



# Building Hope

Warren County Habitat for Humanity Newsletter ~ Spring/Summer, 2023

Seeking to put God's love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities, and hope.

## THE HISTORY OF OUR BUILDING AT 31 BELVIDERE AVENUE

by Donna Detrick and Kathy Halpin

Our town of Washington, approximately one square mile in area, came into existence as a Borough in 1868 with a population of nearly 2,000, with an additional 6,000 inhabitants in the surrounding areas. In its early days, Washington was a bustling community with many factories working at full steam. For many years it was known as the "Organ Capital of the World", touting over a dozen organ factories producing thousands of organs each year during its peak days.



Cornish Piano and Organ Factory, Washington, N. J.

and City Council Chamber in the back. Behind that main building was a little addition that says "lock up". On the 1902 Sanborn map, an additional label appeared: "The cooker". The building next to it was an unidentified wood structure, but it's important to us: it later became our **Habitat Affiliate's very first rented office and home to a tiny thrift store.**

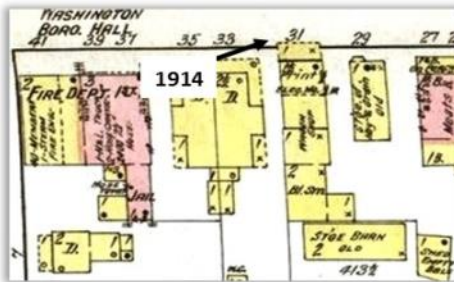
A map from 1909 shows the same structure and shop but the fish market moved over in front probably from the smaller building next door and the back was still a blacksmith shop. That smaller building became a storage building. Town Hall is still the Fire house with a list of trucks and hoses stored there but instead of "cooker"/"lock up," it is now identified as "jail" and that unidentified wood structure is labeled "fire truck".



Photo showing two buildings on the corner.

A big part of Washington's success was due to its access to transportation. The Morris Canal passed through, and additional access was provided later by the intersection of two major railroads and two significant highways.

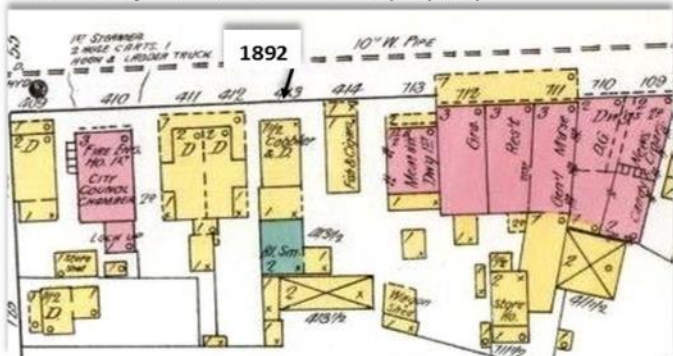
On the Beers County Atlas of 1874, the Masonic Hall existed at 31 Belvidere Avenue. Therefore, it could be said that the original building on this lot was the **first of several "community centers"** to sit on this property!



### Map from 1914

At that time, the front part of the building is listed as a "print & electric machine shop", the middle is a "wagon shop", with the "blacksmith" shop still there. Instead of "old", the back part is called "storage barn, old".

On Sanborn's map dated 1924, the building on this lot was now identified as printing, (no blacksmith) and the little building next to it is no longer there. By now, the two buildings that had made up Town Hall were connected by an addition in between and was renamed Washington Borough Hall. The Fire Department took up the entire building with a jail attached to the back. This 1930 photo shows the two buildings connected and an addition added on. In that addition was the 1st rented Habitat office and tiny thrift store we had. Previously we had a desk in a local realtors office and held meetings at the Presbyterian church.



Old Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps reveal the changes that took place on this property over the years. This first map is from 1892 - It shows a wood framed cobbler section, stone blacksmith shop and another wood-framed building labeled "old". Next to it on this same lot was a smaller building labeled "cigars and fish". The duplex house on the map is still next door. The building at the end of our block was then in two parts - one brick building being the fire house in front



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Jaiden and her brother, Biagio, at the site of their future home.



A rare photo of our amazing photographer, Cathy Miller. Your pictures tell the WCHFH story and capture the heart and soul of why we do what we do. Thank you!



Staff Selfie by JJ! Greetings from Margaret, Jason, Fran, Brittany, Cynthia, and Karen.



Do you have an old or unneeded car, truck, boat, or other vehicle sitting in your driveway or taking up space in your garage? Consider donating it to Habitat for Humanity through Cars for Homes! Not only will you help Habitat provide decent, affordable housing, you'll also help the environment AND open up your space for something better.

### WHY SHOULD I DONATE MY CAR?

- ◆ One hundred percent of the net proceeds from the sale of your donated vehicle will be used by Warren County Habitat for Humanity to build and repair affordable homes.
- ◆ You may qualify for a tax deduction for donating a vehicle.
- ◆ It's fast and easy. Learn more about how vehicle donations work.
- ◆ Thirty percent of cars donated to Habitat are recycled for materials or sold for reusable parts.
- ◆ Recycling steel uses less energy and natural resources and produces less carbon pollution.
- ◆ Taking an inefficient older car off the road helps save gas and improves air quality.

### HOW DO I DONATE MY CAR?

Get more information and start your Cars for Homes donation process [here](#).

Call Cars for Homes toll-free at 1-877-277-4344.

**The Newsletter of Warren County Habitat for Humanity** - Published in digital format and distributed via email. If you currently do not receive *Building Hope* in your email but would like to, please call **(908) 835-1300, ext. 10**.

*Building Hope*



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## Feel the Love: Valentines Day WRNJ Radiothon brings over \$30K in donations



Valentine's Day is about showing love, and the Warren County Habitat for Humanity community certainly felt that love this year! The incredibly successful Have a Heart for Habitat Radiothon was held on Tuesday, February 14th and was hosted by WRNJ Radio in Hackettstown. The event focused on fundraising for two major programs: Warren County Habitat's third ever Veterans Build, where a home is being built in partnership with an amazing Veteran family, and their Critical Home Repair program, a program that aims to keep existing homeowners in their homes safely and affordably.

The Warren County Habitat community came together not only to donate and support, but to share their stories on air. The event featured guest speakers like construction volunteers, Board Members, Habitat homeowners, and a key "founding" couple of the Warren County Habitat Affiliate, Judy and Stuart

Ours. The Ours helped write the initial application that granted Warren County Habitat official affiliate status in 1999. By sharing real stories from their community members, the organization aimed to inspire more people to volunteer, apply for repairs or homeownership, and become a part of the Habitat family themselves.

Former Executive Director Ben Eskow made an appearance and told a personal story of the love and support he received from Habitat. When he and his family were in a time of need, Eskow commented, "The people who fixed [my] roof were from Habitat, the general contractor was from Habitat, and people who provided meals were from Habitat. Very early on in my time with Warren County Habitat I got to feel that blessing and gift first-hand. It was unbelievable. It really changed my life forever."

Because of how large an impact Warren County Habitat has on people's lives, the organization is even more grateful for the community coming together on Tuesday and showing their support. In total, over \$30,000 was raised for the Critical Home Repair and Veterans Build programs.

Keary Riddick, the recipient of the third Veterans Build home that is currently under construction, was also able to speak about her Habitat experience on air Tuesday morning. Afterward, she gratefully commented, "If what you are missing in your life is a sense of purpose or belonging, then I would urge you to stop by [Warren County] Habitat for Humanity and become part of the most amazing camaraderie that truly exists." Keary's home is expected to be completed this summer, and the Critical Home Repair program has completed six major repair projects with more in the works. The support Warren County Habitat received from Have a Heart for Habitat will help the Veterans Build home to be more quickly and efficiently constructed, and will help serve more Warren County homeowners with repairs that could affect their health or safety. Warren County Habitat for Humanity is incredibly grateful to WRNJ for hosting their event, and to all the supporters and donors who are helping build homes and hope in Warren County.



Warren County Habitat for Humanity's **Second Annual Tricky Tray** was held at the Warren County Technical School on May 6th, and netted \$16,049! You can tell by these pictures how much fun was had by all! *Photos by Cathy Miller*





**Interested in Helping Us Out?** Here are some popular ways to volunteer with Warren County Habitat for Humanity. If you are a new volunteer, you will be asked to fill out a Volunteer Survey. If you still have questions, please contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Brittany Powelson at [brittany.powelson@warrenhabitat.org](mailto:brittany.powelson@warrenhabitat.org) or call 908-835-1300, ext.11.

**Worksite Construction Volunteer** - As per the WCHFH insurance policy, all volunteers must sign an insurance waiver before working on a WCHFH site or event. Please click the waiver link provided on this page, complete the waiver, and bring the authorized copy on your first day. Before each build session, you will receive an email with relevant information such as build site location, build day and time, directions to the site, and necessary contact information. If you'd like to join that particular build session, simply put your work clothes on and join the team! First time volunteers at any volunteer site will be asked to print the Emergency Contact page in the waiver and bring it with them.

Q: Do I need to have a certain level of skills to work at the build site?

A: No, volunteers of all skill levels are welcome to participate.

Q: Do I have to make a commitment to a set number of days or hours?

A: No. The construction team gathers at an active job site on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. If one day works best for you, feel free to show up after you've completed all your paperwork!

Q: Can I bring my own tools? A: Yes.

Q: Will I be allowed to use power tools?

A: Yes, as long as you are at least 18 years old.

Q: I'm not licensed, but I have skills and experience in a specific area (plumbing, electrical, HVAC). Can I apply my skills at the build site?

A: The construction supervisor will evaluate the organization's current need for specific skills when you choose to volunteer.

Q: Can I bring my son or daughter?

A: Yes, but all participants on the jobsite must be above the age of 16.

If you're interested in volunteering at the build site, [please click here](#) and complete the Volunteer Survey found under "Individual Construction Volunteer".



**Administrative Functions** - We are currently seeking volunteers with administrative skills, like interviewing new volunteers (Intake Coordinator), community outreach (Ambassadors), and newsletter editing. We are also actively searching for an unpaid intern in Social Media and Marketing. If you have an interest or desire to volunteer for one of these positions, [please click here](#) and complete the Volunteer Survey found under "Administrative Functions".

**Volunteer ReStore Positions** - The ReStore is a retail outlet that fills a critical community need for low-cost household and construction items, while also operating as the primary fundraiser for Habitat builds. The ReStore requires a whole spectrum of volunteers: positions, people, processes and competencies that any retail store needs. Volunteers require no special skills and may fit their hours to their own schedule. Walk-ins are welcome! Ways

to help include loading and unloading donations, merchandise refurbishment and staging, cashier, assisting customers, performing general maintenance or janitorial work. If you have an interest or desire to volunteer for one of these positions, [please click here](#) and complete the Volunteer Survey found under "Volunteer ReStore Positions".

**Join a Committee** - When people think of Habitat volunteers, the image of a weekend warrior framing a wall at a construction site typically comes to mind. While that is obviously a core undertaking, the operations performed by our committees are crucial to the success of the organization. New talent, expertise, and passion are essential for the growth of the teams. Please call the office at (908) 835-1300, ext. 10, for current opportunities.



## *A Celebration of Volunteers*

On April 22nd, Warren County Habitat for Humanity showed appreciation to all of their volunteers - by inviting them to a tasty dinner, prepared by Okaysions Katering in Alpha, NJ. Brittany Powelson, Volunteer Services and Public Relations Manager for WCHFH, served as the evening's host.

After everyone had their fill of wonderful food and desserts, the Trivia fun began! Categories included Sports, Movies, Presidents, and of course, Habitat for Humanity. Each table scored points for correct answers, and Habitat items were awarded to the winners. (A photo below perfectly captures Brittany's prize descriptions.)



*Thank you!*



**DID YOU KNOW? We could host your next event or meeting at Habitat for Humanity's Community Center!**

### The Conference Room



*Our goal as the Community Center is to provide "A Place of Purpose Where the Community Gathers Together to Learn, Grow and Thrive."*

*The Conference Room seats up to 15 comfortably and is ideal for small meetings, training sessions or conferences. It is equipped with WiFi, a 70" HDTV and white boards to meet your collaboration needs.*

### The Great Room



*The Great Room is perfect for large gatherings. It can accommodate up to 175 people standing and 125 seated. It has a stage, a 120" projection screen and state of the art sound and lighting systems.*

### Amenities



*All facilities are ADA compliant. For your convenience, a large kitchen with a full size refrigerator, dishwasher and microwave is available for your use during your event. There are 116 chairs and 6 round and 12 6ft rectangular tables. There is even a small relaxation room with a small fountain and fire place.*

### How Do I Book a Room for An Event?

*First, complete a [Community Center Use Request Form](#). Our Event Coordinator will contact you about available dates and times and whether the Community Center is a good fit for your needs. After your initial discussion with WCHFH staff, if you wish to book a room, please complete the [CC Facility Use Agreement](#). Once the CC Facility Use Agreement and CC Request Use forms have been received, your request will be processed and your event will be added to the Community Center calendar.*

**Contact Annette Beam, Event Coordinator, for more details:  
annette.beam@warrenhabitat.org or 908 835 1300 ext.18**



Co-Hosts Steve Kirchuk & Kevin McCann



ALL PHOTOS BY CATHY MILLER



31 Belvidere Avenue  
Washington, NJ



The next record found was an account by the **Moose Lodge #512, Washington** in which it is stated that in 1941, the Lodge bought 2 garages at 31 Belvidere Avenue which were expanded and remodeled into rooms for the Lodge. The whole lot (which earlier held 2 buildings) was used and eventually a new building was built out of brick this time – pretty much the same skeleton of the building we have here today. The garages mentioned were probably in the back. Therefore, a **second community center** was built on this lot. Moose Hall was one of many civic, fraternal and social groups located in Washington. According to its mission statement, it helped support a children’s home, a senior citizen home, and actively sponsored youth athletic teams and charitable Christmas projects.

Meanwhile, 20 years later, the **Central Warren Youth Association** was formed “to promote the welfare of the teenagers of the Washington area”. By 1982 it was well established and looking for a permanent home. They had raised enough money to buy the Moose Hall for \$80,000, which had been in existence for about 40 years by then, making this a **third community center** on this lot. They were quite active, sometimes housing hundreds of teens in a evening of dancing and music. There was a large disco ball, a game room with a pool table, snack bar, ping pong tables, and shuffle board. Little by little, as the leaders changed, a Christmas toy drive became their focus. Truckloads of toys went in and out during the Christmas season, involving much of the community with collecting and distributing toys.

My son, a teacher at Warren Hills, was involved and would bring students over after school to wrap and pack gifts. Because of his involvement, he knew the probable fate of the building. The leaders and organizers got older and tired, and at some point around 2005, they closed the doors for good and just left. After the building sat for well over a year, our son asked us if we could think of any nonprofit that would be interested in using the building. He had heard discussion that it “should be torn down”.

It suddenly made sense to my husband and me that it might be saved and used as a Habitat building. I approached our President and Board, who were receptive with reservations since the property was in pretty bad shape. Then I approached my friend Kathy, who was active in the Washington area and seemed to know everyone, including the President of the CWYA at the time it closed, Ken Snover.

Kathy Halpin tells us how this building became the **4th Community Center** on this lot:

I had known Ken and Marie Snover for years through doing many community service projects together. I knew they were not happy about how the building was deteriorating, but they did not personally have the money to fix it. Donna and I made an appointment to take them out to lunch to see if they were willing to turn over the building to Habitat. It was not an easy sell, but we assured them that if anyone could reha-

ilitate that building, it was Habitat, and that this way the building would still be used by a community service organization. Ken asked us to promise to include some kind of programming for youth at the building. We had been fulfilling part of that promise through the “Hope in the Hills” program that consists of teenagers supervised by adults doing small repairs and some yard work for low income and disabled persons. So we went to Ben Schneider, their lawyer at the time, and made the transfer legal.

Now the real work began! The roof needed repair. The 18 inches of water in the basement caused the 1<sup>st</sup> floor wood floors to buckle up. All three floors were jammed with toys and debris. Everything in the finished basement had to be ripped out. Seven dumpsters were used to haul the wet, moldy toys and debris away.



We were especially thankful to the Warren County Habitat Board at that time. They approved of the purchase, which only amounted to paying off some utility bills and costs of renovations, but stipulated that no money would be used that was designated to build homes for families.

Phase one was to get the building cleaned out and stabilized. This was going to happen, basically, on a wing and a prayer, because there was no money. And then, a small miracle happened. The Washington Y was disbanding and there was \$11,000 in their treasury that they were willing to donate to Habitat for the building renovations. This allowed Habitat to do some simple remodeling. Offices were built and the upstairs room was cleaned up so the board could meet there. That was all the initial resources could accomplish, and work stopped for several years.



Donna Detrick and Kathy Halpin

But, due to the generosity of so many, we are here celebrating the opening of our new Community Center. (when this story was first presented) We will finally be able to make good on our initial promise to Ken.





**Phillipsburg Middle School**



**Mars Wrigley**



**Centenary University**



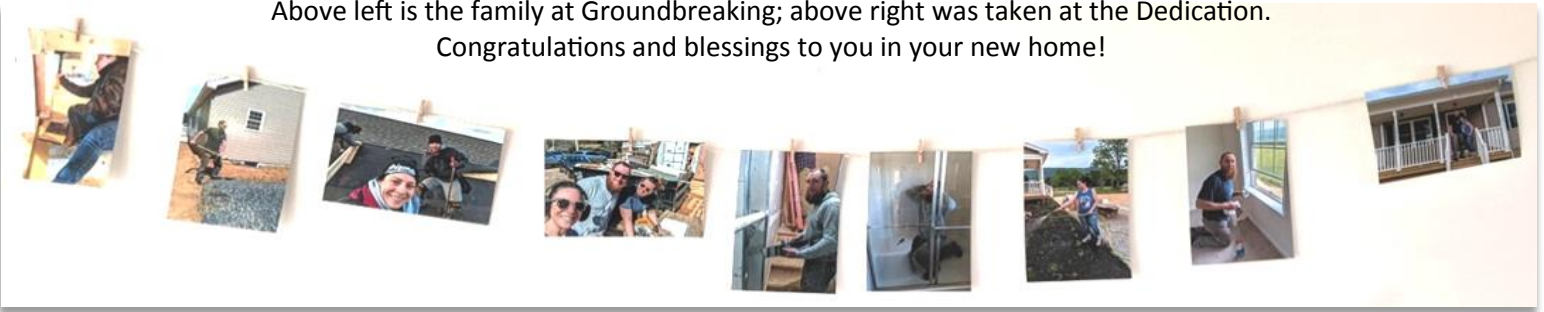
**RJW Exteriors**

**Delaware Valley Regional High School - Multiple Build Days!**





**Full Circle** - On Saturday, June 10th, we welcomed the Pregonzer family into their new home at 26 Beidleman Road. Above left is the family at Groundbreaking; above right was taken at the Dedication. Congratulations and blessings to you in your new home!



**WCHFH's Veterans Build**

Keary, Alyssa and Collin Riddick are excited about the progress being made on their future home at 32 Beidleman Road. Back in May, they were able to visit the worksite and meet some volunteers who are working to complete their new home.

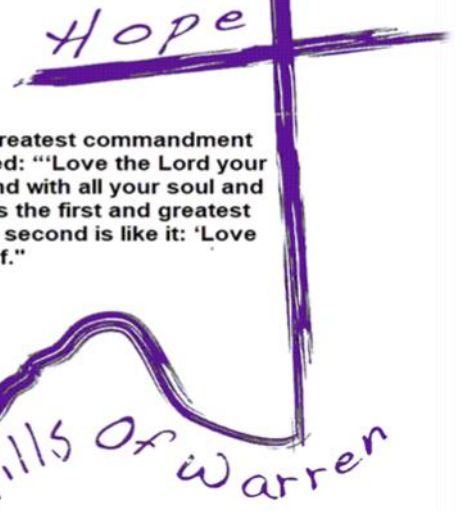
To raise funds for this build, people made a small donation and wrote messages on the very lumber that was to be used in construction. Three are pictured below.



# HOPE IN THE HILLS OF WARREN 2023

70 volunteers  
876 volunteer hrs  
134 tasks complete  
including 17 safety items  
21 homes

**Our Mission Statement:** Seeking to put God's love into action, Hope in the Hills of Warren brings youth and adults together to restore homes, community, and hope.



Matthew 22:36-39

"Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"



Warren County

Habitat for Humanity  
**ReStore**



**Shop. Donate. Volunteer.**

384 Rt. 57, Washington, NJ 07882  
908-835-1980

**ReStore Shopping Hours:**

*(Closed Sunday & Monday)*

Open Tuesday through Saturday  
from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Donations Drop-off Hours:**

*(Closed Sunday & Monday)*

Tuesday through Saturday 9am - 2pm

No appointment necessary, just drive  
around back. We will help you unload!

Or, to schedule a truck pickup,  
call 908-835-1980

Have a donation in mind but not sure  
if we'll accept it? Please email photos  
to: [donations@warrenhabitat.org](mailto:donations@warrenhabitat.org).



**ReStore Volunteers**

require no special skills and may fit their hours to their own schedule. Walk-ins are welcome!

Positions Include:

General help, retail store activities including loading and unloading merchandise, refurbishment, staging, cashier, floor rep, and maintenance/janitorial. For more information, please call 908-835-1980.

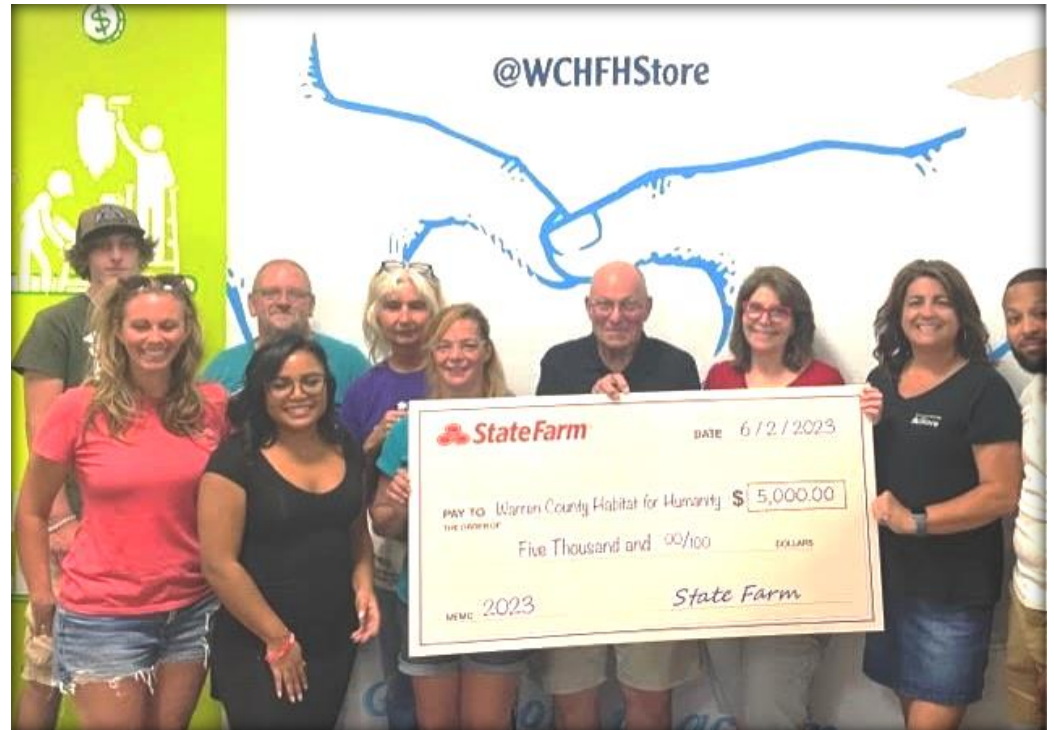


[Visit Us on Facebook!](#)

**STATE FARM PRESENTS \$5,000 CHECK TO HABITAT FOR HUMANITY**



On June 2, 2023, representatives from various State Farm offices joined together at the Warren County Habitat for Humanity's ReStore for a day of volunteerism. Many State Farm agents eagerly assisted ReStore employees and volunteers on their day of service by organizing and moving furniture, restocking hardware and organizing donated clothing items in preparation of the ReStore's 11th Anniversary Sale, their biggest day of the year.



State Farm Agent Rob Pianelli stated, "It is always a pleasure to be able to volunteer and help Habitat for Humanity, an organization that does so much to help our community."

The State Farm representatives presented a check for \$5,000 to Habitat to support their upcoming home build program. This is the second year in a row that WCHFH has received this grant from State Farm.

Warren County Habitat for Humanity relies on community support to implement and grow each of their programs. To learn more, volunteer or join the conversation, visit [www.warrenhabitat.org](http://www.warrenhabitat.org) or stop in at the ReStore on Route 57 in Washington.

For more information on products and services from State Farm, visit Rod Pianelli at the Stewartsville location or at [www.rodpianelli.com](http://www.rodpianelli.com).

**Three Reasons to Join Our Rewards Member Program!**

1. For every \$200 spent get \$5 off your next purchase.
2. Receive notifications of upcoming sales via email.
3. Receive 10%, 15% or 20% off all purchases every 3rd Thursday of the month.

**Not yet a member?**

Sign up for free by filling out a card at the register next time you're in!

**This Quarter's Rewards Member Discount Days Are:**

**JULY 20 - AUGUST 17 - SEPT 21**

Pick a discount card to reveal

**10%, 15%, or 20% off your purchase.\***

\*Must be a rewards member to receive discount.

Rewards Member Discount Day is always the 3rd Thursday of every month. Not redeemable for cash.

Must be used at time of purchase.