



# HELPING HANDS

E-EDITION, NOVEMBER 2017

"This is the power of gathering: it inspires us, delightfully, to be more hopeful, more joyful, more thoughtful: in a word, more alive."

- Alice Waters

## Gathering

By Cathy Collins

As the leaves fall and the air beckons the arrival of colder weather, I know Thanksgiving must not be too far behind. I am thrilled that three new homeowners and their families will have the chance to gather around their tables this Thanksgiving in their new homes. The ability to share a meal with family is often cited as one of the anticipated joys of owning a home by the families with whom we partner.

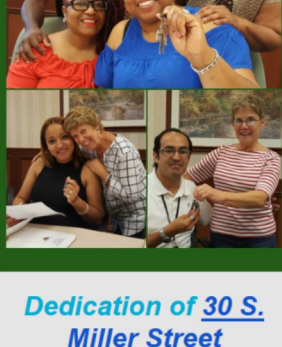
As Alice Waters shares in the quote above, there is such power in gathering. I think the founding volunteers of Habitat Newburgh understood that power when they created the Community Coffee Break. Taking a half hour break in the middle of the build day doesn't make much construction sense, but it certainly makes a lot of human sense. While I don't get to make it to a coffee break every week, I consider it one of the most important events on my weekly calendar. It definitely accomplishes all the things on Ms. Waters' list—inspiration, hope, joy, thoughtfulness, and the sense of being alive. Coffee break allows us to affirm our commitment to the mission of Habitat Newburgh and to exchange gratitude for each other's presence in this community. And there's usually some tasty treats to go along with it. What happens at coffee break is not unlike what happens when we gather with family and friends to share the Thanksgiving meal.

We are now extending this power of gathering into the community as we support the development of neighborhood associations that bring together Habitat homeowners and their neighbors. This process strengthens their connections with each other and their neighborhood.

I have long believed that the Habitat model centers on the power of people gathering together to accomplish things that often, at face value, seem impossible. It is the gathering—the partnerships, the working side-by-side—that allows us to create small miracles every day. It's right there in our mission—seeking to put God's love into action, **we bring people together to build homes, community and hope. For where two or three [or more] are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.**

May you all enjoy a very joyful Thanksgiving gathered with families and friends. And keep joining us to experience Thanksgiving throughout the year.

## Congratulations on Closing to Candice, Elizabeth, & Manny!



## Dedication of 30 S. Miller Street

Home of Viridiana, Juan, & Family



Come and welcome mom Viri, dad Juan, and their 4 children to their soon-to-be home! This beautiful rehab house is the fourth Habitat home completed on S. Miller Street. Volunteers transformed this building from a dilapidated shell into a wonderful house; now this family will transform it from a house into a home.

Date: Friday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017

Time: 1:30 Open House, 2:00 Dedication



Thank you to the sponsor of our 90th House:

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## New Board of Directors Officers

The Rev. Dr. Richard "Deke" Spierling

President

Joe Dopico

1st Vice President

Valerie Desharnais

2nd Vice President

Martine Najork

Treasurer

Scott Lask

Secretary

## #GIVINGTUESDAY is November 28

Black Friday. Cyber Monday. **#GIVINGTUESDAY** November 28, 2017

## Newman's Own Foundation selects Habitat Newburgh to join the Holiday Challenge!

Join the excitement and fun, starting on November 28, as we compete to raise matching gift funds and prizes for Habitat Newburgh. You'll be able to inspire others and see how your gift helps Habitat Newburgh build houses and hope! Watch your email for more details!

## CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

### 20 & 30 South Miller Street:

With the upcoming dedication, 30 South Miller Street is a focal point for Habitat Newburgh. This house is a hive of activity as we work on completing flooring, cabinets, fencing, and trim. Originally constructed in 1900, this historic home will soon be occupied by a hardworking, local family.

A few houses down, Habitat Newburgh is in the rehab process on 20 South Miller Street. There is plenty of work to be done here including the remaining demolition and subsequent framing.

On both these homes, the need for volunteer assistance is crucial. Check out [NewburghVolunteerHub.com](http://NewburghVolunteerHub.com) to see how you can lend a hand!

### 15 ½ Overlook Place:

Habitat Newburgh's 8th Women Build house has been extremely active since opening its doors to volunteers on October 11th. Just around the corner from "The Bluff" in the Washington Heights neighborhood of Newburgh, this home is already a favorite of volunteers. Framing is underway, as well as wrapping up demolition. Come be a part of this home's rehab process and [sign up!](#)

### 324 Robinson Avenue

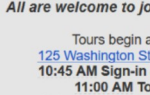
Located across the street from NFA North Campus, this solo new build's foundation has been poured. As winter approaches, Habitat Newburgh and our volunteers are busy insulating the foundation and preparing for the deck.

This home is in its infancy, however it will be growing up quickly.

## Thank you Matt & Matt!



Matthew Rodrigs completed his year-long term of service as an AmeriCorps VISTA member. His project included researching and creating a database structure to categorize and analyze potential properties. Thank you for your service!



Matt Maurelio joined us as an IBM Encore Fellow for 6 months. He worked on streamlining systems within the organization, particularly on our shared server with special attention to the documentation process within Family Services and the storage of confidential information. He has been a wonderful member of our team, and in addition to his primary project, has jumped in to help wherever needed. Thank you for all of your hard work and best of luck in your future endeavors.

## Thank you to the volunteer groups that came out to build with us this month!

**Bank of America**  
**Marist Alumni**  
**Rexhill Furniture**  
**Philipstown Presbyterian**  
**West Point**

If you would like to schedule a Team Build day, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Matt Arbolino at (845) 568-6035 x110 or [marbolino@habitatnewburgh.org](mailto:marbolino@habitatnewburgh.org)

## Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood Tour



Join us for a FREE coach bus tour and learn more about Habitat's work in Newburgh. Tour in-progress rehabs and new builds, and see a completed Habitat Newburgh house. **All are welcome to join!**

Tours begin at our office  
125 Washington St., Newburgh, NY  
10:45 AM Sign-in & refreshments  
11:00 AM Tour begins  
Call (845) 568-6035 x105 to RSVP

Tour Dates:  
Sunday, November 5\*  
\*Sunday Tour—1:45 Sign in, 2:00 Tour begins  
Wednesday, December 6

## LOOKING AHEAD

### Upcoming events in 2017

#### Sunday, November 5

Open House at 152 Ann Street following Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood tour

#### Tuesday, November 28

Giving Tuesday

#### Friday, December 1

Dedication of 30 S. Miller Street, home of Juan, Viridiana, & Family

#### Monday, January 15

MLK Day of Service

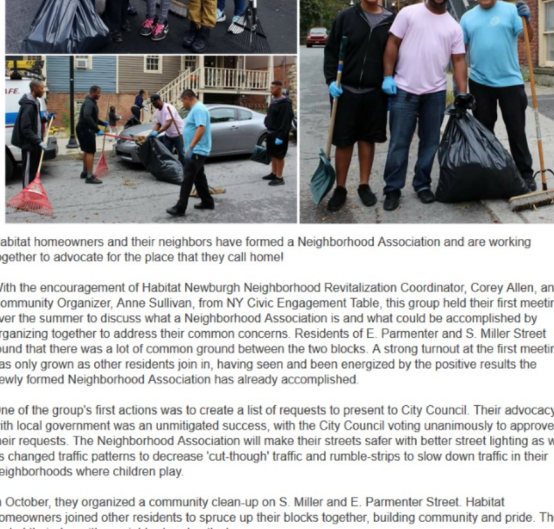
#### Sunday, April 22

Habitat Newburgh Walk for Housing

Keep up with the latest Habitat Happenings!



## Habitat Homeowners & Neighbors Bettering Blocks Through Newly Formed Neighborhood Association



Habitat homeowners and their neighbors have formed a Neighborhood Association and are working together to advocate for the place that they call home!

With the encouragement of Habitat Newburgh Neighborhood Revitalization Coordinator, Corey Allen, and Community Organizer, Anne Sullivan, from NY Civic Engagement Table, this group held their first meeting over the summer to discuss what a Neighborhood Association is and what could be accomplished by organizing together to address their common concerns. Residents of E. Parmenter and S. Miller Street found that there was a lot of common ground between the two blocks. A strong turnout at the first meeting has only grown as other residents join in, having seen and been energized by the positive results the newly formed Neighborhood Association has already accomplished.

One of the group's first actions was to create a list of requests to present to City Council. Their advocacy with local government was an unmitigated success, with the City Council voting unanimously to approve their requests. The Neighborhood Association will make their streets safer with better street lighting as well as changed traffic patterns to decrease 'cut-throat' traffic and rumble-strips to slow down traffic in their neighborhoods where children play.

In October, they organized a community clean-up on S. Miller and E. Parmenter Street. Habitat homeowners joined other residents to spruce up their blocks together, building community and pride. They ended their day with a neighborhood potluck.

While the Neighborhood Association is still relatively new, there is more on the horizon for this ambitious and dedicated group. As new Habitat homeowners move into homes on Ann Street and other residents express an interest in getting involved, the group hopes to expand beyond S. Miller and E. Parmenter into other nearby blocks. They continue to go door-to-door inviting other residents to join in, and look to create a more formalized organizational structure.

Keep an eye out for future projects, including a second community clean-up day on Saturday, November 11th.

We are very excited to see all of the positive changes that local residents have accomplished and will continue to expand on as they organize for a common purpose.

## Happy Birthday Habitat!

Thank you to everyone who helped us celebrate 18 wonderful years of building.



## Thank you, Rick!

Thank you to our outgoing Board President for 3 years of leadership

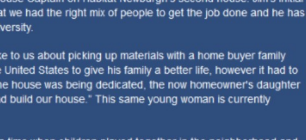


Rick Schoenberg presided over his last Board meeting on October 19. We extend our deep felt gratitude for his leadership and service to Habitat Newburgh. His leadership will be remembered for his commitment to creating a strong organization and facilitating the transition to our new fund development framework. He has been tireless in making sure that everyone's position was heard and that we always landed on the best solution for the organization. Thank you. We are glad we will still be seeing you on site.

## Volunteer SPOTLIGHT! Jim Ferguson

"Keep on Keepin' On"

This month, we sat down with Jim Ferguson and spoke about Newburgh, the value of community, and the importance of diversity. Jim is a longtime Habitat Newburgh volunteer and "longer" time Newburgh resident, whose character, expertise, and drive have been a key part of our organization for nearly two decades.



Jim Ferguson is a born and raised Newburgher. Growing up on Broadway, Jim started washing cars at Park Motors while still in school. At a young age, Jim was schooled on working with motor vehicle engines, which led to a 13 year career with Park Motors. Jim valued the experience his first career offered, as he received training in every facet of the company.

Jim's work brought him into a lengthy career with Central Hudson. During his tenure with Central Hudson, Jim (at age 45) enrolled at Mount Saint Mary College and spent the next five years pursuing his Bachelors in Business. The newly acquired degree, plus his work experience, earned Jim the position of Director of Special Services by the time of his retirement. The native 'Newburgher' had gone from washing cars after school, to a college graduate, to improving utilities around the Hudson Valley.

Ferguson's career at Central Hudson also proved pivotal for Habitat Newburgh, as the company directed Jim our way in 1999, our year of inception. Soon after, Jim became a House Captain on Habitat Newburgh's second house. Jim's initial reaction to the early Habitat Newburgh meetings was that we had the right mix of people to get the job done and he has always greatly valued how the organization embraces diversity.

Jim has many lasting memories over the years, but spoke to us about picking up materials with a home buyer family member from Colombia who told Jim he had come to the United States to give his family a better life, however it had to that point not worked out as planned. Shortly after, as the house was being dedicated, the new homeowner's daughter approached Jim and said, "Thank you for helping my dad build our house." This same young woman is currently completing her undergraduate studies.

Jim recalls his youth here in Newburgh and remembers a time when children played together in the neighborhood and continues volunteering because he wants today's children to have the same opportunity. Jim told us, "You feel good volunteering, but people come back because you make others feel good too."

Ferguson's goals for Habitat Newburgh include continuing to work on Presby Build homes (especially as they approach their 10th house). Jim's final advice to the Habitat Newburgh community, as told to him years ago, is to, "Keep on Keepin' On." We will continue to do so with Jim Ferguson and volunteers like him. Thanks, Jim!

## NOW OPEN—15½ Overlook, Women Build House #8



Join this fun crew of WOMEN BUILDERS and sign up to volunteer! [newburghvolunteerhub.com](http://newburghvolunteerhub.com)

## OPEN HOUSE

Habitat homeowners help build their own homes alongside volunteers and pay an affordable mortgage, building strength, stability, and self-reliance.

Learn how YOU can join in as a homebuyer, volunteer, or donor.



## SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5

152 Ann Street, Newburgh, NY • 2-4 PM



(845) 568-6035 • [info@habitatnewburgh.org](mailto:info@habitatnewburgh.org) • [habitatnewburgh.org](http://habitatnewburgh.org)

## Tithe in Action! India

Did you know that in addition to our work here in Newburgh, we also tithe 10% of undesignated donations to support the work of Habitat organizations in 5 countries- Mexico, Haiti, India, Jordan, and Ethiopia. To date, our tithe has served over 100 families internationally!



## Habitat for Humanity in India

Habitat India began operations in Khammam, Andhra Pradesh state, southeastern India, in 1983. Among the largest Habitat programs in the Asia-Pacific region, Habitat India has helped more than 195,000 families gain access to decent shelter as well as rebuild their homes and lives in the aftermath of disasters. By 2019, Habitat India plans to reach out to 500,000 low-income families with improved housing solutions, safe sanitation and clean water as well as post-disaster reconstruction.

## Housing needs in India

The world's largest democracy, India has seen rapid economic growth and made progress toward achieving most of the Millennium Development Goals. Income inequality remains a challenge though the poverty rate has been declining. World Bank data from 2012 showed the national poverty rate had fallen from 37 percent in 2005 to 21.9 percent. To meet the country's vision of a home for all by 2022, India will need to build an additional 20 million housing units.

## Decent and affordable homes

It is estimated that more than 73 million families in India do not have access to decent shelter. Habitat for Humanity India works with low-income families to build new homes and incremental housing as well as to repair and rehabilitate houses. In line with the Government of India's vision to ensure "Housing for All", Habitat India believes that every person has the right to safe and adequate shelter.

## Disaster response and preparedness

Since 1999, Habitat India has been responding to disasters ranging from cyclones to earthquakes to floods. Among the largest projects was the response to the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami which helped more than 13,000 families. Habitat India also implemented a community-based disaster mitigation and preparedness program which has trained more than 49,000 individuals. The response to the 2015 flooding in Tamil Nadu had the support of actress Jacqueline Fernandez who appealed for funding and led a 150-volunteer build in Chennai. To date, Habitat India has distributed about 7,000 humanitarian aid kits containing items such as tarpaulin sheet, nylon rope, water filter and a personal hygiene kit. In September 2015, a disaster insurance scheme developed by Habitat India's partner, insurance firm HDFC Ergo, was launched. The scheme offers policies to help low-income families rebuild or repair their homes after disasters. Annual premiums range from 100 to 250 Indian rupees (about US\$1.40 to US\$3.50).

## "Sensitize to Sanitize" campaign

In India, nearly half of the population or 564 million people defecate in the open, a problem that the Indian government seeks to end by October 2019 through "Swachh Bharat Abhiyan" (Clean India Mission). Habitat India's "Sensitize to Sanitize" campaign, launched in November 2014, provides access to clean water and safe sanitation through building toilets in individual households, schools and communities. In addition, Habitat India runs a structured, community-driven program on behavior change communication to fight open defecation and raise awareness of the importance of sanitation and hygiene. In July 2015, Habitat India led the formation of the "Sensitize to Sanitize" coalition. Together, the 13 partner organizations have served a total of over 9.3 million individuals.

## Donations and purchases build houses, too.



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