

FAMILY FOUNDATIONS

Faith, Family, Framework

Spring 2010



For those who travel through Habitat's program, it's easy to get caught up in the excitement of a new home. Once the thrill wears off, determination kicks in to continue working toward the goal of making that final mortgage payment. Joyce Mays shares her story of triumph and making that last payment.

It seemed like a natural fit for Joyce to become a Habitat homeowner, after all, she was living with her mother who was also on Habitat's Board of Directors at the time. "I was very confident I could do it. I remember I had my 500 sweat equity hours finished fast. Every weekend my nephew and son were helping on the house, while I was out picking up yards and cooking hotdogs and hamburgers for the volunteers," Joyce recalls.

On Halloween, a pregnant Joyce Mays, her son and nephew were moving into their new home in Harlem Heights. "We were so excited to have something that no one could take from us. It was something we could call home and feel

safe in. We had a brand new house and then five days later we had a brand new baby girl," she remembers.

"There was a joy you just can't believe."

Today, 18 years later, Joyce is beaming. She just wrote out the last mortgage payment on her home. "Without the Lord, I couldn't have done this. There's a joy that you just can't believe. It's like the joy of having a newborn and seeing they are healthy and have all their toes and fingers," she testifies. "My son and nephew have both passed now. I only wish they could see this right now. They worked so hard to help me. I am really thankful my 87-year old mother is still around to see me accomplish my dream. And I have my husband, my 18-year old daughter and eldest son to continue the celebration with," Joyce notes.

Now that Joyce and her husband have their house paid off, the two plan to replace the windows and tile throughout the home. "I'm really blessed that I didn't have destructive kids. I didn't have to spend much to keep up my house all these years. Something you have to work

hard for, you appreciate more and you try very hard to take care of it," she says.

When I asked Joyce what her secret was to paying off her mortgage, she replied, "I'm Duera Mae's daughter. That woman can accomplish anything. I have a strong determination. I'm a home health aide and you have to have a real determination to do that. I would tell others that first of all, you need to believe and trust in the Lord because you can do anything with the Lord. And second, have the end in sight, but focus on today. Lastly, have a strong determination to accomplish something for yourself and don't give up. You gotta wake up and tell yourself every day, I can do this, I can do this..." ▲

Trisha Goins is the Vice President of Communications for Habitat for Humanity of Lee County, FL

Features:

Annual Honors	page 2
Give A Little, Get A lot	page 3
Habitat in Haiti	page 4
Giving is Fun	page 5

CONTACT Us

President & CEO

Vern Archibald
president@habitat4humanity.org

Executive VP & CFO

Richard Shera, Jr.
cfo@habitat4humanity.org

Executive VP & COO

Tanya Soholt
coo@habitat4humanity.org

VP of Communications

Trisha Goins
publicrelations@habitat4humanity.org

VP of Construction

Jackie Williams
vpconstruction@habitat4humanity.org

VP of Development

Karen Quanstrom
development@habitat4humanity.org

VP of Finance

Clara Sanchez
finance@habitat4humanity.org

VP of Resale & Maintenance Division

Roger Waltrip
thriftstore@habitat4humanity.org

VP of Volunteer Services

Terri Rausch
vpvolunteers@habitat4humanity.org

Family Services

familyservices@habitat4humanity.org

Habitat Senior Housing

information@habitat4seniorhousing.org

Habitat Office

1288 North Tamiami Trail
North Fort Myers, FL 33903
Ph: 239-652-0434 Fax: 239-652-0388
www.habitat4humanity.org

Habitat Thrift Store

1288 North Tamiami Trail
North Fort Myers, FL 33903
Ph: 239-652-0388

Annual Honors

As the wife of former 2008 Republican presidential candidate and former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee, Janet Huckabee shared insight with donors and volunteers at Habitat's Annual Dinner about the organization's aid in Haiti and encouraged people to get involved. Huckabee touched on her husband's run for the Republican presidential candidate. "You can imagine how much fun we had because my middle and maiden name is McCain. But our whole 2007-2008 experience, our family was dreaming together and it was just an awesome experience and I wouldn't trade anything for it," she said.



During the event at The Forest Country Club in South Fort Myers, Habitat also recognized three

standout supporters of its mission; Gerry Lanois with Pelican Landing Community in Bonita Springs, who has raised more than \$300,000 for Habitat's mission, Robb and Stucky Furnishings, who have been a major contributor to Habitat's thrift store and Jo Ann Landes-Ross, a member of Habitat's Faith Relations committee.



As a former board member of the non-profit who's pounded nails in more than 20 states and 4 countries, Huckabee

led a "First Ladies" build that included representatives from all 50 states. On Tuesday night, she delivered a message of hope to 250 attendees about the 'tools of the heart'; cash, check, time and prayer and recalled a teary-eyed homeowner once saying 'you have raised my titanic'. Huckabee challenged guests to question themselves 'are we faithful with what we have and who's titanic are we lifting today'.

In memory of a volunteer who propelled Habitat's home construction with his template system



design, friends unveiled a sign at the dinner to rename Habitat's prefab warehouse, The Harold L. Ruth Warehouse. Ruth's wife and son were in attendance to receive recognition of Harold's efforts.

Read about Habitat's homeowner family who shared testimony with attendees at the dinner on page 4. ▲

Make Your Gift Meaningful Today

Giving a meaningful gift isn't something you have to wait for the holidays to do. At Habitat, we invite you to visualize the impact of your giving can have everyday.

Habitat's Meaningful Gifts catalog offers 'gifts' you can select for family and friends to honor an important occasion or 'just because'. These gifts are actually a list of supplies necessary for our organization to build and rehabilitate homes in the community. By making a gift donation that equates to the cost of these supplies, you can participate in an act of stewardship to Habitat for Humanity of Lee County and to those in whose name you are giving the gift. Whether its a birthday or anniversary celebration, in honor of or in memory of, giving a gift to help those in need is one that will last a legacy. The recipient of your gift will receive an appropriate holiday or special occasion gift card from Habitat with your name. Please remember Habitat for Humanity of Lee County and use this gift-giving catalog to incorporate our organization in your future gift giving. ▲



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- James Adams
- Donny Andrews - Secretary
- Glenn Bailey
- Brian Crowley
- Dave Dale
- Miguel Fernandez III
- Joann Golden
- Kitty Green - Vice Chairman
- Willie Green
- Charles Idelson - Chairman
- Brian Lucas
- Denis Noah
- Debbie Prather
- George Reider
- Scott Robertson
- Sandy Robinson
- Duane Swanson, Jr.
- Evette Teal-Richardson
- Sharon Thompson - Treasurer
- Bill Valenti

Last Stop: Home Sweet Home

During Habitat's Annual Dinner in January, volunteers and donors had an opportunity to hear Shawnda and Reginald's heartwarming story of homeownership. Last year, the family of seven found themselves in the middle of a foreclosure crisis, and they didn't even own a house! The 3-bedroom home Shawnda and Reginald had rented for almost 2 years was in the process of being foreclosed upon. Days later, Reginald was laid off from his job, leaving the family unable to afford a conventional mortgage. "It's very stressful as parents not knowing where your next home will be," Shawnda said. "Our family was too big to move in with family members while we saved money to move and at that point we were willing to do anything to have a roof over our heads," she added. A friend of the family had gone through Habitat's program and recommended the organization. Shawnda's salary as an office assistant qualified the family for Habitat's program. Today, Shawnda and Reginald say they are blessed to be Habitat homeowners; they pay a monthly mortgage (including taxes and insurance) equal to a third of their previous rent. ▲



HABITAT 101

In the last year, Habitat for Humanity of Lee County has prepared for the downturn in the economy by making adjustments to some key operations. Today, these changes have kept our operations going strong in a tough market. If you're new to us or would just like to know more about our Lee County operations, sign up for our 1-hour class and tour of Habitat's 10+ acre campus, located in North Fort Myers. We'll let you know what Habitat is all about and what sets us apart from other chapters. You must RSVP for the classes. Call us to sign up now: 239-652-0434 ext: 1678

Saturday, March 6 @ 9am
Thursday, March 18 @ 3pm
Thursday, April 8 @ 3pm
Saturday, April 24 @ 9am

Thursday, May 6 @ 3pm
Saturday, May 22 @ 9am
Thursday, June 3 @ 3pm
Saturday, June 19 @ 9am

Habitat For Humanity In Haiti

Many have asked about Habitat's efforts in Haiti since the devastating earthquake on January 12th that has claimed the lives of more than 200,000 people. Habitat for Humanity has pledged to help 50,000 families in Haiti through a multi-year effort that includes relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction. During Habitat's Annual Dinner in January, former Habitat International Board member Janet Huckabee told Lee County supporters that since Hurricane Katrina the organization has become more than just rebuilding. "We're not a disaster relief organization. But once you take money for relief in New Orleans and Louisiana, what keeps you from accepting it for the rest of the devastations," she said.



Photo by Steffan Hacker

Habitat has announced a threefold plan which has already begun with the distribution of 10,000 emergency shelter kits that contain supplies and tools to help make immediate house repairs and construct temporary shelters on their home sites. Habitat partners like the Clinton Bush Haiti Fund,

the German Foreign Office, Whirlpool Corporation, The Home Depot Foundation and the Ricky Martin Foundation have all contributed hundreds of thousands of dollars to Habitat's efforts.

In the rehabilitation phase, Habitat for Humanity will help families remove debris, salvage materials that can be recycled, repair homes and build transitional shelters. In the reconstruction phase, Habitat will build core houses that are permanent and resistant to earthquakes and hurricanes. They are designed to be expanded over time by the homeowner families. To help implement these efforts in Haiti, Habitat will add Resource Centers in the country to help train people in construction skills; which will also create additional job opportunities in the local communities. ▲



Photo by Ezra Millstein

GIVE A LITTLE, GET A LOT

Through the HandsOn Network, Habitat for Humanity has been running a 'Give A Day. Get A Disney Day.' promotion to the "Happiest Place on Earth" since January 1st. The idea celebrates volunteers by offering a one-day pass to any Disneyland or Walt Disney World theme park to the first one million volunteers. Disney hopes the offer will inspire people to start a tradition of volunteering while Habitat hopes to build excitement about helping those in need, "I've never volunteered with Habitat for Humanity before. Now that I'm here, I would come back without Disney," said Christine Gastra, a Cape Coral resident.

Already, more than 500 people have signed up to volunteer with Habitat for Humanity of Lee County to cash in on the free ticket; even those who traditionally aren't old enough to step foot on Habitat's worksites. Kids are donating their time by constructing birdhouses for future homeowners. At Habitat's home

dedications, families are presented with the mini masterpieces. So far, more than 30 birdhouses have been collected. ▲



Presenting Habitat with a birdhouse



Constructing birdhouse for Habitat



Habitat Home Dedication

how you can help

Because Habitat for Humanity of Lee County has shifted its focus from primarily new builds to rehabbed foreclosures, the need for volunteers on the worksite has decreased. However, through Habitat's North Fort Myers Thrift Store and office, volunteers are still as important as ever. Committee activities, advocacy efforts, bulk mailing campaigns all require the heart and soul of volunteers. Habitat needs creative types who can help with special events and those with technical skills to help us keep up with the evolving world of communications. Check out our website at www.habitat4humanity.org/volunteer to sign up with us. That's where you'll find a calendar of tasks that Habitat is in need of volunteers for today. ▲

From One Charity To Another

Brinda Swadner has had her share of trials in the last couple years after a divorce left her and her children on a tight budget. So when Christmas rolled around, Brinda took her children to Habitat's Thrift Store for presents under the tree. While at the store, Brinda's 8-year old daughter fell in love with Habitat's playhouse up for raffle. With empty pockets, Brinda told her daughter Makara the two-dollar raffle ticket was not in the funds. Later, Brinda visited the store again, this time with her 5-year old son Hayden. And just like his sister, Hayden begged his mom for a chance



to win the little Habitat house. Before they left the store, Brinda purchased a ticket. More than 1000 tickets were sold in Lee County for the three playhouses during November and December. Days after her purchased ticket, Brinda got the call. "They said

'you've won Habitat's playhouse'. I couldn't believe it! I was shocked and so excited for my kids," says Brinda. When she announced to her children that the family held a winning ticket, Brinda says charity came to mind. "I've always taught my kids to give. We talked about keeping the house, but Makara and Hayden agreed that the best thing to do was to give the house to a family who needed it," she says. After some prayer, Brinda says the family decided to donate the little house of hope to ACT (Abuse Counseling & Treatment, Inc.), a organization that has helped her family in the past. ▲

a little help from our friends

During Habitat's 3rd annual playhouse raffle, it was the help from Habitat friends that made the event a success. Viking Craftsman Companies bought materials and built one house, an anonymous donor funded the second while volunteers constructed its pieces and a Chico's employee paid for the third while Renaissance Homes put it together. Overall, the raffle brought in about \$5,000; Chico's employees raised \$3,200 of it. A North Fort Myers supermarket gave Habitat and volunteers a place to set up one of the houses. ▲



GIVING IS FUN

Welcome to Snowbird Season! For six months out of the year, the colder temps and icy roads push retirees south to the Sunshine State. And each November, Florida non-profits gear up to take advantage of the extra hands and generosity. In fact, some of the major contributors to Habitat's fundraising efforts involve 'snowbirds' doing what they do best; enjoying a pastime while helping those in need.

For years, Shadow Wood, Bonita Bay and Pelican Landing residents have traditionally held annual golf tournaments with auction items and raffle prizes donated by local retailers. With hours of preparation, committee members organize the events and rely on resident-volunteers to help pull it all together. Games aside, these communities literally bring in thousands of dollars to help those in need of a safe place to live.



Shell Point residents send internal mailings asking residents to donate toward a home sponsorship of \$50,000. Pine Island residents sell pavers, hot dogs, breakfast and music all in the name of Habitat for Humanity. This year, Verandah & First Bank on Palm Beach Blvd. hosted their 2nd Annual 'Race the Roof' event. Nearly 250 competitors took part in the 8K run and fun walk, raising nearly \$27,000. Miromar Lakes Golf Club spent a second year holding the 'Taste of Miromar,' with 14 resident chefs preparing a favorite dish for the community. The appetite from guests helped this gated community raise about \$15,000 for Habitat's cause.

Through the generosity of time and money, these communities combined have sponsored 50 homes during the last 15 years. If you are interested in assembling a committee, or live in a gated community that is searching for a worthy cause, please contact Habitat at 239-652-0434, ext. 1677. ▲

HABITAT HOME SPONSORS AT WORK



Shell Point residents at the dedication of their sponsored and built home.



Shadow Wood's residents teed off in a golf tournament to help raise funds for Habitat.



Miromar residents sampled prepared dishes from the community's finest to help Habitat.



Pelican Landing residents at the house-raising of their sponsored home.



Bonita Bay residents join Habitat's construction team to raise a home in Bonita Springs.



Verandah residents and First Bank ran with the community to raise a Habitat roof.



1288 N. Tamiami Trail
 North Fort Myers, Florida 33903
www.habitat4humanity.org

Non Profit Org.
 US POSTAGE
PAID
 Ft. Myers, FL
 Permit #406

Current Resident or

MAILING LABEL MUST
 COVER THIS TEXT

How You Can Help



Did you know by the year 2030, an additional 3 billion people - about 40 percent of the world's population - will lack access to decent housing. This translates into a demand of 96,150 new affordable homes every day and 4,000 every hour. Help Habitat make safe, decent, affordable housing a priority! Your contribution of time, talent and support helps Habitat help more families. Find out how to get involved by visiting www.habitat4humanity.org/getinvolved.

Send your gift today, using the envelope inside or by visiting www.habitat4humanity.org/donate or calling (239) 652-0434.

Earth Day (April 22)

Check Habitat's website for more information on how to get involved through Habitat's efforts on Earth Day.

Drawing Contest (entire month of April)

Children can get involved in Habitat's advocacy efforts by participating in a drawing contest. Kids (0-18) are encouraged to draw an image that best represents Habitat for Humanity. Turn the design into Habitat's North Fort Myers office. On May 1st, Habitat will announce the winner on its website and send a special gift.

T-Shirt Design Contest (entire month of May)

Children can get involved in Habitat's advocacy efforts by participating in a drawing contest. Kids are encouraged to draw an image that best represents Habitat for Humanity. Turn the design into Habitat's North Fort Myers office. On May 1st, Habitat will announce the winner on its website and send a special gift.

SHOP with us

Find new and used furniture, household items and construction materials in Habitat's Thrift Store for a low price while helping a good cause. Every dollar you spend with us provides affordable housing for those in need. Plus, we pick up donations!



1288 N. Tamiami Trail
 North Fort Myers, FL 33903
 Ph: 239-652-0388
 Mon.-Fri., 9am - 5pm