

Building Houses

Building Lives

Building Hope

Building Community

### House #53 is complete!

Jessica Clark's house in Jonas Ridge is ready to move in! It's been a long road, but the forever home for Jessica and her son DJ is complete and they'll be able to move in before Christmas! A Service of Dedication and Blessing will be planned for a date in the spring so stay tuned for an update!



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### In memory of Sam...

Sadly, we had to say goodbye to a good friend and homeowner. Sammy Ray Oaks, age 62, of Elk Park, passed away suddenly on Thursday, April 20, 2023. Sam was born on February 16, 1961 in Carter County, Tennessee, a son of Shirley Hill Oaks of Hampton, TN and the late Clyde McKinley Oaks. Sam recently retired from the Avery County School System where he worked as a custodian for several years. He loved his garden and spending time outside, especially walking his dogs and he was an excellent block mason. Sam leaves behind his wife of 35 years, Darlene Buchanan Oaks; Son, Josh Oaks of Elk Park, NC; Daughter, Heather (Dylan Greasama) Oaks of Hickory, NC. Sam worked on many of Avery Habitat's house foundations; applying the stucco and water-proofing. Even after retiring Sam was never idle, he was always working odd jobs, and often was helping around the Milford Meadows community where he lived.



### Partner Families Improve Their Financial Knowledge

Avery Habitat partners with Mayland Community College and Avery County Schools to present Family Financial Management. Partner Families are required to attend the classes, which focus on personal finance, budgeting, paying off debt and saving for emergencies. Mountain Community Bank added to the support this year by providing dinner for the class every week for 8 weeks.



L-R: Brooklyn Buchanan, Travis Wilson, Haven Buchanan, Emily Wilson, Alaina Oliver, Tanner Reynolds, Mayland Instructor Jessica Lanning, Dora Benfield & Nathan South

Melanie Burgin, ED with Hallie Willis, VP, Mountain Community Bank





## Volunteers! July - November



- Banner Elk Presbyterian (Lunches)
- Covenant Presbyterian Church (NC)
- First Presbyterian Church Wilmette (IL)
- Hudson Memorial Presbyterian (NC)
- Lees McRae Day of Service (NC)
- Linville Falls Community Church (Lunches)
- Grandfather Golf &Country Club (NC)
- RV Care-A-Vanners: FL, KY, TN
- Tuesday Quality Team
- Wednesday FAB Team

*Thank You to all our volunteers  
who keep Avery Habitat building forward!!!*

### From the Director -

We need your financial support now more than ever. Building materials have increased so much over the past couple years; a three-bedroom house now costs around \$150,000 but appraises for \$253,000. There is so much need in Avery County right now. We have 24 families on our waitlist just to apply to the program. Please consider contributing to our efforts to build more!

Thank you for your continued support!

Melanie Burgin  
Executive Director



# Ross House # 55 is on the way!



**Freddie & Betsy Ross** along with their four children are getting excited about their new house. The foundation is in and the floor system will be started next. This will be the 7th house in the White Oak Knoll community in Newland.

<The Ross Family:

Back row: Betsy, Trent, Bella & Freddie  
Front row: Cordell & Jasmine

## Habitat for Humanity Road Trip Crazies!

The first weekend in May 2024 is set for a "Blitz Build" in Avery County that will be

led by the Habitat for Humanity Road Trip Crazies! "The Crazies" are based out of Lynchburg, VA, but as a group they have travelled all over the East Coast with "Habititus," a self-named addiction to Habitat for Humanity. As of the printing of this newsletter, the Crazies already have 45 volunteers signed up for this build in Avery County. The build will start around 8 am on Saturday, May 4, 2024 and a new house in the Milford Meadows community in Elk Park will go from a floor system to a dried-in structure with a roof by the end of the day on Sunday, May 5th! We need local volunteers to sign up to help the Crazies that weekend.

Call (828) 733-1909 and let us know you'd like to volunteer! Fundraising

has begun and donations are appreciated!



Robert with his grandfather  
George Yelton

## Employee Spotlight—Robert Clark

Robert is a remarkable 17 year old high school student who has been assisting part time at the Avery County Habitat ReStore for around 4 years now and has become a stable and valuable asset to our daily store operations. Just a few of the multiple duties Robert assists with include: donation pick-ups, customer service and store maintenance. Robert also works for his grandfather's landscaping service 2 days per week. Robert and his grandfather also provide lawn care services for our Habitat administrative office during the summer months.

Robert has gained employability skills that prepare him for success in today's workforce; skills such as customer service, enhanced interpersonal communications, workplace safety, office etiquette and how to work effectively on a team are just a few. Robert's coworkers describe him as honest, dependable, loyal and very respectful. All the staff and volunteers with Avery County Habitat for Humanity are honored to work with Robert and appreciate his service.

# Family Partner Pipeline

Number of Families we have at each Stage of Partner Family Development

**24**

Family Selection  
Waitlist

**8**

Approved  
Building Sweat Equity

**3**

Approved  
Building House

**2**

Closings in  
past 12 months  
Page 3



## Visit the ReStore for your Holiday Shopping!

Come out and shop at the ReStore! Mark, Robert, Lisa and Renee are there to accept your donations and help you find that special item you're looking for. The ReStore is a great place to find deals on appliances, furniture, construction materials, decorative and household items. The ReStore is celebrating 20 years in Avery County, having contributed more than **\$821,000** to the building efforts of Avery County Habitat for Humanity to date!



 Habitat for Humanity®

# ReStore



Donate or purchase furniture, appliances, house wares, building materials, antiques, automobiles, campers, or boats.

**Tuesday - Saturday**  
**9am - 5pm**

**(828) 733-2025**

2170 Millers Gap Hwy, Newland  
All donations are 100% tax deductible

## Free Donation Pickup

### Board of Directors:

Alejandra Fernandez  
Mike Fields  
Patricia O'Connor Galloway, *Secretary/Treasurer*  
Lisa Isley  
Carmen Lacey, *Vice President*  
Dick Larson  
Brenda Lyerly, *President*  
Baxter Stirling  
Mike Davis

### Staff:

Melanie Burgin, *Executive Director*  
Bruce Benfield, *Construction Manager*  
Bobbie Willard, *Office Assistant*  
Lisa Kirkpatrick, *ReStore Manager*  
Renee Hernandez, *ReStore Associate*  
Mark Ramsey, *ReStore Associate*  
Robert Clark, *ReStore Associate*

### How to Contact Us:

<http://www.averycohhf.org>  
Or send email to  
[info@averycohhf.org](mailto:info@averycohhf.org)  
Look us up on Facebook!

### ReStore:

2170 Millers Gap Hwy, Newland - (828) 733-2025

### Office (GPS Address):

57 Taylor Road, Newland - (828) 733-1909

### Mailing Address:

PO Box 1016, Newland, NC 28657



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