

A NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Moms, memories, milestones



Founder Leona Sullivan
and Amy Bartels Roe,
executive director

Hello, friends – happy spring and **happy almost Mother's Day!** When I think back over all of the years I've been involved with Mustard Seed Shelter, countless moms come to mind. I think first of my own mom, of course, and all of the ways she mothered me and my brothers – even as she shared her gifts with our church and wider community. I think of our founder Leona, who never had biological children but

has lovingly nurtured nearly 2,000 women and children over the past 28 years (and even more before Mustard Seed). I think of our other founders, Rosalie and Jeannine – and the women whose selfless service over the years made Mustard Seed possible and whose mentorship made a profound impact on me. I think of Jeannine's sister Maureen,

who passed away earlier this year (read Leona's remembrance of Maureen on page 4). And I think of our long-time neighbor Mable, mother of two, who will be 90 in June and has chosen to celebrate this milestone in a very special way (read about it on page 5).

Right now, we have eight moms in our home. So of course they are all on my mind! And when I close my eyes, memories flood in of hundreds of moms and kids who found unconditional love in our home and are forever part of our family. Moms like Arielle, whose story you'll find on page 2.

On behalf of all of those we serve, thank you for making it possible for Mustard Seed to extend welcome, love and shelter to moms and their families this Mother's Day and all year long.

Love,

MOTHER'S DAY IS SUNDAY, MAY 14

HONOR A MOM IN YOUR LIFE

With a gift to Mustard Seed Shelter

Looking for a meaningful gift to honor a special mom this Mother's Day? Please consider a life-changing donation to Mustard Seed Shelter. Donate online 24/7 at themustardseedshelter.org/give-now, where you will find a list of many giving options – or use the enclosed envelope.



Please join us in welcoming

TERRIE HOWARD
TO OUR GUEST SERVICES SUPPORT TEAM!



MEET ARIELLE

A HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY STORY



BY ERIKA M. HIRSCHMAN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The sun leaks in through the dining room window onto Arielle's face and a warm, modest smile forms. She sits comfortably on an orange chair in our dining area working on getting 2-year-old-son Ky' Legend - nicknamed Ky - to finish his oatmeal. The toddler is definitely more interested in seeing what the other children are doing in the TV room. Ky joyfully scampers off to find them, as Arielle recalls what brought her to this point.

The 18-year-old single mom has been through more than anyone at any age can imagine: family struggles, running away, pregnancy following a rape.

However, through the hardships, pain and struggles, she's gained perspective and has become much stronger. She says motherhood gives her purpose, happiness and reasons to live.

Arielle has much to be proud of; although she's just beginning to feel the pride. She has been a guest at Mustard Seed for 7 months and says it hasn't always been easy for her to live in a community environment with guidelines and expectations.

**"MOTHERHOOD GIVES
ME PURPOSE, HAPPINESS
AND REASONS TO LIVE."**

— Arielle

Still, Arielle says her motivation and spirituality have allowed her to stay on track, along with the love she has for Ky. She can see a future beyond their current situation - one that includes moving into her own home perhaps this summer.

Having her own place wasn't always something Arielle thought was certain ... and safety, security and joy even less so.

But Mustard Seed - and Arielle's patience and hard work - has allowed her to have hopes and dreams for herself and Ky.

She says Mustard Seed has been a blessing and she considers herself and Ky fortunate to have landed here. Her own mother was actually instrumental in helping her come to our home last fall. Focusing on the motto "One day at a time" Arielle says, is at the center of getting through challenging times.

"You have to stick with it and you have to work on it. I can't speed up any of this process. I have to be patient."

This is just one of the lessons Arielle has learned in her time at Mustard Seed. She enjoys attending parenting classes through the Youth Protection Council of Saginaw, reading to Ky and art projects. "It can make a huge difference if you make things fun for you and your child."

Arielle, her mom and sisters are all hairstylists. Their business, BraidingBeauties, LLC, is located in Carrollton Township. Arielle plans to continue working as a stylist once she leaves Mustard Seed.

"I love meeting new people and the relationships we've built with clients. And helping them feel and look better."

While Arielle admits she and her mother have had difficulties in the past, she says she takes responsibility for her own actions when it comes to their relationship.

"I love my mom. She did a good job raising [the four of] us. I give her props and I understand her more now that I'm a mom."

**"YOU HAVE TO STICK WITH
IT AND YOU HAVE TO WORK
ON IT. I CAN'T SPEED UP
ANY OF THIS PROCESS. I
HAVE TO BE PATIENT."**

AROUND OUR HOME

Since our last update in December ...

- We've welcomed **31 new guests**.
- As of April 26, we have **20 women** and **16 children** at our home.
- 23 guests have moved into **permanent supportive housing**.
- 12 guests found **employment** or enrolled in **education/training**.
- We've celebrated the birth of a **precious new baby**.



In January, we had a great time at our first volunteer appreciation gathering at Board & Brush!



Wearing o' the Mustard at a Saginaw Knights of Columbus 4232 fish fry in March.



BRA-vo to F.E.M.E. at SVSU for donating over 400 bras from their annual collection!




We have a college student in the house! Lisa got her Delta i.d.



Congratulations to Nichole for signing her lease and getting the keys to her new apartment!



Moments that make you go "awwwwwwww." 



We ended 2022 with a fun day at Willow Pond Stables – what a great way to end one year and prepare to gallop into a new one!



Chef Rich treated our guests to fresh cinnamon rolls on Christmas morning – yum!



Members of Dow's Hispanic Latin Network did some awesome spring cleaning inside and out – Mustard transformation!



REMEMBERING MAUREEN COALLIER FAIR



We have often talked about the humble beginnings of Mustard Seed Shelter – the vision of radical hospitality, a few friends welcoming a few women at a time, the mighty crew of volunteers who joined us in carrying out our mission to water the seeds of inner strength in women ...

Leona shares these words about her friend Maureen:

Maureen Coallier Fair came to the Mustard Seed in 1999 when her sister Jeannine (one of our co-founders) was diagnosed with cancer. Maureen took over the care of Jeannine, and spent as much time as she could with her until she died. After a few months, Maureen asked to live with us and then to stay. She wanted to care for people, not serve the interest of a company. Maureen had a great sense of justice and compassion. She worked for Legal Services of Eastern Michigan and then with the Chippewa Indians.

Maureen and I were the live-in staff when the Mustard Seed moved to Cherry Street in 2002. Two years later, she remarried her former husband, the love of her life, Jim Fair. Maureen was an outstanding cook, and served a wonderful dinner every Sunday (the women on dishes said she used every kitchen pot!), which she joyfully continued for 10 years – even when she and Jim moved to Gladwin.

Maureen was a news junkie and a master Scrabble player, and her compassion extended to stray animals. She still had a kitten she found on the front step of the Mustard Seed when she died February 17, 2023. – Leona Sullivan

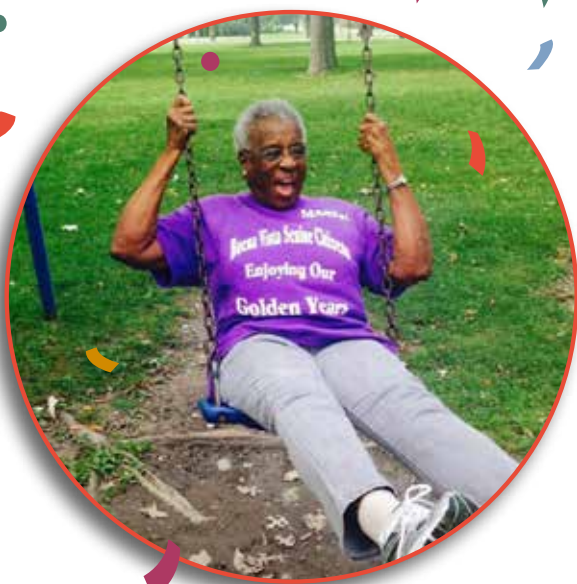
Maureen was an integral part of life at Mustard Seed for many years. Recognize any familiar faces?



2023 SAGINAW PIT COUNT SHOWS INCREASE

Sadly, the need for Mustard Seed and other shelters in our community continues today. This year, Saginaw's annual Point in Time (PIT) count of individuals experiencing homelessness was held on Jan. 25. Over two shifts (morning and evening), volunteer teams braved the chilly temps and snow to canvass neighborhoods throughout the city looking for people in need of shelter. This year, we counted 15 unsheltered and 339 sheltered individuals, an increase over 2022's count (5 sheltered and 313 unsheltered).





MABLE'S 90TH BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION!

JOIN THE PARTY

We'll be celebrating Mable from 12-3 p.m. on Saturday, June 10, with ice cream and cake at a party at Mission in the City Park, just a few blocks from our home.

You can also send cards and birthday greetings to Mable c/o Mustard Seed at our address at left.

In addition, we've set up an Amazon wish list with towel sets, pillows and other items our guests use on a day-to-day basis. Shop the list at amzn.to/41W5b7k.

MORE ABOUT MABLE

While raising her children, Mable worked as a secretary for the Saginaw Board of Education for 30 years before retiring in 1995, making an impact on the lives of thousands of children.

During her working years, she volunteered for Meals on Wheels and served food to the hungry at local community centers and was (and still is) a fixture at the Buena Vista Community Center.

A mom, grandmother and great-grandmother, Mable has remained active in her retirement! She has volunteered at the Michigan/Versiti Blood Center for 28 years (and counting) and in her "spare time" enjoys walking, playing cards and reading. She is also an avid sports fan - especially football, basketball and baseball.

MILESTONE CELEBRATION BENEFITS MUSTARD SEED

Our neighbor and long-time Saginaw resident Mable Freeman will be turning 90 years young on June 9. When her children asked how she would like to celebrate this special milestone, Mable replied that she would like to make a difference by partnering with an organization that relies on donations and support from the community. She immediately thought of Mustard Seed Shelter as she lives right here in our neighborhood, just a few blocks away. Mable said she has always heard about the good work we do and she knows women and families who have lived here have been transformed during their stay and beyond.

Join Mable's family and friends and all of us at Mustard Seed in wishing her a very happy birthday! If you'd like to make a monetary donation in Mable's honor, you may do so by scanning the QR code below or sending donations directly to us at:

The Mustard Seed Shelter - Mable's Birthday
1325 Cherry St.
Saginaw, MI 48601



Scan the QR code or go to bit.ly/mables90thbirthday to donate in honor of Mable's birthday.

SHELTER NEEDS

CAMP MUSTARD SEED HELPERS — Last summer, we launched “Camp Mustard Seed” to provide regular daily activities for the younger guests here at our home. Once again, we are looking for helpers. This would be ideal for a youth group, family, work team or group of friends who love to do arts and crafts, play games, sing songs and plan other camp-like activities. *Time commitment: 2-4 hours depending on activity.*

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES FOR OUR NEW CREATIVE/FITNESS SPACE — shop the Amazon wish list at [amzn.to/41UgCfX](https://www.amazon.com/wishlist/ref=wl_cr_text?list_id=A1UgCfX).

ONGOING NEEDS — Guest welcome sets (new pillows, towel sets – hand, bath towel, washcloth – and collapsible mesh laundry baskets). Guests are provided with these items for their stay at Mustard Seed and take them when they leave. Basic cleaning supplies (no bleach) for our home and to help guests setting up new homes.

HAVE GENTLY USED HOUSEHOLD ITEMS NEEDING A GOOD HOME? Please contact NEST, a collaboration with Saginaw’s Partnership Center. NEST has ample storage for these items and can help quickly get them to people who need them. NEST also has many volunteer opportunities for individuals and groups. For details, visit saginawpartnershipcenter.org.



thrivent Mustard Seed is a **Thrivent Choice®-enrolled organization**. Through the Thrivent programs, we are eligible to receive grant dollars, fee-free donations and support from Thrivent Action Team service projects.

PREFER TO RECEIVE UPDATES BY EMAIL?

Please help us reduce printing and postage costs and build our email database. Email info@themustardseedshelter.org or sign up online at themustardseedshelter.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

For the most up-to-date information about events, visit themustardseedshelter.org

Sunday, May 14 — Mother’s Day — pray for all moms

Wednesday, May 31 — Taco Dinner Benefit at Knights of Columbus 4232 | 4840 Shattuck Rd | 4-7 p.m.

Saturday, June 10 — Mable’s 90th Birthday Celebration at Mission in the City Park | 1401 Janes Street

Saturday, Aug. 19 — 3rd Annual Sowing Seeds of Hope Golf Outing at Beech Hollow Golf Course

Sponsors and golfers are needed!

Email golf@themustardseedshelter.org or visit themustardseedshelter.org/golfouting for more information.

Thursday, Oct. 5 — 7th Annual Sowing Seeds of Hope Fall Fundraiser at SVRC Marketplace

Email amyroe@themustardseedshelter.org to inquire about sponsorship, donate raffle items or join our planning team. Visit themustardseedshelter.org/ssoh for more information.

Have you seen our new decals?



Friends make a monthly or annual commitment to sustain the work of Mustard Seed. We are grateful to all who support our work by sharing their time, talent and treasure. Contact us about becoming a Friend, planned giving options and volunteer opportunities. Visit the Give

Now section on our website to see more ways to help.

We always have room for more friends – individuals and organizations.

Is it time to renew your membership?

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Amy Bartels Roe, Executive Director

William Hartl, President

Kathy Bonn, Vice President

Sigrid Ewers, Secretary

Michael Haremski, Treasurer

Bobbi Allen

Yolanda Collier

Ayiteh Sowah

Leona Sullivan

Cheryl Taylor

OUR MISSION:

We water the seed of inner strength in women experiencing homelessness so they can make a better life for themselves and their children.



1325 Cherry Street | Saginaw, MI | 48601
989-755-4741 | info@themustardseedshelter.org
themustardseedshelter.org |