

# the BLUEPRINT

Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County's Newsletter • Fall 2017



## Pride Shines at Wendy's Dedication



*Wendy and daughter Sophia*

Many months of hard work led up to dedication day, making this a truly special event for Habitat homeowners, volunteers and donors. On the day of Wendy's dedication, the sun was shining, there was a nice breeze and everything seemed to fall into place. After a day at the beach, little Sophia was sound asleep in her stroller, and Justin and Wendy couldn't wait to help set up.

Justin, who recently turned 14, has been eager to get into his home since the day Wendy found out she was approved for homeownership. Offering to help with anything and everything, Justin could often be found helping make treats for volunteers, picking up the yard or watching Sophia while his mom worked on her home with mentors Dwaine and Judy Berger. As guests arrived, people were quick to note how excited Justin was to show his room off to those he knew.

Pastor Scott Keehn, lead pastor at First Congregational UCC, led the message and prayer for the ceremony. First Congregational UCC hosted a mission group of 18 people from Amery, Wisconsin, during the summer of 2016 that largely rehabbed Wendy's home. He noted that Wendy's family seemed to have a sparkle about them, which he summed up to pride.

Mentors Judy and Dwaine Berger each shared kind words about Wendy and her family. Dwaine discussed how

homeownership is hard work, and how he knows that Wendy and Justin are committed to keeping up their home. He said it's been fun watching the progress Sophia has made since beginning this journey several months ago, and how this home will be a place where she can grow and blossom. Judy shared how much she has enjoyed getting to know Wendy on a personal level, and has grown to really love Wendy and her family. Dwaine, Judy and Wendy plan to get together after the family gets settled to see how things are going and continue their relationship.

Wendy took a moment to thank everyone who was a part of building her home. She said she couldn't express how thankful she is for the house and how excited she is for her family to be in Alexandria. In closing, Wendy shared, "this home will really strengthen my family ... we really needed this."



Dear Friends,

Every one of you makes a difference.

We are so thankful for each and every one of you who make our work possible. Your donations help us build that next house. Your hands join us at the build site, in the ReStore and help plan our new Aging in Place program. Your support, your voice and your time

are critical to what we do. This newsletter highlights projects and events you make possible.

This summer, we expanded our parking lot and future plans are underway to make our operation more efficient. We are excited about this progress and the new opportunities to work with more families through our Aging in Place program.

As we prepare for the change in seasons, I invite you to reach out to us to lend your hands, your voices and your donations to help local families build strength, stability and self-reliance through shelter.

With gratitude,

Lori Anderson

## Lori Anderson Nominated to HFHI U.S. Council

Lori Anderson, Executive Director of Habitat Douglas County, was recently elected as a member of the Habitat for Humanity International U.S. Council. The U.S. Council was established by the board of directors to serve as the planning and policy recommending body to guide the growth of Habitat's work in the U.S. The council members serve an initial three-year term.

Twenty-four members make up the U.S. Council team, with three coming from small, rural affiliates like Habitat Douglas County. Lori will serve on the policy committee and travel three times per year to Atlanta, GA, where Habitat headquarters is located.

Lori shared, "I am excited to collaborate with Habitat leaders from around the nation to grow Habitat's brand and mission. I also look forward to bringing back ideas and implementing them in Douglas County."

Congratulations, Lori, on this prestigious election!

## Habitat Welcomes New Board Members

Habitat welcomed two new Board Directors at the start of the new fiscal year: Sandy Susag and Brooke Zabel. Lori Anderson, Executive Director, shared, "Both Brooke and Sandy have a wealth of knowledge and experience that will help guide and grow our affiliate. We are blessed to have them join our Board."

The Board of Directors is the governing body and sets the strategic direction for our local Habitat for Humanity. The Board also elected officers: Nick Heydt, President; Jon Ballou, Vice President; Jeff Montgomery, Treasurer; Michelle Bethke-Kaliher, Secretary. Other directors include: Jason Briscoe, Hans Dahl, Bill Flaig, Dian Lopez, Joyce Moe, and Ken Pederson. We are thankful for the passion and dedication all our Board members bring to our mission. The vision they set for Habitat has been instrumental in our ability to grow and serve families.



Brooke Zabel



Sandy Susag

# Habitat Launching Aging in Place Pilot Program



Habitat Douglas County is thrilled to announce that it is joining the Aging in Place movement. Aging in Place is a program that partners with people aged 65 and older to help them age safely in their homes. Homeowners are provided services based on individual need. The program focuses on making safety improvements, mobility modifications and weatherization enhancements.

In Douglas County, 18% of residents are age 65 or older and it is the fastest growing age bracket. One in three adults 65 or older fall each year, with many resulting in serious injuries, according to a report from the Center for Housing Policy. The goal of

the Aging in Place initiative is to provide products and services that foster safe and livable homes and communities, ultimately helping people of all ages build strength, stability and self-reliance.

As with the homeownership program, there are three main criteria: need for housing, ability to pay and willingness to partner. Applicants must also own and live in their home full time, have homeowners' insurance and someone in the home must be 65 or older.

Pilot program projects have a maximum cost of \$3,000.

## Repair Service Options

### Safety improvements:

- Easy-to-see contrast steps
- Grab bars
- Interior or exterior door adjustments
- Minor lighting improvements
- Non-slip stair treads
- No-step door threshold
- Railings in halls and stairs
- Raised toilet seat
- Ramps
- Repair tripping hazards
- Secure door locks
- Window locks

### Mobility modifications:

- Easy-to-use cabinet pulls
- Lever-style door handles and faucets
- Small bathroom modification
- Widen doorways

### Weatherization enhancements:

- Replace caulking or sealing
- Weather strips to doors

Habitat's founder, Millar Fuller, once said, "I envision Habitat for Humanity becoming the conscience of the world concerning shelter." We believe that giving people the ability to safely age in place is a matter of conscience. We hope that you'll join us in our efforts to address this issue by volunteering with us and donating to the cause. Please contact our office at 320-762-4255 for questions pertaining to this program or interest in volunteering.



# Partnership Program Builds Momentum in Year Two

Thanks to the support of local businesses and organizations, Habitat Douglas County was able to meet its strategic plan goal of working with five groups for the Partnership Program. In 2016, 3M piloted the program with their leadership team in an effort to combine philanthropic efforts with team building.

Groups involved sponsor a build day (or days) financially, and also provide construction volunteers. Participants in this program receive priority scheduling and marketing perks as a benefit to partnership.

2017 participants included two teams from Alexandria Industries, 3M, Douglas County Hospital, and Edina Realty. We have been thoroughly impressed with their generosity as well as their work ethic and impact on the build site. If you would like to get your group involved with the Partnership Program, please contact Molly at [molly@hfhdouglascounty.org](mailto:molly@hfhdouglascounty.org).





# Record Engagement for Upcoming Cambodia Big Build

Habitat is excited to share that we have a record number of people on the Douglas County team for the Big Build in Cambodia! Nine people will make up the team who will travel to Cambodia in November. The group is planning to explore Bangkok, Thailand, as well as visit Angkor Wat prior to the Habitat build, and then spend November 12-18 building 15 Habitat homes in Battambang.

Please consider this group in your prayers as they serve Habitat and families abroad.



*2017 International Build  
November 13-17  
Battambang Province, Cambodia  
Contact Michelle Lackey-Olsen at  
michellevlo@yahoo.com.*

## ReStore Expansion – A “Lot” Is Going On!



*Before*



*During*



*After*

If you've driven by the Habitat office recently, you've probably noticed some action taking place on the South side of the building! We are happy to report that construction has begun on phase one of the parking lot expansion project. The property was leveled, a storm sewer was installed and the whole lot was covered with class 5 gravel.

This area is now available for overflow parking. Phase two will include paving and a new ReStore entrance. This expansion would not be possible without the community's support of the ReStore as well as the MARDAG Foundation's \$25,000 grant. Stop by and check out the progress!



## Thank You!

At every dedication, each family is presented a Bible donated from The Mustard Seed, and quilts for the family. The adult quilts are made by the Lakes Area Quilters Guild, and the children's quilts are made by the Graceful Quilters of Grace Church in Alexandria. These tokens of love are cherished by families for years – thank you!

# Alicia's Road to Homeownership



Alicia's Habitat journey began about a year ago when a friend recommended she attend an upcoming Habitat Open House. Not only did she attend, she filled out an application on site, knowing she wanted to build a better home for herself and her two children.

When Alicia found out she was approved for partnership, she couldn't wait to get started. Her home was a part of Lowe's National Women Build Week, so she joined a group that traveled to Fargo, ND, for a Lowe's training clinic. While there, she and other volunteers learned building skills to apply on her own home. Once her home's construction had begun, hardly a day would go by without her onsite helping out.

Over 250 volunteers joined Alicia in building her home. Group volunteers included Knute Nelson, First Lutheran Church, Thrivent Financial, Greater Alexandria Area Association of Realtors, Billmark's Lakes Area Insurance, Douglas County Hospital, Contech Engineering, Phi Theta Cappa, 3M, Alexandria Industries, Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce, Ecumen Bethany, and Billy V Construction. Their work, of course, would not be possible without the help of our many wonderful crew leaders.



*Left to right: Linda, Alicia, Avany, Chelsey and Mason*

Alicia's dedication was a celebration of hard work and partnership. Her mentors, Ken and Jeanne Howell, spoke about the Habitat community, and how deeply involved so many people get. Ken shared that he has no doubt that when Alicia is at a point in her life when she has the time, she will in turn give back to her community.

Alicia is looking forward to each of her kids having their own room, a backyard for them to play in, and the ability to host birthday parties and family events at her home. In her remarks at the dedication ceremony, Alicia expressed, "This journey has been a lot of work, but getting to work alongside all of the volunteers and knowing we will have a nice home at the end of all this had made it completely worth it. I couldn't have done this without all of you. Thank you!"



## Now Recruiting Homeowners for 2018 Builds

Habitat Douglas County is recruiting qualified homeowners for our 2018 builds. Thanks to a land donation from Flo Bergquist, we plan to build in Kensington. We also hope to build again in Brandon as well as Alexandria. If you know someone in need of affordable housing, please let them know about our homeownership program and have them call our office at 320-762-4255. Habitat homes build strength, stability and independence to families through shelter.



## THRIVENT ACTION TEAMS

Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County is looking for Thrivent members interested in putting together action teams this fall! We have several qualifying projects including feeding volunteer groups, funding CPR and First Aid training for key volunteers, improvements to the volunteer donation door in the ReStore, and more! Not sure what a Thrivent Action Team is or how to apply? No problem, contact Molly at 320-762-4255 or [molly@hfhdouglascounty.org](mailto:molly@hfhdouglascounty.org) to learn more.

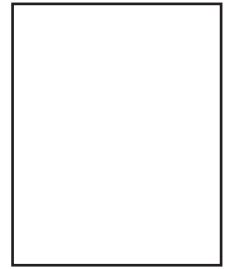


Interested in naming Habitat for Humanity of Douglas County in your estate? Please contact Lori Anderson at 320-762-4255 for more information.





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.



Sophia takes steps at her new home

## Dedication Snapshots!



Wendy, Justin and Sophia with mentors Dwaine and Judy Berger



Alicia giving thanks



Quilt presentation



Linda presenting quilts to Justin and Sophia



Alicia with mentors Ken and Jeanne Howell