



# LIGHT

hope • opportunity • dignity • safety • community

Spring 2005

## FIRST LIGHT

A Center for Homeless Women and Children

### It's Great To Be 8!



Abigail Garrett and Ruth Crosby, Executive Director

Abigail Garrett, daughter of Angel and Brian, came to First Light one evening with special gifts in hand...her birthday presents. Abigail volunteers with her family through First United Methodist Church. A couple weeks before her 8th birthday, Abigail told her parents that she wanted to have a swimming pool party, but she didn't want any presents. She said, "I have a lot of things and there are people that do not have a lot of things." She wanted her gifts to be donations to First Light. The response was amazing! Abigail came to First Light to present her gifts to the women and children. I don't think there was a dry eye in the room as Abigail presented \$228 while all of the women and children at First Light sang "Happy Birthday!" Thank you, Abigail, for sharing your birthday with us! Abigail is proof that anyone can make a difference in the lives of others.

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### How To Be A Hero

You, your organization, your church, your bible study group, or your school can help the homeless women and children at First Light by becoming a First Light Hero! Here's how. Your goal as an individual or group is to raise \$1000 in 6 months or less through any legal means you choose by organizing and implementing your own First Light fundraiser. Hero projects must have prior approval from First Light. Here are some hero project ideas:

- Car Washes
- Bake Sales
- Donation Dinner Parties
- Civic Group Projects
- Yard Sales
- Letters to friends and family
- Bingo Night
- Bunco Night
- Book Sale

In return for giving, "heroes" will be published in First Light's newsletter, on our website, on a hero display at First Light, and hopefully in the newspaper. This is a great way to get your friends and family involved in the community. First Light will arm you with brochures and videos in your quest to become a hero.

For more information, contact Rachel Cabaniss, Development Director, fishelter@aol.com or 323-4277.



# Granada Gala 2005

# Good Fun for a Good Cause

Fine Art, Fine Wine and Great Get-A-Ways! First Light's 7th annual Granada Gala held on January 29th at the HealthSouth Center was a huge success! The post-event feedback—"The gala was just a lot fun!" Raising \$90,000 for the homeless women and children at First Light, the gala was not only fun, it brought in much-needed funding for the vital services that First Light provides. The Granada Gala was dedicated to **Bill and Weesa Matthews** because First Light would not exist but for their hope, inspiration and support. **Fran Wells** was named Volunteer of the Year for 15+ years of service to the homeless women and children of First Light and the guests of the basement shelter of First Presbyterian Church. The event was a great success, thanks to auctioneer extraordinaire Ken Jackson and many contributions of time, talent, art, wine, center pieces and vacation homes. A special thanks to the Gala Committee: **Cindy Coyle, Chair; Joy O'Neal; Blair Sandford; Nancy Skinner; Wendi Boyen, Board President; David Elliott, Board Vice President** and First Light staff, Shannon Horsley and Rachel Cabaniss.

Of course, the event would not be possible without the generous support of our sponsors:

## Event Sponsors

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Fitzpatrick, Cooper & Clark  
Bill and Weesa Matthews  
Maynard, Cooper & Gale, PC  
Mountain Brook Presbyterian Church  
National Bank of Commerce  
Protective Life Corporation

## The Light I See

"My thought on coming back to First Light was knowing I'd have a warm dry place to sleep, not to mention the wonderful staff who are always there to listen when you need. If it wasn't for First Light I'd be sleeping in a wet cold garage or a junk yard. But thanks to First Light that's behind me. I moved to the fourth floor after being here for 4 months. I have my own room and I love it I thank God for First Light. They were here for me when no one else was. They are very caring. I really enjoy being on the fourth floor it's like a new start for me. It's home- no worries. Thank God for First Light. I really enjoy the closeness with my new friends I never had before."

—Elizabeth Gator, Permanent Supportive Housing Resident & Previous Guest of the Emergency Shelter

## Volunteers of the Month

"Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote everyday about the kind of community you want to live in."—Marjorie Moore

### OCTOBER

Mattie Johnson- St. Paul's Cathedral

### NOVEMBER

Lynne Rogers- First Presbyterian Church  
and Cindy Culpepper

### DECEMBER

Kenzi Rauth and Mattie Johnson

### JANUARY

Megann Bates

### FEBRUARY

Mallie Searcy and Maria Presley-  
Birmingham-Southern College

### MARCH

Megann Bates and Terri Cook



## Bring Breakfast!

First Light is now recruiting volunteers to bring and serve breakfast or just bring breakfast! Breakfast is served from 6:30 until 7:30am Monday-Friday and from 7:30 until 8:30am Saturday and Sunday. Any food is good food! Cereal and milk, bagels and juice or eggs and bacon- it's your call! If you are interested or would like more information, please contact Shannon Horsley at 323-4277 or flcoordinator@yahoo.com. Thank you!



## 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. Because First Light exists, no woman or her children has to sleep on the street, in a car or stay in an unhealthy situation.

YOU can provide a place for those in crisis to come and receive the help that they need to regain dignity, hope and self-sufficiency.

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

**Will you help provide shelter and essential services 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?**

## Birthday Surprise!

Betty Drennen, a dedicated volunteer and long-time member of Independent Presbyterian Church, had a big birthday in February, and she made it a big party for First Light! Her friends showered her with presents for the women at First Light including blankets, sheets, towels, breakfast foods and cleaning supplies. Thank you all so much for your generosity!! Happy 75th Birthday, Betty!

Betty's birthday invitations were so creative, we thought we would share!

Oh my my—what a surprise! Betty Drennen is turning 75! February 9th is the upcoming date. We wanted to do something special to celebrate. But she said, "Please No Parties, No Presents, No Fuss." We had to do something. It seemed to be a must! We put our heads together and came up with something great, but we need her friends and family to participate!

It's a "Surprise Linen Shower" on Betty's front door for the First Light Women's Shelter, the place she adores. She'll be so surprised as donations pour in. The birthday gift that keeps on giving, again and again.

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

\$10,000 or more	Benefactor
\$5,000 to \$9,999	Patron
\$1,000-\$4,999	Investor
\$500-\$999	Sponsor
\$250-\$499	Sustainer
\$100-\$249	Advocate
\$1-\$99	Friend

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

This is an anonymous gift. Your name will not be included in our annual report.

This contribution is made:

In memory of  In honor of

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_



FIRST LIGHT

**First Light, Inc.**  
**2230 Fourth Avenue North**  
**Birmingham, AL 35203**

**205.323.4277**  
**www.firstlightshelter.org**

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# FIRST LIGHT

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## WISH LIST

### HYGIENE & PERSONAL ITEMS- *New, Unopened Packages Only*

Cold/sinus/allergy/cough medications, medication dispensing cups, Cough drops, Over-the-counter stomach medications (antacids, Pepto-Bismol, laxatives, anti-diarrhea, etc), Pain relief medications, Medicine boxes, Feminine hygiene products, Toothbrushes and toothpaste, Deodorant, Lotion, Hairbrushes and combs, hairspray, Shower gel, soap,, soap travel cases, Baby wipes, Diapers (Sizes 2-5 especially), Denture cleaning and adhesive supplies

### FOOD- *New, Unopened Packages Only*

Fruit, Cereal, Boxes of instant grits and oatmeal (with individual packets), Powdered drink mixes (tea, kool-aid, etc.), Snack foods, Paper or styrofoam plates, bowls and cups, Plastic forks, spoons and knives, Napkins, Quart and gallon size Ziploc bags

### HOUSEHOLD ITEMS-

Laundry Detergent--powder, Fabric softener dryer sheets  
Cleaning supplies- surface cleaner, dish washing liquid, etc.

### CLOTHING- *New or used in good condition*

Night Clothes- gowns, pajamas, nightshirts, etc.  
Underwear and socks- all sizes

### ART THERAPY

Small portable sewing machine  
Old costume jewelry  
Artists' paint brushes, all sizes  
Gift certificates to A.C. Moore's, Michael's or Hobby Lobby for art supplies

**\*Clothes Donations?**--First Light partners with Pathways to provide our guests with clothes through their clothes closet program. **Please send all donations of clothing, shoes and other apparel to Pathways.** Pathways is located 2 blocks from First Light at 409 Richard Arrington Jr. Blvd. For more information, you may call 322-6854. Thank you!