



Aurora House News

Volume 8 Issue 2

Winter 2014

Of Special Note

Since Inception June 21, 2007

- # of Patients and their Families Served: 465
- Age Range: 17—97
- Avg. Length of Stay: 35 Days
- # of Cities served: 14

Jan 2014 — August 2014

- # of Volunteers: 31
- # of Volunteer Groups: 3
- # of Volunteer Hours: 725

Since 2010

- 640 Nursing Students have received training in palliative care at Aurora House

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Tree of Lights

Honoring Our Patients

A very special tree will be decorated and lit in front of Aurora House throughout the month of December to honor all patients who have been at Aurora House.

On Thursday, Dec. 4, at 5 pm, we will hold our Annual Memorial Service to honor the memory of the patients served during this past year and to light this special Tree.

This annual service is an opportunity for families to celebrate the lives of their loved ones.

A ceremony will honor each patient; holiday music will be sung; and the Tree will be lighted. Light refreshments will also be served.



Aurora House Receives Donation



Cima Hospice recently held a Celebration of Life fundraiser to benefit Aurora House and Comfort House, the other non-profit hospice home in McAllen.

Representatives from Cima presented Kathy Scheurman with a check for \$1,625.00.

Memorials January 2014—August 2014

***In Memory of
Joe Barbee***

Loretta Barbee
Arthur & Nan Beckwith
Benton & Melissa Beckwith
Mrs. Ballard Bennett
Frank N. Boggus
Alan C. Bonsen
Doug & Mary Ann Brundige
Bugambilias
Tom & Lynn Carter
Davis Equity Realty
Kathy Deberjeois
Ted & Jo Ann Dockery
Jack & Thelma Dyer
Mr. & Mrs. Ray Dyer
Ann L. Edwards
John & Patty Ellis
Robert & Joyce Flaks
Frost Bank
Enrique & Leticia Garza
Noe & Esperanza Garza
Rhonda & Robert Garza
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William & Sally Roach
Buddy & Fanny Ross
Mr. & Mrs. Ronnie Round
Sandler Siegel PLLC Lewis H. Sandler
Andy & Pam Scott

Kathy Scheuerman
Mr. & Mrs. Kirk F. Schwarz
Jo Summers
Randy & Alma Summers
Bennie & Charles Thompson
Walter & Sherry Thompson
Reymond & Leticia Todd
Isabella J. Waldschmidt
J.D. White
Linda M. Williams
Jim Bob & Vickie Wilt

***In Memory of
Mariette Bryhan***
Mr. & Mrs. Bill Swinnea

***In Memory of
Ron Christensen***
James & Sondra Plowman

***In Memory of
Maria Contreras***
Bernabe Contreras
Pete Pedraza

***In Memory of
Josefina Covacevich***
Anthony & Leticia Covacevich

***In Memory of
Mary Deuel***
C. Vosecky
Max & Jeanne V. White

***In Memory of
Arthur C. Doyle***
Mary Anne Doyle

***In Memory of
J.E. & Ruth Galloway***
Mr. & Mrs. Neal G. Galloway

***In Memory of
San Juana Garza***
Fred & Marina Cavazos

***In Memory of
Ignacio Guerra***
Mr. & Mrs. A. Hinojosa Jr.

***In Memory of
Connie Hough***
James George Hough

***In Memory of
Max Jentsch***
Mrs. Max Jentsch

***In Memory of
Roy Keath***
Mae G. Keath

***In Memory of
Donald H. Krutwig***
Janet M. Krutwig

***In Memory of
Juanita Leal***
Bill & Sharon Swinnea

***In Memory of
Thelma Legowsky***
Dr. & Mrs. Allen Duncel

***In Memory of
Ted Long***
Patricia Long

***In Memory of
Margery Marshall***
Verda M. Nelson

***In Memory of
Rafael Martinez***
Olivia Martinez

***In Memory of
Lucy Mutz***
Alfred & Velma Dirks

***In Memory of
Efrain Olivia***
Richard Lehman

***In Memory of
Molly Polvado***
Alfred & Velma Dirks
Charles & Eva Plank

***In Memory of
Lorene Raleigh***
David & Martha Raleigh
Mike and Delia Raleigh

***In Memory of
Howard Roman***
Della Cross Roman

***In Memory of
Fernando Saenz***
Janice Casciato
Saenz Family

***In Memory of
Jose A. Saenz***
Anna L. Saenz



2014 Aurora House Expansion Campaign

“Any decent society cares for its most vulnerable members, including children and the elderly.” Marcia Angell MD.

Growing Dilemma

In 2013 Aurora House turned away nearly 100 terminally ill patients due to lack of beds and staff to take care of them. In the first half of 2014, Aurora House has turned away 67 patients for the same reason.

It has become increasingly obvious there is a great need for more rooms at Aurora House.

And then something wonderful happened....

An anonymous benefactor made a major donation for an education center with the stipulation that four additional patient rooms be added to Aurora House.

This generous gift, along with others, allowed the Aurora House to complete the first phase toward expanding its mission, and filling a desperate need!

Construction on four additional patient rooms, which doubles the Aurora House capacity, and a separate education building began in the Spring of 2014. As construction nears completion, funding for the next phase of the project is needed.

This Is Important

As a private not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization, **Aurora House does not receive any form of government funding and relies fully on community donations to provide care for its patients.**

Aurora House is not affiliated or related to any hospital or religious organization. The hospice home is currently licensed through the Texas Department of Health in Austin.

Funding Needed for New Patient Care Wing

“Aurora House must now furnish and staff the four new beds for a year, pay the remainder of the construction costs, and remodel the existing 4 rooms which have been in use since 2007,” explained Raul Cabaza, Managing Vice President at Shepard, Walton King Insurance Group, and chair of the committee of volunteers who have agreed to assist the AH Board with this funding effort.

Assisting Mr. Cabaza in this one-time holiday campaign are: Loretta Barbee, Weslaco; Charles Bell, Donna; Trainor Evans, Progreso; Rhonda Garza and Debby Rektorik, Weslaco.

“It takes a community to sustain Aurora House,” continued Cabaza, “We are committed to raising \$250,000 to accomplish all these important goals.”



Don't wait to be asked. Gifts in the amount of \$1000, \$2500, \$5000, \$10000 and \$25000 are being sought to complete this goal. *Every* gift is needed and gratefully appreciated.

Important tax implications make a campaign donation the perfect end of year gift. It is also a wonderful way to honor those who “have everything”. Or, a pledge to Aurora House is a special way to remember a loved one and assure that future patients receive the kind of dignified end of life care we all wish for our loved ones.



Aurora House History

The idea for Aurora House began as a dream of Dr. Rafael Rodriguez, Founding Director. “When I was Medical Director of a local Hospice, I visited a lot of patients and their families in their homes. Sometimes I saw patients in the process of dying who were living in extreme poverty. They had not been bathed, they were lying in dirty sheets, and they hadn't eaten in days, because they didn't have the resources or families who could take care of them. We were taking those patients to McAllen, to the Comfort House, but at the same time, we were separating the patients from their families and friends” said Dr. Rodriguez. “We needed a place in the Mid-Valley area where families could visit so patients wouldn't feel abandoned.”

Through a grassroots effort, volunteers were able to purchase and remodel a home for 4 patients in south Weslaco. The first patient was admitted in June of 2007.

Mission Statement

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

Expansion (cont.)

Purpose of Aurora House

Aurora House is a licensed Special Care Facility which provides a residence with a compassionate end of life focus, and the patient never receives a bill for this care. This special house offers love and compassion through trained community volunteers and a staff of nursing assistants. This care is provided in a home-like atmosphere, with clean, comfortable, private rooms.



Aurora House is available to residents who have been diagnosed as terminal and have a life expectancy of less than three months. In collaboration with Hospice programs throughout the Rio Grande Valley, Aurora House provides shelter and personal care while the Hospice team provides medical care. Aurora House provides both the patient and family with companionship, homemaker services, personal care training and compassionate support. Each patient must be enrolled in a Hospice Program of their choice.



The medical care (which includes management of the symptoms, pain, medical equipment, medications, IV's or Injections, wound care), is supplied by the Hospice program through an interdisciplinary team of Physicians, Nurses, Chaplains, and Social Workers.

Aurora House follows Hospice protocol where the goal is not to cure, but to alleviate and lessen the severity and pain of illness and embraces the end-of-life philosophy which targets the four different areas of pain: Emotional, Social, Spiritual, and Physical.

Meeting Community Needs

Nurses train to save lives, and they can be unprepared to meet the emotional, spiritual, and medical needs of terminally ill patients and their families. So Aurora House partnered with South Texas College in 2010 to provide fourth level nursing students with an opportunity to learn about end of life care, more specifically palliative and hospice care.

Since that time, 640 students have learned how to identify and report poor management of physical pain; familiarize them-



selves with the most common narcotics; and understand the importance of the interdisciplinary approach in caring for these patients. Students see first-hand the role of the chaplains, social workers, and physicians as they manage the care of Aurora House patients.

Other requests have been received from Valley schools for rotation and curriculum opportunities and continuing education seminars for more than 60 participants have been held away from the Aurora House. The need was great for a dedicated, on-site classroom facility in which to hold, enhance, and expand these courses. Funding for the education center classrooms and furnishings are being sought primarily through grant applications and will be separate from the patient care expansion needs.

Dear Angels at the Aurora House

My father spent his last few months here on earth at your wonderful home.

When I came to visit I learned and saw why he was so happy here. It brought me great comfort to know he was being taken care of so lovingly in his last days.

~A Grateful Family Member

Please contact Kathy Scheuerman, (956)973-9690, for further information about how you, too, can be a part of this exciting endeavor. Help us complete the expansion project and grow the Aurora House mission of providing dignified end of life care.

Memorials (cont.), Honorariums & Donations

January 2014 - August 2014

In Memory of
Dorothy Sanders
Orin & Hazel Anderson

In Memory of
Myron Schriever
Verna E. Vaudrin

In Memory of
Colonel James K. Sluis
Janet Porter

In Memory of
William "Billy" Small
South Texas UAW Retiree's

In Memory of
Harlan Stuffle
Shirley Giese

In Memory of
Carol W. Tinker
George E. Tinker III

In Memory of
Laurenza Trevino
Emilia Barnes
Raquel Rincon
Juan Treviño

In Memory of
Georgia Wahl
Loretta Barbee
"The Bridge Club"
Marguerite J. Wiegand

In Memory of
Jimmy Wayne Fulcher
Monse & Norma Montalvo

In Memory of
Bill Woodman
Alfred & Velma Dirks

In Memory of
Lora Lee Yokum
William Elder
Howard & Linda Happ
George & Cordella Heroux
Karen McCoy Hunger
Mabel N. Parshall
Anita & Jim Perchaluk
Jim & Janet Rudd

PAVERS

In Memory of
Juan G. Garza
Garza's Family

In Memory of
Molly Polvado
Jo Summers

In Memory of
Consuelo Saenz
Eloy Saenz

In Memory of
Eusevio P. Saenz
Eloy Saenz

HONORARIUM

In Honor of
Lorene Raleigh
David & Martha Raleigh
Mike and Delia Raleigh

In Honor of
Dona Theys
Nadia Theys

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Aurora Saenz
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Shady Acres Residents Association
Siesta Village Worship Hour
Maricela Silva
Snow to Sun Community
(Christmas in July)
Southern Comfort Resort Park
Danny Lee Spencer
The Literary Review Club
Trails End Church
Mildred R. Twenhafel
Robert & Evenly Waters
Weslaco Elks Auxiliary

AURORA HOUSE FOUNDATION

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 P.O. Box 976
 Weslaco, TX 78599

(956) 973-9690
 (956) 973-9705 fax
 AuroraHouseFoundation@yahoo.com

Please! Call us with your email address
 and we will email your newsletter — It will be in
 color and will save Aurora House po\$tage!!!



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**Aurora House Foundation
 2014 Board of Directors**

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Trainor Evans, Treasurer	Melanie Riley
Melissa Beckwith, Secretary	Rhonda Garza
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Delia Weaver	Lynn Carter
E. Richard Vaughan, Jr.	

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Caregivers:Araceli Cantu, Alma Garza, Diana Gonzales
 Linda Garza, Martina Juarez, Savannah Lara, Becky Contreras
Newsletter.....Lynn Carter

News and Notes

Thank you to the generous sponsors for the Aurora House Administrative Professionals' Day Luncheon.

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