

Building simple, decent homes since 1989

Summer 2008, Volume 18, Issue 2



HABITAT HAPPENINGS

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Build a House Without a Hammer? Our New Presentation Shows How

By Loraine Tyler, Chair, Publicity Committee

Have you ever thought that you'd like to volunteer with Habitat sometime, but decided that building houses isn't your thing? So have lots of other people. That's why our publicity committee created *You Don't Need a Hammer*. It's a new Power Point® multimedia presentation, and it shows how much work we do behind the scenes before that first nail is pounded.

No matter what kinds of skills you possess, we're sure we have a job that will suit you. If you'd like to help out but aren't sure what you'd like to do, we have lots of chances for you to try us out.

Maybe you'd like a spot on our Board of Directors. Their job is to discuss and decide on what we will do and how we'll do it.

Our Construction Committee is in charge of what's needed to build each house. This includes planning the tasks to be done each workday, making sure we have the appropriate tools and supplies, and training and supervising the volunteers.

People People Wanted

The Volunteer Committee recruits and matches people with the jobs they might like to do. Right now we have an urgent need for people to provide lunches on our workdays (Thursdays and Saturdays).

Or perhaps you'd like to work directly with our families? In that case, you might like the Family Selection Committee, which guides interested families through the application procedure. Once families are approved for home ownership, the Family Support Committee helps them through the building process. They teach families budgeting, home maintenance, and how to be good neighbors.

Dollars, dirt, and doings

Our Fundraising Committee runs sales, raffles, and the like, and also solicits donations from corporations, grants, churches, and individuals. The Site Procurement Committee searches for land for sale or donation, making sure that it's not too wet or otherwise likely to cause a problem to a family. The Publicity Committee keeps us in the mind of the public, so that we can find families, land, money, and build those houses.

If you belong to a church or community group that wants to know more about why *You Don't Need a Hammer* to help us, we'd love to show you. Please call our office or email us. We want to meet you soon!



The First Presbyterian Church of Cooperstown invited us to show "You Don't Need a Hammer" on Sunday, June 8. Longtime Habitat supporter Adele Johnson is shown at far left. Loraine Tyler is at the computer, and her husband Rich – also our treasurer – sits nearby.

I Have the Floor get it?

By Tom Norris, President



What a great time of the year! Not just because summer has finally arrived, but because this is our busiest, most productive and most fruitful season. This is the time of the year when our efforts and the community support for Habitat are most visible.

While we are busy all year long, let me try to give you a flavor and a BIG THANK YOU for what happened during just one month: our busiest month, the month of June.

We worked on three houses in the city of Oneonta and that takes a lot of effort and cooperation. During this month we hosted the Habitat Care-a-Vanners. These volunteers came to Oneonta from various parts of the country to help accelerate our building process. Not only did they give us their time and talents for two weeks but they also had to pay those exorbitant gas prices to get here. I can't imagine what kind of gas mileage you get on those big RVs!

So here is a flavor for our June activity. While Job Corps was working on the foundation for our newest home on Monroe Avenue, our regular volunteers teamed with the Care-a-Vanners building retaining walls for the houses on Main Street. The city then installed sewers while everyone moved to Monroe to build the floor and erect the exterior walls and install trusses. Most of this was done during our heat wave!!!!

Each day church groups and private individuals prepared lunches and delivered them to our volunteers. We received additional material donations and financial support from the community. Otsego Rural Housing worked with our partner families to help them qualify for the first time homeowner's grants. We purchased land in Milford and one of our local lawyers donated his time to help us close on the property.

While all this was going on, Family Selection held an open house to recruit potential home owners. Publicity made several community presentations to recruit volunteers. Family Support hosted a partner family home dedication. Our fundraising committee attended an interview applying for a major grant. And of course there was a welcoming dinner and a farewell thank you celebration for the Care-a-Vanners, plus a special meeting with the community in Edmeston.

NOW THAT IS A BUSY MONTH! But don't take my word for it – look at all the work that one terrific group of young people, students at Cooperstown High School, did for us in June:



Pictured above, at our North Seventh Street site, is Miss Pindar's Sociology class. On Thursday, May 29, the class traveled to the site and worked with our regular crew. Not only did they provide a day's worth of labor, they also donated lunches for all of our regulars. And as if *that* weren't enough, the students raised money through bake sales and a pancake breakfast. The class has raised **over \$700** for us!

We're so impressed by their contributions, we hardly know what to say. Fortunately, the kids aren't at a loss for words – here's a quote from them: "As a class, it has been an uplifting experience participating in and working with the Otsego County Habitat for Humanity. Being able to help and give back to the community has been moving experience and we have grown as individuals as well as a class. In participating we found that a small amount of help can truly make a huge difference within the community."

While June was exceptionally busy and we have all earned a rest, current economic conditions in Otsego County make affordable housing more urgent than ever and our efforts are more needed than ever. So thanks to all for a magnificent job and please keep up the good work - maybe not quite at our hectic June pace, but at a pace that will let us continue to make a difference. Just think: we started in 1989, and we will complete our 25th home this fall. Not bad for a small group of volunteers. THANK YOU!

It's All About You! – Spotlighting some of our supporters and friends



Welcome to our newest family! Future homeowner Ruthellen Buddenhagen is shown signing our volunteer log before a day of work. Waiting their turn, L-R, are Ruthellen's dad, Daniel Baker, brother Donald Baker, and husband Jason. Ruthellen and Jason are both employed by Opportunities for Otsego, and have two children - daughter, Saphine, and son, Sean. Their new home will be on Monroe Avenue in Oneonta.



Dr. Jill Craig of Cooperstown Family Chiropractic is shown with Loraine Tyler at the annual SADD run. Loraine is describing our volunteer opportunities. SADD's run is held at the Oneonta High School and is one of our favorite events.



Fundraising Chair Bruce Ward (left), accepts a donation of \$1,110 from fellow Board member Steve Walsh. Steve is faculty advisor to the SUNY Oneonta Marketing Club. The Club spent several weeks soliciting cash donations from fellow students and members of the Oneonta community.

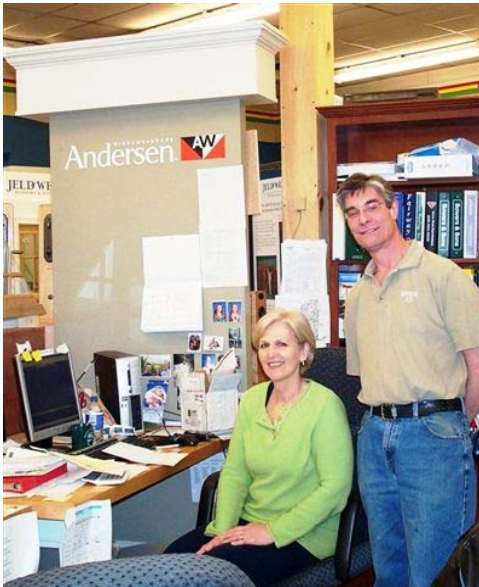


Good friends and a glass of wine: The Otsego Co. Bar Association hosted a wine-tasting fundraiser for us at La Tarantella in Colliersville. Pictured left to right are Steven Z. Feuer, President of the Otsego Co. Bar Association, Kim Koenigsberg, proprietor of Unadilla Grapes & Grains, Marie Hegeman, Habitat Happenings editor, and Herb Simmerly, Esq., Senior Vice-President of the Trust Division at Wilber National Bank. Kim conducted a presentation on wine qualities and tasting techniques. Herb's employer, Wilber National Bank, generously underwrote the cost of the wines. The fundraiser, held on March 12, earned \$800. Cheers!

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world: indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." - Margaret Mead

It's All About You! – Spotlighting some of our supporters and friends

Stock Building Supply's relationship with us began about two years ago. Site Procurement chairman Alton Van Cleef, who supervised the building of Laurel and Frank Wilsey's house in Hartwick, introduced himself and HFHOC to the fine people at Stock, and we've had a great alliance ever since.



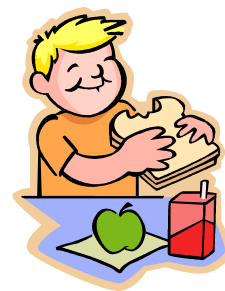
Pictured above is Barbara Peralis, Stock's contractor sales representative, and store manager Wayne Paulino. Barbara, who enjoyed working with Alton, said "We love to do this." Barbara's previous experience with Habitat was as a volunteer builder in Florida. She now works closely with HFHOC construction supervisor Mike Lanza to supply price quotes and procure the materials. Wayne said, "It's always exciting to see a new Habitat house go up. Their design is great – very simple and very functional." He added, "After working with you for a bit, we figured out a system that allows us to coordinate your ordering times so that the materials arrive exactly when they're needed."

Stock, which has 360 outlets throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe, is a major supplier of building materials for our current house construction projects in Oneonta. "As you already know, Habitat International partners with home building manufacturers, [including] Dow Boards, Andersen Windows, and Larsen Doors," Wayne explained. "We're happy to be the local supplier for your affiliate."

"When the well is dry, we learn the worth of water."- Ben Franklin. Ever wonder where we get our washing-up water at the building sites until the plumbing is operational? In the case of our two houses on North Seventh Street in Oneonta, we rely on the kindness of folks like the crew at **Taylor's Full Service** on Main Street, just across the way. For months, Taylor's has generously provided as much water as we've asked for, which is quite a bit – about 30 gallons of hot and cold water a week.



Pictured above is Steve Schwarz, who has been employed at Taylor's since July 2007. When we thanked him for Taylor's contribution, Steve said, "Habitat helps us as well." How so? "We're like a neighborhood store, and my customers like news," explained Steve. "Everyone wants to know what's going on with the Habitat houses. Mike [Lanza] is very helpful to us, because he tells us all about the progress and it makes our customers happy." A case of one hand washing the other!



Did we mention **WE NEED LUNCHES??**

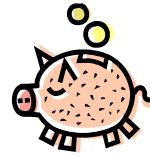
Our crews are building in the city of Oneonta. Please, please call our office to schedule a day to be our lunch-angels. We build on Thursdays and Saturdays.

THANK YOU!!!

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.*

Pennies from Heaven:



Cash – we are always grateful to receive, in any amount. And stop by our office to check out our Habitat merchandise – books, hammers, notecards – all priced to sell!

All your worldly goods:



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.



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.

We would like a person who has the experience and contacts to promote us to local and county governments.

We would also like a person with photo/video experience who could develop a promotional video!

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

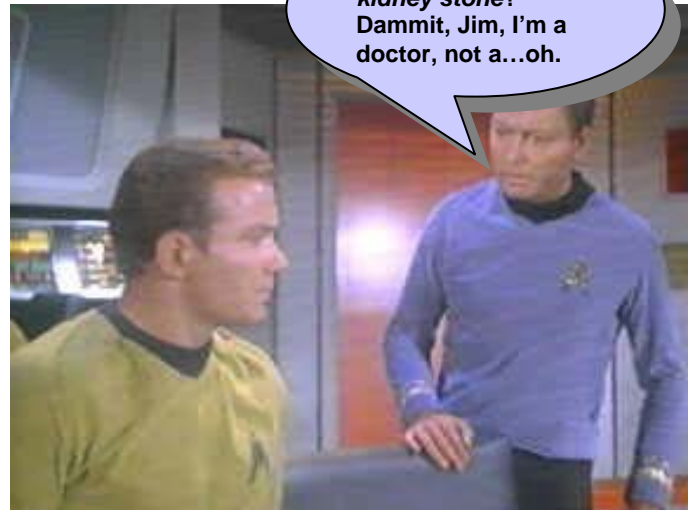
It's All About You! – Spotlighting some of our supporters and friends



Cold hands, very warm hearts: On March 21, the guys at F.L. Hall & Son of Oneonta donated the entire day to installing the roof at our 4 N. Seventh St. house in Oneonta. It was one of the coldest and windiest days of the winter, with the afternoon temperature a bone-chilling 29 degrees. Despite the extreme conditions, the crew stayed on the job until it was done. The Halls are fifth generation roofers, with the family in the business for about 56 years. Pictured above is Fred Hall Jr. The other two men on the crew (not pictured, but also much appreciated), are his son Casey and nephew Tony Winchester.



A neighborly gesture: Zainab Rafique, future neighbor of the Buddenhagen family, is shown setting out lunch goodies at their future home. Zainab brought a homemade dish to the site every day during our Care-a-Van visit. What a wonderful welcome – Zainab, thank you so much!



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Give'Til It Hurts Dept: We just found out that actor William Shatner auctioned off a kidney stone for \$25,000, and donated the proceeds to the Los Angeles Habitat affiliate. Shatner, seen here on Star Trek, is a good friend of Habitat: the cast of his current show, Boston Legal, also raised \$20,000 for HFH. We'd rather not know how. Many thanks to Otsego HFH supporter Bill Safarik for catching this story!

What are you doing this weekend?...
how about building a house?



We're at the sites every Thursday and Saturday from 8:30 am until 4:00 pm. Check our website, Habitat-Otsego.org for Mike Donahue's weekly construction updates!



On the Level

By Marie Hegeman, Editor

As I write this, I just came back from bringing lunch to the Care-a-Van workers at our site on Monroe Avenue in Oneonta. I've been bringing lunches to the worksites for ten years but, for some reason, this time the experience struck me in a different way.

I'd heard that one of the CAVers was allergic to some of the ingredients in the dishes I'd brought, so I asked him what he'd like, figuring I'd run down the hill to Woody's Market and bring him something safe. But he said not to worry, he'd go and buy his own lunch. I argued, "But Habitat is supposed to provide your lunch." He shook his head. "You already do so much for us," he said." And I wondered: *what we do for you? You spend hundreds on gas; take 80 hours out of your life to build a house for people you don't know.*

He drove off and I started setting out the food. I knew today was going to be hot, so last night I fixed gazpacho (a cold vegetable soup), salad, and pimiento cheese sandwiches. And wow, did all of this get compliments! "This tastes wonderful - it's so much work - this was so nice of you." And again, I was thinking: *All I did was spend an hour and a half in my nice cool kitchen. My big labor was pushing the button on the food processor. You're out here sweating for two weeks for people you don't know!*

I just never get over that. I do Habitat because I live here, but why do other people choose to go out of their way like this? Like our college kids -- we have so many students, we can't use them all at once, and they have to take turns. Most of these kids are doing this for a community that is theirs only for now.



The June 13 work crew, made up of our regulars, Job Corps students, and Care-a-Vanners, enjoying lunch.

As a manually inept person, I am in awe of people who are confident enough to go to the site, pick up a tool, and do something with it. I can't say enough about how much I admire the men and women who start out with a piece of land and, a year later, they've built a home - ready to give a family a lifetime of safety and comfort.

That's cool. But what's also cool is the generosity of spirit of our everyday heroes - their ability to make someone like me also feel special and valuable. I can't build a house, but I can pack a lunch - and every time I take my turn as lunch-lady, the people who *can* build a house remind me that you don't need a hammer to be able to help.



Awl About Us

Habitat for Humanity International is a Christian housing partnership that serves all God's people in need. The Otsego County affiliate was founded in 1989. Since then, we have built 24 houses.

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 Mike Lanza.**

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

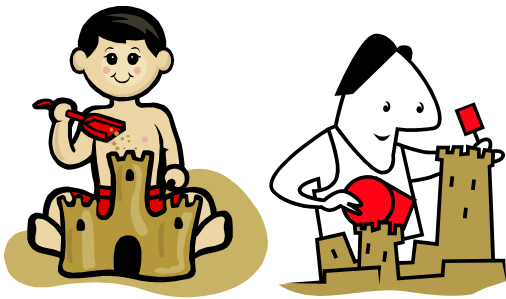
Our Board meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at Elm Park UM Church, Chestnut Street in Oneonta, at 7pm. Stop by and learn more about what we're doing! Our officers and directors are:

President: Tom Norris
 Vice-President: Jeanne Miller
 Secretary: Leslie Craigmyle
 Treasurer: Rich Tyler
 Assistant Treasurer: Mary Ann Dowdell

Board members: Carole Alicino, Barbara Dauria, Mike Donahue, Bruce Downie, Janie Forrest-Glotzer, Marie Hegeman, Susan Melchior, Bill O'Dea, Judy Thistle, Norm Tiffany, Loraine Tyler, Alton Van Cleef, Steve Walsh, 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.



Summertime is building time!

