

# Macomb Habitat Celebrates 100th Build for Local Needy

by Irena Granaas

The Macomb County Habitat for Humanity office recently celebrated the completion of its 100th home.

Habitat volunteers, donors, elected officials and local schools were also on hand for the Nov. 17 celebration, which included a two-hour live radio show, raffles and more at Macomb County Habitat's ReStore location in Mt. Clemens.

Macomb Habitat Marketing and PR Manager Michael Terenzi, Jr., said that, thanks to the hard work of so many caring individuals and generous donors, more than 100 families have been placed into decent, affordable housing since the Macomb chapter was established in 1993.

Terenzi said three more home completions are scheduled to close out the year, and the Macomb County Habitat for Humanity affiliate is slated to do 20 homes in 2013, including some existing houses that have been sitting vacant.

"Because of all the foreclosures recently in the area, we have been able to buy some of those foreclosed homes and completely fix them on the outside and inside, instead of having to build completely new homes and letting the (foreclosed)

homes go vacant and unused," Terenzi said.

"We've been able to turn those around, rehab them and put our homeowners in those as well.

"Recipients of Habitat homes are always grateful for receiving the homes," Terenzi added.

"They are required to participate for 250 hours themselves, so not only does that make them appreciate the home a little bit more, but it teaches them a lot of skills for while they are living in the home after receiving it. (Their participation) helps them learn how to fix things and build things."

Most of the homeowners who are in the process of receiving one of these homes are doing everything from putting up the walls to hanging trim and painting.

That means they're learning valuable skills about all aspects of the home throughout the process of receiving their own home.

They are also taking various classes and courses outside of the build site to prepare them for home ownership, Terenzi added.

The newest - 100th - home is located on Fern in Roseville. Terenzi explained the Macomb County Habitat for Humanity Family Services Department is in the process of selecting the



Volunteers from Great Lakes Recycling, headquartered in Roseville, pitch in during a recent build process.

homeowner for the house and no decision has been announced about who will receive it.

"There is a lengthy process that includes a selection committee and our board of directors to determine who receives a home," he said.

Building these homes is a real labor of love and requires a lot of hands. Terenzi said about 90 to 95 percent of those who work at the build sites are unpaid volunteers.

And for those at Macomb County Habitat, their hard work has its own reward. The Habitat affiliate strives to make a sound contribution to county communities and to revitalize its cities with safe, decent, affordable housing.

"The end results are what keeps everyone here so committed," Terenzi commented. "Being able to see the homeowners accept their homes, and how excited they are to be placed into a

house they can call their own and just seeing all the happiness and the hard work that goes into it keeps all of us here motivated and preparing to go on for the next home."

Volunteers are always welcome. Those interested in getting involved may contact Terenzi at 586-263-1540, ext. 114, or Ruselda Johnson, Fund Development director, at ext. 102; or email mterenzi@macombhabitat.org or rjohnson@macombhabitat.org.

## Suburban Collecting Funds for Cancer

Employees of the Suburban Collection struck a blow against breast cancer during their annual fundraising drive, raising more than \$32,000 to benefit Making Strides Against Breast Cancer.

The Suburban Collection Automotive Group, based in Troy, matched the employees' donation, bringing the total gift to the American Cancer Society to \$64,868.

"All of us have been impacted by cancer," said David Fischer, Jr., general manager of The Suburban Collection.

"We're very proud of our team's effort this year. Their work resulted in a significantly larger donation this year to the American Cancer Society."

More than 125 employees,

along with friends and family, put a little "sweat equity" into their commitment to help these cancer victims by participating in last month's Making Strides Against Breast Cancer five-mile walk on Belle Isle.

John McCandless, spokesperson for The Suburban Collection, said the Belle Isle walk took place Oct. 15.

"Everyone walked at their own pace. If you had your kids with you or were pushing a stroller, it may have taken a little longer," he said.

McCandless said employees at The Suburban Collection make it a custom throughout the year to help others.

"They do a lot for local charities," he said. "For example, this

month they are collecting food and money for Gleaner's (Community Food Bank, which distributes food to the hungry throughout Southeastern Michigan) and next month they're doing Toys for Tots."

The Suburban Collection usually matches their employees' efforts.

He added that the dealer group made a significant donation to the Fallen and Wounded Soldier's fund, a Michigan charity that assists wounded soldiers who are waiting to get through the backlog at the Veteran's Administration.

They raised the money through a golf tournament/live remote show featuring Frank Beckmann of WJR- AM 760.

## Macomb College To Host Robotics, Engineering Day

Macomb Community College (MCC), in collaboration with its Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) partners, is holding a Robotics, Engineering and Technology Days event Dec. 3-5.

MCC's partners include the Macomb Intermediate School District, Lawrence Tech, the Center for Advanced Automotive Technology and U.S. Army's Tank Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center (TARDEC).

The event will be held in MCC's Sports & Expo Center, 14500 E. 12 Mile in Warren. The Dec. 3 hours are 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. The hours on Dec. 4 and Dec. 5 are 8:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m..

The event is geared toward students in grade 6-12 and is open to all who are U.S. citizens.

Those who attend can check out the latest trends for semi-autonomous robotics in action. They will be able to watch robotics systems demonstrations as well as participate in a robot program challenge. There will also be opportunities to learn about vehicle electrification and alternative fuels from design to manufacture to service.

To learn more, visit [www.macomb.edu/RET](http://www.macomb.edu/RET).

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