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Building Houses....
Building Hope

A Periodic Newsletter of Habitat for Humanity-Lima

December, 2012

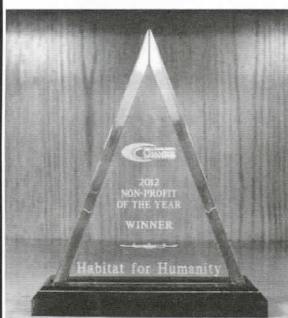
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2012
Non-Profit of the Year
Lima Allen County



Chamber of Commerce

Settled In...

By Lavon J. Welty, past Executive Director



The mission of Habitat For Humanity Lima Area, Inc. is to build houses with lower income individuals and families that they will make their home when completed. While in the past two years we did build three houses (see page 3), the singular achievement of the affiliate in 2011-12 was the development of a home of our own for our operations.

In 2008 we moved from a “scattered site” operation to centralizing operations at 123 E. Wayne St. in Lima. The affiliate operations office was moved into that location from space donated by Market St. Presbyterian Church. Construction operations were centralized from several storage and warehousing facilities into two rooms at the Wayne St. location. Equally important was the opening of a ReStore in that building.

When that three-year lease was up a decision was made to look for another space that would better serve our needs for office, construction management, and ReStore facilities. We found that building at 550 W. Elm St.

Had everything been known about all that would need to be done to make it our home—our own Habitat Center—would we have done it?

That is obviously a moot question from today’s vantage point. We did transform this dark, damp, and foreboding building into a space that today is serving the affiliate very well indeed! The journey was never simple with more bumps in the road than we would have thought possible.

Looking back, I don’t know why we thought that renovating any space would be a relatively easy process. We did not seem to be aware of the extensive planning needing complex architectural drawings that would require approval by the city of Lima in its various departments. And why we thought that when we did finally contract with an architect it would be a quick process—just a few drawings and we could begin renovations. Just drawing up the plans and getting them approved was an extensive and extended process.

And then in the midst of the approval process we were told that we must install a sprinkler

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system throughout the building. This was contrary to what we had been led to believe in conversations leading to a decision to make the purchase. This alone added nearly \$75,000 to the cost of the project that we had not planned for. It also led to a two-week long unplanned-for step to take down a suspended ceiling in the 10,400 square foot room that would become the primary retail sales area for the ReStore. Talk about dust and dirt!

Looking back I don't know why we thought it would take only six months at the most to do the work needed to occupy the building. At the end of the six months it looked like very little had been done! In fact, it took a whole year to do it. As each month passed by we would try to project when it would be ready. Circumstances always seem to dictate that no completion date was in sight.

Finally, in December 2011 we could feel confident that occupancy could safely be projected for January 2012. The ReStore opened its doors to customers on January 18, 2012.



From today's perspectives, however, it was all worth it. The building is serving us so well! The pictures on Page 7 will provide

a glimpse of that transformation process.

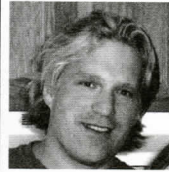
We have much better space for offices and a larger construction staging shop. But the best thing is the transformation of the ReStore. From four floors with only an ancient freight elevator to access the upper two floors and most floors with large columns breaking up the available space, we now have a space all on one level with no columns! From places in the old building that were dimly lighted preventing merchandise from being effectively displayed, we now have space that is lit with energy efficient lighting and a well-organized retail space.

So many persons were so very helpful in making the building transformation possible. All deserve recognition—stop by the ReStore some day and look at the "Wall of Fame" where the businesses and organizations are listed. Many of these donated or provided materials and labor at significant discounts to help make it happen.

Two persons, however, deserve special recognition. The first is Chad King, Vice President of Citizens National Bank. Chad saw the potential in the building and was our loan officer at the bank to arrange financing for the project, both its purchase and



the costs of renovation. When we found ourselves facing the surprise of the sprinkler system, he went back to the bank and facilitated increasing the loan.



The second person is Andy Chappell-Dick. In March of 2011 he stepped in to assume oversight responsibility for the project. He worked with the architect in communicating our needs so that the plans would accurately reflect those needs and meet all the varied requirements of a building that was to be open to the public. He worked with suppliers and contractors to make sure the materials were in place when needed and the work flow was well-coordinated. Not the least he put in untold hours of labor at an hourly pay scale that would have likely been doubled had he been working for some other contractor or for himself.

Now, at the end of 2012 we are settled in and functioning very effectively in our Habitat Center. As we face the future our operations center is well established for a future that will surely include many more houses being built for lower income individuals and families. If you have not stopped by to see this our wonderful Habitat Center be sure to do so in the very near future! We would love to give you a tour!

Meet Deb Kyzer...

The Board of Directors recently approved a new position for our affiliate, that of Administrative Assistant. We are pleased that Deb Kyzer has been employed to assume this new role.



Deb's family moved to the Lima area in 1977. In these earlier years she was able to be a "stay-at-home" mom with her son. During these years she attended Northwestern Business College toward a certificate in accounting.

One might say that volunteering was her avocation during this time. She volunteered in her son's schools assisting their classroom teachers. She was active in Bath Music Association, serving as its co-treasurer for four years.

After her son graduated from high school, she worked in various office positions for several Lima area businesses. Eventually real estate caught her attention and she became a realtor and continues as an agent with Hartsock Realty.

Earlier this year, she learned about the ReStore and became a regular volunteer at the cash register. With the prior experience and awareness built about our affiliate through involvement with the ReStore, she is a natural to fill the Administrative Assistant position.

Deb will become a primary face for affiliate operations being the first person seen by those who come into the affiliate offices. Her appointment signals the Board of Directors' commitment to freeing the Executive Director to be more actively engaged in making contacts in the community inviting support for the affiliate through contributions of money and in-kind materials and labor. Welcome, Deb!