

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

We're back ! 😊

We had a much longer winter break than we were anticipating due to New York "pause". While we anticipated resuming construction in March, it was May 14th before we could slowly start work with two volunteers a day at the site. After much research and planning safety procedures were developed so we could welcome up to eight mask-wearing volunteers on May 28th to work in the house, while social distancing.

As described on page three we broke ground on the house on lot #3 on June 7th. This allowed us to welcome more volunteers back, as we can have an outdoor crew working on the foundation and walls on lot 3 and an indoor crew doing finish work on the house on lot 2. Drive by and you will be astonished at the progress we have made in such a short time.

Among the volunteers are four families who hope to buy the homes we are building on lots, 2,3,4, and 5. They are helping to build the two current houses earning sweat equity as a requirement to qualify for a Habitat home purchase. Casey Grant has completed her sweat equity, required homeowner education, etc., and is hoping to purchase the house on lot 2 soon. We plan to build houses on lots 4 and 5 in 2021.

In the Winter 2019-2020 newsletter I described the joy experienced when a family can finally purchase a Habitat built house. This June, Fran Reed and I had the privilege to meet with Colleen Webb of Hartwick to discharge the mortgages on her home. Colleen and her late husband, Lewen, purchased their home March 2001.



Colleen Webb (left) receives her mortgage discharge papers from HFHOC President Mary Ann Dowdell

Due to COVID-19 financial stresses, several of our current homeowners asked for mortgage payment forbearance. We have supported them by granting them forbearance, modifying their mortgages to give them additional months to satisfy their mortgage obligation. We continue to work with families as they deal with the challenges of the pandemic.

Update about our office: At the beginning of July, Elm Park United Methodist Church leaders decided that they need to keep the church building locked. This limits access to our office. Therefore, you will need an appointment if you need to visit the office. As much as possible, please contact us via mail, email or by phone. Our office is not staffed, so be patient if you are trying to reach us. We do check mail and voicemail every couple of days and emails most days.

—
Mary Ann Dowdell, HFHOC Board President



HABITAT HAPPENINGS

SUMMER 2020

VOLUNTEER UPDATE

Job Site & Board Volunteers Needed

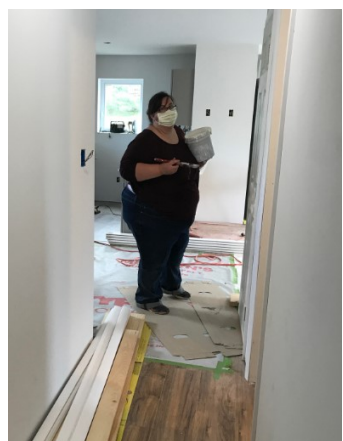
We have new procedures on the jobsite for the health and safety of everyone working. Before coming to the worksite please read the COVID-19 screening and procedures, and travel alerts. Sign up for our weekly email updates (view them on facebook.com/HabitatForHumanityOtsegoCountyNY or email marjorie.pietraface@oneonta.edu to get on the list) to read these new procedures before coming to the worksite.

We do have an opportunity for regular volunteers to join us. If you are looking for a safe and productive activity this summer we would love for you to join us! We are working Thursdays and Saturdays starting at 8:30 am. We welcome volunteers to come for as long as they can. This is a great way to put your handy skills to work, or to learn some new useful ones!

While we are limiting the number of volunteers who can be on the job site at one time at this point, we still welcome any groups who are interested in scheduling a small group to come.

We are also always looking for volunteers to join us on our committees or on the Board of Directors. This is another great way to give back to the community without the physical labor. We have three board positions opening up by October.

If you are interested in volunteering please reach out to Marge at marjorie.pietraface@oneonta.edu



Work has resumed at our building sites at McFarland Meadows with new health & safety procedures in place.



RETURN TO WORK

New Safety Measures due to COVID-19

We took a pre-planned hiatus of work on our building during the winter, and then had to extend it due to COVID-19. We created a COVID-19 Workplace Safety Committee and developed new policies and procedures for the jobsites in accordance with recommendations from the CDC, our insurance agency, and Habitat International. We were able to resume work in May and are making great progress.

Lot number two at McFarland Meadows is nearly complete! Prior to the hiatus the heat pump was installed and we began on the flooring, painting, and kitchen cabinets. A special thanks to Dave Johnson of D&D Commercial Refrigeration & Air Conditioning out of Morris, NY for donating their time to install the mini-split heat pump for us. We also owe a thank you to TW Construction for putting the roof on. After we were able to get back to work, a lot of finishing was accomplished like hanging doors, finishing electrical, and exterior fill grading and grass seeding. We have the final electrical inspection done and next comes the code inspection for the certificate of occupancy with hopes that Casey Grant and her family can move in by the end of the summer!

IN MEMORY

Terry O'Hara

Our site supervisor Terry O'Hara passed away on May 18, 2020. Terry shared Habitat's vision of a world where everyone has a decent place to live and he dedicated his retirement to assisting his neighbors here in Otsego County. We will be forever grateful for Terry's leadership on our builds and will miss his patience, leadership, and sense of humor.

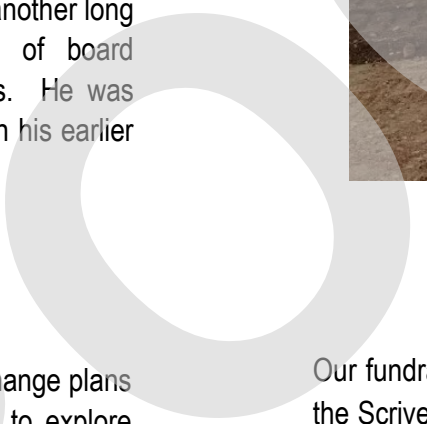


Stanley Syversten

Stan passed away on December 28, 2019. Stan was a volunteer for many years and used his woodworking skills to help us on many builds over the years.

James Pasternak

Jim passed away on March 13, 2020. Jim was another long-term volunteer who served on a number of board committees and worked on many early homes. He was proud to have served on a Jimmy Carter build in his earlier years.



After Job Corps closed due to COVID we had to change plans for the foundation work at lot three. We began to explore using a new procedure for laying the foundation, Insulated Concrete Forms (ICFs). ICFs result in more energy efficiency than standard foundation forms. We hired Unique Builders to assist with this process and learned a lot and may explore using this technique in the future. We have started on the rim joist and floor joists and welcome help as we move forward with construction.



After Terry O'Hara's tragic passing we had to look for a new site supervisor. One of our volunteers, Tom Collier has a lot of experience and was a great fit. We are glad he will be able to help us pick up where Terry left off after years of dedicated service.

BREAKING GROUND ON LOT 3

McFarland Meadows Continues to Expand

We broke ground on the third house in what will be a nine-house community at our development at McFarland Meadows in West Oneonta. The Sullivan/Mendez family pictured is one of three families currently working towards partnering with Habitat for Humanity of Otsego County to purchase a home in McFarland Meadows.



THANK YOU

Generous Donations Help Keep Us Going Strong

Our fundraising committee was able to secure a grant from the Scriven foundation for general support of our work. This will be extremely helpful this year due to our increased expenses related to the challenges of operating during the pandemic.

We also thank the First Presbyterian Church in Oneonta and the Greater Washington Community Foundation for their generous support grants. In addition we received some donations that have helped us increase health and safety on work sites. Thanks to Rotary who donated a box of 50 masks through the Otsego County Chamber of Commerce and to Otsego County FEMA for a donation of two gallons of hand sanitizer.

Did you know?

Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI) has a program called Cars for Homes where you can donate almost all vehicles, including cars, trucks, motorcycles, recreational

vehicles, boats, snowmobiles, farm equipment and construction equipment. You can indicate you would like a portion of the sale to go to our chapter of Habitat, just like Lynne Mebust from Cooperstown did recently. Thanks, Lynne!

Vehicles in any condition are accepted. Vehicles in operable condition are sold for transportation or use and vehicles that have been totaled or are very old are salvaged for any usable parts, and recycle any batteries, tires and fluid. If the rest can be recycled it is crushed, shredded, and recycled into steel which keeps a huge amount of steel out of landfills.

If you're interested in learning more about donating a car or vehicle to benefit Habitat for Humanity of Otsego County visit www.habitat.org/support/donate-your-car or contact carsforhomes@habitat.org or 1-877-277-4344.