



The Magnifier

...news from Magnificat Houses

Magnificat Houses, Inc. (MHI)

Fall 2020

This is what we're about, day in and day out, year in and year out



A Message from Executive Director John Boyles

We're Staying the Course Throughout Stormy 2020

While many service agencies still work remotely, we have been on site since July—well masked and sanitized—to continue our important mission for the destitute. (Thankfully, we've had no known Covid cases among the MHI family!)

In our 9th month of facing the Covid challenge under strict safety guidelines, our homes are quickly refilling, our Club-house programs moving from online-only to staggered attendance, and thankfully our soup kitchen continues serving 275-350 hungry people daily. Though we're still offering take-out meals, we are just a vaccine away from returning to our hospitable sit-down service.

Meanwhile, we've used these months to shore up and rehabilitate housing to make room for additional emergency and SRO residents—just as more unemployed join the ranks of the homeless.

Frankly, things are tight and tough financially. If you can, please help us keep our flock fed and housed. It's an on-going monthly need, and you'll feel great for helping in any amount you can. Please also consider our Adopt-A-House program, which helps sustain an entire residence for a year. Kindly contact me at jboyles@mhihouston.org.

God bless you and your family over this Thanksgiving Season, and always,



"And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap if we do not give up." Galatians 6:9



75 HOMELESS VETERANS gratefully attended their annual steak cookout, with food and service provided by Ron Castro's dedicated group of volunteers.

Staff Serenades Founder Safely, on 97th Birthday



What Rose Mary Badami discovered through the window: the MHI Staff who carries on her work, singing out "Happy Birthday" and her legacy theme, "Whatsoever You Do for the Least of My People, That You Do Unto Me."

TOP: Moses, a nine-year MHI resident, weekly visits his very best friend "Miss Rose Mary" at St. Dominic Village.



MHI Receives 500 Monthly Requests...

...for housing, including 200 letters a month from prisoners ready for release with nowhere to go. We take as many as we can into our 30-day program, some for 60 or 90 days, as needed to stabilize their lives at a critical time when they might have returned to the circumstances that sent them to jail in the first place. SR. GABINA responds to every letter. Our Prison Diversion Program is a good reason for praying for, and donating to, Magnificat Houses.



Remembering Bernice Odom 1930 - 2020

Devoted MHI volunteer **Bernice Odom**, a dear friend of our founder, offered decades of cheerful, efficient service here doing whatever needed doing most, and volunteering in The Mustard Seed well into her



Bernice and Joe

80's. Her sons **Joe Goldner** and **John Goldner** lived and volunteered at MHI for varying periods. Our love, appreciation and condolences to the family.

Daughter **Donna Lloyd** requests those wishing to honor

Bernice's name consider a donation to **Magnificat Houses, Inc.**

Clubhouse Interns Declare Themselves Lucky

Lani and Leah grabbed an outdoor break from their session-intense morning to share their experience at **St. Joseph Clubhouse**, where their two-semester internships began this September. Both hold undergraduate degrees in psychology and are MSW candidates at the UH Graduate College of Social Work, while helping facilitate our mental health and wellness programs accredited by Clubhouse International.

Lani McFadden (upper left) saw her concerns about institutional work vastly altered by the upbeat spirit throughout MHI, which she found

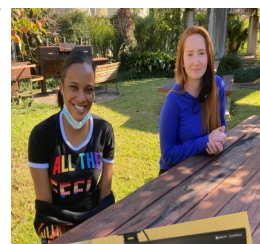
energizing and kind.

Her colleague **Leah Hunt** (right) could not agree more. They felt fortunate

to have been given this particular assignment—400 hours each in such a nurturing environment—and both deeply admire the courage these members have shown in overcoming considerable life obstacles. Our time was up, and the two dashed back inside to help facilitate a Zoom activity connecting the in-person members and the online members they have come to know and care about. But they can't

wait until all members can attend at once!

Neither can the Clubhouse staff. We miss them terribly.

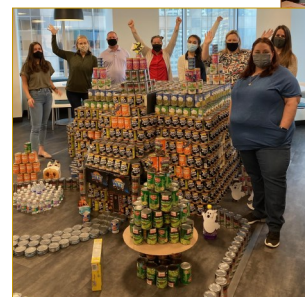


'Can-Struction' Competition Spurs Corporate Kindness

Employees at **EnLINK MIDSTREAM** teamed up to energize the company's giving goals through a fun competition, first collecting 3000 canned edibles then creating sculptures. No winner has been declared yet—except their beneficiary MHI!

Project leaders were **Caitlin Smith** and **Claire Ramsey**, pictured with the Shuttle project by Team A.

Team B designed, engineered and built this Halloween Haunted House.



Anawim Thrift Shop Preps for Holidays



The Volunteer Angels of **Anawim Thrift Shop** are a dedicated band of community builders, creating events at the drop of a hat to charm their customers in **Near Northside Houston**—where they shop as family. Under the direction of Suzanne Young, the spacious store offers affordable furniture, clothing, kids' school needs and underpriced gifts. Preview items are featured on the **Facebook page**: @AnawimThriftShop. Large item donations may be eligible for pick-up.

Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10am-4pm

2102 Common Street Houston, TX 77009 - 832 831 4196

A Day at Loaves & Fishes...

At 7 a.m. these teens from the Humble Christian School were packed in vans, masked and ready to offer a day of service at our soup kitchen. Whatever needed doing, they were on it: salad prep, chef assistance, slicing bread, loading up 300 to-go trays with plenty of nutritious food, then serving Houston's hungry through our back gate, and staying around for clean up.



(Masks down for this photo only! Nobody dared cough.)



Today's lunch line was forming by 10:30



After two hours of preparations, the meals roll out brings to-go hot lunches to the Plexiglass safety partition.



Larry Cronin (R) has been welcoming volunteer groups to Magnificat for service for 23 years. Now 78, he has no intention of resigning from his post as Director of Volunteer Services!



"We are eager to return to our 47 year tradition of seated dinners—but we're grateful to be able to offer take-out during these trying times."

...can build a lifelong commitment

Our founder **Rose Mary Badami** believed that by serving the less fortunate, one developed a lingering passion for service throughout life—but she knew compassion required early development. She urged **Loaves & Fishes** volunteers and organizations to bring their families, and schools to participate as character training. It worked!

One proof is MHI's **Executive Director John Boyles**, pictured here near the first Thanksgiving he volunteered—directly under Rose Mary's wing. She was terribly short-handed with only five volunteers to serve the multitude waiting outside the gate and barely enough food to go around. By the time they finished serving, John and the other youths were dog tired and eager to get home to Thanksgiving dinner. But Rose Mary discovered another equally long and hungry line had formed outside. Would any of them be willing to sacrifice to help? John's hand shot up unexpectedly. Everybody's did. Rose Mary got them on their



knees to pray for a Biblical loaves and fishes solution to their bare pantry.

While the youths cleaned up, Rose Mary stayed on the phone for a straight half hour—and within the hour station wagons and cars and vans began pulling up on Congress Street bearing turkey dinners or leftovers or canned goods or whatever else her friends, and friends of her friends, or open restaurants had on hand. They managed to feed the hungry, every last one.

"I had never worked so hard in my young life," John said, "and I was unprepared for the passion it would stir in me as my hand shot up to stay. It was that moment that showed me my calling to service. And I am so grateful for that."

Like John's soup kitchen experience, these **Humble Christian School** high schoolers bubbled with excitement as they departed, declaring this a really fun day and planning to return.

Board Notes

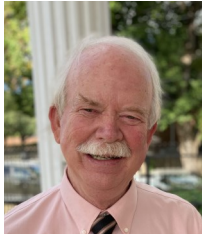
from Grant Kennedy, Chair

Please join me in extending a warm welcome to our incoming board members, elected to serve terms beginning January 1, 2021, and our deepest appreciation to our outgoing members: **Don Auban**, **Larry Cronin** and **Roz Hill**, whose contribution has been immeasurable.

The new members bring varied and rich experience to help with the governance of Magnificat Houses going forward. Please welcome:



Wendy Clark



Scott Hickey



Bart McAndrews



Bobby Knight

Wendy Clark, MSN, RN, VABC, has served 11 years in advanced nursing, nursing education and administration; **Scott Hickey**, a PhD in clinical psychology, has been deeply involved with MHI for more than a decade through his various directorships with MHMRA; **Bart McAndrews**, CPA, has long experience both as CFO of Gillman Auto and as board member of Theater Under the Stars; and **Bobby Knight**, "life-long Catholic, loving husband, father of five, brother to seven, Engineer....preparing for the next phase of life."



Magnificat Houses has merited the GuideStar Gold Seal of Transparency, which allows nonprofit donors and funders to make educated decisions.

DONATE ANYTIME: www.mhihouston.org/donate

Special Thanks

to all volunteers who have so courageously served the needy during the 2020 pandemic:

Loaves & Fishes

Sts. Simon & Jude
Padre Pio
St. Thomas High School
New Hope Church
His Disciples
St. Maximilian Kobe
A Golden Heart
St. John Vianney
Bless a Belly
Hope City
Ron Castro Group
First Assembly of God
Ascend Foundation Group
Warrior Appreciation Group
Set Free with Humble First

Anawim Thrift Shop

Kiki Budzinski
Gisela Chomer
Wendy Clark
Claudia Garcia
Donna Jeansonne
Lisha Luper
Lisa Manuel
Angie Mauricio
Jackie Ross
Gloria Sweeney
Jill Taylor
Suzanne Young

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Thank you for your loving support of our mission!



Practicing compassion at our soup kitchen proves joyful for these teens from Humble Christian School.