



AURORA HOUSE NEWS

Volume 3, Issue 1

Winter 2009

Of Special Note

Since Inception

- # of Patients and their Families Served: 90
 - Age Range: 17—97
 - Avg. Length of Stay: 27 Days
 - # of Cities served: 11
- November—February
- # of Volunteers: 36
 - # of Volunteer Groups: 3
 - # of Volunteer Hours: 439

Inside this issue:

<i>Super Superbowl Party</i>	2
<i>Our Marion</i>	2
<i>Landscaping Plans</i>	2
<i>The Beautiful Rosemarie</i>	3
<i>Sgt. Rios Boot Camp</i>	3
<i>Donors, Memorials and Volunteers</i>	Insert
<i>In Kind Donors</i>	4

Administrative Employees' Day Coming up April 22

The Aurora House Foundation will hold its third annual Administrative Employees' Day Luncheon and Style Show, April 22, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., at the Knapp Medical Center Conference Center in Weslaco.

The event will feature a seated luncheon, a style show, a silent auction, door prizes and fresh roses for a small, additional cost. All money raised will benefit patient care at the Aurora House.

The Weslaco's Literary Review Club has taken the event on as its annual project. According to president Flo Caldwell, the organization will provide the manpower for the event and assist on several committees.

Chairpersons for the luncheon include Lana Marie Paris, event chair; Carla McCaleb and Lupita Martinez, sponsorships; Norma Montalvo, food; Patty Dittburner, style show; Melanie Riley, publicity; and Margaret McAllen, tickets.

Sponsorships and tickets to the Administrative Employees' Day Luncheon and Style Show are still available. Table sponsorships are \$1,000, with a half-table sponsorship at \$500. Individual tickets are \$50 per



Literary Review Club

person. We're happy to sell tickets to anyone who wishes to attend — perhaps you'd like to treat yourself and a friend to this fun event.

Anyone interested should call Lana Marie Paris at (956) 496-5016 or the Aurora House at (956) 973-9690.

Aurora House Benefits the Community

Aurora means "dawn" in Spanish—it is the light of a new day. Aurora House is the light for those who are approaching the end of life. The light which offers dignity, compassion and respect.

Aurora House opened on June 21, 2007. Care is

provided by community volunteers and a staff of well trained nursing assistants. A resource to families of the dying, Aurora House is a not-for-profit, 501(c)3 organization. It is not affiliated with, or related to, any hospital, hospice care service, or religious organi-

zation and does not receive money from Medicare, Medicaid, private insurance or other governmental resources. Instead, it relies on the goodwill of its residents and their families, the community and charitable organizations for support.

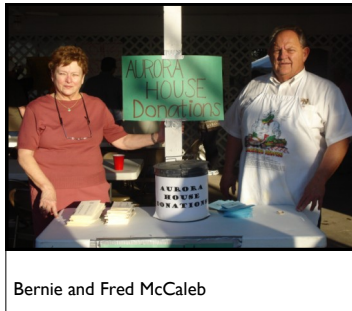
Local Couple Hosts a Super Superbowl Party

Donations Benefit Aurora House

Bernie McCaleb (Aurora House Board Member) and owner of Jenks Flowers, along with her husband, Fred McCaleb (McCaleb Funeral Home) and family hosted a Superbowl party at their home and selected Aurora House as their charity of choice. The Pittsburgh Steelers may have won the game, but Aurora House was the biggest winner with over \$4,000 in donations from partygoers.

Many gave cash donations so we unfortunately have no way to thank them. Donors we know include:

Noble and Sharon Allen, Alejandro and Walkira Avila, George and Linda Barr, Dr. and Mrs. Francis Bhagat, Mr. and Mrs. Lupe



Bernie and Fred McCaleb

Camargo, Tom and Lynn Carter, Armida Cepeda, Mr. and Mrs. Roger Child, Anthony Covacevich Consultants, Crooked Creek RV Park, Mr. and Mrs. Ted Ellis, Elvira Montalvo, Farris Cleaners, Mr. and Mrs. Rocco Fasano, Mr. and Mrs. Tony Fasano, Jose and Maria Fuentes, Fuller Farms, Mr. and Mrs. Neal Galloway, Soyla R. Gonzalez, Mr. and Mrs. A.L. Green, Randy and Sandy L. Greer, Johnny & Linda Guinn, John and Allie Haden, Mr. and Mrs. A. Hinojosa Jr., Mr. and Mrs. Herman A. Henry, Mr. and Mrs. Glen Housley, Mr. and Mrs. E.L. Hyde, J. R. Produce Supply, Inc., Robert and Virginia Janik, Mr. and Mrs. Mike Jones, Mr. and Mrs. John Lackey, James H. Lauderdale,

Mari and Randy Martin, Jodie Majors, Mary Mattar, Mr. and Mrs. Robert McAllen, Mr. and Mrs. Fred McCaleb, Jr., Roy and Mrs. Roy McGregor, Dr. and Mrs. Hector Montalvo, R.R. & N. Moshier, Dr. and Mrs. Neal Namken, Billie Jo and Earl Neuhaus, Andres S. Noriega, Jr., Robert K. and Cynthia J. Ordway, Palomas de Paz Ministries, Mr. and Mrs. Robb Peterson, Pro-Script Pharmacy Services, Inc., Mr. and Mrs. Eddy Ramsay, Sally Reid, M.D. and Norma Ann Round, Jose T. Sandoval MD, Mr. and Mrs. Raul Saucedo, Nita Sauerbrei, Diane Shea, Mr. and Mrs. Randy Summers, Mr. and Mrs. James Summersett III, Mr. and Mrs. Bill Swinnea, Frances Tovar, Mr. and Mrs. Ryan Vaughan, Bob and Martha Veach, Mr. and Mrs. Craig Wiegand, Jeanne L. Wiegand MD, Joann Widle, James and Ellen Williams, Mr. and Mrs. Gary Fromlath.

Our "Marion" *Contributed by Lupita Martinez*

It was a sad day at Aurora House when we lost Marion (not her real name.) Marion resided here longer than any other resident, and it was difficult for the staff to see her go.

Marion, was in her 90's and suffered from cancer. She was placed at Aurora House on two different occasions. Therefore, we came to know her quite well.

In spite of her various health problems, Marion was talkative and cheerful. The Aurora House staff quickly became her family, for she had no blood relatives of her own.

Marion greeted each day with seeming optimism and an assertive request for her first cup of coffee. The coffee had to be steaming hot with lots of cream followed by a hearty breakfast.

Her favorite food of all, however, was macaroni and cheese. We could

not go wrong with that. It didn't matter if it was the instant kind, the slow-cooked kind, or from an inviting homemade casserole.

Marion's day usually included a trip outdoors in her wheelchair accompanied by a caregiver or a volunteer. She delighted in the blooming hibiscus, the morning birds overhead, and the lush vegetables which grew in nearby fields. Her frequent excursions around the grounds were always invigorating and therapeutic for her.

One particular morning we had a fire drill. Marion, with a volunteer pushing her wheelchair, made it outside in very good time. Fire drills are carried out as a part of our safety program and we suspect that

Marion rather enjoyed them.

"Her frequent excursions around the grounds were always invigorating and therapeutic"

It was a special day for Marion when the children from Mid-Valley Christian School came to visit. They brought holiday cards, which they made themselves, along with a stuffed kitten or two. They knew Marion loved cats. The children always sang and Marion delighted in their smiles and that wonderment in their eyes which conveyed the unconditional love that only a child can give.

When Marion came to us a second time her health condition had deteriorated significantly. In her most desperate moments she would call out for the Aurora House caregivers, especially Juan. Although she rallied briefly, she died peacefully with her AH family.

Landscaping Plans to Include Memorial Garden

The Landscaping Committee, chaired by Board Member Lana Marie Paris has been busy leveling the back lot at Aurora House, installing an irrigation system, overseeing the construction of a beautiful winding walkway and planting carpet grass. Many thanks to these contributors: Meto Garza, Rainbow Sprinklers, Brad Sweeny, JIII Concrete and Tad Dyer.

Committee members and volunteers are also working on new plans for a **MEMORIAL GARDEN**. The southwest area of the backyard has been designated as the site for this

very special feature and fundraising activity.

Landscaping planned for the next several weeks include the planting of six Italian Cypress trees and oak trees in two areas of the Memorial Garden and the planting of hedges and seasonal flowers along the south side of the backyard.

Plans will be unveiled soon for the design of the Memorial Garden. Several opportunities will be available to donate brick pavers, benches, a gazebo and water feature for the garden. For more information please contact Kathy Scheuerman, Aurora House Director at (956) 973-9690.



JIII Concrete lays the forms for the walkways which will connect the house with the Memorial Garden for family members and patients to enjoy.

The Beautiful “Rosemarie” *Contributed by Lupita Martinez*

“Rosemarie” came to Aurora House for a very special reason. She was a long-term patient from a hospital in one of the coastal counties because of her very critical condition. When a hurricane threatened the area, hospital authorities were forced to evacuate some patients. Rosemarie was referred to Aurora House. As it is our mission to provide care to those who are in most need of our very specialized services, we promptly accepted her.

Rosemarie was a beautiful young

girl, only 17 years old. Unfortunately, she did not last long with us. Nevertheless, during those few days we communicated in various different ways. Her beautiful eyes, which took in all her surroundings and affirmed our presence, made our efforts to care for her a very rewarding experience.

The evening before she died, while we were tending to her, she accepted our

offer of some ice cream. We believe that she really did enjoy this special treat.

Upon entering her room, we were immediately attracted to her most valuable earthly possession, her pink teddy bear.

It was always by her side. When she took her last breath of life, the teddy bear was there with her. She was not alone.

“Our greatest regret is that we did not get to spend more time with her, that we did not get to know her better.”

Sgt. Frank Rios Boot Camp Program

Sgt. Frank Rios from Weslaco brought a group of handsome young men to do volunteer work at Aurora House. They all filed in military style. After a brief orientation, they went to work in a whirlwind of activity.



At Ease!

They cleaned all the windows, swept and scrubbed the floors. Mowed the lawn and cleaned flower beds.

They were so polite and courteous, al-

ways saying “yes ma’m”. It was a joy for staff to visit with them as some shared their plans for the future.

Sgt. Rios is to be commended for the fine job he is doing with these young men. Their hard work was most appreciated and they are always welcome at Aurora House.

AURORA HOUSE FOUNDATION

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(956) 973-9690
(956) 973-9705 fax



*Special Care Facility for
End of Life Care*

Aurora House recognizes dying as 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.

Aurora House Foundation 2009 Board of Directors

Ruben Arcaute, Chair	Ruby Torres RN
Patti Dittburner, Vice-Chair	Norma S. Montalvo
E. Richard Vaughan Jr., Treasurer	Lana Marie Paris
Lupita Martinez, Secretary	Bernardine McCaleb
Margaret McAllen	

Honorary Board Members

Loretta Barbee	Delia Weaver
Lynn Carter	Rafael Rodriguez, MD

Operations Director	Kathy Scheuerman
Volunteer Coordinator	Virginia Espinosa
Newsletter Editor	Lynn Carter

Caregivers: Therese Corkery, Juan Salinas, Maria Calderon, Araceli Cantu, Orlanda Mendiola

In Kind Donors

Items gratefully received November 2008—February 2009

Celia Alaniz • Elmer Anderson •
Larry Blegen • Connie Beltran •
Biology Club Mid Valley STC •
Darlene Campos • Rosa Cano •
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Catholic Daughters of America •
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King Episcopal
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de los Santos •
Delta Literacy
Club • Patti
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Gregorio Garza •
Rhonda Garza • Elsa Geeland •
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bara Heater • Navia Hernandez •



Lucia Huerta • Esther Hughes •
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Love of Christ Lutheran Church •
Magic Valley Electric Coop •
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O'Day • Alma Palo-
mares • Anita Pequeno •
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Schultz • Southern Comfort Activi-
ties • Marjorie Straumann • Rita

Strickland • St. Joan of Arc Group-
ies • TX Migrant Council • Guada-
lupe Torres • Maria and Eliazar
Vela • Blanca Vera • W. A Todd
School • Carol Watts • Joann
Widle • Mid Valley Office Supply

Many thanks to those listed above who provide food on a regular basis for our residents (fresh, canned, baked goods, hot meals), paper supplies such as toilet paper, napkins, paper towels, cups etc., cleaning supplies and yard equipment.

While the number one item on the Aurora House Wish list is always monetary donations for mortgage payments on the house, operational expenses and salaries, in kind donations are sorely needed and most appreciated. Some donors have chosen to “adopt” monthly bills for AH.