

Bringing Ron home

Ron moved to Tyler from California in 2006. There was a story there, but no one knew any more than the little snippets Ron shared: As a truck driver, he had often passed through Tyler in his big rig. Tyler was pretty and looked to Ron like a good place to call home once he got off the road.

Ron bought a mobile home and settled in with his beloved dog who had been his only family for many years. He started attending the activities at the Tyler Senior Center, a program run by the City of Tyler, especially enjoying the camaraderie around the pool tables and the Friday night dances. As time went on, Ron began coming to the Center every day and then arriving earlier and earlier each day, taking on small helpful tasks, making the coffee, taking out the trash. "We just got used to having him here," said Kay Odom, the Center's Supervisor. "Ron was a big kidder and so much fun to be around. He became a part of our lives."

The Center's staff noticed that Ron always brought a bologna sandwich for his lunch, the same sandwich every single day, and he never joined in the hot noon meal provided at the Center by Meals on Wheels. By this time, the staff knew Ron to be a proud man. Maybe he thought it was a 'free lunch', something he would never ask for. Maybe he

thought the lunch carried a price tag he couldn't afford. No one knew how to broach the subject. "I finally just blurted it out,"



Ron (center) with his friends from the Tyler Senior Center.

said Kay. "Ron, if we could fix it so that you could get a hot meal at lunch, would you like that?" she asked, but she was unprepared for his response.

After a long pause, Ron replied humbly, "Well, I guess I qualify. I have a Purple Heart. Do you need to see it?"

Ron was diagnosed with cancer at the Veterans Administration hospital in Dallas in 2011, and it was his friends from the Center who drove him back and forth for visits and then treatments. He had surgery in the fall of 2012 at the VA, but just never bounced back and most of the time he was alone.

When the physicians at the VA mentioned hospice care, Ron's friends at the Tyler Senior Center had the same idea at about the same time: "We need to bring Ron home." A phone call to Hospice of East Texas set the wheels in motion. "I'll never forget the nurse saying to me, 'we can do this!'" said Kay. It took a while for all the paperwork and forms and red tape to be cleared. There were many people in Tyler who loved Ron but no one was legally his family, and it was complicated. But on a Sunday afternoon in early December, an ambulance brought Ron "home," to HomePlace, Hospice of East Texas' inpatient facility.

"I never thought anyone could do this for me," Ron said over and over. Dr. Tom Beets assured Ron and all his friends that HomePlace was their home now, and that they should treat it as such. For the next three weeks, Ron's adopted family

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TO
EVERYTHING
THERE
IS A
SEASON...



(Bringing Ron home, continued from page 1.)

surrounded him with their caring presence. They were at his bedside literally around the clock, decorating his room with poinsettias and a little Christmas tree, joking with him, sitting quietly sometimes, just 'being there' the way a family should be.

"It was a gift", said Kay Odom, "the gift of a wonderful ending. For Ron to end his journey this way, surrounded by his Tyler 'family', in a beautiful place with incredibly caring people was a priceless gift." After his death, there was talk of a memorial service, but Ron's friends knew what he would have wanted. "He had already had his send-off," Kay said, "and Hospice of East Texas gave it to him. For the last few weeks of his life, Ron received hugs and cards and gifts and conversations from all the people who had grown to love him. He was so happy, and he said over and over "I'll never be able to thank you enough'."

No one knew much about the beginning of Ron's life, or even the middle of it. But those who had come to know and love him knew about its ending. That wonderful ending was a gift, a gift to a proud man who had served his country valiantly. Hospice of East Texas brought Ron home to celebrate his life.

A Note from Marji... Hospice Honors



To say that these are challenging times for healthcare is an understatement.

"Sequestration" has brought significant Medicare budget cuts to hospice care, challenging us in unprecedented ways. In addition, increased scrutiny from a vast array of regulatory bodies is the "new normal."

It makes sense that as hospice care continues to grow in our country—and account for more of the federal healthcare budget—that attention should be placed on our compliance with the Medicare & Medicaid regulations and how Medicare & Medicaid dollars are being spent. Our hope is that the forest will not be lost in all the attention being paid to the trees. Research clearly demonstrates that hospice ultimately saves the system money and family satisfaction ratings for hospice care are unmatched by other sectors of healthcare. Hospice care is fiscally helpful to Medicare & Medicaid, because it is much less expensive than care provided in other settings, at a point when aggressive care is futile. Hospice care also makes a profound difference in the lives of patients and families on a daily basis, as they face this most difficult life transition.

We learned in the spring that Hospice of East Texas was named a 2013 Hospice Honors recipient, a prestigious national award recognizing hospice agencies providing the best patient care as rated by the patient's caregiver. Established by Deyta, this honor recognizes the top 100 agencies that continuously demonstrated the highest level of satisfaction through their care as measured from the caregiver's point of view.

This honor is a testament to the extraordinary care, compassion and commitment provided by our colleagues every day; their leaders who coach and mentor; the wisdom, counsel and unwavering support of the Hospice of East Texas and the Hospice of East Texas Foundation Boards and the foresight, dedication, and dogged determination of the volunteers who created Hospice of East Texas thirty years ago.

We will continue to focus on what matters most, the extraordinary care we provide and the satisfaction of those we care for. With diminished reimbursement from Medicare, your private donations are more important than ever. We are confident that with your support, Hospice of East Texas will not only weather these uncertain times but will thrive as we remain steadfast in serving our mission.

Light up a
LIFE



In loving memory
of a friend or
relative

In honor of
someone who
lights up your life

As a holiday gift in
honor of family,
friends or business
associates

Each year, proceeds from Light Up A Life, Hospice of East Texas' signature fundraiser, help to ensure that our staff and volunteers are able to serve each and every patient who needs the extraordinary care, compassion and commitment for which Hospice of East Texas has always been known.

We hope you will consider a gift to Light Up A Life. What better way to give than to make a contribution that will directly touch the lives of patients and their families at a time when they need it most?

Watch your mail for Light Up A Life materials, arriving in late October or visit our website at

www.hospiceofeasttexas.org



Bobby Crone working in the HomePlace gardens

Bobby Crone... A Willing Heart

"Everything I do for Hospice of East Texas is a blessing to me," says Bobby Crone, "and it's a small repayment for all that Hospice of East Texas means to me and my family."

Martha Crone, Bobby's beloved wife, was a patient of Hospice of East Texas for ten months before her death in April 2011. During that time the Crone family experienced the full range of Hospice services, care in their home, respite care at HomePlace, and finally, in-patient care for the last five days of Martha's life. "I can honestly say that every single person I came in contact with was helpful and professional and caring. I could not have done what I did for Martha had it not been for their help," Bobby recalls.

Bobby gratefully repays that care as a volunteer for Hospice of East Texas. He visits Hospice patients in homes, nursing homes and sometimes in HomePlace. "I'm often asked to read the Bible to them," he says, a favorite activity for this lifelong Methodist and active member of Pollard United Methodist Church. He and his patients may have a conversation, or he may just sit quietly with them, a caring presence at a time when many people are alone.

Bobby has also become the "lead bush and tree man" in the gardens at HomePlace. Asked about his gardening experience and how this role came to be, he grins. "I just heard Marleen (HomePlace Volunteer Coordinator) and Elizabeth (Director of Logistics) talking about how the gardens had gotten overgrown and next thing I knew, I was in charge!" In the spring and into the hot summer Bobby arrived twice a week, very early in the morning ("about six", he admits), cutting and trimming and shaping up shrubs and small trees. "HomePlace is so beautiful," says Bobby, "and it's always peaceful, especially at that time of day. I just love being there."

Early one morning, as Bobby was gathering up branches, Dr. Tom Beets, Hospice of East Texas Medical Director, stopped to help him. "I tried to get him to stop because I knew he would get dirty, but Dr. Beets didn't care," said Bobby. "That's the kind of person he is. That's the kind of person everyone at Hospice of East Texas is!"

Bobby had a long and successful career in business, much of it in executive management positions with Carrier, where he

worked for thirty two years. He and Martha, whom he describes as "the consummate lady" were childhood sweethearts, marrying at 19 and marking 60 years together just before her death. They have three children and five grandchildren. Bobby counts his ability to care for Martha through ten years of Alzheimer's disease as a blessing, proud that he was able to provide that care in their home with the help of Hospice of East Texas, until Martha's last few days at HomePlace.

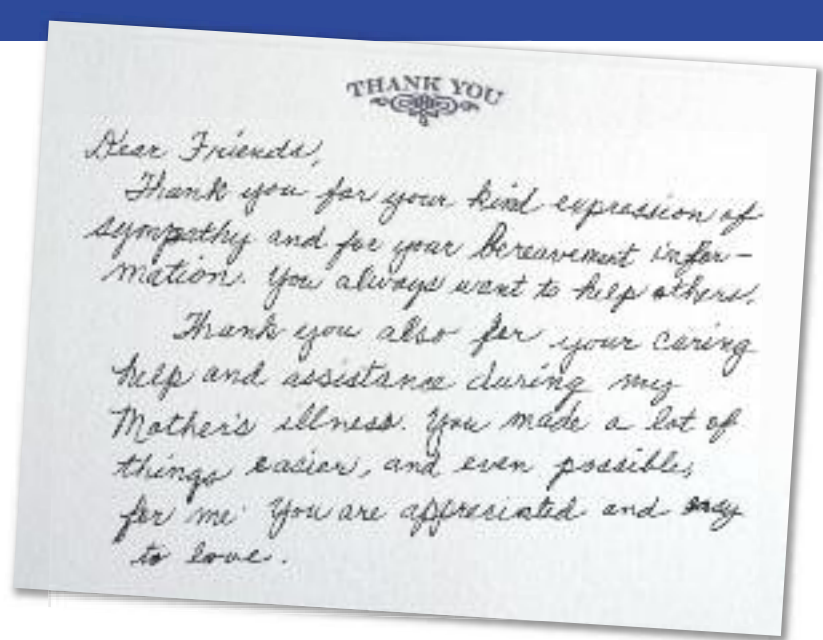
"I tell everyone who will listen how thankful I am for the opportunity to volunteer for Hospice of East Texas," says Bobby. "If you want to help, there are so many things you can do. And the thing is, the blessings I receive are probably far greater than any help I give to Hospice."



Bobby and Martha Crone and their family in 2003



When Beatrice Brumley celebrated her 100th birthday, her friend John gave her \$100, one dollar for each year of her long and well-lived life. Mrs. Brumley decided to donate her gift to Hospice of East Texas and match it with a gift of her own. Another friend added one more dollar to the cause! It's a celebration at Hospice of East Texas to receive \$201 in celebration of Beatrice Brumley!



The beautiful wall tiles at HomePlace, given in memory of loved ones, are now available to take home. Artist Nancy McCain crafts each tile with a pine tree border design and the wording of your choice. Displayed on an easel, they are lovely remembrances and also make beautiful gifts. Visit our website at www.hospiceofeasttexas.org for donation information or call Community Relations at 903-266-3400.

The first graders led the students at TJ Austin Elementary in Tyler in a "quarter collection" for Hospice of East Texas, gathering a very generous total of \$359.85. Representatives from each of the first grade classrooms are pictured here with teacher Tracy Nash, whose father was a patient of Hospice of East Texas.



Hembree Chiropractic Center held a special event in their office with proceeds going to Hospice of East Texas in gratitude for the care Mr. Raymond Hembree received.



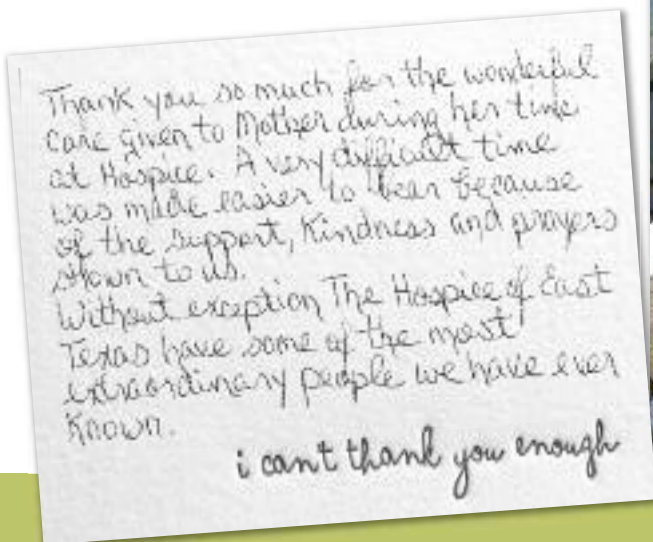
"Like" Hospice of East Texas on Facebook to receive the most up to the minute news, inspiring stories and education on end of life care.



Three Jacksonville volunteers, Neta Hanna, Jann McGaughey and Jean Allen, collectively have more than 75 years' experience as volunteers for Hospice of East Texas. Now that's commitment!



Richard Liptak and Ellen Wallace have volunteered to lead grief support groups at Hospice of East Texas for ten years.



In memory of her father, Mr. Charles Parr, Kim Stout and her daughters prepare a meal each month for all the families, staff and volunteers at HomePlace.

Thirty years apart...

The gifts of two extraordinary women

Gertrude Anne Richardson was a patient of Hospice of East Texas in 1984. Her son, Bill, remembers to this day the extraordinary care she received. "My brothers and my sister and I were at a loss, but when Hospice of East Texas came in to help, we were back on track. The care they provided literally gave my mother six more months of life than what we were told to expect."

After Mrs. Richardson's death, Hospice of East Texas was astounded to learn of a generous bequest from her estate. It was the first planned gift given to the fledgling organization, then only two years old. "Gertrude Anne's gift was so affirming for us," said Ann Lake, a board member at the time. "Hospice was small and fragile in so many ways. We were completely dependent on private donations for our total operating budget. Many people, even in the medical community, didn't understand what hospice care was all about. Here came this significant gift from a lady and a family who were well known and so

respected in East Texas. I remember thinking, 'If Gertrude Anne Richardson and her family were pleased with our care, enough so to recognize Hospice of East Texas with a planned gift, we might be on solid ground. Maybe this whole dream of hospice care is really going to happen.'

Almost thirty years later, Mrs. Richardson's daughter, Trudy Richardson, made a similar ultimate gift with a bequest from her estate to Hospice of East Texas. An annual supporter of Hospice since her mother's death, Trudy often spoke of the gratitude she and her brothers continued to feel for the care, comfort and dignity Hospice of East Texas provided to their mother.

Trudy's death came unexpectedly and too soon, but because she took the time to plan and think ahead, her estate plan mirrored the things she cared most about – her family and the causes she held dear.

In recognition of their gifts, Gertrude Ann Richardson and Trudy Richardson are recognized as members of Hospice of East Texas' Evelyn Lake Society. Honoring the memory of Evelyn Lake, the lady who brought the idea of hospice care to East Texas, the Evelyn Lake Society members are those who have made provisions for contributions to Hospice of East Texas through their estate plans.

As models of extraordinary compassion, generosity and concern for community, the legacies of Gertrude Ann Richardson and Trudy Richardson live on through the example of their volunteerism and philanthropy. Hospice of East Texas is honored to be among the organizations they found worthy, not only of their gifts, but of their confidence and support.



Trudy Richardson,
an extraordinary giver



What is a planned gift?

A planned gift is just what its name implies... a gift that requires some planning.

Many donors make provisions for gifts to Hospice of East Texas when they are doing their estate plans. There are various options for arranging a planned gift, which could include using appreciated securities/stock, real estate, personal property, life insurance, a retirement plan or other vehicles. Gifts can be made during the donor's lifetime or

conferred upon their death. Some gift options can even offer income to donors during their lifetime.

If you are considering a planned gift to support the extraordinary care given by Hospice of East Texas, we would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and your professional advisor. Contact Nancy Lamar, Vice President Community Relations, at 903-266-3402.

Sometimes things circle around...

Volunteer Charles Haydon was sorting through old books in the Nacogdoches Hospice Shop when he found two savings bonds in an old Bible. Dating from 1979, the two bonds were now worth considerably more than their purchase price.

Jessica Henderson, Director of Community Relations for Hospice of East Texas in the Deep South East region, 'Googled' the name and address on the bonds, and miraculously found that the lady listed on the bonds still lived at the same address in Mesquite. Reaching her by phone, Jessica explained the discovery of the bonds. With both excitement and tears, the elderly lady explained that she had been 'looking everywhere' for the bonds because the money would be a real blessing to her right now. "I can't believe you took the trouble to find me!" she exclaimed.

How did the old Bible with the bonds in it travel from Mesquite to Nacogdoches? Volunteer Judy Adams was visiting a friend and told her about the fun she was having working in the Hospice resale shop. That friend, the lady

who was the owner of the bonds, gave her some things to donate to the shop, including that old Bible where her savings bonds were hiding!

The integrity and hard work of the Hospice Shop volunteers returned the savings bonds to their rightful owner, herself actually a donor to the shop, from hundreds of miles away.

The world is indeed a small place where many times things circle around to where they are supposed to be.

Please remember the Hospice Shops for clothing and household items you no longer need or want. If you live in Henderson or Nacogdoches you can deliver to the shops directly. You can also bring items to the offices in Tyler. Limited pick up is available in the Tyler area only by scheduling in advance at 903-266-3400.



Ways of Giving

Looking for a way to help Hospice of East Texas serve patients and families? Here are some ideas!

HOLD A "COFFEE DRIVE"

Yes, a "coffee drive", not a "food drive!" We recently received a thank you note from a family whose loved one was cared for at HomePlace, expressing gratitude for "the coffee that's always there." A little thing like free coffee can mean a lot, but to have free coffee at HomePlace around-the-clock for thousands of families each year adds up to quite an expense. If your group or organization is looking for a service project, why not host a "coffee drive" to help Hospice of East Texas provide this small gesture of comfort?



JOIN THE SATURDAY GARDEN DAY

On Saturday, November 9, 2013, volunteers will gather at



The Robert M. Rogers Hospice Center to clean out flower beds, mulch, plant fall flowers, clear the walking trails and perform other light gardening duties to ready the beautiful grounds for the winter months. Individuals and group volunteers are welcome! BYO-Tools!

INVITE US TO SPEAK

Just the word 'hospice' can be frightening, until you know something about how extraordinary our care can be and what a blessing it is to patients and families. Perhaps your civic club or Sunday School class would like an interesting, informative, thought-provoking presentation about hospice care in general and Hospice of East Texas in particular. We are available to speak throughout East Texas!

To inquire about any of these opportunities, contact Marleen Elkins or Vicki Harvey at 903-266-3400.

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