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Housing Coalition Headlines



Community Housing Coalition of Madison County, NC

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Management Musings

By Chris Brown, Executive Director

Bruce Lee said, "Life is never stagnation..." Things live by moving and gain strength as they go." As we close the door to the first month of 2015 and look to the future it's hard to fathom the pace at which we've begun this new year. Equally as challenging to grasp is the pace of activity this *little-agency-that-could* is maintaining. As we move through the adolescence of being a team we feel we've yet to know *stagnation*.

Whether it's working with the ReClaim Committee in creating a sustainable funding source that also serves the neighbors of Madison (news about this project coming in the next few months), the CHC Outreach Committee in the Neighbors Helping Neighbors initiative, the CHC FUNraising Committee in developing a FUN new funding development event (keep your eyes peeled in Spring '15), answering the increasingly growing interest among Madison neighbors for Mars Hill Commons, implementing a the new data management program with Full Steam Labs, answering the constant calls for help from our neighbors; we pray we continue to *gain strength as we go*.

Please read-on for further details of what's on the move...

Splinters from the Board

By Lee Hoffman

Greetings to the CHC family, wherever you may be. As I have look back over the last year, I am struck by the amount of change and growth that have

www.chcmadisoncountync.org

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Who We Are

CHC is a 501(c)(3) independent, non-profit organization, governed by a volunteer board. CHC's mission is to promote and facilitate healthy, safe, and affordable housing in Madison County, NC.

occurred within this organization. It is similar to having grown up in the small town of Mars Hill and having seen things change as it occurred – a new building here, and new road there, a remodel over there – but it's not until you stop and recall how things used to look that you really appreciate how much they have changed. I think it's the same with organizations. We have monthly board meetings, plus committee meetings in between, and we see things changing and growing on the micro-level; but we really owe it to ourselves to step back on occasion to see the bigger picture and appreciate how much ground has been covered in a period of time.

I won't go into the details of how things have changed here at CHC because I know that Chris and others have covered that already. I do however, want to acknowledge the source of that change and thank those responsible. First and foremost, I want to say that Madison County is truly blessed that Chris Brown, Chris Watson, and June Trevor made their way to CHC and have applied their many talents and their sincere desire to help people, to engage their community, and to help build community. These folks work tirelessly out of a true desire to improve peoples' living conditions wherever possible. They are an inspiration to me and everyone on our board and we are grateful that they lead this organization.

I want to thank all of you reading this newsletter and the many who don't receive it, but are still supporters of this organization. Many of you make financial contributions to this organization, and your gift is truly the lifeblood of CHC. Without our unrestricted donors, we would not long survive because we could not afford to pay for staff, rent, supplies, electric, etc. As you all know, it takes money to run an organization. While we may have grant funds to do repair projects, without the organizational support of staff and volunteers to screen clients, evaluate projects, coordinate volunteer groups, manage mountains of data, etc.; none of those repairs gets done. And please never underestimate the power of your gift. Whether it is \$10.00 or \$1,000.00, we are grateful and appreciative of your thoughtfulness and of your desire to impact the lives of those in need of a helping hand.

Finally, I want to thank my fellow board members. I have served on several boards over the years, but I have to say that this board gives of themselves in so many ways and on so many levels, it is truly humbling to me. I am grateful for the leadership that this board provides and for the follow-through in actually getting things done in supporting the staff and the mission of CHC. It is both gratifying and motivating to have the opportunity to interact and work with such a special group of people.

I suppose my point here is that CHC is in good hands, both internally and externally (you). And we are all thankful for that. Happy 2015!

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

By June Trevor

NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS INFORMATION SESSION ON MARCH 3RD

Learn how you can become a part of our local volunteer network by attending a free information session on Tuesday, March 3rd at 5:30 PM at the Madison County Cooperative Extension Center (Kitchen Conference Room), 258 Carolina Lane, Marshall. Refreshments provided!

Arrive between 5:30 and 5:45 for socializing and snacks and we'll start the session at 5:45 PM. CHC staff will explain how you or your group can join the volunteer pool and what support CHC can provide. Current CHC volunteers will be on hand to share their own rewarding home repairs experiences.

Representatives of any local groups (churches, businesses, local agencies, civic groups, students, youth groups) as well as any individuals interested in providing home repairs assistance (at least once a year or on a very occasional basis) to residents in need are encouraged to attend.

Contact me at 649-1200 or june@chcmadisoncountync.org with any questions, or to sign up to attend!

NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS WORKDAYS IN 2015

Here's an additional way to get involved! CHC is launching a series of monthly home repair workdays this year that will feature fairly simple one-day projects. For these special workdays, CHC will provide materials, onsite supervision, water and other onsite support for volunteers. Volunteers can bring a bag lunch and enjoy a short day working together to make a big difference for a Madison County neighbor.

Dates for the first three workdays have been set:

Saturday, February 7 ~ 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM (Project: deck tear-off near Hot Springs)

Saturday, March 7 ~ 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM (Project: TBA)

Saturday, April 4 ~ 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM (Project: TBA)
Contact me at 649-1200 or june@chcmadisoncountync.org if you'd like to sign up your group (civic, student, employee, church, youth group) for one of these workdays and to learn more about project plans.

Volunteer Corner

By June Trevor, Local Volunteer Coordinator

YEAR-ROUND HOME REPAIR VOLUNTEERS MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

In the midst of a busy and cold December, local volunteers made time for some needed home improvements for our clients. Three volunteers from the Rotary Club of Madison County contributed a total of 18 volunteer hours toward installing two new doors and completing some other repairs at the home of a client in the Ebbs Chapel area. Materials for these repairs were covered through our Urgent Repair Program grant. Jonathan White, one of our regular individual volunteers, once again saved the day with his electrical skills, repairing a light fixture and replacing a thermostat for a resident in the Petersburg area.

We are so grateful to committed volunteers like the Rotary Club and Jonathan who we can call on for needed home repairs throughout the year. However, we need to expand our volunteer pool to avoid overtaxing our current volunteers and help CHC respond more readily to urgent needs year-round.

How can you or your group get involved in helping your Madison County neighbors? See the information on Neighbors Helping Neighbors above and consider offering other skills, such as those provided by our interns below.

CHC VOLUNTEERS DO MORE THAN HOME REPAIRS!

Mars Hill University students Ash Sargent and Barry Wilcox contributed valuable skills and support to CHC (and a combined total of 211.75 volunteer hours!) this past fall with each completing their second Bonner Scholar community service internship in December. Ash's internship activities focused on client intake, volunteer support and office organization tasks. Barry's internship centered on further development of CHC's

Grant Update

By Chris Watson, Client and Grants Coordinator

Around the middle of December a gentleman stopped by our offices to drop off an application for assistance. His roof was leaking and causing terrible mold and water damage to his home. He wanted to fix the problem himself but had been out of work for some time and did not have the money. If we could help him with approximately \$200 in materials, he and a friend of his who was a roofer could do the repairs.

Lin, one of CHC's board members, was volunteering in the office when he came in and shared his story later at a Christmas party. One of her friends heard the story and immediately made a \$100 donation, which Lin then generously matched. George Austin, one of our assessors went to the home and made a complete materials list. This week George provided the gentleman with his new roofing materials, generously donated by the CHC community. The new roofing will help ensure that our client and neighbor has safe, warm housing for years to come.

This is a great example of the importance of CHC being available to serve the community on a year-round basis, which we are only able to do because of the generosity and support of our donors.



Donation Box

CHC would like to thank all those who helped us take the next step towards going digital with the help of Full Steam Labs. We'd like to give special thanks to the Community Foundation of Madison County, Mars Hill Baptist Church, Forerunner Services Inc., and all of you who contributed online during the Indiegogo campaign, as well as the rest of our generous January donors. CHC taking this step towards technologically advanced information management will have positive impact at exponential levels to the neighbors we serve.

This is one step to improving how we serve the Madison County community. Donations to further support our work are welcome throughout the year. You can always mail a tax deductible gift to The Community Housing Coalition of Madison County, P.O. Box 1166, Marshall, NC 28753. Or visit our website at <http://www.chcmadisoncountync.org> to make a donation on-line.

Thank you!

Closing Thoughts

You may have noticed that we use the term 'neighbor' often when referring to those CHC serves. We would like you to know we don't use that term lightly. The CHC team would like you to take a moment to envision a community where every month a group of individuals committed 1 day of their week- to taking action to helping a neighbor in need in their own community. What ripples of change would that send out? How many lives would that effect? How many similar initiatives and actions would it inspire? That vision is exactly what the CHC Team dreams of for our new **Neighbors Helping Neighbors Workdays** initiative. Would you join us? Won't you be our neighbor? As the beloved Frank Rogers said "We are all neighbors..."

Thank you!



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