

Neighbor Love

AS THE VIBRANT BEAUTY of fall captivates us and the anticipation of a festive holiday season grows, we now enter into a natural time to both count our blessings and to seek opportunities to love one another.

In such a time of reflection, here is a question — what do we think of when we think of home? Home is meant to be a place of rest. But, that is difficult when a family rents what their income allows them to afford and finds that can result in a variety of housing issues and challenges. Home is meant to be a foundation from which to thrive. However, that is hard to do when a large portion of limited monthly income goes toward housing costs, leaving little for other necessities or savings. Home is meant to be a place of peace. Yet, for current homeowners who need repairs done and cannot afford market rates, peace can be replaced by worry as they face unsafe porches and leaking roofs.

Imagining what home means reminds us that home also means neighbors and the opportunity to experience neighbor love. For those who dream of home as a place of rest, a place to thrive, and a place of peace, there is great joy in seeing the power of community come alongside them in helping attain those realities. United, the Habitat community celebrated with Rosa and her daughter this past



year as they moved into their very own new home. For the five other partner families whose builds are on the near horizon, they know the community

is ready to build side by side with them. For the five homeowners who completed repairs on their homes, along with the six others who have scheduled repairs, neighbor love is experienced in the pounding of hammers and cutting of boards. In this season of thankfulness, we give praise to God for providing every resource needed to serve others. We are blessed by every family as we develop relationships with them and are grateful for the opportunity to partner with them in building their own dreams. And with deep gratitude, we are thankful for the blessing of community that helps make this possible — donors, volunteers, and supporters who are united in the shared vision that a place where neighbors

love neighbors is a place we are all proud to call home!

MISSION

Seeking to put God's love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities, and hope.

Meet Zachariah

AT THE YOUNG AGE OF 9, life changed dramatically for Zack. He experienced the effects of a condition known as AVM, and over the course of two days, this active boy went from having full mobility to being paralyzed and in need of a wheelchair.

Following high school, Zack moved into his own apartment, but then became a self-described hermit for nearly two years. But, he came to a point of being ready for a change. He took advantage of services offered by the local Crossroads Community Services Board and began job training with the Wilson Workforce and Rehabilitation Center. Through this he began working at the Southside Virginia Family YMCA in Farmville, where he recently celebrated 10 years of employment. Serving in a variety of roles over the years, always with a friendly smile, Zack has made an impact on so many in the local community.

Continuing his journey of transformation, Zack is currently working towards his degree at Southside Virginia Community College, with the hope to eventually pursue a further degree, perhaps in recreation therapy. In addition, athletic pursuits also drive him. He has taken part in the Ukrop's 10k in Richmond and can often be found racing around town and on the High Bridge Trail.

Zack has a history of setting goals and attaining them. Now, that vision is fixed on becoming a homeowner. Having embarked on this journey in the Habitat homeownership program, he still has a mixture of awe and disbelief. Zack looks forward to having a quiet place to call his own, along with a new level of accessibility that can be tailored to his specific needs. Reflecting on his life, Zack notes, "The common theme in getting where I am is community." Community services by various agencies have proven beneficial



"The common theme in getting where I am is community."



Zack volunteering at the Restore

to him. He also notes the power of community in the family that donated a wheelchair accessible van to him, so he would not have to rely on the local bus. In community, he is a part of a local group of friends who enjoy social fellowship and exercising together. They even helped him apply for a race wheelchair through the Challenged Athletes Foundation, so now he is faster than ever!

Zack gives back to his community, including volunteering for various programs and summer camps at the Y, coaching others through a Couch to 5k program, and serving on the board

for the apartments where he currently lives. Soon, the community will continue to be by his side, helping him build his home. As a teenager, Zack never imagined he would live on his own. Then he had his own apartment. And one day in the near future, he again will do what he never imagined possible — he will be a homeowner. As such, he will pay an affordable monthly mortgage, made possible in part by all the volunteers who help build the home, thereby lessening the cost of construction. The power of community continues!

Meet Amy

WHEN ASKED ABOUT what led her to apply with Habitat to become a homeowner, Amy simply smiled and said, "All this started with Will." Back in 2008, while pregnant with her son, Amy was looking for a new place to live. She was able to find a rental at a local apartment complex, right before

Will was born. And, they have lived there to this day.

Having grown up in her family's home, she hoped to one day have a house that she and Will could call their very own. Amy particularly longs for a yard, as Will loves visiting his grandparents' home and exploring the great outdoors surrounding their place. Learning about Habitat from a friend, Amy submitted her application and began praying about it. After being approved for the homeownership program, the first thing she wanted to do was tell Will the good news. But their celebration faded to a new challenge. This past May, Amy felt she needed to go to the hospital. She drove to the ER but then found upon arrival that she could not move out of the car. Will ran inside and

asked for help. Amy had suffered a stroke and would spend the next weeks recovering in a rehabilitation center. All along, her goal was to be home by Father's Day in order to spend that special day with her son. And, that is exactly what happened!

Amy worried the effects of the stroke would hamper her ability to participate in the Habitat program, as all future homeowners are required to volunteer 200 hours per adult. Typically this is done working on the build site of your own home and the home of another Habitat partner family. However, volunteer hours can be tailored to specific circumstances. As such, Amy has given many hours helping in the Habitat administrative office and at the Habitat ReStore. She notes that both working toward her homeowner goal and being active at the ReStore have aided her greatly in the recovery process from her stroke. Amy particularly enjoys her time volunteering, remarking that everyone is so kind and helpful. That spirit of community will continue as their build begins and volunteers serve alongside this family.

Amy looks forward to a quiet place to settle, a home where Will can explore all of his creative curiosity. And learn some new skills. In preparation for taking care of a yard, Will is getting instruction in using the weedeater, along with other yard maintenance, from his uncle and grandfather. One doesn't need to talk to Amy long to understand how important her son is to her. Showing the amazing depths of a mother's love, Amy remarks,

"I will do anything I can for him." Whether overcoming a stroke or working toward building a lifelong place to create new memories, Amy continues to prove just that!



Amy volunteering at the ReStore



"I will do anything I can for him."

Rosa's Home

EARLIER THIS YEAR, the community gathered to celebrate a Home Dedication with Rosa and her daughter, who both spent many hours and many Saturdays bringing their dream to life. As Rosa's pastor opened the ceremony, he noted how the church had come together in prayer over this when Rosa initially applied. Members of the Prince Edward County Committee of Piedmont Habitat presented a special housewarming gift to mark the occasion. In addition, welcome home cards made by youth groups from Farmville Baptist Church and Farmville United Methodist Church were shared. During a Bible presentation, thanksgiving was made for the many blessings of God in making possible both this house and the entire mission of Habitat. The keys were then presented to Rosa by another longtime Habitat homeowner family. Finally, a pair of giant scissors was handed to Rosa and the ribbon was cut. Rosa and her daughter walked through the front door, eager to enjoy the fruits of their labor.

Every Habitat home depends on the tremendous generosity of volunteers, donors, and supporters who give of themselves to make each build possible. Over 153 volunteers spent 701 hours on this build, representing



Volunteer Eric Eberly

individuals, businesses, churches, and local organizations. Volunteer groups included: Helton House, Heritage Baptist Church, Prince Edward Committee, Longwood APO, Faith Bible Fellowship, Farmville United Methodist Church, Walk2Campus, and Farmville Baptist. Please see the sidebar for a listing of those who sponsored the construction financially and the local professionals who helped with the build.

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In addition to our sponsors, we want to thank the following local professionals for their expertise.

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From left to right:
Volunteer Pam
Harvey replacing
siding, Helton
House, Kindness
Matters, Tony
Huddleston
caulking windows

Serving Even More

2021 MARKED the first year of offering affordable home repairs across the entire service area. This allows for even more people to be served beyond affordable homeownership new build opportunities, as repair applications are accepted year-round.

This program is designed for homeowners who need assistance with minor exterior repairs to help preserve the health, safety, and longevity of their home. Although this service is available for anyone who qualifies, almost every applicant has been a senior living alone in a home they have owned for many years. As with the homeowner program, repairs require repayment. Significant cost reduction is available based on the household income.

Possible repairs include ramps, railings, porches, exterior windows and doors, minor roof damage, gutters, mobile home underpinning, pressure washing, general painting, and more. This year saw five repairs completed. Items addressed included replacing deteriorated siding, making steps safer, and repairing doors and windows to improve energy efficiency. Although these may be classified as minor, they



can make a major impact on the life of the home.

Currently, there are six more repairs slated for completion, and applications continue to arrive. With the demand for this program, a new dedicated position has been added to the staff. This year, Habitat welcomed Mike Lopez as the first Director of Repairs. Mike brings an excitement for the mission alongside decades of expertise.

Repairs are happening in all six counties served by Piedmont Habitat, and there is an ongoing need for volunteers. In addition to the generosity of individual volunteers, two groups deserve highlighting. Volunteers from Helton House gave their time on this repair and on a new home build. Students representing Kindness Matters, an organization from Central High School led by Jean Kunath, also served joyfully. Since 2017,

this group has helped with builds and repairs across four different counties!

The need for affordable repairs, particularly among seniors, has also resonated with local funders, including the following: Centra, Walter J. Payne Foundation, Counties of Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Nottoway, and Prince Edward, the Town of Blackstone, Nelson County Community Fund, J&E Berkley Foundation, Community Foundation of the Central Blue Ridge, and Blackstone Walmart. Thanks to all who volunteer and all who donate, the repair program will continue to further expand the mission of loving neighbors through shelter.



**To volunteer, please contact
Mary Shepherd at mary@piedmonthabitat.org.**

Building Bonds

WHEN MR. LOVING LEARNED that Habitat had a repair program available in Nelson County, he reached out in hope of having both his front and back deck repaired. Upon closer inspection, the repair team decided that both needed to be removed and replaced. The back deck in particular did not allow for safe exit from his home.

Mr. Loving joined the action and worked alongside the Habitat staff and volunteers in completing his repair. Along the way, he sharpened his home maintenance skills and helped build a sturdy structure that will last for years to come.

But, he wasn't the only one who benefitted from this repair. Ray Spivey is a member of Woodland Baptist Church and there learned about a need for repair volunteers. Lending a helping hand is part of his belief that people are called to bless their neighbors. Coming out to help rebuild the decks, he didn't need to travel far, as Mr. Loving's home is less than ten miles from his own. Working shoulder to shoulder, they



also discovered that their sons knew each other. Ray enjoyed seeing the smile on Mr. Loving's face and now plans to go by and visit from time to time. Speaking of the experience, Ray remarked, "It was more of a blessing to me!"



Under Construction

THE LAND HAS BEEN CLEARED on the next new home build. Located in Buckingham County, this upcoming construction is highly anticipated by Katrice and her three girls, introduced in last year's year-end newsletter. She continues to work in healthcare at Centra Southside Community Hospital, experiencing the many challenges of front line workers during Covid. Her girls were excited to return to in-person learning, enjoying seeing friends and, for her oldest, trying out new experiences as a high school freshman.



In addition to her job and raising her family, Katrice worked diligently to complete all of her pre-build

requirements. She even discovered the property for her build. Hoping to stay close to where she currently lives, as she has a great family support network nearby, Katrice noticed some land in the area for sale and notified Habitat. Now, as Katrice and the girls daily drive by the build site, they look forward to a quieter location and a place where they can put their personal family touch. Soon, they will join in with a community of volunteers and help build this dream from the ground up.

Together We Build

THE WORK OF PIEDMONT HABITAT would not be possible without the leadership of the local county committees. Serving a large region that includes the counties of Buckingham, Charlotte, Cumberland, Nelson, Nottoway, and Prince Edward can only happen as local residents seek to serve their neighbors. Working with Piedmont Habitat Community Outreach Director Russell Dove, each committee consists of a variety of people who work to raise awareness, volunteers, and funds to help the Habitat programs succeed in their own backyards.

These groups include representatives of various service organizations and Social Services, retired individuals, business owners, Habitat homeowners, and many more. This past year, each group participated in a variety of local events in order to inform the community regarding Habitat opportunities. In Buckingham, members participated in the Juneteenth

Nelson
update
event



celebration, enjoying talking with many who stopped by their booth. The Cumberland committee held its first annual Cumberland Bazaar, a gathering of local vendors and crafters, hosted at Fitzgerald Memorial Baptist Church. Up in Nelson, the group hosted an outdoor event at Pine Hill Baptist Church to inform the community about Habitat services. The Nottoway team partnered with the Blackstone Volunteer Fire Department for the Nottoway Kick-Off event,

which included a chicken dinner fundraiser along with distribution of applications for the affordable repair program. In addition, the group took part in a local Juneteenth event. While certain events in Prince Edward had to be cancelled this year, including the annual Pig Roast and Golden Hammer Awards, that committee hosted the home dedication ceremony for Rosa's build. They are also excited to have a festive entry in this year's Farmville Christmas parade. And, all six county committees will be essential in getting the word out for the upcoming open application period for the affordable homeownership program, to be held in early 2022.

The mission only continues thanks to local dedicated volunteers such as these and with the support of local individuals, churches, businesses, and organizations such as: Melvin C. Draft Foundation, United Way of Prince Edward County, Rockfish Presbyterian Church, Kyanite Mining Company, and St. Luke's Episcopal Church.

In addition, much gratitude and appreciation goes to the local volunteers from across the region who comprise the Board of Directors, overseeing the overall strategy of Piedmont Habitat — Cheryl Gee, Cheryl Steele, Dan Weese, Fred McGee, Gary Elder, Donna McRae-Jones, John Miller, Lisa Gallimore, Pauline Stokes, Sasha Johnson, and Sheri Almond.

Right, Cumberland
Bazaar

Below, Nottoway
Kick-Off event and
Buckingham Juneteenth



ReStore

THE FIRST HABITAT ReSTORE opened in Winnipeg, Canada. Today, shoppers can browse the great deals at over 900 ReStores nationwide. The ReStore is a home improvement center where gently used items are donated and then sold to the public. Many people look for great bargain items, including furniture, home goods, appliances, building materials, paint, a wide selection of books, exercise equipment, and much more. Others value being able to donate their older items. For some, the ReStore offers an opportunity to volunteer. All are helping to fund the mission of safe, decent, affordable housing.

This year, the ReStore enjoyed an amazing opportunity, thanks to



Hampden-Sydney Chi Phi volunteers

the support of the Longwood Small Business Development Center and funding from the Small Business Administration through the CARES Act. After acceptance into their Refocus 2021 program, ReStore Manager Sara Beachum worked

with Dr. Vince Magnini, Brandon Hennessey, and staff from Letterpress Communications to strategize on ways to market with the goal of increased sales—which ultimately leads to serving even more families through housing. Sara looks forward to new customers discovering the store through this venture and is also thankful for all the customers who have continued to shop the ReStore and helped this year's sales surpass the previous year.

To not miss any of the new inventory and great deals, follow along on Facebook at Piedmont Habitat for Humanity ReStore and on Instagram at [piedmont_habitat_restore](#).

Tithe

CLARENCE JORDAN, the pioneer of the movement that helped birth Habitat for Humanity, once said, "It is not enough to limit your love to your own nation, to your own group. You must respond with love to those outside of it.... This concept enables people to live together not as nations, but as the human race." Based on the Biblical concept, every Habitat affiliate has the opportunity to give a portion of their unrestricted funds to the tithe. These funds are used to support Habitat's work around the world. The tithe can be designated to a certain partner country or to one of three general funds: the Global Mission Fund, the Orphans and Vulnerable Groups

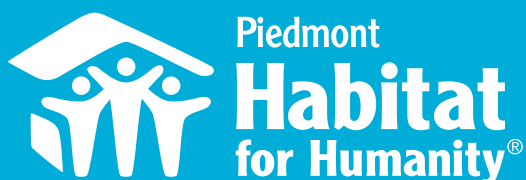


Habitat home in India

Fund, or the International Disasters Fund. Piedmont Habitat has given a tithe every year since 1992. As a result, 62 international families have been served! We are blessed to be a blessing.

Did you know ...

... that all Habitat Partner Families have: 1) A demonstrated need for an improved housing solution, 2) The ability to pay an affordable mortgage or affordable repair loan, and 3) Are willing to partner with Habitat in a variety of ways, including future homeowners investing hundreds of hours in volunteering? Your ongoing support makes it possible to continue to serve our neighbors with loving action. Thank you.



The mission is possible only with your help

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