



# HABITAT HAPPENINGS



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## WE DEDICATE OUR 25<sup>TH</sup> HOUSE – A DAY OF CELEBRATION

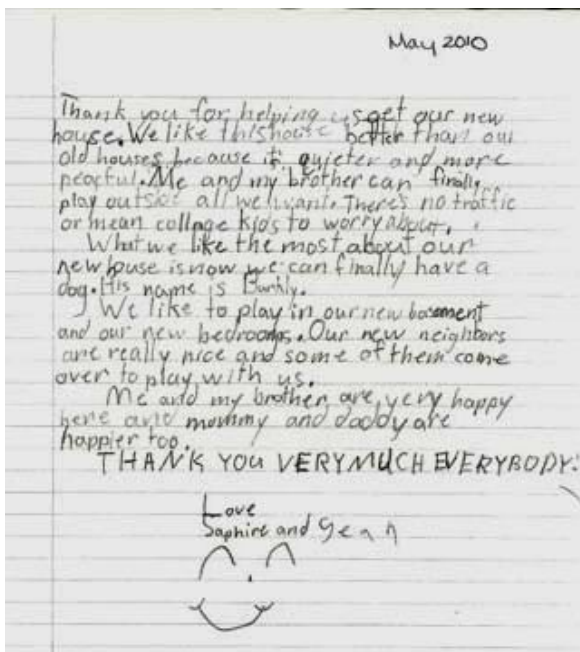
Sunday, May 2 was a joyous day for Jason and Ruthellen Buddenhagen, as they are their children, Saphire and Sean, hosted the dedication of their Habitat home on Monroe Avenue in Oneonta. It was an especially happy day for HFHOC as well, since the home is the 25<sup>th</sup> we've built since we started operations in 1989. The dedication was featured in *The Daily Star* and *Hometown Oneonta*. We hope you'll enjoy our look back at that special day.



Founding Habitat member Rev. Norman Tiffany conducted the dedication service, as he has done for most of our families over the past 20 years.



L-R Homeowner Jason Buddenhagen, son Sean, daughter Saphire, and wife Ruthellen listen to the service. Behind them are Ruthellen's father and brother.



Saphire and Sean wrote a beautiful thank-you letter that they read at the dedication.



Also present were members of our newest partner family. Eleanor Archibald and her children will reside on Miles Avenue in the Town of Oneonta. Pictured l-r are son Khymauri, HFHOC Board member Barbara Dauria, daughter Kynisha, son Khysani, daughter Khaliah, baby daughter Khymiah, and Eleanor.

## I Have the Floor

By Jeanne Miller, President



May was a record-breaking month for Habitat for Humanity of Otsego County. We finished and sold three homes to new partner families and broke ground for another home. WHEW! That's the kind of record that we enjoy breaking!

We talk throughout the year about the teamwork that is necessary to place a partner family in a home, but that teamwork is never more obvious than in the final weeks before we close the sale on a house.



**L-R Attorney Lynn Green conducted the closing for new homeowners Melody and Matthew Stiles in his Cooperstown office. President Jeanne Miller, and Assistant Treasurer Emery Herman join them.**

Finishing three houses at the same time required a tremendous amount of coordination and just plain work for our volunteers. Special thanks go to the members of the Construction Committee and its chair, Bruce Downie, for getting everything finished on time. Emery Herman, Alton Van Cleef, Peggy Fowler, and Mike Donahue deserve special recognition for their multiple contributions. Bruce wore out at least one pair of shoes running from office to office to get all of the necessary permits and inspections scheduled and picked up.



**L-R Treasurer Peggy Fowler, Emery Herman, Chelsea Foster and homeowner mom Lisa Foster, office manager AnnMarie Lindley, attorney Tom Hegeman, and Jeanne.**

The coordination of all of the schedules of the several people involved in the closings was handled efficiently and with good humor by our office manager, Trish Dukes. Peggy Fowler and Emery Herman do double duty as construction committee members and our treasurer and assistant treasurer, respectively. They were very much in the thick of things by making the necessary calculations for money to be exchanged at closing.



**L-R Paralegal Dori Winchester welcomes new homeowner Beth Scully and daughter Melyssa to Dave Merzig's office for their closing.**

I'm happy to thank our three attorneys who donated their time and energy to manage the legal aspects of the closings. Thanks go to Lynn Green, Tom Hegeman, and David Merzig. We couldn't have done it without you.



**L-R Jeanne, Beth, Melyssa, and attorney Dave Merzig after another successful closing.**

As for all of you readers, please don't feel left out. As mentioned earlier, we have a new building site in Oneonta and we will welcome you to build and/or to bring lunch to our volunteers on Thursdays and Saturdays. As always, none of this can happen without your donations. Please welcome our newest partner families, the Fosters, Scullys, and Stiles, by donating money and/or land for our next partner family.

## **A Report from “Penny Lane” – Where Helping HFHOC is a Family Affair** By Sarah Fredette

**Editor's Note:** *Keith Fredette is our youngest regular Habitat volunteer. In 2005-06 Keith, with the help of his parents Sarah and David, regularly baked and delivered treats for our worksite volunteers. Now, Sarah brings us up to date on Keith's latest project.*

Hello Habitat Family,

I don't know if you remember us, but we used to bake treats for the Saturday work crews. We all have fond memories of visiting the work sites, seeing the progress being made, and helping to make the day a little brighter by providing everyone with cookies, brownies, or cake to snack on.

After doing some other community service work these past few years, we are once again working to assist Habitat for Humanity. This time, we involved our entire neighborhood. We could not have been successful without the help of our neighbors, and we are tremendously grateful for their participation in this project. As one family, we would never have been able to donate as much money as we have -- **\$744.71 for this school year** -- but with eleven households joining us in our Franklin St. Penny Harvest project we have been able to give generously.

Each summer, we brainstorm to come up with a community service project to tackle throughout our school year (which runs from the middle of August to the middle of June -- we are homeschoolers). Two summers ago, Keith was watching a television program that featured a group of children who created the actual Penny Harvest (our Franklin St. harvest is an informal group). These children asked their neighbors to save their pennies, which the children would then collect on a periodic basis, count the money, roll the coins and then decide how best to use the money to benefit their community. Keith asked if we could create a Franklin St. Penny Harvest for our upcoming service project. We all thought it was a great idea.

Keith helped to create a postcard which included information about the project, a place to indicate interest in participating, and a place to select one of three local organizations to donate the funds to. He hand delivered these postcards to every household on Franklin St. This year, eleven families decided to participate, and they unanimously voted to donate the funds to Habitat for Humanity.



**L-R: David Fredette, Holly Buccher, granddaughter of Penny Harvest supporter Larry Guzy, and Keith Fredette. Keith is shown giving Holly the postcard reminder that the Penny Harvest will be collected the following Sunday.**

We used some empty coffee cans and some canning jars, put labels on the outside that say “Franklin St. Penny Harvest”, and dropped the “banks” off to our participating neighbors. These neighbors then save their pennies (or any other funds they wish to put toward the project) in this bank. Once a month our family collects the pennies, counts them, rolls them, and sends a check to Habitat for Humanity. We then deliver a postcard to all the participants, letting them know how much we collected that month.

Some people who do not live on our street have heard about our project and have also donated pennies. My uncle, who lives in Florida and downstate, saved pennies for us; someone anonymously dropped pennies off to my husband's office; someone dropped pennies off to our house; and a library worker donated her collection of pennies.

As a thank you to our neighbors for their participation, we head out to the sidewalks every Sunday, and clean the trash up off of the street and walkways. We have picked up thousands of cigarette butts, beer cans and bottles, coffee cups, candy wrappers, clothing, shoes, a smashed cell phone, boxes, broken glass, food containers, and some things I won't talk about. The biggest thing we collected was a rusty old muffler someone left in the road. We have had many Sunday clean-up days where we have nearly filled the garbage bag we carry with us.



**Keith and David Fredette on their monthly clean-up mission.**

Our project is over for this school year. We have loved being involved with Habitat for Humanity once again; we have loved getting to know our Franklin St. neighbors a little better; and we have loved being part of the lives of our community neighbors who are working so hard to provide homes for themselves and for others. As a little bonus, we also like having a cleaner street.

Thanks for all you do,  
*Sarah Fredette*



Join Habitat for Humanity for the

**2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Richard A. Couch  
Memorial Golf Tournament**

Sunday, August 1, 2010  
1:00 p.m. Shotgun Start  
Oneonta Country Club

Registration Fee of \$85.00 per player includes greens fee, cart, lunch, and goody bag including a \$50 gift certificate.

Awards

\* 1<sup>st</sup> Place \* 2<sup>nd</sup> Place \* 3<sup>rd</sup> Place \* Closest to the Pin \*  
\* Longest Drive \* Straightest Drive \*

**\$15,000 Hole-In-One Cash Prize**

Habitat for Humanity of Otsego County builds homes in partnership with low income families. This year HFHOC is in its twenty-first year of building homes in our area. Proceeds from the tournament will be used to purchase building materials for a house currently under construction in Oneonta. A portion of the proceeds will also be sent to the Richard A. Couch Memorial Fund in honor of Rich's efforts to help fundraise for Habitat for Humanity.

# Ain't too Proud to Beg

Really, we ain't. This is a list of stuff that we sure wish we had. If you are of a mind to donate any of these things, we'd be proud to take it. And remember, your donations are tax-deductible and we can supply you with a receipt.

*Call our office at 432-7874 and Trish will gladly talk with you about how you can help.*



**Snack time:** We urgently need refreshments for our laborers. Lunches, morning snacks, and cases of bottled water, juice, iced tea, lemonade, and sports beverages would be terrific.



A gift of LAND — we need building lots all around Otsego County. Donations are great, but if you have some land you'd like to sell, we may buy it if the location and price are right.



**NEWS FLASH** - we own five acres in Edmeston that we can't use and would like to sell. Call our office for more information.



We need people to volunteer behind the scenes on our family, fundraising, public relations, and volunteer committees. And people for our Board of Directors. For a relatively small donation of your time, you will receive a world of fun and friendship in return.

And if you have building skills to bring to the site (and maybe a desire to teach or lead a small crew) - wow!

Nice car.



Donate your vehicle to help build homes.



Habitat for Humanity

Cars for Homes

877-277-4344  
carsforhomes.org

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*We do our best to keep costs down, but the price of building materials has skyrocketed in the past ten years. Your tax-deductible contribution will help us continue our mission to eliminate poverty housing.*

Here's what your Habitat dollar can buy: \$25 = five exterior wall boards. \$50 = four gallons of paint. \$100 = an interior door, or a roll of Tyvek®. \$150 = one square of roof shingles. \$200 = one base kitchen cabinet. \$250 = a window. \$500 = wall insulation or five interior doors. \$1,000 = bathroom fixtures.

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephones: day \_\_\_\_\_ evening \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Dateline, 18 Miles Avenue: We promised in our last newsletter to give you a progress report on our newest house in the Town of Oneonta. We hope you enjoy what you see (enough to join us)! Photos by Peg Fowler



April 24 – 28: ground has thawed and excavation begins



June 24: Men at work



April 29: Barb Dauria digs in, May 31: lot is staked



June 24: We have a roof!

Peg Fowler reporting...



June 5: foundation is poured and deck work begins



[On June 24] at the worksite, at about 3:00 p.m. the ice cream truck/vendor came by. We sometimes purchase some, but weren't going to yesterday - so the lovely lady driver decided to GIVE us each an ice-pop - being worried about our dehydration.



June 17 and 18: walls go up – now it looks like a house!

THANK YOU to our Miles Avenue neighbors: Bruce Hall and Tom Porteous for letting us borrow your water and electricity, Erwin and Maria Vega for cutting the lawn around our lot, Scott Gravelin for letting the cement truck come across your property to pour the foundation, saving us the expense of hiring a concrete pumper (!!!) – and Sandy Collins for baking our construction supervisor a rhubarb pie! How did you know it's Jon's favorite? ☺



Thank you, lovely ice cream truck lady!



## On the Level

By Marie Hegeman, Editor \*\*\*\*

We had a hole in our house for ten weeks. Not the kind of hole that can be repaired with a board or spackle. Not the kind of damage that insurance will cover. No, with this kind of hole, the best you can do is put a patch over it and learn to live with it.

In April we were a family of two humans, one dog, and three cats when Gigi, our charming, sweet-natured seven year old cat, suddenly died. A rare heart condition, we were told. Often no symptoms until it's too late. Nothing we could have done to predict or prevent. We understood, but it didn't make the loss of our ten-pound, glossy black purr machine any easier to bear.

Tom and I have loved cats and dogs our whole lives. We've had to say goodbye before. We know the drill: anguish, tears, mourning, and waiting...waiting for the next animal to come along and fill our lives, even though we know we're putting our hearts out there to one day be broken again.

You're wondering what this has to do with Habitat, I know. Did you read the front page of this issue? Take another look at Saphire and Sean's thank-you to Habitat: *"What we like the most about our new house is now we can finally have a dog. His name is Barkly."* Of course children understand instinctively what we grownups sometimes forget: building materials make a house – compare this to ice cream in a dish. Loving people make a home – the sweet topping that makes something good already better. And animal companions are the cherry on the sundae.

It's wonderful – *wonderful* – that we not only work to build houses for humans, but that our efforts also provide families with an opportunity to shelter and love animals that might not have had another chance.

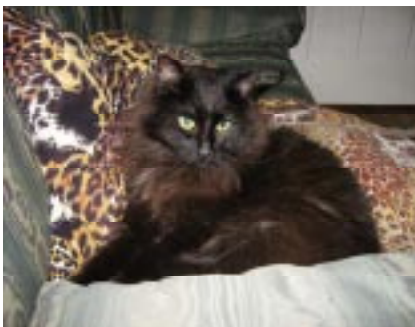
Back to our story. A farm lady looked out her window, saw a car slow down and drop out a cat. The nice lady took him in for a barn cat, and two days later, we got a phone call from our vet. *The lady says he's not meant to be an outdoor cat, he's here now, do you want to look at him?* Okay, we say. No commitments, we're not sure we're ready yet, but okay.

He's a charming, sweet-natured purr machine, just past kittenhood. He's black, but his long hair is dull and rough. And he's thin; so thin, we can feel his bones, like a little bird skeleton. This is the one Gigi found for us, we know.

I wanted to give him a French name, and suggested Beau. Tom didn't much care for it. A couple of hours later he suggested, "How about Beaubeau?" That made me laugh, so Beaubeau it is.

He's been with us since June 11. He looks shinier and rounder every day. He doesn't fill the hole that Gigi left, but we don't expect him to. There's enough space in this house. Plenty of space for him to fill on his own.

Will you do something for me? Give your pets an extra caress – and know that, through your support our Habitat families, and their beloved companion animals, have the chance to give and receive that same love too.



*Bebaubeau Hegeman, lounging at home.*



## Awl About Us

Habitat for Humanity International was founded on Christian principles as a housing partnership that welcomes everyone, regardless of religion, to work toward our goal of a world without poverty housing. The Otsego County affiliate was founded in 1989. Since then, we have built 27 houses in Otsego County. We have also tithed to Habitat for Humanity International to complete 28 houses in other countries. HFHI's mission is to see that everyone in the world can someday own a simple, decent, affordable home.

We build on Thursdays and Saturdays, and everyone is welcome to help. Don't worry if you don't have skills; bring a willingness to learn and we'll teach you. **Our construction supervisor is Jon Edgington.**

OR, you can volunteer with one of the many committees that work behind the scenes.

Our Board meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at Elm Park UM Church, Chestnut Street in Oneonta, at 7pm. Stop by and learn more about what we're doing! Our officers and directors are:

President: Jeanne Miller  
 Vice-President: Karen Joest  
 Secretary: Kirsten Wolfe  
 Treasurer: Peggy Fowler  
 Assistant Treasurer: Emery Herman

Board members: Barbara Dauria, Mary Ann Dowdell, Emily Ernsberger, Marie Hegeman, Star Hobbs, Susan Melchior, Bill O'Dea, Norm Tiffany, Alton Van Cleef, Kerry Wagner, Bruce Ward, and Cecilia Zapata.

**Our office manager is Trish Dukes.**

HABITAT HAPPENINGS is the official newsletter of Habitat for Humanity of Otsego County. It is published in March, July, and November. It is edited by Marie Hegeman, with production assistance from Barbara Dauria at TouchstoneGraphics.com. Thanks to their combined generosity, this newsletter is produced at minimal cost.



Join us on Sunday, August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1:00 p.m. at the Oneonta Country Club

*Habitat for Humanity of Otsego County's  
Second Annual  
Richard A. Couch Memorial Golf Tournament*



*A good supporter, a great friend*