



A LETTER FROM TERESA RANSOM

Home Care nurse, Teresa Ransom, wrote this touching email to her Hospice of East Texas colleagues on Christmas Day 2021:

This month my 17th year as a HOET employee has passed. As you all know we are faced with many challenges, rewards, sadness, funnies, pretty much all kinds of emotions when working with families and patients of the terminally ill, especially in their own home environment.

I truly can't see myself in any other line of work because I personally love it so much. I wanted to share an experience I had at Sam's last week on one of my days off that is a true reminder of the real difference we make to people. Sometimes, and I'm sure you all will agree, we just do our job, after all, it's just our job right?

As I was at Sam's, looking at the clothes, searching for a new Christmas sweatshirt. I found one I liked and placed my hand on it, as I was about to search for my size in the large pile a lady standing close to me placed her hand on the same shirt and said to me, "Feel the inside of this shirt, it is so soft!" As I touched the inside of the shirt, about to agree, she placed her hand on mine causing me to look up at her. As soon as we made eye contact, I noticed she had tears in her eyes. She said to me, "You don't know who I am do you?"

As I searched my brain, I said, "I'm sorry, you look familiar but I can't place where I have met you", She said "You were the nurse that came out the first time when my son got admitted to hospice last year, you were the one, that took so much time



with us and you made it happen! You answered questions, explained what was happening and what we were to expect, you taught us so much that day! My son was declining so fast, and you called it just like it was a movie, and it happened just like you said it would, but because of you (and all of you) at Hospice of East Texas who came to our home were wonderful, we were so comforted when you left us that day. We were so distraught and exhausted, I didn't get to really tell you how much we appreciated all you did."

"You got the bed here, the meds changed, you went back to Tyler, picked them up and brought them back to us to make sure we had what we needed to make him comfortable, you made it all happen as fast as possible and took your time with us. You have no idea what a difference you made to us that day, and I have had flashbacks so many times and you just have no idea how much it really did for us."

She was crying, she grabbed me and hugged me, I began to cry, and as she thanked me again, I had no makeup left on my face! LOL, I thought wow, this is a pretty nice Christmas gift. My point in sharing is not to get a pat on the back. I know we all are thanked and rewarded by families all the time, but I just wanted to remind you all, what we do does not go unnoticed, especially by these families.

Merry Christmas to you all, my Hospice of East Texas family, you all are amazing and I love you each so much!

Much Love, Teresa Ransom

OUR MISSION

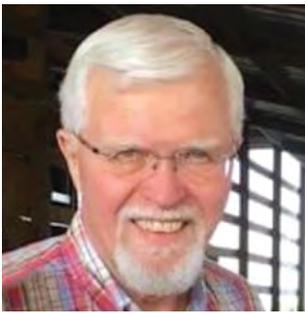
Hospice of East Texas seeks to enhance the quality of life for individuals and families dealing with life-limiting illness and to assist bereaved family members by providing compassionate, comprehensive, coordinated care and support.

OUR VISION

We are the blueprint for exceptional end-of-life care inspired by commitment to our patients, our people, our purpose.

20 Years

TWO HOSPICE OF EAST TEXAS STAFF MEMBERS ARE RECOGNIZED FOR TWENTY YEARS OF SERVICE



Elwood Stetson

“Hospice of East Texas has been my friend for forty years. It’s a part of who I am.”

With these words, Elwood Stetson describes his long relationship with the people and mission of Hospice of East Texas. Forty years ago, he was the first chaplain for

Hospice – as a volunteer! – and led the very first bereavement support groups in the early 80s.

Through the years, Elwood has served in various capacities, as a board member, a volunteer, and for the

last twenty years as a chaplain on the Hospice staff. “Elwood is an example of genuine compassion, and those he serves often use those words to describe him,” said Stacy Sanders, Director of Chaplains and Bereavement Services. “His insight and wisdom continue to guide and encourage not only our hospice families but our staff as well. I am thankful he continues to serve on the chaplain and bereavement team.”

“Hospice of East Texas has touched my life in so many ways,” says Elwood. “My parents were both Hospice patients and they both passed away at HomePlace. My wife suffers from dementia and will need Hospice care. I can sympathize and empathize and even celebrate with patients and families because I know what a blessing Hospice of East Texas can be.”



Shane Lee

“I’ve always enjoyed helping people,” says Shane Lee. “I’m not a medical professional, so working at Hospice of East Texas has been the best way for me to help people without a medical degree.”

In his twenty years on staff, Shane has held many different jobs. “I go where they point me,” he says, “from supervising housekeeping and the kitchen, to now working on the Health Information Management team. You’ve got to listen to God and follow directions!”

“Every job I had before I came to Hospice of East Texas led me here. I’ve used everything I’d ever learned here in some way, because I’ve done so many different things.”

Kim Smith, Health Information Management Team Leader, describes Shane as “one of the nicest people I have ever met and one of the most dependable people I have ever known. I believe he is even better than the postman! Shane is always willing to learn something new and take on any task. Regardless of what is going on in his world he steps up to the plate for it all!”

The best part of working at Hospice of East Texas for Shane is that he enjoys all the people he has worked with over the years. “People with good hearts are led here, and you get to work with people with good hearts every day. That’s such a blessing,”



THE LIGHT IN BETWEEN

Life is full of all sorts of obstacles and obstructions, roadblocks and detours. Sometimes we get stuck in the same place because our focus is only on those things that divert our attention and hinder our movement.

Have you ever wondered what would happen if we spent as much time looking past the obstacles as we do looking at them? Years ago, I was sitting on my front porch taking in the sights and smells of a lazy summer day just after an afternoon rain shower. The sun was setting in the west; the air was warm and fresh, and tiny droplets of fresh rainwater glistened. Across the street there was a thick stand of young sweetgum trees. The green leaves were finely laced together to form a seemingly solid wall that swayed ever so gently in the evening breeze. The scene was beautiful and peaceful.

As I sat in my rocking chair, I noticed a pair of red birds frolicking in the foliage. I watched them chase each other in the dense growth.

A hop here, a jump there, a flutter of wings, and then off they went flying so fast it was hard to keep my eyes from crossing. It was at this point it occurred to me: I have never seen a bird run into a tree. They fly in and out among limbs, sticks, leaves, pine needles, brambles, branches and such all day long, and not once have I ever seen a bird bounce off any of them. I asked the question "Why?" The answer (in my humble opinion) is because they do not focus on the obstacles as they fly; **they look for the light in between.**

Maybe we can learn from the birds. Maybe, just maybe, we could spend a little less time looking at the obstacles in our path and a little more time looking past them, if we remember to look for the light in between.

From "Popcorn, Potatoes and Pomegranates" by Wes Bynum



Wes Bynum
Care Support Coordinator

Dear Wes,



*Thank You
so Much!* for all

the encouragement you have given to me as well the others in our group on January 29th. I pray you keep doing what you are doing! Keep being the light for those of us who can't seem to find it right now. I pray one day I will be able to see what the Red Cardinal sees when flying through the trees. May God continue to Bless you!

*"Enter into His gates with thanksgiving
and into His courts with praise.*

Be thankful to Him, and bless His name.

Psalm 100:4

Carol Robertson



HOSPICE OF EAST TEXAS

40
A GIFT TO OUR COMMUNITY
1982
2022

SAVE THE DATE!

**HOSPICE OF EAST TEXAS
FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION
“A GIFT TO OUR COMMUNITY”
NOVEMBER 9-10, 2022**

NOVEMBER 9, 2022

Presentation for the Medical Community
The University of Texas at Tyler Ornelas Activity Center

Jointly sponsored by
The Smith County Medical Society and
The Smith County Medical Alliance

Reception at 5:45 pm
Presentation by Dr. Ira Byock at 6:30 pm
*“The Best Care Possible... Driving Value
Through Personalizing Care”*

CEUs available

NOVEMBER 10, 2022

Community-Wide Anniversary Celebration
11:30 am to 1:00 pm
Green Acres Baptist Church Crosswalk Center

Keynote by Dr. Ira Byock:
“What Mortality Can Teach Us About Living Fully”

Ticket and Sponsorship Information Coming Soon

**For more information on these events, visit the
Hospice of East Texas website at www.hospiceofeasttexas.org**

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Dr. Ira Byock

Keynoting the Hospice of East Texas Fortieth Anniversary Celebration will be Ira Byock, M.D., FAAHPM, a leading medical authority and public advocate for improving care through the end of life.

With the topic of “What Mortality Teaches Us About Living Fully”, Dr. Byock uses insights and stories to help everyone forgive, appreciate, love and celebrate one another, and live life more fully.

Dr. Byock lectures nationally and internationally and is the author of three books, *Dying Well*, *The Four Things That Matter Most* and *The Best Care Possible*.

FORTY FACES OF HOSPICE

Through four decades, the extraordinary care, compassion and commitment for which Hospice of East Texas has come to be known have been embodied in our people – the staff and volunteers who live out our mission every day and the donors and friends who have supported that mission for forty years.

Throughout this year of celebration, we will present “Forty Faces of Hospice”, forty stories of people who

represent what Hospice of East Texas has always been about, stories of love, hope, commitment and generosity. These faces, and thousands like them, are what make Hospice of East Texas “a gift to our community”.

A few of the Forty Faces are presented here. To see more and read the complete stories, visit our website at www.hospiceofeasttexas.org.



JACKIE CLEWIS Hospice Home Aide

To me, working at Hospice of East Texas is a ministry, not a job. I like it so much, I've done it for thirty years!

My very first patient was a gentleman in his home being cared for by his wife. He was unresponsive, just lying in the bed. For about five days I went every day to bathe him, and on that fifth day, when I was turning him, he died in my arms. God gave me strength that day, and I

said, “I can do this.” I was meant to be there when he passed so that I could be there for his wife. After that day I knew hospice work was what I wanted to do.

What I do is so intimate. I try to help patients keep their dignity when I'm bathing them, shaving them, combing their hair. Families are always wanting to give me something, something to eat or something to drink, I say, “Just pray for me”. It's prayer and passion for this work that have kept me doing it for thirty years.



KEITH MORRISON Hospice Marketing and Access Team

Before my dad came under the care of Hospice of East Texas, I believed hospice meant giving up and dying immediately. I learned that was not at all the case. Our family rallied around Dad, we spent some really good quality time together and closed some holes in our relationships. Friends stopped by, grandbabies and great-grandbabies came in to see Dad and love on him. The level of care and

compassion we received from our hospice team was beyond anything I expected and something I'd never witnessed before. I learned how comfort care is so much different than aggressive treatment and just as important not only for the patient but also for the family. I work for Hospice of East Texas now on the Marketing and Access team. I believe in what we do, and I feel it's my calling to help families get the help they need when they're at their absolute worst. It is what Dad would have done, and that's good enough for me.



MISS TEXANA Hospice Volunteer

I've been a volunteer for Hospice of East Texas since I was one year old... so eleven years now!

I know it's time to go to Hospice when I get a bath and a blow-dry and Crystal puts on one of my red outfits. I love to wear red, and I love to dress up! But even though I look like I'm going to a party, I know that going to visit patients at HomePlace is important,

and I take it seriously.

At HomePlace, I go to those who need me. Sometimes it's a family member, sometimes a staff person, sometimes it's a patient. Crystal asks the patient if they want me to be with them, and if they say yes, she will put me on their bed, and I will lay beside them for as long as they want me to.

Crystal takes good care of me, and I love her, but I don't need her to do my work at Hospice. I just need her to drive me there!



Marji Ream
President/CEO

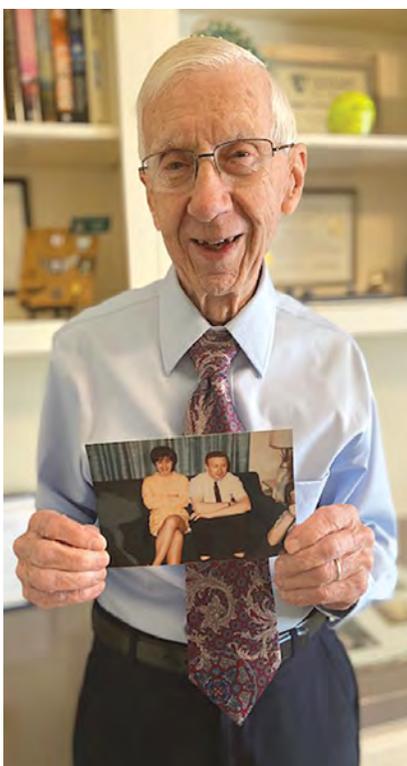
A MESSAGE FROM MARJI

In this newsletter, we joyfully announce the celebration of “Forty Years of Extraordinary Care” provided by the Hospice of East Texas.

Founded by dedicated volunteers and supported by our generous communities, Hospice of East Texas continues to honor its founding commitment to serve everyone who needs our care, regardless of their financial circumstances. In 2021, 3.5% of our patients were uninsured or under-insured; we provided more than \$600,000 in care to those patients and their families.

We mark this milestone fortieth year by renewing our commitment to serve 100% of those who come to us for care, a commitment which sets us apart from every other hospice in East Texas and a commitment which is only made possible by your support. YOU make our mission happen, with your encouragement and your generosity.

We are grateful to all of you, and we look forward to celebrating with you!



A GIFT FROM BOTH OF US

“I will never forget what Hospice of East Texas did for my Georgie, and I will forever be grateful.”

Georgianna and Richard Harris were married for 53 happy years. Mr. Harris’ career in the Army and as an air traffic controller took them all over the United States together before they retired to Tyler.

When Georgianna’s heart condition worsened, Hospice of East Texas stepped in to help Mr. Harris care for her in their home where she passed away in 2010. “Hospice of East Texas was there for my Georgie, and she went to heaven peacefully and without pain. They were also there for me, helping me to say goodbye,” said Mr. Harris.

Mr. Harris has designated that a portion of his estate be given to the Hospice of East Texas Foundation after his passing to create the Georgianna and Richard Harris Endowment Fund. Annual distributions from the fund will be unrestricted, allowing Hospice of East Texas to use them in the area of greatest need at the time.

“I like the idea that I’m creating a fund that will be permanent and give back to Hospice of East Texas forever and ever. I like the idea that others will be helped the way Georgie and I were. When that gift comes to Hospice, it will be from me and from my Georgie,” Mr. Harris insists. “We were partners in all we did, so our gift will be from her as well.”

THE POWER OF A LEGACY

Hospice of East Texas is fortunate to have friends like Richard Harris join in our work by making Hospice of East Texas the beneficiary of a gift through a bequest.

A planned gift is a gift to the future, a gift to create a legacy, a gift which will touch the lives of those who might someday need the caring services provided by Hospice of East Texas.

Your planned gift may be made to honor or memorialize a loved one. It can be an unrestricted gift or a gift designated to a specific program of Hospice. If you are planning such a gift, we hope you will let us know

simply so that we can thank you for your generosity and your commitment to our mission.

As always, you should consult your tax advisor, attorney, or financial planner to make certain the legacy gift you are considering fits into your overall circumstances and planning, especially the needs of your family.

For more information on ways you too can leave a lasting legacy in support of the mission of Hospice of East Texas, contact Kristen Seeber, Vice President of Development, at kseeber@hospiceofeasttexas.org or 903-266-3402.

THE MARGO HIRSCH ADAMS ENDOWMENT

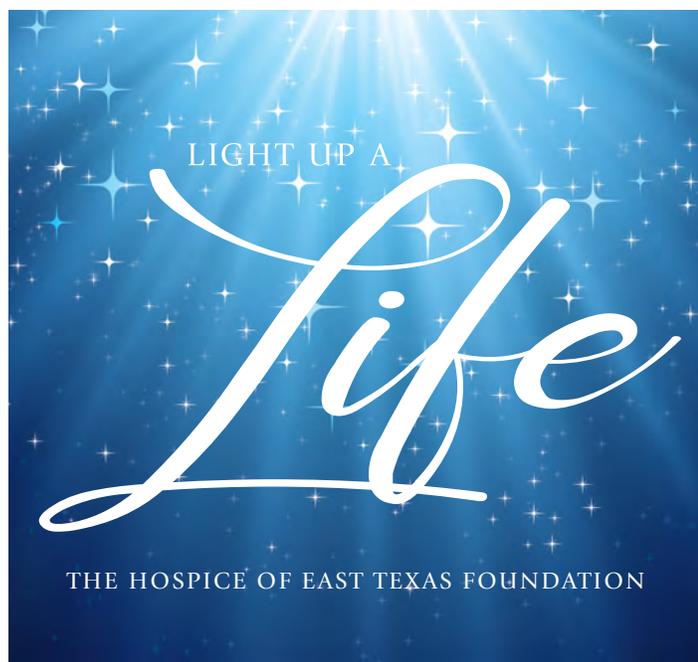
Margo Adams was a part of Hospice of East Texas since before there was a Hospice of East Texas, and she was connected to our people and our mission for forty years, until her death in December of 2021. Described by those who loved her as “a force of nature”, Margo was known for her commitment to her family, to Temple Beth El, and to the Tyler community where she left her heartprint on many causes she cared deeply about.

In Margo’s honor and memory, the Hospice of East Texas Foundation Board created the Margo Hirsch Adams Endowment Fund at the Foundation. This permanent fund will support the mission of Hospice of East Texas in perpetuity through annual distributions from its investment earnings.

Rabbi Neal Katz remarked at Margo’s memorial service, “Life is indeed precious, not because we have too much time, but because we do not have enough. It is hard to imagine a world without Margo’s vibrancy.”



The Margo Hirsch Adams Endowment is one of ten endowment and designated funds held at the Hospice of East Texas. Each was established to honor or remember a loved one or to support a particular program of Hospice of East Texas. For more information, visit our website at [hospiceofeasttexas.org/Hospice of East Texas Foundation/Endowments and Designated Funds](http://hospiceofeasttexas.org/Hospice%20of%20East%20Texas%20Foundation/Endowments%20and%20Designated%20Funds). To inquire about creating an endowment please contact Kristen Seeber, Vice President of Development at 903-266-3402.



Many thanks to the **626 generous donors** who contributed to Light Up A Life, Hospice of East Texas’ signature fundraising campaign in 2021!

Your **gifts totaled \$134,000** and will go to support the mission and programs of Hospice of East Texas in the year ahead.

Thank You to Our Light Up a Life Benefactors!

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