



AURORA HOUSE NEWS

Volume 3, Issue II

Summer 2009

Of Special Note

Since Inception

- # of Patients and their Families Served: 115
- Age Range: 17—97
- Avg. Length of Stay: 27 Days
- # of Cities served: 11

March—June

- # of Volunteers: 85
- # of Volunteer Groups: 6

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Annual Luncheon Sells Out

The third annual Aurora House Luncheon and Style Show, held April 22, was enjoyed by 250 guests and raised \$22,000 for Aurora House.

Thanks to our sponsors:

Diamond Sponsor:
RGV Partnership

Gold Sponsors:
Knapp Medical Center, Payne Auto Group, Cain Customs Brokers, Valley Grande Manor Nursing & Rehab Center, Margaret & Robert McAllen, Magic Valley Electric Co-op, L & G Concrete and Sol Technologies.

Silver Sponsors:
Bugambilias, John Knox Village, Compass Bank, Montalvo Insurance, Jenks Flowers and Gifts, Burton Auto Supply, Ruben Cardenas- State



Diamond Sponsors. Pictured left to right: Sergio Contreras, RGV Partnership—Chairman of the Board, Kathy Scheuerman Aurora House Director, Margaret McAllen Board Member, and Bill Summers, RGV Partnership—President/CEO

Farm Insurance

Bronze Sponsor: Medina Construction

The **Weslaco Literary Review Club** worked hard to make this a great event and served on each committee.

Chairpersons included: 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.

Volunteers Continue to Play a Vital Role

Aurora House depends on volunteers for a smooth operation. Many thanks to the following volunteers who shared their time and talents March through June this year.

♥ Elva Beltran ♥ Larry Blegen ♥ Nora Delgado ♥ Adelita Esqueda ♥ Maricela Flores ♥ Celina

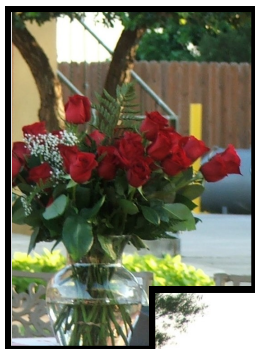
Gamboa ♥ Linda Garcia ♥ Mary Lou Garza ♥ Tony Garza ♥ Vangie Garza ♥ Maryanne Gooley ♥ Lupita Guerrero ♥ Irlanda Hernandez ♥ Kimiki Jaramillo ♥ Karen Macking ♥ Anita Martinez ♥ Orlan Martinez ♥ Hector Perez ♥ Lucia Portillo ♥ Irma M. Ramos ♥ Joann Streiff ♥ Opal Wilson ♥ Guada-

lupe Torres ♥ Transitional Program led by Sgt. George Barrera & Sgt. Lucio Turner, III ♥ First Baptist Church ♥ STC/Nursing & Health Program ♥ STC/EMT Program ♥ STC/Biology Students—Dr. Debbie Villalon

Memorial Service

Aurora House celebrated its second annual Memorial Service on June 28 at the home on West 18th Street and Milano Rd. in Weslaco. Sixty-six patients were honored and names were read by Kathy Scheuerman and Therese Corkery. A beautiful red rose was placed in a large vase as each name was spoken.

Patti Dittburner, Foundation Board President served as mistress of ceremonies. The invocation was given by Norma Montalvo, Board member. Caregiver Juan Salinas reflected on some special



stories about residents at Aurora House. And Bill Summers from the RGV Partnership spoke about the importance of Aurora House to our Mid-Valley community. He presented Aurora House with a flag from Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison.

The “Prayer of Abandonment” was read by Therese Corkery.

Special music was provided by Rose Marie Ellis and the touching ceremony closed with everyone joining her in the singing of *Amazing Grace*.



Caregiver Profile—Juan Salinas

Juan Salinas lives in Pharr, Texas. He and his wife, Mirra Salinas were married in 1999. They are the proud parents of two children....a son, Smily, who is nine years old, and a daughter, Sidney, who is eight years old.

He describes his favorite hobby as reading



books on theology, psychology, history and biographies. For relaxation Juan enjoys gardening in his yard.

Juan is very goal oriented and has several long term goals. One that he is currently striving toward is to graduate as a chaplain.

One of his most enjoyable family events is going to Reynosa, Tamaulipas, Mexico with his family and helping out in the city's nursing home. He also takes supplies which are given to him by friends. Gifts from toys to beds are transported by Juan and his family and given away. He delights not only in the joy it gives to the recipients, but also in the joy it brings to his own family to be helping those in need.

Caregiver Profile—Therese Corkery

Therese has worked at Aurora House since its beginning on June 22, 2007. She worked five years at the Comfort House in McAllen and transferred to Weslaco to help start Aurora House. Originally from Iowa, Therese has lived in South Texas for twenty years and presently lives in Alamo.

Her hobbies include reading, sewing, crocheting, knitting, embroidering, and organizing.

She enjoys doing volunteer work on her days off. She currently volun-



teers at the San Juan Nursing Home visiting and praying with the residents. She also does clerical work as a volunteer at Statewide Melendez Insurance in Pharr.

Always willing to be of service to anyone in need, she assists a ninety-five year old friend of hers who lives alone. Therese visits with her, does her grocery shopping, and takes her to doctor appointments.

Therese is celebrating fifty years

as a Sister of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Dubuque, Iowa. As a Sister, she taught high school and college and served 16 years as a missionary in Bolivia, South America. She was also the Director of a trade school there. This busy lady has also been a foster parent for eleven years in San Juan.

Therese says she *“likes to think of our work/ministry as being the hands, feet, and mouth (voice) of those who have none except our own.”*

Look for more Caregiver Profiles next newsletter.

Remembering Jose *contributed by Juan Salinas*

Jose (not his real name) arrived here with his two brothers and sister. I welcomed him but he did not seem happy to be here at Aurora House. I understand because it is difficult for them to just think of the word hospice.

The family members were pleased with our house and staff. They asked us to be patient with him because he was the "moody" member of the family. I persuaded Jose to go to the kitchen to eat with his brothers and all the staff. He did on several occasions until he became too sick and unable to get out of bed. He was not disrespectful but he did not like to smile or laugh.

Bad words would come out of his mouth in every sentence.

One day I went to check on him. He was surrounded by family, very comfortable, and watching television. I quickly noticed that he was not using his oxygen. I asked him, "Do you need your oxygen because I see that your face is turning purple." He said, "Really?." I said, "No, I was just kidding with you." He said, "Oh, you got me, you son of a gun." His brothers were laughing big time because, finally, some-

one had "got him".it was usually the other way around.

After this anecdote, his humor changed for good. Now, he was laughing more frequently with his family. He was with us for about two weeks before passing away. Over the Christmas holiday his brother returned and presented a donation to Aurora House. He was still laughing about the oxygen joke. It is nice to bring a smile to another person's face.

They asked us to be patient with him because he was the "moody" member of the family.

Memorial Garden

Losing a loved one is never easy. To comfort those of us left behind, we are creating a lovely tribute to them.

The southwest area of the backyard has been designated as the site for our lovely **Memorial Garden**. A winding walkway flanked by cypress trees, hedges and seasonal

flowers will be enjoyed for years to come by patients and their family members. There are several ways to support Aurora House by honoring or remembering a loved one



and to celebrate their life.

You may purchase commemorative pavers or garden features.

Engraved pavers 4"x8"-\$50; 8"x8"-\$100; 12" x 12"-\$150. Christ Bust \$500, Bronze Angel \$5,000.

AURORA HOUSE FOUNDATION

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*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**

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

Honorary Board Members

Rafael Rodriguez, MD - Founder	Loretta Barbee
Delia Weaver	Lynn Carter

Operations Director.....Kathy Scheuerman

Volunteer CoordinatorVirginia Espinosa

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

Newsletter Editor.....Lynn Carter

From a Grateful Family

When we were told that our mother, Ramona Vela, was terminally ill we were devastated and didn't know what to do.

In our quest to try and find a suitable place for the caring of her, the Aurora House invited us to come and see what they had to offer.

Upon arriving and meeting everyone it was evident that this establishment not only met our expectations but made it a point to go beyond just doing their job.

The Aurora House is a caring and warm place with caregivers who are committed and, more importantly, connect on a personal level. The whole-

heartedness of the Aurora House can immediately be felt and has helped us through this difficult time in our lives.

It takes special kind of people to do what these individuals do and their kindness is genuine. I don't



know what we would have done if it weren't for the Aurora House. It is

nice to know that places like this exist. A place you can trust and believe in.

A place which takes those extra steps to cross the patient/doctor relationship and treat you and your family as guests and friends.

I highly recommend this place, without hesitation, to anyone looking for an open and loving environment for their loved ones. At Aurora House everything is from the heart.

The Vela Family.