



life times

FALL 2011

the music of love, family and faith...

Keith Williams was, above all, a man of strong faith. Born and raised in the church, he drew sustenance from its teachings and found in Scripture the model for the way he wanted to live his life. He rarely missed an opportunity to worship, taking great joy in sharing his faith through his musical gifts on the guitar and drums.

A hard worker, model son, devoted husband and father to two young children, at 28 Keith had a life of plans and dreams ahead of him. His diagnosis of terminal cancer stunned all who loved him, but Keith's faith did not waiver. A Bible verse from Thessalonians became his banner: "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." It was Keith's certainty that his illness had a reason, and that he was to be an example for others.

When Keith was admitted to HomePlace in May of 2010, it seemed he

would not be able to attend the annual family reunion at Lake of the Pines, a time when family gathered from near and far. Keith's cousin, Crystal Rossi, sent word to their family, friends and church family. They would gather at HomePlace on a Friday evening for the music and worship they always shared together so that Keith could join them.

Almost 100 people spread across the back lawn that warm spring day. A keyboard, drums, guitar and an ensemble of singers led the way. With the windows and patio door opened to his room, Keith could hear the music and the voices of those he loved rising in praise and thanksgiving, and he was able to join them for a while and to lift his hands in joy.

HomePlace was a gift to the Williams family, a soft place to land and to gather their strength for the rest of the journey. After a week or so, Keith was able to go home with his wife, Sheree, and their children, Penelope and Sawyer, and with the help of

Hospice Home Care, he spent his last days in the home he had built with his own hands when he and Sheree were engaged. "When I think of Hospice, I think of angels," said Sheree. "If Hospice weren't there, people would have to do this all by themselves, and they wouldn't know what to do. They were with us every step of the way."

Keith never missed a church service. First on a walker, then in a wheelchair, he was always there, until the very last week, when he worshipped on the Sabbath, celebrated Father's Day, and died the next Thursday. "He was very strong," said Sheree, "and he lived until he died."

(Continued on page 2.)



(Music...Continued from cover.)

Though Keith was the musical one in the family, Sheree had been working on a song of her own for more than a year, before Keith was even ill. It was to have been a gift for the first Father's Day after Penelope was born, but it took another year, a year of struggle and sadness, for the words to come together. In celebration of the way Keith had taught their little children to pray, Sheree's own song of love and family and faith ends with these words she sang to Keith just four days before he died.

*No matter what we face down life's road
Even though the trials may seem too strong
We just have to go back to those little moments
Where we showed them through our faith that
Prayer. . just. . . can't. . . go wrong*

*So Daddy will you pray. . . and we'll pray with you
Thank God for our every moment that he's brought us through
He'll hold us in His arms each and every day
He knows our every heartache 'cause he's not too far away
And every night we'll all gather just the same
And together we'll call upon His name
And ask Him to help us every day
Amen. 'Cause that's what Daddy prayed*

a note from Marji



At Hospice of East Texas, we use a marketing tagline in our publications and in the media: "the center of excellence in hospice care for more than twenty five years".

But how do we know that our people, our programs and our care are excellent? One measure is to compare Hospice of East Texas to other hospices across the country and submit ourselves to the rigorous accreditation process offered by the Community Health Accreditation Program, Inc.(CHAP).

After a visit from CHAP in March,

this highly esteemed accrediting body announced that Hospice of East Texas has been awarded CHAP accreditation under the CHAP Hospice Standards of Excellence for the third time. Through the CHAP accreditation process, Hospice of East Texas was measured on approximately 3000 standards, demonstrating our organization's continuous commitment to excellence in end-of-life care, and our ability to meet the industry's highest nationally recognized standards.

David Nelson, the Chair of the Hospice of East Texas Board, had this to say about the CHAP process. "During their visit, the CHAP accreditation team recognized Hospice of East Texas for being



among the top hospices in the nation. It is a compliment to our leadership and staff that they have met the highest standards of community-based care."

We celebrated our accomplishment with twelve blue and white cakes for staff and volunteers across the organization; each of them is, personally and professionally, the foundation on which excellence is built. I am so proud of their work, so proud of their care and compassion, and so proud to be their colleague.

Marjorie Ream
President and CEO
Hospice of East Texas

many gifts, many hearts
**one congregation...
many gifts...
many hearts.**

Dayspring United Methodist Church is a small congregation, but they have big hearts for giving and serving.

Challenged by Pastor Jeff Olive, the congregation chose Hospice of East Texas as a focus of their mission outreach for 2011. Their first offering was a generous financial commitment from the congregation's mission outreach. Then Care Groups, Bible Study groups, and Sunday School classes within the congregation looked at their individual and collective gifts, and offered them to the patients and families served by Hospice of East Texas.

Holly Boyd (who is also a member of the Hospice of East Texas Board of Directors) and the care group of which she is a member brought dinner for all the families in HomePlace and stayed to serve the meal. Kathy Ballard and Sharon Troxell and the Ladies Bible Study made and decorated beautiful cookies for the monthly bereavement support groups.

One spring evening, Aaron Laird's group came to do a hotdog cookout on the patio for families at HomePlace, and Karl Steddom led a group of youth and adults to purchase and plant 60 Knockout roses for the front entrance.

Dinner, roses, cookies, hotdogs. A break from the stress of caregiving, a place of beauty and welcome, a treat when doing the hard work of grieving. The people of Dayspring United Methodist Church offered their talents, their gifts of love and caring to Hospice of East Texas. Taking time from their busy lives to serve those who are hurting and grieving, they have touched the lives of patients and families in many meaningful ways, sharing the big gifts and big hearts of their small congregation.



Pastor Jeff Olive in front of Carmike Movie Theatre, where Dayspring United Methodist Church currently worships.



Members of Dayspring UMC prepared a hotdog cookout for families

The Dayspring UMC work crew after planting roses in front of HomePlace



Ida Stephenson's neighbors in Hamilton Park donated a brick in her honor and gathered to celebrate her life at the brick dedication.



Cynthia Ellington, HomePlace Volunteer Coordinator (in white shirt) joins members of Living the Word Ministry International who brought food for families at HomePlace.



Sarah Ford has volunteered at the front desk of HomePlace for five years.



The 2010-2011 class of the Jacksonville/Rusk Leadership Institute shared proceeds from their barbecue lunch with Hospice of East Texas. A brick on the Walk of Friends commemorates their efforts. Pictured are Bob Francis, Hannah Hudson, Deenda Etheridge and Jaleea Hudnall

Attorney Kyle Morrison (at right) brought good news to Hospice of East Texas Board president, David Nelson (left) and President/CEO Marjorie Ream: a significant planned gift from the estate of Mr. Van Winkle.



Rosalinda and Rafael Lemus are a mother/son volunteer team. Rosalinda comes to the front desk in HomePlace each Wednesday evening after her work at Southside Bank. Rafael, a senior at Robert E. Lee High School in Tyler, comes on Sunday afternoon to work the hospitality cart, offering complimentary snacks and drinks to families at HomePlace.



HOET thank you

When someone comes into our life for a reason, it is usually to meet a need you have. They have come to assist you through a difficulty, to provide you with guidance, and support, to aid you physically, emotionally or spiritually. The staff and volunteers at Hospice of East Texas provided all of these things plus the comfort of knowing our loved one was being cared for with true compassion and concern. We cannot praise Hospice of East Texas enough – your kindness will never be forgotten.

...

Thank you for making our last day on earth with him nicer

...

Oh! What a group of angels! Your care for my husband was so appreciated and comforting. How do you say "thank you" which is so little when they did so much. May God continue to bless each and every one—Darla, Alice, Liz, Lou, Emily and Amy. Also, the gentleman who came and sat one afternoon. You truly bless lives.

...

The family of HWS wants to express our gratitude for the wonderful care, maintaining Mr. S's dignity. He would have said "thank you" himself, if it would have been possible. The instant answer to the help light was awesome. Thanks is a little word. Our gratitude has no ending. God bless Hospice of East Texas.



The staff in the Medical Records department love their volunteers so much they showcased them on their bulletin board and celebrated their service with lunch. "The Medical Records volunteers give us the equivalent of two additional full time staff people," said Tammy Shamburger. "We literally could not do our work without them!"



what was it about the car wash?



Todd Sigmon, East Texas Medical Center Vice President and Hospice of East Texas Board member



The 2011 Day of Caring Car Wash crew

What was it about the car wash?

The United Way of Tyler/Smith County's annual Day of Caring offers volunteers the opportunity to "get out and serve" across our community. As a part of this huge community-wide effort, community volunteers and teams from East Texas Medical Center and Brookshires came to Hospice of East Texas for a car wash for the families whose loved ones are at HomePlace.

A car wash. A simple thing. But this year, there was something about washing cars that especially touched the hearts of the volunteers who participated. Two of them wrote about their experience on Facebook, and we share their comments here:

I'd like to say I volunteer because I am altruistic. The truth is volunteering gives me an opportunity to learn more about organizations and the people who work there. Today, I volunteered to wash cars for families with loved ones at our local hospice. It only makes sense that getting your car washed while your father is in his last few days is not at the top of your "to do" list. You learn a good deal about people's lives cleaning out their cars. While scrubbing wheels and rinsing I started thinking about how we've traditionally motivated volunteers. We tell them they will feel better about themselves or repeat the traditional "I got more out of this than they did."

While those may be true, and I do think about that when I volunteer, I realized today that the real benefit was not anything about feeling better about myself. In fact, what was most satisfying was, for once, not thinking about myself or my feelings at all. C. S. Lewis says somewhere that legitimate humility is not thinking less of yourself but thinking of yourself less. In fact, he also says the best kind of humility is a "self-forgetfulness" in which we are not even conscious of how we feel about ourselves at all. That's how I felt today at hospice. I completely forgot about how I was feeling about myself for doing this. For a few hours I escaped the prison of "me" and just washed cars. There was no need to be thanked or recognized or even to feel good about doing it. I wonder if we aren't missing something in encouraging people to feel better about themselves by volunteering? It wasn't even what I would describe as altruism. It was pure and simple self-forgetfulness. Maybe we should figure out a way to describe the benefits of not thinking about ourselves at all. Maybe that's more precious and scarce and valuable than feeling good.

Fred Smith
President, The Gathering

This was a lot of fun and rewarding. Death, disease and trauma have no respect for age, race or finances. One man that had very little was thrilled to have his old truck washed as his mother passed this morning, and he wanted to at least be able to pull up to the funeral with his truck clean. Another lady in a Porsche Cayenne was just thrilled that she had one less thing on her "to do list" to worry about. We all had the chance to do something for a co-worker's husband, and it gave us a chance to visit with him and just do something when really there wasn't anything to do other than pray for peace and mercy in their situation.

Dan Burgess
East Texas Medical Center

Tom's team

Hospice care at its best involves an interdisciplinary team of physicians, nurses, social workers, home hospice aides, volunteers and chaplains who care for the whole person and the whole family.

Tom Shepherd wanted to die at his home by the lake, surrounded by his family. Actually, his wish was even more specific: he wanted to die in his old recliner, at his home by the lake, surrounded by his family. Anyone who knew retired Master Sergeant Tom Shepherd knew that he was going to get what he wanted, and he did, with his caring family and his entire team from Hospice of East Texas surrounding and supporting him.

After his death, Tom's family invited his team for pie and coffee and a presentation, a generous \$10,000 gift in memory of Tom and in honor of all those who so lovingly cared for him. Over the months of Tom's illness, they had all become like family, bonding over many visits, late night calls, long trips to the lake, countless cups of coffee and a shared determination to honor the wishes of a man and a family they all came to love.

"We did it." said Jutta Shepherd, Tom's widow, with both sadness and pride in her voice. "We gave Tom what he wanted. But we couldn't have done it without all these great people. They are so special to us."



To the most wonderful staff and volunteers of Hospice of East Texas: Words cannot express the warm feelings and gratitude that we have for everyone that helped us through such a difficult time. I never felt, not once, that our precious time was just a job to anyone there. For that I will forever have you in my prayers.

...

I know that my normal year has ended, but please continue to send us the letters and especially notification of the Tree Service in December. We are still having grief issues and your literature has really helped. I had so much to do the last year that really my grieving for Mom did not start until the first anniversary of her death. You do a great job for which our family is very grateful.

...

There is no way we could ever repay Hospice for the advice, above all, but for the caring and loving nature of all the ones who came to help us during his sickness and for the way they helped me and my children to make hard decisions. They were right - every time.

I do thank all your organization for the good and caring and HONEST care my husband received.



IN LOVING MEMORY
OF A FRIEND OR RELATIVE



IN HONOR OF SOMEONE
WHO LIGHTS UP YOUR LIFE



AS A HOLIDAY GIFT IN HONOR OF
FAMILY, FRIENDS OR BUSINESS ASSOCIATES

As the holiday season approaches, we hope you will consider supporting The Hospice of East Texas by making a contribution to Light Up A Life, the signature fundraiser that has been an essential source of private donations for our programs for more than twenty years.

As you honor your friends or remember your loved ones, your gifts to Light Up A Life provide the

financial support essential to Hospice of East Texas' ability to offer extraordinary care at the end of life at no direct cost to patients and their families.

Watch your mail for Light Up A Life materials. What better way to give than to make a contribution that will directly touch the lives of people who need our care and compassion?

www.hospiceofeasttexas.org

board of directors
The **HOSPICE** board of directors
of East Texas Foundation

Jim Mazzu
CHAIRMAN

Ann Lake
SECRETARY

Glenn Collins
TREASURER

Mike Allen

Rick Allen (ex-officio)

Tim Alexander

Doug Bolles

Rick Jett (ex-officio)

Steve Mills

David Nelson

Marjorie Ream (ex-officio)

Thomas Smith

board of directors
The **HOSPICE** board of directors
of East Texas

David Nelson
CHAIRMAN

Keith Ingram
VICE CHAIRMAN

Mary Ann Cozby
SECRETARY

Mel Lovelady
TREASURER

Margo Adams

Sissy Austin

Holly Boyd

Taylor Burns

Sherry Dunn

Bob Dyer

Bob Evans

Dr. Robin Fabre

Mary Elizabeth Jackson

Rick Jett (ex-officio)

Dr. David Jones

Rabbi Neal Katz

Greg Kimmel

Dr. Jonathan MacClements

Debbie Roosth

Bob Roseman

Todd Sigmon

Ray Thompson

leadership team
leadership team

Marjorie Ream
PRESIDENT/CEO

Tom Beets, MD
MEDICAL DIRECTOR

Myanh Bui
VICE PRESIDENT OF FINANCE

Nancy Lamar
VICE PRESIDENT OF COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Christi Baggett
DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION
MANAGEMENT

Cammie Bedell
DIRECTOR OF OUTPATIENT CARE

Cheryl Sciba
DIRECTOR OF PROFESSIONAL OUTREACH

Celeste Fisher
DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS

Jean Gordon
DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION, QA/PI

Jessica Henderson
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH, DEEP
EAST TEXAS

Kurt Lorenz
DIRECTOR OF PHARMACY

Vicki Harvey
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND
DEVELOPMENT

Linda Navarro
COMPLIANCE OFFICE

Kim Reimann
DIRECTOR OF INPATIENT CARE

Elizabeth Waldrop
DIRECTOR OF LOGISTICS