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# Fall 2016 Newsletter

## You have changed these families' lives with your donations!

*"The security of having our home will allow us to give back to others, and the surprising relief financially has been overwhelming!"*

Jon and Jennifer Ayers and their adorable 4-year old daughter, Amelia, moved into their new Green Mountain Habitat built home in early August and were all unpacked when I met with them two weeks later. Jenn loves to decorate and has done so beautifully with furniture donated by family including a dining table that belonged to a grandfather. "We are looking forward to being able to have friends and family over for dinner now that we have a big table and more space," said Jen. In their small apartment they only had a tiny table and a tiny kitchen so dinner gatherings were a challenge.



**Jon, Jennifer and Amelia Ayers on the front porch of their new home at Harrington Village.**

"Moving into our home has been a series of epiphanies for me", said Jenn, "We got the keys to our home on Friday, friends and family helped us to move in on Saturday, and we cleaned out our old apartment on Sunday. Jon's parents gave us a washer and dryer and our new home came with a dishwasher, something we had never had before. On Sunday night I had the washer and dishwasher going and I was overwhelmed with gratitude. It really is the American Dream."

Little Amelia chimed in with her favorite things about the new house, the first being that it has two toilets! Another is that she has her own room and there is space under her bed to have a cave to play in with her flashlight. She also likes the blueberry and raspberry plants that they planted before moving in. And she appreciates all the storage, not something a 4 year old would usually notice, but Amelia is a very observant little girl. Jen confirmed that storage in their new home is amazing and that it took time and energy to find storage in their old cramped apartment.

Jen shared that she feels that she has more capacity, more peace and is more "emotionally available" now that the stress is gone. Jon added, "God has blessed Jen and I with people who pour into our lives and so many people who helped to make this home possible. The security of having our home will allow us to give back to others, and the surprising relief financially has been overwhelming. We are so grateful! Our time and resources have been freed up to do more as a family."

## "With this opportunity, we can broaden our prospects and move up."



**Elise Doner, standing in front of her future home in Milton**

Elise, Head Start teacher, wife and mother of two, is shown in the doorway of her soon-to-be home in Milton. She recently said "This housing opportunity means the world to us. Literally, the world, as it expands our prospects, our safety, our security, and the well-being of our family. Owning your own home is the American Dream, which is sadly far out of reach for many. By being given this opportunity, we can broaden our prospects and move up, instead of staying in the same low-income track of hazardous housing and being at the mercy of land lords who have stopped caring about their properties but still want the rent."

Thanks to your donations, Elise, Dwayne and their two sons (one son is shown in his new room in the photo above) will be moving into their new home around the time this newsletter is printed.



## Thank you for making the dream of homeownership possible for families in our community.

Please send in your donation in the enclosed envelope to GMHFH, 300 Cornerstone Drive, Suite 335, Williston, VT 05495, or on our secure website [www.vermonthabitat.org](http://www.vermonthabitat.org)

**Does your employer match employee donations?** – Some employers match employee donations to non-profits. If your company does that, please be sure to enclose the appropriate form when you send us your donation so that we can submit it to your employer for their matching contribution. Thank you!

**Leave a Legacy** – Please consider helping families in the future by leaving a gift to Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity in your will or estate plans. Thank you!

## Help us to reach more people

If you would like us to speak to your company, your organization or church, we would be grateful for the opportunity. Contact David at [dmullin@vermonthabitat.org](mailto:dmullin@vermonthabitat.org) or Catherine at [cstevens@vermonthabitat.org](mailto:cstevens@vermonthabitat.org) and we'll schedule a time.

## Volunteer Opportunities

- Habitat ReStore Volunteers needed—call 802-318-7533 to speak with Allison or e-mail her at [ADevoe@vermonthabitat.org](mailto:ADevoe@vermonthabitat.org). Allison also schedules teams to volunteer on our construction sites.
- Build site volunteers needed for Harrington Village in Shelburne this fall and winter! Please go to [www.vermonthabitat.org/get-involved](http://www.vermonthabitat.org/get-involved) to sign up.
- Join a committee or the Board of Directors. Contact David Mullin at [dmullin@vermonthabitat.org](mailto:dmullin@vermonthabitat.org) or 872-8726 for information.

**Thank you!**

## Volunteering to help build homes got her through a challenging time and gave her the idea for her own business

Ashwinee Kulkarni had never helped to build a home, or done any construction, until she volunteered at the GMHfH Harrington Village site last year. She was going through a rough time and thought that volunteering might be helpful.

"It was cool the first day I volunteered because it was the first day for any volunteers at the second Harrington Village duplex, and only the foundation of the house was there. We started out by organizing the site and then we started hammering floor boards. It was amazing to see that a couple I know, Jon and Jenn Ayers, were the future homeowners of one of the homes we were helping to build! Mike and Brad were great teachers and broke us into smaller groups for different tasks." said Ashwinee.

"I had never used power tools but after having clear instructions I started using a chop saw and I loved it! I think gender stereotypes can sometimes make women feel there are certain things that they can't do or make them feel intimidated by things like construction or using tools. There's nothing inherently masculine about using a chop saw or about doing construction. The GMHfH supervisors accommodate to your comfort level and your experience, and you don't have to do anything you don't want to do."

"The first day was so much fun that I signed up for every Saturday after that, from July to October. I work full time at the Department of Health so Saturdays were the only day that I could volunteer. I've already signed up to volunteer this summer at the new Richmond house build and am trying to organize a team from work to volunteer as a group."

Ashwinee said, "The best part was attending the home dedication for the Ayers and Regmi families in June. I'm so happy for the two families who will move into their new homes and proud that I had a part in making that happen."



Not only is Ashwinee now addicted to volunteering, the experience with learning how to use tools also gave her an idea for a small business in addition to her full-time job. "I've been upcycling old wood and other items headed for landfills into furniture. I've been giving my first pieces to friends but I want to start selling them at affordable prices. My goal is to reduce my carbon footprint by taking old wood and other items, making homemade stains and conditioners from products purchased locally like olive oil, coffee, vinegar and beeswax, and building unique, upcycled pieces."

"Volunteering not only got me through a challenging time of life, but it allowed me to learn to do new things while helping others", concluded Ashwinee. "And, it enabled me to develop a business idea to turn old wood into useful items at a low cost as well as a little or no carbon footprint. Who knew that learning to use a chop saw could have such results!"

## Updates from our Partner Families



- Congratulations to Betty & Slim! You probably remember reading about Betty Button and her two grandchildren who moved into their Habitat built home in Milton last year. We're delighted to announce that Betty Button and Slim Botala were married at the house in July.
- Katie Palmer, who moved into her Habitat built home in 2011, proudly announced that her oldest son is now starting college!

## What will YOU help to build in 2017?



Your donations will help at least 4 families to become homeowners in Richmond, Burlington and Essex Junction in 2017. Each of those families will be working but unable to qualify for a conventional mortgage; will be living in substandard housing and will be willing to partner with Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity including putting in 400 hours of sweat equity helping to build their homes. YOU will dramatically change their lives, helping them to have a healthier and safer home, lower energy bills, and on the way to strength, stability and self-reliance.

**Please continue to make it possible for families to own their own simple, decent, energy efficient and perpetually affordable home by sending in your donation today!**

## A World in Which Everyone Has a Decent Place to Live: How to Leave a Legacy

We recently heard from a donor who said, "I'm working on my will and would like to leave something to Green Mountain Habitat. Can you please provide me with the information I need for my documents?"

This is sample copy that you could use in your will or living trust if you wish to leave a gift to Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity:

"I give, devise and bequeath to Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity of Williston, VT the sum of \$\_\_\_\_ (or a description of the specific asset)." Our federal Tax ID # is 22-2558923."

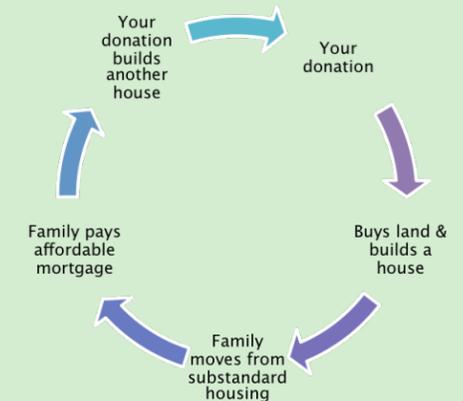
For the families in the future that your legacy will help, no matter the amount, we thank you for including Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity in your will or living trust. You will be making a dramatic improvement in the lives of local low-income working families in the future.



You are a hero to local, low-income working families, making it possible for them to leave unsafe, overcrowded and expensive apartments and to move into their own decent, perpetually affordable and energy efficient home. Each Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity family has been living with lots of stress about high rent, unsafe conditions, cold rooms and no hope of improving their situation no matter how hard they work. The children are moved from bad apartment to bad apartment leaving schools and friends behind.

Your amazing donation changes that! When each family becomes a Habitat Partner Family the parents start building equity in their home, have more disposable income because they pay less on energy, no longer worry about the health of their family in an unsafe or overcrowded apartment. They become part of their new community, their children do better in school and the family becomes more stable and self-sufficient all thanks to you, our donors.

## How Your Donations Are Used



**LAND For Sale**

Did you know that we purchase the land where we build homes? Some people imagine that the land is given to us but, unfortunately, that isn't the case. We are looking for building lots for sale in Chittenden County and would appreciate hearing from you about available land. Please call or e-mail David Mullin, Executive Director, at 872-8726 or DMullin@vermonthabitat.org.

