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## Local Housing Organization Pays Tribute to a Lost Leader

*Habitat is saddened by the loss of its founder, Millard Fuller*

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GAITHERSBURG, MD (February 13, 2009) – On February 3, 2009 Habitat for Humanity of Montgomery County (HfH-MC) learned the news of Habitat founder and leader Millard Fuller’s death. Mr. Fuller along with his wife Linda founded Habitat for Humanity in 1976. Mr. Fuller also served as the organization’s leader for 29 years.

“Millard Fuller was a force of nature who turned a simple idea into an international organization that has helped more than 300,000 families move from deplorable housing into simple, decent homes they helped build and can afford to buy and live in,” said Jonathan Reckford, Chief Executive Officer of Habitat for Humanity International.

The idea for Habitat for Humanity was born at Koinonia Farm, a Christian farming community founded in 1942 in rural southwest Georgia. The idea merged into a program called “partnership housing” where simple houses were built in partnership with very low income rural neighbors. In 1969 the first partnership house was dedicated and in 1973 the Fullers took the concept of partnership housing to Africa. Mr. Fuller thought that if partnership housing could improve lives in Georgia and Africa then why not the rest of the world?

Mr. Fuller was a prolific writer, authoring 10 books. He received more than 50 honorary degrees and in 1996 received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation’s highest civilian honor. Among numerous other awards, Fuller received the World Changer Award, the Martin Luther King Jr. Humanitarian Award, and his name was placed in the National Housing Hall of Fame.

“As one of the first Habitat for Humanity affiliates in the US, HfH-MC is grateful to Millard and Linda Fuller for their dedication to eradicating poverty housing throughout the world. Mr. Fuller will be greatly missed”, said John Paukstis, HfH-MC Executive Director.

### **About Habitat for Humanity**

HfH-MC is an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International; its goal is to reduce substandard housing by providing a **hand up** rather than a **hand out** to help low-income families realize the dream of homeownership.

The completion of the Linganore Woods Community marks a new beginning for HfH-MC and our role to address the need for simple, decent, affordable housing right here in Montgomery County! We hope that this beginning will help us to realize our vision of creating "a community with healthy, safe, and affordable housing for all".

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