

‘Jersey Road Trip’ Collects Cars, Builds Homes

Habitat for Humanity affiliates in four Northern New Jersey Counties Continue Raising Funds with Matching Donation Grant

NEWARK, N.J. – May xx, 2011 – Volunteers from Habitat for Humanity International (HFHI) traveled from all across the country to build homes in New Jersey and raise awareness about the Cars for Homes matching donation program. The ‘Jersey Road Trip’ visited Habitat for Humanity construction sites in Summit, West Orange, Waldwick and Paterson, spending a day to help build homes for hard-working, low-income families at each location.

“The heart of Habitat for Humanity is the volunteers who work alongside future homeowners to provide opportunities for homes to families that could not otherwise afford them,” said Marcia Rundle, Director of the HFHI Cars for Homes program, who traveled from her home in Bozeman, Montana for the week-long event. “Each day we met a different group of volunteers that, between them, characterized the diversity of Habitat volunteers. Every day was another road trip, with beautiful countryside, diverse communities, and amazing flowering trees! And each day brought a new project, new affiliate staff, new building tasks to be accomplished.”

In addition to framing houses, hanging doors, landscaping, electrical work and weatherization, the Cars for Homes work crew raised awareness about the Cars for Homes matching grant program. HFHI is providing a matching grant of up to \$100,000 from its Cars for Homes program, doubling the value of any vehicles donated by June 30 to Habitat’s affiliates in Bergen, Essex, Morris and Passaic counties.

The Jersey Road Trip culminated in an event called ‘Wheels for Deals’ at the Morris County Habitat for Humanity ReStore resale outlet. Supporters of Habitat for Humanity attended the celebration at the Morris Habitat ReStore in Mine Hill where discounts on household goods were offered, prizes and refreshments were given out and a DJ and a mini Classic Car Show provided entertainment. A 2002 Ford Explorer donated to Cars for Homes as part of the matching donation program was also displayed at the event.



From left, Tom Hearn, Sandy Hearn, Joe Hearn, Marcia Rundle and Sally Black, who represent Habitat’s Cars for Homes program and Jacey Raimondo, John Pagliaro, Tim Raimondo and John Opitz from Habitat for Humanity of Bergen County, in front of the Jeep donated by John Pagliaro to the Cars for Homes program.

Lunch on the build days included Chinese, Peruvian, Middle-Eastern and Italian food and Jersey Johnny's Grill cooked up hot dogs and hamburgers at the Morris Habitat ReStore in Mine Hill.

The matching grant proposal from New Jersey was chosen over a number of other "excellent applications," according to Rundle, due to the collaboration between affiliates, the commitment to an ongoing effort to promote the Cars for Homes program, and the fact that the building projects in New Jersey all included elements of energy efficiency, sustainability and community involvement. "It also didn't hurt that New Jersey has quite a few cars," added Rundle.

The matching grant program will continue through June 30. Donors should call 877-277-HFHI (4344) to arrange for pick-up, or they can give online at www.carsforhomes.org. Vehicle donations from zip codes in Bergen, Essex, Morris and Passaic counties will automatically count toward the matching donation program. Donors from other zip codes who want their donation to count toward the program should call so they can specifically ask for the funds to go to Paterson Habitat, Habitat Newark, Morris Habitat for Humanity or Habitat for Humanity of Bergen County, the four affiliates participating in the matching program.