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upcoming events

APRIL 17-23

GREENscaping Days at the Emerald Hollow Community! During this two-week period, groups are invited to come plant their greenery—and receive a house tour. For information, contact Kelly Hile, at x305; k.hile@habitatbucks.org.

MAY 14

Register now for the Doylestown Moose Lodge sponsored **2nd Annual Miniature Golf Tournament** for Habitat for Humanity at the Sylvan Golf Center in Fountainville. For more information see page 3.

MAY 20-21

A **Bargain Barn Re-Sale** will be held at our red barn located in Milford Township, PA. See details on page 3.

JULY 11-17

Put your faith into action! Partner with area youth groups and join **Faith Youth Week**. Come one day or for the whole week. You'll make friends, share your faith and help build a stronger community. Jobs include building, landscaping, fundraising, meal prep. For more information, please contact Dan O'Connor at x312 or d.oconnor@habitatbucks.org.

SEPTEMBER 11-18

Join us for **Building On Faith Week 2005**. Details on page 3.

OCTOBER

Habitat Bucks' first-ever **Women Build**. Details on page 3.

Helping the Habitat Mission

Friends, staff and volunteers recently came together on a chilly February afternoon to welcome home the last families of Emerald Hollow's first phase. The new homeowners brought Emerald Hollow's population to 37 families and represent the completion of a \$4.2 million construction phase. Nearly 65,000 volunteer hours have been donated by over 9,000 volunteers at Emerald Hollow since ground-breaking in November 2001.

Staff and volunteers are now gearing up for the second and final phase of Emerald Hollow. Phase II is a \$5.8 million undertaking that will bring 36 more affordable homes to Bucks County, as well as 15 acres of open space and walking trails for the entire community.

The construction crew is awaiting finalization of the Phase II plans so that they can get started building. "They're chomping at the bit!" says Deputy Director of Construction, Mike Fallon.

In the office, the Family Program offices are a flurry of applications and phone calls, says Stefanie Clark, family program director. "Melissa Trainor, our family program associate, sent out over 120 applications for the recent application day. We're thrilled to see so many families take the next step toward their dreams for homeownership. The family program department and the Family Selection Committee are gearing up for a very busy, and very exciting, next few months. Emerald Hollow is in bloom!"

With so much going on, Habitat simply couldn't succeed without volunteers helping in all aspects of the work. Habitat relies on volunteers for building, serving on committees, helping in the office, advocating the Habitat mission and, of course,



Volunteers from Blooming Glen Mennonite Church.



Joe Morrison and Trish Kriger of Habitat accept a check from Todd Hendricks and Steve Bauman of THP.

providing monetary support. Habitat has been lucky to have that assistance given by so many wonderful members of the community, all of whom have affected the Habitat mission in a special, heartfelt—and sometimes very—unique way.

Bob Lawton, a 17-year-old Council Rock North High School student, recently completed his Eagle Scout project requirements through Habitat. Bob organized more than 20 of his peers as volunteers, fed dinner to nearly 100 families across lower and central Bucks County and solicited Milford Township in order to raise over \$2000 for his project. Bob then used those funds—along with his and his volunteers' labor—to build two picnic tables and six park benches using "green" materials for the "circle" space of Emerald Hollow. Overall, Bob spent 331 hours completing his project and showed how large of an impact can be made on the Habitat mission by the leadership of just one person.

Setting a shining example of how a group can support Habitat, is Blooming Glen Mennonite Church in Blooming Glen. Members of the congregation's Sunday School and Youth Groups have been taking turns coming to site to feed our hungry construction volunteers nearly every month since the beginning of construction of Emerald Hollow. Rain or shine, on warm spring afternoons and on snowy winter days, they remain a constant. In addition, the congregation has donated over \$10,000 to the affiliate.

"[We] have a connection with Habitat Bucks, because two of our members, Paul Landes and

continued from page 1

Glenn Nemath, were on the Board of Directors. They inspired us by sharing the Habitat mission of 'Putting Faith into Action'...it fits with our commitment to service and has given

us an opportunity to serve in our local community. We are happy to be a part of such a valuable ministry," explains Barb Gebelein, a member of the church.

The work of Habitat Bucks also couldn't be accomplished without corporate partnerships like that of THP Properties.

Through a partnership established in April 2002, THP has provided \$625,000 in funding to Habitat, which has gone directly toward the construction costs of Emerald Hollow. THP has provided not only financial support to Habitat Bucks, but also leadership, expertise and access to resources.

"We consider it a great honor to be associated with the cutting-edge work of an organization whose reputation is without blemish," explains Todd Hendricks, co-founder and partner of THP, "We are hopeful our gift will encourage others to give as well."

These individuals and organizations are just a snapshot of the many volunteers who make dreams come true at Habitat Bucks. The efforts made and the generosity given by friends of our affiliate is vast and ever-changing. Whether the donation is that of money, advocacy or a hot lunch, it is needed and goes directly toward helping a Bucks County family achieve the American dream of homeownership.

As the staff and board of Habitat Bucks prepare for the next chapter of Emerald Hollow, it is only with the spirit and heart of the volunteers that Phase II will be brought to fruition.

For information on how to become involved with the Habitat Bucks mission, please contact Outreach Director, Kelly Hile, at extension 305; k.hile@habitatbucks.org.



Eagle Scout, Bob Lawton, cooks up a storm to help Habitat.

Harvest Hoedown a Success!

The weatherman was forecasting a hard, cold rain for November 6, 2004. Fortunately, he was wrong! That probably accounted for the nearly 250 people that showed up at our red barn in Milford Township, PA, to be a part of the first-ever Habitat Harvest Hoedown.

The Cacklin' Hens and Roosters, Too started the evening off with some foot-stompin' square-dance tunes, with the help of caller Stefan Menger. As the children began to show off their skills, the adults wandered around to visit the dozen or so vendors who were selling their crafts - including Pottery by Judy Kashoff; Steel Artwork by Sean McDougal; Toys by Lynn Alderfer; Birdhouses by Kutz Elementary Green Thumb Club; Leslie's Homemade Chocolates;

Preserve the Moment Photography by Will Baier; Kid's Caricatures by David Perry; Juanita's Specialty Foods by Janet Landes; and Habitat for Humanity Holiday Cards and House Pins.

The event featured some great outdoor activities as well, such as pony rides by Mayer Stables in Easton, pumpkin painting and scarecrow-making. Boy Scout Troop 13, sponsored by Trumbauersville Lions Club, created and tended a campfire as well as served hot apple cider and s'mores. A small group of wandering judges presented unsuspecting participants prizes for various categories:

- *Prettiest Pumpkin: Natalie and Hailey Argue*
- *Best Overall Scarecrow: Russell and John Macklin*
- *Best Attempt for an Auction Item: Mary and Syl Mason*

- *Best Marshmallow Roaster: Aaron Margolit*
- *Most Improved Dancer: Stefanie Clark*
- *Least Enthusiastic Dancer: Helmut Thieman*
- *Best Dressed Lady: Christina Dowling*
- *Best Dressed Man: David Shapp*

Of course, the evening would not have been complete without the mouth-watering food provided and served by Duck Deli of New Britain, Village Pretzels of Hatboro, David Shapp and The Baking Lady, Linda Hawkins.

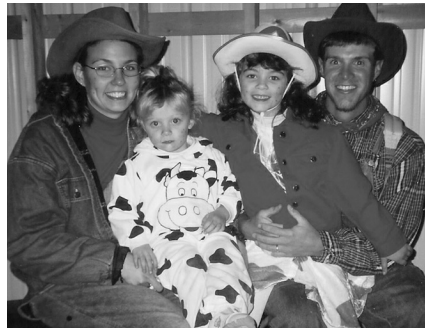
To top off the evening, a number of donated items were sold during a live auction, thanks to the donated services of professional auctioneer, Amy Grimly. More than \$2,000 was raised as part of the Live Auction.

Overall, the event itself raised

more than \$18,000 to benefit Habitat's mission, thanks in great part to our three major sponsors: Quakertown National Bank, First Savings Community Foundation and

Prudential, Fox and Roach. Everyone had a great time, and we continue to get compliments from guests who enjoyed themselves immensely. The food was fantastic, the music and dancing a whole lot of fun, the overall energy exhilarating, and a true cross section of the Bucks County community was brought together—volunteers, donors, board members, families, staff and local residents. Thanks and congratulations to everyone who had a part in making such a positive impact in such a fun and exciting way. And, don't put your boots too far back in the closet, because we'll be doing it all over again this fall!

For information on planning Harvest Hoedown 2005, please contact Joe at extension 303; j.morrison@habitatbucks.org.



Top: The Argue family, Jen, Hailey, Natalie and Steve, take a break from the festivities. Bottom left: Guests, big and small, enjoy pumpkin decorating. Bottom right: Fred and Trish Kriger enjoy refreshments and watch square dancing.

Habitat for Humanity of Bucks County
OUR MISSION: To build affordable homes, better lives, stronger families and safer communities through partnerships with people and organizations throughout Bucks County.

Building on Faith Week

Mark your calendars now for Building On Faith Week 2005! Each year, over the course of one week in September, Habitat for Humanity International celebrates its partnership with congregations by encouraging affiliates to build houses with local congregation sponsors. This week-long event is a true celebration of faith in action! Join Habitat Bucks and local congregations as we express our faith through prayer, fellowship, advocacy of Habitat's mission, building homes, preparing and sharing meals and raising money to help provide safe, simple, affordable homes for those who need them. Come one day or for the whole week. For more information about how your group can participate in BOFW 2005, contact Community Relations Manager, Dan O'Connor, at extension 312; d.oconnor@habitatbucks.org.

Habitat Bucks Bargain Barn Re-Sale

A Habitat for Humanity re-sale will be held on Friday, May 20th and Saturday, May 21st at the red barn located in Milford Township, PA. Donated items will be sold to raise funds in support of our mission. Items now being accepted include building materials and supplies, new and gently used tools, furniture, new appliances, children's furniture and yard toys. To arrange for a delivery of your donated item or for more information, leave a message at our office on extension 373.

Miniature Golf Tournament

Everyone plays an annual golf tournament; why not try something new this year? The Second Annual Miniature Golf Tournament for Habitat for Humanity of Bucks County, sponsored by the Doylestown Moose Lodge, will take place at the Sylvan Golf Center in Fountainville, beginning at 9:30am on Saturday, May 14. Awards will be presented during a complimentary lunch. To register or to sponsor a hole, contact Eric Detweiler at 215.688.8867.

Habitat for Humanity of Bucks County Plans Women Build!

Women Build is intended not only to empower women through teaching them construction skills in a supportive environment, but also to give them an opportunity to address the issue that, worldwide, women and children are the groups most affected by poverty. The event is entirely planned, funded and publicized by women and will be held in October. For more information, contact Kelly at extension 305; k.hile@habitatbucks.org.

We Miss You Already, John!

In a special presentation during the January board meeting, President Steve Bauman recognized departing board member, John Davis, for his outstanding service to Habitat for Humanity. John served diligently on the board since November of 1998, and in accordance with organizational bylaws, stepped down after serving two consecutive three-year terms.

We wish to thank John publicly for his outstanding commitment and dedication on behalf of the board, staff and the 47 families who received keys to their homes during his terms.

John has generously agreed to continue to serve Habitat as an active member of the Advisory Board.

THANK YOU NOTES

A very special thank you to volunteer JUSTIN ISABELL, a designer with T.H. Properties, who painstakingly designed, revised and revised again the building plans for the Emerald Hollow Phase II homes. His expertise and patience allowed the design team to create beautiful and efficient floor plans for the next 36 homes.

We would like to send out a very special note of thanks to LOREN BISHOP, who recently ended his term here. For two years, Loren worked on contributing not just labors of sweat, but also of love. Loren, a staunch advocate of the Habitat mission, plans to stay involved by donating his time during large group days on site and special events. Good luck to you on your next journey, Loren, and we'll see you soon!



A special thank you goes out to DONNA PACHINO for her untiring work promoting the Habitat mission while selling many Habitat products, including house pins and holiday cards. We appreciate her on-going, behind-the-scenes work in support of our cause. Thank you kindly!

As we celebrated the completion of Phase I of Emerald Hollow and welcomed the final four families



into their homes, Habitat recognized a group of volunteers whose continued commitment to the Trumbauersville project has been a significant factor in its success. The "WEDNESDAY

BOYS" donate their time and skills every Wednesday on the construction site. They have worked on every home in Emerald Hollow and have contributed over 3000 hours to the project. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication to the mission of Habitat!

When JIM LEECH volunteered at Emerald Hollow, he learned that some equipment, including an air compressor and two nail guns, were recently stolen by unknown thieves. He was so appalled that he decided to do something about it. Jim purchased a new compressor and nail guns and donated them to Habitat! That kind of generosity is truly what Habitat for Humanity is all about. We salute and graciously thank Jim for his caring spirit.

The NEWCOMERS CLUB OF CENTRAL BUCKS and the ENCORES CLUB OF DOYLESTOWN selected Habitat Bucks as a beneficiary of their annual fundraising event for the fourth consecutive year! This year's theme is "Bet Your Lucky Stars" and will be held in Doylestown in April. Proceeds will benefit Habitat Bucks, Twilight Wish Foundation and Camp Discovery. Thank you, ladies, for your continued dedication and commitment to the Habitat mission and to our partner families!



director's corner

by Trish Kriger, Executive Director

While nothing can eliminate the grief and fear caused by the tsunami catastrophe of December 26, 2004, determination and hope are beginning to take root and piece back together the lives of the victims in Southeast Asia. The task of rebuilding is, and will be, enormous. As many as five million people have been displaced and are in need of basic services as a result of the disaster.

Habitat for Humanity International and affiliates serving the affected areas, have launched efforts to provide temporary and permanent housing in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and Thailand. First phase plans call for the construction of 25,000 houses, as well as training centers designed to provide technical expertise and assistance in construction to additional families in need. The first phase of relief is expected to last over two years at an estimated cost of \$25 million. As of January, over \$8.6 million had been raised for housing and training programs in the region.

Habitat Bucks is proud to be a part of this effort. Our Executive Committee of the Board of Directors met in January to approve the designation of our tithe to the affected region. The designation was approved for the fourth quarter tithe of 2004 and the first quarter tithe of 2005. Our first contribution, representing October through December of 2004, totaled over \$10,600 and is already being put to use to build homes in Sri Lanka. We thank all donors who contributed generously to our affiliate, making our donation to the rebuilding efforts so meaningful.

At Habitat we witness the generosity of volunteers and donors who give so that their neighbors can realize the pride and security of owning a safe and affordable home in the Bucks County community. The global outpouring of support for the tsunami victims reminds us of the seemingly limitless definition of the word "community." The dictionary defines it as "a unified body of individuals." Recent events tell us that the power of that unity need not be defined by borders or governments or beliefs, but by a collective human spirit that mourns loss and believes in hope. Habitat Bucks shares in that hope and calls on all people for their continued prayers and support of Habitat's mission as we reach out to all of our neighbors, both locally and globally.

For additional information on Habitat's Tsunami relief efforts, visit our website at www.habitatbucks.org.

Local Teen Breaks Record at Habitat 5K

A record field of 157 runners took part in this year's Habitat for Humanity 5K Race organized by the Quakertown Rotary Club, raising nearly \$2,400 for the organization. This year, it was the young people who shone for Habitat for Humanity of Bucks County. Leading the way was 17-year-old Brian Cullen of East Stroudsburg, PA, who won the race in a course record 16:03. Equally impressive was the performance by Samantha Lieb, a 12-year-old native of Havertown, PA. Samantha was the first woman's finisher and 21st overall in a time of 20:43, just 30 seconds short of the woman's course record. Jay Stiles, the 12-year-old son of soon-to-be Habitat homeowner, Sherry Stiles, served as the honorary starter.

A number of Habitat staffers took part in the race, with Family Program Director, Stefanie Clark, leading the pack in 37:56. Stefanie's son, Anthony Jr., pushed by his dad, won the Under-One-Year age group in 37:57 with Anthony Sr. just behind in 37:58.

Outreach Director, Kelly Hile, rounded out the pack in 37:59. This was Kelly's first race since suffering a foot injury in June 2003. Dan O'Connor, community relations manager for Habitat, walked the course in 42:43. Both Dan and Anthony Sr. were recovering from running the Philadelphia Marathon on November 21.

Race sponsors included: Visionetics; Fischers Tuxedo Headquarters; Farm & Home Oil; Hutchinson, Gorman & Freeh PC; Robert G. Moffett, Attorney at Law; John M. Heley, Attorney at Law; Dunlap & Associates; Barmar Travel; Quakertown National Bank; Scheithauer Chevrolet; Ivanhoe Industries; Diversified Refrigeration; Alpine International; Precision Solutions; Eagle's Peak Water; The Chocolate Factory; Born To Run; The Spinnerstown Hotel; Sal's Pizza Randa; Giant Supermarket; Boyer's Supermarket; Power Bounce Shoes; Aardvark Sports Shops; Road ID; Runners World and the White Eagle Group.

Tribute Gifts

(Received 6/01/04 - 2/28/05)

Thank you all for your generous support and contributions.

IN MEMORY OF...

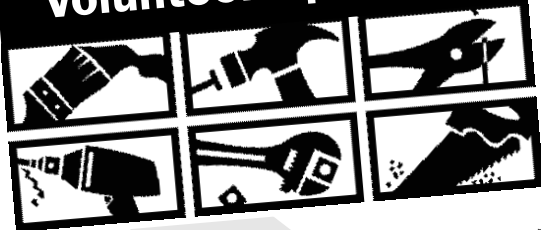
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Andrea Miller
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Volunteer Spotlight



Habitat strives not just to build strong homes, but also strong families. And it's not just our partner families' lives that are strengthened—our volunteer families lives are changed as well. The Ottingers are such a family. They came to Habitat Bucks in 2001 for a one-time volunteer commitment and have been part of the team ever since!

Rick and Terry Ottinger's initial involvement was sparked by Terry's mother's long time desire to help with a Habitat project. For her 78th birthday, the family gave a special gift—a day on the Emerald Hollow construction site. In addition to Rick, Terry and her mom, Terry's sisters, their husbands and children, her aunts and cousins were in attendance—20 family members in all! What Terry remembers most about the day was the camaraderie they all shared. Four years later, the Ottingers are still involved and deeply committed to Habitat's mission. "We've met such wonderful people," says Terry, "Working with the families and hearing their stories, it touches our hearts."

Right away, Rick, an employee of Shelly's, a locally-owned hardware store in Souderton, saw a partnership opportunity between his employer and Habitat. Since then, Rick has set up numerous donations to benefit Habitat.

Perhaps the Ottingers most significant contribution has been their tireless efforts to reinvigorate and sustain our Faith Relations Committee. As active members of Zion Hill Lutheran Church, Terry and Rick promoted the committee and our mission through the Lutheran-sponsored cluster of homes, and recruited many of the current committee members in the process. Terry and Rick also frequently speak on our behalf to area congregations. They take an active role in planning Building on Faith Week and have organized work groups, lunches, dinners, fundraisers and much more. They also ensure that our faith identity is clearly expressed at each dedication ceremony, by presenting each homeowner family with bibles and house blessings.



Rick and Terry Ottinger

While Terry claims her forte is not construction, her gifts are many and special. During her first day on site, both Rick and Terry formed a bond with one of our AmeriCorps members, Robin Fraser. In addition to maintaining that relationship even after Robin's service ended,

Terry has made it a point to nurture relationships with each consecutive group of AmeriCorp members—including occasional home-cooked meals (complete with yummy desserts). Over the holidays, Terry made comforters, affectionately called "babas," for each of our six current members. These gifts of love are a perfect example of the sincere kindness exuded by Terry. Rick and Terry have been married for 28 years. While Rick has always had a love for home improvement, Terry says she has seen his life

affected by Habitat in other ways. "Rick was quiet and shy when I met him," she says. Seeing him speak to congregations really makes it obvious to her how much he has grown. "Habitat has made a difference in our lives," Terry concludes. And the Ottingers' dedication, compassion, optimism and whole-hearted friendliness have definitely made a difference in the "life" of Habitat Bucks, too!

No doubt about it. Habitat Bucks' volunteers are a dedicated bunch. Week after week, month after month they build homes, support families and keep the office running. Seeing the fruits of the labors is what keeps them coming back. Yet, there is one very special group of volunteers who continue to help despite a constant flow of disappointment.

Every month, the **Family Selection Committee** faces the difficult task of sorting through people's lives as objectively as possible to determine whether a family's dream of homeownership will become reality. Often, this tiny group of volunteers is faced with discouragement as they review homeownership applications describing obstacles of unfortunate financial situations and poor credit scores. Their success, though, is measured in a different way—with the bated breath exhaled in relief, the jingle of keys, the tears of joy, the financial safety of a family.



"Being able to call a family and tell them that the committee has approved their application is really enjoyable," Sarajayne Fraley, committee member, said.

"The most rewarding part of our work is seeing families get their keys on Dedication Day," said Bill Tuszynski, family selection chairperson and Habitat Bucks' board member.



"The Family Selection Committee very carefully reviews and chooses applicants based on very objective rules; their ethics are nearly impeccable because they have to follow strict equal housing laws. Yet, the group is probably one of the most emotionally driven in Habitat," said Stefanie Clark, family program director. She explained, "They feel very personally each applicant's struggle with substandard housing, poor wages and difficult financial situations. When the committee has to deny an applicant because he or she would not be financially safe if they pursued this goal at this time, most everyone's heart is breaking. So, when we do accept a family, it's a great gift to be able to make that call to deliver the good news."

John Benincasa continued, "The most rewarding experiences involve interaction with applicants who initially do not 'make the cut,' but through hard work and patience, take the suggestions of the committee seriously and end up as homeowners."



The committee, which also includes **Diana Stockwell**, is gearing up for Phase II's selection.

"This committee is so much fun to work with," said Stefanie, who is also joined on the committee by Melissa Trainor, family program associate. "They are an amazing group of people."



A theme seems to "run" through the committee's personal lives—several members are avid runners. John ran the Philadelphia Marathon this November. Bill is training for the same marathon next year. Diana also enjoys running. However, Sarajayne, enjoying her year-old retirement, prefers to prop her feet up in several special vacation spots!

After a few months' break from selection, the entire committee is looking forward to filling Phase II, catching up with each other and meeting new members Elaine Jones, Marianne Brown, Amelia Bulgarelli, Lorraine Reed and Jenine Kline.

Interested in joining a Habitat Bucks committee? Contact Laura McClellan at extension 302; lmcclellan@habitatbucks.org.

Phase I Welcomes Home Final Families

During December's dedication, Cluster Six families were welcomed by current community members, who also presented each family with the key to their homes. The neighborhood and Habitat Bucks "welcomed home" the Brooks family, the Kausar-Bashir family, the Remick family, Lynn Alderfer and the Kariuki-Nganga family.

February's Cluster Eight dedication completed the neighborhood with the Dallison-Gearhart, Johnson, Kelsh and Schwartz families; they represented the last families of Phase I of the Emerald Hollow community and the completion of three years of constructing 37 homes. The second phase is scheduled to begin this winter and will add 36 homes, walking trails and 15 acres of open space to the community.

"I feel like a princess," said Angela Schwartz who, with husband Brian, welcomed visitors into her family's home after the dedication ceremony. "I thought I'd be a renter my entire life." Angela's two boys, ages 8 and 12, had already determined "whose room was whose" and were busy showing them off to new-found neighborhood friends.

Sponsors of the dedications include: Applebee's in Quakertown (gift baskets and refreshments), Doylestown United Methodist Church (house blessings), Ed Neff (frakturs), Evelyn Taylor (professional photography services), First United Church of Christ (candles), Provident Bookstore in Souderton (Bibles), Saint Paul's United Church of Christ in Sellersville (refreshments) and Woody Keil (refreshments).



Top left: **Dallison-Gearhart Family**
Middle left: **Johnson Family**
Bottom left: **Open house celebrants**

Top right: **Schwartz Family**
Middle right: **Tyler Kelsh**
Bottom right: **Kelsh Family**

Photographs by Evelyn Taylor

wish list

- Bobcat
- Scaffolding
- 2-hp electric air compressors
- Small shop vacs (3 gallon)
- 21 oz. hammers
- Tape measures (25-30 ft.)
- Utility knives
- Molded plug extension cords

Coming Home is produced by Habitat for Humanity of Bucks County

Editor: Mikaela D. Martin
Assistant Editor: Stefanie Clark

Contributors: Kelly A. Hile, Joseph J. Morrison, Laura McClellan

Design: Kelli Regan, The Lightbulb Lab, Inc.

Printing: Old York Road Printing



**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY
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