

Nancy Pfafflin has been working with Habitat for about a decade, answering phones, filing paperwork and greeting the staff and guests. Recently she has become involved with the curriculum committee for homeowner education classes. Nancy's professional background involves education as well as personal financial management.

"Many of the guest speakers are experts in their fields, and aren't always accustomed to speaking to an audience whose English is fairly basic," Nancy said.

She admits that many of us tend to use complex sentences and words that may not match their dictionary definition.

"I'd like to help people become aware of how they can communicate more effectively with the folks in the classes."

Nancy also tries to think of methods that will help the classes become more interactive between the students and teachers. Throughout her career, she has worked with a wide variety of students, and taught classes in Iowa, Long Island and Germany.

Nancy met her husband in the church choir. He has taught music appreciation and music history. She had been involved with music from childhood. Growing up near the college campus in Lincoln, Nebraska, allowed her access to music and dance lessons. She recalls that at age six she would ride the bus alone to attend her lessons.

"It was a different world then," she notes with a smile.

Currently she has a piano in the living room, which she still plays on occasion. Nancy and her husband attend cultural events on a regular basis, such as the opera, symphony and theater.

The Pfafflins are also involved in activities at Tohono Chul Park. They became trained as docents shortly after retiring to Tucson.

"It was a great way to learn about Arizona history, geology, plants and animals."

She adds that many of their friends are fellow docents, so it was a good way to be involved in the community. This is also why she likes working with Habitat.

"I enjoy the times when I get to meet the homeowners," Nancy said. "It's very moving when people get the keys to their house."

Working in the office is a contribution to the organization that Nancy enjoys, noting that her work "helps to relieve the staff of mundane tasks such as stuffing envelopes."

She concludes that the staff she works alongside really help to make her time with Habitat fulfilling.

"They're wonderful people and a delight to work with," she said with a sparkle in her eyes. "And I really appreciate the mission of Habitat."

Interviewed and Written by Volunteer Sierra Russell