



March 2009

Greater Fredericksburg

Habitat for
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Published by Greater Fredericksburg Habitat for Humanity, an official affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International, Americus, Georgia. Entered as standard mail at Fredericksburg, Virginia post office. Send address changes to P.O. Box 8265, Fredericksburg, VA. 22404-8265. This publication is the official communication of this affiliate. For information call (540) 891-5009 or fax (540) 891-7009. Website - <http://www.fredhab.org>

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

A lot of effort for one just one family?

This is a debate I have had with several of my friends when discussing the Habitat model. In this newsletter I thought I would share how this debate typically plays out.

My response starts with a question. Would you undertake a small action, which when added to the actions of others, radically changes the life of one family?

Many of us are blessed and it is easy to overlook the very real challenges facing area families. For instance, one of our families, who are on their third temporary living location, was recently surprised when the adjacent trailer was raided by the Police. It turns out there was a Meth lab less than 15 feet from where they live. Other families in our program will see a 25% decrease in their cost of housing expense, since their new mortgage will be significantly lower

than their current rent. If you are making less than \$45,000 and save \$300-\$400 a month on living expenses, think on how significant an impact that would have on your life. It allows for things like emergency savings, regular doctor visits for your kids, and perhaps a little better sleep at night.

One thing that stuck with me was the pride one of the children in the program had, when she reported that she received A's on her school report card. The reason this is significant is that good grades are a way children can help their family achieve sweat equity hours. In this case the A's were significant as they put her family over the required 500 sweat equity hours. Home ownership improves the quality of family interactions, decreases neighborhood crime, improves general health and kids who live in homes get better grades.

Now, what about the hundred or so volunteers and businesses that helped put them in the home? This, to me, is where there is unseen power in the Habitat program. It not only significantly changes the life of one family; it literally touches hundreds of people's lives. Community groups and business find a place to build team work and get to know each other better. Build volunteers go home at the end of a hard days work filled with the satisfaction of seeing something completed, which was not there when they arrived in the morning. Doing something for others, especially

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those things where you can see the direct impact, just plain makes you feel good.

So would you undertake a small action, which when added to the actions of others, radically changes the life of one family? If you haven't already, join us at a build site, join a committee or make a donation. A family out there will be glad you did and I know you will feel even better than you expected.

Christopher Watson, President

AFFORDABLE HOUSING TASK FORCE UPDATE

The George Washington Region Commission Affordable Housing Task Force has submitted the first application for funding to rehabilitate foreclosed homes in Stafford and Spotsylvania Counties and the City of Fredericksburg. This funding is part of the Neighborhood Stabilization Program that was signed into law last July. GFHFH will be an active partner in this program providing affordable homes to families below 50% Area Median Income. Watch our website for opportunities to partner with us in the home rehabilitations which should be starting this summer. We will need local funding, donated materials, and lots of willing volunteers to make this program work for our families.

BUILD ACTIVITIES UPDATE

We continue to build the home for the Newtons on Belfonte Road in Spotsylvania County. We have passed our inspections and are beginning to finish the interior of the house. We have received a grant from Home Depot which will help pay for the cost of insulation. Thanks also to the Church of the Messiah for providing funding to pay for the drywall. We need volunteers and funding to keep this project moving. The major expenses still ahead of us are



for the well and septic systems. Please consider how you can help with this project.

The work continues on the home for the Flagg family in King George. Thanks to the support of Ferry Farm Baptist, Bethel Baptist, St. Paul's Episcopal, and Potomac Baptist Churches and the South Stafford Lowe's, we are moving



forward with "drying in" the house. We have poured the concrete for the walls, installed the trusses and roofing and will be installing windows and siding

in the near future. We have had a great volunteer group that helped get this project started and trust that you will all come back to help finish this home in a timely manner.



Bruce Seger
Executive Director

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY RIDE VA 09 POKER RUN

Mark your calendars: the Greater Fredericksburg Habitat for Humanity 2nd Annual Ride Virginia '09 Poker Run will be held on April 18, 2009. Pre-ride registration begins at 9:00am the day of the event. The Ride Virginia '09 will start at Morton's BMW in the Four Mile Fork Shopping Center at Lafayette and Jefferson Davis Highway. The ride will continue through the



Chancellorville and Wilderness Battlefields, the Spotsylvania Battlefield, and on to the Habitat build site in King George. From there, the Ride continues on through southern Stafford County and finally through the Fredericksburg Battlefield before returning to Morton's BMW. Prizes will be awarded at the end of the ride.

All participants who preregister by April 11, 2009 will be guaranteed a Ride VA 09 T-shirt, patch and a meal ticket for the end of the ride. If you are interested in participating as a rider, sponsor, vendor, donating prizes or working as a volunteer, contact our office or visit the Greater Fredericksburg Habitat for Humanity website at www.fredhab.org for more information and to register for this exciting event. Last year we had 140 riders and good participation by sponsors and vendors.

COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN (CFC)

Greater Fredericksburg Habitat for Humanity is approved for the CFC, in the National Capital Area (NCA) and the Potomac region. If you are a federal government employee, keep GFHFH in mind as an option for your contributions. The GFHFH Affiliate CFC number is #68630.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CAMPAIGN (LGC)

GFHFH is also approved for the Virginia Local Government Campaign (LGC). If you are an employee of a Virginia local government, GFHFH is an option for your contributions. The GFHFH Affiliate Virginia LGC number is #3584.

HABITAT'S APOSTLE BUILD

We have implemented a plan to contact churches in our community (city of Fredericksburg and counties of King George, Spotsylvania and Stafford) to ask for their support – to take Habitat on as a mission, to provide volunteers and/or to be an advocate for Habitat. We need your help to enable us to talk to the right person in your

church so we can tell them about Habitat's mission and ask for their support. We now have four new churches working with us and have several more with scheduled meetings to talk about Habitat.

If you are willing to help us make the contact with your church, please contact the Habitat office at admin@fredhab.org, (540) 891-5009 or stop in our office at 4755 Jefferson Davis Highway, Fredericksburg, VA.

FREDERICKSBURG ACADEMY MUSIC CONCERT

Get ready for a night of great entertainment. On May 2, 2009, local musicians will team up with the Greater Fredericksburg Habitat for Humanity (GFHFH) and the Fredericksburg Academy to rock out for a good cause. Tickets are available at downtown music and book stores. The benefit concert is tentatively scheduled to begin at 5 p.m. and will be held in the Donald and Susan Reed Theatre at Fredericksburg Academy, 10800 Academy Drive, Fredericksburg, VA. All proceeds of the concert will be donated to GFHFH.

Music will be featured by several popular local bands, including the alternative rock group, Junk Science and the high school indie band, The Red Light Effect. Expect hours of quality music varied enough to appeal to people of every musical preference.

Thanks to Britnae Purdy, a student at Fredericksburg Academy for planning and organizing this event and thank you to the Fredericksburg Academy students who have previously volunteered for Habitat events including the Fall Harvest Festival and working at the job sites.



WHAT YOU MAY NOT HAVE KNOWN ABOUT HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

For a family to qualify for a home with Greater Fredericksburg Habitat for Humanity, they must have lived in our service area for at least one year, be employed, legal residents of the U. S. and have a good credit record. Also, the family income cannot exceed 50% of the area median income, which for a family of four is almost \$50,000. The type of people who fall into this category are entry level employees in law enforcement, fire fighters, medical, teachers, EMT and service personnel.

Bob Hammond, Resource Development

The Housing Trust Fund (SB1055) - The Economic Development Subcommittee of House Appropriations moved to table SB 1055 last Thursday morning, effectively killing the bill for this session. Housing Trust Fund advocates were well represented at the hearing and a stream of witnesses testified in favor of the Bill. Supporters included non-profit housing developers, Habitat Virginia, the Virginia Realtors, the Virginia Homebuilders, the Virginia Organizing Project, Housing Opportunities Made Equal, representatives of the disability community and a range of other supporters. THANKS to ALL who supported this effort. Our patron, Senator Mary Margaret Whipple did an admirable job of advocating for and defending the bill. Republican members of the committee expressed concerns about the commitment of future revenues during a time of fiscal crisis. The motion to table was made by Delegate Clark Hogan and was approved on a voice vote. Delegate Harvey Morgan expressed his concerns about growing housing needs in the Commonwealth but in the end, the Majority moved to table the bill.

Despite the defeat, the Housing Trust Fund clearly gained momentum during this session. Housing advocates vowed to re-double efforts during the next year and bring the bill back again in 2010.

EXCITING NEWS FOR OUR RESALE STORE!!!

We have a new addition to our Resale family! I am pleased to introduce you to Ron Krolick, our new assistant manager. Ron brings to us a new enthusiasm and innovative ideas for the store. Welcome aboard Ron!

The store continues to do well, however we are always seeking volunteers, tax deductible donations, and expansion of our customer base. We need YOU!!!

We are requesting your assistance to spread the word about the store, far and wide, to ensure our continued success. As always, any suggestions or comments are welcome!

The ReSale store is open Monday-Saturday, 9am-5pm and offers pick up and delivery. Call us for details!

Melanie Harper, ReSale Store Manager
540-891-5009
Fredresale1@verizon.net



GRANTS RECEIVED BY HABITAT

We have received the following grants since the last newsletter in December 2008: Home Depot for \$3,000; Fredericksburg Realtors Foundation for \$1,000; the David Morgan Fund of Community Foundation of the Rappahannock River Region, Inc. for \$1,500; the Wal-Mart Garrisonville Road store for \$1,000. We thank all of these organizations for their support.

UMW GFHFH CAMPUS CHAPTER

Hello from the UMW Habitat for Humanity Campus Chapter. Recently, the Campus Chapter has helped out at the King George build site and the Belfonte Road build site. Our volunteers, including myself, are grateful to have had such wonderful and unique experiences working with the other volunteers and families. This semester, about 10-15 new volunteers joined the chapter and after every build they ask about the next time we will go out as a group (which is a good sign that these volunteers, mostly freshmen, will continue to participate in the Chapter throughout their Mary Washington careers!).

Besides the recent build activity, we are happy to present Greater Fredericksburg Habitat for Humanity with \$300 from our Charity Poker Tournament held February 9, 2009. We had 45 participants and raised a total of \$600. The remaining funds will be used for our two Alternative Spring Break trips traveling to Bluffton, South Carolina and Birmingham, Alabama to work with Habitat for Humanity on Collegiate Challenge Blitz Builds.

We are also planning hard for our upcoming Act! Speak! Build! week. This international event happens March 28-April 3 and is sponsored through Habitat International, to promote poverty and homelessness awareness. We will be teaming up with another poverty awareness group on campus for the \$2 a Day Challenge, where students live on \$2 a day for a week in a shanty town and go without showering. This year's event simulates the challenges of being without a home or running water. Also during the week, we will be collecting food for the Fredericksburg Area Food Bank, holding a LEGO House Building Competition Fundraiser, and working with the Fredericksburg Affiliate to have

an on-campus BBQ Build. At the build, we plan on building a large playhouse to be raffled off at this year's Harvest Festival.

Lindsay D'Adamo, UMW Campus Chapter President

GLOBAL YOUTH SERVICE DAY

Greater Fredericksburg Habitat for Humanity is participating in the Global Youth Service Day (www.gysd.org)! We are going to build two compost bins and possibly an aluminum can recycle bin. We will be doing this on Saturday April 25th. Plans are still being developed. See the GFHFH website (www.fredhab.org) for more information.

Brian Deering, Volunteer/Human Relations

GFHFH 3rd ANNUAL HARVEST FESTIVAL

We are in the planning stages for this event which will include a craft show and take place in Sept 2009. If you are interested in helping with the plans, please call Bobbie at 540-842-5639.

Bobbie Wiggin, Administrative Assistant

Habitat's 3rd Annual Golf Tournament

Come and join us on May 21st at the Gauntlet at Curtis Park in Stafford. We are planning a fun day of golf, food and prizes. We are bringing back the use of string to get closer to the hole on non-prize holes. New this year will be a blindfolded driving hole and a blindfolded putting hole. This will be just for fun and maybe next year there will be a prize for each blindfolded hole. This year Habitat is the sole beneficiary tournament so help us out with sponsorships and raffle prizes if you can. Forms for sponsorship and golfer registration are available on the website. Contact Steve Scheibe if you want to sponsor a hole or provide a raffle prize

