

WINGS

Fall/Winter 2005

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HOME APPLIES FOR ARLINGTON COUNTY GRANT

Proceeds to modernize exterior and interior and upgrade HVAC

In October, the Women's Home submitted an application to Arlington County for funding to replace the current heating and air conditioning (HVAC) systems and to install vinyl siding.

Currently, the Home has its original, non-insulating wood exterior. The HVAC units are 20 years old, are costly to maintain, and are inefficient by today's energy standards. Electric costs, which represent a significant portion of our operations budget, have increased by 20% over the past several years.

The installation of new equipment and vinyl siding will improve the comfort level of the Home and provide major energy savings. Monthly utility savings are expected to be as high as 60% from the renovation proposed. Vinyl siding will modernize the property and make it blend in with surrounding homes.

By making this capital investment at this time in the life cycle of the facility, the board believes it will maximize the useful life of the Home. Should the grant be awarded to the Home, it will help ensure the long-term sustainability of The Women's Home, Inc.

The grant for which the Home has applied has been made available to support human services organizations in the county that contribute to the goals and objectives established by the county's five-year plan, and that enhance the

capacity of such organizations to provide quality services in Arlington. As the Home's operations were reviewed during the application process, several things became clear about our presence in the local community.

First, the board found that not only are we implementing our mission, but that we are an important part of the local community. "We are lucky to have such good neighbors within our neighborhood association. They give back to the community in many meaningful ways," Bill Braswell, President of the Tara-Leeway Heights Civic Association, wrote in a letter of support that accompanied the grant application. The Virginia Hospital Center wrote, "We view the Women's Home as a partner in providing valuable support for women in recovery and as an important component in the continuum of care in the Arlington local community."



The Women's Home in May 2005 during its annual yard sale.

A significant number of calls come to the Home's office throughout the year. Last year, over 2,000 calls were received. Of those, an estimated 65% involved Arlington residents. The Home receives many calls from people asking for assistance. They are referred to appropriate places for help, both in the public and private sectors and within and outside of the County.

Secondly, we ensure that the Home and its residents are fully involved in the community. During the past two years, of the 52 residents who lived in the Home, for varying lengths of stay, 27 were or became Arlington residents. Ten others worked for Arlington businesses directly while they were at the Home. Of the 27 who were or are Arlington residents, most do, or did, work for Arlington businesses. Residents live, work, and shop in Arlington. Their social and recovery networks are based here as well.

The Home looks forward to a positive answer when the County makes its grant decisions early in 2006.

BUY A WINDOW

In addition to renovating the Home's siding, the board wishes to replace all windows to improve energy efficiency and aesthetics.

We are accepting donations to make that possible. Just designate on your donation check – "The Window Fund." Initial bids show that each window will cost approximately \$250. Thank you for your generosity.

OTHER WISHES ON THE LIST

If you, your community group, your business, or someone you know might be able to fill any of the following Women's Home needs, please contact our office at 703/237-2822:

- ❖ Towels, twin sheets, and blankets
- ❖ Couches, chairs, lamps in good condition
- ❖ Office supplies (copier toner, paper)
- ❖ Painting supplies and labor
- ❖ Use of a SUV or truck to transport donations.

The Home is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. All donations are tax deductible and receipts will gladly be provided.

POTHoles ALONG THE ROAD TO RECOVERY

--by Ann L. Stone, Ph.D.

As a psychologist who specializes in addictions, I see recovering people with psychological problems. Discovering that recovery does not solve all problems is not good news. Sometimes other issues surface that can only be seen clearly (and addressed) once a person is clean and sober. When such a problem arises, the recovering person's support system and skills from recovery are great assets, and there is more work to do. Here are some of the psychological difficulties I see—what I call "potholes along the road to recovery."

Adjustment problems - Getting sober requires a great deal of adjustment. Problems in a relationship, a marriage or a job can need more help than AA provides. About 1/3 of domestic violence cases involve a husband drinking. Domestic violence needs to be addressed during treatment. Physical and emotional safety are prerequisites for recovery.

Depression - Alcoholics have two to four times as much depression as non-alcoholics. This means that one of three people in recovery also suffers from depression. Females are twice as likely as males to be depressed. There is an especially strong connection between bipolar illness (manic-depression) and alcoholism: 56% of those with bipolar illness also have a substance abuse disorder. Fortunately, there are effective treatments for depression—both psychotherapy and medication. Most antidepressant medications are not cross-addictive with alcohol, meaning they will not "wake up" a person's addiction.

Schizophrenia - Untreated schizophrenia is quite an impediment to substance abuse treatment. Even with psychiatric medication, people with schizophrenia need lots of support. AA groups generally are quite accepting of

all who seek recovery, but the person with schizophrenia may have a harder time connecting.

Anxiety disorders - Anxiety during socializing happens, and alcohol is a tension reliever; hence social anxiety and drinking problems often go together. Panic disorder is another very common problem among recovering people. Of course, alcohol really does not improve performance. In fact, it can make panic worse. There are effective treatments for anxiety disorders. Since the disorder is learned behavior (software, not hardware), I suggest starting with psychotherapy.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Substance abuse often occurs with PTSD. When one is disturbed by overwhelming emotions, flashbacks, or psychological trauma, alcohol can offer relief and can lead to addiction. An estimated 8% of Americans will experience PTSD at some point in their lives, with women about twice as likely to develop PTSD as men. The connection between PTSD and alcohol goes both ways. People abusing alcohol are more likely to experience psychological trauma. Those with PTSD are more likely to have alcohol use disorders. Sixty to eighty percent of Vietnam veterans seeking treatment for PTSD also have alcohol disorders. Again, it makes good sense to seek treatment for PTSD.

Obstacles to treatment - Treatment may be available, but that's only half the battle! Recovering alcoholics' attitudes can be impediments. Here are 3 of the most problematic.

- **AA should be enough.** That's simply not true. All AA promises is that if you don't drink, you won't get drunk.
- **AA is opposed to medication and other treatment.** Not true either. AA officially takes no position on this issue. Many doctors in AA have written about how recovering people can benefit from psychiatric and psychological treatments.

- **I've been down so long it looks like up to me.**
Recovering alcoholics have become used to feeling bad. It takes a long time to realize there is more wrong. Recovery makes them feel so much better that they fail to recognize they still are suffering. They don't know what normal is. Friends and treatment professionals can help by giving honest feedback.

Dr. Stone has been a loyal and committed supporter of the Home for many years.

OUR MISSION

The Women's Home recognizes each woman as a person of dignity whom we accept in a genuine spirit of respect and high regard.

Our mission is as follows:

- to provide a safe and structured environment for women to facilitate recovery from addiction;
- to encourage new patterns of social behavior and relationships;
- to serve as a substitute home and family for recovering women; and
- to ensure an affordable and stable place where residents learn to identify risks to recovery and establish lifestyle changes necessary for long-term sobriety.

HOME CENSUS

In the past two years the Women's Home has been "home" to 52 women ranging in age from 18 to 60+ years old, from nine counties in Virginia, three counties in Maryland, and three additional states.

RESIDENT APPLICATIONS BEING ACCEPTED

To receive a resident application, call our office at 703/237-2822 or e-mail: womensHM@aol.com.

The Home accepts referrals from other treatment facilities, community substance abuse agencies, courts, justice systems,

doctors, lawyers, therapists, the recovery community, and concerned persons. Note: a woman applying to the Home must be clean and sober for 30 days immediately prior to entry.

STAFF RESOURCES

The Women's Home and its 12 residents are blessed with qualified and caring staff, who help the women residents in every aspect of recovery.



left to right – Maritza Negron, Jessica Swansby, Candy Penn, and Nancy Cummings

Counseling services are provided as part of each woman's monthly rental fee. Maritza Negron and Nancy Cummings are experts in the field of addiction counseling. Each counselor brings her own unique skill to the Home's residents.

Ms. Cummings, the Home's newest counselor, is a certified substance abuse counselor and has served many needy people for more than 20 years in the Northern Virginia area. She has provided counseling at A New Beginning in Chantilly, the Regional Detoxification Center in Alexandria, the Arlington County Men's Shelter, the Arlington/Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless, and the Arlington Community Temporary Shelter (ACTS).

Ms. Negron has been a counselor at the Home since 2002. In addition to her years as a certified substance abuse counselor working with women and men, Maritza has worked in social, mental health, juvenile justice, court, and legal services. Working in both residential and outpatient settings, Maritza has held positions as substance abuse counselor, mental health

therapist, community educator, and social services counselor. Fluent in Spanish and English, Ms. Negron has a bachelor's degree in Natural Science with a concentration in Psychology.

Jessica Swansby has been the Home's Resident Manager for over two years. She oversees maintenance and the safety of the facility and the residents' living arrangements.

Candy Penn, the Home's Administrator for the past four years, provides administrative oversight. She handles requests for admission from applicants and referring agencies and counselors, and is responsible for the contract awards from Arlington and Fairfax Counties. Candy has a strong commitment to the success of the Home and the residents, having been associated with it for 11 years and on its Board of Directors for the past 9 1/2 years.

Thank you to our professional staff, who help the Home reach its mission every day.

2005 – 2006 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Chairman – Candy Penn
- Vice Chairman – Bill Mainey
- Secretary – Kathalyn Beck
- Treasurer – Michael Penn
- Directors – Diane Burley, Marilyn Fitzgerald, Tanya Harvey, Patti McGrath

THANK YOU, JACKSON PRENTICE

The Home bids a fond farewell to Jackson Prentice, who has served as a Women's Home board member since 1993. Jackson, CEO of Jackson Prentice Commercial Real Estate, was instrumental in many improvements at the home – the carpet, roofing, and enclosing the backyard porch. Candy Penn, Board President, said, "We are so grateful for his years of service to the board and to the Home. He understands the many facets of our operations. His expertise, extensive network of resources, and his attentiveness to the Home's needs will be greatly missed."

DENISE OSBORNE, FENG SHUI MYSTERY WRITER, MEETS WITH THE WOMEN RESIDENTS

In April 2005, Denise Osborne, feng shui consultant and author of a feng shui mystery series, spent an evening with the residents. She explained the theories of the ancient Chinese art of positioning and arrangement and provided advice to the women about their Home surroundings. Participants reported that her advice improved the chi (energy) around them.

Ms. Osborne was in Virginia for signings of her most recent book, "Evil Intentions." The book includes the Women's Home (set in a fictional suburb of Maryland) in a positive light. Ms. Osborne decided to mention the Home after visiting it with a board member and coming to appreciate the Home's mission and positive accomplishments.

SPRING 2006 YARD SALE – SAVE THE DATE: MAY 6-7

Save your treasures for the 2006 Women's Home Mega-Yard Sale that is held every year on the first weekend of May. Furniture, sports equipment, appliances, computer equipment, toys, jewelry, artwork, antiques, clothing – we sell it all in a very popular, two-day sale at the Home. Virginia Hospital Center staff, friends, and neighbors return annually to buy things at incredible prices. Many people make this event happen – from those who donate their "stuff" to board members and residents who price the goods, answer questions, keep the tables and racks stocked, collect the proceeds, and clean up.

This sale is the Home's major fundraiser. Proceeds from the past three years have ranged from \$4,500 – \$7,000. Start saving your things to donate to the Home for its May 6-7, 2005 sale. Beginning in mid-April, we will accept your tax-deductible donations for our yard sale. If you would like to help, please call Candy Penn at the Home – 703/237-2822. Or, if shopping is your interest, mark your calendar.

THANK YOU TO SO MANY FRIENDS

- Pat Fitzgerald, Fitzgerald Commercial Movers Moving & Storage
- PIP Printers, McLean, VA
- Lori Perez, CPA
- Give Back Club Volunteers – Ann M., Arnita R., Susan P., Deborah, and Elaine D.

GIVE BACK CLUB

The Home's volunteer program, "The Give Back Club," provides support to the women residents with weekly activities. Thanks to the volunteers whose sessions, grocery shopping transportation, and leisure time activities have contributed to the happiness and satisfaction of our women residents. Volunteers and ideas are always sought. If you would like to participate, call 703/237-2822.

YOUR CONTINUING GENEROSITY

Please remember the Home when making your year-end charitable contributions. The financial support from you, our donors, makes possible the quality, low-cost treatment services for the women residents. Your donations are tax-deductible. Ninety-three (93%) of the funds the Home receives go directly to services for residents.

**The Women's Home
PO Box 7412
Arlington, VA 22207**

Address Correction Requested