Letter from the Director

Summer is the time at Manatee Habitat when we reflect on the past year and set goals for our new fiscal year. For the past several months, members of the board of directors and staff have worked together to strategically define an expanding role of Manatee Habitat with a goal to increase our impact on families in the community. This upcoming year is particularly eventful as Manatee Habitat will celebrate its 25th Anniversary in 2019. We will have some special occasions to celebrate and look back at how far we come, and forward as we increase our reach in the next quarter century.

We’ve got an ambitious goal for 2018–19 to build five new homes and complete twenty critical home repairs to serve the housing needs of more families and raise the funds to build the infrastructure for a new Habitat Community, The Poling Gardens. In addition, we have strategically moved the ReStore Thrift Store operation to a new location with the goal of increasing revenue to build more homes.

In July, we learned that we were selected to participate in Margin & Mission Ignition 2018, an initiative of The Patterson Foundation designed to strengthen entrepreneurial capacity and heighten mission impact through earned-income strategies. This program will help us maximize the potential of our ReStore and we are grateful to The Patterson Foundation for this opportunity.

Additional funding from the City of Bradenton through the Community Development Block Grant program has made it possible to expand home preservation projects in the city of Bradenton. Rehab manager, Paul Adamski and his volunteer crew are keeping very busy making homes safe and secure so residents can stay in their homes and their neighborhood. Since our last newsletter, three new home dedications were held for families who became first-time home buyers with a no interest mortgage by completing all the requirements to purchase the home they helped build.

There are new faces in our office – Sheryl Boddy, the new Community Programs Manager replaced Didi Hager who is enjoying her retirement. Sheryl comes from a 25 year career in consumer lending, but most recently was with United Way Suncoast as the Financial Stability Manager. Crystal Frazer, Outreach Manager, also joined the Habitat team in May and brings a diverse background in social work and human services, including working in the outback of Australia. Kerry Collins, is the most recent addition as the Director of Finance and Administration and brings a wealth of experience to this new position.

Our successes this past year and all of our plans for the future are only possible because of the generous support and commitment of our Habitat family - our volunteers, community partners, donors and friends. I am incredibly grateful to each one of you and the part you play in helping us do our work in this community as we serve families and change lives.

WELCOME NEW STAFF MEMBERS!

New Staff members join Manatee Habitat: Crystal Frazer, Community Outreach Manager, Sheryl Boddy, Community Program Manager, and Kerry Collins, Director of Finance and Administration.
Three New Home Dedication Ceremonies in Bradenton

The spring was a busy time for Home Dedications. Britnie Mayhew’s Home Dedication ceremony was held March 10th, and a double Home Dedication Ceremony for Willie Sandifer and Jackie Melendez was held May 19th. Friends, family, sponsors and volunteers turned out to celebrate the hard work of the new homeowners over the past two years culminating in a new place for three families to call home. “A Habitat home dedication is the time when everyone who helped build a home comes together as a community to share the hope and excitement of the new homeowner,” said Diana Shoemaker. Habitat has now built 5 new homes in this Bradenton neighborhood near LECOM Park and the Village of the Arts. Visit Facebook and our website www.manateehabitat.org for more dedication photos and a video by the homeowners.

Home Repair Gives the Hamilton family Renewed Pride

The Home Repair Program of Manatee Habitat is giving families in Bradenton a hand up to make repairs they could not afford through traditional financing channels. The Hamiltons have lived in their house since 1974. Originally from Slocum, Alabama, Nell Hamilton came to Florida and worked in banking customer service for 36 years. Now retired and a widow, she also cares for her mother who is blind. Her daughter Sabrina, a Mental Health Counselor, also lives with her. Her roof was leaking and she could not afford to replace it. She had heard about Manatee Habitat’s program and called the office.

“Didi was so nice and answered all my questions and got me signed up. Paul and Bruce were awesome and all volunteers were wonderful. I thank God for it everyday,” said Nell. Now with a new roof, a new door and windows, she knows she has a secure home again and she is hearing how nice her house looks from her neighbors.

Manatee Habitat’s First Interfaith Build Moving Toward Completion

The walls are up, the roof is on and it is the labor of faith organization members making it happen. Joy in volunteering is evident when this group works together and it is an inspiration to those who work alongside them. Jacquie and Marvin Kendall, the homebuyers of the Interfaith Build have been right there and will have contributed at least 500 hours of sweat equity on the build by the time it is complete. “It has been an awesome experience to feel all the love and support from everyone coming out to build and to be learning how to build a house is so exciting,” Jacquie said. To support the Interfaith Build visit Support Us on the website at www.manateehabitat.org.
Manatee County Habitat for Humanity’s new ReStore on SR 70 opened on Saturday, August 18 with a Grand Opening event. Anxious customers who had been checking regularly to see when it would open lined up down the sidewalk to be the first ones in at 9:00 am. A bounce house, hourly prize drawings, popcorn and cotton candy added to the fun. The new ReStore is located at 5108 15th St. East in Bradenton and is the anchor store of the newly renovated Oneco Plaza. Over 40 volunteers helped make the Grand Opening a big success.

“I am so impressed with the new store! It has such a variety of unique items,” said Sue Moyer a self-proclaimed thrift store enthusiasts and do-it-yourselfer. “Our customers will find what sets us apart from other thrift stores is the volume and variety we have in our store. We have lots of quality furniture, appliances, patio furniture, art and one of a kind decorative items, plus clothes, kitchen and home improvement items like cabinets, doors, flooring,” said Karen McElroy, ReStore General Manager.

Profits from the ReStore are used to help build more affordable housing in Manatee County. Manatee County Habitat for Humanity was one of five non-profit organizations recently selected to participate in Margin & Mission Ignition 2018, an initiative of The Patterson Foundation, designed to strengthen entrepreneurial capacity and increase nonprofit mission impact through the development and implementation of earned-income strategies. “We are thrilled to have been selected for this initiative and look forward to working alongside our consultants to help take our ReStore to a new level,” said Diana Shoemaker, Executive Director of Manatee Habitat.

Mark Your Calendar! 4th Annual ReStore Spaces Event
When you visit the new store, you will see the vignette rooms ready for the 4th Annual ReStore Spaces Design Team Challenge on June 22, 2019! Flyers are available at the store and on the website www.manateehabitat.org. Sponsorships available, contact Amy Van Dell at avandell@manateehabitat.org.

The Poling Gardens, Manatee Habitat’s next community is moving closer to reality. The Community Concept Plan pictured here for seventeen green built, sustainable homes in West Samoset is undergoing the rigors of site planning and engineering. Infrastructure for roads and utilities will take place in late 2019 and new home construction is scheduled to start in early 2020. “I am looking forward to building a community again. We have learned a lot from the three previous communities Manatee Habitat has built, and we will apply that knowledge in this project,” said Bruce Winter, Director of Construction for Manatee Habitat. The Poling Gardens is located off 9th St. East between 31st and 32nd Avenues East, just south of Southeast High School. If you or your organization would like to join the effort to help build The Poling Gardens, contact Amy Van Dell at avandell@manateehabitat.org.

Pictured, top: Construction Volunteer, Paolo Costa, made a leadership gift of $10,000 for The Poling Gardens and helped host an Open House at the newly completed house on 17th Ave. West to share the plans for the new community with donors and guests. Pictured, bottom: Manatee Habitat for Humanity Community Concept Plan for The Poling Gardens
Herb McCarty Receives Manatee Habitat Lifetime Achievement Award 2018

Bruce Winter, Director of Construction had many good things to say about Herb and why he deserved the Lifetime Achievement Award. Herb said for those who want to be considered for this award, “it’s simple, just build houses for 20 years.” Herb McCarty is a leader who encourages new volunteers on the jobsite. He has donated 4,578 hours as a Manatee volunteer and has help build 35 houses. Herb has many more uncounted hours on projects in other states. Congratulations, Herb!

The Volunteer Appreciation Event held on Coquina Beach received rave reviews from the dedicated volunteers who have invested nearly 19,000 hours of their precious time in the mission of Manatee Habitat this past year. Barbara Slater, Volunteer Coordinator and event planner kicked it up with authentic German fare from the Schnitzel Trailer. Volunteers enjoyed the opportunity to mingle on a nice March evening on the Beach. Volunteers received the Presidential “Points of Light” awards in the Gold, Silver and Bronze categories based on their number volunteer hours and special recognition awards were also presented. Volunteers for Administration, Family Services and the ReStore were recognized in addition to Construction. The total value of volunteer time donated exceeds $450,000.

Congratulations to our Annual Award Winners:
Construction Volunteer of Year - Larry Linder
Bent Nail Award Winners – Rich Mort, Mary Miedema, Steven Shiraishi
Family Services Volunteer of the Year – Jim Frame
Administration Volunteer of the Year – Sally Eaton
Hardin ReStore Volunteer of the Year – Joyce Kouba
Cortez ReStore Volunteer of the Year – Janice Shamblen
Development Volunteer of the Year - Sue Moyer

"ALONE WE CAN DO SO LITTLE; TOGETHER, WE CAN DO SO MUCH." -HELEN KELLER