

# 2023 Giving From the Heart Volunteer Awards: Submission #23

The Table page displays a submission's general information and data using tabular layout.

## ► SUBMISSION INFORMATION

<b>Category</b>	Individual
<b>Nominee - Individual or Group Contact Name</b>	Erin Ahern, Mrs.
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Mailing Address</b>	
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Email Address</b>	
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Phone Number</b>	
<b>Volunteer Job Title:</b>	Sales Floor Volunteer
<b>Years volunteered with organization:</b>	3
<b>Hours volunteered per week:</b>	16
<b>Organization Name:</b>	Safe Harbor's ReSource Warehouse
<b>Volunteer Organization Mailing Address</b>	
<b>Nominator</b>	Angi Houston ReSource Warehouse

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**Describe the nominee's commitment to volunteering with the agency/organization they serve. (250 words maximum)**

Erin is a dependable volunteer. She comes in 2x a week to help on the sales floor. She is amazing and always stays busy. If she's not putting out merchandise or clothing, you'll find her merchandising and organizing displays. She is also great customers, staff and the women we serve. Erin has a great personality and has a great attitude every time she comes to volunteer. She really adds value to the store, which is huge, because if the store is not appealing to customers, then they won't shop and ReSource won't earn money to support the programs that helps the women that Safe Harbor serves. We're blessed to have Erin as a volunteer!

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**Describe nominee's accomplishments and how their service has helped meet critical needs in our community. (300 words maximum)**

ReSource Warehouse Thrift Store is the social enterprise for Safe Harbor. The revenue from ReSource helps funds the programs for the women and children we serve. Erin's skills and design talent, makes the thrift store appealing to customers to shop and donate at ReSource. Erin's ability to put our merchandise and display it in a way that customers will spend more money in the store, which in turn helps support the programs that Safe Harbor offers. Erin is personable with our customers, other volunteers, staff and the women we serve, which creates a pleasing environment for those that come into the store.

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**Describe nominee's special skills, qualities and/or leadership qualities. (250 words maximum)**

She has a great eye for design which makes the store more presentable and shoppable. She is task and detailed oriented, so she's always busy...you never see her stop! She's great with new volunteers, showing them around being a point person for them if they need help.

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**Explain why you nominated this person(s) for the Giving From the Heart Award. (300 words maximum)**

Erin is so awesome, has a great personality and is so kind. She stays on tasks, she is very dependable and is such a joy to be around. Her love for design helps the store "sell" and look presentable. Her passion for serving is beyond measure. She is truly a blessing to Safe Harbor, ReSource Warehouse and the women we serve.

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**Volunteer Photo**

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# 2023 Giving From the Heart Volunteer Awards: Submission #16

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## ► SUBMISSION INFORMATION

<b>Category</b>	Individual
<b>Nominee - Individual or Group Contact Name</b>	Frances Fisher
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Mailing Address</b>	
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Email Address</b>	
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Phone Number</b>	
<b>Volunteer Job Title:</b>	Mat Maker- Cutter
<b>Years volunteered with organization:</b>	3
<b>Hours volunteered per week:</b>	10
<b>Organization Name:</b>	VOICE- Volunteer Outreach In Community Efforts
<b>Volunteer Organization Mailing Address</b>	
<b>Nominator</b>	Marcia Hubbard VOICE- Volunteer Outreach In Community Efforts

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**Describe the nominee's commitment to volunteering with the agency/organization they serve. (250 words maximum)**

Frances at the age of 95 has been dedicated to VOICE cutting bags to ensure they are ready to be made into the sleeping mats and/or bags for homeless individuals. She drives her sister Melba to all meetings and fully participates to help with the mission of VOICE.

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**Describe nominee's accomplishments and how their service has helped meet critical needs in our community. (300 words maximum)**

Frances cuts as many as 2,000 bags per week along with her sister Melba Penley who is 85. Frances has shown complete dedication to help out by actively participating in meetings with new and great ideas.

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**Describe nominee's special skills, qualities and/or leadership qualities. (250 words maximum)**

Frances is ready to contribute and help out VOICE to bring assistance to the homeless and Veterans. She even brought in her sister Melba to be a member 3 years ago.

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**Explain why you nominated this person(s) for the Giving From the Heart Award. (300 words maximum)**

I nominated Frances because of her drive and determination along with dedication to fully participate and caring about the community.

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**Volunteer Photo**



# 2023 Giving From the Heart Volunteer Awards: Submission #18

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## ► SUBMISSION INFORMATION

<b>Category</b>	Individual
<b>Nominee - Individual or Group Contact Name</b>	Jane Rinker
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Mailing Address</b>	
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Email Address</b>	
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Phone Number</b>	
<b>Volunteer Job Title:</b>	Public Relations
<b>Years volunteered with organization:</b>	2
<b>Hours volunteered per week:</b>	5
<b>Organization Name:</b>	VOICE- Volunteer Outreach In Community Efforts
<b>Volunteer Organization Mailing Address</b>	
<b>Nominator</b>	Marcia Hubbard VOICE- Volunteer Outreach In Community Efforts

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**Describe the nominee's commitment to volunteering with the agency/organization they serve. (250 words maximum)**

Jane participates in events and meetings. She has brought 3 new members. Jane also advocated for VOICE at her Church to get funds.

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**Describe nominee's accomplishments and how their service has helped meet critical needs in our community. (300 words maximum)**

Jane personally has provided climate controlled storage for our shoes for Mobile Outreach. Jane also helped with the mat making workshops by VOICE at the Hickory Museum of Art to bring awareness to the community. She also made a real connection with a client who is a Homeless Veteran. By doing so, she gained his trust and helped make sure he had a lunch he enjoyed every day.

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**Describe nominee's special skills, qualities and/or leadership qualities. (250 words maximum)**

Jane advocates for VOICE to her church, family and friends. By doing so she has brought new members along with funds.

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**Explain why you nominated this person(s) for the Giving From the Heart Award. (300 words maximum)**

I nominated Jane because of her dedication and caring heart to help out the homeless and Veterans.

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Volunteer Photo



# 2023 Giving From the Heart Volunteer Awards: Submission #2

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## ► SUBMISSION INFORMATION

<b>Category</b>	Individual
<b>Nominee - Individual or Group Contact Name</b>	Jennifer Lancaster
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Mailing Address</b>	
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Email Address</b>	
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Phone Number</b>	
<b>Volunteer Job Title:</b>	Financial Manager
<b>Years volunteered with organization:</b>	1
<b>Hours volunteered per week:</b>	10
<b>Organization Name:</b>	Walk With Me Healing Steps
<b>Volunteer Organization Mailing Address</b>	
<b>Nominator</b>	Elizabeth Wise Walk With Me



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**Describe the nominee's commitment to volunteering with the agency/organization they serve. (250 words maximum)**

Jennifer shows up ready each week. When she is unable to come in she volunteers from home at all hours of the day and night. She shows up during the weekend for events and has been willing to travel with us if we need her.

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**Describe nominee's accomplishments and how their service has helped meet critical needs in our community. (300 words maximum)**

Jennifer's services have allowed our coaching, counseling and developmental staff to focus more on their clients. She has attended the Catawba County Women Who Care meeting and has shared her belief in our services with everyone she meets. She has spread the word far and wide and has allowed others to know about the resources we have available.

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**Describe nominee's special skills, qualities and/or leadership qualities. (250 words maximum)**

Jennifer helps keep us organized and on task during meetings. She has helped create organizational systems to support our continued growth. She is driven, dependable, passionate and forward thinking. She helps out at events and fills in wherever she is needed.

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**Explain why you nominated this person(s) for the Giving From the Heart Award. (300 words maximum)**

I am nominating Jennifer because she has been a key component to our growth. As you all know, non-profits work from grants, sponsorship, donations and sustainability projects. We have big dreams for Jennifer in our future and we are blown away by her commitment and loyalty. Jennifer is invaluable to our programs and we hope she knows how much she is appreciated and loved.

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**Volunteer Photo**



# 2023 Giving From the Heart Volunteer Awards: Submission #28

The Table page displays a submission's general information and data using tabular layout.

## ► SUBMISSION INFORMATION

<b>Category</b>	Individual
<b>Nominee - Individual or Group Contact Name</b>	Jenny Harris Summers
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Mailing Address</b>	
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Email Address</b>	
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Phone Number</b>	
<b>Volunteer Job Title:</b>	Augustine Literacy Project tutor and board treasurer
<b>Years volunteered with organization:</b>	4
<b>Hours volunteered per week:</b>	5
<b>Organization Name:</b>	Patrick Beaver Learning Resource Center
<b>Volunteer Organization Mailing Address</b>	
<b>Nominator</b>	Angela Lawrence Patrick Beaver Learning Resource Center

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**Describe the nominee's commitment to volunteering with the agency/organization they serve. (250 words maximum)**

Jenny trained as an Augustine Literacy Project tutor in January 2019. After completing the 35-hour training in the fundamentals of multisensory, structured literacy, Jenny has continued to grow as a tutor. She rarely misses a tutor enrichment session so that she can refine her tutoring skills to better help her student.

She began serving on the board of Patrick Beaver Learning Resource Center in July 2020, and she has served as Outreach and Event committee chair and is currently serving as treasurer.

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**Describe nominee's accomplishments and how their service has helped meet critical needs in our community. (300 words maximum)**

Jenny is meeting a critical need in our community by helping children reach proficiency in reading. Jenny was initially paired with one student by office, and it was not long before Jenny asked if she could add an additional student whom she noticed could not read while volunteering for her church. Jenny has tutored three children through the Augustine Literacy Project. She is currently tutoring two children at two different schools, twice a week for an hour at a time.

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**Describe nominee's special skills, qualities and/or leadership qualities. (250 words maximum)**

Not only does Jenny have a big heart for children, she is responsible and organized. As the chair of the outreach and events committee, she can be trusted to completely handle the details and communication for upcoming events. She really helps lessen the load on the staff, and she is also willing to volunteer in whatever way is needed. Jenny also actively recruits others to become Augustine Literacy Project volunteers. Jenny is patient and kind. One of her student's behavior is challenging, but Jenny doesn't give up and finds creative ways to keep her student engaged and learning.

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**Explain why you nominated this person(s) for the Giving From the Heart Award. (300 words maximum)**

Jenny is dedicated to seeing students succeed, and she cares about children. Here's just one example of her concern for children: During the 2020-2021 school year, when all Augustine Literacy Project tutoring took place online through Zoom, Jenny really wanted to tutor her student online because her student was already so far behind. Even though we had learned in the past the family could be hard to contact, Jenny continued to log on to Zoom again and again in hopes of being able to tutor. When it became clear her student's family wouldn't be able to log her student on to Zoom, Jenny volunteered to help host other Zoom tutoring sessions and provide an additional adult presence to insure child safety standards were upheld. Her willingness to host Zoom tutoring sessions helped our staff who were already monitoring multiple Zoom sessions at a time. Jenny is always willing to do what is in the best interests of students and our agency!

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Volunteer Photo



# 2023 Giving From the Heart Volunteer Awards: Submission #21

The Table page displays a submission's general information and data using tabular layout.

## ► SUBMISSION INFORMATION

<b>Category</b>	Individual
<b>Nominee - Individual or Group Contact Name</b>	Melanie "Mel" Wilder
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Mailing Address</b>	
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Email Address</b>	
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Phone Number</b>	
<b>Volunteer Job Title:</b>	Pet Food Procurement Specialist
<b>Years volunteered with organization:</b>	4
<b>Hours volunteered per week:</b>	2
<b>Organization Name:</b>	Catawba County Senior Nutrition Services
<b>Volunteer Organization Mailing Address</b>	
<b>Nominator</b>	Michele Francois Catawba County Senior Nutrition Services



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**Describe the nominee's commitment to volunteering with the agency/organization they serve. (250 words maximum)**

Approximately 4 years ago, Mel learned that Meals on Wheels had a need for pet food to provide to our clients, and she has been a dedicated volunteer for our program ever since. While many people will occasionally donate pet food to our program, Mel goes above and beyond. She is the person we call each month to tell her how many pounds of cat and dog food is needed to meet the current demand. Within the week, she delivers the requested pet food to our main office. She has a keen passion for assuring that all animals are cared for and loves that she can help seniors feed their furry friends.

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**Describe nominee's accomplishments and how their service has helped meet critical needs in our community. (300 words maximum)**

Approximately 115 of the seniors we serve in our nutrition programs need help feeding the approximately 180 furry companions who reside with them. In addition to the joy and companionship that pets provide to their humans, science suggests that pet ownership contributes to better cognitive function in older adults and is linked to decreased blood pressure. One third of the clients we serve live below the poverty level and have to make difficult decisions about how to allocate their limited resources. Pet ownership is made easier for our clients who receive pet food donations.

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**Describe nominee's special skills, qualities and/or leadership qualities. (250 words maximum)**

Mel has an enormous passion for caring for animals. She is always willing to reach out to organizations including churches and businesses to coordinate pet food drives. She also utilizes Facebook to promote the various needs that she has identified in the community --- whether it is finding shelter for a stray animal, procuring pet food or filling a 24ft trailer with supplies for her flood ravaged hometown of Hazard Kentucky. She also procured donated storage space so she could better collect and distribute large amounts of pet food to those in need. In July of 2022, she conducted a fund and supply drive for her hometown in Kentucky that was ravaged by floods. She then partnered with a friend to take this 24ft trailer filled with the gathered supplies to Hazard Kentucky to help those in need.

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**Explain why you nominated this person(s) for the Giving From the Heart Award. (300 words maximum)**

We are nominating Mel because she identified a need and took the initiative to meet that need and has continued this commitment each month without fail. In addition to collecting and delivering pet food for Meals on Wheels programs in Catawba County and Alexander County, she volunteers with Hartman's Haven Dog Rescue, transports injured animals to River Rock Wildlife Rehab (and donates food to them), she picks up stray animals and gets them to shelters, and she assists with animal recoveries – searching for and trapping lost pets.

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Volunteer Photo



# 2023 Giving From the Heart Volunteer Awards: Submission #17

The Table page displays a submission's general information and data using tabular layout.

## ► SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Category	Individual
Nominee - Individual or Group Contact Name	Melba Penley
Nominee/Group Contact Mailing Address	
Nominee/Group Contact Email Address	
Nominee/Group Contact Phone Number	
Volunteer Job Title:	Mat Maker-Cutter
Years volunteered with organization:	3
Hours volunteered per week:	20
Organization Name:	VOICE- Volunteer Outreach In Community Efforts
Volunteer Organization Mailing Address	
Nominator	Marcia Hubbard VOICE- Volunteer Outreach In Community Efforts



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Describe the nominee's commitment to volunteering with the agency/organization they serve. (250 words maximum)

Melba , age 85, helps VOICE along with her sister Frances by cutting as many as 2,000 bags per week at times for making the sleeping mats or bags for homeless individuals.

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Describe nominee's accomplishments and how their service has helped meet critical needs in our community. (300 words maximum)

Melba worked in the background for a long period of time cutting bags for mat making.

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Describe nominee's special skills, qualities and/or leadership qualities. (250 words maximum)

Melba is dedicated to help out the community by wanting to assist the homeless and veterans. Melba fully participates in meetings to bring a great sense of humor and motivational encouragement. She inspires through her religious devotion and kind smile.

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Explain why you nominated this person(s) for the Giving From the Heart Award. (300 words maximum)

I nominated Melba because of her kind caring heart along with her dedication and determination to help others.

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Volunteer Photo



# 2023 Giving From the Heart Volunteer Awards: Submission #25

The Table page displays a submission's general information and data using tabular layout.

## ► SUBMISSION INFORMATION

<b>Category</b>	Individual
<b>Nominee - Individual or Group Contact Name</b>	Michelle Hicks Diciuccio, Mrs.
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Mailing Address</b>	
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Email Address</b>	
<b>Nominee/Group Contact Phone Number</b>	
<b>Volunteer Job Title:</b>	Lunch Buddy Mentor and Toy Store Coordinator
<b>Years volunteered with organization:</b>	5
<b>Hours volunteered per week:</b>	3
<b>Organization Name:</b>	Council on Adolescents of Catawba County
<b>Volunteer Organization Mailing Address</b>	
<b>Nominator</b>	Tracey Paul Council on Adolescent of Catawba County

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**Describe the nominee's commitment to volunteering with the agency/organization they serve. (250 words maximum)**

Michelle is very involved in her community, especially with the Council on Adolescents and her church. During the pandemic, Michelle became a Lunch Buddy Mentor. She has persevered with her student throughout the pandemic and not only goes to eat with her once a week but goes an additional day to tutor her student as well. Michelle is also a loyal, committed church member. When her church began to host the Christmas Toy Store Ministry for children and families in the Maiden area in 2006, she immediately jumped at the chance to get involved. Michelle has participated in this annual effort from the beginning with planning, fundraising and direct involvement with the recipient families. Since 2019, she has coordinated this project, including scheduling, volunteer enlistment, working with local school guidance counselors and more. Every parent can come to shop and purchase toys for their children at only 10% of the retail price. They also receive food boxes and vouchers, stocking stuffers, gloves, caps and other clothing and more. In December 2022, the Toy Store Ministry assisted 54 families and 139 children. Despite recent health issues, Michelle has continued to coordinate the annual Christmas Bureau at her church and meets with her lunch buddy student twice a week. She is one of the most selfless people I know. Not only is she a loving and devoted wife, mother, daughter, and friend, she is always thinking of others and putting them first. She has a passion for helping others and it shows.

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**Describe nominee's accomplishments and how their service has helped meet critical needs in our community. (300 words maximum)**

Michelle has made a priceless impact on her community as a lunch buddy mentor and Toy Store Ministry coordinator. One in three young people grow up without a mentor. Volunteers like Michelle are determined to make a difference in a young person's life, just by eating lunch once a week with an at-risk student. As an empty nester, Michelle has the time and desire to do just that. Michelle not only mentors her lunch buddy, but she also tutors her as well. This student is now passing 3 out of 5 subjects, which she was failing, because Michelle refused to give up on her. She ensures her lunch buddy knows that someone cares about her, makes her feel like she matters and reminds her that she's not alone in dealing with daily challenges. Beginning in 2006, East Maiden Baptist Church began hosting a Christmas Toy Store Ministry for children and families in the Maiden area. Michelle has participated in this annual effort from the beginning in numerous roles, ranging from planning and fundraising to direct involvement with the recipient families. Since 2019, Michelle has coordinated the entire project which includes scheduling, volunteer enlistment and working with local school guidance counselors. Every parent can come to shop and purchase toys for their children at a major discount. Families also receive food boxes and vouchers, stocking stuffers, gloves, caps and other clothing and more. In December 2022, the Toy Ministry helped 54 families and 139 children. She recognized an unmet need in an underserved area of the county and helped develop a solution that provides a happy Christmas for the youth in Maiden.

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**Describe nominee's special skills, qualities and/or leadership qualities. (250 words maximum)**

Michelle is truly one of the most selfless people I know. She has many special skills and qualities, beginning with simply being a kind person. She is one of the most involved mentors in the lunch buddy program and her mentee looks forward to her weekly visits. Michelle took it upon herself to not only mentor her student, but also began tutoring her to help her pass failing classes. In addition to her involvement with the Lunch Buddy Program, Michelle's hard work and leadership make the Christmas ministry successful and possible every year. Her drive and compassion are an inspiration to all who know her. She is talented in several ways and there's nothing she can't do if she sets her mind to it. Michelle is welcoming, organized, hardworking, dedicated and a natural leader. She is a true joy to be around and the kind of person you want as your friend and coworker. Michelle enthusiastically tackles any task and is usually the first one to volunteer when needed. Her friends, family, church members and coworkers all mean the world to her and are blessed to be a part of her life. Michelle is persistent, passionate, and positive and always finds good in every situation all while battling cancer.

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**Explain why you nominated this person(s) for the Giving From the Heart Award. (300 words maximum)**

Michelle Diciuccio is very deserving of this award. She is truly one of the most extraordinary people I know and is an inspiration to all who know her. No matter what life throws her way, she carries on and perseveres. She signed up to be a mentor just before COVID restrictions interfered with in person lunch buddy visits, and then received her cancer diagnosis, but never gave up wanting to volunteer. An opportunity opened at Maiden Middle School, and Michelle jumped at the chance to get involved. Her student was failing every class, but Michelle took it upon herself to go an additional day to tutor her student and now her lunch buddy is passing almost all her classes. Michelle never gives up on her student, even when they threatened to transfer her to an alternate school because of behavior issues. Michelle continued going back and refused to be another unreliable person in this student's life. Michelle's volunteer work at her church is a labor of love and she cares about her community and helping others. She works tirelessly in the Maiden community every December to ensure those in need have a good Christmas. She coordinates donations and schedules shopping hours for participants for the East Maiden Baptist Church Christmas Bureau. She does what needs to be done and with a smile on her face. To know Michelle is to love her and she truly wants to make a difference in the lives of children and families in her community. She personifies "giving from the heart" each and every day.

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Volunteer Photo



# 2023 Giving From the Heart Volunteer Awards: Submission #24

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## ► SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Category	Individual
Nominee - Individual or Group Contact Name	Neenie Cline, Mrs
Nominee/Group Contact Mailing Address	
Nominee/Group Contact Email Address	
Nominee/Group Contact Phone Number	
Volunteer Job Title:	Safe Harbor Whole Woman Volunteer
Years volunteered with organization:	8
Hours volunteered per week:	8
Organization Name:	Safe Harbor
Volunteer Organization Mailing Address	
Nominator	Jackie Smith Safe Harbor Whole Woman

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**Describe the nominee's commitment to volunteering with the agency/organization they serve. (250 words maximum)**

Neenie Cline has been a volunteer at Safe Harbor in different areas of programming for 8+ years. She started with our transitional housing, has served as front office volunteer, Safe Friend and Mentor as well as serving in the community center serving meals. She has such a willing heart to serve with love and compassion in any area. She is willing to fill in when others need to be out and cover shifts any day that she is available.

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**Describe nominee's accomplishments and how their service has helped meet critical needs in our community. (300 words maximum)**

The ladies in recovery need to see that they are loved and accepted. Neenie spends time with them and making herself available to be there in listen as they are going through tough times and there to celebrate when they hit milestones in recovery. She has a way of making everyone in the room feel loved and appreciated, she is truly a gift to all those she encounters. She provides meals each Wednesday in our Community Center and is always including the staff in her delicious desserts. Her time here is just a portion of how she volunteers. She also serves the church her husband pastors and the congregation.

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**Describe nominee's special skills, qualities and/or leadership qualities. (250 words maximum)**

Neenie is an incredible cook, listening ear and a joy to be with. Everyone needs a "Neenie" in their life to be that encourager and friend.

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**Explain why you nominated this person(s) for the Giving From the Heart Award. (300 words maximum)**

I have nominated Neenie Cline due to her ability to love others no matter what their circumstance or challenge. We would need 2-3 people to cover every area that she serves with grace, love and kindness. She has rare qualities that you don't often see. We are blessed to have her as a volunteer and friend at Safe Harbor.

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Volunteer Photo

