
Tillie Burgin to receive two awards from Sertoma

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ARLINGTON - Tillie Burgin, Mission Arlington director, says the charity she established in 1986 is simply a mission outreach on local soil.

Burgin, who spent 10 years teaching freshman English at a Korean university, returned with husband Robert Burgin to her native Arlington in 1978 after their son became ill. But she wanted to continue with public service work, she said.

"If you can do missions in Korea, why can't you do missions in Arlington?" Burgin said. "We just decided to do what the Scriptures said and just `keep going.' It just kind of happens over here."

Burgin, 58, will receive two Service to Mankind Awards at a dinner presented tonight by the Sertoma Club of Downtown Fort Worth, said Charles Cook, a club director.

Mission Arlington began as a small Bible study group held at the apartment of a woman whose electric bill Burgin had helped pay. The organization has expanded into 175 locations, providing food, clothing and assistance to more than 3,000 needy residents each week, Burgin said.

The Burgins' son Rick now leads the mission's counseling services; another son is a minister in Atlanta.

Sertoma's Downtown Fort Worth chapter saluted Burgin's leadership by voting her winner of its annual service award and by nominating her for the group's North Texas district award, which Burgin also won.

"Today, Mission Arlington makes a vital difference in lives - both children and adults," stated a nomination letter for the district honor.

The club noted that Burgin has served on about 13 community boards and committees, in addition to her daily volunteer work.

"Most of us are interested in community service and doing something for others," said Caron Hoote, a chapter director, who said Burgin's efforts at creating Mission Arlington set her apart. "Not only does she have that knack for community service, but she's also a good businesswoman. You don't always see that."

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