

Aurora House News

The light of a new day...



**Spring 2022
Newsletter Volume 15 Issue 1**

Patient and families served: 1,216

Age Range: 6 wks - 103yrs

Average Length of Stay: 35 days

Students #: 6,920

Welcome Back

The COVID-19 pandemic fundamentally changed the way people live, forcing everyone to adjust to a "new normal" of social distancing and staying at home as much as possible. The virus disrupted so many of our programs and events.

This past fall Aurora House once again opened our doors and began receiving South Texas College students for in-person sessions. "We are so excited to have students back at Aurora House. We enjoy their hands-on interaction with our patients and learning about everything that goes into caring for them. It's not something you can learn remotely," stated Becky Contreras, Aurora House staff member, who provides a session on care-giving for terminally ill patients.

STC students, weren't the only ones who resumed educational opportunities at Aurora House. Our University of Texas Rio Grande Valley Intern, Librado Skyler Vega, was able to learn real world skills and see first-hand how our caregivers provide comfort and support to our residents, families, and hospices.

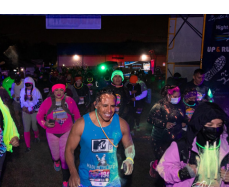
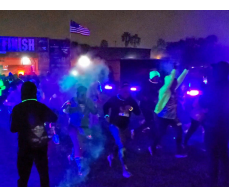
As COVID-19 rates began to fall, Aurora House was excited to be able to host our annual events one again.

Our return to in-person was a good reminder that connecting face-to-face is an unparalleled experience. We've forgotten the power of spontaneous hallway conversations, the sound of chatter, the enjoyment of a meal together as a group, eye contact, body language, and audience reactions like applause and laughter. We received a lot of feedback following our events about how "refreshing," "energizing," "joyful," and great it was to be in-person again.

Our "All is Bright" event held at the Valley Nature Center this past December brought our wonderful community together, and helped Aurora House raise over \$40,000.00 to help us continue 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.

But we didn't stop there - with help from Knapp Community Care Foundation, Boys and Girls Club of Weslaco, RGV Theme Runs, and all of our amazing sponsors we were able to host our 1st Annual Health and Wellness Fair this past February along with our Annual 80's Retro Glow 5k Run Vol. 6.

Aurora House is so grateful to have our community support and we look forward to 2022!



Finding Comfort in a Time of Loss

There's no right or wrong way to grieve. Grief doesn't magically end at a certain point after a loved one's death. But by understanding the stages and types of grief, you can find healthier ways to cope.

The thing about loss is that even when we're expecting it, it still hurts more than what we could have imagined. We could be waiting for someone to pass or get an unexpected call on the loss of someone important to us. The hurt that we feel at that moment is devastating. And it will continue to be for the rest of our lives. No one can take that pain away. And that is okay. It is okay to feel your emotions to their fullest capacity. It is okay to cry your eyes out of grief one minute and then cry tears of laughter at memories and reminisce the next. It's going to happen. And when it does, accept it. We can't bring them back but their memory will live on with us till our last moment. Coping with the loss of someone you love is one of life's biggest challenges. But it's important to know that there are healthy ways to cope with the anguish and come to terms with the grief.



Grieving is unique to every individual experiencing it. There's no set guidebook to follow but here are a few tips that we hope will help along the way.

Tips for dealing with grief:

- Reach out. Confide in someone who can help you move through the grief at your own set pace.
- Be gentle with yourself and know your limits. Don't push yourself to be social. If you can't, you can't. And that's okay.
- Embrace all your emotions and express them. By doing art, exercising, meditating, etc. Any way that may ease or distract you from the pain, if even for a second.
- Focus on things within your control. Set a schedule or start a planner. Fill it up with things you've been putting off or things you want to do.
- Take care of your inner needs. You are the only one fully aware of the expanse of your pain. Take the time to clear your mind and focus on healing.

The Stages of Grief

The Kübler-Ross model of grief (the five stages of grief) describes five primary responses to loss. These stages are denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Someone who is grieving may go through these stages in any order, and they may return to previous stages.

Denial: "This can't be happening."

Individuals may refuse to accept the fact that a loss has occurred. They may minimize or outright deny the situation. It is suggested that loved ones and professionals be forward and honest about losses to not prolong the denial stage.

Anger: "Why is this happening to me?"

When an individual realizes that a loss has occurred, they may become angry at themselves or others. They may argue that the situation is unfair and try to place blame.

Bargaining: "I will do anything to change this."

In bargaining, the individual may try to change or delay their loss. For example, they may try to convince a partner to return after a breakup, or search for unlikely cures in the case of a terminal illness.

Depression: "What's the point of going on after this loss?"

At the stage of depression the individual has come to recognize that a loss has occurred or will occur. The individual may isolate themselves and spend time crying and grieving. Depression is a precursor to acceptance because the individual has come to recognize their loss.

Acceptance: "It's going to be okay."

Finally, the individual will come to accept their loss. They understand the situation logically, and they have come to terms emotionally with the situation.

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- Choose good company. Yes, we all love our family but some just stress you out more than anything. Surround yourself with people who you're comfortable with and will ease your pain.
- Get extra rest. Crying and going through your emotions is exhausting as it drains all your energy. Make sure to get enough sleep, and drink enough water.
- Talk to your doctor. As someone said "Grief isn't a disease. but it can become one". It's okay to reach out for professional help when you feel hopeless or helpless.

July 27, 2018 / Mental Health / Grief: What's Normal, What's Not – and 13 Tips to Get Through It
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By Librado Skyler Vega - UTRGV Intern 2022

Aurora House News

Donations

Donations

October 2021 - February 2022

ADL Services
Albert & Susann Long
Alejandro L. Estrada
Alexis De Sela
Amador & Cristina Leal
Americo De La Paz III
Andres Noriega
Andrew Hernandez
Annette Rios-Barrera
Anthony (Ryan) Vaughan
Armandina Garza
Atanacio Jr. Hinojosa
B. W. & Ingelise Jones
Betty Lou Vitek
Blue Wave Express Car Wash
Bruno Gonzalez
Carl & Linda Meiners
Carmen Reyna
Cassie Luna
Catholic Daughters of the Americas
Christopher & Minerva St. John
Community Foundation Lyster Family Foundation Fund
Concord Hospice Care
Craig Wiegand
CRD Operating, LLC
David W Steiner
Davis Real Estate, RGV, L.L.C.
Davita Mercedes Dialysis
DeVita Weslaco Renal Center
Dimas or Consuelo Martinez
Doctors Hospital at Renaissance
Don McDaniel
Donna Medical Clinic
Elizabeth & Subram Gopal Krishnan, MD
Elizabeth Eckles
Eugene Hufford
Eugene R. Vaughan
Exemplars Beta Sigma Phi
Fanny & Buddy Ross
Francis M. & Amy Grohs Stroschein
Frost Bank
Galvan Insurance Agency, Inc.
Gerald Gieseke
Gloria Fitch
Guadalupe Palomo
Herbert & Tommie Sue Hicks
Hollon Oil Company c/o Steve Wilson
Isabela Gonzalez
Ismael Saldana
J & E MC Connell
J.D Key
Jacqueline Galloway
James & Katherine Whitney
James & Sondra Plowman
James Fuller
Janice L. Earl
Janie Alaniz

Jay & Verna Carter
Jean M. Wilken
Jeanne Wiegand, MD
Joella & Terry Barbee
John & Doris Jacobson
John Knox Village of the Rio Grande Valley, Inc.
Jones, Galligan, Key & Lozano, L.L.P.
Judy Kutugata
Karen Smith
Kevin Bloomquist
Kindred Hospice (Curo)
Kirk Bloomquist
Knapp Community Care Foundation
Knapp Medical Center
Kristopher M. Garcia
Krystal Garcia
Legacy Home Health Agency, Inc
Leslye Solis
Liselotte Pinkerton
Literary Review Club
Liz Free
Lizette Medina
Llano Grande Lake Park Church
Louis Tyler
Love of Christ Lutheran Church
Lynncare Hospice Services
Lynnett & Marvin Hedlund
Magda Escandon
Magic Valley Electric Coop
Marcella Shoemaker
Margaret Barnes
Margaret Sterk
Margarita Perez
Margo Dittburner Sunderland
Maria Calderon
Mariver Bacalso-Munoz
Mark McCaleb
Mark Williams
McAfee Insurance Agency
McCaleb Funeral Home
Melanie Riley
Mercedes Lions Club
Mid River Christian Centre, Inc
Mitty Reyna
Mr. & Mrs. Art Beckwith
Mr. & Mrs. John & Melissa Lackey
Mr. & Mrs. Rhonda & Robert Garza
Ms Melanie B. Young
Mutiat Adeoye
Nancy La Duke
National Financial Services LLC
Nicolas Juarez
Norma L. Govea
Norma Martinez
Norman L. Wessel
Oralia Tafolla
P.A.C.E. Health Care, Inc.

P.E.O. Chapter BW Texas
Patricia & Alan E. Bortnem
Patricia Alexander
Patricia Leon
Patricia Long
Pedro J. Penalo MD PA
Pete & Jo Peters
Priscilla Rawson
R.G.V. Adult & Internal Medicine Specialists
Rafael Cabaza III
Verda Nelson
Rafael Rodriguez
Rainbow Pediatric Clinic
Rainbow Sprinkles Systems
Ramon Montalvo
Raymond Todd
Renate Chamberlain
Rene Aguirre
RGV ACO Health Providers, LLC
Rio Grande Valley Educational Secretary Assoc.
Rios of Mercedes
RJ Garza Investments, LLC DBA RJ Garza & Company
Robert & Billie Vanderveer
Robert & Joanne Degener
Robert & Lynn Gallipeau
Robert & Mary Ester Losoya
Ruby Torres
Sally Ross
San Martin De Porres Church
Seven Cities Foundation
Sheryl L. Henry
Shirley Knutson-Nelson
Siesta Retirement Village
SJ Hospice Services LLC.
Smith Security & Fire
Southern Comfort Park
Stephen R & Dawn M Jones
Tamez Financial Group, LLC
Texas Regional Bank
The Raul Tijerina, Jr. Foundation
Theta Delta Ms. Joan J. Ploeg, Beta Sigma PHI PL2494
Trails End RV Park
United Hospice Care Services, LLC
Valerie Reyna Farmers Insurance
Valley Women's Specialists, P. A.
Verda Nelson
Weslaco Economic Development Corporation
Weslaco Fire Fighters Association Local 3207
William E. & Betty Locke
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

ADL Services
Adrian Farias
Alma Garza
Araceli Cantu
Ashlie 2nd Annual Blanket Drive
Becky Contreras
Becky Vela
Bit of Heaven (Julie)
Celina Valdez
Christina Perez,
Christina Saenz
City Church RGV
Country Sunshine RV Park
Daisy Lopez
Donna Lions Club # 1297 District 2-A3
Donna Rothman
Dora Jeudy RN
Dr. Vorce
Elaine Wilczynski
Elsa Civic & Study Club
Erma Smith
Eunice Chihuahua
Funeraria del Angel - Highland Funeral Home
Gail Scheinder
Gayle Mead
Girls Scouts Troop 2014
Graciela Alvarez
H.E.B.
Ignacio Andrade
Jaime Alvarez
James Fuller
Jennifer Rodriguez
Jesus Calderon
John Knox Village of the Rio Grande Valley, Inc.
Juanita Espinoza
Judy Kluver
Kathy Damalas
Kendall Hill
Knights of Columbus Council 3098
La Mision Palliative Care & Hospice
Leni Galvan
Love of Christ Lutheran Church
Lynncare Hospice Services
Magic Valley Retired School Personal Association
Manny Portillo
Mark McCaleb
Mary Contreras
Mercedes Lions Club
Miguel Vega
Miranda Alegria
Mr. & Mrs. Ronald D & Carmen Hicks
Only Love Hospice
Renata Vela
RGV ACO Health Providers, LLC
Ron & Carmen Hernandez
Ruth Mac Dowell

San Martin De Porres Church
Siesta Retirement Village
Silvia Moreno
South Texas College Students
South Texas Credit Union
South Texas I. S. D.
Southern Comfort Park
STC Social Club
Steven Hulet
Superior Health Plan
Texas Regional Bank
Valley Nature Center
Velas Family, Gonzalez, Cavazos, Davilas,
Weslaco High School NHS
Weslaco Lions Club
Yale Kastler
Yolanda Soria R.
Yvette Vasquez

October 2021 - February 2022

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

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

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

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

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

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

Contact Aymara Ortez at (956) 973-9690 or email aymara@aurorahouse.org

Thank you!

Aurora House News

Memorials & Honorariums

In Loving Memory



Alice Euderlin
James & Sandra Plowman

Andrea Taormina Pool
James and Linda Williams

Aurora E. Perez
Melida Gonzalez

Ben & Rose Soto
Elizabeth De La Rosa

Bill Summers
Bill and Sally Roach

Bobby Lackey
Martin C. & Beth Masso

Carmelita Palacios
Judy Clemans

Cornelia Masso
Martin C. & Beth Masso

Daniel "Danny" E. Arnold
Benton Beckwith
Bill Swinnea
Brad Swinnea
Brandon Gatton
David Cortez
Diane Wittenbach
Emmett L. Bills
Ervin Cockrell
Fanny & Buddy Ross
Hector Garza
Jay Humphreys
Kathleen Harwell
Mark McCaleb
Michael Zink
Mr. & Mrs. Rhonda & Robert Garza
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Reed
Paul & Connie McDaniel
Raul Cabaza
Rio Grande Valley Sugar Growers, Inc.
Sandra Charlton
Texas Regional Bank
Tom J. Weigel
William Hollis

Dario Arriaga
Adela Martinez
Fina Arriaga
Linden Burgess
Ms Melanie B. Young
Sara Rodriguez
Vivian Davis

Derrick Heilman
Bill and Sally Roach

Emigdic Choc Xo
Mary Contreras

Ethel Claire Stewart
Seven Cities Foundation

Felipe Garcia
Mr. Faustino Villanueva Jr.

Fernando Leal
Monterry Cafe

Francisco Manzano, Sr.
Frank Manzano Jr.

Frank & Laura Shopbell
Helen Lavin

Gene Henry
Sheryl L. Henry

Helen M. Cavazos
Jacquelyne Moreno

Hosea O. Toms
Noma Toms

Humberto Saenz
Elizabeth & Subram Gopal
Krishnan, MD

Ignacio Melendez
Esther Garza

Jack Dyer
Geraldine Shields
Mary Brundige

Jack Hubert Holcomb
Mr. & Mrs. Art Beckwith

James A. Palumbo
Zina Terry Palumbo

Jane Ryan
Tina R. Hansen

Janis Ramsey
George Ramsey
Dr. & Mrs. Raymond Mensing

Judith Compton
C.J. Compton

Lloyd D. May
Deborah May

Lloyd Hoffmaster
Ervin & Lois VonSprecken

Maria Gomez
Becky Gonzalez

Marvin Heilman
Bill and Sally Roach

Mildred Alewine
Lukas & Kristi Alewine

Nancy Butz
Anna Smith

Nell S. Hester
Anne Flowers

Nena Gomez
Josephina Washkowiak

Patricio Briones
Rachel Briones
David Briones

Peter Mouradian
James & Sandra Plowman
Ervin & Lois VonSprecken

Polly Lovell
George Ramsey

Pragedis Samudio
Felix & Maria S. Hernandez

Robert Garza
Atanacio Jr. Hinojosa

Robert James "Bob" Rektorik
Jennifer Rektorik

Robert Scott
Robert David Scott

Sally Roth
Lois Tryggestad

Susana Cortez
Jessica Merrild
Thomas & Rebecca Hallin
Victor Cortez
Ted Wipf

Ted Wipf
Lois Tryggestad

Utha Dickerson
Yale Kastler

Vangie Martinez
Javier Martinez

Virgil Asbury
Lane & Beverly Gilday

In Kind

Emigdic Choc Xo
Mary Contreras
Luz Hernandez

Hosea Toms
Ona Gray

John Wilczynski
Elaine Wilczynski

Marco Hernandez
Steven Hulet

Mildred Alewine
Carol (Friend)

Nicolas Mendoza
Maria Hernandez

Susana Cortez
Victor Cortez



In Honor of

Becky Guerrero
Johnny Broshears

Christmas gifts to your Children
Fanny & Buddy Ross

Emigdio Chocxo
Carmen Reyna

October 2021 - February 2022

Flo & Jerry Lasater
Randall Summers

Jo Davis
Randall Summers

Mari & Kevin Bloomquist
Randall Summers

Maria Hernandez
Navia Hernandez

Richard Vaughan
Eugene Vaughan

William Capt
Gretchen Capt

In Kind

Emigdic Choc Xo
Anonymous

Eugene Smith
Erma Smith
Gail Scheidter

Mildred Elewine
Joyce Ellis

Paula Morgan
Tiffany Kott

Victor Rodriguez
Esmeralda Garcia

William Capt
Gretchen Capt

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 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

Let's Sail Away

ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS DAY 2022



Lunch and Style Shows
April 27th & 28th
11:30am-1:30pm
Knapp Conference Center
Weslaco, Texas

It has been two years since most of us have been able to celebrate together on the actual observance day without restrictions. What are your plans to honor your special staff? Restaurants will be booked, and lines will be long.

No worries, we have already set the course for you. Welcome Aboard! Escape to a freer time and treat your administrative professionals to this year's "Let's Sail Away", as we celebrate travel, adventure, and freedom on two memorable afternoons.

Both events include a unique luncheon, spring style show, silent auction, and fabulous door prizes. Join your crew if you like, and let's sail away together!

It is through the continuing generosity of our community and sponsors like you that we can keep outdoors open to those who need us at their most difficult time.

For more information on tickets or sponsorships, please call (956) 973-9690 or email Mari@AuroraHouse.org.

Aurora House Foundation Board of Directors

Mark McCaleb
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Melanie Riley
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Stephen Charlton
Treasurer

Rhonda Garza
Secretary

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Member at Large

Mitty Reyna
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Annette Rios- Barrera
Laura Lopez
Patricia E. Barrera

Your commitment through monthly or quarterly giving is vital to Aurora House's ability to continue to serve our community and ensures that our residents spend their last days surrounded by compassion, dignity, comfort, and peace.

Thank you

TO ALL OUR COMPASSIONATE GEMS



Marisela Gonzalez
Executive Director

Aymara Ortiz
Administrative
Coordinator

Becky Contreras
House and Grounds Supervisor

Araceli Cantu
Caregiver Supervisor

Alma Garza
Jessica Aguiniga
Celina Gonzalez
Miranda Alegria
Christina Perez
Chris Martinez
Cynthia Vasquez
Hilda Gonzalez
Juanita Espinoza
Melissa Calderon
Caregivers

Giving Made Easy

An Easy Way to Give Your Support

You can schedule monthly or quarterly gifts through ACH (Automated Clearing House) debits.

ACH debit allows you to make your donation electronically. It is a more efficient, cost-effective program for both you and Aurora House.

For more information, please contact
Marisela Gonzalez
956-973-9690 or
aurorahousefoundation@yahoo.com

OUR FUNDERS

Thank you!

the Valley Baptist
LEGACY FOUNDATION™



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.

