

# the **BLUEPRINT**

**Spring 2021 Newsletter**

By working with Habitat for Humanity,  
families have the opportunity to  
**positively transform** their lives.



**stabilizes  
families**

**improves  
health &  
academic  
outcomes**

**builds  
personal &  
economic  
resiliency**

**increases  
confidence**

**strengthens  
communities**

# every family

deserves a decent place to live so they can thrive

**Read about the positive impacts of affordable housing...p. 3**

## Dear Friends,

From humble beginnings of building one or two houses a year, Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County has grown into one of the most active small affiliates in the nation. **You are key** to the mission – thank you for your support!

On January 28, 2021, Stephanie and her daughter Frankie purchased their new Habitat home, the **100th family** to partner with Habitat! Since 1997, Habitat has served 103 families and 309 individuals by building or improving 74 homes and completing 29 Aging in Place repairs.

With deep gratitude, we say thank you to everyone who has helped us achieve this important milestone!



**Lori Anderson,**  
**Habitat Executive Director**

Our volunteers who are the heart and backbone of Habitat - Our individual donors and business partners who support our mission with their gifts - All who have served as Habitat committee members and on the Board of Directors - Our community for supporting the ReStore through your donations and purchases - Our Habitat team members rallying behind our mission, keeping volunteers safe and not missing a beat despite the many challenges created during the COVID-19 pandemic - Your leadership and steadfast commitment to Habitat's mission have helped our affiliate thrive!

Now more than ever, Habitat is needed to help families have decent, affordable places to call home. A decent home can change the trajectory of a family's health, education, and economic opportunity.

Home is a shelter from storms. Home is where families celebrate together and comfort one another. Home has become our classroom and our office. Home is everything.

We build more than just homes; we empower families to build brighter futures for generations to come.

**You are key** to Habitat's mission! **Thank you** for your support.

With gratitude,

*Lori Anderson*



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No matter one's age, having a decent place to call home — a place to feel secure — can lead to future success. The need for affordable housing is immense, and **the lasting impact it can have on homeowners and their families is undeniable.**



# The Impact of Affordable Housing



Habitat for Humanity knows that stable housing – housing that is safe, decent and affordable – is foundational to individuals, families, to the communities in which we live and to the economies in which we all participate. Affordable homeownership helps create the conditions that free families from instability, stress and fear, and encourages self-reliance and confidence in nearly every aspect of their lives.

Habitat works with families to help them acquire the access, skills and financial education necessary for them to be successful homeowners. **Through shelter, we empower.**

In 2015, Wilder Research completed a study of Habitat homeowners to understand the impact of our work. Of Habitat homeowners who were surveyed:

- 64% say their kids' grades have improved
- 40% go to the doctor less now
- 92% have an adult family member who has or plans to return to school
- 90% feel better about their children's futures
- 92% said their lives were better
- 89% feel better about themselves than before becoming a Habitat homeowner



Habitat Douglas County has witnessed the same tangible evidence that decent, affordable shelter creates long-lasting and **life-changing impact** on families and communities.

## Education Outcomes:



"My daughter is doing better in school. We're able to focus each night on our homework routine. Her teacher called to tell me she's improved in reading, math and is less stressed!"

- **JeriAnn, 2020**  
**Habitat homeowner**

## Health Outcomes:



"I am living totally independently and my balance is improving. I can get up on my own, but I still use the grab bars. They make moving around so much easier and safer. I have confidence to do what I need to do."

- **Dennis, Aging in Place homeowner**

## Financial Stability:



"Now that I know my monthly payments and they are consistent, I am able to budget better and save money. I've even been able to pay off a student loan early!"

- **Katelynn, 2018**  
**Habitat homeowner**



## Congratulations DECA students! 1st Place at State DECA competition and moving to Internationals

Volunteering on a build last summer led three Alexandria DECA students to a much bigger impact than any of us could have imagined. Ben Borden, Lilly Thull, and Erik Hedstrom expressed interest in partnering with Habitat on their DECA community project. This partnership allowed Habitat to be awarded a \$20,000 matching grant from State Farm, one of four in the nation.

We were honored to work alongside them and were amazed at their energy, enthusiasm and bursting hearts for setting God's love into action to build homes, community and hope. Thank you to Ben, Lilly, & Erik for your hard work, determination and servant hearts.

"Ben, Lilly and I were lucky to partner with Habitat for Humanity and State Farm for our DECA project. We had the opportunity to receive real-world business experience while also giving back to our community. In our efforts to raise funds for the matching grant, we increased community awareness for Habitat, we met amazing people who work to improve our community year-round, and we obtained our goal of raising \$40,000 for safe, affordable housing in Alexandria. We want to thank the team at Habitat and State Farm for their incredible support during this project, and their continued support of us in our DECA competitions," commented Erik Hedstrom.



**Pictured left to right: Lori Anderson, Ben Borden, Lilly Thul, Erik Hedstrom, Dwaine Schuette, Amy Christopherson and Ryan Witte**

## ReStore Corner



**Pictured bottom row left to right: Mona Strege, Brandon Stanek, Heather Ahrens and Nicole Doering. Top row: Glen Bearson, Deb Powell, Chris Olson, Shawn Reilly, Mike Munson, Mitch Doering and Ken Thiele.**

Thank you to the Greater Alexandria Area Association of Realtors® (GAAAR) for filling up the ReStore pot o' gold on March 17, 2021. The group picked up 30 donations while spreading cheer and a wee bit o' luck throughout the community. All proceeds from the ReStore help fund the construction of affordable housing in Douglas County. Heather Ahrens, CEO of GAAAR shared, "It is our commitment to the community to get connected and give back."

**ReStore Hours:**  
Wednesday - Saturday  
9 am to 5 pm

**Donations:**  
Call 320-759-1989  
to schedule.

# 15th Annual Hard Hat Events



## Hard Hat Events

Home Run  
Luncheon



Home Plate  
Happy Hour

June 16, 2021

Knute Nelson Memorial Ballpark

**Save the date!**  
**Wednesday, June 16, 2021**

We are excited to see you again and celebrate homes, communities and hope. **You are key!**

The annual Hard Hat breakfast is moving outdoors to Knute Nelson Memorial Ballpark in Alexandria.

This year we celebrated our 100th family served - **you are key** to this success. The need is greater than ever for safe, affordable homes, the key to this success is our signature fundraiser. The Hard Hat events play an important role in raising funds for our work in building homes and helping older adults age in their homes with dignity.

Although COVID-19 has changed how we gather, it has made us much stronger together. The Habitat team, our Board of Directors, co-chairs Lynn Evans, and Anita Ferguson missed seeing you last year, and we are looking forward to gathering again on June 16. **There is no charge to attend - you are invited.**



**JeriAnn  
Hertwig**



**Dennis  
Anhalt**

Both live events will take place at Knute Nelson Memorial Ballpark. They will follow COVID-19 safety protocols, feature a light meal catered by Broadway Ballroom, music, and an inspiring program featuring Habitat homeowner JeriAnn Hertwig, and Dennis Anhalt an Aging in place homeowner. Emceeding the two premiere events is Habitat's Board President, Brooke Zabel. Enjoy Kent Kolstad's LiveWire team partnering with us to bring the live programs and virtual experience to life.

Our community Team Captains will host guests at the Hard Hat events. If you have not already been asked and would like to attend the lunch or happy hour in person, or the virtual event please contact Mary at 320-762-4255 ext 107 or register online to attend at [hfhdouglascounty.org/hardhat.html](https://hfhdouglascounty.org/hardhat.html)  
A limited number of seats available - register today!

### New location!

Knute Nelson  
Memorial Ballpark

### 2 live events, same program!

Home Run Luncheon: 11:30 am to 1 pm  
Home Plate Happy Hour: 4:30 to 6:30 pm

### Can't attend in person?

Participate virtually

### Register online:

[hfhdouglascounty.org/hardhat.html](https://hfhdouglascounty.org/hardhat.html)

Contact Mary at 320-762-4255 ext. 107 or [mary@hfhdouglascounty.org](mailto:mary@hfhdouglascounty.org) with questions

## Honoring an Impactful Partnership



Since 2005, Habitat for Humanity and Thrivent have partnered together to help make safe, decent, and affordable housing a reality for more families. 2021 will mark a significant milestone in this partnership – the 20th Thrivent Faith Builds home!

"The partnership with Thrivent has had a monumental impact on our organization," states Lori Anderson, Executive Director. "Beyond the significant financial investment, Thrivent Faith Builds has helped us to develop organizational capacity. Through the partnership, we developed a construction calendar, deepened our relationship with the faith community, and improved our planning process and systems. Our mission and our community are stronger because of Thrivent's investment in affordable housing."

To celebrate this partnership, Lori spoke with Larry Gebhardt, Community Engagement Leader and Mike Loken, Thrivent Builds Affiliate Project Leader.

16 years	20 affordable homes
3,984 volunteers	39,121 volunteer hours
4 local communities	



**Mike  
Loken**



**Larry  
Gebhardt**

### What impact have you seen through this partnership?

**Larry:** In the beginning, the program was a bit clunky and many affiliates were struggling. It's amazing to see the progress! The number of homes built through this partnership is incredible.

**Mike:** The partnership seemed to come together at the perfect time, when many affiliates (including ours) knew they needed more structure to be able to build more than one home per year. This program provided that structure and helped Habitat accomplish that goal! There's a great deal of trust that has been established and maintained throughout the years.

### What is a highlight of this partnership?

**Mike:** Millard Fuller, the founder of Habitat, spoke at our 2007 Hard Hat Breakfast. Hearing directly from him and spending time together was inspirational! Additionally, I remember all the planning meetings and reporting requirements. While they may not have been highlights at the time, they really helped our affiliate become more structured, organized and productive. I'm proud of the partnership between Thrivent and Habitat and of the success of our affiliate.

**Larry:** The highlight is two-fold; first, the affiliates would not have been able to grow and build homes so, second, the number of safe, affordable homes built in this community would not have happened without this partnership.



**Pictured left to right:  
Habitat volunteers Chris Worley,  
Carol Dittberner, Habitat Founder  
Millard Fuller and Mike Loken at the  
2007 Hard Hat Breakfast**



### What is one favorite memory?

**Mike:** I remember driving around town with Jennie Hevern, sharing stories and showing us how big the need for affordable housing truly was. I was amazed and moved by that experience.

**Larry:** I also remember being inspired at the Hard Hat Breakfast when Sue Wadsworth shared her Habitat experience, calling us "the hands and feet of Jesus."

Contact Sara at 320-762-4255 ext. 103 if you would like to get involved with our 2021 Thrivent Faith Builds project!



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### Volunteer virtually!

Visit our website for complete details:  
[hfhdouglascountry.org](http://hfhdouglascountry.org)



## Thank you, Habitat Heroes!

### National Volunteer Week is April 18-23, 2021.

Habitat volunteers -- **Habitat Heroes** -- are the heart of our organization! Whether swinging a hammer, helping in the office or working in the ReStore, **every volunteer has a lasting impact on local families**. Our volunteers do an outstanding job and we are so grateful to have all of you help support Habitat's mission. Did you know? 1,070 volunteers shared 11,079 volunteer hours with us in FY 2019-2020!

From our hearts to yours, **thank you to our Habitat Heroes**. Your acts of kindness have impacted 309 people's lives.

We ♥ our volunteers!



Thank you for helping build my home!

You are **key** to me having a safe place of my own to sleep at night!





**every family**

deserves the opportunity to have  
stability so they can thrive

**Building strength, stability and  
self-reliance through shelter.**

**Save the date for our 15th Annual Hard Hat Events:  
June 16, 2021 at Knute Nelson Memorial Ballpark**



**Dennis Anhalt, speaker**



**JeriAnn Hertwig, speaker**

**Home Run Luncheon  
11:30 am to 1 pm**

**Home Plate Happy Hour  
4:30 to 6:30 pm**



**Knute Nelson Memorial Ballpark**

**Limited seating  
No charge to attend**

**Register online at  
[hfhdouglascounty.org/  
hardhat.html](https://hfhdouglascounty.org/hardhat.html)**