

# Habitat Happenings

fall 2021

**on the cover:**  
Marie and her daughters  
outside their new home on  
Grandview Ave.

## in this issue

### **Building legacies with Habitat**

Local family turns pain into purpose

### **10 year review**

A look back at how far we've come

### **2021 Faith Build update**

Meet Kassy and her family

# Dear Habitat Community,

As we approach our 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2022, we want to look back and review what has been accomplished in the last 10 years. It is a decade marked by relatively explosive growth in families served and ReStore sales.

One statistic tells much of the story: for our first 25 years, Cleveland Habitat averaged six houses a year for our families; over the last 10, we averaged 17 houses per year! We have done this incredible work together.

Ten years ago, Cleveland Habitat was barely limping along. Our low point was in 2010 when only one house was completed. In many ways, our situation paralleled the decline in the city of Cleveland, and the large-scale abandonment of several inner-city neighborhoods.

From these ashes, many, many people came forward to revive our affiliate. There was so much pent-up goodwill that we were able to regroup and build the foundation to serve many more families. In fact, over the past 10 years, we have provided housing opportunities for 170 families. We now rank in the top 50 of the highest producing Habitats in the country. And our ReStores consistently rank in the top 20 nationally!

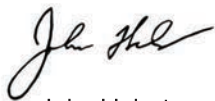
COVID-19 certainly impacted us over the past two years, but even here, we demonstrated our resiliency and will complete 23 more houses in 2021! Our financial position is strong, and we have amassed a construction reserve that will help pay for houses for the next several years.

Our inner-city revitalization efforts are working! Crime has declined significantly in our focus neighborhoods and our investments are attracting the investment of others. Homeownership changes neighborhoods.

All of these accomplishments result from a partnership of volunteers, employees, generous private and public-sector donors, partner families and ReStore donors and shoppers. Our individual and collective goodness has transformed families and communities.

## Thank you.

Now we look ahead and rededicate ourselves to continue to build and serve even more families. Together, we will do fantastic things! Thanks for being on the Cleveland Habitat team.



John Habat  
President/CEO



Michael Owendoff  
Board Chair

## PROGRESS REPORT

**2010**  
**\$643,366**  
net assets

**2021**  
**\$12.8M**  
net assets



### What does this mean?

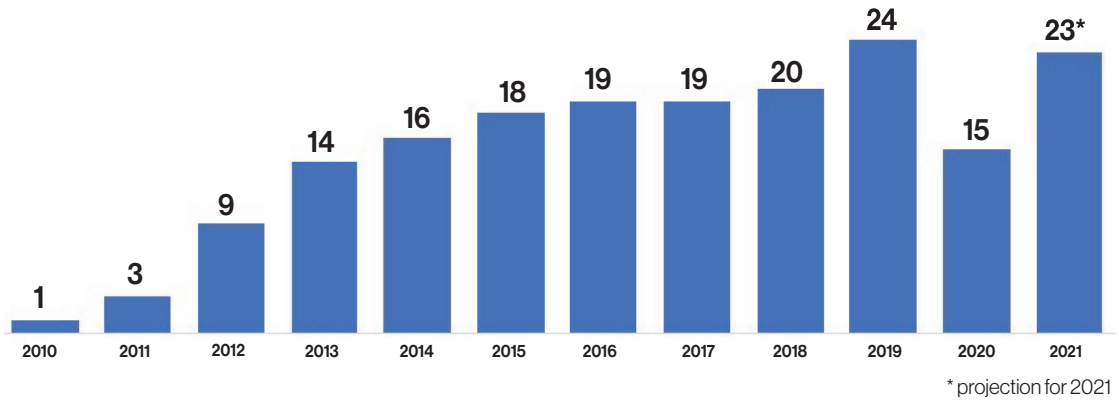
Over the last 10+ years, we built a strong financial foundation to serve even more Cleveland families in the future. Our net assets include mortgages, construction reserves, ReStore and construction inventory, New Markets Tax Credit Program investment and other operating reserves. Cleveland Habitat has staying power!

Help us keep growing and providing more affordable housing opportunities to Cleveland families by going to [clevelandhabitat.org/donate/](https://clevelandhabitat.org/donate/) or scanning the QR code with your smart device.

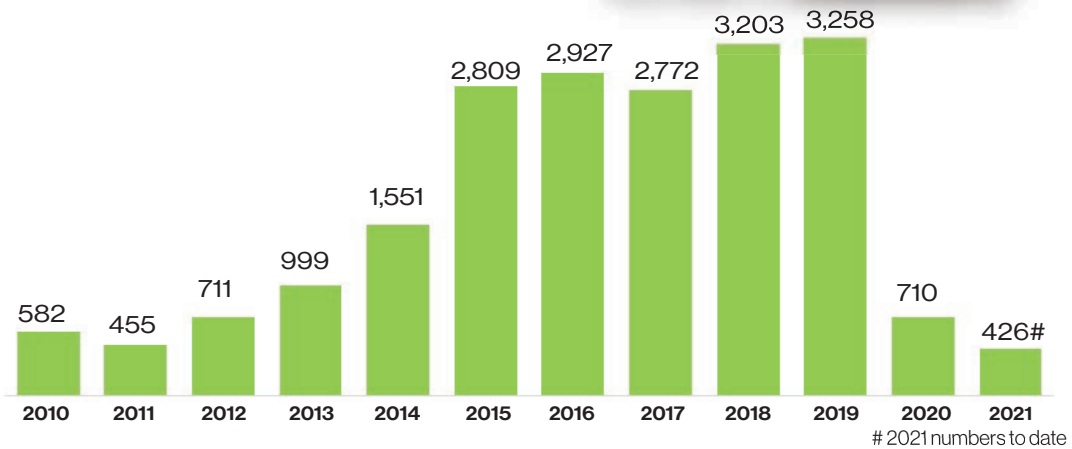




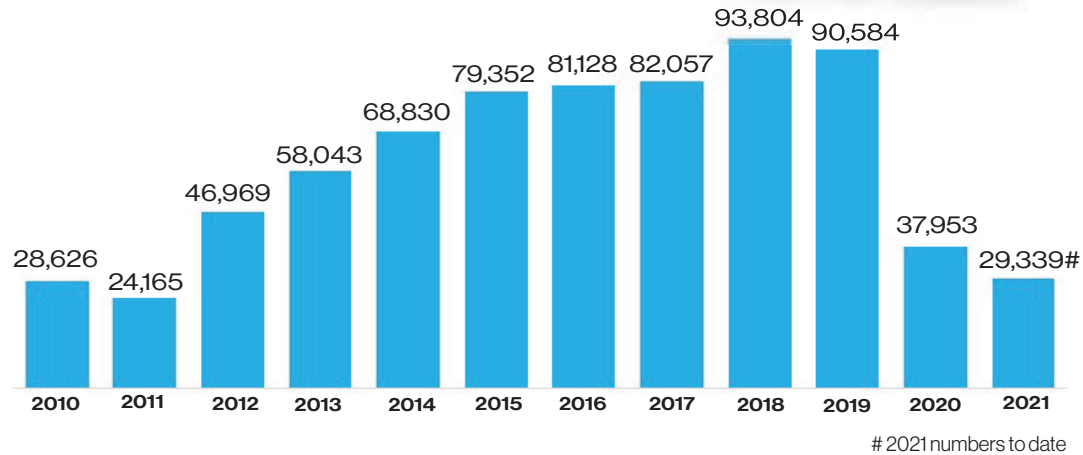
## houses completed



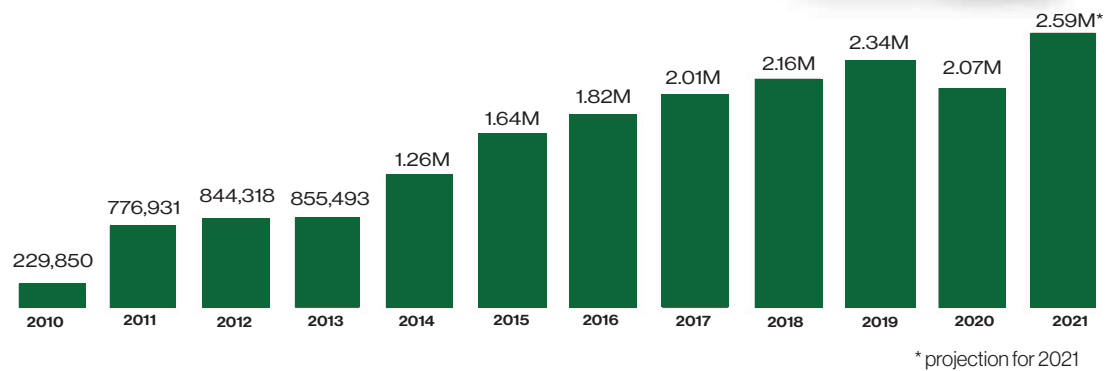
## number of volunteers



## volunteer hours



## ReStore sales





# 2021 VIRTUAL WALK-RUN MOSEY FOR HOMES

presented by: Enza Financial



You walked. You ran. You moseyed. You cheered. You donated.  
**You set a record!**



We're sending a huge thank you to everyone who participated in the 2021 Walk/Run/Mosey, presented by Enza Financial.

You walked. You ran. You moseyed. You were cheerleaders. You made donations. And together, **we raised \$140,000** to build a new home on Hulda Avenue to help change the life of a Cleveland family.

Thank you to all the participants, donors and sponsors. Every penny, step and act of encouragement makes the mission possible.

Additionally, we'd like to send a special thank you to Qualia for generously supporting this year's Walk.

"Greater Cleveland Habitat for Humanity continues to make a meaningful impact in the community," says Nate Baker, CEO of Qualia. "We are proud to be able to support those efforts."

Visit [clehabitatwalk.org](http://clehabitatwalk.org) for a video of a few of our favorite photos and videos sent in from our Habitat community during this year's Walk.

Mark your calendars because we officially have a date for the 2022 Walk/Run/Mosey. Next year's event will be held July 30<sup>th</sup>.

Next year is the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Cleveland Habitat for Humanity, so we're cooking up something special for next year's event. You won't want to miss it!



**amount raised**

**\$140,000**

Save the date for the 2022 Walk/Run/Mosey

# Thank you to our sponsors

**presenting sponsor**



**Neighborhood by Neighborhood+**



Cleveland Shades LLC



Saint Luke's Foundation

**Street by Street**



**Block by Block**

Hyland  
Sherwin-Williams  
Covey Financial

H. C. Murray Group  
CSP/GET  
Armada Poured Walls

First National Bank  
The NRP Group

**Home by Home**

Third Federal Savings & Loan  
First Federal Lakewood  
Robyne & John Habat  
Dahdoul  
Meyers Roman

McManamon Insurance  
Debby & Jerry Smith  
Mother Nature and Sons  
Wells Fargo Advisors  
Sievers Security Inc.

Cuyahoga Title Services  
Ohio Basement Systems  
Tucker Ellis  
Emerald Built Environments  
Mars Electric

**Family by Family**

Zinner & Co.  
Cuyahoga Land Bank  
C-Town Construction

Shaker Auto Lease  
Benesch

Burten, Bell, Carr Development, Inc.  
First American Title Insurance Co.

**Step by Step**

Thrivent  
Weston

Cleveland Lumber Co.  
Western Reserve Land Conservancy

Independence Presbyterian Church



best walk/run/mosey with a dog winner:

**Brian + Winkie**



best silly walk winner:

**Terrell**



Mary Evans, Walk co-founder



best t-shirt design winners:

**Cynthia**

**Seedar**

**Michelle**



best walk/run/mosey with a donut winners:

**Ren + Camilya**

# July 30, 2022



## Turning Pain into Purpose

*Out of a devastating loss, one family finds new purpose to help children in need*

Ten years ago, ChoiceLocal founder Joe Soltis was living a much different life. He was a top executive at a national marketing firm, navigating a demanding workload and growing his family. Then, in 2012, Joe and his wife Becky received life-altering news: The couple lost their son late into their pregnancy.

That's when Joe and Becky decided to bring purpose out of that pain and create the Benjamin Isaac Foundation, ChoiceLocal and a goal to help 10,000 kids per year.

### Partnering with Cleveland Habitat

Having a safe, stable home plays a significant role in the life of a child, which is why Joe and Becky are working with Cleveland Habitat to build a safe, affordable home for a Cleveland family to purchase.

"We wanted to change the life of a family in a really big way," says Joe Soltis. "Giving a family a nice home, a safe home, will enable a family to build generational wealth, get out of poverty and enable things like education for themselves and

their kids."

"We also like the diversity of people that Habitat helps, and Habitat better enables the world and our local community to overcome historical racism as we move into a new era that really supports and encourages all Americans," adds Soltis. "Most importantly, we love that Habitat is faith-based and founded on Christian principals. Through Habitat we see a way to help a family, make the world a better place and bring others closer to a God that loves them."

The house, located on Hulda Avenue in Cleveland, is one of 10 houses Habitat is building on the street. When the house is selected to be purchased, that family will have a great support system of fellow Habitat homeowners.

Thank you, Joe, Becky and the entire ChoiceLocal team for coming out to build a home for a Cleveland family. Your generosity means so much and will help build a strong foundation for a Cleveland family.



## UPDATES FROM CLEVELAND HABITAT

The 2021 Volunteer Dinner is canceled. The annual meeting will be held virtually **Wednesday, November 17<sup>th</sup>**. Stay tuned for more updates on this year's event.

The east side ReStore got a refresh this fall. Head over to the North Randall location to check out the new layout, extensive housewares section and holiday shop.

For the full Q&A with Joe Soltis, visit Cleveland Habitat's blog at [clevelandhabitat.org](http://clevelandhabitat.org)

Joe and Becky Soltis are just one of the generous families sponsoring a house in memory of a loved one.

Ken Polanka, a longtime Habitat volunteer, and his children are sponsoring a house in honor of his late wife, Caryl Polanka.

The family of Steve Mihaly, an entrepreneur who grew up in the old Buckeye neighborhood, will honor him with a Habitat house in his memory.

Stay tuned for upcoming features with both families on their partnerships with Cleveland Habitat.

The Construction Employers' Association (CEA), a group of union construction firms, are not only sponsoring a house – they are building it! CEA wants to engage its firms to make a meaningful contribution for a hard-working family.

# Thrivent Faith Build Update

Kassy and her family prepare to move into the 2021 Faith Build House just in time to celebrate the holidays



Kassy is a single mom of three incredible kiddos: Kamari, Kasson and Jeffery.

Kamari is a ninth grader at the School of the Arts. Kasson is a fourth grader who could tell you *anything* you need to know about anime & Pokémon. Jeffery is a sixth grader that loves to take things apart and code.

"I have always wanted to buy a house. I want to have a legacy for my kids," says Kassy. "I want them to have a place to come home to when they go to college. I want them to one day say, 'We are going to mom's house.' I want this for us."

There's a lot to look forward to in a new home, but for Kassy, one thing tops the list: celebrating the holidays.

"I want to cook Thanksgiving dinner in the new house," she says. "I have been teaching Kamari how to cook. Jeff is gluten free and bakes his own cake. He has been cooking since he was 7 and wants to be a chef. So, we are ready to cook as a family for Thanksgiving."

Since 2006, Cleveland Habitat has partnered with Thrivent Financial to build 22 homes and revitalize neighborhoods.

"For me the most impactful part of the partnership is seeing the smiles and hearing the promising plans of the future from the children who will be growing up in these homes and communities," says Melissa Bell, Thrivent community engagement leader. "The true value of these homes isn't measured in the hours worked, the nails pounded or the concrete poured but rather in the futures of the families who reside in them."

Making the dream of homeownership a reality takes a community and year after year we are blessed to work with some incredible faith partners.

"We are so grateful to participate with other people of faith and see the remarkable bonds and relationships emerge as we work toward a common mission and shared goal of seeing neighborhoods transformed, of sharing God's love in this meaningful way," says Pastor Dave Scavuzzo, Strongsville UMC.

"Working with Habitat gives our parishioners an opportunity to live out our Christian values of caring for our neighbor," says St. Mark's Laura Fibbi. "It is truly an honor and a privilege."

Thank you to all the faith partners who have prayed, volunteered and



donated to make this home possible. Your generosity is overwhelming.

## 2021 Faith Build Partners

Brecksville United Methodist Church  
Calvary Hill Church of God In Christ  
Church of St. Dominic  
Church of the Redeemer UCC  
Fairmount Presbyterian Church  
John Knox Presbyterian  
Lord of Life Lutheran Church  
Old Stone Church First Presbyterian  
Plymouth Church UCC  
St. Joseph of Strongsville  
St. Mark Catholic Church, West Park  
St. Mary of the Falls  
St. Mary's Catholic Church Berea  
St. Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Strongsville United Methodist Church  
The Church of the Covenant  
The United Methodist Church of Chagrin Falls

## Get involved in the 2022 build

We are already looking for Faith Partners to join the 2022 Faith Build. Contact [faithrelations@clevelandhabitat.org](mailto:faithrelations@clevelandhabitat.org) to learn more.

## Are you a Thrivent member?

Thrivent Choice Dollars and Action Teams can be used to help Cleveland Habitat. Check on your eligibility for each program at [thrivent.com](http://thrivent.com) or by calling 1-800-847-4836.





Greater Cleveland  
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for Humanity®

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**ReStore**

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PERMIT NO. 4232



**west location**   **east location**

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cleveland, oh

4601 northfield rd.  
north randall, oh



**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)



**ReStore**

Great **finds**. Great **prices**. Great **cause**.

## shop

Whether you're a DIY master looking for your next project, a bargain hunter or simply someone looking to purchase furniture without shipping delays, a stop at our ReStores is a must. We currently have a large inventory of brand-new Kichler lights (both indoor and outdoor), Moen fixtures and faucets and furniture from Ashley HomeStore and Arhaus.

## donate

By donating your excess household goods, building materials and overstock to the ReStore, you directly support local families. Plus, you'll keep good, reusable items in use and out of landfills.

Schedule your donation pickup today at [clevelandhabitat.org/pickup](http://clevelandhabitat.org/pickup)



**\$5 OFF \$25**

Valid at ReStore locations in Cleveland, OH and North Randall, OH. Coupon cannot be combined with other offers; photocopies not valid; coupon to be surrendered at time of purchase. Expires 12/23/2021

Greater Cleveland Habitat for Humanity  
**ReStore** home improvement store  
**for good.**



Follow us on Facebook for a sneak peek at what's available in the ReStore

 **@CLEReStore**