

Summer 2022

Gwinnett / Walton
Habitat for Humanity®

the doorway

NEWSLETTER

*Building homes,
communities and hope.*



Monroe Home Construction and Sign-a-Stud Event

Annie Fortenberry, homeowner for W10 in Monroe ready to work!

Over 60 years ago, singer Nat King Cole released the song ***A House with Love in It*** just in time for the Christmas season. In this classic tune, the jazz singer reminds us that “a house with love in it just seems to bloom.”

In July, we began construction on the tenth Habitat home in Walton County for Annie Fortenberry. In the early stages of the construction process, before sheetrock was hung on the walls, Annie, her loved ones, and members of the community gathered at the build site to write words of hope, encouragement, and inspiration on the exposed framework of House #W10.

This stud signing day was the perfect opportunity for people of all ages to join us on the worksite to experience the Habitat Home Build process firsthand.

Participants of this event enjoyed breakfast, catered locally by **The Bistro South**, as they made their way around the build site. Some chose to write passages of scripture, and Annie and her family members used this opportunity to honor relatives who have passed away. For safety reasons, all new home construction volunteers must be at least 16 years old, but this stud signing day was the perfect opportunity for people of all ages to join us on the worksite to experience the Habitat Home Build process firsthand. Even after the framework of House #W10 is covered with drywall and paint, the words written on these studs will fill every room of House #W10 with love for years to come, proving once again that “a house with love in it is rich indeed.”



Walton County community members, neighbors and family celebrate at the stud signing awareness event by writing encouraging messages for Annie and her mother, Fannie.

—Perry McWilliams, Volunteer Coordinator

An Interview with Trent Cloer



Trent Cloer, former Gwinnett/Walton Habitat for Humanity Board Member and Treasurer

Trent Cloer grew up in Gwinnett and went on to earn a degree in Math from UGA. After college, he served as an officer in the United States Air Force, stationed at Shaw Air Force

Base in Sumter, SC. His first Habitat build was in Columbia, South Carolina, during graduate school at USC for his Masters of Accountancy, with his wife Mary Katherine.

Involvement with our affiliate fell into place when Trent enrolled in Leadership Gwinnett and happened to room with Brent Bohanan. In graduate school, he focused on Business Measurement and Assurance and with that expertise, he was a perfect fit for the Board. He is a “numbers guy” but is most energized by the impact the Habitat organization has on families, “It’s in the numbers. If housing is unstable or uncertain, children are not able to focus on school. Families that have stable housing, have children that excel in school and go on to be successful. Some have children

that are the first in their families to attend college.” Trent loved being part of this team, building over thirty homes, ABWK projects and adding Walton County service area. He has seen the life-changing impact on families. “There is still a great need for donors, volunteers, and sponsors, especially with the increase of housing costs, construction costs, and land. Rent is at a shockingly high rate and housing is expensive.” Trent knows Habitat gives you a great return on your investment. With the plans to double production over the next few years, he plans to continue to support and volunteer with us. Join us in thanking Trent for his 6+ years of service as the Chair of the Finance Committee and Treasurer of the Board!

—Jan Mayheu, *Director of Philanthropy*

Community Impact Day and Housing Expo 2022: A Success

This year’s Community Impact Day and Housing Expo went off without a hitch on Saturday, July 23. The event brought together members of the Monroe community, 24 sponsors, over 25 volunteers, as well as four speakers from the business community. We had face painters, animal balloon makers, and free food donated by Truck3:16-Dacula United Methodist Church.

It was the 4th year of the event—and the first year Gwinnett/Walton Habitat was a host, along with the City of Monroe.



Rachel Slade, Jen Welch, Erin Colie

Walton residents learned about buying a home, financial education, and down payment programs. Health and wellness vendors provided educational materials and free screenings for high blood pressure, diabetes, and Covid 19.

Special thanks to the Boys and Girls Club of Walton County for allowing us to use their facility, and the Community Impact



Monroe Mayor John Howard escorts attendees

Day Planning Committee – without their commitment, this event would not be possible.

Everything points to a successful event, and we plan to continue Community Impact Day in the future.

—Rhonda Streat, *Director of Homeowner Services*

Meet Our New Team Member



Patrick Baez was born in Austin, Texas and has served in international and domestic missions for the last 18 years. He has been the Missions Director at Graffiti Church in NYC since 2014 and the Minister of Families and Students at Bridgepoint Church in Decatur, GA since 2019. Along with his wife, Kelsie and their 3 children, they live in Gwinnett County. Patrick is passionate about serving and helping develop others to be servants and leaders. He is especially excited to help residents of Gwinnett county with their plumbing repairs and improvements!

Patrick Baez
WRAP Program Specialist

In the News: WRAP Program

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution released a terrific feature on our Water Resources Assistance Program (WRAP). **Scan the QR code** or visit bit.ly/wrap27 to read the story!



Behind the Donation Scene, Lillian Hawkins Does Her Magic

Every item for sale in our ReStore comes from private and corporate donations. It is rewarding that the people and businesses in our community depend on us to solve their needs, while supporting our mission. Did you know over half of our donations come from corporate partners? From cabinets, lighting, and flooring to home décor and linens, these products are a vital part of our business. It takes exceptional effort to get products to our stores, and to maintain the strong partnerships and relationships that sustain us. That is where Lillian Hawkins comes in. Lillian

works behind the scenes to ensure we get the products we need, while solving donor needs.

For years, Lillian has supported us with a professional ethic that represents our core values and furthers our mission. One of the challenges of her job involves excess donations. Lillian works with many private donors asking the ReStore to pick up donations. The trouble is, sometimes potential donors want to donate items we don't need. Lillian is an expert in managing relationships and revealing the best path in tough

Giving & Volunteer Spotlight

Viasat™

Viasat

Thank you to **Viasat** for their most recent sponsorship of **House #W11 Home Build**

Total Sponsorship Amount: 3 build days

Location: 334 Turner Street, Monroe, GA 30655



Andrea Sullivan, ReStore warehouse associate



Lillian Hawkins, Donations Coordinator, ReStore

situations. Lillian has supported multiple stores under Habitat International in Atlanta and is now part of our Gwinnett/Walton team, dedicated to our store's growth and mission. In the months ahead, you will have an opportunity to meet her and hear her great story.

—Bob Cox, Director of Retail Operations



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Lawrenceville, GA 30046

Email Us: sponsorship@habitatgwinnett.org
Call our Director of Philanthropy: 770-931-8080 x1025

gwinnettwaltonhabitat.org
gwinnettwaltonrestore.org

Make a Donation

Visit habitatgwinnett.org/giving
to learn about how you can partner with us.



Gwinnett / Walton Habitat for Humanity is an
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Executive Director's Corner

We are hard at work on the new Build Better capital campaign that will officially launch in January 2023. **The goal of our Build Better Campaign is to build twenty-four homes by the end of 2025.** That will include seventeen homes in Gwinnett County and seven homes in Walton County. Your donation to the campaign will help Build Better futures for twenty-four families in our community.

Meeting this new goal will require doubling our construction output to eight homes per year. We will finally achieve this dream with the funding from this campaign and the land we recently secured. We have land under contract for thirty-two lots that should close by late September. One land tract will support fourteen new homes in Lilburn. **We have never had an inventory of buildable lots like this in our 34-year history.** These are exciting times!

With great excitement comes a great need for additional hands to swing hammers and wield paint brushes. More homes mean more

volunteers and build sponsors are needed. **We need the support of our community now more than ever. Please contact our office if you or your group would like to help us Build Better.**

As we move forward to serve more families in the months and years ahead, I would like to thank all the past donors and volunteers responsible for getting us to this point. We would not be where we are today without your support and dedication to our mission. With your help, we are building strength, stability, and self-reliance through shelter for families in Gwinnett and Walton counties!



Thanks for making a difference.
God bless.

Brent S. Johnson
Executive Director

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