

Aurora House News

The light of a new day...



Spring 2025

Newsletter Volume 18 Issue 1

Patient and families served: 1,612

Age Range: 6 wks - 103 yrs

Average Length of Stay: 35 days

Students & Community #: 24,618

A Legacy of Love: How End-of-Life Planning Honors Your Family

End-of-life planning is a profound act of love and respect that ensures a person's wishes are honored while providing comfort and clarity to their family. By making decisions in advance—whether through advance directives, hospice care preferences, or funeral arrangements—loved ones are spared the burden of uncertainty during an already emotional time. This thoughtful preparation allows families to focus on cherishing final moments together rather than navigating difficult choices in distress. Ultimately, end-of-life planning offers a sense of peace, knowing that everything is in place according to the wishes of the one they hold dear.

To facilitate these conversations, families can take the following steps:

- **Initiate Open Conversations** – Choose a calm and comfortable setting to discuss personal values, medical care preferences, and final wishes.
- **Document Essential Legal Papers** – Prepare or update a living will, healthcare power of attorney, and estate plans to ensure clarity and prevent legal complications.
- **Consult with Professionals** – Seek guidance from hospice providers, financial advisors, estate planners, or legal experts for support in decision-making.
- **Consider Hospice or Palliative Care** – If applicable, explore options for compassionate end-of-life care that focuses on comfort, dignity, and quality of life.
- **Ensure Pain Management and Comfort Measures** – Work with healthcare providers to establish a plan for pain relief and symptom management tailored to the individual's needs.
- **Create a Support System** – Involve family, friends, and caregivers to provide emotional and practical support throughout the process.
- **Preserve Meaningful Connections** – Encourage the sharing of memories, personal messages, and legacy projects to offer comfort and closure for loved ones.
- **Plan Memorial or Funeral Preferences** – Discuss and document wishes for funeral arrangements, burial or cremation, and any desired ceremonies.



While these conversations may be difficult, they ultimately provide peace of mind and allow loved ones to focus on what matters most—being present for one another in life's final moments.

Aurora House News

Holiday Miracles!

Thank you! We use those two words often, but they never quite seem to be enough. As we think back at our 2024 All Is Bright Gala, we are filled with so much gratitude that it's hard to properly express it in words. We had a record of 350 guest at our new Llano Grande Venue.

This year, you helped us raise more than \$90,000 for the programs and services Aurora House provides our community! Whether you were a Sponsor or made a donation, attended the Gala or purchased a live or silent auction item, YOU helped us work toward our mission of helping those in our community at end of life who needs us most. For this, THANK YOU!



While we celebrate the fundraising success of the evening, we must also give thanks to those behind the scenes. The months and days leading up to an event like this are filled with hours upon hours of hard work. It is in those days and hours that we once again recognize the true heart of the people who make the Aurora House a success every single day.

Many members of our board and staff sent letters, made phone calls for sponsorships and collected auction items to help make the All Is Bright Gala possible. All of this was done in addition to their already full workloads.

I heard so many positive comments that evening about the auction items we received, the delicious food (prepared by Chef Torres) and signature drinks, our amazing performers, The Hot Rodz, and the gorgeous decor, put together by Vachoram Productions. Truly a beautiful evening and none of that would have been possible without the dedication of our Aurora House family and, YOU, our community.

From the beginning, we've had the support and commitment of our Aurora House Board of Directors and the Gala Committee. These two groups took time from their own busy schedules to attend meetings, seek donations and help guide us through another successful event.

We were extremely fortunate to have Aurora House board member, Adrian Farias as our Master of Ceremonies, and Horacio Ramirez for being our Live Auction MC. These words of Gratitude don't just come from us – they come from all of the residents, families and staff who make up the Aurora House family. Your support of All Is Bright and Aurora House means you believe in them – in their work, their lives and our community.



Pedro E. McDougal, M.D.



HAROLD JOHN &
DEBORAH
ZURLO



PETE CEDILLO,
JR. CPA

Donations

ADL Services
Alejandra Montenegro
Alexis De Sela
Amedisys
Ana - Cristina Gonzalez
Andrew Levine MD, PA
Andy Tafolla
Anonymous
Anthony (Ryan) Vaughan
April Castaneda
April White
Betty Lou Vitek
B.J. Woodyard
Bloomquist Consulting, LLC
Bobby Garza
Burton Companies LLC
Carl & Linda Meiners
Catholic Daughters of the Americas 2420
Charles Wolff
Christopher & Minerva St. John
Connie Garrels
Daisy Rivera Solis
De Sela Consulting, LLC
Development Corporation of Mercedes
Dimas or Consuelo Martinez
Donna Rothman
Dr. R. E. Margo Elementary
Eloy Gonzales & Marisela Gonzalez
Ericka's Somabel Med Spa
Eugene R. Vaughan
Fanny & Buddy Ross
Father Caleb De La Rosa
FREEDOM Bank
Frost Bank
Gabino Reyes
Harbor Hospice
Heather Wolfenbarger
Hector Solis
Hollon Oil Company
HUB International
Idalia Kimbro
Ingelise Jones
J & E McConnell
Jacqueline Galloway
Janelle Hood
Janice L. Earl
Jannell Flores
John Smith
Jorge Saenz
Jose & Hilda Gonzalez
Jose Soto
Julieta Piando
Karen Schroeder
Kirk Bloomquist
Kris Garcia
La Mision Palliative Care & Hospice
Leisure World Chapel
Leonardo & April Castaneda
Life Giving Outreach Ministries
Lionel's Western Wear Inc
Liselotte Pinkerton
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Liz Free
Lizette Medina
Llano Grande Residents
Magic Valley Electric Coop
Manuel Torres
Marco Flores
Marco Martinez
Margarita Galavis
Marguerite Wiegand
Marivel Tijerina
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Mercy Med Spa
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Monica Wells
Montalvo Insurance Agency
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Mr. & Mrs. Harold Zurlo
Mr. & Mrs. Rhonda & Robert Garza
Mt. Sinai Hospice
Mutiat Adeoye
Myriam Guerra
Myrt McIntyre
Nancy & J Craig Fratzke
Noble Texas Builders LLC
Norma De La Rosa
Norma Martinez
Norman L. Wessel
OpusCare Hospice
Oralia Tafolla
P.E. & J.T. McDougal, FLP
Patricia & Alan E. Bortnem
Patricia Alexander
Pete & Jo Peters
Pete Cedillo Jr., CPA
Rafael Rodriguez
Rainbow Pediatric Clinic
Ranchero Village Church
Renee Zachman
RGV Educational Secretaries Assoc.
Ricardo Reyna
Rio Grande Medicine, Inc.
Rios of Mercedes
Robert Antonacci
Robert Donalson
Roberto Rodriguez
Robyn Rodriguez
Rogelio Ortiz
Ruben Villarreal
San Jose Hospice
San Martin De Porres Church
Sarah Cano
Shepard & Walton Employee Benefits
Sheryl L. Henry
Shirley Knutson-Nelson
Siesta Village Worship Hour
Southern Comfort Park
Stephen R & Dawn M Jones
Steve Urbina
Tereso & Elodia Rocha
Texas Oncology Foundation Inc.
Texas Regional Bank
Tony Garza
Tu Vida Medical Transport, Inc
Vantage Bank Texas
Walmart
Weslaco EDC
Weslaco Lions Club
Women of AT&T SA Chapter
Yolanda Salinas

In Memory of

Allie Haden
Cindy Petch
Billie Vanderveer
James and Linda Williams
Carlos Aldape
Ramiro Aldape
David Bush
Martha Smith
David Castillo
Maria Castillo
Doris Jacobson
John Jacobson
Douglas Brundige
Mary Brundige
Eddie Lee Vaughan
Eugene R. Vaughan
Elodia Garza
Norma De La Rosa
Felipe Garcia
Mr. Faustino Villanueva Jr.
Gary Schall
Anonymous
Herelin Fuentes
Geraldine Shields



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Anthony Covacevich
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Cindy Petch
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Lynn Gallipeau
Debbie McDonald
Gary & Jeanne Fears
Robert Gallipeau

Maria Gomez
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Maria Hernandez
Navia Hernandez
Ramon & Elvira Montalvo
Ramon Montalvo
Robert Janik
Anthony Vaughan
Don & Rebecca McDaniel
Georgia Sobieski
Janese Olivero
Mary Brundige
Melanie Riley
Michael & Claudia Sander
Mr. & Mrs. Art Beckwith
Sharon Swinnea
Vicki Rooker
Robert Scott
Robert David Scott
Silverio Galaviz
Margarita Galaviz

In Honor of

Joyce Hicks
Gene & Ann Hicks
Juana De La Torre
Sonia Alcantar



In Kind

AMARA Hospice
Amazon
Anonymous
Cecelia "Sissy" Vaughan
Country Sunshine RV Park
Don Benjas Mesquite Grill
Elsa Civic & Study Club
Eric Zuniga
Holt Texas First Rental
John Knox Village
Krystal Melgoza
Love of Christ Lutheran Church
Magic Valley Retired School Personal Assoc.
Mr. Weslaco
OpusCare Hospice
Queen City
Paula Cano

Real Valley Estates
RGV Educational Secretary Assoc.
Robert & Sharon Smage
Rosalinda Molina
Siesta Village Worship Hour
South Texas College
Southern Comfort Park
St. Joan of Arc Church
St. Pius X Catholic Church
Stanley Bevelle
Starbucks
Sylvia Pena
Trails End RV Park
Valley Grande Institute
Victor Hernandez
Weslaco Elks Lodge 2057
Weslaco Lions Club

Thank You!

TO ALL OUR COMPASSIONATE
GEMS

- Alexis De Sela
- ADL Services, Inc.
- Eugene Vaughan
- Hollon Oil Company
- Idalia Kimbro
- Janice Earl
- Jo Peters
- Mutiat Adeoye
- Oralia Tafolla
- Rhonda Garza
- Robert Antonacci
- Ryan & Jode Vaughan
- Sheryl Henry
- Yolanda Salinas

In Honor of

Brigido Saucedo
Jesus Gomez
Deborah Morales
Michael Mendoza

Giving Made Easy

Your commitment through monthly or quarterly giving is vital to Aurora House's ability to continue to serve our community and ensures that our residents spend their last days surrounded by compassion, dignity, comfort, and peace.



An Easy Way to Give Your Support

You can schedule monthly or quarterly gifts through ACH (Automated Clearing House) debits.

ACH debit allows you to make your donation electronically. It is a more efficient, cost-effective program for both you and Aurora House.

For more information, please contact
Marisela Gonzalez
956-973-9690 or
aurorahousefoundation@yahoo.com

How You Can Help

Become a Sponsor

By choosing to become a sponsor for Aurora House you'll be allowing us to continue providing compassionate end-of-life care for those in need in our community.

Contact Marisela Gonzalez at
(956) 973-9690 or (512) 865-8085
or email mari@aurorahouse.org

In-Kind Donations

To help reduce costs, our program is always in need of items to support our activities - from blankets and wipes for the patients to office supplies. Visit our Wish List to see what you can help with.

www.aurorahouse.org/wishlist

Monetary Donations

Aurora House does not receive any government aid or funding from national or state humane societies and relies entirely on private donations to fund our program. To donate, visit

www.aurorahouse.org/donate

Planned Gifts & Legacy Requests

Including Aurora House in your will or trust can create a lasting legacy to help the community for years to come.

Contact Marisela Gonzalez at
(956) 973-9690 or (512) 865-8085
or email mari@aurorahouse.org



Education Spotlight: Shaping the Future

"I want to make a difference."

For many young people, especially those who may be considering a career in the healthcare professions, that sentiment probably has a familiar ring to it. Internships often can provide vital first-hand experience and insights that will help students decide upon their fields of study as well as their career path.

We are excited to welcome our Spring 2025 University of Texas - Rio Grande Valley Social Work Intern, Peyton Price. "I have been focusing on learning a social worker's role and how they work with clients and their families through the dying process. Aurora House is definitely unique from other organizations that I've known," says Peyton. "From the different programs they provide, their dedication to all patients, families, and our community, it's been a great learning experience so far."

Our goal at Aurora House is to provide an experience with palliative and hospice care to future health leaders. They gain practical skills in pain management, emotional support, and interdisciplinary teamwork while developing a deep understanding of the ethical and cultural aspects of hospice care and gain prescriptive to navigate difficult conversations, support grieving families, and address the holistic needs of patients. By working closely with our experienced professional partners, interns build resilience, empathy, and critical thinking skills that will serve them in their future career endeavors.



COMMUNITY CONVERSATION SERIES: SPRING CALENDAR

Aurora House Foundation | 2646 W. 18th St Weslaco, TX 78596 | (956) 973-9690

*End-of-life planning offers peace of mind, a sense of security, and positive outcomes for individuals and their families.
Join us and start the conversation.*



February 2025

Lunch & Learn!
Friday February 28, 2025
12:00pm-1:30pm
"10 Warning Signs of Alzheimer's"
SASTX Alzheimer's Association

RGV Death Café:
Ante Books & Creative
Workshop
Tuesday February 11, 2025
6:00pm-8:00pm
"Love Letters to Death"

**El Duelo: Grupo de Apoyo/
Adult Bereavement Group:**
Thursday February 27, 2025
6:30pm-7:30pm
"The 5 Stages of Grief"



March 2025

Lunch & Learn!
Friday March 21, 2025
12:00pm-1:30pm
"Caregiver Support 101"
Caregiver SOS

RGV Death Café:
Thursday March 20, 2025
6:00pm-8:00pm
"A Lucky Death"

**El Duelo: Grupo de Apoyo/
Adult Bereavement Group:**
Thursday March 7, 2025
6:30pm-7:30pm
"The 5 Stages of Grief"



April 2025

Lunch & Learn!
TBD
12:00pm-1:30pm
"Medicaid vs Medicare"
Healthcare Educators

RGV Death Café:
Saturday
10:00am-12:00pm
"Death & Donuts"

**El Duelo: Grupo de Apoyo/
Adult Bereavement Group:**
Thursday April 4, 2025
6:30pm-7:30pm
"The 5 Stages of Grief"

Healthier You! The Value of Volunteering

Volunteers play a crucial role in keeping nonprofits thriving. By dedicating their time to helping others, they engage in philanthropy— sometimes without even realizing it. Volunteering is not just about giving to others—it's also a way to enrich one's own life.

Volunteering also has significant mental health benefits!

Studies show that it can reduce stress, anxiety, and depression while improving overall well-being and quality of life. It fosters self-confidence, self-esteem, and a sense of purpose. Supporting a cause you care about can bring fulfillment, direction, and a renewed sense of identity.

Volunteering offers the chance to positively impact your community, grow personally, gain new experiences, and form meaningful connections. If you're interested in volunteering at Aurora House, please contact Aymara Ortez at 956-973-9690 or email aymara@aurorahouse.org.



Aurora House Events

AURORA HOUSE FOUNDATION
INVITES YOU TO

Pour Your Heart Out In



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23, 2025

11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

KNAPP CONFERENCE CENTER, WESLACO

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON TICKETS OR SPONSORSHIP,
PLEASE CALL (956) 973-9690 OR EMAIL MARI@AURORAHOUSE.ORG

LOOK FOR OUR BOOTH AT THESE UPCOMING EVENTS:



Alfresco
Weslaco
Thursday,
Feb. 20, 2025
6:00 pm CST
Downtown
Weslaco
Texas Blvd
Weslaco, Texas
78596

5K Sweet Run and
Fun Walk
Saturday,
March 1, 2025
8:00 am CST
Harlon Block
Sports Complex
1200 W. 18th St.
Weslaco, Texas
78596

5K Run & Resource
Fair
Saturday,
March 8, 2025
8:00 am CST
Edinburg Municipal
Park
714 S Raul
Longoria Rd,
Edinburg, Texas
78542

Texas
Onion Fest
Saturday,
March 22, 2025
8:00 am CST
Downtown
Weslaco
Texas Blvd
Weslaco, Texas
78596

Thank you!
TO OUR FUNDERS

the Valley Baptist
LEGACY FOUNDATION™

CommunityCare.Today
KNAPP COMMUNITY CARE FOUNDATION
Caring Today for a Healthier Tomorrow

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Caregivers

OUR MISSION

To provide compassionate care for persons in the last chapter of life, in a home-like setting, so they can approach a peaceful death with comfort and dignity.