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Greater Springfield
Habitat
for Humanity®

NEWS

February
2024



Ray Walsh



Kelly Trompke

Welcome, Ray and Kelly 2 new members join Board

Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity's (GSHFH) Board of Directors recently welcomed two new members – Ray Walsh and Kelly Trompke – to its ranks. Both have said they're very excited to join the nonprofit organization and are thrilled to help propel its mission, of affordable housing for everyone, forward.

Ray serves as the vice president of Sales at a Boston-based software company that produces an online video program. Kelly is the vice president and executive assistant at a financial institution.

"Habitat for Humanity is a great

organization with a mission and vision that aligns with my values," said Ray, who has a strong background in sales and marketing and wants to help raise funds to support the community. "I strongly believe that everyone deserves a place to call home and we, as a community, can lift each other up to make a difference – one family, one home, at a time."

Kelly agreed.

"I believe by helping others, we can make our community better," she said. "It is important for me to give back to my community,

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Recycling donations important to GSHFH

A social media post thanking the Belchertown Twirlers for their efforts to collect aluminum cans at a May 2023 event in Holyoke.

At Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity (GSHFH), “recycle for good” is more than a hashtag or catchphrase. In fact, over the past several years, it’s the frame of mind that has financially benefitted the affiliate as well as the environment.

In May 2021, Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI) and Novelis introduced a collaboration and invited Habitat affiliates to participate. The Novelis Affiliate Recycling Program asked affiliates to collect aluminum cans in exchange for a grant. Greater Springfield Habitat has earned roughly \$6,000 and kept many cans out of the landfill.

“Those who donate trash bags of cans and bottles to our recycling events, it probably doesn’t seem like much on the surface, but those cans and bottles help us take part in a grant sponsored by Novelis. Over the last year, those donated items along with the grant funds



Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity



Thank you, Belchertown Twirlers, for having one of our aluminum can recycling bins at the Northeast Regional Baton Twirling competition at Holyoke Community College this past weekend.

have brought our organization enough to cover the cost of one repair project for a disabled veteran,” said Aimee Giroux, GSHFH executive director.

The program goal is simple. Novelis, an international leader in aluminum rolling and recycling, provides collection bins. Each quarter, the donated cans are weighed and the weight is reported back to Novelis. A large sum grant is awarded to the affiliate that collects the most cans and a smaller amount is donated to participating organizations.

According to an HFHI infographic, the aluminum donations can go a long way. The cost of a 2x4 beam is the equivalent of 400 cans. A mailbox is 3,000 cans. A window is 11,000 cans. A front door is 22,000 cans, and a 1,200-square-foot roof is 400,000 cans.

Since 2021, several businesses, including All States Transport (AST), SR Commercial

Realty, Reminder Publications, Lock and Key Realty; Shatz, Schwartz, and Fenin; and Romeo Athletics in Enfield, Connecticut, have participated in the initiative by allowing a bin in their businesses and donating the contents to GSHFH. Other donations came from individuals, including Trina Winans.

“I believe in the organization and the importance of making a difference in people’s lives,” Trina said.

To get your bin, call (413) 739-5503. Cans can be dropped off at 268 Cold Spring Ave in West Springfield. To schedule a pick up, call (413) 739-5503. Greater Springfield Habitat will also accept recyclable glass and plastic beverage bottles.

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volunteer my time and skills, and help make a positive impact,” Kelly said.

GSHFH Board Vice President Tiffany Tranghese recommended Kelly to the position. She said Kelly’s strengths in event planning and fundraising, plus her willingness to give back to the community make her an excellent addition.

Tiffany also recommended Ray.

“I recommended Ray because of his strong business acumen. He is a natural leader, and brings years of business management experience,” Tiffany said. “I look forward to watching them both grow and develop the mission of the board. I feel they are both strong leaders and will continue to bring awareness to Habitat.”



Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity embraces energy-savings initiatives

Energy savings and green products are all the rage right now. Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity (GSHFH) is working tirelessly to provide their homeowners and prospective partner families with environmentally-friendly products that help them save on utility costs, while keeping expenses low. That’s not an easy feat considering inflation and limited resources. Yet, the nonprofit organization is able to accomplish this achievement through fundraisers, donations, and grants.

Sometimes, it’s the small changes that make the biggest difference. GSHFH is now incorporating electric mini split heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems to avoid using fossil fuels. In some instances, based on location and home design, tankless water heaters or air-sourced water heaters are installed.

“Our goal is to provide our partner families with an energy-friendly home that will allow them to save money, while protecting their investment for many years to come,” said Aimee Giroux, GSHFH executive director. “We want them to pass their home to the next generation of family members and provide them with a solid foundation for a better, more stable future.”

Energy-friendly products range from solar panel installation, the



A student from Holyoke High School Dean Technical Campus places rebar between the IntegraSpec ICF foam blocks to give the concrete (after its poured) additional support.

use of Low-E glass windows, to a plant-based fiber insulation called HempWool; light-emitting diode (LED) fixtures, and the affiliate’s first-ever insulated concrete form (ICF) home.

Solar panel installation can help a family significantly cut their electric bill and the use of Low-E glass windows lets in natural light while reflecting inside heat back into the home during the winter months. During the summer, outside heat is reflected away from the home.

LED fixtures reduce energy usage and programmable thermostats provide heating and cooling only during the times it was

most needed. Plus, Energy-Star appliances, which are rated for maximum energy efficiency and cost savings, are used.

HempWool is a US Department of Agriculture-certified bio-based insulation that is naturally mold and pest resistant. It’s also resistant of volatile organic compounds and toxins. It’s easy to install, doesn’t sag, and like the Low-E glass, lowers the energy bills for heat in the winter, cooling in the summer, and general comfort.

“It’s a lot less itchy to handle,” said Tom Eisenman, GSHFH volunteer.

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Additionally, new construction projects are built to meet the Specialized Opt-in Energy Code of Massachusetts Stretch Energy Code. The code sets significantly higher requirements for heating and cooling loads, which can be responsible for 60% of a building's energy use.

In November 2022, GSHFH began its most notable energy-efficient project yet: an ICF home. A dedication ceremony celebrating the completion of construction will be held at 11am on Wednesday, Feb. 14, at 360 Chestnut St in Holyoke. The project is a collaboration between the National Ready Mixed Concrete Association (NRMCA) and Habitat for Humanity International to build 50 ICF homes across the country.

The insulated concrete forms are hollow foam blocks that are stacked into the shape of exterior walls of a building, reinforced with steel rebar, and filled with concrete.

"Doing something different in construction is not easy," said Gregg Lewis, chief communications officer at NRMCA. "Construction is hard enough when you're doing the same thing day in and day out. Try to take on a new way of building and it's really a huge deal."

ICF combines one of the finest insulating materials – expanded polystyrene (EPS) with one of the strongest structural building materials – steel reinforced concrete. The result is a wall system of unmatched comfort, energy efficiency, and noise reduction.

"The house will be quiet, even when it's windy and stormy outside and it'll stay nice and toasty inside," said Steve Bogle, an Integraspec local distributor. Integraspec is the brand name of



Students from Western New England University Pharmacy Degree program installed Hempitecture HempWool at our Jackson Street, Holyoke, build site in April 2022.

the foam blocks. Steve and his wife Cheryl, also an Integraspec distributor, worked with GSHFH in the early stages.

Unlike a traditional wood frame house with sheathing, an ICF home offers several additional benefits to the builder and homeowner. The foam panels are made from recycled material. ICF walls do not off-gas, whereas conventional walls sheathed with oriented strand board (OSB) off-gas through glues and resin. ICF walls are resistant to mold and rot, which provides a better living environment for those suffering from allergens or asthma. Also, due to the rising cost of lumber, this method significantly reduces the need for wood for framing

and sheathing the exterior and less trees are cut down.

"We're excited to have built a more energy-efficient, affordable home for one of our Habitat families," Aimee said.

To see pictures from the construction phase of the ICF build, visit habitatspringfield.org/holyoke



Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity

Click to donate

Show your love for Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity in the **Hearts and Homes** challenge.

Every \$20 donation made to Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity by end-of-day Tuesday, Feb. 13, 2024, will be entered for a chance to win a Spa Renewal Day gift card for two people at the exclusive Canyon Ranch in Lenox. canyonranch.com/lenox/massachusetts-resort (Gift card is valued at \$700.)

Winner will be drawn at the dedication, celebrating the completion of our newest home. **11am on Wednesday, Feb. 14.** 360 Chestnut St, Holyoke. Participants don't have to be present to win.

Donations will be used toward making our mission of homeownership a reality to limited-income families. Greater Springfield Habitat for Humanity believes everyone deserves simple, decent, affordable housing and does so by offering families in need a hand up versus a hand out. Construction for our next home for a family of six is set to begin in spring 2024. To learn more, visit habitatspringfield.org



SPRING

INTO ACTION

- prizes
- goody bags
- snacks
- wrap party at Two Weeks Notice brewery

Saturday, March 23 | 10am-3pm
(rain date Sunday, March 24)

In honor of March's Women's History Month and Habitat for Humanity's Women Build event, join us!



268 Cold Spring Ave, West Springfield

Ladies, leave the "honey to-do list" for another day. Let's get together and celebrate our strengths, camaraderie, and build! Grab your friends and join us. Learn DIY skills and build outdoor furniture and/or accessories for a Habitat auction (at a later date). Just pick an item to construct from the list on the website, register, and come dressed in closed-toed shoes and weather-appropriate clothes that can get dirty.

Cost: \$250 per team (Teams = 5-8 people max. Must be at least 16 to participate.) Cost includes supplies and equipment.

To register, visit:
habitatspringfield.org/spring-into-action