



ALIVE! Wire

Alexandrians Involved Ecumenically

Winter 2010

JUST ASK

I attended a forum for non-profit leaders last month and the speaker asked us what we thought was the primary impetus for volunteering. A number of great responses were suggested: “a desire to give back to the community”, “religious teachings”, and even “the schools now encourage or require volunteering.” But the correct answer was “because they were asked.” Most of us said “Duh, of course!” But none of us had offered that answer. The same is true of donating funds to a charity. Most people give because they are asked.

Think back to when you first became involved in ALIVE! as a volunteer or donor. I’ll bet you did it because you were asked by someone to join them at an event like Last Saturday Food Distribution or a silent auction. Or perhaps someone in your congregation suggested you get involved in ALIVE!, maybe helping to deliver furniture or walking in the CDC or Help the Homeless walkathons.

ALIVE! can always use new volunteers and new donors. If you already are a supporter of ALIVE! consider asking a friend or neighbor to join you this month. It’s the perfect time of year, as we all are focused on giving thanks and giving to others.

And if you either haven’t volunteered or haven’t donated to ALIVE!, consider this your invitation. We need your time, your talent and your treasure, as many of our neighbors in Alexandria continue to struggle in the current economic environment. This newsletter is full of opportunities and you can always check our website (www.alive-inc.org).

Come join us!
Cheryl Malloy



Cheryl Malloy

Thanksgiving Day Turkey Trot

The Del Ray Business Association held the 35th Annual 5k Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving morning this year and honored long-time ALIVE! volunteers Linda and Mike Oliver as Grand Marshalls of the event. Shown below riding in the lead vehicle provided by Jack Taylor Alexandria Toyota are Linda and Mike along with Congressman Jim Moran of Virginia’s Eighth Congressional District. Now an Alexandria Thanksgiving Day tradition, this year the Turkey Trot attracted a record-breaking 4,200 registered participants, about 1,000 more than last year.

For most of the 35 year history of the Turkey Trot, ALIVE! has been the recipient of the canned goods runners are asked to contribute as well as a portion of the registration fee. Another record of the event was the fifty banana boxes of food items donated to the ALIVE! food pantry. The Del Ray Business Association donated a very generous \$5,000 to ALIVE!’s food programs.

Congratulations to Sean Graham of Arlington who finished first in the race and to the three members of Alexandria City Council, Kerry Donley, Rob Krupicka and Frank Fannon who also crossed the finish line. Congratulations to all who participated and a gracious thank you to all who made this a very successful Turkey Trot.



Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” Then said I, “Here am I. Send me!”

Isaiah 6:8

Notes from the Executive Director



Ken Naser,
ALIVE!'s Executive
Director

What a year 2010 has been. Spring brought forth sprouts of hope when the economy showed signs of improvement, albeit slower than all of us would have liked. And, there were some welcome returns of long-time funders like our dear friends at The Ivakota Association who had stopped their funding of non-profits for a while as a result of little or no earnings on their principal. Good news for ALIVE! as we really depend on such support to maintain our programs – most of which will reach a plateau at the higher end like our Last Saturday Food Distribution program which is 41% higher than it was just three years ago.

Recently, our Family Emergency Program analyzed the numbers of new households being served since the beginning of 2010 and discovered that we will have about 700 new households this year that had never received benefits from ALIVE! before. (See related story by one of our FEP volunteers on page 6.)

The annual Thanksgiving Turkey Trot, sponsored by the Del Ray Business Association broke all records this year with more than 4,200 registered runners. For ALIVE! the run yielded \$5,000 from DRBA and 50 banana boxes of canned goods from the participants.

In September, we lost a long-time friend of ALIVE! and founder of one of our most successful programs. In 1972, Barbara Green became the original Director of the ALIVE! Child Development Center. She had co-founded the first Montessori school in Alexandria and brought to ALIVE! that knowledge and experience. Barbara served in the capacity of Director as a volunteer for seven years. She was a dear friend and supporter of ALIVE! right up to her last few months.

There are always new challenges that ALIVE! faces at the beginning of each year. But, with the continued support of our many loyal volunteers, friends and donors, we will embark on our 42nd year with the same dedication and commitment to the Alexandria community that was instilled in us by our founders.

Ken

Recycle to Help ALIVE!

planet
green



ALIVE! has signed up with Planet Green to recycle used inkjet printer cartridges and old cell phones in exchange for cash. Planet Green will buy these items from ALIVE! and the proceeds will go to support our programs.

If you have inkjet printer cartridges (sorry, no laser or toner cartridges are accepted) or cell phones, please drop them by the ALIVE! office. If you want to collect these items at your congregation, school or place of work, we can provide promotional flyers, a collection box and anything else you need to get started.

Thanks for helping ALIVE! and for helping the environment

**“If you wish to receive the ALIVE! Wire electronically,
please email your request to alivetoo@aol.com. Thanks”**



ALIVE!

President: Cheryl Malloy, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Vice President: Ellen Brown, Community Representative
Treasurer: Rick Glassco, Immanuel Church-On-The-Hill
Recording Secretary: Eric Winakur, Agudas Achim Congregation
Corresponding Secretary: Vivian Webb, Blessed Sacrament Catholic Community
Kenneth D. Naser: Executive Director
Kathy Richards: Editor, ALIVE! Wire



ALTERNATIVE GIVING PROGRAM

Don't know what to give a friend or family member for the holidays? Want to reduce the frenzy of gift-giving and advocate for a simpler lifestyle? Want to share your faith and blessings with those less fortunate around you while honoring a friend or relative? Whatever your reason, by purchasing a gift through ALIVE! you are directly benefiting families in Alexandria who need your help.

ALIVE! again this year is offering an alternative giving program. You can purchase a gift to assist one of ALIVE!'s six programs and receive a gift card acknowledging the gift. Gifts range from a holiday turkey for a low-income family at \$10 each to a single box spring and mattress for a formerly homeless child at \$100.

Shopping is simple. Go to ALIVE!'s website (www.alive-inc.org) where you can locate the alternative giving page with a list of gifts from which to choose. Print out the order form, choose your gifts, and mail the form to ALIVE! along with you check. Gift cards for your selections will be sent to you within a few days so that you can present them to your recipients. This is an excellent way to help ALIVE! and the families we serve while honoring someone in a special way.

ALIVE! CDC Celebrates Halloween

The CDC's preschoolers had a wonderful time celebrating Halloween on Friday, October 29. Each child brought a costume to wear for the annual Halloween parade. There were plenty of princesses and super heroes who happily visited our neighbors at Woodbine in the morning to receive some special treats (see photo below). Later in the afternoon, the children enjoyed some "orange and black" colored snacks, including cheese cubes, raisins, orange slices, and brownie bites. After reviewing the Halloween safety rules, the children were well prepared to go trick or treating on October 31 in their neighborhoods.



HELP ALIVE! HELP OTHERS Some of the Alternative Gift Options:

\$10 pays for a dozen eggs for 10 families.

\$15 purchases a hat and gloves to keep a child warm.

\$24 will buy 200 pounds of meat from the Capital Area Food Bank.

\$40 helps a homeless mom buy work clothes or shoes.

\$50 will pay for enough gas for one truck to pick up and deliver furniture to 12 families in need.

To see all the Gift Ideas, please go to our web site, alive-inc.org



CDC Wish List

Boy's sizes 8 to 13 sneakers

Girl's sizes 6 to 12 sneakers

Washable Finger Paint

Jumbo Washable Markers

Jumbo Glue Sticks



ALIVE! House Happenings

Spotlight on Our Graduates!

I came to ALIVE in April 2009 because I was struggling with finding a stable place to live. I was very rebellious and stubborn, and I had my guard up. I was hurt, afraid, defensive, and I had trust issues. I struggled a lot with letting my guard down and trusting people because of my past, which made me very overprotective of myself and my son. I was not the person that talked about my personal business or trusted many people, so that was a challenge for me.

After I had adjusted a little there, it hit me that I need to allow people to help in order to grow and be successful in this program. Although I have had many stumbling blocks at ALIVE! House I have overcome them by humbling myself and seeking answers for my questions versus assuming and being upset. Being in ALIVE! House has allowed me to grow and mature. I learned to “check myself” before others, to think before I act and how to be patient.

I learned how to find myself in becoming a young adult, and having a child to lead by example. ALIVE! House was the best place for me because I don't think I could have gone to a place that had a big sign that said “shelter.” It was more like a home. Although there are rules and people in your business, I realized that in life and everywhere you go there are rules. Being at ALIVE! House has molded me from being mean as a lion to being as gentle as a blue bird. Thank you.

I have grown and let down my guard to allow people to help me. I have developed many relationships with females, which I didn't have before. Within the last eight months I've made some big changes in how I go about things, and I've learned things about myself that made me understand why I was running into the same brick wall over and over again. I learned that sometimes you have to take four steps back to go two steps forward and that not everything comes when you want it because you may not be ready for it. I learned that I do have strengths: I love my son very much. I'm a good mother. I am determined, and I want the best for me and my child. I am hard-working and a fast learner. I am smart and very knowledgeable.

As for my son, he was happy at ALIVE! House and safe. He loved the Reading Connection Read-Aloud program, which took place every Wednesday night. And, he adored Mr. Ben and Miss Warren, who I think he really thinks is his grandma. One day after I told him we were moving, he asked me out of the blue, “If we move, am I'm going to Miss War's house?” I was surprised at his question so I asked why he wanted to go to her house. He said, “Cause I gotta to see my grandma!”

Now I am on my way to continue to be successful and grow to be a great mother and to set an example for my child. I am



strong. I have been through a lot, but I will not let my past continue to haunt me. I have come a long way from where I started, but I know that I still have a lot to work on and a lot of room to grow. When I used to fail at my goals or something that was put in front of me, I used to feel weak or “less than”, but now I feel like I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.
Danielle



The day I met 24-year-old Danielle and her 1-1/2-year-old son Kaliq is not one that I will soon forget. She came to ALIVE! House a strong, protective, streetwise, young woman hoping her “toughness” would continue to mask the fact that she was also angry, fearful, very unsure, raw from rejection and not only starving to be understood and accepted by others, but also desperate to understand and accept herself. Strapped with limitless potential, this quick and intelligent young mother had until then found herself stuck in a repeated cycle of self-sabotage. Feelings of fear, frustration, and anger from abandonment, repeatedly leading to incidences of inappropriate behavior resulting in placement and/or program termination had become the pattern until she secured housing of her own at the age of 19. At age 22 a difficult pregnancy, which resulted in job loss sent her on the downward spiral to homelessness. After two years of transience, Danielle was referred to ALIVE! House.

At our first meeting Danielle announced that she had spent half of her life in “the system” being moved from place to place, that she did not trust anyone and that she DEFINITELY did not like “working with females.” At that moment I knew in my head that I had my work cut out for me; but I eventually came to know more certainly in my heart that the Grace of the Lord was there to help me and Danielle.

Danielle's adorable son, Kaliq, immediately captured my heart when at first sight he called me "grandma." Not yet having children of my own, I never thought of myself as a grandmother, but there was something so very precious about his calling me "grandma" that I never gave it a second thought. Little did I know how telling it would be of the relationship that would develop between me, Danielle and Kaliq during their 19-month stay. Over the first year, Kaliq alternated between calling me "grandma" and "mommy," until he was able to very lovingly make out "Miss War," which he continues to call me to this day.

Although young adults, it is often the case that residents come to ALIVE! House in need of a parental figure to help walk them through stages of development that were not completed (usually adolescence or teenage) – this would also be the case for Danielle. After the long difficult "dance" of adjustment that we often do at ALIVE! House, which was extended in Danielle's case, she finally reached her defining moment where the anxiety of her current situation was worse than the fear of the unknown that accompanies change. Through the critical support of our service team, including ALIVE! House Resident Manager, Ben Caruthers; the Advisory Committee Chair, Susanne Arnold; and staff from several City of Alexandria agencies, Danielle began to make pivotal changes and has begun her journey to a promising future. She has come a long way and has quite a way to go; but, she is off to a very good start.

Danielle and Kaliq now reside in a renovated transitional housing program apartment in the City, where for up to 24 months she can receive support while continuing to improve her life and parenting skills. As she drives away in her very first automobile, received through donation while at ALIVE! House, Danielle is comforted by the knowledge that ALIVE! House will remain a resource of encouragement and support.

Dimitri M. Warren, ALIVE! House Director



Danielle and Kaliq

ALIVE! HOUSE WISH LIST

Volunteer Facility Manager to oversee tradesmen at House (ie: lift inspection, HVAC inspection; annual sprinkler inspection, annual electrical inspection; gutter cleaning; carpentry projects; tree trimming; appliance repair, etc.)

Power washer

Office supplies: printer/copy paper, postage stamps

Household Supplies: Brillo, oven cleaner, sponges, disinfecting wipes, rubber gloves, light bulbs, aluminum foil, standard bed pillows

Cleaners: bathroom, hard surface, floor, glass & window, dishes

Laundry: detergents, bleach, spot cleaner, softener

Paper: towels, toilet, tissues, and napkins

Plastic: trash bags, tall kitchen bags, food storage bags

Cotton rags

Personal: soap, lotion, deodorant, mouthwash, cough, cold, flu medications– adult & children

Bus Tokens & Metro Tickets

If you are able to donate any of these items, please call ALIVE! House (703-684-1430) or email alivehousedir@alive-inc.org.

Could this be our best year yet?

We won't know until February the total amount raised by the 2010 Help the Homeless Program, but we do know that there were many enthusiastic participants. Mini Walks were held at Grace Episcopal School; St. Rita School; West End Congregations (see picture at right); and the Old Presbyterian Meeting House. OPMH also had several family walkers raising funds for our shelter. Youth groups and individuals from many congregations joined residents, former residents, staff and friends of ALIVE! House in the Walkathon on the National Mall – and from everywhere virtual walkers gave their support – and registration fees! As the news comes in, ALIVE! House is optimistic that we achieved our goal of 550 walkers.

FannieMae.
help the
homeless



Walkathon '10
The National Mall



Family Emergency Program Brings a Happier Thanksgiving

She opened the door and started crying as soon as she saw us standing there with 4 large bags of food. We smiled and said "Happy Thanksgiving" and waited, not sure what to do next because we'd never had this type of reception before. Remembering her manners, she took one of the bags from me and led us into her tidy kitchen and we put the groceries on the bare countertops. While continuing to cry she said "I promise to pay it forward as soon as we get back on our feet. My husband lost his job and we've used up most of our savings on the rent." We could easily believe the rent was high in this upscale high-rise in the West End where we had never delivered groceries before.

Feeling the need to explain, although we merely needed her to sign the USDA form, she went on about the hard times they had been facing with only unemployment income, health issues, mounting bills, their inability to get out of their current lease, and the fact that they had no money left over for food. She repeated her pledge to "help in any way we can" as she continued to cry. I reached out and hugged her and then she smiled and hugged my husband and said "I'll never forget your kindness."

In the past year, the Family Emergency Program has helped close to 700 families for the first time, by helping pay their rent or utility bills or delivering food to them. Many of these families are like the one we encountered on the day before Thanksgiving--this is the first time they have ever asked for help and are embarrassed about having to ask.

We should have told this client that her smile as we were leaving had more than repaid us for our time. We left feeling truly blessed to have helped someone in need and to be in a position where we could "pay it forward."

Submitted by an FEP Volunteer

Food Program Wish List

Canned Spaghetti Sauce
Complete Pancake Mix
(Needs Only Water)

Syrup
Canned Meat

Tuna
Dried Milk

Jello

Coffee and Tea

Money to buy fresh eggs,
meat and produce \$



KIDS HELPING KIDS, an organization of Alexandria high school students sold lemonade last spring to raise money. Here some of their members present Pam Blankenship, (left) Director of ALIVE!'s Child Development Center (CDC), along with students and teachers from the CDC with a check for \$4300.00. Yeah KIDS!

DRIVES HELP FILL THE PANTRY



Above: Food contributed by AARP members is sorted before being loaded onto an ALIVE! truck. Pictured in the cap is Kevin Donnellan, AARP's Communications Executive Vice President

ALIVE! has been blessed this Fall with numerous community food drives that have helped our Food Program answer the rising demand by those in need in Alexandria. AARP's National Day of Service on September 11th started off the season. Then on November 13th, the National Capital Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America ran an area wide food drive collecting over 1500 bags of groceries in Alexandria which were delivered to ALIVE!'s food warehouse where volunteers sorted and boxed the food. In October, the Stonegate residents and their families and friends held their "6th Annual Stonegate Hearty One Dish Cook Off" and raised over \$2,000. The food program depends on the support of individuals and organizations like these to provide for those less fortunate in our City. Each day during the week volunteers deliver a three-day supply of food to residents' homes and the Last Saturday Food Distribution helps over 600 families a month. Thanks to all who help ALIVE! help others.



Left: Stonegate residents, friends and families participate in their 6th Annual Cook Off to benefit ALIVE!



Right: ALIVE! volunteers sort and box the mountain of food (see back left of the photo) collected by the Boy Scouts in Alexandria.



CFC Code:
44658



United Way Code:
8352

ALIVE! Wine

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ALIVE!, founded in 1969, is a nonprofit organization devoted to helping Alexandrians facing emergency situations become self-sufficient members of the community. ALIVE! has grown from a handful of organizations and volunteers to a vigorous organization of 41 congregations and many volunteers.

ALIVE! offers Alexandrians in need help through ALIVE! House Shelter, Furniture, Housewares, Food Pantry, Family Emergency, Child Development Center and Last Saturday Food Distribution Programs.

Contact ALIVE! at
703- 837-9300
E-mail : alivetoo@aol.com
www.alive-inc.org

Winter 2010-11 Calendar

January

- 4 ALIVE! Board Meeting – 7 pm at St. Rita Catholic Church, 3815 Russell Rd.
- 29 Last Saturday Food Distribution: Church of the Resurrection, Cora Kelly Recreation Center, and Ladrey High Rise

Food Collection: Downtown Baptist, Ebenezer Baptist, First Baptist, Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill, St. Rita's Catholic

Furniture Collection: First Baptist Church, St. Rita's Catholic Church, and St. Mary's Catholic Church

February

- 1 ALIVE! Board Meeting – 7 pm at Church of the Resurrection, 2280 N. Beauregard
- 26 Last Saturday Food Distribution: Church of the Resurrection, Cora Kelly Recreation Center, and Ladrey High Rise

Food Collection: Beth El Hebrew Congregation, Del Ray UMC, Emmanuel Episcopal, Fairlington Presbyterian, Alexandria Assembly of Baha'is, Roberts Memorial UMC, & St. Andrews UMC

Furniture Collection: Beverly Hills UMC and Fairlington Presbyterian

March

- 1 ALIVE! Board Meeting 7 pm at St. Mary's Catholic Church, 310 So. Royal St.
- 26 Last Saturday Food Distribution – Church of the Resurrection, Cora Kelly Recreation Center and Ladrey High Rise

Food Collection: Alexandria Church of the Nazarene, Alfred Street Baptist, Beverly Hills Community UMC, Church of St. Clement, Commonwealth Baptist, St James UMC, Third Baptist, and Washington Street UMC

Furniture Collection: Old Presbyterian Meeting House and First Agape Baptist Community