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Spring 2016 Newsletter

Our basement apartment floods every year, there is mold in the carpeting and the windows are old. But we had no options.



Dwayne, Rubin, Elise and Finn, beneath a photo of Elise's late father, Rev. Gary McLam. He and Elise's mother were very active with social justice causes including feeding the poor, housing the homeless, counseling teens and runaways. Rev. McLam "loved Jimmy Carter and would be thrilled that we are a part of this program." said Elise.

Elise and Dwayne Doner have lived in the unsafe basement apartment of a split level house for 16 years because they had no other options. The owner of the house lived in the upstairs apartment when they moved in but he got married and moved out and seemed to stop caring about his tenants and the condition of the house. Their young sons Rubin and Finn have only known that home.

Every year the apartment floods and when Hurricane Irene struck, they had standing water in their apartment. Elise found her youngest son standing in water and he was afraid that he had caused the flood by spilling a glass of water! The flooding is due in part to a cracked foundation which the landlord has refused to repair. The windows are old and allow water to come in the sides of the windows and also make the apartment cold. The family's only source of heat is electric baseboards and they also need to run a dehumidifier constantly so their electric bill is high all year round. Because of all the flooding, the carpeted floors are moldy.

You might be wondering why the family didn't complain to the town. Elise said "We felt that we didn't have any options. We don't have family to live with and we have no nest egg. We worried that if we complained to someone that the apartments would be closed and we wouldn't be able to find another place to live in our town. My husband walks to work because we only have one car and I need that to get to work."

Elise is a Head Start teacher at Cambridge Elementary and Dwayne does food production for "It's Arthur's Fault", a sauces and marinades company in Jericho.

When asked what they were most looking forward to in their new home, the responses came quickly!

Elise responded, "My mother is disabled and can't make it down the steep stairs to our apartment but she will be able to come to our new home. Plus, our energy bills will be low and our home won't be flooded!"

"We'll have a home that people can come to, we'll have pride in our home and privacy, no longer having to worry about who's living in the apartment upstairs", replied Dwayne.

Rubin and Finn are excited that they will see sunlight in their new home!

Dwayne said that the process of applying for a Green Mountain Habitat built home has been exciting as they met with the Family Selection committee, filled out applications and provided lots of documentation. "We were so excited and filled with hope and anticipation that we might actually be selected for the Milton house."

The Doners are really looking forward to helping to build their home although Elise is from a "non DIY" family. Her father was a minister and didn't do carpentry but Dwayne's grandfather was a carpenter and his father has many years of experience as an electrical technician and Dwayne is looking forward to the opportunity to learn new skills while working on their home. "We'll be able to have control in our new home with the ability to fix things rather than hope that a landlord will take care of problems.

"We have hope, now, about the wellbeing of our family" said Elise. "Owning our own home will mean the opportunity to climb out of poverty, to have equity, to have a base to spring forward from and a haven to return to, for years and generations to come."



Mold in their apartment bathroom which "no matter how hard we scrub, it never goes away."

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 donate online at www.vermonthabitat.org.

"Supersize" your donation – 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 a group at your business, church or other group, we would be grateful for the opportunity. Contact David at dmullin@vermonthabitat.org or Catherine at cstevens@vermonthabitat.org and we'll schedule a time.

Volunteer Opportunities

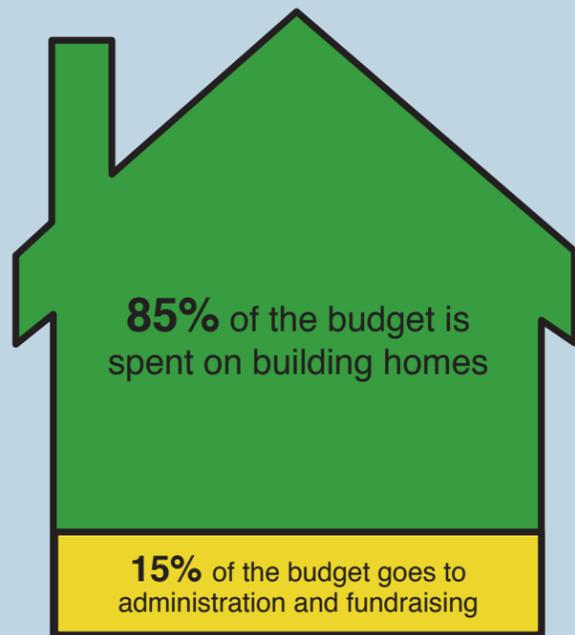
- Habitat ReStore Volunteers needed—call 802-318-7533 to speak with Jen or e-mail her at jpelkey@vermonthabitat.org. Jen also schedules teams to volunteer on our construction sites.
- Build site volunteers needed for this year's home builds. Please go to www.vermonthabitat.org/get-involved to sign up.

Thank you!

Where do your donations go?

You have probably read about a few charities who spend a good deal of their budgets on hiring outside fundraising consultants, lots of staff and even trips to exotic meeting locations for the Board of Directors! The Vermont Attorney General investigated non-profits who hire outside fundraisers who return a small percentage of the money raised to the non-profit, keeping a high percentage for themselves.

Rest assured that Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity uses 85% of the money we receive for actual program expenses, e.g. building homes for low-income working families in our community, using only 15% to fundraise and to manage our work. We have only three employees, our executive director, our advancement director and our bookkeeper. We raise money from individuals like you and philanthropic grants to buy land, provide infrastructure (utilities, permits, etc), purchase building materials and equipment, pay skilled tradespeople (electricians, plumbers, contractors to dig and pour foundations) to do the work that our wonderful volunteers can't do and the other myriad costs to build simple, decent, energy-efficient homes.



From a Refugee camp in Nepal to a Green Mountain Habitat home at Harrington Village in Shelburne

Imagine living in a refugee camp in Nepal for many years, in very tight quarters, far away from your birthplace in Bhutan and without much hope of a better life. But then imagine that you are able to move with your family to the United States, and now imagine that you are selected to become a Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity homeowner!

That whirlwind of change and opportunity has been made possible for the Regmi family thanks to you, our donors.

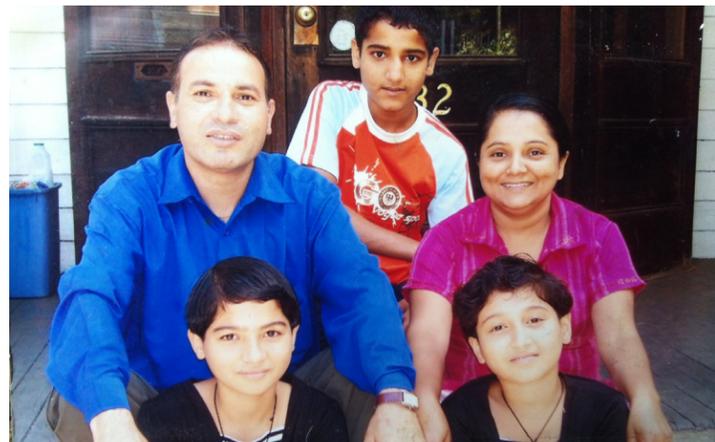
Shree and Chandra Regmi and their three children, son Suman, 22; and daughters Sunu, 19, and Suzen, 17, share a 2-bedroom apartment on Riverside Avenue in Burlington. Suman sleeps on the living room couch since there isn't a bedroom for him.

Chandra works at Autumn Harp in Essex, Shree has been working under a contract with IBM and Suman also works.

The Regmi family moved from Nepal in 2008 and initially moved to the Bronx, where they lived until 2012, when they moved to Burlington. Shree was amazed to find that rent in the Burlington area is the same as what they paid for their apartment in the Bronx! They had imagined that a more rural area would be less expensive and were discouraged by how expensive it is to live here.

Despite the fact that both Shree and Chandra work hard at their full-time jobs, they don't make enough to save for a down-payment to buy a house and don't qualify for a conventional mortgage. The opportunity to become homeowners through Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity was literally a dream come true. They started the process of applying for a GMH home in 2012 and will be moving into their new home next year.

Not only will their new home at Harrington Village have three bedrooms, so that their son will no longer have to sleep on the couch, but it will cost them the same each month for their mortgage, home owners' insurance and taxes as they currently pay for rent in Burlington!



The Regmi family, in front of their Bronx apartment in 2008, after emigrating from a refugee camp in Nepal.

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

Some people might say that the vision of "a world in which everyone has a decent place to live" is unrealistic, but you have demonstrated that you believe, with us, that it is possible. One Habitat home at a time.

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

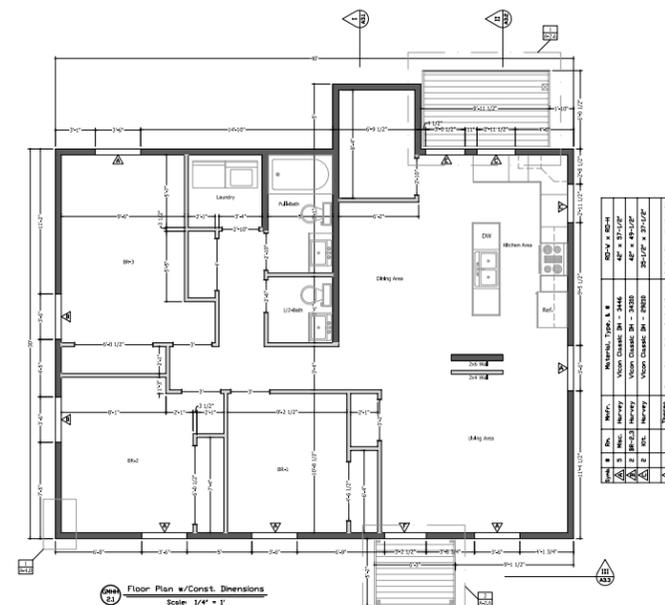
This is sample copy that you could use in your will or living trust if you wish to leave a gift to Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity:

"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.

What are we building with Your Donations in 2016?

In addition to finishing the second duplex at Harrington Village in Shelburne for the Ayers and Regmi families, and building the single family home in Milton for the Doner family, we are actively in the process of purchasing at least one more lot to build on this year and next year. If you know of building lots for sale in Chittenden County, please call or e-mail David Mullin, Executive Director, at 872-8726 or DMullin@vermonthabitat.org.



Energy Star Certified GMHfH Homes



Our construction chair, and Vice President of the Board, Dick Shasteen, works very hard to make the homes built for our partner families extremely energy efficient within a very tight budget. Why is it so important to have the homes rated as "Energy Star Certified" by Efficiency Vermont?

There are two very important reasons:

- The families will be healthier.
- The families will have lower energy costs which will help them have more money for medical coverage, food and other necessities.

"Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity has a longstanding commitment to improving air tightness in their homes. Since reduced air leakage is the number one way to save energy and improve comfort, GMHfH is doing great work to provide truly affordable housing. GMHfH's homes are energy efficient, draft-free and healthy."

Li Ling Young
Senior Energy Consultant
Efficiency Vermont

THANK YOU!

You improve the lives of local families when you donate to Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity. Each 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 and their children do better in school.

