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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.



Contact Us:
P.O. Box 870408
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Office: 770-931-8080
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Web: www.HabitatGwinnett.org

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Executive Director's Corner

March signifies the start of a very special time for Gwinnett Habitat. Can you guess what it is? The start of our 30th year serving families in Gwinnett County with affordable housing solutions. That's right! After years of prayer and research, a group of concerned citizens led by Jan Kennedy, formed a steering committee in early 1988. We received our certificate of incorporation on March 17, 1988 and the very first board meeting was held the following week. In September, the Gwinnett affiliate was accepted as an official affiliate by Habitat for Humanity International. Our first home repair project followed in November and our first new home was completed in August of 1989. In those early years we were completely led by a group of compassionate volunteers. We have come a long way from those early years, but are still so grateful for the vision and dedication of those early leaders. Without them, we would not be able to celebrate the 132 families that have experienced the joy of homeownership and the 47 families that have been able to stay in their homes due to the support of our home preservation and repair program.

We have had a lot to celebrate over the last 30 years and 2018 will be a great year of celebration. We have an Anniversary Celebration Committee that is already hard at work. More information will be shared in the coming months regarding the different ways we will acknowledge and celebrate our 30th anniversary. You will not want to miss a single event. Thank you for the part you have played in the amazing journey of our affiliate. You are a part of an incredible family in Gwinnett County that is building strength, stability and self-reliance for families through shelter. Thanks again for your support. God bless.

Brent S. Bohanan - Executive Director



SPRING 2017

FOUNDED 1988

Executive Director
Brent Bohanan

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THE DOORWAY

building homes, communities and hope

A Brush With Kindness: A story about a volunteer



It was cold and windy that morning and I decided to put on my winter jacket. I knew that I was going to spend some time outside walking around the client's house and pointing out the needed repairs, so I wanted to be warm. When I got to the client's house and pulled in the driveway, I wondered how many times we would need to send volunteer team out to the house to make it reasonably presentable. After all, the referral had been initiated by law enforcement because of the condition of her house. As I waited for the team leader, I saw the 3-4 window panes in

the front that still needed to be replaced and I was certain the client was thankful a volunteer had already replaced 3-4 panes of glass. I wondered how cold it was inside due to the broken window panes.

When the team leader was more than a few minutes late, I gave him a call. He responded immediately and sounded frustrated. His GPS had led him to the correct location, but he could find houses numbers above and below the client's address. When I said the house was on the corner, his response was very telling. He said, "I thought the house on the corner was abandoned." That comment had entered my mind on my first visit to the client as well.

When the volunteer arrived a few minutes later, he was dressed for his professional job and was wearing only his suit coat. We hustled over to ring the doorbell so he could get warm, but I warned him to be careful about the broken hand rail. I also pointed out the condition of the door and door frame. I was hoping to prepare him for meeting the client and to manage his expectations for what to expect. I had told him of the client's physical problems and had cautioned him that she did not move quickly or easily. I did not want him to be discouraged if she did not feel well and she was struggling to move about.

When she opened the door, she appeared to be feeling well and cordially invited us inside. As we sat down to talk, it was hard for the volunteer not to notice the condition of the walls and ceilings in need of minor repair and a coat of paint. As we started to talk, she quickly apologized about the cold and said that her heat pump had been stolen. Someone just pulled their truck into her backyard, disconnected the wires and piping, and simply lifted the unit off the ground and drove off. She did not know what she was going to do.

As we were talking, we could see our breath as we sat in the living room. The volunteer started rubbing his hands in the cold and occasionally he would look up to see the curtains blow behind the broken window when the wind would blow. Within a few minutes, he started to shiver. To help him warm up (and the get him back in his car), I encouraged a walk around the house and then we could talk about future activities.

Within a few minutes we had finished our inspection of the house and had discussed what activities his team could accomplish. We said our "good-byes" to the client and sat in my car to discuss future plans. As the heat was running warming the car, he asked, "How can anyone live like that?"

Greetings From Your Lawrenceville ReStore

Happy spring to you all! The flowers are starting to bloom and before long the grass and trees will be turning green again.

It's the "Spring Cleaning" time of year. As you're cleaning out your closets, garages and other storage areas in your homes, offices or warehouses please remember your ReStore loves to receive your generous donations of gently used furniture, appliances, home décor and building supplies.

Your donations help support our Habitat work in Gwinnett County and around the world. As you are getting rid of items to make space for your next DIY projects or purchasing new furniture, appliances or home décor we are just a phone call away. Our donation hotline number is 770-962-4200 or you can schedule your FREE pick up online at suburbanatlantarestores.org/donate.

Your kindness and generosity will help the families we partner with build strength, stability and self-reliance.

We pray Our Lord will bless you for your amazing support!

Paul Ingbritsen
ReStore Manager

Lynn Weekley retires after 22 years



“What has made my work with Gwinnett Habitat so great, are all the wonderful people I have met...”

After spending 22 years as a member of the Gwinnett Habitat family, it is bitter-sweet to watch her go. Lynn Weekley has been a dedicated member from the beginning, when she was only one of two people in a shared office and working as a volunteer.

“What has made my work with Gwinnett Habitat so great, are all the wonderful people I have met and worked with over the years and their commitment to helping other people by donating their time and talents and doing it with such joy,” said Weekley. “You don't get that wonderful feeling from most jobs so it's really a blessing when you have that opportunity to do something you love with so many great people and get paid for it on top of that.”

When asked about her favorite memory, the choice became hard because there have been so many. One of Lynn's most memorable experience was working on the first Women's Build in 2000. She said it was so empowering and uplifting. The homeowner

Lynn has been a special and integral part of our team and to so many. She has forged relationships with sponsors, homeowners, vendors and staff. And she will be missed by all. We are so excited for her next adventure.

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I reminded him that the Baby Boomer generation was aging and so many of them had bought nice houses, just as she had 40 years ago. Over time, many people start to live on fixed incomes and it becomes difficult to maintain their house. I also told him that soon there would be more Baby Boomers just like her in Gwinnett than young children and she was just one of many on our list of potential clients. All he did was to shake his head.

He then made the promise that his volunteer group would address the repair tasks we had discussed and he personally would find someone to replace her heat pump. He said his group might not be able to help everyone, but this was someone they could. He also said that he would spread the word about the need in Gwinnett and about what A Brush With Kindness was trying to accomplish.

As is true with most volunteers, all it takes is one client and one visit and then the need for A Brush With Kindness becomes so evident, but this is the story of one volunteer.

Sponsors work together to invest in the future of our community



BrandMortgage wanted to do more in the community. They knew the future lies in our youth, with both academics and compassion. BrandMortgage and Meadowcreek High School (Norcross, GA) partnered to create an educational program aimed to teach life experiences. Not only do they learn how to work and the ins and outs of banking, but they are also being taught to give back to the community that helps them.

Together they teamed up with Credit Plus, McMichael & Gray, Warrick Dunn Charities, and Aarons to help sponsor, build and furnish Gwinnett Habitat for Humanity's most recent home. This home was our 132nd home, which now belongs to Lula Jobir, a very deserving, hard-working, single mom. These businesses and students learned how to pay-it-forward through community and teamwork.

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.

New Cargo Van to Ramp Up A Brush with Kindness Program



Gwinnett Habitat for Humanity will soon have a new "face" around town! Beginning in March a new high-roof cargo van will be available to support A Brush with Kindness, a home preservation and critical home repair program for low income elderly and disabled homeowners.

When the A Brush with Kindness Program started a little over two years ago it was quickly apparent that a van was needed to store and transport all the tools, equipment, materials and supplies necessary to complete these preservation and repair projects.

Enter Primerica Foundation, Walton Electric Trust, Ramlose Foundation, Assurant Foundation, 12 Stone Church, Gwinnett Place Nissan and one of our valuable donors. Together, they made it possible to purchase this vehicle!

Many thanks also to Jackson EMC Foundation, First United Methodist Church of Lawrenceville, Westfield Insurance Foundation, Christ the King Lutheran, Peachtree Ridge H.S. Habitat for Humanity Club, Thrivent and 6 individual donors who graciously provided funds for supplies and materials to complete 73 projects so far.

To request an application for A Brush with Kindness project please contact Reesa McLean at 770-931-8080 ext. 1014.