

Summer Newsletter 2022

Volume 20, Issue 2

Summer 2022

Working with our many partners, Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity builds strength, stability and self-reliance through affordable homeownership in Hampshire and Franklin Counties. We are an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International, an ecumenical organization that envisions a world where everyone has a decent place to live.

Looking Forward:

- » **1st Wednesday of each month, 6:30 pm**
New volunteer orientation, online, sign up at www.pvhabitat.org/ways-to-volunteer
- » **3rd Saturday of each month, 9:00 am**
New volunteer orientation, online, sign up at www.pvhabitat.org/ways-to-volunteer
- » **3rd Sunday of each month, 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm**
Women Build, Burts Pit Rd site
Go to <https://www.pvhabitat.org/ways-to-volunteer/womenbuild/> to learn more and to register
- » **Monday, Sept 19, 6:00 pm**
PVHH Annual Meeting, Esselon Café, Russell Street, Hadley
- » **TBD**
Briars in the Cotton Patch viewing and discussion, location TBD
- » **Sat, Dec 3 - Sat, Dec 10**
Gingerbread Build at Home – pickup locations TBD, confectionery crafting at home

Getting It Done: Volunteers are the Heart, Soul and Muscle of Habitat

Last fiscal year (from July 2021 to June 2022), 170 construction volunteers worked a combined total of at least 9,800 hours on the building of Habitat homes. And 98 individuals contributed an estimated combined total of 2,930 hours as volunteers on committees, with office and administrative activities, and helping with events to support the building of Habitat homes. That is a grand total of 268 community members working a whopping 12,730 hours to make sure that two families with low income finished their homes during the year and four more embarked on the building of their future homes. We always say that volunteers are the heart, soul and muscle of Habitat's work, and those numbers tell the story.

Here's another part of the story: In 2017 we lost one of Pioneer Valley Habitat's staunchest volunteer builders, Charlie Klem, to his battle with cancer. Since then, we award an annual Charlie Klem Getting It Done award to a volunteer who carries on Charlie's tradition of rolling up sleeves and getting to work. Specifically, recognition is "to be given each year to the Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity volunteer who most exemplifies the qualities that Charlie Klem personified: outstanding service, determination, dedication, commitment, fearlessness, friendliness and a positive, can-do attitude." Every year, it is a difficult choice to make because so many step up. You step up to swing hammers and install windows and lay flooring, in unrelenting heat and bitter cold. You are the creative geniuses behind the event environments and hospitality served on site and graphic design of Habitat materials. You scout future home sites and draft policies. You give hours and hours to the thoughtful consideration of dozens of homeowner applications and then the mentoring of future homeowners as they navigate the building of their homes.



Charlie Klem with his longtime Habitat Build Team partner Walt Kohler

"The award in Charlie's name and those who receive it highlights the many needs Habitat has for volunteers. Charlie would be so impressed to see what has transpired in the last five years, and how not even a pandemic could slow down Pioneer Valley Habitat's work. He would be very proud the spirit has continued."

— Sheila Klem, wife of Charlie and longtime Habitat volunteer

FY 22 Volunteers



If you are reading this story and haven't yet volunteered for Pioneer Valley Habitat, know that **we need you**. Online new volunteer orientations happen twice each month and now, with the increase in our construction schedule to four homes this year, we need volunteers more than ever. Go to www.pvhabitat.org/ways-to-volunteer/ to learn more. Come build with us, on the construction site or behind the scenes! Volunteers tell us regularly after their Habitat experience that it has been transformative.

And curious to know who this year's Charlie Klem Getting it Done honoree will be? Join us at the annual meeting on Monday the 19th of September at Esselon Café in Hadley to find out!

PVHH Board

Christine Aubrey, President
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Kathy Caputo
Gabby Caruso
Peter Graham
William Levine
Clara Lopez
MaryAnne Kuroczko
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Rob Steinberg

PVHH Staff

Jess Flohr, operations coordinator
Amy Landry, director of resource development
Megan McDonough, executive director
Eric Sussman, construction coordinator

Interns

Robin Hansen
Kayla Sit

Graphics Support

Beth Graham

Office Volunteers

Ken Carpenter
Lyn Heady
Lucia Spiro

Starting to think about your fall yard and garden clean-up? When you get to the driveway, what will you do with that starter car your grown-up daughter left behind when she moved to Savannah for her first job? That camper you inherited when Uncle Billy got too old for his annual jaunts across the country? You could decide, as dozens of owners of used vehicles did last year, "I think I'll donate my vehicle to Habitat!" It's easy, as easy as making a call and waiting for a truck to come take your vehicle away. And your unwanted vehicle could turn into the front door of a family's first home. The beautiful flooring in their entryway or bathroom or the window through which they will see the flamboyant New England fall foliage in their back yard. Go to pvhabitat.org/donate/cars-for-homes to learn more.



Two Families Move into their New Pelham Homes, PVHH's 49th and 50th!



On Saturday July 16th, dozens of people celebrated both virtually and in person with two families the dedication of their two completed homes in Pelham. A two-hour open house at the site was followed by a virtual celebration ceremony on zoom. The occasion was also cause for celebration because it was milestone in Pioneer Valley Habitat's history: the completion of this project marks the 50th home built in Hampshire and Franklin counties by this Habitat affiliate.

"I want to get up, sit on my back porch, drink my coffee, watch my kids play in the yard. Sometimes I still feel like I'm living in a dream..."

— Tiffani, owner of PVHH's 50th home



Letter from the Director

Dear Habitat Community,

As you may have read above, this summer we sold the 49th and 50th Habitat homes in Hampshire and Franklin counties to two excited families in Pelham. And while these homes were being sold, FOUR more homes were being framed – three in Northampton and one in Conway. For the last decade, we have been averaging two homes per year, so this is a big increase.

It took us 33 years to do the first 50 homes, how soon can we build the next 50? We know the need is great. Ninety-two households filled out applications for the four homes currently under construction. Home prices are through the roof and wages have not kept up. People want the stability that homeownership can provide.

The formula to support this building is pretty straightforward, despite the complexity of coordinating hundreds of people to make happen. We need:

- Land to build on
- Volunteers to give their time and talent
- Money to pay for construction materials, contractors and services and to run the organization

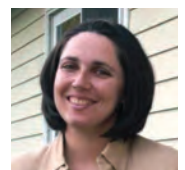
Many of you have been stepping up for years to make this happen. Just this year we increased our number of monthly Golden Hammer givers to over 50 in honor of our 50th home (thank you Golden Hammer givers!), providing reliable monthly income for our work.

I am so grateful to each and every one of you for seeing this need in the community and doing something about it. Invite a friend to join you in giving or volunteering. Let's build the next 50 homes alongside 50 eager future first-time homeowners.



In gratitude,

Megan McDonough,
Executive Director



PVHH Takes Top Honors in National Design Competition

And the Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI) DESIGN OF THE YEAR Award goes to...PIONEER VALLEY HABITAT! At the biennial HFHI conference in Atlanta this spring, winners were announced in a small number of categories, with our very own affiliate taking top honors for the Simple City Studio design of the 1-bedroom home at Broughton's Meadow Homes in Florence. While other recognition was given to other affiliates for various elements of building affordably, this award recognizes the best all-around example of the potential for affordable housing. The announcement of PVHH's win and the \$25,000 prize that accompanied it came with the explanation that "after three rounds of scoring, our external panel of judges believe your plan to be an excellent example of what housing can achieve – affordable to build and operate, climate-resilient, developed in partnership, adaptable for families of various sizes, and inviting for all ages and abilities." We of course share this recognition with our friends at Simple City Studio which had previously won the city of Northampton's Just Big Enough small home design competition in 2017.



National Estate Planning Awareness Week in October

Are you considering Pioneer Valley Habitat as a beneficiary in your estate? In 2008, the US House of Representatives adopted a resolution designating a National Estate Planning Awareness Week in October "to help the public understand what estate planning is and why it is such a vital component of financial wellness" (National Association of Estate Planners and Councils). National and local Estate Planning Councils are a resource for those who want to craft a financial strategy now to maintain financial security to best support their families and their communities throughout their lifetime and upon transfer of property and assets. Thank you to those who have made Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity part of their planned giving wishes.

Gingerbread Build 2022

Just three months to go...Better start drawing up your blueprints! The 10th annual Gingerbread Build contest will open Saturday the 3rd of December, when teams will pick up their kits (locations TBD) and have until midnight Thursday the 8th of December to unleash their culinary construction creativity on their contest entry. Discerning judges will then debate, decide and declare winners in each of several categories the afternoon of Saturday, December 10th. Be watching for more information this fall.



What's happening on the build sites?

In Conway, on S. Deerfield Rd., framing is underway on the second story. The second-floor decking has been installed and the walls are being framed, along with the floor joists and blocking for the stairway. Target completion date: Aug 2023.



On Burts Pit Rd. in Northampton, the exterior sheathing has been completed and taped. The drip edge and ice and water shield have been installed along the roofs. Roofing and interior framing is next. Target completion date: July 2023.



You may be lucky enough to work alongside one of the future homeowners the day you're out volunteering on site. The paths they've traveled to Habitat are extraordinary and inspiring. Read the stories of the families currently building their homes and of those who have gone before at <https://www.pvhabitat.org/homeowner-stories/>.

"It's a nice feeling to build your own home with your own hands. It is a great thing to tell your children."

- Hassan, homeowner

Wish List

We are in need of a new (or like new) wireless color laser jet printer and color cartridges, can you help?



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www.pioneervalleyhabitat.org

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Women Build!



Erin and Ali on the roof



Women Build teamwork

"What an incredible time I had at my first Habitat for Humanity build. New friend Ali and I got harnessed up and laid some ice and water guard on two roofs. Later we used a circular saw and a Ramset to start framing inside the house. I didn't know what to expect, and I loved every minute. Challenging, rewarding, satisfying. I'm hooked!"

— Erin, Women Build participant

Once-a-month Community Women Build days are all about breaking down historical gender barriers and bias on construction sites. We welcome women and individuals of all genders historically underrepresented in construction. We need YOU to lend your energy and enthusiasm to making a local family's dream of affordable homeownership come true!

Join us in Northampton!

- Afternoons 12-4, third Sunday of the month
- Proof of Covid-19 vaccination required
- Attend a new volunteer orientation prior to building

Learn more at www.pvhabitat.org/womenbuild.

Get Involved!

Visit our website to
sign up and volunteer!



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