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## Habitat For Humanity building four homes in Farmington

By JOHN QUINN  
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FARMINGTON — A miracle is happening in the eyes of two families as volunteers recently started building new homes at the end of Berry Court.

About 25 volunteers from Southeast New Hampshire Habitat For Humanity got off to a good start last week by assembling and attaching the framework of one of the new homes.

"This is a fabulous day that has been four years in the making," said Kaylee Masury, president of the Southeast New Hampshire Habitat For Humanity board, during the initial dedication ceremony on Aug. 26.

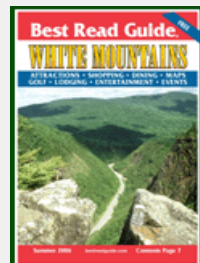
"The next one (foundation) is going in A.S.A.P.," Masury said. "I don't know when it's being done, but we hope for next week because we want to build them simultaneously."

Masury said the site of the new foundation must be cleared of trees and brush before it can be dug out and installed. She added the two homes will be finished by the spring and that two more homes will be built on Berry Court, which is off Old Bay Road, the following year.



From left, future neighbors Sarah and Bill "Shane" Forner and Rick Larson, as well as his wife, Mary, and Kaylee Masury, president of the Southeast New Hampshire Habitat For Humanity board, stop to talk over a coffee and Sarah's homemade peanut butter cookies while volunteers begin work on their new homes at the end of Berry Court in Farmington. (Quinn/Democrat Photo)

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Future neighbors Sarah and Bill "Shane" Forner, of Rochester, and Rick and Mary Larson, of Hampton, were able to meet as they helped out — either carrying boards or baking cookies for the workers — during the weekend. Both families are looking forward to the prospect of moving out of their cramped current accommodations into new homes in a safe neighborhood, where they can let their children play safely.



**About 25 volunteers from Southeast New Hampshire Habitat For Humanity got right to work recently on the first of four houses to be built on Berry Court in Farmington within the next two years. The group hopes to build the first two in the spring before starting the others.**

(Quinn/Democrat Photo)

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starting to change my mind," Rick Larson said.

The Larsons are slated to receive the house volunteers worked on this weekend while the Forner family will move into the home which will soon be started.

The Forners also feel incredibly lucky, not only to have pleasant neighbors, but space for their five children, Emily, 9, and two sets of twins: Maggie and Elanor, 13 months, and Owen and William, three months old.

"We're excited to find a place where our kids can ride their bikes," Sarah Forner said.

While Rick Larson helped sort boards, Bill and his brother, Gary Forner, of Milton, worked on assembling the floor's structure and Sarah brought homemade peanut butter cookies, which she made the night before.

Sarah Forner said, while she has little construction experience, she plans to help with clerical work while she watches her two sets of twins at home. She previously worked in the infant nursery at Wentworth-Douglass Hospital in Dover.

"Can you believe it?" Mary asked. "This is so incredible. I'm so overwhelmed."

Mary Larson, who's taught first-grade students in Kingston for the past 12 years, said they needed a place where their son Jeffrey, 25, who has Down's syndrome, could grow his garden and have his own room.

"Jeffrey needs space — he needs a backyard," Mary Larson said, adding while Jeffrey currently lives with them, their two other sons, Robert, 28, and Tim, 22, have moved out.

Rick Larson, who is undergoing treatments for colon cancer, believes this is a miracle for his family.

"I have a lot of faith, but I usually don't believe in miracles — I'm

Mary Larson said her extended family, many of who have experience as electricians or as plumbers, plan to volunteer some of their time in the future.

"There's a lot of love here, you can feel it. We're so grateful," Mary Larson said.

Byrl Short, building committee chair, gave thanks during an opening prayer on Saturday for all the work that has been done already and said efforts will continue slowly, but steadily until the homes are finished.

"We are grateful for the volunteers who will come to work on this project," Short said, as he asked for a blessing to keep the volunteers safe during the construction process, which will take time.

In January, Habitat volunteers completed a 2[1/2]-year project to move and renovate a home along Civic Street for a family who previously lived in a small apartment in Rochester.

Project Manager Doug Gregory, of Milton, said about half of the volunteers are construction professionals who can help guide non-experienced workers. He added when he's not volunteering, Gregory works with Caledonian Carpentry, which is based in nearby Milton Mills.

Volunteers spent the day organizing supplies, cutting stacks of boards, clearing brush around the area and assembling the framework of the first house's floor, which they attached to the foundation.

While Gregory said there were enough volunteers on hand on Aug. 26, the project could always use another helping hand when work resumes on Saturdays after Labor Day weekend.

"They can just show up — we have work for everyone," said Margaret O'Brien, volunteer team member.

Fellow volunteer Bob Manuel, of Hampton, who works for the Home Depot in North Hampton, said he hopes to rally fellow workers from area stores to lend a hand in the future.

Southeast N.H. Habitat for Humanity also plans to send a group of volunteers to Slidell, La. for a week in November to assist East Street Tammany Habitat for Humanity in their goal to build 500 homes in the next five years for those who were left homeless by Hurricane Katrina.

Area churches will be providing sleeping quarters and meals to the volunteers, who are scheduled to help feed homeless residents from Nov. 20 to 25.

For more information, to volunteer or to make a donation, contact Southeast New Hampshire Habitat for Humanity at 433-9555 or visit their website at [www.senhhabitat.org](http://www.senhhabitat.org)