

# EXCELLENCE



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FOR

*Everyone*

The  
**HOSPICE**  
of East Texas

Spring 2024



## Message of HOPE

Our sweet Daddy, Jon Jasper, passed away at HomePlace on March 31, 2023. For almost three weeks, our extended family and friends spent a lot of time in Room 305 saying goodbye to our dad, growing closer as a family, and feeling so much compassion and kindness from sweet caregivers that loved him so well in his final days on this earth. When someone you love is dying, and in such a slow and difficult way, it is painful and joyful, heartbreaking and beautiful, and the people at The Hospice of East Texas understand those mixed emotions because they live it every single day.

When you know you are running out of time with someone, things shift in your mind, heart, and schedule. Once dad's decision to not prolong his life had been made, he began to tell everyone he knew and loved "goodbye for now". He was mostly bound to his recliner, lacking mobility to do basic things, and he found joy in reading, so a friend recommended a book by John Eldredge, *All Things New*. The book is based on a simple biblical principle – heaven is not our eternal home – the New Earth is. What he read in the pages of this book gave him peace and hope that the Lord is making all things new. I wanted to read the copy of the book he gifted me before he passed away, which I did, but it was a difficult read as I saw it

through the eyes of a man who knew he had only months, maybe weeks to live, and that the end would not be pretty – it would be painful and distressing. It would likely mean a complete loss of control and independence, which was so hard for a strong man like our dad.

By the time I finished reading the book, dad wasn't that communicative, just squeezing our hands and whispering "I love you," so I never really got to ask him about the impact of the book or fully understand what he must have been thinking, but I know he was recommending this book to a lot of people so it was meaningful to him as he approached the end of his life and he wanted others to have the same hope he did.

First, and he didn't need the book to tell him this – heaven is real and precious and far beyond words. Jesus is there and remains there until his return when all things are made new. Jon Jasper is there too – he longed for it, he kept praying for it, and he asked many times when he would wake from his hospice bed if he was in heaven yet. He was ready to be whole again in every way – in his body, his mind, his heart, and his soul – completely restored head to toe. We wanted that for him, too.

*Continued on page 2*

**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

Now, here are the things I think my dad would tell you about what he learned and how these things gave him hope in his final days...

- Our hearts are made for the Kingdom of God. This might be the most important thing anyone will ever tell you about yourself – your heart only thrives in one habitat, and that place is called the Kingdom of God. The things of this earth will never satisfy the desires of our hearts.
- God promises the renewal of all things. He promises to make all things new. This means the earth you love, all your special places and treasured memories, is restored and given back to you when the Lord returns to earth.
- Life is a long series of goodbyes. We said goodbye to our dad a lot over those last three weeks. Goodbyes are hard and painful. However, when our hope is in the proper place, attached to the right things, not only do we flourish better as human beings, but we are rescued from a thousand heartbreaks because we will say goodbye to everyone we love and everything we hold dear in this life.
- If we are going to embrace the hope that God is extending us, we must be honest about the nature of this life. Psalm 39:5 tells us it is a vapor, a passing breeze. Dad knew and accepted this, and He was ready for heaven and prepared to meet Jesus.

The Hospice of East Texas is a wonderful resource here in our community and we are forever grateful for the compassionate team of caregivers that loved him so well in the last days of his life. The fruit of the Spirit abounded as we watched them demonstrate love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, and goodness with him and with us.

**Carrie-Ann Jasper Yearty, on behalf of my mom, Susan, and my siblings, Jane E and Brent.**

Carrie-Ann Jasper-Yearty shared her hospice journey and this personal message of **HOPE** at our recent event in April. We are grateful for her, for all those who attended, and for our many generous sponsors.

**Hope Blooms** proceeds will benefit **The Matt Clapp Fund at The Hospice of East Texas Foundation** ~ established in 2021 by a group of Matt's close friends, desiring to honor his life's work and legacy of love. A multi-year challenge grant leverages gifts to this designated fund to support unfunded care at HomePlace, our inpatient hospice facility.

# Hope Blooms

AT THE HOSPICE OF EAST TEXAS

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# An Extraordinary Journey



**Sharon Howell with her Dad**

**Sharon Howell, daughter of Joel Howell, and Dr. Jason Holman share two perspectives.**

**Sharon:** When we got the diagnosis of dementia, we weren't really surprised, but didn't have a good idea of what was in front of us. Dad was still functional, he was still driving, he was still Joe, he was still my Dad.

**Dr. Holman:** The Pathways Program is made up of social workers and nurse practitioners. It's for people who are not quite ready for hospice but they are at risk. We want to keep a close eye on them, so nobody falls through the cracks.

**Sharon:** I don't think anybody who gets the diagnosis of dementia or Alzheimer's has the ability to wrap their head around how that's going to unfold.

**Dr. Holman:** When I saw Joel, he had lost quite a bit of weight and was not able to get out of bed. So at that point, he met the criteria for hospice. One of the benefits of hospice was that we were able to go into their home, keep him at home and provide care. We made sure his symptoms were controlled and that he was clean and shaved. This gave the family more of a chance to be his family – to be a daughter, a wife – and less so a caregiver.

**Sharon:** What if you were lost in the woods and came upon a pathway and took it to help you get out of the woods. If the pathway had lights and showed you the way – showed you a plan. The pathway and the lights are The Hospice of East Texas' Pathways program, Texas Palliative Care as well as their HomeCare and HomePlace services. They are the experts executing a plan that they had thought through long before we would even know that we needed it.

**Dr. Holman:** It was just getting to be more and more of a challenge for Sharon and her mom at home. This gave us the opportunity to come in and let them be more of those family members.

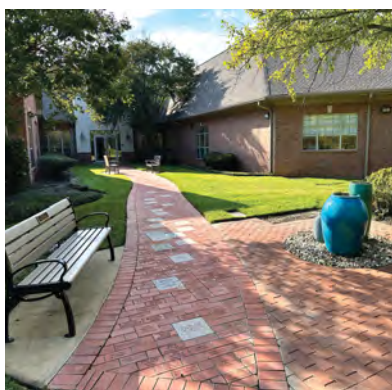
**Sharon:** What an incredible peace we had when Dad was on the Pathways program and then hospice care – those experts guided us on a journey that ended in HomePlace. It was our safe harbor.

**Dr. Holman:** Just like in Joel's situation, palliative care can help in dementia cases. When there is a big change and maybe they meet the criteria for hospice, most caregivers probably don't know when that is. So not only can a palliative care doctor help with symptoms, but the Pathways program can also help get extra services that they may not be able to get on their own.

**Sharon:** And that was the end of the journey. It was a calm and peaceful experience.



**Jason Holman, MD  
Texas Palliative Care  
& Hospice Physician**



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**Texas Palliative Care and the Pathways Program are services of The Hospice of East Texas.**

**To learn more please visit  
[www.hospiceofeasttexas.org/pathways](http://www.hospiceofeasttexas.org/pathways)  
[www.hospiceofeasttexas.org/palliative-care](http://www.hospiceofeasttexas.org/palliative-care)  
or call: 903-565-9230**

# Resale and Estate Shops of The Hospice of East Texas

*“What we keep keeps us.”* Jaki Shelton Green, poet laureate of North Carolina



Jaki first said these words as she spoke about a family artifact. It was a hand-wrought nail, passed down through generations of her family, that connects her with her grandmother's grandmother and has helped make her into the powerful poet she is today.

*Her quote captures the reason we treasure the tangible things of a life: because they are the **evidence of what has happened, and the promise of what we can still do.*** What we keep keeps us.

The Hospice of East Texas has two Resale and Estate Shops. One in Henderson and the other in Nacogdoches. They help generate important funds that support our mission.

In addition, the Shops are a tangible presence in these communities and the surrounding area. The Hospice of East Texas serves 23 counties in our region and most of our care is provided in the comfort of people's homes. Our Resale and Estate Shops are hubs of happy activity with donations arriving several times a week, volunteers busy working and treasure hunters coming in looking for quality clothing, gifts or something to decorate their home.

They also serve as a community outreach and information touchpoint for all of Hospice's services including our Pathways program and Texas Palliative care. Shop employees and volunteers are trained to answer questions or facilitate referrals when needed.

Estate Sales at our Shops are a growing opportunity. Lifestyles change for a variety of reasons and often people find they have more than they need. Your donations of all sizes are welcome and will be received with love. With the help of amazing volunteers, we receive donations ranging from a few items to complete households.

*“Donating the things we had loved, but no longer had room for – knowing the proceeds go to helping other families with their Hospice journey – was a gift we truly wanted to give.”* Holley Howard



**For more information about our Resale and Estate Shops, donating, volunteering or services, please visit [www.hospiceofeasttexas.org](http://www.hospiceofeasttexas.org).**



*“The best way to find yourself, is to lose yourself in service to others.” Mahatma Ghandi*

## Volunteers and Givers

Many people want to support and be involved with The Hospice of East Texas, but sitting at the bedside isn't for everyone. Volunteering at the Shops or an Estate Sale; also being a donor or a shopper is a great way to help that puts a variety of gifts and talents to work.

A special thank you goes to the wonderful team who drive the truck and pick up larger donations for the Shops. When

you meet them, it is evident this group enjoys being together and working as a close team. When we asked what they liked most about picking up and transporting donations:

*“It's the people. I always get to know the people who are donating the contents of their home and most of the time I get to hear their story and they get to tell it. Lots of times I think that is what they needed the most, is just someone to listen. They're great people and interesting.” Greg Brown*



## Cleaning With Meaning

*“Growing up many things were part of our family. There were the intangibles of love, laughter and the trying times we helped each other overcome. There were also tangible treasures in our home. Our lives played out against a backdrop of things, some of which we used and saw every day, and others we brought out on special occasions. They were an integral part of us being together and living out a shared history.*

*Our mother was a decorator, so it was hard for us to part ways with some of her beautiful things. But when we learned about the Resale and Estate Shops for The Hospice of East Texas, we knew mom would be pleased. She always wanted our family to help others and donating her furniture and things for others to love was a wonderful way to honor her.”*

Friends of Jana Autry, Hospice of East Texas Board Member



Nancy Lamar and Jana Autry

## Addresses and Hours

### HOSPICE SHOP, NACOGDOCHES

3801 North Street, Ste. 6  
Hours: Wednesday - Friday,  
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

### HOSPICE SHOP, HENDERSON

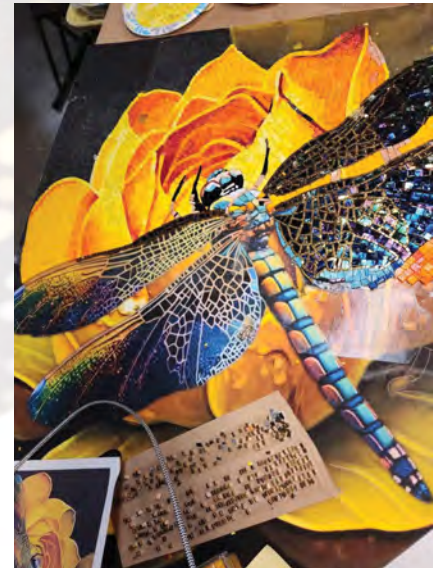
114 Richardson  
Hours: Wednesday - Friday,  
10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

## TO DONATE ITEMS

- Drop them off directly at Resale Shops
- Bring items to The Hospice of East Texas, 4111 University Dr., Tyler
- For larger donations of furniture and household contents please call Denise Graber: 903-266-3400, Ext. 140.

# Children's Interactive Mosaics

The Hospice of East Texas has received, with gratitude, the gift of three commissioned works of art by nationally recognized artist – East Texas' very own - Cassie Edmonds.



The vision for this impactful work, as well as the funding to make it a reality, has been given by The Robert M. Rogers Foundation.

Out of their great love for children and inspired by the hope our children represent, the Directors of the Rogers Foundation are providing a trio of stunning mosaics for the family courtyard at HomePlace. The bold colors and images stand alone as works of art. They also illustrate a children's story often used to explain the end-of-life journey.

*"Art speaks where words are unable to explain." Pam Holland*

In addition, they will be used by our Chaplains and Bereavement Specialists to help children find new resilience following the loss of a loved one.

*"Art can permeate the very deepest part of us, where no words exist." Eileen Miller*



**Marji Ream**  
President/CEO

## A Message from Marji

When we say **Excellence for Everyone**, we mean it wholeheartedly. We want people to choose The Hospice of East Texas because we **are** excellent! The care and services we deliver are not limited by the Medicare hospice benefit or private insurance. There is a difference to our unique brand of care – an above and beyond level of caring. Our dedicated staff, volunteers, and steadfast supporters make it happen. TOGETHER, through generosity and unwavering commitment, we continue to provide Excellence for Everyone, regardless of ability to pay for services. Out of the abundance

of blessings through philanthropy, we are there for all who need us. Because of YOU, families experience our extraordinary care, our culture of compassion, and the value of our hard-won expertise through over 40 years of serving our communities, our neighbors, our friends.

This special and meaningful work belongs to all of us. Not one of us – no individual team – could do this alone. So, thank you for standing with us to provide strength and solace and excellence for everyone.





**GIFT** is an acronym that stands for Giving Instruction For Tomorrow.

90% of people say that it is important to share their wishes for end-of-life care, but less than 30% of them have actually had those conversations with close family or friends.

The GIFT Project is a workshop led by a Chaplain and a Nurse to guide, prepare and support families in having these important conversations with each other. Letting those closest to you know what you would choose ensures

- Your family and physicians know exactly what you want
- Emotional relief for your children, spouse and other loved ones from having to make difficult decisions alone or negotiate them with the family
- Your loved ones will have more time and energy to spend with you and each other rather than grappling unprepared with unfamiliar situations.

“People miss opportunities to take advantage of sacred moments when adult children are uninformed about end-of-life care.” **Stacy Sanders, Director of Chaplain & Bereavement Services**

“Many people don’t know they can take responsibility for their end-of-life decisions and communicate that – as parents this is a GIFT we can give our children.” **Merv Sanders, Director of Inpatient Care**

Your group, class, circle of friends or organization is invited to take advantage of this new community service.

**Stacy Sanders, Director of Chaplain & Bereavement Services – 903-266-3400, ext. 447**

**Betsy Brush, Vice President of Philanthropy 903-266-3400, ext. 402**

# Light Life<sup>Up A</sup>

## Thank You to Our 2023 Light Up A Life Benefactors!

Sincere and heartfelt gratitude to the many generous donors who contributed to Light Up A Life, Hospice of East Texas’ signature fundraiser, in 2023. These meaningful gifts will SHINE on thousands of patients and families served by The Hospice of East Texas in the year ahead.

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