



*Bella Care*  
**HOSPICE**  
Because Every Life is Beautiful



HOSPICE  
MEANS  
MORE CARE,  
NOT LESS

# Volunteer

## NEWSLETTER

JULY 2020 | SEPTEMBER 2020

## Welcome Summertime Sunshine!

...And welcome to our newest Volunteer Newsletter! We at Bella Care Hospice are determined to make the best of this beautiful season. As we continue to wade through the uncharted waters of the year 2020, we realize that there has been a lot of go-go-go. It seems that everyone all over the world is feeling the weight of this year. With canceled plans and major lifestyle changes, many people are not able to be proactive, but instead feel they have been forced to be reactive. Bella Care Hospice recognizes the importance of caring for ourselves mind, body, and spirit in order to stay feeling well. After all, our hospice teams practice this ideal

with our patients regularly. With this on all our minds, our Volunteer Coordinators are trying to help the volunteer teams focus on positivity, relaxation, and growth.

As you read through this newsletter, we invite you to take the opportunity to reflect on the important things in your life. Take some time to think about what helps bring you relaxation, feelings of positivity, and growth. We here at Bella Care Hospice are wishing that you all remain well and, as always, are staying happy and healthy!

*You cannot have  
a rainbow  
without any rain.*





## An Open Letter from Our Volunteer Coordinator on Growth

*"When one door of happiness closes, another opens; but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one that has been opened for us."*

*- Helen Keller*

*Straight from  
the Heart*

*Dear All:*

I read this quote repeatedly and it really resonated within me. When my father received his Alzheimer's diagnosis, I think I was as devastated as he was. I had only been employed with Bella Care Hospice for about six months. For the better part of a year, I lived in the land of denial. I spoke often with our social worker, Deryl, and he helped get me to a place of acceptance.

Now, many of you reading this may wonder what the above has to do with the original quote. You see, the decision I had to make was that I could no longer look back for my happiness. I had to embrace the future and make it happy. This meant that I needed to navigate a relatively new job while embracing my new role as a part time caregiver for my father.

Watching my father's slow, but steady, decline was heartbreaking. It did, however, open doors to a part of his emotions that he was never able to communicate in the past. The softer, gentler side of Dad began to make its appearance. Being a stoic man of Finnish descent, the number of times he ever said he loved me could be counted on one hand. He showed his love by being a hard worker and providing by, as he put it, "giving you a kick in the pants" when you needed it. At this time, he laughed more and said I love you more. That stage did not last long.

Now the silent man is back. I enjoyed the laughing, loving man, but this silent man is the one I have known all my life. As I provide care for my dad, I keep a running commentary of chatter going. I tell him about my day, the weather, and the horses that we own. Sometimes he sleeps through it, sometimes he silently watches me, and occasionally, he responds to what I am saying. I find great joy and peace in caring for my father. This is my part in his journey and I will embrace it with as much joy as I do sadness!

Now, back to the quote! When I came to work at Bella Care, I had recently lost a job where I had worked for 26 years. This was a job I loved, with people I cared about, and from which I had planned to retire. To say I was unhappy would be an understatement! That stoic man, my father, told me to get over it and find another job. So I did! My other job was in an educational setting, which gave me years of valuable information about children and families. My job with Bella Care was at the other end of the spectrum. How could I adjust?

I realize that God puts us where we need to be at the right time. Where one job helped me with challenges with my child when it was needed, this one has helped me with the end of life challenges with my father. So, adjust I did, and happiness returned!

I quickly learned that although our work involves much sadness, it also involves equal amounts of joy. Our volunteers come to us for a variety of reasons. For example, they may have experienced a loss and hospice helped them. Some volunteers come for school experience, while others may have retired and want to give back to their communities. In the end, they stay because it brings them joy, satisfaction and, yes, happiness! Our volunteers give the most precious gift to our patients: the gift of time. They give time to talk, time to sit quietly, time to reminisce, and time to grieve. What our volunteers do on a daily basis is provide support for patients and families as they move through those symbolic doors. They provide support as our patients' door closes and help our families see that they may eventually get to open the door to happiness once again!

To our volunteers: I cannot say thank you enough for all you do! Each of you brings something special to our patients and families. You are a happy part of our patients' journey and I am very grateful to have each and every one of you.

Respectfully,  
Kathy Mills

## Dedicated to Wellness

Even with everything that is going on in the world, the members of Bella Care Cincinnati wanted to take the time to tell our volunteers how special they are. Words cannot fully express how grateful we are for our volunteer team. But, that certainly doesn't stop us from trying! So, here in Cincinnati, we sent out "Thinking of You" cards to let our volunteers know that we appreciate them and all that they do. We are filled with gratitude and cannot thank our volunteer team enough for their time and service!



A few members of Cincinnati's dedicated volunteer team.

## Just BREATHE

Bella Care Cincinnati wants to remind you: Just breathe! It can feel impossible to escape stress. We can carry it with us regardless of what we're doing. Unfortunately, this is something a lot of people are facing during this time. It seems sometimes like it's waiting for you in the morning when you wake up. That's why it's important to learn to de-stress. Below is a resource that we have shared with our volunteers with a few suggestions on how to de-stress. We invite you to try the same!

### WAYS TO DE-STRESS:

1. **Change the environment:** Do something relaxing such as reading, watching TV, or taking a shower. If you are at work, step outside for a few minutes and get some fresh air.
2. **Practice breathing exercises:** Focus on your breath, pushing all other thoughts aside. Be conscious of the breath coming in and going out; focus on the sensation of inhaling and exhaling.
3. **Pray:** Often, one's faith can be a comfort. Saying a small prayer or series of prayer can be calming.
4. **Go walking or running:** Exercise can be a great stress reliever. It helps you blow off steam and releases endorphins. Take a walk or go running. This will provide some perspective so you can return in a new frame of mind.
5. **Express your feelings:** Write your stress away in a journal, take out your colored pencils and paper and focus your concentration on drawing, or have coffee with a trusted friend (social distancing) and just talk.

If one method does not work for you, try another. Learning to de-stress can take practice. Be patient with yourself and you will reap the benefits! (List found at [www.virtuahealth.org](http://www.virtuahealth.org).)



## Planting Seeds of Positivity

“Sometimes when you’re in a dark place you think you’ve been buried, but you’ve actually been planted.”



The year 2020 has been filled with numerous challenges and many people are weathering the same storm with completely different stories. Bella Care Cleveland wanted to do something special to remind our volunteer team that growth and beauty can come out of darkness by starting a seedling project. Each volunteer was sent a packet of flower seeds and an insert about growing their specific flower in effort to build camaraderie in this new world of remote contact. It was our goal that it would help our team put a real life visual to the symbol of growth. Our volunteer team was then asked to share pictures of their “growth” and they did not disappoint!



### Volunteer of the Quarter: Lisa Darden

Bella Care Hospice Cleveland is absolutely delighted to award Lisa Darden as Volunteer of the Quarter! Lisa is celebrating her two year anniversary with Bella Care in July. She has given so much of herself during these past two years.

Lisa has the creative type of mind that is perfect for volunteering with our patients. Her presence is gentle and calming. When one of her patients wanted to be more social after moving into a new facility, she brought in games and read novels for her and a group in the common area. When families are sitting vigil for hours, sometimes even days, she brings in magazines and snacks to offer respite. One of our favorite “Lisa-Activities” is when she brought in a cook book, different blouses, and shoes to ask her patient to help her pick a menu and outfit for a dinner party that she would be hosting.

#### Here’s a little of what Lisa had to say about her volunteer experience these past two years:

*“When medicine says no, hospice says yes. While medicine may not be able to take the patient any further, as a hospice volunteer, I try to find ways in which to uplift and build up a patient in ways medicine cannot. There are so many big and small ways hospice volunteers can cheer and comfort the patients we are assigned. And it feels good to do it!”*

- I am refreshed each time I get a hug from my patient
- I am refreshed each time my patient and I play Bingo (and the patient wins!)
- I am refreshed when my patient reaches and holds my hand
- I am refreshed when I read to my patient and they listen attentively
- I am refreshed when a patient and I walk up and down the halls together.
- I am refreshed when a patient says “please come again.”

*I’m reminded of a phrase spoken at a recent seminar, “we may not be able to add days to a patient’s life, but we can add life to a patient’s days.” As a hospice volunteer it is my pleasure to do what I can to add life to the patients’ days.”*

*Congratulations, Lisa! You are part of what makes our Bella Care team so strong!*

## Helping Bridge the Gap to Bright Futures

For the last several years our Columbus branch has had a great connection with the Ohio State University College of Social Work. OSU requires social work students to get supervised hours at a field placement and over the years many student interns have trained with our amazing team of social workers. In addition to being mentored by our social workers, these interns also work with our volunteer department in order to do everything from assisting with office work, participating in Celebrate Life events, visiting patients for emotional support, and sitting bedside at the end of life!

We are proud to help our OSU students receive quality hands on education while they also offer support through their many volunteer hours. It is a real gift for many of our patients to have a young person visit and share their life! Of course, being OSU students is also an easy way into the hearts of many of the Buckeye fans on our service in Columbus. Patients love to hear about what these students are learning, what's happening on the OSU campus, and sometimes to even help them in school projects!

This spring semester, we had the opportunity to host five social work interns. We are so grateful for the dedicated work and genuine care they offered. We want to give a huge thanks to Christina, Olivia, Autumn, Amy, and Victoria! Sadly, due to the COVID-19 social distancing restrictions, these interns needed to finish their semesters online. But, together they put in hundreds of hours helping serve our hospice patients. We're confident they all have bright futures in social work ahead of them.



# Reiki & Relaxation

Our volunteer department loves partnering with Reiki practitioners! At Bella Care Hospice, we recognize that suffering is not just physical and can extend to the social, emotional, and spiritual parts of our patient's lives. Our approach to comfort is holistic and individualized to meet these various needs and support the dying through their transition. Reiki is a noninvasive relaxation technique that often uses light touch and intentional presence to help calm patients and promote well-being. It is a form of energy work considered an alternative therapy and there are no known negative side effects. Many of our patients have found that Reiki helps with things like stress and pain relief. We are happy to be able to offer this service through our volunteer program.

Here at the Dayton branch, we have welcomed many Reiki practitioners to our volunteer team. They are eager to offer their time and services to help comfort our dying patients. Their training has prepared them to be present with people in the midst of their suffering to provide comfort, empathy, and a calm presence. This is what makes them a perfect fit for hospice care! We are glad to have them on the volunteer team and hope to welcome more in the future.



## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT Janet Miller



This quarter, Bella Care Hospice in Dayton wants to spotlight Janet Miller, one of our amazing Reiki volunteers. Janet uses her skills to provide relaxation to her patients. She has been with Bella Care for over a year and, prior to the pandemic restrictions, visited patients on a weekly basis. She also brings expertise in elder care with an Older Adult Ministry Certificate from Columbia Theological Seminary! She is a retired USAF Lt. Colonel and her military experience shows as she is precise in all her work.

Janet brings the best of her own caring nature to our patients. She visits with the patients that can no longer communicate, though that does not stop her from forming a connection with them! In her own words:

*"My favorite thing about volunteering with BCH is knowing that I am/was a conduit for love and a contact from life outside of their home/room/bed confinement. I feel honored whenever I consider those I've served especially those that have transitioned."*

Janet is also the first volunteer to help with the Music and Memory Program in Dayton. She talks with patients and families about music that has the most meaning and puts individualized music playlists together. Patients that had exhibited no emotion or words for a long time would all of a sudden try to dance to their favorite music!

Because Janet is a part of the team, our volunteer program is able to have more of an impact on our patients in meaningful ways.

*Thank you, Janet!*





Join Bella Care Hospice in celebrating those volunteers with birthdays and anniversaries throughout the months of July, 2020 – September, 2020.

### *Ashtabula Branch*

#### **Birthdays**

*Edith Jonas*, July 9  
*Joyce Misneq*, July 11  
*Angela Dempsey*, August 12  
*Dakoda Dondrea*, September 1  
*Trudy German*, September 6  
*Deryl Nazor*, September 17

#### **Anniversaries**

*Jeanne Williams*, 5 years, August 25  
*Mallory Winter*, 1 year, September 4  
*Staci Jacob*, 1 year, September 24

### *Cincinnati Branch*

#### **Birthdays**

*David Jaffe*, July 9  
*Sandy Ryan*, August 10  
*Yolanda Ali*, August 22  
*Edward Lawless*, September 5  
*Raveesh Ramamurth*, September 11

#### **Anniversaries**

*Sandy Ryan*, 4 years, August 18  
*Edward Lawless*, 3 years, August 7  
*David Jaffe*, 1 year, August 9

### *Cleveland Branch*

#### **Birthdays**

*Lisa Kime*, August 28  
*Yolanda Lee*, September 7

#### **Anniversaries**

*Lisa Darden*, 2 years, July 14  
*Kiera O'Dwyer*, 1 year, July 23  
*Kim Keener*, 1 year, July 31  
*Jennie Narraway*, 1 year, August 2

### *Columbus Branch*

#### **Birthdays**

*Mandy Morton*, July 6  
*Courtney Mundy*, July 18  
*Max Juszczec*, July 18  
*Linda Mizer*, July 25  
*Susann Nagy*, August 8  
*Jennifer Popovics*, August 14

#### **Anniversaries**

*Saanyi Billakanty*, 1 year, July 18  
*Aaron Fernando*, 1 year, August 8  
*Diana Sellers Dallman*, 1 year, August 12  
*Jill Parsons*, 1 year, August 29

### *Dayton Branch*

#### **Birthdays**

*Janet Miller*, July 3  
*Teresa Miller*, September 9  
*Eric Ozio*, September 24

#### **Anniversaries**

*Cathy Potts*, 1 year, July 6  
*Madison Potts*, 1 year, July 6  
*Linda Portillo-Ramos*, 1 year, August 6  
*Eric Ozio*, 1 year, September 26





Welcome to all new the volunteers joining our extraordinary team!

Cleveland Branch

*Varun Aitharaju, April 8, 2020*

*Jay Natarajan, April 8, 2020*

*Lisa Kime & Abby (pet therapy team), May 29, 2020*

