



# HOUSTON HOSPICE

*Life Matters*

VOLUME 24 | ISSUE 2

## Houston Hospice Chaplains Embrace the Spirituality of Each Patient

Holistic support of patients and families is one of the hallmarks of hospice care and one for which Houston Hospice prides itself. We care for the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of everyone who comes through our doors (literally and figuratively). Misconceptions about hospice continue to exist even today, as Robert Lampkin, one of our chaplains, will attest.

Robert humorously recounts when he arrives for an initial visit, people often expect to see him in a long, dark robe with a clerical collar, holding a bible in one hand and a cross in the other! It's an image straight out of a movie!

But in reality, spirituality is very personal and means different things to different people. Our interdenominational chaplains offer spiritual support – in whatever way, shape or form that takes for each patient. Each patient plays a significant role in creating their own spiritual plan. Some patients want to pray. Some want to recite scriptures. Others want to talk about their train collections, driving a Dodge dually or they want to listen to their favorite music on Robert's portable turn table.

"Life Matters" is the Houston Hospice tagline and Robert takes this to heart. He strives to focus on the patient's quality of life for the time they have left. It's important families are open to what a chaplain can offer and they trust the process, which allows our chaplains to travel this journey with them.

In some ways, a chaplain's appointment is almost like a dear friend who stopped by for a visit. It's an opportunity for patients to be their authentic selves and to share their fears, proudest moments and even an "amen" every now and then.

Robert recalls visiting a patient who had Alzheimer's and was non-responsive. After playing a song for her and offering a prayer, she whispered, "Amen!" Her daughter immediately started crying and exclaimed, "Mother hasn't said Amen in years!" According to Robert, no matter the physical ailment, the soul lives and if he can speak to a patient's soul, all is right with the world.

Meaningful engagement with patients and families and respecting every patient and their personal spiritual journey allows our chaplains to be an invaluable asset during end-of-life care. Houston Hospice chaplains have a broad network of clergy who can step in and serve patients of every faith, including Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism – to name but just a few.

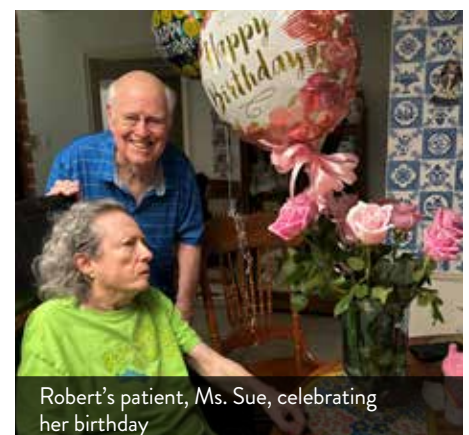
Thanks to the generosity of donors like you, Houston Hospice is able to maintain a strong spiritual care program that not only uplifts patients but also offers their families comfort, peace and unforgettable moments of connection. Your support ensures this vital work continues.



Robert Lampkin, chaplain



Miguel, pediatric Butterfly Team patient, and Robert Lampkin



Robert's patient, Ms. Sue, celebrating her birthday

# The Kyle Tucker Foundation Hits It 'Out of the Park' with Donation to Houston Hospice

For the second year in a row, the Kyle Tucker Foundation invited Hospice Heroes and their families to attend a Houston Astros game in the Field Club at Minute Maid Park, where these field-level seats make everyone feel like celebrities. Doctors and nurses, hospice aides and administrators, and everyone between cherished this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

The Hospice Hero program was created by the foundation to recognize the selfless work of hospice caregivers who go above

and beyond each day caring for patients and families facing their end-of-life journey. It's a welcome acknowledgment much appreciated by Houston Hospice team members.

The two organizations celebrated their partnership August 3, with the Kyle Tucker Foundation presenting a \$10,000 donation to support Houston Hospice's continued efforts to provide the best quality, end-of-life care for the communities of Southeast Texas.



## Houston Hospice Guides Next Generation of Physicians in Essentials of Hospice Care

Houston Hospice is taking its end-of-life care expertise and sharing it with local hospice and palliative medicine, geriatric, and pediatric palliative medicine fellows, as well as medical students, in a series of seminars aimed at training health care professionals how to communicate with patients and families about hospice care, how to treat symptoms at end of life and how to comply with state and national hospice regulations.

A delicate topic under the best of circumstances, these focused lessons on end-of-life options will provide physicians and other staff with the necessary tools to offer clear, compassionate – and accurate – information about hospice care to patients and families and develop hospice symptom management skills. Developed by the team physicians at Houston Hospice and led by Dr. Elizabeth Strauch, vice president of medical affairs, these seminars provide a variety of in-person sessions at the Houston Hospice campus in the Texas Medical Center.

Hospice care is holistic in nature and not only cares for a patient's physical symptoms, but also for the emotional, spiritual and social needs of the patient and their loved ones. To enhance understanding of these concepts, seminar participants have the opportunity to learn from a panel with representatives of each field that makes up a hospice interdisciplinary team.

The lessons learned through these seminars will follow participants throughout their careers. The impact is far-reaching, as patients and families benefit from physicians and health care providers who are knowledgeable about hospice care and its importance as a recognized health care specialty.

We are actively seeking funding to expand this important work and reach more health care professionals by providing a well-rounded curriculum in the field of hospice care. Our ultimate goal is to ensure more terminally ill patients are aware of and receive the compassionate, end-of-life care they deserve. Your generous gift today will help us fulfill this need.

# Houston Hospice Celebrates 2024 Spirit Award Honorees

## Vivie and Chris O'Sullivan Embody the Giving Spirit of Houston



Vivie and Chris O'Sullivan are deeply rooted in the Houston community, and Houston Hospice is proud to be among the causes they support.

The O'Sullivans' dedication to compassionate, end-of-life care is beautifully reflected in their work with the historic gardens at Houston Hospice's Holcombe House.

Vivie became active with Houston Hospice during her provisional year in The Garden Club of Houston and served as co-chair of the Hospice Garden under Cindy Wallace in 2008 and 2009. She went on to chair from 2010 to 2013 and promoted the idea of a Master Garden Plan to better maintain and beautify the hospice grounds. Chris underwrote the inaugural holiday lighting of the Houston Hospice historic garden grounds in 2021, which continues to be a meaningful highlight each season.

Through their generosity, the O'Sullivans created a tranquil place where patients and their families can experience the peaceful power of nature, finding comfort physically, emotionally and spiritually.

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*"We believe that service is a fundamental responsibility and privilege, and we are deeply grateful to be a part of a greater community that shares this view."*

Vivie and Chris O'Sullivan

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Their connection to Houston Hospice is also deeply personal. Both Vivie and Chris entrusted the organization with the care of their loved ones, witnessing firsthand the compassionate, high-quality care that defines Houston Hospice.

This year's Spirit Award Dinner, chaired by Jenny Kempner and Isabel Lummis, with Chris Knapp and Liz Winslow as honorary chairs, promises to be a special evening celebrating the O'Sullivans and their unwavering commitment to making a difference in the lives of others. Funds raised will help Houston Hospice continue to provide dignified, compassionate care and comfort to patients and their families across its 13-county service area.

*The Spirit Award Dinner is Wednesday, October 23 at the River Oaks Country Club.*

# Ending the Year on a High Note

As we approach the end of 2024, you may be wondering how you can fulfill your philanthropic goals while enjoying tax savings and income advantages. Consider these worthwhile strategies before the year's end:

- **IRA Charitable Rollover**  
Congress made permanent a law allowing individuals aged 70½ or older to make gifts directly from their IRA to charity. For many, this is a highly tax efficient way to give. An IRA rollover gift will not be included in your taxable income and may qualify for your required minimum distribution (RMD).
- **Outright Gift of an Asset**  
If you would like to make a gift to support Houston Hospice this year but are concerned about preserving your cash resources, consider donating an appreciated asset. For example, if you own stock (or any appreciated asset), you can gift that asset to our organization. Our mission receives the current value of the stock, and you can claim an income tax deduction for the same amount even if you originally paid less for it.
- **Blend Your Giving**  
For even more impact, consider a gift today using your IRA distribution, appreciated assets or cash, while complementing it with a gift in your will or estate plan. This allows you to see your gift in action, while also building a lasting legacy.
- **Make a Gift Today**  
If you want to make an immediate impact and enjoy income tax savings, make your gift now and witness the direct results of your generosity in action.

To learn more about these Planned Giving options and discover which is right for you, please visit <https://houstonhospicelegacy.org/> or reach out to Aida Matic, CFRE, vice president of philanthropy and community engagement at [amatic@houstonhospice.org](mailto:amatic@houstonhospice.org). We are dedicated to helping you create a legacy that aligns with your values and philanthropic goals.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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

## Green Thumbs Rejoice! It's the Annual Bulb & Plant Mart

A Houston tradition since 1942, The Garden Club of Houston's annual Bulb & Plant Mart takes place **October 10-12** at The Church of St. John the Divine located at **2450 River Oaks Blvd.**

Funds raised from this annual event support beautification, education, horticulture and conservation projects, including the historic Holcombe House gardens right here at Houston Hospice!



**For more information, please visit:**  
<https://www.gchouston.org/bulb-plant-mart/>



## Annual Trees of Light Event Scheduled

December 5 kicks off the lighting of the historic gardens at Houston Hospice, which will be transformed with more than 100,000 sparkling lights for the community to enjoy throughout the holiday season. Feel free to stop by our Texas Medical Center location during the month of December and tour the illuminated gardens.