THE LEGAL ADVOCATE

The Newsletter of Legal Hospice of Texas November/December 2008

World AIDS Day 2008

The North Texas Community Observance of World AIDS Day will be held on Friday, December 5. A display of the National AIDS Memorial Quilt will open at 10:00 am, along with an Information Faire featuring local service providers as well as corporate sponsors. A luncheon at 12:00 noon will feature special Guest Speaker, Jeanne White-Ginder, the mother of Ryan White. Dr. Barbara Cambridge will be awarded the Hero of Hope Award.

All events will take place at the Hilton Anatole Hotel in the Trinity Ballroom. Tickets for the luncheon will be $30. Admission to the AIDS Memorial Quilt and Information Faire will be free to the public. For event and ticket information, please call the LHT office, 214.521.6622

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Growing to Meet the Need

Roger W. Wedell, Ph.D.
Executive Director

We're all reading the headlines and hearing the news reports about bad economic times, cutting back, feeling disoriented. These are, without a doubt, unsettling times. As I write this, we are in the last days of a presidential election with all of the attendant uncertainty of the outcome.

In the midst of all of these uncertainties, Legal Hospice of Texas remains a stalwart advocate on behalf of low income persons diagnosed with terminal illnesses or HIV disease. Our clients face uncertainty every day! Their uncertainties will not be resolved by an election. Their uncertainties revolve around basics – housing, access to medical care, transportation, work.

In March 2006, in partnership with Cancer Care Services of Tarrant County and AIDS Outreach Center, we launched a major expansion of services into Tarrant, Parker, Hood and Johnson counties. At the same time, we expanded our partnership with AIDS Services of North Texas to provide client appointments in Greenville and Plano. All of this was possible because of a very successful Equal Justice Works Fellowship which resulted in our Mobile Legal Services Project.

As of October 1, 2008, more than 30% of our clients reside outside Dallas County. In response to the demonstrated need for our services, the LHT Board of Directors has set an objective of opening a satellite office in Fort Worth in early 2009! Better service to more clients will be both an immediate and on-going result of this new venture.

Even in times of uncertainty, we are committed to our vision of a community in which all persons, regardless of health or economic status, have access to justice.

HIGHLIGHTING DEVELOPMENT

Thank you to the Labor and Employment Law Section of the State Bar of Texas for a 2008 grant of $2,125 in support of our work on labor and employment related cases.

LHT has received a $1,500 grant from the Dallas Association of Young Lawyers Foundation in support of our Mobile Legal Services Project. The funds will help defray the additional costs of travel related to serving clients outside the urban core of Dallas.

Attention all federal, state and Dallas City employees! Legal Hospice of Texas (or Dallas Legal Hospice) is participating in the combined employee campaigns at all 3 levels! Our Combined Federal Campaign code is 31476. For State of Texas employees, please designate 280231. City of Dallas employees can also designate Legal Hospice of Texas. Thank you for your support!

Thank you to the Texas Gay Rodeo Association – Dallas Chapter for their support. LHT has received $2,808 in support of our services in 2008. In addition, members of the Chapter have provided free bartending services at both our Fashion Cited and In the Heat of the Night events!

Matching gifts work! So far this year, LHT has received nearly $2,500 in matching gifts from companies that match employee donations to qualifying nonprofits. Check with your employer. LHT staff can provide all necessary information needed to help multiply your gift.

Mark your calendars and save the date! Fashion Cited 2009 will be held on Thursday, April 16. This annual high-energy, fun-filled event will be bigger and better than ever! You won't want to miss it. If you are interested in being part of the planning for this event, or any of the special events that support LHT, please call Cynthia Emerson at 214.521.6622.

LHT Receives IOLTA Award

The Texas Access to Justice Foundation, administrator of the Texas IOLTA program, has awarded $181,762 to Legal Hospice of Texas for the period September 1, 2008 through August 31, 2009. This represents a 20% increase over the previous grant. Through its Prime Partner Program (see our May/June 2008 newsletter for more information), TAJF has increased funds available through the IOLTA program. TAJF awarded more than $20 million dollars through its IOLTA, BSLS and CVLS programs to legal aid organizations in the State of Texas.

"Legal Hospice of Texas is pleased to continue its partnership with TAJF", commented Executive Director, Roger W. Wedell. "These funds will allow us to continue our expansion into rural areas while maintaining access for clients living in the urban core of Dallas. We depend on IOLTA funds and private donations to underwrite all of our services for clients diagnosed with terminal illnesses other than HIV disease. And, with the cut in federal funds for legal services for persons with HIV disease, other sources become even more important."

For more information on the work of the Texas Access to Justice Foundation, visit www.teajf.org.

Browse; Shop; Save: DONATE

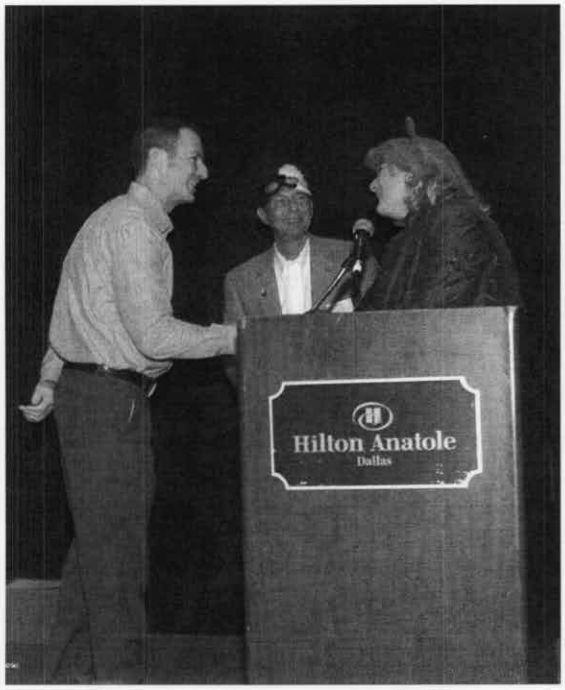
Shopping might not be the highest priority for any of us right now, but we all do need "things" from time to time. You can shop online and support Legal Hospice of Texas at the same time. We are now registered with iGive.com and GoodShop.com. It's simple, frequently cheaper than shopping in-person, and a portion of each purchase will help support the work of LHT. You can also use the browser, GoodSearch.com, and a portion of the advertising revenue will be donated to LHT.

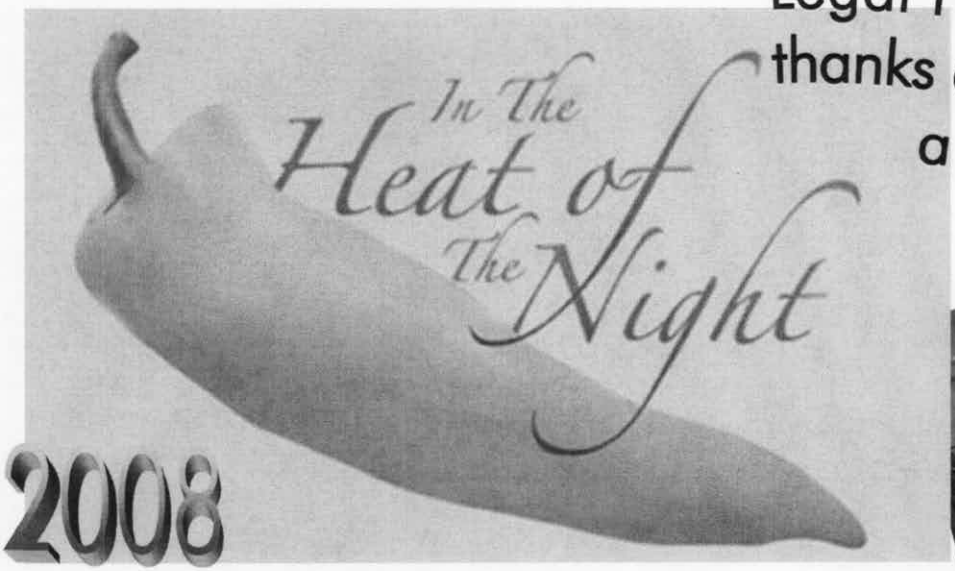
It's simple. Go to www.igive.com and/or www.goodshop.com . Register as a user, select Legal Hospice of Texas as your "cause", and start shopping! You can shop GAP, Staples, Expedia, Nordstrom, Lands' End, Best Buy, Office Depot and over 500 other name brands. Check it out today! Everyone wins!

LifeWalk 2008

We want to thank everyone who donated and those who walked to support LHT.

We received $4,885.56 and acknowledgement for being the second highest fundraising team in the civic organization category.





Legal Hospice of Texas thanks all who made it a Success!

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From Our Volunteer Coordinator

Cynthia Emerson

Coordinator of Volunteer Services

We have such great volunteers, and I've often wondered what motivates them to give back to the community. So, instead of just wondering, I asked 2 of our volunteer attorneys, James Deets and Katherine Breslin, to talk about their experience and about the commitment of their firm, Hunton & Williams, to pro bono.

CE: Why are you interested in volunteering with Legal Hospice of Texas?

JD: Originally, I was recruited for a specific litigation case. The LHT staff attorneys don't have the time and the agency doesn't have the funds to take on litigation. We won the case, and I was hooked on volunteering with the organization.

KB: My background is in estate planning, and I know how important is it to get your estate in order, regardless of the value. Also, I think it's important for same-sex couples to put their wishes in writing so that their choices are protected. LHT is the right place for me to achieve both of those goals.

CE: What motivates you to volunteer?

JD: I recognize that many do not have access to legal services because of economic restrictions and it's a service I can provide. Also, I have friends who are living with HIV disease and know some of the issues they face.

KB: I gravitated toward public interest law when I lived in Lubbock and have continued various volunteer associations since then. Volunteering just comes naturally to me and I see myself continuing to do so.

CE: What are you wanting to get from your volunteer experience?

JD: It's fulfilling to help others and I have a great sense of reward from volunteering.

KB: A feeling of helping people and of being supportive of our firm's commitment to pro bono.

As I talked with James and Katherine, it became clear to me that Hunton & Williams is a firm that encourages and supports pro bono. When I went to their website, my impression was confirmed. To quote from that site, "When a citizen's access to justice is thwarted by inability to pay a legal fee, the fabric of our free society suffers. We as lawyers are obliged to use our best efforts to see that the economically disadvantaged received adequate legal services."

Legal Hospice of Texas applauds our pro bono partner, Hunton & Williams, for its commitment to legal aid and for its continuing pro bono support of LHT and its mission to provide timely and compassionate legal services to low income persons diagnosed with terminal illnesses or HIV disease.

Client Services:

Here are our client service numbers through September 2008:

Gender			
	Women	150	23.5%
	Men	487	76.4%
	Transgender	1	.1%
	Total	638	
Ethnicity			
	Caucasian	316	49.5%
	African American	233	36.8%
	Hispanic	85	13.3%
	Asian	1	.1%
	Native American	2	.2%
	Other	1	.1%
Age			
	<13	0	0%
	13 – 24	11	1.7%
	25 – 44	280	43.9%
	45+	327	54.4%
	Units of Service	7,758 (1,939.5 hours)	
Diagnosis			
	HIV/AIDS	570	89.3%
	Other terminal	49	10.7%

Your Legacy of Legal Aid

The Legal Hospice of Texas Board of Directors is committed to planning for the long-term financial stability of LHT. To accomplish this, the Board has implemented the LHT Endowment Fund and is creating opportunities for individuals to make major gifts as part of their estate planning.

Very soon, you will notice a recurring "symbol" on most LHT printed materials. We will begin promoting the Leave a Legacy program. Leave a Legacy is a national movement to promote legacy giving in support of nonprofits nationwide. LHT will be joining with hundreds of nonprofits to help individuals explore their ability to provide ongoing financial support to organizations they have supported during their lifetime.

Among the possibilities is to name LHT as the beneficiary of various estate planning options – life insurance, trusts, wills, etc. While other nonprofits can assist donors with these documents, LHT cannot due to ethical conflicts of interest. However, we can provide information on how to make such gifts.

Your legacy of legal aid could provide for the continuation of valuable services offered by Legal Hospice of Texas. Call our office at 214.521.6622 for additional information.

We wish to thank these 114 individuals who have already volunteered 2,252 hours during 2008:

Ron Allen	John Ambler	Saul Arcco	Douglas Arrington	David Bacon
Chris Barker	Rhonda Bartlett	Meghan Billings	Jennifer Bishop	Mikel Blake
Katherine Breslin	Aaron Brown	Carol Lynne Brown	Joanna Green Brown	Lori J. Butler
Ashley Butley	Lynne Candler	Vincent Castillo	Nikki Casto	Anne Christian
Candace Collins	Katherine Connell	Ali Cook	Charles Cook	Jeffery Cook
Nina Cook	Rebecca Covell	Cece Cox	Jerry Coyle	Donald Crook
Roger Crowe	James Deets	Robert Diago	Sarah Dobbs	Linda Dome
Susan Elmore	Cynthia Emerson	Francisco Flores	Pete Flores	Sylvia Gallegos
Daylen Gallman	Cathy Garcia	Meera George	Nadia Gilkes	Larry Gollaher
Aricia Grant	Julie Grimm	Curt Hadaway	Patrick Hancock	Bill Hanges
Greg Hausdorf	Greg Hawthorne	Barbara Houser	Brent Huddleston	Linda Huynh
Jo Bess Jackson	Stephen Kaplan	Alan King	Angela Komisarz	Susan Kravik
Dawn Lacerte	Paul Lapierre	Lisa Laqua	Matt Lavery	Joel Lazarine
Lisa Leffingwell	Kevin Lindstrom	Troy Lonion	Alice Marcee	Peg Margo
Tim Martin	David McBrayer	Randy McBrayer	John McCall	Sandra McFeeley
Tom Mighell	James Mincey, Jr.	Michael Misner	James Motley	Melody Musick
Ajay Nath	Noel Navarrete	Cynthia Navarro	John Niles	Hilary Pearson
Cynthia Pool	Debbie Puckett	Grace Rawlins	Marq Robinson	Eliseo Ruiz III
Tynetta Runnels	Michelle Schulz	Sharon Seal	Jon Self	Jessica Sheridan
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