

VOLUNTEER news

A Newsletter for the Shepherd Auxiliary & Volunteers



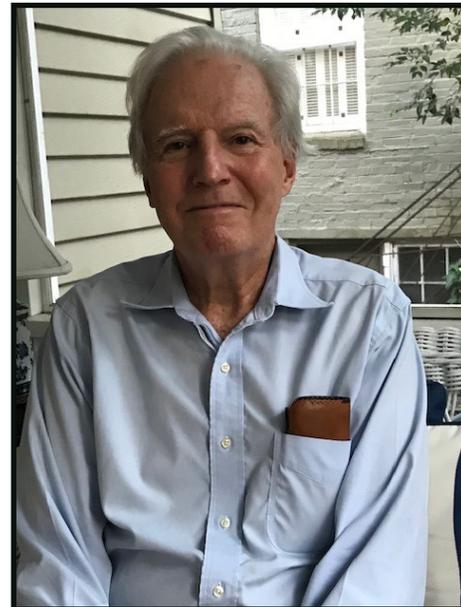
Volunteer Spotlight - Jack O'Neill

John O'Neill (who goes by Jack) has been one of our weekly volunteers at Shepherd Center since 2013. Born and raised in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, he was the middle child between two sisters and raised in a family where values such as honesty, integrity, and treating others as you would like to be treated were important. His mother was a full-time homemaker that volunteered at a hospital, and his father worked in the family textile waste business, O'Neill Brothers. Growing up, Jack loved sports, played football and basketball, and even played on the freshman basketball team at Georgetown University as he was earning his bachelor's degree in English. Jack continued his education at Georgetown, graduating from law school. He then worked in the District Attorney's Office in Philadelphia for his first professional experience, later moving to Bucks County, PA, where he practiced trial law for several years. In 1975, Jack made a big change. The family business had moved to Atlanta years ago, and he moved to our city and managed that company until the family sold it. For the past 14 years, he has worked for Pat Murphy Electric in business development and retired this year.

At one point in his life, Jack heard a speaker who talked about how each individual should decide whether they will be a "depositor" in life, doing for others, or a "withdrawer." Jack decided he wanted to be a depositor!

His first experience in the volunteer world was through the I Have A Dream Foundation. He helped sponsor that program for the first grade at a school in southwest Atlanta, committing to help pay for those students' college education if they stayed in school through graduation. Jack also participated in tutoring them and enjoying social activities with them. In time, someone encouraged him to volunteer at Shepherd Center, and he helped with the locomotor at first. Then, he settled into feeding breakfast to patients with quadriplegia twice a week. "I always look forward to going to Shepherd and enjoy everything about it! I've gotten to know the patients, and I've met some wonderful people, including staff and other volunteers," Jack reports. "It has been astounding to see the same patients week after week and to see their improvement. I've seen the resilience of people in very trying circumstances. It gives me satisfaction to help."

We are very grateful to Jack for helping to care for our patients for several years, and we look forward to the day we can welcome him and all other volunteers back to our Shepherd campus!



Above: Jack O'Neill is dedicated to his volunteer work as a feeder at Shepherd.



This year's flu season is expected to be worse than usual.

Please protect yourself and get your flu shot!

ShepherdCares 2021 Employee Giving Campaign: "Full House"

Each September, Shepherd Center employees support the hospital by contributing to the ShepherdCares Employee Giving Initiative. This year's campaign, "Full House," benefited the Irene and George Woodruff Family Residence Center (WFRC). This facility, consisting of 84 fully accessible suites, allows us to provide housing for up to 30 days for family members. The WFRC helps minimize the added financial burden on families who travel from across the country - and around the world - for our inpatient and day programs. It allows them to focus on their loved one and learning how to care for him or her following discharge. Honorary chairs Chet Bhasin, Dr. Andrew Dennison, John Hamilton, Marsha Hanson, Jacque Jones, Dr. James Liadis and Katie Metzger, challenged employees to raise \$175,000. A former patient's generous family offered a challenge grant of \$30,000 if 85 percent of Shepherd Center employees participated in the initiative. Also, several generous donors challenged staff to do even more by offering \$75,000 in challenge grants if certain pledge landmarks were met.

Sixty staff ambassadors across the hospital worked hard to encourage their co-workers to participate in the campaign. Kickoff events were held for staff at 80 Peachtree Park, Pathways, and all shifts at the main campus. Enthusiastic ambassadors handed out box lunches and encouraged their employees to get in on the fun.

Per usual, Shepherd Center employees rose to the challenge. We blew past the goals, achieving 88% participation and pledging a staggering \$231,825.26 in just five short weeks, exceeding the goal by almost \$57,000 - a record-high amount. Because employees surpassed all the goals, generous donors gave an additional \$105,000 in challenge grants, bringing the total raised in support of the residence center to \$336,825.26!

We are grateful to our generous employees who help support our patients in this meaningful way. Thank you, Shepherd Center!





We Remember with Love...

Volunteer Cathy Hunt died on September 13 after a two month battle in the hospital with the Covid-19 virus, which caused pneumonia.

For six years, along with her husband Scotty and mother-in-law Wynell Hunt, Cathy was a Brain Injury Peer Visitor at Shepherd Center and Northeast Georgia Medical Center, selflessly helping others. She was a school teacher and active in her church and many organizations.

Cathy's bright smile and giving heart made her a welcome presence wherever she went.

Please keep Scotty, Wynell and their entire family in your thoughts and prayers.



Shepherd Center

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Sarah Batts, Executive Director, Shepherd Center Foundation
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Gale Eckstein, Family Support Services Coordinator
Newsletter Co-editors: Alex Seblatnigg and Gale Eckstein

Membership in the Shepherd Center Auxiliary, Peach Corps, and Junior Committee is open to all volunteers. Members provide ongoing fundraising and volunteer support to Shepherd Center. For more information on becoming a member of one of these groups, contact Alex Seblatnigg at (404) 350-7315 or visit www.shepherd.org.

Shepherd Center's mission is to help people with a temporary or permanent disability caused by injury or disease rebuild their lives with hope, independence, and dignity, advocating for their full inclusion in all aspects of community life while promoting safety and injury prevention.