

P.O. Box 231 \* Houghton, Michigan 49931 \* 906-482-5376  
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## *Spring means a new home*

*"The sun does arise,  
And make happy the skies.  
The merry bells ring,  
To welcome the Spring.  
The sky-lark and thrush,  
The birds of the bush,  
Sing louder around,  
To the bells cheerful sound, ..."*

William Blake

It is hard not to be caught up in the alarum of Spring. The warmth, the sunshine, the flowers and birdsong, all quicken the blood and promise new life, new beginnings. Spring is always a joyful time for our affiliate as well, as we break ground and begin the building of this year's house. We will again be building in Hancock and giving denizens of Houghton and Hancock ample opportunity for helping with construction. This will be only the second house that we have built in Hancock; the location on Anthony Street was made possible by a donation of land by Merle Kindred. We and the Carlson family thank Merle deeply for her generosity.

This year will further challenge Copper Country Habitat to continue to renew and to rebuild itself. We began this process a year and a half ago with the opening of our ReStore in Calumet. Thanks to the hard work of our store manager, Joseph Mihal, the store has been highly successful and will start to provide the affiliate with significant income this year. We hope that the spring alarum will infect many in the community and

lead them to cleaning out their houses and garages and donating their no-longer wanted household furnishings and building materials to the ReStore. We hope that spring fever will afflict many others with the feverish urge to renovate their homes, and that these people will visit the store and peruse our wide array of building supplies, paints, and other offerings. While the store represents primarily a fund-raising venture for the Habitat affiliate, it is the environmentally friendly aspects of this venture that inspire many of the volunteers needed to run the operation.

Another aspect of our renewal is our preparation to hire an Executive Director. After about three years of deliberation, the Board has committed to moving toward hiring an Executive Director. We have reached a size and level of activity where our hard-working office manager, volunteer Board and committee members cannot keep up with the management and funding requirements. We continue to seek funding that will allow us to grow in this fashion. While the shedding of our old skin and emerging in a new form may bring both discomfort and relief, we hope to emerge better able to respond to the winds of change blowing in our economy, our nation, and our community.

As our early spring warms your heart, we hope that it will also invigorate and inspire you to join us in improving our local community, our habitat for humanity.

- Noel Urban, President, Board of Directors



# Community partners make a difference!

Copper Country Habitat for Humanity has many dedicated community partners who make affordable housing a possibility. A closer look at the 2009 build, the Bierman family house in Hancock, is a prime example of the wide range of contributions from businesses, organizations and individuals. The Hancock property was donated to CCHFh by Merle Kindred. The house to be constructed this summer will also be located on this plot. The two lots are generously sized with a gradual sloping grade that provides a great view to the south.

Construction of the Bierman home was significantly aided by the contribution of a number of organized groups of volunteers. The groups consisted of representatives of GE Aviation of Houghton, Lake Ann United Methodist Church, Saints Peter and Paul Lutheran Church, Finlandia University, Michigan Tech Campus Chapter, First United Methodist Church of Hancock, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, and the U.S. Coast Guard Portage Station.

Invaluable assistance was also provided by individual volunteers from the community as well as many members of the CCHFh Building Committee and Board. Plans for the Bierman home were prepared as a donation by Karin Cooper and Charles Johnson of UP Engineers & Architects. Other forms of special expertise were donated in the form of electrical work by John Liimatta and interior painting by Denny Garver.

Dow Chemical provided a substantial donation of insulation materials. Various appliances, fixtures, and supplies were donated by Whirlpool Corporation, Ferguson Enterprises, McGann Building Supply, Charter Communications, and First United Methodist Church. Subcontractors who donated a portion of their services and/or



**Above, the Bierman family celebrates the completion of their new home, shown at left, in Hancock.**

materials include Turpinen Builders, MTM Contracting, DP Construction, Holombo Masonry, and Hendrickson Excavating.

The Bierman home was constructed in keeping with a CCHFh tradition of building highly energy-efficient housing. Utilizing the combined talents and abilities of Construction Coordinator/Supervisor Carl Olson, CCHFh Building Committee members, and Michigan Tech personnel, improvements in energy efficiency and the use of green-building techniques are continuing to occur. The specially designed heating and air-exchange system was installed by MTM.

Construction on the next house (adjacent to the Bierman home) began in April, and completion is scheduled for midsummer. We are looking forward to adding AmeriCorps to our list of volunteers.

# Groundbreaking for 2010 Homeowner, Tina Carlson and family

The 2010 Habitat homeowner is Tina Carlson. Tina is originally from Hancock and is currently living in Houghton with her two children Jakob who is nine years old and Macy who is 18 months old, and their dog Reggie.

The Selection Committee screened the pool of applicants for the 2010 build in the fall of 2009. Tina met all the criteria for selection in addition to being open to a move to Hancock. In fact, she is very excited to be able to move back to Hancock or as Tina says, “the sunny side of the bridge.”

Groundbreaking for her home took place on Monday, April 12. Tina’s Pastor, Jimalee Jones, officiated at the ceremony. It was quite a celebration of a new beginning for the Carlson family with friends, family, Hancock Mayor Bill Laitila, Habitat Board members and Construction Supervisor Carl Olson in attendance.

Tina has been employed by Copper Country Mental Health for the past 11 years, working in a group home in Hancock. Having her own home will add stability to the lives of her children.

They are all very much looking forward to getting started on their new home. We at Habitat are happy to be building with Tina and her family.



**Above, Tina Carlson, far right, joins friends, family, and community members in breaking ground the new home she will share with her two children, Jakob and Macy, pictured below with their mother and dog Reggie.**





“Neither rain, nor sleet, nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds.”

*unofficial motto of the U.S.  
Postal Service*

This could have been the official motto of the hardy band of Habitat workers who, on December 20-21, 2009, braved cold, windy and snowy conditions as they labored mightily to transfer a huge donation of furniture, equipment and home decor from the former Stillwaters Elders Home to the ReStore in Calumet. Since the Stillwaters building is undergoing a complete interior remodeling, Haan Development of Harbor Springs, Michigan, contacted the ReStore in early December to offer the donation . . . the only caveat was that there was only a two-day window to get everything moved out.

Seven truckloads later (plus half of a semi trailer placed by Haan Development for onsite storage) the tired, sore, but nevertheless feeling like “we did it!” workers had completed their “appointed rounds”. The ReStore wishes to express its gratitude to both Gerald Haan for his generous gift to our organization and Haan Development staff members Kathy Schorfhaar and Jonathan Scheel for their work with us on facilitating the transfer of goods.

Donations from individuals, businesses and organizations are the lifeblood of our ReStore and without them we simply could not exist to serve the community. Stand behind the cash register and you quickly see the sensation every shopper feels when they have made a “find” in the store and, just think, their find might be the object that



you donated to the ReStore! Consider that in our first year alone the store was able to keep about 39 tons of material from the landfill, and that profits from the store will be used to build affordable, energy efficient houses for low-income families in our area, and you can see why every donation (no matter how small) is a win-win situation for all involved.

I would be remiss in not mentioning my dedicated and hard working staff who do the behind the scenes work that gives the store the clean and organized look shoppers see when they walk through the front door. A big “could not do it without you” to volunteers Matt Barkley and Fred Geis, as well as Ray Gervais of Experience Works. Finally, a “good job” exclamation to the “volunteer muscle men” Jim Brodeur and Dave Bach who did ReStore pickups for most of our first year.

Come and visit us soon! We have new items daily!

*Joseph Mihal  
CCHFH ReStore Manager*

# Reducing our impact: HOMES Green Building Summit yields information

HOMES stands for Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie and Superior. This conference in Mt. Pleasant in late January was sponsored by Habitat for Humanity of Michigan and was attended by over 200 hundred Habitat volunteers from all over the state.

Attending from our Copper Country affiliate were Carl Olson (Construction Coordinator) and Bill Binroth (member of the Board and the Building Committee). Both of our representatives attended the course “Introduction to Green Building” as well as the corresponding “Advanced Builder Training” conducted by Green Built Michigan. The courses covered these topics:

- Lot design and development
- Resource efficiency
- Energy efficiency
- Water efficiency
- Indoor environmental quality
- Operation, maintenance, and homeowner education

## Global impact

In effect these categories are lined up with the NAHB (National Association of Home Builders) guidelines for Green Building and the corresponding certifications.

What our attendees were particularly looking for were new ideas on ways to assure that the crawl space in our locally built homes stays dry without being vented to the outside. All of the other affiliates were very willing to share their experiences and give us some new ideas to ponder, e.g. installing an unfin-

ished cement slab in the crawl space.

Our Copper Country Habitat homes are recognized by the other affiliates to be particularly energy efficient. Some of the ideas in the training (e.g. Advanced Framing) may give us further means to improve energy efficiency while reducing framing costs.

Another subject that got a lot of attention by all of the attendees was whether to build new homes from the ground up or acquire older homes currently available through foreclosures and the like, and rehabilitate these.

On a cost-basis the experience with respect to savings has been mixed. Some affiliates claimed significant savings while others considered the costs of the two approaches “a wash”. Additional costs for “rehab” units are abatement of lead paint and asbestos.

Our representatives also established contact with members of the Construction Council that has members from throughout the state. These people will be a good source of information in the future.

— Bill Binroth



## Copper Country ReStore details

Where: 25971 Pine Street, Calumet

Contact: (906) 337-0020, ccrestore@pasty.net

Hours: Tuesday through Saturday  
9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

# Copper Country Habitat for Humanity seeking qualified applicants for homes

The HFH Homeowner Selection Committee is seeking applicants for Habitat homes to be constructed in 2011 and later. Applicants are encouraged to volunteer at the current build site so they can get acquainted with how the construction process works, as well as getting to know some of the people they would be working with on a weekly basis. Applications for the 2011 build are currently being reviewed.

Copper Country Habitat for Humanity builds homes and sells them at no profit and no interest to local families who cannot otherwise afford adequate housing. To be selected as a Habitat homeowner, you must first fill out an application and meet the following guidelines:

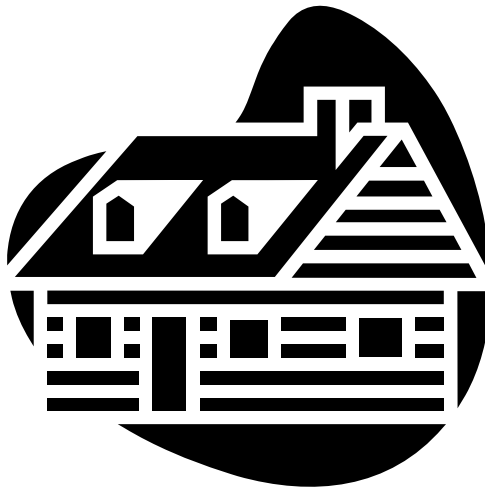
- You must have a housing need. This includes houses with overcrowded living space, severe structural problems, or unsafe or unsanitary conditions.
- Your annual household income should not exceed 45% of the median income for the state of Michigan but must be sufficient to make a monthly mortgage payment. For example, for a family of four, 45% of the median income is \$27,225. This figure will be greater for larger households and less if there are fewer than four people.
- You must be willing to allow Habitat to verify employment and other income, to verify checking and savings balances, to

run a credit check, to ask for references, and to interview you in your current home.

- You must work 200 hours of “sweat equity” for each adult in the household. Up to 25% of the hours may be completed by designated friends or relatives. Sweat equity may include construction, helping the organization with fund-raising and publicity, office tasks, working at the ReStore, or any hands-on involvement with Habitat.
- You will be required to attend financial management counseling.
- You will need to make a down payment of \$350 prior to the start of construction, and you will be responsible for

closing costs and mortgage payments. Since Habitat homes are built primarily with volunteer labor, costs are kept as low as possible to keep mortgage payments affordable.

If you think that you meet these guidelines or can recommend applying to someone you know, begin by completing an application, available either by calling the office at 482-5376 or downloading it at <http://coppercountryh4h.org/Apply.htm>. Mail it to Copper Country Habitat for Humanity, P.O. 231, Houghton MI 49931 or drop it off at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, 1000 Quincy Street, Hancock. Applications are accepted year-round. If you have any questions or need help filling out the application, please call Emily at the Habitat office (482-5376).



# ReStore participates in Haiti recovery efforts

Shortly after the January earthquake in Haiti, Habitat for Humanity International issued the following challenge to Habitat for Humanity local affiliates – collectively raise \$3 million for Habitat’s Haiti recovery effort. The governing board of Copper Country Habitat for Humanity elected to participate in Habitat for Humanity International’s Haiti recovery efforts by donating all the proceeds from the Habitat for Humanity Restore in Calumet from March 6-13. The proceeds from that week contributed \$767 to the Haiti recovery effort.

Habitat for Humanity International expects to help 50,000 families in Haiti who were affected by the devastating 7.0-magnitude earthquake that struck near Port-au-Prince on January 12. Habitat’s ability to respond effectively to Haiti’s long-term plan of recovery requires the support and participation of many. 100 percent of all funds raised by affiliates will go to Haiti program work. HFHI will not recapture expenses incurred to process and distribute the funds. Habitat’s involvement in the Haiti recovery effort includes emergency shelter kits, construction of transitional shelters, core house construction and the creation of Habitat Resource Centers making available affordable building materials and household items. For more information on Habitat for Humanity International’s plan for Haiti recovery see their Web site at [www.habitat.org](http://www.habitat.org).



*I want to make a difference!*

- ☐ I am enclosing a check to help Habitat eliminate substandard housing.
- ☐ Please contact me to help with construction.
- ☐ I can lead others in the following construction skills: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ I am willing to provide food for the construction volunteers.
- ☐ I am available to help with phone calls to volunteers.

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Daytime phone:**

**Evening phone:**

**E-Mail:**

Please return to:

*Copper Country Habitat for Humanity  
P.O. Box 231  
Houghton, MI 49931*

## Board of Directors

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## *LaCourt named Volunteer of the Year*

Many of you involved with Habitat in the Copper Country are most likely familiar with Mike LaCourt. The governing board of Copper Country Habitat for Humanity has had an opportunity to recognize Mike's contributions formally by naming him as Volunteer of the Year. Mike was recognized at the annual banquet for Habitat for Humanity-Michigan along with volunteers from Habitat affiliates around the state on March 23 in Lansing. Both Governor Jennifer Granholm and the Habitat for Humanity International CEO, Jonathan Reckford, spoke at the gathering.

Mike gets paid to be a research engineer at Michigan Tech but he has put in the same level commitment in his involvement with Copper Country Habitat for Humanity for nine years as a Board member, Building Committee chairperson, and construction volunteer. His nomination for Volunteer of the Year was based on his involve-



ment in 2009 when he finished his sixth year on the board and was instrumental in facilitating a smooth transition for the new CCHFH construction supervisor. Mike is known for his leadership style at construction sites that makes others eager to be part of the project.

Construction volunteer and past Board President, Ron Gratz, affirmed LaCourt's nomination as Volunteer of Year saying, "His knowledge of all aspects of the building trades has made him someone all volunteers can call on for advice on how things are done. He does all things with a positive attitude and sense of humor making it a privilege to work with him."

A Habitat homeowner appreciated LaCourt's emphasis on teaching others, saying, "What I really liked about Mike was that he not only showed me how to do a certain thing: hammering, drywall, measuring etc., he also took the time to explain why it was done that way."