

# Habitat Happenings

fall 2022

**on the cover**

Brianne and her boys celebrate the dedication of their new home



# Dear Habitat Community,

Our 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary has been a year of celebrations, looking back and planning ahead. It also has been a year during which Cleveland Habitat has prepared for new staff leadership.

Once again, we will set records this year, all possible because of the growing financial, volunteer and staff resources dedicated to advancing affordable homeownership in Cleveland.

These are exciting times at Cleveland Habitat. As we plan to conclude our 100-house campaign in Buckeye-Woodhill started in 2016, we will soon announce an ambitious 400-house, \$30.5 million initiative for both the East and West sides of Cleveland. Did you ever imagine Cleveland Habitat would be in the position to help so many families?

This large initiative is premised upon \$5 million in American

Rescue Plan Act funds being awarded by the city of Cleveland – if you know Mayor Bibb and/or Cleveland City Council members, please put an encouraging word in for Habitat's affordable homeownership program.

Nobody does what Habitat does in Cleveland, and we can and will do more with your continued support.

We are excited that Habitat's new president and CEO – John Litten – is starting October 1. You will have the opportunity to meet John in the next few months, and we know you will warmly embrace and support him.

It is an honor, privilege and joy to lead this outstanding organization. We wish you all the best.

  
John Habat  
President/CEO

  
Michael Owendoff  
Board Chair

# Habitat news

For the first time in more than 10 years, Cleveland Habitat will be breaking ground on a new construction project on Cleveland's west side.

The official groundbreaking ceremony took place in early September.



## Greater Cleveland Habitat for Humanity names new President and CEO

John Litten joins Cleveland Habitat after serving as executive director at the West Side Catholic Center since 2017. Previously, he served as executive director of the Diocese of Cleveland's St. Vincent de Paul Society and was director of the Cleveland Catholic Charities Camp Christopher. He brings a wealth of nonprofit and fundraising experience, a deep understanding of poverty issues and Cleveland's housing crisis, and solid relationships with civic and corporate leaders and government officials.

## Save the date

The Volunteer Dinner will take place November 16<sup>th</sup>.

## Habitat Snapshots



**1** James and his family celebrate at the dedication of their new home.

**2** The fifth class of **Building Great Futures students** spent the summer working in Buckeye-Woodhill.

**3** Cleveland Habitat teamed up with the **Western Reserve Land Conservancy** to plant some beautiful new trees in the yards of our Habitat homeowners.



# Cleveland Habitat to expand into Lorain

The move will not impact operations and projects in Cleveland.



We have no intention of slowing down after celebrating our accomplishments of the last 35 years — and our expansion into Lorain proves just that.

This decision wasn't made lightly. There were several factors to consider, chief among them being if this move would affect our ability to serve those in Cleveland. After careful consideration, we determined that we can help others secure affordable homeownership in Lorain, without impacting our work in Cleveland.

"We're approaching this expansion through the lens of our mission," says John Habat, president and CEO of Cleveland Habitat. "There is a great need in Lorain County, and we want to help more families and individuals secure safe and affordable housing."

The first step of the expansion process will be to reopen the

Lorain ReStore, located in Amherst, in November 2022. Other elements of the Habitat plan will begin to fall into place in the months following the store's reopening.

But first, we have some work to do. Earlier in 2022, Habitat for Humanity International dissolved the local Lorain affiliate following staff leadership issues.

"We're looking to earn back Lorain County's faith in Habitat's mission," says Habat. "The Cleveland Habitat program works and we can use our experience and successes to develop a program of service in Lorain."

**"We're looking to earn back Lorain County's faith in Habitat's mission," says Habat.**

First stop is the local faith community.

The church is a key part of the foundation of Habitat. We're eager to connect with local churches and faith leaders, and, based on our track record of rallying the religious community in Cuyahoga, we hope to have similar success in Lorain.

Next, we need to connect with local government agencies to identify resources available, much like we have with the city of Cleveland.

Finally, we must talk with the philanthropic and corporate communities. There is a vibrant community in Lorain. Once we have a plan of action, it will attract the community to get involved.

We're excited to start this next chapter in Cleveland Habitat's history and we're looking forward to growing our Habitat community.



## Construction Update: Union-made Habitat house

The Construction Employers Association (CEA) broke ground on the 14th Habitat house on Grandview Ave. in April. Since then, its members have been hard at work building another affordable home for a Cleveland family.

"It's great to see so many groups coming together to build this house," says Tony DiGeronimo, vice chair of CEA. "We're doing good in Cleveland and having some fun, what could be better?"

A family has already selected the house and construction should be wrapped up before November.

Want more regular updates from Cleveland Habitat? Subscribe today to get our e-newsletter at [clevelandhabitat.org](http://clevelandhabitat.org)



# WALK·RUN·MOSEY



Greater Cleveland  
**Habitat**  
for Humanity®

**35<sup>th</sup>** anniversary  
1987-2022

presented by **Cuyahoga Land Bank**

# RECAP

the total is in and this year's Walk/Run/Mosey raised...

# \$215,619

That wouldn't have been possible without the help of our amazing Habitat community. Whether you joined us at the Walk, donated online, volunteered or helped us spread the word of our mission, you helped us have the most successful Walk yet. Thank you!

The money raised will be going toward the construction of 8 new houses on Shale Avenue, providing 8 more families the chance to purchase an affordable home and helping revitalize an entire neighborhood.

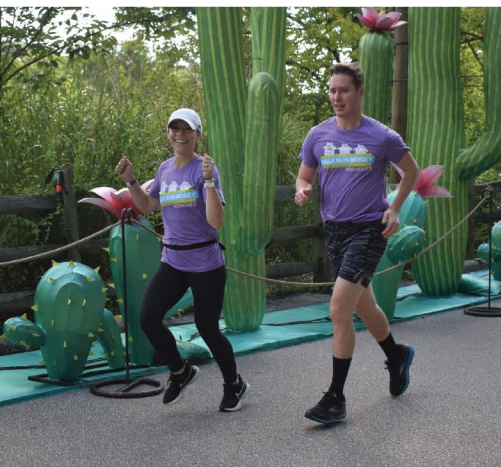
# 715

attendees



# 43

teams





hundreds  
of donuts

thank you to our sponsors!

presenting  
sponsor



neighborhood by neighborhood



street by street



block by block



T-Shirt Sponsor: **Anonymous**

family by family



volunteer by volunteer



Habitat Homeowner Sponsor: **James Breen Real Estate LLC**

brick by brick



step by step



# Habitat ReStore

builds the story of homes and communities



## donors

give their furniture, appliances, building materials, excess business stock and more!

## volunteers

contribute their time, talents and hard work to the Habitat ReStore.

## shoppers

find great deals on awesome stuff, with all proceeds from sales going to fund Habitat's work.

## Habitat

uses the proceeds from the ReStore to build and rehab affordable homes.

## families

work with Habitat to purchase a safe, affordable home, creating better lives in the community!



Donating to a Habitat ReStore also saves thousands of tons of reusable materials from landfills!

## When was the last time you visited the ReStore?

Whether you're a do-it-yourselfer, homeowner, renter, landlord, contractor or treasure hunter, make Greater Cleveland Habitat for Humanity ReStore your first stop when shopping for your next home improvement, renovation or DIY project.

Visit us today to check out our large selection of furniture, appliances, lighting fixtures, flooring, paint and so much more!



# Meet Jenavione and her family

Jenavione is a mother, a full-time employee with the Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (RTA) and a student.

Her daughter, Cemyrah, is 14 years old and just started 9<sup>th</sup> grade.

A year before she started the process of becoming a homeowner, she was homeless in the Atlanta area. At that time, she found out about Habitat and started the application process. As we all know, this process takes many months, so she returned home to her mother's rental unit and is currently sharing a room with Cemyrah.

Once she settled in and found a full-time position with the RTA, she started the Habitat Homeowner process again

here in Cleveland.

It was a grind, juggling everything, but she got it done. She came in before work, after work, on her days off and whenever she had time because Jenavione knew every hour of sweat equity would be worth it in the end.

Jenavione is a student at Cleveland State University and is on schedule to graduate in December 2022. Her professors really value her classroom contributions, life experiences and have encouraged her to continue with a master's program.

She and her daughter are very laid back and self-proclaimed "homebodies." They enjoy a nice quiet night in.

Jenavione has big plans for when they move in: she plans to design and build her own deck by herself!



They are both very artistic. Jenavione is involved in theatre and Cemyrah has a true gift as a makeup artist.

They both look forward to life in their new home. They want to host their extended family and little cousins for overnights and FUN!

## many thanks to our faith partners on the 2022 Faith Build

Brecksville United Methodist Church  
Calvary Hill Church Of God In Christ  
The Church of the Covenant  
Church of the Gesu  
Church of the Redeemer United  
Church of Christ  
Church of the Western Reserve  
First Lutheran Church of Strongsville  
John Knox Presbyterian Church  
King's Church  
Lord of Life Lutheran Church  
Old Stone Church

Plymouth United Church of Christ  
Church of St. Dominic  
St. Joseph Catholic Church of  
Strongsville  
St. Mark Parish Westpark  
St. Mary Catholic Church Berea  
St. Mary of the Falls  
St. Paul's Episcopal Church  
Strongsville United Methodist Church  
The United Methodist Church of  
Chagrin Falls  
Valley Presbyterian Church



## It's not too early to start thinking about the 2023 Faith Build!

Each year a group of 12-20 churches come together and either build or rehab a home for a local family in need. We pray, volunteer and financially sponsor a home. Interested in joining the Faith Build next year? Join us Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup> for a tour and open house. Please carpool if you're able and meet at our west side ReStore located at 2110 West 110<sup>th</sup> Street, Cleveland, @ 10am. Your faith group will receive a short tour and explanation of the Faith Build and then we'll head out to a construction site. Call Michelle Killin-Keith, manager of Faith Relations, at 216-318-0274 to hold your spot on the tour.



Greater Cleveland  
**Habitat**  
for Humanity®

2110 W 110th St.  
Cleveland, OH 44102

# ReStore

**discount home  
improvement  
store**

NONPROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
CLEVELAND, OH  
PERMIT NO. 4232



**Cleveland**  
2110 W 110th St.  
Cleveland

**North Randall**  
4601 Northfield Rd.  
North Randall, OH



**Lorain County**  
300 Rice Industrial Pkwy,  
Amherst, OH

**\*\*starting Nov. 5**



**Open Until 6pm**  
**tue/wed/thu**  
10am-6pm

**Open Until 4pm**  
**fri/sat**  
10am-4pm

**donate  
in-store**

**tue/wed/thu** 8:30am-5:30pm  
**fri/sat** 8:30am-3:30pm

**schedule  
pick-up**

**216.429.3631 [clevelandhabitat.org/pickup](http://clevelandhabitat.org/pickup)**

Since our founding, we've helped more than 300 families realize their dreams of homeownership.

**Together, we can do even more  
in the next 35 years.**

**[clevelandhabitat.org/donate](http://clevelandhabitat.org/donate)**



I have often asked myself, 'how did a guy like me get so lucky to represent the collective goodness of the people that make Habitat what it is?' I am deeply appreciative and forever thankful.

*- John Habat*