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## NewCityPatch

VOLUNTEERS IN THE NEWS

### Spotlight on Volunteers: Charles Izzo

He donates his time and energy to United Hospice of Rockland in New City.

By Andrew C. Shurtleff 5:18am

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**Volunteer: Charles Izzo**

**Organization: United Hospice of Rockland, New City.**

Charles Izzo, 55, of Valley Cottage, began volunteering at the United Hospice of Rockland four years ago. Though Izzo began volunteering in the direct care division of Hospice, he currently spends most of his time contributing to the children's "Healing Hearts" bereavement group. He has done fundraising and vigil care for Hospice as well.

Having grown up in Brooklyn, Izzo ended up settling in Rockland County in order to pursue a career as a self-employed independent contractor for the Coldwell Banker real estate company.

Izzo is a positive and motivated person, whose attitude toward helping others and serving the community is clear in his responses to the following questions.

#### Why did you choose to volunteer?

Life's experiences led me to understand that it was useful to serve the community. I had three deaths in my family from 1988-1996 and it seemed like my experiences would benefit others.

#### How did you get started?

I have a friend who volunteers at Hospice. After hearing his experiences, I asked him about getting involved. I contacted Hospice, went for training and took a chance going forward.

#### How did you make time to volunteer and do all the other things you have to do?

It takes less time than one would imagine at first glance. It averages 2-4 hours per weeks, sometimes nothing is scheduled in volunteering, other times it takes more time. I'm self-employed also so I'm more easily able to control my schedule.

#### General thoughts on volunteering experiences at Hospice:

It's somewhat of a spiritual experience. The people are generally very gentle and feel comfortable to be around. Most of the folks who work there have very humble salaries. It appears that is not about the money—there's a different sense of motivation, a sense of love about it. The volunteers have support groups and there's a sense that we're viewed differently because we come at it from a completely service motivated perspective instead of a financial motivation.

#### Do you plan to make volunteering a part of your life in the future?

Yes, always.

#### What is Hospice? What does Hospice do?

We emphasize quality of life, comfort and dignity for individuals and families facing serious illness. Our highly skilled and compassionate team of nurses, home health aides, social workers, physicians, spiritual care providers, therapists and volunteers provide care for your loved one at home or in other settings. We also provide bereavement support services to members of our community who have lost a loved one.



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