



Contents – May Newsletter, 2022

- Our Mission Statement
 - Letter from the President
 - Calendar of Events
 - Volunteer Spotlight
 - Blood Drive
 - Successful Art Auction
 - Music Enhances a Life Well Lived
 - Transitions in BHH
 - BHH Does Not Provide Emergency Services!
 - Activity Recap
 - The Magic of Music
 - What Happens When a Service You Need is No Longer Provided?
 - Chris's Corner
 - Education Videos
 - Medical Equipment
 - Tree of Life
 - BHH Policies
 - Contact Us
-

Our Mission Statement

Our mission is to inform and promote community health. To support people with health and wellness needs by providing information, equipment and volunteer services. To provide palliative (hospice) care for the terminally ill in order that they may experience death with dignity and limited pain.

Letter from the President

Dear Friends,

I have just returned from five weeks in the USA. My trip was for medical reasons and, due to complications, took longer than expected. My treatments took place in the Miami area, so most of my doctors and their staff spoke Spanish. Sometimes it really sounded like I was home in Panama!

One thing that really stood out about the caretakers and their staff was their heart-centered and kind care. They came from the heart in their work. Being the recipient of this care reminded me of the importance of the core values of Boquete Health and Hospice, manifesting kindness and compassion. All of us are driven by the desire to help and provide solace and care to our clients, and to make an often difficult and sometimes frightening time in their lives easier to accept. This principal does not only apply to our patient care teams but also to all our volunteers. We have several teams working on specific areas of community needs and operational necessities that do not interface

with clients directly, but all of these teams are driven by this same desire to help others.

Over the years people have asked me and other hospice volunteers, “How can you stand it, being with the dying and their families?” I have worked in different hospices, but the answer is always the same, “I get a lot more out of it than I put in.”

Babbie’s mom used to volunteer in the children’s cancer ward at the Children’s Hospital in Chicago, offering care and love, hanging out with the kids, and supporting the staff. Years ago, before I was a hospice volunteer myself, I asked her this same question. I got the same answer. I did not understand it at the time. I learned the reward is something you only experience when you manifest love and compassion yourself. When she died, the hospital put up a plaque in her honor which identified her as “The Angel of Four West” (the children’s cancer ward). We all have an angel within, and the work we do at Boquete Health and Hospice gives us the rare opportunity to discover this amazing part of ourselves.

John Earle,
President

Calendar of Events

- June 8 – General Meeting (via Zoom only)
- June 11 – Blood Drive
- July 18, 20 and 22 – Volunteering Training



Dra. Shannon Tuer, the BHH Medical Director.

Dra. Shannon joined the BHH team as medical director early this year. She is a beloved and respected member of the Boquete community and we are lucky to have her on our team!

A self-described military brat, Dra. Shannon was born in Newport News, VA, where her dad was stationed in the army. Panama was her dad's last duty station and she moved with her family in 1992. Before moving to Panama she attended community college for a couple of years and worked as a security guard. In Panama she studied criminology and earned her associate's degree from Canal College in the canal zone. She became interested in forensic psychiatry and studied it for a semester at John Jay College in New York City and, intending to pursue it, decided to study psychiatry first.

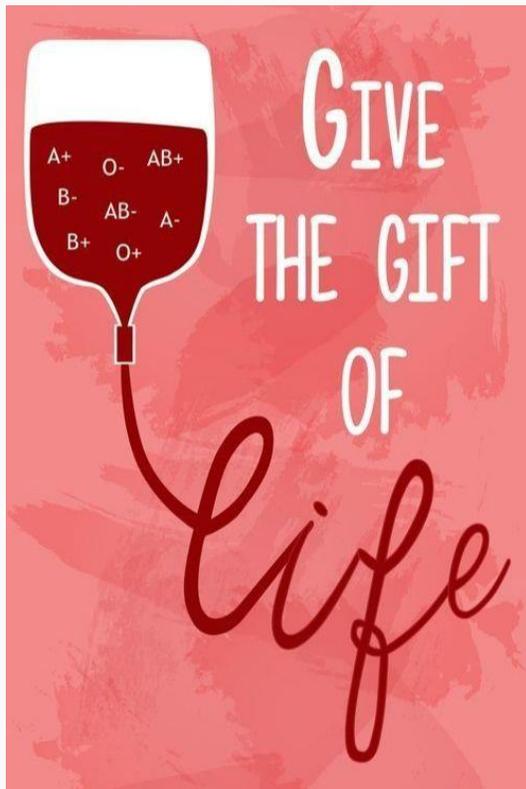
She was accepted into the medical school at Universidad Latina, which was especially challenging because she had to learn Spanish, full-immersion mode. While studying medicine she worked at the Gorgas Army Hospital in Panama City for two years as a volunteer

Red Cross paramedic and completed a two-year medical internship. Prior to her medical internship she had to obtain her Panamanian citizenship.

She split her internship between Hospital Obaldia (children's/maternity hospital), Regional Hospital, and six months at the Social Security clinic in Boquete. At the clinic she did rotations with Dr. Chen, the head of SADI, the social security palliative care unit, and they visited bed-ridden terminal patients twice a week. She became interested in palliative care and says she learned everything she knows in palliative care from her mentor, Dr. Chen, and that she's still learning from him.

When she graduated from med school she had to go back to Panamanian high school to take a couple of courses to fulfill the requirements to practice medicine. She earned her medical degree as a Doctor of Medicine and Surgery in 2009.

Dra. Shannon has worked at Clinica Especializada Boquete since 2017. Her current hours are every Monday through Saturday from 4-6pm and she hopes to increase her hours in the future.



Join World Blood Donor Day on June 11 ~ Help Your Community and Neighbors!

Date/time: Saturday, June 11, 7am-12 pm

Location: Aniales Event Center (Ruby McKenzie Clinic) across from Super Centro Ivan's

Requirements: Must be under 65 years old with no Covid since May 1

On average, a pint of blood saves three lives. The BHH program, which partners with Hospital Regional, is the only true blood bank in Panama.

Please consider being a blood donor and if you can't donate blood, join our Matching Fund Drive. For every blood pint collected, you match donations with a dollar amount. You set the amount, with an upper limit if desired. Support this vital program by donating your time, talent, or funds!

For more information go to boquetehealth.org/what-we-do or call/text: WhatsApp +507-6590-2000 or call 507-6781-9250, 8am-5pm, Monday through Friday, 9am-1pm, Saturday and Sunday.

Donate blood and save a life today! Sign up to give blood at the link below.

[Sign Up Now to Donate Blood!](#)



WORLD

BLOOD DONOR DAY 2022

— ECG — SAVE A LIFE  GIVE BLOOD — ECG —

Do something
amazing today.
Save a life.
Give blood!

Saturday June 11th*
7am to 12 pm

Animales Event Center

Do something
amazing today...

JOIN THE



WORLD

BLOOD DONOR DAY 2022

MATCHING FUND

The Matching Fund will help attract blood donors and help Hospice with all its community work.

The World Blood Donor Day Matching Fund allows people who can not donate blood to be able to participate in the drive. For every blood donor you match their donation with a \$ amount. You set the amount and you can set an upper limit. When the drive is over, we will email you with your matching donation amount and you can pay with PayPal or at the Tuesday Market Table.

Remember every pint of Blood saves 3 lives. email blood@boquetehealth.org

* World Blood Donor Day is officially June 14th we are celebrating on June 11 because of logistics

Join the Matching Fund

Don't Miss Dra. Shannon's Conversation with
the Blood Bank Director on May 28!

Listen to Dra. Shannon's conversation with the director of the Blood Bank in David on May 28 at 10am on Radio Chiriqui, FM 103.3.

To watch the show live on Facebook, go to facebook.com/radiochiriqui/, then look down the page to find the live post. The post likely won't show until the beginning of the show.

Send questions about the blood drive and donating blood to info@boquetehealth.org in advance and they will answer your questions on air.

Blood Donation has Come a Long Way in the Boquete Area

Nine years ago there was no "blood bank" anywhere in Panama. In Boquete, BHH maintained a call list of volunteers willing to donate blood. When blood was needed, BHH volunteers contacted volunteers with the required blood type. Donors then had to go to the hospital in David to have blood drawn, typed, and cross-matched in the lab with the person in need, which could take 3-6 hours, depending upon the hospital. If the blood was a match, the donors were called back to donate blood.

This method posed many challenges. In Panama, donors must be

under 65 and the labs strictly adhere to this rule, which limited donors. The person's family was asked to call their friends to donate blood, but there were few Panamanian donors because of various myths and fears. There were at least two people who likely died because enough blood for them couldn't be found.

BHH reached out to the lab director at Hospital Regional in David and a blood bank program was set up three years ago for Boquete residents. BHH agreed to educate employees at businesses in town and encourage donors to donate blood to Regional. In return, Regional gives us credit for future needs regardless of the hospital someone might be in. When a Boquetanian, a donor, or a donor's family member needs blood, they receive blood from our credit and don't have to scramble to find friends and family members to donate.

BHH now holds regular blood drives several times a year—even the mayor's office employees of Boquete have donated blood. This has helped Boquete and Regional immensely, as one unit of blood, when split into its components, can be given to three people. Over time, BHH has developed a larger credit and has been able to slightly expand who can be given blood using that credit, but the Boquete area is still the primary area serviced, because that is where our donors live. The Regional blood bank is the only one in Panama and through it many lives have been saved. In the future no one in Boquete should die due a lack of blood.



Short Video on Why You Should Donate Blood



Successful Art Auction and One Happy Mama

By Lorraine Handler

Our second Annual Art Auction was successful despite heavy afternoon rains and the recent wave of Covid. Everyone commented on the quality and quantity of art in this year's gallery.

Thank you to all the contributing artists for your generous donations. Of course, none of this would have been possible without all the amazing volunteers. Thank you so very much for all your help from the start to final cleanup. Thanks to Nairn for the wonderful appetizers and Kat McKay, Holly Carter, Erin Ross, and Babbie Earle for the fabulous flower arrangements. Lastly, many thanks to the bidders. All the art was sold and the money from the donations received will allow BHH to continue its services in the community. Net proceeds to Boquete Health and Hospice were over \$3,200.

Recently I delivered one of the still unclaimed pieces of art to a woman who was a visitor to our area and thought the auction was only on Friday. When she didn't hear that she was high bidder, she thought someone else would be enjoying this special artwork. Unbeknownst to her, her sons continued bidding on the piece and on Sunday she became the high bidder and winner. This mama was so surprised and happy when she learned she had the winning bid. It was a pleasure to see her beaming face when we connected for the pickup. She exclaimed, "I love it!" One happy mama reveals the power of art to bring joy and happiness into our lives.

Our special thanks to all artists and donors:

- Robert Brauns
- Martha Dick
- Stacey Fern
- Martine Heyer
- Mark Heyer
- Fran Hogan
- Lynne Johnson
- Yolanda T. Vega
- Mary Ellen Watts
- Barbara Will-Wallace
- Sally Zigmond

And an extra-special thank you to Robert Brauns for donating nine spectacular Cuban paintings!





Music Enhances a Life Well Lived

Willeke Pena-de Voogd recently wrote a lovely post on social media thanking the Magic of Music team for helping her husband, Hubert Pena. Hubert passed away this past December and she said it helps her to write and talk about what happened, and the assistance they received from several of our BHH teams (PCCs, Equipment, Blood, and Magic of Music). We asked her to share their story in our newsletter:

“Music can help when you are bedridden or being a caregiver, or for any other reason, actually. Last year when Hubert was sick, we were glad we could borrow an MP3 player with different music genres on it. We both love Motown and there was a nice selection. While waiting in the emergency room in a hospital in David, we would both plug in one side of the headphones that came with it and relax while listening to music together. When Hubert received blood transfusions, it was so nice to block the surrounding noises of a hospital and be in our own world with music. We learned that we could ask for our own customized playlist, and it was truly wonderful to listen to our favorite music while he was going through medical procedures. Even at home, when I had to stay awake until 11 pm to give Hubert his medications, it was nice just to listen to music from the MP3 so I wouldn’t fall asleep.”

They were also able to borrow a bed, walker, and wheelchair from Boquete Health and Hospice. Everything was delivered to their home and assembled by a BHH volunteer. Hubert also obtained blood through the BHH association with the blood bank in David. Willeke says, "Thanks to BHH and its wonderful volunteers for their help."

Music, and making music together, was an important part of their lives together. They played drums together including djembes and congas. Hubert also played accordion and didgeridoo and they made many more didgeridoos out of agave plants that grow abundantly here. Willeke also plays Native American flute.

Hubert lived a colorful life and experienced a lot of interesting times, from living in a commune and being in the Vietnam war, to being part of a cult in India which he escaped in fear for his life. He wrote stories about their life on the beach in Samara, Costa Rica; Willeke hopes to print the book at some point and is working on illustrations.

The Magic of Music team supports people in health, wellness, palliative, and comfort care by providing information, equipment, and volunteer services aided by music. Please contact a Boquete Health and Hospice patient care coordinator at +(507) 6781-9250 for more information about how the Magic of Music team can help through difficult moments. We have a large music collection and can create a personal playlist of music for you and your caregivers.

You can also find out more at [The Magic of Music](#).

Transitions in BHH

Hospice Team Leaders and Members Needed

We have a special opportunity for the right person. There is little in life as rewarding as supporting a person and their family in the process of dying. BHH is looking for people with a background in a medical field, ideally with experience in hospice care, to join our team. We need people with sufficient background to coordinate a team of volunteers to work together to meet the needs that are presented. The person must be vaccinated against Covid and be willing to participate in our three-day training.

If interested, please complete a new volunteer application on our website at boquetehealth.org and someone will contact you.

Volunteer for the Newsletter Team!

If you enjoy writing articles, proofing copy, or creating graphics and flyers, BHH could use your help on the newsletter team. We take a "many hands" approach to keep things light and fun.

Any related experience is ideal. If you're interested in volunteering with a group of talented people to help advance the presence and efforts of BHH in our community, please email Natalie Kelly at newsletter@boquetehealth.org to set up a time to chat.



BHH Does Not Provide Emergency Services!

Recently the patient care coordinators have received emergency-related calls. One was for a person who fell and could not get up. Another person was expecting BHH to provide immediate emergency transportation to a hospital in David for what was a possible stroke.

BHH is not equipped nor is it licensed to provide emergency services. We do, however, help provide support and equipment once the medical emergency is over and the patient is back home.

Everyone should have, at a minimum, the following emergency numbers/information in their phone and posted on their refrigerator:

- Contact information and account number for Rodney Direct (if using)
- Doctor contact information (both for doctors in Boquete and David)
- Ambulance and transport numbers
- List of all medications
- Details of all medical issues
- Known allergies
- Blood type
- Contact information for a spouse, partner, friends, and family, as well as emergency buddies

- Information regarding who will care for pets during an emergency

Initially, it does take a bit of time to compile the above information, but once compiled, it can be easily updated and shared with family, friends, and emergency buddies.

Our Being Prepared Guide (both in English and Spanish) has forms and information to help you get started collecting and organizing the information you will need during an emergency. With a donation of \$5 or more through the link below, you can obtain a PDF version of the guide by going to boquetehealth.org/prepared-payment. You can also purchase a bound paper copy of the guide for \$10 from Mail Boxes Etc. in Boquete.

You can find additional health links on the information downloads and forms page of our website at boquetehealth.org/forms.

During an emergency, time is critical. Calling BHH and/or not having emergency contact information readily available prolongs the time before help can arrive. Planning ahead is crucial.

Activity Recap

May 11 General Meeting

The May meeting was by Zoom only. Highlights of the meeting include:

- Team recaps and reports.

- Details regarding the Art Gala and Auction.
- Michael Polacek, DNP, RN, PMH-BC, presented Stress, Toxic Stress, and Trauma, Part 4.

Review of Dra. Shannon's Recap on Latest MINSA Guidelines

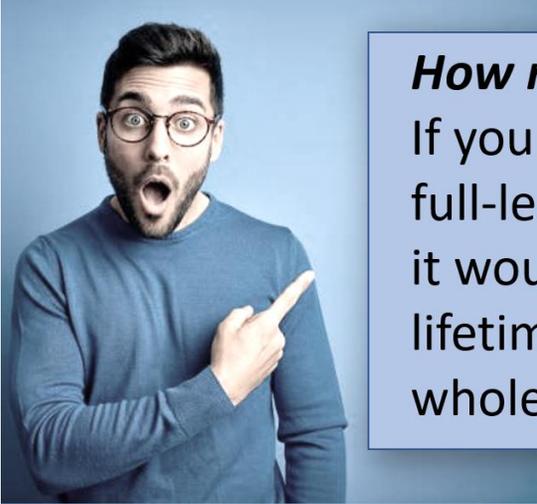
- Contagion rates are going up and ICU stays are slightly up.
- People without vaccinations are at the highest risk although some vaccinated people are being infected. The new variant may be causing the rise in rates.
- People still need to use masks when around other people, wash their hands frequently, and distance when possible.
- The second booster (fourth shot) of the Covid vaccine is available in Boquete health centers (MINSA, Social Security, etc.) for people 50 years and older.
- Regular flu shots are also available at health centers.

The Magic of Music

Did you know music can be therapeutic?*

*Harvard Medical School (2021) "Harnessing the Therapeutic Potential of Music"

And, the Magic of Music Team has a music lending library that contains HALF A MILLION SONGS!



How many songs is that?

If you listened to two new full-length albums every day, it would take an entire lifetime to listen to our whole collection.



Research has shown that music has medicinal value, ranging from the reduction of stress and anxiety to improving brain function in patients with degenerative brain diseases. For these purposes, the Magic of Music team has small personal music players and a music lending library containing over half a million songs. With these resources the team can build custom-tailored playlists that can help patients and their caretakers who contact Boquete Health and Hospice for assistance. For more information, check out this article on our website at [Music's ability to Support Health & Wellness](#).

Contact us at WhatsApp +507-6781-9250 to borrow a music player.

Los pacientes que están lidiando con problemas médicos que se

ponen en contacto con Boquete Health & Hospice para obtener ayuda, bien pueden estar lidiando con una cierta cantidad de estrés y ansiedad relacionados con su situación de salud. El equipo Magic of Music tiene pequeños reproductores de música personales y una amplia biblioteca de préstamos de música que puede ayudar a los pacientes a relajarse y reducir su nivel de estrés y ansiedad.

Ponte en contacto con nosotros en WhatsApp +507-6781-9250 para pedir prestado un reproductor de música.



Home Modifications for Seniors: A Room-by-Room Guide for Safety and Independence

Home modifications for seniors reduce fall risk and help older adults stay independent in their homes for as long as possible. Falls are a top reason why seniors lose independence and mobility. Hazards in the home can add up over time, making it easier for older adults to trip, fall, and hurt themselves.

To help seniors stay safe at home, we share an excellent guide to home modifications for older adults. It takes you step-by-step through the entire house and explains specific changes that are important for

keeping seniors safe. It also includes a list of simple do-it-yourself items.

[Read the Article](#)

What Happens When a Service You Need Is No Longer There?

What if you needed an oxygen concentrator or a hospital bed, or wheelchair, or some other piece of medical equipment, but the local company providing such things had gone bankrupt and closed its doors? You would need to find some other way to get the items you needed, and when time is critical, that can be challenging.

Boquete Health and Hospice is there when you need us. We are available seven days a week (8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday – Friday and 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. Saturday and Sunday) and are staffed with patient care coordinators who can help you with needs for equipment, blood, medical resources, and being prepared for end of life.

Our Equipment and Respiratory teams are staffed with volunteers who will meet you at our lockers to loan you needed equipment and show you the correct way to use it.

Through the first four months of 2022, BHH's expenses have been about \$1,800 more than donations. While the balance in the bank account is still healthy, if the trend continues, eventually BHH will not

be able to continue to provide services.

Please consider a donation.

To Make a Donation

BHH functions with donations provided by the community. If you are interested in supporting the work we do, there are several ways to donate:

- ▶ Scan the QR code to the right or use the link below. Both will take you to the donation page of our website at boquetehealth.org where you can make a PayPal donation. All major credit cards are accepted.
- ▶ Donate directly at our blood pressure table in the Tuesday Market (Tap Out) in Boquete OR when picking up or returning equipment. All checks must be made payable to Boquete Hospice and Health Foundation.
- ▶ Make a wire transfer or a direct deposit of cash or check to Boquete Hospice and Health Foundation, Global Bank, Checking Account #16-101-23071-6.



We appreciate all donations and use them in a variety of ways to help our community.

[Donate via PayPal](#)

Education Videos

Education videos are up and running! They provide excellent info for caregivers and the general public in Spanish and English. Topics cover using equipment including crutches, wheelchairs, and walkers, as well as moving patients safely for patient and caregiver and general patient care. There are also informative videos on Alzheimer's and other types of dementia. To find these, go to the BHH website and choose your topic at boquetehealth.org/education.

Need Medical Equipment?

If you or someone you know has a need to borrow or return equipment, please contact our patient care coordinators (PCCs) at 6781-9250. All requests related to equipment must go through the PCCs. The PCCs will work with you or the caregiver to determine the appropriate equipment, availability, and loan period. Once the equipment need is identified, the PCCs coordinate with the equipment team to ensure the correct equipment is sanitized and ready to be checked out (picked up) at our locker located at Alto Dorado. A member of the equipment team will contact you or the caregiver directly to make arrangements to meet at our locker.



Please note that our equipment team members only go to the locker for scheduled equipment checkouts and returns. **No equipment team member is staffed at the locker and the locker is only open during**

specific times. Therefore, it is important to contact the PCCs first. When you are ready to return equipment, the process is the same. Simply call the PCCs at 6781-9250.

If you are using a piece of equipment for the first time, be sure to visit our website and go to patient/caregiver videos under the education tab to learn more. Here you will find videos and information on using equipment and caring for patients in the home.

[Videos](#)

About the Tree of Life

The tree was created to honor our donors and volunteers. The roots are volunteers, the trunk is the council, and the leaves are people who have donated \$100 or more. The two-color leaves are people who have donated for two years. The flowers are sponsors who donate \$1,000 or more. The lilies are memorials to people who have passed where family or friends have donated \$200 or more to honor them.

Add your leaf, flower, or lily by clicking the button to make our tree grow. Thank you!

[Donate](#)



The policies of the organization are posted on our website and are updated as needed at boquetehospice.org/bhh-policies.

Read

Contact Us

Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm

Saturday and Sunday, 9am to 1pm

Hospice/Health: (507) 6781-9250

Blood Donor Program: WhatsApp (+507) 6590-2000 or call (507) 6781-9250

Email: info@boquetehealth.org

Website: boquetehealth.org

Facebook: facebook.com/boqueteheartshandsandhelp

Instagram: instagram.com/boquete_health_hospice/

All patient information shared with any Boquete Health and Hospice volunteer is kept in the strictest confidence.

Freely send this to anyone or use any part.

Our mailing address is:

info@boquetehealth.org

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

Thank you!