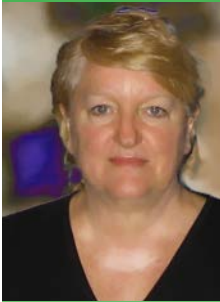


# ALIVE! Wire

Spring 2014



## *President's Message*

### **Fundamental Forces at Work**

I received an email on Valentine's Day from my brother, and this is what it said: "Fundamental Forces Are Invisible Except in Interaction." It showed a spinning heart made of copper wire, powered by a single battery. There was no additional message.

I expect this Valentine could be interpreted on a number of different levels. Being an ALIVE! volunteer for a while now has provided a filter through which I view many things, and so I think of fundamental forces as traits that I see in you – the people I've come to know or know about through ALIVE!. They include generosity, kindness, and compassion, among others, and certainly are not invisible.

In this edition of the Wire, you will find a number of articles demonstrating clear evidence of these fundamental forces at work – stories of gifts of generous souls who have heard about ALIVE!'s efforts, perhaps been inspired by them, and seen a need and stepped forward to meet that need.

Let me offer one additional example. One of the dearest people I know, an ALIVE! board member, heard of some refugee families from Afghanistan who are here in Alexandria because they'd been assisting the U.S. military and, for this reason, were no longer safe in their own country. He organized a few ALIVE! volunteers to help the initial group of families, and, as the number of families needing aid grew, so did the number of those willing to assist. Through your support of ALIVE!, you have participated as well. Together we've been able to help eight families so far, and the effort continues.

I know you understand that, for whatever reason, there are many in our community who need assistance in the pursuit of healthy, safe, productive lives. Because you volunteer your time, your skills and your financial resources, ALIVE! is able to help thousands of these people each year.

It is true that I don't always understand my brother, and I can only guess at the message he meant to impart, but his Valentine did remind me to thank all of you for making ALIVE!'s accomplishments possible.

Ellen Brown

## **Dedicated Sorority Volunteers**



As the primary food bank in the City of Alexandria, it is necessary for ALIVE! to have the constant support of many food drives held throughout the year. Overall, we benefit from in excess of about 40 food drives each year, some small and others humongous, such as those conducted by the Boy Scouts and the U.S. Mail Carriers. After every food drive, all food needs to be sorted, placed in banana boxes, and racked in high stacks in our small warehouse for future

distribution. This process takes innumerable volunteers and considerable muscle, which is not always readily available. In times like these, we go to one group that has never turned us down. The wonderful, dedicated members of the Phi Nu Omega Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha, who unceasingly recruit their spouses, boyfriends, children, and others, have always made themselves available to join in "the sort."

One of our largest sorts of the year always occurs, of necessity, on Mother's Day, the day after the U.S. Mail Carriers' food drive. This is a notoriously difficult occasion to get volunteers. And yet, volunteers from Alpha Kappa Alpha come, often bringing their daughters with them. They never complain about the long hours and heavy lifting, and their personalities make each sort fun for all. In addition, as a group and individually, they frequently volunteer at the Church of the Resurrection for the ALIVE! Last Saturday Food Distributions.

We cannot thank these loyal volunteers enough!



Jean Moore, Food Program Chair, and members of Alpha Kappa Alpha pause their hard work for a picture.

## Notes from the Executive Director - Ken Naser



“Lordy, lordy, sakes ALIVE! Gerry’s turning sixty-five.” That’s how the invitation to a birthday party hosted by Victoria Hebert, wife of ALIVE!’s past president, Gerry Hebert, read. Family and friends gathered to help Gerry celebrate in grand style. All of his children were present, including one daughter who surprised him when she arrived from California. And, since guests were invited to make a donation to ALIVE!, “Gerry’s favorite charity,” in lieu of gifts and cards, the fun spirit of the party was matched by one of purpose.

To say that Gerry’s friends think a great deal of him is an understatement. And what a generous group of friends gathered to help him celebrate. The party raised nearly \$3,500 for ALIVE!.

Happy Birthday, Gerry. Thanks for the many years of leadership and volunteer effort you have provided.



Gerry volunteering at the ALIVE! Last Saturday Food Distribution.

## Catjammers Support Alive!

“What are Catjammers,” you ask? They are a group of bluegrass musicians who get together at King Street Blues in Kingstowne to have a fun and to support worthy causes. The core group is a local band called King Street Bluegrass. On Thursdays, the band invites anyone who is so inclined to play or sing with them, and tips are given to local social service organizations. The name “Catjammers” came about because the first project the group supported was a cat rescue effort.

On December 26, 2013, the Catjammers’ charity of choice was ALIVE!. After an evening of good music and good times, ALIVE! received a generous donation of \$575. In 2013, the Catjammers’ contributions to various groups exceeded \$10,000.

An additional pleasant surprise on the 26th was that one of the musicians was Rebecca Krafft, daughter of Joe and Alice Krafft, long time, legendary ALIVE! volunteers with the Furniture Program. Not only did Rebecca play the banjo and sing, she described to the audience the long history of success of the Furniture Program. Our thanks to King Street Bluegrass and all the Catjammers for your support of ALIVE!.



Catjammers using their musical talents, raising money for ALIVE!, and playing the night away at King Street Blues.

## Living Legends of Alexandria 2014

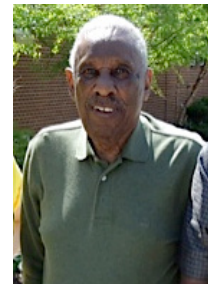


Living Legends of Alexandria is a local organization which aims “to identify, honor, and chronicle individuals who have made significant contributions to the quality of life in Alexandria.”

We are proud to announce that, this

year, two longtime ALIVE! volunteers were nominated: Rick Glassco (L) and Bill Willis (R). Rick was selected as a legend this year, and, to us, they are both living legends!

ALIVE! congratulates them for receiving this honor and thanks Rick and Bill for their years of service to our City.



## Bill “The Produce Man”

In early January, ALIVE! received a delayed holiday gift from Bill Duran, “The Produce Man.” Bill, a professional dog walker, appeared at the doors of ALIVE! with baskets of fresh produce in hand. He had received this donated produce from MOM’s Organic Markets in Del Ray and Merrifield.

For some time, Bill had been picking up donated produce from MOM’s and providing it to nonprofit food banks in the area. To our elation, he offered to be a regular source of produce for ALIVE!, making deliveries of donated produce each week. Given how hard it is to acquire fresh fruits and vegetables at all times (particularly during the winter), Bill delivered to us the best holiday present we could ask for. It truly takes a village to make our ALIVE! Food Program work. Many, many thanks to MOM’s and Bill!

(L-R) Jean Moore, Food Program Chair, Bill Duran, and Linda Coleman, Family Emergency Program Chair.



## TOP SIX LIST: Beneficiaries of ALIVE!'s Furniture Operations by Mike Diffley

ALIVE! is blessed to have Mike Mackey take the reins of the Furniture Committee. Mike is the City's Gang Prevention and Intervention Coordinator and a seven-year veteran of the Furniture Committee who has served as both driver and warehouse person. So, he knows his way around the City in more ways than one. He is also a big man with a big heart, a winning smile, and an ever-positive attitude ... all of which bodes well for ALIVE!'s furniture program ... which, in turn, bodes well for lots of people. As I turn over the committee's reigns to Mike, I thought that I'd share with you my TOP SIX LIST of the beneficiaries of ALIVE!'s furniture operations.

**#6: Furniture Donors** benefit from a team of cheerful volunteers who remove no longer wanted furniture and leave behind the good feeling of knowing it will go directly to someone in need ... and a tax receipt too. Not a bad deal!

**#5: The City of Alexandria** is a great place to live. It's no accident. Good activities and organizations make good cities; and, in my view, no organization does more good in Alexandria than ALIVE!. The Furniture Committee is proud to do its part.

**#4: Our Faith Communities** are like people: they need fresh air and exercise; and sometimes they need a personal trainer to get them going. Thank you, Congregational Representatives, for supporting the Furniture Committee and using it to keep your communities in shape – in more ways than one!

**#3: Furniture Recipients** get the tangible goods. But when I watch the recipients and volunteers interact, I see the better good. I see men, women, and children, who probably haven't had people line up to help them that week, light up when they see us give up our Saturday mornings just for them. As a young refugee told me recently, "My father can't believe that you are asking nothing in return!"

**#2: Volunteers** do, in fact, get lots in return. If you've volunteered with the Furniture Committee, you know exactly what I mean. Simply put: It's a great way to spend a Saturday morning. It might even be addictive ... which brings me to the #1 beneficiary of ALIVE!'s furniture operations in the past 27 years.

**#1: Me.** On a cold Saturday morning in 1987, I made my first rounds with the ALIVE! Furniture Committee. Our last delivery that morning was to a sweet woman in her 70s who had a barrel chair stuffed with blankets and a 19-inch TV sitting on a milk crate ... period. We were running late; and we didn't have much on the truck to give her. I can't remember who the driver was ... could have been Walt Rasmussen, Jack Huber, Bob Ruskin, Don Mela, Joe Krafft or Will Willis – founding fathers of the committee and truly Great Americans. But, he drove us back to the warehouse where we filled the pickup truck with furniture and returned to the lady who was now in tears ... to think that someone would do this just for her! I was hooked. Since that day, I have observed variations of that scene nearly a thousand times; and, even better, I've been able to share these times with some of the nicest men and women to grace this planet; the drivers and warehouse persons of the Furniture Committee – past and present. How good is that!? Thanks!!



(L-R) Mike Mackey and Mike Diffley, ALIVE! Furniture Committee Co-Chairs.



(L-R) Mike Diffley, Joe and Alice Krafft, and Gerry Hebert prepare for another morning of furniture deliveries.

## RunningBrooke Supports ALIVE! CDC Healthy Kids Program

A new grant from the RunningBrooke's Caring for Kids Challenge will expand our current health and fitness programming by funding playground improvements, weekly healthy eating and nutrition lessons, and health and fitness information sharing for families at monthly Parent Circle meetings. This expansion of health and fitness related activities will become a year-round component of the CDC curriculum called CDC Healthy Kids. ALIVE! is grateful to Brooke Curran and the RunningBrooke Fund for caring for Alexandria's kids.



## Correction: CDC Visitor Donates Time & Supplies

Henry Drembus, a special young Alexandrian, chose the ALIVE! Child Development Center (CDC) for his Bar Mitzvah service project. He read books to students weekly during the spring and, over the summer, collected cleaning supplies for the CDC from his congregation, Agudas Achim. In our last issue, Henry's congregation was incorrectly identified. ALIVE! thanks both Henry and Agudas Achim for their generosity and support!



**\* SAVE THE DATE \***  
**33RD ANNUAL STEP ALIVE! WALKATHON**  
**SUNDAY, MAY 4th**



**What:** 5k or 5 mile (walker's choice) stroll from ALIVE! into Old Town and back, followed by a picnic of food, music, and fun to raise funds for the ALIVE! Child Development Center (CDC).

**When:** Sunday, May 4, 2014, 2-5 pm. On-site registration and T-shirt pick-up begin at 1:15 pm.

**Where:** Start/End point at First Christian Church, 2723 King Street, Alexandria.

**Why:** Proceeds help bridge the gap between what CDC families can afford to pay and what it costs to provide their children with quality early care and education.

**How:** Register at the event or online at [www.alive-inc.org](http://www.alive-inc.org) or call 703-837-9321 for a registration brochure. Also, consider creating a team of family and friends. Or solicit sponsors to pledge support for your walk. If you are unable to be there, you can still participate as a "virtual" walker.

**Be Good to Your Body \* Have Fun \* Support the CDC**

### Annual CDC Family Christmas Party is a Resounding Success!



The evening of Friday, December 20th was filled with happy children and families engaged in arts and crafts, games, caroling, a potluck dinner, and a visit

from Santa, complete with personal gifts for each CDC family (thanks to our friends at the American Physical Therapy Association and at Alexandria Fire Station 208). Popular crafts included decorating cone-shaped Christmas trees, creating reindeer from plastic cups and cut out handprints, and making jingle bell rhythm sticks. CDC Committee members helped staff serve a splendid potluck dinner to the families. But, of course, the highlight of the evening was the visit from "Saint Nicholas" and the chance for each family to pose for a keepsake photo.



### CDC Hosts Gingerbread Activities with Blessed Sacrament School Students

On December 17th, the CDC was treated to a morning of gingerbread-themed activities, courtesy of Blessed Sacrament's seventh grade class. The seventh graders arrived laden with gift bags for the preschoolers and went right to work in each classroom. They assisted the children in decorating gingerbread houses, stringing ginger-bread-boy necklaces, assembling gingerbread-framed photos, and decorating individual gingerbread cookies. A wonderful time was had by all! The ALIVE! CDC is deeply grateful to the Blessed Sacrament students; Susan Doyle, Director of Religious Education; and the parents who accompanied the students to our center. A follow-up "Spring Fling" event is planned for April!



#### CDC Wish List

Science discovery table \$300

Dress-up carousel \$300

Children's underwear, girls and boys, sizes 2T up to 6  
 9 Goldfish (1 orange, 1 black, and 1 silver per classroom)

**\* MARK THE DATE \***  
**SET ASIDE YOUR DONATIONS – PLAN TO ATTEND**  
**ALIVE! HOUSE – SIDEWALK SALE**  
**SATURDAY, MAY 17<sup>th</sup>**



Once again, the neighbors of ALIVE! House will join with the ALIVE! community to hold a multi-block sidewalk sale centered on the 100 block of South Payne Street and including the landmark Ice House. It is time to look in your attic, basement, and around the house for items that are no longer in use. They can be turned into support for the families of at-risk women and their children that ALIVE! House serves. Put them aside now: starting Saturday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, and every Saturday following, you can bring your items to the Ice House, at the corner of South Payne Street & Commerce Street, from 10 am-4 pm. Pick-up service will run from Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, to Wednesday, May 14<sup>th</sup>.

We are pleased to announce that the Beverley Hills Garden Club will support our efforts by selling plants at the sidewalk sale in perfect timing for your spring planting needs.

An additional opportunity to donate! If you have an item that is too upscale or valuable for a sidewalk sale, we have made arrangements with a local eBay auction facilitator to handle the sale of these items. The item will be picked up, advertised on eBay, and sold at auction. You will be notified of the price received, and you can take that amount as a tax deduction.

If you have questions or would like to schedule a pick-up for the sidewalk sale or the eBay opportunity, call Kevin Heanue at 703-549-7039.

## ALIVE! House Happenings by Amanda Neer, ALIVE! House Director

It has been a busy few months here at the ALIVE! House!. As of December, we have a full house comprised of four families — four mothers and ten children between the ages of one and seven. Two of these families were already residing at ALIVE! House prior to my arrival in November, and getting to know them, catching up on their journeys, and reviewing their goals has been wonderful. The two newest families arrived in December, and we have begun to assist them in sorting out their goals and needs.

The number of young children has presented ALIVE! House with a new set of needs as well as a number of challenges such as the need for childproofing. We have been able to fulfill our immediate requirements with the assistance and support of generous Alexandria families on community listservs. Our current ALIVE! House wish list includes items that we need continually. Thanks to our community for its ongoing support of ALIVE! House.

### ALIVE! House Wish List

- Gift cards - Walmart and Target
- Diapers - sizes 5 and 6 and pull-ups
- Baby wipes
- Baby body wash
- Baby lotion
- Diaper bags
- Trash bags
- Laundry detergent (preferably free and clear for sensitive skin)
- Brushes and combs
- Shampoo and conditioner



## Thank You, Apartments.com!

Apartments.com made a very generous contribution to ALIVE! House to help combat homelessness. We are so appreciative of their dedication to those we serve in the City of Alexandria!

  
apartments.com™

## An Unusual Thanksgiving Surprise by Jean Moore, Food Program Chair

A few days before Thanksgiving, I received a call, asking whether I knew of 20 Virginia low-income seniors who might be interested in meeting someone at the Capital Area Food Bank on Thanksgiving Eve. Although the name of the person we would meet could not be disclosed, I was told that my list of seniors would have to clear the Secret Service. Having only two days to provide my list of names to the Secret Service, I headed down to Ladrey Senior High Rise, an ARHA low income housing project. With the help of social worker, Starr Robertson, we found numerous residents who were interested in going on our little adventure. There was only one problem: ALIVE! had no means of transporting them.

As I drove home on King Street, I passed First Baptist Church, an ALIVE! member congregation, and saw four beautiful vans just sitting in their parking lot. I swerved in and explained my predicament to a wonderful woman by the name of Karen Parsons (Ministry Assistant to Missions). She informed me that they would not only provide the necessary vans, but also the drivers. Thus, on the afternoon before Thanksgiving, I, along with three First Baptist drivers including Karen and longtime ALIVE! volunteer Kathy Madison, headed down to Ladrey to pick up our 20 special seniors. Then, off we went into the pouring rain.

When we arrived at the Capital Area Food Bank, we waited for an extended period while the buildings, our vans, and ourselves were checked by the Secret Service who were accompanied by their dogs. Once inside, we were served a beautiful sandwich buffet while we waited for what we thought was going to be a speech by the President. The first group was finally called to go in, and it was the ALIVE! group. As we entered, each client was given a bag of pre-packed food and a \$50 gift card from Giant. Then, as directed, we went into the main warehouse room and, to our total astonishment, there stood five people behind tables, waiting to meet us and personally give us food. This was no speech, it was the entire first family, including

President Obama, First Lady Michelle, daughters Sasha and Malia, and First Mother-in-law Marian Robinson. Clients filed by, and the members of the First Family chatted with them and handed each one a bag of fresh produce.

From the President, they got yams; from the First Lady, apples; from Sasha, carrots; and from Malia, a box of White House M&Ms with the President's signature. Mother-in-law Marian Robinson provided each client with a recipe card for "White House Yams." What a stunning Thanksgiving Eve surprise!

As we returned home, now well after dark, everyone was bubbling with enthusiasm for their once-in-a-lifetime experience. I can only imagine what it must have been like the following day for one of our clients to be able to say to their Thanksgiving guests, "I would like you to try my White House yam casserole, made from yams that were personally handed to me by the President of the United States."



## Thank You, Safeway!

The Safeway Foundation, funded through the generous contributions of Safeway employees throughout its Eastern Division, distributes approximately \$250,000 annually, with special emphasis on organizations working in the areas of hunger relief, education, health and human services, and special needs. This year, ALIVE! was, once again, among the groups chosen to receive funding. We are so appreciative of the Safeway Foundation and its continued support of ALIVE!.



(L-R) Gregory Ten Eyck, Chairman of the Safeway Foundation for the Eastern Division, presents Ken Naser, ALIVE! Executive Director, with a check to support the ALIVE! Food and Family Emergency Programs.

### Food Program

#### Wish List

- Canned meat & tuna
  - Canned spaghetti sauce
  - Canned fruit
  - Peanut butter & grape jelly
  - Complete pancake mix  
(needs only water)
  - Syrup
  - Dried milk
  - Rice & dried beans
  - Baby food
  - Crackers
  - Jell-O
  - Coffee & tea
  - \$ Money to buy meat \$
- (We are able to purchase meat at \$0.19/lb., so a \$20 donation buys more than 100 lbs. of meat for those in need.)

## Extraordinary LSF D Volunteers



The ALIVE! Last Saturday Food Distribution (LSFD) Program serves hundreds of families with packaged and fresh food at the end of each month to supplement what they receive through SNAP (formerly Food Stamps). The distribution takes place at three sites throughout the City. In February alone, the LSF D program provided food to 668 households, including 2329 individuals. Many families arrive hours before the food distribution begins. The children of these families must wait with their parents as they line up and register to get groceries. In order to enrich the time children spend at the LSF D, special groups of volunteers have come together to provide exciting activities for them to enjoy (see articles below).

### Cora Kelly Kids Fun



For over a year, a group of Fairlington's United Methodist Women (UMW) has been providing craft projects for the children to enjoy while their families wait for food at the Cora Kelly food distribution.

In December of 2012, Fairlington's UMW group offered the children an opportunity to decorate small bags for the holidays. There were markers, crayons, and seasonal stickers for the children to use, and they received some "stocking stuffer" items for their bags. The volunteers had as much fun as the kids did, and, when one of the children asked if the ladies would return, the decision was made to continue with the project. Since then, the women have been there for each food distribution, creating things like tissue butterflies in the spring, jellyfish and flowers in summer, and Halloween masks in the fall. On January 25th of this year, they made beautiful Valentines.

Last spring, with school closing for the summer, the women realized that many of the children would not have access to any books. The group asked members of their church to donate new and gently used children's books that could be shared with the Cora Kelly families. The congregation was very generous, and the women have been able to provide hundreds of books for the boys and girls to keep at home. Thanks to the Fairlington United Methodist Women and the entire congregation for their generosity and dedication to Alexandria families in need!



### Reading the Morning Away at Resurrection

The Church of the Resurrection offers a reading program for children waiting with their parents at this ALIVE! LSF D location. Several members of the congregation read books aloud to the children. The young ones love the opportunity to hear stories, and the parents and older children often listen in. The books read have all been generously donated by members of the congregation and the Duncan Branch of the public library. Branch librarian, Marilyn Doherty, is extremely supportive of this effort, and she has promised to provide additional books as they become available. The Reading Connection also donates books to the program. This organization, which is dedicated to improving the lives of at-risk children and families by developing a motivation for reading, assists other ALIVE! programs as well. Donations from these sources have enabled volunteers at the Church of the Resurrection to give books to the children to take home. Thank you to all who contribute their time and resources to this effort!



### Alexandrians Receiving Food from ALIVE! Between December 1, 2013 and February 28, 2014

	Households	Individuals
<b>December</b>	<b>719</b>	<b>2043</b>
<b>January</b>	<b>667</b>	<b>2238</b>
<b>February</b>	<b>712</b>	<b>2421</b>

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

ALIVE! Wine



ALIVE!, founded in 1969, is a non-profit organization devoted to helping Alexandrians facing emergency situations or long-term needs become capable of assuming self-reliant roles in the community. ALIVE! has grown from a handful of organizations and volunteers to a vigorous organization of 42 congregations and hundreds of volunteers.

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

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

Nonprofit Organization  
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## Spring 2014 CALENDAR

### April

- 1 Board Meeting:** 7:00 PM, Emmanuel Episcopal, 1608 Russell Rd.  
**26 Last Saturday Food Distribution:** Church of the Resurrection, Cora Kelly Recreation Center, and Ladrey Senior High Rise  
**Food Collection:** First Christian, Good Shepherd Lutheran, Old Presbyterian Meeting House, St. Joseph's, Trinity UMC, Unitarian Universalist, Zion Baptist  
**Furniture Collection:** Church of the Resurrection, Grace Episcopal, Christ Church, St. Mary's

### May

- 4 33rd Annual CDC Walkathon:** Starting/Ending Point: 2723 King Street, 2:00-5:00 PM  
**6 Board Meeting:** 7:00 PM: St. Clement, 1701 N Quaker Ln.  
**17 ALIVE! House Sidewalk Sale:** 100 Block of South Payne Street, including the Ice House  
**31 Last Saturday Food Distribution:** Church of the Resurrection, Cora Kelly Recreation Center, and Ladrey Senior High Rise  
**Food Collection:** Agudas Achim, Christ Church, Church of the Resurrection, Fairlington UMC, Good Shepherd, Grace Episcopal  
**Furniture Collection:** Blessed Sacrament, Westminster Presbyterian, Sixteenth Tabernacle

### June

- 3 Board Meeting:** 7:00 PM, Church of the Resurrection, 2280 N. Beauregard St.  
**28 Last Saturday Food Distribution:** Church of the Resurrection, Cora Kelly Recreation Center, and Ladrey Senior High Rise  
**Food Collection:** Blessed Sacrament, Church of God and Saints of Christ Sixteenth Tabernacle, Community Praise Center, Convergence Community, Immanuel Church-On-The-Hill, St. Mary's  
**Furniture Collection:** St. Paul's Episcopal, Washington St. UMC, Unitarian Universalist, St. Mary's