

# ALIVE! Wire

Spring 2016



## President's Message



This was a tough winter, proven by my bent snow shovel! Those from really wintry places scoff at the winter in Alexandria but, you all agree that the cold and icy weather is a pain. The pain is deeper for many of our neighbors. Some neighbors don't get paid when it snows because they can't get to work. Many working families have no child care when the schools are

closed. The time lost from work has serious implications for these families. There is much that ALIVE! can do to help struggling families.

Do you need an idea of what to do with all the things you find you no longer need when you do your spring cleaning? You can **donate** these items to the ALIVE! House Sidewalk Sale in May. If you really want to have a fun day and meet a lot of people, you can volunteer to help with the Sidewalk Sale.

The **Last Saturday Food Distribution** needs volunteers at all three sites each month: contact [volunteers@alive-inc.org](mailto:volunteers@alive-inc.org). The **ALIVE! Walkathon**, an important fundraiser for the ALIVE! Child Development Center, is Sunday, May 1st. This event is a great way to walk through our beautiful city, meet new people and help sustain a quality pre-school education for children of working families. Each of these events provides an opportunity for you to **personally effect change in your community**.

Maybe you don't have time to **volunteer**. There are other ways you can help make Alexandria a community that cares about all of our people: advocate with your elected officials for more affordable housing in Alexandria; talk to your neighbors and your fellow congregants about giving their **time** and **financial resources** to ALIVE! You can plant the seed to make spring in Alexandria a real season of growth and renewal for all Alexandrians.

Deborah Patterson

## The Child Development Center Celebrates Diversity

On Friday, February 19, ALIVE! CDC families and staff celebrated their annual Multicultural Festival. Flags from many countries were displayed and parents created bulletin boards, sharing pictures of their families and information about their culture. They also provided items representing their countries to adorn the walls and tables. There was a fantastic turn-out by families and staff. Ethiopia, Peru, the Ivory Coast, Venezuela, Sierra Leone, Honduras, El Salvador, Morocco, Iraq, and, of course, the U.S.A. were all represented.

Despite families' busy work schedules, economic hardships, and family demands, everyone was very generous in cooking and sharing delicious dishes. The Peruvian great grandmother of one of the students taught the children and families a Peruvian dance. Many children and some of the parents participated in a Fashion Show dressed in the traditional wear of their country. Following the Fashion Show, the children participated in a piñata game and the limbo dance. It was a delightful evening in which everyone



was able to relax and get to know each other better. Many thanks are due to Ellen Brown and Margie Carpenter, who helped out at the event, and to Fred Nelson of First Christian Church, who loaned his sound system to help with the acoustics for the music and announcements.

*Your support of the CDC means all children are given the opportunity to learn together.*

## Notes from the Executive Director - Diane Charles



Thanks to you, ALIVE!'s donors and volunteers, we step into this busy spring with high hopes to build upon the important work that you enable ALIVE! to carry out for those in need in the City of Alexandria.

*Spring2ACTion*, ACT for Alexandria's flagship endeavor that raises awareness of Alexandria's nonprofit community during one enthusiastic day of giving, is just around the corner on April 20th. Support for ALIVE!'s Child Development Center, a high quality preschool for low-income working families, will be our focus on how the community can *Spring2ACTion* that day. We ask you to consider a financial gift to ensure children can flourish at the CDC preschool.

Following soon after, there is the ALIVE! tradition, the annual Step ALIVE! Walkathon on May 1st. This fun event presents a great opportunity to pledge your support to children and families in Alexandria by walking and encouraging your friends, families and colleagues to join you. Be sure to

see all the details included in this ALIVE! Wire.

On May 14th, the United States Postal Service carries on their annual tradition of conducting a food drive throughout Northern Virginia. In its 24th year, the USPS "Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive" engages letter carriers in a massive food drive – with a significant amount of collected food in Alexandria coming to ALIVE! Thanks to our regional USPS letter carriers, this is an example of how our community partners rally to provide assistance to our neighbors.

Because of your continued support, ALIVE!'s partnerships and programs are bringing food, financial assistance, transitional shelter, furniture, housewares and early childhood education to those who might otherwise go without. You make the difference for ALIVE! to be able to provide these services and we are grateful for all you do.

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## A Caring Community - Working Together



Have you ever wanted to know more about the families you support through ALIVE!?

In early December, ALIVE! received a request for rental assistance for a young family. The family was struggling, not only financially, but emotionally, as three very young children had just lost their 24-year-old mom to cancer. Their dad had lost time at work (and income) for months as he cared for his dying wife. ALIVE! provided rental assistance to help them stay in their home.

ALIVE!'s Family Emergency Program (FEP) does not typically know the details that bring a family to the point of crisis, but this family's social worker shared the story of their experience from the time the cancer was diagnosed. FEP volunteers asked how they could personally help this devastated family during the holidays, and learned of the dad's modest wish for a Christmas tree for his three young children. Volunteers found a tree online with multi-colored lights and hoped it would bring a bit of joy to these children who were missing their mom.

FEP volunteers went to the Alexandria Home Depot only to discover that the tree that had been chosen was not in stock. Assistant Manager, Michael Kings, offered to pick up the tree at another Home Depot, and even donated the tree and some toys for the children.

Volunteers delivered the tree to the family's home along with many wonderful ornaments and gift cards donated by FEP volunteers. The volunteers helped decorate the tree - with its lights glowing brightly. How wonderful it was to see that family gathered around their tree, basking in the glow of the lights and the love of their neighbors!

ALIVE! is grateful to our wonderful volunteers who exude compassion and caring for those in need, and we thank Michael Kings and Home Depot for demonstrating what being a good and generous neighbor is all about.

## Affordable Housing in Alexandria

The need for affordable housing in Alexandria was a major topic of conversation last fall in both the mayoral and City Council elections. Candidates expressed their support for increasing the number of affordable housing apartments in the City without many specifics. We are pleased to see that a number of affordable developments are currently moving forward, most benefiting from financial support from the City. However, the Council faces a number of decisions this year, which highlight the opportunities and the constraints surrounding affordable housing development in the City.

ALIVE! has been actively participating in policy discussion as specific plans come forward for affordable housing developments. Key issues include:

- **Ramsey Homes.** The Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA) is seeking approval to tear down the four dilapidated buildings at Henry and Pendleton Streets and build approximately 50 new apartments, 15 of which would be available to current residents and the remainder affordable as workforce housing. ALIVE! has written to the Planning Commission and the City Council, in support of the redevelopment. The Council is trying to accommodate both the neighbors and the needs of low-income families and the outcome is uncertain. We do know that further study and negotiations will be required and redevelopment will be delayed until 2017.
- **The City's FY17 Budget.** Prior to the development of the FY17 budget, the Partnership to Prevent and End Homelessness (of which ALIVE! is an active member) sent a letter to City Council detailing the needs for additional resources for services and for affordable housing. The City Manager recently released his proposed FY17 budget which does not address the additional services needed. The Affordable Housing Committee will be working with a coalition of other groups to attempt to amend the proposed budget to include funding for some of these priorities. On a more positive note, the proposed budget does include authorization for a FY18 City bond issue of \$5.2 million for the proposed 132-unit affordable housing development at Church of the Resurrection.

There is much good news on the affordable housing front that we should all celebrate. A number of affordable developments are being occupied or under development with assistance from the City:

*Affordable housing in Alexandria is important because a stable, affordable home is critical to the health and academic achievement of our children.*

- The townhouse on Aspen Street owned by the City is now being occupied by three formerly homeless veterans.
- Jackson Crossing, a 78-unit affordable development by AHC, Inc, is now leasing.
- AHC is also planning to construct 93 affordable apartments in the Beauregard neighborhood on a site formerly owned by St. James United Methodist Church.
- Alexandria Housing Development Corporation is moving forward with 74 units of affordable housing at The Gateway development at King and Beauregard.
- Carpenter's Shelter and Alexandria Housing Development Corporation have signed a memorandum of understanding to move forward with redevelopment of the shelter which will include 90 new affordable units and 10 permanent supportive housing units (for individuals with developmental or mental disabilities), as well as maintain a smaller emergency shelter.

If you know anyone who would like to participate in the work of ALIVE!'s Affordable Housing Committee, please email [info@alive-inc.org](mailto:info@alive-inc.org).

Cheryl Malloy and John Bohm

Co-Chairs, ALIVE! Affordable Housing Committee



*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*



# Step ALIVE!

## 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Walkathon

### What?

Choose either a 5K or a 5-mile walk through the streets of Alexandria, Virginia, followed by a community picnic.

### When?

Sunday, May 1, 2016 • 2 pm

### Where?

The start and finish are at First Christian Church, 2723 King Street, Alexandria. You can register and get route directions and a T-shirt there, too.

### Registration:

At the event starting at 1:15 pm

or online at [www.alive-inc.org](http://www.alive-inc.org)

\$25.00: 19-70 years of age

\$10.00: 12-18 and 70+ • Free: Under 12

Virtual walkers are welcome!

### Why?


Step ALIVE! benefits the ALIVE! Child Development Center, a highly-rated full-day preschool program serving children of low-income working parents, with a sliding fee scale for tuition.

### Questions?

Visit ALIVE! at [www.alive-inc.org](http://www.alive-inc.org)

by email at [alivetoo@aol.com](mailto:alivetoo@aol.com)

or telephone (703) 837-9321

 Follow us on Facebook.

### ALIVE!

(ALExandrians INVolved ECumenically)  
participates in the United Way (#8352)  
and Combined Federal Campaign (#44658).



**Benefiting the ALIVE! Child Development Center**

## ALIVE! Weekend Care Bag Program

Children who participate in their school free or reduced lunch program during the week may also need food on the weekends. Providing weekend care bags of food to children who rely on food from the schools during the week is the inspiration for ALIVE!'s recent help in this effort.

Thanks to a partnership with the United Way of the National Capital Area and Communities in Schools, ALIVE! began working with Hammond Middle School in January and Mt. Vernon Community School in February to support providing weekend care bags for children who might otherwise go hungry over the weekend. Weekend bags include ready-to-eat breakfasts, lunches, and snacks to supplement the children's' diets. Working together to get food to the children on the weekend, United Way and each school provides the food items and volunteers to pack the food, while ALIVE! provides the storage, a place to assemble the packs and supplementary food items.

In the first two months of the program, over 600 weekend care bags have been packed and are currently being distributed at the two schools. These packs will go to 50 children at each school every weekend. Both schools are now on a rotation for packing the food at the Alexandria Food Center, the expanded warehouse where ALIVE! operates the Food and Family Emergency Program.

In March, ALIVE! will work to bring on board two additional schools, Maury Elementary School and Lyles Crouch Traditional Academy, each with 50 children participating in the Weekend Care Bags Program.

The Care Bags Coordinator, Jan Novia, is working with some ALIVE! congregations that are interested in supporting this program with food donations and/or monetary contributions. The next steps will be to reach out to other interested congregations, and also to local businesses that might be interested in donating or sponsoring a school.



*Communities and Schools, United Way and ALIVE! partner to serve our children.*



*Examples of 'kid friendly' food needed for Weekend Care Bags*



## SAVE THE DATE!

**The ALIVE! House Sidewalk Sale will be held on Saturday, May 14th. Stay tuned for more details about drop off times/ dates and volunteer opportunities!**

**Questions? Contact Amanda Isaac at [alivehousedir@alive-inc.org](mailto:alivehousedir@alive-inc.org).**

### ALIVE! House Wish List

- Laundry detergent
- Toilet paper
- Paper towels
- Baby wipes
- Shampoo/conditioner
- Disinfectant spray
- Metro fare cards



## A Grateful Student Says, “Thank You, ALIVE!”



*Rodrigo would like to say “Thank You” to the many people who have contributed to ALIVE!*

“Rodrigo” is an 18-year-old attending T.C. Williams High School’s International Academy who supports himself by working two jobs. Rodrigo is one of the hardest working students in the Academy, where he is a 10th grader. Like many students in the International Academy, Rodrigo came to Alexandria from Central America. His journey to safety and a new life took almost 8 months as he was forced to stop his journey periodically and work to support himself and save to finance the next steps of his trip. He did everything from washing cars to cleaning kitchens. The toughest job he had was working in a cement block factory in Reynosa, Mexico, across the border from Texas. This took a toll on his hands but not his spirit, and after several months he was able to proceed on his journey.

When Rodrigo arrived in Alexandria, he found that the extended family members he planned to live with were less than fully supportive. He was moved from home to home in Alexandria and the District of Columbia until finally a relative asked him to move out. For the last 3 months, Rodrigo has supported himself entirely from his wages, living in a rented room in an apartment on Alexandria’s West End. Despite working as late as 4:00 AM (even on some school nights) Rodrigo sometimes comes up short, and food is always in short supply.

Rodrigo is one of the many young adult students in Alexandria who need support from ALIVE! to keep food on the table, or to get help with rent, utilities, or medical expenses.

The International Academy is an intensive English language learning environment located in T.C. Williams High School. Currently, 640 students make up the Academy. The number grows every week, as immigrants and refugees come to make a new future in Alexandria. Because virtually all of them are struggling to make ends meet, students in the International Academy and their families rely on ALIVE!. These students come from 44 different countries and speak 26 different languages.

## NEW BOARD MEMBERS: Spring 2016

**Skipp Calvert** is the new representative from Saint Paul’s Episcopal Church, where he is a Lazarus counsellor and former vestryman. He and his wife Mary live in Old Town after returning from Italy in the 80’s. They are the parents of two sons, a Navy jet fighter pilot and a financial entrepreneur in Dallas. Skipp is a retired Navy Public Affairs Officer, advertising executive in New York and Los Angeles, and a Bush #41 appointee. He is an avid gardener and is a member of the board of Directors of the American Horticultural Society.

**Greg Smith** is the congregational representative for St. Mary Catholic Church where he became a parishioner last year. Originally from Baltimore, Maryland, Greg is an active duty naval officer who has moved 14 times during his 19-year career. He has been stationed in Florida, Maine, Rhode Island, Texas, Virginia, Washington, and Japan. This is his second assignment in the DC area. He and his wife are the proud parents of four daughters. Greg volunteers with ALIVE! to serve the people of our community and to set a good example for his kids.

**Barbara Swan** is the new congregational representative from First Christian Church of Alexandria. She has lived in Alexandria for the last 5 years and works in D.C. with a trade association. She’s been married for 36 years and has two adult children. She volunteered many hours with church youth activities since her son was very active in the youth group. At First Christian Church, she has been working with the capital committee, the property committee, and the board to get the building repaired and refreshed.

## Alexandrians Receiving Food from ALIVE!

	Households	Individuals
<b>December</b>	<b>732</b>	<b>2746</b>
<b>January</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>2047</b>
<b>February</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>2109</b>

Please consider ALIVE! this year  
when making your  
United Way/CFC contributions.



CFC  
Code:  
44658



United Way  
Code:  
8352

## Spring 2016 Calendar

### APRIL

- 5 **ALIVE! Board Meeting**, 7:00 PM, Fairlington Presbyterian Church, 3846 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22302
- 30 **Last Saturday Food Distribution**: Church of the Resurrection, Cora Kelly Recreation Center, and Ladrey Senior High Rise
- Food Collection**: First Christian Church of Alexandria, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Old Presbyterian Meeting House, St. Joseph Catholic Church, Trinity UMC, Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington,
- Furniture Collection**: Church of the Resurrection, Grace Episcopal Church, Christ Church, St. Mary Catholic Church

### MAY

- 1 **2016 CDC ALIVE! WALKATHON**
- 3 **ALIVE! Board Meeting**, 7:00 PM, Church of St. Clement, 1701 N. Quaker Lane, 22302
- 28 **Last Saturday Food Distribution**: Church of the Resurrection, Cora Kelly Recreation Center, and Ladrey Senior High Rise
- Food Collection**: Agudas Achim Congregation, Christ Church, Church of the Resurrection, Fairlington UMC, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Grace Episcopal Church
- Furniture Collection**: Blessed Sacrament Catholic Community, Westminster Presbyterian, Church of God and Saints of Christ Sixteenth Tabernacle

### JUNE

- 14 **ALIVE! Board Meeting**, 7:00 PM, Fairlington United Methodist Church, 3900 King St. Alexandria, VA 22302
- 26 **Last Saturday Food Distribution**: Church of the Resurrection, Cora Kelly Recreation Center, and Ladrey Senior High Rise
- Food Collection**: Blessed Sacrament Catholic Community, Church of Good and Saints Sixteenth Tabernacle, Community Praise Center, Convergence Community, Immanuel Church-on-the-Hill, St. Mary Catholic Church
- Furniture Collection**: St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Washington Street UMC, Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington, St. Mary Catholic Church

**ALIVE!**  
2723 King Street  
Alexandria, VA 22302  
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E-mail: [info@alive-inc.org](mailto:info@alive-inc.org)

**ALIVE! Wire**



*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 43 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: [info@alive-inc.org](mailto:info@alive-inc.org)  
[www.alive-inc.org](http://www.alive-inc.org)

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**As an ALIVE! supporter, you are providing emergency assistance to people in need in Alexandria. You are also helping to break the cycle of poverty through programs like ALIVE!'s Child Development Center, which provides high quality early childhood education and care for the children of low-income working families.**

**Thank you for everything you do to help the 13,500 people living in poverty right here in our community!**