

JULY 2007

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Newsletter

Barb Tatarchuk

We are pleased to announce that Peter Lanc will be a new Board Member for Habitat. He is in Human Relations at Mercy Hospital in Cadillac.

A New Home for the Roderick Family

May 29th was a beautiful, warm evening, just right for dedicating the new 3-bedroom home of Laura Roderick. This was the fourth Habitat home to be built on Robertson Street in Cadillac, so it is a neighborhood of many blessings. About 28 people gathered for the short ceremony which began with a welcome and introductions by Habitat's Executive Director Mary Ellen Van Dyke. Laura Roderick's parents and her daughters Kristina and Shania were the first to be introduced. Also in attendance were Frank Tilman, Donna Waddell, and Kyle Aiello from Building Trades program at the Career Technical Center; Superintendent Mike Blanchard from the Intermediate School District; and several staff, Board members, and volunteers from Wexford Habitat for Humanity.



Laura, Kristina, and Shania Celebrate the dedication of their new home.

After the introductions, candles were lit and then held by Shania and Kristina to represent the presence of Christ in the home. Then, Deacon Jim Barton from St. Ann's Catholic Church read from Mark 12:28-31 and 1 John 3:16-18. A responsive reading followed to bless the different rooms in the house, to remember the generosity of all the volunteers and donors that made it possible, and to thank God for "wisdom and guidance in the project." The ceremony ended with Habitat's presentation of a Bible to the family. Earlier, a pictorial history of the building project had also been presented to the family by Donna Waddell.

After the ceremony, refreshments were served, and everyone was invited to tour the house. Shania, who is a fifth-grader at Lincoln, proudly showed off her bedroom, which is "the biggest one," while other visitors checked out the spacious backyard and basement. Although the home had no furniture on this first evening of ownership, it was filled to the brim with the spirit of a loving God, the warmth of friendship and hope for the future.

Robert Clark - A Legacy of Hope for Others

Robert Clark was a man who wanted to make a difference; he felt he had not done enough to help others during his lifetime, so he wanted to use his will as a tool for giving after his death. His will stipulated that generous monetary gifts be given to both Love INC and Wexford Habitat for Humanity. After thoughtful consideration, the Habitat Board decided to use the money to purchase five different building sites. Within the next few years, two homes will be built on lots located

on Allen Street, two homes will be built on Rogers Street, and a final home will be built on Cummer Street. For five families, the dream of affordable housing will become a reality, and Robert Clark will have played a role in making the dreams come true. Because the Cummer Street home will be built primarily by community members, the Board is planning to designate it as the official Robert Clark memorial house, but all five homes will be part of Clark's legacy to our community, a true legacy of hope.

Who Qualifies to be a Habitat Home-owner?

How Does Habitat Humanity Provide Affordable Housing for those in need?

Wexford Habitat for Humanity is a Christian housing ministry that is financed through private donations and through profits from our local ReStore. In our area, the houses are built by community volunteers or by students in the Building Trades program at the Career Technical Center. Families must pay for the homes, but no interest is charged and no profits are made from the sale of the homes. This makes them affordable to families who otherwise might find it difficult to buy a new home.

Those who are interested in becoming a Habitat home owner must meet several qualifications.

- They must have a real housing need. Their present home must have serious problems such as overcrowding, unsafe or unsanitary

conditions or some other issue that is not easily overcome.

- Homeowners must have lived or worked in Wexford County for one year.
- The combined family income should not be much more than \$27,600 for a family of three.

Once a family is approved for a Habitat home, they have some further requirements.

- They are asked to join in programs that focus on budgeting, home repair, and maintenance.
- They must provide \$500 for a down payment which should be paid before closing. The money can be saved while the home is being built.

- All adults in the family must put in a substantial number of hours in "sweat equity," and 30 of those hours must be completed before the construction begins. Sweat equity can be completed in another Habitat home that is being built or prospective homeowners can work in the ReStore.

Once families meet the above requirement, the home is sold to the family at cost. Payments are generally \$400 to \$500 per month and they include taxes and insurance.

If you think you qualify or if you know of someone who would benefit from a Habitat home, call Wexford Habitat for Humanity Offices (775-7561) for additional information on how to apply.

The Welcome Club Packs and Passes to Help Habitat

When the Cadillac News Taste of Home Cooking School came to Cadillac, there were over 1000 tote bags that needed to be filled with assorted foods, magazines, and gift certificates. Wexford Habitat for Humanity was offered the job of filling the bags in exchange for a donation of \$600.00. It sounded like a good opportunity to our Executive Director Mary Ellen Van Dyke, so she enlisted the help of her friends in the Welcome Club of Cadillac as well as several staff members and volunteers from Habitat.

The group arrived at the Wexford Civic Center at 3:00 on May 1, and discovered a mountain of gifts to distribute. An assembly line of sorts was set up with Mary Garcia setting an ambitious (and intimidating) pace at the head of the line. After the first hour, backs were aching, eyes were glazing over, fingers were numb, and several of us wondered if we would survive, but the last bag was finally filled at around 7:00 in the evening. A cheer of relief rose up from the exhausted bodies surrounding the tables..

The workers celebrated their accomplishment at a local restaurant with tasty food, lots of laughter, and a healthy share of good-natured teasing directed at Mary Ellen for saying "yes" to this unenviable task.

It goes without saying that, Habitat is eternally grateful to the Welcome Club for their willingness to pick up, pack, and pass...again and again and again. Will they be available next year?



A special thank you goes out to all those who helped out with the Home Builder's Parade of Homes this spring. They were:

Doreen Belleville, Rose Nixon, Marley Vandercook, Rick and Coyla Kehl, Homer and Esther Boughner, Lori Bowen, Laura Klatt, Carol Miller, Carol Marcus, Donna Weaver, Stacy Proctor, Angela Vanderwater, Judy Liptak, Judy Jones, Marsha Wieringa, Roseann Watkins, Chad Geiger, Barb Tatarchuk and Joy Van Drie.

A big thank you also goes Board Member **Dennis Hammar** for taking on the role of interim Construction Supervisor while the Board is interviewing prospective candidates for the position.

If you prefer to receive an online version of this newsletter, email us at wexfordhabitat@netonecom.net
Write "newsletter" in the subject.

Meet Board Member Jack Fitzgerald

Jack Fitzgerald has been on the Wexford Habitat Board since 1992. At that time, Habitat had completed one house in the area, but the organization seemed to be crumbling and the Board had dwindled to just three members. Allen McCreedy, who was the pastor at the United Methodist Church in Cadillac, wanted to get things moving again, so he called on members of his congregation to get involved. Jack was one of those who listened to the call. He liked the fact that Habitat was a Christian-based organization, and because Jack's skills were in the area of construction, he had much to offer. Since that time, Jack has not only remained on the Board, but he has picked up hammer and nails to work on almost every Habitat house project. He jokes that it "keeps him off the streets," but his work certainly has been an important ministry to the community. Jack has watched the transformation of the Wexford Habitat operation over the years. He says that the biggest difference is in the finances. The budget and day-to-days workings are much more complex, and as more funding becomes available, more houses can be built.



When the World War II broke out, Jack joined the Infantry, fighting in Europe. After the War, Jack did two important things: he married a wonderful girl named Alice in 1949, and he completed his Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering at Michigan Tech in 1951. After "57 years and 8 months," Jack and Alice are still happily married partners, and the Engineering Degree led Jack toward 40 years in the construction industry. He worked for Consumer Power and the State of Michigan Highway Department; was an Engineer for Charlevoix County, Manistee County, and the City of Mt. Pleasant; and he also worked with the United States Army Corp of Engineers.

Jack speaks with pride when he talks about his family. He has four sons, 3 daughter-in-laws, and 5 grandchildren. One son is a minister in Grandville, one works as a sanitarian for the Central Michigan Health Department, one is a science teacher in Houghton Lake, and one is a nurse in Lansing, so all of them have remained Michiganders. Jack is also a valued and active member of the United Methodist Church "family." He continues to sing in the choir and helps out wherever he is needed. He is a man who always seems to have a smile on his face and a giving spirit in his heart.

Jack was born in St. Ignace and was the oldest of three brothers. His father worked in construction, but when the Great Depression hit, the family moved to the family farm in Big Rapids where young Jack continued his schooling.



Habitat Salutes Rose Nixon

Wexford Habitat values each of its volunteers, but it especially appreciates people like Rose Nixon who are willing to help out, no matter what the task. Rose started her relationship with Habitat for Humanity when she was still living in Flint. She had brought a group of young people at the St Francis Catholic Church in Otisville to the Habitat work site with hopes of getting them involved. The kids were too busy to help all that much, but Rose enjoyed the experience and found herself returning again and again to work on the building projects.

When she and her husband retired and moved to Cadillac in 2000, she took about a year off, and then decided to investigate the Habitat projects in this community. Soon she was helping out with the Parade of Homes, putting up siding, painting, and even doing some roof work. She enjoys meeting the home owners and thinks some of the moms enjoy working with other females on the projects. She notes that sometimes she has been the only woman on the crew. When asked if she plans to work on the next community project, she answered, "Possibly, if they need me." There's no doubt that Habitat will always need hardworking people like Rose Nixon.



Donation Form



Would you like to purchase a square foot of the upcoming house or purchase a particular item for the house? If so, fill out this form and send it in the envelope with your check to Wexford Habitat for Humanity, P. O Box 828, Cadillac, Michigan 49601.

I want to purchase _____ square foot/feet at \$75.00 each for a total of _____

- I would like to donate :
- \$10 for a box of nails
 - \$35 for shingles
 - \$50 for a toilet
 - \$75 for a window
 - \$100 for a door
 - \$150 for two kitchen and bathroom sink
 - \$500 for exterior siding
 - \$1000 for wall board
 - \$2000 for flooring

I would like to make a cash donation in the amount of _____

You may also donate in honor of someone else. A card will be sent in recognition of the gift for; (Please circle)

Graduation Birthday Housewarming Other _____

Retirement Wedding Memorial Holiday _____

Send card of acknowledgement to (name) _____
 (address) _____
 (city, state, zip code) _____

May we also acknowledge you in the newsletter? yes no

Wexford Habitat for Humanity

7953 E 34 Rd.

Cadillac, MI 49601



Wexford Habitat for Humanity was established in 1989 by community leaders of Wexford County who wanted to make a difference and eliminate poverty housing. They saw a need for simple, decent, and affordable housing. With the completion of the 3 homes this year, 17 families from Wexford County will be living in safe, decent housing.



WEXFORD HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

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Habitat for Humanity eliminates poverty one house at a time.