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HABITAT HERALD

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Patrick and Angel (inset, left) completed 11 classes on homeownership before signing their mortgage. Now their daughters (left) will have room to grow in the house their dad helped rehab. Above, volunteers helped with the final landscaping to turn the house into a home.

Loving parents partner with Habitat to give children stable home

When Angel and Patrick’s kids open presents in their Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity home this Christmas, it will be a dream made true through two years of hard work.

Back in 2012, the family was spending more than half their money on rent each month. “Renting, you just don’t know what’s going to happen in the next year and it was much more stressful,” says Angel. “We were just throwing my husband’s hard earned money away rather than putting it

“You could see how much they wanted it and how much they were willing to do for it.”

Chad Formo, Site Supervisor

toward a home we could call our own.”

They knew something had to change in order for their four daughters to have a brighter future. Their journey to buying their rehabbed home in

Brooklyn Park wasn’t easy. Patrick works nights, so he squeezed in the hundreds of required sweat equity hours whenever he could.

Chad Formo, the Habitat Site Supervisor who oversaw the rehab of their home, says Patrick worked as hard as any homebuyer he’d ever encountered. “You could just see how much they wanted it and how much they were willing to do for it.”

Continues on 10 »

DEAR FRIENDS,



Sue Haigh (left) and Marilyn Carlson Nelson spoke at the sold-out Hearth & Hope Signature Luncheon in October. More than 250 women gathered to discuss affordable housing solutions for Minnesota. Nelson delivered a moving keynote on the role women can play in solving our greatest societal challenges. The luncheon raised nearly \$70,000 for Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity's mission. Be a part of Hearth & Hope. Find information at tchabitat.org/hearhandhope

The smile of a child is what giving at the holidays is all about.

I will forever remember my daughters' faces lighting up upon discovering that perfect present under the tree. So I offer holiday blessings to you, and your family, on behalf of all the children your support allowed us to help in 2014.

Thanks to your gifts this year, 175 more children are living in Twin Cities Habitat homes that their parents purchased. An additional 108 local children will sleep tonight in the warmer, more secure homes that A Brush with Kindness repaired this year. Since our founding in 1985, nearly 5,000 children have benefited from these core programs.

We are all benefiting as these children

Thanks to your gifts this year, 175 more children are living in Twin Cities Habitat homes that their parents purchased.

grow up, graduate, and contribute to the prosperity and diversity of our region. They are the future and, by supporting our work, you provide the foundation on which they can thrive.

But there is much work to do. Heading into 2015, we face an economy and housing market extremely tough for lower-income earners. Too many Twin Cities families are forced to put half or

more of their income toward rent each month. This isn't sustainable. It means nutritious food or needed prescriptions may become luxury items, to say nothing of a Christmas present.

Marilyn Carlson Nelson, Minnesota's most prominent global leader in business and philanthropy, says our affordable housing challenge requires a grand partnership between businesses, government, and nonprofits. I add caring and concerned individuals to this list. It will take all of us working together. Please continue to give and volunteer so that even more children can enjoy next year's holidays in a Habitat home.

Warmly,

Multitude of partnerships revitalizing St. Paul neighborhoods

Whether building one Habitat for Humanity home or trying to revitalize an entire neighborhood, the work goes better when more people help.

This all-in-together approach is paying off right now in St. Paul's Frogtown and Rondo neighborhoods, one area where Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity has focused efforts since the foreclosure crisis.

In the past three years, working in just a small cluster of blocks, Habitat for Humanity volunteers have built or rehabbed 11 homes and repaired 11 existing homes through *A Brush with Kindness*. The positive impact is noticeable, and both hope and neighborhood pride are on the rise.

All this work is thanks to an outpouring of support from businesses with strong St. Paul ties, local churches, and residents passionate about seeing their neighborhood become a better place to live. The community groups who've joined in these efforts include Frogtown Neighborhood Association, Frogtown Rondo Action Network, Frogtown Rondo Homefund, Community Stabilization Project, and the Aurora St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation.

Advocacy creates homes

More than 100 decent, affordable rental units will be created or preserved in the Frogtown and Rondo neighborhood thanks in part to the advocacy work of Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity's green-shirted Housing Heroes. During the last legislative session, they pushed lawmakers to approve bonding that will result in projects like BROWNstone (pictured, middle right) to be built in the coming years.



Above, Jowhar is excited to buy a Habitat home in Frogtown where he'll be able to ride the train to work and his kids will have a yard to play in. Jowhar built homes and made furniture in his native Ethiopia, so his sweat equity hours were extra valuable on site.



The Builder's Circle, Ecolab, Holy Hammers, and PCL were all primary sponsors of homes built in St. Paul's Frogtown neighborhood this summer. More than 1,500 St. Paul residents volunteered with Habitat for Humanity this year.

Thanks Thrivent!



Above: Volunteers onsite with Thrivent Financial Representative Diane Dworschak. In 2014, volunteers, donors and Thrivent members from more than 50 congregations contributed to four local homes through the Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity partnership. Over the years, Thrivent Financial has been a part of nearly 100 Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity homes.

Inset: Thrivent Financial CEO Brad Hewitt stopped by a repair project in St. Paul to personally thank volunteers and members. The Thrivent Builds Repairs program helped Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity partner with five low-income homeowners needing critical repairs this year.



Said and his son Ahmed worked alongside Thrivent volunteers and members to complete the family's new home in Coon Rapids. Said was so thankful to volunteers that his 'joy on site was contagious,' according his Site Supervisor.



Thrivent Members have Choice Dollars

If you're a Thrivent Member, make sure you're taking advantage of the Thrivent Choice program that lets you vote on which nonprofits are awarded Choice Dollars. You can help local families by voting your Choice Dollars toward Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity.

Visit thrivent.com/thriventchoice or call 1-800-847-4836.



Read Erv's entire Habitat story at tchabitat.org/erv

THANK YOU, ST. PAUL REGULARS!

The St. Paul Regular Crew has been going at it, building with Twin Cities Habitat, since 1993. Some members have worked on over 200 homes! They joke that they've broken in quite a few Site Supervisors over the years. Thank you, crew!

Front row (left to right): Bill Nye, John Meyer, Tom Rykken, Bill Barrett, Erv Barrett. Back row: Scott Nelsen, Wood Foster, Bryce Fier, Dutton Foster, David Kronmiller, Allan Cederberg, Lois Parsons, Rob Weum, Bill Skinner. Not pictured: Jane Hladky, Chuck Stewart, Russ Isbrandt, Bobby Gordon

Regular Crews work all over the seven-county metro. Send email to volunteer@tchabitat.org to learn how to join a crew.

Habitat 500

July 12-18

Supporting Twin Cities families is as easy as riding a bike!

This great event has riders coming back year after year so sign up now and reserve your spot. The 2015 route takes riders to some of the most beautiful spots in southeastern Minnesota.

Sign up at www.habitat500.org



Vietnam War Veteran Bob Karlstrand, who is dying from complications related to cancer, is giving the Maple Grove home he's owned since 1976 to Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity.

Dying Veteran

to donate home

In 1967, Bob Karlstrand graduated from high school and enlisted in the Air Force because he was just 17 years old and the Navy wouldn't take him.

At the height of the Vietnam War, he was stationed in Bangkok, Thailand handling logistics for B-52 bombers. “We’d coordinate everything they needed,” Bob remembers, “and they were flying 30 missions a day.” That’s a lot of weight to put on the shoulders of a 20-year-old.

In his time off, Bob toured Thailand. This was the start of a lifetime of traveling adventures. Bob has seen Machu Picchu in Peru and Angkor Wat in Cambodia, and he’s spent more than a month traveling by bus to the immense Iguazu Falls where Paraguay, Brazil, and Argentina come together. He’s volunteered in Guatemala and spent months crisscrossing China. Bob has seen the world, and now he is preparing to leave it.

With quiet dignity and powerful resolve, Bob explains how his colon cancer has spread to his lungs. It’s getting harder to breathe and walk. Doctors told him he has months, not years. He made the difficult decision not to renew his stamp-filled passport. He also had to decide what to do with the home he owns in Maple Grove. Bob never married and has no kids.

“The home cost \$37,900 in 1976,” Bob says. “It’s a good home; it could have four bedrooms. It’s in a quiet neighborhood.

My plan was to give it to a young couple or family that I’d gotten to know, but I don’t think I have time for that.”

That’s when Bob found Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity’s Veterans Initiative and decided he would donate his home.

Bob got in contact with Mike Nelson, Director of Land Development for Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity, and explained his situation. Mike agreed that the home would be a great fit for a family and arranged everything. Bob is going to stay in the home as long as his health allows him to. But he already dropped off his keys when he filled out the last of the paperwork.

Bob didn’t set out to get attention for this amazing act of kindness toward a family he will never know. When we asked if we could share his story in

Bob’s hope is that the next income-qualified Veteran’s family will purchase his house and make it their home for decades to come.

hopes of inspiring others to support our work with Veterans, he understood the motivation and agreed.

Veterans Initiative

Recognizing that Veterans are disproportionately affected by housing challenges, Twin Cities Habitat launched this initiative in 2012 and soon earned Yellow Ribbon accreditation. In the past three years, Twin Cities Habitat volunteers, working through *A Brush with Kindness*, have helped repair the homes of 34 Veterans and their families. In that same timeframe, four local Veteran families have completed the Homeownership Program and purchased Twin Cities Habitat homes.

Bob’s hope is that the next income-qualified Veteran’s family will purchase his house and make it their home for decades to come.

This year, The Home Depot Foundation made a \$200,000 grant to keep the ball rolling on our work with Veterans. That is translating into an additional 20 repair projects and hopefully two more Veterans families buying Habitat homes. Of course, even more money will allow us to do even more work. So if this is something you’d like to support, please contact us at 612-305-7127.



Volunteers from The Home Depot worked on a Veteran’s home in St. Paul during the National Day of Service on September 11. The Home Depot Foundation gave \$200,000 to support projects for Twin Cities Veterans.

Be a Housing Hero!

It's easy, empowering, and you can make a huge impact. Join us March 3 for Habitat on the Hill - MN 2015. Everybody matters. A big crowd will mean big results.

Also, be part of our April Challenge and spend one day at the State Capitol advocating for housing.

Take action now!
tchabitat.org/advocate



Save the Date!

Habitat on the Hill - MN Tuesday, March 3, 2015



Thank you, 2014 Home Sponsors

More than 1,000 families have purchased a Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity home!

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Thrivent Builds with Habitat
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Bluestem Brands, Inc.
Carlson & The Carlson Family Foundation
Entrepreneurs House
First Universalist Church of Minneapolis
Women Build (Hugh J. Andersen Foundation & Wells Fargo)

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Delta Air Lines
PCL Construction
Travelers

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Cargill
Ecolab
General Mills
Holy Hammers
St. Andrew's Lutheran Church
Three Bridge, Keyot & Boom Lab

SUSTAINING (\$40,000+)

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Learn more about sponsorship and volunteering opportunities at www.tchabitat.org.

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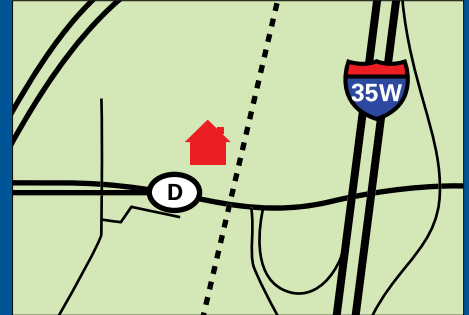
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Take part in lively conversations inspired by good books and thought-provoking movies.



See upcoming events at tchabitat.org/book

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HABITAT HERALD

Contributors to this issue: John Hagerman, Becky Engen, with design by Erin Ahlstrom and edited by Matt Haugen.

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To complete Habitat's required homebuyer classes, Angel would get help with childcare and Patrick would come straight from his overnight job to the morning sessions. They downed coffee as they learned what you need to know to succeed as a homeowner: family budgeting, home maintenance, how to be a good neighbor.

The paperwork, the sweat equity, the homeowner training—it all paid off when they finally signed their mortgage

and got the keys. Now, each mortgage payment they make will help Habitat build more homes and help them build a brighter future for their five children (Patrick Jr. was born last year).

We must all do our part to break the cycle of generational poverty. This holiday season, please extend a hand to another hardworking family by making a gift to Twin Cities Habitat for Humanity today.

Thank you, 2014 Builder's Circle!

The Builder's Circle recognizes individuals and family foundations who give more than \$1,000 annually. There were 530 members of this generous group who made gifts during fiscal year 2014. In order to be good stewards of our resources, we are displaying donors of \$5,000 and above here. For a full list, see our forthcoming Annual Report. To learn more about the benefits of membership within the Builder's Circle contact Lan Freitag at 612-305-7127.

\$250,000-\$500,000

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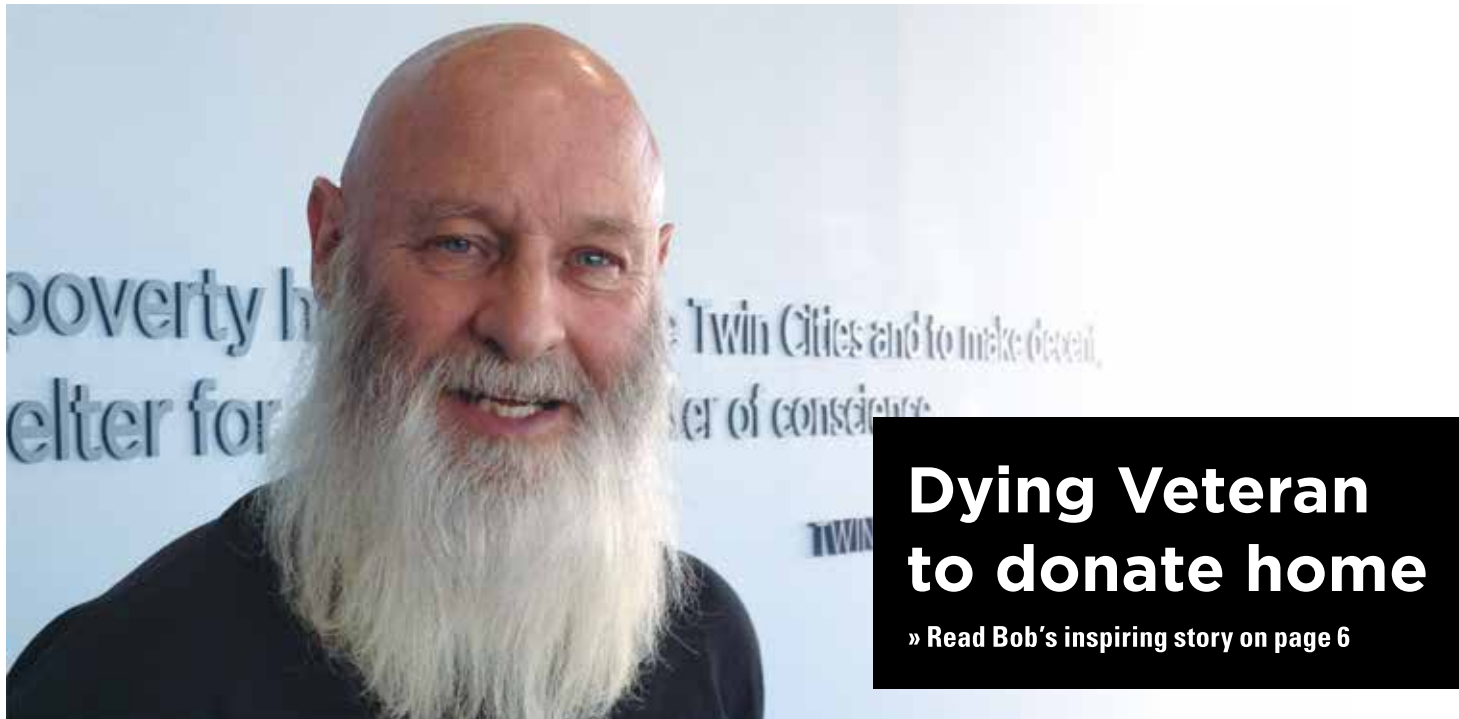
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to donate home**
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