

# Volunteering comes from

the  
*'Hart'*

BY  
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SHARP



Mercy Medical volunteer Bob Hart enjoys a good story with Anna DuPree, resident of the John McClure Snook Regional Center.

Retired industrial engineer, Bob Hart, had more than a decade of experience as a healthcare volunteer when he first offered his time and talent to Mercy Medical. His propensity for problem-solving, service and identifying needs made him an ideal volunteer.

Hart is one of 60 hospice volunteers in both Mobile and Baldwin counties that work in private homes, nursing homes and inpatient units. Hart has volunteered with Mercy Medical for the past nine months averaging five hours each week.

In hospice care, Hart works with patients, and family members, bringing communion and friendship to them. In the hospital, guided by the patient's religious preference, Hart delivers communion and visits with Catholics and non-Catholics.

Hart began a meditation group for patients at the John McClure Snook Regional Center, Mercy's specialty care assisted living community. He also distributes communion and assists with weekly Mass.

"I can't express how wonderful the Snook Center is," he continued. "I almost feel like I'm home when I'm there."

Hart is one of several career engineers currently volunteering at Mercy, according to Mercy Medical Volunteer Coordinator Judy Hazelton. "I noticed a few months ago that I had a number of engineer volunteers. They certainly go that extra mile," she said.

Hazelton said that Hart is willing to take on a lot. "He's a good person. I asked him to see a need and put himself in that role. He sees where he needs to fit in."

Hart leads by example, bringing his whole family into volunteering. His wife, Helen, frequently accompanies him.

Hart's 16-year-old grandson was named by the Knights of Columbus as the Most Outstanding Youth in Alabama, due in part to his volunteer service.

"I try to teach my family to give back one-on-one, helping people," Hart explained. "A little bit of time is more important than what people think."

Hart's grandchildren often accompany him on his volunteer visits. "People in healthcare facilities like kids more than they like adults," he laughed. "If you want to get them going, bring in a child."

What motivates someone like Hart to give so much of himself to others? Several years ago, Hart experienced first-hand the importance of volunteers. With three open-heart surgeries in two months and a hospital stay of more than 100 days, he understood the value of their assistance.

"I saw how important it was for people to be there to help, to relieve them," Hart explained. "I do it for them. I don't do it for myself."

"A little bit of time is more important than what people think."  
— Bob Hart

## Volunteer opportunities at Mercy Medical

As members of the Mercy team, volunteers contribute in the following areas:

- Feeding patients
- Delivering patient mail
- 'Adopt-A-Friend' program
- Transporting patients
- Assisting in the beauty shop
- Transporting lab work
- Assisting with patient activities
- Planning seasonal parties
- Administrative office assistance:

filing, mailing, answering phone calls, planning, newsletters, and recruiting

• Hospice volunteers typically have experience with a hospice program and may volunteer in either inpatient or home hospice. Extensive training required.

Whenever possible, volunteers work in areas of their interest, are asked to give four hours per week, and provide support and care to patients and their families.

For more information call Judy Hazelton, 251.621.4445.

## Other ways to volunteer

Mercy Magic, an informal organization of women, helps the Development Office with special events and projects. For more information call the Development Office at 251.621.4884.

