



Love. Comfort. Support. From Us To You.

Your 2020-2021 Annual Fund gift will help us continue to provide:

- End of life care for everyone that needs it regardless of ability to pay
- Grief support and bereavement services
- Innovative programs and training for our volunteers
- Community and professional education in end of life issues
- General endowment to ensure our future needs will be met

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# 2020-2021 ANNUAL FUND



## Your Non-Profit Community Hospice

### Our Mission

The mission of Hospice of South Texas is to ensure palliative and compassionate care to patients with a life-limiting illness, so as to enhance natural death with dignity. Hospice addresses the physical, spiritual, psychological and social needs of patients and their families with special emphasis on family bereavement.

## Never Did She Give Up, Never Did She Throw in the Towel

My daughter, Brittany Langridge, was diagnosed in February 2019. She was a nurse so she was very aware of what her prognosis was and she managed her own care herself until the day she walked into the Dornburg Center of Compassion. We felt she was so brave when she found out that she had stage IV metastatic breast cancer. Her doctors created a great treatment plan and her body was responding well. In April of the same year, we found out she had leptomenigeal disease (LMD), cancer cells in her spinal fluid. They did have a chemo that could prolong life and she chose to do it. She went to MD Anderson once or twice a week for a year.



Brittany and Mom, Kelly Webb  
C/O Candace McCarthy Photographer

Brittany was very intentional of her time with her family and friends. As sick as she was, she seldom missed an opportunity to take her family to church. Her faith was a huge part of who she was, and it was very important to pass this on to her children. She set goals for herself, never did she give up, never did she throw in the towel.

After her diagnosis of breast cancer, a group of her friends and family, pitched in and sent Brittany, Justin, her husband, Jensen, their 7-year-old son and Harlyn, their 6-year-old daughter, to Disney World over Spring Break. Brittany and Justin went to Las Vegas in October because they had never been. Once again, as sick as she was, she was still very intentional with her time, making memories and living life to the fullest.

Brittany was born and raised in Victoria. She graduated from Memorial High School and the VC Nursing program. She was an LVN and was only six weeks away from graduating as an RN/BSN. She loved her patients and her job as a nurse and always made a difference in the lives of her patients. We believe God gave her opportunities to allow others to have memories of special events in their lives with her. There were some things she wanted to experience, one was to see Harlyn start kindergarten, which she was able to do. Two of her very dear friends were having babies and she was actually in the delivery room with one of them. A girl she had known since birth got married and Brittany was in her wedding.

No one ever wants cancer to touch their family, as it is a painful journey. However, we believe that there is also great joy when you have to face such adversity. We feel like people who are told they have a terminal disease are really chosen. Brittany was always in control of her care. She could list every medication she took and what worked and what didn't. Her plan was always to be in her home when she required hospice care. In January, at MD Anderson, her neurooncologist said it was time to go home and call Hospice. We knew who we wanted and that was Hospice of South Texas (HoST).

We realized quickly that managing her pain at home, with her young children, was going to be more difficult than anticipated. She was in a lot of pain: walking around in circles, laying down, sitting down, wanting me, wanting Justin, it was awful. Finally, Brittany and Justin agreed to call Dr. Vu and get the ball rolling with Dr. Meyer. The HoST admitting nurse came to the house to do her assessment and it was determined that the best course of action for Brittany was the Dornburg Center in order to manage her pain.

God gave Justin and me the peace to know that we were doing the best thing for Brittany. Justin said, "even though it broke my heart, it made me feel good because she was strong and stubborn and walked into the Dornburg Center of Compassion on her own." Over two hundred

(Continued)



Brittany, Justin, Jensen, and Harlyn  
C/O Sherry Janis Photography



# Never Did She Give Up, Never Did She Throw in the Towel

(Continued)



Brittany's family  
C/O Albrecht Artistic Photography



Christmas with Brittany, Justin, Jenson, and Harlyn  
C/O Albrecht Artistic Photography

of her family and friends, even her previous patients were able to visit. We shared meals together, we told stories, we laughed, we cried, we prayed and we felt like we were in our home. It was perfect.

The greatest gift to us was to sit back and let the staff become the “care givers” to Brittany while we could resume our roles as “family”. She was a giver throughout her whole life, and the time was well over due for her to be cared for and loved on as the Hospice of South Texas staff so beautifully did. We were blessed to be able to be with Brittany around the clock.

Her children visited her daily - they loved on their momma, crawled in bed with her, watched movies, played games and played outside. The Center not only gave them time with their mom, it gave them time with their dad too. We feel the HoST team was readily available for us when we needed them, yet always gave us the privacy we required. They just took such loving care of Brittany.

Justin, Justin's mom, Brittany's parents and step parent ALL slept in that room with Brittany. “We were spread out like lava; we are not kidding you, with air mattresses, sleeping in the recliners, just all loving on each other, consoling each other, reassuring each other.”

Justin would crawl in bed with Brittany and wrap his arms around her. That was such a gift for them. Our center staff would come in and give her medication, with Justin snuggled up right next to her. It was perfect. They really worked to make it bearable and as peaceful as possible.

**The greatest gift to us was to sit back and let the staff become the “care givers” to Brittany while we could resume our roles as “family”.**

We'll never forget the loving words, kindness and compassion everyone gave us. Dr. Meyer and Dr. Whitehouse came by each day and gave us their best thoughts on where Brittany was medically. This gave us peace each day. They talked to us for a long period of time, they never made us feel rushed nor left in a hurry. One evening, Dr. Oakley stopped by and sat with Brittany. He held her hand and told me wonderful stories about Brittany working with him at the Cardiovascular Clinic and how much he and his wife adored her.

Brittany, 33, died on February 19, 2020. She lived one year and one day after her diagnosis. We called some friends and family and they were able to come to the Center. The staff helped us have a service for her. It was very healing and meaningful for those able to come and say their final good bye. We were given all the time that we needed.

Peace of mind at the end of life means different things to different people. Although her time was short, we felt like we were given so much more time. We just want to say that we hold the hospice team at the Dornburg Center in the highest regard. Jennifer, Ashley, Donna, they were just amazing. Tammi, Eva and everyone that reached out to us made us feel like we were the only family there, but we know that we weren't. They didn't make us feel any different by our requests or the times that we needed them. We felt they cared for our precious Brittany and ALL of us, with respect and compassion.

What would I tell someone thinking about hospice services? It would be hard for me to explain to them that this was a wonderful experience, as I know people don't think of that when they think of death. I would tell them as difficult of a time that it was, I so appreciated the staff's loving care and dedication which made Brittany's end of life bearable for all of us. It helped prepare us. In spite of great adversity, we made the best of it. God placed Brittany right where she needed to be, there at the Dornburg Center of Compassion.



C/O Sherry Janis Photography



## COVID-19

As we began our 35th year of providing compassionate care, our community (and the world) had experienced unprecedented challenges due to the COVID 19 pandemic. We instituted extra safety precautions, social distancing became the new buzz phrase, working remotely from home and new forms of communication “zoom meetings” were utilized for coordination of patient care. Our staff donned PPE (personal protection equipment) for home visits, telemedicine was utilized (a first for us) and visitation protocol was modified at the Dornburg Center. Spirits were lifted by our participation in a patient's 100-year “distance” birthday celebration, along with nursing home car parades, staff meetings in the great outdoors and wonderful volunteers sewing and distributing much needed masks. Hospice of South Texas remains grateful for the outpouring of community support to our organization during these trying times – by providing meals for our heroes on the front line, much needed donations through the mail and online, and a wonderful grant from HEB for \$2,500 in support of emergency aid to Texans impacted by COVID 19. From 1985 through the global pandemic of 2020 and beyond, your community not-for-profit Hospice of South Texas has, and will continue to provide outstanding, supportive, and compassionate care to our patients and their families.

