

Groundbreaking marks new beginning for Friend family

By Julia Ferrante

On the first day of spring, under a blue, sunny sky and surrounded by more than 60 friends, family and volunteers, Rob and Amanda Friend and their two children celebrated a new beginning.

The family, together with Union-Snyder Habitat for Humanity and Central Pennsylvania YouthBuild, broke ground on a new house off New Columbia Road, bringing the Friends one step closer to fulfilling their dream of homeownership.

"It's an amazing opportunity for us," Amanda Friend said. "We couldn't be luckier, happier or more thankful. This house is going to allow us to sit down as a family and have dinner, something we can't do now because we only have three chairs and a small counter. This will provide us with a safe place for our children to play."

The Friend family is the 18th family to partner with the Union-Snyder Habitat affiliate since the organization was founded in 1994. Their 1,040-square-foot, three-bedroom, ranch-style house will be built on a lot adjacent to the home of a fellow Union-Snyder Habitat partner family. Tito and Virginia Lopez and their children, Nathaniel and Angela, moved into their house in the fall.

Room to grow

Amanda Friend, a stay-at-home mom, and her husband, Robert, a tow truck operator for Minuteman Towing & Repairs Inc. in Bloomsburg, had been looking to move from their small, two-bedroom apartment into larger quarters when they learned about the opportunity for partnership with Habitat.

Until recently, the family was paying \$500 per month to heat their drafty apartment. When their heating system was replaced, holes were left in the floors where radiators once were, Amanda Friend said. Most of the windows in the house leak and do not open, and some are made of Plexiglas. Paint on the walls is chipping, and when trains go by on the adjacent train tracks, the house shakes. Brian Friend, 6, and his sister, Ashley, 3, did not seem to be able to contain their excitement before the ceremonial groundbreaking. They both put their hands on the shovel and waited for their moment.



YouthBuild Coordinator Kate Lomax, Friend Family, Union-Snyder Habitat President Tom Rambo

"It's time to break some ground," Rambo, the Union-Snyder Habitat president after a group prayer and remarks.

"Yea!" Brian exclaimed, pushing his foot against the top of the shovel. Their dad, Rob Friend, offered a little help, guiding the shovel through the dirt.

The Friends' home, which will be built with volunteer labor and many donated materials, will include a place for family meals and separate bedrooms for the children. It costs about \$80,000 to build a Habitat house. The family will pay back Habitat through an interest-free mortgage, and the payments will be put in the Fund for Humanity to be used for future

home construction. Volunteers will complete the majority of labor to build the home.

Central PA YouthBuild partnership

In addition to traditional community volunteers, young adults enrolled in the Central Pennsylvania YouthBuild program will work on the house through the fall. Union-Snyder Habitat recently launched a two-year partnership with YouthBuild. Groups of young adults from six counties in the Susquehanna Valley will work with the local affiliate and another organization that provides affordable housing during six-

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'ReStore' committee continues to seek building site

By Anne Marie Talty and Sandra Hopkins

Union-Snyder Habitat for Humanity is moving forward with plans for a local ReStore as committee members continue to look for a building site.

The ReStore, which will be about 10,000 square feet, will sell new or gently used construction and home items from local businesses or homeowners remodeling their homes. The committee is considering buildings or land in Union, Snyder, and possibly Northumberland and in areas with high traffic.

Items such as wood, shingles, windows, doors and appliances would be sold in the ReStore at a discount of their retail value. Proceeds will be used to hire additional employees and to raise money for the future Habitat homes.

"By recycling materials that would normally be placed in a landfill, the ReStore will be a great addition to other groups who are helping to make our area a little cleaner and greener," said Sandra Hopkins, Habitat's development officer and a member of the ReStore committee. "It was clear to everyone involved that that Union-Snyder Habitat certainly had the ability and desire to take this project to fruition as

an additional way to help our affiliate grow."

Building on similar successes

As part of their research to determine the feasibility of a ReStore, committee members visited similar stores in Williamsport, Lancaster and Irwin, Pa., to see the concept at work. They have corresponded closely with Williamsport ReStore managers through their opening process and followed their successes in their first year of operation.

The ReStore not only would be a place to buy and sell goods to benefit Habitat but also the affiliate headquarters and a place where community members may learn more about the organization, find out how to volunteer and otherwise support Habitat's mission, Hopkins said.

Committee members consulted with Bucknell University's Small Business Development Center on a business plan. The Union-Snyder Habitat board agreed to move forward with the first phases of opening a ReStore, including renting a storage unit to keep donated items until the ReStore opens.

"We wanted the ability to start taking donations immediately, so with board approval, we rented a storage

area to keep donated items until we find a facility," said Cherie King, vice president of the local affiliate and a ReStore committee member. "We also will have yard sale-type events once a month to raise seed money to open an official store."

Businesses including Lowe's home improvement center, Mifflinburg Lumber & Building Supply, and US Supply Co. of Lewisburg have agreed to donate items. The committee eventually plans to expand the items sold at the ReStore to include seasonal decorations, and home décor.

"We hope that the word spreads, so will get donations from other sources," Hopkins said. "It is the goal of the committee to pay particular attention to the needs of the community and get their feedback and develop a wish list of items."

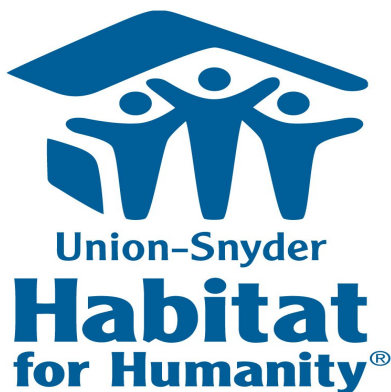
If you know of a building or site that fits our needs or would like to make a donation to the ReStore, please contact Sandra Hopkins at sandy@ushfh.org or Cheri King at mking@sunortho.com.

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Former volunteer helped build seven Habitat houses

By Julia Ferrante

Helping others came naturally to Charlie Foster.

Throughout his life, he put his professional skills to work, supervising building and rehabilitation projects in some of the most depressed areas of Kentucky, on Native American reservations in Minnesota and in Alaska and Pennsylvania.

In 2006, he was named one of Union-Snyder Habitat for Humanity's volunteers of the year, recalled Paul Hoot, the former construction chair who nominated Foster.

"I knew that Charlie had been involved with our construction committee for a number of years, even before my time," Hoot said. "I considered it an honor to nominate him for his skills and volunteer spirit. He was truly an asset to our organization."

Foster died Feb. 3 at his home in Lewisburg. He was 83.

Born May 31, 1926, in Boston, he was a son of the late Alphonse J. and Vernice E. (Blackey) Foster. He and his wife of 60 years, the former Marion A. Joslyn, were married December 26, 1949.

After graduation from Laconia High School in New Hampshire in 1944, Foster joined the U.S. Navy and served as a Motor Machinist's Mate during World War II until 1946. He graduated from the University of New Hampshire in 1951 with a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering and worked for many years for Bethlehem Steel in Williamsport before retiring as plant manager in 1983.

Foster was involved in many community organizations including his church, the Salvation Army, the Boy Scouts and Union-Snyder Habitat's construction committee, supervising construction of seven houses.

In addition to his wife, he is survived by three sons and a daughter-in-

law: David A. Foster of Dunmore, Douglas A. Foster of Williamsport and Jeffrey C. and Kimberly Foster of Rockford, IL; a daughter and son-in-law, Joyce C. and David Paterson of Sachse, Texas; a sister, Doris Morrison of Abington, Mass.; ten grandchildren; five great-grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

A memorial service at Beaver Memorial United Methodist Church and burial in Twin Hills Memorial Park will be announced at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Evangelical Hospice, 1 Hospital Drive, Lewisburg, PA 17837 or RiverWoods Benevolent Care Fund, 90 Maplewood Drive, Lewisburg, PA 17837 or Beaver Memorial United Methodist Church, 42 S. Third St., Lewisburg, PA 17837

Cronrath-Grenoble Funeral Home in Lewisburg handled arrangements.

Longtime volunteer Pyle raised profile of local affiliate



Florence Pyle

By Julia Ferrante

In the early 1990s, when Union-Snyder Habitat for Humanity was founded, volunteer Florence Pyle helped raise the profile of the local chapter through her numerous community contacts and media savvy.

"When we first started out, it was very difficult to get newspaper coverage," recalled Ann Heath, who was president of the local affiliate at the time. "She was responsible for getting Habitat known in the community and really getting our mission out there. Her real gift to Habitat was that she knew how to do the publicity in a way that others had tried and failed."

Pyle, a one-time Union-Snyder Habitat volunteer of the year, died March 27. She was 94.

Born in Huron, South Dakota on April 15, 1915, Pyle was the only child of John Shields and Florence (Bruce) Pyle. She grew up in South Dakota and near Pittsburgh and graduated

as class valedictorian from Mount Lebanon High School. She received a bachelor's degree in public school music from Carnegie Institute of Technology (now Carnegie-Mellon University) in 1936 and in 1954 received a master's from Bucknell University.

Pyle worked as a music teacher and at Briarcliff Junior College in New York before joining Bucknell University in 1947. She retired 30 years later after serving for many years as the university registrar and assistant secretary to the Board of Trustees.

Pyle dedicated much of her time to volunteering and handled public relations for organizations including local chapters of

Habitat, the Girl Scouts, the Audubon Society, and her church. She also handled publicity for the Lewisburg Arts Festival, the capital campaign for the Union County Public Library and the local Kiwanis and United Way.

A musicale and service of remembrance will be held at 10 a.m. Saturday, May 15 at Bucknell Hall off St. George Street. Inurnment will be at a later date in South Dakota. Donations may be made in Pyle's memory to Buffalo Valley Lutheran Village, 889 Fairground Road, Lewisburg, PA 17837.

Cronrath-Grenoble Funeral Home of Lewisburg is handling arrangements.



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Groundbreaking (continued)

month-long programs.

The YouthBuild trainees, who range in age from 18 to 24 years old, will split their 30-hour, five-day weeks between the classroom and the construction site, learning academic, career and life skills, said Kate Lomax, the youth coordinator for the Central PA Workforce Development Corp. Eight of the YouthBuild participants attended the groundbreaking.

"I am excited about our partnership with the Friend family and with YouthBuild," said Tom Rambo, president of Union-Snyder Habitat. "This is the beginning of something great."

Funded by the U.S. Department of Labor, Central Pennsylvania YouthBuild is part of a national program that helps young adults rebuild their lives while rehabilitating or building affordable housing. The local organization is supported by a three-year grant and administered by the Central PA Workforce Development Corp. and the Central Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Board.

The process of selecting Union-Snyder Habitat's next partner family will begin next winter. Those interested in volunteering may visit the local affiliate website at www.usfhf.org or call 1-888-995-4387.

Founded in 1976, Habitat International has built more than 175,000 safe, affordable homes for partner families.

Habitat's goal is to fulfill the dream of home ownership with simple, basic homes for families in need. Families must be able to pay a no-interest mortgage and commit to 250 hours of "sweat equity," by helping with construction of their own home and working on future affiliate projects. They also must complete a home ownership course.



YouthBuild members at groundbreaking for Friend family

Family selection

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