

The Hammer Times Winter 2020



Cheboygan County
Habitat
for Humanity®

Letter from the Board President

Dear Friends,

During this COVID-19 pandemic, my wife and I took its dangers seriously and sought safety by putting ourselves under stay-at-home prescriptions (except grocery shopping and doctors' appointments). So far it lasted ten months. We spent five in San Jose at my son's home and five in Cheboygan. In both places our homes became havens protecting us all from COVID-19, as well as from physical fatigue and depression. In addition, as a homeowner, I learned many new lessons that affected me deeply. Overall, I realized how fortunate families are when they abide in a home they own.

Now, more than any other time, a safe home means everything to us. This realization has led me to understand why the staff and volunteers of Habitat for Humanity, as well as many of its financial supporters, are so passionate about eliminating substandard housing. We believe that deserving families, who own the homes we build, gain hope and help to build a better community.

In the face of a historical health crisis, along with a pre-existent housing crisis, 18 million families in the United States struggle with overcrowded, unaffordable, unsafe houses and apartments. Armed with Habitat's Mission and Vision, we attack the instability, uncertainty, and vulnerability both conditions create. We want to eliminate despair and offer hope instead.

The power of owning a house gives families a chance of making it a home. This potential has no limit. Ten months ago, we began to learn that our home could become a college classroom, a loaded library, an eatery with creative cooks, a chapel for meditation and prayer, an infirmary for healing, an exercise arena, and a family social center. We believe that better living conditions afford families the ability to look to the future when deciding about their education, jobs, and community service.

My mother was a young wife during the Great Depression, who lived with my grandparents during WWII, learning the importance of homeownership. I recall that whenever we returned home from visiting relatives on holidays, from infrequent vacations, or short Sunday rides to see the world beyond the street we lived on, my mother would contentedly say, "Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home." At that time, I thought that statement was trite. Today I know better.

I realize how blessed I was to grow and develop with all the benefits a home provided. That is why I am committed to Habitat's Mission and Vision, and I urge you to get involved today in some capacity to partner with us to build, rehabilitate, and repair houses to help deserving individuals and families take advantage of owning a safe, secure, affordable home.

Sincerely,

Richard Kowalczyk

Board President

The Power of Home



Over the course of this crazy year, we have learned how much we truly depend on a safe place to call home. During this global pandemic, we were told to shelter in place and later that we are safer at home, but no one truly thought about the folks who didn't have a safe home or those who had no home. We, here at Habitat, have known since our inception the benefits of a safe place to call home.

We have some exciting milestones coming up for our organization that I wanted to share with you.

- In 2021, we will celebrate 26 years since we started construction on our very first Habitat Home. In 1995 we started construction on the Neelis Family Home, and this January they will celebrate 24 years of homeownership. Congratulations Neelis Family!
- December 19, 2020 our second Program Partner will celebrate 22 years of homeownership! Congratulations LaLonde Family!
- May 15, 2021 we celebrate 15 years since we first opened our Cheboygan Habitat ReStore. Stay tuned for details on our fun celebration on Saturday, May 15, 2021 - Mark your calendars now.
- We are increasing our capacity to serve through our Home Repair Program. We are hoping to complete 11 home repairs by June 30, 2021. Currently 6 projects are approved and are at different stages, 2 more are in the process of being approved, and we are still taking applications.

As much as we struggled through the pandemic, because our normal operations were put on hold, we came back to work even stronger. We stand united with our homeowners, volunteers, donors, and our community. Together, we are better. Together, we will get through this. And together, we will build back.

Sincerely,
Mandy Martin
Executive Director

Current Projects

Home Repair Project 1 - CCHFH is partnering with Christy to finish some needed repairs after water damage in her crawlspace. We will be repairing some flooring, siding, and a porch, along with removing a dead tree.



Home Repair Project 2 - CCHFH is partnering with Helen to complete some critical repairs on her home. We are working on remodeling her bathroom for handicap accessibility, repairing her front and back porch while adding a handicap ramp and some other energy efficient updates to make her home safe for herself and her granddaughter.

Helen states that "Partnering with Habitat has been a lifesaver." Helen has been caring for her autistic granddaughter and is so grateful for the work being done on her home. She wants to regain her independence and be able to get in and out of her new shower with ease. When the time comes, she hopes to leave her home to her granddaughter so she always has a place to call home.

Home Repair Project 3 - CCHFH is partnering with Gary, a United States Veteran, who recently had his bathroom remodeled thanks to USDA Grant Funding. CCHFH will be going into the home to remove a wood stove, repair porch steps, and install new windows.

Gary stated that "Partnering with Habitat means the world to me, big time. This is my home where I raised my family and have great neighbors. With the repairs being done, I can be independent again in my home."



Home Repair Project 4 - CCHFH is partnering with Tom to do some repairs on his home. Tom is wheelchair bound and unable to get out of his home due to no wheelchair ramp. In partnership with Region 9 Area Agency on Aging, CCHFH will do a handicap bathroom modification, widen his interior doorways, and install a new front door and handicap ramp.

Tom is so happy he will be able to live independently with the help of his health care aids and his dog Doodle! And we are so happy we can help him get the needed repairs done so his home is safe once again.

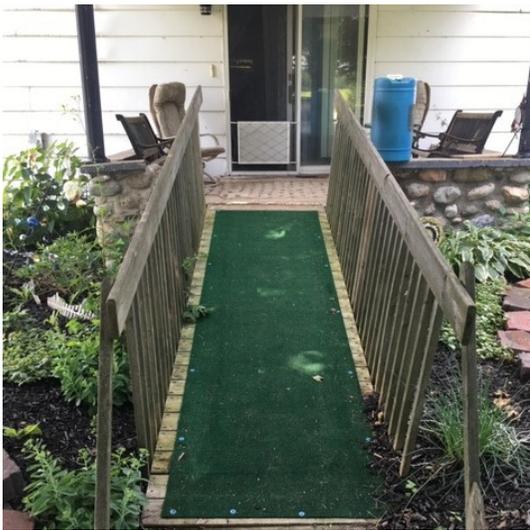
Home Repair Project 5 - CCHFH is partnering with Sharon to build a handicap ramp on her home to help her as she ages in place. Right now the stairs work for her, but they require her to exert a lot of energy and her activities throughout the rest of the day are impacted.

Sharon is so excited to have this ramp installed to provide her ease in getting in and out of her home. She loves hanging laundry still and a ramp would allow her to do this and get outside easier to enjoy all of the seasons we have here in Cheboygan.



Home Repair Project 6 - CCHFH is partnering with Lisa and her son Ronnie, who is wheelchair bound, to provide some health and safety updates. Habitat will replace their handicap ramp, modify their bathroom for handicap accessibility and repair the siding on their home. Habitat has committed to creating a plan to help this family get all of the needed repairs done, even after Habitat does the repairs that fall into their Repair Program.

Lisa could hardly put into words what it means to partner with Habitat to get these repairs started on her home. When asking Lisa how her family has managed all these years without a handicap accessible shower, she stated "When you get used to it, you just do it that way."



Accepting Program Applications

We are currently accepting applications for our Home Repair Program. We encourage anyone to apply for our program and we promise to do our best to find the best program that works for your unique situation.

We are also accepting applications for our Homeownership Program. We will soon start the process of rehabbing a home in Cheboygan County to sell to a qualified Program Partner.

Program Partners are selected based on:

- Level of need
- Ability to pay an affordable mortgage or loan
- Willingness to partner, which includes taking classes in financial management and budgeting, home maintenance, as well as performing 'sweat equity hours' to help build, renovate or repair projects under construction.

To learn more about our programs, visit www.habitatcheboygan.org or give us a call at 231-597-4663.

Fundraising

Funding Received to Support the Home Repair Program

This summer we were blessed to find out we were chosen to receive \$2,000 from the Community Foundation of Northeast Michigan's Urgent Needs Funding. Due to COVID-19, 3 of our home repair projects were pushed back and this funding will be used to help with these projects. Wells Fargo also granted \$15,000 to help with 1 home repair project in Indian River. And earlier this year, the Tromble Family Foundation provided \$2,500 to support this new program!

We are so grateful to our local donors who have donated this year to help turn the dream of a safe home into reality for our local community members. Your donations through the Summer Newsletter, Events and our Square Foot Club are directly helping us provide critical repairs for homeowners throughout Cheboygan County.



**WELLS
FARGO**

Hard Hats and Hope Online Fundraiser - Huge Success!!!

We moved our annual banquet and auction to an online format this past August. We had 17 amazing auction items that the community could bid on to support our mission. Our auction raised \$2,829 to support our Home Repair Program. Thank you again to our sponsors, auction donors and auction bidders for making this event so successful for us!

Also a shoutout to Bronze Tanning Salon for putting together a last minute auction item! We appreciate your support!



Other ways you can support us... available in the ReStore!



Stock Donations

We can also accept stock donations to support our mission. We hold a stock account with Infinex, through Citizens National Bank. Below is the information you need to make a stock donation to provide the gift of shelter today:

Account Number: ABM211111

Account Name: Cheboygan County Habitat for Humanity, Inc.

Name of Receiving Institution: Pershing, LLC

DTC Participation Number: 0443



Cars for Homes



Donating your vehicle to Cheboygan County Habitat for Humanity is a great way to support our work. Proceeds from the sale of your donated vehicle will help Habitat families build strength, stability, and self-reliance right here in Cheboygan County. Plus, it's fast and easy to do, and you may qualify for a tax deduction.

We accept almost all vehicles, including cars, trucks, motorcycles, recreational vehicles, boats, snowmobiles, farm equipment and construction equipment. If you want to donate your car or truck, please visit www.habitat.org/support/donate-your-car. If you want to donate any other type of vehicle, please call us at 1-877-277-4344.

*Make sure to use your Cheboygan address so your donation stays local.

Cheboygan County Habitat was selected as 1 of 5 community non-profits to receive \$2,853.72 from the first round of Odawa's new Spare Change Donation Program. Mandy Martin Habitat Director stated, "We are so blessed to receive this funding from Odawa and it will help us increase our capacity to serve through our Home Repair Program."

Thank you so much Odawa Casino!

Community Support



AmazonSmile

You can make a difference while you shop on Amazon this holiday season! Simply shop at smile.amazon.com/ch/38-3190977 or with AmazonSmile ON in the Amazon Shopping app and AmazonSmile donates a percentage back to Cheboygan County Habitat for Humanity.

ReStore

Happy Autumn everyone!

Things at the ReStore are settling back into our Fall/Winter pace. Did you know that when you shop at or donate to the Cheboygan ReStore, you are helping us build and repair homes throughout Cheboygan County? So we invite you to always shop the store that builds and repairs homes in our community.

We will continue to be open for shopping Wednesday – Friday from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Masks are still required for those entering our building. If you can't medically wear a mask, call us to hear about your shopping options.

Saturdays are Customer Appreciation Days. Stop in to shop and take a free bag of popcorn for the road.



We are doing donation pick-ups on Tuesdays throughout the remainder of the calendar year. Due to holiday scheduling, not every Tuesday may be available. If you would like to get on our schedule for a pick-up, please call us ahead at (231) 597-9463.

As we are managing our way through COVID, we have only been accepting a limited list of items for donation. These items include

- Large Appliances: washers, dryers, refrigerators, freezers, kitchen stoves, microwaves, dishwasher, etc.
- Furniture: sofas, loveseats, chairs, end and coffee tables, desks, bookshelves, dressers, armoires, nightstands, bed frames, etc.
- Building Material: tile, flooring, shingles, insulation, lumber, fasteners, plumbing, electrical, doors, windows, drywall, tools, cabinets, toilets, sinks, countertops, etc.

Currently, we are not taking household goods, such as dishes, glassware, pots and pans, linens, etc. or lighting at this time. We are accepting donation drop-offs on Wednesdays between 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. by appointment only. If you would like to schedule a drop-off appointment, please call (231) 597-9463 for a time slot. Donation drop-offs will not be accepted any other day of the week.

***Always call before bringing donations to drop off. As noted above, our drop off schedule has changed.**

Store Beautification

We have slowly been working on making some improvements to our building and store layout to help make your shopping experience even better. In doing this, we have received a lot of questions asking if we were closing. We ARE NOT closing, just rearranging some departments and always reconfiguring the furniture section based on available inventory. Take a look at some of the changes we have made over the past couple of months:



Investment in our Future

This year we made the choice to invest back into our organization, despite the challenging world around us. The ReStore liftgate was no longer able to hold the weight of the staff and donations, so we purchased a new liftgate. We also upgraded our HVAC system to help lower our monthly out of pocket utility costs - all to help us increase our overall capacity to serve. Thank you to Great Lakes Energy for granting us funds to help with these projects.



Building Homes, Community and Hope

I wanted to take some time to talk about building community and how community members can come together to make a big difference. Building community is much more than any one person and one organization. It takes all of us doing the little things that really make a lasting impact throughout our community. There are some great programs in place already where a small gesture makes a large impact. - Mandy

Presque Isle Electric and Gas Co-op Communities First Fund

PIE&G members can round up their bill every month and it goes into the Communities First Fund. The PIE&G Communities First Fund was created in 1998 for the purpose of collecting and disbursing funds for the benevolent and philanthropic needs (i.e. humanitarian, youth, educational, and civic development) of individuals and organizations in the service area of Presque Isle Electric & Gas Co-op, as determined by its volunteer, independent Board of Directors.



Great Lakes Energy People Fund

Great Lakes Energy members help to enhance the quality of life for people in our communities through the People Fund. Bills of participating members are "rounded up" to the next dollar amount and grants are awarded to non-profit organizations for charitable activities throughout our service area. Grants are awarded by three independent Boards of Directors representing three geographical regions – south, central and north. There are no overhead costs – 100 percent of the money collected is returned to our communities.



SpartanNash Scan Program and Direct Your Dollars Program

Customers shopping at Family Fare Cheboygan have 4 opportunities a year to round up their change or make a \$1, \$5, \$10 donation to a St. Thomas Food Pantry, Cheboygan County Habitat for Humanity, Special Olympics and Military Heroes.

Customers who are YES Rewards members can save their receipt(s) and donate the receipt(s) to local non-profits participating in the Direct Your Dollars Program. Non-profits can earn \$1,000 for every \$150,000 worth of receipts turned in.



SpartanNash.
Taking food places®

"I alone cannot change the world, but I can cast a stone across the waters to create many ripples" - Mother Teresa