

# New Luck home will be beginning of new life

Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity has completed the family selection process for a home funded by Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity, a partnership that will change the lives of 164 families this year

LUCK – This year will mark the beginning of a new life for the Christensen family of Dresser. They recently learned they had been selected to build a Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity home in Luck.

Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity is a multi-year, multimillion-dollar partnership between Habitat for Humanity International and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. This initiative will provide 55 percent of the construction costs of the Christensen home. Area Thrivent chapters and Lutheran congregations will raise an additional 10 percent while WRHFH will fund the remaining 35 percent.

Because the need for affordable housing is so great, the desire to partner with Habitat for Humanity to build a home is also great. Families are chosen based on their need for decent housing, their ability to repay a no-profit, zero-interest mortgage and their willingness to help build their home or other Habitat for Humanity homes. Because partnering with Habitat is a life-changing experience, selected families are often joyfully overwhelmed when told the good news.

"We couldn't believe it when we heard we were selected for a Habitat home," said Linda Christensen, Dresser. "We hardly even dared to hope we'd be chosen. This is going to change everything!"

While Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity will build one Thrivent Builds home this year, other Habitat affiliates in 33 states will build hundreds more homes for a cumulative total of up to 164 homes in 2011. These partner families will all experience the pride of homeownership by year's end and will know that their lives are forever changed.

The new home is a result of a partnership between Habitat for Humanity International and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. Called Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity, this partnership has resulted in more than 2,500 decent, affordable homes across the country and around the world since 2005. The total six-year commitment from Thrivent Financial now surpasses \$150 million. Thanks to its 2.6 million members who own financial products with the organization, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans is able to contribute to the improvement of communities like Luck. The Thrivent Builds partnership also engages volunteers—members of Thrivent Financial, members of area Lutheran churches and members of the community at large—to work alongside the partner families to build these homes.

To learn more visit [www.thriventbuilds.com](http://www.thriventbuilds.com).

### About Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity

Wild Rivers Habitat for Humanity, located in St. Croix Falls, is an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International. WRHFH serves Polk and Burnett counties and this year is building its 21st and 22nd homes since its inception in 1997. Habitat raises funds and donated building materials, organizes volunteers, selects a family, and builds a home. Habitat doesn't give anything away. The family is required to help build the home, and they buy it from

Habitat with a no- or low-interest mortgage when it is complete. For more information, call 715-483-2700 or visit [www.wildrivershabitat.org](http://www.wildrivershabitat.org).

Thrivent Builds is designed to involve Thrivent members and Lutherans in helping provide a "hand up" to people who lack decent shelter, offering them a path to greater economic independence. Excluding government funding, Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity is Habitat's largest single source of funding. For more information, visit [ThriventBuilds.com](http://ThriventBuilds.com).

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans is a not-for-profit, Fortune 500 financial services membership organization helping approximately 2.6 million members achieve financial security and give back to their communities. Thrivent Financial and its affiliates offer a broad range of financial products and services including life insurance, annuities, mutual funds, disability-income insurance, bank products and more. As a not-for-profit organization, Thrivent Financial creates and supports national outreach programs and activities that help congregations, schools, charitable organizations and individuals in need. For more information, visit [Thrivent.com](http://Thrivent.com). Also, you can find us on Facebook and Twitter.

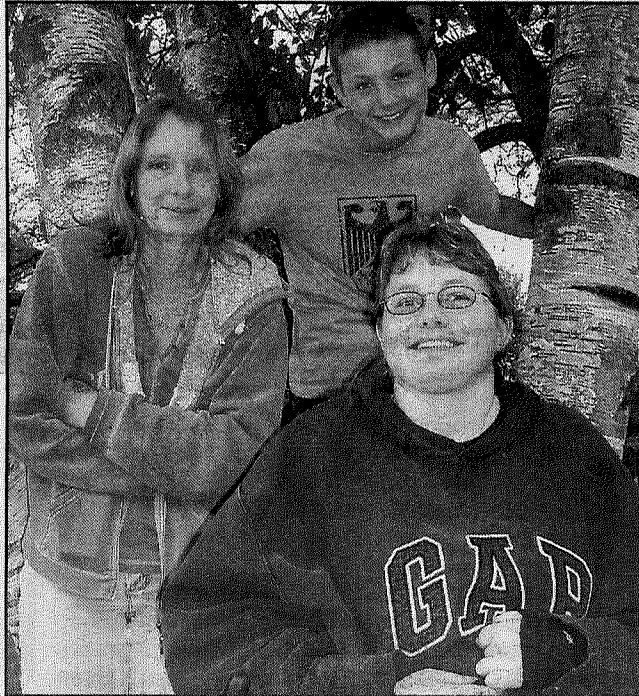
Habitat for Humanity International is an ecumenical Christian ministry that welcomes to its work all people dedicated to the cause of eliminating poverty housing. Since its founding in 1976, Habitat has built, rehabilitated, repaired or improved more than 350,000 houses worldwide, providing simple, decent and affordable shelter for more than 1.75 million people. For more information, or to donate or volunteer, visit [Habitat.org](http://Habitat.org). - submitted

## "God's up there looking over us"

ST. CROIX FALLS - Linda Christensen stopped in to the Habitat office in March. She was feeling desperate. Her daughter, Leah, 31, had been in a terrible car accident in March of 2010. Leah had been in a coma for several months after the accident. Linda had been told if Leah survived, it was likely she'd be a "vegetable." Linda had been encouraged to take Leah off life support, but she didn't want to do that. After several months, Leah came out of the coma. Since then, through lots of hard work and rehabilitation, she is now able to walk some, and she is relearning how to speak. And after a long, tough year, she was finally about to be sent home from the care center she was in – but Linda didn't have a home to take her to. Linda was renting a small, one-bedroom home. "It was really cute," Linda said, "but it was falling apart. And it was too small."

Linda, who works as a certified nursing assistant, had never been able to buy a home. It was turning out to be very tough to find a home she could afford to rent that would work for her and Leah and Leah's 12-year-old son, Tyler. Linda didn't know what to do.

Her neighbors had stopped in to the ReStore grand opening and learned about the Habitat program. They told Linda to check it out, and Linda came up the same day. She took home an application and completed it quickly. Soon she got the call telling them that they had



been selected.

"I cried like a baby when I heard," Linda said. "It was beyond anything I expected or even hoped for. God's up there looking over us. If I was a nonbeliever, I'm not anymore."

Linda and her family will help to build their home along with Habitat volunteers. When it's complete, they will buy it from Habitat with a no-interest, affordable mortgage. Before year's end, they will have a home of their own.

Volunteers are needed to help build the home, which will be located at 803 East Park Ave. in Luck. Please call 715-472-2700 to join in this rewarding work. Volunteers of all skill levels are welcome, as are donations toward the cost of the home. Contact WRHFH, PO Box 736, St. Croix Falls, WI 54024. - submitted

The Christensen family has been selected for the Habitat home that will be built in Luck this summer in the Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity program. They are, from front, Leah and Linda Christensen, and Leah's son, Tyler Bushweiler, 12. - Special photo