

Winter Newsletter 2024

Volume 22, Issue 1

Winter 2024

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, 6:30pm**
New volunteer orientation, online, sign up at pvhabitat.org/ways-to-volunteer
- » **3rd Saturday of each month, 9:00am**
New volunteer orientation, online, sign up at pvhabitat.org/ways-to-volunteer
- » **3rd Sunday of each month, 12-4pm - Women Build,**
 Burts Pit Road site
 Go to www.pvhabitat.org/ways-to-volunteer/womenbuild/ to learn more and to register
- » **Saturday, Feb 24, 7am-1pm**
Opening Day at Steve's Sugar Shack, Westhampton. Enjoy a stack of flapjacks with Steve's own maple syrup and raise money for PVHH!
- » **Wednesday, April 3**
 Application deadline for a single family home in Greenfield and one in Northampton. For info and application, go to www.pvhabitat.org/apply/
- » **Early spring, date TBD**
Planning for the Future Panel, location TBD
- » **Spring, TBD**
 Wallraising ceremonies for a home on Petty Plain Rd. in Greenfield and a home on Woodland Drive in Northampton
- » **Wednesday, May 22, 6pm**
Feast for Habitat, rk Miles warehouse, Hatfield

Making it Happen in the Habitat World: Businesses Step Up

We are so fortunate to live in a place with a lively local economy, a landscape dotted with small to medium sized businesses, many of them locally-owned or operated. Habitat construction is above all local. Neighbors helping neighbors to build and buy their first homes, homes that are deeded affordable in perpetuity to ensure families ready to become homeowners have opportunities to make their dream a reality. Construction in 2024 looks a lot different than it did 35 years ago when this affiliate first began building houses. Today, homebuilding Habitat-style requires increasingly more donations of cash and goods and services to help subsidize costs and keep home prices affordable.

The partnerships forged between Habitat and the businesses in our back yard are laying the groundwork for the front yards of future habitat homes. We salute some of the corporate contributions that have come our way in recent months and share some examples here in case they might inspire you and your place of business to consider a creative approach of your own to support the creation of affordable homeownership opportunities. Right here. Right now. In our Valley.

The employees of the Turners Falls Charter Next Generation Plant, recognizing that the housing crisis is continuing to be one of the most critical issues affecting the ability of local families/households on limited incomes to thrive and get ahead, sent a portion of this year's employee charitable contributions, several thousand dollars, to Pioneer Valley Habitat. "Keeping consistent with our Core Values of Caring and Committed to the communities our employees live in, our employees requested that we donate to PVHH to ensure fellow community members have access to affordable housing," said Chad Jzyk, Senior HR Business Partner at CNG.



photo by Thomas Leahy

Jim Flannery, owner of Peak Performance Roofing, also recognizing the immediacy of the need, jumped immediately when asked if he could provide a seasoned crew to roof two of the three houses currently under construction on Burts Pit Rd. In short order, Peak's roofers were at the site with their expert rooftop skills so the regular community volunteers could turn their attention to other tasks. When thanked for his efforts, Jim commented, "We were happy to be in a place where we were able to help Habitat for Humanity in its work to build houses with those who need assistance with the purchase of a safe, affordable home."

Crews from engineering company DA Sullivan and Sons, solar installer PV2 and architectural fabricators Wright Millwork all rolled up sleeves and joined the work happening on the Victoria Bismark Farm construction site this fall. Cows Building Supplies offers discounted materials to help mitigate construction costs, attorney Timothy Reilly does pro bono work for PVHH...the list goes on, too many to count. Whether providing general muscle, professional assistance or cash donations, members of our local business community are helping Habitat get the job done.

Maybe you have a creative idea for fundraising in your place of business to support Habitat's work? Perhaps you and your colleagues have a skill set that could be applied to Habitat's work or just the will to make a difference, could move construction ahead with your participation? Director of Resource Development Amy Landry would love to talk with you about your idea. Call Amy at 413-586-5430 x 102 or email amy@pvhabitat.org.



PV2 on the Victoria Bismark Farm site

Time to clean out the garage for spring, spruce up the yard? 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 walls, the windows, the front door of a family's first home.



Go to pvhabitat.org/donate/cars-for-homes to learn more.

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

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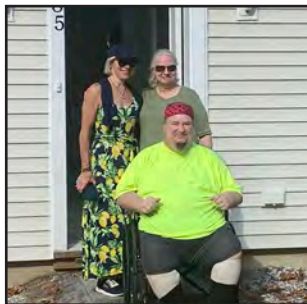
Beth Graham

Office Volunteers

Kenneth Carpenter
Muriel Codwise
Lyn Hedy
Lucia Spiro

Three Families Finish Building and Buy Their New Homes

It was a beautiful day for a celebration. The sun shone as dozens gathered in October outside three recently completed all-electric homes to celebrate with three families ready to cross over their new thresholds into the homes they helped build. Court Cline on behalf of the city of Northampton, Jim Hickey from Florence Bank and local solar advocate Bill Ashley spoke about their commitment to the project through contributions. State representative Lindsay Sabadosa, Build Team member David Dunn and Chadd Meerbergen from Smith Vocational School shared well wishes from the perspective of contributing to the actual construction. Family mentors welcomed the soon-to-become homeowners who took ownership of their new homes a few short weeks later. Congratulations to the new homeowners!



Letter from the Director

Dear Habitat Community,
Legacies take many shapes and come from many origins.

The work we are doing here today at Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity was born 35 years ago with a group of dedicated volunteers. That legacy continues today with hundreds (thousands?) of volunteers still giving their time to provide "sound, decent, low cost housing for people unable to afford it".

Those initial volunteers had a vision that still rings true today, but in April 1989 they could probably never have imagined the heat pumps and solar panels we install today. They also could probably not have imagined that construction costs would increase so rapidly in comparison to incomes.

In honor of our 35th anniversary as an organization, we are launching and invite you to join Pioneer Valley Habitat's **Future Builder Legacy Society** by including us in your estate planning. Whether your assets are modest or mostly reserved for family, designating an estate gift today toward Habitat's future can make an impact you could never imagine tomorrow.

Let's build a legacy together for the future we want to see.

In gratitude,

Megan McDonough,
Executive Director



PS – You can make your own free will online (www.freewill.com) or consult with a local professional on estate planning. We can't give you legal advice, but we would be happy to hear from you if your local Habitat is part of your legacy for the future. Learn more at www.pvhabitat.org/donate/planned-giving-building-a-legacy/



2. The purposes for which the corporation is formed is as follows:

The Corporation shall have the authority to perform all acts necessary to accomplish the below-mentioned purposes which are:

- a. To acquire property & build or rehabilitate buildings in order to provide sound, decent, low cost housing for people otherwise unable to afford it.
- b. To work in cooperation with other agencies, groups and individuals with a kindred purpose.
- c. To enable an expanding number of persons from all walks of life to participate in this ministry.

Now Accepting Applications for Homeownership

DEADLINE WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, 2024

Family selection has begun for two homes to break ground in Spring 2024. For more information about the **three-bedroom energy efficient home planned for Woodland Drive, Northampton**, attend an information session:

- Saturday, March 9th, 10am at Forbes Library, Northampton
- Wednesday, March 27th, 6:30pm on Zoom

To learn more about the opportunity to apply for a **one-bedroom energy efficient home on Petty Plain Rd. in Greenfield**, attend one of these sessions:

- Thursday, February 29th, 6:30pm on Zoom
- Saturday, March 23rd, 10am at Greenfield Public Library

Equal Housing Opportunity. More at: pvhabitat.org/apply/



Steve's Sugar Shack Opening Day



Who doesn't love a stack of flapjacks drizzled with butter and Massachusetts-made maple syrup on a mid-winter morning? Combine filling your belly with supporting the creation of affordable homeownership opportunities on Saturday the 24th of February at Steve's Sugar Shack in Westhampton! From 7am to 1pm, our friends Steve and Julie Holt will once again be celebrating Opening Day of their 2024 sugaring season by contributing a portion of the proceeds from all breakfasts sold to Pioneer Valley

Habitat. Fundraising will continue through the season, but you don't want to miss the festive atmosphere of Day 1 and the opportunity to learn about the Holts' state-of-the-art syrup-making equipment and wish them well for another season.

...And More Food Festivities!

FEAST for Habitat Wednesday, May 22nd 6-8pm at rk Miles, Hatfield

If you were at last year's FEAST for Habitat, you know you want to save the date (and work up a big appetite) for this year's FEAST. Where else can you spend a pleasant evening sampling some of the area's most creative culinary offerings and beverages elbow to elbow with your friends from the Habitat world, all in chic construction warehouse surroundings? Again, you will have the opportunity to cast your votes for Best Of awards and let your gastronomical preferences be known.



**Registration opens
April 1st.
See you there!**



What's happening on the build site?

Three homes are under construction at the Victoria Bismark Farm site on Burts Pit Rd. Crews are finishing siding as insulation work is about to begin. Sheetrock and flooring coming soon, come lend a hand!.



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 www.pvhabitat.org/homeowner-stories/.

"I am looking forward to decorating! And to gardening. Being able to have our own property, our own parking spot. Not only something we own, but something we built."

- Giovanna, future homeowner

Wish List

Low-cost or free warehouse space (need loading dock entrance)



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Building the Future, Leaving a Legacy

For a generation, the Pioneer Valley Habitat community has been building a legacy for the generations to come. Some 55 families now own and live in volunteer-built houses, deeded affordable in perpetuity: affordable today, affordable in the future for the next generation of first-time homebuyers. What is the legacy you want to leave behind and what are the steps you want to take now to get there? Join a panel presentation and discussion on Planning for the Future with a local estate lawyer, accountant and financial planners who will share their expertise and answer questions around making a will, planning for estate transfer, designation of assets and the tax implications around all of that. More information and how to register will be available March 1st.

Get Involved! Check out the list of committee volunteer opportunities included with this newsletter. Could you see yourself contributing in one of those areas? We need you!



Visit our website to
sign up and volunteer!



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