



Every Day Matters



FALL 2023

“This is Not Our Work”

The staff at The Hospice of East Texas believes in a *calling*. Journeying with families – especially at such a tender moment in time – is a privilege for us. As we travel together during difficult days, we bear witness to the truth that this sacred work is not ours. It has a deeper meaning, a higher purpose.

The two reflections that follow – one written by one of our treasured nurses at HomePlace, and another

written by a patient we were honored to serve – are beautiful reflections of that. Two different perspectives about a shared experience and how it made a lasting difference. Lives forever changed because of what brought them together... what lessons they learned... how hope was found... how love and kindness matter most.



Cyndi Wilson

Personal Words from Cyndi Wilson

After working as a hospice nurse for most of my nursing career, I’ve had the honor of being with patients and their families at the end of life. I have been able to walk with them along their journeys and help them to know what to expect, educate them on disease processes, and medications and treatments to help them be more comfortable. There are times along these journeys that I am reminded of why I am where I am and why I do what I do.

Recently, I had the honor to care for a patient with terminal cancer with very specific goals. He wanted to be out of pain; a pain that was shaking his body to its very core. Another added element was that he wanted to be able to walk on stage to present his recommendation for the next pastor of his church. We had several days to get him to this goal. Every member of the team, his doctor, nurses, nursing assistants, and pharmacist gave everything we had to help him work towards his goal. We had many elements to consider – working with medications to fine tune the timing, using the right medication for the symptoms that he was having and finding the patient’s own level of comfort. The patient wanted to be out of pain but still able to communicate and meet the challenges of the upcoming day with his church.

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OUR MISSION Hospice of East Texas seeks to enhance the quality of life for individuals and families dealing with life-limiting illnesses and to assist bereaved family members by providing compassionate, comprehensive, coordinated care and support.

OUR VISION We are the blueprint for extraordinary end-of-life care; inspired by our commitment to our patients, our people and our purpose.

Continued from front page

We needed to help him sleep more at night, so that he was still able to spend time with his family, friends, and the community that he loved. The patient needed help with being able to eat and control nausea and balance activity levels; to learn not to do too much but have quality of life. Every aspect was thought out, so that we could help him achieve his goals.

The day the patient had to go to his church was hopeful but cautious. The pharmacist came in early to make sure the patient had all the medications needed. The patient and I had final talks about medications and activity, and precautions. The morning was filled with hope and prayer on everyone's part. The patient and his wife left that morning ready to go try. During the time they were gone I did not worry. I knew in my heart that this man was continuing a journey he was meant to do. I was thankful to play the part in his journey that I did, helping him to achieve what he knew he needed and wanted to do.

When I saw the patient and his wife after, it brought me to tears. They had come up to the nurse's station, the patient stood in a nice blazer, his wife in a beautiful dress, and there were smiles on both of their faces from ear to ear. There was such pride on the patient's face. I knew the day had gone well before even asking.

Listening to the patient and his wife speak about the day with such pride and joy gave me an invaluable reward that I will never forget. They both helped me to see what strength and love should be – the strength of the patient who continued to work with the medical team to reach his own goal and the strength of his wife walking beside him, helping in any way she could. The love they showed each other through this was heartwarming. God spoke in many ways during this experience, and I am so thankful to have been a part of it.

Cyndi Wilson
RN, The Hospice of East Texas

Personal Words from Doug Anderson



Gina and Doug Anderson

On Wednesday, January 18th, I met with my oncologist to hear him say, "There is nothing else I can offer you for your pain. It is time to call hospice." I was very aware of the ministry of The Hospice of East Texas as a pastor for 40 years. This was different. My wife, Gina, and I had many emotions and questions. But my pain level from having Stage IV Lung Cancer that has metastasized throughout my body was at a point of crisis.

When we walked into the HomePlace facility that afternoon to check in for pain management, I had no idea what to expect. We were praying for God to work a miracle and allow me to be present at church on Sunday for a special celebration of 40 years of ministry. I had transitioned the previous weekend from Lead Pastor to Pastor Emeritus, and this upcoming celebration with our church family meant so much to both Gina and me.

What happened between Wednesday afternoon and Sunday was nothing short of miraculous. The doctors immediately understood my pain crisis and desire to be capable of attending church on Sunday, and they worked tirelessly on a plan. Each of the nurses and aides were incredible. They worked around the clock responding in real time to help me. They were never anything but compassionate, using honest and clear communication and, most of all, encouragement. They became our cheerleaders. We felt like they wanted us to make it to church on Sunday as much as we did! And when Sunday came, I felt like I had just won a marathon as we checked out with a day pass to attend church and have lunch with our family. It was a great victory, and God granted the desire of my heart.

Gina and I don't know what the future holds right now, but we trust God and know He is with us. I have never felt Him closer, and we are celebrating all the miracles on this journey. Especially the miracle of Sunday, January 22nd, and the dedicated ones at The Hospice of East Texas who worked so diligently to make it happen.

Doug Anderson
Pastor Emeritus, Rose Heights Church

Doug Anderson passed away April 1, 2023 at home in Tyler, surrounded by his family.

Why I Give to The Hospice of East Texas

Patty Highfill McKinney



Jerry and Patty McKinney



Patty's parents, Daisy and Richard Highfill

I love The Hospice of East Texas, and I have loved it since December 20, 2007. That was the day that my father, Richard Highfill, entered HomePlace. He had been under hospice care for several months, but the day he went to HomePlace was the day that everything became real. He was there for ten days before he died. During those ten days we had joy, tears, laughter, and more care than we ever dreamed possible.

You see, Dad was extremely proud and dignified. He had been in the Army in WWII, and his bearing and attitude always showed that military training. The personnel at The Hospice of East Texas didn't know that, but they treated him with the same amount of dignity that they showed to every patient, and they showed that same care for us, his family. My mother, Daisy Highfill, passed away at HomePlace last July, and she was treated with that same love and care.

Because of the wonderful experience with Dad, I decided that when I retired from teaching, I wanted to volunteer at The Hospice of East Texas, which I did. I began in 2012 and am still sitting at the front desk! What a wonderful feeling it is to be a part of the Hospice Family!

The Hospice of East Texas is a not-for-profit organization. Because of that status, it relies on donations to continue its mission and legacy of extraordinary care. Donations. Are they necessary? The answer is a resounding YES!

While The Hospice of East Texas is a gift to us, we can be a gift to them. And every gift matters. No amount is too small. Donations range from thousands of dollars to a single dollar bill placed in an envelope. Some donors give a brick or a plaque in memory of a loved one. Still others may wish to give to a specific fund, such as the Matt Clapp Fund, which provides support for unfunded care at HomePlace so that every patient and family receives the expert and compassionate care they need, regardless of their financial circumstances.

Planned giving is another route that many people may take. Neither my husband nor I have children, and we have chosen to make The Hospice of East Texas our heir. It is our desire that, after our deaths, our house will be sold, and the proceeds go to The Hospice of East Texas. Likewise, the sale of the contents of the house will go to the Matt Clapp Fund. In that way, we know that we will help others long after we are gone (the amount isn't that great – I am a retired teacher! – but every gift makes a difference.)

If you love The Hospice of East Texas as much as we do, please consider giving. You can be assured that in blessing Hospice, you are blessing others - including yourself!



Save the Date

THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 2024

Tyler Rose Garden Center

Pop-Up Shops and Brunch

Proceeds directed to the Matt Clapp Fund
providing support for unfunded care at HomePlace

For more information: 903.266.3400, ext.191.

The Heart of Matt Clapp



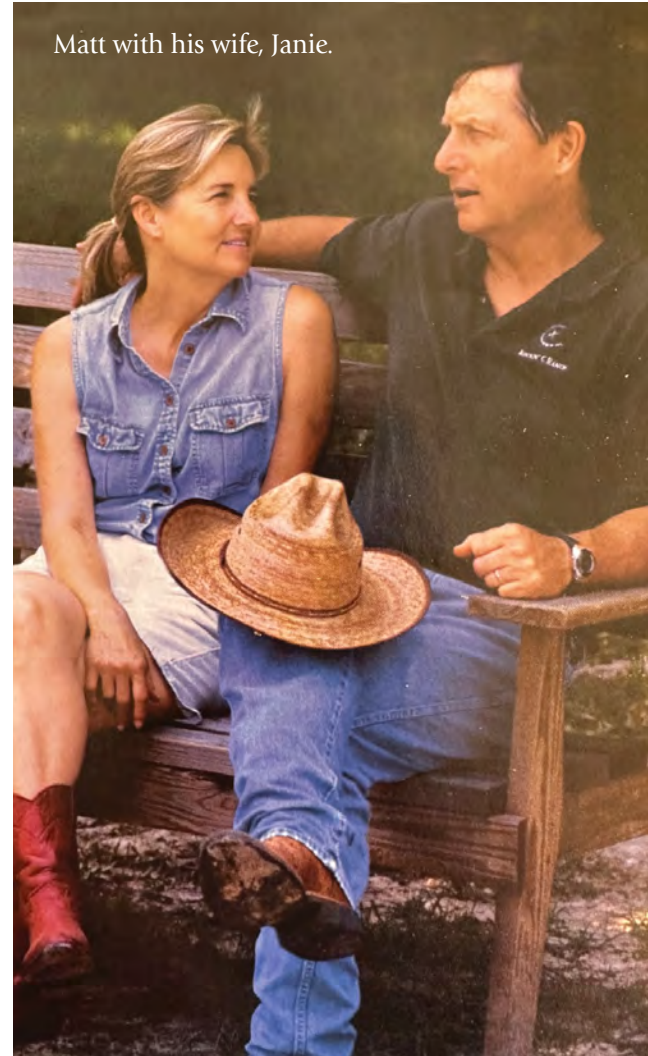
I had the honor of belonging to the REL Class of '69 in Tyler. This was an extraordinary group of folks. Somehow it grew a large number of leaders that accomplished great things. Financial fortunes were made, non-profits were established, and professionals in every field emerged. What made it exceptional was the common thread to make "a real difference" in this world. At every economic level there was a heart to serve others. It is quite a legacy! At the top of this group was a man named Matt Clapp. His heart and vision were unmatched, even as a teenager. At his death, our class started The Matt Clapp Fund to help ensure unfunded care for those in need at Hospice Home Place. I would like to introduce you to the "heart" of Matt Clapp through the eyes of several of those that knew him.

Janet Hills

I'm not sure how you measure the impact a life has on the lives of others, but Matt's life impacted those around him so deeply for so long that the effects are still being felt and will continue to be felt for generations to come. His stories around a campfire, his calming smile, and his relentless work ethic all coalesced in such a way as to unmistakably portray Christ to those with him he interacted, especially the youth he was so deeply invested in seeing come to a saving knowledge of God. The character, patience, and wisdom he exuded were a light in the darkness to a generation so desperate for guidance. He was and is more than a husband, father, brother, rancher, or friend. He is a Christian hero- a legend in the hearts and minds of so many. They don't make them like Matt Clapp anymore, but then again, there will only ever be one Matt Clapp. He was truly one of a kind.

Scott Ferguson

Matt with his wife, Janie.





Matt (#31) and John Muse (#41)

My path with Matt Clapp crossed when we joined Marvin Methodist Church upon moving to Tyler in 1980. My husband had played high school football with Matt being a senior and very much esteemed by underclassmen. He was already a legend on the football field and then to be Division 1 player – not much higher on the esteem ladder than that.

Somehow, we all ended up in the youth department at church, teaching, running MYF and coordinating activities for the kids. Matt and I taught seniors for over 15 years and as often with a teacher/student situation, I ended up learning more than I probably taught- both from Matt and from our seniors. Matt cared deeply about his faith, his journey, and kids. We often went out to the ranch in Lindale, with Janie providing delicious home-cooked meals and the kids enjoying the horses, swimming and being together. Playing his guitar and singing around the campfire became very special for all of us.

I remember Matt as being tough and I mean TOUGH. He was knocked off his horse by lightning. He tried to stop a fight at the bus station and ended up in the hospital himself. He fought for the underdog. He held firm to what was right and what was wrong. He loved his family first and foremost. He held true Biblical truths and teachings. He was hard working, not afraid of anything and loyal to those he held close.

Ann Brookshire

By way of background, I got to know Matt at Robert E. Lee High School in our sophomore year. We had both attended separate elementary schools and junior high schools. Matt was a gentle giant in many ways, an outstanding athlete and principled person, but always humble and kind. Whether you are a committed Christian, as we both are, you have to admire anyone that follows Jesus Christ's teachings while he was here on earth. Matt modeled that great behavior every day with his modesty and walked the walk every day without calling out any attention to his own ego. In fact, he was modest in every way and would always be more likely to help someone that needed nurturing than hanging out with the "most popular" crowd. One ritual that we did together after winning an at home football game was young kids would come up to get our chin strap as a souvenir. Matt and I would not give them to the obvious aggressive "jocks" in the crowd surrounding us, but looked for the kids with thick glasses or small stature that were pushed to the background. We shared the belief that we are judged by what we do with the least of

these and to those that much is given – much is expected. We were both active in Young Life and were in the same "Campaigners" group as well as the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. We were both supported by families with great core values, and I treasure that every time I can spend time with my 94 year old mother.

We reconnected after many years in the mid 1980s and I was completely taken with his commitment to Rockin' C Ranch after a near life threatening experience that redirected his life in many ways. So much so, that I was moved to make an early on financial commitment to it to ensure a successful launch. He and Janie's influence on thousands of kids over the ensuing years is the definition of a life well lived.

We lost our gentle man, Matthew Earl Winfred Clapp, way too early but I am sure he is smiling now as he watches his legacy grow through his grandchildren, who he and Janie adore...

John Muse

The Matt Clapp Fund is one of many endowed and designated funds within The Hospice of East Texas Foundation – an independent nonprofit organization whose sole mission is to support The Hospice of East Texas. Each fund honors the life of a person loved and remembered, creating a lasting legacy in that person's name. A multi-year challenge grant will be used to leverage gifts to the Matt Clapp Fund – all designated to unfunded care at HomePlace.

The future of The Hospice of East Texas is important to those who will need us tomorrow. Long-term investments,

including these endowments and designated funds, are important – ensuring that our organization will always be able to care for everyone who needs us, regardless of uncertain economic environments, and the constant shifts and changes in the healthcare system.

If you would like more information on establishing or giving to an endowment or designated fund, please visit our website www.hospiceofeasttexas.org or call the office of Community Relations at 903-266-3402.



Marji Ream
President/CEO

A Message From Marji

Every Day Matters

Each of us can choose – every day – how we will live our lives and what matters most.

Thank you for your support of the mission of The Hospice of East Texas. We are fortunate and *grateful to be on this journey* to serve our community *together, with you.*

Because of you, days are filled with expressions of gratitude, peace, joy, love,

and relationship.

You are an integral part of The Hospice of East Texas family, connected by powerful, shared experiences such as those written about in this issue. I am grateful to you and proud of the entire team – volunteers, staff, leaders and donors – who, collectively, work to enhance the quality of life for others.

PATHWAYS A Hand to Hold



July Johnson-Minnick and Lana Chapman with Keith Morrison, Director of Access

PATHWAYS is a community service of Texas Palliative Care for people living with advanced or chronic illness. Both programs are supported by The Hospice of East Texas.

If you or someone you care about is experiencing:

- Chronic or life-threatening disease
- Dealing with multiple illnesses
- Frequent hospitalizations or visits to the emergency room
- Challenging medical decision-making or questions about courses of treatment
- Previously beneficial treatments are no longer working
- Struggle to manage or pay for medications
- An inability to see a primary care physician due to a lack of insurance or transportation

PATHWAYS may be able to help.

Our services are provided in 23 counties throughout East Texas and include emotional support, help communicating with family members or medical care providers, coping strategies, advanced directives, applying for medication assistance through pharmaceutical companies and public programs and, potentially, with medical transportation services.

Easing challenges faced by patients and caregivers is our focus. Because *services are provided as a gift to our community, there is no charge.* Also, important to know, is that a physician referral is not required. **PATHWAYS** does not provide direct medical services, but strong social and emotional support in addition to connecting clients with needed resources.

PATHWAYS services are for people who are not yet ready for hospice care, but may feel challenged by difficult circumstances and questions.

Each month **PATHWAYS** provides over 200 consultations. Our team of licensed and experienced professionals are supported by a great group of volunteers. Each week the team checks in with those we serve and their families. The personal calls and visits are an appreciated and valued source of support.

To get started, please call us – we want to hear from you!

A Special Side to Hospice Care



"We suffer different losses in life, and each has its own impact on us," says **Barbara Proctor**. "The loss of my husband, Bobby, rocked my world. The care and compassion we received, not just my husband, but my family as well, during our five days at The Hospice of East Texas HomePlace, carried us through the final days."

Hospice care, by definition, is an inter-disciplinary approach to caring for patients at the end of their lives and supporting those who love them. For forty years, attending to the spiritual needs of patients and their caregivers has been an important part of the services of The Hospice of East Texas.

The role of a hospice chaplain is to meet others where they are spiritually, not attempting to impart the chaplain's own beliefs, but to honor the patient and family's own life values and beliefs. They have spent many hours listening, and many hours in prayer through the day and night. They have officiated at funerals and memorial services, baptized infants and adults, even conducted wedding ceremonies.

Some of the greatest needs in life, especially at end-of-life, are to simply be heard, understood, and have a life validated. The chaplain has the privilege of being invited into the inner recesses of another's heart and life at an intimate and vulnerable time. Often, a silent presence, empathetic ear and genuine concern establish the framework for a deep and

abiding relationship. Serving as a hospice chaplain is more than a profession, it is a calling of the heart.

Barbara is grateful for those who answer that call. From them, she continues to receive blessing after blessing through one-to-one grief counseling, monthly support groups and grief seminars. "The support from the Bereavement Team since Bobby's passing – their kindness, knowledge and dedication to their calling – has helped bring me to where I am on my journey." At the request of Barbara and her family, the Bereavement Team went to their home, on the anniversary of her husband's death, to dedicate a special memory garden – a place where she now loves to spend mornings and time in the sunshine with her grandsons.

To keep Bobby close and to honor his memory, Barbara has begun volunteering at The Hospice of East Texas – playing the piano at HomePlace one day a week. The gift of her talent is a gift to others. The music is both calming and lifting, as it fills the halls with its melody, reminding all who hear and hum along – patients, families, caregivers – to keep a song of hope.

Barbara lovingly observes, "Learning to live a meaningful life after your strong, deep connection is broken but still in your heart, requires safe and caring people to help you. The Hospice of East Texas is there for you."

The Hospice of East Texas Chaplain and Bereavement Team

The Hospice of East Texas is pleased to offer a variety of support programs designed to promote positive ways for healing. Bereavement support is provided to patients' families for at least thirteen months after the death of a loved one. In addition, many of our programs are offered free of charge to anyone in the community who has suffered the loss of a loved one.

Chaplains left to right: Charles Kimble; Stacy Sanders, Director of Chaplain & Bereavement Services; Virginia "Ginni" Guimond-Biggs, Volunteer Chaplain; Tim Wade, Robert Carter, David Badders



Light Life^{Up A}

As the holidays draw near, we take time to remember those we miss... those we love...

“There are some who bring a **Light** so great to the world that even after they have gone the **Light Remains.**”

Light Up A Life is our end-of-year tradition, offering the opportunity to shine light into the lives of others through the purchase of holiday cards – which we personally hand address and mail for you! – in honor or in memory of those held dear. These loving gifts ensure that our care and compassion are available to East Texas families when they need us most. Please be watching your mailbox for Light Up A Life materials to arrive in late October or visit our website www.hospiceofeasttexas.org for more information. Thank YOU for being a GIFT to others!

GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

Some tips for giving to Hospice of East Texas that could be beneficial to you as well:

Take advantage of the IRA Charitable Rollover

If you own an IRA and are at least 72 years of age (70 ½ if you turned 70 ½ before January 1, 2020) the law requires you to take a minimum distribution from your IRA each year and pay income tax on the distribution. You can give all or part of the distribution from your IRA to Hospice of East Texas, tax-free, and have it count as all or part of your required minimum distribution for the year.

Consult with your professional advisor or call us at Hospice of East Texas to see if these benefits might be helpful to you:

- The amount of your gift is counted towards your required minimum distribution for the year
- The amount of your gift is excluded from your reported income for federal tax purposes – your gift is 100% tax free!

- Most importantly – your gift may be used immediately to support Hospice of East Texas' patients and their families.

To benefit from the tax advantages of this giving strategy, you must make the gift from your IRA directly to Hospice.

Plan for the future

Often families express their desire to “give back” to Hospice of East Texas in a meaningful way. A simple bequest to Hospice of East Texas in your will is a wonderful way to do that and could be the most important charitable gift you ever make. You may designate a specific dollar amount, a particular asset such as securities or real estate, a fixed percentage of your entire estate, or leave your residuary estate after you have provided for loved ones.

We encourage you to speak with your attorney, accountant or estate planning advisor about ways to take care of your family and meet your individual goals while helping to support a cause you care about – the mission of Hospice of East Texas.

If you would like information on any of these giving opportunities, visit our website (www.hospiceofeasttexas.org) or call us at 903-266-3402.