

(Fundraiser, continued from front page)

I am on a tight and challenging training schedule to run my next Boston qualifier (2nd of 3 tries) on April 12, 2025, just a few days from now! I need a faster time!

How close am I to making the Boston cut? To qualify in my age group, I must run a certified marathon in 4 hours and 20 minutes (4:20). Last October I ran the Grand Rapids Marathon in 4:15:07, but Boston is tight to get in. I will need to run a 4:13 to be confident of making the cut!

Applications for Boston are due in mid-September 2025 to run on April 20, 2026. I will know by early October.

Watch for training updates, prayer requests and race information on *shalom kazoo* Facebook. The April 12 race is called the BQ2 Spring in Geneva, Illinois (BQ2races). An app called *Chronotrack* will be available to track my run, cheer and pray in real time.

I have been putting in the work through wintry hazards, snow, ice, wind, sleet, darkness, schedules and illness. I ran up hill and against the wind both ways. There are so many variables, including illness and injury.

Will you please support my efforts to furnish the new house God is build-

ing, turning it into a SHALOM home?

As a sidelight, beginning in May the SHALOM community will be invited to walk/run with Keith each Saturday morning, for fitness and fun! The goal race will be the Parchment Kindelberger 5k, July 12. Go to [5K Race & Fitness Walk - Kindelberger Arts](#) for details to walk or run with TEAM SHALOM! Go Team!

In summary, next year's Boston Marathon will be the fundraiser, April 20, 2026. But first Keith has to get into the Boston this September!

How can I get involved?

- ♦ Watch shalom kazoo Facebook and newsletters for race and prayer updates.
- ♦ Get the *Chronotrack* app when available for the April 12 BQ2 qualifier marathon and pray as Keith runs!
- ♦ Pray as SHALOM begins building the new SHALOM Home later this year.
- ♦ Pray over your contribution to the 2026 Boston Marathon SHALOM HOME FURNISHINGS FUND.

"...and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith..." Hebrews 12:1-2

Another Way to Partner



Scan the QR code with your phone camera and tap the link. Follow the steps to partner financially with SHALOM!

For updates and news, follow us on Facebook!



shalom kazoo

SHALOM depends on the financial gifts of individuals, churches and civic organizations. We are a non-profit, 501c3, faith-based public charity. Please consider using the QR CODE or the enclosed Gift Planning card to partner with SHALOM!

Board of Directors

Keith Lohman, Pres; Janan Zimmerman, V.P.; Michelle Baird, Clerk; Barb Patterson, Treas., Robin Ipema, Layla Jabboori, Gary Steensma, Garry Walton
STAFF: Lon Bouma, Exec. Director; Kelly Lewis, Enrichment Coordinator

Assisting adults with disabilities to find new abilities in the context of Christian family.

Self Help Alternative Living Opportunities of Michigan, Inc.
PO Box 265
Kalamazoo, MI 49004
269-382-3840
Office@shalomkazoo.org
or call 269-382-3840 or e-mail Kalamazoo, MI 49004
please write SHALOM, P.O. Box 265, remove your name from the mailing list.

The SHALOM Network includes adult foster care homes, supported living homes, other adults with disabilities and our many partners in ministry of the same heart and purpose.

Self Help Alternative Living Opportunities of Michigan, Inc.
PO Box 265
Kalamazoo, MI 49004
269-382-3840

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us... Hebrews 12:1



SHALOM!



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LEGACY OF GROWTH

"I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing." John 15:5

Glen and Sara Collison showed us what God will do when people stay connected to Jesus, the Vine. They are our ancestors in the Lord, and they left SHALOM with a long *legacy of growth*.

We have witnessed the development and growth of the SHALOM Woolery and Farm, Connection Depot, and SHALOM Coffee Connection. Each part has the same purpose of "vine-connected people" working together to *enrich the lives of adults living with disabilities through the love and wholeness of Jesus Christ*.

Woolery Barn Expansion

Since we moved into the *SHALOM Woolery Barn* in 2021, we have witnessed the average number of participants grow from around 25 per day to 42 per day. This of course resulted in significant increases in the number of coaches and volunteers each day.

We now have 17 employees sharing one office, not including volunteers! During morning devotions, there are many days every seat is filled.

Due to the initiative of coaches and volunteers, the variety of Woolery activities has increased and we now utilize every space.

As a result, the SHALOM Board of Directors has decided to expand the SHALOM Woolery Barn! We plan to add 4,200 square feet to increase office space, areas for new activities, work-space, storage, and elbow room.



The SHALOM Woolery gang on a typical day.

A New SHALOM Home

In addition, we have seen God grow the *SHALOM Network of Homes* from one to nine since 1987 when The Homestead began. However, it has been 14 years since SHALOM built or purchased a home. For several years, the SHALOM Board of Directors has been praying and inquiring of the Lord, specifically wondering when or if we were to build another SHALOM home.



When a friend of SHALOM indicated a strong desire to help, God's plan for growth began to unfold before our eyes. The SHALOM Board decided, in keeping with our legacy of growth, to take a step in faith.

So, in addition to expanding the SHALOM Woolery Barn, we are also planning to build a new SHALOM home!



While God has provided the means to construct the buildings, there will be plenty of opportunities for the SHALOM community to partner in these projects.

We ask for your prayer support, including protection against the enemy, wisdom for decisions that must be made, and safety and success for all working on these projects.

Design drawings for both projects are nearing completion. Soon we will begin the process of acquiring bids and moving forward, with hopes that both projects will be completed by the end of the year 2026.

We give thanks to the Lord for his provision, love and kindness for SHALOM, wonderful partners, and for a legacy of growth connected to The Vine!

Home Furnishings Fundraiser by Pastor Keith

Being retired (not tired) the rumor is that I'll be kicking the bucket soon. My bucket list, that is!

In September 2022, I could not shake the feeling that I should run a marathon. Ever have that feeling? I wrote, *"Reasons to run a marathon: #3 A worthy bucket list item. I never had a bucket item. Hey, why not the Boston?"*

Ha! That is from the first entry in my journal titled, "My Journey to a Marathon." I had never even run half that far! So after running several half-marathons over the next 18 months, I was ready to make the jump to the full distance - when I got plantar fasciitis. *I could not run any more.* In defiance, I went public: *"I'm going to run the Boston Marathon!"*

After going through two months of physical therapy, I slowly began to regain my running feet with the goal of running the Grand Rapids Marathon, October 2024, and to try to qualify for Boston.

Upon finishing that race I said, *"I can do better!"* I had qualified for Boston (!) but there was no guarantee of making the cut since they limit the number of runners. *"I need to have a better time!"*

Another thing I had written in why to run a marathon was, *"#7 Raise funds for a specific cause."* But what cause?

I did not know what God was up to behind the scenes on behalf of SHALOM! Now the goal is to cross the Boston Marathon finish line to raise funds for furnishings in the new SHALOM home!

The fundraiser will be the Boston Marathon, April 20, 2026. I will be (Lord willing!) running in the 70-74 men's division. *I am asking for your prayer support, participation and gifts to the SHALOM HOME FURNISHINGS FUND.*

All gifts to this fund go 100% toward the cause. Any excess will help re-furnish other SHALOM homes or go toward maintenance. The goal is \$100,000.

I am funding all my own costs from running shoes and gear, hydration, energy, travel, entry fees and housing, easily surpassing \$3000.

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Volunteer Spotlight

“Isn’t it great when you follow the Holy Spirit’s leading?” Layla Jabboori

Layla asked Jesus to be her Lord and Savior in 1975 while studying at Western Michigan University. She often wears a beautiful butterfly pin as a reminder and conversation starter. Layla shared how she received a new beginning, experienced a spiritual rebirth and embraced her new life guided by the Holy Spirit.



Layla enjoys using her talents, including her Arabic cuisine, to help her friends feel special. A fiber artist who loves to collaborate with others, Layla learned to weave in 1971 in France working on an organic farm where many individuals with various developmental disabilities lived. She quickly recognized that weaving brought her happiness and a passion was discovered.

Layla uses her grief counseling gifts to help others feel heard and valued. In 1994, she followed the Holy Spirit’s leading and joined hospice as a Grief Support Counselor, staying for 28 years. She is currently an outpatient therapist at Desert Streams Christian Counseling.

Layla’s heart has always been with individuals living with disabilities. It was through a patient at Desert Streams that she heard about SHALOM in 2016. She giggled as she thought of how many times she passed the Shepherd’s Barn, not knowing it would be her next step. The Holy Spirit led her there for a visit!

She walked into the Shepherd’s Barn in 2019 during a Woolery workday. She says, **“That very day as I stood in the main area in the Shepherd’s Barn the Holy Spirit told me, ‘What you didn’t get to do in your career, you will do in your retirement.’”** Her heart skipped a beat.

Layla became a SHALOM Woolery volunteer in 2022. And recently we welcomed her as the newest member on the SHALOM Board of Directors! It all makes Holy Spirit sense, especially when Layla’s favorite Bible verses are Hebrews 10:24-25, “Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

You can find Layla volunteering at the SHALOM Woolery every Tuesday and Thursday, supporting SHALOM Coffee Connection on the weekends, enjoying community at our monthly dinners, lending a hand at worship nights, giving respite at SHALOM Homes, and serving at Friday Night Fun Night!

God Provides People

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory...” Ephesians 3:20-21.

At SHALOM, we often pause to ask the Lord for what we need. Often, He provides *extravagantly!* When it comes to providing *people*, He has provided more than we could imagine.

The SHALOM Board of Directors acknowledged a growing need for the SHALOM homes. We asked God to provide a **Home Liaison**, a new role focused on support, encouragement, and accountability for caregivers and residents.

It was not long before **Beth Reeber** applied for *another* position, Woolery Coach. During her interview, it became evident that Beth’s background and experience managing ROI Homes and working at Gilkey Elementary School was a perfect fit for the *Home Liaison* position.

She has been hired as both Home Liaison and Woolery coach! She jumped right into both roles and has been investing in relationships and working hard to enrich the lives of caregivers and residents. Welcome Beth!

As many of you know, Pastor Keith officially retired from his role as **Property and Maintenance Director** at the end of 2024. Once again, we asked God to provide someone to fill this critical role. An email went out to our community to present the need. Within 24 hours **Earnie Taylor** expressed interest. Earnie had already been volunteering with our property and maintenance team for some time, but we had no idea he would be interested in this position. We were delighted to discover that Earnie’s gifts and SHALOM’s needs were a perfect match.

Due to Earnie’s previous volunteer investment, he already has growing relationships with residents, volunteers, and staff, which has made this transition much easier. We are so grateful that Earnie is willing to serve, and we believe he is right where Jesus wants him!

It was only last August that we bid goodbye to our **Woolery Woodshop Coach Wayne Hayward**. While Wayne was off trying his dream job teaching Auto Shop to high schoolers, we carried on in the Woolery Woodshop with the help of Dale Rudkin, Anna Joy Tucker, and great volunteers.

Near the end of February, and to our surprise and great delight, we received a phone call from Wayne wondering if there was still a place for him at SHALOM. Proverbs 16:9 reminds us, **“In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps.”**

When participants, staff, and volunteers heard Wayne was coming back, there was a unanimous expression of relief and joy! We are so glad God is

establishing Wayne’s steps here at SHALOM.

We thank the Lord for each one of these people and for providing more than we could ask or imagine! We ask the Lord for His blessing over their work, for His honor and glory. Amen!



Beth, Earnie and Wayne

Participant Spotlight

Christine started attending the SHALOM Woolery in 2022. Her caregiver was exploring programs to find one that was the right fit, and Christine started attending the Woolery one day a week.

Fast forward to 2025, and Christine attends the SHALOM Woolery every day. She not only attends, but she volunteers for many different jobs, has a routine that she values and looks forward to each day, and excitedly welcomes new people to SHALOM!

Christine has grown significantly in skills that apply at the Woolery and to life in general. She works alongside others, learning what teamwork looks like and how to communicate with the love of Jesus - something we practice every day at the Woolery.

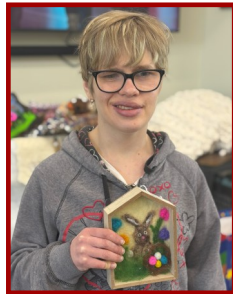
When asked why she likes coming to the Woolery, Christine said, **“I feel comfortable here. I feel like people like me and I feel included.”**

She enjoys seeing the coaches and volunteers each day and she likes to be on a team.

Christine says, **“I don’t want to be lazy! SHALOM is like my job.”** Specifically, Christine loves taking walks, going on outings, folding laundry, and ripping material. She also loves to say grace for lunch.

When asked how SHALOM has impacted her life, Christine simply said, **“It’s better now.”**

We all need community, and we all need purpose. But more so, we need to experience the love of Jesus to grow in wholeness. Since coming to SHALOM, we have seen firsthand this growth towards wholeness in our friend Christine.



GIFT REMEMBRANCES

November 23, 2024—March 7, 2025

Honor of Jackie, Ann, and Laura
Susanne Johnston

Memory of Jerry R. Adrianson
Wendy Estrada

Honor of Aktion Club
Arthur Roberts & Betty Lujan-Roberts

Memory of James Bacon
Janet Wojciechowski

Memory of Delores Mae Bosker
Paul Bosker & Marlene Vlietstra (Bosker)

Memory of Mark Brown
Joyce McNally

Honor of the Coffee Shop teams
Peter & Marilyn Cake

Memory of Glen & Sara Collison
Allen & Norma Collison
Clarence Collison
Keith & Andie Lohman
David & Paula Nieboer
Doc & Julie Stevens
J.D. & Janet VanderMeer

Memory of Dr. Ray DeHaan
Paul Bosker & Marlene Vlietstra (Bosker)

Memory of Carol Dexter
Tom Dexter

Memory of James Eccles, Jr.
David & Paula Nieboer

Memory of Ernestine Garnaat
James & Carol Garnaat

Honor of Chip Gerhart
Jim & Sue Lewis

Memory of Richard Lee Groenheide
Paul Bosker & Marlene Vlietstra (Bosker)

Memory of James Hansen
Donna Hansen

Memory of Stanley Hewes
Peter & Marilyn Cake

Memory of Reginald Iervolina
George & Gladys Manley

Honor of Layla Jabboori
Elizabeth Dykhouse

Memory of Cecil & Arlene Martens
David & Paula Nieboer

Memory of Ron McLain
Marvin & Ebie King

Honor of Miya Oliver
Amy & Kelvin Oliver

Memory of Marty Schau
Susan Miller

Memory of Elta Shoemaker
Sally Miner

Honor of Robin Skit
Mr. & Mrs. Barry & Kathy Bond

Honor of Julie Stevens
Doc Stevens

Honor of Doc & Julie Stevens
Keith & Andie Lohman

Memory of Bill & Corrine Webb
David & Paula Nieboer

Memory of Pamela J. Wheaton
Paul Bosker & Marlene Vlietstra (Bosker)

Honor of all Woolery Coaches
Keith & Andie Lohman

THANK YOU FOR THESE GIFTS OF LOVE GIVEN ON BEHALF OF THESE VERY SPECIAL PEOPLE!

Farewell Brother Stanley

“The Lord is my shepherd, He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me besides quiet waters, Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.”

Anyone who spent time with Stanley probably heard him recite this passage. It was a favorite of his, and when he spoke it, you knew he believed it.

Stanley was often described as our “SHALOM greeter,” and looking back, not only did most of us meet Stanley, but our lives were truly touched by him. He had a presence of joy and wonder, and it overflowed as he shared it with others.

Stanley loved Jesus, loved people, and he loved SHALOM. He was part of the SHALOM Network for over 30 years on and off, including many years at what was known as Homestead West. In June of 2020, he moved into Growing Grace.

It was then that he started attending the SHALOM Woolery and he continued right up until a few days before he was called home to Heaven. His final SHALOM activity was SHALOM Worship just the night before he passed.

In preparation for Stanley’s memorial

service, his guardian Kathy sent us several pictures and we perused the photo archives of SHALOM to put together a slide show.



What stood out most in those pictures was that Stanley did not let his disability limit him. He lived life to the fullest, from camps, to bike riding,

archery, special Olympics, meeting Tony the Tiger, and so much more. He lived life! And he lived life for Jesus, seeming to experience the fullness of joy while he was here on earth.

We can only imagine what the celebration was like when Stan was welcomed into heaven. He was so excited to meet Jesus, and he KNEW that heaven was his home. We’re glad you’re home brother and we’ll see you when we get there!

