



# HOUSTON HOSPICE

*Life Matters*

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## Tenth Annual Butterfly Luncheon Another Smashing Success

**O**n April 20, 2011, Houston Hospice presented its Tenth Annual Butterfly Luncheon benefiting Houston Hospice programs. The event, chaired by Sharon Michael Owens, with Honorary Chairman, Les Alexander, raised over \$226,000 and drew 360 guests to the Legends Ballroom of the Intercontinental Hotel. KHOU-TV News Anchor Greg Hurst emceed the event, which featured best-selling author Jeffrey Zaslow.

The crowd enjoyed an inspirational presentation by Zaslow, a columnist for *The Wall Street Journal* and author or co-author of three bestselling books including *The Last Lecture*, written with Randy Pausch, for-



*Jeffrey Zaslow, co-author of The Last Lecture and Sharon Michael Owens, Butterfly Luncheon Chairman.*

mer Carnegie Mellon Professor who courageously battled terminal cancer. Zaslow's presentation included video clips of Pausch's "Last Lecture" given at the university. Sadly, Pausch

lost his battle to pancreatic cancer on July 25th, 2008, but his legacy will continue to inspire us all, for generations to come.

Seen in the crowd were Harriet Foster, Mehrnaz Gill, Sarita and Bob Hixon, Ann James, Doug Pitcock, Nancy Ruez, Ann and J. Kent Friedman and Sally and Bob Thomas.

The luncheon continued the Houston Hospice tradition of bringing inspiring speakers to town each year to share their thoughts on life's journey and to celebrate life. In so doing, Houston Hospice promotes its belief in quality of life as opposed to remaining quantity of life and allowing terminally ill patients to live every moment under the best possible circumstances.

## Progressive and Compassionate Taking Advantage of Technology

**I**n the fall of 2007 Houston Hospice proved progressive with the introduction of electronic medical records providing up-to-date technological tools for better and faster patient care directly to the bedside. The state-of-the-art technology also included laptops in the field and wireless capabilities. These improvements made it efficient and effective for physicians doing

an e-signature for instant prescription delivery or a nurse accessing the latest change to a patient's care plan.

Houston Hospice's technology does not stop there – compassion can exist in a technological world.

When people are caring for a loved one, keeping friends and family engaged is difficult. Updating and getting help can

be an emotional drain. Houston Hospice employees see this each day. Houston Hospice is offering CareFlash as a means of connecting people when it



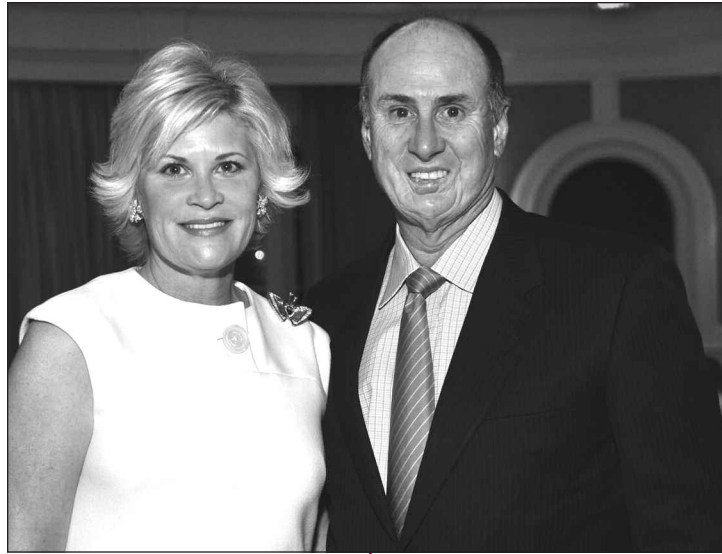
matters most. By clicking on the CareFlash icon on the Houston Hospice web site, *continued on page 2*

# Newsletter



## 2011 Spirit Award Dinner set for October 26

**K**elli and Eddy Blanton are co-chairs for the upcoming Thirteenth Annual Spirit Award Dinner to be held Wednesday, October 26 at the River Oaks Country Club. The Blantons chair numerous events throughout the year and Houston Hospice is honored to have them lead us to another record breaking fundraising event. This is particularly special because the award is the Laura Lee Blanton Community Spirit Award, named so for Eddy Blanton's mother.



The Laura Lee Blanton Community Spirit Award was created in 1999. Houston Hospice named the Community Spirit Award in honor and memory of Laura Lee Blanton who dedicated herself to making a difference in the community. The

recipient(s) of this award support a wide range of community efforts through their energy, enthusiasm, time and resources. Past recipients are Jack S. Blanton, Janet and Ernie Cockrell, Dr. John P. McGovern, The Honorable and Mrs. James A. Baker, III, Dr. Richard E. Wainerdi, Mary and Tony Gracely, Connie Baird Linbeck, Harriet and Joe Foster, Jes and John Hagale, Margaret R. Caddy and Sarita and Bob Hixon.

This year's Laura Lee Blanton Community Spirit Award will

be presented to Maureen and Jim Hackett. "We are pleased to have the opportunity to present this award to Maureen and Jim, who have not only been friends and supporters of Houston Hospice, but of the entire community," remarks President & CEO Jim Faucett.

## Houston Hospice Care Rotation Program

**I**t is estimated that by 2030, 71 million people in the U.S. will be over 65 years of age. In addition to developing the infrastructure to handle increased demand for hospice services, Houston Hospice is committed to increasing hospice care education among the broader healthcare community.

A 1997 study published by the National Institute of Medicine's Committee on Care at the End of Life concludes that every health professional who deals directly with patients and families needs a basic grounding in dealing competently and compassionately with seriously ill and dying patients.

The Houston Hospice Care Rotation Program offers future physicians a hands-on introduction to the concept of hospice care. Houston Hospice is an educational partner with Baylor

College of Medicine, M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, the University of Texas Medical School – Houston, University of Houston, Prairie View A&M University and North Harris County College School of Nursing. Each year, Houston Hospice rotates approximately 30 medical students, fellows and residents through its inpatient unit and individual patient homes. Participants work as part of a multidisciplinary team with nurses, social workers and chaplains. Supervision is provided by doctors who are experts in palliative care. The goal of this program is to ensure that physicians are prepared to effectively and compassionately handle end-of-life issues for all patients and families—a skill that is increasingly important in our aging society.

## Progressive and Compassionate *cont. from page 1*

families and friends can share and support each other. It provides a way to keep everyone up-to-date. It is a secure and centralized CareCommunity which serves as a private online place for loved ones, family caretakers and friends to support each other. It has a private blog capability; an iHelp Calendar where friends can schedule a day they can help with errands for instance; find medical information if desired and a place to share great memories.

Also on the technological front, Houston Hospice is incorporating blogging and social media tools into its web-based mar-

keting and outreach efforts. Blogging will provide Houston Hospice with a home base for telling the Houston Hospice story and will allow the organization to continually update its audience. Houston Hospice will establish a network of communication and engagement opportunities by taking full advantage of Facebook and other Social Media Networks. These improvements will be up and running by the end of the summer so look for Houston Hospice on Facebook and become a fan.





## Houston Hospice Volunteers Offering Comfort to Those in Pain

**F**or the past year, Jennifer Tran has been knitting afghans for hospice patients. Contributing her time in this way has helped her deal with her own grief over the loss of a dear friend. She reaps the rewards of knowing that she offers comfort to others during the difficult final days of terminal illness. One recipient of Jennifer's gift wrote her the following thank you note:

*I want to thank you for the beautiful afghan that you crocheted for a patient at the Houston Hospice. My father received your special gift. It will be a wonderful remembrance for me as he was covered with it when he went to heaven to be*



Jennifer Tran

*with my mother. The hospice care was so special and gave me so much peace of mind. He was taken care of in such a special way to make his last days as peaceful as possible. I was with him when he passed and am so glad that he is in peace and with God. What you do is so special—you give comfort to many families.*

Houston Hospice is most grateful to the many volunteers like Jennifer who give countless hours making thoughtful gifts for patients receiving hospice care and their families. To learn more about Houston Hospice volunteer opportunities, please visit our website at [www.houstonhospice.org](http://www.houstonhospice.org).

## Hospice Care The Gift of Dying Well

**H**ouston Hospice recently received an eloquent description of hospice care from a Philadelphia woman whose sister, father and husband benefited from hospice care. Her sister, Connie, was a Houston Hospice patient. Excerpts from her description follow:

*My sister Nanci has been a hospice and palliative care nurse for over twenty years. Her commitment to her work continues to inspire me. She has a motto, "join hospice and live longer". For many years her motto made no sense to me, it was an oxymoron. I thought hospice was all about dying not living. Then in 1998 my perceptions changed. It became clear that my sister Connie's death was imminent. Although Connie had excellent round the clock hospice care, Nanci felt compelled to personally take care of her. She went to Houston to care for Connie the last weeks of her life. This was my first up close and personal experience with death and dying, my first real introduction into the world of hospice and palliative care. I was totally mesmerized by Nanci's ability to sense just what Connie needed, the ease with which she held and comforted her frail body, her willingness to be both emotionally involved and discerning. Connie was her sister and I was amazed at how Nanci was able to maintain her sense of humor and keep Connie engaged in living while she was dying. Nanci treated each day as another day in Connie's life to be enjoyed to its fullest. She was able to engage us all in the process of Connie's death, lead us through that process and make it easier for our family to be comfortable at an extremely uncomfortable and stressful time. Houston Hospice provided a safe and caring setting for us to share and create great memories as a family.*

## Heating it Up for Hospice



**H**ospice Support, Inc., in support of its local hospice, Houston Hospice – El Campo, held its 7th Annual Bar-B-Que Cook-Off on March 25th and 26th to support hospice care services for residents of Austin, Brazoria, Colorado, Fort Bend, Jackson, Matagorda and Wharton counties.

This event was established in partnership with Muldoon's Saloon and Ryan Services, Inc. in memory of Pat Ryan and Rick Davis of Don Davis Dealerships.

On Friday night, guests danced to the tunes of the popular band, The Slags, and also participated in silent and live auctions. Saturday's festivities included a 5K Fun Run, a Motorcycle Fun Run, a Poker Tournament and a free children's play area. The event was the most successful to date, raising over \$100,000.

For information on next year's event, please contact Reneau Gold, Executive Director, Hospice Support, Inc. at 979-578-0314 or [elcampohospice@yahoo.com](mailto:elcampohospice@yahoo.com).





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**Houston Hospice is a member  
of the Texas Medical Center**

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#### Mission Statement

*Houston Hospice provides uncompromising, compassionate end-of-life care to patients and families in our community.*

*Through the efforts of specially trained and highly skilled interdisciplinary teams of health care professionals and volunteers, Houston Hospice patients and their families are guided through the process of illness, by receiving clinical care, psychosocial support, spiritual guidance and volunteer assistance.*

## Legacy Planning IRA Gift Opportunity Renewed Through 2011

In 2010, Congress passed a wide-ranging package of income tax and estate tax changes. The new legislation, extended through 2011, permits persons over 70 1/2 to arrange direct gifts from traditional or Roth IRAs to charitable organizations, up to a maximum amount of \$100,000. It also includes a variety of other provisions promoting charitable giving, including: repeal through 2012 of cutbacks in certain itemized deductions – including charitable deductions – for individuals with high incomes; a two-year extension of low tax rates on long-term capital gains and qualified dividends – meaning people who receive such income from charitable gift annuities and charitable remainder trusts will pay tax at only a 15% rate (or 0% in some cases); and favorable tax treatment of shareholders in S corporations that contribute property to charity through 2011. To take advantage of these opportunities, please contact your financial advisor. For information on planned giving options at Houston Hospice, please contact Cynthia Nordt, Vice President of Development, at 713-677-7123, [cnordt@houstonhospice.org](mailto:cnordt@houstonhospice.org).

**If you would like to opt out of receiving the Newsletter please notify us by e-mail to [sshrum@houstonhospice.org](mailto:sshrum@houstonhospice.org).**