

Statewide Habitat for Humanity Affiliates Collaborate to Build a House of 20,000 Signatures for World Habitat Day

In recognition of "World Habitat Day" on October 5, 2009, Habitat for Humanity affiliates in Iowa will address the lack of decent housing around the world, including the need for affordable housing across the state of Iowa.

Focusing on this year's themes, secure tenure and neighborhood revitalization, Habitat for Humanity affiliates in Iowa will bring awareness to the need for affordable housing in Iowa by beginning to create the "House of 20,000 Signatures". Affiliates will set-up informational booths across the state to educate about affordable housing, Habitat for Humanity, and to collect signatures on 2'x4's that will be used to construct a house in front of the Iowa Capital in April 2010. The goal is to collect 20,000 signatures from across the state. The signatures will represent the thousands of Iowans who support Habitat's efforts to create safe, affordable homeownership opportunities and will serve as a message to legislators on the importance of affordable housing.

The local Habitat affiliate will be celebrating World Habitat Day with an Open House on Monday, October 5th from 11:30am – 1:30pm at a current build site, 1636 North Pennsylvania Ave in Mason City. The public is encouraged to stop by and sign a 2x4, enjoy some food, sign up for a door prize, and learn about Habitat. This house is sponsored by the Thrivent Builds program and should be ready for the Partner Family to move in by Thanksgiving.

In the US, about 95 million people, or one-third of the nation, have housing problems including a high-cost burden, overcrowding, poor quality shelter and homelessness. In Iowa alone, more than 20,000 families are living in substandard or poor quality housing. One in three households spend more than 30 percent of income on housing, and one in seven spends more than 50 percent. There is not a single county in Iowa where a full-time minimum wage worker can afford even a one-bedroom apartment at what HUD determines to be the Fair Market Rent. 2.2 million Subprime home loans made in recent years have already failed or will end in foreclosure, costing homeowners as much as \$164 billion.

Raising awareness and advocating for change are the first steps toward breaking the cycle that perpetuates the plague of poverty housing. World Habitat Day serves as an important reminder that everyone must unite to ensure that all Iowans have a safe and decent place to call home.

About Habitat for Humanity North Central Iowa

Habitat for Humanity NCI is a not-for-profit ecumenical, Christian housing ministry that utilizes volunteer labor and donations to build simple, decent, affordable houses for families who would otherwise be unable to afford home ownership. The homes are sold to qualified families with 1% down and 0% interest loans. Habitat also operates a ReStore, a home improvement discount outlet that sells new and gently used merchandise to the public in which the proceeds support the home builds. 1411 South Taft Ave., Mason City, Iowa 50401, 641-424-8978, www.habitatnci.org Serving: Cerro Gordo, Franklin, Hancock, Winnebago, Worth and Wright counties.

About Habitat for Humanity International

Habitat for Humanity International is an ecumenical Christian ministry that welcomes to its work all people dedicated to the cause of eliminating poverty housing. Since its founding in 1976, Habitat has built more than 300,000 houses worldwide, providing simple, decent and affordable shelter for more than 1.5 million people. For more information, visit www.habitat.org

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