



HOUSTON HOSPICE

Life Matters

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**Chicken Soup Author, Acclaimed Speaker, Self-Help Expert
LeAnn Thieman Joins 18th Annual Butterfly Luncheon on April 1st**



Prolific *Chicken Soup* author LeAnn Thieman shares engaging stories as an accidental humanitarian, nurse and nationally-acclaimed speaker at the upcoming Butterfly Luncheon to be held at The Junior League of Houston.

When Saigon was falling to the communists in 1975, LeAnn Thieman accidentally found herself caught up in the Vietnam Orphan Airlift ordered by President Ford. She and a friend, both homemakers and nurses, had originally come to bring six babies for adoption. Six became 300. Her book, *This Must Be My Brother*, details her daring adventure to rescue 300 babies in a mass evacuation as artillery attacks by the North Vietnamese Army rained on Tan Son Nhut Airport. The experience forged her ability to find courage in extraordinary circumstances.

Thieman has been featured in *Newsweek's* "Voices of the Century" issue, on FOX-TV, BBC, NPR, PBS, and countless radio and TV programs. After her Operation Babylift story was featured in *Chicken Soup for the Mother's Soul*, Thieman became one of *Chicken Soup's* most prolific writers.

Her devotion to 30 years of nursing, made her the ideal co-author of *Chicken Soup for the Nurse's Soul*. She went on to co-author 16 *Chicken Soup* books, including *Chicken Soup for the Christian Woman's Soul*; *Chicken Soup for the Caregiver's Soul*; *Chicken Soup for the Father and Daughter Soul*; *Chicken Soup for the Grandma's Soul*; *Chicken Soup*

for the Mother and Son Soul; *Chicken Soup for the Christian Soul 2*; *Chicken Soup for the Adopted Soul*; *Chicken Soup for the Soul, Living Catholic Faith*; *Chicken Soup for the Nurse's Soul, Second Dose*; *Chicken Soup for the Soul, A Book of Miracles*; and *Chicken Soup for the Soul, Answered Prayers*.

As a renowned motivational speaker, Thieman shares life-changing lessons learned from her Airlift experience. Believing we all have individual "war zones," she inspires people to balance their lives, truly live their priorities and honors them for the difference they make in the world.

Thieman is one of about 10 percent of speakers worldwide to have earned the Certified Speaking Professional designation and in August 2008 she was inducted into the Speaker Hall of Fame. She and Mark, her husband of 45 years, reside in Colorado where they enjoy their empty nest.

Proceeds from the Butterfly Luncheon fund Houston Hospice operations and its Butterfly Program of pediatric hospice care.

Newsletter

HOUSTON HOSPICE BUTTERFLY LUNCHEON • MONDAY, APRIL 1, 2019
11 A.M. REGISTRATION • 11:45 A.M. LUNCHEON
LUNCHEON CHAIRS: JENNY KEMPNER, ISABEL LUMMIS AND SUE WHITE
THE JUNIOR LEAGUE OF HOUSTON • 1811 BRIAR OAKS LN, HOUSTON, TEXAS 77027
VISIT WWW.HOUSTONHOSPICE.ORG TO PURCHASE INDIVIDUAL TICKETS.
CONTACT CYNTHIA NORDT, CNORDT@HOUSTONHOSPICE.ORG OR 713-677-7123 TO RESERVE A TABLE.

Houston Hospice Reaches Top Level of We Honor Veterans Program

Houston Hospice has earned a Level Four promotion from We Honor Veterans, the highest level of the program. Launched by the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO) in collaboration with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), We Honor Veterans is a program to improve the care veterans receive from hospice and palliative care providers.

The higher status reflects Houston Hospice's work to provide veteran-centric care and support that reflects the important contributions by men and women who served in the U.S. military. Houston Hospice officially celebrated this achievement ahead of Veterans Day with Veterans on Thursday, Nov. 8.

"Texas and Houston are home to large Veteran populations in all of our communities," said Houston Hospice Vice President of Development and External Affairs Cynthia Nordt.

"Our commitment as a hospice is not only to provide quality hospice care and services for Veterans in our care but help connect Veterans to the VA, healthcare services and valuable community resources. Level Four is a significant achievement reflecting our continuous work across educational and community outreach along with patient care to better serve our Veterans."

According to NHPCO, a vast majority of Veterans may not be aware of end-of-life services available to them, including the Medicare Hospice Benefit and VA-paid hospice care.

In Houston Hospice's Vet-to-Vet program, Veteran volunteers are paired with Veterans who are on hospice service. Volunteers like Mike McCardle meet with patients to share experiences, support and healing. "I feel a deep connection because they know I understand," said McCardle, who served in the U.S. Army from 1964-1969.

"It's been a rewarding bond to meet other Veterans. I've heard stories about the Battle of the Bulge and South Pacific," he added.

In addition, care teams, including chaplains, nurses, volunteers and social workers, present each Veteran with a Certificate of Recognition for his or her service to the nation. As a Level Four partner, Houston Hospice has demonstrated a commitment to: Integrating Veteran-specific content into staff and volunteer orientation, including education programs; conducting Veteran-specific presentations to community, healthcare and Veteran organizations; partnering with the VA to ensure the to unique needs of Veterans are met; and



Veterans Michael McCardle, Paul Agnew and Narilyn Riley were saluted by Cathy Travland and Sue Lucas of Helping Hands Ladies of Cypress and Houston Hospice to celebrate the We Honor Veterans achievement.

instituting organizational policies and procedures that evaluate how Veterans and their families are served.

Community groups like Helping Hands Ladies of Cypress (HHLOC) add to the program. HHLOC is partnering to make quilts and crocheted hats for Veterans in hospice care. "It's a huge honor for us to recognize Veterans and use our craft for Veterans. Every quilt we make is special and represents our gratitude and commitment to those men and women who have done so much for serving our country," said HHLOC's Cathy Travland.

The patriotic-themed quilts are made from donated fabric and materials. HHLOC has also supplied quilts to the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center.

"Quilts are an expression of love, strength and warmth and these will touch many hearts," said Nordt. "Helping Hands Ladies of Cypress using their amazing craft is a wonderful way to touch lives of our Veteran patients and their loved ones while creating a keepsake to treasure the memory of a loved one."

Good Samaritan Foundation Recognizes Hospice Nurses Booth, Kessler and Turner



Houston Hospice nurses, Sarah Booth, Margaret Kessler, and Bridget Turner received the prestigious Good Samaritan Foundation Excellence in Nursing Award at a luncheon ceremony on September 5, 2018 at the Royal Sonesta Houston Galleria Hotel.

The event was chaired by Lorraine Fraizer, PhD, RN, FAAN, FAHA, John P. McGovern Distinguished Professor and Dean, UT Health Cizik School of Nursing. Through the Excellence in Nursing Awards, Good Samaritan Foundation encourages others to celebrate and recognize individual nurses who excel in their chosen fields.

Nurses are nominated by their peers for their passion, leadership, mentorship, and service to the Houston community. All nominations were reviewed and scored by a distinguished selection committee chaired by David Marshall, JD, DNP, RN, CENP, NEA-BC Chief Nursing and Patient Care Services Officer, UTMB Galveston, and comprised of many clinical leaders in the Texas Medical Center.

Booth, Kessler and Turner have more than 100 years of combined nursing and healthcare-related experience.

Three

Houston Hospice Family & Friends Profile: Dan Danford

Dedication, appreciation, accomplishment, determination, and much more all come to mind when we think of reaching milestones. In 2018, Chaplain Dan Danford achieved a significant one: 25 years with Houston Hospice, making him one of the longest-serving staff members in the organization's history.

Why did you become a chaplain?

That is a good question. I was at a crossroads when I did my clinical chaplain residence at a hospital here in Houston. I was either going to stay with Ministry or shift my focus to a social work degree. Once the decision was made, it seemed the path led into hospice chaplaincy. Hospice care was a reminder of my childhood with grandparents staying with my family. My mom once said "family cares for family."

Something people don't know in my role as chaplain

I remember reading an article which used the image of meeting a stranger while traveling. This was a reminder of an experience in which I was riding a Greyhound bus to travel home on Christmas evening. I sat in the only available seat and ended up in a conversation with the person next to me. She talked about her holiday hopes and fears. This led to religious beliefs. I remember leaving with a different perspective of God, a new view that led me to expand my own beliefs.

So in answer to the question, I think my approach to meeting with people in hospice care is an echo of the first time meeting with a stranger. To meet with people where they are in their journey, aware that my role is to listen more than to speak.

How has chaplaincy changed in 25 years?

Most of the changes have been due to Medicare regulations. There is a greater focus on details in charting with a more defined plan of care regarding Pastoral support.

Most important thing about serving the spiritual needs of hospice patients and families

This is a tougher question for me because



Houston Hospice Chaplain Dan Danford

every encounter is different. As such, I would say that it helps to be flexible when meeting with people. Also to be able to say "I don't know" and "I'm sorry," as there are times when spiritual questions don't have a simple answer. I try to affirm the journey where questions lead to more questions rather than a simple answer. Because as long as we are asking questions we are open to growth and change along the journey.

Is there something that guides you in every situation?

For me, it is the belief that "God is with them before I arrive. God will be with them after I leave." So I strive to be 'in the present moment encounter', acknowledging that each moment can be a sacred moment.

Interests outside of work

I like to read a good book. I seek quiet time in the yard. I have discovered that pulling weeds can be a time for life review amidst the work.

Favorite comfort food

Macaroni and cheddar cheese.

Movie or book recommendation

Everyone is different. So I would say there are books and movies that have caused me to think about life, faith, family. I tend to review those books and movies. I'm open to new options, but tend to stick with some of the early influences. For books, *The Hobbit*,

"There are times when spiritual questions don't have a simple answer."

The Velveteen Rabbit, *Horton Hears a Who!*, *Roots*. For a movie, I will always watch *Sergeant York*.

Things to do in Galveston

I always recommend the ferry ride over to Bolivar peninsula. Watch the people, watch the water for dolphins, watch the air for seagulls.

Readers' Accolades, Solid Philanthropic Support Highlight Past Year

This past year saw continuous success at Houston Hospice. More recently, *Senior Resource Guide* unveiled its 2018 Readers' Choice Awards in January and once again, Houston Hospice was a "Best Of" winner in the publication's annual awards. For the fourth straight year, Houston Hospice received the award for Best Hospice (Houston area). Readers rated and picked a top winner in seven categories including leisure and lifestyle, health and beauty, housing and home care, food and drink, Texas professionals, medical centers in Texas and final planning.

Moreover, Houston Hospice fundraising and donations were once again above par. 2018 contributions were \$2,553,000 which was favorable to the budget of \$1,650,000 and the 2017 total of \$2,005,000. More than \$1,000,000 in grants was received while the Annual Direct Mail Campaign generated \$54,000 and the Trees of Light revenue was \$30,000. Houston Hospice Vice President of Development and External Affairs, Cynthia Nordt, said: "The generosity of so many, from individuals and families honoring loved ones to corporate partners and foundations, keeps our mission in the forefront of the families and communities we serve."



The 2018 Spirit Award dinner honored Nancy and Bryan Ruez in an evening chaired by Mary Ellen and Bruce Meyer at the River Oaks Country Club.

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Suzi Hanks, Monica James and Dr. Hahn Trinh at Cox Media Group

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 featured on For Your Information radio broadcast

Team physician Dr. Hahn Trinh and community outreach coordinator Monica James were invited by Suzi Hanks, an on-air personality with 107.5 FM The Eagle, to talk about Houston Hospice. Hanks' show, *For Your Information*, is a 30-minute program that broadcasts Sunday mornings on Cox Media's three stations: The Eagle 106.9/107.5 FM, The New 93Q and Country Legends 97.1 FM. Hanks, who recently experienced how hospice works when her mother, residing out of state, became an in-home patient, wanted Houston Hospice to help her audience better understand hospice and how the service cares for patients. During the 30-minute program, Dr. Trinh and James described how interdisciplinary teams work to support patients and families and levels of care provided by Houston Hospice. A download of the show is available at houstonseagle.com/news/public-affairs