

Volume 4 Issue 2

SAWs & Habitat Launch PARTNERSHIP

For the past few years SAWs leadership has discussed the possibility of a relationship with Habitat for Humanity. Jim Morris, President and CEO of Habitat Indy and Gina Leckron, State Director for Habitat Indiana, have been encouraging sounding boards. Last fall, Doug Taylor, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Lafayette, and Charlie Russell, former Executive Director of SAWs, had a “what if” conversation that set in motion a plan to develop a working relationship between the two organizations. Neal Porter, Habitat’s Home Repair Program Coordinator, and John Hunter, SAWs Tippecanoe County Area Coordinator, were asked to create a pilot program to establish a coordinated working relationship. That effort has now transitioned into a maturing and functioning partnership.

Hunter has begun cross training Bryan Horton as a new Project Manager. Habitat will handle the site surveys and construction. The SAWs Indy office is furnishing all of the prebuild support, client intake, waiver approvals, ramp design, materials lists and cutting guides. In time as

staff support increases, Habitat looks to take over these functions.

According to Taylor, “These ramps are not within the neighborhoods we currently are building in. But we anticipate finding situations where ramps will be needed.” Already this partnership has four ramps “on the books” and awaiting completion of the prebuild requirements. “Once it clicks, we will be pretty busy,” said Hunter.

Habitat for Humanity has created the Neighborhood Revitalization Home Repair Program to expand its services for qualified families in need. Now along with in-filling neighborhoods suffering from blight, Habitat affiliates are addressing the existing homes in these neighborhoods to strengthen the fabric of those communities. Frequently people with mobility limitations inhabit some of these homes and are in need of a ramp to regain their ability to rejoin the community. “We built one ramp that was only 2 ½ feet long,” said Taylor. But it was as important to that client as one much longer. This overlap of the mission of SAWs and evolving mission of Habitat is

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MDRT SPELLS HOPE

*Million Dollar Round Table
Foundation Awards Grant to SAWs*



Tom Lipinski (left), SAWs Board Chairman, and Mike Matthews, SAWs Board and MDRT Member receive the 2017 Quality of Life Grant Award.

At this year's Annual SAWs Open House, the MDRT Foundation awarded a \$5,000 Quality of Life Grant to SAWs Indy as a part of over \$1 million in MDRT member- endorsed grants to more than 200 charitable organizations worldwide. SAWs board and MDRT Foundation member Mike Mathews, CLU (Chartered Life Underwriter), LUTCF (Life Underwriter Training Council Fellow), was presented the check.

Mike is a relatively new board member joining the board in 2016. But he has been a very active member of the SAWs Indy construction group having participated in over 100 builds. As a board member, Mike brings his vast experience in estate planning to help build a stronger and sustainable SAWs organization. The Quality of Life Grant Program honors the selfless volunteer efforts of MDRT members who give their time to serve charitable causes in their own communities and worldwide.

Grants are critical for SAWs to meet the growing need that comes calling everyday. Twenty-nine percent of SAWs funding comes in the form of grants from organizations like the MDRT Foundation and local foundations across Indiana. This is the largest source of income for SAWs followed closely by individual donations. This grant will provide ramps to five deserving families in the Indianapolis area.

The MDRT Foundation is the charitable arm of the Million Dollar Round Table, The Premier Association of Financial Professionals. The MDRT Foundation helps MDRT members like Mike maximize their philanthropic efforts in their own communities and worldwide. Since its inception, the Foundation has donated more than \$30 million in more than 70 countries throughout the world and in all 50 U.S. states.

MDRT Foundation grants support social service agencies, education and advocacy programs, medical agencies and many other causes committed to empowering people in need, i.e. youth, senior citizens or at-risk groups, people with disabilities and mental health services (including alcohol and drug dependency programs). The mission of the Million Dollar Round Table Foundation is to increase member and industry participation and to give funds to worthwhile charitable organizations throughout the world striving to improve the quality of life for those in need.

Consider SAWs in your estate planning to help ensure the mission of SAWs continues to bring hope to those still waiting to escape their homes and rejoin their communities. We know a guy you can call.

UMM Meets Jim Hamilton

The 12th National Quadrennial Gathering of United Methodist Men was held at St. Luke's United Methodist Church in Indianapolis July 7-8. Approximately 700 men from across the country attended. Several churches were represented that have wheelchair ramp ministries. A surprising number of them had built one or more wheelchair ramps, and faced many challenges designing and constructing their ramps.

Jim Hamilton, SAWs Indy Area Coordinator and former board member, led three scheduled outreach sessions building a display ramp with attendee volunteers. Each session was followed by discussion about the experience and experiences encountered in their own ramp ministries. Jim demonstrated how our design system might save both time and money while constructing a totally American Disability Act (ADA) compliant wheelchair ramp.

Conference volunteers prefabricated and loaded a ramp for an Indy area

project at the SAWs warehouse. This was a great opportunity for men from New York to South Carolina to California and back to Massachusetts to see the SAWs ramp fabrication organization and process. There was great exchange of ideas and contact information with good people who wanted more information to give them insight into how they might modify and improve their programs. The participants were very happy to have attended and commented on how much they learned in the short time they were there.

Over the nine years Jim has volunteered with SAWs, he has become one of the most experienced Project Managers and now Area Coordinators in the program. As SAWs Indy Area Coordinator, Jim oversees the activities of multiple construction teams in the multi-county metropolitan area of Indianapolis as they construct over 120 ramps per year.

At the close of the conference,



Gil Hanke, Chief Executive Officer, and Martha Davis, Chief Operating Officer, offered their support to help the SAWs ministry expand beyond Indiana through the United Methodist Church. Plans to explore this opportunity are in motion.

*Paul Snyder
SAWs Lay Relationship Leader
St. Luke's United Methodist Church
Indianapolis, Indiana*

(Partnership)

a perfect synergistic relationship.

SAWs and Habitat for Humanity of Lafayette have begun co-marketing their ramp services. We do not know where this relationship will lead but the possibilities are indeed exciting! "So far it looks extremely promising," said Rik Hagarty. "When you add the relationship between Habitat and Thrivent Financial for Christians that opens the door for widespread funding for 'repairs,' the potential of this relationship is stellar."

SAWs continues to seek out opportunities to partner with organizations that serve those who are the focus of our mission to extend our reach to more awaiting their freedom. If you would like to join in this effort, please let us know.



All Can Serve

No matter your strengths

INTAKE
INTERVIEWS

DATA ENTRY

SITE SURVEYS

PREFAB
CONSTRUCTION

ONSITE
CONSTRUCTION

FOLLOW UP
SURVEY

by Darla & Joe Fox, Muncie, Indiana

On April 15th we went to a home in Anderson to build a wheel-chair ramp. The gentleman was a bilateral amputee. When talking with us he stated his home had become a prison. He was determined to get out before we got there so he attempted to leave again and turned his chair over and was unable to get up. His neighbors saw him and came to his aid. When we arrived he was so happy he sat on the porch and talked with us all.

After we finished each section, he used his motorized wheel chair to get to that section and just sit there. He was so excited to be able to get out in the sun and out of the house. He stayed out there with us all day. We brought lunch to eat that day, but he insisted that he order pizza for us. So we all ate together.

By the end of the day we had all written in a Bible and presented it to him. He was so thankful. He also had a gentleman living in the house with him that stayed while we were doing the ramp. He rode motorcycles

so we had a motorcycle Bible with us and we were able to give it to him. That Bible had a great story about a motorcycle and relating it to Christ. When we handed it to him, reality set in for us when he stated, "I can't read, but I will have my wife read it to me."

I think we get involved in what we are doing and lose sight of who we are working with. It humbled us to know a gentleman who had a family and was working to support them could not read. We don't think about the situation others are in such as being a prisoner in their homes. If we want to get out, we just get up and walk out.

For anyone who is on the fence about getting involved with SAWs and helping, don't hesitate. We can use everyone no matter your skill. Sometimes just talking to the family as the ramp is being built is a blessing. Fixing sandwiches for the workers and the family helps as well as a lot of times we cannot leave the tools or worksite.

God wants us to help our brothers and sisters, just as He helped and healed so many on His journey on this earth. As Christians, we are to be Christ-like, which means reaching out to help our brothers and sisters no matter how small we think it is. It can mean the world to them.

God Bless
Darla & Joe

Note: Building a SAWs ramp begins well before a single board is cut. There are many ways to volunteer, some of which can be done from the comfort of your home. Help is needed for activities such as administration, client interviews, site surveys, grant writing and fundraising.

If you would like to contribute your time and talent to the mission of SAWs, please contact us. Just visit our website (www.SAWSRamps.org) or call the main office at (317) 844-7446 and let us know how you would like to serve. Some tasks can be performed right from your home by phone and computer. Come share in the blessings we receive every day.

If your group or organization would like to sponsor a service project both financially as well as with volunteers, please contact us at info@sawsramps.org, phone (317) 844-7664 or write to us at the address below. We will help you arrange an event.

News & Notes



SAWs Board On the Job!

The Board of Directors of SAWs fulfills its commitment to be active members of Construction teams. The board has evolved through the years from one comprised mostly of members of construction teams to one composed of passionate business leaders whose mission it is to move SAWs to greater heights in its ministry. Board Chairman, Tom Lipinski, led the crew of board members building this project for Carl.

Rush County Community Foundation Awards Grant to SAWs

SAWs (Servants at Work, Inc.). RCCF has fully funded a grant request for wheelchair ramp materials

for SAWs. SAWs builds wheelchair ramps for housebound residents throughout Indiana. This grant will support their efforts in Rush County specifically.

SAWs Builds Its 1,500th Ramp!

On June 10th, SAWs celebrated the construction of its 1,500th ramp built for Barbara Goode. Barbara is an 88-year-old resident of the Indianapolis west side who lives alone. Crippled by polio as a child, she has had to rely on the help of a neighbor's son to come and go from her home. Barbara recently broke her hip and rehabilitation has not been successful. This made the addition of a ramp at her home an imperative.

This is yet another important milestone in the 14-year life story of SAWs. Our commitment to provide persons with disabilities and conditions of aging with the freedom to remain in their homes and reconnect with their communities remains strong.

The Crossings School & SAWs Partnership Takes Step Forward

The Crossings School has agreed to have their students in all 24 schools across Indiana to do "Service Learning" (volunteering) with SAWs. The Service Learning projects will continue through the school's summer break. Crossings School piloted this partnership in 2015 with the school located in Kokomo, Indiana.

The Crossings provides a state accredited academic education by maintaining a balance of certified teachers and professionals from a variety of backgrounds. They meet students where they are, build relationships with them, and equip them for the future through Job Training and Faith-Based Character Education. Their mission is to empower struggling students to become contributing members of their communities through academics, job training and faith-based character education.

SAWs Howard County & The Crossing School Awarded Grant

"\$10,000 to Servants at Work will be used to build 10 ADA specific wooden wheelchair ramps in Howard County. All work is completed by volunteers from Howard County SAWs groups, Howard County Outreach and the Crossing School."

SAWs Welcomes Clay County Building Group

SAWs Clay County becomes the newest affiliate to join our expanding network reaching even more of those in serious need of help. This is a new building group that has built two ramps so far this season with the initial assistance of the Wabash Independent Living and Learning (WILL) Center in Terre Haute, IN. SAWs Clay County will be asked to take a leadership role in the area by recruiting and training more Project Managers and volunteers. SAWs will assist with securing grant funding till the team takes it on independently.

SAWs Directors Emeritus



Jim Hamilton



Jim Gilster

SAWs has created the Director Emeritus Award to recognize outstanding, long-time service of board members to SAWs. SAWs will, on very special occasions, honor a board member whose term has ended or who has retired from the board, by naming him or her a Director Emeritus. Conferring this honor shall be a rare event, reserved for a member who has provided exceptional service during his or her tenure on the board. These honorees will have created a legacy that will last for years to come and whose contribution is so great, it is hoped that others will aspire to meet the same standard. This honorary title is a mark of distinction. The first two recipients are Jim Gilster, Fundraising Committee chair and Jim Hamilton, SAWs Indy Area Coordinator. These

men have given countless hours over the years to the organization.

Since 2010, Jim Gilster, an experienced grant writer, has led a team of grant writers who have raised over \$175,000 from foundations across Indiana. Jim has built strong relationships within that community that continue to keep the mission of SAWs top of mind.

Jim Hamilton became involved with SAWs upon his retirement as a civil engineer in 2008. Jim was a key member of the board bringing his vast hands on experience to the table informing strategic and tactical decisions. Now as an area coordinator, his experience is raising up a new generation of Project Managers.

A Director Emeritus may serve on board committees, may be named chairman of a committee, and may be reelected as an active board member, if the board and the honoree so desire. He or she shall be kept informed about issues before the board through regular communications from the organization's leadership. We look forward to their continued contributions to better the lives of people with mobile disabilities.

GOING DOWNHILL



Can be
a good thing!

More than 3 million adults in the U.S. use a wheelchair, and another 10 million walk with the aid of a cane, crutches, or a walker.* But a disability isn't the only barrier they face everyday. Over 14 million people with disabilities live below the poverty line**, and many of those disabilities include impaired mobility.

How uplifting it would be if they could exit and enter their home with ease.

And how uplifting it can be if you help.

You can pick up a tool and help, or you can pick up the phone to learn about all the volunteer opportunities. And of course, you can make a donation. Your contributions go straight into the good work of helping good people go downhill, and back up.

* Data from 2010, the most recent U.S. survey.

** People between 5 and 75, according to the 2013 American Community Survey

