

# Healing Hearts



e-Newsletter | April | 04.02.19

## In This Issue

- Remembering Carla Bagalay
- Bo's Place partners with StoryCorps to record stories
- Volunteer Spotlight: Cynthia Bello
- Mind-Body Medicine: Self-Care for the Grieving Soul
- Cereal Box Drive
- The Kentucky Derby Trumpet Call Awaits
- Brews, Buddies & Bugs



## Remembering Carla Bagalay



The Bo's Place Family is saddened to share the news that Carla Bagalay, our former Volunteer Coordinator, has died. Carla retired last June after ten years with Bo's Place. Carla loved the mission of Bo's Place and held the families, volunteers and staff in such high regard. We will all miss Carla's great wit and sense of humor. Details for a Celebration of Life will be announced at a later date. Bo's Place will honor Carla with a moment of silence at the Volunteer Appreciation Fiesta on Saturday, April 6.



## Bo's Place partners with StoryCorps to record stories

Bo's Place is partnering with StoryCorps and the New York Life Foundation to record and preserve stories of children and families grieving the death of a family member or friend as part of *Road to Resilience: Memories that Move Us Forward*. This program leverages the power of stories and storytelling to help children cope with the death of a parent, sibling, friend or loved one.

In the New York Life Foundation's 2017 Bereavement Survey, those who lost a parent growing up spoke to storytelling's important role in their grief journey, indicating that the most helpful thing family or friends did after their loss was to share stories about their loved one (37%, highest cited action). A full 68% felt that it would have been easier to cope with their grief if our society was more open to talking about death and loss.



Through *Road to Resilience*, StoryCorps is partnering with bereavement support organizations to provide opportunities for children and their families to preserve memories of their friends and loved ones, share their grief journeys, or simply to record themselves as they are. Partnering organizations receive in-depth training from StoryCorps and special resources to assist them in incorporating the interview model into their existing programs.

Bo's Place is one of six bereavement organizations chosen from a large applicant pool to participate. Bo's Place is inviting their participants to record 40-minute conversations facilitated by their trained staff and volunteers for inclusion in the program.

At the conclusion of this project, StoryCorps will create and share free digital training resources to help local providers enrich and strengthen their work through storytelling and, in turn, to encourage more dialogue around grief and the issue of childhood bereavement.

Founded in 2003 by Dave Isay, StoryCorps has given nearly 500,000 people—Americans of all backgrounds and beliefs, in towns and cities in all 50 states—the chance to record interviews about their lives. The organization preserves the recordings in its archive at the Library of Congress, the largest single collection of human voices ever gathered, and shares select stories with the public through StoryCorps' weekly podcast, NPR broadcasts, animated shorts, digital platforms, and best-selling books. These powerful human stories reflect the vast range of American experiences, wisdom and values; engender empathy and connection; and remind us how much more we have in common than divides us.

"Looking a loved one in the eyes and asking about his or her life is one of the greatest gifts we can give one another. The simple act of listening tells them how much they matter, and documenting that conversation for posterity tells them that they won't be forgotten," said Dave Isay, StoryCorps Founder and President.

Mary Beth Staine, Executive Director of Bo's Place, said "The mission of Bo's Place is to enhance the lives of those who have experienced the death of a loved one. As a part of Road to Resilience: Memories that Move Us Forward, we have witnessed first-hand how the program has unequivocally enhanced the lives of the bereaved families in our programs. Bo's Place believes that sharing your story, your memories and your feelings with others who have had similar experiences is helpful and healing. Through our partnership with StoryCorps and the New York Life Foundation, we are now able to offer family members a unique new opportunity to share a deep, intimate conversation and stories with other family members, a conversation that they have prepared for emotionally in a very deliberate way and that will be recorded so that the conversation and stories will not be forgotten."

"Creating opportunities for children in grief, their families, and caregivers to record, preserve, and share their stories aligns with the New York Life Foundation's longstanding support of grieving children and the organizations that serve them," said Maria Collins, Vice President, "Our partnership with StoryCorps seeks to heighten awareness of childhood bereavement while focusing on resiliency and positive responses to death through personal voice and story."

To listen to excerpts from some of the stories already recorded as part of StoryCorps' Road to Resilience, click below to visit the website.

[ROAD TO RESILIENCE WEBSITE](#)



## Volunteer Spotlight: Cynthia Bello

Cynthia Bello is accustomed to hearing the voices of children floating down the halls. After 34 years as an educator, she retired and was seeking new ways to stay involved in her community. With encouragement from her daughter, Carrisa Bello, who is a support group facilitator at Bo's Place on Saturdays, Cynthia started volunteering in the kitchen at the same time. Her reward for working

hard to prepare the kitchen for breakfast on Saturday mornings is the smiles from family members that she receives in return. Cynthia loves to be a familiar face for these families facing so much change and chaos in their lives. She recalls fondly a time one grandmother arrived early with her grandchildren for group. The woman opened up to Cynthia about the challenges of raising children a second time, after the parents died. "Getting to know them, and making sure they feel welcome," these are the parts of her role as a kitchen volunteer that truly uplift Cynthia.



A strong advocate for the mission of Bo's Place, Cynthia uses her personal knowledge of the power of grief support to encourage others to seek help. After a friend came to Bo's Place many years ago, Cynthia can attest to her friend's success story, and often hands out brochures to people she meets who could benefit from our services. She also encourages others to volunteer at Bo's Place and has recruited two friends to join her in the kitchen on Saturdays. Cynthia values her volunteer commitments, both here and at her church, explaining the power of giving of one's self and not expecting anything in return. "Being a support person is so important; sometimes the things we think are small, can be a big deal for someone who is struggling." And not only does she have the internal reward for her service, but she has also built some lasting friendships through volunteerism.

Cynthia, we are so grateful for your friendship and your dedication to our families.



## Mind-Body Medicine: Self-Care for the Grieving Soul

For the last several years, Bo's Place and the Institute for Spirituality and Health have partnered to bring a unique perspective to education on the intersection between spirituality and grief. The partnership will bring a new workshop to Bo's Place on May 17 entitled *Mind-Body Medicine: Self-Care for the Grieving Soul*. Based on the work of The Center for Mind-Body Medicine (CMBM), the workshop will feature mind-body skills facilitators trained by CMBM, exploring a variety of self-care skills with particular attention to the development of adaptive coping for the bereaved.



CMBM was founded in 1991 by psychiatrist James S. Gordon, M.D. In the 25 years since then, CMBM has become a worldwide leader in making self-care, group support, and community-building central to all healthcare, the training of health professionals, and the education of children. In the wake of Hurricane Harvey, the Institute for Spirituality and Health, along with six other local agencies, partnered with CMBM to form the Greater Houston Healing Collaborative. The collaborative has now trained a diverse group of 120 community members who have gone on to offer mind-body skills and group support to thousands of individuals across Greater Houston.

Mind-body medicine is based on the scientific understanding of the inextricable connection among our thoughts, sensations and feelings, and our mind, body, and spirit – between ourselves and the social and natural world in which we live. This approach to wellness is grounded in practical, evidence-based skills for self-care, self-awareness, and group support. Mind-body skills (such as meditation, biofeedback, guided imagery, and self-expression in drawings, words, and pictures) are scientifically validated to reduce stress, heal trauma, and restore physical and psychological health.

We hope you can join us for this fascinating look into mind-body medicine and its application in working with the bereaved.

*Mind-Body Medicine: Self-Care for the Grieving Soul*  
Friday, May 17, 2019  
9 am - 12 noon  
Bo's Place Training Room

[REGISTER NOW](#)



## Cereal Box Drive

We need your help collecting standard-size, empty dry good cardboard boxes for an upcoming "scream box" project for our grief support groups. Boxes can be dropped off at Bo's Place





## The Trumpet Call Awaits

The Kentucky Derby is one of the most anticipated events of the year, and Bo's Place is hosting the 3rd annual Hats, Hearts & Horseshoes to celebrate. It's not too late to make your commitment to support Bo's Place and be a part of the best Derby Party outside of Churchill Downs. Guests dressed in their Derby best will enjoy a fun soiree on the lawn at a lavish River Oaks estate. Classic Mint Juleps, delectable bites, fun, games, prizes and so much more awaits you on May 4!

Reserve your tickets or tables today and plan on spending an afternoon filled with fun for your favorite cause – Bo's Place!



RESERVATIONS



## Brews, Buddies & Bugs

Crawfish season is just heating up and we hope you'll join Bo's Place for *Brews, Buddies & Bugs* on Masters Sunday (April 14) at Bungalow Heights from 1:00pm-5:00pm.

Non-Members: \$40 for beer and crawfish  
Members: \$30 for beer and crawfish  
\$10 for drinks only

Peruse the silent auction, sip Deep Eddy cocktails and enjoy the inflatable putting green while the Masters plays on the big screens. Bring your friends, have fun and discover ways to get involved with Bo's Buddies!



PURCHASE TICKETS



## Happenings



On March 1, Bo's Place had a full house for *The Spiritual Lives of Grieving Children* workshop, presented by **Dr. Julie Kaplow** of the Trauma and Grief Center at Texas Children's Hospital.



Fashionable friends joined Bo's Place at **Tootsies** on March 1 to toast the upcoming *Hats, Hearts and Horseshoes: A Kentucky Derby Affair*. Guests were treated to mimosas, breakfast bites and a fashion show, complete with fabulous fascinators. With a percent of proceeds donated to Bo's Place, guests picked out perfect ensembles for the May 4 event.



Bo's Place took home top awards at the **2019 Houston Marathon Run for a Reason Celebration Luncheon** on March 6. The awards included: 3rd Place Overall Top Fundraising Charity, Top Sidewalk Squad Charity, and Charity Challenge Winner – Highest Number of Donations. Longtime Bo's Place supporter and Team Bo's Place runner Peggy Roe received the award for 3rd Place Overall Top Fundraising Participant.



Our staff enjoyed lunch at **Hopdoddy** on March 7 to support the day-long fundraising initiative to support Bo's Place. A percentage of proceeds from the Rice Village Hopdoddy were donated back to Bo's Place. It was a delicious way to give back!



On March 16, **Reliant Energy** held the **Hats Off to Houston** check presentation at the Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo. Executive Director, Mary Beth Staine, and Board President, Meredith Chastang, were on hand to receive the \$2,500 gift for placing 3rd in the hat decorating contest. Thanks to everyone who helped decorate, vote and promote this fun activity!

Members from the **Houston Ultimate Community** sponsored a meal for families on



March 27. Volunteers served dinner and handed out Frisbees for all of the kids who attended group. We are so grateful for their continued partnership!



## 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 in Houston and West Houston/Katy.

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

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

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