

Habitat Happenings

FEBRUARY 2021



Wild Rivers
Habitat
for Humanity®

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

This issue, we spotlighted longtime employee and Spooner ReStore manager, Mary Jo Shaw!

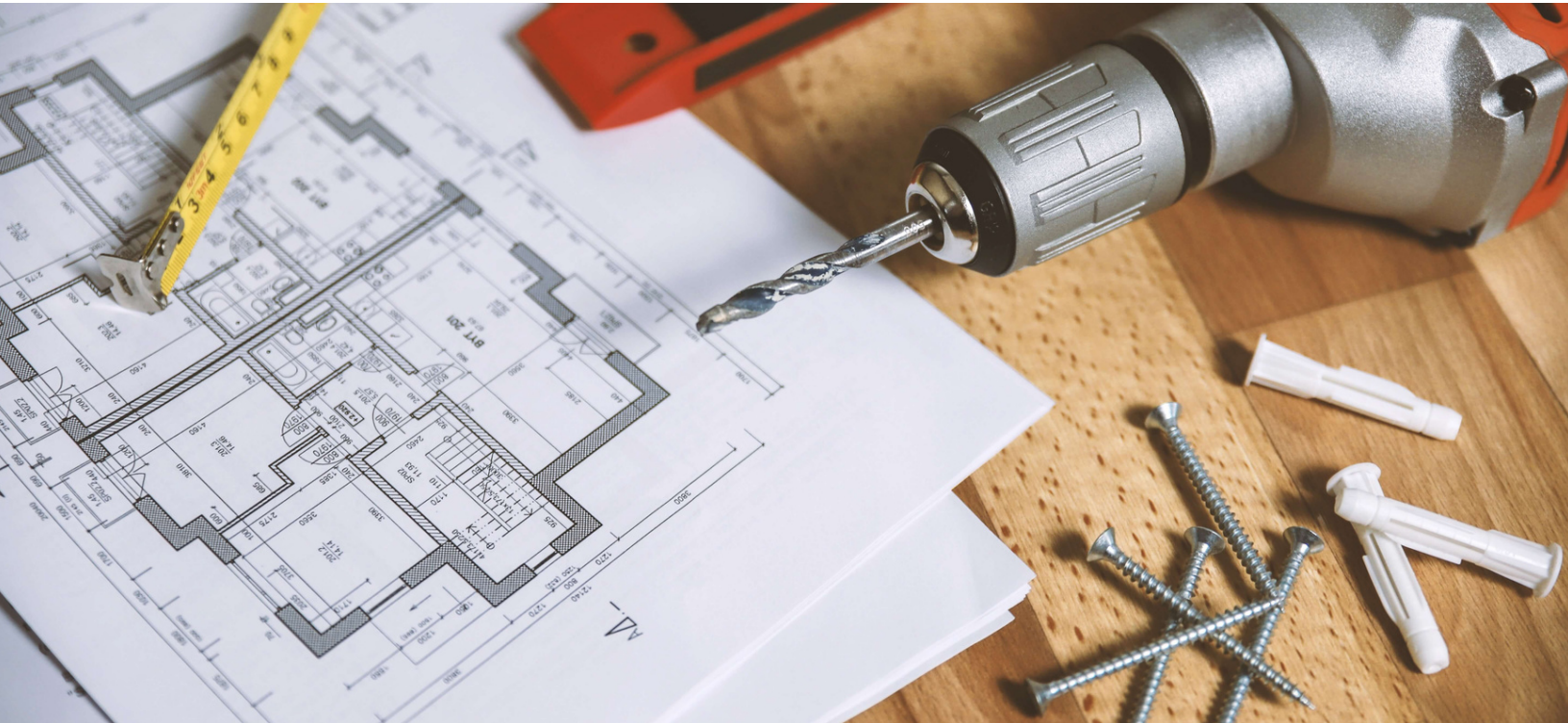
PROJECT SPOTLIGHT

Take a peak at some before and after photos of a wheelchair ramp installation we did in 2020.

DONATION HIGHLIGHT

Learn more about the hoosier cabinet sensation in the 20's as we take a look at an antique cabinet.

Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity



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A message from the team

Throughout 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped every facet of our lives. As we begin a new year, it might be tempting to close the book on 2020 and not look back. But when we do take time to reflect, we see stories of hope despite the despair. Stories of people coming together in new ways to meet the needs of our neighbors. Stories of families persevering through difficult times. Stories of making the most with the hand we were dealt. When the pandemic began, one of the first things on our minds was how we would safely keep our doors open and be financially able to keep helping those in need, specially during a time when we were needed more than ever to step up: our ReStores serve as a major segment of our fundraising, and between mandatory shutdowns and people sheltering in place, we feared that our fundraising would take a major blow. Thankfully, through hard work and innovative ideas from each member of our team, our organization was able to not only keep up, but thrive in this new normal.

When we look back on 2020, all of us at Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity can be proud that we answered the call to help those in need by completing over \$100,000 in critical home repairs, launching an emergency rent and mortgage assistance program for those impacted by COVID-19, assisted Benjamin's House with two home builds, and are busy prepping for new home builds and the launch of brand new programs in 2021.

One of our great accomplishments of 2020 was learning that we were one of 184 awardees chosen for a 2020 AARP Community challenge grant from AARP Livable Communities and AARP Wisconsin. This grant was awarded to fund our tool lending library project: project that is part of our initiative to grow the number of people that we can assist within our service area. This library will work just like a traditional library, but instead of books homeowners and renters will be able to check out tools to complete home projects. It's important to us to be able to get high quality equipment into the hands of those with limited resources, so that they can maintain their homes and have a decent place to live.

Since the pandemic began last February, Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity's top concern remains the safety of our employees, volunteers, and ReStore customers. While we are hopeful that in 2021 we can return to our usual donation acceptance process and be able to greet you with smiles not covered by masks, we are also listening closely to CDC guidelines and state guidelines. We would like to thank everyone for their patience and endless generosity last year: we're all in this together!



The Health Implications of Moving as a Senior

Moving from your home can be an arduous process for anyone. For seniors, moving can affect physical, mental, and emotional well-being, and add confusion and stress to their later years. But each person's living situation is unique, and the benefits and drawbacks of moving as a senior can look wildly different based on how an individual wants to live their life. With home improvements and technology helping older adults live at home longer than ever, many seniors find themselves weighing their options when it comes time to decide whether to stay at home or move to an assisted living community. Here are some of the pros and cons that can help make that decision a bit clearer.

When making the decision to age in place or relocate, don't underestimate the health implications that come with a change of address. For seniors, uprooting and moving to a new home can mean confusion and worry on top of the physical effort. Relocation Stress Syndrome (RSS) is defined as the anxiety and loneliness that can follow moving to a new place. While RSS can affect people of any age, it can have a negative impact on the physical and psychological well-being of seniors in particular. When added to the emotional toll of leaving their home, symptoms of RSS can include depression, stress, and decreased cognitive function, all of which have been associated with lower quality of life and shorter life expectancy. The impact can be even more profound when someone has lived in the home all or most of their lives; for some, it can be difficult to let go of their emotional attachment to the experiences and moments that happened there.

In later years, aging itself can increase an individual's risk of depression and isolation, and moving during that period in life can emphasize those effects. That's why, as a baseline, it's vital to make sure any senior has the tools and opportunities to be with or around other people as they age. While many senior living communities offer socializing programs for residents, they're still an unfamiliar place. Many older adults would rather socialize within their own home and community. Senior socialization can be as simple as regular calls with family, joining friends for group activities like volunteering or games, or just being in public. Everyone's situation is different, but with the right resources, many seniors see an improved quality of life when they're able to live at home longer. Seniors and their loved ones should take stock of the effort required to stay at home or relocate, the potential lifestyle changes, and what life would look like on the other side of the decision.

Apply for a Habitat Home

If you are ready to make the jump from renting to homeownership, or you are looking for an affordable and safe home for your family, consider partnering with Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity. We are looking for homeowners for a 2021 new home build in Spooner, Wisconsin. 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 have a credit score of at least 620, are able to make monthly mortgage and escrow payments, and a willingness to partner, you may qualify. To apply, please visit our website www.wildrivershabitat.org or call (715) 939-1390.



2020 Wheelchair Installation

Project Spotlight

The year 2020 was undoubtedly a tough year for everyone, but with all that's happened, our team at Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity is nonetheless proud of being able to complete over \$100,000 in home repairs this year! Our final project of 2020 was helping a family in Shell Lake assemble a wheelchair ramp for their front porch. A family member had suffered a fall and injured themselves, and with our help, they were able to regain their independence by being able to safely enter and exit their home again. We want to thank the contractors who worked with us, as well as everyone who took the time to make this happen!

Do you or somebody you know have small home repairs that need to be done? We are now accepting applications for Spring 2021! Please visit our website at <https://wildrivershabitat.org/home-repairs-or-painting> to learn more about how to apply!



Mary Jo Shaw

Employee Spotlight

Meet the Crew

Mary Jo Shaw has been working with Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity for three years, and within those three years, our Spooner ReStore has seen phenomenal growth and improvement. Nothing would have been possible without such a hardworking and dedicated employee like Mary. Our community outreach coordinator, Tatiana Trimble, spoke with Mary regarding her job, how she likes to spend her free time, and more! Read on to learn more about our very special employee spotlight this month!

Tatiana Trimble: What are some things that you enjoy about working with WRHFH?

Mary Jo Shaw: Wow, I don't even know where to start! Well, I just can't wait to come into work. The people that I work with are wonderful, they treat you like family. Not to mention, the customers are their own little family themselves. I love seeing our regulars!

What do you like to do in your free time?

It's hard to think about what my hobbies are, but I guess I would say photography is my main one. I love being outdoors, whether I'm fishing, camping, or taking care of my animals. I also really enjoy baking because I used to work at a bakery before working here.

In your opinion, what is the neatest donation that has been made at the Spooner ReStore?

I know this isn't really one item, but I enjoy seeing all the antique and vintage pieces that we get donated. I think they're special because they remind me of all the cool stuff I would find in my grandma's or great-grandma's house.



#Blessed

What are you most proud of accomplishing in 2020?

Well, first off, not getting Corona! But going off that, I am proud of staying healthy and active, despite the pandemic. And I guess I'm really glad the ReStore was able to open back up after the March shutdown. We've had a phenomenal year since our reopening!

What are some things you'd like to see WRHFH do in 2021?

As COVID continues, I'd really like to see our donation process improve. A lot of people still try dropping off items without having an appointment, which can set my whole day back. Hopefully, we will be able to have better luck this year! And of course, I'd love to see our ReStores open for the entire year.

New Year's Resolutions? Habitat's Your Solution!

New Year's resolutions can be a great way to reflect on the last year and set goals for the next one. Good resolutions don't have to be a drastic lifestyle change, and Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity has many opportunities for you to accomplish what you set out to do in 2021!

If your resolution is to give back to the community, consider volunteering at Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity. We engage people from all walks of life in rolling up their sleeves and lending their hands to our efforts, but you don't need a hammer to help! We have opportunities both in our ReStores and on build sites. With our help, families can achieve the strength, stability and independence they need to build a better future.

If one of your resolutions is to declutter, our ReStores can help! We accept donations of new or gently used furniture, appliances, home décor, building materials, and beyond. Drop off your

items at either our Spooner or St. Croix Falls ReStore locations by calling to set up an appointment, but check out our website first for the latest COVID procedures we are following for handling donations. You'll get the satisfaction of knowing your donations helped support local families - and didn't end up in the landfill. And all of your donations are tax-deductible!

For some of us, it can be a daunting task when our list of New Year's Resolutions includes making improvements or repairs to our home. For others, age, disability, or family circumstances can make crossing these resolutions off feel impossible. The Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity's Home Repair program might be the hand-up you need to accomplish your New Year's resolution to fix your home. Projects we can help you with include exterior painting, landscaping, minor repair services, and wheelchair ramp installation. We also are offering rent and mortgage assistance for individuals whose income was impacted by COVID-19. If you are interested in either of these programs, you can download an application from www.wildrivershabitat.org or call the Wild Rivers Habitat office at 715-939-1390 to have one mailed to you. Don't let a personal circumstance keep you from accomplishing your resolution to live in a safe and decent home.

2021 Wall Calendar Fundraiser

If you are looking for an easy way to show your support for us, we are selling 2021 Wall Calendars to raise funds for our 2021 construction and operations. Each calendar has images from Habitat for Humanity International and describes how deep of an impact you can have within your neighborhood by continuing to show your support to your local Habitat!



Congratulations, Blessing Basket Winners!

Katie Guzman

Kinda Featherly

Dawn & Jack Pearce

Charlie & Gloria Mattson

Josh Saunders

Sharon Wakefield

Maaren Spears

Sharon Asp

Pete Hopke

Sarah Zeien

Ravae Anderson

Angela Gorski

**Your Community
appreciates you!**



#blessed

*Thank you to those of
you who nominated
these outstanding
community members
and participating in
Blessing Baskets!*

Antique Hoosier

Donation Highlight



About Hoosier

This style of baker's cabinet, or as you may know it as a hoosier, peaked in America in the 1920s. Just a little over a decade later, these large pieces of furniture would be considered old-fashioned. Created in the famous hoosier state itself, this specific type of cabinetry came to be in the state of Indiana. Though we don't know for certain, it is believed that the first hoosier was built in 1898 by the leading company at the time, Hoosier Cabinet Manufacturing. There were several other companies throughout the 20s and 30s that were dominant in the hoosier cabinet industry, such as G.I Sellers and Sons and the McDougall Company. Throughout the

emergence of modern America, houses were being built at a rapid rate. At this point in time, it was not typical for kitchens to include built-in cabinetry. Originally meant to provide baker's a large kitchen cabinet with storage and counter space, there's no mystery that this innovative piece of furniture gained attention from thousands of Americans. According to Indiana Public Media, these stand-alone cupboards were selling at nearly 600 a day!

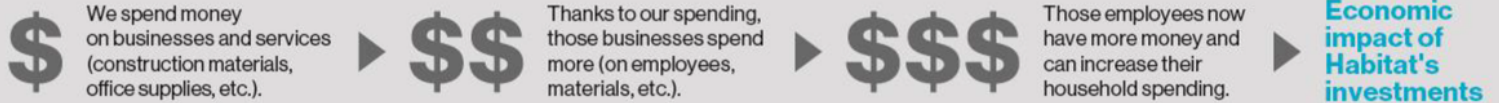
If you were to visit your local antique store, or searched around on Google, you'd notice that hoosiers came in several different shapes, sizes and differentiations, although they all had a similar stature. For example, the most conventional hoosier was about six feet tall and four feet wide, usually made out of a rich wood, like oak or pine. Since they started out for baking purposes, hoosiers typically included a lower section with storage space. The mid section was used for kneading bread or preparing meals, and can often be found made out of tin or another durable metal. Lastly, the top portion consisted of more storage space, such as two or more cabinets. By the height of their popularity, hoosier cabinets came included with various additions, such as a sugar sifter, built-in ant traps, and collapsible ironing boards. Antique collectors admire the absolute beauty, efficiency and timelessness that antique hoosiers embody.

This hoosier cabinet is available at the Spooner ReStore and E-store, and is priced for \$375. Interested in purchasing this item? Visit the Spooner ReStore, but hurry! This item will not last long!

Habitat for Humanity makes a tremendous impact on the lives of homeowners. Our work impacts health, environmental and educational outcomes; civic and social engagement; the financial stability of Habitat families; and local economies. This infographic details one component of our economic impact. See below to learn how Habitat's work contributes to our local economy by supporting jobs and purchasing local goods and services, creating a ripple effect that multiplies our investment to generate meaningful impact.

Beyond the house: How Habitat's investments ripple across local economies

An economic impact analysis



Our work in 2018



\$567,371

invested in operations, construction, rehabilitation and renovation

Our impact in 2018

18

jobs supported,
generating



\$331,909

in wages paid into
the local economy



\$826,807

economic impact
of Habitat's
investments



\$1.46

dollars injected into the economy
for every dollar invested by Habitat



\$22,965

in local and state
taxes paid



Top industries impacted:

1. Community food, housing, and other relief services
2. Real estate sales and property management
3. Owner-occupied dwellings

Results measure only the economic impact of affiliates as measured by affiliate expenditures on programming and operations. Additional factors contributing to economic impact (e.g., property taxes paid, homeowner spending) are not included. The economic impact was estimated using IMPLAN, an economic modeling software, based on data from affiliate financial documents.

Habitat Ready: Winter Weather

The dangers of winter weather are often overlooked. From extreme cold to ice storms to blizzards, winter weather can knock out heat, power, communications and transportation networks, and can immobilize entire regions. In order to protect your home and family, it is important to be prepared before winter weather strikes. Before winter weather:

- Review your family preparedness plan.
- Establish a family communications plan.
- Assemble a disaster supply kit.
- Insulate walls and attics, caulk and weather-strip doors and windows, and install storm windows or cover windows with plastic.
- Learn how to shut off water valves.
- Clear rain gutters, repair roof leaks, and trim tree branches that could fall on your home.
- Maintain chimneys and heating equipment by having them cleaned and inspected.
- Insulate pipes with insulation, newspaper or plastic to keep from freezing.
- Hire a contractor to check the structural ability of your roof to hold heavy weight from snow accumulation.
- Know the difference between an ADVISORY, WATCH and WARNING.
 - ADVISORY: Inconvenient winter weather is possible.
 - WATCH: Hazardous winter weather is likely within 36 hours. Stay tuned to a TV or radio for more information and be prepared.
 - WARNING: Dangerous winter weather is expected or occurring. Take shelter immediately.

If it's already blistering and cold out, try these home tips and hacks to keep your place warm and energy-efficient in the winter:

- Put up a plastic kit over your windows, especially if you live in a home where your windows are older. Leaks around windows can lead to uncomfortable drafts and energy losses. Putting up plastic also adds another layer of insulating air to reduce heat loss through the window.
- In the winter, set your ceiling fans to spin clockwise on a low speed. This creates an updraft, sucking the cold air up and moving warm air trapped near the ceiling back down and around the room.
- If your driveway has a concrete or asphalt driveway, try to avoid applying salt or de-icing agents with harsh chemicals. These corrode driveway materials, and suggest using cold ash from a fireplace or sand instead.
- On the coldest days and nights, your plumbing pipes may be at risk for freezing and bursting. To avoid this plumbing catastrophe when temperatures dip, insulate your exposed pipes with heat tape or foam pipe insulation, open cabinet doors under your sinks to help warm air circulate around the pipes, and turn on your faucet to a slow drip to keep water flowing.



A Special

THANK YOU

To our 2020 supporters

Including: individual, business and church donors, Habitat for Humanity International, US Bank Corp, WE Energies, Bank of the West, FHLB-Chicago & Community Bank Grantsburg, AnnMarie Foundation, AARP, USDA Rural Development, St Croix Valley Foundation, Shell Lake State Bank, Small Business Administration, Cars for Homes, Thrivent Financial, Excel Energy, CCF Bank, USDA Rural Development, the Hugh J Andersen Foundation, Nexen Group, Anderson Corporation, Polk Burnett Electric, and YOU!