



Kelly Swisher works with a horse at Walk On Farms.



Angel Kruzel and her daughter Ashley make cards for the Senior Smile Program at Elderwerks.

## Take Your First Step Through the Barrington Area Volunteer Connection

RESIDENTS SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH BAVC AND LOCAL VOLUNTEERING

**A**S I WATCHED a high school commencement ceremony, the student speaker spoke to the graduates about how one small action can make a positive impact on many and encouraged the graduates to do the same. It reminded me that this is one of the main reasons that the Barrington Area Volunteer Connection (BAVC) was created. Volunteering comes in different levels and forms and just one step can make a difference! We wanted to share the experiences of two BAVC volunteers who are making an impact through their volunteering.

### ANGEL KRUZEL, ELDERWERKS

#### What was your interest Elderwerks?

I love our community's senior citizens. They are such an important part of a community and have so much knowledge and insight they can share with us. When I was searching on BAVC for a way to give back, Elderwerks came up with their need for a Board Member. I thought that with my background

as a business owner and a former VP of Brand Management with a background in sales and marketing, that I might be a good fit.

I reached out through the BAVC portal to express an interest in learning more and spoke with Jennifer Prell, the president and founder of Elderwerks. I loved her passion and her mission to help senior citizens in our area and knew that I wanted to help.

Elderwerks is such a great community resource for families and seniors! It provides complimentary assistance to find any type of senior housing, home care, or support services. They offer education on a variety of topics for seniors and caregivers, as well as an annual Aging Better Expo and offer CE credits for Illinois nurses and social workers.

#### Was it easy to use BAVC to find it and sign up?

BAVC was easy to use! I love how easy the website interface is to use and register for volunteer opportunities. You can view different organizations

in the Barrington area and to find a volunteer need that matches your abilities or interests and give back to our community. I encourage you to check it out and register for it.

#### How has your volunteer experience been so far?

My experience so far has been positive. I have met so many great people that share my commitment to give back to our community. I think that volunteering has so many benefits, especially after the horrible year we all experienced.

Volunteering makes you feel a part of something bigger than yourself, it helps so much if you are lonely or depressed to be a part of something, working toward a goal or helping others. It's wonderful meeting and working with people who share your same commitment to a cause and is also a good way to meet new friends or learn new skills. And BAVC makes it easy to find a cause that resonates with you and to sign up for it.

#### How long have you lived in the area and/or some background info on you?

My family and I have lived in the Barrington area for over 10 years now. We love the area and plan on living here for a long time. I knew when I wanted to open my photography studio that it had to be in the heart of downtown Barrington. We were fortunate to find a great location downtown at 117 Barrington Commons Court! Visit us online at [angelkruzelphtography.com](http://angelkruzelphtography.com).

#### KELLY SWISHER, WALK ON FARMS

##### What was your interest in Walk On Farms?

My interest in Walk On sparked after a trip I took to Wyoming where I was exposed to horses on a daily basis. When I got back from Wyoming, I wanted to find a place that would allow me to be around horses and get community service hours. I had never previously done work with any equine-assisted barns, so it was a new experience for me. After I started volunteering it turned into so much more than just a way to get volunteer hours and became a part of my weekly schedule.

##### How was your sign up via BAVC with Walk On and your volunteer experience?

The signup process was very quick and easy and responding to shifts is also very accessible and quick. Walk On sends out emails every month that have a link that takes you directly to the signup for shifts.

##### How long have you lived in the area & what have been your other volunteering experiences?

I was born on the north side of Chicago and have lived in Barrington my whole life. I have been volunteering with Walk On for about two and a half years now and previously to that I did some volunteer work for the Boy Scouts of America.

**BAVC invites you to make a positive impact no matter how small!**

**Visit [thebavc.org](http://thebavc.org) to learn more and find your volunteer match!** 

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*Shefali Bhuvra is a BAVC Community Outreach Committee member.*



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