

Compassionate Connections



HONORING OUR VOLUNTEERS

Put simply, Talbot Hospice could not exist without its volunteers. Our volunteers are incredible members of our community who support all areas of our programs and services. From working directly with our patients and families, to tackling other projects like tending our gardens, stocking the Hospice House kitchen and manning our reception desks, our volunteers show up each and every day to make our mission possible. We've dedicated our Spring issue to this amazing group of individuals and thank them for sharing their volunteer stories with you. To learn more about how you can become a Talbot Hospice Volunteer, please contact Megan Murray at mmurray@talbothospice.org.



BEVERLY SPROUSE

Why did you become a hospice volunteer? To give back to an incredible organization. My first experience with Hospice was for my mother in 2011. This was in Prince George's County. My Mom had Alzheimer's. We had home care with Hospice. It was incredible. It helped my father the most who was in denial. Since then, I have personally experienced the care and support they give with my father, mother-in-law, sister, brother, best friend and my "adopted parents". It is a privilege to be a small part of Hospice.

What has been your most meaningful experience?

The most meaningful experience is when a family member thanks me for a smile and simple kindness. When I am told that I have helped them makes every moment special.

What do you think people should know about being a hospice volunteer?

That it is not sad or depressing. I hear that quite often. In fact it can be the opposite. The act of kindness and respect to others and knowing in some way you are making a difference even in a small way, is a wonderful feeling.



MIKE POTTER

Why did you become a hospice volunteer? We had donated to Hospice for some time and decided that I should get more involved after hearing the stories of a few friends and their volunteer experiences.

What has been your most meaningful experience?

Being complimented by a patient of how perfectly I had cooked his over-easy fried egg. I got the opportunity to provide him the morning aroma of scrapple and eggs.

What do you think people should know about being a hospice volunteer?

We have purchased and decorated 2-ft Christmas trees for each room, cooked breakfast, helped with minor interior design, weeded gardens, cleaned out kitchen cupboards, served on the board, among other volunteer functions. My point here is that not all of us have the skill to serve as a doula or as comfort to an emotional family. But, there are so many other valuable tasks required to make a hospice operate. Some do shopping, some provide respite care so family caregivers can get a break, some sit at the reception desk, the list goes on and on. So, I encourage you all to find a place to jump in and play a meaningful role in this wonderful organization.

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S LETTER



As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands. One for helping yourself, the other for helping others.”—Audrey Hepburn

Dear Friends,

Talbot Hospice recognizes the vital role that volunteers play in providing exceptional care and support to patients and their families. From providing companionship to offering practical help, our volunteers are essential in enhancing the hospice experience and creating a warm and welcoming environment. Volunteers bring a diverse range of skills, experiences, and perspectives to Talbot Hospice, and their dedication and compassion are an inspiration to all who work and receive care. With the support of our volunteers, we are able to provide a higher level of care and make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve.

We are proud to feature on the next few pages a few of our dedicated and selfless volunteers who give their time and energy to make a positive impact in our community. All of our volunteers embody the true spirit of volunteerism and the mission of our organization. Their tireless efforts range from greeting families at the Hospice House reception desk, answering phones and welcoming visitors in the administrative wing, maintaining our gardens, preparing breakfast for Hospice House patients, and many more.

Talbot Hospice volunteers answer the call to coordinate events that raise money to support our programs and are a testament to the power of one person to make a difference and inspire others to do the same. Their unwavering commitment to service is a shining example of what Martin Luther King meant when he said, “life’s most persistent and urgent question is, what are you doing for others?” Their acts of kindness and compassion are too many to note. However, it is our honor to shine a light on a few examples of the wonderful work they do.

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to all those who have supported our mission to provide comfort and care to those facing end-of-life challenges. Your generosity and kindness make it possible for us to continue providing our patients with the highest quality of care. May you be blessed with peace and joy in the coming months. Thank you for being a part of our hospice family.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christopher Chekouras". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light-colored background.

Christopher Chekouras
 Executive Director

JUDY AUSTIN

Why did you become a hospice volunteer? I became a hospice volunteer because I enjoy spending time with people, especially older people. I am a good listener and can appreciate hearing about a person's life, their family, career and interests. I also see the joy that reminiscing can bring to them and that is very satisfying for me.

What has been your most meaningful experience? My visits to a gentleman in a facility this past year were a bright spot for both of us. He was a Navy Veteran who had traveled the world and his career was spent in a teaching capacity. He had excellent memory recall and we had many times together revisiting his experiences and adventures. These exchanges brought a smile to both of our faces frequently. He would usually start our visit with, "Well, what do you want to know about me today?" Sadly, I will miss our visits. He passed away.

What do you think people should know about being a hospice volunteer? My life is full and there were times when I wondered how I could possibly squeeze more into it but Hospice was always flexible and understanding with my schedule which allowed me to set my own pace for visits to this facility and that was important to me.

2022 JON FOX FISHING TOURNAMENT!

The Jon Fox Fishing Tournament is held each fall and brings together the friends, family and colleagues of the late Jon Fox for a fun day on the water in support of Talbot Hospice. **This year, the tournament raised almost \$10,000 - a new record!**



Some Talbot Hospice staff members created their own team, "Hooked on Hospice" to support the effort. They rose to the challenge and worked tirelessly for the patients they care for to ensure that our services are available to everyone regardless of their ability to pay. Thank you to team Hooked on Hospice, Doc's Sunset Grille, and everyone who came out to remember Jon!

Left: Hospice House Manager, Colby Hall, won the women's division!



HOSPICE VOLUNTEERS: DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that Talbot Hospice is required by Federal regulations to have volunteer support as part of its accreditation?

Did you know that Talbot Hospice's Pathways Program which provides support and companionship services is mostly staffed by volunteers?

Did you know that Talbot Hospice's volunteer roles include, but are not limited to:

- Sitting with, talking to or reading to patients and families
- Providing respite care for caregivers
- Grocery shopping for the Hospice House
- Preparing meals for Hospice House patients and families
- Staffing the Front Desk
- Supporting everyday administrative tasks like stuffing envelopes, answering phones
- Supporting Hospice events like the Memorial Walk, Remembrance ceremonies, etc.
- Performing Veterans Recognition Ceremonies
- Gardening and landscaping around Hospice House

If you would like to help, we can find the right role! Volunteer trainings are held in the Spring and Fall. To learn more, contact Megan Murray at mmurray@talbothospice.org.



LIZ HASLUP

Why did you become a hospice volunteer? As a 13-year-old, I lost my father to cancer. There were no Hospice services offered to families at that time, especially not for young children. When I encountered the services of both Pathways and Hospice in my thirties with my husband's illness and subsequent passing, I saw the great potential of what those services could do for children, loved ones, and families. Deciding to be a hospice volunteer was really a no-brainer for me. I wanted to help ensure that the opportunity for the support that Hospice can offer a family was available to anyone in our community.

What has been your most meaningful experience? I have volunteered in many ways for the hospice organization... Tree sponsorship and decorating for the Festival of Trees, Hospice House caregiver, support staff for children's grief camp, arts and crafts for events as needed, and providing the services of an end-of-life Doula. My experiences as a Doula have been the most meaningful, particularly when I am able to serve a patient who does not have family with them at the time of their passing. Providing a hand to hold, a quiet and peaceful environment, or answering questions for a loved one as a patient is transitioning is both sacred and awe-inspiring, and I am honored to serve in that space. I'm also humbled and grateful to the families that allowed me to serve and be with them and their loved one at such a difficult time.

What do you think people should know about being a hospice volunteer? All it takes is caring! There are so many ways to volunteer that there is no doubt you can find something that is a good fit for you! And it feels so good to help this wonderful organization. We are so blessed to have Talbot Hospice in our special community!!

JOHN HORNER, FRIENDS OF HOSPICE



John Horner is the Vice-President of Easton Utilities and Past Vice-President of Friends of Hospice. He also served as Co-Chairman of the 2022 Winter Festival, which brought in the largest contribution to date from Friends of Hospice.

Winter Festival was a series of fundraising events hosted by Friends of Hospice and Talbot Hospice during the second half of 2022. Events included Pump It Up for Hospice, Santa 5K Fun Run, 37th Annual Festival of Trees, Carols by Candlelight, and Holiday House Tours. **Collectively, the events raised**

\$169,000 - the most ever in a single year! Since its creation in 1986, Friends of Hospice has raised more than \$3 million for Talbot Hospice.

Last year's record-breaking achievement is due largely in part to John's commitment to Friends of Hospice and working collaboratively with Talbot Hospice to make the Winter Festival a huge success. John truly exemplifies what it means to be a "Friend of Hospice." His passion for Talbot Hospice and raising money for its programs is evident in his tireless efforts to ensure that everything runs smoothly and that every event is a positive and fun experience.

Talbot Hospice would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to John, as well as the entire Friends of Hospice Board of Directors, event chairs and volunteers for their dedication and hard work!



Save the Dates!

Saturday, April 22nd: 2023 Memorial Walk

Saturday, September 16th: Hospice Cup

Saturday, September 23rd: Hospice Gala

Friday, October 6th: Guthrie Party



JANE HOPKINSON

Why did you become a hospice volunteer? As a hospice musician since 2010, I've had some wonderful experiences. Providing music offers many opportunities of feedback from visitors and guests as well as the staff. The beautiful thing about music is that it makes you feel good. It conjures up happy memories that are forgotten. It's said that music is the universal language and depending on certain songs it's the supreme love language.

What has been your most meaningful experience? Recently, I played "Over the Rainbow" and one of our visitors said it reminded him of the movie "The Wizard of Oz" that he looked forward to seeing on TV every springtime years ago. Love songs from the 1940s and show tunes like "Phantom of the Opera" make up a large part of my playlist. Music by Duke Ellington and a favorite, "Ain't Misbehavin" by William Fats Waller are also included. Before I leave Hospice House, I play Jules Massenet's Meditation from "Thais."

What do you think people should know about being a hospice volunteer? Volunteering at Hospice House is an opportunity to make you feel good. Whether you are sitting at the front desk, answering the phone, cooking breakfast or lunch, aiding the staff, or providing music, your skills are always needed and always appreciated.



CINDY REED

Why did you become a hospice volunteer? I was already an active volunteer for several organizations while employed as a special education teacher. Once I retired, I felt that my particular skills, outlook, and responsibilities might be well applied to Talbot Hospice's needs.

What has been your most meaningful experience? Of the many rich experiences I've been privileged to encounter through Talbot Hospice, those I most treasure have a common thread. As a Pathways home volunteer, I was fortunate to have served as the conduit bridging the gap between receiving hospice services at home and becoming an on-site resident. In every scenario, the client was hungry for specific information about Hospice House and with potentially strong interest in making that move. As a weekly volunteer there, too, I could not only address questions and concerns, but was naturally positioned to begin that frequently uncomfortable conversation between the patient and their family. In every case, and with kudos to hospice staff on varied levels, the clients moved within days, to the serenity and satisfaction of all.

What do you think people should know about being a hospice volunteer? The benefits of early contact with Talbot Hospice extend far and wide beyond general community awareness. Not a week seems to go by without my regret that a family didn't reach out long before their loved one's final weeks or days. Beginning hospice services is most definitely not an act of giving up; in fact, lives have been comfortably extended, and with heightened quality, under the hospice umbrella. Calling upon this incredible community resource is a clear act of strength and love.

FELLOWS, HELFENBEIN & NEWNAM CAREGIVER AWARD

Congratulations to Mary Camper, RN and Caroline Mack, RN who were recently recognized with Fellows, Helfenbein & Newnam’s Caregiver Award.

They are pictured with Justin Britcher, Brooke the pup and Cade Helfenbein.



MARTI BREMER



When I was preparing to retire in June 2022, I knew I still wanted a little structure in my life. Hospice has always been important to me as both of my parents had been on hospice in another county. After going through the training to become a Talbot Hospice volunteer, I learned of all the different types of jobs available. Baking in the Hospice House caught my eye! I have always enjoyed baking and creating the aromas that help make a house a home. It brings joy to my heart when one of the nurses says to me, “You can smell the aromas all the way down the hall.”

Another job I do is patient transport for the Pathways program. It has been enjoyable getting to know the people and getting great satisfaction in knowing that I am helping to make their lives easier.

THANK YOU, BOUNTIFUL!



Thank you to Jamie Merida and the Bountiful Team for their continued support of Talbot Hospice. Each year, they contribute a portion of their Holiday Kick-Off Sale to support our patients, families and programs. This year, Bountiful’s patrons set a new record: \$4,371.40!

We can’t thank them enough for their belief in our mission and helping us raise awareness and support every year.



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Talbot Hospice
MEMORIAL
Walk

IN PERSON WALK: SATURDAY, APRIL 22ND
VIRTUAL WALK: FRIDAY, APRIL 21ST - SUNDAY, APRIL 23RD

We are returning to Oxford Day for the 2023 Memorial Walk!

Join us in celebrating the lasting memories of your loved ones for the annual Hospice Memorial Walk. This year we will again offer a virtual walk for our out-of-town friends and those who are more comfortable walking on their own in addition to the main event on Saturday, April 22nd as part of Oxford Day. Walk as an individual or with a team, and make an even bigger impact by participating in an optional crowdfunding campaign. Learn more and register at www.talbothospice.org.