

our House

719 Somonauk Street
Sycamore, IL 60178

payitforwardhouse.org



*Melissa Woods Stephani,
Bolingbrook, IL*



*Carolyn Bates (Mother) and
Melissa Woods Stephani (Daughter)*

A Guest's Perspective

Who was the patient and what brought you to Pay-It-Forward House?

My mother, Carolyn Bates, was a patient at Kindred Care Hospital. She was admitted on January 7th after a serious life event that occurred in Marion, IL on December 14th. She was transferred to Saint Louis University where she had a major heart surgery that she was not likely to make it through. She survived the surgery, a heart pump removal. She persevered to finally be transferred to Kindred Care in Sycamore. On the night of Wednesday, January 30th 2019 just two days before my mom was to be transferred downstate for further rehabilitation, she suffered an irreversible stroke which she passed away from on Monday, February 4th, 2019. Her doctors tried everything they could to help her but it was my mom's time to be with the angels.

What was your first impression of the House?

My first impression of the House was it was beautiful and we found comfort at the Pay-It-Forward House. Here at the House, we found a place to eat, sleep, and relax. Most importantly, it allowed us to be by mom's bedside at all times, or at a moment's notice even if it was in the middle of the night.

What was it like to stay here at the House?

The Pay-It-Forward House gave us so much comfort in our time of need. I stayed there with my stepdad, one of my best friends and two of my aunts were also able to stay here to say goodbye. During my stay a support worker helped jump start my car. The time we spent at Pay-It-Forward House has no way to be repaid. The Director and staff made us feel so at home. Everyone was so kind and always were there to the ups and the so far downs. We were away from home, in a new town with a sick family member and needed comfort the staff at the house was so kind, they helped clean daily and would check in on my step-father and me daily if not many times a day. One volunteer went as far as to help me get my car started when my battery had died on one of the coldest days in the history of the recorded Chicagoland weather. The most gratifying part of our stay here was that they were so accommodating when we needed them the most.

What do you wish other people knew about the House?

There is no way our family can ever repay the comfort the house brought to us and the amazing care and love the staff and volunteers provided daily. This situation made me

- ♥ Over 20,000 nights of rest
- ♥ Over 200 regular volunteers
- ♥ Approximately 75% of our guests come from more than 50 miles away
- ♥ In 2018, we served 1,164 guests by providing a home-away-from-home

appreciate the Pay-It Forward House even more because it is an invaluable service to family members needing a place to rest and relax and collect our thoughts after a hard day in a hospital environment. Thank you to the staff, donors and volunteers of the Pay-It-Forward House of Sycamore, IL. Super Heroes come in all forms and you guys were ours. I encourage anyone that can and wants to donate or be a volunteer to a good cause to consider Pay-It-Forward House. My mom loved the pictures of the house when I showed them to her and I so wanted to share the town with her, what a lovely place for her to spend her last days. My family and I are forever grateful.

- Melissa Woods Stephani, Bolingbrook, IL

Volunteer Spotlight

Here are just some ways the many volunteers, visitors, and donors help to make the Pay-It-Forward House successful. Their donated time and talents are a precious resource which helps us keep Pay-It-Forward House a warm, welcoming and comfortable home-away-from-home for our guests all year round.

THANK YOU

to our community for making our annual All You Can Eat BBQ Buffet Benefit Dinner at the Sycamore VFW another huge success! Great food, fun, and fellowship was had by over 350 friends and families!

First, thank you to the members of our community who supported this event, by joining us at the Sycamore VFW Club or taking meals home in the carry-out containers provided.

Second, we would like to give a sincere thank you to Tom Ulrich and his team at Country Store and Catering in Sycamore and his wonderful staff for their hard work and dedication in preparation of the delicious food for this event and great service during the dinner.

We would also like to thank Ralph Townsend and his team at the Sycamore VFW for hosting the event at their facility and making all of our diners feel welcome.

A special thanks goes out to Shaw Media/ The Daily Chronicle for being our media partner for this event and helping us spread the word to invite everyone to attend!

And especially, thanks again for all of our amazing volunteers who shared their time



and smiles at the BBQ Benefit Dinner. Your participation in this fundraiser helps continue the human chain of kindness by paying it forward and contributing to our mission at Pay-It-Forward House, so

that families in need of a good night's rest because of a loved one's illness will find a comfortable, warm and welcoming home-away-from-home at Pay-It-Forward House.

Save the Date!

Our Annual Meet Me at the Fair Event is right around the corner and we would love to see you there! Bring the family out for this free event and take part in games, silent auction, singing, dancing, face painting, balloon animals, storytelling, a bounce house and much more! This family friendly event takes place on July 14th from 3-6pm at Blumen Gardens in Sycamore. Contact us with questions about the event, volunteering, or becoming a Corporate Sponsor.

ADA ROOM LEVEL SPONSOR: \$100
CHARLES ROOM LEVEL SPONSOR: \$250
EDWARD ROOM LEVEL SPONSOR: \$500
SOMONAUK ROOM LEVEL SPONSOR: \$1,000

You Can Be a Volunteer, Too!

For upcoming Volunteer Orientations, please visit our website at payitforwardhouse.org.



Heather Du Vall

Letter from Our Executive Director

Dear Friends:

I want to start off by sharing my sincere gratitude and appreciation to each and every one of you. Everyone has been unbelievably welcoming and kind since the moment I stepped foot into the House and into the wonderful history it holds. I recently moved with my husband from Minnesota, and we are both originally from Green Bay, WI, but do not worry because I am a Bears fan! I have many years of experience in nonprofits, and my family personally used hospitality houses and Ronald McDonald Houses during my brother's three year battle with cancer, so the Pay-It-Forward House mission and vision really hits home for me. It was truly serendipitous when this position made itself known to me, and upon meeting Joyce Mathey, Mary Lou Eubanks and the Board of Directors, I knew this organization was a perfect fit.

One of our core Values is Caring, demonstrated by a willingness to provide as little or as much companionship and support as each guest welcomes. This value is truly exemplified in everything the House entails. We are so blessed that everyone involved in our mission from Friendly Face Volunteers, Cookie Committee Members, Board Members, community members, donors, snow shovelers, Garden Committee Members and so many more friends truly have our guests' best interests at heart. We pride ourselves on the fact that every staff member and volunteer that helps with our mission truly embodies the value of caring and can provide the love and support that our guests truly need and deserve during their loved one's medical crisis.

Again, I am completely humbled by the outpouring of love, support and kindness that I have received so strongly from this community and organization. I am finding it so hard to believe that I have already been with Pay-It-Forward House for six months. The time has truly flown by and each day I fall more in love with this organization, this community and this mission. I am so excited for the opportunity to serve this wonderful organization and to leave my mark on its already amazing legacy and history. For those of you I have not had the pleasure of meeting in person, I hope to meet you soon!

Gratefully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Heather".

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PLEASE help us spread the word about our mission on our Facebook page by clicking "LIKE" and "SHARE" our postings!

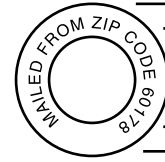
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*Thank you for
helping us*



***How do I sign up?
It's EASY!***

Go to our website:

payitforwardhouse.org

Click on the News & Events tab on the top right for the link!

About Give DeKalb County

Give DeKalb County May 2, 2019

Give DeKalb County is a 24-hour fundraising event designed to build community, encourage philanthropy, connect donors to nonprofits, and raise awareness about the nonprofit sector serving DeKalb County, IL. Donors of all ages and walks of life are encouraged to express their generosity on May 2, 2019. A bonus pool of funds raised from Community Partners ensures that every donation makes a greater impact! Give More, May 2!

