

Building Faith in Columbus

July, 2010



He must not seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor.
1st Corinthians 10:24

Greetings!

2010 is flying by, as witnessed by the recently celebrated 4th of July! Much has been happening at our affiliate in preparation ahead of our being ready to fully step out into the world of the federally sponsored Neighborhood Stabilization Program or "NSP." During these last few months our staff has been busy working to determine what properties are the best candidates for Habitat's "ReBuild" program - like the home completed earlier this year on Siebert Avenue on Columbus' south side - or outright demolition allowing for construction of a new Habitat home. Look for a flurry of construction activity to start in July and August as plans are approved and partner families are qualified and given the green light to begin work on their new homes.

Finally, allow me to share our sincere appreciation for what you, your church and the faith community in central Ohio do for those who would otherwise never be able to realize the dream of homeownership. Have a great summer!

Blessings to all,

EJ Thomas
CEO; Habitat for Humanity - Greater Columbus

God's Work at Habitat for Humanity

Youth Lower Average Volunteer Age

Columbus couple called to serve in El Salvador

Youth lower Habitat's Average Volunteer Age



Youth continue to become more and more involved with the work of Habitat for Humanity. Because youth must be 14 to volunteer in the ReStore, and 16 to volunteer at a build site, youth often become acquainted with Habitat's mission through Advocacy, Fundraising, or Education in addition to volunteering. Here is a quick synopsis of how our young people have been involved this year:

- Brownie Scout Troops #303 and #2221 have used their meeting time to learn about the work of Habitat, as well as sign studs to be built into our homes.
- High schoolers from churches and schools around the city convened in Worthington for SHACK CITY in April. Despite the rain, they kids had a good time, and the event was chronicled by WBNS on the nightly and morning news. The youth raised over \$4,000 for Thrivent Builds. [View Pictures of the Event here.](#)
- On April 30, youth from Christ Lutheran Church in Bexley and St. John's Lutheran Church in Grove City volunteered in the ReStore after hours. They youth worked from 7-10 pm and began what is becoming a major renovation in the ReStore. [View Pictures of the Event here.](#)
- Kathy Costello's third grade class at the Holy Spirit school in Whitehall collected aluminum cans all year and donated \$264.17 to Habitat for Humanity Greater Columbus.
- A group of middle schoolers from Dublin Community Church spent an afternoon re-finishing some items donated to the ReStore to help increase the resale price of each item and help expedite inventory turnover.
- Mara Dalton, a 2010 graduate of Upper Arlington High School, created a Youth Programs brochure to be used to increase awareness of the opportunities Youth have to serve.

It is exciting to have youth volunteering in a variety of ways. Their willingness to be involved in service is contagious as they bring a wealth of energy to the mission.

Columbus Couple called to serve in El Salvador

Dedicated volunteers Bonnie and Joe Reilly made their second and third Thrivent Builds Worldwide trips to El Salvador this June to build homes in the Villa Esperanza Community of Santa Ana. This 75 home community is being built by Habitat for Humanity - El Salvador with a 1.3 million dollar contribution from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. Since they began volunteering with Habitat in El Salvador, Joe, who is a Thrivent Financial representative, and his wife, Bonnie, have been captivated by the culture, spirit, and resourcefulness of the area.

Most Habitat for Humanity Global Village trips are life changing events, providing the opportunity to serve while traveling to a distant land and experiencing a new culture. Working in the same community each trip, Joe and Bonnie have had the opportunity to develop lasting relationships with a large number of residents, and they are constantly impressed by the amount of joy new these friends express every day. Most El Salvadorians possess very little, but they work hard, appreciate their blessings, value their families, and welcome volunteers with smiles, laughter, and hugs that transcend all language barriers. Joe and Bonnie have no doubt they will continue to lead trips to El Salvador in the future as they have a strong call to serve this place and they feel richly blessed to have had the opportunity to build such lasting relationships with all those they have worked with, including their team members, Habitat staff, and partner families.

Habitat for Humanity houses built in El Salvador are built with cement block reinforced with re-bar to help make them earthquake resistant. Local masons do the majority of the build work, but Joe and Bonnie's team of volunteers worked hard to mix cement, carry bricks, move and compact dirt, and paint. The typical house has a living room, indoor kitchen, and two bedrooms. A bathroom is built just outside the home but comfortably connected to the house by a covered porch. A triple sink is also included, but its location varies. Some families choose to have it inside, others make it a fixture in their covered porch, and still others have it located outdoors. This final option is preferred by some families because most El Salvadorian families still do the majority of their cooking over open flame fire pit.

Many Villa Esperanza residents also run businesses from their homes: selling ice cream, operating a beauty salon, or selling any other good and service. Often the front living room of the house becomes a center of commerce and the residents limit their living quarters to the two bedrooms and kitchen.

In addition to building on site, the team visited Mayan Ruins, toured a coffee plantation, worshiped in a local church, played with girls at an orphanage, relaxed on the beach for a day, and enjoyed all sorts of cultural activities to better appreciate the land and people with whom they worked. Bonnie and Joe have been quick to adjust their outlook towards life since their first trips. They live much simpler now - so that others may simply live. Bonnie will be the first to tell you, "we lead these trips to better the lives of those we serve but it has truly changed our lives as well."

Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI), and the Greater Columbus Affiliate, is an ecumenical Christian housing ministry. Habitat affiliates work locally in communities around the world to select and support homeowners, organize volunteers, and coordinate house building. Since its founding in 1976, Habitat has built more than 300,000 homes worldwide, providing shelter for more than 1 million people in nearly 90 countries. In the Greater Columbus community, Habitat has built more than 220 homes since 1987.

Sincerely,
Habitat for Humanity Greater Columbus

Parade of Homes!

Habitat for Humanity Greater Columbus will have a presence at the [2010 BIA Parade of Homes](#) that goes on from July 8th to August 24th at Ackerly Park in New Albany. Our display will be located in the garage of the home built by Zeppernick Custom Homes, Inc.

Please, stop by our booth to learn more about all the ways Habitat is working to eradicate sub-standard housing from our city.

Get Involved!

[Habitat for Humanity Greater Columbus](#)

[Volunteer!](#)

[ReStore on Facebook](#)

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

Homeowner Profile

Giving families a "hand-up instead of a hand-out" is the philosophy that guides all that we do here at HFH-GC. We don't ask for charity, and neither do the hundreds of individuals who apply to become homeowners with Habitat each year. They only ask for a chance. Like Jana and Michael, who recently returned to Ohio from Florida with all of their worldly possessions in a single bag! They were directed to Habitat by their church and the local non-profit, Community Development for All People.

They quickly completed their sweat equity requirements, and signed the paperwork for their new Habitat home on their 10th anniversary! Although Michael is disabled, he still walks Jana to the bus stop every morning before dawn as she leaves for a job with a local waste and recycling company. After many years of struggling and living in substandard housing, they can celebrate being first-time homebuyers through Habitat and the generosity of the United Way.

Prayers and Thanksgivings

We are grateful for the three years of faithful service from Lindsay Miller. She built connections with our partner families that extended beyond the building process. We pray that she finds success at Moritz College of Law starting this fall.

We give thanks to Joel Grimes for his year of service as an AmeriCorps National Direct member. Joel served as a crew lead this year. Our prayers will follow him as he moves to Haiti at the end of July to continue his construction ministry.

Thank you to AEP for donating \$50,000 to help our affiliate build every house according to AWARE green building standards. We pray that we can continue to lead the way among HFH affiliates in caring for God's creation.

As always, we are so very thankful to all of our volunteers, but we especially want to celebrate Barb Metz and Marge Ward who have both recently won local volunteering awards for their service with HFH-GC!

As new partnerships begin in the Weinland Park and Whitehall areas, we pray that our efforts will begin to revitalize whole neighborhoods.



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