

Volunteer Voice

March 2026

A Message from the Director

By JoAnn Bross, Director of Social and Volunteer Services

Dear Volunteers,



Spring is a season of renewal, growth, and reflection. As we welcome longer days and fresh beginnings, I'm reminded of the compassion and dedication that define our volunteer community. Your generosity of time and heart truly makes a difference and we are deeply grateful. Thank you for the extraordinary difference you make every single day.

With the spirit of Spring, change also comes. After dedicated service to our organization, our Volunteer Services Manager, Sheri Florizone, will be leaving to begin a new chapter. While we are excited for what lies ahead for Sheri, we feel the weight of this transition. Her leadership, passion for volunteerism, and steadfast advocacy have helped shape and strengthen Volunteer Services in lasting ways. The relationships she has built, the programs she has developed, and the culture of support she has fostered have made a meaningful and lasting impact. There is no doubt that these are big shoes to fill.

And while change can bring uncertainty, it also brings opportunity. As we move forward, our commitment to supporting you and strengthening the volunteer program remains unwavering. We will use this transition as a time to reflect on what we do well, identify areas for growth, and continue building a program that honors your contributions and advances our mission. Together, we will continue providing exceptional care and companionship to those who need it most. Thank you for being the heart of hospice.

JoAnn Bross

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Dates to Remember:

March 8: International Women's Day

March 17: St Patrick's Day

April 5: Easter Sunday

April 1-9: Passover

April 11: Volunteer Luncheon

April 19-25: National Volunteer Week

April 22: Earth Day

May 5: Cinco de Mayo

May 6: National Nurses Day

May 10: Mother's Day

May 25: Memorial Day

June 19: Juneteenth

June 21: Fathers Day

July 10: Chronic Disease Day

Save The Date



April is Volunteer Appreciation Month and that means it's all about celebrating you! Our hospice program simply wouldn't be the same without the time, heart, and energy you share. Whether you visit patients, support families, help in the office, make phone calls, assist with events, or work behind the scenes, every role matters. You are an essential part of our team and we are so grateful for all you do!

To honor you and say thank you, we're hosting our Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon on Saturday, April 11th. We hope that you'll join us! It will be a relaxed and fun opportunity to gather, enjoy a meal together, connect with fellow volunteers and staff, and celebrate the incredible impact you make across our organization.

Please save the date and plan to attend. More details will be coming soon. We can't wait to celebrate with you!



Holiday Party Fun

Our Volunteer Holiday Cookie Socials were a sweet time for everyone! Cookies and other yummy holiday goodies to share took center stage and everyone had a great time! Whether you joined us at Loveless Funeral Home or the Hadley Training Center, we "ho, ho, hope" everyone savored some hot chocolate, shared your delectable treats and enjoyed some holiday tunes from Andy Anderson.



Veterans Holiday Party

This year we partnered with The Veteran Center to host a Christmas party complete with gifts and food for our local Veterans! We spent a great day showing appreciation and sharing time together around a homemade meal!

Gulfside Veteran Volunteers provided and served the food! Each Veteran received a goodie bag/stocking with personal items and a \$10 gift card, which we collected from the community! We had a great turnout with more than 35 people attending!

We're happy the first year was a huge success and are already looking forward to planning next year's event! Thank you to all who supported this event! Gulfside Veteran Volunteers are AMAZING!!



Upcoming Event


**CHARITY CASINO
NIGHT**
BENEFITING GULFSIDE HOSPICE

**Friday, April 24
6 - 10 p.m.**

at the Shanna & Bryan Glazer JCC
in Tampa
\$100 Per Person

50/50 Drawing | Restaurant Roulette | Prize Drawings

INCLUDES:

Gaming from 6:30 - 9:30 p.m. | Fun Money Tokens | Prizes
Hors d'oeuvres | 1 Free Drink from Cash Bar | Photo Booth
Ages 21+ only.

CharityCasinoNight.org

**Follow Gulfside On
Social Media To Get
More Updates:**

@GulfsideThriftShoppes
@GulfsideHealthcareServices



Gulfside Hospice Thrift Shoppes

Did you know that Gulfside Volunteers get a **volunteer discount** at all four **Gulfside Hospice Thrift Shoppe Locations**? Volunteers receive 50% off clothing and 25% off everything else! Visit one today to see what discounted treasures you can find!

Farewell From Sheri Florizone

Dear Gulfside Volunteers,

As I take my leave from Gulfside at the end of February to return to my home in Canada, I would like to take a moment to share my distinct pleasure at working in the Volunteer Services Department at Gulfside Hospice. Working in hospice has truly been a life-changing experience. I have loved being a part of such a lively team who welcomed me from the moment I arrived and showed me the meaning of dedication.

And the volunteers...what can I say? Your generosity, compassion, and kindness have left an indelible mark on me. I have seen the heart and soul of hospice, and it is you, our volunteers. I will always be grateful for the lessons I have learned and the friendships I have made here. As I return to the cold climate of Canada, please know that my heart will always be warmed by memories of my time at Gulfside. Thank you, everyone!



Sheri's new home in northern Saskatchewan, Canada

News to Know

Annual Evaluations

Gulfside takes an interdisciplinary approach to giving both patients and their families the best possible quality of life. This means that our entire team provides excellent medical care as well as emotional and spiritual support to every patient. As a Gulfside volunteer YOU are part of this essential care team, and we want to ensure that you have the skills needed to perform your duties. To this end, every volunteer is required to undergo an annual evaluation and skills assessment (we call these 'competencies').

Volunteer Services staff undertake this annual evaluation with each volunteer around the anniversary of their enrollment date with Gulfside. If you have any questions about these annual evaluations, please reach out to us directly at volunteercoordinators@gulfside.org.

The 5% Rule

Did you Know? Gulfside Hospice must fulfill a federally mandated commitment to provide at least 5% of the clinical hours with volunteer hours (administrative and/or direct patient care services). With your support, we met that goal in 2024. Thank you!

Important Reminder

Patient Reporting Forms must be submitted on the SAME DAY of the patient visit. Your attention to this request is greatly appreciated!



*Support
Hospice*
Everywhere You Drive

With every purchase of a Florida Hospice specialty license plate, \$25 goes to support end-of-life care programs and outreach through Florida Hospice & Palliative Care. Plates

facebook

join our
group +



Join the new Volunteer Facebook Group!

Gulfside volunteers have a new way of staying connected! If you are on Facebook, we invite you to join our new Facebook group created just for our volunteers.



We'll share information about what's coming up, fun facts, inspirational messages, photos from events, and more. Plus, you can use the group to share your experience as a volunteer and connect with other volunteers.

To join, visit [FB.com/GulfsideHealthcareServices](https://www.facebook.com/GulfsideHealthcareServices) and go to the "Groups" tab, or scan the QR code above with your smartphone.

Tell A Friend

Gulfside's volunteer department is looking for volunteers to help in the following areas:

Companionship - Provide companionship to patients in their home to decrease loneliness and isolation, and provide moments of joy. Companionship type activities could include playing cards, reading, or simply talking about fond memories with the patients. Up to 3 hour per visit a week.

Caregiver Respite - Assist caregivers by being with a patient in the home while the caregiver runs errands or simply takes some time for themselves.

Pet Peace of Mind - Deliver pet food to patients. May also assist in completing paperwork for patient's pets to enroll in the Pet Peace of Mind Program. Hours vary based on need.

Veteran Volunteers - Match with veteran patients for companionship or respite. May also assist with pinning ceremonies to recognize the veteran patient and other veteran specific opportunities. Hours vary based on need.

Kitchen (RUCKI) - Assist with a variety of kitchen and dietary duties at the Rucki Care Center in Zephyrhills. Daytime hours vary based on need.

Happy Anniversary!

	# of Years
Ronnie M	11 years
Linda C	5 years
Joan M	4 years
Pat M	3 years
Diana L	3 years
Sheila T	2 years
Dale M	2 years
Bev S	2 years
Elizabeth B	1 year
Judy R	1 year
Maria F	1 year
Joyce F	1 year