

VOL 4 ISS 4



WELCOME  
*January*  
*Valued Volunteer*

STEPHANIE WHEELER VOLUNTEER SERVICES MANAGER  
MOBILE/TEXT: (779) 861-4170  
OFFICE: (815) 732-2499  
[STEPHANIEW@SERENITYHOSPICEANDHOME.ORG](mailto:STEPHANIEW@SERENITYHOSPICEANDHOME.ORG)





# Happy New Year

As we reflect on 2025, it's hard not to feel immense pride and gratitude. This past year was filled with some of the most meaningful events we've ever held, brought to life by volunteers who stretched themselves in new ways, turned vision into reality, and served patients and families with their whole hearts. From January through November, volunteers contributed an average of 16% in direct patient hours; a powerful reminder of your commitment, especially when Medicare requires 5%. Beyond that, our non-direct care volunteers donated over 6,000 hours, strengthening Serenity in countless behind-the-scenes ways. Our success is rooted in your willingness to bring heart to this organization, and I cannot wait to see what 2026 holds for Volunteer Services and for Serenity as a whole.

-Stephanie Wheeler





# What's Been Happening?

The last three months of the year are always some of the busiest, but also the most rewarding, months at Serenity Hospice & Home.

In October, our volunteers helped prepare for the Angel Ball fundraiser and created beautiful wreaths for our veteran patients, spreading holiday cheer early. On Halloween, we had the privilege of participating in the Top of Illinois Stand Down, providing essentials to around 100 at-risk and homeless veterans.

November brought our Annual Memorial Event, honoring the patients we had the honor of caring for over the past year. We also renewed our Level 5 partnership with the We Honor Veterans program, celebrating the dedication of our veterans and the social workers who support them.

Volunteers helped bring joy to the next generation as well, reading military-themed books to students at Oregon Elementary School. Over the holiday season, volunteers delivered more than 50 Thanksgiving and Christmas meals and helped adorn Serenity Home for the festivities. Our Angel Ball fundraiser was a tremendous success, thanks in large part to volunteers who decorated the event and ensured the evening ran smoothly. Volunteers also made over 45 candy tins for staff at nursing homes caring for our hospice patients and participated in Wreaths Across America, donating over 40 wreaths for the event.

We closed the year with our Comfy & Cozy Volunteer Christmas Party, a heartwarming celebration bringing together volunteers from every opportunity. The games, food, and gift exchange made it the perfect way to honor the year's work and community spirit.

These past three months, and the year as a whole, remind us that Serenity's success is rooted in the dedication, creativity, and heart of our volunteers. We couldn't do it without you!



# Volunteers Needed!

## GATHERER GROUP

Join us for our monthly Gatherer Craft Group on WEDNESDAY JANUARY 14<sup>TH</sup> AT 11AM in the Serenity Conference room. We supply all the materials; all you need to bring is your creativity and enthusiasm. Join us for a morning filled with laughter, learning, and artistic expression!

## Join Our Knitting and Crochet Group!

Are you passionate about knitting or crocheting? We have the perfect group for you! Join us to craft your own designs or contribute to projects such as prayer shawls, lap blankets, and prayer squares for our patients at Serenity Hospice and Home.

### Details:

- Location: Serenity Shed
- Date: Friday, January 9th
- Time: 10 a.m.

We can't wait to see you there!

## Serenity Home Tree

Do you enjoy decorating? We invite you to add your personal touch to the tree in our Serenity Home Family Room! Bring your favorite decor to brighten up the space. We are seeking decorators for the following months:

- February
- March
- April
- May
- July
- October

## Knitting and Crocheting Group

## Book Club

The Book Club meeting has been moved to January 15th at 8:30 AM and will be held at the Village Bakery. This month, we will be discussing "The Wedding People" by Alison Espach.

# Volunteers Needed 2

## FRONT DESK GREETER

Front Desk Greeters play a vital role as volunteers at Serenity Home, providing a warm welcome to families upon their arrival. We are currently seeking volunteers for the following shifts:

- Sunday, January 25th:
  - 8:00 AM — 12:30 PM
  - 12:30 PM — 4:30 PM
- Tuesday, January 20th:
  - 8:00 AM — 12:30 PM
  - 12:30 PM — 4:30 PM
  - Every Tuesday from 4:30 PM — 8:00 PM
- Wednesday:
  - Every week from 8:00 AM — 12:30 PM
- Thursday, January 22nd:
  - 8:00 AM — 12:30 PM
  - Every Thursday from 4:30 PM — 8:00 PM
- Saturday, January 24th and 31st:
  - 8:00 AM — 12:30 PM
  - 12:30 PM — 4:30 PM

Your support is greatly appreciated!

## CROCKPOT MEALS

We are looking for volunteers who would like to make a crockpot meal for the families visiting patients in the Serenity Home. We have the following dates available:

- FRIDAY FEB 6TH
- FRIDAY FEB 13TH
- FRIDAY FEB 27TH

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## EDUCATION

Join us on Tuesday January 20<sup>th</sup> at 10am for our monthly education in the Serenity conference room. Reminder for 2026: Volunteers need 3 hours of Dementia Training and 3 hours of Hospice Training. Please let me know if you need online options.

Listen to this TED Talk on "Stories from a home for the terminally ill." This highlights the importance of pediatric respite care in hospice. Serenity Hospice and Home is proud to be a hospice with the knowledge and compassion to care for pediatric patients. Watch the Ted Talk here:

[https://www.ted.com/talks/kathy\\_hull\\_stories\\_from\\_a\\_home\\_for\\_terminally\\_ill\\_children?utm\\_campaign=tedsread&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_source=tedcomshare](https://www.ted.com/talks/kathy_hull_stories_from_a_home_for_terminally_ill_children?utm_campaign=tedsread&utm_medium=referral&utm_source=tedcomshare)

## SUPPORT CHAT

Join us for a discussion on best practices for patients and connect with fellow volunteers. Our upcoming meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 28th, at 10:45 a.m. in the Serenity Conference Room.

## ONLINE EDUCATION

## ADMIN VOLUNTEER

I am looking for a volunteer who would be willing to help with administration paperwork 1-2 times a month at their leisure . This role is perfect for someone who is organized, detail-oriented, and enjoys working behind the scenes to support our mission. If interested please reach out for more information.



## NEW VOLUNTEER TRAINING CLASS

Volunteers are essential to the mission of hospice care. This February, we will be hosting a training class for new volunteers, and who better to share this information than our incredible volunteers?

There is a significant demand for the following types of volunteers:

- Pet Therapy Volunteers
- Direct Patient Volunteers
- Veteran Volunteers

Our training sessions are designed to provide volunteers with all the tools they need to create a meaningful impact on the lives of patients and their families. Together, we can make a difference.



### VOLUNTEER CLASS

**TUESDAY, FEB. 10  
AND  
THURSDAY, FEB. 12  
9:00 AM - 4:00 PM**



By volunteering at Serenity Hospice and Home, you help us focus on living fully; bringing comfort, meaning, and dignity to every day.

Volunteers for all skills and interests are needed. Pet therapy and direct-patient volunteers are especially encouraged to get involved.

#### To Register For The Class:

Contact Stephanie, Volunteer Manager  
[Volunteers@serenityhospiceandhome.org](mailto:Volunteers@serenityhospiceandhome.org)  
(815) 732-2499

[SerenityHospiceAndHome.org](http://SerenityHospiceAndHome.org)

