

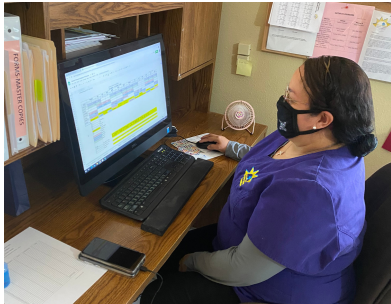
# Aurora House News

*The light of a new day...*



**Fall 2020**  
**Newsletter Volume 13 Issue 2**

## Quality Care Continues in times of COVID-19



There is not a person or organization in the world that has not been impacted by COVID-19. Aurora House is no different, yet our dedicated staff continues to provide end of life care for some of the most vulnerable members of our community.

For the past few months, our leadership team has been in contact with local health leaders to receive the most up-to-the-minute information, and have used guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) and the Texas Department of State Health Services (TxDSHS) to help to ensure the actions we take are the most appropriate and comprehensive.

Our entire team has been provided personal protective equipment (PPE) kits that include an N95 mask, face shields, hand sanitizer, gloves, three loop masks, and protective gowns. We have also been supplying masks and gowns to patients' families who come in to visit their loved one to protect and prevent the spread of COVID-19. Aurora House staff has also been using virtual tools to families connected.



Our community businesses and organizations, such as South Texas Federal Credit Union and United Way of South Texas have continued to support by providing and assistance during this critical time. Our liaisons delivered special care packages to our staff stay safe and sanitized. Knapp Community Care Foundation awarded Aurora House \$15,000 to help us continue to provide our services to those in our community. We were able to purchase PPE equipment, cleaning supplies, a much needed new washer and dryer, and other supplies to continue to keep our staff and patients safe during COVID.

We'd like to send our heartfelt thanks to all of those mentioned above and inside this newsletter for standing by our patients and their family members during the COVID-19 pandemic. And a special thank you to YOU, our reader, for your continued support. With your help, we will get through this stronger than ever.



Patient and families served: 1,088

Age Range: 6 wks - 103yrs

Average Length of Stay: 35 days

Students #: 3,447

## A letter of Gratitude

*The Barrera Family, owners of local Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory, have been wonderful supporters of Aurora House. and we are so grateful for their support.*

We are eternally grateful for the loving care the staff at Aurora House provided for our mother, Mirta Barrera, during the final week of her life. Seeing how she was cared for gave our family much-needed peace about her passing. Mirta was a wonderful, caring wife to her husband Guillermo and a loving mother to her four children.

The family moved to Weslaco in 1981 and built a comfortable life. Mirta worked as a substitute teacher for WISD for at least 16 years. She loved her parish of St. Pius X Catholic Church. She was always very involved and was part of the Divine Mercy prayer group. In 2004, Mirta was diagnosed with Cryptogenic Cirrhosis.

Her FAVORITE Doctor, Dr. Robert Sepulveda, took great care of her and referred her to the best specialists the Rio Grande Valley (RGV) had to offer. She suffered with this illness for about 16 years.



She embraced life throughout her illness, never complained about her circumstance and continued to live every day to the fullest. Mother never let her medical condition interfere with what mattered most to her which was faith and family. Always time for letters, phone call and visits to those that she loved despite her declining health. She enjoyed her visits to see her grandson, his wife and her 2 great grand children. When she could no longer travel we would Facetime with them and that brought her great joy.

She never wanted to live in an assisted living center, rather choosing to remain in her home that had so many cherished memories. Yet as her time approached our family was confronted with difficult decision of who would offer her the compassionate care that we so desperately wanted. Aurora House was highly recommended by Dr. Sepulveda, and we were blessed that a room was available at her time of need. The staff was always very attentive, explained what they were going to do while we were present and were so compassionate and respectful to the specific needs of each patient.

Aurora House and its staff are a true blessing to our family and many other families across the RGV. Aurora House is a crucial part of this community and we need to ensure that they always receive the funding it needs to continue to help families in their time of need. We are eternally grateful for their work and help with the end of life care of our beloved mother. With deep gratitude and much appreciation.



~The family of Mirta Alaniz Barrera

# Aurora House News

## La Dolce Vita



It's home to the music of Verdi and Pavarotti, Bolognese sauce, Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese, and some of the finest balsamic vinegars in the world—and on April 2020, Aurora House hoped to have our community experience it for itself without having to leave Weslaco.

Because of the challenges caused by COVID-19 Aurora House Foundation's much beloved Administrative Professionals' Day Luncheon was transformed into an online Facebook Live Raffle Event. Thanks to you our community our online event was a success and helped raise over \$16,000!

“Fundraising events like this online event are so important to Aurora House,” Marisela Gonzalez, Aurora House Executive Director said. “These funds support our care-giving expenses so we can continue to serve our community. We had so much fun going live and reading about all the excited winners during our Facebook Live Event.”

TO OUR SPONSORS

*Thank you*



Burton Companies    Davis Equity Realty    Frost Bank    Kindred Hospice

Montalvo Insurance Agency    Advantage Healthcare Consulting    All State Insurance - Myriam Guerra

Shepard Walton King Insurance Group    Ronald E Blanco, MD - Valley Women's Specialist, P.A.

## Volunteers Change the World

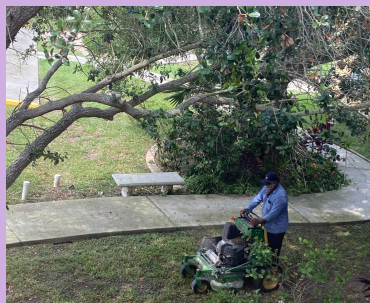
Volunteers continue to contribute to patient care in spite of Covid-19. Our wonderful volunteers have made masks for staff and sold masks which provided donations to Aurora House, made prayer shawls for families, dropped off groceries, and provided landscaping service to beautify our grounds. We truly appreciate your support!



Love of Christ ECLA Lutheran Church



Genevieve's HOPE Foundation



McCaleb Funeral Home



Snow To Sun Community

# Aurora House News

## Memorials & Honorariums

### *In Loving Memory*



**Al Smith**  
Anna Smith

**Americo De La Paz Jr.**  
Americo De La Paz III

**Arlys Patterson**  
Teresa & Bill Mize

**Aurora E. Perez**  
Melida Gonzalez

**Barbara Gillott**  
William E. & Betty Locke

**Betty L. Veale**  
Gary/Lisa Blackburn

**Cathy Mackner**  
James & Sondra Plowman

**Diana Womble**  
Scott & Dolly Kimbro

**Dr. Rock Riley**  
Brian Humphreys  
Craig & Marguerite Wiegand  
Mary Brundige  
Robert & Virginia Janik  
Ronald D Hicks  
Sandi Sparrow

**Edward Ottis**  
Robert Janik

**Ella Dean Cook**  
Randall Summers

**Felipe Garcia**  
Mr. Faustino Villanueva Jr.

**Fernando Saenz**  
Norma Martinez

**Genoveva Graciela "Beva" (Cantu) Guerra**  
Rafael Cabaza III

**Gregoria Rodriguez**  
Dalia Carpenter

**Henry Borgfeld**  
Alfred Dirks

**Horace (Hank) Edgley**  
Jeannette Edgley

**Janis Ramsey**  
Mary Brundige  
Craig & Marguerite Wiegand  
Rhonda & Robert Garza

**Jesus Covacevich**  
Anthony Covacevich

**Josefa Covacevich**  
Anthony Covacevich

**Jose Luna**  
Felisa Luna

**Joseph Martinez**  
Rachel Gil

**Judy Lackey**  
Richard & Fredricka Vaughan  
Loretta Barbee  
Ramon Montalvo  
Brian Humphreys

**Kathryn Carter**  
Ronald D Hicks  
Carolyn Bell

**Kay Hayden**  
James & Sondra Plowman

**Leon Carrol Billings**  
Alfred & Velma Dirks

**Linda Groves**  
Bob Williams

**Lisa Westfall**  
Randall Summers

**Lloyd D. May**  
Deborah May

**Lorraine Mackner**  
James & Sondra Plowman

**M. Susie Lopez**  
Rafael Cabaza III

**Margaret E. Bardonner**  
Joann Streiff

**Mary Ellen Beard**  
James and Linda Williams

**Mike Ottis**  
Robert Janik

**Myron Riggert**  
James & Sondra Plowman

**Nan M Sutton**  
James & Sondra Plowman  
Rhonda & Robert Garza  
Robert & Carol Ritter  
Randall Summers

### November 2019- January 2020

**Patricio Briones**  
Rachel Briones  
David F. Briones

**Pragedis Samudio**  
Felix & Maria S. Hernandez

**Ramiro Beltran**  
Oralia Beltran

**Ramona V. Segundo**  
Eliazar Vela

**Richard De Paul**  
Sherry Henry

**Robert Garza**  
Atanacio Jr. Hinojosa

**Robert James "Bob" Rektorik**  
Jennifer Rektorik

**Rita Gardner**  
Ramona Harrington  
Carol Harrington  
La Feria American Legion Post # 439

**Encarnacion Solis**  
Anonymous

**Enedina Garcia**  
Ofelia Griffith

**Felicita Castro**  
Oralia Castro

**Gregoria Rodriguez**  
Noemi Martinez  
Veronica Hargis

**Hosea Toms**  
Ona Gray

**Julius Latter**  
Ranchero Village

**Ramiro Cruz**  
Yolanda Cruz

**Santos Balderas**  
Dolores Balderas

### *In Honor of*

**Ruth Kapraun**  
Mr. & Mrs John Damalas

**Sherry Dianne Kennedy**  
Linda K. Leger

**Thomas Leadbetter**  
Randall Summers

**Tom Blessington**  
Richard & Fredricka Vaughan

**Delia Carpenter**  
Jon Vagi

**Health Workers**  
Elizabeth and Gopal Limited Partnership

Kathy Damalas  
Mr. & Mrs. John Damalas

**Mark McCaleb**  
Debby Rektorik  
Anna Smith

**Richard Vaughan**  
Dolores Balderas

**Rita Gardner**  
Dolores Balderas  
John Covell

**Sr. Therese Corkey**  
Louis Bartscher

**Sulema Cuellar**  
Susan Peterson  
Bernadine McCaleb

### **Pavers**

**Eva L. Plank**  
Jo Summers

**Melinda Hernandez**  
Merica Hernandez

### **In Kind**

**Adam Bazan**  
Cristina Leal

**Arthur Rich**  
Joyce Rich

## **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.

# Aurora House News

## Memorials & Honorariums

### In Kind

**Adan Bazan**  
Greg Bazan

**Alan Farkas**  
Noemi Moya

**Gregoria Rodriguez**  
Noemi Martinez  
Veronica Hargis  
Family of Gregoria  
Rodriguez  
Rudy Rodriguez

**Lucinda Ledesma**  
Lazaro Ledesma

### Donations

Addington, Dawn  
ADL Services  
Alexander, Patricia  
Anderson Bean Boot Co.  
Antonacci, Tony & Alma Rosa  
A-SJ Properties  
Atlas, Debra  
Bartle, Donald & E. Helen  
Beckwith, Benton & Melissa  
Bettis, Jean L.  
Betty Pilcher, Shannon  
Clugston  
Boehme, Marvin  
Bortnem, Patricia & Alan E.  
Burton Companies LLC  
CAF of America  
Cantu, Araceli  
Catholic Daughters of the  
American Court - Donna  
Catholic Daughters of the  
Americas- Mercedes  
CIMA Hospice  
Community Foundation Lyster  
Family  
Foundation Fund  
Country Sunshine RV Park  
Crossroads Community  
Church  
Cuellar, Sulema  
Damalas, Mr. & Mrs. John  
Damalas, Kathy & Eugene  
Davis Equity Realty  
De La Rosa, Elizabeth  
De Leon, Rosemary  
De Sela, Alexis  
Depue, Patty  
Diaz, Christopher  
Diedrich, Barbara  
Donna Medical Clinic  
Eckles, Elizabeth

Escandon, Magda  
Estevez, Jessica  
Estrada, Linda  
Fasse, Sharon  
Fears, Gary & Jeanne  
First Christian Church (Disciples  
of Christ)  
Frank Venecia Farmers Insurance Agency  
Free, Mary  
Frost Bank  
Fuller, James  
Gallipeau, Robert & Lynn  
Galloway, Jacqueline  
Garcia, Francisca Ninfa  
Garcia, Herlinda  
Garza, Alma  
Garza, Rhonda & Robert  
Gonzalez, Celina  
Gonzales, Eloy & Marisela Gonzalez  
Guerra Insurance  
Hernandez, Andrew  
Irina, Concepcion  
Jacobson Rev Living Trust John  
& Doris Jacobson  
John Knox Village of the Rio  
Grande Valley, Inc.  
Johnston, Hollie S.  
Jones, Stephen R & Dawn M  
Juan Gonzalez & Elyn Gloski  
Justice Raul A. Gonzalez  
Elementary School  
Kasella, Mary  
Key, J.D  
Kindred Hospice (Curo)  
Klinek, Steven  
Knapp Community Care Foundation  
Knapp Medical Center  
Knights of Columbus Council 3098  
Kuck, Inge  
Lavin, Helen  
Leisure World Chapel  
Leon, Patricia  
Life Giving Outreach  
Ministries/Crossroads  
Llano Grande Lake Park Church  
Lone Star National Bank  
Long, Albert & Susann  
Long, Patricia  
Lopez, Ofelia  
Losoya, Robert & Mary Ester  
Love of Christ Lutheran Church  
Magic Valley Electric Coop  
Magic Valley Retired School Personal Association  
Martinez, Norma  
McAfee Insurance Agency  
McCaleb Trust c/o Mark McCaleb  
Mercedes Lions Club  
Messer, Marlene  
Montalvo Insurance Agency  
Navy Army Community Credit Union

### February - September 2020

Nelson, Verda  
Noriega, Andres  
Polzin, Eric L.  
Puente Aguirre, Sandra  
Rawson, Priscilla  
Reigner, Carlota  
Reyna, David  
RGV ACO Health Providers, LLC  
Riley, Melanie  
Rios of Mercedes  
Rios-Barrera, Annette  
Rodriguez, Dr. Rafael  
Saldana, Lauro & Irma  
Salinas, Yolanda  
San Martin De Porres Church  
Seven Cities Foundation  
Shepard Walton King Insurance  
Group  
Shidler, Tom and Sheila  
Siesta Village Worship Hour  
Southern Comfort Chapel  
Southern Comfort R.V. Park  
Steiner, David W  
Sunderland, Margo Dittburner  
Tafolla, Oralia  
Tafolla, Virginia  
Texas Regional Bank  
Top Golf USA, Inc.  
Torres, Erasmo & Esther  
Turner, Edward  
United Way of Metropolitan Dallas,  
Inc,  
United Way of South Texas  
Valley Baptist Legacy Foundation  
Valley Land Title Co.  
Valley Women's Specialists, P. A.  
Vanderbeck, Gloria  
Vaughan, Anthony (Ryan) & Jode  
Villalobos & Villalobos Law Firm  
Vitek, Betty Lou  
Weslaco Chamber of Commerce  
Wild August, LLC  
Zachman, Renee  
Ziegler, Martin  
Zink, Michael

Calderson, Jesus  
Cantu, Araceli  
Cardenas, Sarah  
Contreras, Becky  
Country Sunshine RV Park  
Damalas, Kathy & Eugene  
Ferguson, Randi  
Garza, Alma  
Garza, Diana  
Gonzales, Logan  
Gonzalez, Diana  
  
Gonzales, Eloy & Marisela Gonzalez  
Gonzalez, Lori  
H.E.B.  
Hernandez, Melissa  
Hollon Oil Company  
John Knox Village Residents  
Jones, Stephen R & Dawn M  
Love of Christ Lutheran Church  
Lynncare Hospice Services  
Magic Valley Retired School  
Personal Association  
Maropin, Nora  
Martin, Beth  
Martinez, Noemi/Veronica Hargis  
Mata, Mr.  
McAllen, Sam  
McCaleb Trust c/o Mark McCaleb  
Mead, Gayle  
Mercedes Lions Club  
Molina, Rosie  
Nerio, Jose Luis  
Newcomer, Thomas and Sharon  
Nicho Produce Co. INC  
Only Love Hospice  
Rodrigue, Richard  
Salinas, Roy  
San Martin De Porres Church  
Santiago, Vanessa Y  
Siesta Retirement Village  
SNAPIX  
Southern Comfort Park  
Southern Comfort R.V. Park  
St. Pius X Catholic Church  
T Ghost BBQ  
Trails End RV Park  
United Hospice Care Services, LLC  
Vallejo, Betty  
Valley First Hospice Care  
Weslaco Lions Club  
Williams, Mark  
Willingham, Amparo

### In Kind

Alexander, Patricia  
AllState Hospice  
Anderson Bean Boot Co.  
Bar-B-Cutie

### YOUR IMPACT

Your donation to Aurora House allows us to continue the rich legacy of compassionate care for those facing the end of life and those learning to live with the loss of a loved one.

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

# Aurora House News



## We Need Your Help

Across the globe, COVID-19 has disrupted lives and challenged us to adapt to difficult circumstances. While so much has changed, one thing that's remained constant is Aurora House's commitment to continue to serve our community and ensures that our residents spend their last days surrounded by comfort, dignity, compassion, and peace.

We have been serving this community since 2007, and we are here for you. As 2020 comes to a close and we navigate into the future together, we are so grateful to our donors for their ongoing support, which is more important now than ever before.

A monthly commitment from you helps us provide:

**Comfort** - Many patients who come through our doors lack comfortable housing, they would otherwise be sharing crowded living quarters, with little privacy, and without basic living necessities. \$500 a month helps to pay utilities taxes and building maintenance.

**Dignity** - When we take over the daily personal care, relationships within families are Restored. We offer hands-on, nurturing care to relieve pain, stress, anxiety and isolation. We believe that every moment matters and strive to provide comfort and support to both patient and family. \$100 a month helps to pay for the caregivers who provide support services.

**Compassion** - We address the social needs of a patient who is facing end of life, by providing a welcoming environment for their loved ones. Our staff is compassionate to the entire family and helps ease the emotional burdens faced by patients and their families by sharing meals, community resources, and lending a listening ear. \$50 a month helps defray the costs of meals and PPE.

**Peace** - Each patient has a private, quiet room. We embrace death and dying as a natural process. We are, with the help of our community volunteer power, a place of emotional, spiritual, and social support of the patient and their loved ones. \$20 a month helps us to manage volunteer programs for Music Therapy, chaplain support, Service Animal visits, Seasonal celebrations, Memorial services... and much more.

### Give Online

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

### 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

*Thank you!*

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 generous contributors whose generosity and continued support truly makes a difference for those in our care.

the Valley Baptist  
LEGACY FOUNDATION™

CommunityCare.Today  
KNAPP COMMUNITY CARE FOUNDATION  
Caring Today for a Healthier Tomorrow

ADL  
SERVICES, INC.

United Way  
United Way of South Texas  
Serving Hidalgo & Starr Counties

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**Melanie Riley**  
Vice President

**Stephen Charlton**  
Treasurer

**Rhonda Garza**  
Treasurer

**Yoli Salinas**  
**Mitty Reyna**

**Dr. Rafael Rodriguez**

**Rosemary C. de Leon**

**Lincoln Talbert**

**Kevin Bloomquist**

**Oralia Taffolla**

**Annette Rios- Barrera**

**Marisela Gonzalez**  
Executive Director

**Diana Gonzalez**  
Administrative Assistant/  
Volunteer Coordinator

**Becky Contreras**  
House and Grounds Supervisor

**Araceli Cantu**  
Caregiver Supervisor

**Alma Garza**  
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**Celina Gonzalez**  
**Amparo Willingham**  
**Jasmine Guerra**  
**Jackie Moreno**  
Caregivers

## OUR MISSION

Aurora House recognizes dying as part of the normal process of living and focuses on respect and compassion in preparation for death. Our mission is to provide care for persons in the last phase of incurable disease, so they can approach death with dignity, comfort and peace.