



Lake Agassiz
Habitat
for Humanity®

PO BOX 1022
Moorhead, MN 56561

Fall 2007

SERVING CASS AND CLAY COUNTIES

First Ever **Women's Build** Complete

Women's Build a Huge Success

"Never underestimate the power of a woman" or in this case, the power of nearly 500 women! Over 14 volunteer days, from 96 degree weather on framing day to almost 4 inches of rain for two solid days of siding, 150 lbs of 16 penny nails, hundreds of cases of water, 70 dozen donuts, new friendships and renewed spirits, two new homes were completed for two deserving families.

In July Lake Agassiz Habitat for Humanity celebrated the completion of its first Women Build project, a twin home at 703 & 705 South University Drive. The build was part of First Families Building Homes Across America, a two-year project of Habitat for Humanity's Women Build program, which is underwritten by Lowe's.

Planning for this first-ever Women Build project began in May of 2006 when Lake Agassiz Habitat was notified of the opportunity to partner with the local Lowe's Store, offering a grant



The first ever Women's Build House was completed with the help of nearly 500 women.

to complete a Women Build project. In addition to providing financial support, the local Lowe's store worked with the Affiliate to offer a series of construction skills workshops geared specifically to women. This provided an excellent opportunity for women interested in volunteering on the worksite. The eager volunteers learned how to use power tools, and general construction materials and methods.

Many volunteers from organizations and groups from throughout the community came together to work alongside Tara and Laura to complete their home. In addition to working on site to complete construction, hundreds of volunteers and businesses provided

meals, beverages, snacks and support throughout the build. Many thanks go out to the numerous people that helped to make this project a success.

One thing certainly learned from this first experience, is that there is no lack of enthusiasm from the community for helping others. The outpouring of support and volunteers for this worthy project was gratifying to see. Women Build continues to grow and we are excited by the opportunities it has offered, the new friendships made and the broader circle of people Habitat for Humanity has touched. Look for us again to build in 2008! We would love to have you join us! ■

By Amanda Thomas, Women Build Chair

2007 Construction Update

Summer 2007 has been a successful one. The affiliate started the season with their first ever Women's Build which was also LAHFH's first ever twin home.

LAHFH's third home was built in partnership with Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity and Hope Lutheran Church located in Fargo. Construction on the single-story, four-bedroom, one-and-three-quarter bath home began on June 23rd, 2007 and the home was recently dedicated on August 16th, 2007. This home is located in South Moorhead.

The affiliate's fourth home was built in partnership with Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity, Olivet Lutheran Church, Fargo and Comstock/Hoff Churches in Comstock and Hoff, MN. This was the second partnership with Thrivent during the 2007 build season. This single-story, four-bedroom, one-and-three-quarter bath home is located in South Fargo and is scheduled to be dedicated in mid-September.

After the 5th blitz, LAHFH volunteers were able to take a short rest. This home was the third home built in partnership with Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity and Trinity Lutheran Church, Moorhead. This nice three-bedroom home fits well within its new North Moorhead neighborhood. This home is scheduled to be dedicated in October.

Currently, LAHFH is prepping for house number six and seven which will be located in West Fargo. As LAHFH's Construction Manager, I am very proud of how much our affiliate's volunteers, Construction Team and staff has been able to accomplish in such a short period of time. Thank you for all of your hard work and commitment to our mission of building simple, decent and affordable housing for families within our community. ■

By Bryce Stordahl, LAHFH Construction Mngr

2008 Family Selection Underway

With the 2008 build season quickly approaching, our Family Selection Committee is working diligently to reach out to families in our community who are in need of adequate housing. In the past two years we have been able to dramatically expand our family selection program by going out into the F-M community with letters and posters.

In 2005, we had a total of 20 applications for three homes in the F-M community. In 2006, we received over 40 applications for seven homes in the F-M community. In 2007, our goal is to receive 60 applications for six homes to be built in 2008.

How does LAHFH Choose Partner Families?

In the process of reaching out to the community and spreading awareness, we have been able to fine-tune our ability to select strong Habitat Partner Families. This year we will be adding three additional steps to our already intense selection process to ensure that our affiliate is able to select the most appropriate families for the available housing.

The Lake Agassiz Habitat for Humanity family selection process begins with finding families that meet three basic criteria: need, ability to pay, and willingness to partner. To ensure that our Habitat's expectations are clear, the affiliate does not give out an application until an applicant has attended a required Family Selection Orientation

Session. At this session, the LAHFH Family Selection Committee is able to explain the HFH program and answer any questions that an applicant might have before receiving a pre-application. Pre-applications are screened by LAHFH's Program Coordinator to make sure all criteria are met, and for those who qualify, credit reports are pulled. After this initial screening, qualified applicants are required to make an appointment to meet with a panel of LAHFH Board Members, staff and committee members. This first interview gives LAHFH representatives and the applicant a chance to get to know each other and ask questions they may have.

After the panel interviews are complete, prospective "Partner Families" are required to submit verification forms regarding information from their pre-application (pay stubs, landlord references, public assistance, etc.). After each applicant has returned all of their information verification forms, the Family Selection Committee decides who will receive a home visit. This second interview is critical because it helps the family selection committee members experience first hand the living conditions that the applicant is currently in. Each home visit is then followed by an evaluation.

Only after this process is completed does the Family Selection Committee decide on the applicants it will recommend to the Board of Directors as the LAHFH Partner Families. ■

Annual Appreciation Dinner

Lake Agassiz Habitat for Humanity will be hosting its 3rd Annual Appreciation Dinner on Thursday, Oct. 18. LAHFH's Annual Appreciation Event is held to show our appreciation to our numerous volunteers, community partners, and monetary donors.

Unlike last year's sit-down Spaghetti dinner, this year's event will feature a variety of desserts from Habitat Partner Families and the F-M community. We will be sending out more information about this event shortly. ■

Goldenwood Charity Corn Maze

Homeland Developers have created a Corn Maze with the proceeds going to Habitat for Humanity!

The Goldenwood Charity Corn Maze will be located at 12 Ave N and County RD 17, in West Fargo and will run weekends from Sept 15- Oct 31.

Admission will be \$7.00 for adults, children 5-7 yrs old are \$5.00, and children under the age 5 are free. There will also be hay rides, special event days, and more!

Come out and enjoy some great fall fun while supporting a great cause! See you there!

Thrivent Financial Donates Trailer to Habitat



Lake Agassiz Habitat for Humanity is so grateful to Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity for donating us our beautiful new trailer. It has been very helpful, as our affiliate has grown from building 3 homes in 2006 to 7 homes in 2007. We are so proud to have such a functional and striking trailer to represent our affiliate and our mission. We couldn't be happier! Thank you Thrivent! ■

"There is a time for everything, a season for every activity under heaven. . . (and) there is nothing better for people than to be happy in their work."

Ecclesiastes 3:1 and 22

Habitat Restore is Expanding!

In its inaugural year, ReStore has had great success. The ReStore was able to exceed its goals financially and through in-kind donations. The community support has been so strong that ReStore has actually found it difficult to house all of the donations.

Due to this support and the growth of the affiliate, the Habitat ReStore will be moving to 210 11th St. N. in Moorhead. The new building (formerly Sunmart) will allow the ReStore to increase its square footage from 7,000 square ft. to 15,000 square feet of retail space. This expansion should allow the Habitat ReStore to house all in-kind donations, thus providing a wider variety of merchandise for our customers to choose from.

Over the next few months Habitat will begin renovating the old Sunmart building with hopes of occupying the building by December 1st, 2007. The Habitat ReStore will need the support of the community and the help of many volunteers in order to make this transition successful. The Habitat ReStore is also in need of a number of in-kind donations to help with renovation costs and keep them within budget. Examples include, but are not limited to: ceiling tiles, lighting fixtures, carpet, shelving, pallet racking, etc.



Restore expansion will begin shortly at their new location in North Moorhead.

If you are interested in getting involved in this exciting project, please call Shane Busby at the Habitat ReStore: 218.284.5253 Ext.1 or email: restore@lakeagassizhabitat.org Follow our progress by visiting our website at www.lakeagassizhabitat.org.

If you are interested in making an in-kind donation to the LAHFH ReStore, please contact Jane Knealing at 218.284.5253 Ext. 1 or by email: jane@lakeagassizhabitat.org. Please visit our website: www.lakeagassizhabitat.org for a list of items the LAHFH ReStore is able to take.

We feel so blessed to be in such a supportive community. Thank you.

(A Note from ReStore: The Lake Agassiz Habitat ReStore appreciates the numerous donations it receives on a daily basis. However, the LAHFH ReStore is not able to repair items. Please donate items that are still in working condition. Thank you!) ■

Lake Agassiz Habitat for Humanity Welcomes Two VISTAS

Lake Agassiz Habitat for Humanity is proud to welcome two new VISTAs; one working with the affiliate; and one working with the LAHFH ReStore.

Katie Tucholke is the new Lake Agassiz Habitat for Humanity affiliate VISTA. Katie is originally from St. James, Minnesota and recently graduated from Concordia College, Moorhead with a major in Communications- Public Relations and a minor in History. In Katie's senior year at Concordia she began volunteering with Lake Agassiz Habitat for Humanity. Katie stated that she was drawn to Habitat for Humanity for both its mission and the amazing people who volunteer. During her year of service with LAHFH, she learned more about the AmeriCorps VISTA program and became interested in continuing the work of the current VISTAs. During her one-

year term with VISTA, Katie will work on developing amiable partnerships with local churches and will be working closely with the volunteers involved in various areas of LAHFH.

Jane Knealing is the new VISTA for the LAHFH ReStore. Jane is originally from East Bethel MN and recently graduated from Concordia College, Moorhead with a major in Religion and minors in Sociology and Psychology. Jane stated that she chose to become a VISTA with the LAHFH ReStore because of the two-fold aspect of its mission: providing financial support to LAHFH's mission to build simple, decent, and affordable housing in the F-M community and its mission to help the environment by minimizing



L to R: Katie Tucholke and Jane Knealing

the trash that is put into landfills. During her one-year term with VISTA, Jane will work towards providing a group of core volunteers for the ReStore and build relationships with several F-M businesses. Jane will also be in charge of a ReStore deconstruction project.

Katie and Jane, we welcome you! ■