



Texas Ramp Project Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 1

January 2020

Dear Friends,

I will be conducting a Leadership Academy in San Antonio on Jan 24-25. This will be our first attempt at creating more team leaders. This is very much a work in progress and will become a once-a-quarter conference that will move around the state. Our targeted attendees are both existing team leaders and potential new team leaders.

More info will be coming your way about this, including locations and starting times. The Friday part will be done in a classroom setting, and the Saturday portion will be on site at a build. I hope to see you there. Please respond to me at jlaine@texasramps.org if you will be joining us.

All the best in the New Year.

John

IMPORTANT REMINDER as We Close Out the Year

Please remember that we need all 2019 expense receipts and donations by January 20, 2020. Our auditors require that all expenses and income be booked in the proper year before the accounting books can be closed at the end of January.

- Send credit card receipts by email to Marge Oberg (maoberg45@gmail.com).
- Send expenses for reimbursement to Donna Burton (treasurer@texasramps.org) or by mail to 7702 Turnberry Lane, Dallas, TX 75248.
- Send checks for deposit to Texas Ramp Project, P.O. Box 832065, Richardson, TX 75083-2065.

If you are holding year-end inventory, please send to Donna Burton at the above address by January 15. You should have received forms and instructions from Stephen earlier this month. For questions, please contact Donna at treasurer@texasramps.org.

Thanks so much for your help as we close out this year and begin the new one!

Meet TRP Board Member: Marge Oberg



Marge Oberg has been active with TRP for the past six years and a board member since 2017. Marge is responsible for matching the credit receipts from the TRP regions to the bank statements. She then creates a spreadsheet of all the matched expenses and forwards it to TRP's treasurer, Donna Burton.

Making sure this bookkeeping activity happens in a timely manner is critical to the overall financial health of the Texas Ramp Project.

Marge and her husband, Larry, moved from Minnesota to the Dallas area 30 years ago. Larry, who was with the corporate J.C Penney Company, thought Texas would be a good place for their family to live. The Obergs have two grown children, a son living in Utah and a daughter in New Jersey. Marge taught elementary school for 43 years. After retirement she remained very active with volunteer work through the Texas Ramp Project, Friends of the Library in Garland, and her church, King of Glory Lutheran in Dallas.

Toyota and TRP Featured in *The Dallas Morning News*

Toyota presented the Texas Ramp Project with a huge Christmas present on December 23: a full-page article about TRP on the back page, front section of *The Dallas Morning News*. Toyota and TRP began partnering early this year when the car company's employees started building ramps with Dallas team leaders. Toyota's employee resource group ToyotAbility found that our work providing ramps for older adults and people with disabilities dovetailed perfectly with their mobility goals.

We are so pleased to be partnering with Toyota. Publicity like this really raises our visibility. Here is the link to the article: <https://fwddfw.com/how-the-texas-ramp-project-is-helping-elderly-and-disabled-texans-take-back-their-mobility-one-ramp-at-a-time>.

Beverly Does Santa

TRP Tarrant County coordinator Beverly Ford gives of herself in many ways, and she took on a Santa-size job in December. She portrayed the jolly old guy as part of Lewisville Fire Department's annual Santa tour.

Fire trucks parade down every street in the city, with Santa (Beverly) or other volunteers waving from on board. Beverly and her husband, Ron, are part of a "rehab" team that is on call with food, water and respite when crews are fighting a large fire.



Grants Approved in December

Teaming Up with UPS®

UPS® employees Austin Stoetzel and Mike Dimego spent several Saturdays last year volunteering to build ramps in the Round Rock area. Austin's father, Bill, is a regular volunteer. Their participation provoked interest at UPS's local level, which rose to corporate and resulted in the award of an \$11,000 grant to be used in the Round Rock area. Way to go, guys, and thanks!

Other grants approved in December came from the following:

- John R. McCune Charitable Trust, \$15,000 for Statewide use
- Harry W. Bass Jr. Foundation, \$10,000 for Dallas
- Helen Gertrude Sparks Charitable Trust, \$10,000 for Tarrant County
- King of Glory Lutheran Church, \$9,500 for Dallas and Statewide
- Amarillo Area Foundation, \$5,000 for 26 Panhandle counties
- St. Luke's Lutheran Health Ministries, \$5,000 for San Antonio region
- Lucille & John B. Dougherty Trust, \$5,000 for Bryan/College Station
- W.P. & Bulah Luse Foundation, \$5,000 for Dallas
- The Dorothy Gaines Foundation, \$3,000 for Waco North, Hill County

HILTI North America Comes to Dallas



Hilti Executive Team – 10/11/17

Hilti North America moved their headquarters from Tulsa to Dallas in 2015. The worldwide headquarters is in Liechtenstein. That was the best move for them and for Texas Ramps.

We were contacted in July 2017 to arrange a build for their senior leadership, which included CEO Avi Kahn, community relations manager Ann-Maree Harrison, and eight executives. In October 2017 John Laine and Ray Beall led the build. Hilti left us with a \$1,200 donation and a truck bed full of tools.

Since our initial contact, we have built on a regular basis during the week. Each time Hilti brings tools and donated funds to cover the cost of that ramp. We have received nearly \$30,000 in tools and \$4,800 in cash. Hilti volunteers will only use Hilti tools. Travis Pierce is our current contact and makes sure we get tools that work for us.

To date we have built 10 ramps (426 feet) with 132 volunteer participations and 519 total man-hours. Plans in 2020 include one build of one or two ramps each quarter.

Recently Ann-Maree inquired about the Oklahoma Ramp Project, which John Laine helped establish several years ago. Hilti would like their Tulsa office to get involved.

If any of your teams are in need of tools, let Gary Stopani (glstopani@verizon.net) or John Laine (jlaine@texasramps.org) know as we can get impact drivers, circular saws, reciprocating saws, drills, hammer drills and angle grinders.



Ramps of the Month: Christmas Builds in Hill & Washington Counties

On December 14 Texas Ramp Project's Hill County build team from White Bluff Chapel in Whitney invited four local high school students to join us in spreading Christmas cheer by helping a neighbor in need of a ramp. While assisting us prefabricating ramp modules weeks earlier, several students indicated they would like to participate in installing a ramp.



So on a cold Saturday we put on our Santa hats and “*I gave a ramp for Christmas*” green shirts and met at the Whitney warehouse to load materials before heading to the client’s home. The build took a little longer than usual as we coached the students and encouraged them to do most of the assembly. But they really enjoyed it and learned a lot about construction techniques and the use of tools. Most of all they experienced the satisfaction of serving others.

Ms. Teresa W., a 62-year-old woman with multiple sclerosis, now has a new 26-foot ramp. What a great Christmas present!



Love those TRP Christmas T-Shirts!

In Washington County, Ms. Nicola S., a 72-year-old woman, suffered a major fall on her back steps, resulting in the fracture of her left tibia and ankle as well as two bones in her right foot. Surgery was required, and she is not allowed to bear weight on her left leg for several months. Nicola already had a very arthritic right knee and bilateral hip replacements. All of this has resulted in Nicola needing to use a wheelchair for mobility.

Nicola’s 36-foot ramp was a Christmas present built by 16 volunteers from Salem Church and St. Paul’s Lutheran Church. The volunteers contributed 40 hours of their time to give Nicola her ramp.

The team leader, Richard Meir, received the following letter from Nicola:

“Thank you so much for building my ramp today. I really appreciate it. Please thank the others who contributed to it and participated in the build. It’s great to see there are still kind and loving people in this world. I am looking forward to returning to my home and you made that possible.”

The letter was signed “Sincerely, Nicola.”



It was a Merry Christmas for Nicola.

DO: Pass the Newsletter On

We hope you enjoy having the newsletter sent to you directly, as it is filled with useful information, building hints and tips, data collection updates and processes, client stories, special announcements and recognitions.

The newsletter only does its job when it is dispersed and shared with all who might be interested. We encourage you to liberally pass it on to others in your region. Also, do send email addresses of people in your region who should be receiving it, along with their name and TRP region, to Sandy Knutson at sjkbits@aol.com.

If you prefer to **not** receive the newsletter, you can unsubscribe by emailing sjkbits@aol.com and asking for your name to be removed.

Happy New Year to all!

We couldn't do it without you.