

Healing Hearts



e-Newsletter // May // 05.01.18

A Tribute to Mrs. Barbara Bush

We are republishing a letter from our Executive Director, Mary Beth Staine, who wrote this in 2015 as part of Bo's Place 25th anniversary celebration year:

Dear Friends,

One of the very special traditions at our annual Hearts of Hope Luncheon is the bestowing of the Robin Bush Award upon a member of our community who has made a marked difference in the lives of children in the Houston area. In 1998, the Honorable George H.W. and Mrs. Bush gave their permission for Bo's Place to name the Robin Bush Award in memory of their daughter Robin who died of leukemia when she was three years old.

At Bo's Place we talk a lot about ways to create continuing bonds with loved ones who have died. The creation of the Robin Bush Award is a beautiful example of both the special ongoing bond that the Bush family has with their precious Robin, and a memorial honoring their daughter. Mrs. Bush has been to Bo's Place on a several occasions, both at our new and old location. Sporting a hard hat and shovel, she participated in the groundbreaking of our home on Buffalo Speedway in 2003 when a tree was planted "as a symbol of Bo's Place planting roots in the community and growing the organization into the new building". That tree (pictured below) is now part of a restive garden seating area next to our basketball court under which rests a memorial stone emblazoned with the tribute: "In Loving Memory of Robin Bush". Mrs. Bush also participated in the Bo's Place tradition of creating a quilt square in memory of Robin. Mrs. Bush's memory square is framed and hanging in our hallways with the inscription: "I love all children because of Robin." - Barbara Bush

As I was preparing this letter, I came across an article by Eun Kyung Kim dated November 20, 2012 on the website Today.com in which Mrs. Bush recalls Robin's death and their continuing bond with her:

"Decades later, Robin continues to be on the minds of the Bushes, even more so in recent years. 'Robin to me is a joy. She's like an angel to me, and she's not a sadness or a sorrow,' she (Barbara Bush) said remembering 'those little

fat arms around my neck!."

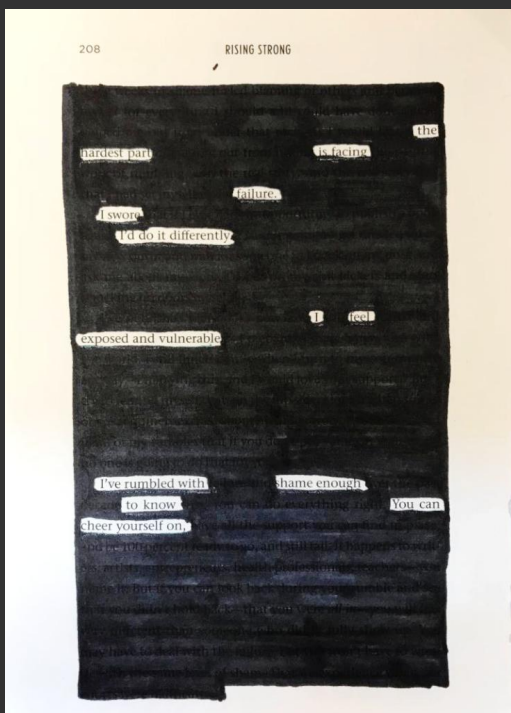
Each year when we select the recipient of the Robin Bush Award, we at Bo's Place have the opportunity to think about that curly haired three year old who would throw her "little fat arms" around the neck of her mother. We have a chance to honor those who "love all children because of Robin".

Thank you to the Bushes for sharing a little bit of Robin with all of us.

With love,
Mary Beth Staine
Executive Director



In loving memory of Mrs. Barbara Bush and her heart for children.



Blackout Poetry

In honor of April being National Poetry month, teens in our support groups participated in an activity to express their grief through poetry. They were asked to create blackout poems that reflected aspects of their individual grief journey.

Blackout poetry involves taking a printed page from a book and selecting specific words and phrases to create a poem. All unused words on the page are then blacked out.

Bo's Place received a large donation of books for our teen groups to use to create their own blackout poems. We would like to thank our community partners for these



Get Social for GOOD!

Bo's Place is excited to be one of the four charities featured at **OKRA** Charity Saloon during the month of May.

Haven't heard of OKRA? They're a downtown hotspot that raises awareness and funds for local non-profits. For each drink or food item purchased, you receive a ticket to vote for your favorite charity. Place your ticket in the Bo's Place voting box. The charity with the highest number of votes in May will receive all of the proceeds from OKRA in June.



Please bring your friends, family and coworkers to vote for Bo's Place in May!

[LEARN MORE](#)



Volunteer Spotlight: Allen Shook

When Allen Shook saw a sign in the lobby of his office building in 2005, he instantly connected with the mission of Bo's Place. Sitting back in one of the chairs in the living room 13 years later, Allen shared with me his personal grief story. Allen was only 11 years old when his father lost his battle with cancer, and as he was still trying to make sense of that loss, he experienced the unexpected death of his mother at age 14. He recalls feeling like the only one in his high school who had suffered this type of loss and that sense of isolation was intensified by the fact that no one spoke of the deaths, including himself. But he does have "snapshots" of the support he received during that time, small recollections of things people said or did that helped along his path.



After stopping by the original Bo's Place building to learn more about the organization, he felt drawn to participate in the next volunteer facilitator training. Allen has always been a facilitator on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month as part of our ongoing groups, where families can continue for as long as they find the group helpful. His commitment and consistency have been invaluable in creating

stability for the children whose lives have been flipped upside down. Through the years he's facilitated various age groups, but primarily stayed with the middle school group. He remarked on the depth of their thoughts and the wisdom beyond their years. One story he shared involved a young boy in his group who, during the anniversary tray (where group members are invited to light a candle in memory of their loved one on the anniversary of their death), went around the room and told each group member, as well as his volunteers, something he had learned from each of them. Allen admits that during his first few years volunteering in the support groups he learned so much about children's grief, which ultimately helped him to understand his own experience all those years ago.

Allen jokes that his default is to follow the rules (he's an engineer by day), but over the years as he's gained more experience as a facilitator, he knows that the goal isn't always to power through the activities for the night, as he once tried to do. Now, he follows his group night coordinator, Marian's signature line: "The activity is just a tool." And if the children in his group are engaged in a parallel conversation about grief, that isn't conducive to the night's suggested theme or activity, Allen is perfectly comfortable following the group's lead. He has also gained confidence in his belief that sometimes he'll never know what impact he or Bo's Place has had on a particular child. But, as he thinks back to those snapshots from his own grief journey, he knows that somewhere along the line, they have learned something that will serve them on their journey. And he is steadfast in his belief that after his family and his faith, Bo's Place is the most meaningful thing he has ever done.

When asked to share something that many people don't know about him, Allen leaned in and whispered "I'm a fantasy golfer." Which he went on to explain means that he fantasizes about playing golf more than he actually plays. Then he smiled as he explained why he doesn't play as much golf as he might otherwise: his four amazing grandchildren. Pictured above are Bradley, Sadie, and Austin, but his family now includes a two-month old grandbaby as well. One more thing pulling him away from the golf course on the weekends is the restoration of a 100-year old farmhouse where he hopes to spend even more time with his family in the coming years.

Allen, we are truly grateful for your dedication to Bo's Place and the children you have impacted through the years with your compassion and understanding.



Volunteer Appreciation Fiesta

Despite near-freezing temperatures, almost 130 volunteers braved the elements to attend the annual Volunteer Appreciation Fiesta held on Saturday, April 7. With incredible food provided by Over the Hill Gang, door prizes generously donated by community vendors, and our own personal paparazzi, a good time was had by all.



As Volunteer Appreciation month comes to an end, words cannot express the gratitude we have for each and every one of our volunteers who give their time and their hearts to the families of Bo's Place.



CJ Strnadel IV

Memorial Fishing Tournament

CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS | JUNE 22 - 23, 2018

NEW LOCATION - Doc's Seafood and Steaks, Corpus Christi

Bo's Place will once again be a beneficiary of the annual **CJ Strnadel IV Memorial Fishing Tournament**. This event is held each year in memory of a member of the SpawGlass family, CJ Strnadel IV, who died in 2012. Celebrating the things CJ loved, the benefit was originally put together to raise much needed funds for his family and the future college expenses for his daughter, Cadence. It is a beloved tradition of the SpawGlass family that has grown over the years and has benefitted many worth causes. Bo's Place is fortunate to have been one of the beneficiaries for the last 3 years, and all told they have raised more than \$70,000

to support grieving children and families at Bo's Place.

The event will be held in Corpus Christi, TX on June 22-23. It kicks off with a Captain's Dinner and Live and Silent auction on Friday night. Saturday is a day of bay fishing, followed by awards for the top teams.

If you would like to put a team together to support this event, registration is open until May 15.

[LEARN MORE](#)



Book a bike from May 7-13 at [RIDE Indoor Cycling](#) in the Heights to benefit Bo's Place! As one of the charities for *Meaningful May* at the studio, \$1 from each bike booked during that time period will be donated to Bo's Place.

Make your workout even more meaningful by dedicating your ride *In Honor Of* or *In Memory Of* a loved one.

[RESERVE A BIKE](#)



Happenings

Bo's Buddies enjoyed "**Yoga and Bubbles**" on April 21. This great morning workout ended with a fun champagne toast afterwards!





During the week of April 23, Bo's Place clinicians Flor Guebara, LCSW and Cristina Flores, LCSW attended the **Association for Death Education and Counseling (ADEC) Conference** in Pittsburg, PA and presented a workshop titled "Offering Culturally Appropriate Grief Support to the Latino Community." Presenting at conferences helps build Bo's Place's national reputation as a leader in the field of bereavement support.

Bo's Place was selected to be a "Charity on the Green" at the **53rd Annual Spindletop Golf Tournament** on April 27-28. Bo's Place staff members Rina Ocampo and Andrea Sivells greeted sponsors from a variety of different companies. For every tee shot hit on the green, Bo's Place received an additional contribution!



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; www.bosplace.org; facebook.com/bosplace

