



Fall 2025 Newsletter



Letter from our Executive Director

In a world where so many feel disconnected, overwhelmed, or quietly burdened by grief, the simple gift of human presence has never been more important. At Coastal Family Hospice Volunteers (CFHV), our volunteers believe that even the smallest acts of compassion—sitting with someone in their final hours, offering a listening ear, or giving caregivers a moment of respite—can lift isolation and remind us that we are never truly alone.

This past year has been one of growth and impact for CFHV. We've expanded our bereavement support groups, strengthened volunteer training, and continued to serve hospice patients and grieving families with care and dignity. Every call, every visit, every shared moment reflects our mission: to bring comfort and connection when it matters most.

As we head into the Thanksgiving Holiday, I am so thankful to you for being part of this mission, either as a volunteer, donor, or Board member.

Together, we can continue to bring light, comfort, and hope to those who need it most.

Sincerely,

Rebecca JangDhari Brandes

November 2025

Our Board Members

Kathy Derene- President

Steve Ruelke-
Vice President

Chris Tofani-Secretary

Ingrid Van Steenberg-
Treasurer

Jeanne Short

Louise McLellan

Beth Chamberlin

UPCOMING EVENTS

HOLIDAY BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT GROUP :

MONDAY DECEMBER 1ST
4:00PM-5:00PM,

8TH, 15TH AND 22ND, 4:30PM-
5:30PM

@ QUARRY HILL

30 COMMUNITY DRIVE

CAMDEN, ME

ANNUAL VOLUNTEER CHRISTMAS PARTY

DECEMBER 15TH!

COMING SOON IN 2026!

Pet Peace of Mind
Partnership

Ongoing Support Groups

Drop-in Support Group

Open to all; meets on the first Monday of the month at Quarry Hill, 30 Community Drive in Camden from 4:00pm-5:00pm

Parent Bereavement Support Group

For those seeking support after the loss of a child, meets twice a month at the Nativity Lutheran Church in Rockport. Interested individuals can call 207-466-9444 to register.

Caregiver Support Group

For those who have taken on the challenging role of caring for a loved one; meets on the last Monday of every month from 4:00pm-5:00pm at our CFHV office, 91 Camden Street, Suite 408 at Breakwater Marketplace in Rockland.



Pet Peace of Mind

Keeping Pets & People Together
Through Life's Transitions

Partnership with Coastal Family Hospice Volunteers

Pets play an incredibly important role when their human is facing a serious illness. For many of our patients, this bond is a powerful source of comfort, but it can also be a source of deep anxiety. We believe our patients should never have to experience anxiety related to their pets' well-being.

This is why Coastal Family Hospice Volunteers has partnered with Pet Peace of Mind. This program is built

on respecting the relationship between people and their pets at the deepest level, actively advocating for the pet's role as an important member of the caregiving team. In our world, a pet is never "just a pet." This program is driven to preserve the bond of love and helps us understand its importance in the lives of our patients.



Pet Peace of Mind is the only national program providing a care model for the pets of seriously ill patients, and it works by training organizations like ours to use specially trained local volunteers to help patients with their pet care needs.

This is where you come in. As volunteers, you might be interested or know others who might want to provide this practical support, that gives our patients true peace of mind. There are those who might not initially be comfortable with people, but may be very comfortable with animals; this opportunity is for you! Our plan is to start offering training and services in early 2026! So stay tuned!

This program also helps find loving new homes for orphaned pets when a patient dies and the family is unable to keep the pet. If you are interested in volunteering as a Pet Peace of Mind volunteer please give us a call @ 207-466-9444 or email: coastalfamilyhospicevolunteers@gmail.com

Honoring Rob Gabe's Years of Heartfelt Service



For many years, Rob Gabe has been a quiet, but powerful presence at Coastal Family Hospice Volunteers. After completing his hospice volunteer training in 2005, Rob stepped into roles that touched lives in deeply meaningful ways—sitting with patients in their homes and nursing facilities, offering comfort at Sussman House, and guiding bereavement support groups with compassion and understanding.

Rob's care extended beyond individual moments. He served nine years on the CFHV Board of Directors, always focused on making sure families received the support they needed. He helped create systems to ensure timely bereavement outreach, coordinated phone calls to grieving families, and worked tirelessly to keep programs running smoothly.

When challenges arose, Rob never hesitated to step in. He attended interdisciplinary team meetings, covered staff absences, assisted during state surveys, and even served as acting program director during a sudden transition—helping to train the new director and keep everything on track.

Now, as Rob retires from his volunteer work, we celebrate the incredible impact he has made. His dedication, kindness, and willingness to go above and beyond have been a gift to our community and to all of us at CFHV. Rob leaves behind a legacy of compassion that will continue to inspire us for years to come.

For more information about what we do, to become a volunteer, or if you are interested in becoming a CFHV board member please call 207-466-9444 or

email: coastalfamilyhospicevolunteers@gmail.com



Find us on Facebook and Instagram



*VOLUNTEER TRAINING OCTOBER 2025 @ SUSSMAN HOUSE
(Not all of our new volunteers are featured in this picture)*