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HABITAT NEWSLETTER

225 Broadway #7
PMB 151
South Haven, MI 49090

Volume 3, Issue 3

November 2009

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Letter from the Board

This year has certainly been educational with positive momentum entering into our 20th year of operation. With the changing of the economy, legislation and standards, South Haven Area Habitat for Humanity has had its challenges. We are finished with our current build on School Street and the family is planning to move in prior to Christmas, 2009. We are blessed with great volunteers within the community that assists us with each detail of the build.

This year as part of our fundraising efforts we held a giant fundraising event of slightly used donated home improvement items. These items were donated from people renovating their homes, cleaning out their garages of leftover items, contractors cleaning out their inventory of partial items and people in general donating slightly used items. Coupled with our Mardi Gras Dinner that was held in January, our fundraising efforts for 2009 raised about \$11,000.

However, this amount only covers the basic necessities for us to continue our mission of providing affordable homes for workforce families. Realizing that money is tight this year as well, we would really appreciate any monetary donation that one can give to us. It costs about \$100,000 to build a house in the South Haven market. So you can see whatever cash donations we receive would be greatly appreciated.

During this holiday season we wish everyone Happy Holidays and a Prosperous New Year. Thank you for supporting our mission.

We are always thankful,

South Haven Area Habitat for Humanity Board of Directors

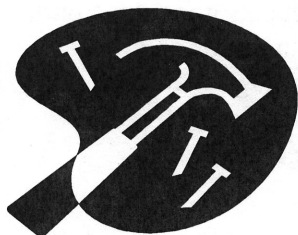
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Kraus Family Story

By the end of 2009 Emily Kraus and her three young children will be moved into their new Habitat home in South Haven. This will be the 19th South Haven Area Habitat for Humanity home built for our community.

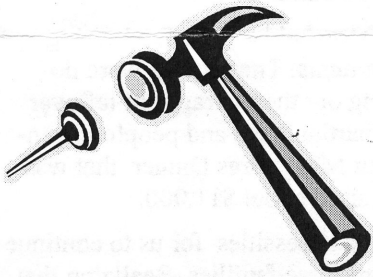
Emily is a single mother that is employed at Countryside Nursing Home as a LPN and will graduate from Lake Michigan College this fall with her RN license. She was born into a military family and has lived numerous places throughout her life. She has resided in South Haven the past 2 years and is looking forward to settling down in her own home with her children ages 1 year, 2 years and 6 years. Her oldest son has autism.

We welcome Emily and her family to our Habitat for Humanity Community.

How YOU can help!

Volunteer

- Participate in scheduling and recruitment
- Coordinate volunteer recognition activities and orientations
- Coordinate job site and assignments
- Join a committee
- Administration and notifications/marketing



Construction:

- Help build new homes
- Facilitate professional contract relations
- Monitor material purchases
- Assist in build site assessment

Site & Family Selection:

- Obtain Building Permits and Assist in land transfer/titling
- Help select building site and acquisition process
- Help find and select a family and facilitate "sweat equity" education



Fundraising & Donations:

- Assist in grant writing
- Plan special events
- Write thank you notes
- Donate furniture, equipment, tools & office supplies
- Co-ordinate donor recognition/relations
- Donate "T" shirts for volunteers
- Plan/develop fundraising activities

Thank You to Chemical Bank for their \$2500 donation and to Entergy Corp for their \$5,000 donation!! Your donations are greatly appreciated!

Did you know...

...that South Haven Area Habitat for Humanity is preparing to build our 20th home?

...that our last 2 homes have been Energy Star rated home, which means lower energy bills for the new owner!

...that every month a Habitat homeowner's mortgage payment goes towards helping to build the next home? The mortgage payment is money that keeps on giving!

...that you can visit us & apply for housing at:

www.southhavenhabitat.org

...that if you would like to receive this newsletter by email you can email us and request that? Email us at:
info@southhavenhabitat.org

Special Thank YOU!

What a surprise it was to open up an envelope and see a \$100.00 donation from the Hope Reformed Youth Group to our Habitat South Haven. Special thanks go to the Youth for thinking of us and raising money through their own efforts. Thank you Hope Reformed Youth Group.

Habitat Homeowner Elected to South Haven City Council

By Whitney Anderson

When Gail Patterson decided to run for South Haven City Council, her home served as command central for her campaign. A Crock-Pot of warm food was always ready for the community members, and volunteers gathered in her home to help with her campaign. Ten years ago, having a home that Gail could share was merely a dream. In 2002, that dream was made possible by South Haven Area Habitat for Humanity. Today, Gail is inspired to community service by the dedicated volunteers who helped build the home she now owns. "Habitat is a great organization, and it makes dreams come true," said Gail. "It gives people hope; people like me who had no opportunity to own their own home.

Gail Patterson was elected to South Haven City Council on Nov. 3, 2009. She is the first African American woman to be elected to South Haven's City Council.

Raised in South Haven, along with seven brothers and sisters, Gail graduated from the University of Michigan with a Bachelor of Arts in social work. Upon graduation, she attended medical school at the University of Michigan for three years, until she got married and had her son, Ben. She later divorced, and raised Ben as a single mother. When Ben was 2 years old, Gail moved into a trailer on the outskirts of South Haven, located about 15 minutes from the town. For income, she ran a licensed daycare service in her trailer for 10 years. It was through one of the mothers who used her service that Gail first heard about Habitat for Humanity.

During the construction of her home, Gail and her then 12-year-old son would stop by the site nearly every day after work and on the weekends to help out. "My son and I were just so thankful to have the opportunity to work on our house," said Gail. "We had been praying for a long time for it. So we were happy to do whatever we could to help with the building of the house." Gail and Ben moved into their new home in April 2002. Around the same time, Gail took a job with the South Haven Memorial Library as the youth librarian. Through her work at the library, Gail found a passion for community outreach.

In 2004, Gail partnered with one of the library directors to found the Wishes and Dreams Project to reach out to community members, especially of Hispanic and African American descent. The mission of the project is to assist in the development of reading skills, enhance library selection and encourage community participation in library activities. Many of the activities were hosted at South Haven's Elkenberg Park. "During the programs, I noticed the park was in the same condition it was in the 60s, when I was a child," said Gail. She recognized a great opportunity for development, and helped to start the Elkenberg Park Redevelopment Committee. The committee's goal is to enhance the park for area children and families, and to make it more attractive to the community and to tourists.

In her effort to achieve the committee's objectives, Gail began developing relationships with many organizations and members within the community. It was through this process that Gail was asked to run for city council. When she decided to run, she was surrounded by people in the community who offered to help. Gail says that becoming a homeowner has opened up her world of possibilities.

"Now I know I can run for office if I want, and I never thought about doing that when I was living in my trailer. Home ownership helps you have more pride in what you have and what things you can do in life," she adds.

Gail continues to be a highly active member of the South Haven community. In addition to her work through the library and the city council, Gail serves on the board of the South Haven Center for the Arts, and is regularly involved in her church. "Because I have been given so much, I want to give back." Gail said.

Gail's son, Ben, is now a senior at Aquinas College in Grand Rapids, due to graduate with a business degree in December 2009. She says he hopes to volunteer at Habitat for Humanity in the future.

Peace Lutheran Church Donates Warehouse Space

Peace Lutheran Church has donated warehouse space for South Haven Habitat to house their gently used donated items for a future fundraising sale to be held sometime in 2010. SHAHH was in need of a large space to house these items for preparation of another sale. Peace Lutheran generously made available an area and SHAHH now has a temporary home for this storage. Any items you wish to donate, please call 269-639-2670, or email to info@southhavenhabitat.org. Thank You Peace Lutheran for your generous donation to SHAHH.



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Don't Dump it! Donate it!

2nd Annual Sale Coming Soon!

Donate your gently used furniture, tools, electronics, fixtures, household items, appliances and construction materials!

The South Haven Area Habitat for Humanity appreciates your donations for our summer fundraising sale!

This sale will help continue our mission of building homes for low income families. All proceeds stay in the South Haven area.

Please call for assistance or with questions.

We appreciate your donations for our next sale!

www.southhavenhabitat.org

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