

LIGHTS OF COURAGE LUNCHEON

JEN HATMAKER DESCRIBES OUR CANDLELIGHTERS "TRIBE" LIKE NO OTHER

With a sold out crowd of over 500 guests, the Lights of Courage Luncheon was held at River Oaks Country Club on Tuesday, April 24th. The luncheon honors children with cancer and their families who represent all the thousands of children with cancer and are our lights of courage and inspiration. Their inspiring stories of courage and hope are the highlight of the annual event.

The luncheon was led by our wonderful Co-Chairs **Meg Earle and Andrea Montgomery Stewart**, and raised more than \$220,000 for the many families we serve. Thank you for your hard work and dedication to this luncheon!

As guests arrived they sipped on mimosas and shopped at the 17 boutique shops filled with stationery, jewelry, clothing, and decorating accessories. Featured stores included: Andrea Montgomery, Alexandra Knight, Aspire Accessories, Cute Head Kids, Elaine Turner, Gris Designs, Katie & Co., Kendra Scott, LC Designs Jewelry, MUSE, Nice Custom Goods, Paris Texas Apparel Co., Pomp and Circumstance, Santalisa, Shopaholic Sanctuary, Smocked Frock, and Switch2Pure. Our thanks to these shops who donated 20% of sales in support of the luncheon.

Our guest speaker this year was beloved author and podcast host **Jen Hatmaker**. Jen gave an inspiring speech with her illustration of how Candlelighters is like a tribe of elephants. She talked about how tribes of elephants are a very close-knit community that form a bond and protect one another. When an elephant is giving birth or is harmed in any way the tribe encircles that elephant as protection from predators and as a way of offering peace and comfort to the elephant in the middle. Jen used this comparison to illustrate how Candlelighters volunteers, supporters, and staff all rally around our families to uplift one another and offer support and care in their time of need. Many of our Candlelighters families have shown their appreciation through paying forward the help that they have received to other families – offering everyone a chance to be in the middle of our circle. Jen Hatmaker captivated the crowd through this comparison; we laughed, cried, and celebrated life together as the "Candlelighters tribe." (cont. on pg 4)



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UPCOMING EVENTS

Camp CLIFF

October 12th - 14th, 2018

Emmaline/MUSE Fashion Show

October 24th, 2018

Family Fall Festival

October 28th, 2018

Margarita Taste Off

March, 23, 2019

Lights of Courage Luncheon

April 23, 2019

Support Group Meeting at MD Anderson:

Every Wednesday 11:30 am – 1:00 pm
 MD Anderson Children's Cancer Hospital
 Pediatric In-Patient Unit
 Ronald McDonald House Room
 For more information call (713) 792-4891

**Support Group Meeting at
Texas Children's Hospital:**

Every Wednesday 1:00 – 2:00 pm
 Texas Children's Hospital - West Tower
 Ronald McDonald's Kitchen – 9th Floor
 For more information call (832) 822-1415

To stay up to date on Candlelighters events, please check our website at www.candle.org and follow us on Facebook at Candlelighters Houston

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CORPORATE CORNER

MP2 ENERGY

On June 18th MP2 Energy, based in The Woodlands, hosted Roxy Irwin from Candlelighters for a Walk Team Introduction and Kick Off Meeting. MP2 Energy, a subsidiary of Shell Energy North America, is a top-tier electricity company that manages power plants, delivers retail power to end-use customers, and also manages all other aspects of the power markets like demand response, commodity hedging, solar and wind installation and offtake, and distributed generation. At this meeting the MP2 Team of 80 professionals learned about the Candlelighter's Fun Walk along with Candlelighter's mission to provide emotional, educational, and financial support to families in the Houston area with a child diagnosed with cancer. The Walk Team initiative was debuted by MP2 Team member and Candlelighters supporter Jay Beasley as MP2 Rocks! Night at the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion. Foreigner, Whitesnake, and Jason Bonham performed to a packed amphitheater, with the MP2 Energy Team and their guests enjoying the trip down memory lane from their party room in the Event Center and reserved seating in the amphitheater for the concert. The concert was a huge success, with the MP2 family enjoying a night of 70's & 80's rock and roll while raising money for the MP2 Candlelighters Walk Team, earning this year's Rookie of the Year award at the Fun Walk. MP2 Energy truly does ROCK! If you would like to learn more about MP2 Energy, please visit www.mp2energy.com



Thank you to our Sponsors!

Candlelighters Cares! 2018

Treating the nurses, doctors, social workers and more at the pediatric cancer centers for all they do for our Candlelighters families!

jan	feb	mar	apr
may	jun	jul	aug
sept	oct	nov	dec
			SPONSOR NEEDED!

DECEMBER SPONSOR NEEDED!! We're also accepting 2019 Sponsors! If you're interested in sponsoring a Candlelighters Cares day at the hospitals, please contact our Program Director, Roxy Irwin, at rirwin@candle.org.



LIGHTS OF COURAGE LUNCHEON

Mistress of Ceremonies **Melissa Wilson** shared her own encouraging story of her family's journey through childhood cancer when her son, Caleb, was diagnosed with A.L.L. Melissa shared how Candlelighters stepped in and provided invaluable support to her family throughout Caleb's treatment.

Dr. ZoAnn Dreyer of Texas Children's Cancer Center and **Dr. Doug Harrison** of The University of Texas MD Anderson Children's Cancer Hospital presented our 2018 Honorees with their awards. Their stories of courage and hope are highlighted in this newsletter.

Candlelighters wants to thank **Jenna Jackson** and her talented crew at **P+R Productions** for producing what may be the best video we have ever had. The video was a touching tribute to the families we serve and the impact Candlelighters has made on their lives. Please visit our Facebook Page @Candlelighters Houston to view the video

In addition to shopping, the event featured a raffle which raised more than \$33,000. Congratulations to our raffle winners and many thanks to the generous individuals and businesses who donated the amazing prizes.

2018 LIGHTS OF COURAGE HONOREES:

Luisa Victoria Parra – In Loving Memory Honoree

Michael Spedale – Sibling Honoree

Brittany Maddox – Childhood Cancer Survivor Honoree

Elizabeth Maniha – On Treatment Honoree

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ELIZABETH MANIHA



Elizabeth Maniha has always been a happy and spunky little girl who loves getting into all kinds of mischief with her twin brother. In March of 2017, while on a Disney cruise with her family, Elizabeth's parents noticed she wasn't quite herself. She began running a fever the last day of her trip and before they returned home, her parents made an appointment with her pediatrician online. They landed in Houston early the next morning and immediately took Elizabeth to her doctor. The doctor said those words that every parent fears - "this looks like leukemia"- and sent them to Texas Children's Hospital where the diagnosis was confirmed later that night.

After the first few days of her hospitalization, hearing so much information that was impossible to absorb, her parents were overwhelmed. Not only with the battle Elizabeth would be facing, but also having another 2 year-old toddler, a 9-year old and an 11-year old at home – they just wanted their family together and everything to be normal again.

The first few months of treatment were tough, the steroids and chemo made Elizabeth feel terrible, and she wanted to be held by her mom night and day. As she began to feel better, her personality began to shine, and when she began to play, and cause trouble with her twin brother again - it was heartwarming for everyone to see.

In the midst of their own personal storm, the Maniha family wanted to help the Houston community after Hurricane Harvey. They knew they needed to help other childhood cancer families, and supporting the Candlelighters Hurricane Harvey relief program was their way to help. The family raised funds for cleaning supplies, gift cards and personal items.

During treatment there were ups and downs, infections and low counts, hospital stays and delays in treatment, but one year later Elizabeth is in maintenance!

The day she was able to go back to pre-school she was so incredibly excited and happy to be with her friends again. Elizabeth takes in every moment.

She was silly with giggles when she saw in the mirror that her hair had started to "grow up". On family outings everyone has fun, but it's obvious that Elizabeth is truly loving every adventure. Now three years old, she is learning to swim with her twin brother, loves books, princesses and changing outfits several times a day. Daily, she tells her mom and dad, "I love you super high!" and we think they would agree!

**It is Candlelighters honor to present the
2018 Childhood Cancer On Treatment Award to Elizabeth Maniha**

MICHAEL SPEDALE

When a child is diagnosed with cancer, the entire family is diagnosed with cancer. Candlelighters recognizes the difficulties the family unit faces when battling childhood cancer and this year's sibling honoree exemplifies all the siblings that face cancer with the same fierce spirit as our patients.

Michael Spedale is a senior at St. John's School. He is the Center for the varsity football team and a Captain on the swim team. He works as a lifeguard during the summer and spends lots of time in the gym – a typical teenage boy! In June of 2016, Michael's sister Claire was diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma, a rare form of tumor that grows in the bone and tissue. After Claire's diagnosis, Michael's life changed. He knew that he wanted to honor his sister by giving back to the cancer community.



Michael was first introduced to Candlelighters through his school, St. John's, as an 8th grader participating in the annual Family Fall Festival hosted by the school for Candlelighters families. The festival is organized by the 8th graders and Michael remembers manning the gold fish booth. He also participated in the school's Friday Night Lights event. Organized by the football team, the event honors Candlelighters families during a home field game.

He knew that he wanted to do something for Claire and volunteering at Candlelighters was his way of taking action. Michael wasted no time – the week after Claire was diagnosed he called the Candlelighters office asking to help in any way he could. He spent his summer days, not in the gym or at the pool, but in an office as the summer intern. He volunteered his precious time to help Candlelighters prepare for Summer Surprises and Camp CLIFF. The all-female staff was grateful for his ability to lift and sort heavy boxes in the office!

For his family, Michael is often the source of warmth and laughs when the days are long. The first thing he does every day when he gets home is give Claire a rub on head and a big hug. On school holidays, he takes her to physical therapy and attends chemotherapy treatments. We are happy to report that Claire recently rang the bell signifying the end of treatment.

Michael is focusing on finishing the school year and planning for college – having narrowed his list down to 10 target schools.

And through it all he has been a big brother (the kind everyone wishes they had), a volunteer (up for any task large or small), and an advocate and voice for his sister. Childhood cancer is a family affair and Michael has been an active participant in his sister's treatment.

**It is Candlelighters honor to present the
2018 Childhood Cancer Sibling Honoree Award to Michael Spedale**

BRITTANY MADDOX



As the youngest of seven children, there are plenty of family members who can confirm that Brittany Maddox was a joyful and healthy toddler. In August of 1991, she became sick at only 18 months old when she began having seizures. An ambulance rushed her to a nearby hospital. After countless tests she was diagnosed with myelofibrosis, a rare form of leukemia. She was transferred to Texas Children's Hospital where she was given a 5 percent chance of survival. While other toddlers spent their days playing and exploring the world around them, Brittany's days were filled with blood tests, medical procedures, and getting her IV tangled up with the IVs of the other kids on the hospital floor.

Against all odds, the little girl who was not supposed to survive to be two years old, became an active and healthy child. She spent most of her adolescence traveling around the United States as a competitive figure skater. She graduated high school, and then went on to graduate summa cum laude at Sam Houston State University with a degree in Theatre Arts.

Brittany met the love of her life and best friend, Brandon Maddox, while attending college. They married in May of 2015 and are now enjoying their life together with their perfect little dog named Beans.

Brittany and Brandon are long time volunteers with Candlelighters as counselors at Camp CLIFF and love being able to help other childhood cancer patients and their families. As a long-term survivor, she is an inspiration to so many of our campers. Patients, siblings and parents are all touched by her life story. Brittany is also an amazing photographer and has donated her talents at many of our family events.

Brittany is now in her second year as a teacher, teaching 5th grade English Language Arts. While teaching is extremely challenging, she appreciates the impact she is having on her students' lives.

She and her husband spend their free time camping, hiking, traveling, and enjoying the life Brittany was never expected to have.

Being diagnosed with childhood cancer is a life changing event, not only for the patient, but for the entire family. Brittany's family was forever changed by her diagnosis of cancer, and though she cannot remember her battle, it has shaped her mindset and outlook on life. She feels that because of being diagnosed so early in life, she was able to grow up being grateful for her health and for the chance to live her life to the fullest.

**It is Candlelighters honor to present the
2018 Childhood Cancer Survivor Award to Brittany Maddox**

LUISA VICTORIA PARRA

Luisa Victoria Parra was a child with a purpose – she was on a mission since the day she was born – arriving a few days early, so she could be born on a leap year, February 29, 2012 in Florida.

She was not even three months old when her parents noticed a bump on the side of her nose. Her parents knew something was wrong and after seeing multiple doctors, they arrived at Joe DiMaggio's Children's Hospital. On September 22, a biopsy confirmed a diagnosis of Alveolar Rhabdomyosarcoma, a soft tissue tumor. The family decided to leave Florida and seek treatment at the Children's Cancer Hospital at MD Anderson and in October 2012, by the time she was five months old, she began her fight.



By the time she was 2 years old she had already had 26 rounds of three different types of chemo followed by proton radiation. She was on constant treatment but her strength and uniqueness was mesmerizing.

During her long treatment, the hospital became a second home for the Parra family. It was during that time Candlelighters was there to provide emotional support to the whole family. Having someone who understood was invaluable to the Parras as they fought childhood cancer while struggling to keep the family together.

She hit every milestone like any healthy baby, even though she was attached to a line and receiving chemotherapy. She learned to crawl, walk and even ride the pink tricycle in the halls of the MD Anderson Children's Cancer Hospital floor. Other than being bald, this girly girl was always playful and filled with courage.

Luisa Victoria loved the water and her pink plush dolphin named Pink. Always the happiest little girl, she loved her older brother, dancing, singing and My Little Pony (especially Rainbow Dash). Animals in general were her weakness, from dolphins to goats at the petting zoo, to pretending to be a rabbit or a kitten every time the nurses came into her room. Of course, she had her sassy attitude and did not like when people made a fuss about her health.

After multiple chemotherapy treatments, surgeries, and four relapses she celebrated her first leap year birthday in 2016. A few weeks later, on March 18, 2016, at 4 years old, Luisa Victoria lost her battle with childhood cancer. Her life was full of love, happiness and so much faith.

Families at every stage of their journey are welcome members of the Candlelighters family. The Parra family continues to be involved with Candlelighters - attending the Rodeo Cookoff, the Family Fall Festival and Summer Surprises.

**It is with great respect that Candlelighters presents the
2018 In Loving Memory Award to the family of Luisa Victoria Parra**

15TH ANNUAL PLANET TEXAS BAR-B-QUE COOKOFF

On Saturday, February 24, 2018 the largest crowd of Candlelighters families arrived in four luxury busloads to enjoy the festivities in the Planet Texas Team tent at the 2018 Houston Livestock Show Bar-B-Que Cookoff . Jim Petree and his chefs provided delicious bar-b-que sandwiches and had cupcakes that brought joy to everyone's tummy.

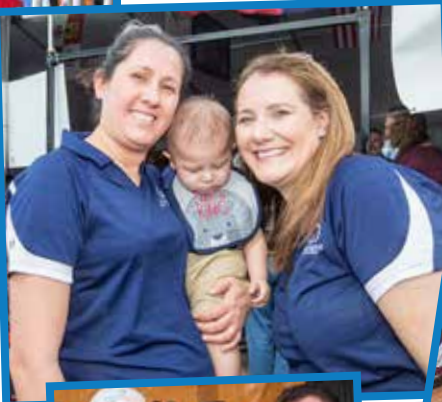
Jay Beasley, Joanne Crouch, Ray Carter, and Marty Wells organized this year's event including live music and a welcoming committee that included the Houston Texans Cheerleaders.

At the close of the event each child was given a book of rodeo carnival tickets! Thanks to Jay Beasley and the 100 Planet Texas volunteers who helped make this a special day for our Candlelighters' families.

Each year in addition to all the wonderful things Planet Texas does to make Saturday at the Cookoff enjoyable for our Candlelighters' families, they also raise money in memory of a deceased team member, Jeff Primm, to send many of these same families to Camp CLIFF. This year, Primm's Posse raised a record-breaking \$15,000 in donations for Candlelighters Camp CLIFF!!

The event marked the 15th year that Planet Texas has hosted Candlelighters families. Many thanks to all who were involved in making this day a special one for our families.





10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MARGARITA TASTE OFF BENEFITING CANDLELIGHTERS SOMBREROS OFF TO A RECORD-BREAKING FIESTA!

Candlelighters Young Professionals Group's 10th Annual Margarita Taste Off presented by Don Julio took place Saturday, March 24th at Kirby Ice House. With beautiful weather and more than 850 guests enjoying the fiesta, our YPG members raised more than \$85,000!

Local restaurants vied for the title of Best Margarita; guests sipped, sampled and voted for their favorite concoction. Don Julio graciously sponsored the tequila to ensure consistency and quality among contestants, and DJ Senega made sure spirits were high with beats all afternoon. Special thanks to Ditta Meat Company, La Fisheria and Texas Tamale Company for providing food to counteract the day's libations. Non-tequila lovers were taken care of by Bud Light/Silver Eagle Distributors, Dos Equis, Modelo Especial, Oasis Texas Brewing Company, and Real Ale Brewing Company.

Guests sampled margaritas from 17 of Houston's hottest restaurants including: Berryhill, Cilantro's Mexican Grill and Taco Spot, Los Cucos Mexican Café, Eight Row Flint, Emma's Mex Grill, Emmaline, La Fisheria, Gigi's Cupcakes, Grandma's Boys Lemonade, The Grove, Habanera & the Guero, Harold's in the Heights, Irma's Southwest Grill, Line & Lariat, Lupe Tortilla, Pablo's Mexican Kitchen, The Palm, El Patio AKA Club No Minor, El Teimpo Cantina, and Los Tios Mexican Restaurant.

New to this year's event was the advice from some local celebrity judges! Joining in on the fun was the Morning Mix Crew from 96.5, Lauren Kelly, Geoff Sheen and Sarah Pepper, FOX 26 Morning News Anchor Melissa Wilson, Pappas Beverage Director Matt Tanner, and Kareem Jackson #25 for the Houston Texans!

A special thank you must go out to our amazing twenty and thirty-something YPG committee: Ashley Angelle, Blayne & Davis Bonham, Amanda Cuellar, Rob Davis, Amaris Dawson, Emily Deatherage, Lewis Ehrle, Allison & Will Evans, Sterling & Rob Evans, Elliott Gabriel, JD Garza, Leigh & Chris Joseph, Mary Caroline Lee, Kandyace Mayberry, Brian McCulley, Melanie Miguez, Mary Elizabeth O'Leary, Clair & Ryan Primm, John Rhodes, Shannon Schmidt, Carly Schorr, Ashley & Jonathan Sloan, Jesse Soto, Albert Spiers, Corinne Sullins, Kelsey & Jeff Tarpinian, Brandon Thacker, Yadira Torres, Michael Tsang, Shelby Ubrich, Adam Will, and Alex & Aron Will.

Also contributing to the funds raised, were wonderful raffle packages including: a VIP Texans game in Head Coach Bill O'Brien's suite thanks to the O'Brien family, a 50-box Kendra Scott jewelry pull that sold out in 15 minutes, a private shopping experience at STAG, a weekend getaway to Hill Country, Pedal Party, and a membership to the Red Neck Country Club just to name a few.

As usual the most exciting part of the day was announcing the winners of the margarita contest.

The Top Awards were given to:

1st place	The Palm
2nd place	The Grove
3rd place	Eight Row Flint
4th place	El Tiempo
Honorable Mentions	Irma's Southwest Grill, Emmaline, Lupe Tortilla and Cilantro's Mexican Grill & Taco Spot
Don Julio Critics Choice Awards	The Palm and Cilantro's Mexican Grill & Taco Spot
Celebrities' Choice Awards	The Palm and Berryhill
Jorge Raptis Award (named after the Don Julio rep who started it all 10 years ago!) – La Fisheria	

Our heartfelt thanks to all who supported and made this year's Margarita Taste Off such a successful event.

Please Save the Date for the 11th Annual Margarita Taste Off! Join us on Saturday, March 23, 2019!

With questions regarding the event or joining Candlelighters Young Professionals Group, please contact our Development Director, Kelsey Tarpinian at kelsey@candle.org or (713) 270-4700.



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Special Thanks to



MARGARITA TASTE OFF



SUMMER SURPRISES

Once a year, Candlelighters hosts Summer Surprises at Texas Children's Cancer Center and MD Anderson Children's Cancer Hospital. This year, with the help of wonderful volunteers, and amazing partners, we were able to have a couple of pretty fun parties to help celebrate the 25th anniversary of Candlelighters.

On July 11, 2018, Candlelighters and sponsor **Oler Relocation** spread cheer throughout the Texas Children's Cancer Center. This may have been one of the best celebrations at TCH ever! There was something to do in every corner of the infusion area. Whether you were enjoying your Chick-fil-A lunch, creating something in our arts & crafts area, getting your face painted, or dancing to the music of our DJ with Princesses Belle and Rapunzel, a good time was had all around. Our many volunteers did a fantastic job of distributing presents, and giving out delicious cupcakes provided by **Sugary Cindy's** and **What's Baking? Bakery Shop**.

One week later on July 18, 2018, Candlelighters, **Adam's Angels Ministry**, and **The Rankin Twins** brought the party to MD Anderson Children's Cancer Hospital. We had a great party with the largest turnout we've ever had! The party in the Pedi-Dome included arts & crafts, a Chick-fil-A lunch, and cupcakes generously donated by **What's Baking? Bakery Shop**. The highlight had to be the return of The Rankin Twins who provided the musical entertainment for the day.

A HUGE thanks to **Houston Relocation Professionals** for holding their annual toy drive during the holiday season! This toy drive supplies the majority of the gifts given out at Summer Surprises. Summer Surprises would not be possible without their generosity! Another special thank you to all of the volunteers who helped make these days possible including **Constellation Energy's OLE Group** for wrapping the hundreds of toys we gave out at the hospitals, and **Brittany Maddox** and **Mary Rocha** for capturing the magical moments!

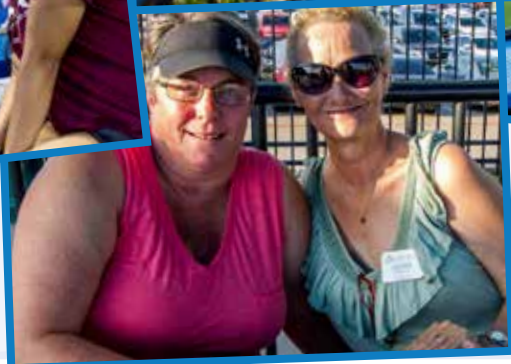
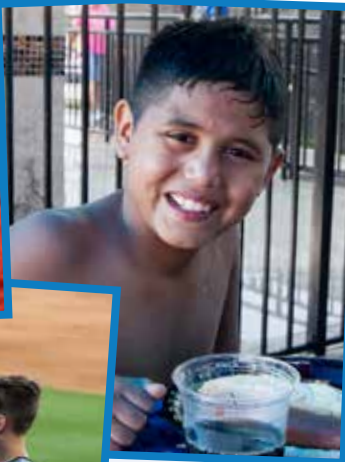


THE SUGAR LAND SKEETERS “STRIKE OUT KIDS CANCER”

The Sugar Land Skeeters hosted its seventh annual Strike Out Kids Cancer event benefiting Candlelighters on Saturday, June 2nd at Constellation Field. Our Candlelighters warrior Joey Santiago threw out the first pitch to kick off the game.

The families received game tickets and a complimentary buffet provided by Constellation Energy and the Sugar Land Skeeters. Each year, the Skeeters raise money for Candlelighters through a silent auction, where fans bid on the Candlelighters jerseys worn by the players. This year, they decided to have a second auction at another game, in hopes of raising more money for Candlelighters.

Candlelighters is grateful for the partnership with Constellation and The Sugar Land Skeeters. Our families can't wait to Strike Out Kids Cancer again next year!



One Year Later

It's hard to believe it has been a year since Hurricane Harvey brutalized Texas with its historic rainfall and flooding. Candlelighters had multiple families and some staff affected by the devastating storm. We had multiple fundraising events cancelled, and for the first time in twenty years, Camp CLIFF was cancelled. However, with the help of a few generous donors, we were able to act quickly and help our Candlelighters families in need.

Read below to see some quotes from some of the families we assisted.

"The survival bucket was much needed and greatly appreciated, as well as the gift cards from the donors. One would never imagine how much joy can come from a bucket of cleaning supplies, trash bags, and gift cards to Home Depot. One less thing to have to worry about, it allowed us to focus on the children and reassuring them that we were still a family and we would still make happy memories together even if we couldn't be in our own home for the holidays. We will be forever grateful for the tremendous blessing the Candlelighters continue to be in our lives."

"The Survival bucket was great. It had things that we could not find on the shelves in our community. We were so grateful to receive it. Our home sustained about \$7,000 worth of damage. Walls, insulation and flooring primarily. We were able to stay with friends while the repairs were made. We are back in our home now. Thanks again for all you and your organization have done for us. We are blessed to be a part of the Candlelighters family."

"Even though our house didn't flood, we had 4 ceilings come down, so water came through the top. The Survival Bucket was very helpful because we couldn't find basic supplies anywhere. The gift cards were helpful when it came time to buy items that were damaged. A year later, and one of the repaired ceilings has come down again. The damage to our roof was more extensive than we thought, but we are here and so grateful to Candlelighters for your help."

"The survival bucket was very thoughtful and useful. We were very thankful for your support. We took on 3 feet of water and had a total loss of our down stairs plus both family vehicles. We are complete with the rebuild, mainly due to all the help and support of organizations, friends and family. It will be a couple of years before we fully recover, primarily financially and mentally."

We'd like to thank our donors, once again, for going above and beyond and allowing us to help our Candlelighters families.

BACK TO SCHOOL AFTER TREATMENT

By: Bonnie Mondragon – cancer mom and school counselor

In January of 2017, Audrey went back to school after completing her treatment for Hodgkin's Lymphoma. She was ready for a change from the hospital setting. Although a few of her friendships were maintained while receiving treatment, she was ready for some normalcy with peers for her last year in junior high.

Audrey was 13 and finishing her 8th grade year. There were many things for her to prepare for schoolwise. Band concerts and contests were coming up. She had her 8th grade graduation plan for high school to think about. Her 8th grade formal and STAAR tests were right around the corner as well. As eager as she was to get back to school, there were some struggles ahead.

Going back to school after complete hair loss was a big concern for Audrey. Finding the right hair piece was important. After applying for a hair piece through the Locks of Love website, Audrey was approved and received a nice hairpiece to wear upon returning to school. Audrey also loved makeup. She spent a lot of time viewing Youtube videos on makeup tutorials and it became her art expression. Although she was not able to control her hair loss, she was able to control the way she applied and contoured her facial art. This helped Audrey greatly.



Audrey's school, Alvin Junior High at the time, was fabulous in easing her back in to a regular routine. Prior to Audrey's return, we sent an email to all of her teachers, school counselors, school nurse, principal and assistant principals. The email discussed Audrey's planned return and possible concerns we had regarding any possible bullying due to her hair loss. The school officials met with her one-on-one upon returning to let her know the whole school was giving her their full support. Random teachers would say hello to Audrey throughout the school day and ask her how she was doing. This, too, helped with her transition back into school.



Prior to Audrey's return to school, we also set up a 504 meeting to update Audrey's 504 plan. A 504 plan is an education plan for students with disabilities or certain health conditions, such as cancer. By law, these students must have the same access to school programs and activities as students without disabilities. A 504 plan may include extra help in the classroom, such as allowing the student more time to take a test or finish an assignment. It is

covered under the U.S. law, Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Audrey was eligible for 504 services as a student with Hodgkin's Lymphoma in remission. We obtained a medical document from our social worker at Texas Children Hospital stating her diagnosis.

Returning to school brought on a large array of emotions for Audrey. Excitement to spend time with peers again, anxiousness about possible negative thoughts from peers and frustration with her limitations on her energy level. Due to this vast assortment of emotions, we sought out counseling services to help Audrey adjust with her return. The counseling services were very beneficial and gave Audrey a different perspective on social situations. As parents, we learned as well how to be more helpful to Audrey. Adjusting from great amounts of attention in the hospital to less attention in school was difficult. We learned to give Audrey time and attention daily by listening to her stories of her school day experiences without judgement or interrupting. This was important in helping Audrey to feel heard and validated with what she was feeling.

When cancer touches one's life, it leaves a lasting mark and affects the whole family. Through many prayers, community support and determination, families can work through the struggles. Communication is the key. Talk with school officials about your child's return. Even into Audrey's 9th grade year we were talking to all her teachers and counselors at school. Please keep in mind, although cancer goes into remission, the recovery process can take longer emotionally. Survivors may need support for extended periods of time.



Join the Candlelighters
**SCHOOL
 INITIATIVE**

**We have almost met
 our goal but still need
 YOUR help!**

In honor of Candlelighters 25th Anniversary, we're looking for **25 schools** in the greater Houston area to partner with Candlelighters by hosting an awareness and fundraising campaign in 2018. While September is Childhood Cancer Awareness Month, whatever timing is best for your school is just fine.

**Connect us with your
 school TODAY!**

kelsey@candle.org
 or
 713-270-4700



Candlelighters.

CHILDHOOD CANCER FAMILY ALLIANCE
 SUPPORTING FAMILIES FOR 25 YEARS

1. Episcopal High School—\$2,000
2. Incarnate Word Academy—\$1,350
3. Leon H. Sablatura Middle School—\$800
4. St. Martha Catholic School—\$539
5. Goforth Elementary—\$285
6. Mark Twain Elementary—TBD
7. Glenda Dawson High School—Toiletry Drive
8. West University Elementary—Gift Card & Toy Drive
9. Fort Bend Christian Academy—Gift Card Drive
10. Carlestone Elementary
11. EA Lawhon Elementary
12. Garland McMeans Junior High
13. Crosby High School
14. Crosby Middle School
15. Barrett Elementary School
16. Charles R. Drew Elementary School
17. Crosby Elementary School
18. Newport Elementary School
19. Oak Forest Elementary School



A DAY AT THE BALLPARK WITH HRP



Every year, Houston Relocation Professionals (HRP) generously invites Candlelighters families to a special day at Minute Maid Park. On June 27, 2018, six lucky families were able to get a special tour of the stadium before enjoying lunch and the ballgame. To top it off, the Astros pulled out a win over the Blue Jays in the bottom of the 9th with a two-run walk-off home run by Alex Bregman. THANK YOU HRP for treating our Candlelighters families to great day at the ballpark, and to the Houston Astros for providing the entertainment.



BRAS FOR THE CAUSE

In 2006, Shirley Rogers, Administrative Assistant to the Executive Board of the Crosby Fair and Rodeo had an idea! CF&R had always been community minded and loved giving to the community of Crosby, Texas. She organized a fundraiser during the local fair and rodeo in June of that year. A group of volunteers sold "Tough Enough to Wear Pink" t-shirts and raffled other items donated by the community.

Beginning in 2011, The Bras for the Cause (BFC) committee began planning a fundraiser in which male "celebrity" models would participate in a fashion show and the bras were auctioned off at the end of the evening. Guests were also treated to a catered dinner.

Since that first Bras for the Cause event in 2016, Crosby Fair and Rodeo and the Bras for the Cause Committee included Candlelighters as a recipient of their fundraising efforts in addition to the Pink Heals Fund at Houston Methodist. Candlelighters has supported the event with raffle donations, participation and models!

In 2018, The Bras for the Cause committee donated \$30,000 to Candlelighters! We have been blown away by the generosity of the Crosby community and the BFC. They have become a huge part of our Candlelighters family and have volunteered for us throughout the year.

Currently, the BFC committee is planning for the 2019 Bras for the Cause event. Save the date for Saturday, February 2, 2019!



I AM A CANCER SIBLING

by: Jennifer Giambi

I am a cancer sibling. I have a unique perspective on childhood cancer. It has been 29 years since my sister's diagnosis. Since then, I have viewed cancer through a sibling's eyes. That all changed with help from my mom and Jen Hatmaker.

I am a fairly new mom. In 2016, my husband Carlos and I welcomed our son, Gus, into the world. Becoming parents is an awesome, but insanely scary responsibility. I spent those first few days staring at Gus, who strangely looked like a grumpy old man, wondering how we would pull this off (so far, so good). Thus, began my journey through the jungle that is motherhood.

Since then, I have spent every day on the phone with my mother seeking advice and answers about raising a child. She has patiently listened as I have cried, fretted and rejoiced during this wild ride.

During Gus' first illness, my mother and I spoke about my sister's cancer. As we talked, it dawned on me how difficult it was. I knew it was hard, but, in the moment, the thought floored me. How do you do it? Where do you turn? Being a mom is hard. It is wonderful but hard. I can't imagine adding cancer on top of that.

At the beginning of my sister's treatment, Texas Children's Hospital put her in contact with another cancer mom. She became my mom's guiding hand. She offered my mom support when she needed it most. At one point, my sister became very ill. My mom had no idea what to do. With one call to her new friend, she immediately whisked my sister off to the hospital. This amazing woman was there every step of the way. She helped keep my mom afloat, which, in turn, kept our family afloat. If I had the chance to meet her, I wouldn't have the words to express my gratitude.

At this year's Candlelighters Lights of Courage Luncheon, we were blessed with Jen Hatmaker's honest words. She hilariously spoke about the "trenches" of motherhood. As she looked out over a room sprinkled with cancer moms, and dads, she used the most accurate word to describe them - heroes. As those heroes stood up for recognition, my eyes landed on some very special friends - the Candlelighters Parent Consultants.



I know these women. I know their stories. They walked the same road as my mom. And, they have dedicated their lives to offering guidance and support to new cancer families. Again, I was floored by the thought. It can't be easy. Just like my mom's friend, the parent consultants help families navigate through the fog of a cancer diagnosis. But, that's what you do. We lift each other up. Cancer parents, cancer siblings, cancer families - we are all in this together.

Looking around that ballroom I was in awe. In awe of those parents; in awe of Jaynie, Maria, Linda, and Yuvi. I was in awe of my mom. As Jen Hatmaker said, the strength it takes to be a cancer mom is nothing short of heroic.

I am a cancer sibling. But, now that I am a mother, my perspective has shifted.





ways to GIVE

Candlelighters

CHILDHOOD CANCER FAMILY ALLIANCE
SUPPORTING FAMILIES FOR 25 YEARS

1 **WALK with us**

2 **Attend the Lights of Courage Luncheon**

3 **sponsor a family to attend Camp CLIFF**

4 **adopt a family for the holidays**

5 **Hold a Childhood Cancer Awareness Campaign at your school**

6 **have office jeans days**

7 **Attend the Margarita Taste Off**

8 **Make a tax-deductible donation**

9 **sponsor Candlelighters Cares treats for hospital staff**

10 **Warm the fingers and toes of children in the hospital by donating cozy mittens and socks**

11 **Collect grocery gift cards for families**

12 **make a \$12 donation to our parking fund to cover one day of hospital parking**

13 **be a Camp CLIFF counselor**

14 **Follow us on Facebook!**

15 **sponsor a Parent Support Group Meeting**

16 **hold a book drive for: activity, coloring, and chapter book sets**

17 **collect toys to deliver to Candlelighters kids**

18 **Collect gas gift cards for families**

19 **donate prizes for our Fall Festival Costume Contest**

20 **Select us as your Amazon Smile beneficiary!**

21 **VOLUNTEER**

22 **Share the Gold ribbon in September!**

23 **collect toiletries for families who find themselves in the hospital unexpectedly**

24 **collect gift cards for families to use at restaurants or for every day items**

25 **Make a donation in honor of our 25th anniversary**

Thank you for celebrating our 25th Anniversary with us! Please contact the office with any questions in regards to these ideas and opportunities to give.



Candlelighters
CHILDHOOD CANCER FAMILY ALLIANCE
SUPPORTING FAMILIES FOR 25 YEARS

Save the Dates

Camp CLIFF - A Royal Re-Do - October 12th -14th, 2018

For more information contact rirwin@candle.org

MUSE Fashion Show benefiting Candlelighters at Emmaline

October 24, 2018

Call our office for more information (713) 270-4700

Family Fall Festival - October 28, 2018

For more information contact rirwin@candle.org

Adopt-A-Family for the Holidays - October-December 2018

To sponsor a family, contact rirwin@candle.org

*Candlelighters families, please contact your Parent Consultant
for more information*

Margarita Taste Off - March 23, 2019

For more information contact kelseyt@candle.org

Lights of Courage Luncheon - April 23, 2019

For more information contact lwheeler@candle.org

*To stay current on everything happening at
Candlelighters, follow us on Facebook*



Candlelighters Houston

RESOURCES FOR CANDLELIGHTERS FAMILIES

Candlelighters mission is to provide emotional, educational, and practical support to children with cancer and their families. If you are a family battling, recovering or bereaving from childhood cancer, or know a family on this journey, please share these resources both Candlelighters and other organizations in our community offer.

Candlelighters provides practical financial support in the following ways:

- Parking assistance at the Texas Medical Center
- Grocery store gift cards
- Meal passes in the Texas Medical Center cafeterias
- Gas Cards
- Help with funeral expenses

Candlelighters provides emotional and educational support through our following programs:

- Parent Consultant Program: one-on-one peer support from Candlelighters staff and cancer moms at each of the children's cancer centers
- Newsletter
- Adopt-A-Family for the Holidays
- Camp CLIFF (Children Loved in Families Forever)
- Weekly Support Group Meetings at MD Anderson and Texas Children's Hospital (see page 2 for more information)
- Fall Family Festival
 - Many others throughout the year! Please stay up to date on everything by joining our email and newsletter mailing list, and by following us on Facebook at Candlelighters Houston.

Important Candlelighters Phone Numbers:

- Main Office: (713) 270-4700
- MD Anderson Parent Consultants: (713) 792-4891
- Texas Children's Parent Consultants: (832) 822-1415

Other resources available to families facing childhood cancer:

- On-Treatment Housing
 - Chance for Hope
 - Halo House Foundation
 - Ronald McDonald House
- Transportation Assistance for the disabled
 - Houston Children's Charity
- Grief Support
 - Bo's Place
- Financial Assistance
 - Heroes for Children Rent and Mortgage
 - Houston Children's Charity Prosthetics
- College Scholarships
 - American Cancer Society
 - Cancer for College
 - Cancer Survivor Fund
 - Childhood Brain Tumor Foundation/Brittany Truitt Scholarship
 - Friends of Scott
 - Jack's Ride Scholarship Program
 - Kidsrstrong2
 - Kids 4 Kids with Cancer
 - National Children's Cancer Society
 - National Collegiate Cancer Foundation
 - The Simon Cancer Foundation Scholarship Program
 - Snowdrop Foundation
 - Super Sibs Scholarship Program for brothers and sisters of children with cancer
 - The Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation
 - The SAMFund for Young Adult Survivors of Cancer
 - The Ulman Cancer Fund for Young Adults



Childhood Cancer Family Alliance, Inc.
12919 Southwest Freeway, Suite 100
Stafford, Texas 77477

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ADOPT-A-FAMILY

As we begin to prepare for the holiday season, there's no better time than now to join forces with us to bring hope and joy to Candlelighters families through our annual Adopt-A-Family for the Holidays program. Our Adopt-A-Family program recognizes that the diagnosis of childhood cancer affects the entire family and offers help and hope in the holiday season. If you are interested in sponsoring a Candlelighters family, please contact Roxy Irwin at rirwin@candle.org or (713) 270-4700.



Follow us on Facebook at Candlelighters Houston

Candlelighters' mission is to provide emotional, educational and practical support to children with cancer and their families.



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Candlelighters began in 1989 with two parent support groups from the Texas Medical Center: one at Texas Children's Hospital and one at The University of Texas MD Anderson Children's Cancer Hospital. The Texas Children's Hospital group sought formal incorporation, and in 1992 Candlelighters was legally formed. In the fall of 1992 they invited the MD Anderson Parent Group to join them and the two organizations merged into one. The Parent Consultant Program was developed to directly meet the needs of families at the treatment centers and to inform them of potential resources. Our programs and services extend beyond the hospital walls with our Family Camp, Adopt-A-Family, Fall Festival, Candlelighters Newsletter and other special events. Over the years, we have learned how critically valuable it is for our Parent Consultants to be able to personally hand parents of children with cancer practical assistance such as a meal pass, parking assistance or gas cards. It is our greatest honor and privilege to bring this type of comfort and hope to childhood cancer families.