

Warren County Habitat for Humanity Celebrates Veterans, Raises over \$7,000 for 3rd Veterans Build

By Warren County Habitat for Humanity

WARREN COUNTY NJ. -On Friday, November 11th, Warren County Habitat for Humanity (WC Habitat) hosted their 2nd Annual Veterans Day Celebration event at their Washington Community Center. The event began promptly at 11 AM, to honor the time and date when the Armistice was signed in 1918, symbolizing the end of World War I. The celebratory event saw twenty-five Veterans in attendance, many from Warren County, and featured enticing speakers, delicious food from Okaysions Katering, and a "Test of Military Knowledge", led by WC Habitat's own Margaret Wallace, Army Veteran.

Navy Veteran and WC Habitat Homeowner Rick Houston opened the event in song while guests were entering the room. Houston played a role during last year's Veterans Day Celebration too, as he was selected to pull the winning tickets of the 50/50 raffle. This year, he passed the torch to Keary Riddick, Army Veteran and future Habitat homeowner, who is the recipient of WC Habitat's current Veterans Build.

After a welcome from WC Habitat Board President Donna Detrick, a prayer blessing the meal from former Board President John Rolak, and opening comments from WC Habitat's Executive Director Ben Eskow, guests enjoyed a free hot breakfast catered by Okaysions Katering. Keary Riddick attended the event and was invited to speak on both her experiences serving in the Army, and her journey to become a Habitat homeowner. Her words were incredibly moving and reminded everyone of the sacrifice that Veterans have made for our country.

Margaret Wallace, Army Veteran and WC Habitat's Business Process Manager, created and led a "Test of Military Knowledge" following Keary's anecdote. This interactive portion of the event was a fun, trivia-style test with every correct answer earning a prize: an MRE, or "Ready-to-Eat Meal", typically given to members of the military during their time of active duty. Attendees loved it, racing to raise their hands to win their very own MRE! Keary Riddick returned to the stage afterward to pull winning tickets for this year's Veterans Build 50/50 Raffle. Tickets had been sold since May 2022, raising just under a total of \$15,000. Half of that sum is going towards WC Habitat's current Veterans Build to support Keary Riddick and her two children, Alyssa and Collin.

All in all, the event was a success, both in terms of funds raised and celebrating Veterans who sacrificed so much for our country. "It was good to see the Veterans from all services together, pause and be thankful for each other's service to our country," Tracy Freeman, Veteran of the Army Corps of Engineers, commented.

To support the work Warren County Habitat for Humanity is doing in your community, feel free to visit their website at www.warrenhabitat.org.



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