



**Habitat**  
for Humanity®  
of Addison County, VT

**NEWS**  
from the  
**CREWS**  
Fall 2019

## First Seymour Street home nears completion

Looks like Dora Soberal and Frankie Rivera and their three daughters might have an especially happy holiday season in 2019. Their new home—the first of two houses Habitat for Humanity of Addison County is building on a Seymour Street lot in Middlebury—is scheduled for completion just after Thanksgiving.

As this issue of the newsletter went to press in mid-October, construction

and insulated, the interior studs were in place, and sheet-rocking had begun in the attic section, which will provide storage space for the family.

Alex Carver and Harold Strassner, veterans of several H4H houses, were splitting time as site managers on Seymour Street. (The site is directly across the street from Danforth Pewter.) In a new twist, Habitat crews are working on Tuesdays and

Wednesdays each week, allowing the volunteer home-builders to make more rapid progress on the house. That was in part thanks to the large number of volunteers available.

The three-bedroom house and a two-bedroom model that will go up on the

back, or west side, of the same lot were designed by Middlebury College architecture students, with help from John McLeod, their professor, and his firm, McLeod Kredell Architects in Middlebury.

“Overall, the details that the college students gave us are really fantastic,” said Carver, a contractor who, when not volunteering for H4H, runs his own firm in Middlebury, Northern

Timbers Construction. “We really love what they did.” The steel panels used on the roof will also be used on the north and south walls, with white cedar siding on the east and west ends of the house.

Carver pointed out that this house is expected to be the first H4HAC home to use solar panels on the roof. The building is situated to take advantage of both active and passive solar. He said H4H is seeking a grant to reduce the cost of the solar installation, which would cover most of the south-facing roof. He said the solar panels might well provide enough electricity to power the entire home, which will use an electrically-powered system for heating and cooling. The solar array, he said, with its cost reduced by the grant could probably pay for itself with savings on electricity within five or six years.

There might even be enough electricity produced to supply some for the second house, when it's built. Trees and other structures in the area mean that house is not as well situated for solar.

Also on the site is a storage shed, designed and built by students at Edmunds Middle School in Burlington. Brent Truchon, a Middlebury College grad, is an administrator at Edmunds, and got involved with Habitat via his friendship with Steve Kredell, an architect and partner with John McLeod. (See the story in our Spring

*Continued on next page*



**Habitat volunteers hope the Seymour Street home can be ready for Frankie, Dora and family by early December.**

of Frankie and Dora's house, the 11th house built by Habitat in its 20-year history, was moving quickly, with the standing-seam steel roof panels installed on one side and the other side under way. The exterior walls, windows and doors were all installed

# Seymour Street

*Continued from previous page*

2019 newsletter.) The shed was assembled by the students, then disassembled and transported to Seymour Street, where the students put it back together on concrete piers between the two house sites. The shed will provide space for both houses on the lot, and mirrors the houses in design and materials. It's been used for storage of tools and construction materials as work has proceeded on the Soberal-Rivera home.

Energy efficiency has become the hallmark of H4HAC homes, and this one is no exception. In partnership with Efficiency Vermont, the state's energy conservation utility, Habitat has been working to make their houses more and more efficient, and less costly to maintain for the homeowners. Lots of insulation, triple-glazed windows and a very tight building envelope are the keys. Carver and Efficiency Vermont's Li Ling Young say the numbers suggest heating and cooling costs of less than \$100 per month for the Seymour Street house. And, again, the solar panels may reduce the monthly electricity bills to nearly zero.

In addition to the H4H volunteer builders, lots of folks have been making contributions to the project. Local electrical contractor Matt Wisell from Bristol has done much of the electrical work; J.W. & D.E. Ryan in Vergennes is helping with the plumbing and heating, and Goodro Lumber in East Middlebury has provided construction materials, and a deep discount on flooring and kitchen cabinets. Rob's Home Improvement in Middlebury is working on the standing-seam roof.

J.M Huber & Co. donated a lot of the sheathing and subfloor material for the house, in the form of its AdvanTech oriented-strand board (a.k.a plywood)



products. The collaboration with that company was facilitated by Charlie Robinson, a Huber executive and Middlebury College alum and parent who also spent some time volunteering on-site this summer.

The house site already has a healthy lawn, thanks to sod donated by the Town of Middlebury; the sod had been used during the town's annual block party. It was delivered to the site and rolled out by the Middlebury Union High School soccer team. Also pitching in was the MUHS football team, which installed posts for a fence

## **MUHS soccer players helped place sod around the Seymour St. home.**

along the property's southern border. Students from the college architecture course have been busy adding sections of fencing.

As the leaves changed this fall, it appeared that everything was on schedule for wrapping up work in early December. And Frankie and Dora, who have been there for every workday, and their daughters Lillianna, Emmarie and Tatianna couldn't be happier.

## **Habitat board seeks assistant treasurer**

The volunteer position of assistant treasurer on the Habitat for Humanity of Addison County board of directors will be vacant as of May 1, 2020, and we are looking for someone with financial training who is interested in joining our board to fill this position.

Duties include processing all deposits including checks, Automated Clearing House (ACH) and other electronic transfers,

credit card donations, and posting to QuickBooks.

The assistant treasurer works closely with the treasurer and at certain times of the year may fill in temporarily for the treasurer. Complete training will be provided. Great way to lend a hand to H4HAC, even if you can't hammer a nail straight. (Although if you can, that won't disqualify you!)

If you're interested, please contact Cecelia Dry via e-mail: [ceceliadry@gmail.com](mailto:ceceliadry@gmail.com).

## HOMEOWNER SPOTLIGHT

### A new home for Frankie & Dora

Dora Soberal and Efrain “Frankie” Rivera know a little bit about the importance of having a roof over your head.

Frankie and Dora, the owners of the new Habitat for Humanity house nearing completion on Seymour Street in Middlebury, have worked for years—11 for Dora, 15 for Frankie—with homeless people, and are now both employed at the Charter House Coalition in Middlebury. Dora is a case manager and overnight



**Frankie Rivera and Dora Soberal.**

supervisor, and Frankie is an overnight supervisor.

They’ve been together for 10 years and have lived in Vermont for eight, now in Middlebury just down the road from the Seymour Street site. They are expecting to move into their new home in early December and decided to rent a place in Middlebury in the interim so their kids could start the school year at Mary Hogan School.

Dora and Frankie have three daughters: Lillianna, 8, is a second

grader; Emmarie, 6, is in kindergarten; and Tatianna is 2. Their H4H home, designed by students in John McLeod’s architecture class at Middlebury College, has three bedrooms. Tatianna will have her own, Dora said, and Lillianna and Emmarie will share a bedroom, as they have in the past.

Frankie and Dora have been pitching in with the Habitat crews, as is required for all H4H homeowners. For this project, there have been enough volunteers to create two crews, one working on Tuesdays and one on Wednesdays. Dora and Frankie adjusted their work schedules to be able to join the crews for at least half days on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and say they have enjoyed working with site managers Alex Carver and Harold Strassner and all the

volunteers. “I love it, it’s great,” said Dora. Said Frankie, “It’s been a learning experience. I didn’t know how to build a house, so this has been great, working along with them. And helping build it, you know how to fix things, how it all went together.”

Dora said they both love the design,

with a cathedral ceiling in the main living room/kitchen/family room. And they’re thrilled that the house will be extremely efficient, reducing their heating and cooling costs, even compared to a much smaller apartment. Frankie likes the large attic space, which he jokes may end up as “a man-cave where I can go to escape from all the women in the house!”

Said Frankie, who was himself homeless for 13 years, “Our rental places were home, we were all together, which is what really matters. But this going to be huge. This is life-changing for our whole family.”



### 2019 Board of Directors

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**Habitat for Humanity  
of Addison County,  
*founded 1999***

**Mail:** P.O. Box 1217  
Middlebury, VT 05753

**Phone:** 802.388.0400

**E-mail:**  
[habitat.addison@yahoo.com](mailto:habitat.addison@yahoo.com)

**Website:**  
[www.addisonhabitat.org](http://www.addisonhabitat.org)

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Habitat for Humanity of Addison County  
Post Office Box 1217  
Middlebury, Vermont 05753

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## At Mary's, doing good, eating well

Habitat for Humanity of Addison County has a friend in Mary's at Baldwin Creek.

The restaurant, on Route 116 in Bristol, has hosted events for H4HAC for several years, most recently a benefit dinner on September 5, when Mary's generously donated half of the cost of all meals to Habitat.

Rob Liotard, a longtime H4HAC board member and a frequent visitor to Mary's, played a role in the first benefit, when some board members showed up to help as servers. Wearing hard hats. Liotard was one of them.

"Mary's was already inclined to help local people and organizations," he said. "Among other things, they do a community dinner for seniors just before Christmas every year. And a



couple of Habitat board members have always helped with that event."

Linda Harmon, who with husband Doug Mack has owned Mary's since 1983, says the restaurant's involvement with Habitat is just one of the ways they support people and non-profits. They also work with Elderly Services Inc. and Planned Parenthood. In addition to their legendary Christmas-season meal, for which they donate all the food for about 200 people, they offer seniors a \$5 lunch once a month.

**Benefit dinners at Mary's have become a Habitat tradition.**

She said their Habitat events, which have become an annual tradition, usually end up raising about \$1,000 for the non-profit.

Liotard says Mary's management "has always been very generous, and it helps to have the people who dine there learn more about Habitat, raising awareness of our organization. We can't thank them enough."