

Granada Gala 2003

Mark your calendars! First Light's 6th annual Granada Gala will be on Saturday, November 1, 2003 at the Harbert Center!

Some thoughts from First Light guests..

Contentment
Love and kindness shared
In times of joy and sorrow
Brings contented hearts.
by Vicki Nolen

This poem inspires Tywana Jones, a First Light guest:

Begin with a Vision
Begin with a vision and
Hold it fast, reality last
But great dreams past
Begin with a vision
And follow it through
For that is the way
Great tomorrows come true.
- Author Unknown

Thanks for your support!

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Alabama Civil Justice Foundation

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!



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.

Shelter Stories

April 30, 2003

The two worlds of Birmingham-Southern College and First Light are polar opposites. The majority of my week is spent in at BSC, a land of opportunity and hope for the future. Then, the scenery changes each Wednesday night when I enter the doors of First Light. This land is bleak and scary and at times, filled with a sense of hopelessness. It is difficult to leave one world and enter the other. It isn't fair and I'm frustrated. Where do I belong? Shouldn't everyone have the same chance at truly living and not simply existing? Sometimes I wonder if I'm actually making a difference on this earth filled with millions of people. I only provide food one night a week for fifty women. Yet, this is where hope takes over and I have to believe that I have a purpose. This is where, in faith, I cross the border between worlds once again.

- Alison Downs, Birmingham Southern College

March 9, 2003

It has been an eventful night. We sent one lady to the hospital and one downstairs so Officer Yvonne could keep an eye her. God bless our guard, Yvonne. She is caring, yet firm. I am always glad that she is here for us. Several of the ladies are sick – mostly colds. There seems to be a lot of concern and friendship among this group. I spent some time with one lady that will be getting her own apartment in a couple of weeks. I am so proud of her. She has had some set backs but has been sober for almost a year. She seems committed to her goals. We talked about how to get her things she will need for her home – she has nothing! But for the grace of God, we could all be here. First Light makes me so thankful for my home and family. These ladies have a lot of courage. They always touch my life.

- Peggy White-Rouveyrol, Our Lady of Sorrows

May 21, 2003

This was a very lively night because Ruben won!!! The floor was rocking and most of all they were excited. One of the ladies had to fill me in on all of the history of this competition. We marveled at how this event had pulled millions of Americans together across races, ages, genders, and economic status. We pronounced it "very good." Ruben has given a wonderful image for Birmingham, so has First Light – we are grateful for both.

– Marion Walker, First Light Board Member

Counselor's Corner

Grief is a powerful term that counselors use on many occasions. What is grief? Who has it? How can you help someone get through it?

Grief is a normal, natural process that all of us go through when we have encountered some type of loss. It is a safe bet that each of us has experienced grief at some point in our lives and may be experiencing grief at this time.

Many of the guests of First Light are experiencing grief that is related to some type of loss aside from the loss of a loved one. One may experience grief as a result of any loss, including the loss of a person's home, loss of a person's sense of security, loss of financial stability or loss of unfulfilled dreams. Basically, we all need to mourn the loss of things that are important to each of us on an individual basis.

So, how can you help someone who is dealing with a loss? The answer is to respect their grief and allow them to grieve. For example, if she needs to tell the story of what she has lost, even if it is the same story you have heard for the tenth time, LISTEN. Validate her feelings. Let her know it is OK to feel sad, angry, scared or all of those feelings at the same time. If she needs to be alone, respect her request and let her know you are there when she needs you.

Grieving is an individual process. There is no manual that lets you know what a person should be feeling or how long they should be feeling it. It varies from person to person. So, by listening, being supportive and validating feelings, you can help a person work through their grieving process.

First Light Fashion Show A Fabulous Success

The third annual Hats Off Luncheon on March 18 was quite a success! The Stein Mart models and merchandise were a wonderful introduction to this Spring's fashion. Door prizes were donated by The Dande' Lion, J. Alexander's, The Holly Tree, Rich's-Macy's at Brookwood and St. John's Boutique. Table centerpieces were donated by Andy's Creekside Nursery, Plant Odyssey, Collier's Nursery, Lowe's, Hobby Lobby and Wal-Mart. Of course this event would not be possible without the tireless efforts of Rita Helton. Thank you Rita!

Welcome New Staff!

Welcome, **Amy Brown!**

Amy is a rising senior at Birmingham-Southern College from Scottsboro, AL. She will be living on the 4th floor as the Resident Assistant and working as a shelter assistant for the summer. She is studying Sociology and Religion. Amy has been a First Light volunteer for the past 3 years and has served as the volunteer liaison for BSC's Service Learning group for the past 2 years!

Welcome, **Kerri Carruth!**

Kerri will be filling a new position at First Light as a case worker! Kerri has a bachelor's degree in Social Work from the University of Montevallo. She has previously served as an intern for First Light. First Light has increased its capacity to serve homeless women and children by providing additional space in our overflow area. We are excited that Kerri will be here to help us serve the many guests of First Light!

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.

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

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Phone _____



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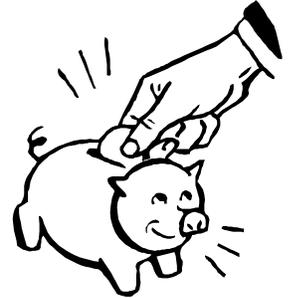
Our mission is working with homeless women, their children and others at risk to create hospitality in a safe and nurturing community, encouraging them to maintain dignity, to find hope, to seek opportunity and to grow spiritually, thereby achieving their full potential.

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First Light Wish List

- Deodorant
- Cleaning supplies—surface cleaner, window cleaner, Lysol spray, dish washing liquid, Comet, etc.
- Styrofoam cups & plates
- Large and Extra-large sleep shirts
- Napkins
- Cereal
- Small cups for dispensing medicine
- Clothes Washing Detergent-powder
- Mops, brooms & dustpans
- Snack foods
- Cough syrup-(non-alcoholic)
- Antacids, Pepto-Bismol
- Toothbrush and soap travel holders
- Toothache medicine
- Fresh fruit
- Feminine hygiene products
- Socks
- Copier Paper
- Ibuprofen/Tylenol
- Underwear (all sizes)
- Twin size blankets



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