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Greater Green Bay Habitat for Humanity and ReStore Set Sights on New, Bigger Location to Improve Lives and Transform the Community

Public phase of $3.5 million Framing Our Future Campaign kicks off with $500,000 matching challenge from local Habitat co-founders and longtime advocates Jack and Inky Meng

GREEN BAY, Wis. (June 20, 2019) — In just 10 years, the Greater Green Bay Habitat for Humanity ReStore has helped dozens of families in Brown County become homeowners with its unique retail model of turning donated household goods, furniture, and building materials into safe, affordable, stable homes.

The ripple effect of neighborhood and community enhancement by the ReStore will grow even more later this year. Today, leaders from Greater Green Bay Habitat for Humanity and the ReStore are kicking off the Framing Our Future Campaign. The plan is to relocate the ReStore to a bigger site that will double its current size allowing for more Habitat homes to be built, improve neighborhoods, and add to the tax base in the community.

The public launch of the $3.5 million campaign coincides with the 10-year anniversary of the local ReStore, a home-improvement store that opened June 27, 2009, with all net revenues going directly back into Habitat’s homeownership program.

With more than $2.1 million in funding already secured, the project is receiving a major boost from Greater Green Bay Habitat for Humanity co-founders and longtime Habitat supporters Jack and Engrid “Inky” Meng.

On top of a previous $500,000 gift for the project, the Mengs have issued a $500,000 matching challenge for the community. They will match all gifts up to $500,000, meaning an additional $1 million could go toward the relocation of the ReStore from 2965 Ramada Way to a larger facility at 1967 Allouez Avenue in the Village of Bellevue.

Greater Green Bay Habitat for Humanity will also move its administrative offices from Green Bay’s west side to the new location, which will become a Habitat campus.

“We don’t know of any finer advocates and ambassadors for Greater Green Bay Habitat for Humanity than Jack and Inky Meng,” says Cora Haltaufderheid, executive director of the local affiliate of Habitat for Humanity. “Time after time, the Mengs have gone to bat to help ensure generations of families in the Greater Green Bay region have a roof over their heads while empowering them with strength, stability and self-reliance as their dreams of owning a home are turned into a life changing reality.

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“Thanks to the compassion and generosity of the Mengs and so many more, we look forward to moving into our new all-inclusive Habitat Campus, which will allow us work more efficiently as a unit, streamline efficiencies and live our mission daily,” Haltaufderheid adds.

Now in its 33rd year of fulfilling a Christian purpose of building homes, communities, and hope, Greater Green Bay Habitat for Humanity signed a purchase agreement for the Van Lanen Inc. building on Allouez Avenue. The nearly 3 ½-acres parcel became available after Van Lanen Inc. merged with fellow longtime printing company HC Miller last summer and rebranded as VIRIDIAM.

The total size of the existing building that will be renovated at the new Habitat for Humanity campus to accommodate the nonprofit’s offices and its ReStore is 35,000 square feet.

Habitat leaders expect to close on their new home mid-July and move the affiliate offices from its current location at 811 Packerland Drive in Green Bay by the end of August.

The transition of the current 12,000-square-foot ReStore near Interstate 41 to the Bellevue site is planned for early fall.

“The timing couldn’t be better for this wonderful news as we give thanks for and celebrate 10 remarkable years at the Greater Green Bay Habitat for Humanity ReStore this month,” says Maureen Meinhardt, the ReStore director. “By combining operations for Habitat and the ReStore into one, larger location, we will be able to better meet the needs of our community and our mission.

“We will have an easy-to-find, convenient ReStore for shoppers and those coming to donate new and gently used furniture, home-improvement goods, and building materials,” Meinhardt adds. “This expansion of the ReStore will enable us to carry on our long-term sustainability and momentum of building more Habitat homes and serving more families who are deserving of quality, safe, stable, affordable housing.”

Through the reuse-and-repurpose retail focus of the ReStore, funding from the sales of donated items in the store stays right here in the community. Since its opening 10 years ago, the ReStore has diverted more than 6 million pounds of materials from landfills.

“Jack and I have been so passionate about Habitat for Humanity and its faith-based purpose of serving the greater good in the community since we volunteered one summer to build a Habitat home in Lafayette, Indiana, in the mid-1980s,” Inky Meng says.

The Mengs have fond memories of the first Green Bay Habitat home build at the corner of Gray and Mather streets on the city’s west side, soon after they brought a Habitat affiliate to their hometown in June 1987 with the support of their church—Union Congregational United Church of Christ.

“Through lots of volunteer labor and family participation, the home was done in five short months,” Inky recalls.

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Since then, teams of dedicated, resourceful community volunteers, with the support of in-kind materials and services from local organizations, have constructed 114 Habitat homes. They have been occupied by 500-plus residents, including more than 330 children.

Families that are chosen for a Habitat home through a rigorous selection process must demonstrate a need for housing, ability to pay and must participate in up to 500 hours of sweat equity in their home. Greater Green Bay Habitat for Humanity then sells the home to the qualified families with affordable, zero-interest mortgages.

“We have a longstanding philosophy and tradition at Greater Green Bay Habitat for Humanity of helping families revitalize their lives with a hand-up, not a handout,” Haltaufderheid says. “To that uplifting and transformational end, a bigger and better ReStore in our community will accomplish our vision of everyone having a decent place to live. An accessible facility centrally located in Greater Green Bay will enhance efficiency of services, and most importantly, provides our Habitat for Humanity a sustainable funding source for years to come.”

More information about the Framing Our Future Campaign and how gifts can be made is available at greenbayhabitat.org and restoregb.org.

GREATER GREEN BAY HABITAT FOR HUMANITY
Founded in 1987, Greater Green Bay Habitat for Humanity is part of a global nonprofit housing organization operated on Christian principles that seeks to put God’s love into action by building homes, communities, and hope. Habitat for Humanity is dedicated to eliminating substandard housing in Brown County, Wisconsin, by constructing homes for qualified homebuyers to help families improve their lives. Greater Green Bay Habitat for Humanity is one of 37 Habitat for Humanity affiliates in Wisconsin. The Greater Green Bay affiliate operates the local Habitat for Humanity ReStore, where all proceeds from the sale of donated building materials, furniture, appliances, and more stay in the community to help build strength, stability, and self-reliance through housing for low- to moderate-income families. Learn more at greenbayhabitat.org and restoregb.org.

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