy added. "Lorna Kerbel does Cranio-Sacral therapy on Wednesday afternoons and occasional Saturdays; Lynn Chadderton is our Reflexologist, who is here on Mondays, and I am here, of course, seeing clients daily and teaching on weekends."

In an extension of her interview through email McCarthy said that Heart to Heart "recently began offering Tools for Transformation Jewelry and I'm so happy to be able to have these pieces. This is jewelry cut in specific geometric patterns, each with a particular healing purpose."

And McCarthy's work is receiving recognition. She was just selected as one of the top 25 IET Master Instructors for 2005, based on the number of students she taught in 2005. She was bestowed the honor by the Center of Being and Stevan Thayer, the developer of Integrated Energy Therapy.

The Heart to Heart Healing Connection is open by appointment only. To learn more about Reiki, IET or workshops offered, contact Michelle McCarthy at 413-737-9443 or log on to www.heart2hearthealing.com.

The Heart to Heart Healing Connection is located at 283 Elm Street, 2nd floor in West Springfield.

