

# Stephanie's Place Makes Difference Year-Round For Alton Area Children

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ALTON - Within a few minutes of heading to the lot at the corner of Riley and Johnson in Alton, it is clear that you have arrived not at a lot location, but at a Place - Stephanie's Place. This space is filled with children, laughter, smiles, and games.

Stephanie Elliott is an Alton alderwoman. Apryll Pittman, Events Coordinator for Stephanie's Place, said "Unity in the Community" is the mission of the events and activities held on this ground owned and stewarded by Joe and Stephanie Elliott since 2012.

“Joe bought me the lot as a Christmas present... it was a surprise,” Stephanie said.

If you know Joe and Stephanie... you would know that it is not a surprise that they haven't built a dream home or a business on the lot... no they have far greater plans. Stephanie and Joe have made the community at Riley and Johnson their family and want people to know that “someone loves them.”

Stephanie's Place is used for what they describe as "Kingdom work" - for loving people and bringing people together. Stephanie and Joe have been married for 36 years and are the proud parents of Jeron (New York) and Jamar (Texas).

Their first event was held at Easter, now years ago, and Stephanie reflected how she “was surprised to paint the faces of the nearly 75 children that attended.”

From Movie nights sponsored by Carrollton Bank to Obstacle Course Days to the next upcoming event; The Christmas Tree Lighting and party the Saturday after Thanksgiving (November 27); there is always something happening at Stephanie's Place. Back To School events are always common there. Sometimes a portable basketball goal goes up for games.

“Joe takes care of everything from the games to the lot maintenance and he loves doing it,” Stephanie says of her husband. The name Stephanie Elliott may sound familiar because as a past YWCA Woman of Distinction, she has served two terms as the Sixth Ward Alderwoman, and currently serves on the Community Hope Center Board and the NCNW National Council of Negro Women, Alton Chapter as well as the SAK Board.

Joe and Stephanie always begin events with prayer at Stephanie's place and believe prayer is always first.” Stephanie's church, Shalom CCOP led by Pastor Freddie J. Clark, is important to her family life and leadership.

Stephanie Elliott said the work with children at Stephanie's Place means everything to her and is something she is committed to in years ahead.

*Stephanie's Place is a 501c3 and would love to connect with anyone that would like to volunteer or donate. They are most in need right now of books and lights for their upcoming Christmas tree lighting and gathering. You may reach out to Stephanie and Joe at [joenstephanie@outlook.com](mailto:joenstephanie@outlook.com) if you would like to volunteer or donate to events and activities.*