

With Attached Photos: Top to bottom, left to right: **Photo one:** Sue Schwartz and Peggy Tuten, president, Volunteer Services, Brunswick Campus. **Photo two:** Mary Heckel with Kathleen Worthing, president, Volunteer Services, Camden Campus. **Photo three:** Peggy Tuten and Penny Smith. **Photo four:** Jewellene Braun and Kathleen Worthing.
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Southeast Georgia Health System Honors Volunteers of the Quarter ***Volunteers of the Quarter Winter 2024 and Spring 2025***

BRUNSWICK, Georgia: August 28, 2025 – Southeast Georgia Health System Volunteer Services recently announced Sue Schwartz as the Brunswick Campus Winter Volunteer of the Quarter and Mary Heckel as the Camden Campus Winter Volunteer of the Quarter. At the same time, Penny Smith was announced as the Brunswick Campus Spring Volunteer of the Quarter and Jewellene Braun as the Camden Campus Spring Volunteer of the Quarter. The awards were presented during the recent Volunteer Services' Summer Luncheons.

Winter Volunteers of the Quarter



Since joining the Health System as a volunteer in 2022, Schwartz has become a valued and dependable member of the Volunteer Services team. Serving in the Gift Shop, she brings warmth, dedication and a strong work ethic to every shift. According to Peggy Tuten, president, Volunteer Services, Brunswick Campus, "Sue's friendly demeanor and supportive nature make her a joy to work alongside, and her empathy for patients – shaped by her own personal medical experiences – shines through in every interaction."

Tuten adds, "Over the past two and a half years, Sue has consistently gone above and beyond, often stepping up to cover extra shifts, especially during the busy holiday season. She is always willing to do what's needed to ensure the Gift Shop remains welcoming, efficient and successful."



Schwartz is a retired law enforcement officer, having served with U.S. Customs and Border Protection. She now resides in Brunswick with her husband, John. In her free time, she enjoys painting and is a proud member of the Blue Knights Motorcycle Club, the Brunswick Shrine Club Ladies Auxiliary and the Order of the Eastern Star for over 25 years.

Heckel began her volunteer journey at the Health System in 2023, bringing a warm presence and a wealth of life experience. Stationed at the Guest Services desk, she has quickly become a familiar and reassuring face for patients, visitors and team members alike. According to Kathleen Worthing, president, Volunteer Services, Camden Campus, "With an easy-going demeanor, Mary is known for her attentiveness, professionalism and kindness – always willing

to go the extra mile, both literally and figuratively, to ensure those she encounters feel cared for and supported.”

What makes Heckel’s contributions even more inspiring is the legacy of service she brings to the team. After retiring from a 47-year career in nursing – most recently as an oncology nurse – she relocated from Maryland to Kingsland, Georgia, where she now resides. “Her deep understanding of patient care, paired with her unwavering compassion, is evident in every interaction she has within our halls,” Worthing adds.

Heckel’s commitment to the Health System extends beyond her regular shifts at Guest Services. She represented the Health System’s volunteer community at a Camden County High School’s honor event, where she took part in celebrating and awarding the Health System Volunteer scholarships to three exceptional former teen volunteers. Her involvement underscored the vital role our volunteers play in inspiring the next generation of health care leaders.

Spring Volunteers of the Quarter

Smith began her volunteer journey in 2008, bringing with her not only years of professional experience as a hospital materials manager and purchasing agent, but also a warm heart and a sincere desire to give back. Her knowledge and kindness made her a valued member of the volunteer team.

Smith’s first assignment in the Emergency Care Center placed her on the front lines of patient care, where her calm presence and steady hands offered comfort to those facing medical emergencies. She later brought that same compassion and thoughtfulness to the Ribbon of Hope Specialty Boutique, helping cancer patients find encouragement, dignity and a sense of self during their most vulnerable moments.



Currently, Smith lends her time and talents to the Health Promotion & Wellness department, assisting in the Dick Mitchell Health Information Center, providing valuable resources and a friendly face.

According to Tuten, “Over the years, Penny has been a constant presence at Health System events and fundraisers. Whether she’s lending a hand behind the scenes or stepping up to organize, her generosity of spirit shines through in everything she does.”



Smith’s dedication is also part of a larger legacy. Her late husband, Ross Smith, was a long-time Health System volunteer as well. Though he passed away in 2018, his commitment to service lives on through his wife’s continued involvement and passion for helping others. Smith resides in Brunswick and volunteers with other community organizations, including Manna House, MAP International, the Brunswick Women’s Club and Friends of the Library.

Braun joined the Health System volunteer team in 2023. Having previously volunteered for 35 years as a Gift Shop manager at a hospital in Oregon, it was a natural fit for her to continue that legacy in the Health System Gift Shop, helping with inventory, creating welcoming displays and supporting the shop's daily success with care and reliability.

“Jewellene’s warmth and work ethic have made her a valued member of our team,” says Worthing. “She brings not only experience, but a genuine kindness that enhances every shift.”

A resident of St. Marys, she enjoys reading, crocheting and quilting – donating many of her handcrafted quilts to House of Hope.

More than 150 volunteers generously share their time and talents to assist patients, visitors, and team members at the Southeast Georgia Health System Brunswick and Camden campuses. To learn more about volunteer opportunities, contact Kristin Doll, CDVS, director, Volunteer Services, at 912-466-1071 or visit sghs.org/volunteer.

ABOUT SOUTHEAST GEORGIA HEALTH SYSTEM

Southeast Georgia Health System is a not-for-profit health system comprised of two acute care hospitals, two Cancer Care Centers and multiple specialty care centers, including orthopaedic and spine care, joint replacement, breast care, maternity, outpatient rehabilitation, sleep management and wound care. The Brunswick Campus Cancer Care Center is accredited by the American College of Surgeons Commission on Cancer and is one of the few centers in Georgia to offer CyberKnife® M6 with MLC. Additionally, the Brunswick Campus is accredited by The Joint Commission as an Advanced Primary Stroke Center and the Camden Campus is accredited as an Acute Stroke Ready Hospital. The Southeast Georgia Physician Associates medical group includes more than 175 providers working in 20 different medical specialties at more than 45 locations. The Health System is part of Coastal Community Health, a regional affiliation between Baptist Health and Southeast Georgia Health System, a highly integrated hospital network focused on significant initiatives designed to enhance the quality and value of care provided to our contiguous communities. For more information, visit sghs.org.

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