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Part 1 of a 2-Part Story

By Valerie D. Lockhart **SUN EXECUTIVE EDITOR**

Reluctantly, Chana Hardin answered a call from an unidentified caller on the fourth attempt and received news that most parents dread hearing, "Your house is on fire and your children are in the hospital."

Without hesitation, Hardin rushed to the hospital to learn that her 13-year-old daughter was cooking and fell asleep. She escaped by jumping out of a second floor window and sprung her ankle. Her 25-year-old disabled son was found in the basement and rescued by the fire department. He was hospitalized for a few days due to smoke inhalation.

"I lost a lot more in the fire on December 8 then I knew," Hardin said. "My friends that I use to have I lost them in the fire. My phone used to ring off the hook, before the fire. Someone was always sleeping on my couch or calling me for help. Now, my phone has stopped ringing."

All of Hardin's belongings including her daughter's beloved therapy dog were lost. There was no insurance, so she would have to start again.

Although the fire department extinguished the flames leaving behind charred remnants of furniture, a new blaze was ignited when Hardin turned to the Travelers Aid Society of Metropolitan Detroit for help.

The non-profit organization that was founded in 1923 website states, "The mission of Travelers Aid Society is to provide homeless individuals and families with individualized supportive services and tailored housing solutions with a goal of obtaining and maintaining affordable housing."

Hardin was pleased to learn that the group was able to provide her with a home and was told to come pick up the keys.

The keys would mark a second chance to regain stability, instead of couch surfing, sleeping in her car, scraping up funds for a hotel or considering sleeping in abandon homes.

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