

Happy Friday! Winter welcomed us as we left the Metra this morning. Breakfast was delicious and it was great to see some familiar faces.

Announcements:

Dina sent a "save the date" email to membership on Wed for District Convention scheduled for May 21 - May 23, 2021, in Butte. The postcard is attached.

There were no guests today. Our scheduled speaker was unable to attend, so we had the pleasure of hearing from BEC member Jim Woolyhand, Executive Director of the Mid-Yellowstone Valley affiliate of Habitat for Humanity, which was established in 1992. Jim has been with the organization for about 10 years, and has been the Executive Director for 6 years. The following is a link to the website: <https://billingsshabitat.org/>

Habitat For Humanity - Billings, Montana

The Mid-Yellowstone Valley affiliate was established in September 1992 and completed its first house exactly one year later. Efforts to continue building provide challenge, opportunity and blessing for individuals and groups who participate.

billingsshabitat.org

Habitat has built 88 houses in the Billings area since 1992, and the 89th is in the works. It has broke ground on a 21-lot subdivision in the Heights off of Hawthorne and Wicks. They are planning on building 3-4 homes per year over a period of 6 years.

There are 3 qualifications for purchasing a home through Habitat: (1) need, (2) willingness to offer, (3) ability to pay. The homes are purchased by pre-qualified buyers for fair-market value on a 30-year mortgage at 0% interest. An individual must have a minimum 640 credit score to qualify, and must be willing to put in 350-500 sweat-equity hours in volunteering for the organization. The average home is 1200-1500 sq. feet and the largest is 5 bedrooms. Purchasing a Habitat home teaches accountability and fiscal responsibility. It also provides a family with stability. Workshops are offered to teach owners to maintain their home and landscaping, and the volunteers often help in that regard as well.

When a family moves from a Habitat home within the first 5 years, the home must be offered back to Habitat, but the owners are usually allowed to sell the home and repay Habitat what it is owed. If a home is paid off, the owners keep the sale proceeds. Defaults are rare - there have been 4 or 5 in 88 homes. Owners are not allowed to rent out a Habitat home.

Habitat gets funding solely from community support through financial sponsors and fundraising events such as an annual golf tournament and the playhouse parade. It receives no federal funding. 100% of the money raised here, stays here. The Habitat for Humanity ReStore brings in 30% of the overall operating budget. This fiscal year, it had approximately \$744,000 in gross sales. 100% of the proceeds go back into the building program. The new store is located on King Park Drive (next to Gusicks/behind Davids Bridal) and has been operating for about 3

years, after the downtown location was damaged by fire. It is a better store with better offerings, and even has brand new flooring for sale. Check it out!!

That's all for today. Have a great weekend and stay warm!!

Your BECON editor,
Tanya Tweten