



# ALIVE! *Wise*

Alexandrians Involved Ecumenically

Spring 2011

## MARCH MADNESS

March is one of my favorite months because I thoroughly enjoy watching the NCAA basketball tournament. And it's not just because UNC has been quite successful in that tournament over the years. I enjoy it because of all the smaller school teams that get to play against teams from the major conferences and show that they can, on any given day, compete with teams with a lot more resources. It's the idea that the best team wins—not the team with the most McDonald's All-Americans or with the most impressive arena. It's the group of students who play together, who listen to their coach and who really love the game that does well in the tournament.

ALIVE! is a lot like a good basketball team. Everyone has a role and does their part to achieve the ultimate goal and make the group successful. An excellent example of that team approach is the staff of the Child Development Center. They achieved the equivalent of an NCAA championship recently with full accreditation of their program by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). We owe a debt of gratitude to CDC Director Pam Blankenship, the intrepid coach, who put together an excellent team and worked diligently on her game plan. When NAEYC deferred ALIVE!'s application last year, Pam was not discouraged but took the recommendations for improvement to heart. She worked to improve the caliber and professional development of the classroom teachers and aides and focused on each of the suggestions for improvement. That dedication and the new teachers she was able to attract to the CDC made a huge difference. And this year her team made it to the elite group of preschools that is fully accredited by NAEYC. This is a huge accomplishment and we can all be proud. Only 8% of preschools nationwide are NAEYC accredited.

The CDC is a wonderful program—providing a quality preschool education to at-risk children and nurturing the capability of these children and their families to achieve their full intellectual, economic and social potential. Study after study has shown that quality early education can make a huge difference. Especially for disadvantaged children, pre-kindergarten early learning programs reduce placement in special education, improve grade retention, reduce juvenile crime, increase high school graduation rates and dramatically improve earnings.

I hope you will stop by and visit the CDC and celebrate this NAEYC-accredited program where the children are enjoying themselves, learning skills and being nurtured to become all they can be. That's a March Madness we can all enjoy.

Cheryl Malloy, ALIVE! President



(L-R) President Cheryl Malloy, Executive Director Ken Naser, CDC Director Pam Blankenship, and Ellen Brown, who serves as both ALIVE!'s Vice President and Chair of the CDC Committee, show off the certificate proclaiming NAEYC's accreditation of the ALIVE! Child Development Center.

## Alive! Child Development Center Earns National NAEYC Accreditation

The sounds of jubilation could be heard throughout the classrooms in the Child Development Center, down the hall in the Family Emergency Program and upstairs in the offices of Ken Naser and Kathy Richards. Child Development Center Director Pam Blankenship, the teachers, and even the children were celebrating the news that the CDC had been accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The rigorous criteria are the "gold standard" in early childhood education.

The CDC is a key program in ALIVE!'s attempt to assist Alexandrians to acquire the skills they need to lead self-sufficient and productive lives. It builds on the fact that all children need high-quality, early childhood education to prepare them for school and working parents need low-cost, convenient and flexible care for their children. The CDC is open 51 weeks a year from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. to allow parents to hold jobs and pursue their education with assurances that their children are well cared for, receiving nutritious food, and a great education.

The news from NAEYC could not have come at a better time. It has been a tough few years for the

NAEYC continued on page 5

## Notes from the Executive Director



Ken Naser,  
ALIVE!'s Executive  
Director

ALIVE! is very grateful for the support it has received from ACT for Alexandria almost since the founding of ACT in 2005. ACT works to shore up Alexandria's non-profits and to help them become more effective in carrying out their mission. In the case of ALIVE!, support we have received from ACT has been used to strengthen our capability to raise much-needed funding by conducting a development assessment and plan, by helping us improve our donor database, and now in 2011 to link our strategic planning effort to a strategic and comprehensive fund raising plan. ALIVE! is a stronger organization than it was five years ago and with the support of ACT for Alexandria, we will continue to be healthier and more effective.

Spring is just around the corner and we'll kick it off May 1, with our annual *Step ALIVE!* for the benefit of the Child Development Center. This is our 30<sup>th</sup> annual Walkathon and this year it will be dedicated to the memory of the Child Development Center's dear friend, Ruby Tucker. Ruby was with the CDC for more than 20 years, first as one of our teachers and the last twelve years as the CDC Director. Please join us for this fun and important event.

Ken

## ALIVE! and Planet Green

**planet  
green**



In the Winter issue of the *ALIVE! Wire* you might remember seeing an article about how ALIVE! can benefit by sending old cell phones and used inkjet printer cartridges to Planet Green who will pay us for them. You can continue to bring old cell phones and used inkjet cartridges (no laser or toner cartridges) to the ALIVE! office or a collection point can be set up in your congregation or office.

Our relationship with Planet Green is still new but it has already grown. Now, we have our very own web site with Planet Green where anyone can purchase remanufactured (not refilled) printer cartridges at substantial savings - some savings are as much as 70% vs. the original brand. AND, they are 100% guaranteed. Visit our special website at [www.planetgreenrecycle.com/aliveinc](http://www.planetgreenrecycle.com/aliveinc) Be "green", save the earth and help ALIVE! What's not to love?

## Spring for Alexandria

The 4th Annual Spring for Alexandria will take place May 5 - 7! Spring for Alexandria is a three-day celebration of giving and service in Alexandria. Now in its fourth year, Spring for Alexandria is jointly hosted by ACT for Alexandria, the City of Alexandria, Volunteer Alexandria, and the Alexandria Jaycees. Spring for Alexandria brings together more than 3,000 community members, including businesses, nonprofit organizations, Alexandria City Public Schools and City government to support Alexandria-based charities. Spring for Alexandria...where we work, live, play...give!

[Spring2ACTion.org](http://Spring2ACTion.org)

ALIVE! will participate in Spring for Alexandria and Spring2ACTion, a three day fundraising event that will raise funds for Alexandria non-profits, including ALIVE! Please put this on your congregation's calendar and visit the web site [www.Spring2ACTion.org](http://www.Spring2ACTion.org)

**SPRING**  
for  
**alexandria**

# Postal Letter Carrier's Food Drive

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION  
OF LETTER CARRIERS

**Stamp  
Out  
Hunger**

FOOD DRIVE

**2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**Saturday in**  
**May**



**ALIVE!**



**Please leave food at your Mail Box!**

*A portion of the food collected in Alexandria will be donated to the ALIVE! Food Program*

### Remembering...

Volunteers at the Last Saturday Food Distribution at Cora Kelly will miss long-time volunteer and friend Daniel Barton, who collapsed on February 26th at Cora Kelly during the food distribution and later passed away.

### Food Program

#### Wish List



Canned Spaghetti Sauce  
Canned Meat & Tuna  
Complete Pancake Mix  
(Needs Only Water)  
Syrup  
Crackers  
Dried Milk  
Jello  
Coffee and Tea  
Money to buy fresh eggs,  
meat and produce!

### GOODWIN HOUSE ANGEL TREE SUPPORTS ALIVE!

Last December, Goodwin House residents decorated an angel tree as they donated to ALIVE! Over \$ 5000 was raised—all of which will be matched by the Goodwin House Foundation. Pictured right (L-R) are Goodwin House Chaplin Rev. Bruce Stewart, Outreach Chair Mike McCaffree and ALIVE!'s Executive Director, Ken Naser. Residents of Goodwin House and its Foundation have been long time supporters of ALIVE!'s programs. Thanks to all who participated.





# Mark Your Calendars

## Annual STEP ALIVE!

Sunday, May 1, 2011  
2:00 PM

Walk for the ALIVE! Child  
Development Center

This year in memory of Ruby Tucker,  
CDC Teacher and Director, and  
advocate for the poor

Starting at the CDC, 2723 King Street  
midway,  
Enjoy the entertainment at Market Square  
and then,  
Join all for the picnic following the 5-mile walk

### PLAN AHEAD NOW

- Be a \$200 sponsor & you'll be listed on the Tee shirts!
  - Organize your teams
  - Gather pledges from family & friends.
- Arrange a mini-walk for your congregation and your friends

Have questions? Want to volunteer?

Call Ellen Brown, CDC Chair, 703-836-4922

For more information and details go to [www.alive-inc.org](http://www.alive-inc.org)



**Step ALIVE!**  
Walkathon



**NAEYC** continued from page 1

working families of the CDC, including many one-parent households. Reversals such as illness, job loss, increasing utility bills, and unexpected expenses have long been tipping points to destroy self-sufficiency, and the families of our preschoolers were hard hit by the recession.

Many parents lost jobs or had work hours reduced, but because stability is so important for these families, we allowed the children to remain despite the fact that our policies generally require the parents to be working or in school full-time. Some parents lost better paying jobs and are struggling to get by on less pay and with no benefits. The CDC fees are based on a sliding scale, charging families only what they can afford to pay. Because of these setbacks for the parents and our fee policy, ALIVE! has been faced with more heavily subsidizing the CDC which means we must increase the level of contributions we need to reach each year.

Our achievement is particularly sweet since the CDC was, in 1992, the first early childhood program to be accredited in Alexandria. Much has changed in early childhood education since our founding in 1972 by a group of mothers who lacked affordable care for their own children, and since our first accreditation nearly 20 years ago. The changes include the understanding of how children learn; what skills, learning and behaviors are needed for “school readiness”; and how children grow through “child-directed” developmentally appropriate learning opportunities. Operating costs have increased with greater understanding of how children learn. We focus on learning opportunities in language, self-expression, independence, physical, cognitive and emotional development, socialization, creative expression, computer skills, and math and reading readiness.

In order to provide these services to Alexandrians who need them most, the CDC depends on the financial support of those who recognize the importance and long-term benefit of a high-quality early childhood education. We have been blessed that a number of organizations have provided funding to the CDC. They include: Philip L. Graham Fund, ACT for Alexandria, The Virginia Early Childhood Foundation, Washington Forrest Foundation, Alexandria Rotary, Alexandria Day Nursery and Children’s Home, Ivakota, Giving Circle of Alexandria, Weissberg Foundation, the City of Alexandria, the Gannett Foundation, and so many other generous individuals, businesses, and congregations.

NAEYC accreditation provides assurance to parents that their children are in good hands and to funders that their resources are being used wisely to achieve the desired result. The Alive! CDC Committee thanks the CDC Staff for this significant accomplishment and our supporters for making possible our efforts to prepare young children for a brighter future.

We will celebrate our accreditation and raise badly needed funds for the CDC at the walkathon scheduled for Sunday, May 1 at 2:00 pm. We will also remember and honor Ruby Tucker who worked at the CDC for over 20 years and served twelve of those years as the CDC’s Director. Ruby was instrumental in securing our original NAEYC accreditation.

Come join us to celebrate and bring your walking shoes!

### National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Accreditation

To earn NAEYC accreditation, the CDC was measured against ten early childhood Program Standards and over 400 related Accreditation Criteria. To be accredited, a program must meet all required criteria, meet at least 80% of assessed criteria for each program standard, meet at least 70% of assessed criteria for each classroom observed, and continue to meet the NAEYC requirements during the accreditation period of five years.

The Alive! CDC earned scores of 100% or more for six of the ten Program Standards – Relationships, Health, Teachers, Families, Community Relationships, and Leadership and Management. For the remaining standards, the scores were 95% for Teaching, 91% for Physical Environment, 90% for Assessment, and 82% for Curriculum. The percentage of criteria met for the two classrooms observed were 93% and 94%. Therefore, it is fair to say that the CDC passed “with flying colors.”



## ALIVE! House Happenings

### New Designation – Same Great Place!

ALIVE! House will now be classified as a transitional housing program rather than as an emergency shelter. What will change? Only the designation for purposes of applying for grants from the Department of Housing and Community Development in Richmond (DHCD). Our Program Administrator at DHCD pointed out to us last fall that our residents stayed too long for us to call ourselves an emergency shelter. Since they average almost a year at ALIVE! House – six months longer than the limit at an emergency shelter, and some stay even longer -- it was time for us to become transitional housing. ALIVE! House is much more than a shelter from the weather and the storms of life, it is a program wherein people put their lives together - overcoming many challenges as they gain the maturity to go forth on a new path of self-sufficiency and independence – a transformation that seldom happens in six months. So now, we will call ourselves what we are. Residents will be evaluated continuously and may, if approved, stay any length of time up to two years, and we will incur no penalty.

The ALIVE! House Advisory Committee, which is made up of three former Chairs: Catherine Thompson, Mary Riley, Kathleen Sullivan; current Chair, Susanne Arnold; House neighbor, Ann Matikan; former resident Reshma Begum; ALIVE! President Cheryl Malloy; and Ken Naser, both Staff and former Chair; has discussed this change in their last two meetings. As ALIVE! House goes through strategic planning and makes decisions about its future, you will see more details about the program in subsequent issues of the WIRE.



## Spring Sidewalk Sale

From King to Prince, South Payne Street will be “ALIVE!” with happy shoppers on Saturday, May 21st from 8 - 4 at the annual Sidewalk Sale that benefits the ALIVE! House shelter. As you Spring clean & de-clutter, please put items aside for us. Donations will be accepted on Saturdays, starting April 30th, from 11-3 at a location still being determined. If you can offer a site to store donations or want to make arrangements to drop off items at other times, please see contact information below and watch our web site, [alive-inc.org](http://alive-inc.org), for an up-date.

To volunteer to help organize items, help at the sale, or offer suggestions, please call 703-837-9300 and chose option 6 to leave a message or email [alivehouse@alive-inc.org](mailto:alivehouse@alive-inc.org).

Most important is for you to come, have fun and buy yourself a treasure! You'll be making a difference in the lives of our ALIVE! House families.

**“If you wish to receive the ALIVE! Wire electronically, please email your request to [alivetoo@aol.com](mailto: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

## Working together to help a neighbor

Late last month, Linda Coleman was working the desk at the Family Emergency Program (FEP) distributing funds for families in need when she returned a phone call to a woman seeking assistance with her rent. Nancy (not her real name) told Linda her story of being a Veteran and a breast cancer survivor who had fallen on hard times. She was receiving disability from the Veterans Administration, but she had lost her lease and was now living temporarily in a hotel, where the manager was allowing her to stay at a reduced daily rate. Unfortunately, Nancy's money had run out and she was facing having to survive on the street unless she could pay the \$200 she owed the hotel.

All of the FEP funds had been committed for the month, but Linda wanted to help this woman so she started making calls. A recommendation that she call Dave Taylor from First Agape Baptist Community (a member congregation of ALIVE!) yielded results. After many phone calls, including talking to Nancy several times, Dave was able to locate a parishioner who offered a bedroom in her own home to this woman in need. This kind parishioner even went to pick Nancy up from the hotel where she was stranded in the lobby and hoping for a miracle, having been informed by the manager just an hour earlier that she would have to leave.

The story has an even happier ending. Nancy found a room to rent in a private home in Fairfax County that she could afford on her VA disability income and moved to her new home after only a few days with her First Agape savior. She is extremely grateful to ALIVE! and First Agape for their assistance in her time of need. And it demonstrates, again, the commitment and caring of this community of faith that we call ALIVE!.

*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*

## Sunday Suppers . . .



A delegation from the Old Presbyterian Meeting House Youth Group brings a Sunday Supper to ALIVE! House residents on February 27th. A good meal and a chance to sit down and relax with their children for a great dinner is a real treat for our moms. Think about it! If your organization would like to provide a Sunday Supper, email Coordinator Jillian Baxter at [jill@princessjill.com](mailto:jill@princessjill.com).

### ALIVE! HOUSE WISH LIST

4 Laptop computers for Residents  
Bleach - for laundry  
Diapers, sizes 5 & 6  
Oven Cleaner

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



CFC Code:  
44658



United Way Code:  
8352

ALIVE! Wine

**ALIVE!**  
2723 King Street  
Alexandria, VA 22302  
703-837-9300  
www.alive-inc.org  
E-mail: alivetoo@aol.com

Nonprofit Organization  
U.S. Postage Paid  
Alexandria, VA  
Permit Number 567

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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

## Spring 2011 Calendar

### April

- 5 ALIVE! Board Meeting – 7 PM at First Agape Church, 2423 Mt. Vernon Ave.  
30 **Last Saturday Food Distribution:** Church of the Resurrection, Cora Kelly Recreation Center and Ladrey High Rise  
**Food Collection:** Agudas Achim Congregation, First Christian, Good Shepherd Lutheran, Old Presbyterian Meeting House, St. Joseph Catholic, Trinity UMC, Unitarian Universalist Church and Zion Baptist  
**Furniture Collection:** Grace Episcopal, Church of the Resurrection, and Christ Church

### May

- 1 Annual Step ALIVE! Walkathon Benefiting the ALIVE! Child Development Center  
3 ALIVE! Board Meeting -7 PM at Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington, 4444 Arlington Boulevard, Arlington  
21 ALIVE! House Sidewalk Sale, 125 South Payne Street in Old Town  
28 **Last Saturday Food Distribution:** Church of the Resurrection, Cora Kelly Recreation Center and Ladrey High Rise  
**Food Collection:** Agudas Achim Congregation, Christ Church, Church of the Resurrection, Fairlington UMC, Grace Episcopal  
**Furniture Collection:** Blessed Sacrament and Westminster Presbyterian

### June

- 7 ALIVE! Board Meeting – 7 PM at Roberts Memorial UMC, 606-A So. Washington St.  
25 **Last Saturday Food Distribution:** Church of the Resurrection, Cora Kelly Recreation Center and Ladrey High Rise  
**Food Collection:** Blessed Sacrament Catholic, Convergence Community, Immanuel Church-On-The-Hill and St Mary's Catholic Church  
**Furniture Collection:** Christ Church, St. Paul's Episcopal, Unitarian Universalist Church and Washington Street UMC