

# Habitat News



Summer 2009

## Peterson Family



### Letter from the Director

With the economic downturn and the housing crisis many more families are now without adequate housing. Evidence of this can be seen by the increased number of for sale signs and foreclosures in our community. The need for action to improve housing conditions continues to grow.

One such action is Habitat for Humanity's model of providing home ownership and improving neighborhoods. Habitat families are more stable and set down roots in the community. Statistics show that this allows their children to obtain better grades, experience less conflict, achieve higher levels of education, and grow into productive adults. Habitat is currently building or renovating two homes and is hoping to start a third this year pending the availability of donations.

Also, Habitat for Humanity is the founding partner of the Vision 2020 neighborhood improvement program. Vision 2020 works in Iron Mountain's North Side and Norway's Third Ward. In addition to improving parks and sidewalks, the program offers small zero percent interest loans to families that need exterior home repairs. Participating families must volunteer time on the home repair or with Habitat. Thus, the program follows Habitat's homeownership model of no interest charged and family members volunteering sweat equity hours.

Habitat is providing solutions to the growing number of families in inadequate housing through homeownership and improved neighborhoods. This year two of Habitat's homeownership projects are on schedule with the third awaiting additional donations. It takes a partnership between working families, volunteers, and donors to build/renovate homes and improve our neighborhoods.

Habitat thanks everyone who volunteers and donates. Also remember, more can be accomplished with your support and time. Please call us or visit our website to learn more.

Bill Stephenson, Executive Director

The dream of home ownership is nearing a reality for the Peterson Family. They are eagerly awaiting the completion of their new home in Vulcan, Michigan.

Leah has lived in Norway all her life and went to the Norway Area Schools. Leah and her son Jordan currently rent an older home in Norway.

Leah says, "Owning a home will provide a better place to raise a family. Our home will entitle Jordan stability, someplace safe, and a nice environment. Jordan will be able to have friends over and he can continue to attend the same school."

Jordan, who is six, can hardly wait to have his own bedroom where he can fix it up the way he wants. Leah has been able to choose the exterior colors, colors of the cabinets, countertops, and flooring in her new home. She is already thinking of ways to put her own ideas together and make it 'their' home. Her home will have two bedrooms and one bathroom.

Leah became aware of Habitat from a Public Service Announcement on the Norway Bank marquee. Leah and Jordan both believe their future looks bright, due to their partnership with Habitat. Leah has been volunteering on the build site all summer, working alongside the many volunteers that come out to help construct her home.

The Peterson home is one of two homes being built by the local Affiliate on property donated to Habitat for Humanity.

Another benefit to Habitat homeowners, volunteers at the local affiliate are currently building energy-efficient and Green homes. The houses are built to Energy Star and Green Build standards; to become certified a third party inspection is done on the home. For the Petersons this means the benefit of lower utility costs.



## Meet the Starnes family

The Starnes Family is very eager and excited to be partners with Habitat in the building of their new home in Vucan, Michigan. Brian and Jessica have three children: Collin, age 10, Riley, age 11, and Dawson, age 6.

Brian has been a lifelong resident of the Iron Mountain area. He attended Iron Mountain schools and now works for Stewart's Manufacturing. He enjoys attending his son's little league games. Some of his hobbies are playing his guitar, hunting, and fishing.

Jessica was born and raised in Hermansville, Michigan. She attended North Central Schools, moving to Norway with her parents in 1999, and then to Iron Mountain in 2003. She is employed at LaFaive Oil in Quinnesec. She also enjoys watching her son play baseball and some of her hobbies are reading and walking.

They were renting an old mobile home in Norway which was in very poor condition. "Both bathrooms had leaking toilets which actually rotted the floor. The floor was at an angle since one side was sinking". Their annual lease came due in April, 2009. They requested a shorter lease in order to stay in the mobile home while their new home was in the construction stage but was denied. Jessica's parents opened their home to Brian and Jessica and their grandchildren. This was a welcome solution for Brian and Jessica as it allows them to save for some needed items for their new home. They are also able to catch up on costly heating bills from last winter while living in the poorly insulated mobile home.

Brian says he is looking forward to "Getting into our new home and making it our own. Finally, we will own our own home and not need to ask permission to do anything to the house." He has plans to make a "football room" in the lower level and invite friends in to watch the Packer games. Jessica is looking forward to decorating their home the way she has always dreamed. She is especially looking forward to their first Christmas. She already knows how they will light up the porch and windows.

Brian believes having a new home is going to brighten the lives of their children. He believes it will boost the morale of the whole family and have a positive impact on the kids. Jessica feels their new home will provide a healthy and safe environment for their children. Both parents know the children will be proud to have their friends over to play. They especially love the neighborhood.



## Ways to support Habitat

There are a variety of ways that you can financially support Habitat—by donating property, in-kind contributions of needed products and services, gift annuities—but one such method that is not in the forefront of most people's minds is giving through a Will.

Sadly, 7 out of 10 people die without a Will. By ensuring that you have an updated Will on file, you are not only relieving stress from your loved ones, but you are also giving yourself a sense of peace that your charitable giving can continue, even in your absence. Your charitable giving wishes or bequests can happen in several ways—a fixed amount, specific property, or a percentage of the estate. The goals for Habitat for Humanity Menominee River are to house 3 families in 2009, 4 families in 2010, and 5 families in 2011. It is our hope that these numbers will be able to continue to increase from year to year, meaning that more area families will know what it means to have safe and adequate housing.



### Office Hours:

Monday - Friday: 8 a.m. - Noon  
Visit: 113 S Milwaukee Ave  
Kingsford, MI 49802  
Mail: PO Box 398  
Iron Mountain, MI 49801  
Phone: (906) 779-5377 Web:  
E-mail: coordinator@habitatmr.com  
www.habitatmr.com

### Board of Directors

Clyde Nelson, Board President  
Pat Killian, Mary Robitaille, Albert Santoni,  
Michelle Eskritt, Roger McNeil, Becky  
Rose, Charles Munk, and Peter Smaby



### Visit the Habitat ReStore

113 S Milwaukee Ave  
Kingsford, MI 49802  
(906) 774-2867

### Open to the Public:

Monday - Friday: 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.  
Saturday: 9 a.m. - noon

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### ReStore volunteer positions available:

- ü Product Coordinator
- ü Customer Service Coordinator
- ü Handyman

## Updates

Home Construction continues on the two homes on Main Street in Vulcan, call today for volunteer opportunities.

Thanks to Volunteer Teams: Lowe's of Marquette, Wells Fargo Housing Foundation, Thrivent Financial, Norway Lions Club, and Lutheran Build Days.

Mark your calendar:

National Habitat Day - October 5  
Wine & Hops 2010 - March 26  
Golf Outing 2010 - June 3

Watch for home dedication announcements in local media.

A special 'Thanks' to OPG for fixing our copy machine