

Helping Hands



Our 6th House Nears Completion in East Windsor...

The sixth house built by the Millstone Basin affiliate of Habitat for Humanity is nearing completion. If all goes well, Deon and Precious Lewis and their three children will take possession of their new home in early fall 2005.

Construction on the house began in September 2004 much like an Amish barn-raising, when members of the community come together to raise buildings with their neighbors.

During the fall Habitat volunteers worked to get the stick-framed house raised, sheathed and roofed. By December the house was weather-tight, allowing work to continue in the colder months. By April, the exterior siding, drywall and insulation was complete, leaving the summer for Spackling, painting and installation of kitchen and bathroom fixtures.

Crew leaders, build leaders, and numerous volunteers have put nearly 3,000 hours into construction of the house and overcome the challenges they met along the way. They often worked side-by-side with Deon, as he worked toward the 350 hours of sweat equity his family was required to tally.

Construction of the Lewis house was made possible by a grant from Detroit-based GMAC Financial Services. The \$53,000 donation represents the approximate cost of a Habitat house in New Jersey. Tied to that sponsorship was the local backing of Maguire Automotive Group, owned by Marcy and Bob Maguire. Once construction is completed, there will be a house blessing ceremony and the Lewis family will move from their Trenton apartment into their new home.

For a list of some of the teams who helps us build the house, see Page 4.



Construction started last fall, as the first wall was raised under the watchful eye of Crew Leader John Nichols (front, dark hat) and President Glenn Fannick (top, ladder). Below, the nearly completed house.



...As Plans Kick in for Next House Right Next Door

The two remaining vacant parcels of land on Evan Avenue owned by the Millstone Basin Affiliate are the targets for growth in 2006. As construction is completed on the Lewis house, the affiliate is making plans for construction of the next house. Project 7 will be a Youth United house, built with funds being raised by the youth group; it will be the primary builder of that house.

Project 8 does not currently have a sponsor. Churches, professional groups, corporations and community groups are all possible sponsors. Sponsorship involves donating the \$60,000 to \$75,000 it will take to construct the house,

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Volunteer Spotlight:

Jeanne McCarthy

This month our volunteer spotlight shines on Plainsboro resident Jeanne McCarthy.

Jeanne has been a volunteer with Habitat for Humanity for six years, all of those with the Millstone Basin Affiliate. In those six years Jeanne has helped build two Habitat homes and has served as the adult coordinator for Youth United for the past three years.

When asked what prompted her to become involved with Habitat for Humanity, Jeanne responded that she joined in honor of her father who was a builder. "I loved being able to use my dad's hammer" when working on the houses, said Jeanne.

The names of Jeanne's family members could be found written on the board into which she hammered her first nail, including that of her brother who is also a Habitat volunteer.

According to Jeanne, her favorite thing about being involved in Habitat is the enthusiasm of the youth in the organization. As a former teacher, Jeanne values her work with Youth United for the opportunity to guide today's youth toward a better future. "I love people" says Jeanne. "When young people come alive and the light goes on, that's what volunteering is all about." Clearly, the Millstone Basin Affiliate is fortunate to have Jeanne as one of their members. A special thanks this issue's spotlight volunteer!



Youth United Update

The Millstone Basin Affiliate Youth United organization got its start in the winter of 2002. Since that time, nearly 70 youth of varying ages and representing 11 area schools have participated in the building of the affiliate homes and raising awareness and money for their efforts.

Youth ages 16 to 18 help with construction while those under 16 participate in painting, landscaping, and clearing lots for future construction sites. Younger children can get involved in raising awareness and fundraising.

This summer, Youth United school team leaders from each of the represented high schools planned their school's construction schedules and events to raise funds for the next the next home, which Youth United plans to sponsor. The group has already raised more than \$18,000 from events such as bird house sales, car washes, bike raffles and annual contribution drives.

When the home currently under construction is completed, the Youth United group will participate in house blessing activities for the home. The exemplary work of this group of young people has been recognized not only by the Millstone Basin Affiliate and their own schools but also by the community. The Youth United group has been recognized as an outstanding volunteer group by the *Trenton Times* and has applied for and won a \$5,000 grant from the Boston-based Argosy Foundation.

For more details about how adults and children can get involved in this program, check out the Youth United part of the Millstone Basin Web site at <http://habitatmba.org>.

'First Annual' Volunteer Picnic Dishes Up Thanks

Despite the hot weather June 25, the day's build crew and a group of recent build volunteers had a great time at the affiliate's volunteer thank-you picnic. The event was held during an extended lunch break at the building site.

Our future home owners, Deon and Precious Lewis, attended the picnic along with their three children. Deon was the grill master, earning the family some fun sweat equity hours. In addition to good company and good food (thanks to Allyn Bonilla's effort in obtaining a donation from Wegmans Food Markets in Princeton, N.J.) the volunteer picnic also provided a forum for the affiliate to recognize committee chairs, special event chairs, build leaders, group leaders, and various individuals for making notable contributions.

Among those in attendance were Ramona Schilling, volunteer coordinator; building crew leaders Mike Strada, Roger Mauro, Emil Kahut and Tom McGeachen; volunteers Denise and Drew Milot, Terri Boyer, Allyn Bonilla and Corey Kochis; and several members of the Knights of Columbus.

Jeanne McCarthy, Youth United leader, also recognized youth volunteers Tom Chacko, Rollin Say and Jennifer Kennedy as well as the Bicycle Rack in Hightstown for donating a bicycle which was raffled earlier this year.

New Members, a New Family and Plans for the Next House

I just read the Volunteer Spotlight (*Page 2*) on Jeanne McCarthy, our youth leader, and it made me think. For all the time and passion Jeanne puts into our organization, she's a real treasure. But what makes our affiliate special is not one or two people giving in 100%, but person after person committing their time and talent to the cause because they believe it's a just one.

I really want to list their names here because they all deserve the public thanks, but inevitably I'd miss people because much of the good works our volunteers do undoubtedly takes place quietly, without the board or me knowing about it. I know each volunteer who puts in that extra bit of effort is not doing it for the praise. They're probably doing it because it makes them feel good to help others, because they are committed to our mission and because they know that giving back to the community is the right thing to do.

**President's
Notebook**
By Glenn Fannick

Last fall we started putting up the walls of the Lewis family's house and as summer comes to a close we'll be handing them the keys. But in that year we've seen more than a house get built. We have seen the continued building of our affiliate.

I'm most excited and inspired by the large number of new volunteers on the work site, the new people on our committees, the continued enthusiasm of the Youth United team and a sense of optimism and pride in many of the long-time volunteers I've spoken with.

Our affiliate is a modest one. Our goal is to build at least one house a year. It's a goal we strived for in past years, but couldn't quite grasp. Now it seems we have all the pieces in place to do it.

More than 900,000 households in New Jersey spend more than 30% of their income on housing -- a percentage generally considered unaffordable.

We have taken the decision to pay a stipend to a building coordinator (*Page 8*), so we can have the professional knowledge and the stability required to run a construction operation.

We have been putting aside money to purchase the land which we will need, most likely in 2007, to continue our home-building work.

And we have a host of great volunteers: We have a thriving youth group, filled with enthusiasm, and representing the next generation of those who will carry on the mission. We have a long list of building volunteers always ready to pick up a hammer when we need them. We have a dedicated Board of Directors. And we have the support of our faith community, coming in the form of volunteers and monetary gifts.

So with all these things going for us, what is it we need? We especially need people to take on small projects in a few areas: family selection, building crew leadership, building planning. (See *Page 5*.)

As always, I thank God for each and every one of you who dedicate your time or money to help us do what we do.

Post Script: As I write, the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina continues to evolve. The scale of the homelessness there is overwhelming to all the relief agencies on the ground. All will need your support and your prayers. Habitat, while not set up to provide emergency relief, will be involved in the next phase – the rebuilding. To that end a program called Operation Home Delivery will respond to the disaster. Part of the plan is to pre-build many homes around the country, disassemble them and ship them to the Gulf Coast. Plans are still evolving; updates can be found at www.habitat.org. While the Gulf Coast will be a big part of Habitat's focus in the months and years to come, affiliates around the world are still very much focused on their local missions. I encourage you to consider both our affiliate and the needs in the Gulf Coast when planning your giving.



This group of volunteers, lead by Emil Kahut, left, and Construction Coordinator Dave Petrenka, second left, take a break from their hard work to smile for the camera. We rely on teams such as this group to get the job done.

Special Thanks to the Teams Who Helped Build this Year

Beth El Men's Club, East Windsor
 Bristol-Myers Squibb
 C Squared Architecture
 Comcast Cable
 Factiva, A Dow Jones & Reuters Company
 First Boston Bank
 Johnson & Johnson
 Knights of Columbus, Hightstown
 Merrill Lynch
 Notre Dame Alumni Club
 Robert Wood Johnson Medical School
 St. Anthony of Padua Church, Hightstown
 Wachovia Bank

Vehicle Donations Accepted

Habitat is now able to accept donations of used cars and light trucks. This is a great opportunity for you to get a tax deduction for your car and for us to benefit from the value of the car. Please call us at 609-443-8744 or email us at info@habitatmba.org to find out details.

Houses Seven and Eight

(Continued from Page 1)

as well as providing some of the volunteers to build the house. Partial sponsorships are also available.

The Family Selection Committee is in the process of reviewing partner-family applications to determine who will be the family chosen for house No. 7.

The selection process takes about five months to complete. The first phase, distributing the applications, was completed in September. The current phase, reviewing the applications, will continue for a few more weeks. This is followed by conferring with the applicants to clarify any missing information and re-reviewing that information.

At that point, those families who meet the income requirements (between 25% and 50% of the median income of the county) and are willing "to partner" (volunteer 350 hours to the affiliate) will move on to the next phase – the home visit. The home visit is a vital step, giving the family a chance to meet a couple of committee members and further discuss the program. It also gives the committee members the opportunity to see the family's current housing situation to see if it meets Habitat's definition of inadequate housing. These include overcrowding and health and safety issues.

In the next phase, the committee discusses the information they have gathered and takes a few suggestions to the board of directors.

The Board of Directors makes the final decision based on the recommendations of the committee.

Building Work Groups Needed

Is your group is interested in helping build a Habitat house next spring? Please have someone from your group send an email to info@habitatmba.org or drop a note to:

HFH Millstone Basin
 Box 178
 Cranbury, NJ 08512

Include the following: the expected number workers; the number who are ages 16-18; the day of the week you'd like; the team leader's email, address and phone number; and any building skills any of you have.

Children under 16 are not allowed on the work site. Work on the site generally takes place Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., though other days can be arranged.



Volunteer Application

If you would like to volunteer with our affiliate, please complete the following and return to:

Habitat for Humanity Millstone Basin Area, P.O. Box 178, Cranbury, NJ 08512
 or email to: **info@habitatmba.org**

Name:	Group Affiliation (if applicable):
Address:	Other local groups / houses of worship where you belong (optional):
State/ZIP:	Past Habitat Experience: Yes ___ No ___ Doing What:
E-Mail Address:	
Phone number:	

If you are under 18:

Age:	Parent's name	Parent's phone number:
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If you want to help us build, mark your levels of experience:

0 = not interested 1 = willing to learn 2 = some experience 3 = experienced 4 = professional	
clearing land	0 1 2 3 4
carpentry	0 1 2 3 4
electric wiring	0 1 2 3 4
plumbing	0 1 2 3 4
insulation	0 1 2 3 4
drywall	0 1 2 3 4
windows/doors	0 1 2 3 4
masonry	0 1 2 3 4
roofing	0 1 2 3 4
siding	0 1 2 3 4
painting	0 1 2 3 4
carpeting	0 1 2 3 4
tile	0 1 2 3 4
cabinets	0 1 2 3 4
landscaping	0 1 2 3 4

If you'd like to learn about volunteer opportunities, check the area(s) you are interested in: *(Details on Page 6)*

<input type="checkbox"/> Building Planning: Coordinate home building efforts either on the work site or behind the scenes. Ideal candidates have home-improvement or home-building experience.
<input type="checkbox"/> Volunteer Coordination Schedule, recruit, contact, greet or train volunteers either for committee tasks or on-site building.
<input type="checkbox"/> Publicity & Fund-Raising Identify new avenues of funding and plan or run fund-raising events or programs; write grants or solicit donations from organizations and corporations.
<input type="checkbox"/> Family Relations Work with existing, new or potential partner families to help them on the road to home-ownership
<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership Lead the efforts, planning and coordination of various aspects of the organization and/or sit on the board of directors.

Other comments:

Volunteer Opportunities

Contact: info@habitatmba.org for more details

While we always need volunteers to help build houses, we especially need help behind the scenes and with leadership roles. Here are some of the specific places in which we need help:

Building Planning and Leadership

- **Building Crew Leaders** – to lead groups of volunteers in performing specific construction tasks.
- **Building Facilitators** – to take on tasks such as working with the architect and subcontractors, getting permits, and working with the construction budget.
- **Building Committee Chair** – to work with the Building Coordinator and to oversee the work of the Building Committee, organizing meetings and helping to coordinate house-building efforts.
- **Site Selection Member** – to help identify land in our six-town area on which the affiliate can build future houses.

Volunteer Coordination

- **New-Member Coordinator** – to email and phone those interested in volunteering with the organization and/or conduct orientation of new volunteers
- **Site Greeters** – to greet and prepare volunteers at the beginning of the work day.
- **Voice Mail Manager** – to check and respond to the affiliate's voice mail.
- **Youth United Leaders** – adults to help guide the affiliate's team of young people raising money for and helping to build.
- **Volunteer Relations Committee** – to identify, recruit and instruct volunteers and ensure that the program creates a rewarding experience for participants.

Publicity and Fund Raising

- **Writers** – to contribute to the newsletter and Web site to get the word out about the mission and message of Habitat for Humanity in our area.
- **Grant Writers** – to write grant requests for funding.
- **Fund Development Volunteers** – to help plan fund-raising events and long-term fund development; to help coordinate the solicitation of in-kind donations of building supplies.

Family Relations

- **Family Selection Committee Members** – to help a team of volunteers select the next partner family; tasks include interviewing families and reviewing applications.
- **Family Support Committee** – to help a new family on their road to home ownership by welcoming them into Habitat, providing them with a support system and a forum for discussions regarding home ownership and Habitat policies and procedures.
- **Faith-Community Liaison** – to communicate our mission to, and seek help from, our area's houses of worship; to act as a liaison between one or more local houses of worship.

Leadership

- **Board Members** – to sit on the Board of Directors to help lead the affiliate. Board members usually make a commitment of about 10 hours a month, including attendance at a monthly board meeting and at monthly committee meetings.

Those interested in any of these opportunities can send an email to info@habitatmba.org for more information or complete and mail the application form included in this newsletter.

**Habitat for Humanity
Millstone Basin Area Inc.**

2005 Board of Directors

President • Glenn Fannick
Vice President • vacant
Secretary • Dee Garvey
Treasurer • Marshall Lerner

Board Members

Building Committee Chair • vacant
Fund Development Committee Chair • Jerry Ford
Site Selection Chair / Webmaster • Justin Stien
Lorenzo Figueroa
Marc Maratang

Other Leaders

Construction Coordinator • Dave Petrenka
Youth United Chair • Jeanne McCarthy
Family Selection • Laura Reebe
Newsletter • Jamie and Jenna Zhang

The Millstone Basin Affiliate serves the New Jersey communities of Cranbury, East Windsor, Hightstown, Plainsboro, Washington Twp. and West Windsor as an independent unit of Habitat for Humanity International, 121 Habitat St., Americus, GA 31709.

Helping Hands is published quarterly or as events warrant.

Send articles, letters to the editor or queries to:
Millstone Basin Area, P.O. Box 178, Cranbury, NJ 08512
609-443-8744

info@habitatmba.org • <http://habitatmba.org>

Tithing Spreads the Wealth

HFH Millstone Basin continues to tith 10% of its revenue to Habitat for Humanity International's global efforts. In the past 12 months, the affiliate has donated \$2,000 to international building efforts in Guatemala.

Your Donations Needed

Every one of the more than 1,800 Habitat affiliates around the world is run locally and therefore responsible for raising its own funds. We can only carry out our mission of providing decent housing to those in need through donations from local individuals, churches, organizations and businesses.

If you have the ability to help, please consider sending a tax-deductible donation to help us build more houses. An envelope is included in this newsletter. Mail checks to:

HFH Millstone Basin
Box 178
Cranbury, NJ 08512

Building Chair Takes on New Responsibility

One of the affiliate's long-time volunteers and former board member, Dave Petrenka, has taken on a new job with the construction of our sixth home, the Lewis house.

Dave has become the affiliate's Construction Coordinator, a new position the board created in 2004 to manage the affiliate's desire to increase the rate of house construction. Dave left the positions of building committee chair and board member to fill the construction coordinator position. The construction coordinator, the affiliate's first paid position, will report to the building committee chair and the affiliate president.

In this new role, Dave will be a continuing presence on the work site, a place he's quite comfortable, having worked on all the affiliate's other five projects. Dave and his wife, Becky, who is also active with the affiliate, managing the ongoing sale of designer jewelry "House Pins", live in East Windsor.



Construction Coordinator Dave Petrenka, left, explains the tasks of the day to volunteers on the work site on a Saturday this spring.

We Need Land!

Our affiliate has begun a search for more land on which to build. Our Site Selection Committee is actively exploring available properties in our six-town area. If you know of an abandoned house or other blighted property in your neighborhood, our affiliate might be interested in purchasing it.

Together we can improve your neighborhood and help a needy family in the process. If you know about such land, please let us know.

**Habitat for Humanity - Millstone Basin Area
Operating Statement - Fiscal 2005**

Revenues

Donations:

From Individuals	\$ 4,900
Through the United Way, Habitat International & Payroll Deduction Programs	3,900
From Local Churches, Matching Gifts & Corporations	5,300
McCaffrey's Supermarket (1% of Receipts)	1,300
Special Youth United Programs	500
Total Donations	15,900

Merchandise Sales:

Pancake Breakfast	4,600
From the sale of Habitat Pins & T-Shirts	800
Total Merchandise Sales	5,400
Interest Income	1,000

Total Revenue \$ 22,300

Program Expenses

Site Supervision	\$ 4,500
Tithe to Habitat International	2,000
Property Taxes on Building lots	2,600
Other Items	4,200
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 13,300

Excess of Revenue over Expenses \$ 9,000

Memo:

Funds raised for Youth United Program (to date)	\$ 18,900
Funds invested in homes under construction	\$ 51,300

[Information shown above is before year-end accounting adjustments]

Habitat for Humanity International
Millstone Basin Affiliate
P.O. Box 178
Cranbury, NJ 08512

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

**Special Thanks
to Local Area
Houses of Worship**

Several houses of worship gave donations to the affiliate during the fiscal year ending June 30, 2005. This is not the first time they have supported us. We would like to thank them publicly for their continued generosity:

- First Presbyterian Church
of Dutch Neck \$1,100
- First Presbyterian Church
of Cranbury \$1,000
- St. David's Church
of Cranbury \$400
- St. Anthony's Church
of Hightstown \$250
- First United Methodist Church
of Hightstown \$100

And a special thanks to First United Methodist of Hightstown for their ongoing generosity for the use of their facilities for our monthly board meetings.

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