



A Message from our Executive Director

As **National Senior Citizens Day** occurs in the month of August, it seemed like a good opportunity to remind our supporters that Habitat Susquehanna has a [Repair Program](#). The purpose of the program is to assist low-income homeowners in Harford and Cecil Counties with their critical home repairs and weatherization needs. While there are no age limits to applying (it's an income-based program), most of our applicants are seniors whose income is well into the poverty-level range. Our Repair Program turns 15 years old next month.

Please keep our program in mind if, for instance, you know of an older neighbor who might need a ramp or grab bars installed at their house. Mention our program to your place of worship if they do community outreach and visitations to the elderly. We have received many referrals from church representatives who noticed safety concerns while visiting a congregant in need. Everyone deserves a safe and stable home!



Yvonne Golczewski

NOTABLE DATES IN AUGUST

- Aug 17: National Nonprofit Day**
- Aug 19: World Humanitarian Day**
- Aug 21: National Senior Citizens Day**

Save the Date

September 25

Dinner at Bonefish Grill of Bel Air

Enjoy a delicious dinner at Bonefish Grill of Bel Air, and 10% of your food purchases will be donated to Habitat Susquehanna!

4-10 PM

Present your [flyer](#) on the 25th (flyer is required for Habitat to receive the proceeds; digital flyer is acceptable).

November 4

Habitat Susquehanna's Birthday Bash

November is the month of our nonprofit's 30th birthday and we're having a party!

Kids are free and dogs are welcome!

Susky River Beverage Co.

80 Alstone Farm Lane, Perryville

1:30-4:30 PM

For details, tickets and sponsorship info, visit our [website](#).

April 13, 2024

Dream Builders Ball

Bulle Rock Residents' Center Ballroom

1200 Bulle Rock Parkway, Havre de Grace

6:30-10 PM

There are a limited number of presale tickets available for purchase via our [website](#).

Staff News

ALISON VAIN

Alison joined us earlier this year as Finance Assistant.

BEN MARSH

Ben has joined our staff this month as a Site Construction Supervisor. He previously served with us as a Habitat AmeriCorps member for two terms.

YVETTE VALENTIN

Yvette is departing Habitat Susquehanna after almost eight years here, but she will remain a key contributor to our mortgage origination, strategic planning and ReStore committees. She has always been a passionate and dedicated member of our team, and we wish her well in her future endeavors.

HEATHER GIBSON

Heather has transitioned over from the Repair Program to the Homeownership Program in her new role as the Homeowner Program Manager.

RANDY KERINS

Randy has joined our staff in the position of Donation Ambassador for the Aberdeen ReStore.

Work Anniversaries

The following staff members have recently marked work anniversaries* with us:

Yvonne Golczewski (6 years)

Ola Boswell (1 year)

Phil Eichensehr (19 years)

Adam Letschin (7 years)

Dave Burja (8 years)

Roger Breedlove (4 years)

Michele Louderback (1 year)

*listed in month/date order

Volunteer raises thousands of dollars annually for the ReStore through his metal recycling efforts



by Cathy Herlinger

Years ago, Rob Orndorf was nicknamed the “scrap metal recycling crew of one” by the staff of the Aberdeen ReStore for his solo efforts to save tons of material from going to the landfill.

He began volunteering for the ReStore when it opened in May 2016, moving and repairing furniture; loading and unloading trucks and vehicles; and, working closely with donors. In the course of his first year there, he noticed that items that were deemed unsellable and thrown into the dumpster actually had value as scrap metal. One day, Rob started sorting through the tossed items and setting them aside to see how much he could salvage to sell at a scrap yard. Initially, Rob and the ReStore staff tried selling a couple thousand pounds of discarded items as scrap metal but they only received approximately \$30 for it. Then, Rob had a different idea.

“If we take the stuff apart, separate the steel from the brass from the aluminum, we can get a lot more,” Rob told the staff. “So I said, ‘Let me try it’ and it’s been that way ever since.”

“Rob is one of the unsung volunteer heroes of the ReStore,” said Aberdeen ReStore Manager John Kunzelman. “He has been here from the start, uses his own truck and gas to gather and sort through our metal recycling.”

Most of the items that were thrown out were damaged, had been on the store floor for months without receiving any customer interest, or could not be sold for safety or liability reasons. The varied items included lamps, silver-plated bowls, kitchen faucets, brass candlesticks, kitchen knives, batteries, etc.

“I spend a day sorting and loading my truck, then I take it to my shop,” Rob said, referring to the workshop he’s created at his home in Zion (northern Cecil County). His workshop, off of his garage, has a vise and set of tools for the home repairs he likes to work on in his spare time.

“I take the items apart. At the end of the week, I load it up and take it to the scrap yard near my house, and I get typically \$150 to \$200 for the load just on my truck.”

In addition to metal recycling, Rob would cut off cords from items such as microwaves, table lamps and vacuum cleaners and sell a large-box full at the scrap yard for \$50 to \$60.

“He doesn’t just go to one metal recycler,” explained Kunzelman. “He stops at several places to get the most for the Habitat mission.”

“Last year was a banner year,” said Rob, referring to the fact that his recycling efforts garnered approximately \$15,000 for the ReStore. Normally, he raises about \$8,000 to \$9,000 each year.

“He does all of it by himself and never asks for help,” said Ashley Hall, Volunteer Coordinator for the ReStore.

Rob’s efforts not only raise money for the ReStore, but saves money as well, since there are associated costs of \$300 to \$400 in having to move a dumpster-load of unwanted materials.

“And you’re not throwing all that stuff in a landfill; it’s recyclable,” said Rob. “The total weight of all the metal that I’ve sold – copper, brass, insulated wire, aluminum, steel, and heavy metal steel – was around 19 tons last year.”

It took a little time for the ReStore staff to get used to what Rob was doing. Now, they are so supportive of his efforts that they regularly pull items aside for Rob so that he doesn’t have to retrieve them from the dumpster anymore.

“Rob has been one of the most valued ReStore volunteers here since day one,” said the ReStore’s Assistant Manager Adam Letschin. “The amount of time and effort he puts forth each week to go through all our scrap metal to elicit the most money is truly remarkable. He did all of this without ever taking a dime for himself.”

Rob’s background is as varied as his hobbies. He majored in physics in college; he was a supply officer in the Navy for several years; and, he was a government contractor working in logistics (mainly aircraft repair) for 30 years.

Rob plans to “retire” from volunteering at the ReStore at the end of August so that he can focus more on his health and family obligations.

“Rob is a wonderful volunteer, and does so much for Habitat,” said Hall. “He will truly be missed by many.”

Letschin agreed. “His contribution to Habitat for Humanity Susquehanna and the Aberdeen ReStore through the years has been invaluable and he will be missed dearly.”

“He is very humble and doesn’t like to be in the spotlight,” said Kunzelman, “but his efforts have never gone unnoticed to management. It will be hard to replace such an honest, reliable and hard-working volunteer! He has been here from the start of the Aberdeen ReStore. I hope he takes time now to enjoy his family and full retirement.”

Habitat homeowner milestone anniversaries

JULY

Tina marked 15 years as a Habitat homeowner (her home was part of the 2008 "Builders Blitz" event). She was

AUGUST

Donna marks five years as a Habitat homeowner this month. When she first applied to the Homeownership

quoted in *The Building Block* (an earlier Habitat newsletter) as saying, "When I found out from Harford Habitat that I was accepted, my knees got a little weak. I was with my oldest daughter and we looked at each other, and our smiles were from here to there....As for Habitat? I thank you for every smile, hug, prayer, and for just being you."

Candice is also a 15-year Habitat homeowner as her house, like Tina's, was built during the same blitz build. Her son, George, spoke along with his mother at their home dedication ceremony and said, "Thank you for building my beautiful, brand new home. This is so exciting!"

Interested in learning more about the [Homeownership Program](#)? Visit our website for details and/or to sign up for a future orientation.

Program, she explained (in the bio she submitted to us) that she had to work on building up her credit, and learn to grocery shop and take care of bills (things her former husband used to do) after a bad divorce. She said, "I am hoping to be considered for a home through Habitat for Humanity because my income would probably not qualify me for a traditional loan. I do not need a big house; a two bedroom would be more than enough."

Jessica, who also marks five years as a Habitat homeowner, was a single mother pregnant with her second son when she applied to the Homeownership Program. She said, "My ultimate goal and dream has always been to own a house. My kids deserve the best and I want them to be proud of their mommy's accomplishments. I also want them to have a stable, amazing, safe and secure home. My kids are my motivation for everything I do. Owning a home would truly be a dream come true."

Sponsor Spotlights

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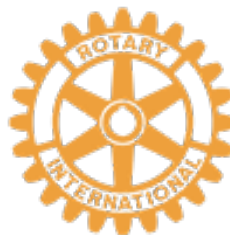


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