

Another Amazing Year: Eighty-four Homes Strong

Rockford Area Habitat for Humanity (RAHFH) volunteers and homeowners celebrated a summer of hard work when they dedicated five new homes on Saturday, August 29, in northwest Rockford.

The August dedication and blessing was the earliest ever as our volunteers and

homeowners completed their homes in record time. Many hands make light work!

All new homebuyers had an opportunity to thank volunteers and donors for their support of our program. Their homes were blessed as was the bible they received from our board of directors.



Habitat 2009 Dedication Attendees

Gary Ecklund wins Volunteerism Award



Gary Ecklund

This year's Floyd and Helen Rickard Volunteerism Award went to former board member and 20+ year Habitat supporter Gary Ecklund. It was Gary's dedication, along with other founding members, that established Rockford Habitat back in 1988. Prior to 2009, Gary conducted the 77 closings free-of-charge for all Habitat Homes built and sold.

The Floyd and Helen Rickard Volunteerism Award is given to volunteers who have dedicated themselves to Habitat's mission year-after-year, just as the Rickard's have done since nearly the first home was built in our community.

2009 Major Home Sponsors

- Community Foundation of Northern Illinois
- Thrivent Builds
- Bears Care
- Evangelical Covenant Churches
- First Evangelical Free Church
- Rockford Area Lutheran Ministries
- United Methodist Churches
- Private Family Foundation

*What we do for ourselves
dies with us; what we do for others
and the world remains immortal.*

— Albert Pike



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Letter from the Executive Director — Our Blitz

Remember back in mid-June when we had monsoon-like rainfall followed by record-breaking heat and humidity?

That crazy weather occurred during the timeframe that a national group of volunteers, Blitz Home Builders (BHB), partnered with local families and volunteers to build two homes in eight days!

Our local board of directors took a great leap of faith in applying to host the build. Can we find the funding? Do we have enough volunteers? Is it even possible?

As it turns out, it was one of the best decisions ever made by our board of directors.

After months of planning, the real magic happened when the BHB volunteers from 14 states and Canada appeared on site on June 18. I can't express how well they worked together and with our volunteers and future homeowners. An onlooker would have never guessed they only build together once a year or never before. The BHB demonstrated a tremendous sense of community and team. No job was too small or too large. All had to be done and done correctly.

The families of the future homebuyers stopped by daily to watch the progress and thank the volunteers. I can't begin to know the impact the caring and dedication of the BHB volunteers will have on their children.

Just imagine someone traveling across the U.S., at their own expense, taking vacation from their own jobs, working long days in extremely humid weather, to build a home for a stranger.

Lives have truly been changed as have the lives of generations to come.

Thank you to all those local volunteers, lunch donors and sponsors, such as Stillman Bank and Swedish American Medical Foundation, for making the Blitz Build a reality!

Although the build was exhausting, it was one of the greatest adventures of my career. I continue to be overwhelmed and humbled by the generosity and kindness exhibited by our neighbors during those eight days.

Tonya Thayer
Executive Director

— *Tonya Thayer*



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Thank you to former board member Ron Toppe for his dedication to our board of directors and the United Methodist Churches construction crew.

This newsletter is published by the Rockford Area Habitat for Humanity affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International and is a non-profit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry whose purpose is to eliminate poverty housing from the world, and to make decent shelter a matter of conscience and action.

*“Don’t ask yourself what the world needs;
ask yourself what makes you come alive.
And then go and do that. Because what the
world needs is people who have come alive.”*

- Howard Thurman

Two Homes in Eight Homes



Who built these homes?

Each year, the Blitz Home Builders (BHB) select one Habitat for Humanity affiliate in the United States for a home building partnership. The BHB are current and past Honeywell employees who personally support Habitat's goals. Approximately 50 volunteers traveled to Rockford to partner with the local volunteers and homeowners.

Thank you to volunteer partners

- Rockford Fire Department
- SupplyCore
- OSF St. Anthony's Medical Center
- Texas Roadhouse
- Victor Lutheran Church
- Northern IL Reading Council

Special thanks
to the Tenika Posely Family
and Joan Kelley for executing
two fabulous cook-outs!

Thank you to our sponsors

Major Sponsors:

Stillman
BANK

SWEDISHAMERICAN
MEDICAL FOUNDATION 

- Alpine Bank
- Riverside Community Bank
- Appraisal Services of Rockford



We have great community partners

The Community Foundation of Northern Illinois (CFNIL), after years of awarding smaller grants, sponsored their first ever Habitat Home. Not only did they cover the cost of building supplies, but they sent volunteers to work with the future homebuyer.

Letter from a CFNIL Volunteer ...

Saturday, May 2nd, was a great day to frame a house, CFNIL's Habitat for Humanity house, that is!

I arrived at the address a little early. The location is great, across from a park, the bike path and Kent Creek. At the site there was only a cement slab with a few volunteers examining plans. A flatbed truck was stacked with wall panels built off site. Soon Barb Nelson arrived as well as Jon and Sandy Bates. Pat Derry came with his tool belt, tools, knee pads and his expertise.

Soon there were 30 volunteers including Elisha who will live in the house with her 4-year old son. Elisha's mother also worked with us. Our crew chief Ted kept us all on task and it wasn't long before the wall panels were going up. There was a huge sense of camaraderie as we hauled and lifted and cheered. Elise Cadigan came and took lots of photos for the scrapbook that Barb is assembling for Elisha. Nancy Hyzer brought donuts that disappeared quickly! Nothing like a sugar high!

Tonya, Habitat's executive director, came by to see how work was progressing.

The organization is impressive with significant mentoring to the folks who become homeowners after taking part in 300 hours of classes and volunteering. A local church provided brown bag lunches with a sandwich, chips, cookies, an apple and a fortune cookie. Elisha's fortune was—"Don't give up! The best is yet to come!" Elisha gave it to Barb to include in the scrapbook.

In the afternoon, a few of us were given the job of moving a large bundle of huge boards into the living room of the house. We were all tired and muddy, but we formed a "board brigade" and laughed and cheered as the pile grew smaller and disappeared.

By the time that I left, I said goodbyes to newfound friends and felt a huge sense of accomplishment. The concrete slab had become a home, or at least it was well on its way!

... It's an immensely rewarding way to spend a day!

Janice Westlund -
Community Foundation Trustee



CFNIL Volunteers

Homeowner Spotlight:

Jacole Stovall

Dear Habitat for Humanity Volunteers and future homeowners,

Habitat for Humanity has changed me and my son's life in so many ways. The first benefit came from the classes that I had to take for my new home. I learned so much. I never had a checking account nor was I thinking about getting one. Then I took the Get Checking class at Family Credit Management. I don't know how I made it without a checking account. That's how it was with all the classes. I learned so many things.



Jacole receives bible from Pastor Rife.

As far as the 300 hours of sweat equity. I thought to myself "man, that is a lot of hours." But after I started working, the hours flew by. I didn't even need a lot of people helping me. My father and I got almost all my hours together. It's a great feeling to walk through my home and look at a wall or the tile floor and say "I helped with that."

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A home really means so much more when you know your own sweat and hard work helped make it happen.

Trust me when I say that building a home is going to be hard work, time consuming and I thought "my house will never be finished." But the smile on my child's face as he plays in his yard is PRICELESS.

*Sincerely happy and blessed,
Jacole Stovall*

PHOTO GALLERY: Volunteers & Homeowners



CFNIL gives flowers to homeowner.



Blitz Build—volunteers work after the rain.



Blitz Build—Rockford firefighters give a hand.

Letter from a Family Mentor

As a member of this wonderful community, I wanted to find a way to give back and volunteer towards something that would be very rewarding and positive.

Last year I began researching different options to channel my energy. Petting cats/dogs in my free time didn't really appeal to me. While opening a brand new hotel I was reading about their volunteer efforts. Nationally, Fairfield has a partnership with Habitat for Humanity. I checked the local website and contacted Tonya right away. We met for lunch and she explained the family-partnership concept and I was sold. Tonya was wonderful to sit down with and sold me further on Habitat.

When I met Jacole for the first time, I saw her drive and motivation. She seemed to be a very determined lady and clearly needed a better living option. When I visited Jacole and her father, they were working on her home and knew what they were doing. I was impressed with their skills, along with all of the snacks that were there! I helped sand trim for a little while and quickly found out why I am not in that business.

For my first mentorship opportunity, Jacole was the best! She had all of her sweat equity (volunteer) hours completed early. And her wonderful hands-on father and the drive they had as a family was truly inspiring. I thank Jacole for letting me be a part of her journey.

*Sincerely,
Kara Davis*



Blitz Build—Builder with a duct tape kilt?

Now Stocking "Hard" Furniture:

That's right! We now stock hard furniture. That is, no upholstered furniture, no couches or recliners, or that sort of thing. We have kitchen tables with and without chairs, dressers, chests, coffee tables, end tables and night stands, just to name a few. And remember, our stock will always change.

More Space. More Hours. More Volunteers!

We are blessed. The support for our ReStore has been wonderful. In the next few months we would like to expand our store and our hours to include another business day to accommodate our customers. To do that, we need help! By volunteering at the ReStore...you can help us build houses without swinging a hammer!

Call us at 815-713-3184
for more information.

Spring Cleaning?

Please remember us as you are cleaning your shed, garage, or basement this spring. Items that can't be used in the construction of our habitat houses are sold at the ReStore and the profits support our building program. Pick ups are available for larger items at no charge.

For a complete list of items we accept visit the ReStore page at www.rockfordhabitat.org!



ReStore

The Store that builds Homes

Our First ReStore House



ReStore Home

Thank you to all the generous individuals, contractors and businesses who have supplied our Restore with stock to sell! Your gifts save our customers money, save our landfills, and help fund the construction of more Habitat homes. The ReStore was able to fund one house during the 2009 building season. Our goal is to build two houses during the 2010 season. Your continued support will make this goal a reality.

Attention Creative People! We Have an Idea Contest

Do you have an idea? Of course, everyone has ideas, but is yours worth \$100?

Dan built a pedestal fan out a ceiling fan and Christmas tree holder. Everyone has seen planters made from tubs and wheelbarrows. Find different uses for windows and doors, plumbing parts, carpets, cabinets, whatever's in the ReStore. Maybe make a planter out of HVAC parts? Or wall coverings from carpets or cabinet doors? Maybe build a fountain out of reused everything? What uses can you find?

The rules are simple. Make whatever you desire. Bring it in or bring in several pictures of it. (8x10 pictures that we can post.) You must have a Restore receipt for more than 50% of the materials used. The last day for entries will be January 10, 2010. The judge will be popular opinion. The winner will announced on February 3, 2010, and awarded 100 ReStore Bucks to go crazy in the ReStore.

We are located at
North Towne Mall in Rockford
at 1020 W. Riverside Blvd.
815-713-3184

SHARE OUR NEWS

We love "word of mouth."

If you have volunteered or donated items, then you know the fun we have, the good we do, and the reward of helping others that you reap. Take this newsletter to your neighbors. Ask them to read it and take some action. They can donate their time and/or their items to a worthy and laudable cause. Experience is not necessary. All that is necessary is willing hands and an open heart.

New ReStore Manager



If you haven't been to the ReStore in a few months, then you haven't been to the ReStore. Lori Springer has left to be with her husband, who is an Army soldier. We pray that Mark will be safe from harm. We miss Lori. She did an outstanding job, building this from nothing to a house supporting entity. Dan Bement has taken Lori's position and is following her lead to make the ReStore even better. Dan has made enough changes to make the place unrecognizable to someone that hasn't been here in a few months. Please stop by, meet Dan and look the place over. You'll be pleasantly surprised.

**10% off
any purchase**

**Bring this coupon to the
ReStore and receive a
10% discount from
your total purchase price**

This offer applies to a single check-out only. This offer not to be combined with other discounts.
In the North Town Mall

Expiration date January 31, 2010
1020 West Riverside Boulevard,
Rockford, IL 61103 • 815-713-3184

BUSINESS HOURS:

Wednesdays & Fridays: 10:00 am-6:00 pm
Saturdays 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
1020 W. Riverside Blvd., Rockford, IL 61103
<http://www.rockfordhabitat.org/reStore.htm>

**THANK YOU
to Thrivent Financial
for Lutherans and RALM!**



Since 2005, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans has given more than 1,000 families an opportunity to achieve the American dream of homeownership. In 2009, Thrivent Builds contributed more than \$24 million to help build another 314 affordable homes. This year, RAHFH received \$42,007 to build the Thrivent Builds home in partnership with Rockford Area Lutheran Ministries (RALM).

RALM has donated over \$165,000 since 2000 and provided volunteers to build 12 homes.

This year they held a House of Prayer fundraiser. Members from sixteen churches purchased 2 x 4's, wrote a blessing on them, and donated them to Rockford Habitat to be used to frame the house. 442 boards were sold!

**ARMY JOHNSON
CLASSIC 5K & 10
MILE RUN**



for Habitat is scheduled for Saturday, April 3, 2010. Stay fit and raise money!!

**Time Is Running Out
for Tax-free Gifts!**

If you're 70 1/2 or older, you can make tax-free gifts of up to \$100,000 directly from your IRA to qualified charities like Rockford Habitat. But don't wait long—this opportunity expires Dec. 31, 2009

**WHAT?
No Super Sweeps
Sweepstakes?**



BEARS CARE

After 14 successful years, we are unable to hold our annual sweepstakes to win a trip to the Super Bowl. Through the Bears Care organization, our Habitat affiliate was awarded \$773,000.

This doesn't mean our need to raise money for build has decreased. Just the opposite! Please consider a "non-event" donation of the \$30.00 that you would have used to purchase a chance to win the trip.

**FURTHER THE
EDUCATION OF A
HOMEOWNER**

Consider a donation to the Rockford Habitat Homeowner Scholarship Fund for existing homeowners and their children. Go to www.cfnil.org or contact the Community Foundation at 815 962-2110, x 10.

2009 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS:

- Mrs. Rachel Perez - Judson University
- Ms. Kenyetta Watkins - Northern Illinois University

ONLINE DONATION

Thinking of donating to Rockford Habitat online? We make it easy for you.

Just go to www.rockfordhabitat.org and click on Donate Online.

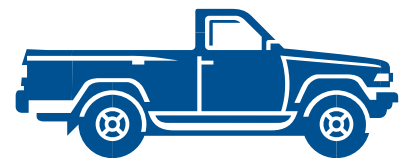
However, you must designate "Rockford Area Habitat for Humanity" if you want your donation to support local building. All undesignated donations support Habitat for Humanity, International.

Thank you!



**Want to donate
your car, truck, boat
or other vehicle to help
build homes?**

**Go to
www.carsforhomes.org
or call 1-877-277-HFHI**



**CONSIDER FINANCIALLY
SUPPORTING A SPECIFIC
BUILDING ITEM. YOUR GIFT
WILL HELP BUY:**

- Box of nails = \$10
- Roof Shingles = \$35
- Low-flow toilet = \$50
- Kitchen sink = \$100
- Front door = \$150
- Help with Siding = \$500

Look like fun, come and join us. We're building a future for our families.



Blitz Build—future homeowner helps frame house



Blitz Build—home dedication with Rich Stephens



Walls going up



Blitz Build—lunch time for hard working volunteers



So this is how it starts



Dedication—Northern Illinois Reading Council donates books



Rockford Area

Habitat
for Humanity®

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Rockford, IL 61111
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FAST FACTS

Total Habitat Homes built by RAHFH:	84
Habitat Homes built this year:	7
Percent living in original home:	89%
Number of foreclosures:	5
Average income for a 2009 Habitat Homebuyer:	\$28,525
Average length of loan for 2009 Family:	24.57 years
Average monthly mortgage payment:	\$460

FACT:

46% of women in homeless shelters cited not having a safe and affordable housing alternative as the primary reason they remained with an abusive partner. *Homeless in Minnesota 2003, Wilder Research Center, 2004*

FACT:

The National Low Income Housing Coalition estimates that there is not a single county in the country where a full-time minimum wage worker can afford even a one-bedroom apartment at what the US Dept. of Housing and Urban Development determines to be Fair Market Rent.

FACT:

The number of low-income families that lack safe and affordable housing is related to the number of children that suffer from asthma, viral infections, anemia, stunted growth and other health problems.

FACT:

Research shows that children of homeowners are more likely to stay in school and daughters of homeowners are less likely to have children by age 18.