



HOUSTON HOSPICE
Life Matters

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Chicken Soup Author, Acclaimed Speaker LeAnn Thieman to Speak at 18th Annual Butterfly Luncheon

When Saigon was falling to the communists in 1975, LeAnn Thieman accidentally found herself caught up in the Vietnam Orphan Airlift ordered by President Gerald Ford. She and a friend, both homemakers and nurses from the Midwest, had originally come to bring six babies for adoption. Six became 300. Her book, *This Must Be My Brother*, details her daring adventure to rescue 300 babies in a mass evacuation as artillery attacks by the North Vietnamese Army rained on Tan Son Nhut Airport. The experience forged her ability to find courage in extraordinary circumstances.

Guests of Houston Hospice's 18th Annual Butterfly Luncheon will hear Thieman's remarkable stories when she speaks on April 1 at the Junior League of Houston.

Thieman has been featured in *Newsweek's* "Voices of the Century" issue, on FOX-TV, BBC, NPR, PBS, and countless radio and TV programs. After her Operation Babylift story was featured in *Chicken Soup for the Mother's Soul*, Thieman became one of *Chicken Soup's* most prolific writers. Her devotion to 30 years of nursing, made her the ideal co-author of *Chicken Soup for the Nurse's Soul*. She went on to co-author 16 *Chicken Soup* books, such as *Chicken Soup for the Christian Woman's Soul*; *Chicken Soup for the Caregiver's Soul*; *Chicken Soup for the Father and Daughter Soul*; *Chicken Soup for the Grandma's Soul*; and *Chicken Soup for the Mother and Son Soul* among many.

In a review of Thieman's book about Operation Babylift, John Clark Pratt, author of *Vietnam Voices* and *The Laotian Fragments*, wrote: "Among many unknown Vietnam stories of compassion and bravery has been that of Operation Babylift. Here, written by two women who were there, is a fascinating part of that story told with honesty and compelling sincerity. Some of the scenes in this book will stay with me forever."

Upon the 25th anniversary of the airlift, President Ford asked to meet Thieman. Her books and work drew an invitation from First Lady Rosalynn Carter who invited Thieman to present at The Carter Center's annual conference. Mrs. Carter wrote the forward to Thieman's *Chicken Soup for the Caregiver's Soul*.

As a renowned motivational speaker, Thieman shares life-changing lessons learned from her Airlift experience. Believing we all have individual "war zones," she inspires people to balance their lives, truly live their priorities and honors them for the difference they make in the world. Her latest book, *SelfCare for HealthCare, Your Guide to Physical, Mental and Spiritual Health* is a dynamic component of her transformational SelfCare for HealthCare program.

Thieman is one of about 10 percent of speakers world-wide to have earned the Certified Speaking Professional designation and in August 2008 she was inducted into the Speaker Hall of Fame. She and Mark, her husband of 45 years, reside in Colorado where they enjoy their empty nest.

Houston Hospice Vice President of Development and External Affairs, Cynthia Nordt said, “With LeAnn, we are excited to have an author and speaker who brings her personal and professional experiences together to share an engaging perspective about real life, whether it be finding a higher purpose in spirituality, creating fulfilling relationships and building trust as a parent, helping healthcare practitioners and caregivers answer their ‘calling,’ or persevering trials and celebrating tribulations that we experience every day. Her books resonate because, in essence, she provides readers with a meaningful guide for navigating life no matter the situation.”

On behalf of Luncheon Chairmen, Jenny Kempner, Isabel Lummis and Sue White, the community is warmly invited to attend the Butterfly Luncheon and hear LeAnn Thieman, Monday, April 1, 2019 at the Junior League of Houston located at 1811 Briar Oakes Lane, Houston, Texas 77027. Registration will begin at 11 a.m. Individual tickets and table sponsorships are available at www.houstonhospice.org or by calling 713-677-7123.

Proceeds from the luncheon help fund Houston Hospice operations and its Butterfly Program of pediatric hospice care. Through this program, children and their families are teamed with physicians, nurses, social workers, chaplains, hospice aides and volunteers with expertise in children's care.

About Houston Hospice: Nonprofit Houston Hospice was founded in 1980 and has grown from an alternative, grass roots concept to a leader in hospice care for people of all ages and walks of life. Care is provided to patients and families in private homes and in residential facilities throughout Austin, Brazoria, Colorado, Fort Bend, Harris, Jackson, Matagorda, Montgomery, Waller and Wharton Counties. Inpatient care is provided through the Margaret Cullen Marshall Hospice Care Center located in the [Texas Medical Center](#).

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