



Hilton Head Regional Habitat for Humanity

Patricia Carey Wirth, Executive Director

October 2005

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Hilton Head Regional Habitat for Humanity

***womenBUILD*, 2006 Begins Planning for January Construction**

The women of southern Beaufort County will join forces on January 15, 2006, at 8:00 am, wearing tool belts, hammers in hand, to build the second Habitat for Humanity house in Beaufort County to be funded and built by women! Nationwide, more than 500 houses have been built by the **womenBUILD** project.

womenBUILD will provide local women the opportunity to participate in a women-led initiative to:

Address the affordable housing crisis in the Hilton Head Island/Bluffton area and show that women from all backgrounds can join together and actively work to solve this problem.

Support the mission of Hilton Head Regional Habitat for Humanity for Humanity by creating even more home ownership opportunities for families in need.

Participate in all aspects of home construction in a supportive, empowering environment. This experience will increase the number of women needed to meet the organization's growing construction goals.

Women who are committed to providing a simple, decent place to live for a local family will begin work on January 15, 2006 and will gather again to dedicate the house on Saturday, May 7, 2006 the day before Mother's Day.

Founded in 1990, Hilton Head Regional Habitat for Humanity is a nonprofit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry that has built sixty-two simple, decent houses in the Hilton Head/Bluffton area, providing affordable housing to over 250 people in need. In the next few years, 14 new houses will join the 47 homes already built in Brendan Woods in Bluffton.

Habitat for Humanity International's co-founder, Millard Fuller, has explained the cooperation of various groups of people working together to eliminate poverty housing as "The Theology of the Hammer", saying, "With God's help and more people embracing this life saving mission, Habitat will keep on hammering until all of Humanity can proclaim that no one, no where, no child, no family, no grandparent any longer must live in unsafe, unhealthy housing."

For more information on how you or your organization can join with other women in the Hilton Head Island/Bluffton area to build the first **womenBUILD** Habitat house in Brendan Woods, call Susan Sommer at 757-5864.

Americorps Update ... Susan Sommer Americorps Member

I am thankful to be back at work with Hilton Head Regional Habitat for Humanity. It is wonderful to swing my twenty-two ounce framing hammer again, to cover myself in sheetrock mud and then paint, to get soaking wet when I clean up with the hose at the end of the morning (I never fail to drench myself, somehow). I love hauling lumber and laying sod, and I can't wait to dig some more ditches. I am not kidding! I can't explain in sufficient words how important this work is to me. Two weeks ago, after it rained and the Third Phase was lake and mud, I was walking around in my sneakers getting good and dirty, and I had a vision of myself as I used to be –wearing a suit and fancy shoes. To pull on well-worn shorts and a T-shirt and banged up tennies every day is a far better thing I do than dressing for court. If you see me smiling, and I do every day, you'll know why.



From August 27 to September 3, 2005, Tuck Daniels (my husband!) and I led a team of twelve good folks to Eagle Butte, South Dakota. We helped build a Habitat house there through the Global Village Program of Habitat for Humanity International. Global Village builds around the world as well as here in the United States. The mission of Global Village is to work with folks of different cultures and to build bridges between people as well as to build homes and hope. Eleven of our team members were volunteers with Hilton Head Regional HfH. Three others came because of volunteers here whom they know.

We had an excellent build and accomplished more than the folks of Okiciyapi Tipi Habitat for Humanity, on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation, thought we would. They build there using SIPS technology, Structural Integrated Panel Styrofoam. With the help of a large crane, and an old telephone pole strapped to it by a thick chain, our team put the SIPS roof panels in place the

first and second day. We also built interior walls, cleaned and organized the work trailer, wrapped and sided the house, and installed windows and exterior doors. We got as much work done for them as we could given the supplies on hand. In our free time, we herded bison while riding a pick-up truck, experienced a sweatlodge (part of Lakota spirituality), and attended a Pow-Wow and rodeo. Our group had a wonderful time working and relaxing together. We ate well, too, from Belgian crepes in the mornings, compliments of Henry Diercxsens, to Bison Roast one evening, prepared by Chef Daniels. Many thanks to all of you who supported us in this mission.

September found us back at work with the Realtor Blitz Build, the 15th through the 17th. In three days, realtors from the area and the State framed two houses, which they also funded. Talk about hard workers! The heat was horrible, and yet these good folks worked eight-hour days through humidity that could drown a person. At the end of the Realtors Build, two homeowner families had houses standing where there were only slabs three days earlier.

WomenBuild 2006 is underway with a planning committee and the goal of fundraising in mind. Because this house isn't supported by a particular group, fundraising is a challenge. If we have enough money by mid-December, then the kick-off for the WomenBuild 2006 house will be January 15, 2006. We plan to dedicate the house May 7th, the day before Mother's Day. Come on out and join us, you wonderful women! This last WomenBuild 2005 was an incredible experience. We learned a lot about building and about ourselves and each other. It is both empowering and humbling to build a house and be there when the family comes home.



Tuck Daniels and I are working on a plan to build a “house-in-a-box” with an affiliate along the Gulf Coast. The Hilton Head Regional Board of Directors gave our proposal the “go-ahead”. My next step is to find an affiliate in Mississippi, Alabama, or Louisiana who needs our help in rebuilding. Our goal is to not only prebuild the exterior and interior walls here, but to also ship those walls and all the other materials needed to finish the house through the mudding and taping stage to the Gulf Coast affiliate and then take two work crews there and get the house built in two weeks. This is a work in progress, and at present I have no idea when we’ll begin building. The Gulf Coast still is cleaning up from Hurricane Katrina, and until title to land is cleared and infrastructure is in place, we won’t be able to start the construction of our “house-in-a-box.” We plan to be prepared, though, for the moment an affiliate contacts us and says they are ready to begin.

The Americorps program has afforded me the opportunity to share another year in service to Habitat for Humanity. I am constantly grateful for this gift of good work I have been given. This Americorps term is as exciting and challenging as the last. My goal this year is to learn how to truly love my neighbor – I want to do more than just the physical building of houses; I want to build on the relationships with the volunteers and the good folks who become homeowners here. I have been given the place to do that: the neighborhood of Brendan Woods. Now I have to open my heart and really *see* what this mission is about.

From the Volunteer Coordinator’s Corner ... Lois Wilkinson

The best recruiters of new volunteers are the volunteers themselves. Meet the Kelly’s.....

Although these six Kelly’s are not all related to each other, they share a common dedication to Hilton Head Regional Habitat for Humanity. Habitat reaps the benefits of their many hours of service building houses, raising money and supporting new homebuyers.

Gerry Kelly, a diminutive dynamo started the Kelly involvement. She has been hooked on Habitat since she retired in 1997. She has served on the board of directors for seven years during which she was a Support Partner for two homebuyers and helped raise funds to get a house built by Rose Hill Plantation. When the resale store was opened, Gerry was in at the start and continues because of her love of interacting with the customers and volunteers. She strongly believes in the mission of Habitat for Humanity to build simple, decent housing for hardworking people in our community and shares her love with friends and acquaintances encouraging them to volunteer whenever and wherever they can.

“Mr. Gerry”, her husband George, became a Habitat volunteer when their church, St. Andrew’s Catholic Church, joined with the Church of the Cross to sponsor a house. He has worked on building six Habitat houses and supported two single-father families in the home buying process. He is always available for help at the resale store. He continues to volunteer because he enjoys the fellowship of the other volunteers and the gratifying feeling of watching the joy of the families moving into their new homes.

Paul and Patricia Kelly of Callawassie Island became involved in construction when their community sponsored their first house in 2000. Paul has continued to build two days a week and loves to be involved in all phases of carpentry, insulation, hanging sheetrock, painting and laying sod. He enjoys learning and using new skills and he has put in over 200 hours thus far in 2005. Paul, a retiree from J.P. Morgan, makes excellent use of his company’s matching funds policy, which has provided funding for Hilton Head Regional Habitat for Humanity on several occasions for each of the many hours Paul has donated. For his efforts at Habitat, Paul was awarded the prestigious Retiree of the Year award from J.P. Morgan. Patricia was drafted by Gerry Kelly to work the register and help customers at the resale store and also worked on the second Callawassie house by fund raising, pre-building and providing refreshments for coffee break. Patricia feels that everyone in the world has at least one talent and should contribute that talent in some way to benefit others. Both like the people they work with and know that their work is essential to the success of the Habitat mission.

Frank Kelly, Paul’s brother, and his wife Anne are Rose Hill residents who became aware of Brendan Woods, the 62 home Habitat community being built in Bluffton, when their community sponsored a house. Frank was encouraged by Paul to come and build at Brendan Woods and he encouraged his son and daughter-in-law to volunteer during their vacation. Anne got hooked on working at the resale store after hearing Gerry Kelly talk about it. She particularly enjoys meeting and helping the local residents find their special treasure. She continues to enjoy the volunteers she works with because they are “helpful, fun and truly giving of themselves”.