

**Boquete Health & Hospice**  
**Boquete Salud & Cuidado Paliativo**

**Helping Hands • Caring Hearts**



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**Our Mission Statement**

*Our mission is to inform and promote community health. To support people with health and wellness needs by providing information, equipment and volunteer services. To provide palliative (hospice) care for the terminally ill in order that they may experience death with dignity and limited pain.*

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## Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

Panama continues to struggle with the Covid pandemic, but cases appear to be dropping rapidly. The Covid virus has, for two years or more, hampered one of our primary services, patient care. We cannot go into the homes of people who need our care and support. But masks are coming off in the US and we hope that in the not-too-distant future we will be free of the worst of the virus and can resume one of our core functions.

Our patient care coordinators Bev Tyler and Craig Gatrel have been receiving distress calls from people having difficulty dealing with the emotional effects of the virus. Many of these calls are from caregivers who need our support. Bev and Craig are doing an excellent job of handling these calls, but report that the telephone is no substitute for personal contact.

As a result of these calls we have identified some vital areas which need our attention. We are in the process of exploring the idea of offering specific support groups. This is an exciting initiative. More later.

Meanwhile, the beat goes on. At the end of January we completed our new training for the second time with great results. Patient care coordinator Greg Gatrel and former president, now treasurer, Lesley Hughes, led the workshop again. I attended and it was very educational. Our original training focused mostly on patient care. Our new training focuses on what Boquete Health and Hospice support does and how our teams operate, and offers volunteers a great way to see how they can participate in our community efforts without necessarily being involved in direct patient care. It is a wonderful and

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intelligent update. This training was joined by some very skilled and dedicated new volunteers, and as a result we have a new training team and a new patient care coordinator. Both of our current patient care coordinators will be out of the country at the same time soon so this is great news!

Our technical team has been very busy too, and we now have a new and updated website which can be viewed in Spanish or English. Please have a look at [Boquetehealth.org](http://Boquetehealth.org)! In addition, Chris McCall and his team are creating a database program to handle all the data we are currently hand-archiving. This will be a great boon to our patient care coordinators and our team leaders.

And so, despite Covid, our work goes on. Our teams are busier than ever providing equipment, health support, and educational services to the community. It is a wonderful and dedicated group of volunteers.

John Earle,  
President

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## Calendar of Events

- March 2 – Council Meeting (Zoom)
  - March 9 – General Meeting (Zoom)
  - April 20 – Being Prepared for End of Life in Boquete Workshop (Zoom)
  - May 13, 14 and 15 – Art Show and Auction
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## Donations Needed!

After two years of Covid-19 and the fact that Boquete Health and Hospice has been unable to hold ANY of its usual fundraisers, there is concern that the community may have forgotten about us. For the first time ever, current donations do not even match our expenses! Unfortunately, this is happening as our services in the community are more in need than ever before. While we continue to provide much needed services, we need some financial help to keep this important community function going smoothly.

### Please help today by:

- Making a PayPal or credit/debit card donation via our website at [Boquetehealth.org](http://Boquetehealth.org). Follow the prompts there or click the button below.
- Making a donation by direct transfer to our Global Bank account in a direct deposit to:

Boquete Hospice and Health Foundation  
Global Bank Checking Account  
#16-101-23071-6

- Making a cash donation at our Tuesday Market table at Tap Out (by the left rear door).
- Making a cash donation when picking up equipment or returning equipment.

Funds go towards purchasing and maintaining our equipment, paying rent on four equipment storage rooms in Alto Boquete, providing blood to those who live in our service area, helping with hospice/home health services as needed or possible, the "Being Prepared for End of Life in Boquete" program, training our volunteers, and promoting our services to the community.

[Donate Now Please](#)

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The BHH family extends its sincere gratitude to Sela Burkholder for her years of service and congratulates Sally Zigmond on her new role!



## **Sally Zigmond**

By Sela Burkholder

Sally has been an equipment volunteer for many years. I was REALLY glad that she stepped up to take my position when it was time for me to retire from my equipment team leader position last year. She has worked endless hours, asking questions and being truly receptive as I passed on to her the methods that had worked for me over the years.

Sally has taken what worked well in the past and tweaked it to become even better to suit the needs of our clients, the team, and the lockers. She has spent lots of time analyzing the equipment and additional things that are in our inventory, and has done an amazing job in her new role. We are grateful that Sally is on the BHH team!

Sally lives half the year in Palmira and the other half in Amherst, MA. In both places she enjoys the outdoors and paints scenes from her bike rides or walks. She is attracted by light and color and her landscapes, which often include farm animals, express the sense of peace she feels in the countryside.

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# Transitions in BHH

## Welcome to Our New Volunteers and Team Members!

Please join us in welcoming our nine new volunteers: Christine Kunert, Dave Nichols, Denise Daniels, Don Norris, Ellen Edmondson, Janice Norris, Juliette Garesche, Natalie Kelly, and Pat Bozanich. They completed the three days of new volunteer training in late January, where they learned what BHH is, how it operates, volunteer requirements, and team opportunities available. Many quickly joined teams and we look forward to their energy and passion in their new roles!



### Left to right back row:

Don Norris, Ellen Edmondson, Juliette Garesche, Pat Bozanich, Dave Nichols, Bev Tyler, and Craig Gatrel.

### Left to right front row:

Janice Norris, John Earle, Natalie Kelly, Denise Daniels, Chris Kunert, and Lesley Hughes.

## New Training Team

Dave Nichols and Pat Bozanich have agreed to become our new training team. Both have experience in training and educating people about organizations. In addition to working with new volunteers, Dave and Pat will provide ongoing volunteer training.

## **New Patient Care Coordinator**

Denise Daniels will serve as our third patient care coordinator. Denise has been working with the equipment team for the past few months recording equipment loans and returns. She has started her training and is working with Bev and Craig in this vital role.

## **New Hospice and Family Care Team Lead**

Ellen Edmondson is our new hospice and family care team lead. Babbie Earle will be stepping back for a little while and Ellen has agreed to take over for her. Ellen has experience in the medical field and will be working with our patients and their families as needed. Thank you Babbie for EVERYTHING you have done!

## **Newsletter Editor**

Natalie Kelly is working with Linda Avery over the next couple of newsletters and stepping in as editor. Linda is transitioning to other interests within BHH and other organizations. We thank Linda for all she has done to improve the newsletter over the past several months as editor.

## **Equipment**

Don Norris has joined the equipment team and quickly jumped in to help. He is repairing and replacing parts on wheelchairs, walkers, and beds, which means we get more mileage from our equipment!

## **Equipment – Story from the Field, by Lesley Hughes**

You never know when something will happen! Last October Chuck High and Cat Vann came to the new volunteer training and demonstrated the use of wheelchairs, walkers, crutches, canes, and gait belts.

A couple of weeks ago I fell and broke the fifth metatarsal bone in my foot. I had to have surgery to place a pin to stabilize the bone. After I was told emphatically not to walk on it, I called the patient care coordinator (PCC) and asked for crutches. She suggested that a

walker might also be useful. I agreed and within a very short time I was being instructed in the use of both pieces of equipment (thank you Cat Vann!).

Well, it turns out that I am not very coordinated in the use of those pieces of equipment, so I asked for a wheelchair. While I could use it, I was told I needed to go to Drivers Ed because I kept running over people's toes. I saw the surgeon the next day and he gave me permission to walk, using a cane. In the space of four days I had used four of the five pieces of equipment Chuck and Cat had demonstrated. The demonstrations were very useful and I am grateful for their assistance.

The equipment team is more than willing to train people borrowing equipment in its use. And, in addition to the personal touch, the BHH website at [boquetehealth.org](http://boquetehealth.org) has videos that explain, in both English and Spanish, the use of equipment and other patient care topics.

BHH is very fortunate (and I am very grateful) for the incredibly caring people who volunteer for us.

### **Help Wanted – Volunteer Coordinator**

BHH needs an organized volunteer to take on the responsibilities of volunteer coordinator:

- Accepting new applications for membership, meeting/talking with prospective volunteers to learn about them, and answering any questions they may have.
- Maintaining the membership roster for future classes, including vaccination status.
- Maintaining the membership area of the database, including updates to phone/WhatsApp numbers, emails, teams, training, and skills.
- Working with the training team to reserve the venue for training.
- Communicating with potential new volunteers about upcoming training.
- Working with the training team to arrange for speakers during the training.
- Communicating with guest speakers.



- Working with new volunteers to find out their passions and where they wish to volunteer within BHH.

Much of the communications are already written, so the activities prior to each new class are:

- Sending an email reserving the venue six weeks prior to class and an email to new volunteers four weeks out, two weeks out, and one week prior to class.
- Arranging for speakers four weeks out and reminding them one week out.
- Thanking the guest speakers after they speak.
- Talking with the new volunteers and connecting the team leaders with the new volunteers.
- Following up with the new volunteers a couple of months after training to see if there are any concerns.

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## Activity Recap

### February 9 General Meeting

The February meeting was by Zoom only. Highlights of the meeting include:

- Half of the attendees in January's New Volunteer Training have already become active participants in the organization. Welcome to the team!
- The database to organize BHH information and activities goes live soon and will streamline operations and improve our efficiency.
- The website revamp is complete and the site has gone live.
- Revisions to the "Being Prepared for End of Life in Boquete" guide are almost complete, and the next class will be delivered via Zoom on April 20. While the training is helpful to everyone, it is DON'T MISS information for expats!
- In March Dra. Shannon Tuer will take on the role of medical liaison for BHH.

- The next blood drive will be held June 11. On average, a pint of blood saves three lives. The BHH program, which partners with Hospital Regional, is the only true blood bank in Panama. If you can't donate blood (you must be under 65 years old to do so), please consider donating your time, talents, or funds to support this vital program.
- BHH is working to expand its caregiver and emotional support offerings and gained insight from Michael Polacek's presentation on "Stress, Toxic Stress and Trauma, Part 2." The third part of Michael's training will be delivered at the March meeting.



## The Magic of Music

The magic of music team invites you to visit our website and use our free music playlists derived from YouTube at [boquetehealth.org/music-playlists](https://boquetehealth.org/music-playlists).

Additionally, we have another list of free YouTube playlists that are associated with our articles about music: [boquetehealth.org/playlists-music](https://boquetehealth.org/playlists-music).

You'll find our music articles at: [boquetehealth.org/music-health-wellness](https://boquetehealth.org/music-health-wellness).

Enjoy!

**Service area for  
the magic of  
music team  
and the Boquete  
Health and Hospice  
organization**



## **7 Best Exercises for Seniors (and a Few to Avoid!)**

Exercise and nutrition are essential parts of a healthy lifestyle throughout one's life, and as we age, our requirements are ever-changing. A growing body of research illustrates how regular exercise is especially important for seniors, and how more seniors are opting for an active lifestyle instead of a sedentary one. This article shows you the benefits of exercise for older adults, the seven best forms of exercise for seniors, and a few exercises that may be hazardous to seniors' health.

[Read the Article](#)

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## Education Videos

Education videos are up and running! They provide excellent info for caregivers and the general public in Spanish and English. Topics cover using equipment including crutches, wheelchairs, and walkers, as well as moving patients safely for patient and caregiver and general patient care. There are also informative videos on Alzheimer's and other types of dementia. To find these, go to the BHH website and choose your topic at [boquetehealth.org/education](http://boquetehealth.org/education).

[Videos](#)

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## Need Medical Equipment?

If you or someone you know has a need to borrow or return equipment, please contact our patient care coordinators (PCCs) at 6781-9250. All requests related to equipment must go through the PCCs. The PCCs will work with you or the caregiver to determine the appropriate equipment, availability, and loan period. Once the equipment need is identified, the PCCs coordinate with the equipment team to ensure the correct equipment is sanitized and ready to be checked out (picked up) at our locker located at Alto Dorado. A member of the equipment team will contact you or the caregiver directly to make arrangements to meet at our locker.



Please note that our equipment team members only go to the locker for scheduled equipment checkouts and returns. **No equipment team member is staffed at the locker and the locker is only open during specific times.** Therefore, it is important to contact the PCCs first. When you are ready to return equipment, the process is the same. Simply call the PCCs at 6781-9250.

If you are using a piece of equipment for the first time, be sure to visit our website and go to patient/caregiver videos under the education tab to learn more. Here you will find videos and information on using equipment and caring for patients in the home.

[Videos](#)

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## About the Tree of Life

The tree was created to honor our donors and volunteers. The roots are volunteers, the trunk is the council, and the leaves are people who have donated \$100 or more. The two-color leaves are people who have donated for two years. The flowers are sponsors who donate

\$1,000 or more. The lilies are memorials to people who have passed where family or friends have donated \$200 or more to honor them.

Add your leaf, flower, or lily by clicking the button to make our tree grow. Thank you!

[Donate](#)





Docmosis.com  
John and Dale Sandeen  
Mitzi Unamuno  
Bruce Stangl

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The policies of the organization are posted on our website and are updated as needed at [boquetehospice.org/bhh-policies](http://boquetehospice.org/bhh-policies).

[Read](#)

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### **To Make a Donation**

BHH functions with donations provided by the community. If you are interested in supporting the work we do, please make a donation. To make a financial contribution:

- To contribute checks or cash, please contact Lesley Hughes, treasurer, at [treasurer@boquetehealth.org](mailto:treasurer@boquetehealth.org).
- [Click here](#) to make a Paypal donation.
- Send direct deposits to Boquete Hospice and Health Foundation, Global Bank Checking Account #16-101-23071-6

### **Contact Us**

Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm

Saturday and Sunday, 9am to 1pm

**Hospice/Health:** (507) 6781-9250

**Blood Donor Program:** WhatsApp (+507) 6590-2000 or call (507) 6781-9250

**Email:** [info@boquetehealth.org](mailto:info@boquetehealth.org)

**Website:** [boquetehealth.org](http://boquetehealth.org)

**Facebook:** [facebook.com/boqueteheartshandsandhelp](https://facebook.com/boqueteheartshandsandhelp)

**Instagram:** [instagram.com/boquete\\_health\\_hospice/](https://instagram.com/boquete_health_hospice/)



***All patient information shared with any Boquete Health and Hospice volunteer is kept in the strictest confidence.***

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*Freely send this to anyone or use any part.*

**Our mailing address is:**

info@boquetehealth.org

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

Thank you!