

Please consider a financial gift to help finish the houses set for completion in the next few months. Your gift in any amount will make a difference. Thank you!

### Upcoming Home Dedications

**June 18**  
*Alvarado Family*  
139 Abba Way  
Taylors, SC

**July 14**  
*Reese Family*  
305 Gray Street  
Travelers Rest, SC

**TBD**  
*Houston Family*  
201 Gray Street  
Travelers Rest, SC



## Habitat Greenville Women Build 2011

As part of Habitat for Humanity's National Women Build Week, more than 30 Greenville County women raised their hammers on Mother's Day Weekend. The women installed windows and Tyvek and shingled the roof at a Travelers Rest build site.

Habitat's National Women Build has drawn more than 20,000 women volunteers from 50 states to build more than 1,800 houses. Greenville County women have

built more than 11 Women Build houses.

Lowe's has financially underwritten Women Build since 2004. This year, Lowe's contributed more than \$1.3 million, providing \$5,000 gift cards and building materials to more than 250 Habitat affiliates. Lowe's conducts how-to clinics to teach construction skills to women, empowering them to support Habitat projects.

# BREAKING GROUND

A newsletter of Habitat for Humanity of Greenville County

JUNE 2011

## Synergy is ... a Habitat forklift

The word synergy can be defined as "the combined effect of two or more things, where the result is greater than the sum of their individual capabilities."

Earlier this year, a unique synergy resulted in a special and much-appreciated gift to Habitat Greenville—a forklift for the Habitat ReStore.

We could say it started with Habitat volunteer Bob "Lucky" Armbruster. But in a sense, it also started with Michelin North America, and also with Barloworld Handling. In fact, it was the synergy of all three that made the Habitat forklift a reality.

Bob Armbruster, purchasing agent for Michelin North America for 38 years, retired January 1. Michelin is a faithful Habitat partner that builds a home in Greenville County each year, and Bob became a Habitat volunteer through Michelin's involvement.

One of Michelin's suppliers throughout North America is Barloworld Handling, southeast authorized dealer of Hyster lift trucks. Barloworld's Rusty Cherry had done business with Bob Armbruster for years and they had



Surrounding Habitat's donated forklift are: Rusty Cherry (Barloworld), Monroe Free (Habitat), Bob Armbruster (Michelin retiree), Judi Armbruster (Michelin), and Bobby Laboone (Barloworld).

become friends. When Rusty heard that Bob was retiring, he hoped Barloworld could do something that would honor his friend and associate in a special way.

Bob's volunteer involvement with Habitat Greenville turned out to be the key. Rusty Cherry asked his boss if Barloworld could give a gift to Habitat in Bob's honor. Rusty's boss liked the idea. "How about a lift truck?" he responded. Rusty couldn't have been more delighted.

Since March, the bright yellow Hyster forklift has been on duty at Habitat's ReStore. "This piece of equipment has made such a great difference in our operation. Without it, we were really limited in what we could do," said Jay Morgan, Director of Retail.

The forklift was dubbed "Lucky II," in honor of Bob's nickname, "Lucky." When asked how he came by his nickname, Bob said it originated many years ago with his sister. These days, he explains it

this way: "I have a wonderful family, a wonderful wife (Judi, who still works at Michelin), seven children, a great job. I've had a very blessed life."

Thank you, Bob, for sharing your blessings with Habitat Greenville. 🏡

Bob "Lucky" Armbruster sits at the wheel of "Lucky II," donated by Barloworld in his honor.



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## FURMAN STUDENT CHAPTER: An ongoing legacy of community service



*Furman students do a final window check on a Habitat home they have helped build.*

Twenty-two years ago, the Furman University Habitat Student Chapter built its first home with Habitat Greenville. Since 1989, this partnership has been one of the most fruitful joint efforts in Habitat Greenville's history. This Spring, the Chapter's project was a rehab of a home in Greer.

Many Greenville County families have realized their homeownership dreams because of Furman students who choose to extend their education beyond classroom walls and into the community.

"Many of these students come from a family background of volunteering," said John Bosma, Vice President of Operations for Habitat Greenville. "This is a great opportunity for them to have hands-on involvement with a project that will directly impact a family in need."

The Furman Chapter provides partial funding and most of the laborers for its Habitat builds. The Chapter holds fundraisers and solicits contributions from Furman alumni to help fund construction materials. The Chapter has also received grants from State Farm Insurance that match student-raised funds.

In spite of student turnover, the Furman Chapter has been remarkably

consistent in their commitment to Habitat Greenville. A new Chapter president takes over each year, and this new president is fully trained and up-to-speed when he or she assumes leadership.

President during the 2010-11 school year was Leland Frost; next year's President is Joshua Wenzell. Nancy Cooper, Coordinator for Volunteer Services at Furman, is also a great asset in promoting community service among the students.

As Furman students work alongside the homeowners who will benefit from their labor, they see firsthand the life-long blessing their efforts have produced. Perhaps that's one reason their commitment remains steady from year to year.

One thing is sure: "These students bring a whole lot of dedication, energy, and enthusiasm to every build site they work on," said John Bosma. ▲

## Alvarado family makes plans for the future

*Diana Alvarado's younger daughter, Angelica, 14, is making a list of things the family will be able to do when they move into their new Habitat home this summer.*

Among other things, Angelica is already looking ahead to her 16th birthday party. That's a celebration her older sister, Elizabeth, 16, missed out on because having a party in their small apartment wasn't possible.

"A lot of things will change" when they move into their new home, said Diana. In a household with two teenage girls, having two bathrooms is something they really look forward to, she laughed. "Now, they are always fighting over the bathroom."

During the family's years living in apartments, Diana was constantly looking for more space at a price they could afford. When they moved to Greenville County, all three shared one bedroom. Finding a two-bedroom apartment at a reasonable price wasn't easy, and she never could find an affordable apartment with two bathrooms.

"Ma, I need my space!" Angelica often reminds her mother. In their Habitat home, Angelica will no longer have to share a bedroom with her mom. Elizabeth and Angelica will have the privacy of their own rooms and be able to decorate them just as they please—always a delight for teenage girls.

And, the family's mortgage payment will be less than what they are now paying for rent. Diana looks forward to investing that extra money in her daughters' futures.

Leaving a legacy of homeownership to her daughters is very meaningful to Diana, who moved to the United States from Colombia in 1984, and to Greenville County in 2003. When asked what is so important about owning her home, Diana had to

take a moment to compose herself. "When I am not here any longer," she said, "they will have something." Diana looks forward to showing her girls what it means to responsibly own and care for a home.

This hardworking single mother—a banquet server at the Hilton Hotel since 2005—began the Habitat process in 2009. Diana said the classes she took were very helpful to her—especially "learning to handle money in the best way." Her "sweat equity" volunteer hours have been spent with Meals on Wheels and helping with the construction of her own home and other Habitat homes.



*Diana Alvarado looks forward to making special family memories when she and her teenage daughters move into their new Habitat home.*

The Alvarado family's home is being built by a Michelin volunteer team through the generous financial support of Michelin and Greenville County Redevelopment Authority (GCRA). It's located in the new Abigail Springs subdivision in Taylors that Habitat Greenville is developing with Homes of Hope.

"It's wonderful to see so many people working together as volunteers to build my dream home," said a happy and grateful Diana Alvarado. ▲

Fresh Start

with Monroe Free

I was riding through the neighborhood checking on a build in progress when I saw one of our Habitat homeowners in her yard working on her flowers. My first reaction was envy. Her flowers were beautiful, much more so than those in my yard. I stopped to talk.

She showed me her garden, where I saw small strawberries growing. She then pointed into the back yard and I saw her daughter working, pulling up weeds. No doubt I was looking at a proud mother, proud of both her daughter and her lovely yard.

It was a wonderful moment for me, seeing the impact Habitat was having on the single mom and her three children. And it's not just about pretty houses, yards and families taking pride in their home.

Recently new data came out from Housing and Urban Development showing the average house prices in Greenville County. The average price to rent a three bedroom house in Greenville County is \$843. In comparison, the average mortgage payment for a three bedroom Habitat house is \$350.

As I stood in the yard of that Habitat homeowner, I knew the impact of Habitat's work was greater than I was seeing at that moment. More cash flow for the family to pay for things like doctors' visits and medicines, school supplies and extracurricular activities; more nutritious food and better clothing. Those are some of the important differences Habitat makes for working poor families.

How does Habitat help working poor families? By providing them an opportunity to pay less for housing so other necessities can be afforded. It really is an opportunity like no other!

**Monroe Free,**  
President



*An Opportunity Like No Other.*