

# *The Road Home*

STORIES OF **HOPE** FROM THE ARLINGTON LIFE SHELTER

**Arlington  
Life Shelter**

WINTER 2023





Stephanie R. Melchert  
**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

## Dear Friend,

It's a brand new year and I'm optimistic about the progress we'll make over the coming months. Why? Because I know Arlington Life Shelter has caring people like you in our corner.

While we celebrate a fresh beginning, we know we're facing familiar challenges. Cost of living is on the rise. As inflation pushes rent, utility, grocery and gas prices up, people who were already having a hard time financially can quickly reach a breaking point.

That's where you come in. Your generosity brings renewed hope to neighbors who face homelessness.

Please take some time to meet the people in our community who give thanks for your partnership. On the following page you'll hear Randy's story. He's perpetuating your support by taking advantage of programs that are helping him get back on solid footing.

You can also flip to the back of this issue of *The Road Home* to meet Ethel. She and her son are on the path to securing a home of their own because you choose to give.

I know there will be countless more stories of hope in the year ahead— and I look forward to doing the work alongside you. Thank you for strengthening our community!

Gratefully,

Stephanie R. Melchert  
Executive Director

### Our Mission:

To promote self-sufficiency by providing shelter, employment programs and transitional services for North Texans impacted by homelessness.

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# Arlington Life Shelter

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## Your Giving Spirit Is Spreading Across Our Community!

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With the high cost of gas, rent, groceries and other expenses, Randy's budget wore thin — as did his frame.

"I did not look healthy," he remembers of that time.

He couldn't afford food...or his home. Randy's only option was to sleep in his truck, which needed maintenance and repairs. Thankfully, his cousin told him about Arlington Life Shelter.

After a few days at the shelter, Randy earned his forklift operating license and now works full time. Things are looking up for him. As he

rebuilds his finances, Randy hopes to secure his own home and eventually start a family.

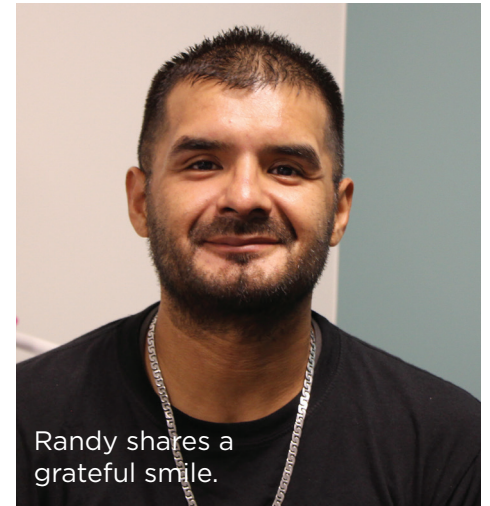
He credits your support for the success he's creating.

"I would give you all a big 'ol hug!" he says about friends like you. **"You are appreciated."**

In addition to working and participating in our programs, Randy spends time cleaning up around the Shelter and helping the staff with odd jobs. He recently had a birthday with the shelter and was excited to celebrate with all his new friends.

"We are all family here," Randy says. "I want to give back to this organization."

Your generosity is being paid forward every day. Thank you for giving neighbors like Randy the hope of a brighter future.



Randy shares a grateful smile.

## Thank You, Chris, for Your Legacy of Support

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"Just to see a smile on [someone's face], it makes all the difference," Chris says of volunteering at Arlington Life Shelter.

She began giving her time through her church in 1995 and continues preparing and serving meals every third Tuesday of the month. Chris also donates items like blankets and supplies

for holiday activities so the residents can celebrate together.

It's the human connection Chris makes with Arlington Life Shelter residents that gives her volunteer work meaning. She remembers countless interactions over the years, including providing guidance to a brand-new mother as well as praying with another mom who'd just arrived at the Shelter and was struggling emotionally.

When she's not offering support, making sandwiches or seniors sharing hot meals at the Shelter, Chris enjoys spending time with her husband, five children and 17 grandkids. She also teaches

a group exercise class every weekday morning.

Because she has such a rewarding experience volunteering, Chris encourages others to get involved, too.

"Just come and see what you could do," she says. "The door is always open, and the need is always there."

We couldn't be more grateful for Chris' commitment to sharing hope with our neighbors. We will be updating everyone with our new volunteer opportunities in the coming year. Our work wouldn't be possible without caring, generous volunteers. A great big thank you to Chris!

# Seniors Like Ethel Are Grateful for Your Partnership



Ethel has renewed hope, thanks to you!

Ethel is a true southern lady. She was born in McComb, Mississippi, grew up in Louisiana and eventually made her way to the North Texas community.

A caring soul, Ethel spent her working life as a nurse's assistant in hospitals, nursing homes and private health.

"I enjoyed helping people — and especially helping the elderly," she says.

Like many local seniors, Ethel has been impacted by inflation. When cost of living rises, neighbors like Ethel who rely on fixed incomes can really struggle.

Ethel was living with her son, Levi, and getting by on their combined budget of his income and her Social Security. But when their rent suddenly went up by \$600, they could no longer afford their home and came to Arlington Life Shelter.

Through Arlington Life Shelter, Ethel and Levi have accessed several support services — including help to secure a housing voucher.

"This basically allows us to get a down payment on our next lease, which has been a huge barrier in finding a new place to live," Ethel says, adding, "The shelter has been most helpful to us."

She knows this opportunity would not be possible without your generosity. Ethel is excited to share her gratitude with you directly.

"Thank you," she says. **"You have helped more than you know."**

## THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS & VOLUNTEERS

Last year was another unprecedented year for the Shelter and we are so grateful for each and every person who gave time, funds and in-kind gifts to support our shared mission! The care and generosity you showed to your neighbors experiencing homelessness in 2022 has helped dozens of families and individuals regain their footing. Thank you!

## AMAZON WISH LIST ITEMS

Did you know that our Amazon Wish List has all our immediate needs listed in one place? These supplies are crucial to serve our friends and neighbors experiencing homelessness. You can even direct a portion of your purchase directly to the shelter! Just go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and select Arlington Life Shelter as your charity of choice.

