

Willamette West Loves Being “Nickeled-and-Dimed”

Kids raise money by the pound in December

Have you been thinking to yourself lately: ‘How can I help my kids understand that not every child is as lucky as they are? How can I pass on my passion and joy for helping those less fortunate? How can they build simple, decent, affordable homes too?’

The answer is MATH!

This past Christmas, kids from three different Washington County churches raised money and awareness for Willamette West Habitat for Humanity by counting. For 30 days, kids counted things in their house. Things like electrical outlets, rooms, doors, and water faucets. Then they multiplied each item by a recommended donation and put that into a house-shaped bank. For example: on the 4th day of the month, they deposited .10c for every room in their house; on the 17th day they donated .03 for every light fixture. All month long, kids counted and added coins to their bank. At the end of the month, the banks came back to their church and the donations were counted.

Bethel United Church of Christ

Bethel United Church of Christ’s program was called “Handing Out Hope.” Ushers and Sunday school teachers passed out banks and the program was explained. Kids from the primary grades made a 3- x 6-foot poster with their handprints on it to remind everyone what they were doing. Over the weeks, many parents told how their kids loved running around counting outlets, pipes and all the rest. On the final



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three groups of kids raised
over \$4,100!*

*That’s a lot of nickels, dimes and
pennies, and we appreciate
every single one.*

Sunday, the kids started the service in the sanctuary by pushing a wheelbarrow down the center aisle to collect some 75 banks. The wheelbarrow got so heavy that it eventually took two kids and an adult to push it. It took almost two hours to count all the change and in the end, the kids raised \$2,200! “By getting our kids

involved in our activities we create a win-win situation where the enthusiasm of the kids feeds the adults and the kids feel good about helping us sponsor a Habitat house,” commented Bob Leitner of Bethel UCC.

Gaarde Christian School

When their month was finished, the kids at Gaarde Christian School (pictured above) in Tigard invited Willamette West staff to attend their Christmas Chapel so they could present us with a “big check.” Due to the foot of snow we received the program had to be postponed until January. Habitat Development Director Hope Howard told the kids and parents assembled how proud Habitat was of them. “Thank you so much for your generosity. Wow! You kids raised \$986.00. That’s enough money to pay for all the doors in an entire house! When you go to bed tonight, and you close your bedroom door, I want you to think about the little boy or girl who next Christmas is going to have their own bedroom door, in their own house, thanks to you. I know your parents are as proud of you as we are.”

St. Pius X Catholic Church

The kids at St. Pius X Catholic Church took on a similar task in January this year, and together they raised \$970.

All together, in only 30 days, these three groups of kids raised over \$4,100. That’s a lot of nickels, dimes and pennies, and we appreciate every single one.



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Our Mission:

Habitat for Humanity works in partnership with God and people everywhere, from all walks of life, to develop communities with God's people in need by building and renovating houses so that there are decent houses in decent communities in which God's people can live and grow into all that God intended.

Staff:

Mark Forker, Executive Director
Hope Howard, Development & Communication Manager
Marilyn Palma, Bookkeeper
Anna Wendt, Family Services & Volunteer Coordinator
Mike Wille, Construction Manager

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From the Board

Lane Clem, president

A little over a month ago, I took on the responsibilities as your board president. What an awesome privilege this is for me. As president, I have the privilege of working with a group of qualified and dedicated men and women who make up your board of directors and committees, a very skilled and competent staff, and numerous dedicated volunteers who give so generously of their time and talent.

Last week, I had an opportunity to sit in the conference room of Chicago Title with three different families as they signed the paperwork to purchase the homes for which they have worked so hard. I could not help but feel the excitement as they saw their dreams at last becoming reality. Each family has spent many months of partnering with Habitat for Humanity to set aside money for a down payment; to accumulate many hours of sweat equity labor, and otherwise prepare themselves for home ownership. As one family signed their papers, their pre-school daughter played at, under and around the table. As I watched her play, I could not help thinking what a difference this will make in this one child's life. She will grow up in a home that provides warmth, shelter and safety; in a community of friendly neighbors; and in an environment where parents demonstrate commitment a better standard of living for themselves and their children.

I thank God for Habitat for Humanity and for giving me the chance to serve in this small way.

From The Executive Director

Hector's eyes dampened while telling me about his son Antonio's asthma. He's convinced it's caused by the moldy apartments he and his wife, Alexa, have rented over the past five years. They've moved three times trying to find a better place, but there are not many options for this family of six. Hector works full-time on a loading dock. Even with overtime, it's the best they can afford.

By the end of this year, Hector and four other partner families will have moved into simple, decent Habitat homes. Antonio and his little brother, Tomas, will finally share a bedroom that is free of mold. It would not have been possible without your help. Thank you.

On May 7th, we will again ask our community to support Habitat's work by attending our free fundraising breakfast and being as generous as possible. It's our one fundraising event of the year, and provides a significant part of our construction budget. Hector and other partner families will share their stories, and I'll report more on we've accomplished in the last year, and share my vision for the coming year. We hope to see you there!



Mark Forker



Share the Love: Be The Foundation

75 people brave the snow to jump into a hole

Even with a few snow flakes falling from the sky, 75 members of local United Church of Christ congregations made their way to Aloha on Valentine's Day to show their support for Joel Lopez and his children.

Members of the Westside United Church of Christ Partnership, which includes **Bethel Congregational United Church of Christ, Cedar Hills United Church of Christ, First Congregational Church in Hillsboro, and Lake Oswego United Church of Christ**, have spent a year raising money to help build a home in Wilamette West Habitat's newest neighborhood: Vance Place, on SW 160th and Farmington Road.

The hole for the foundation had been dug, and the cement truck would arrive shortly, so church members wanted to get together to celebrate their accomplishments, share their enthusiasm, and meet the family who will be living in the home they build. They picked February 14th – Valentine's Day – for their "Share the Love, Be the Foundation" event.

The program began with an Invocation and Benediction



LoR: Eusebio Vega Arroya, Iker Lopez, Rosa Vega Cruz, Chelsea Lopez, Joel Lopez and Jennifer DeVoe. Eusebio and Rosa are Joel's Family Partner mentors and are there for support and help throughout the process.

by Pastor David Randall-Bodman from Bethel UCC.

"Our group has raised a little over \$31,000 so far," Bob Leitner of Bethel UCC - who serves as coordinator for the UCC/Habitat partnership - told the crowd. "That pays for the foundation and the first floor, so let's show Joel our commitment to building his second story with a show of hands." With that 75 people hopped down into the hole where the foundation will go, stood shoulder-to-shoulder, raised their arms and symbolically formed the walls of the second floor. The group is raising an additional \$19,000 for materials, and will show up in person to actually build the home.

Stephen Galvan, Director of ISING Community Choir, lead the group in "Blessed Be The Ties That Binds." ISING did three benefit concerts, raising nearly \$5,000 for the project.



Meet Our Newest Families

Fall enrollment nets 10 new families.

*Will you help them achieve the **American Dream?***

Al-Khachi family.

Moumen and wife Aurora will be sharing their home with their two children: a girl, Iman (10 years) and a boy, Aiman (17 years). Currently they live in a small, two-bedroom apartment which is drafty and moldy.

Bekele/Hellora family.

Bekele and wife Wubinesh have a 6-month-old son Abel, and a son named Surafel who is six. Right now, Surafel is living in Ethiopia, but he will be joining his family soon.

Douglas family.

Single-mom Sheryl keeps busy with her three children: boys Collyn (14 years) and Taylor (10 years), and 7-year-old daughter Meagan. The family currently shares a two-bedroom apartment.

Hussein/Elmi family.

Originally from Somalia, Abdi and Shukri have sons Mohammed (9 years) and Jamakl (7 years); daughters Sumaya (11 years) and Sara (5 years); as well as 18-month-old boy/girl twins Dahiar and Hanam. This family of eight lives in a 750sq. ft. 2-bedroom apartment. That's less than 10 square feet per person!

Jepson family.

Single mother Angela says of daughter Michaiiah (age 2), "Now that I have a daughter my life has changed in many ways."

She is looking forward to raising her daughter in a cultural and racially diverse neighborhood.

Mohamed family.

Abdulahi and his wife Adey come to Habitat with their six children. Boys Mohamed (12 years), Mustaf (4 years), and Muad (1 year), and are joined by girls Fatma (11 years), Khadija (9 years), and Suhela (6 years). This family of 8 is barely getting by with a three-bedroom apartment.

Monterroso family.

Single mom Mirian, originally from Guatemala, shares a two-bedroom apartment with 19-year-old son Danny, and girls Mirian (16 years) and Talya (13 years). A third daughter, 18-year-old Daisy, is currently a Job Corps volunteer, but will be joining her family when her service is up.

Nguyen family.

Hoang and his wife Hanh share their home with 13-year-old daughter Peyton. The family is renting a house that is over 100-years-old, which causes problems in itself. Among other things, they must use tape and newspaper on windows to try to keep the sweating and mold under control, and the cold out.

Noor family.

Aweis and his wife Faiza are the proud parents of

three kids: son Abdirmaasir (7 years), and daughters Najma (8 years) and Nadia (5 years). Their unit has water leaking from the apartment above through the kitchen light, and the electric heater must be turned on for several hours before the heat begins to warm their space.

Osman/Ali family.

Ahmed and wife Faiza have two daughters living with them, Maryan (8 years) and Muna (5 years). They also have an 11-year-old son who lives in the UK with his Grandmother, but will be moving to Oregon now that his parents have been selected as a Habitat family.

Watch future newsletters, both printed and electronic, for full bio's and photo's of our new families.

Another Habitat Family Success Story!

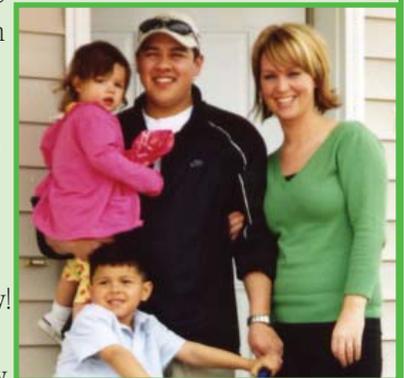
Recently, Javier Espyker – JD to his friends – was in the office with his two charming, and very well-behaved children, to give us some exciting news. I'll let him tell you himself:

"I was accepted into the Ronald E. McNair Post-baccalaureate Achievement Program at Portland State University!

The program supports my goal of graduate study through scholarship, seminars and mentorship. Additionally, I will receive funding to pursue independent research in a field of my choice during the summer months. Fall term I expect to complete my Bachelor of Science degree in geography, where I have concentrated in physical environmental systems and land use. With this opportunity, I hope to develop a project that supports my interests and carries over into a graduate program.

WWHFFH has supported our efforts by enabling my family to have a safe, efficient, and affordable home as a stable platform from which we all can build upon.

Thank you all so much!



Introductions are in order: Please meet our new employee and newest board member:

ANNA WENDT:

Our newly created position of Family Services / Volunteer Coordinator has been filled, with Habitat Alum Anna Wendt.

Anna will work with two critical constituent groups: the hardworking family's we serve, and the hundreds of volunteers who work with them to build simple, decent homes. She'll support all aspects of family services, including qualifying and training a diverse group of partner families and assuring the success of our homeowners. She is also responsible for developing, implementing and maintaining a vibrant volunteer program, as well as managing our efforts to recruit, retain, deploy and recognize our volunteer workforce.

How'd She Get Here?

Originally from St. Paul, Minnesota, Anna heard about the position from good friend Sara Armstrong who works for Portland Habitat. She flew out here for an interview and ultimately beat out 120 other applicants for the position.

As a graduate from Creighton University with a B.A. in Spanish and History, Anna was looking for an opportunity to put her degree to work. Plus, she'd experienced things from the other side as a volunteer at "Centro de Información y Recursos" in Minneapolis, a resource center connecting the Latino population with social services. After that she served as an AmeriCorps volunteer in the Family Services Department for the New Orleans Area Habitat for Humanity.

What Are Her Plans?

Simple: spread the mission of Habitat to families in need, connect volunteers and partner families, and make sure volunteers enjoy themselves on site. *"I'm so excited to be a part of the WWHFH team, and looking forward to working with the great families and volunteers who come to this organization!"*

Are We Excited or What!

Office staff has been very impressed with her take charge attitude and her ability to quickly remember people's names. "She got 12 family members together at the worksite recently and introduced me to everyone of them without looking at any notes or forgetting anyone," commented Construction Manager Mike Wille.

Welcome onboard Anna!

BOARD MEMBER STEVE LORD:

Steve joins the board with over 40 years of experience in the Real Estate and Construction industry. He has built over 120 custom homes, completed several residential planned unit developments, has developed, built, and owned apartment complexes, assisted care facilities, and medical office buildings, and developed condominium conversions and commercial retail strips. Projects have ranged in price from the low hundred thousands to over nine million dollars.

Three years ago Steve sold the last of his properties and decided it was time to give back to the community. He searched for the perfect charitable fit where his experience and construction background could be utilized best.

How'd We Find Him?

He was approached and asked to attend a board meeting of Willamette West Habitat for Humanity. The board meeting was followed by one-on-one discussions with three other board members and the executive director. It was obvious to Steve that he had a good connection with Willamette West, and given that Habitat is a Christian-based charity made the decision that much easier.

Steve has been married to his lovely wife Debi for 12 years and they share their home with a toy Yorkshire Terrier named Lucy.

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Are you remodeling and need a new set of French doors? OR, are you remodeling and need to get rid of a set of French doors? Believe it or not, one place could help you with both needs: the Habitat ReStore.

The ReStore is open to the public. Since all merchandise is donated by businesses and individuals, inventory does change daily, but there is always a great variety of quality building and home improvement products, and prices are significantly below retail prices.

Typical donations include:

- ♥ Windows and doors
- ♥ Flooring and tile
- ♥ Plumbing fixtures and hardware
- ♥ Lighting and electrical hardware
- ♥ Sheets goods, roofing, HVAC
- ♥ Cabinets and cabinet hardware
- ♥ Furniture and household goods [no soft goods]
- ♥ Tools and equipment



The Habitat ReStore has returned over \$550,000 to local Habitat affiliates from the sale of items, and over 1,200 tons of materials are kept out of the landfill each year. Now that a second location has opened in Vancouver, the Habitat ReStore is even more convenient for

Please Note: You should always contact the Habitat ReStore before taking your items in to make sure they will accept them. You can visit the Habitat ReStore website at www.pdxrestore.org or call them at 503-283-6247.

PLEASE DO NOT drop your donations off at the Willamette West Habitat office, we are not a collection site.



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your help!*

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May 16 - 17: Lutheran Community Wall Signing. If you are Lutheran, or a member of Thrivent Financial, come out to Vance Place and write you good wishes on the wall before the insulation goes in. Sponsored by Thrivent Financial for Lutheran's.

June 16: Washington County Clergy Build.



RSVP Deadline April 29th. For information visit us
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