



Saint Anthony's Offers Hospice Volunteer Training

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(Alton, IL) – Area residents interested in becoming a Hospice volunteer are invited to a special training program sponsored by Saint Anthony's Hospice, on April 21 and 22, from 5 to 9 p.m. each evening in the Auditorium of Saint Clare's Professional Building, 815 E. Fifth Street.

"It takes a special person to share time with someone who is dying," said Marilyn



SAINT ANTHONY'S
HEALTH CENTER

Eyman,

Supervisor of Saint Anthony's Hospice. "A person who can spend an afternoon, give a listening ear, write a letter or simply hold a hand is the type of volunteer that we are looking for."

The [Cassella Hospice Volunteer Training](#) program for Saint Anthony's Hospice shares a hospice philosophy of providing care for the terminally ill person and their loved ones in the comfort of their own home or home-like surroundings. The training program is named in tribute to longtime area residents, John and Janet Cassella, who left an estate gift to Saint Anthony's Hospice in 2011.

Hospice care allows the terminally ill person to live out their last days among the people and things they love as comfortable and pain free as possible.

"Our Hospice team is composed of the patient and their family, as well as an experienced group of supportive clinicians and volunteers," Eyman says. A hospice medical director, supervisor, nurse, social worker, pastoral care director, certified nurse'

s aides and volunteers ensure that the patient's hospice care addresses the needs of the whole person and affords them the opportunity to die with dignity.

Saint Anthony's Hospice offers two programs to help individuals in their final days. "The *No One Dies Alone* and our *Buddy System* allows us to match up volunteers with the family and/or patient, based on their individual preferences and desires to participate," she says.

During the volunteer training sessions, volunteers will be trained in all aspects of hospice including confidentiality, spirituality, communication skills, understanding of diseases and conditions, pastoral care, and bereavement.

Volunteers work in collaboration with other members of the Saint Anthony's Hospice team to meet the needs of the patient and their family. Volunteers may provide support and companionship for patients and families as well as helping with other needed tasks, some of which are listed below:

- provide companionship for patients and families
- provide emotional support for patients and families
- remain with the patient during scheduled periods of absence of the primary care person
- write letters for the patient or family
- listen
- play cards or games with patient or family members
- read to the patient
- watch television with the patient
- provide TLC
- fulfill other needs identified by the patient, family or volunteer
- help with clerical duties and/or fundraising in the Saint Anthony's Hospice office

Bereavement Services are also offered because the caring does not stop with the death of the hospice patient. For at least a year following death, the Saint Anthony's Hospice bereavement staff and volunteers provide supportive contacts designed to assist in coping with grief and adjustment to loss.

Light snacks will be available at the training. To register or to learn more information, please call 618-463-5636.