

The Salinas family

Each year, we reach out to area organizations and schools looking for a family in which to sponsor for Christmas. This year, we have identified the Salinas family who are really having a tough year. Ashlee Salinas, the 14 (soon to be 15) year old girl in this family, is a freshman at Pasadena Memorial High School in Pasadena. She lives with her family in the Gulf Palms subdivision. Here is their story as told by Ashlee's school counselor:

Jason Finnen, Chief Deputy
Harris County Constable's Office, Pct. 8

"This summer, Ashlee's dad Stephen had a brain aneurism. He was in a coma for 24 hours and on life support. The family was encouraged to let him go. But he rallied. One week later, on a Tuesday, he had a stroke that paralyzed his entire left side. The following Tuesday he flatlined. But again, he came back. In the next 2 weeks he had multiple procedures, primarily on his skull and head. Ashlee's mom, Maria, stayed with him in the hospital for 4 months. Ashlee and her 3 younger siblings were at home with the help of an aunt. Maria lost her job because of the time she needed to spend with Stephen.

Eventually, Stephen was moved to a Clear Lake rehab facility for about 1 ½ months and then to another rehab facility in Sugar Land for 1-2 months. Finally, just recently, he was able to come home. They had to move because the hospital bed would not fit into their previous apartment. Home health comes out 3 times a week providing speech and physical therapy, and her dad is making progress slowly.

Maria is working again part time as an assistant to an attorney and also at a car lot. They do not have insurance. Actually, they have ObamaCare which she says, "pays barely anything". Each time he was life-flighted, the bill was \$20,000 after the insurance. His meds are over \$100 a month plus \$1050 rent. They are making it, but it is very tough. Stephen was a tow truck driver prior to the accident.

Stephen and Maria will have been married 17 years in December. They have 4 children, Ashlee – 14 (precious and quite mature), Shelbee – 12, Chelsea – 9, Anthonee – 5.

Ashlee's lifeline is her church. She began going occasionally with a cousin back before this happened, but now is there twice a week. She said that if her mom can't take her, she finds a way to make it. She got saved about a month ago and had an opportunity to share her testimony. And it touched lives. I have no doubt that she will continue to touch lives. She beams.

Ashlee is grateful and thinks her mom will welcome the help. She gave me permission to share this information with you and thinks it would be fine for you to contact her mom. I did mention that we would need clothes sizes, toy interests, etc. She was very thankful and appreciative. This made my day."

Laura (Shannon) Milam
9th Grade Counselor
Pasadena Memorial High School