

Habitat Happenings

fall 2023



On the cover:

Jada enjoys her new playhouse as mom Shureene enjoys the benefits of Habitat's Homeownership program.



Greater Cleveland
Habitat
for Humanity®

Inside this issue

Habitat Launches 400-Home Initiative
Walk/Run/Mosey Wrap Up
Playhouse Project

Dear Habitat Community,

I write on the heels of an incredible 400 home initiative groundbreaking, with countless elected leaders, funders, neighborhood leaders and as many staff as we could spare in attendance. We also had one Habitat family join us as well. The plan is already well-covered within this newsletter so I will not belabor the topic, but I am just blown away by the support as well as the fervor for what Habitat for Humanity provides; the earned opportunity of homeownership within the families that we serve in the face of a growing need. Indeed, the book "Evicted" by Matthew Desmond was summoned at least twice within the speeches of elected leaders. This book rests on my bookshelf and does a brilliant but heartbreaking job of telling the stories of families living in poverty.

Another book rests on my shelf as well called "The Four Agreements" by Don Miguel Ruiz and lately that is the book captivating my mind and actions as we move forward. It is billed as a "practical guide to personal freedom" and speaks to how limiting certain beliefs can "rob us of joy". The four agreements in order are to:

1. Be impeccable with your word
2. Don't take anything personally
3. Don't make assumptions
4. Always do your best

Now, I try VERY hard to uphold all four, and feel like I am surrounded by staff and volunteers who do the same. I fail sometimes, and I can also say that it might be natural for newer leaders to have any of these four (especially taking things personally) get the best of them. I can remember my early days as a Summer Camp Director and feeling like every staff member mistake was a personal affront upon me and my leadership, which hindsight tells me is clearly not the case.

The agreement that I most have on my mind is #3, "Don't make assumptions" and the way that I translate it is that the greatest gift that we can give anyone is the benefit of the doubt. In a way, Habitat for Humanity makes it a mission and makes it its business to always give people, including and especially our prospective homeowners, the benefit

of the doubt. It can be so very easy to focus on a minority percentage of people who try to "game the system" from time to time. The truth is that we rob every one of our gifts and best selves if we lump everyone we work with into such a category up front. It is a terrible assumption to make in our profession. So too is the assumption when meeting a family with smart phones or flat screen televisions and making the leap that they are not worthy of our housing or other services. We all wish to better our lives and be our best selves – who does so without the ability to communicate or have entertainment in their lives?

The workplace is no different and once again I've learned the hard way! Indeed, one of my best friends is someone who worked for me for a couple of years nearly a decade ago, about whom I made a lot of narrow minded assumptions. This led to their ultimately quitting the job after I let education level, position and/or stature get in the way of truly listening to ideas, many of which I would later realize were good ones worth trying for the betterment of our clients. I am thankful this person was able to put aside my not having given them that benefit, and to then help me to understand how to be a better leader who fosters a culture of engagement, open ideas regardless of position, and ultimately a better connection to our mission.

I hope as I near a year in the self-proclaimed "greatest job in Cleveland" that our staff and volunteers have seen me as someone who values their ideas regardless of their role. I hope everyone feels valued, and I cannot wait for the next idea wherever it may come from! It might be the key to helping us to reach a vision of 400 homes, an incredible workplace, and a growing support system for all who come into contact with Greater Cleveland Habitat for Humanity!

Yours in service,

John Litten
President/CEO

Habitat news

Building Great Futures



We truly had an amazing group of participants this year. Five young people helped rehab a home for future Habitat Homebuyer Naomi and her daughter. Two participants who recently graduated from high school are staying on with Habitat to help finish the house while they participate in Youth Opportunities Unlimited's young adult construction program. Thank you BGF kids and Youth Opportunities Unlimited for an amazing partnership!



Save the Date

Greater Cleveland Habitat will host its Volunteer Recognition and Annual Meeting event on Wednesday, November 15th. Watch for more details as we get closer to the date.

Habitat Launches Catalytic 400-Home Initiative



We do not use a word like "catalytic" lightly. It is a unique adjective to describe a unique moment in the 36-year history of Greater Cleveland Habitat for Humanity — Unprecedented government funding through the American Rescue Plan Act that will ensure funding for sustained growth. We anticipate receiving almost \$9 million over the next three to four years from the City of Cleveland and State of Ohio ARPA allocations. ARPA is the New Deal of our generation and a grant like this will allow us to expand our ability to meet one of Greater Cleveland's most pressing needs — affordable homeownership opportunities for historically underserved populations.



When we learned that these grants were available, we devised a "BHAG," short for "Big Hairy Audacious Goal," a phrase coined in the book Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies. Our BHAG was to help 400 households in Greater Cleveland through four key areas, one of which is new to us:

- Build 100 new homes across Greater Cleveland
- Rehabilitate at least 50 homes, which entails creating a genuinely new space with no major needs for at least ten years
- Hold "spruce up" events in the neighborhoods in which we work to assist existing homeowners with minor repairs, landscaping, clean-up and more, touching a minimum of 150 homes
- Create a new Critical Home Repair Program to do major repairs (roofs, porches, siding, etc) on at least 100 homes

So how do we get there? Our plan is to leverage this \$9 million investment into another \$24 million from other funding sources, such as:

- HOME Investment Partnerships Program funds
- Cuyahoga Land Bank funds and land
- Generous foundation support
- Equity payments from our Partner Families
- Proceeds from our three ReStore locations
- Individual donors
- Proceeds from our annual Walk/Run/Mosey fundraiser

This diverse set of funding streams, while complex, all come together to become something greater. And anyone can be a part of our BHAG through donations, volunteering or joining us for our annual Walk/Run/Mosey fundraiser.

We officially broke ground on our BHAG 400-Home Initiative on August 29th at an event attended by over 75 people, including Mayor Justin Bibb, Cleveland City Council President Blaine Griffin, Councilperson Jenny Spencer and many other dignitaries and partners.



Cars for Homes

Have a car you don't need? Don't let it take up space in your yard — donate it to Habitat's Cars for Homes program, where the donations come directly back to helping build and repair homes for local families.

Call **1-877-277-4344** to start the process or **Scan the QR code >>**





Walk RECAP

July 8th was a gorgeous day at Edgewater Park. Thank you to all who participated and showed support for affordable homeownership.

FUN FACTS

- over **650** friends joined us
- together we raised over **\$140,000**
- ate over **50** dozen donuts
- recorded the most single donation transactions of any Walk to date
- the funds raised will help build homes in the Buckeye-Woodhill neighborhood

You're the Best

Top Individual Fundraisers

Kim Pride
Peggy Sobul
Amy Whitacre

Top Fundraising Teams

Prince of Peace Westlake
Miles (and Scout) for Homes
Master Builder Solutions

Most Team Members

Master Builders Solutions
First Federal Lakewood
Roof Raisers
Team Kelly (tie)
Team Langan (tie)

Most Donors

Kim Pride
Frida Etchell
Peggy Sobul



a huge thank you
to our amazing sponsors!

block by block



home by home



family by family



brick by brick



Robyne & John Habat

step by step



The Solecki Family



Cleveland Shades LLC



nail by nail



Debby & Jerry Smith

Independence Presbyterian Church



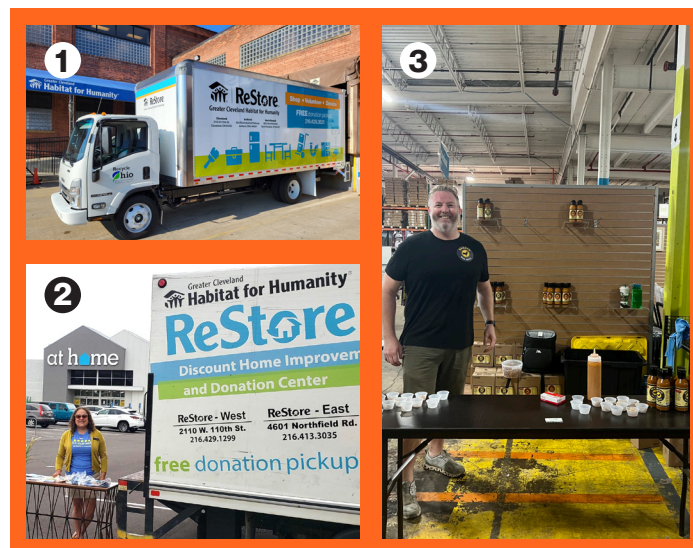
Amherst Anniversary

The Amherst ReStore will have its first anniversary celebration in November to commemorate the Grand Opening of the ReStore as part of Greater Cleveland Habitat for Humanity and its expansion into Lorain County. There have been challenges, as there are with any new venture, but there is truly so much excitement and opportunity to continue our mission in Lorain County while providing residents a place to find discount furniture, home and building supplies as well as a donation center. Nancy, one of Amherst ReStore's dedicated volunteers has said, "The comment I hear most about the store is how well organized it is. Customers are often surprised to see the large selection

of merchandise we carry - paint, rugs, large and small appliances, tools, lawn and garden, kitchenware, dishes, decor, craft supplies, books, records, and DVDs, etc," adding "Shoppers like the bargain prices on new items." We couldn't continue our mission without volunteers like Nancy, the staff, the community partners, the shoppers and those who donate, and we look forward to what the new year has in store for us.

Out and About...

- 1 This year, the ReStore got a new box truck with partial funding from the Ohio EPA. The new "green" truck is equipped with air conditioning and will have less of a negative environmental impact. Be on the lookout for the truck as it drives around town for donation pickups!
- 2 One of the community events the ReStore participated in this year was a partnership with the At Home store in Elyria, in which the donation department brought the truck to the At Home parking lot to receive gently used household items in exchange for a coupon to be used in the At Home store.
- 3 The ReStore partnered with Branch Sauce Co. this summer during our Garage Sale Day event, and Chris came out to the Cleveland store with samples for our hungry customers!



**shop. volunteer.
donate.**

Learn more by scanning this QR code or visit our website at www.clevelandhabitat.org/restore



PLAYHOUSE PROJECT



This year we are excited to introduce Playhouse Project — an opportunity for Greater Cleveland Habitat to partner with corporate sponsors to build playhouses for local families. Each playhouse kit is pre-made by a team of dedicated volunteer Playhouse Pros. The playhouses are then custom designed specific to the children who will be receiving them. To make the day even more special, at the end

of the build, the volunteers who design and build each playhouse are there for the big reveal when the families come to pick them up. These playhouses provide children with a safe place to play, increase their creativity and help them to imagine what owning a home is like. The funds raised through sponsoring a playhouse build go toward building big houses here in Cuyahoga and Lorain counties.

For information on sponsoring a build, receiving a playhouse, or volunteering as a Playhouse Pro you can visit our website; you can also email us at playhouseproject@clevelandhabitat.org.

Faith Build 2023

We are celebrating the 9th year of the Faith Build.

Sixteen churches are providing funding, volunteers and prayers to help local families have safe affordable places to call home.

The 2023 Faith Build supports the construction of a house in Bellaire-Jefferson. This is a unique project as the Faith Build home is part of a five-house Habitat build on West 128th Street.

At the time of print, we are thrilled to share that two of the five houses have been selected for purchase by families. We believe the remaining three will be selected shortly.

Many thanks to all the churches who have given their love, generosity, and service.

Brecksville United Methodist Church
Calvary Hill Church of God In Christ
Cathedral of St. John The Evangelist
Church of the Gesu
Church of the Western Reserve
First Lutheran Church of Strongsville
Lakewood United Methodist Church/
Heat and Frost Insulators Local 3
Lord of Life Lutheran Church
Old Stone Church
St. Joseph Church, Strongsville
St. Mark Parish, Cleveland
St. Mary of the Falls
St. Mary's Parish, Berea
St. Paul's Episcopal, Cleveland Heights
Strongsville United Methodist Church
The Church of the Covenant

To learn more about the Faith Build, or if your church would like a tour/speaker, contact Philip Katsadouros at pkatsadouros@clevelandhabitat.org or call **216.358.0576**.



2110 W 110th St.
Cleveland, OH 44102

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
CLEVELAND, OH
PERMIT NO. 4232



**discount home
improvement
store**



Cleveland	North Randall	Amherst
2110 W 110th St. Cleveland, OH	4601 Northfield Rd. North Randall, OH	300 Rice Industrial Pkwy Amherst, OH



Open Until 6pm	Open Until 4pm
tue/wed/thu 10am-6pm	fri/sat 10am-4pm

**donate
in-store**

tue/wed/thu	10am-5:30pm
fri/sat	10am-3:30pm

**schedule
pick-up**

216.429.3631	clevelandhabitat.org/pickup
---------------------	--

WE ARE HIRING!



Scan this QR code or
use this url to learn more:
clevelandhabitat.org/who-we-are/employment

We are always looking for new talent!
Check our website regularly for the latest openings.


\$5 OFF \$25

Valid at ReStore locations in Cleveland, OH, Amherst, OH, and North Randall, OH. Coupon cannot be combined with other offers; photocopies not valid; coupon to be surrendered at time of purchase. Expires 1/31/2024.

 **ReStore** | home improvement store
for good.