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802-747-7440 Spring 2022  
[www.rutlandhabitat.weebly.com](http://www.rutlandhabitat.weebly.com)



## GROUNDBREAKING - April 19, 2022

Over 50 people joined with Rose and Josh Tabor to celebrate the start of their home; the first of three homes we will build on Hickory Street in Rutland City. Building this house is only possible because many donors and volunteers worked hard during the past year to make plans and secure the resources needed to bring them to life. None of this could be happening without the Rutland Housing Authority contributing the land for all three homes. This was an incredible donation to the Rutland community which has a critical need for housing that is affordable for lower-income residents. Photos and a video of the groundbreaking can be seen by going to <http://rutlandhabitat.weebly.com/construction-photo-gallery.html>. Photo L-R - Eric Solsaa with Rose and Josh Tabor breaking ground.

*Rose expressed her gratitude: "I just was in awe to see the amount of support we have in the community. I am living my mother's dream of owning her home and will be able to live in a home we can call our own. This home is built not only by the hands of the community but by love. It is showing me that where there is heart there is hope. My mother always said, " That God worked in mysterious ways." When I first moved here from Florida 17 years ago, I married my husband, but I felt like such a fish out of water. I began getting involved with the community either by way of music or volunteer work of some sort. I truly fell in love with the community. People embraced me and showed me though it may not be blood, I did have family here and they embraced us in every way. The day of the Ceremony my eyes filled with tears when I saw everyone here to support us to build our home. It was a day we will always remember and cherish. Thank You Every One!*

Josh closed the ceremony with a prayer. *"Dear Lord, We come before you to say thanks for all you are doing. We ask you to bless this property, and protect all those who will be involved with the construction. I pray that the Holy Spirit will dwell in every board, nail, screw, and other parts of our home. We thank you again for everything you've had done, and are going to do. In Jesus' name, amen."*



*Photo L-R Eric with Kevin Loso, Executive Director of the Rutland Housing Authority who congratulated and welcomed Rose and Josh to what will soon be their new home and shared his thoughts. "The Rutland Housing Authority is proud to have donated the land to help make the next three Habitat homes a reality here in Rutland. It had always been our dream to include affordable single-family homes in the Hickory Street neighborhood, Habitat for Humanity is making that happen. Home ownership is out of reach for many families in our community. Habitat represents a cost effective vehicle to expand this option to families of low and moderate incomes."*

## **MAKE AN INVESTMENT IN YOUR COMMUNITY: VOLUNTEER!**

If you want to join with others to accomplish something bigger than you can do alone, and you are concerned about adequate housing in Rutland County, consider volunteering with us. We are always looking for folks with knowledge and skills that can be used to further our work.

While an attractive, highly energy efficient and well built home is the visible testimony of the great work of our volunteers, it would not be possible without the hard work of many women and men who never drive a nail but work hard off site. Do you see a way that your talents and interests can have an impact on your community? Don't be shy! Let us hear from YOU.

**Building** - We are fortunate to have a core group of talented builders who welcome and teach volunteers who sometimes come with little or no building experience but always with an abiding desire to help a family in need to live in an affordable and safe home. The extraordinary leadership of our core builders enables as many as 140 different volunteers help to build each of our homes. We salute Skip Abelson, John Berryhill, Paul Brown, Norm Cohen, Steve Follett, Dick Kilburn, and Eric Solsaa.

**Community Relations** - This committee communicates by ZOOM, email, and phone to raise awareness and to tell the Habitat story to our community. We write press releases, keep our website and Facebook page up to date, and plan awareness events. We could use some help. A little inspired work can go a long way. Let us know if you would like to join with Louise Duda, Richard Malley, Dave Pearson, and Dave Tibbs.

**Homebuyer Selection and Support** - Want to help a family to enjoy the stability and security of living in a safe, sufficient, and affordable home and to move from a world of limitations to one of possibilities? Many people are astounded to learn that most Habitat affiliates are challenged to find qualified candidates. We need help getting the word out, and this is another example where a little time can have an enormous impact. Our homebuyer and support committee members are Tom Arnen, Diane Alberts, Pat Fowler, Andy Salamon, and Jolene Yoder.

We are accepting applications for a homeownership opportunity on Hickory Street in Rutland. Do you know someone in need of better housing? If so, to learn more about our process and qualifications, download a homeownership application from our website or contact us at (802-747-7440 or [rutlandhabitat@gmail.com](mailto:rutlandhabitat@gmail.com)).

**Finance** - Managing the resources we have so we can help more people in need is an incredible responsibility. The work includes developing and working within an annual budget but extends to helping our first time homebuyers manage their resources to successfully manage the responsibilities that come with homeownership. The members are Ed Eno, Lisa Lynch, Dawn Smith, and Eric Solsaa. Does this sound like a way you would like to help?

**Resource Development** - The members of this committee are passionate about Habitat's mission and work hard to secure the resources we need to build and repair homes. Our members are Paul Brown, Bob Harnish, Richard Malley, Dave Pearson, Andy Salamon, Eric Solsaa, and Tracy Weatherhogg. We do not ask for ourselves, but for the benefit of hard-working Rutland area residents who are in need of a hand up, not a handout! Let us know if you want to help.



*L—R Homebuyer Selection Committee Chair, Andy Salamon. Nan Salamon, Hazar and Hussam Alhallak, and Homebuyer Selection Committee member, Jo Yoder*



**WHO IS THIS MASKED WOMAN? - Breaking news! Rebekah Stephens will serve as our Executive Director!** Our Board of Directors is excited to announce that we were one of fifteen affiliates in the nation to receive a small and rural affiliate capacity building grant. It is tremendously affirming to have been chosen, and we are thrilled that Rebekah has agreed to work with us.

Through her work with the Community Cupboard and Rutland's Promise, Rebekah has demonstrated she is excited about housing as a key to ending the cycle of poverty. Eric Solsaa said, "Rebekah is a totally mission-driven person, and we know her to be a really hard worker who cares a lot about the community." Rebekah said that she felt, "blessed and grateful" for her time with the Community Cupboard and was extremely excited about having the opportunity to help hard-working area residents to have a safe and an affordable place to live. She will formally begin her work on June 1st.

**BOARD WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS** Throughout this newsletter, we profile the work of our committees that are our lifeblood. If you are interested in contributing by serving on one of our committees, including our board, please let me know. *Eric Solsaa, President, Board of Directors*

Julie Demaree is a graduate of Princeton Theological Seminary. This was a "late-career" move for her, after many years in small business management and small business coaching. Julie has a lifetime of interest and experience in fostering connection and community in the places she lives.

Gretchen Goodman admires the Habitat for Humanity model of helping people to invest in reaching their goals. "My admiration for Habitat for Humanity has never changed."

Ed Eno is serving as the chief financial officer of the Heritage Family Credit Union and looks forward to serving Habitat as the treasurer and chair of the finance committee. With every new household partner, we begin what could be as long as a thirty-year relationship. Managing our resources and helping our family partners successfully manage their resources is critical to our success.

**ACCEPTING CRITICAL HOME REPAIR APPLICATIONS** The Critical Home Repair program works with volunteers and local funding sources to help income sensitive homeowners continue to live independently in safe, decent, warm, secure homes. Types of repairs we complete:

- Handicap accessibility including ramps, stairs, and doorways
- Minor roof repairs on single story homes
- Exterior painting
- Window replacement
- Deck, stair, and porch repairs
- Minor weatherization ex. weather stripping doors.
- Landscaping and exterior clean up if it impedes entrance or exit

Applicants must own their home, live in Rutland County, earn less than 80% of the area median Income based on the household size, be willing to contribute "sweat equity" to the project, have a demonstrated need for repairs for reasons of safety, health, or affordability, have homeowner's insurance, be current on property taxes and mortgage payments. Call 802-747-7440 to learn more.



Rose and Vernon Mossey with their new ramp.



**We are most grateful to everyone who made a personal contribution in 2021 and who made it possible to build our first home on Hickory Street in Rutland City.**

***Individuals***

Skip and Ina Abelson  
Diane Alberts  
Karen Anderson  
Laura Aquistapace  
Joyce Austin  
S. Carol Bam  
Rebecca Bates  
John Berryhill  
Eugene & Mary Jane Brisbane  
Paul & Katherine Camp  
John Campbell  
Mary Ann Charron  
Norman Cohen  
Luca Conte & Diana Parker  
Claire & David Coppock  
John & Judith Crowley  
Carolyn Cushman  
Louise & Stan Duda  
Marcia Foley  
Douglas Reynolds and  
Cathy Fontein  
Edwin J. Fowler  
Jennie Gartner  
Robert & Joan Geiszler  
Samuel J. Groom  
Jane Hanley  
Robert Harnish  
Melissa Hoellerich  
Cheryl & George Hooker  
Linda & Leroy Jones  
James & Allyn Kahle  
Arnold Kapnick  
Joe & Peg Kraus  
Barbara & David Lacy  
Kevin Loso  
Richard Malley  
William Martinez  
Sabrina & Matthew McDonough

Robert & Shirley Miller  
Vernon Mossey  
James Paison & Joan Gamble  
David Pearson  
Lorraine Peters  
Tia Poalino  
Joanne Reynolds  
Jean Roberts  
Robert Ronfeld & Theresa Broach  
Natalie & Alan Sabino  
Andrew & Nan Salamon  
Jennifer Sanford  
Dawn Smith  
Marie Smith  
Martha St Onge  
Kevin Sweeney  
Stephen Waite  
Kim Washburn  
Joan Wise  
John & Anne Zawistowski

***Anonymous Gifts Made in Honor of***

Paul Brown  
Eric Solsaa



Mayor David Allaire (above-right) congratulated the Tabors. We were treated to a festive lunch prepared by Mike Skibisky, cooked by Sam Lewis (above - left), and provided by Price Chopper, Hanafords and Grand Union.

**Contributing Contractors**

We could not be successful without the generous support of area contractors who have donated or discounted their services to help us start the Hickory Street home in 2022.

- Big D Electrical
- Kesselring Engineering
- Lohsen Plumbing and Heating
- Mac Steel
- Rob Stubbins Electrical and General Construction
- Tom Grace Excavating



*Shed donated by GE Aviation.*

**2021 CONTRIBUTING ORGANIZATIONS**

**Foundations**

- Allstate Foundation
- American Endowment Foundation
- Huntington Tracy Foundation
- People's Community Foundation
- Streetscape Historical Preservation



Vanguard      Ready to pour the slab.      Charitable

**Businesses**

- Amazon Smile
- Bar Harbor Bank and Trust
- Berkshire Bank
- Carris Reels Inc.
- Computer EZ
- Foley Services Inc.
- GE Aviation
- Gagnon Lumber
- Heritage Family Credit Union
- Home Depot – Rutland
- LaValley Building Supply
- Prestige Real Estate of Killington
- Rob Stubbins Electrical and General Contractor
- Rutland Housing Authority
- Stewart's Shops
- The Bank of Bennington
- The Vermont County Store
- UBS
- VELCO



*Tom Grace Excavating*

**Congregations**

- Church of the Wildwood
- First Congregational Church of Fair Haven

**Service Organizations**

- Killington-Pico Rotary Club
- VELCO

**Town Voted Appropriations**

- Town of Killington
- Town of Pittsford
- Town of Proctor

**State of Vermont**

- Vermont Housing and Conservation Board



**Board of Directors & Staff**

Paul Brown

Julie Demaree

Ed Eno, Treasurer

Gretchen Goodman

Sam Groom

Jeff Guevin

Dawn Smith

Eric Solsaa, President

Bill Vien, Vice President

**Staff**

Lisa Lynch, Bookkeeper

**OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR WANTED**

We are looking for a part-time office administrator. If you know someone who is committed to building and repairing homes in partnership with income-qualified people, please contact 802-747-7440.

Responsibilities include:

Management of the database (contact information, tracking volunteer and financial contributions)

Correspondence – mostly gift acknowledgment.

Telephone and email – redirecting inquiries to the appropriate volunteer.

Sharing our mission and plans through email, Facebook, e-news, and print publications.

Record keeping and maintenance of mandated files.

This job provides a unique opportunity to have a positive impact on the Rutland area community. The person filling this position will work closely with members of the board to coordinate activities. This job will require the equivalent of three ½ days each week. The hours are flexible.