

# LETTERS OFFERING VOLUNTEERS

(Letters from organizations recognizing the virtues of the Texas Ramp Project and offering their support as a way of introduction to their membership.)



# Northern Texas - Northern Louisiana Synod

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## Dallas Ramp Project—Building Freedom for the Homebound

Dear Friends:

+ *Grace and peace be unto you from God our heavenly Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.* +

I want to make you aware of a very special project you and members of your congregation can become involved with. It is a special life-saving hands-on project for people in your community whose lives will be changed as a result of your efforts. You have an opportunity to learn from and develop a project in your community modeled after the "Dallas Ramp Project—Building Freedom for the Homebound." Here's more about the project.

In the mid-1990's, volunteers from King of Glory Lutheran Church in Dallas joined an existing project of the Kiwanis Club in suburban Richardson to form the Dallas Ramp Project, building wheelchair ramps for people who cannot afford them. Volunteer builders like completion of a ramp to liberating people unjustly imprisoned in their homes. The few small steps that most of us take for granted are enormous barriers to a person who uses a wheelchair.

With the support of generous annual grants from King of Glory and gifts from nearby congregations, building-supply stores, and others, the Dallas Ramp Project is now able to build more than 100 ramps per year. In fact, the last quarter of 2002, the project built about 60 ramps, or one every 1.5 days. Referrals come from social service agencies, hospitals, and other community agencies. Although raising the roughly \$ 300 for materials for each ramp is a challenge, what the project really needs are willing hands.

King of Glory and other Ramp Leaders are willing to train a corps of members of your congregation or other neighborhood group in the process of building ramps for the handicapped. If you would be interested in learning how to start a Ramp Project in your area, contact Mr. John Laine, Project Coordinator at (972) 235-7309 or visit their web site at [www.dallasramps.org](http://www.dallasramps.org).

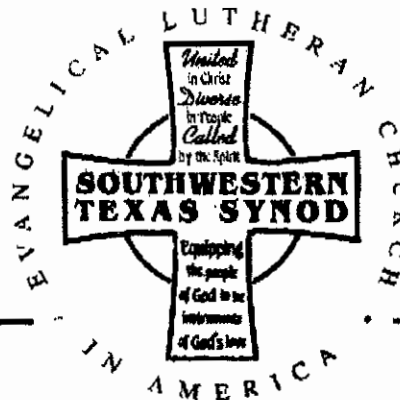
Thanks for your ministry and mission in the world!

Blessings in Christ,

+ *Kevin S. Kanouse*

Kevin S. Kanouse,  
Bishop

From the office of the Bishop  
The Rev. Dr. Ray Tiemann



1090 Oestreich Drive  
Seguin, Texas 78155-3403

Ph: 830.379.9900 - Fax : 830.379.9990

February 1, 2006

To: Congregations of the Southwestern Texas Synod, ELCA  
Re: The Texas Ramp Project

*Grace to you and peace from God -- the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.*

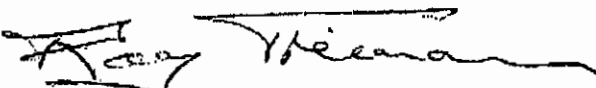
Not long ago I became acquainted with a wonderful endeavor called The Dallas Ramp Project. It was begun by a member of King of Glory Lutheran Church, Dallas. I encourage you to learn more about it yourself at [www.dallasramps.org](http://www.dallasramps.org).

An article in the *Dallas Morning News* said, "In this world of incredible, mind-boggling technology, the simplest device can still have a profound effect. A mere inclined plane in a high-tech world (makes) all the difference for (the handicapped). This program began modestly 20 years ago. The Richardson Kiwanis Club built a few ramps a year for people in need. Then demand exploded, and The Dallas Ramp Project took on a life of its own. Volunteers now build about 225 ramps a year. With something as vital as a wheelchair ramp, you might think some government program would provide that for the needy, but you would be wrong. It's just the volunteers of The Dallas Ramp Project who bring freedom to homebound people. The good news is that they do it with great efficiency. When the city of Dallas did have a ramp program, materials and administrative costs pushed the price to nearly \$5,000 a ramp, said Ramp Project president John Laine. With volunteer labor, donated supplies and zero administrative costs, The Dallas Ramp Project builds ramps for about \$250 each."

If your congregation is looking for a project that will help those in need in and beyond your community, this may be your avenue of service. It is currently expanding into The Texas Ramp Project and is being considered in major cities across the state.

For more information, please contact their office at [info@dallasramps.org](mailto:info@dallasramps.org) to find out how you can be a part of this very worthy mission.

Sincerely in Christ,

  
Ray Tiemann, Bishop



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THE REVEREND PAUL J. BLOM  
Bishop  
paulblom@gulfcoastsynod.org

January 26, 2006

Mr. John Laine  
Texas Ramp Project  
Box 832006  
Richardson, TX 75083-2006

Subject: Letter of Introduction

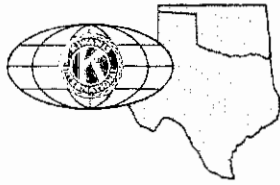
Dear Mr. Laine:

We are pleased that the Dallas Ramp Project will expand to create similar efforts across Texas in 2006. The services that are provided in Dallas are needed in our area as well and healthcare providers in Houston have recognized that the need for wheelchair ramps is underserved there. Providing assistance for those needy handicapped residents allowing them the ease of access that we often take for granted is a worthy outreach mission.

Please use this letter as an introduction to our individual congregations in soliciting volunteers to help build these ramps. We fully support the goal of unrestricted access for all Texans. Please find a list of our member congregations attached.

In Christ Name,

Paul J. Blom, Bishop



# Texas Oklahoma District

*Kiwanis International*

Mr. John Laine  
Dallas Ramp Project  
Box 832006  
Richardson, TX 75083-2006

Subject: Texas Ramp Project

Dear Mr. Laine:

We are pleased that the work of the Dallas Ramp Project with its roots in the Kiwanis Club of Richardson will be expanding to serve the handicapped residents of other Texas localities. The strong Kiwanis support that you have found in the Dallas area exists all over Texas in our 348 clubs with 11,346 members. Please use this letter of support as you contact our clubs in areas where you will be working to solicit their support.

As you well know, a hallmark of Kiwanis is the strong flavor of service that we bring to each of our communities. We appreciate the important work of the Dallas Ramp Project volunteers and wish you luck as you expand your horizons to provide access solutions across Texas. I have attached a current list of clubs with contact information.

Sincerely,

Jack Carlton

Governor, TX-OK District of Kiwanis Intl

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**CAN-DO Missions**

February 24, 2006

John Laine  
Texas Ramp Project  
Box 832006  
Richardson, TX 75083

Dear John,

CAN-DO Missions exists to “equip youth and adults for mission-minded leadership as they reach the lost, disciple the saved, and **care for people locally** and globally”. Therefore it seems only fitting that in our work with the 300 + congregations of the Texas District of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod that we partner in your work of providing accessibility for many wheel-chaired and homebound members of our communities.

As a statewide non profit organization we believe we can assist in providing a base of volunteers from the many LCMS churches in the state as well as beyond. Also as a member of the Concordia university staff we believe your opportunities mesh nicely with our servant learning program. We believe Concordia University at Austin could be a strong leader in involving many in the college communities of Austin in this noble work as well.

Blessings on your work and May God keep the Joy in your heart.

In Christ,

*Ron Scherch*

Ron Scherch  
Director CAN-DO Missions

*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*

*Phil 4:13*  
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February 22, 2006

John Laine  
Dallas Ramps Project  
P.O. Box 832006  
Richardson, TX 75083

Dear John,

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) of Senior Citizen Services (SCS) works with about 100 non-profit organizations in Tarrant County. RSVP places adults 55+ in these organizations to help the agency meet community needs. RSVP is excited about the opportunity to work with the Texas Ramps Project.

In 2005 the United Way of Tarrant County produced an Assessment of Health and Human Service Needs. The report shows two significant items for older adults that would be addressed with the collaboration of the Texas Ramps Project and the RSVP:

1. "8,500 households with older adult with a disability are estimated to need modifications to their home, such as a wheelchair ramp or grab bars."
2. "19% of residents 60 years of age or older indicated that they feel isolated or alone."

The mission of SCS/RSVP is: "To help older adults build a brighter future for themselves and their community by enabling them to live independently with dignity." With this mission and the needs assessment of the United Way it is very clear that collaborating with the Texas Ramps Project would be a benefit for the older adults of Tarrant County.

The additional benefit would be to engage the baby boom generation in service and creating opportunities for Boomers to deliver independent living services to seniors in need.

RSVP of Tarrant County looks forward to working with the Texas Ramp Project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joyce Hanstrom-Parlin".

Joyce Hanstrom-Parlin  
Volunteer Services Manager/RSVP Director  
Senior Citizen Services