



Habitat
for Humanity®
of Otsego County

HABITAT
HAPPENINGS

607-432-7874

OUR SEASONAL NEWSLETTER
403-B Chestnut Street, Oneonta, NY 13820

HabitatOtsego.org

BUILDING SIMPLE, DECENT HOMES SINCE 1989

FALL 2021

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Autumn is here. It's getting colder, leaves are falling, and could there be a hint of snow in the air? So we can work inside, we're doing our best to finish the exterior of house #4 at McFarland Meadows. In August and September we put roof trusses on the ICF walls, added exterior facings, and erected interior wall frames. It looks like a house! And thanks to your support and the dedication of all our volunteers, on and off the building site, McFarland Meadows is starting to look like a neighborhood.

Our chapter by-laws specify a two-term limit to serve as a member of the Board of Directors. This year, Mary Ann Dowdell reached that limit and stepped down as President and from the Board. She has been a fantastic leader who improved just about every aspect of our operations. Even though she has left the Board, Mary Ann continues her service on several committees. Thank you so much, Mary Ann!

This year our build site was visited by the Care-a-Vanners in September (see the article in this newsletter). In a five-day whirlwind, they installed most of the ceiling and wall sheetrock! Our local volunteers worked outside, out of their way as there was a lot of terrific activity going on inside. A big thank you to the Care-a-Vanners.

In our October elections, we chose the following people as our officers: President - Jerry Blechman, Vice-President - Karyn Wendrow, Treasurer – Ryan Chronister, Assistant Treasurer – Fran Reed, Secretary – Bill O'Dea. Congratulations to the new slate of officers. Per our by-laws, these folks are automatically members of the Executive Committee. I have also asked our resident building expert, Bruce Downie to

continue on that committee and I have asked Mary Ann Dowdell to help in a non-voting role because who better to advise us on everything Habitat-related?



Volunteers working on framing out interior walls inside house #4 at McFarland Meadows.

I would also like to issue a personal thank you to everyone who has helped me transition from regular volunteer to Board of Directors member and finally to Board President. It's a big job and an important one, making sure our local Habitat for Humanity chapter is able to function. I think building houses and improving people's lives is an incredibly fulfilling task. If you think so too, please help by considering joining us or perhaps making a donation. It would be most appreciated.

—
Jerry Blechman, HFHOC Board President

HOME ACCESSIBILITY AND SAFETY PROJECT

Accessibility Work Makes Big Impact

Our Home Accessibility and Safety Project (HASP) arm of HFHOC has been busy. One of the most recent projects was at a home in Worcester. The project had two components to assist a person with limited mobility to continue living independently. First, it entailed bringing in 30 tons of gravel to build up our client's existing driveway from the road above the home so that caregivers and transport service providers could safely access the home in winter. The second part was repairing the main entry porch and building a ramp connecting it to the new raised parking area. This client was having trouble leaving their home to get to medical appointments and their Community Health Navigator wrote us the following note of appreciation. If you know someone who could benefit from HASP's assistance, please email or call us!

Hi Steve,

Thanks for helping by your work and other volunteers to complete ramp project, it looks amazing. Because of the help of Habit for Humanity volunteers, the client can leave their house safely to get the medical care that they need. All of you are amazing.

Stephanie Thorne
Bassett Community Health Navigation
Team Lead/Navigator III

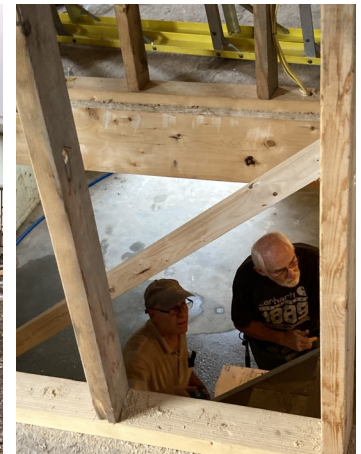


BUILDING UPDATE

Building Almost Back to Normal This Summer

Lot four at McFarland Meadows is coming right along! Much work was done over the summer to complete the foundation, framing, roofing, window installation, plumbing and wiring in time for the RV-Care-A-Vanners to arrive and help with hanging sheetrock. See article on p. 3 about the Care-A-Vanner's work.

Once the sheetrock was up, we have moved on to putting up the siding in time to close in the house fully before winter arrives.



GRANT FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR MOBILE HOME REPAIRS

Otsego County recently announced \$300,000 in new grant funds for people who own their mobile homes on rented land in area parks. Administered by Otsego Rural Housing Assistance (ORHA), these grants will be available to low and moderate income residents 60 years and older on a first-come first-served basis. For more information contact ORHA at (607) 547-8839 or ORHA@stny.rr.com.

RV CARE-A VANNERS VISIT OTSEGO COUNTY

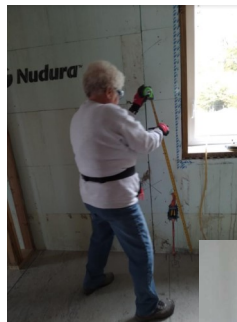
Volunteers From Across the Country Help for a Week

The last week in September brought some very special visitors to Otsego County. Six Habitat volunteers from different regions of the U.S. travelled to Oneonta to help us with making quick work of installing sheetrock in the interior of lot 4 at McFarland Meadows. These volunteers are part of the Habitat RV-Care-A-Vanner program where volunteers who own an RV can sign up to participate in building projects at chapters all across the nation. Our six volunteers were made up of three couples who hailed from South Carolina, Vermont, and Florida. They worked alongside our regular volunteer crew all week and were able to sheetrock the walls and ceilings in lot 4. This work is literally a heavy lift and saved us several weeks of work.

The Care-A-Vanners set up their RVs at the Susquehanna Trail Campground which was a wonderfully convenient location for easy access to the build site and to town. We thanked them for their hard work with a welcome pot luck dinner, then an ice cream social on their last day. It was marvelous to be able to welcome visitors to our unique build site and hear stories of their experience helping at Habitat chapters across the U.S.



The Care-A-Vanners reciting their morning cheer—"Not a hand out, a hand up!"



MEET A BOARD MEMBER

Karyn Wendrow

Karyn Wendrow is the new Vice President for HFHOC, but has been serving on the board of directors since 2018. Serving as secretary of the board from 2019—2021, Karyn is also on the volunteer and publicity committees.

Karyn works in communications at SUNY Oneonta and uses her skills to help maintain the HFHOC website, handle publicity, and manages the production of this newsletter. She lives in Oneonta and tells us why she got involved in Habitat.

"I had been looking for ways to give back to the

community and immediately fell in love with Habitat's mission because, I know how difficult it can be to find housing that won't break the bank, especially when you're young or just starting a family. I experienced how overwhelming the home buying process can be, and the fact that Habitat provides partnership and education for families to not only be successful home buyers, but life-long home owners is really powerful. I also appreciate all of the flexible ways there are to get involved in Habitat. I can't help at the build site on Thursdays and Saturdays, so I give back in ways that I can help from home during my free time."

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HELP US HELP OTSEGO COUNTY FAMILIES

Include HFHOC on your holiday gift list!

Building Habitat homes requires many hours of volunteer labor and many dollars to purchase materials and services. We have had 32 successful years, but we need your help to finance future builds!

With two houses complete and two more close to completion, we are beginning to see the dream of McFarland Meadows come to life. Our partner families help build other houses as they work toward purchasing a home of their own. Houses are not given away, they are sold to families at a subsidized cost. That means we rely on generous donors to help us keep the sale price low.

While it has been a joy to get back to almost normal work on the job site, we still face several challenges with the widespread increase in cost of construction supplies due to demand and supply chain issues.

Our projects change the lives of families who live right here in Otsego county and want to stay and establish their lives

in our area. Between our build sites and our Home Accessibility Service Project (HASP), building requires land, materials, and sometimes hiring professional services. Without your help, we wouldn't be able to impact our communities in such powerful ways.

There are several ways to donate:

- Use the enclosed gift envelope to mail a check directly to our office.
- Donate online at www.HabitatOtsego.org.
- List us as your preferred charity on AmazonSmile for a percentage of your Amazon purchases to be donated.
- Donate unwanted vehicles through Habitat's Cars for Homes program. Our chapter benefits directly when indicated on the donation form! Visit habitat.org/support/donate-your-car for more information.

Thank you in advance for your assistance in keeping Otsego County an affordable and great place to live!