



this star won't go out: The Houston Hospice Butterfly Luncheon - April 2, 2015

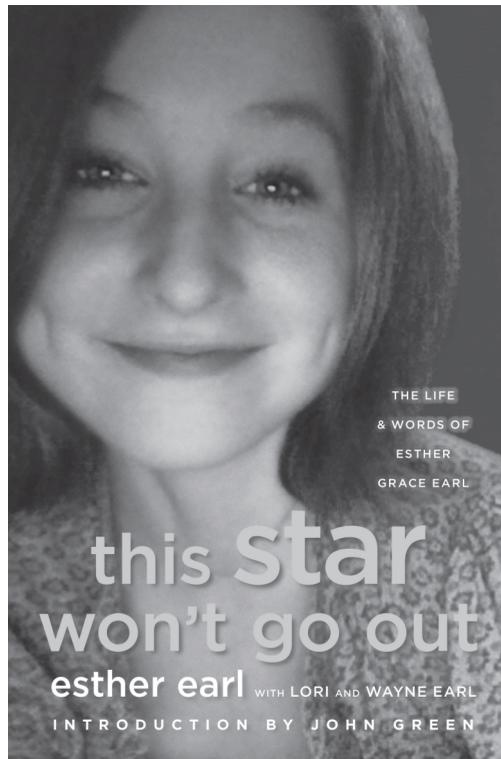
Esther Grace Earl's short life inspired the best selling book, *The Fault in Our Stars* and the blockbuster movie of the same name. Her words will inspire us Thursday, April 2 at the 2015 Butterfly Luncheon.

We are honored to welcome Lori and Wayne Earl, Esther's parents and co-authors with her of *this star won't go out*, as our speakers this year. The Earls will share the amazing story of Esther Grace; her battle with thyroid cancer beginning at the age of 12, and her wit, courage and unflappable spirit that inspired one of the biggest teen phenomena of our era. With Esther as muse, John Green's *The Fault in Our Stars* explored the funny, thrilling and tragic business of being alive and in love.

Esther Grace kept journals, letters and stories of her cancer journey. Her memoir, *this star won't go out*, is her life and words along with her parents', and a touching introduction written by John Green. Lori and Wayne will share Esther's story and talk about the true meaning of life—helping and loving others—that Esther Grace embraced even while facing death.



The Earl Family



Goodreads Choice 2014 Winner

A collection of the journals, fiction, letters and sketches of the late Esther Grace Earl, who passed away in 2010 at the age of 16. Photos and essays by family and friends help to tell Esther's story along with an introduction by award-winning author John Green who dedicated his bestselling novel *The Fault in Our Stars* to her.



Chairmen Lesha and Tom Elsenbook

On behalf of Chairmen Lesha and Tom Elsenbook, we invite you to join us Thursday, April 2, 2015 at the beautiful Houstonian Hotel for the annual Butterfly Luncheon which benefits the operations of Houston Hospice and provides the primary funds to support our Butterfly Program that provides special services for children with life-limiting conditions. *Space is limited, visit www.houstonhospice.org to reserve a table.*

Newsletter

The Grace of Leaving a Legacy Celebrated at Ribbon Cutting

The completion of the construction and renovation of the Margaret Cullen Marshall Hospice Care Center was celebrated at a ribbon cutting ceremony November 18, 2014. Dr. Michele Sabino and Nancy Ruez, Members of the Houston Hospice Board of Directors, cut a ribbon to the entrance of the new, beautiful third floor with its 12 state-of-the art patient rooms.

After the ribbon was cut, and a proclamation from The Honorable Annise Parker, Mayor of the City of Houston, declaring November 18, 2014 as Houston Hospice Day was unveiled, Dr. Sabino inspired us with these words that we share with her permission.

“Let me reiterate the comments of Jim Faucett, our CEO and Don Wagner, our Board Chair, by thanking all of you for making this day possible through your contributions and your hard work.

In February, while giving a homily, Pope Francis referred to his recent reading of the Book of Samuel in which King David’s death is described as quiet, peaceful and serene. As you know, King David’s life was not exactly quiet and certainly not peaceful; yet, he was granted the grace of dying quietly in peace and serenity.

This caused the Pope to reflect upon death and dying, and his hope that all of us will die with three gifts of grace.

The grace of dying at home. At Houston Hospice, we make every effort to honor a patient’s request to die at home. If that isn’t possible, we offer as home-like an environment as possible, surrounded by caring, considerate individuals who support not only the patient but the family as well.

The grace to die in hope, with hope. The hope referred to here is that our patients die in peace, knowing that their families have hope for the future, hope for the human spirit, shored up by positive memories of our care teams’ ministrations, along with our extraordinary bereavement program that sustains and supports the family and loved ones for over a year.

The grace of leaving a legacy. This is not the legacy of material goods, but the legacy of prayer and good works, the legacy of a model of care that allows our families to see that we can die with dignity and respect.

Houston Hospice is blessed with the grace of legacy through our mission—uncompromised, compassionate end-of-life care to our patients, their families and their loved ones, without exception.”



An Emotional Spirit Award Dinner

As reported by the Houston Chronicle, the 16th Annual Laura Lee Blanton Community Spirit Award Dinner at the River Oaks Country Club on Tuesday, October 28 was indeed an emotional evening.

Mistress of Ceremonies and KTRK-TV anchor, Melanie Lawson, invited Houston Hospice nurse Krista Caldwell to share her story. Crowd members were visibly moved as she told them that her husband, (former Arizona State and NFL defensive lineman) Bryan Caldwell, was a Houston Hospice patient. “Knowing the ‘end result’ of Bryan’s illness does not lessen the journey that we are on. I truly cannot fathom walking this road without the Houston Hospice El Campo Team.” Krista revealed that she was taking a leave of absence to care for her husband as he could no longer be left alone. (Bryan Caldwell passed away Saturday, January 3.)

Dr. Paula Denise Trauth, president of Texas State University, presented the Laura Lee Blanton Community Spirit Award to Jerry Fields. His daughter Gregory Burk accepted on behalf of her mother Linda Fields, who was at home recovering from surgery.

Overcome, Fields addressed the audience through tears as he spoke about his wife’s current battle with eye cancer. “Some of us die with dignity and some of us don’t, but we all die,” he said, urging attendees to be generous. “Hospice is the one thing that brings peace.”



L-R: Krista Caldwell and Melanie Lawson



Jerry Fields

A Bucket List Fishing Tale

Thomas Moore, Houston Hospice Admissions Patient Care Manager

One day late last summer, the Houston Hospice Intake Team was answering calls as usual on a Wednesday morning when my colleague, Marcy Antiuk, received an unexpected call, and an unusual request. A doctor phoned to tell us that her patient wanted to be admitted to our inpatient hospice care center, but he had one last desire before discontinuing treatments and surrendering to his disease. You see, this man's disease had progressed to the point that ceasing treatment would decrease his life expectancy to a matter of days. He needed to be transitioned to hospice services that day due to symptom management issues, but first, he wanted to go on one last fishing trip. In fact, he and his family already had the trip planned. In fact, they even had their favorite pier picked out, but concerns about the patient's safety created seemingly insurmountable obstacles to fulfilling this bucket list wish.

Working in the hospice field, we're accustomed to satisfying end-of-life requests, and we often grant day passes out of our facility for this purpose. These are typically outings to visit other family members or to have a meal out. Journeying to the edge of our coverage area for several hours was not an issue. However, this man had a severe and painful wound at the base of his spine that made moving him difficult — transportation would be the key to successfully executing this bucket list wish. The family had already inquired about private-pay ambulance transport, but the quote they received was overwhelming — several hundred dollars, maybe even a thousand.

Gathering a team of individuals (Larissa Williams, Dr. Elizabeth Strauch, Jayne O'Brien and me), we discussed the patient's condition and possible complications. We determined that the

request was reasonable as long as the patient was safe, and stable enough to make the trip. An evaluation by our Admitting Nurse, Debbie Breaux, confirmed that the patient's symptoms were manageable, however it also revealed that pain management was a concern. Because of the expensive private ambulance quote, the man's family had decided to transport him to the fishing pier in a family vehicle. He desperately wanted this last fishing trip, but we feared the car ride would cause excruciating pain.

The only safe option was transportation via ambulance, so we started calling our contracted ambulance companies asking if they would consider a full or partial charity transport. Orion EMS came to the rescue. After gathering only a small amount of information, they immediately agreed to cover all transportation expenses in order to fulfill this last request! Arrangements were made to pick up the patient the very next day. Houston Hospice provided a wheelchair and oxygen for the patient to use during the trip. Hollie Sims and I assisted while Orion EMS transported the patient to his fishing pier.

The water, the pier, the landscape—everything was perfect. The late summer sunlight shimmering from the water was matched only by the twinkle in our patient's eyes. After he finished fishing, Orion EMS provided a safe and comfortable ride to the inpatient unit. This was a great collaborative effort by many people with a triumphant blessing as an end result—just another reason why we love this work so very much.



Your support continues to humble, encourage and fill us with gratitude. Each year, community support enables Houston Hospice, the only nonprofit hospice in Houston, to provide comfort and care when and where it is needed most. In 2014 your contributions helped Houston Hospice care for 2,276 patients (122 were non-funded with 5 non-funded pediatric patients).

2014 Annual Campaign Contributions	\$83,063
2014 Spirit Award Dinner Contributions	\$301,680
2014 Trees of Light Memorial Contributions	\$29,232
2014 Butterfly Luncheon Contributions	\$302,059
Capital Campaign	\$4.2 million (in only 18 months!)

In addition to monetary giving, you have given of your time, energy and talent. Over 350 trained volunteers donated thousands of service hours to direct patient care, office assistance, monthly deliveries of "Angel Bags" (food for needy families), donation and delivery of holiday gift cards to needy families, and much more. No words can describe our gratitude for your patronage and support of our mission to provide uncompromising, compassionate and respectful physical, social and spiritual support.

Houston Hospice
1905 Holcombe Boulevard
Houston, Texas 77030-4123

Phone: 713-467-7423
Website: www.houstonhospice.org

Volume 15 Issue 1

The Newsletter is published by Houston Hospice, a nonprofit organization providing comprehensive end-of-life services and education to Greater Houston and surrounding communities.

Houston Hospice is a member of the Texas Medical Center

Board of Directors

Chairman
Don B. Wagner, LFACHE

Vice Chairman
Michele J. Sabino, EdD

Secretary
Shadow Sloan

Members
Leslie J. Flynne
C. Stratton Hill, Jr., MD
Sarita A. Hixon
William A. Hyslop, FACHE

Smith L. Johnston, MD, MS
Paul F. Mansfield, MD, FACS
Quinella A. Minix, EdD
James A. Reeder, Jr.
Judson W. Robinson, III
Nancy Ruez
Arthur L. Smith
H. Richard Walton
Edmund H. Weinheimer, Jr.
Sue Stiles White

President & CEO
James A. Faucett, Jr.

Reserve Your Butterfly Luncheon Table Today



Visit www.houstonhospice.org to reserve your table for the 2015 Butterfly Luncheon on Tuesday, April 2 at the Houstonian Hotel with speakers Lori and Wayne Earl, co-authors of *this star won't go out*.

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.

HOUSTON HOSPICE

IS HIRING



Houston Hospice is hiring the best of the best. **Nurses are especially needed.** Please share this news with nurses and others you know who are ready for a fulfilling career. See available positions and apply at www.houstonhospice.org.