



Valued Volunteer

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Welcome October,
In the blink of an eye, we find ourselves in the final quarter of the year. As volunteers at Serenity Hospice and Home, we've been actively engaged in the hustle and bustle of this season. As the leaves shift color and the air becomes crisp, we take time to reflect on the impact we've made in recent months. Each visit with our patients serves as a powerful reminder of the strength and resilience inherent in the human spirit. Their stories inspire us and reaffirm our purpose. With the holidays on the horizon, we are seeking more helping hands. It's a fulfilling experience that not only aids others but also enriches your own life. As we enter this season of gratitude, we want to express our heartfelt thanks to all our volunteers, donors, and community supporters. Your kindness and commitment enable us to continue our mission of delivering compassionate care. As October unfolds, let us welcome the beauty of transformation, the warmth of community, and the strength found in compassion. Here's to a month brimming with hope, connection, and meaningful moments.

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 **Serenity**
HOSPICE & HOME
Serving our community for 40 years!

What's Been Happening?



July, August, and September flew by in a whirlwind of activity. Each month brought numerous new patients seeking assistance, along with various events requiring volunteer support. Every individual stepped up at just the right moment, ensuring that our patients' needs were met. As we reflect on the past three months, it's clear why we have the most exceptional group of Hospice volunteers. Some key experiences and achievements that showcase the dedication and impact of our Hospice volunteers:

- Heartwarming Stories
 - Numerous volunteers shared moving moments with patients that not only brightened their days but also left a lasting impact on everyone involved. From engaging in games to simply lending an ear, these interactions offered comfort and companionship during tough times.
- Training and Development
 - Beyond providing care, many volunteers took part in training sessions aimed at enhancing their skills. These sessions covered topics such as communication techniques, emotional support strategies, and self-care practices, preparing volunteers to tackle various challenges they may encounter. Including training 7 new volunteers.
- Community Engagement
 - Our volunteers expanded their outreach within the community, raising awareness about hospice care. They participated by showing off virtual reality, helping at our 40th anniversary party, and helping in different committees.
- Building Connections
 - Through their commitment, volunteers have formed a robust support network not only for patients but also among themselves. Regular meetings and social gatherings have nurtured friendships that boost the overall morale of our group.

As we look ahead to the coming months, we are eager to continue this journey with the same passion and dedication. The heart of our organization resides in the compassion and resilience of our volunteers, and together, we will continue to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.



Meet our Volunteer



Nancy Wadsworth - Dixon
Illinois

Lived in Dixon most of my life.
Married for 50 year - Three adult
children - eight grandchildren.
Retired in 2014 from Dixon
Public Schools after 24 years at
Washington school.

I chose to be a part of Serenity
volunteer team to support families
at a very important time. Each of
us will walk through this
experience at some point, and it
is helpful to travel with someone
to support them during their
journey.





Volunteer Opportunities

GATHERER GROUP

Join us on **Wednesday, October 3rd, at 11 a.m.** in the Serenity Conference Room for our monthly Gatherer Group! The Gatherer Group is a team of volunteers who unite each month to work on projects and crafts that benefit our patients, organization, and community. We welcome all volunteers, whether you're a seasoned crafter or simply looking to lend a helping hand. Here's what you can look forward to during our upcoming session:

- Project Overview:
 - We will begin the meeting with a brief introduction to the projects we'll be focusing on this month. This may involve creating care packages, crafting personalized cards, or designing seasonal decorations for our facilities.
- Collaboration:
 - This is a wonderful chance to meet others who share a passion for giving back. Be ready to collaborate, exchange ideas, and motivate each other as we join forces to make a difference.
- Light lunch:
 - To keep our energy levels high, we'll offer a light lunch and beverages. Feel free to bring along your favorite treat to share with the group!
- Feedback and Future Projects:
 - At the end of our session, we will dedicate some time to discuss future projects and gather your feedback on the types of activities you would like to see in upcoming Gatherer Group meetings.

Your involvement has a meaningful impact, and we can't wait to see you there! If you have any questions or wish to RSVP, please get in touch with us at 815-732-2499. Let's come together to create something beautiful for our community!






Volunteer Opportunities

AOP

Autumn on Parade is an annual festival celebrated in Oregon during the first weekend of October. Serenity Hospice and Home is proud to join their staff, volunteers, and family members in the parade each year. It serves as a heartfelt tribute to our collective efforts in the community, especially when we see bystanders cheering us on as we pass by. It's truly moving to reflect on the lives we have been fortunate to impact in the community. There is still an opportunity to take part in the AOP parade. This year, our float will feature benches for those who are unable to walk in the parade. If you're interested, please reach out today!

KNITTING & CROCHET GROUP

We have an amazing team of volunteers who create stunning lap blankets, prayer shawls, prayer squares, animals, and more through knitting and crocheting. While many individuals craft these beautiful pieces at home, there is a group that meets monthly at the Serenity Shed. Join us on **Friday, October 11th, at 10:30 AM** to knit and crochet with fellow volunteers. These gatherings provide a fantastic opportunity not only to produce lovely handmade items but also to connect with others who share a love for crafting. So, bring your yarn and needles, and join us for a rewarding morning filled with creativity and companionship. We can't wait to see you there!





Volunteer Opportunities

VOLUNTEER SUPPORT CHAT

Serenity Hospice and Home is fortunate to have a remarkable group of dedicated volunteers who devote their time to patients and their families. Each month, we invite these volunteers to participate in our Volunteer Support Group. This gathering allows them to discuss effective visiting practices, share experiences, and provide mutual support. By nurturing a supportive community among our volunteers, we aim to create an environment that enhances the lives of those we serve while also enriching the experiences of those who selflessly contribute their time. We sincerely appreciate every volunteer's dedication and eagerly anticipate continuing this vital work together. We invite you to join us on **Wednesday, October 30th, at 10:45 AM** in the Serenity Conference Room.

BOOK CLUB

Serenity Hospice and Home is thrilled to announce its very own book club! The Book Club gathers every other month at the Village Bakery at 8:30 AM. Join the cozy book nook for lively discussions about captivating reads. This month's meeting will take place on Thursday, October 17th, where the featured book will be "Dear Edward" by Ann Napolitano.



Volunteer Opportunities

FRONT DESK GREETER

Front Desk Greeters serve as the welcoming face of Serenity Home. These volunteers warmly greet patients and their families upon arrival, guiding them to their designated areas. They play a vital role in fostering a friendly environment, ensuring that everyone feels valued and cared for from the moment they enter. The duties of Front Desk Greeters go beyond just offering a friendly welcome. Open volunteer opportunities:

- **Sundays from 12:30 PM to 4:30 PM**
- **Tuesdays:**
 - **October 8th from 4:30 PM to 8 PM**
 - **October 29th from 4:30 PM to 8 PM**
- **Wednesdays:**
 - **October 16th from 8 AM to 12:30 PM**
 - **October 23rd from 8 AM to 12:30 PM**
- **Fridays from 4:30 PM to 8 PM**
- **Saturdays from 12:30 PM to 4:30 PM**

CROCKPOT MEALS

Arranging Crockpot meals for the families of patients at Serenity Home helps foster a warm and inviting environment, filled with the delightful scent of slow-cooked dishes. Every Friday, our committed volunteers put in great effort to prepare these meals. If you would like to contribute a Crockpot meal, here are the available dates for October:

- **Friday, October 25th**
- **Friday, November 1st**



Volunteer Opportunities

VOLUNTEER IN-SERVICE

Each year, we take the time to educate our hospice volunteers about the significance of infection control. We warmly invite you to participate in an informative volunteer in-service, where we will cover key topics vital for maintaining the safety and well-being of both our volunteers and patients. This in-service will take place on **Wednesday, October 9th, at 10:45 AM** in the Serenity conference room. Your participation is vital in helping us maintain high standards of care within our hospice. Together, we can ensure our patients receive optimal support in a safe and healthy environment. We look forward to seeing you at the in-service!

VET STAND DOWN

On October 25th, we will take part in the annual Veteran Stand Down event for at-risk and homeless veterans. We are reaching out to our volunteer and staff community for support to make this event a success. We are collecting various items that can greatly benefit veterans in need. Some of the items we are seeking include:

- **Cold Weather Gear:**
 - Thermal socks, gloves, beanies, and scarves are highly sought after as the weather gets colder.
- **Personal Hygiene Products:**
 - Travel-sized toiletries like toothpaste, toothbrushes, deodorant, hand sanitizer, laundry detergent, Q-tips, razors, alcohol-free mouth wash, wipes and feminine hygiene products are essential.
- **Non-Perishable Food Items:**
 - Easy-to-eat snacks such as granola bars, trail mix, and individual packaged goods are very helpful. Another fun idea is drink packets (kool-aid, crystal light, hot cocoa, apple cider)
- **First Aid Kits:**
 - Basic first aid supplies, including band-aids, antiseptic wipes, cough drops and small bottles of over-the-counter pain relievers can make a significant difference.

Every contribution, no matter the size, is greatly appreciated and will make a real difference in the lives of our veterans.

Together, we can ensure that those who have served our country feel valued and supported. Thank you for your generosity and commitment to aiding our heroes!

VET CAFE

Veteran Volunteers! We warmly invite you to join us on **October 14th at the Polo Senior Center from 10 to 11 a.m.** for a Veteran Café. This gathering is open to all veterans, providing a wonderful opportunity for camaraderie and connection. We aim to create a supportive environment where veterans can share their stories and reinforce our community ties. Don't miss this chance to connect with others who truly understand your journey.



Online Education

This month's online education focuses on a comprehensive overview of Music Therapy for hospice patients. Did you know that Serenity Hospice and Home provides Music Therapy for our patients? K-rae excels at bringing comfort and meaningful music to those in need. Music therapy has become recognized as an essential form of support for individuals facing terminal illnesses. Here are some key insights into the impact of music therapy in hospice care:

- **Emotional Relief:** Music has the power to evoke memories and emotions, offering patients a sense of peace and comfort during challenging times. It alleviates feelings of anxiety and sadness, allowing patients to express their feelings in a supportive environment.
- **Physical Benefits:** Studies indicate that music therapy can diminish pain perception and enhance relaxation. The calming effects of music may lead to reduced heart rates and blood pressure, promoting overall physical health.
- **Cognitive Stimulation:** Engaging with music can enhance cognitive function, helping patients recall cherished memories or connect with loved ones. This can be especially significant for those experiencing memory loss or cognitive decline.
- **Social Connection:** Music therapy sessions often include family members or caregivers, cultivating a sense of community and support. Sharing music strengthens relationships and creates shared experiences, deepening emotional bonds between patients and their loved ones.
- **Legacy Creation:** K-rae's approach to music therapy highlights the importance of legacy music—songs that hold special meaning for the patient. This not only honors their life experiences but also fosters lasting memories for their families.

In summary, incorporating music therapy into hospice care at Serenity Hospice and Home serves as a powerful means of enhancing the quality of life for our patients. It demonstrates the healing power of music and its capacity to provide comfort in life's most difficult moments. If you or someone you know could benefit from this service, please reach out to learn more about how we can assist.

Watch the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XSOB-sGvAFY>





Flu Clinic

Serenity Hospice and Home provides flu shots for our valued volunteers. According to CMS guidelines, volunteers involved with patients or in administrative roles are required to receive a flu shot or present a medical/religious exemption. Flu shots (or exemptions) must be completed by November 15th. Serenity will host flu clinics on the following dates:

- **10/2/2024:**
 - 10:45 AM - 12:00 PM in the Serenity Chapel
 - 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM in the Serenity Conference Room
 - **10/9/2024:**
 - 10:45 AM - 12:00 PM in the Serenity Chapel
 - 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM in the Serenity Conference Room
 - **10/15/2024:**
 - 7:00 AM - 9:00 AM in the Serenity Conference Room
 - **10/16/2024:**
 - 10:45 AM - 12:00 PM in the Serenity Conference Room
 - 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM in the Serenity Conference Room
 - **10/23/2024:**
 - 10:45 AM - 12:00 PM in the Serenity Conference Room
 - 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM in the Serenity Conference Room
 - **10/25/2024:**
 - 7:00 AM - 9:00 AM in the Serenity Conference Room
 - **10/30/2024:**
 - 10:45 AM - 12:00 PM in the Serenity Chapel
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Serenity Home Tree



A STORY OF FRIENDSHIP



A dedicated group of friends collaborates behind the scenes at Serenity Hospice and Home, known as “The Krafty Angels.” This joyful team gathers to share laughter and complete projects that benefit the patients and community. Their generous contributions include baking cookies for nursing home staff during Christmas, collecting candy and trinkets for Autumn on Parade, creating special gifts for children, packaging hundreds of Easter eggs, ensuring veterans receive essential items, and much more.

Tragically, the Krafty Angels lost one of their own, Sandy Noser, on July 20, 2024. Sandy's passing has profoundly impacted everyone connected with Serenity Hospice and Home. Her warmth and commitment to the Krafty Angels were genuinely inspirational, and her absence is deeply felt. However, in true Krafty Angels fashion, the group has committed to honoring her memory by continuing their charitable work. In September, they adorned the Serenity Home tree with the decorations Sandy had once used, celebrating her spirit. As they navigate this challenging period, the Krafty Angels remind us that love and community can thrive even amidst loss, serving as a beacon of hope for those in need.

Through their steadfast dedication and spirited teamwork, the Krafty Angels illustrate how kindness and creativity can change lives, one project at a time. Their story showcases the power of community and the endless opportunities that emerge when individuals come together for a shared purpose. Whether assembling care packages for families in need, crafting personalized holiday decorations, or simply lending a helping hand, their efforts resonate throughout the community, spreading joy and comfort. Their legacy embodies compassion, demonstrating that with a touch of creativity and a lot of heart, anyone can make a difference.





Looking Ahead

The last quarter has been quite busy, and the upcoming three months will be filled with volunteer opportunities. We have a variety of community events planned, and here are some highlighted activities you can participate in:

- **Autumn on Parade: Sunday, October 6th, starting at 12 PM. While it's too late to grab a t-shirt, you can still join in!**
- **Veteran Cafe on October 14th at 10 AM, located at the Polo Senior Center.**
- **We are collecting items for the Top of Illinois Stand Down on Friday, October 25th.**
- **Our annual Serenity Hospice and Home Memorial Service is scheduled for November 3rd at 1 PM at the Ebenezer Reformed Church.**
- **Veteran Cafe on Tuesday, November 5th at 10 AM at the Rock River Center in Oregon.**
- **On Friday, November 8th, veteran volunteers will read veteran-centric books to students at Oregon Elementary.**
- **We're seeking volunteers to help deliver Thanksgiving meals to patients and their families on Wednesday, November 27th.**
- **Our annual Angel Ball Fundraiser is set for Saturday, December 7th, and we need volunteers to assist with the event.**
- **Keep an eye out for our annual volunteer Christmas party in December.**
- **We're also looking for volunteers to deliver Christmas meals to patients and their families on Monday, December 23rd.**

These events are just a sneak peek of what's ahead in the coming months. We encourage everyone to get involved, whether for just a few hours or through a long-term commitment. Your participation not only enhances our community but also fosters connections that lead to meaningful change. Stay tuned for more details and specific dates as they are confirmed!

