



BENNINGTON COUNTY HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Fall 2019 Newsletter

Inside this issue:

Letter from our Board President 2

David Nichols Remembered 3

ReSale Store 4

Construction Update 5

Share Your Blessings, Nov. 3rd! 6

Note from the Executive Director 6

Newest Homebuyer Families 7

Win Hoyt Golf Tournament 8



SOMETIMES A PERSON JUST NEEDS A RAMP

William Vetter needed a ramp so he could stay safely in his home.

The Vermont Center for Independent Living told Bennington County Habitat of Mr. Vetter's need.

As it happened, we had a ramp handy to install.

The ramp had been donated by the Wechsler Family in late 2018, and was just waiting for a place to call home.

In mid-July, Habitat staff and volunteers installed the ramp at Mr. Vetter's home in Bennington.

Your support helped Mr. Vetter get the ramp he needed. Thank you!

Letter From Our President

Dear Habitat Friends,

Summer has sped by as always and cooler air is signaling the arrival of fall. Another marker of autumn is the arrival in the mail of our semi-annual newsletter. As you will see as you read through this issue, we have had a very busy year.

Last year at this time we shared with you the exciting news that Lyman Orton and Janice Izzi had very generously offered us a 3 year matching grant in the amount of \$300,000. The grant came with several conditions. In order to receive the first \$100,000, Habitat had to build 3 houses, raise \$100,000, hold 3 donor events and complete 10 home repair projects. We worked hard all year to meet these

conditions and I'm happy and proud to tell you that we did!

We are indebted to our many supporters without whom we never could have reached our goals. Thank you to all who attended our very successful *Share Your Blessings* fundraiser at the Publyk House last November. We hope you will consider joining us again on November 3rd for another evening of fine food, fun and great auction items. Thank you, too, to any of you who showed up to help at one of our job sites. Whether you came once or every week, we want you to know how grateful we are for the time you spent helping to build or repair a home. Our committee members and store volunteers are vital to the success of this affiliate

and our hearts are full of appreciation for the time, talent and dedication you bring to the work you do. And to our wonderful staff, Susan Sommer, Executive Director, Anne Pearce, Office Manager, Sue Wilborn, Bookkeeper, Sue Congdon, Habitat ReSale Store Manager, and Tony D'Onofrio, Construction Manager, we count our lucky stars every single day that you have chosen to work with Bennington County Habitat. Thank you for all you bring to us and all you do. We are truly blessed!

And now please read on and share our excitement, pride as well as some sadness with the events of the past few months.

Best wishes to all,

Ellen Leeds, President



RESALE STORE

Donate, Shop, Volunteer!

**Open Thursdays and Fridays from 11-4
Saturdays from 10-4
Sue Congdon, Store Manager
802-362-0964
shiresresale@hotmail.com**



David Nichols Remembered



David Nichols loved the mission of Habitat with his whole heart.

One afternoon in 2011, a tall, husky man with a shock of white hair wearing a polo shirt and suspenders, stopped by the offices of Bennington County Habitat for Humanity in Manchester. He was greeted by then director Dick Malley, who was meeting with the board chair, Monica Knorr. “Hi,” he said. “I am David Nichols. I recently retired and moved here. I am looking for ways to engage with the community.”

David told us he had a family foundation and that he was in charge of decision making about grantees. David said he and his wife, Christina, had agreed they would each support two local nongovernmental organizations. David was diligent in selecting his two. Bennington Habitat was not chosen until he had gone to our build sites, visited with some of our families, and met members of the board.

Thereafter, David established a matching fund which, over the years, helped build homes for several deserving families.

He made generous annual donations to our Jennifer Lane program, and one of the community’s new streets is named Peggy’s Way in honor of his stepmother. More recently, David’s gifts have supported Habitat’s work in Bennington.

When David decided to adopt BCHfH, his support was more than financial. He joined the board and became an important voice on policy matters. He also served on the Resource Development Committee. He and Christina introduced their friends to Habitat and hosted events for prospective donors. He taught us how successful fundraising is done.

In late 2018, BCHfH needed an interim chair of the board. David offered to serve in that capacity for two years. Sadly, he soon became seriously ill and died on June 8th, 2019.

David is remembered fondly and with gratitude for all he did for this organization. He loved the mission of Habitat with his whole heart, and he will be greatly missed.

Monica Knorr and Ellen Leeds

RESALE STORE KEEPS MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

Now in its sixth year of operation, and under the watchful eye of store manager, Sue Congdon, and her band of merry volunteers, the BCHfH ReSale Store on Memorial Avenue in Manchester continues to thrive.

Many are the people who benefit from the store's existence. Young people setting up homes in the area find an array of furnishings at very reasonable prices. Folks selling homes or redoing condominiums are grateful for the opportunity to donate furniture and appliances knowing that they will be used and appreciated. (They also are grateful that Habitat volunteers comprise the pick-up crews that make such donations that much

easier!) Homeowners setting up Air BnB or VRBO units find the broad selection of items at the store very useful whenever the need for furnishings occurs at short notice. And certainly all who are concerned that in our throw-away culture, landfills are at—or close to—their limits are pleased by this opportunity for meaningful repurposing. Best of all, the

proceeds from the store directly support our mission to make home-ownership a reality for hard-working, deserving families in southern Vermont. Indeed the ReSale Store is a win-win on many counts!

After many years in the retail business (she and her late husband owned and operated Star Electric in Bennington for many years), Sue finds the

is out on the road, there are often eager customers waiting at the store for its unloading ... talk about a quick turnaround time! And Sue loves the variety of people from the community who make their way to the store and appreciate its value.

Wondering how you too can make a difference? Stop by the store to check out the bargains. Spread the word among

your friends and business associates. Consider donating items when moving or remodeling. And whenever you spot that handsome ReSale Store truck on the road, be sure to give our volunteer drivers an enthusiastic thumbs-up!



mission and the process at the ReSale Store both refreshing and rewarding. She credits much of the store's success to her core of hard working and like-minded volunteers who find, pick up and manage a constantly changing inventory. The store has become so popular and well-known that on days when our colorfully wrapped Habitat Resale truck

Together, we will continue to make a meaningful difference in Bennington County!

Dave Low

ReSale Store
Restore, Recycle,
Reuse!

Construction Update

It has been a very busy and successful building season for Bennington County Habitat. With your help, we completed the construction portion of our Orton Matching Grant in Fiscal Year 19.

The fifth and sixth houses on Corcoran's Way are finished. On September 21st, we celebrated with the Mattison-Barber family at 31 Corcoran's Way and the McLaughlin family at 23 Corcoran's Way as we dedicated their houses. Both families close on September 30th. The seventh and last house on Corcoran's Way is under construction by the students at the Building Trades program of the Southwest Vermont Career Development Center.

Our Home Repair program has been busy as well. In FY19, we built decks, installed an energy-efficient door, stained a house, constructed ramps, and repaired a roof. This fiscal year, we are off to a good start - we built a ramp and new back stairs for a

family; and we have two ramps and a railing project lined up.

The focus of our volunteer builders will move back to Manchester this fall and winter as we start two houses on Peggy's Way in the Jennifer Lane neighborhood. The foundation is in at 22 Peggy's Way, and we are anxious to start framing. Land clearing has begun at 44 Peggy's Way.

We give a huge shout out to Construction Manager Tony D'Onofrio for his hard work in helping us meet our goals.

We welcome all volunteers, regardless of your skill level! Please join us to help build quality, affordable homes for deserving families in Bennington County.

Curt Merrow

**Are you receiving the
Weekly Construction EBlast?
Sign up at bchabitatoffice@gmail.com!**



23 and 31 Corcoran's Way, Bennington
(photos courtesy of Curt Merrow)

Last year Bennington County Habitat held its first ever major fundraiser.

As a 2018 Attendee said:
“We had so much fun at this event, you have to do it again!”

SO WE ARE!
Please join us Nov. 3rd
at the Pablyk House.



HABITAT FOR HUMANITY
BENEFIT GALA



*You're Invited to our
2nd Annual*

*Share
Your
Blessings*

at
**THE PABLYK
HOUSE**

**SUNDAY
NOVEMBER 3
6 - 9 PM**

Tickets are on Sale
at the Habitat Office (802) 367-1000
or email bchabitatoffice@gmail.com

*Tickets are \$125 for an elegant evening
of dinner, drinks and music.
Silent and Live Auction*

Note from the Executive Director

At the end of June 2019, Bennington County Habitat for Humanity received an extremely generous check from Lyman Orton and Janice Izzie in the amount of \$100,000. They were satisfied that we had met our FY19 commitments under the Orton Matching Grant Award.

You made this accomplishment possible.

Without your support as donors, volunteers, and friends of Bennington County Habitat, we could not have built 3 new houses, finished almost 10 home repair projects, held 3 donor related events, and raised an additional \$100,000 in individual donations, all in one year's time.

Most importantly, because of your efforts, three families now have affordable, decent houses to call home. And several lower-income homeowners remain safely in their houses through the Home Repair program.

By now, we are three months in to the next Fiscal Year and working hard to complete our commitments under the Orton Grant for the second year in a row. Your faith in the work this Habitat affiliate does inspires us to keep going. Thank you. *Susan Sommer*

Welcome Home our Newest Families!



THE MCLAUGHLIN FAMILY

If you've ever visited the Emergency Room at South Western Vermont Medical Center, you may have been taken care of by Dawn McLaughlin, who has worked there for the last five years.

Dawn and her 11 year-old granddaughter, Alliyah, and 7 year-old grandson, Damian, will be moving into their new home at the end of September. It is a dream come true for this family to feel the safety and security of knowing that they have a place that is their own. Alliyah and Damian look forward to having a yard in which they can play and a home in a safe neighborhood. Dawn plans to enjoy watching her grandchildren thrive and grow in a home where they each have their own room. We are so pleased that Dawn, Alliyah and Damian have become partners with our Habitat affiliate.

Sandi Hedman

THE MATTISON-BARBER FAMILY

Tracey Mattison, Mark Barber and their two children, two-year-old Nova, and newborn Theodore, will soon be owners of their own Habitat home. Tracey and her family are builders, so the 400 hours of sweat-equity for their house was completed very quickly, and Mark and Tracey have been ready to move in for a couple months now - since Theodore was born in June. They are counting the days. Mark grew up in Bennington and Tracey has lived here for the last five years. They are thrilled to have a home in a safe neighborhood and to have a yard for Nova and Theodore. Tracey looks forward to continuing a longstanding tradition by hosting dinners for her extended family. We are excited to see this young family building their lives in a Habitat home.

Sandi Hedman



**BENNINGTON
COUNTY HABITAT
FOR HUMANITY**

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Sue Wilborn

ReSale Store Manager

Sue Congdon

Construction Manager

Tony D'Onofrio

Empowering People One House at a Time

28th Annual Win Hoyt Charity Golf Tournament

The 28th Annual Win Hoyt Golf Tournament was played September 18th at the Ekwanok Country Club in Manchester to benefit Bennington County Habitat and the Manchester Community Library. Twenty-seven foursomes enjoyed a spectacular late summer day on a beautiful golf course. We are very appreciative of all our sponsors, especially our Tournament Sponsor, Casella Waste Management, the Ekwanok Country Club staff for hosting this large group, and finally to all the donors to our very successful raffle. *Bill Hoyt*



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