

## From Executive Director Jeff Clark...

A lot has happened since our last newsletter. We completed two new houses. Emmett Street was vacant land we got from the City of Schenectady and used for our Builders Blitz in June, while 317 Schenectady Street was completed and turned over to the new owner, Kristen Shelley, at the end of September.

After several years of only building new houses, we have gotten back in the rehab business. We bought two houses and received another as a very generous gift. Thanks to another gracious gift, we are also in the process of acquiring vacant property for two building lots.

We helped bring a basketball event to town in conjunction with Weed & Seed and several local sports groups. Emmett, Schenectady, Steuben, Duane and other streets got cleaned up thanks, again, to Weed & Seed along with youth and adults from First Reformed Church, Schenectady, Temple Gates of Heaven and area residents including Bharath Arjoon, our new homeowner on Emmett Street. The city even pitched in by providing dumpsters and taking the trash away following the event.

Our first annual Dream Builders breakfast was a huge success that introduced our work and goals to a hundred new friends and generated more than \$90,000 in five-year pledges that will help us build a base for future fundraising. We look forward to another breakfast next spring!

In addition, we are building our team in several key directions. Jenny Mann has joined our volunteer office staff as she moved back to the area. She has some great experience from being involved with the Bakersfield, CA affiliate for a number of years. For the past month, she has worked diligently to input data for the Habitrak system, a tool developed by Habitat personnel and is now being used as a separate support program. It will help us improve volunteer communication and scheduling plus other information tracking.

Habitat International awarded us a capacity building grant, which will enable us to hire a development manager who will help establish a ReStore and grow other fundraising efforts. We have also received support through local foundations—you'll find further information about these in other parts of the newsletter.

The success we have enjoyed this past year encourages us to do more. More and more families contact us about becoming

# Habitat Builder

The newsletter of Habitat for Humanity of Schenectady County, Inc.

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## Second Habitat House Dedicated on Schenectady Street

When Kristen Shelley and her family moved into their new home on Schenectady Street in September, it was a dream come true.

In an interview with *The Daily Gazette*, the day care worker told reporter Mary Martialay that she was "excited to spend the holidays in my new home and to have a backyard. I don't have a backyard now."

Shelley, a single mother of two, prepared lunches for the workers building her home to contribute to the 300 hours of "sweat equity" necessary to be able to qualify for a Habitat for Humanity home. She worked hard while others wielded hammers and put plumbing into place for her new home.

"Without Habitat, I doubt that I could have ever bought a home," she said.

Now each of her two daughters has her own room. They have new appliances and a home that has energy-efficient windows to help keep utility bills reasonable.

partner families. We are building strong partnerships within the community. By the time this reaches you, I will be back from my week as a crew leader with this year's Jimmy Carter work project in Lonavala, India, where 4,000 volunteers built 100 homes in one week. It promises to be an amazing and memorable experience!

There are projects here in Schenectady to keep us working throughout the coming winter with more to do when spring arrives. The challenges are great, but we see new possibilities every step of the way. Please join us in our work. Whether you swing a hammer or write a check, we need your support. The mission of eliminating substandard housing is important and highly rewarding. That's why Habitat has such a favorable image around the world. There is so much that needs to be done — together we can do it.



Kristen Shelley (right), and her 14-year-old daughter, Kiara, celebrate in their new home.

The home is adjacent to another Habitat home built for James Thomas, who is now Kristen Shelley's neighbor.

"There are no words to describe this feeling," she said, after receiving the key to her new home at the dedication ceremony on September 17.

## Moving Forward on Georgetta Dix Plaza

HFHSCI has started working on rehabilitating 352 Georgetta Dix Plaza in Schenectady, according to Bruce Pomeroy, chair of the Building Committee.

The cold New York weather has halted work for the remainder of the winter. However, once the spring comes, this will mean opportunities for building volunteers. Contact the office at 518-395-3412 if you are interested in volunteering on this project.

# Builders on a Blitz

## How'd they do that?!

It was a blitz—a builders' blitz, thanks to the efforts of the Capital Region Builders and Remodelers' Association (CRBRA).

At 7 am on Monday, June 5, a concrete slab was in place on the lot on Emmett Street. By 5 pm, five days later, a house stood on the same spot. Joe Constantine (Constantine Builders) is no stranger to big jobs. Joe has run many Habitat projects and did a masterful job of making sure the builders' blitz house was done right. Nationwide, Habitat built more than 500 homes the same week.

With the building secure by the end of day one, interior walls went in the next day, while outside siding and roofing were being completed. Then, as the walls were finished, the heating system was installed. Kitchen and bath cabinets were followed by the shower and sinks. By 5 pm on Friday the house was finished and the dedication ceremony took place, complete with a dinner prepared by volunteers and our newest homeowners, the Arjoon family. Due to threatening weather, the Boys & Girls Club on Craig Street offered the use of their facilities so there was plenty of room for all.

For our local effort, contributions came from a number of CRBRA members including Curtis Lumber, Norandex, Degraff Bloom Custom Builders, Warren Electric Supply, Quality Roofing & Siding, NYSERDA, Petrocine Builders & Remodelers, Erie Materials, Powers Drywall, Media Well Done, Schrader & Company, Syvertsen Architects, Tangora Technologies, Karandy Plumbing and more.

Thanks to all who made this blitz a reality, taking a once-empty lot and turning it into a true home for the Arjoon family.



Top: Mid-morning on Monday, June 5<sup>th</sup> as the walls go up. Above, Ahmad Yusufi, Schenectady Fair Housing coordinator, Bharath Arjoon, Mayor Brian Stratton and Sharon Jordan, chief of staff, stand in front of the new house.

## Pearl Street House Donated to Schenectady Habitat

A two-bedroom house located at 1016 Pearl Street in Schenectady will be renovated into a home for a Habitat family, thanks to the generous donation of the property to Habitat for Humanity of Schenectady County, Inc.

Formerly the home of Zita Weinman, this structure is now undergoing significant upgrading and renovating and should be ready for occupancy sometime in 2007.

"We worked with Ms. Weinman's nephew, Dan Steck, who provided the deed to the home to HFHSCI," said Jeff Clark, executive director. "This kind of donation makes it possible for Habitat to help a family in need to find a decent, affordable home."



If you or a member of your family has a home or land that you would like to consider donating to HFHSCI, contact Jeff at 518-395-3412.

## Recent Grants and Gifts

HFHSCI is the proud recipient of a number of grants. We send our appreciation and thanks to the individuals and the foundations involved.

- Schenectady Foundation — \$30,000 grant (\$15,000 in each of two years)
- Wright Family Foundation — \$15,000 grant
- Habitat for Humanity Capacity Building Grant
- \$25,000 bequest received following the probate of an anonymous person's will
- \$2,750 from the proceeds of the Capital Region Builders and Remodelers Association's annual Parade of Homes

*If you are looking to make a year-end gift, please mail your tax-deductible check, made out to HFHSCI, to P.O. Box 9043, Schenectady, NY 12309. This can be made in honor of someone's birthday, as a holiday gift, or just because you want to support Habitat for Humanity. If you work for a matching gift company, don't forget that your gift can mean even more. All donations stay within Schenectady County.*

# Habitat Receives Capacity Building Grant

The good news arrived first by email and then by letter. Habitat for Humanity of Schenectady County has been selected to receive a capacity building grant through Habitat International. These are funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded nationwide to help affiliates increase their level of productivity over a three-year period.

The first year we will receive enough money to pay a development manager's salary. The grant reduces in year two to cover 70 percent of the salary and 30 percent in year three. Therefore, it forces the position to pay for itself in very short order!

Our primary focus will be to establish a ReStore, which many other successful affiliates have all across the country. A variety of home-based products such as light fixtures, discontinued decorating products, plumbing fixtures and hand tools can be donated from individuals, contractors and home improvement businesses for resale to generate income. The proceeds from many ReStores provide enough to build at least one house a year and, in some cases, much more.

The development manager will also oversee various fundraising projects throughout the year, such as our annual dream builders breakfast, direct mail campaigns and events like our planned "kick-off" for early December.

Competition for this national funding is highly competitive and demonstrates the faith HFHI has in our direction and growth. We are most grateful for the support!

## Exciting News!

Habitat for Humanity of Schenectady County, Inc., will be part of a national alliance between Trivent Financial for Lutherans and Habitat for Humanity International. This is part of a \$24.5 million effort that will help build 355 homes in 43 states in 2007. We are honored to be part of this exceptional group. More information will follow.



### QUILT REQUIREMENTS:

- Blocks must be washable.
- Prewash all fabrics.
- Finished block size 10" X 10"  
(Unfinished size 10-1/2" X 10-1/2")

**Theme:** *Hearth and Home for Habitat*

**Techniques:** This can be pieced, appliqued, or any other technique you choose. However, if paint is used, it must be washable and NOT three-dimensional.

**Submission deadline:** February 9, 2007

**Send to:**

Mary Phillips, HFHSCI  
Box 9043, Schenectady, NY 12309

# Make a Block for the 2007 Raffle Quilt!

The theme for the 2007 Habitat raffle quilt will be "Hearth and Home for Habitat." You can be part of this exciting project by making a block for the quilt. This year we have optional fabric (a mocha brown) which you can incorporate into your block, to help tie the blocks together. Quilt Essentials of Loudonville, NY, has donated the fabric. If you would like a piece, please contact Habitat at 395-3412. These will be available while supplies last.

If we get too many blocks for one quilt, we reserve the right to hold onto the extra blocks to be used to make a second quilt for an as-yet-to-be-determined event and date.

Although the exact date for the 2007 raffle has not been set, it will be during the 2007 building season.

Kathy Gomula won our 2006 quilt (first place), and Kay Tanner won the quilt rack (second place). Congratulations and thanks to all who participated.

## Kids Clean Up On Hamilton Hill

So, what do you do with 40 kids under the age of 16 who want to work for Habitat, but are prohibited by state laws from doing most construction work? Give them gloves, rakes and plastic trash bags and put them to work cleaning up the neighborhood Habitat works in, that's what!

Members from a variety of youth groups, including the Boys & Girls Club of Schenectady, Schenectady Inner City Ministry, Weed & Seed, Temple Gates of Heaven and the First Reformed Church/Stockade gathered on Saturday, September 30, and spent more than three hours on the street-by-street clean-up project working alongside adult supervisors and residents of the Hamilton Hill neighborhood.



By the time they were finished, more than 60 bags had been filled and deposited in two dumpsters provided by the City of Schenectady's Department of General Services.

**GREAT JOB!** We hope to schedule other clean-up days throughout the coming year.

## Habitat's Wish List

What does Habitat for Humanity of Schenectady County, Inc., need? What do your monetary donations fund? Here are a few examples:

\$ 30	buys 50 pounds of roofing nails
\$ 60	covers deadbolt locksets
\$ 140	mirror/medicine cabinet
\$ 150	range hood
\$ 200	smoke alarms/ceiling fan
\$ 275	tub/shower
\$ 350	surveying/engineering
\$ 500	engineering plot plan
\$ 525	architect's services
\$1700	site excavation
\$1800	concrete slab

House sponsorships are also available for churches and business partners, starting as low as \$5,000 for our "friend" level and \$50,000 for the "full" sponsorship. We can work out anything in between if your church, civic or fraternal organization, or business would like to sponsor a home.

HFHSCI is also seeking:

- A cement mixer (\$750 to buy a new one, but a good used one would also work)
- Donation of services to remove asbestos at rehabilitation sites
- Donation of services of a stone mason to do foundation parging
- Donation of services from an HVAC professional to work on hot water and heat at rehabilitation sites

Contact the HFHSCI office at 518-395-3412 if you want to get involved in donating your time, treasure or talent at any level!

## How can you help HFHSCI?

**It's simple. Get out your checkbook. That's what we need the most at this point—your financial support. Your donation to HFHSCI is tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Now is the time, as the year winds down, to think of the people who need simple, decent, affordable housing in our community. Just tear off this coupon and mail to: HFHSCI, P.O. Box 9043, Schenectady, NY 12309.**

**Your company may match your donation. Please check with your human resources department for any necessary forms. For General Electric employees or retirees, go to: [http://www.ge.com/foundation/matching\\_gifts.html](http://www.ge.com/foundation/matching_gifts.html) for further information about matching gifts.**

Habitat is a 501(c) 3 organization.

Please print

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Ste \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

This donation is in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_  check  Visa  Mastercard  AmEx

Acct. # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date. \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to: *Habitat for Humanity of Schenectady County, Inc.*

Yes, I want to become a volunteer. Please check off what you would like to do:

Build  Public Relations  Fundraising

Office Work  Other (please explain)



### **Habitat for Humanity of Schenectady County**

**PO Box 9043  
Schenectady, NY 12309**

*Schenectady County Habitat for Humanity is an ecumenical Christian ministry whose mission is to build simple, decent, affordable housing for those who are unable to pursue home ownership in the conventional manner.*

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