



# The Light



**FALL 2002**

### Special Points of Interest

- Check out First Light's new website! Info. P. 2
- Give a light to help the homeless! Holiday Lights coming soon! P. 2
- Find out what's brewing in the First Light Coffee Shop. P. 2
- Counselor's Corner P. 3

### Need a speaker ?

If you need a speaker for your civic meeting, congregational meeting or organization, please call or e-mail us! We have staff that would love to tell you about all of the wonderful things happening at First Light. Call 323-4277 or E-mail flshelter@aol.com.

**First Light, Inc.**

**2230 Fourth Avenue North  
Birmingham, AL 35203  
(205) 323-4277  
www.firstlightshelter.org**

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**Saturday, November 9** **6:00 p.m.**

**2002**  
**GRANADA GALA**  
*Benefiting First Light*

**The Harbert Center**  
Entertainment

**Four For Time**  
Cabaret Act

**The Alabama Jazz All Stars With  
Cleve Eaton and Vocalist Roszetta Johnson**

Music by **e. e. boe** during Silent Art Auction

Live Art Auction by **Ken Jackson** Auctioneer

**Cocktail Buffet** **Cash Bar**

First Light's 5th annual Granada Gala will be on November 9th! The night will be filled with food, fun, entertainment, our new video and a silent and live art auction! You will have an opportunity to purchase original art created by a wonderful variety of Birmingham's phenomenal artists! Four For Time is a quartet made up of professional singers Jan D. Hunter, Kristi T. Higginbotham, Carl Dean and Lonnie Parsons. You don't want to miss this cabaret act! We are also honored to be entertained by Cleve Eaton. Cleve Eaton is a recognized name in the jazz world as a consummate bassist, producer, composer, publisher and head of his own Birmingham based record company. Among his many achievements, awards and honors, Cleve has been inducted into the Birmingham Jazz Hall of Fame and received the Achievement Award at the Count Basie Tribute Concert. The Granada Gala is an event you don't want to miss! For tickets call Rachel at 323-4277.

- \$75 Tickets (\$40 is tax deductible)  
Includes cocktail buffet, silent and live art auctions, entertainment and two drink tickets for wine, beer or soda.

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ ticket(s) at \$75 each for a total of \$\_\_\_\_\_.

- \$1200 Patron Table (Seats 8)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Company \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

- My check made payable to First Light enclosed.

- Please charge \$\_\_\_\_\_ to my:  
MasterCard or Visa (please circle one).

Account number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

- I regret that I cannot attend but wish to contribute \$\_\_\_\_\_ in support of First Light.

Please complete this form and mail to First Light, Inc.:  
2230 Fourth Avenue North, Birmingham, AL 35203  
or fax (205)323-8362. Tickets will be mailed to you or you can pick them up at will call.

## HOLIDAY LIGHTS



The holiday season will be here before we know it! Do you fret about finding the perfect gift for the person who has everything or who doesn't want anything? Well, don't worry anymore because First Light has the perfect solution. You can give a unique and meaningful gift to your loved ones while brightening the lives of homeless women and children. Lights will shine from the First Light building in honor or remembrance of those you love or as a gift to someone special through your donation to First Light. First Light will mail a holiday card to the recipient of your gift. The lights will burn through Hanukkah and Christmas. A Holiday Lights brochure will be coming to you in the mail in November! Don't fret! Give the gift of light to brighten the lives of homeless women and children at First Light!

### The Light I See

Written by Martha Terrell, First Light guest

At first things seemed  
so hard

Yet, I kept my faith in the  
Good Lord

Many wonderful things have happened at  
First Light

So now I know  
Everything will be alright

## CHECK OUT OUR NEW WEBSITE!

[www.firstlightshelter.org](http://www.firstlightshelter.org)

First Light would like to thank  
Martine Craven and Digital Trends  
Corporation!  
[www.digitrends.com](http://www.digitrends.com)

October 1, 2002

This is my first experience staying over night. The facility is very nice and I am so happy to see that each resident has a "private" space. I think it's so important for them to have their own locker to keep their things separate. Not only for privacy, but also to give them some responsibility. Everyone was pleasant and quiet this evening. I hope to volunteer again soon. Thanks for the great work that you do here at First Light. May God continue to richly reward you.

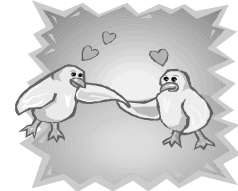
## What's Brewing in the First Light Coffee Shop?



The First Light Coffee Shop is doing a lot more than making coffee. The guests of the shelter have been doing some catering! If you would like First Light to cater lunch for your next business meeting, organization meeting or party, just call First Light at 323-4277, and ask for Wynter Byrd, our Coffee Shop Manager. The First Light Coffee Shop is turning into a busy place. Come by and see us and our health rating of 100! You can check out our lunch menu on our website: [www.firstlightshelter.org](http://www.firstlightshelter.org)!

## How Can You Help?

First Light depends on volunteers to bring and serve dinner every night of the year. We also rely on volunteers to stay overnight in the emergency shelter every night of the year, acting as hosts/hostesses, and often providing a listening ear, a shoulder to be cried on and arms that hug. Collecting wish list items is also a fun and rewarding group thing to do. Be creative. If you have a volunteer project that you would like to do, please let us know! Volunteers are an invaluable part to making First Light a reality. We could not do this without you!



## Christmas Needs

The shelter is home for the holidays for the guests at First Light. The holiday season can be a hard time for our women and children. But with your help, we can lift spirits! Every year we surprise the women and children with large gift bags full of all kinds of goodies! If you, your organization, church, school or club would like to help, call Valeri at 323-4277 to find out more!



## Shelter Stories

September 7, 2002

What good food we had tonight, and one of the ladies gave the Sunday school class a pillow she made in remembrance of 9-11 (quite beautiful!). Many requests tonight, but not unexpected—ladies very pleasant; baby finally settled down.

Reflecting back past May 2000 and how crowded and cramped the basement was—seems like this First Light is a Taj Mahal—very very nice!

-Ann Askew

September 13, 2002

Ann Scott and I had a very pleasant evening. All our guests were polite, cooperative and appreciative. We gave out lots of shampoo, and we gave a few just about everything else (powder, shaving cream, shower cap, etc.).

...It really is wonderful to hear the women laughing, talking and fixing each other's hair. Even in such dire straights, the joy of connection with others is fulfilling and evident.

I would like to come on a more regular basis so I could have more than one contact with some of the guests. I would like to get to know them better. It is a joy to be here.

Love in Christ,  
Lynne Rogers

# Counselor's Corner

## Amazing Courage: A Pathway to Healing

She walks into the shelter looking ashamed and defeated. Alcoholism brought her to us. Her mouth is as dry as a sun-scorched desert, yet she manages to ask for help. "I need a place to stay. Do you have any room for me?" A bed is available, but she must answer questions and sign her name, confirming that she is truly homeless. This isn't just a bad dream or another night spent in a cheap hotel. There are no more friends or family members willing to help her out. She is alone. She is tired. She is an alcoholic. She starts to cry...

Something miraculous begins to happen as she looks around her. She begins to talk with others who understand her pain. She receives a smile from a staff member and a warm hearty meal from volunteers. As she is preparing for bed she is offered clean towels, linens, dignity and hope from loving hands. As she lays in her bed that night, she looks up and sees a pipe of all things, probably a part of the plumbing. But beyond the pipe, she feels God. He comforts her, assures her of His presence in this place and offers her His healing touch. She reaches out and accepts it...

*This is a true story, shared with permission, by one of the guests who came to me for counseling. God did touch her here, through each of us, and she turned away from the path of alcoholism onto the road towards healing.*

*For many of our women it takes tremendous courage to enter our doors and admit they need help. May each of us who are called to serve these fine women remember their courage, and continue to offer them dignity and hope. Thank you for serving...*

-JoNell Comegys, First Light Counselor

## Welcome New Staff!

Welcome, **Valeri Cowart!**  
Valeri is First Light's Receptionist/  
Volunteer Coordinator/Administrative  
Assistant—multi-talented! We are  
thrilled to have such a great addition to  
the First Light team. If you want to  
volunteer, call Valeri at 323-4277! **The  
next volunteer liaison meeting will be  
Tuesday, December 3 at 11:30!**

Welcome, **Aileen Tarpey!**  
Aileen is a Jesuit Volunteer from Boston,  
Massachusetts! She will be serving at First  
Light as the Shelter & Program Assistant  
for the next year! We "reckon" we can fix  
her accent before she goes home, but it  
ain't goin' to be easy.

# Will You Help?

You can make a difference in the lives of Birmingham's homeless women and children.

You can provide shelter from a life on the streets where there is no place to go when it is raining and cold, except for a business building's overhang, under a bridge, the public library or a cardboard house made from boxes rescued from a dumpster.

You can make a sanctuary available to women and children 24 hours a day with social and counseling services.

You can help provide specialized programs geared to chronically mentally ill women, those who cannot complete traditional day care programs.

You can give homeless women a reason to get up every day, a boost of self-confidence, a source of motivation and job experience through First Light's Coffee Shop program, First Perk.

No one deserves to be homeless. No one plans on being homeless, abused, mentally ill or addicted to drugs and/or alcohol.

Will you help provide shelter to homeless women and children in a place of hope and love with a sense of home and family?

If you don't, who will?

I (we) make the following gift, offering a physical example of commitment, care and concern for homeless women and children.

- \$15,000                       \$1,000
- \$10,000                      \$500
- \$5,000                         \$100             \$25
- \$3,000                         \$50              \$\_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_



**FIRST LIGHT, INC.**  
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**BIRMINGHAM, AL 35203**

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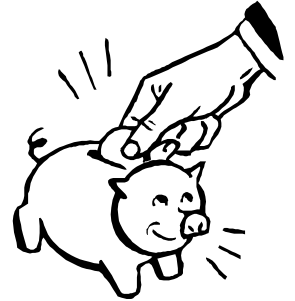
Our mission is working with homeless women, their children and others at risk to create hospitality in a safe and nurturing community, encouraging them to maintain dignity, to find hope, to seek opportunity and to grow spiritually, thereby achieving their full potential.

### Board of Directors & Staff

Robin Vines, President  
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 JoNell Comegys, Counselor  
 Wynter Byrd, Coffee Shop Manager  
 Valeri Cowart, Receptionist/Volunteer Coordinator  
 Erica Watkins, Resident Manager, BSW

### First Light Wish List

- Ziploc bags—large and small sizes
- Deodorant
- Styrofoam cups & plates
- Napkins
- Cereal
- Vaseline
- Small cups for dispensing medicine
- Metal forks and spoons
- Clothes Washing Detergent-powder
- Powdered drink mixes
- Mops, brooms & dustpans
- Snack foods
- Cleaning supplies
- Antacids, Pepto-Bismol
- Toothbrush and soap travel holders
- Cleaning supplies—surface cleaner, window cleaner, Lysol spray, dish washing liquid, Comet, etc.
- Toothache medicine
- Fresh fruit
- Feminine hygiene products
- Socks



• *Cash donations allow us to continue to serve Birmingham's homeless women and children.*

- Ibuprofen/Tylenol
- Underwear (all sizes)
- Bingo game
- Twin size blankets
- Boxes of grits & oatmeal w/ individual packets
- Adult diapers
- Donation to purchase new dining room tables