



THE DOORWAY

building homes, communities and hope

WINTER 2017

FOUNDED 1988

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Brent Bohanan

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When Butterflies Appear



December 2, 2017, we dedicated Gwinnett home #134 in Loganville to Jaime Paige and her four children. Her experience with this build and homeownership is one that will leave your heart full of joy and excitement for their future. After a period of many bad times, including homelessness, Jaime has been able to see the light at the end of the tunnel and propel herself and her family forward through her faith in God.

“My experience building our Habitat home began this summer, one early Saturday morning. My two daughters and I showed up ready for hard work and excited to start building the house, that would

soon become our new home. Right away I knew this was going to be a good experience. We met Cliff, Chuck, Brent and a slew of other people, who volunteered their early Saturday morning on our behalf.

We were lead in prayer before work began, and that confirmed for me that God’s hands were all in this project. My youngest daughter became even more excited to see the unusual amount of butterflies on the property, as she knew that butterflies had a special meaning for me. You see, a few days after my father passed away, I was leaving work and suddenly became overwhelmed and grieved with tears, over his passing. I was standing outside and suddenly a butterfly landed on my hand, as I reached out. I smiled and then realized that there were butterflies all around me. Seeing those butterflies on the property confirmed for both me and my daughter, who was very close to her grandpa, that this was a new beginning for us and that somehow God was letting us share it with my dad.

This is not just a Habitat House, this house is special and a gift from God.

Every Saturday, Cliff started our work day with prayer and Chuck kept everyone on pace, which was not an easy task for him to do, concerning my 16 year old daughter, who could not focus on anything else but those butterflies, who also showed up every Saturday.

This whole experience has been one that we will always cherish and means so much to us, in ways more than words can express. This is not just a Habitat House, this house is special and a gift from God. My father’s birthday is December 21st, which is also my closing date. I don’t believe in coincidences, and this is just in time for Christmas. What a gift it will be!

I cannot thank all those who volunteered their time and resources to be a part of this journey and a good Samaritan, to a neighbor that they did not know. We will forever be grateful.”

The outpouring of love and relationships was tremendous at the dedication. Multiple sponsors brought gifts, but more importantly, you could see the friendships and memories that were formed throughout this entire project. Jamie and her family will be able to celebrate Christmas in their new home, giving them stability and shelter, some of the biggest gifts of all. 🏠



Greetings From Your Lawrenceville ReStore

'Tis the season of giving! It's that time for Christmas decorations to make their way out of storage and furniture to be moved, making way for traditions - both new and old. As you go through boxes and re-evaluate furniture, think about donating to Gwinnett ReStore.

Gwinnett ReStore offers items and bargains for your projects or renovations, never knowing what treasures or unique items you will find with each visit.

Do you need to find a new home for gently used items? The ReStore is an easy option. To donate, please give us a call on our "Donation Hotline" at 770-962-4200, or schedule your free pickup online at suburbanatlantarestores.org/donate.

We want you to know how grateful we are for your continued support. As a donor, shopper or volunteer, you are helping Habitat build homes and hope for families right here in Gwinnett County and around the world. We could not be successful in our mission without your continued support.

Thank you,

Paul Ingbritsen {ReStore Manager}
+ The staff & volunteers at Gwinnett ReStore

Meet Marc-Antoine

(Main story reprinted from Habitat Haiti 2017 Impact Report)

We just had to share Marc's story from Haiti. Gwinnett Habitat has tithed 10% of our undesignated donations to Haiti since 2014. Through your support Marc-Antoine and 1573 other students in 14 schools have benefited from the WASH program just this year. Every donation makes a difference!



"Habitat has been implementing a WASH (Water Sanitation & Hygiene) program in Simon Pele, a community where we have been working since 2011. We started with a community wide WASH assessment to help us understand how to better serve this community's water & sanitation needs. Part of our strategy for long term change includes raising awareness with schools in the community to help children learn good hygiene practices early on and to help carry the message home to their families. Our community mobilisers use games and songs to help sensitize young minds. We first met Marc-Antoine during a donor visit, we ran into him on his way home from school and he stopped to sing a WASH song for us. Marc-Antoine is 14 years-old and he lives in Simon Pele with his extended family in a small two-bedroom home. He has lived in this community most of his life and loves to play soccer and basketball with his little brother Mitelson and their friends. We went back to visit with Marc-Antoine and asked him to tell us about his experience learning with our WASH team.

{ I really liked the games and songs we learned around WASH, who knew washing your hands was such a big deal? I mean we knew but the song really brought it home. }

"I really liked the games and songs we learned around WASH, who knew washing your hands was such a big deal? I mean we knew but the song really brought it home. At home we don't have a latrine of our own. We use one that's close by which means that we share with many people in the neighborhood. Now, every time I use the restroom, I wash my hands and I tell my little brother to do the same. With so many different people using the latrine, I know it's important to help keep my hands clean so that I won't get sick from the germs. When I got home, I also told my mom about making sure we were drinking clean water. At school they taught us about different ways to treat water, to make sure it stays clean. My mom laughed at me because I was talking really fast but then she said she was proud of me, for remembering every single detail. I think it's great that someone in a whole other country is helping to make this program possible for me and my classmates. It helps me feel like God is really watching out for me and my friends and my family. God bless our friends abroad, may He keep them healthy and strong so that they can keep on helping my community." —Marc-Antoine

This year our awareness campaign has reached 1574 students throughout 14 schools and several community meetings and we're just getting started! Thank you for all that you do in helping us make this possible." 🏠

Kindness is a Simple Thing (I Feel So Blessed)



In conducting projects for Gwinnett Habitat's home repair program, A Brush With Kindness, many of the projects are simple activities, such as painting a room or clearing debris from the house or yard. It is remarkable the impact a coat of paint can have for brightening and refreshing a room. But while the new paint can change the atmosphere, it also can change an attitude. New paint and new outlook on life. It is common for the clients to talk about how such a simple thing makes such a difference in their outlook on life. The homeowners typically provide a heartfelt appreciation of thanks for the work done by volunteers.

Simple things... painting, trimming bushes, raking the yard. While not everyone can install a ceiling fan or is willing to repair a leaky faucet, many of the home repair activities are the same tasks we perform around our houses on weekends. In talking about the work done by the volunteers, one of the homeowners described the work being performed as an act of kindness. She went on to say that "kindness is a simple thing."

In working with homeowners and volunteers, there are times when a comment has such an impact that it lingers in your mind and this was one such comment. To acknowledge her quote, the shirts provided to volunteers who help with A Brush With Kindness have that statement printed on the back.

But her comment also had an impact on the team leader for the volunteers working that day. Mark had been doing home repairs as a volunteer for nearly 20 years and had participated in dozens and dozens of projects, but somehow this one was different. Upon hearing her comment of how kindness was a simple thing, he provided his own comment about helping others by saying, "I feel so blessed." Please contact Gwinnett Habitat if you want to feel blessed by performing a simple act of kindness. 🏠

Help Us Find Adequate Land and Properties!

As Gwinnett County continues to grow, acquiring land for Gwinnett Habitat's home projects is becoming more challenging. If you are aware of raw land for sale, or houses for sale that are in need of repair, renovation or demolition, we would love to hear from you!

We are looking for RAW LAND that:

- Is a buildable lot for a 1,200-1,500 square foot house
- Cost under \$25,000 (20% appraised home value)
- Could be donated (donor will receive a letter of donation for tax purposes)

We are looking for HOUSES to rehab or demo that:

- Cost under \$60,000
- Are salvaged due to storm damage/fire, foreclosed or are HUD properties
- Could be donated (donor will receive a letter of donation for tax purposes)

If you know or are aware of such properties or would like to speak to us about the sale or donation of your property, please contact our Executive Director, Brent Bohanan, at (770) 826-4638 or bbohanan@habitatgwinnett.org.

Thank you for your support and for helping us to create affordable housing in Gwinnett County.



Continued from "Executive Director's Corner"

2018 promises to be another successful year with the construction of five new homes in Lilburn off Burns Road and our 30th Anniversary Celebration Event in April. Be on the lookout for more information coming soon. Thanks again for your continued support of our mission. Everyone at Gwinnett Habitat wishes you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. God bless. 🏠

Brent S. Bohanan - Executive Director

Building a Habitat Home Requires a lot of Equipment

Did you know that in order to build a Habitat home we have to haul a large tool trailer, a utility trailer, supplies, tools and construction materials throughout the county depending on where we have found a piece of property on which to build?

We need your help TODAY to fund a heavy duty truck for our home construction program. Your donation will ensure that the proper equipment, supplies and materials are available when needed to complete our homes. Please give generously to this need so we can help our partner families have a safe and secure place to call home. Please use the enclosed envelope or go to our website to make an on line donation: www.habitatgwinnett.org or <https://give.habitatgwinnett.org/GwinnettHabitatforHumanity/truck>

Every donation helps a family build a safe and affordable home. DONATE TODAY. 🏠





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Donate, Volunteer, Advocate

Become a HopeBuilder and help us meet the needs in Gwinnett County.

- Make a donation to Gwinnett Habitat
- Volunteer on one of our build sites
- Be an advocate: Share the Habitat story with others and help raise awareness

For more information, visit www.habitatgwinnett.org or call 770-931-8080.



Gwinnett
Habitat
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Contact Us:

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Executive Director's Corner

This time of year is when we like to reflect on our year's work and give thanks for all we have achieved due to your support. In fiscal year 2017, we served 36 families, which is the most families ever served by our affiliate in one year! Four families were welcomed into new homes and 32 households were served with home repair projects through our home preservation program, A Brush with Kindness. Many of these citizens are elderly or disabled and our program is crucial to their ability to

age-in-place with dignity. We also recently completed and dedicated our very first veteran's home in Sugar Hill (FY2018 project). A Veterans Build has been a long-time goal and we are so excited to finally achieve it and serve a very deserving veteran family.

Our impact is not possible without two vital things. First, your financial support which represents 62% of our income and for which 87% is spent directly on program costs and serving families. We greatly appreciate your financial support and will be accepting your tax-deductible gifts for 2017 through December 31st. Secondly, volunteers are key to our success. In FY2017, over 1,600 volunteers provided over 10,000 service hours. Your volunteered time and skills saved us over \$100,000 in labor costs. In addition, you worked alongside our partner families and got to know them as they put in their sweat equity and worked hard to achieve self-reliance. We like to say that "Every Hand Makes a Difference!" Thank you for what your hands have done this past year to help us build strength, stability and self-reliance through shelter.

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Brent S. Bohanan - Executive Director