

# Aurora House News

*The light of a new day...*



**Spring 2023  
Newsletter Volume 16 Issue 1**

Patient and families served: 1,366

Age Range: 6 wks - 103yrs

Average Length of Stay: 35 days

Students & Community #: 8,134

## Teaching Comfort

Although it is one of two universal human experiences, our society often ignores, denies, or misconstrues the true nature of death and dying. End-of-life care is challenging, and since 2015, Aurora House has provided education on Palliative and Hospice care for health professional students throughout the Rio Grande Valley, helping them understand the challenges and complexity of working in this setting.

With the support of our Hospice partners and our volunteer retired nurse, Cori Hetzel, students are offered the chance to get hands-on experience in caring for others and to discuss death and dying, and learn how patients are supported by their palliative and hospice care team and how their families handled their grief.

Many students expressed fears and anxieties at the beginning of the sessions, but by the end had an improved sense of confidence and self-esteem in their ability to care for others, physically and emotionally. They may not choose Hospice as a field, but the experiences they have are life changing, and won't be forgotten any time soon.

*"I had a great experience today. I got to really learn what palliative care is and what it means. I liked that we got to speak with some of the patients and hear their experiences in life."  
- Spring 2023 STC Nursing Student*

Aurora House believes it is important to involve health professional students in the discourse of death, and to grant them access to people who routinely deal with death and who can provide a positive example of healthy emotional management, thanks to their ability to comprehend and experience pain—both their own and that of others.

In our home-like setting of comfort care, opportunities for learning extend beyond the traditional classroom rubric and conventional methods of evaluation. The volunteer Hospice presenters teach students the physical, mental, and emotional skills they need to work in a hospice setting. The ultimate goal will always be rooted in true relationships and connection, which occurs only through empathy and compassion.

We are so grateful to Knapp Community Care Foundation and The Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation who generously provide funding for our programs, which allows us to provide a holistic picture to health professional students' knowledge and attitudes about palliative and hospice care.

# Aurora House News

This past December our "All is Bright" event was held at the historic Villa De Cortez. The event was an evening filled with great food, friends, entertainment, and the joining of a community who together raise over \$90,000.00 for Aurora House. With over 200 people in attendance, we created beautiful memories. This has been one of our most successful events to date!

With this we are able to continue our mission to provide compassionate care, in a home-like setting, for persons in the last chapter of life, so they can approach a peaceful death with comfort and dignity. "The All Is Bright event was a resounding success thanks to the hard work of the many volunteers, the sponsors who gave financial support and the people who attended," said Board President Mark McCaleb. "A huge thank you to all who helped make it an evening of fun and celebration, and most importantly, hope for those in our community who need help at their most vulnerable moment."

## Thank You!



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 Burton Companies  
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## A Celebration of Hope



## Healing Your Grief: Remembering Loved Ones This Easter

Easter is a day of rejoicing the spring season with themes of growth and rebirth, but when processing feelings of grief this can be a particularly difficult time.

These special occasions we usually spend with our loved ones can make the feeling of loss a little stronger.

These are the moments when we should lean towards our feelings of grief and not avoid it. Grief expresses itself in many different forms, each unique to the individual experiencing it, and while grief can be an overwhelming mix of emotions it isn't just about the pain, it's about love.



### Ways to cope

Remembering your loved ones during the holidays isn't the easiest thing to deal with. But remembering and sharing happy memories can help fill the empty space left by those we lost. Here are a few ways to make lost loved ones part of your Easter season.

- **Making a "Remembering Basket"** Create an Easter basket in memory of your loved one. Fill/decorate with their favorite items. Add photos or cards dedicated to your loved one.
- **Decorating Easter Eggs in Memory of Loved Ones** Decorate Easter Eggs with your loved ones favorite things/past times (favorite color, activity, flower, food, sports team, etc.)
- **Easter Egg Notes:** Write down a memory, something you miss about the person or anything else on a piece of paper and place in a plastic egg (\*Add eggs to "Remembering Basket")
- **Create an Easter Scrapbook** You and your family could make an Easter collage scrapbook with photos of your loved one. Make it a tradition and add new photos every year!
- **Make their favorite recipes.** By making one of your loved ones favorite meals it'll feel like they're there with you.
- **Make a remembrance item from their clothing.** You could make a stuffed animal, pillow, blanket, etc. The ideas are endless. These are items you could keep with you forever. You'll always be able to have a physical part of them with you.

<https://whatsyourgrief.com/grief-and-easter/>  
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# Aurora House News

## Donations

### Donations

October 2022 - January 2023

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William E. & Betty Locke  
Yahaira Almonte  
Yolanda Salinas  
Zurlo's All Electric



On behalf of the Aurora House Foundation Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers we would like to extend a heart-felt THANK YOU to our friends at Snow to Sun. Your continued support truly makes a difference for those in our care.

# Aurora House News

## Donations

### *In Kind*

A.N. Tony Rico Elementary  
Adrian Farias  
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All Generations Health Care Inc.  
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Valley Grande Institute  
Weslaco East Baseball  
Weslaco High CTE ECHS  
Weslaco Lions Club  
Weslaco Mid Valley Lions  
Yolanda Salinas

**October 2022 - January 2023**

### How You Can Help

### Become a Sponsor

By choosing to become a sponsor for Aurora House you'll be allowing us to continue providing compassionate end-of-life care for those in need in our community.

Contact Marisela Gonzalez at  
(956) 973-9690 or (512) 865-8085  
or email [mari@aurorahouse.org](mailto:mari@aurorahouse.org)

### Corporate & Business Partnership

Get your company involved to raise funds for Aurora House by sponsoring an event.

Contact Marisela Gonzalez at  
(956) 973-9690 or (512) 865-8085  
or email [mari@aurorahouse.org](mailto:mari@aurorahouse.org)

### Planned Gifts & Legacy Requests

Including Aurora House in your will or trust can create a lasting legacy to help the community for years to come.

Contact Marisela Gonzalez at  
(956) 973-9690 or (512) 865-8085  
or email [mari@aurorahouse.org](mailto:mari@aurorahouse.org)

### Monetary Donations

Aurora House does not receive any government aid or funding from national or state humane societies and relies entirely on private donations to fund our program. To donate, visit [www.aurorahouse.org/donate](http://www.aurorahouse.org/donate)

### In-Kind Donations

To help reduce costs, our program is always in need of items to support our activities - from blankets and wipes for the patients to office supplies. Visit our Wish List to see what you can help with.  
[www.aurorahouse.org/wishlist](http://www.aurorahouse.org/wishlist)

### Monthly Donations

Monthly donors support our work throughout the year with recurring monthly gifts. These monthly donations allow us to focus on making everyday as comfortable as possible for our patients. To donate, visit [www.aurorahouse.org/donate](http://www.aurorahouse.org/donate)

### Volunteer

Our work depends entirely on the support of our dedicated volunteers. Many opportunities are available for youth, adult and groups in our program and for events.  
[www.aurorahouse.org/volunteer](http://www.aurorahouse.org/volunteer)

Contact Aymara Orteza at  
(956) 973-9690 or email  
[aymara@aurorahouse.org](mailto:aymara@aurorahouse.org)

# Thank you!

### *In Loving Memory*

**Amelia Gonzalez**  
Adalberto & Rosa Linda Hinojosa  
**Americo & Dionicia De La Paz**  
Americo De La Paz III  
**Arene Doerfler**  
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**Aurora E. Perez**  
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Myra Martinez  
**Maria Cordero**  
Maria C. Arredondo



### *In Kind*

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**Clotilde Cantu**  
Anonymous, In-Kind Donations  
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**Robert Reed**  
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Nancy La Duke  
**Robert Scott**  
Robert David Scott  
**Rufino & Aurora Barron**  
Ofelia Barron  
**Sergio Lazo**  
Scott Jenkins  
**Tonie Fuentes**  
Robert & Jodi Janik  
**Vangie Martinez**  
Atanacio Hinojosa, Jr.  
**Vickers Barrett**  
Priscilla Rawson



### *In Honor of*

**Antonio Cantu**  
Guadalupe Cantu  
**Carla Sausto**  
Vincent Sausto  
**Christine Prince**  
Charity McCormick  
**Debbie Rektorik's Birthday**  
Craig Wiegand  
Esperanza Garza  
**Doris Williams**  
Larry Williams  
**Flo Lasater**  
Randall Summers  
**Jo Davis**  
Randall Summers  
**Nora Solis Gil**  
Gerardo & Lisa Gil  
**Rhonda Garza's Birthday**  
Esperanza Garza  
**Santa Claus**  
B. W. & Ingelise Jones  
**Staff**  
Elizabeth & Subram Krishnan, MD

### **Memorial Gifts**

Friends and family members of a hospice patient remember a loved one in various ways: sometimes with flowers, a card, and sometimes it is with a more lasting tribute in the form of a memorial gift.

Through memorial gift-giving you remember your loved one in a very meaningful way and at the same time you help other hospice patients in need.

To make a donation visit <https://aurorahouse.org/donations/> or use the envelope provided with the newsletter.



#### Give Online

- Visit [www.aurorahouse.org/donations](http://www.aurorahouse.org/donations) and click on MONTHLY with your credit or debit card. One time donations are greatly appreciated.

#### Donate by Check

- You can also write a check to Aurora House and specify Annual Giving in the memo line. Check can be mailed to P.O. Box 976, Weslaco, Texas 78599

# Aurora House Events

## Upcoming Events



### Aurora House Foundation

Cordially Invites You To

## Dejeuner En Blanc

2023 Administrative Professionals' Day Luncheon In White  
Wednesday, April 26<sup>th</sup> & Thursday, April 27<sup>th</sup>  
11:30 am to 1:30 pm – Knapp Conference Center, Weslaco

For Sponsorship & Individual Ticket Opportunities, Please Call Us At  
(956) 973-9690 or email [Mari@AuroraHouse.Org](mailto:Mari@AuroraHouse.Org)  
Thank You For Your Consideration and Continued Support!

IN PARIS, 1988, FRENCHMAN PASQUIER INVITED A GROUP OF FRIENDS TO AN ELEGANT GATHERING, REQUESTING THEY ALL WEAR WHITE ATTIRE TO INDICATE THEIR STATUS AS HIS SELECTED GUESTS. SINCE THEN, THIS ARISTOCRATIC BORN TRADITION HAS BEEN REPLICATED ACROSS SIX CONTINENTS AND IS ALWAYS "INVITATION ONLY". THIS YEAR ON ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS' DAY, AURORA HOUSE INVITES YOU TO ALLOW US TO TREAT YOUR OWN SELECT SPECIAL GUESTS TO A PARIS STYLE LUNCHEON WITH THE THEME, "ALL WHITE". AS ALWAYS, WE HAVE PLANNED FOR A SPRING STYLE SHOW, A DELICIOUS LUNCHEON, AND OTHER FUN SURPRISES.

YOUR SPONSORSHIP FOR THIS EVENT PROVIDES VITAL CASH FUNDS IN SUPPORT OF THE AURORA HOUSE MISSION TO PROVIDE COMPASSIONATE END-OF-LIFE CARE IN A COMFORTING, HOME-LIKE SETTING. WHERE THERE IS LACK OF ABLE OR PRESENT CAREGIVERS IN THE HOME, LACK OF ADEQUATE SHELTER OR OTHER DIFFICULT SITUATIONS, WE ASSIST THOSE UNDER OUR CARE TO APPROACH DEATH WITH DIGNITY, COMFORT, AND PEACE. AURORA HOUSE IS ABLE TO CARE FOR OUR PATIENTS LIKE FAMILY, AS WE DO NOT RECEIVE INSURANCE OR GOVERNMENT FUNDING. IT IS THROUGH THE CONTINUING GENEROSITY OF OUR COMMUNITY AND SPONSORS LIKE YOU THAT WE CAN KEEP OUR DOORS OPEN TO THOSE WHO NEED US IN THEIR MOST DIFFICULT TIME.

SPONSORSHIPS APPLY TO THE ENTIRE EVENT, BUT TICKETS ARE CHOSEN FOR ONE OR THE OTHER LUNCHEON OR CAN BE SPREAD OUT BETWEEN THE TWO DAYS. SEATING IS LIMITED, AND WE WILL RESERVE THE LUNCHEONS TO CAPACITY. YOUR PROMPT RESPONSE WILL ENSURE THAT YOUR SELECTED GUESTS HAVE A RESERVED SEAT AT THE LUNCHEON OF YOUR CHOICE.

### OUR FUNDERS

*Thank you!*

the Willey Barner  
**LEGACY FOUNDATION™**



**THE  
RAUL TIJERINA JR.  
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**CommunityCare.Today**  
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### OUR MISSION

To provide compassionate care for persons in the last chapter of life, in a home-like setting, so they can approach a peaceful death with comfort and dignity.