



# THE HABITAT NAILER

Habitat for Humanity Newsletter

November 2020

## NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION

Residents of a community know their hopes and dreams for their neighborhood — safe streets with decent and affordable homes, a place to buy fresh fruits and vegetables, a park for the kids to play, a school where students thrive.

Through [Habitat for Humanity's neighborhood revitalization work](#), we tailor our efforts by partnering locally with residents and community leaders and organizations to best address real concerns and improve the lives of the people who live in the neighborhood. With residents leading revitalization efforts, Habitat's work looks different in each community — a bank and grocery store in one, a youth center in another, walking trails, home repairs and community gardens in yet another.

What does neighborhood revitalization look like?

Our neighborhood revitalization work follows the guidelines provided in our [Quality of Life Framework](#), a data-driven and customizable approach developed by Habitat and vetted by community development experts to help to improve neighborhoods. The framework focuses on first understanding the concerns of the residents and then empowering these residents to lead the projects they want to see. Alongside Habitat, residents work with churches, schools, new and longstanding neighborhood coalitions, local government and other community partners to achieve their goals.

Because each neighborhood's challenges and aspirations are different, the framework acts as a guide that can be tailored to fit the goals of each community. That's why neighborhood revitalization can look like anything from developing public parks to organizing safety meetings with the local police department to rehabbing and reopening schools, stores and homes.

Please see back cover to see how you can help!

**Decatur Area**

**Habitat for Humanity**

**Christmas Shop**

Tuesday—Friday 10-4

Saturday 10-2

**November 4—December 24**

**802 East Wood Street**

### Board Members

Joe Auvil  
Monica Clevenger  
Dixie Haskins  
Ross Munsterman  
Peggy Myers  
Sharon Samuelson  
Gale Stenger  
Bill Veteo  
Katrina White

Executive Director  
Ed Smith

ReStore Manager  
Stephanie Stukins

ReStore Assistant Manager  
Jennie Hord

Office Manager  
Trish Rayner



We are just about to enter the Holiday season and bring the year 2020 to a close. This has been a trying year at Decatur Area Habitat for Humanity (DAH4H), as it has been for many of the businesses in our community. But instead of listing our troubles, we need to celebrate our successes and move forward into 2021.

Our greatest success continues to be our Habitat Homeowners. Since our last newsletter in August, we have had three (3) more Homeowners pay off their mortgages. When I started with Habitat in 2015, DAH4H held the mortgages for 44 homes. As of the writing of this letter, we are holding only 24 mortgages. Except for one unfortunate situation, all these homeowners have paid off their mortgages and habitat has released the mortgages to the homeowners. Congratulations to our Homeowners.

In February DAH4H contracted with Affiliate Mortgage Services (a Habitat mortgage company) to manage our mortgages. This partnership has substantially reduced the mortgage delinquency rates, started reporting to the major credit agencies helping our Homeowners build credit, gives our homeowners online access to monitor their accounts, and keeps us in compliance with the Federal mortgage laws, while still allowing DAH4H to make local decisions concerning our homeowners. This was a lot of work to transition over and Trish, our office manager, did a great job getting the mortgages switched over to AMS. The change to AMS has proved to be beneficial to both DAH4H and our homeowners.

The COVID 19 shutdown has dramatically affected our construction and ReStore efforts. Lockdown mandates from both Habitat International and the State of Illinois, totally shut the ReStore and construction down for several months. The ReStore reopened in June and Constructions has just restarted with the help of the Vocational Students but on a very limited basis.

On the construction front, the Dennis house is about 90% completed, but we are still looking for a qualified homeowner to partner with us on the house. If anyone knows of a family who may be curious about owning a Habitat home or is interested in the qualifications to become a partner with Habitat, please check the web site at [www.decaurhabitat.org](http://www.decaurhabitat.org). Inquiries can also be made at the office. The Veterans build is also nearing completion with the hopes that we may be able to hand over the keys to the Waterman family for the holidays.

DAH4H has also began working on our "Campus" which will open several options for growth. Remember, the property down to Hilton Street was donated to DAH4H. We started with the warehouse building west of the ReStore. We have a new roof (thank you ProMax) and the plan is to open the front half of the building as a sales floor for building materials (doors, windows, cabinets, flooring), while using the back half for much needed storage. This also will give us some options to explore with our property on Van Dyke, while we consolidate

into one location. Some of the ideas that are floating around for the future, might be a high end ReStore, a place to conduct home improvement classes, or even possibly looking at more office space, we just don't know right now and of course, all this needs funding, and of course volunteers.

One recent surprise came from our staff who decided that we needed to do something with the excessive amount of Christmas items that we have in storage. The idea was proposed that since the old Labor Ready Building was sitting empty, we could open a Christmas Store. So, by the time you get this newsletter, we will have an open Christmas store. Jenny, our assistant Manager, has been busy in her little workshop and I can guarantee that you will be surprised at the amount of Christmas ornaments, yard decorations, trees and other stuff we have in our Christmas shop. There is also talk of hot chocolate and cookies and the Christmas music is already playing. DAH4H invites you to stop by and enjoy the holiday season with us.

As mention earlier, this has been a trying year. We were able to keep the bills paid and the lights on with the help of the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) and grants. Now the ReStore is up and running and Stephanie and her crew are doing a great job in the store and we are looking at ways to expand.

As always, we are looking forward to staying involved with our neighbors in the Johns Hill Neighborhood. DAH4H partnered with one of our homeowners to have a food truck on the lot, and we have also been involved with the Phi Beta Sigma Alumni group who have worked with the Central Illinois Food Bank to conducted three (3) free food giveaways on our lot for people in the neighborhood.

As we turn towards the end of the year, I must remind everyone, Decatur Area Habitat for Humanity is an excellent choice for end of year giving. As our mortgage totals fall, so does our monthly income which we recycle back into our home building efforts., So now more than ever, we need financial help from our community. Please consider donating to the local, Decatur Area Habitat for Humanity. No amount is to small and our work and your money stays local.

We are always looking for volunteers and could really use some help during the holiday season with the opening of the Christmas store. Please be safe, this COVID virus should not be taken lightly and The Board and Staff of Decatur Area Habitat wish you all a happy holiday season....Happy Thanksgiving, Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year, and good riddance to 2020, 2021 is going to be a great year.

God bless you each and everyone.

Ed

**Hello from the ReStore Staff. We hope to find everyone doing well and staying healthy. Since our last newsletter we have been very busy at the ReStore. We have cleaned the lot next to us and cut down some of the trees and brush. A new roof was just put on and we hope to use this building as storage. Our biggest news is the New Christmas Shop. We have changed the old Labor Ready Building into a Habitat North Pole. The Christmas Shop is now open for business, with the same hours as the ReStore, Tuesday – Friday 10 am – 4 pm and Saturday 10 am - 2 pm. Anything and everything Christmas related we have in this store. Plus we have new items arriving every day. So make sure you stop by and take a look at the Decatur Area Habitat For Humanity ReStore Christmas Shop!! We are hoping to serve hot chocolate and cookies on Saturday December 5<sup>th</sup>. Please Watch our Facebook for more details.**

**We have been very blessed during these hard times to still be picking up donations. As you are getting new items this year or cleaning out the old, don't forget us. If it is clean, and resalable we will take it. Just give Trish a call and she will get your scheduled. We truly appreciate the dedication and support from all of you. Without you none of this would be possible! We hope you all stay healthy, safe and have a wonderful holiday season. Until Next time...**

**The ReStore Staff**

**May God Bless You,**

**Stephanie, Jennie, Lori , Tony, Q1 & Q2**

## WHY HABITAT?

In the closet in the back bedroom, 6-year-old Matthias sits on the floor, legs crossed. The little boy isn't hiding, he says. He just loves this space because this is his closet, in his room. "I'm going to keep my toys in here," he says, already looking ahead to Christmas Day.

Matthias soon surfaces, not wanting to miss the fun in the rest of the Habitat for Humanity house built by his mom, Yashica Tompkins. On this Sunday in Greenwood, South Carolina, a seemingly endless parade of cousins, grandparents, siblings, friends, church folk and volunteers are gathering to dedicate his tan home with burgundy shutters.

"My mom worked really hard to get this house," Matthias says. His 17-year-old sister, Meajah, also is impressed with — and proud of — her mom.

In addition to caring for her two kids, Tompkins works as a trainer at a local center that teaches job skills to adults with disabilities. Somewhere in the midst of all that, she completed the hundreds of [sweat-equity hours](#) that Habitat requires by helping to build both her house and the homes of other Habitat families. "I want my children to understand that anything you want in this life, you have to work for," says Tompkins, visibly moved.

There are plenty of emotional moments on this celebratory afternoon. The first piece of furniture in the house is a Christmas tree, a gift from Habitat volunteers who asked to remain anonymous. There's a cake baked by a neighbor, decorated with a rendering of the new home. And a hug from Mike Ware, [Greenwood Area Habitat](#)'s construction supervisor, who hands Tompkins her house keys.

Tompkins knows that the hard work of being a homeowner and paying the mortgage every month will continue. But this house will give her children stability, she says. Meajah has plans to go to school to become a dental hygienist and come home on the weekends. Matthias will have a safe yard to play in.

A shy woman, Tompkins has a beautiful singing voice that she doesn't often share. She decides to show her thanks to everyone this day by singing the gospel song, "See What the Lord Has Done." It isn't long before people join in and the house rocks in song. Figuratively.

"As you can tell, we put this house to the test today," says Chad Charles, Greenwood Area Habitat's executive director. "It is a well-built house."

Come Christmas Day, the house will be filled again with family and friends. "We are all going to get together and have a big dinner," Tompkins says. She already has given her kids their gift. "This house is the best present ever."

Coming home for the Holidays, © 2020 Habitat for Humanity® International.

This story is shared on the Habitat for Humanity Website, it shows what a house means to this hard working young family. It touches on the hard work and dedication it takes to get a habitat house, and it shows how this young family made this house a HOME!

But what is missing....

## YOU

Your contribution to Habitat is the only way these houses are built and families are given a foundation to build strong families with big dreams.

Please remember your help is not a hand out, it is a hand up, that every single habitat family takes that to heart and makes huge changes in their lives and families and communities.

Please consider donating to Decatur Area Habitat for Humanity this holiday season, every penny helps us, help others, so they can help themselves.



## Will YOU Volunteer?

### Construction Team

Enjoy working outside? Do you enjoy working with a great group of people? Volunteers have the opportunity to learn about the building trade by working with a skilled Construction Supervisor.

The Decatur Area Habitat for Humanity Construction Team welcomes volunteers (individuals and groups) who are able to help in a variety of roles and for any length of time.

#### Experience and Skills

No experience required, just a willing attitude. Bring your own tools or use ours.

#### Work Schedules and Hours

Construction offers a flexible schedule for all volunteers, (weather permitting).

#### Sign-in and Work Attire

All volunteers must report to Construction Supervisor and should wear sturdy, closed-toed shoes and work clothes. Safety training is available.

Call the office for more details or to have a Volunteer Information form sent to you.

Help us continue our Mission to build simple decent and affordable housing in our community for all God's people in need.

Contact the Office for more information.

217-425-6446



### ReStore Team

Volunteers are essential to our ReStore as we receive donations of building materials and other home items, such as light fixtures, carpet, doors, sinks, toilets, etc. frequently.

The Decatur Area Habitat for Humanity ReStore welcomes volunteers (individuals and groups) who are able to help in a variety of roles and for any length of time. We are looking for volunteers who can lend a hand to assist customers, receive and organize merchandise and stock shelves.

**WHERE::** 932 E. Wood Street  
Decatur, IL 62521

#### Experience and Skills

No previous retail experience needed. Ability to lift moderate to heavy items for merchandising work.

#### Work Schedules and Hours

The ReStore offers flexible schedules for all volunteers; you may work a regular schedule or on an occasional basis.

We accept volunteers  
Tuesday-Friday. 9:00 AM—4:00 PM. And  
Saturday's from 9:00 AM —2:00PM

#### Sign-In and Work Attire

All volunteers must report to the ReStore Manager.



Jennie, Stephanie Ed, Trish, Quinton, Lori, Tony  
 Quentin

Happy Holidays from The Habitat Crew to all of you!



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**A donation receipt will be sent to you. Thank YOU!**

**Specify method of payment:**

- ◇ Check (payable to DAH4H)
- ◇ Credit Card—If you choose to donate by credit card, please go to our website, at [DECATURHABITAT.ORG](http://DECATURHABITAT.ORG), Click on the Donate button!

To submit your donation directly to Decatur Area Habitat for Humanity, mail your gift to:

932 East Wood, Decatur IL 62521  
 (217) 425-6446, [officemanager@decaturhabitat.org](mailto:officemanager@decaturhabitat.org) [Decaturhabitat.org](http://Decaturhabitat.org)

Decatur Area Habitat for Humanity is a tax-exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code, ID#91-1914868