



You've been so much in my thoughts  
*And knew I had to drop you a line  
to tell you . . .*

## TO ALL THE STAFF AT: THE HOSPICE OF EAST TEXAS HOMEPLACE

Thank you seems so inadequate for the marvelous care shown to our loving family member, Charles Lee Walters, during his stay at The Hospice of East Texas HomePlace during the period of September 3, 2013 until he departed this earth on September 11, 2013.

From the moment we arrived, we were taken back in awe, as the facility was the most beautiful, serene, peaceful place that we never imagined. Entering the front door, everyone was so kind, caring, compassionate and professional. We will always be eternally grateful to every member of the team, including the social worker helping to make key decisions, the bereavement counselor for helping us accept what we already knew, the nursing staff who provided the family with "what to expect" along the way, the prayers from the Chaplain when we all cried and needed that shoulder to lean on, the nursing aides who always took special care with Charles when he needed to be carefully turned or needed fresh linens and above all Dr. Bankhead and Dr. West. God has given each of those doctors a very special talent. He has blessed them with loving and compassionate hearts. Their individualized, personalized care and support was genuine and consistent every day. The response to our needs was overwhelming at a time that was extremely difficult for all of us. A heavy weight was lifted from our shoulders when we arrived at HomePlace, and the team's knowledge and experience helped to prepare us for the inevitable.

Our family felt calm and reassured in life's darkest hours by The Hospice of East Texas team and that is a gift bestowed upon you by God. Your kindness while going through our painful ordeal is a gift of your hearts. We are truly honored to have been cared for by such wonderful people.

There is no doubt in our minds what makes life worthwhile. It's the spirit of love in a hug and a smile, and the care that you give when things get so bad you can't think anymore because things are so sad. The entire Hospice team was there through the entire grieving - helping our hearts mend. You don't even realize you've all earned your wings and continue to do such wonderful things. God bless each and every one of you there at The Hospice of East Texas HomePlace.

We are also very grateful for all the food and condiments available from the kitchen and to all the surrounding churches in Tyler who kept food/meals available for the families. What a wonderful way to be blessed by kind and considerate people in the community.

### 2 Corinthians 4:18

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

With sincere appreciation and gratitude:

Richard and Becky Walters



# Light up a LIFE



The AI Fine Little Big Band played beautiful Christmas music to set a happy and festive atmosphere at the Tyler Light Up A Life Ceremony this year. Their music reminded attendees of happy holiday memories with loved ones. Thanks to all the members of the band!

Once again, Light Up A Life, the signature fundraiser of The Hospice of East Texas Foundation, had a record-breaking year. Contributions totaling \$147,268 were received from 857 donors who honored friends, loved ones and business associates with gifts in their honor or memory.

Of special note is that more than 10% of the money raised in the 2013 Light Up A Life campaign was contributed by employees of The Hospice of East Texas, a testament to the giving spirit of those who make The Hospice of East Texas their professional home.



Throughout the season, tree-lighting ceremonies in eleven East Texas communities offered families served by The Hospice of East Texas and the community at large a time of remembrance and reflection.



# Lifetimes of experience, wisdom, and heart



"If the Lord has been good enough to give you a profession, you should practice it as long as you can" is a motto Raymond Smith, RN, CRNA and Paula Greenlee, RN live by. Together they have 105 years of nursing experience!

Ray and Paula met fifty years ago in a Tyler hospital when Paula was a student nurse and Ray was an orderly. Paula remembers the starched white hat she wore, and Ray remembers that the hospital had no air conditioning. Their lives and careers diverged, but they reacquainted six years ago and renewed their friendship while working as RNs at Hospice of East Texas HomePlace.

Fifty years ago, Ray set out for the wider world, completing his nursing training at New York University's Bellevue Mills School of Nursing in 1964. He served in the US Army Nurse Corps, and as an operating room nurse in New York City and Houston. After completing training as a nurse anesthetist at Baylor College of Medicine, Ray worked in Houston and Tyler and retired from the anesthesiology department at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler in 2000. Full time retirement was enjoyable, but not fulfilling and in 2008 Ray came to work at Hospice of East Texas HomePlace part-time.

After completing her nursing training in 1958, Paula stayed

closer to home. She married the love of her life, Wayne Greenlee, and had a full life in East Texas as a wife, mother of three, helper to Wayne in his business and full time nurse in local nursing homes, and hospitals. Paula joined the part-time staff at Hospice of East Texas in 2004.

Ray and Paula have seen many changes in their profession through their long careers. "Disposables are a blessing!" Ray asserts. "You can't imagine how many hours we spent cleaning syringes and other things that now we can just throw away." Both agree that advances in technology have improved medical care in many ways, but they are also adamant that nursing is not just a science. "It's art too," says Paula, "and it has to have heart in it. A lot of heart." That's why both love working at Hospice of East Texas.

"I've been an RN for 55 years, and in hindsight I wish more of those years would have been with Hospice of East Texas," says Paula. When her beloved Wayne was a patient at HomePlace, the care hospice provides took on a whole new meaning for Paula and her family. "It is a beautiful and wonderful place and my family and I were so grateful and thankful for the memories that were created in room 401 and beyond."

Although Paula has just retired from Hospice of East Texas, Ray continues to work part-time. We are grateful that these caring professionals brought two lifetimes of experience, wisdom and "heart" to share with the patients, families and staff at Hospice of East Texas.



## A Note from Marji...

Extraordinary care, compassion and commitment... from Hospice of East Texas... for YOU!

This edition of our newsletter abounds with examples of the extraordinary care, compassion and commitment of the people of Hospice of East Texas... the extraordinary care given by nurses Ray Smith and Paula Greenlee. ... the extraordinary compassion of nurses aides and Keith Ingram Award recipients Jackie Clewis, Nancy Gardner and Jessica Hensley. ...the extraordinary commitment of donors Trudy Richardson and Estha Nowlin who cared so much about our mission that they made gifts to perpetuate it well into the future. ...the reciprocating care of volunteers David Johnson and Bill Read who "give back" of their time in gratitude for the care their families received.

Hospice of East Texas' commitment to being extraordinary

is also reflected in our accreditation by the Community Health Accreditation Program, Inc. (CHAP) who recently announced that Hospice of East Texas has been awarded CHAP accreditation under the CHAP Hospice Standards of Excellence. This accreditation demonstrates that Hospice of East Texas meets the industry's highest nationally recognized standards, an accomplishment our organization has worked hard for and reached for ten years.

Our board of directors, leadership team, staff and volunteers are committed to 'extraordinary care, compassion and commitment', for each and every patient and for each and every community in East Texas in which we serve. Your support, in ways both large and small, allows Hospice of East Texas to give the very best to our patients and families. We are grateful for the privilege of doing this work and grateful to each of you who make it possible.



**This quilt was made by Hospice of East Texas social worker Anna Donihoo**, inspired by elderly residents in the Nacogdoches area. In the spring of 2010 Mrs. Donihoo conducted a series of art activities at Austin House Assisted Living, Westward Trails Nursing Home, Stallings Court Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, Rock Haven Nursing Home, and Garrison Nursing Home. A total of 37 residents participated. They were asked to design a picture honoring a loved one who had passed away. With the help of volunteers, residents shared their stories, and remembered childhoods, marriages, best friends, hobbies and careers. Mrs. Donihoo created this 16 square quilt to represent their memories. A special thanks to social work intern Andromedia Pippins, nursing home volunteers, and Hospice of East Texas volunteers who helped make this project happen.

**Valentines donated by children at Green Acres Baptist Church** for residents and families helped make the holiday brighter!



**David Johnson and the bird feeders** There are all kinds of jobs to be done at HomePlace... including feeding the birds! Thanks to volunteer David Johnson whose attention to the feeders brings feathered friends for all to enjoy.



**Davis Robinson and his Leverett's Chapel 4H Club** were among the many groups and individuals who responded so generously to the suggestion of doing a 'coffee drive' in the last newsletter. What a blessing a simple thing like a free cup of good hot coffee can be to families and visitors at HomePlace. Many thanks to all whose gifts have made this simple comfort possible, and to all who would like to help, we welcome your gifts.



**Pat Burkhart** brings coffee, apple cider, hot cocoa mix, sugar and creamer for the patients, families and staff in memory of her husband, Dub Burhart.



"Like" Hospice of East Texas on Facebook to receive the most up to the minute news, inspiring stories and education on end of life care.



**Penny Reynolds** and **Dorothy McClure** met at HomePlace when their parents were patients in rooms across the hall from one another. They formed an instant but lasting friendship, full of mutual support and understanding, and have stayed in touch with one another. Meeting at the Bereavement Department's holiday reception in December 2013, Penny commented, "It's like we were supposed to be together."

**Bill Read** and **Webb Harvey** are indispensable as 'pick up' volunteers, gathering donations for the Hospice of East Texas resale shops in Henderson and Nacogdoches. Selling a little of 'this and that', donated clothes, household items, dishes, furniture, books, etc. the resale shops generate more than \$100,000 each year to help Hospice of East Texas provide its extraordinary care. Bill and Webb need some company in their volunteer ranks. If you have a strong back and a willing heart and would like to join them, contact Wendy Frizzell at 903-266-3400 ext. 140.



Hospice of East Texas volunteers, **Kay Milligan, Julia Lassiter** and **Anita Kress**, and residents of the Meadow Lake Long Leaf community presented blankets they made for use by our patients. Hospice of East Texas staff and patients appreciate the time and effort these volunteers and residents put forth to help make our patients more comfortable.



**Doris Simmons** and **Larry Kudro** met while volunteering at the Hospice of East Texas Shop in Nacogdoches. Love blossomed while they were sorting donations and putting clothes on the racks. Doris and Larry even spent their first day as Mr. and Mrs. Larry Kudro volunteering at the Shop! Staff and fellow volunteers surprised them with cake and a "spree" in the Shop as a wedding gift.



**Duane Gilbert** made and donated three benches for the gardens at HomePlace in memory of his wife Ann. Thank you Duane for sharing your talents with The Hospice of East Texas and for making a comfortable place for families and guests to sit and visit.



Thank you to **Pierce's Chapel, Marvin United Methodist Ladies Group** and all of the church groups who bring food and goodies for our patients, families and staff. Your treats are very much appreciated!





## Twenty years times three

Jackie Clewis, Nancy Gardner and Jessica Hensley are certified nurses assistants and each has worked for Hospice of East Texas for more than twenty years. Twenty years is a long time in any job. It's an especially long time in a job that can be challenging—mentally, physically and emotionally.

Every day, Jackie and Nancy and Jessica travel the highways and country roads of East Texas. They journey many miles, from patient's home to patient's home, from nursing home to nursing home, to care for the dying. They bathe their patients, wash their hair, put lotion on their skin, change their sheets. They bring comfort and dignity, conversation and a little cheer, consistently and constantly, even when those they are caring for don't know them or even perhaps realize they have been there. Jackie and Nancy and Jessica have done this work, this ministry, with skill and compassion every work day, day in and day out, month in and month out, year in and year out...for more than twenty years.

To recognize their dedication, Hospice of East Texas honored Jackie, Nancy and Jessica with the Keith Ingram Award at this year's annual meeting and celebration. Congratulations go to these skilled and dedicated professionals who exemplify the "extraordinary care, compassion and commitment" of the Hospice of East Texas.



The **Keith Ingram Awards** honor the memory of Keith Ingram, a devoted volunteer and advocate for Hospice of East Texas who was board chair at the time of his death in 2012. Six staff and volunteers received this honor at the Hospice of East Texas annual meeting and celebration in February 2014. Pictured are **Ann Lake**, whose volunteer service to Hospice of East Texas began in its very earliest years; **Grady Stewart**, a 13 year volunteer; home hospice aides, **Nancy Gardner**, **Jackie Clewis** and **Jessica Hensley** who have each worked for Hospice of East Texas for more than twenty years; and **Jim Stewart**, a dedicated volunteer whose work with veterans has impacted so many lives.

# Introducing The Hospice of East Texas CARE Fund

Since its inception The Hospice of East Texas has been committed to serve every patient and family who needs our extraordinary care, regardless of their financial circumstances or life's situation. For more than thirty years, this commitment has defined our mission, and motivated our staff, volunteers and donors.

A new giving vehicle, The Hospice of East Texas CARE Fund, will enable Hospice of East Texas to fulfill that commitment, now and in the future. A specially designated fund at The Hospice of East Texas Foundation, the CARE Fund is a permanent endowment. Designed to grow over time, the fund will return its earnings each year to help cover the cost of hospice services for those patients who have no payor source for their care.

The Hospice of East Texas CARE Fund, created by the Board of Directors of The Hospice of East Texas Foundation, was seeded with the estate gifts of two extraordinary women.



**Trudy Richardson**



**Estha Nowlin**

Trudy Richardson and Estha Nowlin were both ladies with life-long commitments to care for those less fortunate. As volunteers and donors they put personal time, energy and resources to work on behalf of the causes they cared about, among them The Hospice of East Texas. In creating The Hospice of East Texas CARE Fund endowment at The Hospice of East Texas Foundation, 2013 Foundation Board Chair Thomas Smith, recognized the significance of the board's decision. "Ms. Richardson and Mrs. Nowlin were friends and donors to Hospice of East Texas whose lives were examples of service

to those in need. Using their gifts to create The Hospice of East Texas CARE Fund at the Hospice of East Texas Foundation will serve as an inspiration to others who support our commitment to care for every patient and family."

The Hospice of East Texas Foundation welcomes gifts of any size to The Hospice of East Texas CARE Fund. As a designated endowment at The Hospice of East Texas Foundation, the CARE Fund is particularly appropriate as a destination for planned gifts.

For more information on giving to The Hospice of East Texas CARE Fund, contact Nancy Lamar, Vice President of Community Relations at 903-266-3402 or [nlamar@hospiceofeasttexas.org](mailto:nlamar@hospiceofeasttexas.org).

**"I had a friend. He was a good, good man, a hardworking man. He had made his way in the world working with his hands, and he never made much money. When he got sick, he didn't have any health insurance. He worked as long as he could, but finally he was just too sick. Hospice of East Texas was there for him. They helped care for him in his home and when it was too hard for his family at home, then they took care of him at HomePlace. No one ever asked his family for money, and they did everything they could for Jim even though his family couldn't pay them a dime. I'll never forget what they did for Jim. Never. Never. Never."**

These thankful words convey so eloquently why The Hospice of East Texas CARE Fund was established... so that Hospice of East Texas can be there for every patient like Jim.

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