

# the BLUEPRINT

Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County's Newsletter • Spring 2019



## Meet Two of the 2019 Homebuyers!



*Jessica*

With a polar vortex, a record amount of snow, and an unprecedented number of school closings under our belt, it's probably safe to say that we're all more than ready for spring! Three families wait with anticipation for the snow to melt and the ground to thaw so they can begin building their new homes alongside volunteers near Latoka Beach in Alexandria.

Jessica's home, which was prepped last fall, will begin in April and has been dubbed the Partnership Home. Jessica learned about the homeownership program through a coworker and friend, and can't wait to begin the building process. Jessica shared, "I'm looking forward to meeting all the volunteers, Habitat has already changed our lives and we know it gets even better! Our apartment isn't big enough for a kitchen table, and that's a big issue. Homework happens at the table, family conversations, game nights, meals... you don't realize how much you use a table for until you don't have one. I don't want to just be a 'homeowner,' I want a forever home for my daughter."



*Koopman Family*

Joe and Chelsey's home will be the 2019 Women Build! The couple has three daughters, ages 12, 3 and 1½. Their youngest, born with hydrocephalus, was their primary motivation for seeking an improved housing situation. The Koopmans have eagerly attended nearly every Habitat event and sweat equity opportunity since being approved for homeownership and look forward to starting the building process. The couple immediately noticed their lot's close proximity to the beach, and are excited for more space, a yard for their kids to learn and grow, a place they can bring friends to, hold birthday parties, holidays, and most importantly, a healthy home for everyone.

If you would like to get involved on these homes by sharing a devotion, preparing treats or meals, or through swinging a hammer please contact Molly at 320-762-4255.

# Lori Celebrates 15 Years Working at Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County



## Q & A with Lori

*We are celebrating Lori's 15 Years at Habitat Douglas County by asking her some questions about her journey.*

### What are your biggest memories?

"The wide grins, the tears, and the hugs of 49 Douglas Country families'

stories are so motivating. Here are some I quotes that I have used in presentations over the years:

Picture an uninhibited 4-year-old dancing across the threshold to their first home.

A mother of three – tired, yet overwhelmed with happiness because today she's a homeowner!

"I have an oven! And can now cook my turkey and host my family."

"I have a yard to play in. No more parking lots, it's playgrounds for me."

"My life has changed."

Mother: "I found my boy sitting in his closet marveling that he had one."

### What is your biggest contribution?

"I have tried to be intentional about our culture. What I mean by culture is to lead by Habitat's norms and beliefs, which are the pillars of any organization or business. If these pillars are not properly followed by all - volunteers, board, employees – we will not be successful. Habitat is blessed with a great team of employees who work well together.

It's a gradual process. And an exciting process. Like when a volunteer understands that Habitat gives a 'hand-up,' not a handout. And that the homebuyer has a mortgage.

Promoting our Christian beliefs while simultaneously helping others understand we **show** our love for others. President Jimmy Carter says it well, "A lot of times we learn about service, we learn about love, and we talk about it. But Habitat lets us put it all into practice." We are privileged to be builders of not only houses but of families.

### Your Habitat is ranked #10 in the US when compared with other similar sized affiliates. Have you had setbacks?

Of course! I started as a half-time staff and now there are seven of us! We have moved offices four times. I have been learning from day one. One snowy day, I was bemoaning that there was too much to do when a check for \$5,000 fell out of the letter I was opening. That got me back on the vision!

Gaining and retaining volunteers has been a big challenge and one of the biggest rewards. In the first few years, I was working during the day in the office and calling volunteers at night. I had been out to the jobsite one day and there were too many volunteers on the build site for the task at hand. One of our board members stopped in to see how I was doing and I said in between tears we had too many people at the job site. Our Habitat runs on volunteers that are nimble and extremely dedicated.

More than one of our board members have said, "You meet some of the nicest people at Habitat who want to give back."

And it's true.

In partnership,

*Lori Andersen*





# Cold Weather, Warm Hearts and Home at Katelynn's Dedication

Katelynn's dedication likely set the record for the coldest dedication ceremony, though you'd never know it after stepping foot into her new home. The house was full of warmth, laughter, and excitement as many of her friends, coworkers, and supporters joined her in celebrating the next step in her homeownership process. A huge thank-you to her employer, Noonan Sport Specialists, for volunteering on her home as well as sponsoring the meal at her dedication. We also extend our greatest thanks to Scott and Kim Morrissey, Katelynn's mentors, for their help and guidance throughout her homeownership journey.



## Guests Moved to Tears at Home Is the Key Luncheon



*From left: Sue Wadsworth, Angie Heidelberg, Chelsey and Mataya Koopman*

The 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Home is the Key Luncheon held on April 10 was a huge success! Over 100 guests came to hear Habitat homebuyer, Chelsey Koopman, and 20-year Habitat homeowner, Sue Wadsworth, tell their stories.

The crowd was moved to tears multiple times as we heard about each lady's personal struggles and successes, and the opportunities that Habitat

provides. Just as we used up the last dry spot on our sleeves, Angie Heidelberg, homeowner selection committee member, gave her testimony. She spoke about how the home visits prior to Habitat homeownership approval "revealed another level of brokenness in this world."

While those aspects are disheartening, she also shared the joy of working with homebuyers. "The best part of being on the committee by far is the moment when we are able to surprise applicants to tell them they have been chosen. In that one moment, we get to say what maybe no one else has ever said to them – and certainly what many don't see in themselves. That they are worthy. That they are amazing. And that they deserve a home. That their messy life and story is a beautiful one and that by God's amazing grace has now been intertwined with not just one committee, but a whole group of people dedicated to Habitat's mission to give them a hand up."

# Welcome Catherine Stine as Development Director



Habitat is excited to welcome Catherine Stine to our team as the new Development Director. She is responsible for planning, organizing, and directing all of Habitat for Humanity's fundraising. This includes the annual fund, major gifts program, planned giving, special events, donor stewardship, grant proposals, and capital campaigns.

Catherine moved to Alexandria in 2014 and serves on the boards of the Alexandria Community Foundation, Le Homme Dieu Lake Association, and was a founding board member of the West Central Initiative Fund. She has an extensive background in strategic planning, fund development, and grant writing along with a genuine passion for Habitat's mission.

"With the growing demand for Habitat's programs comes the need for innovative and sustainable funding, and we are confident that Catherine's skills will help us meet our growth plan," stated Lori Anderson, Executive Director.

Please help us welcome Catherine to the Habitat family!

## Habitat Douglas County Ranked #3 in Tithing



Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County was ranked #3 in the nation out of 518 small affiliates for tithing. These donated funds help support housing in priority countries around the world including Nicaragua, Cambodia, Vietnam, Mexico, and more. US Habitat affiliates have been tithing for 40 years, and throughout that time have given more than \$272 million, serving nearly 85,000 families. With every donation, an impact is being made both locally and around the globe!

### FY18 Top Tithing Small Affiliates

(Serving a population of less than 50,000)

Affiliate	FY18 Tithe
East Jefferson County (WA)	\$52,867
Greater Teton Area (WY)	\$38,087
<b>Douglas County (MN)</b>	<b>\$33,307</b>
Sisters (OR)	\$32,750
Fremont Area (NE)	\$28,511

### FY18 Top Tithing Minnesota Affiliates

Affiliate	FY18 Tithe
Twin Cities	\$244,220
Lakes Area	\$48,000
<b>Douglas County (MN)</b>	<b>\$33,307</b>
North St. Louis County	\$27,827
Rice County	\$23,139



## Pi Day Even Bigger and Better in 2019

Habitat and Thrivent kicked off the 2019 Thrivent Faith Builds with the 2nd annual Pi Day event on March 14, 2019. Delicious, homemade pies by The Brass Lantern, Travelers Inn, and Country Blossom Farm were offered to those who signed up to volunteer on the build or gave a donation to support the build.

We were blown away by the response, and are thrilled to report that thanks to the community's generosity, we raised over \$1,600 and over 60 volunteers signed up for construction this summer!

Might your congregation be interested in getting involved on the 2019 Thrivent Faith Build? If so, please contact Molly at 320-762-4255 to join in on the fun!



*From left: Molly Comer, Habitat for Humanity, and Thrivent team members Larry Gebhardt, Scott Fassett, Paul Amundson, Mary Roiger and Jennifer Anderson*

## ReStore – New Year, Tidy Homes



If you're like many of us at Habitat, you may have jumped on the bandwagon this year and started purging your home of items that simply don't "spark joy" anymore. The good news is that your donations of new and gently used furniture, appliances, and building materials are sure to "spark joy" for ReStore shoppers. Even better, the profits from items sold in the ReStore help create lasting joy for families building or improving their homes in our community with Habitat for Humanity.

Donations can be made Monday-Saturday from 10:00 am - 4:00 pm, or schedule a pick up by calling 320-759-1989.

*The ReStore, the store that builds homes!*

**New, expanded shopping hours! Wednesday-Saturday, 9:00 am - 5:00 pm**



1211 N Nokomis NE  
Alexandria, MN 56308

## OUR *Mission*

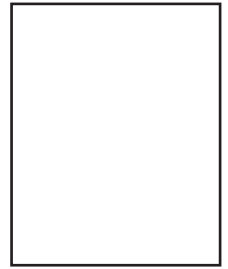
Seeking to put God's love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities and hope.

## OUR *Vision*

A world where everyone has a decent place to live.

## OUR *Core Values*

- **Compassion** – Acting with selflessness to demonstrate Christ's love.
- **Stewardship** – Serving others with the gifts entrusted to us.
- **Relationships** – Building community through meaningful partnerships.
- **Family** – A foundation of love and safety.
- **Optimism** – Empowering hope and possibility.



*Save the Date*  
**2019 Friends &  
Family Reunion**  
June 18, 2019  
5:00 pm at City Park

