

WEST TEXAS REHABILITATION CENTER

ROUND-UP

Events

EDITION

INSIDE

 **FRED KEY** *wins*
dancing with the
San Angelo stars

- LEGACY OF GIVING
- REESE HARRINGTON
- LOSING THE ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE
- REMEMBERING ALISSA GOMEZ
- & MORE



ISSUE NO. 7 • JULY, 2019



CONGRATULATES

FRED KEY

dancing with the
San Angelo stars



LEADERSHIP LETTER BY STEVE MARTIN, PRESIDENT & CEO



“Jesus said the kingdom of God is like a man who gave a banquet and made room for everyone who was willing to come. Not just the movers and shakers, but also the ‘poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.’” (Luke 14:21)

I used this quote from Mike Wittmer, as recounted in Our Daily Bread, recently during our Legacy of Love memorial events in Abilene and San Angelo to describe the 23 individuals we honored. 23 folks, who over their lifetimes, showed true selflessness, generosity and kindness to thousands of patients served by the West Texas Rehabilitation Center and worked tirelessly to help serve those society might deem less important.

When attending an event like our Legacy of Love, one can’t help but feel challenged and desire to follow in the footsteps of these remarkable folks to share our own gifts of time, talent and treasure in order to create our own legacy of love. These folks helped make remarkable things happen every day at West Texas Rehab by their willingness to serve the least of these.

We are fortunate to highlight companies and individuals within these pages every

quarter who help create their own legacy of love and support for those served by West Texas Rehab. Folks like John Ekdahl of Ekdahl-Nelson Real Estate, who is a new presenting sponsor for our Round-Up for Rehab. What could be more fitting when talking about legacy than having a new supporter involved with the West Texas Rehab’s oldest fundraising event, which marks its 60th year in 2019!

What a great fundraiser we had in April with the inaugural Dancing with the San Angelo Stars! This was our first fundraising event specifically to benefit West Texas Rehab’s Hospice of San Angelo. To say it was a resounding success would be the understatement of the year! A big thanks has to go to our 10 volunteer dancers and professionals who began a legacy of service to Hospice of San Angelo by artfully performing everything from ballroom and salsa to country & western and pop rock. This event benefits patients directly served by our hospice programs. Patients like Alissa Gomez (see *Alissa’s story on p. 12*), whose family members have seen hospice’s provision of compassionate care and how it positively impacted their family.

Frequently, I find myself saying how blessed and fortunate we are to have an outstanding medical community in all our locations. Medical communities who not only work with our clinicians to carry on a legacy of caring that spans 66 years,

but who also work every day to bring the very best in treatment techniques and technology to leave their own mark on the great care provided at West Texas Rehab. I know you will enjoy reading about Dr. Zeke Duke (physician spotlight) and Khristina Douglas (employee spotlight), two of the finest individuals to have ever been involved with our patients!

23

No discussion of a legacy to West Texas Rehab would be complete without some information on how folks can benefit our patients through our Foundation (foundation spotlight), which exists solely to support more than 650 patients cared for at West Texas Rehab each day! Patients like Reese Harrington, who has a wonderful story about how the West Texas Rehab has positively benefited her life, which will undoubtedly allow her to impact many others throughout her lifetime.

So, what I want you to hear loud and clear is, THANK YOU! Thank you for your steadfast support; thank you for graciously finding your own way to make a difference in the lives of our patients; and thank you for creating your own Legacies of Love to help generations of folks served by the West Texas Rehabilitation Center!

God Bless,

Steve

TABLE of CONTENTS

- 2 Leadership Letter
- 3 Foundation Spotlight
- 5 Patient Spotlight
- 7 Sponsor Spotlight
- 9 Physician Spotlight
- 11 Staff Spotlight

- 12 Hospice Spotlight
- 15 Volunteer Spotlight
- 19 Calendar of Events
- 21 Board of Directors
- 22 Capital Wishlist

©2019

Publisher
West Texas Rehabilitation Center
WestTexasRehab.org



Design & Layout
Zoom Advertising & Design
www.zoomtexas.com



LEGACY OF GIVING;
WHAT I'VE LEARNED AS A
DEVELOPMENT OFFICER

Or maybe a better way to say it is, “What it was like to realize all I – and most people – don’t know!”

It’s a scientific, biological, psychiatric fact that giving makes us feel good! It does. Scientists believe that selfless /philanthropic behavior releases endorphins in the brain, producing the positive feeling known as the “helper’s high.” Researchers say people are more likely to experience certain gains in well-being because giving to others is more memorable than spending money on themselves.

Now, that being said, even the most generous givers I know are usually frugal, money-savvy individuals who have just as much desire to give to their own family members. They also want to have some for themselves as they age. Which, you might not be surprised to hear, brings us back to this whole arena of Planned Giving! Everything about Planned Giving is geared to helping generous people do so in a way that benefits BOTH themselves or their family AND the charity or charities they choose, all while giving as little to the IRS as possible. Pretty great, huh?!

Probably one of the most profound, and yet simplest, things I’ve learned along the way is that Planned Giving can really only do two things:

- 1 Lower Taxes
- 2 Trade a Gift for Income

Oh sure, there are lots of pieces and persons, papers and professionals, but in the end they are all about finding the best planning vehicle to meet your desires! That’s it!

And since the people we hope to help through this amazing arsenal of planned giving tools are folks who are very dear to us, it’s paramount that we get this information to you as quickly as possible! Of course, there are dozens and dozens of estate planning instruments out there, like.... CGA’s, CRAT’s, CRUT’s, Grantor CLT’s, Non-Grantor CLT’s, NICRUT’s, NIM-CRUT’s, Flip-CRUT’s, ILIT’s, PIF’s, DAF’s...see what I mean? It’s overwhelming and can get very complicated in a hurry! That’s why I have to remind myself, when I’m swimming in all the complexity, that it’s still about helping our friends either Lower Taxes or Trade a Gift for Income, PERIOD!

Over the next weeks and months we’re going to take a look at some of the more common, though powerful, financial planning tools/instruments/vehicles that you can use to either lower your income tax or trade some particular “non-income producing” asset for income. How crazy is that?! The latter is the one I’d like to start with, the trading a gift for income, and is one of the easiest and most mutually beneficial tools out there for both you and the charity you choose. The particular estate planning instrument I’m referring to is the CGA: Charitable Gift Annuity.

So what, exactly, is a Charitable Gift Annuity/CGA? I’m glad I asked that question (because I did!). A CGA is most simply defined as:

An agreement in which an individual transfers assets to a charity in exchange for a lifetime income stream and a tax benefit.

A charitable gift annuity is a way you can make a gift to your favorite charity and receive fixed payments for life in return. The payments can begin immediately, or

can be deferred to a future date which you choose. You may also establish a gift annuity for someone else; however, the total number of recipients, called annuitants, of these payments associated with any one gift cannot exceed two. The terms of the arrangement are set forth in a contract signed by you and the charity. The arrangement terminates on the death of the annuitant(s), at which point the charity uses the remaining funds on its mission.

Who establishes gift annuities?

Most gift annuity donors are retired, want to increase their cash flow, seek the security of fixed payments that will not vary, and would like to save taxes. A charitable gift annuity might be appealing in the following circumstances:

- The interest rate on a CD or other fixed income investment is low and you would like to increase your cash flow.
- You own appreciated stock or mutual fund shares, have considered selling some of the shares and reinvesting the proceeds to generate more income, but don’t want to pay tax on the capital gain.
- You would like fixed payments which are unaffected by interest rates and stock prices and which you cannot outlive.
- You want to assure continuation of payments to a loved one without the delay of probate proceedings and in a tax-efficient manner.

How is the amount of the annuity determined?

Continue this article
on the FOUNDATION page
@WestTexasRehab.org

1 How’s This For A Bank Statement: Thanks San Angelo.

All of us at First Financial Bank are so proud and honored with the recent awards we have received. We can’t begin to thank you enough for these recognitions – it means so much.

And rest assured – we will continue to strive to earn your business and respect by delivering the highest levels of personal, professional service in every aspect of our bank. After all, you say it’s what we do best!

Thank you again, from each of us at First Financial Bank
for honoring us with the following 2019 Reader’s Choice awards:

- Best Bank
- Best Place to Work
- Best Mortgage Company

FIRST
FINANCIAL
BANK
YOU FIRST | FFIN.com



Member FDIC



DISCUSS THE FINANCIAL ILLUSTRATION(S) WITH YOUR TAX AND FINANCIAL ADVISORS.



REESE HARRINGTON
WAS NOT WALKING AT
THE AGE OF 15 MONTHS

Little Reese Harrington was not walking at the age of 15 months, and her pediatrician wanted to know why. An MRI showed evidence of Periventricular Leukomalacia, a disorder characterized by softening of the brain tissue, which leads to the death of the white matter of the brain. There are no specific treatments for PVL, only symptomatic and supportive interventions.

Babies with PVL are at risk for motor disorders, delayed mental development, coordination problems, and vision and hearing impairment. In Reese's case, she



demonstrated left-sided weakness, head to toe, including her facial muscles, and visual impairment.

Reese had already been doing Early Childhood Intervention (ECI), but after her diagnosis, Reese's parents, Amanda and Mark Harrington, began bringing her to therapy at West Texas Rehabilitation Center. Reese was immediately fitted with braces, and three months later, at 18 months, she began walking. Over the four years she has been in therapy, the orthotics have diminished in size. Today she wears inserts inside her zip-up pink ankle-high Billy Footwear.

Reese reports once a week for what she calls her "work-out day" at West Texas Rehab. On rehab days she has one hour of physical therapy, followed by an hour of speech-language therapy and a half-hour of occupational therapy.

Lindsey McMillan, Director of Pediatrics and Reese's physical therapist, has created many therapeutic activities to address Reese's needs. In one of them she has laid out an S-shaped course on the floor and given Reese the task of maneuvering from one side of the course to the other on a Scoot About while carrying one object at a time to dress Mr. and Mrs. Potato Heads. Lindsey has set up cones, which Reese must avoid, if she doesn't want to do "push-ups." But even the kneeling push-ups are fun.

"Girl, you owe me about forty push-ups," Lindsey says playfully at one point of the activity. One activity gives way to another – playing hopscotch and climbing stairs. Activities vary with each session.

"The brain is such an amazing organ," Lindsey says. "We use the term neuroplasticity when talking about the brain and its ability to make changes. I like to describe this as the brain being 'moldable,' meaning we can reshape it to work in a different way. When injuries to the brain happen at an early age, we have a bigger

window of opportunity to make these changes. With the right interventions, the brain can sometimes 're-wire' itself when certain motor pathways are disrupted from the brain injury."

"Reese has made tremendous progress over the years, and I have loved watching her grow into her own little person," Lindsey adds. "She has progressed to a point where it is much less obvious to see her physical deficits. At this point, we are



focusing her treatment on goals to be more independent with higher level balance skills, including walking on changing or uneven terrain and being able to run, jump, and play with her siblings and peers. This will be important for Reese as she begins kindergarten in the fall."

"West Texas Rehab has been extremely important," Amanda says. "Without them, Reese wouldn't have made so many gains. We started early, and everyone has helped her so much."

In 2016, Reese was diagnosed with Cortical Vision Impairment. Her eyes were healthy; however, her brain was not relaying what her eyes were seeing. She had 20/100 in her right eye and 20/200 in her left eye. Over the last three years, with the work of her vision specialist and her West Texas Rehab therapists, she has made significant improvement.

"When her vision was tested in May of 2019, both eyes were seeing 20/45," Amanda says. "She no longer has CVI. God is good and so are Reese's therapists!"

"West Texas Rehab and its staff have been a true blessing for our family," Mark notes. "We are forever grateful for the hard work and compassionate care that Reese has been given. Reese has not only had great advances in her motor skills and vision but has also been engrained with a very strong work ethic as a result of her weekly therapy sessions. Her mother and I started a mantra with Reese and her sister, Charley, at a young age that is stated each and every morning: 'I'm smart, I'm beautiful. I am not better than anyone, no one is better than me. I work hard, be strong!'"

Reese will begin kindergarten at Miles ISD this fall. She has the full support of her mother, Amanda, who is a certified special education teacher, her dad Mark, who gives back to West Texas Rehab by serving on its Board of Directors, her siblings, Charley and Smith, and the entire team at West Texas Rehabilitation Center.

After all, West Texas Rehab has taught Reese how to maneuver the S-curves of life. That's just one of the many good things happening here every day!





With the West Texas Rehabilitation Center struggling to stay afloat in 1960, Shelley Smith (The Rehab’s lone therapist and visionary) approached Coke County ranchers, Conda and Edna Wiley, seeking funds to help the Center continue operations. Low on cash, the ranchers donated cattle - cattle that would be sold at auction, which in turn helped to keep the doors open at WTRC! So it began, the long-standing West Texas tradition known as Round-Up for Rehab!

West Texas generosity is what allows The Rehab to continue meeting its mission of providing exceptional care to all patients, no matter their personal financial circumstance. That generosity was evident in Conda and Edna Wiley, and is equally evident in John Ekdahl, the owner and broker of Ekdahl Nelson Real Estate, the new Round-Up for Rehab presenting sponsor.

The Ekdahl family is no stranger to difficult times and they, too, understand the importance of neighbor helping neighbor. To hear John tell it, his grandfather migrated from Sweden in 1896 and the family worked the cotton fields as indentured servants.

Determined to get out of the cotton fields, John’s grandfather joined the United States Marines, sending his checks back home. Little did he know,

his father invested those funds by buying land. Upon returning home, John’s grandfather realized he would be right back in the cotton fields, only this time, he would farm his own land. In an effort to help his community, John’s grandfather built a local cotton gin so he and his farming neighbors could market and process their crops better. The Ericksdahl Gin is still in operation today, only now it’s a co-op.

John’s father started Ekdahl Real Estate in 1980 and built the business while continuing to steward the land as a cotton farmer just as his father did. Upon graduating from Texas A&M University, John joined his father at Ekdahl Real Estate and took over as broker for the business when his father retired in 2007.

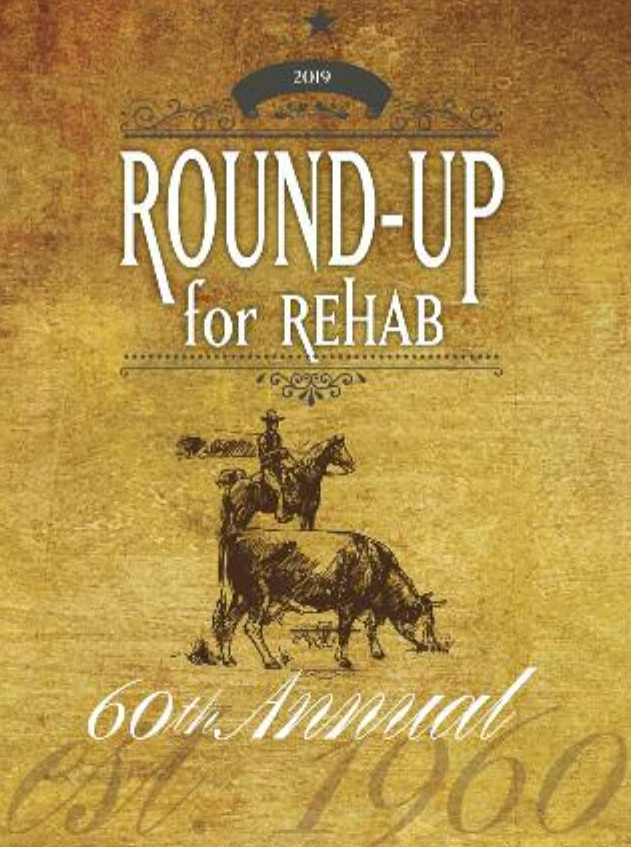
John continues to steward the land just as the Ekdahl men before him did, but in a different way. John continues to grow the business, and has since merged with former WTRC Board Member, Butch Nelson of Nelson Farm and Ranch Properties. John now manages the office of Ekdahl Nelson Real Estate and their 22 agents and three brokers. Through Ekdahl Nelson Real Estate, John is preserving the land’s heritage and rich tradition for families like his, while



also connecting new families to the land. The Ekdahl family and their rich history in stewarding the land as farmers, ranchers and now real estate brokers, make their leadership in Round-Up for Rehab a perfect fit!

John acknowledges, “The Rehab is a real blessing and I want to help where I can, in some small way, to provide for those in need and give back to West Texas.” Helping people find their dream property and helping people in need tells you one thing about John Ekdahl: He and Ekdahl Nelson Real Estate truly embody the spirit of “Neighbor helping Neighbor.”

Welcome aboard Ekdahl Nelson Real Estate! We are proud you have chosen to support our mission of helping people in need!



2019 Round-Up for Rehab Sale Calendar

Lamb & Goat Sale

Wylie ISD Ag Barn, Abilene
Tuesday, June 18, 6pm

Abilene Round-Up Sale

Abilene Livestock Auction
Tuesday, September 17, 11am

San Angelo Round-Up Sale

Producers Livestock Auction
Thursday, Sept 19, 10am

Coleman Round-Up Sale

Coleman Livestock Auction
Wednesday, October 2, 11am

Stephenville Round-Up Sale

Stephenville Cattle Company
Saturday, October 12, Noon

Pig Sale

Wylie ISD Ag Barn, Abilene
Monday, November 7, 7pm

Jackpot Show

Wylie ISD Ag Barn, Abilene
Saturday, December 7, 8:30am



Group IV - Member Owned Electric Co-ops
Southwest Rural Electric Association
Fort Belknap Electric Cooperative
Coke County Electric Cooperative
Big Country Electric Cooperative
Hwy 69 Electric Cooperative
Carrizo Electric Cooperative
Carrizo Valley Electric Cooperative

PROPETRO

B-4 Farms

BAR-C FEEDYARD

Round - Up for Rehab is a year-round program. You can support the life-changing programs at the West Texas Rehabilitation Center by attending one or more of our special Round-Up Sales, or donating livestock. Please contact the West Texas Rehabilitation Center for more information.



PHYSICIAN SPOTLIGHT DR. EZEKIEL DUKE



DR. EZEKIEL DUKE
PICTURED WITH WIFE AMANDA AND
SONS JONAH (L) AND DANIEL (R)

Get out, get active! Find an activity that fits your interests! Move more, sit less! Phrases like these can be found on the covers of health magazines, and throughout internet searches on wellness, but they cannot compare with the dedication and excitement Dr. Ezekiel Duke brings to the topic of wellness within our community.

Dr. Ezekiel Duke is an Abilene primary care physician whose practice is through Abilene Family Medical Associates. Dr. Duke grew up just outside Knox City in Benjamin, TX. After graduating from Benjamin ISD, he received his undergraduate degree at Texas Tech University, then completed his medical degree and residency through the Texas Tech Health Sciences Center. When asked why he chose to become a physician Dr. Duke says, “I always enjoyed science and I like challenging problems.” We are glad to have him taking on those challenges in the Abilene community. Dr. Duke has recently become a part of Abilene, coming to us from Knox City, where he has been practicing for the past 11 years.

While he may be new to town, he has been a part of the West Texas Rehabilitation Center from Knox City for years as one of our referring physicians. Upon moving to Abilene and opening his practice, he quickly showed his enthusiasm to learn more about all of the services we offer by coming to an open house and asking about the many ways we are able to serve his patients. We appreciated his interest and enthusiasm so much, we asked Dr. Duke to become one of our board members and are so pleased to have his perspective and voice on our board.

Alongside his wife, Amanda, and sons, Daniel (15) and Jonah (12), Dr. Duke enjoys all manor of outdoor activities. They especially enjoy fishing as a family. The common adage, “Do as I say, not as I do”, does not apply in the case of the advice Dr. Duke has to offer our community: “Move more, the dead are still all the time!” He definitely takes this advice himself as he and his family keep very active. In addition to their outdoor adventures, Dr. Duke also offers a program once a month, Walk With a Doc, where he gives a short talk (less than 5 minutes) about exercise and health. He then walks and chats with



the program attendants for the remainder of the hour.

Dr. Duke is passionate about promoting wellness through exercise and overall health in prevention of many diseases. However, when medical intervention is necessary he is thorough, thoughtful, and there to serve his patients with respect and compassion. His favorite aspect of being a physician says it all, “I enjoy the reward of seeing people's lives improve when we are able to successfully address a problem, especially one that they believed they would simply have to live with.” What a reward that is, helping to guide and improve the lives of those you serve!

We at West Texas Rehab Center are so grateful for Dr. Duke and his commitment to his patients, and our organization.

"Welcome to Abilene, Dr. Duke! We are excited to work alongside you and your wellness goals for our community."

walk with a doc
ABILENE

2nd Sunday
Every Month
3:30 - 4:30 PM

Led by Dr. Ezekiel Duke & Family
GROVER NELSON PARK
(Meet at the Pavilion)

This doctor-led group is a fun and safe place to go for a walk, learn about health, and meet new friends.
This event is FREE and all are welcome!
Walk at your own pace and distance

AFMA
Abilene Family Medical Associates

Questions?
egiduke@hotmail.com



REHAB
WEST TEXAS REHABILITATION CENTER
Hospice

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2019
FAIRWAY OAKS GOLF COURSE
8:30 AM

FOR SPONSORSHIP & TEAM INFO:
KARLA BROWN
325.793.3507

REGISTRATION:
\$125 / GOLFER
\$500 / 4-MAN TEAM

POST GAME:
LUNCH & AWARDS CEREMONY

LIMITED TO THE FIRST
36 4-MAN TEAMS
(144 GOLFERS)
FORMAT: 4-MAN SCRAMBLE
CALL KARLA @
325.793.3507 FOR
SPONSORSHIP / TEAM INFO

4601 HARTFORD
ABILENE, TEXAS
WESTTEXASREHAB.ORG

REHAB
WEST TEXAS REHABILITATION CENTER

TIM HAMILTON
2019
GOLF CLASSIC
IN MEMORY OF
DEV OHRE

SPONSORSHIPS

BIRDIE SPONSOR - \$1,250: ONE TEAM OF FOUR GOLFERS + SIGNAGE ON THE COURSE
EAGLE SPONSOR - \$2,500: TWO TEAMS OF FOUR GOLFERS + SPECIAL SIGNAGE ON THE GOLF COURSE AND AT THE CLUBHOUSE
GREAT PRIZES AWARDED THROUGHOUT THE DAY

Miguel's
MEX-TEX CAFE

©2019 ZOOM TEXAS.COM


STAFF SPOTLIGHT KHRISTINA DOUGLAS, SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST, SAN ANGELO



“My goal is to be a part of a team with the patients to help them improve their communication or swallowing function,” Khristina says. “I can provide the tools, activities, and exercises they need to improve, and I can encourage them to use them in their daily lives, but they still have to do the work! By improving their communication and swallowing functions, we can help them have a better quality of life when they finish here.”

In 2018 Khristina received a grant from the Parkinson’s Voice Project to implement the SPEAK OUT! and The Loud Crowd programs in San Angelo. The grant has enabled West Texas Rehab to set up SPEAK OUT! – individual therapy sessions for Parkinson’s patients with each patient receiving a workbook from Parkinson Voice Project. It also has provided for the creation of The Loud Crowd maintenance group, which allows for carryover and long-term maintenance of function achieved in the individual SPEAK OUT! program.

SPEAK OUT!
Live with Intent

 PARKINSON VOICE PROJECT

“We’ve had great results with speech and vocal function,” she says. “We started with one group, and we now have two, and the groups continue to grow. I’m so excited we received an extension of the grant for the upcoming year, which will provide ongoing training, materials, and funding.”

Khristina also sees a large number of patients who have suffered strokes or brain injuries, noting that the sooner therapy begins, the better. Khristina sees other patients as well – patients with memory and comprehension deficits, stuttering, voice and swallowing disorders.

“There’s no cookbook therapy,” she notes. “Each patient and family will learn function differently. My role is to

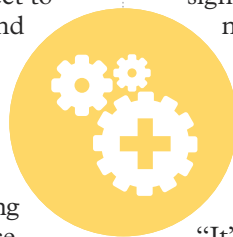
determine what each patient needs, how they can best achieve it, and help them implement it in a way that works for them. We may have to take something we’ve been using as a therapeutic tool and use it in a different way.”

Untreated communication and swallowing problems can lead to social isolation and depression. Khristina is inspired by seeing her patients able to communicate with their families and friends, being able to say I love you or I need some water, sign their own name, read the newspaper, eat a meal, understand what others are saying during a conversation, and doing many other things that most people do in their everyday lives without even thinking.

“It’s fun to see that,” she says. “I celebrate every achievement with my patients. I try to make sure they see the improvement even when it’s slow. On hard days, I’ll be right there with that, too!”

Two stories explain part of why Khristina is a speech pathologist at West Texas Rehabilitation Center. First, when she was a child, Khristina watched her great-grandmother crying and struggling to express her thoughts after having multiple strokes. That experience made Khristina determined to help people like her great-grandmother. Second, after working for two years as a therapist in a hospital, she came to West Texas Rehab and fell in love with their entire concept, especially the fact that here.... no one has to worry about their ability to pay!

Khristina is one of the many dedicated professionals at West Texas Rehab who make great things happen every day!



LOSING THE ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE TAKES AWAY SO MUCH IN LIFE

Most of us take for granted that we can control our environment using communication. We can let others know our needs and wants, our thoughts and ideas. We can have conversations. We can understand what others are saying to us, and we can respond in such a way so that what we read or write is understandable to them. We take our communication skills for granted, that is, until we suffer a stroke, traumatic brain injury, or the onset of a degenerative disorder like Parkinson’s Disease.

Some people develop speech, language, or swallowing problems suddenly after a stroke or brain injury. Still others develop these problems so gradually that they are unaware of them until they find it difficult to communicate or enjoy a meal with family and friends.

In her 26 years of working with adults at West Texas Rehab, Khristina has seen all kinds of patients, from those whose communication and swallowing were affected suddenly to those with gradual degeneration. After patients are referred to West Texas Rehab by a physician, Khristina begins a process of evaluating, creating and initiating a therapy plan; then re-evaluating and adapting the plan – always working toward the goal of improving the communication, swallowing, and quality of life of her patients.

HOSPICE SPOTLIGHT HOSPICE OF SAN ANGELO Hospice of San Angelo is now a member of the West Texas Rehabilitation Center family.



ALISSA GOMEZ

Children should not die of cancer! They just shouldn’t, but sadly, some do. Alissa Gomez, a sweet, caring, seven year old girl died under the care of Hospice of San Angelo in August 2017.

Alissa was a student at Bowie Elementary School in San Angelo, where she was known for inviting classmates to be part of her group if she saw them sitting alone. She had many friends, especially Mallory and Allyson. Sometimes they would call each other at night to coordinate what they would wear the next school day. She liked the colors purple and pink, the movie Frozen, and the song “Trust in You.” She was a loving child, kind and soft-spoken, but capable of bossing around her brothers Jeriah and Keano. She loved her caregiver grandfather and grandmother, Jerry and Brooke Gomez.

Alissa was an artistic, creative child. She loved to paint and draw, even during her illness, and gave one of her paintings to her favorite nurse at Cook Children’s Medical Center in Fort Worth.

When asked what the family would like for people to know about Alissa, Brooke says, “We want people to know how strong she was – strong in her faith. She wasn’t scared. She had no fear of what was happening.”

Alissa knew what was happening in her body because, as Brooke tells it, she and Jerry were always honest with Alissa

because they did not want to cover up what was going on.

Brooke remembers the drive back from Fort Worth after the doctors gave her the prognosis they all had been dreading. She was hoping Alissa and she would get home first, so Jerry could be there with her talk to Alissa together about what the doctors had said. But an hour from home, Alissa asked her grandmother what the report meant. Brooke said it meant the doctors would try a few more meds to see if they worked.

“What if they don’t?” Alissa asked.

“Then there’s nothing else we can do.” There was a slight pause.

“So I get to see Jesus and my daddy?”

With a pinky-bump, Alissa made her grandmother promise not to tell her brothers. Shortly after getting home, Alissa asked her if she had told them about “the dying thing.” Brooke assured her she had not. Alissa was determined to tell them herself, and she did.

The doctors at Cook told the family Alissa would live about six months. They were right.

“Everyone at Hospice of San Angelo was engaged,” Brooke remembers. “Even those who did not have a specific responsibility helped. They wanted to. A nurse would come and watch so we could leave the house. Melissa Salvato, Director of the Building Bridges program, would come polish her fingernails and read books to her. They brought meals and flowers. Hospice was with us for her. They were more blessing than we can describe.”

The night of Alissa’s passing, Brooke recalls HOSA brought them structure and peace. She and Jerry had so many questions. It was two or three in the morning. The nurses were sitting on the floor with them, disposing of the meds, not rushing them through the situation they were not ready for.

Brooke recalls she and Jerry wanted the house to be quiet. They did not want to wake up the others.



“That’s how we wanted it. We couldn’t have done it without hospice,” she says.

HOSA understood what the family was going through.

“Everyone was so professional.

They knew when we needed them to step out of the room,” Brooke says.

Since Alissa’s passing, support for Alissa’s family has continued. They still get HOSA’s bereavement newsletter and handwritten notes from hospice and friends. The students at Bowie Elementary collected money in Alissa’s name for a Buddy Bench, a place where no one would ever be alone on the playground again. Ami-Mizell-Flint, Allyson’s mother, wrote about Alissa and bereavement counseling at Hospice of San Angelo in an essay published in the San Angelo Standard Times.

“We do not feel forgotten, and that’s why we participate in the events hospice has, like Building Bridges,” Brooke says.

“Alissa is unforgettable. We look at her paintings, we talk about her. We want to remember.”

Alissa is unforgettable to Hospice of San Angelo, as well. Children should not die of cancer. But Alissa Gomez did.... at age seven....and in the process taught all of us so much with her faith, her determination, and her strength!

We will never forget her!



“So I get to see Jesus and my daddy?”



**THE STAGE WAS SET:
THE LIGHTS, THE PAGEANTRY,
THE COSTUMES...**

The inaugural *Dancing with the San Angelo Stars* benefiting West Texas Rehabilitation’s Hospice of San Angelo (HOSA) is in the books! April 25, 2019 marked the beginning of what will be a new and annual tradition of great fun, great food, and YES, great dance with this wonderful event! More than 750

eager guests from San Angelo and beyond were treated to a night the likes of which have never been seen in the Concho Valley! It was an evening of dinner and displays of amazing dancing featuring “San Angelo Stars” and local dance Professionals dancing their hearts out to benefit HOSA’s life changing programs! If you’re thinking, “Man, I should have gone to that!” Well, you’re right, except that it had been sold-out for months! Local celebrities from across the



community, and professionals representing different dance and theater organizations, rehearsed for more than five months to put on a spectacular show! The night truly had something for everyone, with dances ranging from Salsa and The Bachata to Country & Western and Jazz.

However, the entire evening would have been impossible without the amazing Liz Bates! Liz volunteered countless hours to make sure the event was not only fun, but also raised funds for West Texas Rehab’s Hospice of San Angelo. Liz had an entire team of folks, including producer, Amanda Jameson, and a slew



of Rehab & HOSA volunteers who made sure the event was a total success! Of course, we couldn’t have done anything without the STARS of the evening, our dancers and professionals, who gave so much of their time, talent, and themselves, to make the night one we will not soon forget!

Finally, we are so grateful for our Premier event sponsors, *Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices* and *Foster Communications*. The evening had additional significance



for many, as Dancing with the San Angelo Stars offered guests the opportunity to remember loved ones they’ve lost through *Stars Remembered*, presented by *CalTech*.



After the smoke cleared and the votes were counted, more than \$240,000 was raised for West Texas Rehabilitation’s
(continued)



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT DANCING WITH THE SAN ANGELO STARS

Hospice of San Angelo, and Fred Key was named the Mirror Ball Trophy Winner! He can now add this distinction to his long list of volunteer efforts as Fred is the past vice-chair of the Board of Directors and current member of the West Texas Rehab Board of Directors. When he isn't supporting West Texas Rehab, he can be found at Foster Communications in San Angelo, where he is the CEO.

We're already planning next year's event, so be sure and mark your calendars for:

April 30, 2020

For more information, please give us a call at West Texas Rehab, (325)223.6313.

Here's a list of all those who made the night such a success. Please know how grateful we are for each of you!

2019 Winners

- Fred Key – Mirror Ball Trophy
- Best Female – Norma Cerna Schneemann, MD
- Best Male – Derek Darby
- Muy Caliente – Quang Le

2019 Stars

- Bridget Carr – Owner of Bug Express and local Barrel Racing Champion
- Colleen Haddad – Community Volunteer & Mother of four
- Laura Scott – Broker/Owner Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices
- Norma Cerna Schneemann, MD – Hospice of San Angelo Medical Director
- Kaysie Smashey – Bentwood Country Club Tennis Professional & Realtor at ERA Newlin
- Derek Darby – local attorney

- Chris Galban – Allstate Agency Owner
- Quang Le – Community Volunteer & Camp Rehab Fruit Ninja
- Fred Key – CEO, Foster Communications
- David Wagner – KLST/KSAN News Director

2019 Pros

- Erin Lane – Ballet San Angelo
- Stacia McSpedden – The Dance Academy
- Angela Hill Brooks – San Angelo Broadway Academy
- Angel Noriega –Ballet San Angelo
- Dorothy Noriega – Ballet San Angelo
- Oscar Narvaez – Angelo State University
- Nick Dietrick – BE Theater
- Cameron O'Briant – BE Theater
- Tim Layman – Country & Western Extraordinaire



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT DANCING WITH THE SAN ANGELO STARS



Shall We Dance?

Admit One

for Dancing with the San Angelo Stars
benefiting West Texas Rehabilitation Center's
Hospice of San Angelo

Thursday, April 25, 2019
6pm

McNease Convention Center

Cocktail Attire • Dress to Impress

dancing with the San Angelo stars

HSA REHAB SA

BERKSHIRE HATHAWAY | ADDRESS HEALTHCARE | CalTech | Foster



dancing with the San Angelo stars



CALENDAR of EVENTS ABILENE DATES, KARLA @ 325.793.3507 / SAN ANGELO DATES, JENIFER AT 325.223.6313

8	8/29/2019	Abilene Summer Dinner Show
9	9/5/2019	Round-Up Supper @ Bob Helmers
	9/7/2019	Sonora Sensation
	9/13/2019	Round-Up Lunch Ballinger
	9/17/2019	Round-Up Abilene Sale
	9/19/2019	Round-Up San Angelo Sale
	9/27/2019	Rehab's Hospice of the Big Country Tim Hamilton Golf Classic
10	10/1/19-1/20/20	Round-Up Cotton Project
	10/2/2019	Round-Up Coleman Sale
	10/3/2019	Round-Up Dudley Brothers
	10/7/2019	Round-Up Pig Sale
	10/9/2019	Round-Up RA Brown Sale
	10/12/2019	Round-Up Stephenville Sale
	10/19/2019	Round-Up Ozona Goat Roper's Gala
	TBD	Round-Up Powell Sale
11	TBD	San Angelo Fall Dinner Show
	11/5/2019	Round-Up Sweetwater Shrimp Peel
	11/7/2019	Hospice of the Big Country Candlelight Memorial Service
	11/9/2019	Frank Caraway Sporting Clays - San Angelo
12	12/5/2019	Hospice of San Angelo Light Up a Life
	12/7/2019	Round-Up Jackpot Show
	12/14/2019	Snyder Christmas Ball
	12/17/2019	Hospice of San Angelo Candlelight Memorial Service
1	1/18/2020	50th Annual Rehab Telethon & Auction

TBD: To Be Decided All dates subject to change. Please check WestTexasRehab.org throughout the year for updates.



Shelley Smith Physical Therapist Founder and first CEO of WTRC, accepting a contribution in 1960

Founded in 1953, West Texas Rehabilitation Center has continuously been on the cutting edge providing health care services to the people of West Texas.

WTRC continues to do so with top of the line treatment methods, technology, certifications, & special programs.

65 years of service & many more to come... current services include:

- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Therapy
- Pediatric Therapy
- Nutrition Services
- Family Support Services
- Audiology - Hearing & Balance
- Orthotics & Prosthetics
- Hospice Services
- Employer Services
- Pacesetters Fitness Program
- Retired & Senior Volunteer Program



CONTACT US TODAY!

WestTexasRehab.org

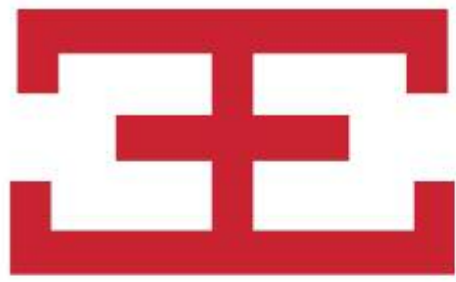


2019 Board of Director Officers

- Chairman, Abilene: Faye Smith
- Vice-Chairman, San Angelo: Carol Ann Bonds, PhD
- Secretary: Tiffany Wagstaff
- Treasurer: Gary Morrison
- Medical Director: Dr. Jay Capra
- Chairman, West Texas Rehab Foundation: John Berry

CAPITAL WISHLIST

SITE	DEPARTMENT	DESCRIPTION	QUOTE
SA	Audiology	Pneumatic Exam Chair	3,100.00
SA	O & P	New Solid counter tops, 2 solid surface sinks and faucets (plaster room) Replace sink and faucet and counter top (Cast Room)	4,000.00
AB	Hospice	Scoop Mattress (Quantity 15)	2,506.65
SA	IR	Drug Screen Chain of Custody Cabinet	2,210.00
OZ	PT/OT	N-K Delux Electric Hi-Lo Table	2,395.00
AB	Pedi OT	Social Group Room Kitchen Play Set, Switch Music Box, Treatment Card Sets.	2,883.32
SA	Adult PT	SportsArt Upright Cycle w/20 Resistance Levels	1,770.00
AB	Pedi PT	Clinton physical Cuff, Weights, Dumbell and Racks	826.68
SA	Adult OT	Lightforce Laser Therapy System	33,500.00
SA	Adult OT	New Whale P5 Portable /include linear & convex probes, trolley cart	17,500.00
AB	Pedi PT	Therapy/Nesting Bench	2,584.32
SA	O & P	Powered Parallel Bars	4,850.00
SA	Adult ST	Iowa Oral Performance Instrument (IOPI)	2,120.75
AB	Audiology	Vivosonic ABR - Infant hearing evaluation system	19,400.00
AB	Pedi OT	Sensory Quiet Room Equipment- Light Wall Panels	7,117.75
OZ	PT	Triton DTS Advance Traction Table (Vonco)	9,258.00
AB	Pedi PT	Vital Signs Monitoring System	2,429.68
AB	Pedi OT	Treatment Chairs for food school program	2,421.00
AB	Pedi ST	Green house and supplies for Horticulture Therapy Program	2,357.00
SA	Pacesetter	Elliptical Trainer	2,520.00
SA	Audiology	High HZ Option-HF Tinitus Evaluation System	1,775.00
AB	Audiology	GSI Tympstar	10,345.00
AB	Adult PT/OT	OCCCUPRO FCE Software	13,225.00
AB	Pacesetter	Fitness Equipment for Pacesetters Program	17,500.00
SA	Adult OT	Stereo Optical Vision Screener	7,225.00
AB	Adult PT	Matrix Climbmill	4,118.00
SA	Pedi	Cabinets (13) for Speech Rooms and Hallways	2,599.87
SA	Adult PT	Natus Balance Master	109,436.25
		Total to Fund	\$291,974



EKDAHL • NELSON •

Farm & Ranch, Commercial, & Residential Real Estate



Stamford: **325.773.3676** | Abilene: **325.698.3374**

Ekdahl Nelson Real Estate is proud to partner with West Texas Rehabilitation Center and its mission to improve the quality of life of those served regardless of financial circumstance.

www.ekdahlrealestate.net



4601 Hartford
Abilene, TX 79605