

Habitat Happenings

MARCH 2020



COVID-19 UPDATES

Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity discusses current procedures taken to address the COVID-19 pandemic, including the opening of an online store!

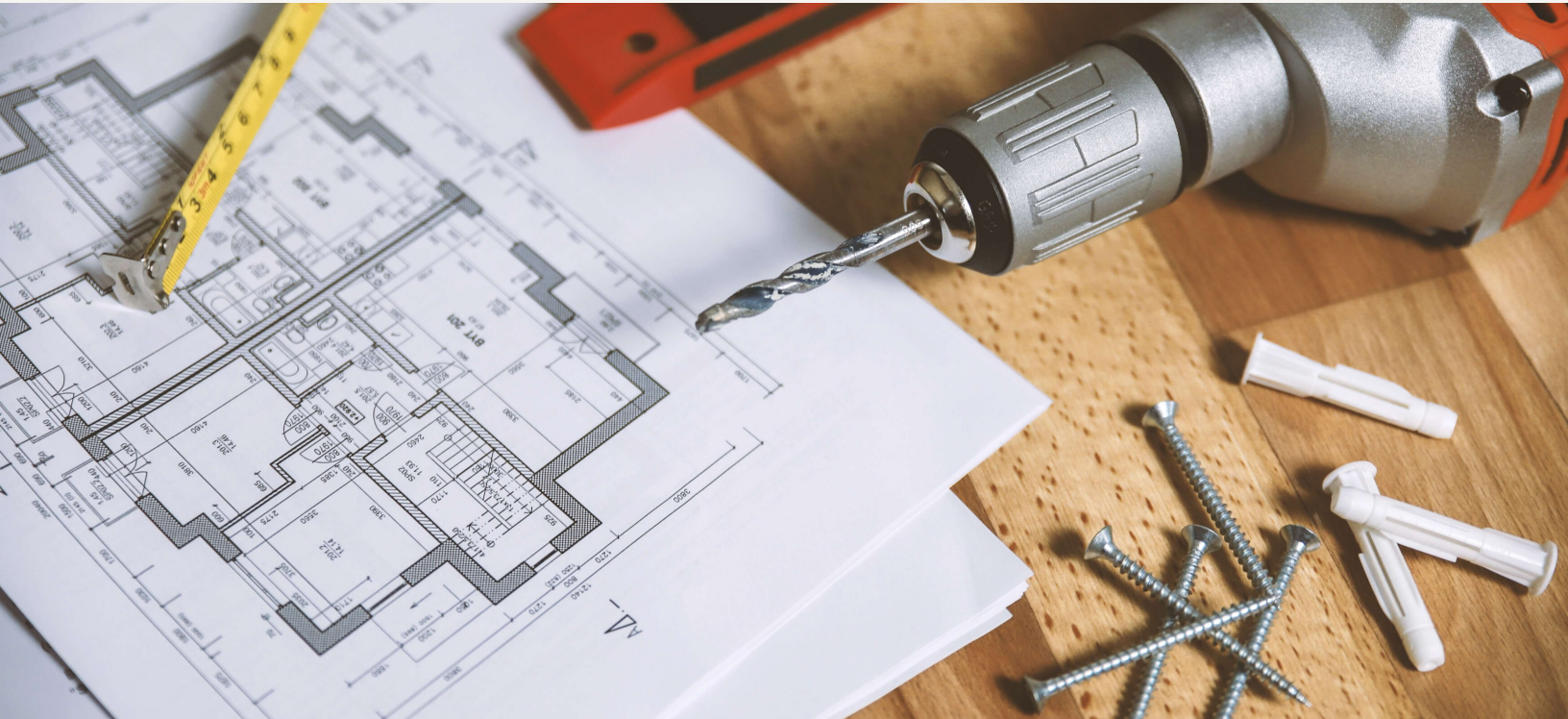
GIVEBIG 2020

24 hours of giving through the most socially-distant fundraiser you can participate in. Can we count on YOU to give BIG on April 28th?

DIY MOTHER'S DAY PRESENTS

Looking for ideas for mom this Mother's Day? Wild Rivers goes over some easy DIY gift ideas!

Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity



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Contents

COVID-19 Update from WRHFH	3
COVID-19 Update from WRHFH (continued)	4
Easy Ways to Give	5
Apply for Current Projects	5
giveBIG St. Croix Valley 2020	5
Home Energy Efficiency Program	6
The Importance of Home	7
WRHFH Community Updates	8
DIY Mother's Day Presents	9
Thank You to our Sponsors	10

COVID-19 Update from WRHFH

Coronavirus Measures

Our Online Shop is Open!

With each passing day, we all find ourselves trying to adapt to the measures required to combat the spread of COVID-19. For many states, and countries all around the world, “shelter in place” is the practice being used to flatten the curve and save countless lives. From the very beginning, Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity has complied with recommendations from the CDC as well as orders from Governor Tony Evers to ensure our work environment remains safe for employees, volunteers, and customers alike. On Tuesday, March 24th, we temporarily closed both of our ReStores due to the Safer At Home Order issued by the Governor.

Our affiliate staff have been working remotely and continue to accept and evaluate program applications. Applications are available through our website; email us if you have questions or concerns. There is a lot of uncertainty right now with talk of different businesses reopening, and we want to be clear that we have no plans of resuming total operation until it can be done so with proper precautions and the go-ahead from the Governor. As the situation continues to evolve, we will assess our options and follow the guidelines that comes from the state. Please keep an eye on our Website and our Facebook page to get updates on changes to operation hours.

Keeping our ReStores closed takes a huge hit on our fundraising for the year, and we have made

the decision to reopen our ReStores in a limited fashion through an online shop. This new, virtual storefront is our safest way to keep business open and allow you to continue and shop for the products you love!

We'll answer a few of the questions you might have!

Q. How can I visit the online shop?

A. Click [here](#) to be sent directly to our online shop or you can always visit our home page and select the “Online ReStore E-Store” button underneath the “RESTORES” menu.

Q. Can I order online and pick-up my order at your ReStores?

A. Yes! After you check out, a member of our ReStore staff will be in touch with you shortly to arrange a day that you can pick up your order. Due to social distancing rules, we ask that you remain in your car while we bring your order out to you. If you purchase a larger item, be sure that you bring necessary help to load it into your vehicle, as ReStore staff will be unable to assist. Thank you for understanding.

Q. Where do you ship?

A. We do not offer shipping options for our online store, all orders must be picked up at our respective stores.

Coronavirus Measures

COVID-19 Update from WRHFH

Q&A Continued...

Q. What forms of payment do you accept?

A. We accept payments through PayPal. If you do not have a PayPal account, you can still checkout using the Pay with Debit or Credit Card option on the PayPal prompt.

Q. What if there is an item that I want that you don't have listed?

A. Check back often, we will be continually updating our storefront with a variety of items. Only items listed on the storefront are listed for sale.

Q. I ordered items from the St. Croix Falls ReStore, but in my confirmation email the pickup address is listed as your Spooner location; do I have to pick up my items there?

A. No; through our website it is only possible for us to setup one store location for in-person pickup. Items marked under the St. Croix Falls category are available for pickup in St. Croix Falls, so please select carefully.



We are deeply concerned about the impact COVID-19 will have on the families we serve. Now, more than ever, it is important to raise the funds necessary to build and repair homes and hope for the hardworking individuals and families that need a stable, safe and decent place to live. Although the measures we have taken are necessary to prevent the spread of COVID-19 into our communities, it will significantly inhibit progress we wanted to make on building and repairing homes this year.

When addressing these difficult times, Habitat for Humanity International CEO Jonathan Reckford shared the following message: "May those of us who are merely inconvenienced remember those whose lives are at stake. May we who have no risk factors remember the most vulnerable. May we who settle in for quarantine at home remember those who have no home. As fear grips our country, let us choose love."

If you are able, we hope you will consider making a donation so that we may continue to build homes at a time when home and the sense of safety and security matter more than ever. While we've paused home construction volunteer groups, we're eager to get everyone back to work as soon as possible. All of us at Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity continue to keep you in our thoughts and prayers-our homeowners, volunteers, supporters, and the entire community.

Easy Ways to Give

Carpenters Club: Help your neighbors through planned, monthly donations. As a member, you will be updated on the progress of builds and you will be invited to events including groundbreaking and home dedication ceremonies.

Give Online: Visit <https://wildrivershabitat.org/easy-ways-to-give> and click on the DONATE button

Tribute Gifts: Give in memory or honor of your loved ones to help others.

Planned Giving: Include Wild Rivers into your will/estate/trust.

Give Smart: Anyone 70 1/2 or older can transfer IRA distributions and appreciate stock to Wild Rivers.

Thrivent Choice: Eligible members can direct Choice Dollars to Wild Rivers.

smile.amazon.com: Amazon donates 0.5% of your purchase when you select Wild Rivers.

Cars for Homes: Donate your junk vehicle, motorcycle, RV, or boat and help Wild Rivers.

Apply for Current Projects

Even though our offices are temporarily closed, our staff is still working remotely accepting and reviewing applications for partner families and home repairs!

We are looking to partner with two families for new home builds located in Burnett and Washburn County. By working with us from beginning to end, we can help prospective individuals prepare for the various responsibilities of homeownership, including learning about personal finances, mortgages, maintenance and upkeep of homes, and much more.

If you are interested, you can visit our Website for eligibility details and program requirements.

If you are a low-income homeowner struggling with improving and maintaining your home for any number of reasons, consider applying for our Home Repair Program. Repairs that the program can help you with are related to poor structural conditions, safety, landscaping and painting, as well as special needs. Projects can include porch and deck, window, roof, gutter, siding and trim, and wheelchair ramp and railing repair or installation. This program was recently expanded to include providing energy efficiency upgrades in addition to our standard repairs; currently we are offering homeowners the ability to replace their current thermostat with a new Google Nest Thermostat at no charge.

giveBIG St. Croix Valley 2020

We are honored to be participating this year in giveBIG St. Croix Valley! This is a one-day online event that encourages our community to log on to giveBIGSCV.org, connect with causes they care about and contribute. giveBIG St. Croix Valley includes nonprofit organizations that serve a broad section of communities in Polk, St. Croix and Pierce counties and always happens on the last Tuesday in April. This year, giveBIG St. Croix Valley will be on April 28th, 2020. giveBIG St. Croix Valley is an extraordinary opportunity to bring our counties together, raise money and awareness for nonprofits.

Every donation, big or small, gives Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity the opportunity to make BIG things happen. Be a part of 24 hours of giving on April 28th and make a BIG impact on our community.

Home Energy Efficiency Program

New
Program

A New Way to Create Sustainable Housing

In March of this year, we officially launched a new program to preserve and modernize affordable housing availability within our service areas. The Home Energy Efficiency Program is a part of our Home Repair Program and is made possible through a joint partnership with Focus on Energy and Habitat for Humanity International. It will pioneer new ways for us to help low income households to create energy-efficient and sustainable houses.

“This program allows homeowners to make an easy home repair to increase energy efficiency,” our Executive Director Jennifer Johnson said. “Participation also opens the door for families to participate with Habitat programs before their need becomes too great.”

Currently, through the program we are offering income qualified homeowners in our service area the opportunity to replace their current thermostat with a new Google Nest thermostat at no charge. Applicants need to provide proof of income, proof of homeownership, and complete an application. Once verified, applicants will schedule a date to have their current thermostat replaced with the Nest. Those who are interested can print out an application online or call 715-553-0467 to have one mailed to them.



Box of Google Nest thermostats, provided by Focus on Energy

Google Nest is a learning thermostat that can save energy by preventing heating or cooling an empty home while you are away. It learns what temperature you like and when you like it, as well as when you're more likely to be home, or away. It builds a custom temperature schedule to help save energy and keep you comfortable. Your Google Nest thermostat can be controlled on the wall or through your phone or tablet if it is connected to a wifi network.



The Importance of Home

For many of us, our home is our biggest investment. It also tends to be our most important possession; according to the “It’s Not Just Stuff” survey conducted by Allstate in 2016, 62% of Americans would rank their home as “Very Important” to them, and homes were found to be the most important possession of respondents overall. Now that we are officially into spring, it’s time to get to work taking care of our home and doing those jobs that winter prevented us from doing. Start with these ten home maintenance tips to keep your home in good shape!

- Inspect your roof. Your roof is your home’s first line of defense against water damage, and it’s better to address problems before the next storm hits. Take notes of possible signs of damage, sagging, and aging.
- Clean your gutters. Gutters protect your home by directing rain away, and when they get clogged it can open your home to water damage.
- Clean or replace HVAC filters. A dirty filter forces your heat, ventilation, and air-conditioning system to work

harder. A dirty filter will also circulate dust and allergens through your home.

- Clean your dryer vent. Not all of your lint will get caught in the lint trap; some can make its way into the dryer vent and pose a fire risk. A clean vent will also reduce the time your dryer has to run, saving you money.
- Replace the batteries in your smoke detectors. You never know when you’ll need them; hopefully it’s never, but sometimes it can be a matter of life or death. Take the time to change the batteries while you’re addressing other maintenance on your home.
- Every spring we suggest homeowners check the hoses on their washing machine to make sure they are still tight. Washing machines tend to shake and loosen up hose connections. It’s also a good time to clean behind there and find that one missing sock.
- Check your sump pump annually. Make sure it is working properly before the spring thaw.
- Go through everything you no longer use—donate to the ReStore or give away to friends and family and rejoice in all the space that emerges free of clutter, revealing areas that might need a touch up, minor fixing, etc.
- Test your air conditioning unit in spring so if there are any issues to address, you can do so before you need it up and running in summer.
- Remove screens and wash them with a hose and store them for winter. Your windows will let in more light, then they are ready for spring.

In the Community

WRHFH Community Updates



Lance Ausing and Rick Nelson at the Better Buildings: Better Business Conference.

In March, staff and board of Wild Rivers participated in several community events and conferences. Among them, Jennifer Johnson was a speaker at the Community Resource Forum and presented on the impact Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity has in Rusk County and the rest of our service area. Just a few days beforehand, Lance—our Board Chair—and Rick—our Construction Supervisor—were at the Better Buildings: Better Business Conference in the Dells. Attending events like these are not only key for staying up-to-date with current trends and changes in the industry, but they serve as a key method to reach out with other businesses and people like you!

Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity Awarded \$10,000 Grant

This Spring, Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity received a \$10,000 grant from the Hugh J. Andersen Foundation. Their support of Wild Rivers has a tremendous impact in communities throughout our service area. We are proud of the work that we are doing together to help families secure a place to call home.

The grant has been designated for home repair efforts within our service area, which includes four counties in northwestern Wisconsin: Burnett, Polk, Rusk and Washburn. The Home Repair program assists income qualified homeowners with maintaining and improving their residence, helping individuals complete repairs such as wheelchair ramp installation, deck, window, roof, gutter and siding. The grant also will help to expand the new Home Energy Efficiency program, which aims to make housing more energy efficient. Our goal with these programs is to help even more people find a decent place to live without necessarily building them new homes.

The Hugh J. Andersen Foundation was incorporated on March 2, 1962 and honored the Andersen Family values of giving back to the community, being responsible citizens, and caring for their neighbors.



DIY Mother's Day Presents

Mother's Day is coming soon, and us at Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity think that no matter her age, moms will always love receiving homemade gifts. If you're feeling crafty, here are some handmade Mother's Day gift ideas! She might not hang your gifts on the fridge, but hanging them on the wall might be even better.

- Make a wine rack from old coffee or tomato cans. Clean the cans (you'll need about four to twelve depending on how big you want) and take off any labels, then use a can opener to remove the bottom of each can so they are open from both sides. If there are any rough edges, file them down. Use spray paint to spray the inside of your cans a bright color, and use white for the outside. After the cans are completely dry, arrange them side-by-side into two to four groups. These groups will form the horizontal rows of your wine rack. Use E6000 glue to glue the cans together into rows and secure them with binder clips or clothespins to make sure nothing shifts. Once it has dried, start gluing your rows together! You'll need to stack the cans and mark where to put the glue. Once you're done, all that is left is to add some wine!

- Turn a rusty grater into a jewelry holder! Take off the surface rust, give it a coat of spray paint, and you'll have the perfect place for mom to store her earrings and prevent them from getting lost.
- Turn a scratched cookie sheet into a magnet board! Start by giving it a couple coats of spray paint for color, and then measure the dimensions of the inside of the cookie sheet. Adhere your choice of paper to the inside of the cookie sheet to decorate, rubbing it firmly to reduce any bubbling. If you're feeling especially crafty, you could even adhere fabric to the inside instead of paper.





YOU DON'T HAVE TO LIFT A HAMMER TO HELP

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity would also like to recognize local businesses that have supported us in the past two years, and we encourage all of our neighbors to show them your love and kindness. Thank you to Adventures Restaurant & Pub - Siren, Albus Conveyors, Inc. in Ladysmith, Bernick's Pepsi-Cola in Dresser, Cafe Wren, Dairy Queen in St. Croix Falls, St. Croix Casino Danbury, St. Croix Falls Cinema, FAWN-DOE-ROSA, First Supply, Holiday Inn Express in St. Croix Falls, Holiday in St. Croix Falls, Loggers Bar & Grill, LolliCakes, Pour House, Siren Eyecare in Siren, St Croix Valley Golf Course, the Subway locations in Spooner, Siren, and Osceola, Voyager Village, Wal-Mart, and Wildflour Bakery & Catering. We have not forgotten what you have done for us!



RESTORE HOURS AND DONATION HOURS

ReStore Hours:

Our ReStores are currently open in a limited capacity, and only serve as pickup locations for our items available online. If you wish to shop, please visit our online store!

Donation Hours:

Currently we cannot process any donations. We ask that you do not leave any items at our ReStores at this time; it is considered illegal dumping and costs us resources to dispose of items.

