

Dedicating the Bowler-Santiago Home



*Kelly Bowler with her Habitat mentor, Jim Harvey.
Photo courtesy of Nick Ferrari*

Saturday July 24th was a beautiful warm and sunny day. Many guests parked and walked toward #2 Garfield Avenue to attend the dedication of the first home planned for this site: a large lot framed by walls of green deciduous trees.

Sandy Belden, President of Pioneer Valley Habitat, welcomed us to this joyous ceremony. No matter how often one attends dedications, it's always heartwarming to be with volunteers, partner families with children, supporters of our affiliate--who all want to celebrate what has been accomplished. Reverend Peter Kakos, Pastor of Edwards Church, prayed the Invocation, asking God to fill this home with love, peace, and happiness. Though Edwards Church has helped Habitat (and the Northampton Survival Center) for years, 2010 is a milestone for them. They launched a capital campaign to which many parishioners responded. The result was a major gift that paid for the foundation at #2 Garfield!

After the familiar Dedication Song with guitar accompaniment, mentor Jim Harvey introduced the family. Jim expressed his admiration for Kelly's resourcefulness and determination. She had continually hunted for baby sitters who could care for her children--daughter Dezalyne and son Carlito--so that she could work on the house and fulfill her sweat equity commitment. It took five years! But the long wait is about to end. Soon the Bowler-Santiago family will move into their home.

The guests had the privilege of hearing Mayor Mary-Clare Higgins whose theme was The Long Journey to Garfield. Many newsletter readers know that Northampton's mayors have often given Habitat land for affordable housing. Sometimes there's a delay between the time of the gift and the moment when PVH volunteers begin working on the new site. Garfield Avenue is a case in point. The city took over the large lot from a private owner several years ago! Mayor Higgins said that three successive mayors kept their eyes on it until the conditions were right for Habitat to begin this project. Five Habitat homes will be built—including the two home (zero lot line) home that looks like a duplex but is two single family homes. (Readers who want to learn more about this type of construction can re-read Betty von Klemperer's article in the March newsletter of this year.)

Steve Ferrari spoke next, representing the Garfield Build Team. Those of us on chairs noticed a group of construction experts standing together at the back: Peter Jessop, Aaron Walker, and others. Steve praised our Mayor's continuing efforts for low income housing and also the **Smith Vocational School** students who worked through this academic year on their second PVH project--through all kinds of weather they did a great job! Thanks went also to George Hollywood (who easily puts in 25-30 hours a week!), Irene Fradet, and Pat Falvey--who is always ready to join our builders.

Then it was time to bless the home. Jim Harvey filled in for Kelly's Pastor who was out of town. Kelly was invited to come up front to receive the traditional gifts: a Bible, the repair manual, a sampler to decorate a wall, and an expandable file for storing important papers (something new for the tradition). Tears of joy filled Kelly's eyes when she expressed her thanks. It was a beautiful moment. MJ congratulated Kelly for "keeping her shoulder behind the boulder". This compliment referred, doubtless, to her sweat equity and also to the big push Kelly made to close on her house financially, just in time. Everyone was touched and happy to hear MJ's final sentence: "A whole city has been working together here, full of love, joy and peace".



Bowler-Santiago Home Dedication

Photo courtesy of Nick Ferrari

We Are Ready to Build in Montague

The permit is approved and we are preparing to begin building on Warner Street in the Montague City area of Montague, not far from the Farren Care Center. The challenges of the layout of the site were formidable, including wetlands and access issues. Our thanks go to **Mark Annis** and **Chuck Dauchy** for their surveying and wetland work. Carl Geupel, Gloria McPherson, and Luke Goodridge of our Site Selection Committee, along with Executive Director MJ Adams, worked through many alternative designs and deserve our gratitude for their patience and perseverance.

We have a permit to build a single family home. We may explore adding additional homes to this site, but the cost of the added infrastructure may push the cost beyond what our Habitat homeowners could afford.

The home will be a one and a half story cape with three bedrooms and will be built in partnership with students from the **Franklin County Technical School**. The students will work during the week, with PVH volunteers working on Saturday and Sunday. The Tech School students also worked with PVH in the building of two homes on L Street in Turners Falls. The partnership is great for both groups -- the students get to build a real house and we benefit from their labor. This is especially true in the plumbing, electrical, and HVAC areas, which few of our volunteers are licensed to do.

The land for this project was made available to us by **Our Lady of Peace Church** in Turners Falls. The land had been given to them some time ago, and **Father Stan Aksamit** suggested that building Habitat homes would be a good use for the property. In addition, **The First Baptist Church** in Greenfield contributed a legacy gift of \$15,000 toward the building of the next Habitat home in Franklin County. And a grant of \$5,000 from the Xeric Foundation will help Pioneer Valley Habitat get the foundation in.

This gives us a start, but many more funds will have to be raised to bring this project to fruition. Plans are being made for several events in the next few months.

We are very glad to be back working in Franklin County! We hope many of our Franklin County supporters and volunteers will share our enthusiasm and lend a hand.

—Doris McLeod

Habitat for Humanity in Haiti

The fifth anniversary of Hurricane Katrina recently passed, and more than six months have gone by since a devastating earthquake shook Haiti. Recovery efforts at the scene of both disasters continue apace, with the active participation of Habitat For Humanity.

Working with twenty-one Gulf Coast affiliates, Habitat has constructed 2219 new homes in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Texas. In addition, 994 homes were repaired through Habitat's partnerships. Habitat volunteers, including many from the Valley, helped clear and remove debris from more than 2500 homes in preparation for rehabilitation. In May 2008, 5000 volunteers joined the Jimmy and Rosalyn Carter Work project at sites along the Gulf Coast. Those efforts helped more than 250 families move closer to living in a secure home once again. **Whirlpool Corporation** has exceeded its commitment to Habitat by \$9 million in product donations.

As reported in the June newsletter, Habitat's effort in Haiti consists of three stages. In the first stage of the response, more than 21,000 emergency shelter kits of tools and needed supplies were distributed to displaced families. Now in the second stage, families are being helped to remove or recycle debris from their home sites; unaffected families are being organized to host victims of the quake; and transitional shelters are being constructed using materials that can be reused or recycled into permanent housing. Habitat's upgradeable transitional shelters have a permanent foundation and represent the beginning of a permanent home. As of July 12th, more than 400 such shelters had been constructed. In the third and final stage of the response, permanent homes will be constructed. The goal is to help 50,000 earthquake-affected families improve their shelter conditions.

Habitat is also conducting structural damage assessments of affected houses in order to advise families whether their home is livable, needs repair, or should be demolished. Two thousand of these assessments are already complete. The goal is to assess 15,000 houses by the end of the year.

PVH is truly grateful to the following attorneys who graciously provided their services pro-bono during recent Habitat Home sales:

David Bloomberg
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Michael Bulman
of Amherst

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of Bacon and Wilson

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photographs of the Bowler Dedication

State Ballot Question 2 – what does this have to do with Habitat?

Question 2 on the Massachusetts ballot this November 2nd would repeal the state's primary affordable housing law, the Chapter 40B Comprehensive Permit Act. We urge you to vote "No." We need to protect the affordable housing law for our seniors and working families. Pioneer Valley Habitat has relied on this law to help permitting for our Habitat homes on Westhampton Road and Garfield Avenue in Northampton.

The affordable housing law sets a goal for each and every city and town to have at least 10% of its homes to be affordable to low income households (senior and families). It encourages construction of new homes by allowing for a single comprehensive permit and flexible zoning for developers who build affordable homes (like Habitat).

Pioneer Valley Habitat's five-home construction project in Florence is one example of the housing opportunities made possible by the affordable housing law. 40B permits allow cities like Northampton to fit new homes into "smart growth" urban neighborhoods. They also provide rural and suburban towns with the zoning tools they need to create housing for seniors and first time homebuyers, and to join with urban centers in building a regional approach to affordable housing.

Here are some facts about the law:

- Over the last decade, this law has been responsible for approximately **80% of the affordable homes built** outside of the Commonwealth's major cities.
- More than **58,000 homes have been created** for working families, seniors, and disabled individuals across the state.
- A repeal would immediately halt the construction of 12,000 homes in the pipeline—not to mention all of the jobs and economic benefits they would bring.

If you'd like more information visit the website www.protectaffordablehousing.org. And please remember in November, Vote "NO on 2" to protect the affordable housing law.

**Join us Nov. 14th at 4 pm
for a Partner Family
Information Meeting**

Community Room at
Greenfield Savings Bank
Avenue A, Turners Falls

Don't forget—
Volunteer Orientation happens on
the first Thursday and third
Saturday of every month.



PVH is on Facebook!
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Monica Borgatti Works on Raising Funds and Friends for Pioneer Valley Habitat

Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity has a new member to fill a new position. Monica M. Borgatti has been named Resource Development Director. She was chosen because of her rigorous and professional training and experience. Successful philanthropy requires more than good will: nonprofit organizations need the same communications, managerial, and entrepreneurial skills that are found in for-profit organizations.

Monica has always been attracted by the helping professions. At eleven, she wanted to be a doctor. Since then she has picked up volunteer work when she could. But her three years at UMass Amherst didn't lead where she'd hoped, and in 1998 she took off for a semester that grew into eight years. During this period she worked at various jobs, including renting vacation homes on Cape Cod and working as an auctioneer. Finally, as she was working for a for-profit heating and plumbing company, she realized she was helping no one in particular: "I didn't feel that I was making any difference."

Then she heard about Bay Path College's new graduate program in Nonprofit Management and Philanthropy. She entered it after finishing college at Bay Path *summa cum laude*. The program includes courses on managing volunteers, grant writing, and global communications--which involved week-long trips to China and India. Monica is now taking her last class, an advanced seminar on management which examines difficult problems from different perspectives.

In our Habitat office Monica deals with various aspects of development: fundraising, public relations, and faith-based ventures. She sees how these are interconnected and how connections depend on effective communication. She likes the concreteness of the problems she deals with: on her first day with Habitat she rolled up her sleeves did construction work on the Garfield site. She finds the non-profit world very real and rewarding.



—Elizabeth von Klemperer



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Start thinking about the holiday giving season a little early this year.

We want to help you get your shopping done early - PVH has a few good ideas for you to consider.

ALTERNATIVE GIVING.

PVH offers the ultimate gift - "The Gift that Gives Twice." This gift emphasizes relationships rather than material goods. When we receive your donation to PVH in honor of a friend or loved one will send them a card noting the materials (studs, sheetrock, kitchen cabinets...) your gift provided to help us construct a new home. We'll be sure to include a flyer about this giving option with our November newsletter.

Magical Night of Giving.

By purchasing a \$5 ticket you will gain access to special discounts and raffles at the Holyoke Mall on November. 21st from 6-9:30pm. Over 40 stores have already signed up to participate and more are joining every day. Buy your ticket now by contacting the PVH office at 413-586-5430. 100% of the revenue from our ticket sales will benefit the work of Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity.

A Fourth and Final Home Moves Forward

Work is now under way at #10 Stanley Street in Amherst, on the fourth and final home of the Pioneer Valley Habitat building project. The land for all four homes has been donated by **Amherst College**. By the end of August, the foundation had been laid. Several work parties have been held to compact the foundation and prepare for pouring the slab, which is expected to take place during

the second week of September. The building crew hopes to be able to enclose the house prior to the onset of cold weather and snow. Volunteer workers are welcome.

The partner family who will occupy #10 Stanley Street has been selected. The Keenan Family will join the Perry, Cancio-Bello, and Lamberg families who are already living in the first three homes.



Friends help to raise the walls at Phyllis Keenan's new Habitat home.