



HabiChat

Habitat for Humanity Winter, 2006 Newsletter

HABITAT UPDATE:

What an exciting and productive 4th quarter of 2005 Coles County Habitat for Humanity had. The talent and enthusiasm of our board of directors has been expanded. We added a total of five new board members, the most recent being Luz Whittenbarger, Ed Pence and Eric Anderson. That makes a total of 15 board members now serving this community.

First Federal Bank of Mattoon and the Charleston Wal-Mart presented gifts to our affiliate. First Federal donated a building lot on Dewitt Avenue in Mattoon as a building site for a future Habitat home. They also cleared the land and made it ready for use as soon as an appropriate family is selected for the new home.

The Charleston Wal-Mart gave the affiliate a \$500 check from their "Bonus Grant" fund. We are sincerely grateful for the support of our community businesses.

In addition, Coles County Habitat for Humanity has been awarded a grant from Thrivent Financial to build one house in Coles County in 2006. Thrivent Builds Homes is a national program that joins the nearly 3 million Thrivent Financial for Lutherans members with Habitat for Humanity volunteers, other Lutherans, their families and their communities to build up to 500 homes in the U. S. annually by 2008. The initiative includes four programs to help end poverty housing and help families achieve greater economic independence.

Thrivent will provide 70% of the funding for a house with Coles County Habitat contributing 20% and Thrivent members and Lutheran congregations contributing the final 10%. They will also provide 50% of the volunteers working on the house.

This is a tremendous feather in the cap of Coles County Habitat for Humanity as there were many strong and deserving applicants. The grant will be a valuable asset in helping CCH4H achieve our goal of building three houses this year.

Molly Daniel has been working on our website and it's terrific! Check it out at www.colescountyhabitat.net.

The Heart of the Matter..... by Cal Smith

The heart is the power center of the body. This fist-sized organ is absolutely essential. Its continuous function is a must. And its efforts bring remarkable results.

Some years ago, the Carle Care newsletter provided these fascinating facts about the capacity of the human heart: 1. "Everyday the adult heart pumps through a total of about 155 miles of blood vessels and moves enough blood to fill a 4,630 gallon tank." 2. "The heart of a 47 year old man will (has) pumped a total of 300,000 gallons of blood during his lifetime."

In short, that efficient pulsating organ just beneath our sternum is truly a marvelous mechanism. And not just as a physical entity. It has, for centuries, be regarded as a register for emotional reactions as well. Losing sports teams are accused of playing "half-heartedly". We love our spouse "with all our heart," and catastrophe may "break our heart." These are only a few sayings that reflect the heart (and brain's) physical and emotional connection.

It seems appropriate that we have adopted the theme "Give from the Heart" as our theme for February. We would hope you will look into your own heart and donate generously to the Habitat program. And, once a home is underway, we hope you'll be an enthusiastic volunteer in Habitat's efforts to provide good, appropriate housing for those who qualify for the "hand up" to home ownership.

Please send a generous check to: Coles County Habitat for Humanity. We appreciate the hearty support Habitat has received in the past and trust that we can rely on it now. Happy Valentine's Day!

From the Ground Up: by Ann Siverling, President of the Board

Giving from the heart.....

Funny little valentine cards with candy hearts tucked inside and big frilly red hearts pinned up on the wall. These are the images of childhood Valentine's days. Heart-shaped boxes of yummy chocolates, red roses, elegant dining out. These are the images of adult Valentine's days. Well, for most of the world, these are the Valentine images.

Valentine's Day has always been special for me but not because of the things mentioned above. Valentine's Day is special for me because it is also my birthday. My memories of Valentine's Day are the odd-but-wonderful mixture of birthday gifts and celebrations and Valentine gifts and celebrations. No matter how I look at Valentine's Day though, it is all about giving and receiving love.

Giving love can take many forms. When I think about all the people in Coles County who give so much for Habitat for Humanity, I am overwhelmed. We have a board of directors who are committed, excited and giving. We have many volunteers who help year round by working on the committees that get everything behind the scenes done so that the homes can be built. And, of course, we have all the people and companies that donate financially to Habitat for Humanity.

So, this Valentine's Day, I want to thank all of you for giving so generously from your own hearts to Coles County Habitat for Humanity. Your heartfelt giving builds homes and community!!

SAVE THE DATES: Calendar of Meetings and Events:	
Board Meetings:	Third Tuesday of the Month Sarah Bush Lincoln HC
Annual Golf Tournament:	May 13, 2006 Meadowview Golf Course
4 for the 4th Walk/Run Fundraiser	July 4, 2006
Annual Meeting (Open to the Public)	August 15, 2006

Katrina Response..... by Jim Craig

The Coles County Habitat for Humanity Board of Directors has authorized a special contribution toward Hurricane Katrina relief. Because of the great response of the community during the recent Habifeast fundraiser, \$600 has been donated to the Habitat for Humanity hurricane Response Fund. This was completed in the spirit of the affiliate's promise to tithe and is over and above our regular tithing commitment.

If you wish to contribute to this fund also, please send your check to Habitat for Humanity, P. O. Box 945, Charleston, IL 61920. Put "Katrina" on the memo line and we will forward 100% of your donation to Katrina Relief.

Habitat welcomes Sarah Bush Lincoln Academy Plus Interest

Graduates of the Sarah Bush Lincoln Health Center Academy, a leadership class for employees, have expressed an interest in developing a partnership with Coles County Habitat for Humanity to build a house in Coles County. The 121 SBL employees who have completed the six-week curriculum of SBL Academy are a high-energy group known as Academy Plus. An informational meeting about the pending partnership was held in early November, 2005 and an *ad hoc* committee of the Habitat Board of Directors is working to further develop partnering plans.

If your place of business, church or service organization is interested in exploring the possibility of partnering with CCH4H, please give the business office a call at 217-348-7063.

VOLUNTEERING

Lou & Royce Marble—*in their own words*

Why get involved with Habitat for Humanity?

If you are considering whether or not you want to volunteer with Coles County Habitat, take a moment to learn what motivated others to act. Take for example, Lou and Royce Marble of Charleston. Long-time residents of Coles County, the Marbles are both retired and enjoy being involved with the Coles County affiliate. We asked them to share their thought about the rewards of contributing one's time, talent and treasure to Habitat. Here's what they said, in their own words:

Volunteering is something you can do together

"After we retired, we thought that volunteering with Habitat would be a good thing that we could do together as a family. We got involved, and we've met a lot of nice people."

Getting Involved helps you appreciate your own blessings

"Having grown up very poor ourselves, we appreciate what it takes to earn one's way. We so appreciate our home and cannot imagine what it would be like not having our house."

Habitat provides families with much more than a house

"We are blessed to be able to own our home, and we can identify with the mission of Habitat of helping others to achieve this goal by giving them an opportunity to participate in the process. It's not a give-away program. The new homeowner families not only buy their home, but they contribute sweat equity toward building their house and helping other homeowners achieve the same goal."

"You think to yourself, 'this is just one family that we are helping,' but you're also helping homeowner families get their feet on the ground and getting them started on the way to having so much more than a house."

Habitat welcomes people of all faiths

"We like the idea of people from many faiths working together. Habitat is an ecumenical cause, and churches can unite in this effort. Sharon Monroe (former pastor of Otterbein Methodist Church and a past president of the board of directors of CCH4H) convinced us what a powerful tool Habitat provides for our community."

Advice for anyone who is still thinking about volunteering with Coles County Habitat for Humanity

"Try it! You might like it."

Did you know that.....? by Jim Craig

Habitat for Humanity is a global partnership. Therefore, each affiliate is encouraged to contribute at least 10% of its unrestricted cash revenues to Habitat's international work.

Covenant partners are affiliates that believe in and follow the U.S. affiliate covenant commitment to tithing. These dollars are designated for building projects outside of the United States. Currently they are working in 100 countries around the world. This type of financial support helps Habitat for Humanity International achieve its goal of providing decent, simple and affordable shelter to people in need.

Tithing is a spiritual practice and a joyful discipline. It is a biblical practice that goes back to the earliest stories of Abraham. The tithe was Abraham's response to having received his gracious blessings. Likewise, Habitat for Humanity affiliates respond with their tithe to be used for work in partnership with God and people everywhere, from all walks of life.

Coles County Habitat for Humanity is a committed affiliate to the practice of tithing. It is stated in our By-laws to tithe on all receipts except mortgage payments, fundraisers and donations restricted by the donor for only local purposes.

Habitat's Impact on Communities

The impact of Habitat for Humanity on our communities is to some extent measurable beyond emotional and anecdotal terms. Other areas of Habitat's success might be measured in terms of family stability and achievement and the contribution to the economic and societal well-being of the community.

It is a proven fact that Habitat homes add to a community's tax base and also increase property tax revenue. Generally, Habitat homes are assessed more than the average city homes on the same street (many times they are assessed at 2 times other homes). Another economic impact would be the decrease in crime rates by improving the neighborhood. Often, when a Habitat home is built in a depressed neighborhood, it causes other homeowners to improve the condition of their homes. Many Habitat homeowners also participate in some kind of neighborhood watch program.

The fact that Habitat homeowners are stable and their children do not change schools as frequently as do many low-income renters, is indicated by the fact that approximately 70% of children of Habitat homeowners graduate from high school and attend an institution of

higher learning. Those that do drop out are more likely to pursue a GED than youth from non-Habitat homes.

In Coles County, 80% of the original Habitat homeowners still live in their home. This is significantly higher than many low-income renters who typically move every year or less.

While we can look with pride at what Habitat has accomplished, it is a drop in the bucket to what could be achieved given more resources. In the past 15 years, Coles County Habitat for Humanity has built approximately one house per year. This year, our goal is to build three.

Since we accept no government funding, Coles County Habitat for Humanity relies on contributions and house sponsorships from the faith community, businesses, professional organizations, foundations, and individual donors. We offer tangible results for each donation: decent affordable housing for low-income families and neighborhood improvement through homeownership.

Please contribute generously of your time, prayers and donations. Habitat for Humanity is not just about building homes, but about building community.

Coles County Habitat for Humanity
P. O. Box 945
Charleston, IL 61920

Return Service Requested

Non Profit Org.
U. S. Postage
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Charleston, IL 61920
Permit no. 16

MISSION STATEMENT: Coles County Habitat for Humanity's (CCHFC) mission is to improve our community by providing affordable, owner-occupied single family housing to low income families in Coles County.

Our office is located at 2202 4th Street, Charleston, IL 61920. The phone number is (217) 348-7063.
Normal business hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

www.colescountyhabitat.net

I want to be Part of Habitat for Humanity!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

How you can "give from the heart":

- Pray
- Be on a committee
- Be on the Board
- Provide lunch for the volunteers
- Donate building materials
- Help in the office
- Encourage those in need to apply
- Be a "Support Family"
- Hold a fundraiser
- Get your church family involved
- Help with construction
- Donate land
- Donate \$ _____

Detach and Mail to:
Coles County Habitat
P.O. Box 945