

FACES IN THE CROWD

Moms, sons do good through charity league

By Megan Mattingly-Arthur

Elizabeth Rutherford founded the Alpha Charity League two-and-a-half years ago in an attempt to stay close to her son during what she calls the “terrible teenage years.” Alpha Charity League is now one of the fastest-growing charitable organizations in the Houston area and the only one to focus specifically on strengthening the bonds between mothers and sons.

“I saw my son starting to take those natural steps away from me,” she said. “He was redefining our relationship, and I went, ‘Fine. I can redefine my relationship with you, too.’”

The organization allows mothers to share their love of charity work with their seventh-through-12th grade

ABOUT ELIZABETH RUTHERFORD

AGE: 50
OCCUPATION: Founder and executive director of the Alpha Charity League
COMMUNITY CONNECTION: Memorial resident
FAST FACT: Before founding the Alpha Charity League, Rutherford worked in the energy industry and had her own consulting business.

sons and promotes an excellent work ethic.

“I want these boys to understand that charity work isn’t something that you do on the weekends; it’s something that can and should be a part of your adult life,” she said.

Building a BB gun shooting range at Houston’s Camp for All, painting a barn and constructing birdhouses at a horse refuge in San Antonio and running weekly football clinics at the Julia C. Hester House are just a few of the community service projects the league has completed.

Since its founding, the group has grown from 160 members to more than 800 members spread between chapters in five Texas cities. Rutherford estimates that membership will surpass 1,000 by the end of the year. She plans to expand the Alpha Charity League nationally in 2015.

Rutherford spends 60 to 70 hours each week organizing the Alpha Charity League and considers it a full-time job and hobby all rolled into one. The hours



Contributed photo

Elizabeth Rutherford founded the Alpha Charity League to help teach her son, Ross, the value of community service.

are long but, for Rutherford, the work is rewarding.

“You hear people say, ‘Find what you like to do. Find your passion and then you’ll never feel like you work.’ I finally found my

passion with Alpha Charity League,” she said.

For more information on the Alpha Charity League, call Elizabeth Rutherford at 281-253-0546 or email erutherford001@comcast.net.

The Alpha Charity League is also on Facebook.

Megan Mattingly-Arthur is a freelance writer. She can be reached at neighborhoods@chron.com.

VOLUNTEER HOUSTON

Help beautify Houston’s fifth ward Oct. 4-6

Houston’s fifth ward will get a meaningful sprucing up Oct. 4-6 thanks to the “Lyons Avenue Renaissance,” a civic improvement project spearheaded by local businesses and nonprofit organizations. Volunteers will be out in force to refurbish public areas, create urban gardens and help erect new affordable housing, transforming roughly 100 city blocks in the community. Please call now if you would like to participate.

How to help

Volunteer Houston features a variety of local volunteer opportunities in the community. For more information, call 713-965-0031 from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday.
Additional opportunities: www.volunteerhouston.org

Know what to do when disaster strikes

In case of an emergency, the safety of people throughout greater Houston can depend in large part on the effective response of trained volunteers. You can become one

of these critically important volunteers by joining a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) supported by a network of city, county, state and private agencies. Register now for an upcoming 20-hour CERT training series.

Many options available for Italian Festival

Whet your palate by volunteering at the Italian Festival, slated for Oct. 11-14 on the campus of the University of St. Thomas. Dispense tickets, serve food or beverages or help with other activities. As a volunteer, you’ll be

treated to a pasta dinner.

Help unemployed identify job opportunities

Job searching goes a little easier for displaced workers thanks to an employment services program run by a church coalition in the Spring Branch area. If you are computer-savvy and enjoy problem-solving, consider volunteering with this program to support and guide unemployed people in identifying job opportunities. Weekly morning and afternoon shifts are available on weekdays. Training is provided.

Interpreters sought to help abused women

Foreign language skills on the part of volunteers can help immigrant females overcome the ravages of rape, human trafficking, domestic abuse and other forms of violence. If you are fluent in French, Thai, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Hindi or Spanish, please consider serving as an interpreter for women or girls at meetings with pro bono attorneys or at intake processing sessions at local shelters. You’ll have a wide choice of times and locations.

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