

# Healing Hearts



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## A Holiday Tradition: Holiday Meals at Bo's Place

At a time of year when most families with children are already stressed, the added weight of grief can be overwhelming. Coming to Bo's Place is one more task added to an already full calendar, and often our families travel long distances (in traffic!) to arrive in time for the potluck meal. Although it seems like a small thing, the gift of a meal during the holiday's means each family can avoid the drive-thru lane at a nearby restaurant, or recapture the time spent preparing a dish for the potluck. We are so grateful for the generosity of our corporate and community partners who sponsored meals in November and December, who helped remove one task from our families' to do list this holiday season.

We would like to thank:

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| • Adams and Reese, LLP  | • Katy Funeral Home                                    |
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| • Junior League of Houston  | • Vietnam Veterans of America, San Jacinto Chapter 343 |
| • Kathleen Feller & Family  | • Westside Lexus/Northside Lexus                       |



## Continuing Bonds: Love for a Father and His Love of Texas Shared

Brooke Bailey came to Bo's Place and began attending an evening adult support group after the death of her father, Michael T. Bailey, after a courageous year-long battle with cancer. "The moment I entered Bo's Place and saw the commemorative quilts on the wall, I began to cry," shared Brooke. "Here was a place where I didn't have to pretend my dad wasn't dead to get through work and the day, but where death was acknowledged, given time, space, and honor. My group consisted of the warmest, kindest women. They shared their grief and let me share mine." When Brooke's support group was coming to an end and it was time to say "good-bye" to her fellow group members, she wanted to share one last piece of her father with each of them.



Brooke's dad had a special hobby. He collected smoothed wooden planks or rocks from a Texas river or hillside and painstakingly hand-painted Texas flags on each. Making these flags was a labor of love for Mike -- he never sold them, and he kept making them until the last time he went to the hospital when he left his paintbrushes, paints and a half-painted rock on the kitchen table. Brooke hand-selected rocks from her dad's Texas flag collection to "gift" to each of her group members. "We had shared stories, jokes, and memories of our person who died. I felt like I knew their loved ones (for many of them, their mothers) and they knew my dad," explained Brooke. "We had a session where we talked about 'legacy,'" explained Brooke. "I wanted these big-hearted women to each have a Texas rock. Because of their willingness to listen and make themselves vulnerable by sharing, they enabled the memory of my dad to live inside of me along with all of the enormous tides of feelings -- the love and the sadness -- that comes with that. It was as if they had made little temples for him in their hearts. The generosity of that was astounding, and such a gift to me."

Brooke went on to share a little bit more about her dad: "My dad was a teacher and a coach—he



taught English and journalism and coached track and football. He touched the lives of hundreds of athletes and students with his humor, integrity, and dedication. He also loved the outdoors and took his family camping and tubing on the Guadalupe and Frio Rivers, swimming at Galveston, and on road trips to many of America's national parks. He had a big heart and a big laugh and loved large gatherings of friends and family. He was a passionate fan of the Houston Texans and the Astros and an avid golfer, reader, and music lover."

Brooke and her sister, Melissa, wanted to find someplace special to "gift" the remainder of their dad's collection of Texas flags – so Brooke reached out to Bo's Place with the hope that these special works of art would either be used to raise funds to support the programs of Bo's Place or would be given to bereaved families to brighten their grief journey. Brooke shared, "These flags capture my dad's love of Texas and the outdoors, as well as his love of crafting beautiful things for family and friends. We hope they will bring others joy and comfort."

We are grateful to Brooke and her family for sharing Mike's big heart and love of Texas with Bo's Place and our families. The Bailey family is a living example of what we see happening with the bereaved families who come to Bo's Place for grief support – as they find their way to a place of hope and healing in their grief journey, they find ways to support others in grief.



## Swoosh! New Hoops for Bo's Place

One of our most cherished items at Bo's Place is the basketball hoop. When we moved to our home on Buffalo Speedway, our families requested we have one, just like we did at our old home in the Museum area. The court provides a small break from the day before our kids head into their support groups and gives them time to build a stronger sense of teamwork with their peers, with a healthy dose of competition. We also use the basketball hoop as part of our programming: sink a shot, share a memory of your loved one. Through 15 years of love and use, our old basketball hoop was looking a little worse for the wear.

Thanks to a generous donation from the Thielhorn family, we were able to upgrade the basketball hoop system. It can now be lowered or raised, making it easier for kids of all ages and heights to enjoy. This generous gift shows our families that they deserve the best, and that with the team they build here at Bo's Place, they can be courageous in their endeavors on and off the court.



## Be Brave in 2020!

As we step into the New Year, many will commit to doing something new, challenging or brave in 2020. Perhaps it's planning a trip or taking a class, repairing a wounded relationship, or going skydiving. It takes courage to try something new or challenging, to face the unknown. We often think of death as the great unknown; many people experience fear or discomfort when discussing the topic. At Bo's Place, it is part of our mission to help support the bereaved by educating others to better understand grief and better support those who have experienced the death of someone close to them.



If you are ready to do something brave in 2020, consider improving your ability to support those walking the path of grief. Whether you are a helping professional who encounters bereaved individuals in your work life, or a community member ready to gain the tools to help facilitate a support group, we have many ways to better equip you to help.

On **Friday, January 24, 2020**, we will hold a workshop, entitled "**Good Grief for Helping Professionals.**" Created for those working in funeral services, hospital/hospice, mental health, private practice, or spiritual care, the training includes both lecture and experiential activities. If you feel this is an area of potential growth for you professionally, please join us for this full-day workshop offering 6 CEUs.

REGISTER NOW

The weekend of **February 15-16, 2020** is our biannual **Volunteer Facilitator Training**. To become a facilitator for our support groups you do not need any previous experience, only a willingness to listen and be present with the bereaved. The first step is to schedule an Interview & Tour with our Volunteer Department. Bryant McGill so eloquently said "The way you become brave is one terrifying step at a time."

DETAILS HERE



## Call to the Post: It's Derby Time!

It might be winter outside, but plans are already being made for the hottest Derby party in town! Join our Chairs **Kelli and John Weinzierl** for a fabulous afternoon decked out in your finest Derby attire. Cheering on our Chairs from the sidelines are our Honorary Chairs: **Paige Fertitta, Megan and Luke Hotze, Hannah and Cal McNair,** and **Hallie Vanderhider.**

Having set the pace of raising over \$1 Million dollars in its first three years, this event is a sell-out each year filled with food, fashion and fun. We're betting

on you to join us on **Saturday, May 2, 2020** for another spectacular event where we'll watch the "run for the roses" and toast the champion horse, but the real winners will be the families who are able to receive support at no cost because of your belief in our mission.



Email [Derby@bosplace.org](mailto:Derby@bosplace.org) for more information!

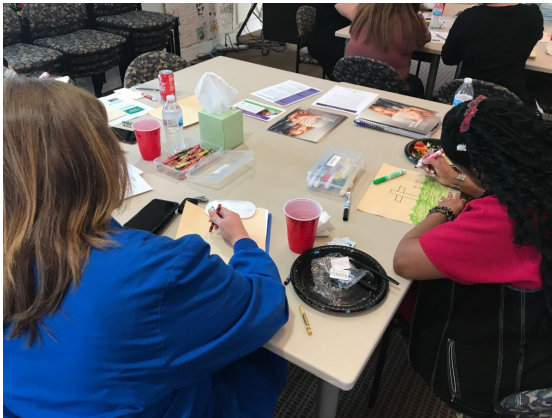




## Happenings



On December 6, children from our family groups enjoyed a **Kid's Night Out** at Bo's Place! Activities included dinner and arts & crafts with the University of Houston's Kappa Delta Phi, music and conversation with musicians from the Houston Symphony, and games in the Team Room with Houston Texan #65 Greg Mancz. Thank you to all the volunteers who made this fun event possible, and to PetSmart for the donation of stuffed animals for the children.



On December 13, Bo's Place hosted a **Lunch & Learn for Hospice Professionals**, where participants learned more about Bo's Place, as well as how they can help support patients and families through their own work.



On December 14, volunteers from **National Charity League Heart of Texas** chapter tied bows on Buddy, Chip and Raisin puppies for the upcoming Hearts of Hope luncheon. We are grateful for their help!

**METRO Blue Santa** made a special visit to Bo's Place on December 17! METRO officers served a fabulous holiday meal for our family support group, and then Blue Santa took photos with the children while distributing gifts. It was a very special night and we thank all of the METRO elves who made it happen!



Bo's Place staff enjoyed a delicious **Annual Holiday Lunch** at the Junior League of Houston Tea Room on December 18. Happy holidays from our family to yours!



It's a new tradition in the making! We had a staff **Cookie Exchange** on December 20 that resulted in everyone leaving with a platter of delicious treats for the holidays!



## 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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