

# Healing Hearts



Bo's Place®

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## Vacationing While Grieving



The first family vacation after a loved one has died can be wrought with emotion and uncertainty. What will it be like without your loved one? Will you feel guilty trying to enjoy yourself? While you cannot take a vacation from grief, there are actually good reasons why vacations – even short ones – are beneficial to the grief process.

- Grief is isolating: Those who are grieving often feel disconnected.

Planning a vacation and engaging with the outside world again may remind you that you're not alone.

- Grief is hard work: In fact, it's likely the hardest work you will ever do. While it may not be realistic to expect that you can leave the pain of grief behind, a change of scenery may allow you to grieve together as a family while offering some much needed distraction, as well.
- Traveling can provide insight: When we venture into unknown territory, we are forced to confront ourselves and each other in a different way. Stepping outside of our comfort zone can put us in closer touch with our feelings and help us process our emotions with new insight.

If you're apprehensive about a week-long vacation, consider a day-trip or a long weekend. A vacation can be as simple as a day at a theme park or a hike in the hills. In addition to your length of stay, consider the destination. It may feel right to visit a place that holds special meaning for your lost loved one or your family. Or you may decide that it is better to visit a new place. You may wish to memorialize your loved one on the vacation by organizing something in

their honor or reflecting on their absence.

Talk with your family to assess expectations and desires. What does everyone hope to get out of the vacation? How does each family member think they will feel? Just because the family is at Disney World, for example, does not mean that Mom won't have some sad moments and need some time to cry.

Like much of the grieving process, the timing and destination of that first vacation after a death will be unique to you and your family. And while it will certainly be different from past vacations, it can be an important step in your family's grief process.



## Volunteer Spotlight: Kelly & Nick Nolan

we \*heart\* our volunteers

Nick and Kelly Nolan have been part of Wednesday nights at Bo's Place for six years. Kelly works with the Junior High group. Nick started as a kitchen volunteer, but was quickly recruited to go through training and become a facilitator for 9-11 year olds. Nick and Kelly have also volunteered at Camp Healing Hearts, and Kelly has run the half marathon five times, raising money on behalf of Bo's Place.



"Working with the children has been a wonderful experience. It is a place for them to feel not alone and that there are others that share in their grief. We love how much the children connect with each other, and feel safe sharing their deep sorrows not only with each other but us as well. It is nice knowing that when they leave Bo's Place they have some relief and an extended family to help them in their grief journey. Another thing we enjoy is the community aspect created through the volunteer network. It is a group that supports one another and we have developed many friendships as a result. We couldn't ask for a better place to volunteer."

Thank you, Kelly and Nick, for being enthusiastic supporters of Bo's Place. Your commitment to our mission helps us to heal hearts!



## Quilting for a Cause

Bo's Place is grateful to the creative and devoted volunteers who Quilt for a Cause, sewing the memory squares created by our families in honor of their loved ones into the beautiful quilts that hang on the walls of our building.

These talented volunteers include Nan Darilek, Christine Hempel, Debbie Jones, Katherine Onstott, Judy Quinn, Debbie Ruffing, Sonja Stephens, Debbie Stuart, Auian Ward, Coastal Prairie Quilt Guild, and Bluetriangle Quilt Guild. They develop the design and layout for each quilt, picking the fabric, sewing the squares together, and attaching the backing. Some volunteers quilt by machine and others quilt by hand. Each quilt is unique: designs include butterflies, children's handprints, stars and moons, balloons, rainbows, zigzags and stripes, and animals, for example. Last summer, Bo's Place hosted 13 quilters who pieced and completed three quilts in one day.



The passion, skill and creativity of these volunteers show through in the amazing quilts they lovingly craft for Bo's Place. Auian Ward picked up quilting at an early age. "I grew up in the country and quilting was a necessity. Quilts were heirlooms. Back then we made 'scrappy quilts' using a grandmother's wedding dress or old clothes to make memory quilts that tell a story. We quilted by hand or had crude equipment, but now we have machines. Quilting is relaxing to me and provides cherished memories. I'm grateful to give back and make quilts for lots of different groups. I try to come up with new ideas from nature or architecture; and I keep a Bo's Place folder with ideas and patterns for new quilts. I enjoy the patchwork, sewing the tops, attaching the batting, and adding the backing." Katherine Onstott, with the Coastal Prairie Quilt Guild, picks bright colors and a layout to showcase the beautiful panels created by group members.

Jennifer Fuller, Bo's Place Katy Group Coordinator, recruited her mother, Judith Quinn, to make a quilt while she was visiting her family during the Christmas Holidays. Judy writes, "I have sewn, knitted, embroidered, etc. since I was a girl. I was happy to do a quilt for Bo's Place because I am very impressed with the work they do. I picked fabric that would represent the spirit of memory and lasting love, and tried to lay the squares in a pleasing arrangement

according to color and sentiment. Although I did not know the individual and families, I was honored to be a part of something so moving and meaningful."

Bo's Place is always looking for talented quilters. If you would like to Quilt for a Cause, please contact Carla Bagalay, Volunteer Coordinator, at [carla@bosplace.org](mailto:carla@bosplace.org) or 713-942-8339.



## Come to the Bo's Place Spring Ethics Workshop: *Ethical Interactions with Grieving Children & Families*

On Friday, April 1, 2016 from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm, Anne Strain, LCSW, will present [\*Ethical Interaction with Grieving Children and Families\*](#). Utilizing lecture, discussion, and film clips, this workshop will explore how to ethically support a child/adolescent within the family unit, especially when the needs and experiences of the family and individuals within the family are different.

To register online, please click [here](#). To register in person, please contact Valencia Buggs, Administrative Assistant, at [valencia@bosplace.org](mailto:valencia@bosplace.org) or 713-942-8339.



## Happenings



On February 1, Development Director Andrea Sivells accepted a donation from the **Charity Guild of Catholic Women**. The funds will support our Hispanic Outreach efforts.



On February 3, Marian Mankin, LCSW, Bo's Place Program Director, presented "**Suddenly Solo: Grieving the Death of a Significant Other**" at The Hope and Healing Center. Click [here](#) for a handout on things to consider after the death of your significant other. To see the entire presentation, click [here](#).



A group of high school freshmen from **National Charity League, Heart of Texas Chapter**, held its meeting and participated in a service project at Bo's Place on February 7. The students helped prepare for the Kaleidoscope project for our ongoing children's groups next month.

**St. Martin's Episcopal Church** continued its longstanding tradition of decorating Bo's Place for Valentine's Day, and they provided a delicious meal to our families and volunteers.



On February 9, the Social Workers of **Texas Children's Hospital** featured Bo's Place as the highlighted charity at its Valentine's Day bake sale. Flyers, wristbands, and branded Band-Aids were passed out to staff, families, and hospital visitors to spread the word about Bo's Place.

On February 15, this group completed the five-week **Volunteer Facilitator Training** at Bo's Place, and they will all now serve as support group facilitators for adults, teens, and children. Hats off to these volunteers!



On February 26, Marian Mankin and Cristina Flores recruited interns at the **University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work's** 28th annual Field Marketplace.

On February 27, we held our **Retiro Sanando Corazones** volunteer training to prepare our camp counselors, medics, media personnel, gophers and art barn volunteers for a fun-filled camp weekend. We're grateful to be able to offer this exciting experience to our Spanish speaking families for the second year in a row!





On February 27, our staff trained **Camp Healing Hearts** volunteers. The trainings were a fun, informative and educational time for all. We now have over 30 volunteers trained and ready for camp!



## Bo's Place Grief Support Services

At Bo's Place, we believe that enabling grieving families to share their experiences with each other helps these families navigate the grief journey and move towards hope and healing. We offer free Grief Support Groups in English and Spanish to families and individuals.

*If you or someone you know would like information about Bo's Place Grief Support Groups for children, families, and adults, [click here](#) or call 713.942.8339.*

Bo's Place exists to enhance the lives of those who have experienced the death of a loved one.

10050 Buffalo Speedway // Houston, TX 77054 // 713.942.8339

[info@bosplace.org](mailto:info@bosplace.org); [www.bosplace.org](http://www.bosplace.org); [facebook.com/bosplace](https://facebook.com/bosplace)

