

Program Summary

Amount Request \$ 4,615

The Senior and Disabled Transportation Program

Physically challenged or elderly people who are no longer able to drive are trapped with no transportation. Imagine the feeling of helplessness of not being able to get to the doctor, grocery store, pharmacy or dentist's office without the use of a cab or attempting to catch a city bus. Both of which require money and/or the ability to get to the bus stop – which is impractical either due to physical limitations or weather.

HandsOnTexarkana has a solution for many of these residents in Texarkana called the Senior Transportation Program. The program offers free transportation to clients by volunteers who are screened and trained to area residents needing help getting to not only appointments, but to the grocery store and other necessary errands. Even though this program has been in existence for many years, **in the last couple of years the transportation program has provided over 1,400 rides to people in need.**

The Siren Family

One such family who benefitted from the program is the Siren Family. Walter and Lola Siren along with their daughter Donna--all blind, lived in New Orleans most of their lives. Walter Siren, husband and father, died in July 2005 a short while before Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans. After being evacuated from their apartment during the storm, Donna and Mrs. Siren soon decided they needed to get away from the city and build a new life elsewhere. Mrs. Siren's niece offered to help them in Texarkana, so they decided to make the move to our community in March 2006.

A HandsOn Texarkana board member introduced the Sirens to HandsOn Texarkana because she knew it was a good match for them as they desperately needed safe transportation in their new city. Mr. Esther Hammond, a driver for the escort program, was also a transplant from New Orleans as a result of Hurricane Katrina. The Sirens and Mr. Hammond were introduced and struck a friendship immediately.



Mr. Hammond, along with his wife Lou, helped the Sirens to most of their doctor appointments, grocery shopping, picked up medicine at the pharmacy and even some housecleaning.

This program assisted the Siren family in ways that run so much deeper than just "a ride". It brought stability to their lives and assisted with settling into in a new community.

The Transportation Program was vital to freedom and new friendships and to live life independently in Texarkana for the Sirens.

It is strong and healthy today affecting hundreds of lives in our rural community.

Section I: Contact Information

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IRS Determination Letter attached to this application

Section II: Organization Description

HandsOn Texarkana Background and History

Forty-seven years (47) - established in May 1969 to make the Texarkana area better through promoting volunteerism, HandsOn Texarkana has been a strong leader in this community. Texarkana is on the border of Texas and Arkansas with many smaller towns surrounding. Because of the higher than average poverty rate many non-profits have answered the outcry of the citizens and provide services which otherwise would not be offered. HandsOn Texarkana, as a volunteer center, exists to coordinate many of these efforts with concerned citizen volunteers. The agency operates from the historic Ben and Jane Collins Building which was gifted to HandsOn Texarkana in 2009 by the Wadley Foundation. This building has allowed HandsOn Texarkana to office in the building and offer space and meeting facilities to other non-profits.

HandsOn Texarkana not only connects people to volunteer opportunities, but also has several programs which it coordinates for the community.

These programs include:

- Senior and Disabled Transportation Program - volunteers transport senior citizens to necessary appointments or errands,
- Youth Volunteer Organization - a training program for youth designed to help them complete community service for school credit;
- Skilled Parenting program teaches practical parenting skills while providing psychological support at Texarkana Federal Correction Institution.
- TACOAD was formed working closely with other community emergency management partners including the Texarkana Chapter of the American Red Cross during Hurricane Katrina to offer volunteers and relief efforts. This partnership has resulted in Texarkana Area Organizations that Aid in Disasters being formed. HandsOn Texarkana is responsible for organizing the COAD group and overseeing volunteers. Our building will serve as an emergency HUB in a disaster.

Section III: Program Description

Senior Transportation program is a good model for other communities to duplicate. When a person attains older age and is no longer able to drive themselves to the doctor, pharmacy, dentist, grocery store and other necessary places, they are totally dependent on other people. That is why this program is so affective and has been for over 25 years. Volunteers are ready, willing and able to assist the clients from their doorsteps to the vehicle, help them in and drive to whatever destination they have chosen.

According to data provided by the City of Texarkana, in our rural area there are approximately 34,308 people over the age of 60. When an older person qualifies described above and enrolls in the Transportation Program, they call Joy Jordan, the Program Manager with details of the request. She then coordinates with a volunteer driver to arrange the trip, and reports back to the client so they know who to expect for transportation. Given the information, the volunteer goes to their the door, aids in any way necessary to make sure they are safe and takes the client to their appointment.

Win-win: this program is geared for the person needing transportation and the volunteer feels good about giving back. It provides social connections and self esteem to both parties. Most of the volunteer drivers are also over the age of 60; however there are a few younger adults who drive for the program.

No one is turned away unless they have wheelchairs that must be lifted. Wheelchairs can be used to get them into the vehicle, left at their home and the drivers get one at doctors' offices and grocery stores which provide them. Most of the clients use a walker but need assistance in and out of the vehicle.

Ethnic background or income levels are not considered. The Transportation Program will serve **over 1,000 people this year.**

Expected outcomes for this program will be to provide a service that is not duplicated for people who truly have a need. They cannot get on a city bus, nor are they able to afford a cab to destinations. New volunteer drivers will be continually recruited to keep the program strong. These outcomes will be measured monthly through reports to the board of directors at the meetings.

The program's successes will be communicated through the newspaper, website: www.HandsOnTexarkana.org; the Facebook page and other social media.

HandsOn Texarkana has never received a grant award from TRC and we appreciate the opportunity to submit this application. If TRC is unable to fund the total amount requested we would certainly accept a smaller amount.

Senior Transportation Program Budget

2017 Expenses:		
Program insurance	\$ 1,100	
Equipment - office	666	
Printing materials and postage to clients	1,585	
Salaries for program coordinator	6,617	
941 IRS tax deposit	1,165	
Janitorial / cleaning	283	
Utilities	2,250	
Health Insurance	1,600	
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$ 15,266	

2017 Income:		
Fundraisers	\$ 6,900	
Donations	333	
Grants	8,033	
TOTAL EXPENSES:	\$ 15,266	

Timeline and expenditures of proposed grant funds

The timeline for requested grant funds is for the 2017 fiscal year. Above budget details the needs of the Transportation Program and how the money would be spent.