NVCN Interview with John Fanelli, Warren, MI 3.29.2023

First Draft 3.29.2023

Final Draft 3.30.2023

***John Fanelli, Volunteer Caregiver in Warren Michigan since 2013***

My particular start in volunteer caregiving occurred when my wife and I volunteered at our church. Our church had a project housing the homeless for a week in the commons space, and a friend involved in the project mentioned that she also served as a volunteer caregiver. This kind of volunteering piqued my interest.

At Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers of Roseville, Michigan, I learned all the ways I could help. I’m not handy, but I liked their helping hands logo and slogan—something simple which goes a long way to help someone in need.

Working for the Michigan Social Services Department for 30 years, I helped people with various governmental programs including Medicaid, Food Assistance, and Emergency Relief. Serving as a volunteer caregiver had become an extension of what I did before I retired.

I now volunteer my services by driving people to and from the doctor, delivering groceries, and handling their seasonal yard work. I spend an average of 20 hours a month volunteering. At certain times of the year, the hours can go up to 35 a month with the extra yard work. I don’t mind.

Driving someone to and from the doctor can be very reassuring to them. They have someone to talk to, and if they need help going into the office, I can do that. I am there waiting for them whenever their appointment is done. They don’t have to take the bus or an expensive rideshare to get there. If they want to stop somewhere on the way home, I do that too. If they need a gallon of milk or want to stop for fast food, we do that. From a dollars and cents standpoint, they are very grateful.

I have helped a collection of really lovely people who are inspirational. Many are in a bad situation—poor health, family abandonment. Despite that, they all show gratitude. I also am grateful that I can help. Empathy is a crucial mission statement of the Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers. I’m also very much aware that someday I might also need volunteer help.

You don’t have to be a professional or a whiz at home repair. You need the inclination to want to help somebody—deliver a meal, deliver groceries, or fix a faucet. Volunteer caregiving is neighbors helping neighbors.

**Social Media Idea #1**

At Interfaith Volunteer Caregivers of Center Line, Michigan, and learned all the ways I could help. I’m not handy, but I liked their helping hands logo and slogan—something simple, which goes a long way to help someone in need.

John Fanelli, Volunteer Caregiver, Warren, Michigan

**Social Media Idea #2**

I have helped a collection of really lovely people who are inspirational. Many are in a bad situation—poor health, family abandonment. Despite that, they all show gratitude. I also am grateful that I can help.

John Fanelli, Volunteer Caregiver, Warren, Michigan

**Social Media Idea #3**

You don’t have to be a professional or a whiz at home repair. You need the inclination to want to help somebody—deliver a meal, deliver groceries, or fix a faucet. Volunteer caregiving is neighbors helping neighbors.

*John Fanelli, Volunteer Caregiver, Warren, Michigan*