



3 Families Cherish their First Christmas in New Homes

Tony, Gabriella, and Kiawa moved into their new homes to enjoy Christmas in safe, affordable housing for the first time.

Three of our partner families earned the gift of affordable homeownership just in time to spend Christmas with their families in their homes. What an incredible feeling to wake up in your own home on Christmas morning! This gift is something all three families have worked hard towards the past few years putting in sweat equity hours.

Tony reflected on his experience on his dedication day in November saying, "Thank you, Habitat! It's been a wonderful experience and relationship. It's been almost 4 years and my home is finally here. We got through COVID together with patience and perseverance and I now have my home. I want to thank everyone from Habitat for Humanity and extended partners that have worked on my home and whom I had the opportunity to work with since I've been involved with Habitat. I look forward to remaining involved with Habitat. I'm just gracious!"

Kiawa wrote a wonderful thank you message that she read at her dedication in December saying, "I literally have a new foundation for this program has provided me a stronger foundation to be a better person, not only for myself but for others in the community."

Thanks to your generous donations and dedicated volunteer hours, we were able to make the dreams of all three families a reality. Thank you for providing a wonderful Christmas for these hard-working families! They will continue to build family traditions in their homes for many years to come.

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Gabriella admires a donated welcome home wreath on her dedication day.



Rochelle Sibbio passes the keys to homeowner Tony.



Kiawa is grateful for the support of family & friends on dedication day.

**"I literally have a
new foundation
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others in the
community."**

-Homeowner, Kiawa



Keep Those Leaves Green All Winter Long

Learn from these helpful indoor plant tips to keep your house plants happy & healthy during the cold months.

- **Water Less:** Winter air is drier and plants experience a slower rate of growth during colder months but overwatering can lead to root rot. The surface soil can dry out more quickly so make sure you stick your finger in the soil to determine if watering is needed.
- **Adjust Humidity Levels:** Your home's humidity level can drop 10-20% during the winter and plants prefer a 50% humidity level. Cluster plants in groups and put them in rooms with more moisture like bathrooms and kitchens. Try placing plants near a tray of water.
- **Soak Up The Sun:** With fewer hours of sunlight and rays at a lower angle, you may need to move plants to a brighter spot or supplement with artificial lighting. Rotate pots ¼ turn each time you water to ensure all sides get sunlight. Wipe down leaves with a damp cloth to remove dust.
- **Put Them On A Diet:** Don't fertilize during the winter because most plants aren't actively growing. Wait until early spring to feed. Some tropical plants will continue to show signs of new growth and may still require reduced rates of feeding.

Source: <https://www.thespruce.com/tips-on-caring-for-houseplants-in-the-winter-1403001>

What Legacy Will You Leave?

New Opportunity to Leave a Lasting Impact

By: Drew Hall

Author Nelson Henderson once said, "The true meaning of life is to plant trees, under whose shade you do not expect to sit." That quote embodies the spirit of legacy giving.

Donors create a lasting impact for the organizations they care about by including those organizations in their estate plans. Like Nelson Henderson, these donors want to create an impact even when they may not have the chance to experience it for themselves. They embody a selfless commitment to caring for others.

Habitat for Humanity is proud to announce our brand new Legacy Giving Circle. Legacy Giving Circle members share Habitat for Humanity's commitment to creating strong families and vibrant communities by increasing access to affordable housing in Summit County. Members including Habitat for Humanity in their estate plans help ensure that Habitat for Humanity will be able to create opportunity through affordable housing in perpetuity.

For more information on joining the Legacy Giving Circle, or on planned giving opportunities, please contact Drew Hall, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at drewh@hfhsummitcounty.org or 330-745-7734, ext. 214. If you have already included Habitat for Humanity in your estate plans and would like to be included in the Legacy Giving Circle, please also contact Drew so that we can thank you properly and recognize your membership.



Priest's New Year Prayer

Let us look into 2022 with hopeful hearts and make it the best year yet!

Through everything in the world, there has always been time. Always a beginning and an ending. So as we put 2021 behind us, for some it was a great year of laughter and rejoicing, but for others, it was a great year of loss of trying moments when it felt like no relief was in sight.

When a New Year comes about, it is a time for new beginnings. A renewing of the mind, body, family bonds, and progression. In God's word which is the Bible, God always wants us to progress and not look back, maybe for a moment but never dwelling on the past. So we all need to progress, come together, and move forward in all aspects of our life. We all need to be in agreement that 2022 will be our best year yet. May God bless everyone and their families. Amen.

Psalms 71:

1 In You, O Lord, I put my trust;
Let me never be put to shame.
2 Deliver me in Your righteousness, and cause me to escape;
Incline Your ear to me, and save me.
3 Be my strong refuge,
To which I may resort continually;
You have given the commandment to save me,
For You are my rock and my fortress.

STEPS

1. First, get your shelving unit and turn it on its side.
2. Next, you will screw the 4" legs into the bottom of the shelf. You will screw the legs to each end and the middle of the shelf. You should have a total of 6 legs (this step is optional for extra height).
3. Once the legs are attached, you will need an MDF board and foam.
4. Fit the foam to the bench. Use a marker to outline the edges. Then use an x-acto or carving knife to cut excess edges. Everything should line up with the top of the shelf.
5. Then, you will take your batting and cover the foam and MDF board. Pull batting tightly and use a staple gun to secure to the underside.
6. Repeat the process with the fabric of your choosing.
7. The last thing you want to do is secure the MDF board, batting, and fabric to the shelf. Grab the 3-inch screws and secure them underneath the bench. There should be a screw in each end and one in the middle of the bench.
8. Finally, add storage bin containers for organization.
9. Your DIY project is now complete! Declutter this January with your new window bench!

Check out our
ReStore for DIY
building materials!



DIY PROJECT:

SHELVING UNIT INTO WINDOW BENCH



MATERIALS/TOOLS

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> shelving unit | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> drill | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 3" screws |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2 sets of 4" legs | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> foam | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> marker |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MDF board | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fabric of choice | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> batting | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> x-acto or carving knife | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> staple gun | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> organizing bins | |



JANUARY 2022
SAVE 25%



Excludes NEW items and Arhaus furniture. Excludes all online items. Cannot be combined with any other promotions. ONE-TIME USE PER CUSTOMER. Must show coupon at checkout to receive discount. Some exclusions may apply. Only valid at the Summit County ReStore at 2301 Romig Rd. Akron, OH

January Home Checklist

Clean & Organize Your Home for a Fresh Start to the New Year

- **Pack Up Christmas & Declutter** - Repair or recycle all damaged ornaments and decorations as you store them.
- **Turn Clothing Hangers Backwards** - At the end of the year, you'll easily be able to see the clothes that you did not use to help declutter.
- **Spot Clean from Holiday Gatherings** - Clean spills on couches and carpets from guests.
- **Deep Clean the Kitchen** - Clean your stove, empty and clean the refrigerator, purge expired spices.
- **Put Away Gifts and Minimize** - You might have received gifts that upgrade your past goods, donate the old items that are in good quality.

Source: <https://premeditatedleftovers.com/naturally-frugal-living/january-cleaning-checklist/>

Cookbook Highlight: Cheyenne's Spicy Chili

1 pound ground beef
1-pound zesty hot sausage
1 28 ounce can tomato sauce
1 can hot Rotel diced tomatoes
1 28 ounce can whole peeled tomatoes
1 can light kidney beans, drained
1 sweet onion, chopped
1 medium green pepper, chopped
1 large can tomato juice
½ c. brown sugar
2 Tbsp. chili powder
1 tsp. cayenne pepper
¼ tsp. salt
½ tsp. black pepper
1 tsp. red pepper flakes

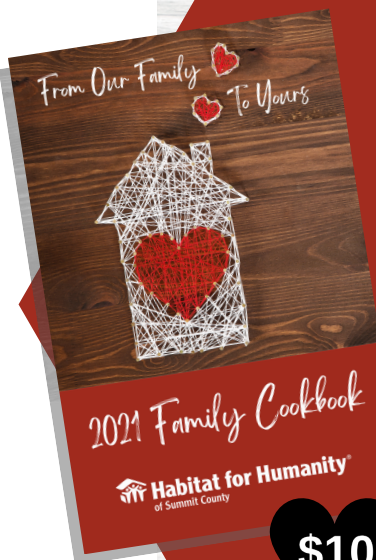
Brown ground beef and sausage. Add onions and peppers while browning. Drain grease when meat is fully cooked. In large saucepan add tomato sauce, tomatoes, and beans. Add ¾ can of tomato juice, or until desired consistency. Add chili powder, cayenne, brown sugar, black pepper, salt, and red pepper flakes. Cook in crock pot for 6-8 hours or on stove for about 2 hours.



From our family. To yours!

Partner Family Cheyenne with daughter, Savannah

"Our family has loved these recipes for years! We're excited to share them with your family to enjoy in the New Year."



Habitat for Humanity
of Summit County

\$10
each

Fundraising Cookbook

on sale now!

Enjoy our favorite recipes and stories collected from our Habitat family of Partner Families, staff, and volunteers. Over 90 delicious recipes including a special section of Nepali recipes from our international partner families!



Financial Planning Tips: How to Invest in your 2022 Goals

- **Self-reflect on the past year.** What are your goals and are you financial on the right track to achieve those goals?
- **Rethink your retirement timeline.** Can you retire earlier? You can earn more money working longer but what does it matter if you don't have your health and use it to do the things you want to do?
- **Budget for home investments.** After spending so much time at home, are also considering renovating or relocating? Are you willing to fund an addition if it costs you one or two more years of employment before you are able to retire?
- **Rank your goals.** Consider both short-term and long-term goals. Meet with a financial advisor to make sure you are right track to get where you want to be financially.
- **Fund future joys.** Not spending money on travel or events? Create savings accounts for future goals like "vacation fund" or "future entertainment". This also gives you hope for the future!

Source: <https://www.cnbc.com/2021/12/03/why-its-super-important-to-revisit-your-financial-plan-for-2022.html>

Habitat Partner Family Corner

You are working to build a brighter future for yourself and your family. You are doing a great job!

**"Success is not final; Failure Is not fatal:
It is the courage to continue that counts."
-Winston Churchill**

Homeownership Can Be Hard, But Don't Give Up

By: Rochelle Sibbio

Remember your dedication day and when you signed your documents? That was one of the most exciting days of your journey for us and hopefully, it was for you too! We hope you have been happy in your new home, making family memories and enjoying a place to call HOME.

We recognize that sometimes our homeowners run into challenges in being able to balance expenses of homeownership. A car repair, a large medical bill, heaven forbid a large ticket home repair needs to be completed and WOW your financial monthly budget is upside down. And maybe this occurs a couple of months in a row or you lose income in your household??? What can you do about your mortgage with Habitat for Humanity? You certainly don't want to lose your home but you also know that on the 1st of every month your mortgage payment is due, on time or a late fee is assessed.

Did you remember from closing that we gave you a copy of a delinquent payment policy and a copy of the mortgage extension policy? Sure the day is overwhelming but these were policies our Board of Trustees has had in place since 1986 to help our homeowner families when they fall upon a situation that affects their ability to pay their mortgage. Both of these policies can help you! Please don't wait for the late notice letter to show up in your mailbox... call Rochelle at the office and speak to her about your situation and how one of these policies can help you get back on track and stay there.

**We partnered with you to build your home...
we want to help keep you there forever.**

Using Construction Tools In Everyday Life

By: Kim Kerr

We all have heard the saying "righty tighty, lefty loosy". We learn these sayings to help us make tasks easier to remember. Schools use Mnemonic devices to teach children to remember things all the time. We recently had an electrician teach us another useful saying... Black on brass will save your..... (behind). This is used when changing electrical sockets. She showed us how to use a receptacle tester to test for current in the socket as well as talking about the importance of turning off the electricity at the breaker. A great tip is to turn on the vacuum in the room, and when the vacuum goes off, you know you have the correct breaker. Another tip, have a flashlight close by as well.

As part of our sweat equity requirement, families must go to build sites and attend homeownership classes. Some homeownership classes focus on home repair and maintenance such as the home maintenance modules, caring for your driveway and concrete, caring for your HVAC system, caring for carpets and ductwork, and even pest control. These classes and time in construction, help learn to care for a home before closing. At the build site Partner Families learn skills like caulking, putting up drywall, painting, hanging siding, and many other tasks. Using hammers, screwdrivers, sandpaper, and drills become skills our homeowners become proficient at. When the families receive their home, they are given a notebook that contains information about their products in their homes along with warranty items. We recently added an important tool list to this notebook. One of our site supervisors compiled the list of "must-have" homeownership tools.

On this list were things such as a hammer, screwdriver with multi bits, tape measure, level, pliers, putty knives, and spackling. All of these items are things that the families use often during the time in the program completing their sweat equity hours. I believe this builds confidence in using these tools. Once our homeowners close on their homes, they will need to use these tools to do basic home repairs and installations. These repairs and installations may include putting up curtains, hanging blinds, assembling furniture or organizers, and putting up pictures.

During the spring, we have a community garden. We learn how to grow plants, use garden tools, and basic landscaping skills. We have a class scheduled to talk about how to take care of outdoor tools such as lawnmowers, weed whackers, and pressure washers. These necessary items are costly to replace if not cared for. Knowing how to care for these expensive homeownership tools is important. We have many Corporate Partners who volunteer to come present to our families in various homeownership classes. We greatly appreciate their help in preparing our families for homeownership. Prior to closing on their homes, Habitat families learn to use construction tools in everyday life.