

## **Local “Jewelry of Hope” Partners with Kelly and Sharon Stone’s “Planet Hope”**

SPRINGFIELD - The jewelry is tangible...the meaning behind it is not. Beth-Ann Latsko, founder and owner of Jewelry of Hope, is not just a jewelry designer; she is also an author dedicated to the cause of helping cancer patients and their loved ones. The necklaces, bracelets, and custom pieces that she designs help to give “hope” to those who wear them. Her jewelry contains a “hope” charm meant to help inspire not only healing, but also the overall feeling of hope and comfort. Beth-Ann’s jewelry attracts all people who find solace in the colors and designs of her pieces, not just those who are ill.

Local residents aren’t the only people who Beth-Ann inspires. Actress Sharon Stone, co-founder of “Planet Hope”, a foundation which helps women and children in shelters, and her sister Kelly Stone were given custom necklaces designed by Latsko. Latsko became acquainted with Stone and her sister after she was chosen to design the jewelry that would help convey the “Planet Hope” message when the foundation visited Harvard University to distribute several hundred coats and other items to poor and disadvantaged people.

Every year, Jewelry of Hope seeks to help out an important cause through raising donations at the Jewelry of Hope “Open Studio” Gala event held once a year at Barney Estate in Springfield’s Forest Park. Part of the money this year will be going towards the “Prayer Shawl Ministry”, a ministry built on the compassion and love of knitting/crocheting, and using it to make shawls for those in need of comfort. Latsko was inspired by a friend who encountered a woman wearing a “prayer shawl” while waiting for treatment. Latsko’s book of hope entitled “Wrapped in Hope and Love,” was inspired by the “Prayer Shawl Ministry.”

Last year, donations benefited the Oncology Ward at Baystate Medical Center, when Jewelry of Hope presented DVD/VCR’s for private rooms as well as an armoire stocked with food and drink items so that families would not have to leave their loved ones. Handheld DVD players and a library of movies and CD’s were also given for chemotherapy patients. Her mission to bring comfort to cancer patients and their loved ones continued this year, when donations also provided a gourmet coffee service and a restocking of the armoire for families.

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Latsko is accepting donations for the replenishing of the armoire in the Baystate Oncology Ward. She is also encouraging people to help give comfort to those in need by visiting the "Prayer Shawls Ministry" web site [www.shawlministry.com](http://www.shawlministry.com), or by sending your hand made prayer shawls to Beth-Ann, which will be given to the Oncology Ward. She can be contacted at her Web site, [www.JewelryofHope.com](http://www.JewelryofHope.com).

Beth-Ann Latsko, author, inspirational speaker, and international jewelry designer has touched people's lives through her words and designs for over seven years. She is a Reiki Master and has been using color and energy to educate people in their search to live a healthier and more balanced life. She integrates this knowledge into her unique designs at her company, "Jewelry of Hope." Beth-Ann lives in Western Massachusetts with her husband, and two children.

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