

# Jeff

## Volunteer



**Hawthorne Volunteer since 2017**

**Days of the week: Friday**

**What motivated you to Volunteer at The Hawthorne?**

Back in 2015, I needed to have surgery to control my prostate cancer. Needless to say, that health care was the most emotionally challenging situation of my life. It brought me to a dark place, filled with fear, exhaustion, and uncertainty. But it also led me to want to give back and assist others who may face similar challenges. That led me to meet Robin Yoder and walk into the Hawthorne center for the first time.

**What do you enjoy most about volunteering?**

Since becoming a volunteer, I very much enjoy getting to know the other volunteers at the Center; they are filled with courage, tenacity, and grace. I also appreciate the opportunity to meet several patients; they hesitantly walk into the Hawthorne looking for guidance, light, and connection. After talking with the patients, and getting past initial moments of awkward introductions, I realize very quickly that we are all the same, looking for contentment, peace, and understanding. That realization is a beautiful gift.

**What situation has touched the most?**

I remember one morning in particular, which touched my heart. A middle-aged woman, filled with fear and trepidation, walked into the Hawthorne. As she and I talked about her cancer journey, her emotions bubbled to the top. Her husband looked on attentively and lovingly. During our conversation, however, she indicated that she might be interested in trying on a wig. After a bit of persuasion, she was even willing to put on wig styles that were rather different from the hairstyles she has worn in the past. After an hour and a half of trying on this wig and that wig, she emerged with one wig on her head, another in her hand, and a big smile on her face. Her husband turned to me and said, "I have not seen her this happy in weeks. I don't care what these wigs cost, I want to buy both of them." I mention that the wigs are a gift on behalf of the Center. And the three of us stood there tear-filled and silent. A few weeks later, the patient happens to stop by the Center

just to say hello – she was wearing the wig and even a bigger smile. It was at that moment, that I realized, that we gave her was much more than just a wig.