

Winter 2025

# the doorway

NEWSLETTER

*Building homes,  
communities, and hope.*



## Building Hope through Partnership Revitalizing A Home with A Brush with Kindness

**D**eborah, a long-time Gwinnett County resident, found her home becoming a source of stress. Living on a fixed income, Deborah had no means to address some issues at her house. She started as a WRAP client with a water line leak in the front yard, which was causing her front deck and steps to sink. It was a safety issue for her getting in and out of her home. That's when **Home Repair Ministries** and **Gwinnett/Walton Habitat for Humanity** joined forces to help through Habitat's **A Brush with Kindness** program to repair the ever-evolving issues that continued to surface for Ms. Deborah.

Both organizations had long worked toward improving lives through safe and affordable housing, but Deborah's home presented the perfect opportunity for collaboration. *A Brush with Kindness* focuses on revitalizing homes through essential repairs, restoring dignity, and allowing homeowners to live in their homes longer.

Home Repair Ministries contributed specialized carpentry skills, tools and volunteers while Gwinnett/Walton Habitat for Humanity mobilized team members and *A Brush with Kindness* sponsorship funds. Along with stabilizing and repairing the front steps, deck, and front door, the combined teams replaced the rotting chimney siding, repaired all four sides of the home where birds had created holes, repaired and cleaned gutters, and trimmed tree limbs to prevent future roof damage.

**Heather Loveridge**, Executive Director of Home Repair Ministries, emphasized the importance of collaboration:

*"Partnerships like the one between Home Repair Ministries and Gwinnett/Walton Habitat for Humanity are at the heart of what makes community work so impactful."*

*"By combining resources and expertise, we addressed Deborah's challenges and ensured she could keep her home insurance."*

This project highlights the vital role of partnerships in advancing shared missions. **Patrick Baez**, Habitat Repair Programs Manager conveys, "Partnerships and collaboration is a key component of our work. Volunteers and sponsors who show up, and continue to show up to learn, serve, and contribute time and finances for our clients and for our mission are invaluable."

Loveridge added, "Collaborating not only resolved her home's repair needs but also strengthened our shared mission to serve vulnerable homeowners."



### Join the Thursday Crew!

Scan the QR code to sign up and be part of our **skilled volunteers** who serve on Thursdays from 8:30 AM–2:30 PM.



### Support A Brush With Kindness

**Over 180 Families Served This Year!** Help us serve more families—scan the QR code to donate today!

Inspired by their success with Deborah's home, Home Repair Ministries and Gwinnett/Walton Habitat have committed to exploring further collaboration opportunities. Together, they aim to tackle more challenging projects, reach more homeowners, and continue building stronger, healthier communities.

*—Jan Ruth Mayheu, Director of Philanthropy*

# WRAP Celebrates 400th Repair Milestone

In 2024, the Water Resources Assistance Program (WRAP), a partnership between the Gwinnett County Water Department and Gwinnett/Walton Habitat for Humanity, reached an incredible milestone of completing 400 critical water repairs. WRAP addresses urgent plumbing issues for low-income homeowners, improving health and safety while reducing water waste in the community.

"Partnering with nonprofits like Habitat for Humanity is incredibly rewarding," said Kevin Barrett, owner of Right Price Plumbing and Septic. "We take pride in knowing that our work directly impacts families and helps them feel safe and comfortable in their homes. Supporting Habitat's mission and serving their clients aligns with our values of giving back to the community and making a meaningful difference where it's needed most."

Patrick Baez, Repair Programs Manager, shared his excitement about the achievement: "Reaching 400 repairs is a testament to the power of collaboration. Together with Gwinnett County Water Department, we've not only improved lives

but also helped preserve vital resources for our community."



Homeowner Patricia and Patrick Baez celebrate WRAP's 400th repair.

This milestone highlights the program's continued impact and commitment to enhancing the lives of residents across Gwinnett County. WRAP celebrated its highest completions in a quarter with 66 completions in Q2 of FY25.

-Patrick Baez, Repair Programs Manager

# Homeowner Update: Nyshawn

To Our Habitat Family,

I hope this season continues to spread the joy your organization does every day. Unfortunately, I have not been able to volunteer like in past years. I've been pretty busy with a career change, and I am proud to announce I graduated with my Master's degree in Teaching-Special Education.

- Ky is attending Georgia State majoring in Computer Science - Graphic Arts.
- Laila is attending Kennesaw State majoring in Criminal Justice - Forensic Science.
- Ellis finished his football season as a junior. His senior year of high school will be here in the blink of an eye.

I see the amazing expansion Habitat has been making. I wish you continued success as our community needs you thriving.

-Nyshawn



# New Team Members



Jeremy Dupont  
Repair Technician

Jeremy Dupont started his first day with an onboarding orientation. He brings over 10 years of experience in plumbing, electrical, and carpentry for both commercial and residential projects. Raised in Lawrenceville, Jeremy graduated from Central Gwinnett High School, just down the street from our office. He was heavily involved in athletics and is eager to serve our families with much-needed repairs.



Paul Honeycutt  
Construction Manager

Paul Honeycutt steps into the role of Construction Manager, bringing over a decade of expertise in construction and home maintenance. Paul is a devoted husband and father who channels his love of speed into time spent racing cars on the track. He also enjoys spending time outdoors, particularly hunting. We are thrilled to have Paul on board!

# Thursday Crew Spotlight



## Meet: Bob Manka

"As they say at Chick-fil-A, 'my pleasure.' I first got involved with Atlanta Habitat in spring of 1997, when my daughter became a house leader for Atlanta Habitat. I tried to work at least one Saturday on each of her houses. I got to meet WSB Radio personality Clark Howard—he's personally sponsored more than 100 houses, starting around the time of the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta."

Bob emphasizes that you don't need to be an expert in construction to volunteer:

"I talk to a lot of people who think you have to be an expert at a construction trade in order to be a volunteer. That's not true. If you're willing to learn, one of the more experienced people on the job site can walk you through what needs to be done."



He can be found on the job site most Thursdays, exemplifying the heart and soul of Habitat volunteers.

# Tribute to Walter Henderson Thompson, Executive Director for Gwinnett Habitat for Humanity, 1997-1999

Walter Henderson "Walt" Thompson, 82, of Newnan, passed away on December 26, 2024.

After a distinguished career with the FDIC, he rose to Regional Director, with a territory covering eight states. Walter Thompson's friend, Mr. Jimmy Taylor, of Newnan, he reminisced about his friend, "we met playing football at Grady High School in Atlanta. We were best friends from 1955 until the day after Christmas this year." The two friends stood in

each other's weddings and have shared many good times, including serving at Habitat. In California, Walt volunteered with a local Habitat. When he returned to Georgia, he dedicated his retirement to serving others. Gwinnett/Walton Habitat for Humanity needed an Executive Director, so he took the role.

His expertise in banking and deep belief in the power of affordable housing became a driving force for the organization. Under his leadership, the affiliate grew from

building just one home a year to five, transforming countless lives. His vision laid the foundation for the first homes in Lake Carlton, a testament to his belief that every family deserves a safe place to call home.

He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Marjorie; his son, Dale (Susan) Thompson; and grandchildren, Devin and Joseph Thompson. Mr. Thompson is a graduate of Auburn University in Alabama and of the Florida School of Banking at the University of Florida.



# THE PLAYSET PROS ASSEMBLE

IN AN INSPIRING VOLUNTEER EFFORT, STUDENTS FROM LOGANVILLE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY TEAMED UP TO ASSEMBLE A PLAYSET FOR THE FRAZIER FAMILY'S HOME (HOUSE #163). THE DAY-LONG PROJECT BROUGHT TOGETHER STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND HABITAT STAFF TO CREATE A SAFE AND JOYFUL SPACE FOR THE CHILDREN.

COACH ANDRE' O. KING FROM LOGANVILLE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY EXPRESSED HIS GRATITUDE, STATING: "OUR PEOPLE ARE STILL TALKING ABOUT THE FRAZIER VOLUNTEER EVENT. THEY WANT TO DO IT AGAIN! THE JOY AND HAPPINESS OF A CHILD ARE PRICELESS."





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Email Us: [sponsorship@habitatgwinnett.org](mailto:sponsorship@habitatgwinnett.org)  
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[gwinnettwaltonhabitat.org](http://gwinnettwaltonhabitat.org)  
[gwinnettwaltonrestore.org](http://gwinnettwaltonrestore.org)

## Make a Donation

Visit [habitatgwinnett.org/giving](http://habitatgwinnett.org/giving)  
 to learn about how you can partner with us.



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 HERE**

*Gwinnett/Walton Habitat for Humanity is an  
 affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International.*

## Executive Director's Corner

As we look ahead to our strategic plan for FY25-29, we are reminded that the heart of Habitat for Humanity's mission is the power of partnership that happens when we are able to bring people together. None of our progress, and none of the meaningful work we are committed to, would be possible without the incredible support of our partners. Whether it's the dedication of volunteers, the generosity of donors, or the collaboration with local organizations, these relationships form the solid foundation upon which we build not just houses, but also communities.

In the coming years, we are excited to deepen and expand these partnerships as we work together to create safe, stable, and affordable homes for families in Gwinnett and Walton counties.

**Our goal to build 60 homes and serve 650 households with home repairs is more than just numbers; it's about giving**

**families the opportunity to thrive and creating lasting change in our community.** With each new home, and every family we serve, when we come together, we make a profound impact.

Thank you for being a vital part of this journey. Together, we're not just building houses—we're building hope and opportunity for future generations.

### Jen Welch

*Interim Executive Director  
 Gwinnett/Walton Habitat for Humanity*



*Jen Welch*

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