

Healing Hearts



E-Newsletter // October // 10.01.16

Día de los Muertos

It's Día de los Muertos altar season at Bo's Place and we are preparing for our participation in the ofrenda exhibition at MECA (Multicultural Education and Counseling through the Arts). This exhibition is part of their *Día De Los Muertos: Honoring Our Past, Celebrating Our Future* event and culminates in a free Día de los Muertos festival on October 29-30.



MECA is a community-based non-profit organization committed to the healthy development of under-served youth and adults through arts and cultural programming, academic excellence, support services, and community building. We have participated in their ofrenda exhibition for the past three years and are excited to continue this community altars tradition.

The ofrenda exhibition at MECA will run from **October 10 to November 18** and is open to the public. For more details, please visit MECA's [website](#).



Volunteer Spotlight:

Amy Smith - a facilitator with music in her heart



Perhaps the first things you notice about Amy Smith are her friendly smile, big heart, and unstoppable can-do attitude. If you dig a little deeper, you will find she has a great sense of humor and music in her heart. While most of these qualities are required characteristics of a good support group facilitator, the music was an added bonus; and due to her background in music therapy, many at Bo's Place refer to Amy as our music guru.

Amy's musical skills became particularly important during volunteer trainings and at Camp Healing Hearts. According to Amy, "there are many different ways that music can benefit the grief journey but one of the most poignant is its incredible ability to give voice to a depth of emotion that is often unspeakable. Music provides a safe space to share, whether by facilitating a discussion of personal responses or by piquing memories and experiences."

The positive impact of music was illustrated at Camp Healing Hearts with a group of moms that Amy was facilitating. "I brought 10 ukuleles to camp and was determined to teach the women to play, just for fun. What I didn't anticipate, however, was their level of involvement in the music and learning, which led them to write an original song about camp. It was a wonderful shared experience for these moms who had not really bonded until this moment."

Amy began volunteering at Bo's Place in 2011 and as a group facilitator, she has done it all, leading groups for our youngest family members to the teens and even adults. A couple of years ago, there was a facilitator opening in the young adult group and, according to Amy, that group quickly became her favorite. "It is so important for young adults to have a group of peers to relate to; and I have seen amazing connections and healing happen over the past two years. One of my favorite success stories is a young woman who came to Bo's Place 'secretly' because she felt she needed a different kind of help than what was traditionally accepted in her family. Watching her begin to relate to and be supported by her group members was a really significant transition that was incredible to watch."

It's that story and so many others that kept Amy coming back to Bo's Place year after year. Bo's Place Bilingual Ongoing Groups Manager, Cristina Flores, LCSW, says that Amy was "the heart and soul of the Tuesday night young adult group, and really made everyone feel welcomed and important." Amy says she felt that same support from her co-facilitators. "Bo's Place really has the most amazing volunteers that I am also happy to call my friends."

Amy recently moved from Houston to attend the University of Kansas where she

will be obtaining her PhD in Music Therapy. Amy is originally from Kansas, so in a sense, she has moved back home; but she says that she will miss her Houston "family" and will always hold Bo's Place staff, fellow facilitators, and families near and dear to her heart.

We'll miss you too, Amy. Best of luck!



Workshop: Helping the Bereaved through the Holidays

The holidays are filled with traditions and gatherings with family and friends. Because of all the meaning and heightened expectations, the absence of loved ones that have died can be felt more intensely. Please join us for a free lunch and learn entitled *Helping the Bereaved through the Holidays*.

Date: Friday, October 14
Time: Noon - 1:00 pm
Cost: Free (1 CEU provided)
Location: Bo's Place

This workshop will describe common reactions to the holidays that the bereaved experience, and will provide techniques and activities to use with the bereaved to help them express their needs, concerns and expectations regarding the holidays.



Lunch will be provided, but space is limited! Please [RSVP](#) to save your spot.



Help Our Camp Superheroes

Bo's Place is taking our families to Camp for All in Burton, Texas November 18-20, 2016 for a weekend of camp activities and grief work. Our camp theme is "Continuing the Journey: Superheroes," which will allow families to explore how each of us has the strength to be the hero in our own grief story.

In order to offer this special bereavement camp, we need volunteers with big hearts and lots of supplies!

Click [here](#) for a volunteer application.



Bo's Place is hosting a free live viewing of a community workshop presented by the National Alliance of Grieving Children entitled "**Understanding the Impact of Death, Dying, and Bereaved among Urban Youth Populations**" on November 3, 2016.

Death, dying, and bereavement in urban communities are themes that appear almost daily in news headlines. Rarely, however, is there any discussion on a national level as to how this impacts the lives of children and teenagers living in urban communities. Death in the family and in the community has a huge impact on the daily lives of urban youth.

This presentation will provide insight into the challenges faced by urban children and teenagers grieving the death of people in their lives and in their communities. A panel of three professionals living and working with children and teenagers in high need urban communities will share their personal experience working with this population. They will also share information about the impact of grief on the lives of urban youth, and provide insight into how to help bereaved youth in the urban community in culturally informed and sensitive ways.

Date: Thursday, November 3

Time: 11:00 am- 4:00 pm

Cost: Free without CEUs or \$25 with 4.5 CEUs

Location: Bo's Place, 10050 Buffalo Speedway, Houston, TX 77054

Lunch and snacks will be provided

For more information, please contact Valencia at valencia@bosplace.org or 713.942.8339.

To register to attend a viewing of this webcast at Bo's Place, click [here](#).



Host a Holiday Meal and Spread some Holiday Cheer

The holidays can be especially difficult for those who have experienced the death of a loved one. At Bo's Place, we want to ensure that all of our group participants enjoy a holiday meal during November and December. By providing a meal for one of our support group gatherings, you can also participate in the volunteer experience of serving the food during that meal.



Friends from Avison Young providing a holiday meal

It's the perfect opportunity to give back during the holiday season.

To learn more, click [here](#).



Setting the Pace for Team Bo's Place

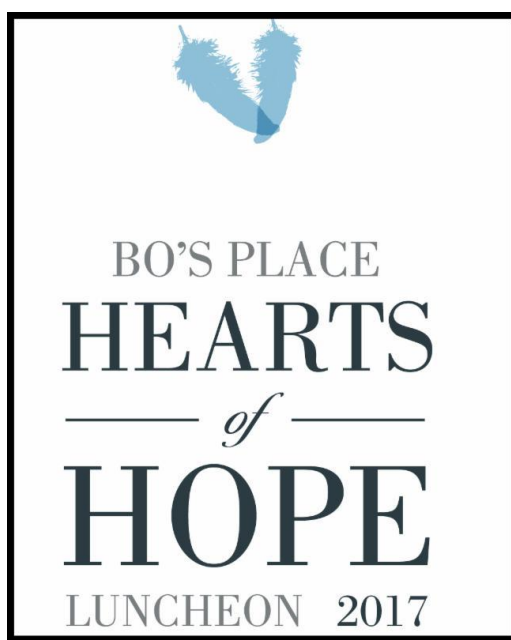
It's not too late to be a part of Team Bo's Place! Did you know the Chevron Houston Marathon and Aramco Half Marathon entries are sold out? You can still get in as a part of Team Bo's Place through the "Fundraising for Registration" program. In addition to the full and half marathon, Team Bo's Place members can also run the 5k!



Once you set up a fundraising page and reach a minimum of \$350 donated, you become a HERO and get great benefits.

To learn more, contact us at marathon@bosplace.org.





We hope you'll join us for the Hearts of Hope Luncheon on Thursday, January 26, 2017 at the Hilton Americas. We are excited to have **Dr. Lucy Kalanithi**, widow of the late Dr. Paul Kalanithi, author of *When Breath Becomes Air*, as our speaker. This gripping book, penned by Paul after a diagnosis of terminal lung cancer, explores life in the face of death and along the journey are reflections about the frailty of life, the decisions we make, and how death challenges us to find what makes life meaningful.

In addition, we will honor Susan Harvin Lawhon with the Robin Bush Award for her long-time commitment and valuable support

of Bo's Place. We are grateful for her many years of service, whether as the President of the Board of Directors, Chair of our Capital Campaign, or champion of the mission, and we look forward to honoring her at the luncheon.

For more information, contact andrea@bosplace.org. To purchase your tickets or tables, click [here](#).



Happenings

Team Bo's Place members enjoyed the fun **Marathon Kick-Off Party at The Dunlavy**, where we shared some of our exciting plans for the year.





On September 23, Bo's Place friends gathered to hear guest authors read excerpts from their books on grief and related life lessons during our **Community Book Night**. Thanks to all of our guest authors for their time and contributions: Lindy Neuhaus, Julie Kaplow, Tom Stephens, Susan Lieberman, Tracy Gray, Zoey Hess, and Mari Dombkowski.

These incredible volunteers gathered on September 27 for the annual **Bo's Place Board of Directors Retreat**, where their plans and vision for the upcoming year took shape. We thank them for their service!



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.

