Habitat for Humanity® of East Jefferson County

July 2026 eNews

A Welcome Home, a Milestone for the Store, and the Power of Women Build

Celebrating a New Chapter for Paul and Oceana

Home dedications are always meaningful ceremonies at Habitat for Humanity.

They bring together homeowners, volunteers, neighbors, and supporters to celebrate the journey to homeownership and the strength of community. On Friday, June 26, that spirit was on full display as Paul and Oceana received the keys to their "new to them" recycled Habitat home.

Family, friends, Habitat supporters, and neighbors gathered to celebrate the occasion and welcome the newest homeowners into the community. The dedication highlighted not only the importance of a safe, stable home, but also the many people whose efforts helped make the day a reality.

Photos above: Left, Paul and Oceana's family. Right, Paul mowing the property in preparation for the dedication and moving in.

Top photo collage: Top, group photo from the home dedication with Paul and Oceana in the back. Bottom left, Store team members Santiago, Pam, manager Jerimah, and Dan. Bottom right, Women Build participants.

Preparing a 'recycled' home for its new owners

The home's preparation was made possible through the work of Repair Specialist Brian Bochat, homeowner Paul, and dedicated volunteers, who worked together to refresh the house for its next chapter. This included inspecting all appliances and restoring neutral paint colors. Depending on the age and condition of the recycled home, this could also include updating electrical systems, upgrading the water heater, and installing a new roof.

At the dedication, Brian shared that it is "inspiring to be a spoke in this well-running wheel, where each of our contributions is a building block that ends in a home dedication." He also reflected on the "wonder of volunteers and future homeowners all working together, pulling hard and true, for the shared goal of owning a home."

A highlight of the dedication was hearing from Chuck Thrasher, former Habitat board member and the home's initial construction supervisor. Thrasher shared the history of the house and reflected on its original construction, reminding attendees of the lasting impact Habitat homes have as they continue to serve families for generations.

Gillian Stewart shared warm words of welcome and support written by Amy Milne. Gillian and Amy are both neighbors and Habitat homeowners, highlighting the close-knit community that surrounds Habitat families and the relationships that help make a house feel like home.

Left photo: Chuck Thrasher is speaking as Paul, Oceana and other attendees listen. Right photo: Gillian Stewart shares a welcome. Behind her is Captain Christopher Hanke, with his children. He gave the house blessing.

A special passing of the keys

One of the most meaningful moments of the dedication came when Erica Dirksen, the home's original owner, personally presented the keys to Paul and Oceana. The gesture symbolized the continuation of Habitat's mission, with one family's success helping create an opportunity for another family to thrive.

As Paul and Oceana stepped into this new chapter, those in attendance celebrated more than a home. They celebrated the enduring power of community, partnership, and hope. This recycled Habitat home serves as a reminder that affordable homeownership creates lasting opportunities, strengthening families and neighborhoods for years to come.

Left photo: Erica Dirksen is presenting the keys to Paul and Oceana.
Right photo: Oceana sharing heartfelt words as Paul looks on; a photo that speaks volumes to the importance of Habitat homeownership and the peace and stability it brings.

The Habitat Store Celebrates a Record-Breaking Year

The Habitat Store has plenty to celebrate! This fiscal year, the store blew past its sales goal and came very close to reaching its stretch goal. June, the last month of the fiscal year, was the store's biggest sales month ever. Together, these achievements pushed the store to a record bottom line, reaching an important benchmark several years ahead of plan.

None of this would be possible without the Store volunteers! In this past fiscal year, 87 volunteers, many of them on the path to homeownership, contributed their time, their heart, and their commitment to the mission. From picking up, delivering and sorting donations to organizing inventory and assisting customers, these volunteers are the backbone of the Store's success.

Store Manager Jerimah gives credit to the hard work and dedication of his co-workers on the Store team: Pam, Santiago, and Dan. A key part of this year's achievements was the team's commitment to hosting more monthly sales events throughout the year. Events like the Art & Tool Sales, the Spring Fling, the Valentine's Bling Sale, and the Holiday Sale created excitement, brought new customers into the store, and helped build greater awareness of the Store's role in supporting Habitat's work across East Jefferson County. Jerimah also calls out the mentorship and support of his supervisor, Ellen Michael, in helping him grow into his management role and strengthen the store's operations.

Thank you to everyone who shops, donates, volunteers, and supports the Habitat Store. All the money raised goes into building homes and expanding access

to affordable homeownership in East Jefferson County. Together we're building homes, communities, and hope.

Left photo: unloading the truck, left to right, are store team member Dan, store manager Jerimah, and store volunteer Wendell.
Right photo: in the procesing room, sorting and pricing donations. From left to right are homeowner Karen Y., store team member Pam, and volunteers Alice, Anne, and Karen K.

Apply for Homeownership

We are accepting applications for homes in the Mason Street neighborhood

This will be the largest affordable housing development in East Jefferson County's history — 138 permanently affordable homes! **Read more about Mason Street.**

This neighborhood is designed for the hardworking people who make our community special, including teachers, healthcare workers, tradespeople, restaurant employees, and young families who want to put down roots here but have been priced out of the market.

Wondering if you qualify? Curious about the **Habitat Extended Program**? Visit **Buy a Home** or reach out to our team to learn more, info@habitatejc.org.

Please share with family, friends and coworkers!

APPLY TO BE A HOMEOWNER

Be a Part of Women Build

Join Us for Women Build!

Upcoming Women Build Weekends

- August 6-8, 2026
- September 17-19, 2026

This is a hands-on opportunity to learn new skills, meet great people, and help build affordable homes right here in East Jefferson County. These build days are about more than construction. They're about connection, teamwork, and being part of something lasting in our community.

Just listen to Cindy Brittain, Habitat homeowner and longtime construction volunteer:

> These Women Build opportunities are so inspiring! I always learn something new, and we accomplish soooooo much in just one day! Oh… and did I say FUN!?!?

Already a construction pro? Awesome. Never picked up a hammer? That's just fine. Come ready to learn, laugh, and build alongside other amazing women.

LEARN MORE & SIGN UP

Join us for a Special Groundbreaking

Habitat for Humanity®
of East Jefferson County

Please join us

Mason Street
Groundbreaking

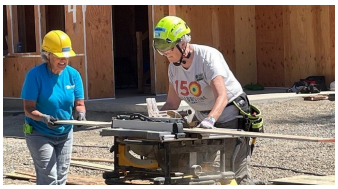
AUGUST 26 | 2 PM
Mason Street, Port Hadlock

Building Community Together Here and Now

Get Involved

Every gift helps a family build a foundation.

DONATE



We're building homes, communities, and hope.

VOLUNTEER

A good deal for you, our communitiy, and the environment.

SHOP THE STORE

We'd Love to Hear from You!

Please get in touch. We're here to answer any questions and are always happy to help.

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