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Seeking landscape dreamers and designers



If you are someone who loves the thinking that goes into the preparation and planning for a home's final external environment, you might want to consider getting in on the ground floor of Pioneer Valley Habitat's Landscape Committee. The Landscape Committee's primary responsibility is to oversee and enhance the landscaping aspects of Habitat projects, ensuring that outdoor spaces are both functional and aesthetically pleasing. Members will work collaboratively to design, plan, and implement landscaping strategies that align with the organization's goals and the needs of the families we serve.

Does this sound like you or someone you know? Please contact Community Engagement Coordinator D'ahnee Lorenzo at dahnee@pvhabitat.org to learn more.



Get Involved!

October is **Bring a Friend Month!** Throughout the month of October, we're inviting you to bring a friend, family member, colleague, etc. to join you as you volunteer with Pioneer Valley Habitat.



Visit our website to sign up and volunteer!



140 Pine St. Rooms 3 & 4, Florence, MA | (413) 586-5430 | www.pvhabitat.org



Summer Newsletter 2024

Volume 22, Issue 2

Summer 2024

Working with our many partners, Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity builds strength, stability and self-reliance through affordable homeownership in Hampshire and Franklin Counties. We are an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International, an ecumenical organization that envisions a world where everyone has a decent place to live.

Looking Forward:

- » **1st Wednesday of the month, 6:30pm, New volunteer orientation, online**
- » **3rd Saturday of the month, 9:00am, New volunteer orientation, online**
- » **3rd Sunday of the month, 12-4pm - Women Build, Greenfield and Northampton build sites.**
- » **Monday, Sept. 30, 6pm PVHH Annual Meeting, Esselon Café, Hadley**
- » **October 2024 Bring a friend to volunteer month**
- » **Sunday, Oct. 27, 1pm Film Screening & Discussion, Parlor Room, Masonic Street, Northampton**
- » **Saturday, Dec. 7-14 Gingerbread Build, build at home!**

Learn more at pvhabitat.org

Frame the Future with your legacy gift

Recently a couple who was in the process of helping to build their Habitat home described seeing their future finished home as an investment in their children's health and well-being today and into the future. "Something for them now and something for them when we're gone," as they put it. In addition to building and buying a secure place today from which to build personal financial stability, Habitat homeowners are starting down the road toward also building a legacy for the future, often for the first time in their lives.



At this moment, our 35th anniversary, Pioneer Valley Habitat is also building a legacy, marking it with our partnership with FreeWill and the launch of the Framing the Future Legacy Society. There are many ways to support Pioneer Valley Habitat beyond a traditional one-time donation. Whether you would like to put your donation to work today or benefit families after your lifetime or both, there are plans that fit your needs. Create a charitable gift annuity through Habitat for Humanity International to generate income during your remaining years while leaving a legacy gift after you're gone. Consider a bequest and access step by step instructions for doing this by visiting freewill.com to make or update your will in just 20 minutes for free. This commitment to future giving costs nothing today, but opens up a world of new opportunities for families in our community for generations to come.

We have already seen how a legacy gift can be a catalyst for multiplying affordable homeownership opportunities for local families. Your planned gift can be the key that unlocks amazing potential. For more information or to discuss your legacy intentions, contact Director of Resource Development Amy Landry at amy@pvhabitat.org or call 413-586-5430 x102.



"Setting up a charitable gift annuity through Habitat aligns with two important things I look at in my charitable giving. First, I like to give both locally and internationally and this accomplishes that goal. Secondly, I like the fact that future Habitat homeowners are given the opportunity to contribute to the process of becoming homeowners. And for me, a charitable gift annuity is better than an insurance policy. The return is excellent and any remainder goes to a good cause, to meeting a basic need locally and internationally: affordable housing. You just can't go wrong with a gift for Habitat."

-Margaret McClamroch, donor

Donate your car.



Want to try your hand at magic? Presto! Turn a no-longer-used vehicle into some part of a home for a family with low income ready to become first time homeowners. It's easy, as easy as making a call and waiting for a truck to come take your vehicle away. And your unwanted vehicle could turn into the walls, the windows, the front door of a family's dream home.

Go to pvhabitat.org/donate/cars-for-homes to learn more.

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 MaryAnne Kuroczko, Asst Clerk
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Three families finish building and will soon buy their new homes



Anticipation is in the air as we close in on the end of construction at the Victoria Bismark Farm site on Burt's Pit Rd. It was just over a year ago that the first walls were raised and the community building began on these sun-powered, energy efficient all-electric homes, and now we are down to final punch lists, lawn seeding, driveway grading. As leaves are beginning to turn and schoolchildren are standing expectantly roadside waiting for buses, three new homeowner families will be unlocking their own front doors and settling in to the homes they have worked so hard to complete in the last thirteen months. Congratulations to Giovanna, Greishka and Tim and Sara and their families!

And even as the hammers are quieting down on this construction site, they have been taken up elsewhere in Northampton and in Greenfield as two more households begin their Habitat journeys. You don't want to miss this! Go to www.pvhabitat.org/ways-to-volunteer to find out how you can bring your own heart and hands to creating affordable homeownership opportunities for our valley.



Letter from the Director

Dear Habitat Community,

One of the things that I most appreciate about our local Habitat community is the longevity of our volunteers AND our ability to welcome new people into the fold. When you come to the job site for the first time or attend your first committee meeting you might feel a little nervous – there are people here who have been volunteering for 5 years?! 10! 20 years?! How can I contribute?

But what these long-term volunteers tell me is – We want new people to join us! We want to pass on our knowledge, meet new friends, build new relationships and get things done together. So – thank you to the brave first-time volunteers trying something new and thank you to the veteran volunteers for taking the time to encourage and welcome them. It takes a bit of extra effort to find the right fit sometimes, but it is the way we build the beloved community we want to see. Working side by side with patience, grace and gratitude.

The housing need is great and we need all the help we can get. If you've been thinking about joining a committee or a swinging a hammer – take this as your invitation that the time is now to raise your hand and say you will help. If you are already one of the faithful, invite a friend to join you.

This summer we are finishing 3 homes at Victoria Bismark Farm in Northampton, starting another in Greenfield and one in Northampton and planning for four more in 2025. And if we have enough volunteers we might do a bit more, that's where you come in.



In gratitude,

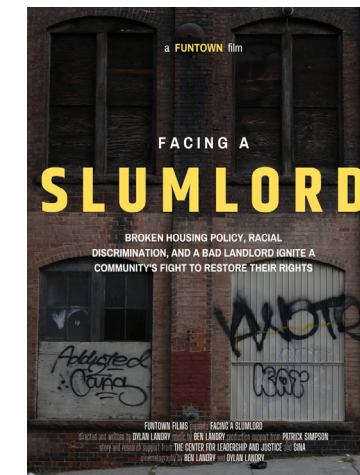
Megan McDonough,
Executive Director



Facing a Slumlord Film & Discussion at the Parlor Room Sunday, October 27th, 1pm

Join us for a screening of this 50-minute film by Conway-born filmmaker and local Habitat volunteer Dylan Landry. The film follows tenants and activists from Hartford Connecticut who organized and took to the streets to protest conditions in their subsidized housing units. Their story is of the fight that brought them eventually to confronting key players in the office of Housing and Urban Development under the former Trump administration. Local activists eloquently outline modern-day realities against the historical backdrop of housing discrimination painted by experts in urban planning and development from Trinity College. Followed by a facilitated discussion on housing justice.

Please be advised that this film contains words, images and content about racism that may be disturbing and is intended for mature audiences.



Will Bike 4 Food



PVHH volunteer and board member Bill Levine's heart for his community doesn't end when he puts his Habitat hammer down. This year, for the 3rd year, Bill has assembled a team to raise money and ride in support of the Food Bank of Western Mass's September 22, 2024 fundraiser "Will Bike 4 Food". He says the need for affordable housing and an end to food insecurity are two equally critical and interrelated issues locally. If you'd like to know more and support the efforts of Bill and his team (which has among its members more PVHH stalwart volunteers), go to www.foodbankwma.org/events/will-bike-4-food

Gingerbread Build 2024

You know it's coming...but are you ready? Have you drawn up your plans, made your materials list? Just a little over three months to go! The 12th annual Gingerbread Build contest will open Saturday the 7th of December, when teams will pick up their kits and have until midnight Thursday the 12th to unleash their countertop construction creativity on their contest entry. Discerning judges will then debate, decide and declare winners in each of several categories the afternoon of Saturday, December 14th.

Check back in the fall for more information at www.pvhabitat.org/events/gingerbread-build/.



What's happening on the build site?

Petty Plain Rd., Greenfield
The framing of the exterior walls is complete! On to roof trusses, interior framing and siding.



Woodland Dr, Northampton

The first wall has been erected! If you like framing and seeing the structure of a home unfold from the foundation up, this is the moment to volunteer at Woodland Drive.



You may be lucky enough to work alongside one of the future homeowners the day you're out volunteering on site. The paths they've traveled to Habitat are extraordinary and inspiring. Read the stories of the families currently building their homes and of those who have gone before at <https://www.pvhabitat.org/homeowner-stories/>.

"I never thought I'd ever get the chance to be a homeowner. It still feels unreal! I love everything about building my home."
- Greishka, future homeowner

Wish List

- Centrally located warehouse space in Hampshire or Franklin County
- Lightweight portable projector
- Standing desk for staff
- Electric teakettles for construction sites