



# Habitat for Humanity®

Allegheny Valley

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## Alvarez and Marsal in Natrona

On Monday June 4<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday June 5<sup>th</sup> 2018, Habitat for Humanity of Allegheny Valley, along with Natrona Comes Together, were lucky enough to receive nearly 200 volunteers from the New York City global professional services firm Alvarez & Marsal in a joint effort to enhance the town of Natrona.

The 200 plus volunteer blitz build lasted two days and took place in Natrona Community Park. The goal of this rehabilitation project was to bring people together and make lasting changes in the community. With the help of Alvarez and Marsal we set out to help bring art and beauty back into the community, provide a safe environment for children, and make known the rich history of the town. In recent years the community has worked hard to make Natrona a safe and welcoming environment for children, and keep the arts thriving. Habitat for Humanity was happy to work alongside Natrona Comes Together to further enhance the town into a more beautiful, artistic, and welcoming place for all. The community restoration project included a number of different efforts intended to revitalize the community such as:

- Construction of amphitheater wall and benches
- Install outdoor children's classroom / workshop
- River walk clean up
- Home rehabilitation
- Community museum
- Community garden



Habitat is truly blessed to receive the strong support of volunteers and donors throughout the Natrona project. From every corner of the community people showed their willingness to help and make a difference. The volunteers from Alvarez and Marsal displayed a passion to be there and took pride in every minute of their servitude.

The two day build engagement concluded with a Pittsburgh Pirates baseball game where the firm presented a \$25,000 check to Habitat for Humanity on the field. The contribution was made to help continue efforts intended to transform the landscapes of the region. Projects are expected to be completed in the fall of 2018 utilizing help from a number of local volunteers.



Thank you  
Alvarez & Marsal!

Summer

2018

Newsletter

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## What's new? Summer Newsletter

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## Pivik's Play for All!



On Friday September 28<sup>th</sup>, Pivik Elementary school located in Plum Borough is set to receive a new playground in collaboration with Habitat for Humanity Allegheny Valley, Duquesne Light, and KaBOOM. Along with funding the venture, over 100 employees from Duquesne Light Company will be volunteering

during the single day blitz build commencing in September. KaBOOM, a nonprofit based out of Washington DC dedicated to safe play for all children, will provide the equipment and construction facilitators for the day.

Habitat for Humanity director John Tamiggi along with Pivik Elementary school principal Kristen Gestrich applied for the "Build it with KaBOOM" grant in hopes of receiving the funding needed to develop a more inclusive playground for the school. The current playground is only a few years old, but with redistricting and growing enrollment Pivik is in need of a playground more suited to its students' needs.

This particular playground will be uniquely designed as an inclusive playground striving to meet the needs of special education students, as well as those with any physical or sensory challenges. In addition, Habitat is hoping to encompass the idea of the Universal Language of Play throughout the process. The playground will accommodate the growing needs of the school as their enrollment increases from 600 to a projected 750 students.

Pivik elementary hosts the ESL international program for the district and welcomes several students from various parts of the world. With play being an integral part of childhood development, it is important that all children have a comfortable place to play. While some children might not be able to communicate through the same spoken language, everyone can communicate through play.

What makes this project even more exciting is the way in which the playground will be constructed. On July 19<sup>th</sup> a design day involving parents, children, teachers, and other community members took place to determine what will best suit the needs of the school. Children were asked to build their own "dream" playground using LEGO's and other blocks under the supervision of professionals. This LEGO

build was extremely successful, and the children had tons of fun. Results will help the committee gather information about what children enjoy in a playground and what they might struggle with so that developers have a better understanding of what children truly want and enjoy in their playground.

Parents were also involved in the design day to form committees and provide input. From these meetings, Habitat and Pivik will then work with KaBOOM to choose the playground equipment necessary.

Jennifer Evans, a teacher at Pivik elementary and mother of two, is very excited about the playground. Jenn has been teaching kindergarten at Pivik for 15 years and notes that "due to redistricting, we are expanding our student population. This expansion includes all of the ESL kids in the district."

She feels that the playground will be well received not only to accommodate the growing population but also to capture the developmental needs of the students. She stated "The number of students with special needs is on the rise everywhere and the numbers increase yearly. Having a bigger play space that meets various needs will help all children in our school play together."



As a mother of two sons who both have autism and apraxia, Jennifer is confident they would benefit from equipment that allows them to be included with their peers. Jennifer helped with the planning of design day and also supervised children as they worked. She plans to continue her heavy involvement with the project in all stages of development. After all, she notes, "Play is the foundation for all of the other learning the children encounter in a school day."

Habitat for Humanity of Allegheny Valley is excited to partner with Duquesne Light, KaBOOM, and Pivik Elementary on this endeavor. We expect it to be a great community partnership and something that will strengthen the entire district. We are happy to help provide a safe,



welcoming, and fun playground for ALL children. Stay tuned for our next newsletter to see how the build day unfolds and view pictures of the new playground!





## Habitat Home Owner Today



Habitat was happy to have the chance to reconnect with Habitat home owner Regina McMunn and chat about her home and family. Regina moved into her new home located in Lower Burrell three years ago with her two sons. Habitat was happy to catch up with Regina, and hear what's new in her life during our interview.

**Habitat:** Tell us about your children? What do you three enjoy on a day off together?

**Regina:** My oldest son is Alyis, he is 10 years old and going into 5<sup>th</sup> grade. My other son, Jaydon is 9 and going into 4<sup>th</sup> grade. They are both in cub scouts this year and we love to go camping and canoeing whenever we get the opportunity.

**Habitat:** How has this house helped you? What type of impact has it had on your life?

**Regina:** This house has helped me so much! The apartment I lived at before did not have a yard, and there was nowhere for my kids to play. They love being able to have their trampoline and swimming pool at their own house, and I enjoy having cookouts and birthday parties because I was not able to do so at my apartment.

**Habitat:** What is your favorite part about the house?

**Regina:** My favorite part is my backyard. I also love the open-concept kitchen and living room area. This design makes the space feel much more open, welcoming, and connected.

**Habitat:** Do you have any exciting plans coming up this summer/fall?

**Regina:** Yes! The boys will be participating on-field for the opening ceremony at the Pittsburgh Pirate game August 1<sup>st</sup>. They will be doing so with their Cub Scout troop.

**Habitat:** Tell us one of your favorite quotes

**Regina:** "Live well, Love much, Laugh Often"

## From One Veteran to Another

A Habitat for Humanity home located on Ridge Avenue in New Kensington is currently being worked on in the hopes that it will be sold to a United States Military Veteran and his family.

For months Habitat for Humanity's construction lead Scott Reider, along with dedicated volunteers, have been working tirelessly on the home installing drywall, painting, landscaping, and putting in cabinetry.

The beautiful two-bedroom home has come a long way, and the finishing touches are almost complete. Habitat for Humanity is looking to sell the home to a very deserving military veteran who served the Marines for several years.

Habitat is happy to have such a strong involvement of Military veterans within our organization. Scott also served our country in the United States Marine Corps and is now serving the community by leading the build on the home.

Stayed tuned for our next article and learn more about our Habitat home owner.



## Volunteers in a Pinch

In the nonprofit world, finding dedicated volunteers can sometimes be a very difficult task. However, at Habitat for Humanity we have found that there are always people willing to help in a pinch. Every day we are thankfully surprised to learn that people of all ages volunteer in efforts to help build, organize, or clean up.

Recently Habitat was blessed yet again with some young individuals who dedicated their time on a project in Natrona. With the help of Alvarez and Marsal, over 40 bollards located by the riverbank in Natrona were stripped and primed to be repainted. Unfortunately, due to rain the painting was forced to be put on hold.

A few weeks ago, Habitat reached out to some friends to help finish the job and was not disappointed. A group of young men local to the area happily volunteered to finish the work that was started. Now, the river bollards look brand new and bring a pop of color and patriotism to the area.

We want all of our volunteers to know that your efforts are deeply appreciated, and without you none of what we do would be possible!



1

Turn old dresser drawers into a planter for your front porch!



Create a kitchen playhouse for the kids! Paint and decorate an old entertainment stand so that it can be a play kitchen that your children will love!



2

Headboard to coat rack! Add a fresh coat of paint and a few hooks for a DIY coat rack.



## ReStore DIY *Upcycle*

Upcycling means to reuse items in such a way as to create a product of a higher quality or value than the original.

Did you know that you can  
Upcycle old furniture with Habitat  
for Humanity Allegheny Valley  
ReStore?



By refurbishing old furniture and reusing materials, you are reducing the amount of garbage in the landfill as well as the pollution created through manufacturing. In addition, upcycling is a fun way to unleash your creativity by making something unique.

There are many different upcycling projects for all types of furniture. You can simply fix something up to make it look brand new, or give an item a whole new purpose. Stop in today and find something you can make your own!

Check out the images below for some  
Upcycling inspiration!

### Interested in volunteering?

Come volunteer with us! Whether on the construction home build sites or at our ReStore, we love volunteers that assist us in the achievement of our mission! Come join us today! Visit [www.habitatav.org](http://www.habitatav.org) for more details



### Facebook and Instagram!

New to Habitat for Humanity Allegheny Valley this summer is our Instagram page! Follow us @habitatforhumanity\_av

AND

Like us on Facebook at Habitat for Humanity Allegheny Valley, New Kensington



### Community Partners

Special thanks to the following groups who have dedicated resources to support our collective community endeavors!

ALVAREZ & MARSAL

LOWES

BUSY BEAVER

COMMUNITY MARKET

WALMART

GIANT EAGLE

SHERWIN WILLIAMS

RI LAMPUS

84 LUMBER

## BACK TO SCHOOL BLOWOUT AT THE RESTORE!

**Big sale on office / School supplies beginning August 1<sup>st</sup>**

- Binders
- Binder Clips
- Paper
- Staplers
- Desk Organizers
- Paper Trays
- Pens
- Hole Punchers

**AND MORE**

Location: Habitat for Humanity Allegheny Valley  
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