

Phil Helfrich's Memorial * Annual Meeting

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Larry E. Lutz

From the President

This has been a very active month for DignityHouston. Please take a few moments to read this newsletter carefully. In the coming few weeks, members of DignityHouston will have the opportunity to express their choices in moving DignityHouston forward. I truly want to encourage each of you to who is not a member of DignityHouston to act quickly to become one so that you can participate in making these choices. If you're unsure about what it takes to be a member of DignityHouston, be sure to read the article ***Deadline for Voting Rights*** later in this newsletter.

I also want to thank all the members who worked long and hard this last month to make DignityHouston a success. We've formed a functioning Board, gotten our financial transactions in order at long last, and done far too much to tell you about in this short newsletter. I especially want to thank Frank Aguilar for his wonderful efforts in the memorial for Phil Helfrich. Without his efforts in ensuring that the room could accommodate all the folks without know how big or small the attendance might be, we could have had utter chaos on our hands. Frank also worked tirelessly to ensure that the room was beautiful and everyone was made to feel welcome in what was a very strange place to many of them. The music by Andy Shell made the service even more memorable. These folks and many others truly embody the spirit of "getting it done and done right" that Phil brought to our small Catholic community.

Deadline for Voting [voting button](#) Rights

Don't forget! In order to vote in the Annual Election, you must be a full member of DignityUSA on August 12, 2015. Membership is easy. You can sign up online at [DignityUSA](#), call (800) 877-8797 with your credit card, or write info@dignityusa.org. Membership is only \$50, \$10 of which goes to your local chapter, DignityHouston.

Being a member gives you a say in the important choices that keep DignityHouston moving forward and keep it there for you when you need it.

[Phil Helfrich](#) We Remember Phil

Phil, a close friend and strong member, left us on July 21, 2015 to be with the God he so revered. Having been born November 29, 1939, Phil had 75 years of experience and wisdom that will be sorely missed by DignityHouston and many others in the Houston area.

He was currently on the Board of Trustees of DignityHouston and had served on the Board several times in the years since we were on Fannin Street back in the 80s. He had also served on

ballot issues **What Are We Voting For?**

Our Annual Meeting will be on September 12, 2015 at 6:30 pm. At that time, the membership will elect a new Board of Trustees and render its decision on a series of amendments to the By Laws and Articles of Incorporation.

You can find the slate of candidates for the Board of Trustees and the proposed amendments at your [DignityHouston](#) Web site.

Last Call for Nominations nominations

The email ballots for the Annual Election will go out on August 12, 2015. That means all nominations for persons to be listed on that email as candidates for the Board of Trustees must be received by August 11, 2015. If you want to nominate yourself or someone else for the Board of Trustees, please be sure to email that nomination to dignityhouston@outlook.com by that date. After that, nominations will be accepted from the floor at the Annual Meeting on September 12, 2015, but people who voted by email and do not attend the Annual Meeting will be unable to vote on those nominations.

ballot box **(E)Mail Ballots**

Ballots will go out by email to all members on August 12, 2015. Members who do not have an email address on record will receive a ballot by hand delivery or U.S.P.S. mail. Members who receive their ballots by email will have three ways to vote:

- They will be able to click a hyperlink in the August 12th email

the Board of Trustees for the Executive and Professional Association of Houston (EPAH), as well as having revived and reinstated the Houston Chapter of AVER (American Veterans for Equal Rights). In addition to that, he was an active member of the American Legion, having been a Master Sergeant in the United States Army Reserves, 75th Division until he retired at age 60.

DignityHouston was proud to host a memorial service for him on Saturday, July 25, 2015 at the Montrose Center, Room 114. About 35 people attended this service including Phil's family members, representatives of the many groups who benefitted from his leadership, and long-time friends both in DignityHouston and in the community.

We often say that those of us who are members of the LGBTQ community create our own families, often out of necessity. As true as that may be, it is also wonderful to see how the many families that Phil had, biological, career, and LGBTQ, could come together at a time like this to celebrate a man we all truly loved.

Is Dignity/Houston, Inc. a Charitable Organization?

Dignity/Houston, Inc., a Texas nonprofit corporation, is recognized by the U.S. Internal Revenue Services as a tax-exempt organization under the Internal Revenue Code §501(c)(3). By definition, such organizations are *public charities* and *private foundations*. The definition of what a *charity* is can be confusing to many. Some have the erroneous notion that *charities* solely dispense money to individuals. Actually, private foundations

to vote online.

- The will be able to print a PDF ballot attached to the email, complete it, and mail it back to DignityHouston or bring it with them to the Annual Meeting.

If you have any questions or concerns about voting or the Annual Meeting, please call (832) 390-4453 for assistance.

exists primarily to dispense money to individuals, public charities **do not**.

Dignity/Houston, Inc., is designated as a public charity and does not meet the criteria necessary to be a private foundation. IRS defines *charitable* as including relief of the poor the distressed, or the underprivileged; advancement of religion; advancement of education or science; erecting or maintaining public buildings, monuments, or works; lessening the burdens of government; lessening neighborhood tensions; eliminating prejudice and discrimination; defending human and civil rights secured by law; and combating community deterioration and juvenile delinquency.

In looking at these things, it's important to realize that a public charity, such as Dignity/Houston, Inc. do not undertake those charitable activities by giving money to individuals; that it is the province of private foundations. Instead, public charities, like Dignity/Houston, Inc. provide **services**. Hence, Dignity is service-oriented, not alms-giving.

You can find out more in the [IRS Publication Compliance Guide for 501\(c\)\(3\) Public Charities](#).

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