



Habitat
for Humanity®
of Otsego County

HABITAT HAPPENINGS

OUR SEASONAL NEWSLETTER

607-432-7874

403-B Chestnut Street, Oneonta, NY 13820

HabitatOtsego.org

BUILDING SIMPLE, DECENT HOMES SINCE 1989

SPRING 2023

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Spring is here, both on the calendar and actually in the weather. It certainly has been an unusual winter yet we had our share of snow and when we got it in March, the snow stayed on the ground for a while. Our building season didn't get started until the beginning of April but we're going full swing now. If you wish to volunteer, we'd love to see you at the building site. **Our ambitious plan for 2023 is to build two houses!** We chose three new Partner Families last year and they have been eagerly putting in lots of Sweat Equity volunteer hours so we need to build, build, build to get nice, new houses ready for them. If you want to help, we have plenty to do.

Last fall we finished our 37th house overall, the 4th one on McFarland Road in Oneonta. I'm very pleased to tell you that in January, our partners Nick and Jayme McCoy bought that house and have moved in. They decorated it, not just inside but also out as you can see:



Jayme & Nick McCoy enjoying the yard in their new home!

Special thanks go to **Richard Ranieri** owner of Ranieri Appraisals, Inc., who donated his expertise in appraising the McCoy home and at least three other Habitat homes in recent memory. While I'm at it, let's also recognize **Rich Harlem, the staff at Harlem and Jervis Attorneys at Law**, and **Carol Malz** who all donated their valuable time and legal expertise leading up to and at the closing. We really appreciate it when our professional community members donate their services. We know your time is valuable. We couldn't place partners in houses without you.

Nick and Jayme are first-time homeowners but they have Habitat for Humanity standing with them to help with the inevitable quirks and incidents that happen in every house. It's called Homeowner Support. Chances are when you bought your first house, you needed help or advice on handling things like water condensing on the windows or settling of the house. It creaks! If you are a homeowner, you likely know that some things are normal, like the settling and drywall cracks. Some things are unsettling. If you would like to volunteer but feel nervous about actually building, Homeowner Support could be the right fit for you. Contact us through HabitatOtsego@gmail.com or call the office at (607) 432-7874. Leave a message if we're out building houses.

Jerry Blechman
HFHOC Board President

EARTH DAY PLANTING

For Earth Day, our Partner Families planted 55 Norway Spruce seedlings along the border between McFarland Road and State Highway 205 in Oneonta. This was an effort to to replace some of the Colorado Blue Spruce that were lost last year due to drought conditions.



A bald eagle and a cardinal perched in a tree on our McFarland Road property. Photo taken by the McCoy partner family.

CARE-A-VANNERS COMING

Two groups on their way to help!

Habitat for Humanity International sponsors a program called RV Care-A-Vanners. The people who participate in this program drive their RVs across the country and stop at local Habitat affiliates to assist with building projects for a week or two at a time. They will stay at a local campground and come to the job site for 6 days in a row. This extra help increases our productivity and allows us to have the capacity to build more than one house.

This summer, to support our efforts to build two houses this season, we have two groups of Care-A-Vanners coming. The Care-A-Vanner's motto is "Travel With a Purpose," and we are looking forward to their help in reaching this new goal of two houses in one season.

If you're interested in helping while the Care-A-Vanners are here, please contact us at HabitatOtsego@gmail.com.

MEET A BOARD MEMBER

Jared Shue

Jared Shue has been a member of the Board of Directors for the past two years. He is a registered architect and works in the Facilities Planning office at SUNY Oneonta. There, he does project management for campus construction projects.

For HFHOC, he serves on the board and the Building Committee. One of his most important contributions is producing the construction drawings for our houses. These drawings help our future homeowners envision what is possible and provide a guide to the building committee and volunteers on the job site. Let's get to know him!

Why did you get involved with Habitat Otsego?

I got involved with Habitat Otsego because I wanted to donate my time as an architect toward meaningful projects that help the local community .

What has been the most rewarding part of volunteering?

The most rewarding part of volunteering is knowing that you are part of a good cause that has a profound impact on people's lives.

Interested in volunteering or joining the board? Email our Volunteer Committee Chair, Marge Pietraface, at marjorie.pietraface@oneonta.edu.

BUILDING UPDATE

Two Houses on the Build List This Year!

Things are moving right along on our builds at McFarland Meadows. We started work for the 2023 season at the end of March. Lot number 5 is almost done and ready for a new family to move in.

This year we have a big, new goal - to build TWO houses in one year!

Lots 6 & 7 are well underway. We broke ground in the beginning of April and are already working on the foundations and insulating concrete forms. Photos of the work accomplished so far are below.

Special thanks to **Komenda Property Management** for helping us pour the cellar floors. We'd also like to extend a thanks to the **Milford BOCES** who builds a tool shed for each Habitat House and the **Amish Barn Co.** who transports these sheds to our build sites. Shout out to **Alpine Roofing** for helping to provide long-lasting roofs on our houses and to **Barney & Sons** for digging trenches for the underground electric and installing the pump and waterline to the houses. The last thank you goes to the **Community Foundation of Otsego County** for their support in helping us purchase new tools for our volunteers as we need expanded inventory to build two houses this year!



Thank you to all of our volunteers & partner organizations! If you're interested in volunteering with us, email HabitatOtsego@gmail.com

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HOMEOWNER APPLICATIONS OPEN

Seeking New Partners Interested in Homeownership

Habitat for Humanity Otsego County (HFHOC) is accepting applications for local families or individuals who are interested in working with Habitat to become owners of a safe, affordable house in Otsego County. **Anyone interested is asked to fill out an interest form and application by May 15, 2023.** HFHOC will discuss the application details and partnership process with all who submit an interest form.

The four key considerations for applicants are that they: currently live in unsuitable and/or unaffordable housing; meet the income/credit guidelines and agree to work with HFHOC on obtaining an affordable loan; are willing to help build Habitat homes; and are employed in, or a resident of, Otsego County for at least one year. **The interest form and additional information is available by visiting HabitatOtsego.org or contacting the HFHOC office at the information below.**

Families who are selected to partner will be assisted every

step of the way to complete the process of purchasing a Habitat home, including the application for a low-interest mortgage. Local volunteers provide the majority of the labor, so our homes are sold to partner families at extremely attractive prices! Homeowner education and basic home maintenance lessons are also provided to partners. All that is asked in return is a commitment to be active partners in the process and to help on current building sites.

It takes about two years from the time an applicant is accepted to the home's completion. This allows time for partner families to prepare for homeownership and to complete required homeownership education, as well as time for a house to be built. HFHOC's Homeowner Support Committee act as mentors throughout the entire process.

Questions are welcome from any interested individuals or families. Contact HFHOC at 607-432-7874 or HabitatOtsego@gmail.com.