



Coming Home

HABITAT HAPPENINGS FOR OUR FRIENDS AND VOLUNTEERS

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upcoming events...

MONTH OF MARCH

March Madness. Four alternative spring break groups are coming to help build at Emerald Hollow during March. We are currently seeking places for these groups to sleep, cook, and shower. Contact Ellie Dakin at 215-348-2204 x302 for more information.

WEEK OF MAY 13 TO 19

Building on Faith Week. Join us on site to put your faith into action. Ask if your church or synagogue is involved.

SATURDAY, MAY 19

Annual Volunteer Appreciation Picnic. All volunteers are invited as we celebrate YOU! Join us on site at 223 N. Main St. in Trumbauersville for a day of good old family fun. (We won't make you work!)

Emerald Hollow Estates is Born!

Habitat Bucks has been working toward a dream for quite a while and now we can begin building that dream! After what seemed like years of preparing, settlement took place on October 31 and groundbreaking took place the very next day. Infrastructure work soon followed and now construction has begun. The unseasonably warm weather worked to our benefit and we were able to start on the first cluster of

homes before the winter freeze. We have been able to keep to our construction schedule so far and we will be able to work all through the winter. Our first volunteer day was on December 8. Students from Delaware Valley College along with other volunteers and partner families made history as the first work group at Emerald Hollow Estates.



Delaware Valley College student, Janet, is triumphant.

Bucks County Commissioners Help Emerald Hollow Estates

On November 7th, 2001 the Commissioners of Bucks County approved the proposal for HOME funds to help build the 25 homes in the Emerald Hollow project—which qualify as affordable housing. Through the Department of Community and Business Development and the commissioners, this \$370,000 helps Habitat and Interfaith Housing move closer to acquiring the \$4M needed to complete the project. By approving these funds, the commissioners show their continued support and dedication to provide safe, decent, affordable homes to the people of Bucks County. Their on-going support of Habitat's work will allow

us to serve more families in need than ever before.

These HOME funds not only assist Habitat with moving forward with the Emerald Hollow project, but also help us keep these homes affordable—difficult to do in Bucks County with its high cost of land and construction.

With the HOME funds and the support of Quakertown National Bank and other contributors to the project, Habitat now needs to raise another \$800,000 over the next two years. A challenging task, but one we know we are up to.

HOLIDAY ARTISTS' SHOWCASE

Habitat Bucks held its third annual Holiday Artists' Showcase on Friday, November 16 at the Community Conservatory of Music in Doylestown. Featured artists included Dana Applestein, Sal Asaro, Glenna Bye, Byers' Choice Carolers, Linda Chapman, Anita Gronendahl, Fannie Krauss, Audrey McCrea, Sally Morgan, Navidad Heirloom Nativities, and Tatyana Merz, the artist whose work appeared as the 2001 holiday card.



Sally Morgan adds musical flavor to the evening.

A Dream Comes True

Pacific Avenue Dedication

On August 25, 2001, Tracy and Jacob Higgins were handed the keys of their new home at 1208 Pacific Avenue. After many months of working hard putting



Jacob nails on the numbers to his new home.

in their hours, and just before school started, they were able to move in! Just before Christmas Tracy told us they had up their Christmas lights and tree and were anxiously awaiting Santa's arrival. "It's been going really well. Jacob loves his new room," she explains. "He doesn't like yard work though, he says it takes too long." Tracy also plans to continue working on site in Trumbauersville to keep giving back to Habitat.

A Closer Look at a Habitat Family Partner

On December 8, Judy and George were working with other volunteers at Emerald Hollow Estates. But this couple was working for another reason—to build their home. Judy and George are family partners working to fulfill their required 500 hours of "sweat equity." "We both plan on coming out on Saturdays and I'll start to come out on Wednesdays to work," explained George. "We should be done by late March." Judy, George, and their son, Gregory qualified as a Lions Club family with disabilities. When asked what the disability was, Judy asked, "How much paper do you

have?" Judy was in a bad accident in 1985 that caused brain trauma, partial paralysis as well as other problems. She has had heart and kidney problems and short-term memory loss. "Because of the memory loss, it is difficult for me to get trained at work and further my career. No one seemed to want to give us a chance," explains Judy. "But we love what Habitat is doing. They are giving us a chance to make something for ourselves and Gregory."



Judy and George plan to work on site even after their home is complete.

Habitat Ball a Success!

Habitat Bucks held its First Annual Masked Ball on October 27, at the Health and Wellness Center in Warrington.

Guests enjoyed an evening of music by Sally Morgan and Jazz Essence as well as food by Crystal Rose Catering by Bert Prouix.



Board Secretary Maureen Gatto and husband Dennis McKenna enjoy the evening.

The sponsors of the evening were Commerce Bank,

Crystal Rose Catering, Michael Stumpf & Associates, Inc., Gene Fickes, Marvin & DeeAnn Woodall, Fox Rothschild, O'Brien & Frankel, LLP, Univest Corporation, Dutch & Kim Gronendahl, Quakertown National Bank, Richard & Marilyn Schaumberg, & Carroll Engineering.

Hardy and Beer Team Up to Dig a Dream Into Reality



Standing left to right; Kevin Rice, Tom Hess, Mike Hardy, Jake Hardy, Tom Hardy Matt Beer, Rodney Beer. On knee, Dan Tusavitz, Ray Luszcak, Joe Devlin.

On Saturday, November 28, **Tom Hardy and Ken Beer & Sons Excavating** started digging at Emerald Hollow Estates. Seven contractors donated time and equipment to dig out the basements for the first cluster of homes. Tom Hardy, the excavation coordinator helped to put together the entire day. Ken Beer & Sons Excavating donated three machines. "They were so close to each other, I thought they would run into each other while doing the digging. These guys did a really good job and we are grateful for their donated services," explains Ray Luszcak, Habitat's Construction Supervisor.

director's corner



Executive Director, Jim Petruzzi

Emerald Hollow: A Jewel of Volunteerism

As I drove to the Emerald Hollow building site I thought about what to write for this article. It was in mid-December—the first day for volunteers. When I arrived, it instantly became clear what I would write about.

What a great day it was as we kicked off the largest project ever for Habitat Bucks! We had a group of students from Delaware Valley College ready and waiting to start swinging hammers. We thought that was the full group for the day. Not so. Walk-ons from the community began arriving and before you knew it we had a group of 24 volunteers!

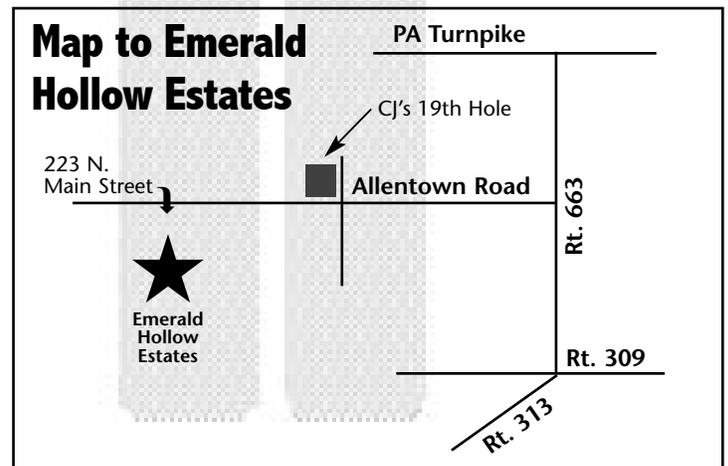
Everyone was excited, full of energy and thrilled by the 37 home development. We split into groups and began our work. Ray, our construction guru, led the

way in setting up the projects and coordinating the work. Vince, and our two AmeriCorps members, Joe and Romy, led other work groups working on foundations and building wall panels.

By noon we were all tired and dirty—but still shooting sparks of energy. That's when a youth group brought and served us lunches. What a great way to take a break and talk with all of the volunteers.

With this kind of volunteer effort, and continued dollars coming from supporters, we'll stay on schedule and have the first homes ready by May. Thanks to all of you helping in so many ways. I hope to see you on site during a glorious day of building and making new friends.

Map to Emerald Hollow Estates



Volunteer Spotlight



September Volunteer of the Month

GLEN NEMATH

Glen is a relatively new member of the Habitat Bucks family who has had a very significant and positive impact on our Building Committee and the future of our affiliate. This volunteer quickly took hold of various responsibilities and immediately brought new volunteer members into our Habitat Building Committee. His enthusiastic style has had a positive affect on the other volunteers and staff



members that work with him. Glen has accepted a nomination to our Board of Directors and was unanimously approved. Glen sets a shining example of human kindness and compassion for all of us to follow.

October Volunteer of the Month

FRED KARPF

By the end of his first meeting with us, Fred was already offering up fresh ideas and digging in with work that needed to be done. He even went so far as to check in from his recent vacation in the tropics to make sure everything was on track with our work. His enthusiasm is a motivator to those who volunteer with him. Fred sets a shining example for all of us



about the difference one person can make in the lives of many.

November Volunteer of the Month

TERESA ASCHER

Teresa brings an enthusiastic and dedicated style to the committee that has revived the spirit of Habitat within our committee, bringing new ideas and a "Whatever it takes" approach to our work. Even with a very busy schedule, Teresa finds the time to efficiently handle the committee work that needs to be done. She certainly sets a benchmark of human kindness and compassion for all of us to aspire to. She helps to bring the dreams of our Habitat families into reality and creates a positive impact for our community.

Putting Faith Into Action

Doylestown Presbyterian Church is putting faith into action. The congregation is working to raise the needed funds (\$80,000) to build a town home in Emerald Hollow Estates. Not only are they raising this, but they will also raise the additional funds to tithe to Habitat International and send a mission group to work on a home in Mexico.

Last summer in Vacation Bible School, the children of the parish donated over \$1,300. So far the congregation has raised about \$37,000, but the big push will begin now. Members will be asked to volunteer on site

as well as give financially. In fact, some members are already involved on the board, in committees, and working on site.

Area churches have also been raising funds to sponsor a home and will have a Building on Faith Week to confirm their commitment. Churches can

get involved by sending a financial contribution or volunteers. Building on Faith Week, slated for May 13-19, will be a time for fellowship, faith, and community as all faiths pull together to build a home with a family in need.



Tom Vogely is one of many DPC members already volunteering.

Welcome To Our Newest Americorps Members

Romy Brossman graduated from the University of Delaware with a degree in Art History. She was exposed to the Americorps program this fall when she was on a Habitat build in Tennessee. "I have always had an interest in architecture, and I am interested in the restoration of historical buildings. I wanted some hands-on experience in building so that I would understand the practical end of design." Romy also enjoys reading and walking her Jack Russell terrier, Basil Boy.

Joe Devlin graduated the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a degree in Psychology. "I felt the desire to give something back to society. Not every day do you get to make a difference in life and this is my opportunity." Joe is also excited to work with the many youth groups that will work on site. In his spare time, Joe volunteers to teach a group of 7th graders every other week.



Look for Romy and Joe at Emerald Hollow Estates

Special Thanks!

In our newsletters we often highlight partnerships that have helped to make our work possible. We want to take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge PASTOR CAROLANN HOPCKE and her congregation at CHRIST EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, on One Luther Lane, in Trumbauersville.

Over the past few months Pastor Hopcke has been instrumental in helping us with the family select process by making the church facilities open for our use. We have never been turned away and have always been welcome with open arms. This has allowed us to invite over 40 families to fill out applications and learn more about Habitat and our homeownership program.

In addition to this, the congregation has also contributed financially and has expressed a desire to get involved in other aspects as well! We are looking forward to a continued partnership with Christ Evangelical Lutheran church and want to thank all the members for their help and support.



RSVP HAS A DIFFERENT MEANING

RSVP-RETIRED AND SENIOR VOLUNTEER PROGRAM is part of the Bucks County Area Agency on Aging. The program began in 1974 to help individuals age 55 and older put their skills and life experience to work for their communities. It is also a great way to meet others and feel useful after retirement.

Terry Grundman explains, "Paul and I moved here from Chicago and didn't know anyone. We saw an ad in the newspaper and we got involved." Many other area seniors are doing just that—getting involved in their community and making friends. "They have been a wonderful addition to the Habitat team. Whenever we need help with our bulk mailings, we call in the RSVPers," explains Ellie Dakin, Volunteer and Youth Coordinator.

But mailings are not all that RSVP provides. Volunteers are currently providing 200,000 hours of service at 160 sites throughout the county. Other activities include delivering meals to the homebound, providing adult and school



Kenneth Nelson, Esther Bjornstad, Sara Stover, Kathryn Graham, Terry Grundman, Paul Radosza, Lester DeFonso, and Robert Gartner are the expert bulk mailing team!

based literacy programs, and providing care for disabled youth. "This really is a great group to work with," says Esther "And RSVP is always looking for more people." To get involved, or to have RSVP help your group, call the Bucks County Area Agency on Aging at 215-348-0510.

wish list

- Bobcat excavator or any machine with a bucket on it (\$5000)
- 7-ton dump truck (\$7000)
- TV/VCR combo (\$150)
- 30 Craftsmen 25ft/1in tape measures (\$18 each)
- Leather hammer holders (\$3.50 each)
- Stanley retractable utility knives (\$4/ea)
- One-piece fiberglass tub kit (white) (\$280)
- Lunches for volunteers (\$400/month)
- Public address system
- Housing for alternative spring break students (place to sleep, cook and shower for a week)

Thank you very much to the individual who sent in the generous donation that provided funds for almost everything on the wish list in the last newsletter! We really appreciate it!!

Thank you to Kelli Regan for the design of this newsletter and to Old York Printing for the printing. We appreciate their hard work in bringing "Coming Home" to our supporters.

Local Youth Rise to the Challenge

Emerald Hollow's size and uniqueness provides a perfect opportunity to challenge local youth to become an important part of this community. To that end we've introduced our Youth Campaign, encouraging young people, under 25, to get involved in all aspects of our organization. Through the Youth Campaign young people take an active role in fundraising and building. But even more important, we encourage them to share their ideas and get involved in ways that best uses their talents.

To introduce the Youth Campaign our first step was to spread the word. Habitat representatives made presentations to schools, church groups and other youth-based organizations. We explained the need for and benefits of affordable housing and how our affiliate works. It quickly became evident

that the youth of Bucks County are ready and willing to rise to the challenge— youth involvement has exploded as the project's progressed.

In the near future we aim to include youth in every aspect of our organization as board and committee members, working in the office, assisting at special events, coordinating efforts on site and more. But most importantly, we want to help young adults to feel part of something bigger than themselves. We want them to know they were a key piece to helping eliminate substandard housing. And we want to help them grow into responsible, caring adults.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE VERY SPECIAL YOUNG PEOPLE PARTICIPATING IN OUR YOUTH CAMPAIGN:

John Barclay Elementary: continuing last year's commitment to complete a volunteer activity every six weeks. They recently packaged over 5000 of our holiday cards.

Unami Middle School 7th grade: currently involved in a three-tiered fundraising project

Assumption BVM of Feasterville Church-Youth in Action: bringing lunches to work groups once a month

Girl Scout Troop 717 (Troop Leader Chris Vaughn): will provide a welcome wall hanging for a Habitat families

Buckingham Friends Meeting School: ongoing projects includes: writing thank you cards and selling homemade birdhouses

Look for more youth involvement highlights in future newsletters!

Member Agency



United Way
of Bucks County



**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY
OF BUCKS COUNTY**

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