

Garfield Open House

After a rainy Saturday, October 25 was indeed a *sun* day, perfect for Valley Habitat's open house at the Garfield Avenue site in Florence. Here you could see all at once different stages of Habitat building. There was bare land still awaiting the digging of foundations for three more Habitat houses; there were volunteers at work, in this case a dozen high school students painting laid out on saw-horses; and there was a structure consisting of two units already recognizable as homes, though requiring another year's work.

Visitors were welcomed not only by the sun, which made the surrounding



Longtime Habitat volunteer Lyn Heady welcomes visitors at the Open House with fall treats of cider, cider donuts, apples and information!

foliage glow, but also by members of the Habitat community. Lyn Heady provided autumnal treats—shiny apples, homemade cake, doughnuts, and cider. MJ Adams, Executive Director of Pioneer Valley Habitat, pointed out a special feature of the building: since it is set on a slope, one side has a well-lit walk-in basement. Meanwhile Sandy Belden greeted visitors willing to clamber to the second floor.

The warmest welcome of all was that of the two heads of families who will occupy the new units, Kelly Bowler and Iris Rosa. Kelly will make her basement into a playroom for her children, now 7 and 3—although she's also enthusiastic about the extensive outdoor space that comes with the Garfield site. As for the interior,

though proud of the work she put into constructing the party wall separating the two units, she dreams about colors for the visible walls, inspired by an interior decorating program she watches every week.

Iris Rosa, a social worker employed by the Salvation Army, will use her basement as a bedroom for herself. She's leaving the whole second floor for the four younger children (ages fifteen, ten, six, and five). Speaking from experience, Iris says, "building a house is almost like birthing a child." Indeed, installing her second-floor bathtub and shower was like a difficult birth: with no male in sight, she and other members of a Womenbuild team had to lug a large, ungainly object up narrow stairs and around a corner.

The Rosas' gleaming bathtub is striking to the eye. Not so are the generosity and much of the labor behind what you see at the Garfield site. The land itself was donated by the City of Northampton. The foundation of this half-finished building was under-



Student volunteers pre-paint siding as visitors tour the Habitat homes at the Open House

written by the Edwards Church. The Northampton Lions Club, Northampton Community Preservation Funds, Community Foundation of Western Mass, United Bank Foundation, Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston, and Sandy and Betsy Belden have also contributed to the financial underwriting of these homes, along with the multitudes of individual donors, businesses and organizations that contribute to the work of Habitat. In kind contributions from Berkshire Design Group and Krause/Fitch Architects also support the project.

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Habitat homeowner John Speak shares stories of family life in his new home with Habitat supporters at the 4th Annual Donor Appreciation Party held at the home of Betsy and Sandy Belden. Newborn twins joined the Speak family in late October—Life is full!

Big Surprise: Exceptional Donors to Pioneer Valley Habitat!

One October morning Lyn Heady was preparing a bank deposit slip when she came on a \$1000.00 check, mailed in by **Bike & Build, Inc.** with the following explanation: \$500.00 contributed by Sarah Roberts, Hampshire College; \$500.00 contributed by Abigail Lively, UMass. Everyone in the office, including MJ, was amazed, excited, dying to learn more. Lyn emailed Abby who said we could interview her for our November Newsletter. Here's the story:

In the fall of 2008 Abby surfed the net looking for a summer program combining travel with work on affordable housing. By chance Bike & Build, Inc.'s website appeared on the screen. It's a non-profit dedicated to recruiting young adults for work on moderate income housing. Each fall they offer 8 different summer bike routes covering various primarily US

regions. Each group, about 30 riders, guided by 4 leaders, spends 2 months on the road, with 8-9 Build days woven into the itinerary. (Riders must have at least 8 hours building experience before leaving home.) They all sleep in churches, high schools, camp grounds. Prospective bikers ask family & friends to help sponsor their trip. They raise money themselves also, to cover expenses. The money is pooled. Trip leaders buy food, gas for the van which accompanies each group and cover administrative costs. Funds left over are given to affordable housing projects encountered en route.

Abby Lively chose the Northern US Route, from Portsmouth NH to Vancouver, Canada; Sarah Roberts did South Carolina to Santa Cruz. (We don't have more details about her trip at this time.) This summer B&B, Inc. let each rider select the non-profit

housing organization he/she wished to help, with \$500 of the money they raised. There's our gift check!

Abby loved her summer. She's an outgoing, intelligent young woman, easy and fun to be with. While growing up she helped her father with home repair or building projects and she volunteered with us occasionally during college years. Once committed to B&B for June 2009 Abby gave herself a "crash course" in building with PVH Florence and Turners Falls, doing lawn work, insulation, staging, roof trusses. This enabled her to be a boss on some of the Build days, which, incidentally, were often with Habitat affiliates.

Sarah and Abby are wonderful examples for us, choosing to give time and labor to local and countrywide partner families working to build their own home.

One Stop Shopping, Habitat Style

Here is the perfect solution for all of your gift-giving needs during this Holiday Season and beyond. **"The Gift That Gives Twice"** is the perfect answer for someone who already has enough and doesn't want to store, clean or maintain anything else! You can easily get several gifts with one check—and there's no need to wrap boxes and mail packages. Here is the deal:

- List the names and addresses of those you wish to honor, gift, remember or celebrate.
- Decide how much you wish to contribute.
- Write out a check or fill in the credit card information on the enclosed form.
- Mail the form to Pioneer Valley Habitat Office.

In response, Habitat will send a beautiful colorful card to each of the recipients on your list, telling them of the donation you have made in each one's name.

Your gifting will be simple, a future home owner will be closer to her or his goal, and you will receive a tax deduction! What could be better?

And don't forget: "The Gift that Gives Twice" is not just for holiday giving but is also just right for Birthdays, Anniversaries, Graduations, Weddings, and Memorial Gifts.

Garfield Open House (Cont.)

Also at this Open House—Pioneer Valley Habitat invited guests to honor the work of two long term volunteers—Jean Miller, who has served as chair of Family Support for 11 years and Sharon Moulton, who was a founding member of the Pioneer Valley Habitat affiliate and served for 19 years on the board and in various positions. For their long service Jean and Sharon have been awarded an honorary 2x4 beam, to be installed into the walls of our Habitat homes. Guest were invited to sign the 2x4's. Once in use in the new homes, these beams will no longer be visible, but it will help hold the building up, much like Sharon and Jean contributed so much in laying a strong organization foundation for the work of Habitat in this Valley.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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PVH Welcomes New Directors

Pioneer Valley Habitat welcomes some new faces to its leadership. New officers and members of the Board of Directors were elected at the annual meeting in September. Sandy Belden moves from vice-president to president, replacing Brandon Braxton. Brandon remains on the Board, however, and will head the Board Development committee. Peter Jessop, who has been serving as a Board member, assumes the office of Vice-president. Continuing in their positions are Doris McLeod, clerk; Carole Manning, assistant clerk; Joseph Bova, treasurer; and Sarah Darling, assistant treasurer.

Four new members join the Board. Mike Simolo, who lives in Granby, is an attorney with Robinson-Donovan,



Sandy Belden and Mike Simolo

a firm with offices in Springfield and Northampton. Lori Grover, who lives in Greenfield, is Vice-President for Residential Lending at Greenfield Savings Bank. Lori also serves on our Family Selection committee. Mike Fritz, also of Greenfield, is a retired businessman, formerly the owner of Rugg Lumber. Kay Berenson is the publisher emeritus of the Greenfield Recorder. She lives in Shelburne. Mike and Kay have both served as members of the PVH advisory board.

As we welcome new members, we also thank our retiring members, Richard Morse of Amherst, and Tyler Johnson, our student representative.

Progress at Stanley Street

Steady progress is reported at the construction site on Stanley Street in Amherst. The third of four houses is being built by PVHH on land donated by Amherst College. The house will be occupied by the Lamberg family.

According to Charlie Klem, one of the construction supervisors, the shell of the house is now complete. After one inch of rigid foam insulation has been installed, the outside walls will be finished with Hardie planks, made of easy-maintenance cement siding. The roof is scheduled to be in place by the time this article appears.

The third house on Stanley Street will have the same footprint as its predecessor. The same energy-efficient heating system will be installed. Just as at the

first two houses, photovoltaic solar cells will be installed on the roof. The solar cells at #18 and #24 are currently providing, on average, more than 50% of the electrical power for each house.

Work is also progressing on the interior. After the roof and windows are in and the house is watertight, work can continue through the winter. Rough plumbing and electrical wiring should be in place by the end of the year, after which the interior walls can go up. The schedule calls for the house to be completed by next April.

Students from Amherst College, UMass, and Mount Holyoke are contributing their labor, as they did for the first two houses at the site.





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Saturday Dec 5th 9-4 pm
at the Amherst College Alumni House

Local artists invite you to come to the craft fair
with the feeling of a Holiday Open House.

Free, but all donations to benefit Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity!!



A GOOD Day's Work

Peter Jessop sent some of his staff from Integrity Design & Development and Cowls donated their boomtruck with an operator for the day to set the trusses on the Habitat home under construction at 14 Stanley Street, Amherst. While many hands make work light — a strategically donated boomtruck can work wonders. We can now have peace of mind that the roof will be on before the snow falls.

**OUR DEEPEST THANK YOU TO COWLS BUILDING
SUPPLY AND INTEGRITY DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT**