**Carol Ricketts**

**Collinsville, IL Faith in Action Volunteer and Board Member**

My parents, volunteers with the Collinsville Faith in Action organization, inspired me early on to volunteer. My mother, who is 95, still makes reassurance calls once a week and keeps me motivated. During his time, my father was instrumental in building wheelchair ramps. Both also drove people to appointments.

When I retired in 2007 from my work as a federal government employee, it was a natural fit for me to continue in the family tradition. I have been the family caregiver driving my parents, sister, sister-in-law, niece and friend to medical appointments, taking medical notes, and keeping my loved ones on schedule. I do a variety of volunteer activities in my church and dog and cat sit for family and friends. I also serve as the scheduler for a group that sings at area nursing homes. For a while, I provided volunteer transportation for rescue dogs.

As a volunteer caregiver, I began as a driver. I really enjoy the interaction you have driving those who need your help. I became excellent friends with several of my regulars. For example, Kathy and I became close because we shared the same birthday and tried to celebrate every year together. Almost every time I drove, we would be the ladies who lunch, and I enjoyed that time together as much as she did.

In 2012, I became a board member of the Collinsville Faith in Action, and for a couple of years, I served as the Board Secretary. I stopped doing so much hands-on volunteering and handled more administrative work. Eventually, I became the Board President and have served in that capacity for seven years. I became very close with the former Faith in Action Executive Director. She helped me grow, learning about nonprofits and how to be of service to a board of directors.

Other people that inspired me are several church members who were also Faith in Action volunteers. They were all such giving people, and I saw that they really appreciated the service that they provided. I learned how much joy it is to assist others. I feel blessed to have all those I have cared for in my life. It gives me joy to know that I can help people in some way who are in need.

Being a board member has been challenging and exciting, and I have seen the organization grow. I have also seen the need grow more and more. The challenges—volunteers dried up during COVID, but now they are coming back, and that is great. In the future, I hope that the Collinsville Faith in Action can provide more services with more funding and more volunteers.

For Social Media:

Post #1

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Post #2

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