

# SHELTER

RESTORING HOPE TO THE  
HOMELESS THROUGH YOU

spirit

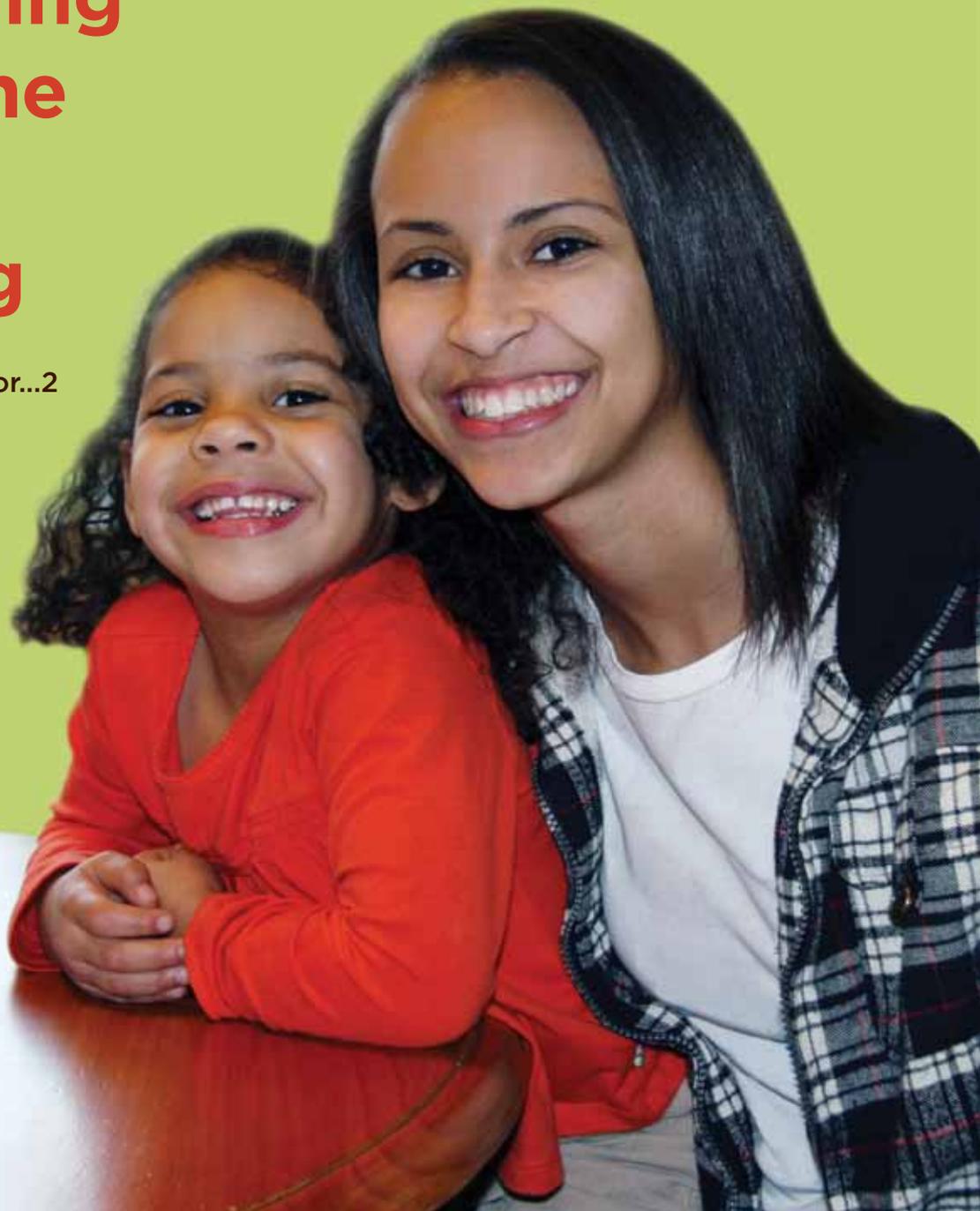
## You're Giving Hope to the Homeless this Spring

A message from the director...2

A donor's legacy lives on  
through her husband...3

You restore confidence to  
those in need...3

A family's future is  
changed for the better -  
thanks to YOU...4



SPRING 2010



Arlington  
Life Shelter



Becky Orander, LMSW  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

## dear friend,

Eating dinner as a family may seem like a small and insignificant part of life – but the impact it has on a child can affect his or her future for years to come.

Children who eat five or more meals a week with their families have a more advanced vocabulary and greater academic achievement than those who don't. Regular family meals also help protect children against unhealthy conditions like obesity and eating disorders.

To help promote healthy eating habits – and healthy relationships – the tradition of “Family Dinner” has been renewed by 14 families who have moved into the Arlington Life Shelter’s transitional housing program over the past several months.

Thanks to your support and the shelter’s partnership with the Arlington Housing Authority, these families have a home to call their own and receive social work services for up to two years. Plus, they’re participating in training programs and employment assistance that help them develop the vocational skills required to earn an income and sustain their families once they graduate from the program.

It’s your generosity that enables individuals and families in need here in Arlington and the Mid-Cities to find their way back to a life of self-sufficiency. Because of your compassion, those who face the desperation of homelessness have access to comprehensive, personalized services that enable them to become productive members of our community.

I am so very grateful for your continued partnership as we work to serve our community’s homeless men, women and children. Thank you.

**“Other things  
may change us,  
but we start and  
end with family”  
- Anthony Brandt**

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# A Legacy of Service Lives On

The Arlington Life Shelter simply wouldn't be able to serve individuals and families in need here in our community without the hard work and steadfast support of our many dedicated volunteers. Gene Pfretzschner is one of those special volunteers.

Gene and his late wife Rosemary became faithful donors to the Arlington Life Shelter after discovering the shelter through their church several years ago. Soon they were also making trips to Gene's favorite discount store every few weeks to purchase wish list items for the shelter in bulk. When Gene and Rosemary heard that milk was in short supply for the increasing number of young children and pregnant women, they opened a charge account for the shelter at a local grocer. Because of their continued commitment to the clients served by the Arlington Life Shelter, Gene and Rosemary were recognized with the Heroes of the Homeless award last spring, the shelter's highest honor.

When Rosemary passed away last November, Gene wanted to find a way to honor her memory and keep himself connected to the cause they both cared so



*Gene helps fold towels in the shelter's laundry room.*

much about. He began volunteering even more regularly at the shelter, and most weekday mornings, he can be found here folding laundry or doing paperwork. He says he finds that volunteering at the shelter not only helps the agency stretch its dollars, but it also provides him with the daily interaction and communication he so deeply misses since Rosemary passed away.

"It's just uplifting to be able to do something for a meaningful program that helps people," says Gene.

Gene encourages others to volunteer at the Arlington Life Shelter so they can experience the joy of giving that he feels every day.

"Take that first step – I guarantee you're gonna like it!" he says.

The Arlington Life Shelter is endlessly grateful for the generosity and compassion of this extraordinary couple. Rosemary leaves behind a legacy of immense generosity, comparable only to the selfless service her husband Gene continues to live out each day.

## You Help Those in Need Through Times of Trial



Philip, a graduate of Mansfield High School, has lost both of his parents within recent years. After the death of his father last year, Philip was overwhelmed with feelings of loss and desperation - and he was suddenly without a permanent home.

After months of moving from one place to another, seeking shelter and the emotional support he so desperately missed, Philip was referred to the Arlington Life Shelter. Thanks to the gifts of friends like you, he received a warm welcome, a safe place to sleep, and most importantly, a structured program of support services to help him get back on his feet.

Philip has become confident in himself and his abilities and is steadily preparing for

a life of self-sufficiency. He's even started doing extra things around the shelter to help other clients.

"I like helping...because I feel like I'm giving back for everyone helping me," he says.

The Arlington Life Shelter is challenging Philip to look beyond the general labor jobs he has held in the past to a field that would provide better opportunities for learning and advancement. Philip is also becoming linked with the community services he'll need once he's on his own.

Thanks to your commitment to improving lives, Philip is developing the skills and confidence he needs to face the challenges he will undoubtedly encounter in the future.

## There's Still Time to Have TWICE the Impact for Those in Need!

A generous friend of the Arlington Life Shelter has issued a matching gift challenge to help restore hope to homeless men, women and children in our community. From now until August 1, any gift you give will be matched, dollar for dollar – up to \$20,000. That's a total of \$40,000 that can be used to provide important resources for individuals and families in need!

Please give a gift to the Arlington Life Shelter today – any gift you give will be DOUBLED to help those facing the desperation of homelessness. Thank you!

## THANK YOU

Thank you to **Lamar Baptist Church, Center Point Community Church** and **Legacy High School's ROTC** members for brightening the lives of families by decorating dorm rooms here at the Arlington Life Shelter!

*Four dorms are still available for adoption. Please contact Alex Davis, Volunteer Coordinator at [adavis@arlingtonlifeshelter.org](mailto:adavis@arlingtonlifeshelter.org) to learn more.*

Special thanks to **First United Methodist Church of Arlington** for providing a new handicap ramp and handrails for the shelter's entrances. Several of the church's Sunday School classes have made separate donations, including Discoverer's, Aldersgate, Open Door, Lamplighters, Wesley Progressors, Today's Woman, Bible Explorers, Young Adults and United Methodist Women.

*Please contact Chandra Thompson, Director of Community Services, at [cthompson@arlingtonlifeshelter.org](mailto:cthompson@arlingtonlifeshelter.org) to find out how your group can get involved.*

Thank you to **City Councilpersons Kathryn Wilemon** and **Mel LeBlanc** for their continued generous support of the Arlington Life Shelter. Kathryn and Mel recently engaged personal friends and community leaders in a creative way, encouraging them to support the shelter, too!

## 2010 Volunteer Recognition Event

All volunteers and members of the PALS Auxiliary are invited to attend a special evening of celebration. Former residents will share how the Arlington Life Shelter has changed their lives. Join us Thursday, April 22 at 6 p.m. at First United Methodist Church of Arlington. Visit [www.arlingtonlifeshelter.org](http://www.arlingtonlifeshelter.org) for more information.



*Amanda with her children, Tiera, Anastasia and Zantavious*

## You Give Families a Second Chance at Life

At age 16, Amanda thought her life was perfect. She made good grades, was captain of her high school's drill team and had just been selected for a special ballet tour in New York City.

But that all changed when she found out she was pregnant. Her plans to study medicine in college and to teach ballet suddenly evaporated before her eyes.

Like so many young mothers, Amanda was left to raise her child on her own. She knew she'd have a long road ahead of her, but she was determined not to give up on her dreams.

Now at age 32, Amanda cares for her three children – Tiera, 15, Zantavious, 11, and Anastasia, 4. Amanda loves her kids more than anything, but she's a single mom, which is not without its challenges. Recently her hours were cut at work, and before she knew it, she was out of money and simply couldn't pay her rent. With nowhere else to go, Amanda brought her family to the Arlington Life Shelter for help.

Thanks to your support of the Arlington Life Shelter, Amanda and her children received a warm welcome, filling meals, a safe place to sleep...and so much

more. Thanks to donors like you, they now have a comprehensive plan that will get them back on their feet. The shelter's structured education and employment programs have made a huge difference, too. Amanda was able to complete a dental health assistant program while her kids received after-school tutoring at the shelter.

Because of Amanda's dedication to improving her life and those of her children, she was selected to participate in the Arlington Life Shelter's two-year Transitional Housing program. The family now lives in a home in south Arlington within walking distance of the children's school. A social worker will partner with Amanda for the next two years, supporting the young family as they find their niche in the community, ensuring that education remains a priority and keeping them connected to community services.

Amanda is so thankful for the help she received from the shelter – and she knows she has generous friends like you to thank.

"We had no choice but to go to a shelter. It made me appreciate whatever I have, and to treat it like gold," she says. "We know where we've been and what we're blessed with."



**Arlington  
Life Shelter**

Together, we shepherd homeless men, women and children toward a lifestyle of self-sufficiency.