



Midland County
Habitat
 for Humanity®



THE HAMMER TIMES

SUMMER 2005



Volunteer workers continue construction on Kami Wade's house on Yoder Drive.

From hammers to hydration . . . **Volunteers make it happen**

Managing a three-home blitz takes a lot of planning and people. Several hundred volunteers working directly on construction tackled everything from hammering shingles and hanging doors, to cleaning up the lumber scraps. The construction of each home was overseen by Bart Jones with crew leaders Jon Horton, Greg Weckesser and Jim Kosinski, who directed the volunteers, assuring quality craftsmanship and safe construction practices.

But not all the volunteers were involved with the construction. A fourth crew leader handled the blitz support services – an almost overwhelming task. They say an army runs on its stomach; well, so does an army of

see volunteers pg. 5

New logo to provide common Habitat identifier

AMERICUS, Ga. - Habitat for Humanity, which is poised to celebrate three milestones -- its 200,000th house worldwide, its millionth person housed and its 30th anniversary -- introduced a new logo to secure and promote a consistent image around the world.

"A consistent, common identifier will only enhance our brand, which already helps 'pave the way' as we communicate who we are and what we do," said Chris Clarke, Habitat's senior vice president of communications.

The former logo, featuring two people with upraised arms sheltering a house, has served Habitat well for a number of years, but it was too similar to other marks to allow it to be registered and protected. The new blue and green logo will establish a unified look among all Habitat for Humanity affiliates regardless of size, location or length of affiliation.

One thing won't change, though, Clarke stresses, "the mission. Building simple, decent houses in partnership with families desperately in need remains our number-one commitment. Now is just the time to establish the same continuity in the name and look as there is in our purpose."

"The new logo symbolizes volunteerism and the community spirit of neighbors helping neighbors," said Paul Leonard, Habitat's chief executive officer. "In it, three forms stand united in purpose, their arms lifted to act on the world's need for decent housing, not hanging idle as if the work were complete. The rounded edges suggest a search for harmony, the universality of family and gentleness of spirit that springs from the hearts of Habitat partners.

"The roofline represents shelter, to be sure, but also symbolizes the Habitat mission, under which people of all races, ages and religious beliefs

come together for the common good. Habitat's name is prominently featured in the logo, and the three forms united together as one represents the Trinity and Habitat's Christian foundation."

The logo was a team effort that sprang from suggestions that poured in from Habitat affiliates and national offices around the world. Taking these suggestions and others, Habitat's international design team deliberately developed a mark that would transcend different cultures and communicate Habitat's missions, goals and values.

(Reprinted from www.habitat.org/newsroom/2005_archive/insitedoc009210.aspx)

INSIDE . . .

- President's letter 2
- Partner families 2 & 3
- Blitz Build 4 & 5

Walz family leaving apartment behind

With three growing teenaged boys at home, Lisa Walz can hardly wait to move her family from their tiny apartment to their new Habitat home at 2822 Yoder Drive. Her sons, 14-year-old Ted Tomczak, 15-year-old Steve Tomczak and Andy Tomczak, 17, are equally excited. In fact, Lisa said the boys used to walk over to the building site and just stand where their new rooms currently are.

There's no waiting now as their home was one of the three homes built in Midland County during the 2005 state-wide Jimmy Carter Work Project. Lisa took time off from her job at WalMart to work during the blitz, even though the family had almost completed all of their required equity hours. "It's hard work, but it's worth it," Lisa said.



Steve, Lisa, Ted & Andy



Linda Holder

Wow, what an amazing experience! Blitzes are always exciting and inspiring, but this one topped them all. Three homes in 16 days. Three families finally realizing their dream of home ownership. A community of volunteers who put their own busy lives on hold for a few days to make it happen. This is what I love most about being part of Habitat.

There are far too many people to thank here, but I want to extend a personal thank you to our three house sponsors – The First United

• LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT •

Methodist Church, Chemical Bank and Trust, and The Dow Chemical Company. These three groups were amazing! Not only did they contribute the funds to purchase building materials for the three homes, but they also contributed the bulk of the volunteer labor. This is just one more way these organizations show their dedicated commitment to our community.

I also want to thank the many members of the Home Builders Association of Midland, who once again provided additional skilled labor and work crew leaders to keep our projects on track. And a special thank you to the United Church of Christ, who handled all of the logistics this year – everything from renting the tents to organizing the meals and arranging for trash pick-up. The detail work that went into the

logistics was amazing, and this group saved our board members countless hours.

With the Blitz behind us, we're tempted to sit back and rest, but we have two more homes this year that still need our attention – including the Vanderbush-Fisher home which has already been started on Saiko Road in Hope Township. We have also started a house for the Servis family, our fifth house this year.

Finally, I want to say goodbye and thank you to Carolyn Bacon, who is retiring this year after almost nine years as our office manager. Your dedication and support over the years has been a godsend. All of us at Habitat, including our partner families, thank you from the bottom of our hearts, and we wish you well in your retirement. We are going to miss you, Carolyn.

Second time's the charm for McDonald partner family

Persistence paid off for Larry and Connie McDonald and their two children, who weren't chosen as a Habitat partner family the first year they applied. "We were encouraged to keep applying, because it sometimes takes several tries," said Connie. "When we found out we were selected this year, we were thrilled."

They also were thrilled to learn that their new home was one of the three homes built in Midland County during the 2005 statewide Jimmy Carter Work Project. That

means that the family will be moving out of Connie's mother's home, where they have been staying for the last two years. Eight-year-old Doug and 13-year-old Kaylin are pleased to be returning to the Bullock Creek schools, where they had previously attended.

One of the first things the family plans to do is hang the personalized doorknocker, which they received years ago as a Christmas gift, on their new front door. "I've kept it all this time, just waiting for our own home to hang it on,"



Larry, Connie,
Doug & Kaylin

Connie said. "It's a testament to having patience, having faith."

Wade and sons leave rental trailer in Homer Twp.



William, Kami & Michael

Kami Wade and her two sons, 13-year-old William Hopkins and 7-year-old Michael Wade, were thrilled to learn they were chosen to be a Habitat Partner Family. The trailer they were renting in Homer Township wasn't in good shape and the rent was high. "I never thought I'd be able to qualify for a home, but I applied anyway, and I'm really glad I did," Kami said.

The Wade home was built on Yoder Drive in Ingersoll Township, one of the three homes "blitz-built" in Midland County as part of the statewide 2005 Jimmy Carter

Work Project. The boys are pleased that they'll be able to stay in their current school district. Kami, who has a home-based business, looks forward to being able to decorate her home the way she likes. "If I want to paint a room yellow, I can," she said.

Kami admits that getting in her required "sweat equity" hours was challenging, but she was determined to do it. "Everyone at Midland County Habitat has been awesome," she said. "I thank God for all that he's given me. Without him, this never would have been possible."

Three-home Blitz Build a success . . .

Blitz Build Fun Facts

Locally

- 850 volunteer sign-ins
- 7200 manhours
- 9000 nails pounded
- 1800 2x4s used

Statewide

- 232 homes built
- 20,000 volunteers
- 714,000 manhours
- 9,600,000 nails pounded



Despite torrential rains and stifling humidity, there were no dampened spirits at this year's blitz build. And three Habitat partner families are now enjoying their newly built homes.

The weather was certainly a topic of conversation among blitz volunteers, but no one complained, despite temperatures that reached into the 90s, winds that threatened to blow off shingles, and rain that turned an almost dry creek bed into a pond. In fact, a temporary bridge built to help shuttle volunteers from the parking area to the work site actually began floating away and had to be replaced with a larger, stronger one. Fortunately, the rains didn't start until the homes were enclosed, so work was able to continue despite the downpours. And the rains actually helped keep volunteers cool in the otherwise oppressive heat.

Volunteers build lasting friendships

Moods remained high throughout the three-week period, and many volunteers had so much fun, they showed up to help a second or third day. One volunteer mentioned that she had dragged her teenaged daughter along “kicking and screaming” the first day, but her daughter had so much fun, she came back to help several more days, even coming without her mother.

In addition to homes, many friendships were built over the 16 days of the Blitz – both between the volunteers and between the partner families. After working together almost all day every day, given that the three houses are next to each other, the three partner families developed a closeness that should provide additional support as they settle into their new neighborhood. Other neighbors also introduced themselves during the Blitz – one even offering a truck to help with a partner family’s move.

The bond between the partner families and Habitat started long before the Blitz kick-off, of course, as each family had to donate at least 100 sweat-equity hours prior to the event. Most had already completed the bulk of their total 500 hours, but stayed out at the site as much as possible to help and watch their dreams being built.

By the time the homes were dedicated on June 24, all that was left to do was hook up the utilities. Mortgages were signed by the families on July 1, and families were scheduled to move in before the end of the month.

The Blitz was part of the statewide Jimmy Carter Work Project 2005: Bringing Vision to Life. Local homes were sponsored by The Dow Chemical Company, Chemical Bank & Trust and First United Methodist Church.



Volunteers (cont. from pg. 1)

volunteers, and logistics captain John Ditzler saw that the stomachs were kept full and the water flowed. He and his committee of volunteers arranged for meals and snacks to be brought in each day, along with plenty of soda and water. They also rented a huge food tent, arranged for a trailer to store tools and supplies on the site, coordinated rentals of portable toilets, leased scaffolding and saw that the dumpsters were delivered and dumped as needed.



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MCHFH Board meets on the second
 Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. Meetings
 are open to the public and are held at the
 Habitat Office, 1825 Bay City Rd.
 989.496.0900 (t), 989.496.1904 (f)

Mission Statement

*MCHFH demonstrates Christian principles
 by building decent, affordable housing
 through a partnership of volunteers
 and Midland County people in need.*

Statement of Non-discrimination

At a regularly constituted meeting of its Board of Directors on Sept. 21, 2000, Midland County Habitat for Humanity adopted the following resolution with regard to non-discrimination:

MCHFH criteria for selecting families states that we will not discriminate against any applicant with regard to their selection as a partner family based on their race, color, religion, national origin, gender, familial status, handicap or age.

Website information

Visit our website at www.midlandhabitat.org and click on "Construction Update" to monitor progress of our current Habitat homes.