

HABITAT NEWS



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Got News?

Send an email to Sophia at stimm@habitatocala.org

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February Edition



ELVIS & THE LEGENDS OF COUNTRY

This year's Elvis & the Legends of Country was an unforgettable event held on Thursday, January 8th, at Circle Square Cultural Center. Cote Deonath rocked the stage as Elvis Presley, joined by Samantha Chambliss as Dolly Parton, Michael Cullipher as Johnny Cash, and Alex Mitchell as Garth Brooks.



The excitement continued outside the concert as well! Attendees enjoyed an intermission featuring Juggling Joel, sponsored by JNS Pressure washing, participated in raffles full of Elvis memorabilia, cash drawings, and so much more!

Our VIP and Platinum attendees even enjoyed a Meet & Greet with Cote and the performers, birthday cake, appetizers, early entry, and premium seating. We are especially grateful to all of our sponsors who made this event possible, including our presenting sponsors listed below:





Mission, Vision, and Values

OUR MISSION:

Seeking to put God’s love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities and hope.

OUR VISION:

A world where everyone has a decent place to live.



"We lead by serving."

SERVANT LEADERSHIP

We are committed through our actions to uplift individuals, families, and communities and to inspire others to join us in our mission.

"We take responsibility for our actions and commitments."

ACCOUNTABILITY

We are dedicated to upholding the highest standards of reliability and transparency, honoring our promises, and continuously learning from our experiences.

"We act with empathy and kindness."

COMPASSION

We honor, respect and value every person we serve by fostering a culture of care and belonging.

"We build together for generations to come."

LEGACY

We are focused on building a sustainable future where our community grows stronger, and families thrive for generations to come.



A Message from Our CEO

Dear friends,

As we celebrate the season of Valentine's Day, we are reminded that love is more than a feeling, it is an action. At Habitat for Humanity of Marion County, our core value of compassion is how we live out that love every day, and it is at the heart of everything that we do. It is how we honor, respect, and value every person we serve, and how we strive to foster a culture of care and belonging in every community we touch, especially our own.

Our mission calls us to show love in tangible ways. Love is present when volunteers pick up a hammer and work alongside future homeowners. It is present when sponsors invest in our organization and vision. It is present when supporters share our message and help extend hope to more families. Each act of compassion reflects a deep belief in one another and in the power of community.

This season invites us to reflect on the many ways love shows up among us. We see it in the generosity, service, and shared commitment to ensuring everyone has a safe place to call home. That love, expressed through action, is what makes our work possible and our impact meaningful.

To everyone who has supported us and shown our community compassion: thank you. Your compassion strengthens our mission and reminds us that when we come together with care and purpose, we build more than homes, we build hope.

Thanks much,



Rob Peters
CEO/President
Habitat for Humanity of Marion County



Family Partner News

Family Partner January Meeting

On January 21, our Family Partners were gathered together to start the new year strong with an introduction to where they will be taking financial literacy classes and other workshops for the remainder of the year, thanks to our workshop sponsors Regions Bank. During the meeting, many staff from the Habitat team came to meet our valuable partners, introduce themselves, and explain each of our roles in the organization.

Food was provided. We are grateful to our Homebuyer Services Director, Tori Arens, for making this event possible in conjunction with Regions Bank.



Charlene Tucker Lot Assignment

We are very proud to announce that Charlene Tucker, one of our family partners, was assigned a lot for where her and her family will soon build their home! Charlene has contributed over 300 hours of sweat equity hours into volunteering at the ReStores, working special events, and helping other family partners with building their homes.

She is known for always having a smile on her face and a positive attitude throughout this process of becoming a homeowner. Charlene is a healthcare worker with three daughters and a son. With this soon-to-be new home, Charlene and her family will have a new 4 bedroom/2 bathroom house to start a new beginning and make home. Thank you, Charlene Tucker, for all you have done for Habitat!

Habitat Homeowner News

Britney Mann House Closing

This past month, we celebrated more than a house— we celebrated a testimony of patience, perseverance, and faithfulness. Watching Britney Mann and her family’s home come to life has been a reminder that when people come together with purpose, compassion, and steady determination, miracles take shape one nail, one board, and one prayer at a time.

Teresa Lanning, our Mortgage Manager, stated that “Britney’s journey has inspired every single person who touched this project. Her patience through the process, her strength in the waiting, and her unwavering perseverance has been the heartbeat of this home.”

Britney’s home was built as a result of this past year’s Women Build. We hope that this home may be filled with peace, laughter, protection, and blessings beyond measure.

Britney, we are so incredibly proud of you. Congratulations!

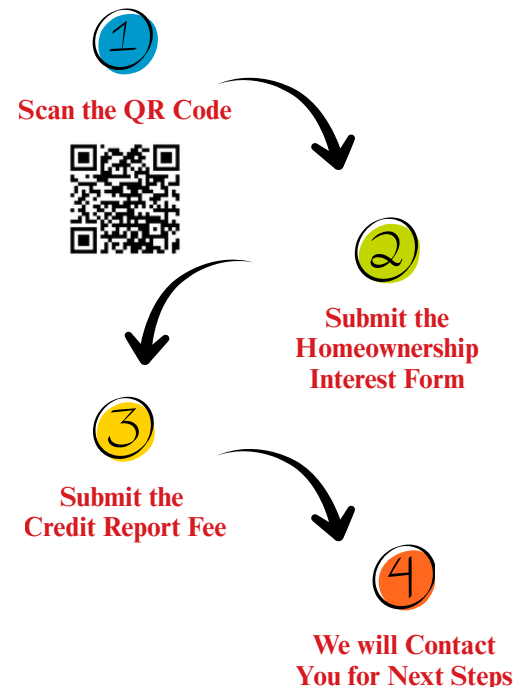


Homeownership Program

We partner with hardworking local individuals and families who are ready to take the next step toward homeownership — offering a hand up, not a handout — by working side-by-side with them to build safe, decent, and affordable homes with affordable mortgage payments.

Instead of a traditional down payment, families invest 350 hours of “sweat equity” by helping construct their homes, supporting Habitat’s ReStores, and completing homeownership education workshops focused on budgeting, maintenance, and long-term success.

We currently have thirteen family partners, but we are always looking for new individuals and families who are interested in homeownership to join our program! If you or someone you know is interested in applying, follow the steps to the right:



Community Involvement



Bold Ladies Meeting

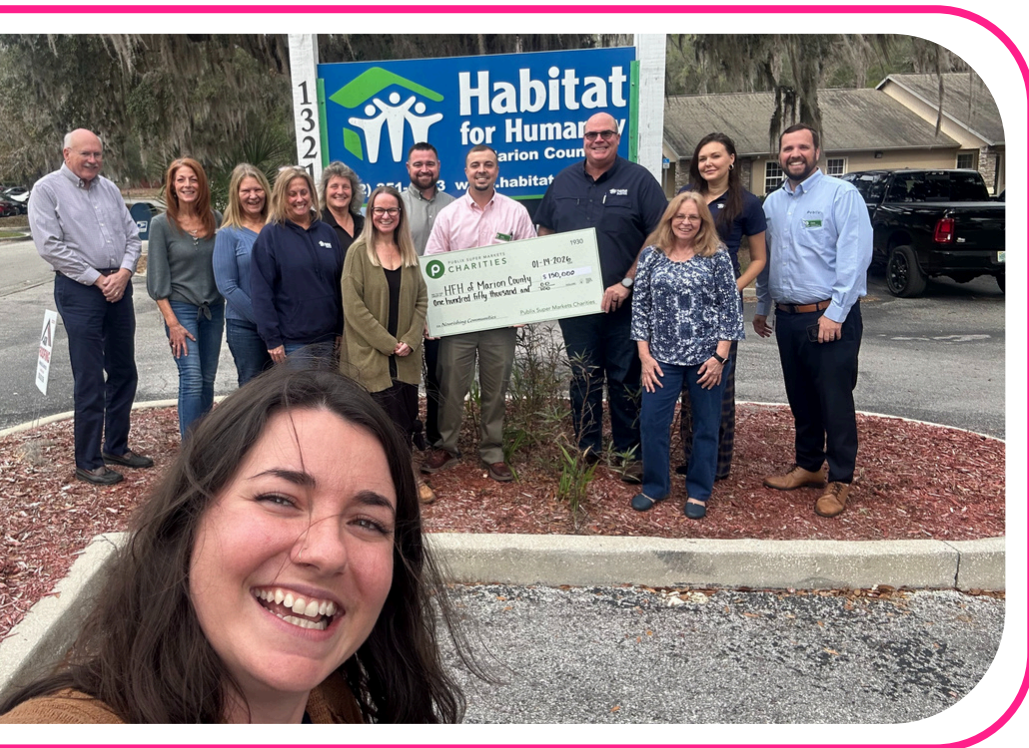


Amidst an evening filled with vision boards, positivity, and laughter, Habitat for Humanity of Marion County was honored to receive a lovely donation from Bold Ladies in the form of a \$250 check!

We greatly appreciate the generosity and hospitality bestowed upon us on January 13th by this wonderful organization. Our Events Manager, Lauren Lewis, had the pleasure of speaking to all the ladies in attendance about our mission here at Habitat. We look forward to attending future meetings and to manifesting our vision boards for 2026.

Publix Charities Check Presentation

We are incredibly grateful to Publix Super Market Charities for their generous \$150,000 donation! These funds will go toward building an affordable house for a hardworking family here in Marion County. Thank you, Publix Charities, for believing in our mission to bring people together to build homes, communities, and hope. Together, we are turning dreams of homeownership into reality.



Homeownership for All Check Presentation

We are grateful to our partners at Homeownership For All for awarding our organization with \$15,000! These funds will go towards building affordable homes for hardworking families here in Marion County.

The Homeownership For All license plate is a Florida specialty plate offered through Florida Realtors® that allows drivers to show their support for affordable homeownership.



[Click Here to Learn More](#) →

exCEPtional Breakfast

On Wednesday, January 21, members from our Habitat of Marion County team attended the monthly exCEPtional Breakfast held at the Reilly Arts Center. This is a monthly breakfast that brings together hundreds of CEP partners and community leaders for high-impact networking and meaningful conversations. Commission Chairman, Carl Zalak III, spoke on how Marion County is shaping the state through projects, people, and vision.



Ocala Lions Club Presentation

Our Development team was invited to the local Ocala's Lions Club general meeting to discuss our organization. Lauren Lewis, Events Manager, gave a wonderful presentation that included our programs, emphasized our commitment to serving more individuals and families, shared details about our upcoming Habitat Strawberry Festival, and highlighted volunteer opportunities — bringing our shared mission to serve the community to life.

Bellevue After Hours

We had a great time attending the Bellevue After Hours event on January 22. We love every opportunity to connect with the amazing individuals and businesses that make our community thrive. Sophia Timm, our Marketing Manager, even won a door prize at the event that was donated by Dreyer's DKI!



Kona Ice Ribbon Cutting

We were proud to attend Kona Ice's Ribbon Cutting, welcoming new owners Lee and Allison Winchester. The celebration featured all six Kona Ice trucks, and guests enjoyed complimentary shaved ice. We're also thrilled to share that Kona Ice is a Bronze Sponsor of this year's Habitat Ocala Strawberry Festival, so make sure to mark your calendars for a berry sweet time!



Bellevue on the Rise

Bringing businesses and community leaders together, we attended last month's Bellevue on the Rise which included an engaging presentation from Sara Fennessy, Executive Director of Horse Farms Forever. Breakfast was also provided and we were able to connect with local leaders on the importance of our mission.



DCBA Banquet

A portion of our team came together on January 29th at the Dunnellon Chamber and Business Association Banquet for an evening recognizing outstanding businesses, organizations, and individuals who make a meaningful impact in the community. Our very own Chief Development & Retail Officer, Joanne Black, was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award. We are so proud of you, Joanne, and are grateful to have you on our team!

Ocala Leadership Conference

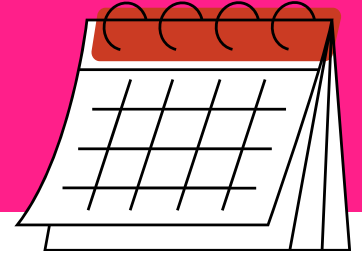
We feel immensely inspired after attending the first-ever Ocala Leadership Conference held on Friday, January 30th. At our organization, we hold dearly our core value of servant leadership. We look forward to taking all of the wisdom, knowledge, and connections made from this conference and putting them into action!

Key Speakers:

- [John C. Maxwell](#)
- [Jon Gordon](#)
- [Chad Robichaux](#)
- [Chaunte Lowe](#)
- [Damon West](#)
- [Ryan Leak](#)



Upcoming Events



HABITAT OCALA STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL - March 7th, 2026

SOUTHEASTERN PRO RODEO - March 20th & 21st, 2026

**For more Information:
habitatocala.org/events/**

33rd SOUTHEASTERN PRO RODEO
OCALA, FL EST. 1994
MARCH 20 & 21, 2026

Presented By **OCALA TRACTOR**

FOR TICKET AND INFORMATION
OcalaRodeo.com • 352-421-3199

Presented by:
Volkswagen of Ocala BMW Porsche of Ocala Gettel Toyota Ocala

March 7, 2026
9AM-5PM
McPherson Complex
601 SE 25th Ave, Ocala, FL
Where Every-Berry Builds a Home

HABITAT OCALA STRAWBERRY FESTIVAL

- 235+ Vendors
- 15k-20k in Attendance
- Supported by 700+ volunteers
- Car Show
- BMX Stunt Show
- Pie Eating Contest
- Live Music & Entertainment
- Kid Zone + Petting Zoo

[@HfHMCstrawberryfestival](https://www.facebook.com/HfHMCstrawberryfestival) www.habitatocala.org/strawberry



ReStore

Habitat for Humanity of Marion County

Updates

Packing with Purpose

Donating to Habitat and need a hand? We pack and prepare your donation items for pickup.



How it Works:



Yes

packing, boxing, light consolidation of donations



No

Deep cleaning or full-house cleanouts

