



House by the Side of the Road

2022 Annual Report

Message from the House Manager

2022 Board members

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President

Kevin Graber
Vice-President

Lynn Cohan
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Ken Westerman
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Jean Bush-Bacelis

Sara Deon

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Scott King

Dear Friends,

House by the Side of the Road has never been as busy as we have been this year. The number of clients we served, clothing donated, households served, monetary donations received, and number of volunteers all increased in 2022. We remain a 100% volunteer organization. We have no paid staff and rely completely on the generosity of our donors and volunteers.

People sometimes ask why I do what I do for the House without getting paid. I feel called to be House Manager. I have always loved our mission statement: "to provide free clothing and small household items to children and adults in need." If we all share what we have in abundance the world will be a much better place. In the words of Saint Gregory the Great: "For if everyone receiving what is sufficient for his own necessity would leave what remains to the needy, there would be no rich or poor." Working at the House made me realize how much stuff people throw away that someone else would be thrilled to have.

I also love my job because of the wonderful volunteers we have. Our volunteers are committed, dedicated, and here because they want to help our community. They offer so much more than just their help: they provide the laughter, fun, smiles, and most of all friendships that make me love my job, a job I absolutely could not do without them.

Best wishes,
Gemaya Griffin
House Manager



Our mission

House by the Side of the Road's purpose is to provide FREE clothing and small household items to children and adults in need.

Client Story

Interviewed by volunteer Elaine Shaw

Meet Shaka, a client at House by the Side of the Road, on and off, for at least the last ten years. She spent a few minutes recently talking, with House volunteer Elaine Shaw, about her life and her experiences at the House.

Shaka has four children and sees the House as a blessing and needed resource for her family. She has an associate degree and has worked as a Nursing Assistant, but in the last few years has faced challenges. She moved from Michigan to Virginia but encountered domestic abuse and racism there making it necessary to return to Michigan. Once here, she and her four children lived in a camper for a while, which was okay during the spring, summer, and fall, but heat and water in the winter made it untenable. She was able to get assistance to move into an apartment and is settled now with two children still at home and two in college!



In her words, “I’m doing the best I can, but I still need help.” She’s grateful she’s been able to find things for the kids at the House so they don’t have to face teasing at school. For one of her sons who is on the Autism spectrum, she has found toys, like K’nex at the House. He is excited and interested in K’nex. That toy would be too expensive for her to buy but she found it free at the House.

She heard about the House over ten years ago when her kids were smaller and, as she says, “They grow like weeds,” so the House was helpful as she found her kids growing out of shoes and coats so quickly. “Sometimes, she says, “You send them to school with a coat in the morning and they come home without it!” I think all of us with kids can relate to that situation! When she returned to Michigan, she drove by the House and remembered us. She came in, explained what was going on, and found help.



What she likes about the House is that she feels respected and is treated with decency. One time when she had a concern, she decided to stand up for herself and talked with Gemaya Griffin, our House Manager, about the issue. She felt she was heard and has returned to shop since then without incident. She hopes the House can recruit more volunteers, maybe students from the School of Social Work or the Law School or from local churches. She feels the House is playing a part in filling a great need in the community. In Shaka’s words, “People depend on what you do at the House!”

Meet Our Volunteer Roberta King

Interviewed by ex-Board member Jean Bush-Bacelis

If you walk into the House by the Side of the Road often the first person you meet is Roberta King, working at the sign in desk. A silver-haired, petite, cheerful volunteer of 20 years, Roberta's eyes light up when she talks about her experience at the House. "I love meeting the clients who are ever so grateful, and I love my fellow volunteers. We're like family."

Roberta started volunteering at the House shortly after retiring following a thirty year career teaching speech to deaf children in Flint and Lapeer. She really lights up and her eyes sparkle when she talks about educating the deaf and shared that her own son is deaf. Her son is an auditory learner by nature. This made it even harder for him to learn to speak since he was deaf. But with help, he did.

"I can't really travel; first I was busy teaching, raising my four children and tending to my family. Now it's too hard for me to travel, but thanks to the House I've met people from all over the world, including Cuba, Eritrea, Ukraine, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran." She explained how much she enjoys meeting the challenge of communicating with those who speak little or no English. But thanks to her training and experience in deaf education, she knows she can figure out how to communicate. "We don't need words to communicate," she said with twinkle in her eye. "Concepts can be in your mind without the words. All my students came to me with no words and yet we communicated."



During her tenure at the House Roberta has served as a Board Member, Board Chair, and House Manager, sometimes concurrently. She assumed the role of Board Chair just as the county was unable to continue funding the House. At that time the House had just enough funds to keep the doors open for 3 months. Suddenly the House had to raise funds, find a new location, and manage itself. During her leadership terms, the house moved twice. She started a search for 50 different individuals and organizations, each to donate \$1,000. An anonymous donor agreed to match those funds up to \$50,000! Those donations enabled the House to continue to serve people in need.

Roberta commented that it is important to keep in mind that clients have difficult circumstances and are struggling. They may have just been released from prison or may have just arrived in the United States that very day. She also observed that many of the clients have strong faith based on different religions. She chuckled that no matter how many Bibles are on hand, they always go out the door with the clients. "We do not preach or judge" she stressed.

Continued Meet Our Volunteer Roberta King

Over the years, Roberta has found it exciting to watch the House grow and prosper. “We serve clients from Detroit, Ypsilanti, Ann Arbor, and even Adrian, but most are from the Ypsilanti and Ann Arbor area. It’s almost evenly split between Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti. There are people in need all over. “

Roberta has bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Eastern Michigan University. She enjoys Hallmark movies, Ken Burns specials on PBS, spending time in nature and especially watching birds. You might find her dining at Bob Evans, McDonalds, Weber’s, or the Brighton Bar and Grill. She loves cryptograms and other puzzles. She would love to see the House continue with its success, even expanding to additional locations, developing a means to pick up donations and to share with other non-profits.

While she sparkled when talking about deaf education, she also glowed when talking about the House, its successes, its clients, and its volunteers. Roberta plans to continue with her volunteering for as long as she is able; we are very fortunate to count her as one of the family of the House by the Side of the Road.



Who We Are

At the House by the Side of the Road, we are happy to serve the needs of our clients. Volunteers and volunteer Board members bring special skills and dedication to the mission of the House by the Side of the Road. Our clients pay nothing and are not required to provide a referral. We are proud to report that we are uniquely a 100% volunteer run organization. That means we have NO paid staff but rely on the generosity of many individuals.

Our Impact

In 2022 we served:

3,754 households

313 households/month (average)

1,175 new clients

Our clients came from:

48% Ypsilanti

34% Ann Arbor

18% Other (3% other cities in Washtenaw County, 15% beyond Washtenaw County)

Our Clients

Some clients are homeless, just re-entering society from prison, dealing with mental health issues, recent immigrants, or migrant workers. People come in after family breakup, job loss, fire, or prolonged illness.

How You Can Help

Give Funds

Consider helping to support the House.

- Become a sustaining donor by donating any amount per month
- Honor someone (birthday, anniversary, return of good health, graduation, wedding...)

Give today! Go to:

www.housebythesideoftheroad.org

Volunteer

Our volunteers are the heart of what we do. We need people to receive, sort, tag, and hang up clothes, sort and display household items, and check clients in and out. Call us at 734-769-4085 or email us at housebyroad@gmail.com.

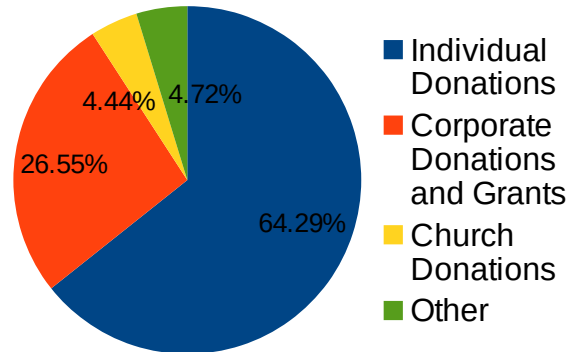
Donate Clothes and Household items

Our current needs are:

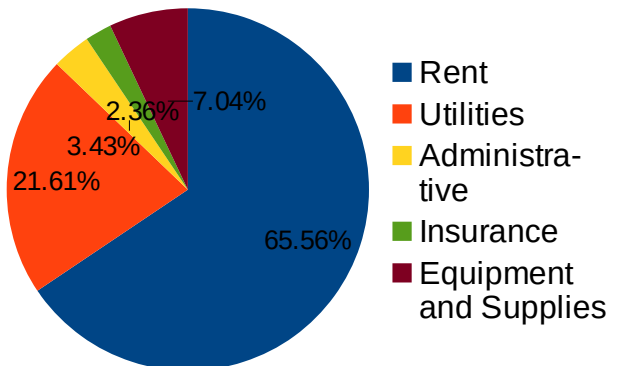
- Pots and pans
- Sheets and blankets
- Towels
- Small appliances
- Backpacks/suitcases
- Tennis shoes
- Pajamas
- Men's jeans

Financials

Revenue	
Individual Donations	\$58,146
Corporate Donations and Grants	\$24,010
Church Donations	\$4,014
Other	\$4,269
	\$90,439



Expenses	
Rent	\$46,896
Utilities	\$15,455
Administrative	\$2,454
Insurance	\$1,691
Equipment and Supplies	\$5,037
	\$71,533



Contact

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734-769-4085

housebyroad@gmail.com

www.HousebytheSideoftheRoad.org

<https://www.facebook.com/housebysideoftheroadAnnArbor/>

Hours

Open for clients:

Monday - Friday, 10:00am - 2:00pm

Open for donations:

Monday - Wednesday, 9:00am – 1:30pm

Thursday & Friday, 10:00am – 1:30pm