

LEAFLET

News and Updates From Our Home on Cherry Street

December 2024

A NOTE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

TIME FOR WHAT'S IMPORTANT



If you're at all like me ... even though you *know* the holidays are coming, somehow Thanksgiving, Advent and the season's festivities have a way of sneaking up on you. Time has a way of doing that. Those goals you set after *last year's* whirlwind season to start earlier *this year* may not have been met, but it's never too late to take a breath, prioritize and make **time** — and space — for what's most important.

For us here at Mustard Seed Shelter, that means **pausing every day to pray** or meditate; **giving thanks** for our many blessings; **sharing love and joy**; and yes, **doing the work**.

Speaking of ... did you know we've been doing this work for almost three decades now? We'll be celebrating **30 years** in 2025! While our board is still finalizing plans to commemorate this huge milestone in the coming year, including a special giving campaign with a "power of 3"

theme," it's not too early to make a gift or pledge of support as part of our 30th anniversary celebration (and definitely not too late to make a 2024 year-end gift). **Every dollar you give makes a huge impact.** You may use the enclosed envelope or scan the QR code on the back or contact me to discuss other options (amyroe@themustardseedshelter.org).

Since opening our doors in 1995, Mustard Seed has provided shelter and radical hospitality to **over 1,700 women** and children experiencing homelessness. We are supported primarily by private donations and are proud to share that **97 cents of every dollar received goes directly to life-changing programs.** In 2025, we will be launching an endowment and announcing some exciting collaborations, including a workforce development project.

On behalf of all of those we serve, thank you for making it possible for Mustard Seed to extend welcome, shelter and unconditional love to women and children in this season of peace and joy and all year long — for nearly 30 years.

Amy



MORE THAN JUST A SHELTER

More than just a shelter
More than just a bed
More than just a roof
Over mine and my daughter's head

More than just a hot meal
More than a drink of water
More than the gifts they give
To our sons and daughters

This is a **forever home** for our aching hearts
Love despite a cruel world
Understanding when we feel alone
And rest when we can't go on

This is a **family** who will never leave us
Even when our choices are poor
Guidance instead of judgement
A place I finally belong

Kim G., guest (9 months)

AROUND OUR HOME

Since our last update in May ...

- We've welcomed **47 new guests**.
- As of Dec. 1, we have **19 women** and **20 children** at our home.
- **44 guests** have moved into **permanent supportive housing**.
- **9 guests** found **employment** or enrolled in **education/training**.
- **Over 26** of our guests have been connected with **primary care** and **mental health treatments**.
- **Volunteers, including social work students**, have given **over 1,500 hours** of dedicated service at Mustard Seed.



SO MANY SEEDS OF HOPE!



Our signature **Sowing Seeds of Hope** events continue to raise vital funds and welcome new supporters to help with the life-saving work of Mustard Seed.

Our **fourth annual Sowing Seeds of Hope golf outing** was another great success — **raising over \$16,000** to support daily operations. Learn more and see the list of sponsors and donors at themustardseedshelter.org/golfouting and on our Facebook page.

Please plan to join us for the fifth annual Sowing Seeds of Hope golf outing, Saturday, Aug. 16, 2025.



Thank you to all of our golfers, generous sponsors and volunteers, and the staff at Beech Hollow Golf Course for another successful event!
Photo credit: Bob Paetz



First place team



Second place team



Third place team



Best decorated cart

Our **seventh Sowing Seeds of Hope fall fundraiser** was also a great success, **raising over \$20,000** to support our daily operations.

Photo credit: Arielle Roth Photography



DECK THE HALLS ...

Our SVSU writing intern, Leah Nash, recently gathered these beautiful comments from a few of our guests and a founding board member! We look forward to sharing more of Leah's talents in 2025.

"God is always making sure my needs are met, and I know this because I found Mustard Seed ... it's uplifting, supportive and positive. The women here are a group; we lift each other's spirits when they are low. The home provides many resources for us to be comfortable and secure. Everyone in the home are good people with faith in God, and it shows."

**Traci R.,
guest (21 months)**

"Mustard Seed is a safe place for me to stay sober. I have been in recovery for 16 months. Mustard Seed gave me time to work on myself and on the things I needed to work on before being out on my own. I have never been in a place like this before; this home and the people here are generous and will do their best to provide any resources they can. Mustard Seed is a beautiful place to be."

**Jaysa E.
guest
(10 months)**

"With the short time I have been at Mustard Seed, I can tell this home is enlightening, helpful and refreshing. Refreshing because of not only the culture, but because this place focuses on women becoming successful. I have never felt shunned or judged while staying here; the women here take the time to know your heart. Mustard Seed is a safe haven."

**Robin P.
guest (3 weeks)**

"I'm amazed at how Mustard Seed has grown from a tiny enterprise with five ladies working to what it is now: a beautiful home-like atmosphere with a great number of staff and volunteers to help contribute."

**Sigrid Ewers,
founding board member**

Read Sigrid's story, written by Leah, on our website:
themustardseedshelter.org/stories/meet-sigrid-ewers/

CELEBRATING OUR 2024 VOLUNTEER AWARD RECIPIENTS



LEONA SULLIVAN CULTIVATING SPIRIT AWARD BARB HALL



Art Fair Committee and is a regular volunteer in our home.

Barb recently retired after nearly 34 years of service from Midland County Educational Service Agency, where she worked as a physical therapist with special needs children. Since her retirement, she has volunteered with the Saginaw County Commission on Aging's Meals on Wheels program, Miracle Field in Midland, the Saginaw

GROWING SIDE-BY-SIDE AWARD YWCA OF THE GREAT LAKES BAY REGION



two main avenues of support: Pathways to Progress, a goal-setting and soft skills development workshop, and Moving Ahead, a financial basics course. Through these programs, participants create personalized economic action plans, develop budgets and define the next steps on their journey to stability and prosperity. The YWCA has been a tremendous partner to Mustard Seed, helping many of our women progress from uncertainty to hope and security through its programs.

The **YWCA GLBR** Women's Economic Empowerment Program is dedicated to uplifting and equipping women facing instability by providing educational resources and support. Whether serving residents of Mustard Seed, those staying in shelters like the Underground Railroad or members of the broader community, this program offers

SEEDLING OF THE YEAR ADELAIDE HEINRICH



A true friend and leader, Adelaide is also an active member of her Junior Girl Scout troop in Bay City. She enjoys spending time with her family and her dog, and plans to spend more and more time volunteering with Mustard Seed and other organizations as she grows up.

Adelaide made her volunteering debut in 2024 at our "Last Day of May Olé" taco dinner. She wooed attendees with her bright smile and witty comments as she sold 50/50 tickets and proved she was a natural at upselling. Adelaide is 9 years old and a fourth-grader at Hemmeter Elementary, where her favorite subjects are math and science.

BEAUTIFUL BOUQUET AWARD CONNIE BOCKELMAN AND LINDA TOMANDL



Connie Bockelman



Linda Tomandl

Connie and her late husband, Jim, moved to Saginaw in 1987, immediately embracing the Saginaw community. Connie taught science for 13 years at the former Saints Peter and Paul Elementary, followed by another 13 years in the Saginaw Public

Schools, then eight years with the National Energy Foundation. After retiring in 2017, she became a "professional volunteer." Connie helps write our thank-you notes and assists with our large mailings, often gathering friends and neighbors to join her. Connie's heart for the poor is an example of Jesus's call to be his hands and feet and her dedication to our current and former guests is unwavering. Most recently, Connie became a "giveaway gal" at Saginaw's Partnership Center NEST Program.

Linda is a Saginaw native and says: "I've been here the whole time"! Linda is a proud graduate of the Arthur Hill High School class of 1968 and received a BA from Saginaw Valley College in 1972. While teaching was Linda's goal, life had different plans for her. Remember "Hi, this is Linda from Town and Country"? That was Linda from 1972-1993, followed by 27 years with O'Connor's Carpet One, where she was "Linda from O'Connor's"! Service in our great Saginaw community has always been a priority in Linda's life. She began volunteering at Mustard Seed soon after her retirement and is relentless in her commitment to our mission and our guests. Linda is also very active in her church, Peace Lutheran.

GROWTH THROUGH GIVING CORPORATE SPONSOR AWARD CLIFF DUVERNOIS/TOTAL MICHIGAN



Cliff, who lives in Frankenmuth, spent over two decades in California as an aerospace engineer — a real rocket scientist! — before discovering his passion for storytelling. After returning to Michigan, he founded the Total Michigan podcast and radio show dedicated to sharing stories of ordinary

Michiganders doing extraordinary things. Cliff has used his platform and business to tell our story and grow our family of Mustard Seed supporters. He also launched "Project Pudding" (featured in our May LEAFlet), which has helped provide after-school snacks for our kids during the school year and lunches during the summer months.



ACRYLIC ALCHEMY

A BENEFIT FOR MUSTARD SEED SHELTER



Looking for a unique and meaningful gift this holiday season? Local artist and student intern Rebecca Kovick has generously donated more than 20 gorgeous abstract acrylic paintings to help raise funds to support our life-saving

services for women and children experiencing homelessness. Canvases range in size from 5x5 to 16x20 in horizontal and vertical configurations and various colors and designs.

View the complete collection at Mustard Seed — or you can view thumbnails, learn more about Rebecca and order on our website:

themustardseedshelter.org/give-now/artwork4change

Suggested minimum donation per piece is \$40 but any amount is gratefully accepted.

SHELTER NEEDS

Ongoing needs — We always need **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. Other ongoing needs include **basic cleaning supplies** (no bleach) for our home and to help guests setting up new homes, as well as **plastic hangers**.

Have gently used household items needing a good home?



Contact NEST, a collaboration with Saginaw's Partnership Center. They even have a **donation hotline: (989) 898-0077**. 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.



Mustard Seed is a **Thrivent Choice®-enrolled organization**. Learn more on the Give Now section of our website.

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.



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?

UPCOMING EVENTS

Celebrating 30 years in 2025

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

January and February — Pints for Positive Change

Stop by Oracle Brewing any time in January and February and a portion of your purchase benefits Mustard Seed. Mark your calendars for our **evening at Oracle Feb. 21 from 5-10 p.m.** Join us for a pint or two and meet with staff, volunteers, board members and make new friends!

Date(s) TBD — Grateful Pasta | Artisan Urban Bistro

Sunday, May 11 — Mother's Day — pray for all moms

May Date TBD — Taco Night at KOC

Our taco dinners at the Knights of Columbus are now officially a tradition! Watch our Facebook page and website for a date to be announced.

Saturday, Aug. 16 — 5th Annual Sowing Seeds of Hope Golf Outing | Beech Hollow Golf Course

Thursday, Nov. 6 — 9th Annual Sowing Seeds of Hope Fall Fundraiser | Location to be announced

Please contact Amy if you need information for corporate sponsorships of Sowing Seeds of Hope events at amyroe@themustardseedshelter.org.

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 |



GIVE ONLINE
AND MAKE AN
IMPACT TODAY

