**Amy Perfetto**

**Volunteer Caregiver for over 25 years**

**Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers of Center Line, Michigan**

A dear friend of mine started volunteer caregiving, and I decided to try it. I was looking for a place to volunteer my time and needed something flexible. I wanted to work on a cause bigger than myself and some of the need to give back was born from my religious faith.

I started volunteering before I had my five children, aged 12 to 23. When I had three toddlers and a part-time job in sales, I had to pause for a while, but I am back at it and feel that the need is so great out there. People need people to survive and thrive. I’ve learned that outreach programs like the Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers of Roseville, Michigan, are a lifeline to the marginalized.

Many people I have worked with have found themselves in unexpected situations. They are retired, maybe disabled, and generally lack family or friend support. They are older adults who typically live alone. Some people I have volunteered with sometimes live in a tight-knit community, but most live in isolation and feel lonely. I’m not here to preach or judge, only to serve and provide. All the good things happen naturally.

One of my most rewarding experiences as a volunteer caregiver was helping a woman named Sarah. She lived alone and I helped her by delivering her groceries. She sometimes went with me, and I would bring the groceries to her house. That was all I needed to do, but one day I noticed when I brought her groceries to her kitchen, she still had groceries in the sack from the last time I was there, so I started helping her organize her groceries after I delivered them for her. Sarah and I became friends, and she would serve me tea on those grocery run days.

Later, I noticed I wasn’t asked to help her anymore and called the IVC coordinator, who told me that Sarah had a stroke. I started visiting her in the nursing home until she passed away. Right around that time, I paused my volunteerism for a while since I had just had my third child.

Serving as a volunteer caregiver has kept me grounded. I don’t worry about keeping up with other people because I learned nothing matters except relationships and seeing the world through other people’s eyes. Many things seem so trivial when you have a different perspective on life.

*Amy works part-time as an Administrative Assistant at Oakland University in Rochester, Michigan, while still finding time to volunteer.*

Suggestions for Social Media:

Number 1:

*“I wanted to work on a cause bigger than myself and some of the need to give back was born from my religious faith.”*

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Number 2:

Amy Perfetto, Volunteer Caregiver for over 25 years from Macomb Township, Michigan

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