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Anonymous donor provides homes for two county families

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The Harris family of White Hall was one of two Lowndes County families that received a home through the help of an anonymous donor.

By Fred Guarino
The Lowndes Signal

A flood disaster has ended in a Lowndes County miracle for two families.

Thanks to the good will of others, especially one anonymous donor, the Smith and Harris families have been provided with homes, furnishings and infrastructure worth well over \$140,000 each, Catherine Flowers of Alabama Center for Rural Enterprise (ACRE) said.

Having lost their homes due to a flash flood last September, the Smith family received a three-bedroom two-bath home in Mosses and the Harris family received a four-bedroom, three-bath home in White Hall on Friday.

After the help received from the Red Cross was no longer available, the families contacted Flowers of the Alabama Center for Rural Enterprise (ACRE) and the Equal Justice Initiative requesting assistance, Flowers said.

She said ACRE and EJI provided several weeks of hotel accommodations for both families, while public appeals brought additional support, Flowers said.

"This is truly a community effort and many acts of goodwill made this possible," Flowers said.

She said the septic systems for each location were provided by the Kess Environmental and Danny Brown, the Alabama Onsite Wastewater Association, Northwest Supply in Prattville, The Organized Community Action Program, and Allen Nipp of Infiltrator

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Special thanks to Burton Fisher of the Lowndes County Health Department for his attention to this matter and Lowndes County Engineer David Butts and Stephanie Wallace of ACRE who assisted in coordinating the effort, Flowers said.

Frank and Rosa Harris, parents of eight children, five girls and three boys, were making their home on Collirene Cutoff Road.

After two days of rain last September, Frank said he became concerned about a creek near their home. When he took his wife to see it, they could no longer see a road they were about to turn onto.

On the way back, he said, "We're in the front. The water is behind us. The water is rushing down the road."

He said at his mother's home, the water rose in a matter of seconds.

When the water receded, Frank and his wife discovered their propane gas tank had snapped away, the foundation blocks had been washed away and the floors, walls and their clothing were all soaking wet.

To make matters worse, he said the frame of their house trailer was bent.

Frank said when he was told his home was no longer livable it was "devastating news."

When funds ran out for the hotels, Frank said Flowers asked if they would be willing to make a public appeal for help.

He said then one day, Flowers called crying, "I've got some good news for you guys. Someone heard your story and they are willing to buy you guys a home."

He said his wife also cried and he was ecstatic.

"The donor, that's what I call her, thank God for her heart. I don't know her but I thank her. She paid for our home and another family's home," Frank said.

"Wow, It's just amazing. It's blessing. It's a truly a blessing," Rosa said. "You just never know that someone would do that for you and your family."

The Sears Smith family has a new home now on Fred Grant Drive in Mosses. They have three girls.

"This is great. For someone to do something for me and my family it's unbelievable. There are some good people out here," Smith said.

He and his wife, Amy, have three girls.

"But what I think is even more important is that the person (donated the homes) had the heart to donate this and not expect anything in return because the families were displaced due to a disaster," Flowers said.

She said the only thing the families had to do was basically move in and then become homeowners and do the things homeowners have to do and maintain all the things homeowners do.

Flowers said in addition to the homes and furnishings, both families were also provided with a washer and dryer.

She said due the climate change disasters like this are going to happen again, and she said she was willing to bet most people who read this story also do not have flood insurance.

This post was written by:

[michaelrogers](#) - who has written 764 posts on [Lowndes Signal](#).

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by Taboola

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