



# VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER WINTER 2024-2025

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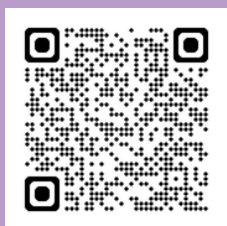
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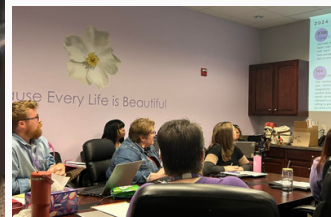
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View the Complete Newsletter or sign up to volunteer at [bellacarehospice.net](http://bellacarehospice.net)



## Happy New Year!

As we enter a new year, I have been reflecting on the volunteer department in 2024. Last year had a lot of ups and downs. We lost a lot of great volunteers - graduating students, health concerns, sudden moves, changes in schedules. Yet we also welcomed over 60 new volunteers to the team and added 2 new Volunteer Coordinators who bring fresh energy to the department! Each office has had increased volunteer help with admin tasks. We have added more musicians in multiple branches and more students who are volunteering in health care for the first time. We also had more volunteer involvement in holiday celebrations and other special events in 2024. Through it all, I regularly hear stories of volunteers making heartwarming connections with patients and families.



As we look forward to 2025, we hope to provide more education to improve volunteer services. We especially want to focus on two areas: volunteers sitting bedside vigil at the end of life and doing life reviews with patients who are able to communicate and share stories. As we continue to strive toward our 5% goal, I'm excited to see what new initiatives will come about and to hear more stories of the impact volunteers make. Here's to another great year of volunteers helping Bella Care to celebrate life: Happy New Year! -Scott Gorbald, Director of Volunteer Services.





# HOLIDAY CHEER!



## Christmas Gifts in Cincinnati

This year in Cincinnati, our Volunteer Coordinator Katie worked with several local organizations to collect Christmas gifts for all our hospice patients. Gifts were wrapped in our office by Katie and volunteers Tom and Maria. Cincinnati volunteer Byron has been dressing up as Santa Claus for many years and was delighted this year to pass out these presents to our Bella Care patients. Byron visited several facilities accompanied by Katie and volunteers Tom and Erika. The response was amazing! Patients were delighted by the Christmas cheer with many smiling and laughing, some even crying that Santa came to visit them and they weren't forgotten this year. Donations were given by Miller Coors Brewery in Trenton, Marc Messerschmidt and Veterans of Butler County, Todd's Iga in Trenton, and Woodsdale Drive Thru in Trenton.





# HOLIDAY CHEER!

## Christmas Blankets in Columbus

On November 19, the Columbus Volunteer team wrapped 226 lap blankets that were made by the St. Matthew Knitting and Crocheting Ministry. There has been a long-term friendship with Bella Care and this sewing ministry for 15+ years. We had five volunteers, 2 Volunteer Coordinators, and 3 Social Workers come to the office to help wrap the blankets. Christmas music was playing and the team had lunch together. This was also a good time for volunteers to get to know one another and share their experiences of offering companionship visits with our patients. Each volunteer took home a bag of sweet treats as the Columbus office was celebrating National Hospice Care Month.



## Christmas Trees in Cleveland

Four years ago, Volunteer Coordinator Melissa started an annual project of making all our Cleveland patients a decorated Bella Care Christmas tree for the holiday season. In the beginning, she made all of the trees herself with ornaments made on a Cricut cutting machine. The second year, Melissa needed help from her family because there were more trees to make, and she added more ornaments. The third year, Melissa simplified the trees slightly but also had a big win from an administrative volunteer helping to put the trees together! Every year our staff has been amazing in delivering the trees to our patients, and our partner facilities now look forward to the Bella Care trees around the holidays and patients seem to really appreciate the handmade gift. This year, we had tons of help from 6 different volunteers which allowed Melissa the time to personalize each tree with patients' names! She also got to spend time with volunteers and was able to ask them what they thought about 'her crazy handmade tree project.' Their response in words was "it matters, it's worth it" and in action was the hours spent helping. Seeing our patients light up with their trees and really shared the Christmas joy this season.

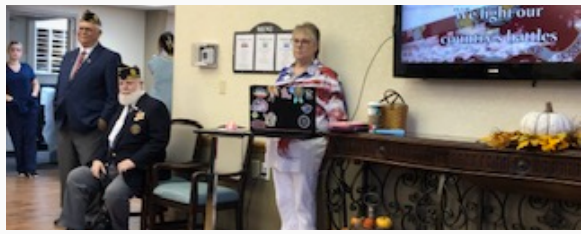




# HONORING VETERANS

## We Honor Veterans

The volunteer department is proud to lead Bella Care's We Honor Veterans program. Our goal is to improve our care for Veterans at the end of life and to honor their lives of service. One of the ways we do this is through special services of recognition. This year we were once again honored to participate in several Veterans Day events around Ohio. In Ashtabula we had another great turn out at a community event we cohost; our own volunteer John was one of the Veterans recognized! Each branch is also dedicated to ensuring that each of our Veteran patients was honored with a pin, certificate, and words of appreciation. Many team members gave this recognition at the bedside with patients who are likely facing their final Veterans Day. Many expressed heartfelt thanks; we were blessed to be able to offer gratitude and appreciation to those who served our country.







# WELCOME



## Welcome Baby Frederick!

We are happy to announce that our Dayton Volunteer Coordinator, Abby Frederick, and her husband Nate welcomed their first child! Natalie June Frederick was born on December 20th. Mom and baby are both healthy and doing well. We are very excited for Abby and sure she will make a great mother! Abby is taking some time off to be with baby Natalie, but plans to return in March. In the meantime, volunteer services will continue as normal with Director of Volunteer Services, Scott Gorbald, covering communication and any volunteer needs.

## Welcome Cheryl Sharpes!

In September, we welcomed Cheryl Sharpes to the Columbus branch as a new Volunteer Coordinator to work alongside Kendra Lambert as the department continues to grow. Cheryl has had a wide variety of experience working with volunteers. She spent several years early in her career as an Activity Director for a long-term care facility and also served many years as a worship pastor where she managed multiple volunteers. Her most recent position was at a local university where she was the Associate Director of Admissions for Visits and Events.

Get to know Cheryl personally: she is married to her husband of 33 years (Greg), with four sons and three daughters-in-law. She has two rowdy kittens (Milo & Maisy) and cares for her 90-year old mom who lives with her family. She loves to read, being active or walking outside, doing artistic crafts (floral arranging, flower pressing, paint by number, etc.), enjoys hanging out with family and friends for game nights, and loves doing stage design for her local church.

Cheryl states that she's looking forward to getting to know the wonderful team of volunteers at the Columbus branch better and working together to bring quality care to our patients. She believes that when we do small things with great love, lives are changed!





# SPECIALTY SERVICES

## Guitarists in the Spotlight

We would like to spotlight a few of our amazing musician volunteers. Music is a wonderful way to connect with patients; we have several dedicated volunteers throughout the state who play instruments and sing at the bedside! One of our longest serving volunteers is Columbus musician Todd. Todd has been visiting patients since 2016. As he meets with patients over the years and gets to know them, Todd has learned new songs and even written new music to honor their preferences. Dayton volunteer Kyle has been volunteering since November 2023 and regularly visits with patients where he brings his guitar. This year, he shared a beautiful rendition of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" at Bella Care's annual Memorial Service to honor patients who passed away on our service. Tim started volunteering in Akron/Cleveland earlier this year and has already made a great impact. This Fall, he had an opportunity to join in a Celebrate Life event for a patient who loved Elvis. The team purchased Elvis memorabilia for the patient's room and Tim performed a few songs. The patient smiled from ear to ear and sang along. These volunteers represent the way music connects with people and brings beauty and joy at the end of someone's journey. We are grateful they share their gifts as part of our team.



## Stepping Stones

One of the greatest privileges our volunteers get is the opportunity to sit bedside vigil during a patient's final moments. At Bella Care Hospice we call this Stepping Stones. When someone is actively dying, our volunteers can be present to let them know they are cared for. This gift of presence can be a source of comfort for patients and their loved ones. Volunteers can offer families respite, for the chance to get a break during a long end of life process. They can also offer families emotional support and the chance to share stories at the bedside in their loved one's final moments. Volunteers can hold a patient's hands, offer comforting words and music, bring blankets, read, pray with a patient, and more. Many volunteers say this opportunity is a sacred experience and they are grateful for the opportunity to be part of someone's final hours. Recently, Dayton volunteer Deb was able to sit bedside and offer Reiki during Stepping Stones. She said she is always willing to help whenever she can because "It is an honor to be with them on their journey home." This year each of our branches is going to offer extra training to volunteers on sitting bedside vigil so that hopefully more volunteers will get the privilege of experiencing these sacred moments.



# VOLUNTEER OF THE QUARTER

## Gail Sims - Quarter 3 2024

Gail started volunteering with us over a year ago. Our Dayton team cared for one of her loved ones in their final days. Gail experienced our support first hand and wanted to give back by helping our administrative team. She has become an invaluable asset in the office, willing to perform any task with attention to detail and insight to improve processes. She has a beautiful heart for hospice and brings a bright spirit to the office that our team greatly appreciates! In her free time, Gail loves to travel to see many beautiful places in the world. We are glad she has made us part of her home. Thanks for all you do Gail!

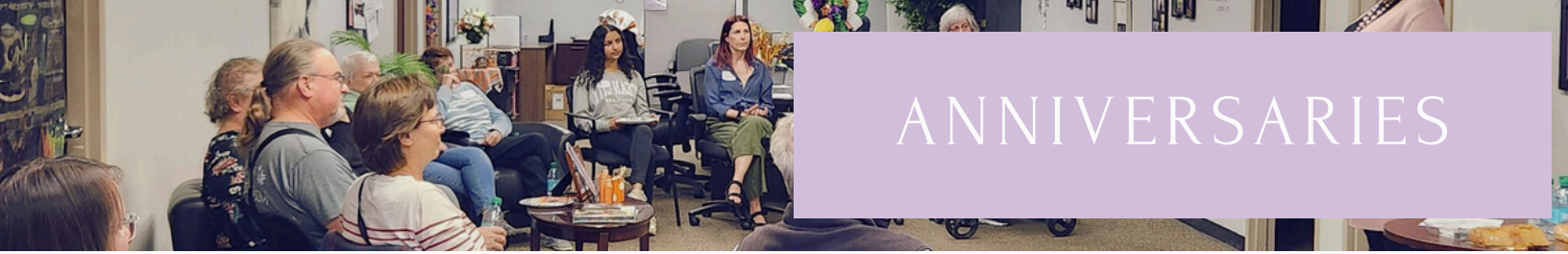


## Judy White - Quarter 4 2024

Judy started volunteering just this October but has already made a big impact in the Cincinnati office. She has dedicated an entire day each week to make regular visits with patients taking time with each one to show genuine care and compassion. Judy is a chaplain and brings her empathy and spiritual care to her role as a volunteer. We have already received positive feedback from patients and families. This is what Volunteer Coordinator Katie had to say: "Judy embodies the essence of selflessness and dedication, consistently going above and beyond for her patients. Her discipline and professionalism are unmatched; her positive spirit is infectious. Whether she's attending her patients' birthday parties, taking them for walks outside to enjoy the fresh air, or visiting the office with a radiant smile, Judy lights up every space she enters. In fact, one patient remarked that Judy is 'the best volunteer they have ever met in their 101 years of life,' a testament to her kindness, passion, and remarkable ability to connect with others." Recently Judy was able to sit Stepping Stones with a dying patient and stayed at the bedside for over three hours until the patient passed away. Then she continued to minister to a family member afterward. Thank you for your care and dedication Judy!







# ANNIVERSARIES

## Celebrating volunteers who reached an anniversary this Fall & Winter!

### 1 Year

- Diya Dewangan, Companion, Columbus
- Linda Adams, Companion, Ashtabula
- Nora Berry, Companion, Columbus
- Gail Sims, Administrative, Dayton
- Christina Yancey, Administrative, Cleveland
- Kyle Marler, Musician, Dayton
- Alicia Manning, Companion, Dayton
- Ela Mueller, Companion, Cleveland
- Kristina Gambill, Massage Therapist, Dayton
- Deb O'Bryan, Administrative, Cincinnati
- Drew Delgross, Pet Therapist, Cleveland

### 2 Years

- Susan Meehan, Companion, Columbus
- Marsha Browning, Administrative, Columbus
- Vidhi Bar, Companion, Columbus

### 3 Years

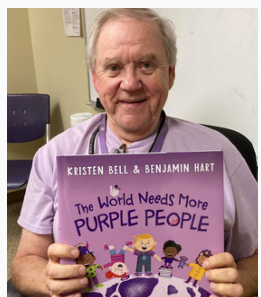
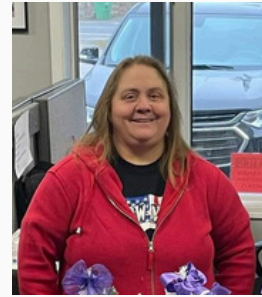
- Julia Sims Haas, Massage, Columbus
- Nancy Parker, Companion, Cleveland
- Michael Adomako, Pastor, Columbus

### 5 Years

- Carolyn Hubbard, Companion, Cleveland
- Staci Jacob, Admin/Companion, Ashtabula

### 8 Years

- Tom Hopper, Administrative/Companion, Cincinnati





# WELCOME NEW VOLUNTEERS

## Welcome all the volunteers who joined our team this Fall & Winter!

### Columbus

- Enobong Ekong, Companion
- Glenn Kahley, Companion
- Oliver Griffith Companion
- Olivian Carpenter, Companion
- Srikruthi Godavarthi, Companion
- Anna Purdy, Companion
- Jason Chen, Companion
- Sela Hennon, Music
- Livia Schorn, Companion
- Surendra Pokhrel, Companion
- Shannon Burrows, Companion

### Cincinnati

- Judy White, Chaplain
- Amy Weisbacher, Reiki
- Maria Hessin, Administrative
- N'Deye Dieng, Companion
- Hong Wilson, Companion
- Patricia Albano-Sietz, Companion

### Dayton

- Amy Asher, Companion
- Sonia Mangara, Companion
- Megan Hildreth, Companion
- Makenzie Smith, Companion
- Paige Emig, Companion
- Yasmeen Razi, Companion

### Cleveland

- Meysa Graham, Companion
- Missy Paul, Companion

### Ashtabula

- Lisa Bennet, Companion

