

STORIES OF CARE

Helping people feel at home



When Rosanne first visited Dr. Kemp's House, she had never been inside a residential hospice.

A former colleague was receiving care here, and Rosanne came to visit shortly before Christmas. She remembers volunteers offering coffee, the smell of baking and the warmth shown to everyone who walked through the door.

After a 35-year career as a respiratory therapist, she knew she wanted to stay connected to care when she retired.

"I thought this would be a good transition for me," Rosanne said. "There is so much focus on the family here. It was quite beautiful."

Rosanne began volunteering nine years ago. Today, she can usually be found at the front desk on Monday mornings, welcoming visitors, answering calls and helping people find where they need to go.

For someone entering a hospice for the first time, a familiar face and a warm greeting can make a difference. "I want them to feel that this is their home as well when they're here," she said.

Rosanne's support also reaches beyond the hospice. Through KCN's Volunteer Visiting program, she has supported four clients living with serious illness in the community.

She visits regularly to offer companionship and help with everyday challenges. With her health-care experience, she is also comfortable helping clients work through forms, phone calls and community services while remaining within her volunteer role and keeping the KCN team informed.

"I love being able to help somebody figure out the system," she said. "That's where I feel I'm making a difference." Rosanne also helps train new reception volunteers, sharing what she has learned and encouraging them to bring their own strengths to the role.

This year, Rosanne is being inducted into the June Callwood Circle of Outstanding Volunteers, which recognizes outstanding hospice volunteers across Ontario.

While she is touched by the honour, Rosanne is quick to recognize the work of volunteers throughout KCN. "I don't think I do anything more than anybody else," she said. "It's a pleasure."

Rosanne also chairs Making a Difference, a community fundraising dinner in support of Keaton's House, KCN's planned children's hospice for families across South-Central Ontario. The first event in 2024 raised approximately \$44,000, and the next dinner will take place on Nov. 7, 2026.

What keeps her coming back is simple.

"You get more back than you give," Rosanne said. "I think there's something here for everybody."

Volunteers like Rosanne help people feel welcomed, supported and less alone, whether they are visiting Dr. Kemp's House or receiving support in their own home.