



For Immediate Release

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Merrimack Valley Habitat for Humanity 2014 Home Builders Blitz - It Takes a Village

Months of Planning, One Week to Build, Two Families Get a Hand Up

Lawrence, MA. We often hear the phrase "it takes a village". This village mentality is alive and well in the Merrimack Valley as the final five weeks of planning for the 2014 Home Builders Blitz is in full swing.

Have you ever thought about what it takes to build two homes in ONE WEEK? The short answer is: it takes a village.

Five weeks from now, during the week of June 9th, Acton Street in Lawrence will be converted to a bustling construction site with local builders, plumbers, electricians, landscapers and dozens of volunteers focused on one common goal: building two homes for two deserving families in six days. Six days!

Who is part of this village?

The center of the village is Merrimack Valley Habitat for Humanity with its mission of building affordable housing, giving a "hand up" to qualified families. This year, during the 2014 Home Builders Blitz, two homes will be built as part of a national effort to build or restore over 200 homes across the country during this one week! During the last Blitz in 2012, Merrimack Valley Habitat built two homes on Market Street in Lawrence.

Eight local dedicated building companies and professionals are converting the mission of Merrimack Valley Habitat for Humanity to a reality for the 2014 Builders Blitz. This team is the heart of the village, putting yeoman's time and effort into planning and coordinating the complex undertaking of building two homes in six days. While many of us can't complete a small home project in six days, this team has been meeting regularly for months to finalize the details that are required to execute the build during the week of June 9th. The lead building team includes: Howell Custom Building Group (Lawrence/Boxford), Cote & Foster (Methuen), Lavalley Plumbing and Heating (Auburn), Red Phoenix Construction (Topsfield), The Remodeling Company (Beverly), Steeplechase Builders (Methuen), JSR Adaptive Energy Solutions (S. Hamilton & W. Falmouth) and Andrew Steingiser, architect.

Additionally, a Logistics Committee, comprised of local business leaders, has spent the last 6-7 months planning for the non-construction elements of the effort - volunteers, fundraising, sponsorships, and food. The Logistics Committee is led by Susan Howell, Howell Custom Building Group (Lawrence/Boxford) with team members from the following businesses: For Marketing Matters LLC (North Andover), KR Interiors (Boxford), JSR Adaptive Energy Solutions (S. Hamilton and W. Falmouth), Linda Holt Interiors (Boxford), Designer Bath (Salem), Enterprise Bank (Lawrence), McLennan Century 21 (Methuen), and Juniper Networks (Westford).

An important focus of this group is attracting Builders Blitz sponsors, as the Habitat model relies on the incredible support of local businesses to help offset the building costs. The goal is to offset 1/3 of the cost of building these two homes in one week by raising \$80,000 in donations. Sponsorships are still available at all levels to help support the 2014 Builders Blitz.

Thank you to our generous sponsors including Arlington Community Trabajando (Lawrence), Meridian Associates (Beverly), Zehnder America (Greenland NH), Shea Concrete Products (Wilmington), Foster & Sullivan Insurance Agency (North Andover), Lupoli Companies (Lawrence), The Green Cocoon (Salisbury), JB Sash & Door (Chelsea), and Wallace Building Products (Danbury, NH).

Feeding the builders and volunteers throughout the six days on site is also a priority. Three meals are provided each day in addition to coffee, waters and snacks. With over 300 builders, sub contractors and volunteers expected to be on site throughout the week, it takes a village to keep them energized and fed! Many thanks to local businesses who have generously agreed to donate meals to fuel the energy of the builders and volunteers as they work from sun rise to sun down to stay on schedule. This includes Bertuccis (North Andover), Butcher Boy (North Andover), Andolini's and Sauce (Andover), Panera Bread (North Andover), Cedar's Food (Haverhill), Ralph's to Go (Bradford), Sunpac Foods (Lawrence), Coffee Cann (Lawrence), The Party Connection (Methuen), Good Day Cafe (North Andover) and Salvatore's Italian Restaurant (Lawrence).

The village would not be complete without the two families who have been selected to call these two new houses on Acton Street their home. These families meet the rigorous qualification requirements of Habitat including income levels, ability to pay their mortgage and their commitment to put in the required 'sweat equity' hours to become homeowners. These two families look forward to seeing their dreams come true right before their eyes as they witness the walls of their home being erected! The upcoming weeks cannot pass quickly enough for these families who look forward to moving out of difficult living conditions.

It takes a village to build two homes in six days. It takes many months of planning, coordinating, soliciting support and donations to make the second week in June a magical week for 2 selected families, 8 local building businesses and professionals of the Lead Build Team, 11 members of the Logistics Committee, countless donors and volunteers and one Merrimack Valley Habitat for Humanity.

Five weeks to go. There is time to join the village and help. For more information about Builders Blitz 2014 and other local Habitat projects, please visit us at www.merrimackvalleyhabitat.org.

About Merrimack Valley Habitat for Humanity

Merrimack Valley Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit organization dedicated to building homes and building hope in the Merrimack Valley. Founded in 1985, we have delivered on our mission for 80 families to date. We are the independent local affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International, the largest non-profit homebuilder in the world. Working in partnership with families in need, volunteers, churches, local governments and businesses, we build simple, affordable, homes that are then sold to the families at cost with a no-interest mortgage. This partnership makes it possible for families who could not otherwise afford a home realize the dream of homeownership. Every week, volunteers help the American Dream come alive in our community by volunteering their time and donating supplies. To help fund our work, we opened the first ReStore in the region in 2011. Promoting the benefit of reuse, reduce and recycle, we

sell donated appliances, furniture, building materials and home furnishings at greatly reduced prices. To donate, volunteer or learn more about MV Habitat or our ReStore, please visit our website at <http://www.merrimackvalleyhabitat.org/>

For more information contact:

Sharon Mason, Director of Development

Merrimack Valley Habitat for Humanity

Office: 978-681-8858

Email: Sharon@merrimackvalleyhabitat.org