



under CONSTRUCTION

G HOMES IN PARTNERSHIP WITH G

groundbreaking with WIREMANS

After days of stormy spring weather, beautiful blue Western Montana skies smiled on Dave Chrismon, executive director of Habitat for Humanity of Missoula, as he welcomed about 100 volunteers and supporters to the April 2nd groundbreaking of the Wireman family home. Among the guests joining the Wireman family were Jeff Roth, president of Habitat for Humanity of Missoula; Lisa Bridston, Thrivent Builds Specialist; Mayor John Engen; and Pastor Chris Flohr of St. Paul Lutheran Church.

The groundbreaking celebrated the start of building on Habitat's 29th home at 4321 Deveraux Place in the Windsor Park subdivision off North Reserve. The Wireman

family includes parents Rodney and Tanya and their children Shane 11, Michael 10, Bethany 6, Amy 4, Katelynn 3, and Christina 2 months. When asked what the groundbreaking meant to her, Tanya Wireman replied, "It proved to us that we were actually going to be first-time home owners! Now the children are all excited about choosing decorating ideas for their rooms. Michael favors a Buzz Lightyear look and wants to do his walls blue with yellow splotches of paint. I'm not sure how that will look but the kids are having a lot of fun planning."

The Wireman home represents a partnership between Habitat for Humanity of Missoula, St. Paul Lutheran Church and Thrivent Builds. St. Paul raised \$26,000 to get the home sponsorship process started and Thrivent, which sponsors Habitat homes nationwide, agreed to contribute 70% of the project's building costs (about \$100,000). Lisa Bridston, Thrivent Builds specialist, reported that "Thrivent Financial Services for Lutherans is committed to helping families achieve economic independence. We have a 100-year history of helping members help others."



photo by Tim Larson

The Taberna family passing the hammer to the Wiremans

GROUNDBREAKING *continued on page 2*



photo by Libby Quinn

We had a great crowd. Were you there? Why not come to the dedication this fall!



photo by Tim Larson

Lisa Bridston, *Thrivent Builds* Specialist, came all the way from Spokane to support this great project.

FROM THE President's Desk

I've spent a significant number of days traveling overseas so far this year. Most of it has been for work, but during a long weekend in January, I had several days in a row free. I set off from Guam, where I'd been working with the United States District Court, and flew to the island of Bali in Indonesia. I spent my first day there touring the highlands on a mountain bike. My guide, Loba-Loba, led me into the jungle, past terraced rice paddies, past ancient Hindu temples tucked away in the forest, and through the small villages that dotted the countryside.

Toward the end of the day we stopped for water in one of the villages and visited with a family. As with everyone I encountered during my visit, they were welcoming and even took us into their home. The homes in the jungles on Bali are modest, with none of the modern refinements we all expect. But as this family showed me through their compound, pointing out where the different generations slept, the open-air kitchen, the pen for live-stock, and their small family temple with offerings of rice and flower petals, their pride was clear. This was their home: it was special and a source of strength for them.

That is the essence of Habitat for Humanity. Everyone deserves what that family in Indonesia has. Our mission is to help provide everyone in our community with a home that is special, a place that will be a source of pride, and one that will foster growth. In this way we will build homes, build lives, and build community.

I'm excited to be president of Missoula Habitat and look forward to building with you.

- Jeff Roth, Board President

Groundbreaking page 3



photo by Tim Larson

Of course St. Paul Lutheran's Pastor Chris Flohr had a big part in the groundbreaking. The church is sponsoring this home to celebrate their centennial year.

Groundbreaking Continued from page 1 Thrivent is committed to building 10 more homes. Says Lisa, "We are glad to have the opportunity to build 10 homes in the northwest region. Our partnership with Habitat for Humanity is helping us share the dream of simple, decent and affordable housing. This partnership is what makes each community a very special place to live." Special guest, Mayor John Engen, greeted the crowd stating, "People deserve decent, affordable housing. Homeownership is the single most important factor in becoming a member of the middle class. While not everyone has that wish, becoming a homeowner gives people equity, roots and a stake in the community."

Brad and Betsy Martens, the Wireman's sponsor family, will help the family through the homeownership process as well as serve as a liaison between the St. Paul volunteer work force and administrators at HfH of Missoula. *Continued on page 3*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Cindy Bartling	273-0975	Laure Pengelly Drake	251-5618
Alice Dailey	549-8095	Gay Peterson	543-6884
John Drake	721-8880	Jeff Roth	543-0330
Scott Johnson	721-9736	Debbie Wilcox	549-3657
Cindy Klette	523-4657	Chuck Williford	273-2317
Spencer MacDonald	728-0920		
John Mudd	721-7772		



Habitat for Humanity
P. O. Box 7181
Missoula, Montana 59807
(406) 549-8210
e-mail: habmsla@habitatmsla.org
Jeff Roth, President
Dave Chrismon, Executive Director

Habitat for Humanity of Missoula is a grassroots nonprofit Christian housing ministry dedicated to the elimination of poverty housing in Missoula County. The Habitat for Humanity of Missoula Newsletter is published quarterly.

GROUNDBREAKING *Continued from page 2* Pastor Chris Flohr, of St. Paul Lutheran Church, mentioned that “all the physical materials that go into a house are important and necessary. There are also important spiritual materials that go into a house to make it a home. Those are faith, hope and love. These are the spiritual building materials that Habitat for Humanity and faith communities (like St. Paul Lutheran and others) bring with them when they build and serve.”

Symbolizing the official start of work on the Wireman home, Chris and Janelle Taberna enthusiastically passed the hammer to their friends, the Wireman family, who accepted the tool with relish.

Those attending the groundbreaking were blessed with glorious weather, a wonderful symbol of the blessing that all – the Wireman family, Habitat for Humanity of Missoula, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Thrivent Financial Services and the community at large – share building a home together.

-Libby Quinn, PR Committee



Missoula Mayor John Engen likes the idea of everyone having a “simple, decent place to live.”

photos by Tim Larson



The Martens, members of St. Paul Lutheran, are the sponsors for the Wireman family. Their support and mentoring are helping the Wiremans become successful homeowners the Habitat way.



Our best excavators are under the age of 12.

Vacation Bible School with **HARDHATS**

Looking for ideas for Vacation Bible School, children’s church or Sunday School? Looking for ways to challenge kids to become involved in Christian service? Looking for a way to promote Habitat for Humanity in your church?

Smith & Helwys has published a program titled: *Under Construction: A Habitat for Humanity Vacation Bible School*. The purpose of the program is “to create an environment which provides children the opportunity to participate in Christian community, teaches the value of Christian service, and introduces children [and adults, too] to the ministry of Habitat for Humanity International.”

The program uses a construction theme. Adults are given

the titles of construction supervisors. The children are “crew members” who move in their crews to five different “job sites” that include Bible activities, stories, snacks and crafts. Hard hats, plastic tool kits, rulers and T-shirts for each child provide a realistic, on-the-job feeling.

If you would like to view the introductory package, including books for the “job sites” and administration, posters and kids “props”, please contact the Habitat office. You can also go online to see more at www.helwys.com/us/index2.html.

- Christine Prescott, Church Relations Group Chair

Thank You For Your Generous Support in Building Houses and Hope Contributors From January - April 2006

C. Leroy & Joanne R. Anderson
Atonement Lutheran Church
Nona Babcock & Darrel Fite
Terry & Bonnie Baldwin
Bernard J. Balleweg
Janice & Bruce Baxter
Anthony F. & Marlene E. Beltramo
Big Sky Surgery Center LLC
Marcia Bishop & Dick Twilde
Bitterroot Turf Farm
Lois Blevins
Helen Bolle
Bolt & Anchor Supply
Joe Boutin
Donna J. Bowne
Robert L. & Kimberly L. Brander
James W. & Linda I. Burfeind
Bea Burnham
Central Montana Building Supply
William & Janet Chilcote
Frank & Lana Clark
Combined Federal Campaign
Community Bank of Missoula
Coumellia "Melly" Cooper
Joyce Z. Cooper
Judith A. Cooper
Ouida Cunningham
Richard T. & Alice M Dailey
Patricia H. Darne
John Davies
Fred H. & Eileen S. Decker
Bill DeCou
Lois G. Dodge
LeRoy J. & Georgette Moses Dosch
Mary Jeanne Doyle
Laure Pengelly & Richard Drake
Allison M. Easterling
Dan & Vicky Ecton
James E & Marjorie S Elander
Catherine Everingham
Fasteners, Inc.
Gerald A. & Scott, Sally Fetz
Richard J. & Judith Field
First Interstate Bank
Jean M. Forney

Gary & Vickie Gallagher
Charlotte Geist
Gillespie Foundation
Denise & Dick Giuliani
Richard & Mary Denise Giuliani
Kathy Gromko
Thrivent Builds with Habitat
Judy Hazelbaker
Teresa Henry & Stephen Egli
Sheila & Larry Hoffland
Ingrid Holliday
Holy Spirit Episcopal Church
Gayle A. Hudgins
Randall & Kathleen Hungate
Deanna E. Huseth
Elizabeth R. & Sieckman, Dan E. Ikeda
David & Kathleen Jackson
Anna Kalm
Margot Keeton
Miriam Kurinsky
Jessica Lambert
Eldora Landman
Mary C. Langenderfer, M.D.
Jo K. Lasich
Vicki Lincoln
Lolo Middle School/ 8th Grade Classes
LS Jensen Construction & Readymix
Jean Luckowski
Elizabeth & Bradley Martens
Gary & Judy Matson
Microsoft Giving Campaign
Theron A. & Robin L. Miller
Missoula County Public
Schools Campaign
Missoula County Treasurer (Payroll
Deduction)
Montana Bolt
Montana First Credit Union
Morganroth Music
Mudd Law Firm, P.C.
Norma Jean Myrdal
Rod & Marilyn M. Nelson
Clarence R. Nickles
Norco
NorthWestern Energy

Patsy O'Keefe
Glenn L. & Muriel A Parmeter
Mary Pengelly
Gay & Michael Peterson
Blair & Jennifer Piippo
Christine A. & David H. Prescott
Dr. Michael Priddy
Quality Supply
R & L Excavation
Marie E. Reed
John Risken
Dwight W. & Betty B. Rittenhouse
Ed & Sally L. Rosenkranz
Carol Routh
Dan & Betty Rude
Michael J. & M.J. Schutte
Seaboard Farms, Inc.
Tom & Barbara Seekins
Michael & Kathryn Sehestedt
Janet K. Shanahan
Sign Pro
John E. Smith
Olof S. & Marcille Sohlberg
State Farm Insurance
Peter F. & Suzann Stickney
Loren Stormo
Steve & Elaine Sutherland
Sweet Pea Sewer and Septic
Chris & Janelle Taberna
Cynthia K. Thiel
University Congregational Church
University of Montana Charitable
Giving Campaign
Sandy & Pam S. Volkmann
Bill West
Western Montana Lighting
Western Tool Supply
Jim & Beverly Williams
Van & Jeanne Wolverton
George Wood
Sol T. & Beth B. Wright
Terry Zahn, D.D.S.

VOLUNTEER salute

Scott Johnson

Among the many traits that distinguish Habitat for Humanity from other organizations is its blending of professionals and members of the community in the building process. While the result is the proverbial “many hands making light work,” it also means that someone needs to make sure the many right hands are knowing what the many left hands are doing. That someone, in the current building season, is Scott Johnson, who does in his spare time as a volunteer for HfH of Missoula what he does as a paid project manager at Cost Management Engineers in Missoula.

In the private sector, Johnson notes, his project management duties represent the interests of owners, facilitating the design, procurement, contract, and construction processes, insuring that clients are not overcharged for work done by various businesses involved on the project. The project manager also tracks the progress of the project, making sure that the work of each stakeholder is recorded as it is accomplished and that the project stays within budget.

For Johnson, who grew up in Germantown, Wisconsin, lived more recently in Leadville and Basalt, Colorado, and moved to Montana about 14 years ago, living the last nine years in Missoula, it seemed natural that he would lend his professional expertise to HfH of Missoula. Says Johnson, “I started working on building sites several years ago... I have a professional-skills set that fits in well with Habitat.” The fit worked so well that Johnson was soon asked to join the building committee and is midway through a term on the Habitat Board of Directors.

Thrivent Financial Services for Lutherans, which is sponsoring construction on the Wireman home, required that the site have a project manager, a job for which Johnson was both well suited and willing to accept.

Habitat’s approach to building is unique, notes Johnson. “Habitat builds by committee, so communication is critical for getting all committees to be accountable.”

The goal, he continues, “is to get better at what we do well and to improve on what we’re not doing as well... It mostly has to do with balancing the need to build efficiently with Habitat’s mission to involve the community.”

Toward that end, and to enhance communication, Johnson conducts regular work site co-ordination meetings that involve



photo by Dave Chrismon

such parties as the site supervisor, members of the building subcommittee, and members of the family and the sponsor family, among others. “It’s another communication tool,” says Johnson. “Being there at the site helps us to put our heads together on any problems.”

Working one full-time job with Cost Management Engineers and what seems like a second one with Habitat for Humanity leaves Johnson little time for the other types of outdoor activities, such as hunting and fishing, that he loves. He always makes time, however, to serve as the coach of his 8-year-old son Fisher’s Little League team.

Volunteering with HfH of Missoula, says Johnson, enables him “to continue learning things. Learning is power and learning is something you can do for yourself and you can continue to give back.”

Johnson hopes that the work he is doing to help streamline Habitat’s construction process can be “a tool used to keep Habitat proactive instead of reactive to things that come up.” To which Habitat’s many right hands and many left hands all stop working to give Johnson a hearty round of applause.

- Lucia Solórzano Work, PR Committee



photo by Steffan Hacker

Operation Home Delivery – 1000 Homes on the Way

Acquiring enough land to build Habitat homes for families in need is a problem confronting affiliates throughout the country, especially now in the devastated Gulf Coast region.

Recent progress reports on the efforts by Habitat for Humanity International to provide housing to families whose homes were destroyed by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita say that finding affordable land is a challenge.

A recent report from Ken Meinert, senior vice president of Operation Home Delivery, Habitat's program focusing on Gulf Coast recovery, notes, "Along the Mississippi Gulf Coast, land acquisition continues to be a challenge. Habitat is working hard to find land and then purchase the best lots for a fair price. We have also been fortunate to have received several land donations."

In New Orleans, at last report, three Habitat homes were under construction and building had begun on the Musicians' Village and Baptist Crossroads projects. Houses also are under construction in coastal Mississippi.

Despite the challenges confronting Habitat workers in these affected areas, Operation Home Delivery still plans to have a thousand houses completed or under construction across the Gulf Coast by mid summer of 2007. As of the end of March 2006, nearly 242,000 individual donations had been recorded totaling almost \$82 million. In addition to these funds, another \$11 million was projected in commitments from other sources, bringing the total documented and projected to over \$93 million.

As high as those figures sound, the amount pales with the need: With the average cost of family sponsorship standing at just over \$75,000 per home, even \$200 million could not build a sufficient number of homes to meet the needs of families in the Gulf Coast region.

To donate or to learn about other ways to help, go to www.habitat.org.

-- Lucia Solórzano Work, PR Committee

Visiting volunteers, Americorps members and military personnel help to construct temporary units in "Volunteer Village." The units will house visiting volunteers that will assist in rebuilding the hurricane affected region. The project was made possible through a partnership with the Salvation Army and sits on the grounds of "Yankee Stadium" Biloxi where the Salvation Army has created a base for hurricane recovery projects in the area.

under CONSTRUCTION What's in a Name

Over the last month, the Habitat for Humanity office received a number of great suggestions for a new name for the Habitat newsletter. Each name mentioned some attribute that all of us associate with HfH of Missoula and that has kept us volunteering for this great organization.

After much deliberation by the Public Relations Committee, we voted and unanimously agreed that the Habitat Newsletter will now be known as (drum roll, please) "Under Construction." (Please note: We selected this name before we saw the newsletter story announcing the Vacation Bible School program bearing the same title. Great minds think alike!)

As you all know, Habitat for Humanity of Missoula works hard to build new, affordable homes for our partner families and has done so since 1991. All of us are working toward bettering ourselves and our community by our involvement with Habitat. We are all "Under Construction!" This name best conveyed Habitat's ongoing projects and our desire to continue helping the community.

Thank you to everyone who submitted a suggestion! Well done!

- Hillary Ogg, PR Committee

business partners

Dave Edgell and Collin Bangs

Over the last few years, two letters of the alphabet, “B” and “E” have come to encapsulate Habitat’s motto of giving a hand up when times are tough. And few individuals have extended the reach of that hand further at a time of rising land prices than the men behind the letters, realtor Collin Bangs and builder Dave Edgell.

Since 1999 when the two men partnered as B and E Corporation, Bangs of Coldwell Banker Steinbrenner Real Estate and Edgell, president of Edgell Homes and Development, Inc., have focused through B and E Corp. on providing affordable housing, most recently in the growing Windsor Park development near North Reserve. That’s also where the last two Habitat homes have been built, and where two more are under construction, thanks to B and E’s decision to sell lots to HfH of Missoula at cost.

Explains Bangs, “I watched Habitat struggle with the need for land and said if I ever found a place with a lot of lots that I could provide without profit, I would.”

Adds Edgell, “With a bigger subdivision than we’d done before, we felt there should be room to give something back if we didn’t take any profit.”

For Bangs, affordable housing has been an important, and even personal, issue since the morning more than 30 years ago when he woke to find his clothes stuck to the wall. As a 1967 UM graduate returning to Missoula after four years in

the Navy, Bangs and his wife, who was then pregnant, were looking for work. The only place they could afford to live was in summer cabins located behind a little motel on West Broadway; the units had no insulation and only steam heat. Bangs remembers well the cold morning the couple awoke to find “the steam in the room had frozen all our clothes to the wall.” Bangs ultimately found a job selling real estate, and soon bought a home of his own. More than three decades later, the issue of affordable housing has stuck with him, much like those clothes to the wall.

Bangs was raised on a wheat and cattle farm north of Inverness, Montana. In the late '80s he began to notice that existing houses were selling for more money than it was costing builders to construct new ones. Bangs, first by himself, and then with partner Pat Lawler, began buying lots. They worked with a variety of contractors, many of high quality, some less so, who failed to take responsibility when problems arose after construction. In the late 90s, Bangs’ primary contractor moved out of state, and Lawler left to spend more time with his other business, The Women’s Club.

Enter David Edgell. Edgell, a native of Sussex, England, had settled in Missoula in the early 70s after meeting his future wife while attending a cousin’s wedding. Though Edgell’s university degree was in zoology, he had grown up on a farm in England and en-



Our superheroes! Collin and Dave (left to right) are so busy that photographer Adam Emmert had to resort to some fancy PhotoShop work to get them together.

joyed working with his hands. Construction seemed a natural way to make a living in Montana. He worked his way up through the carpenters union and other positions until starting his own company Edgell Homes and Development, Inc., in 1979. The company has built homes in a wide range of prices over the years and has won numerous awards for its designs in Missoula’s annual Parade of Homes.

Twenty years ago, when Edgell first worked in home construction, “affordable housing was not the sound bite of the times,” he recalls. “But when houses are so expensive, being affordable begins to carry more weight.”

Edgell and Bangs have partnered together on nine different projects. As Edgell notes, “Affordable housing has always been a passion of Collin’s. He’s very knowledgeable about what it takes to create affordable housing. It’s been a strong partnership.” And it’s been an especially helpful one to HfH of Missoula as the price of land in Missoula escalated and lots became increasingly expensive for Habitat to purchase.

With nearly 100 lots

available in just the first two phases of B and E’s new Windsor Park subdivision, Bangs and Edgell decided to sell four lots for homes at cost to HfH of Missoula. HfH of Missoula also has options on two more lots and “more as long as the lots are out there and we can supply them,” says Bangs, though both men hope that other developers will join them in making lots throughout the city available for affordable housing. Says Bangs, “I have a very strong feeling that we as a community, and especially those of us in real estate, have a moral obligation to house people who work here. We have an obligation as a community to provide good housing at prices people can afford.”

Habitat for Humanity, Edgell and Bangs agree, provides a way for people who work hard and need affordable housing to achieve the American dream of home ownership. “When people work hard, there’s supposed to be a return,” says Edgell. Thanks to B and E Corp., there has been one for at least four Habitat partner families.

- Lucia Solórzano Work, PR Committee

Habitat Welcomes New Board Members

meet cindy, spencer & chuck

Habitat's newest board members—Cindy Bartling, Spencer MacDonald, and Chuck Williford—joined us this past winter. We are delighted to have the benefit of their expertise and dedication.

Cindy Bartling, originally from Casper, Wyoming, is currently a realtor with Lambros Realty. She has experience with nonprofit management, personnel, and finance. Because of her work with many nonprofits, as a board member and as an executive director of Friends to Youth for 15 years, Bartling is able to understand both staff and directors' perspectives.

For 30 years, Bartling was involved with human services work, following a BA in social work from the University of Wyoming and an MA in social work from the University of Denver. About 25 years ago she moved to Missoula for what was supposed to be a brief period before moving on to a big city. Instead she went in the other direction and lives on four acres in Florence with three dogs and three cats.

The reason Bartling gives for joining the board is "you called"! She believes in the mission of Habitat and plans to offer dedication and real estate knowledge through the Site Selection Committee to help us work with people to reach the dream of owning their own homes. We will draw on her understanding of nonprofit structure and process as well.

Spencer MacDonald, a Missoula attorney, started volunteering with Habitat when he shared law offices with my brother Dave who rounded up everyone in the office to participate in work days. MacDonald says that he has always had "a lot of respect for the work" and had followed television reports on Jimmy Carter's wall raisings.

He hopes to spend some time learning more about how Habitat operates

before deciding for sure where he will concentrate his energy, but he enjoys working with people. He is eager to work with the Family Selection Committee: "In a broad sense, I feel like I'd really be doing good work by helping people to own a home who wouldn't otherwise be able to do so."

MacDonald was born in Whitefish, attended Lolo Elementary School for a couple years, and graduated from high school in White Sulphur Springs. He earned a BA in political science with a minor in history from Carroll College. MacDonald "appreciated that part of education there was trying to teach students to be good people. Habitat definitely fits with that training." His education included a semester at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland and some "bumming around" time in Europe. He earned his law degree at The University of Montana. MacDonald says that the pro bono service requirement for attorneys helps provide the motivation to volunteer. His profession reinforces something he learned from his family, which had the tradition of giving up something for Lent and contributing the money saved to the Rice Bowl collection: "My parents did try to instill a sense of responsibility for people who were struggling."

Chuck Williford was born in Deer Lodge and attended many schools. He left Bigfork High School to get a GED and join the army. He says that he met his wife of 37 years while reading her pen pal letter in a bunker in Quan Tri Province: "It was love at first paragraph." The Willifords have 2 children and 3 grandchildren.

On December 31, 2005, Williford retired after 34 years with the Missoula City Fire Department. He served as firefighter and emergency medical services coordinator, was promoted to cap-

tain, and retired as battalion chief. During his career he was an advocate for the emergency medical response program and taught at the Montana State Fire Services Academy and Missoula Vo-Tech.

In addition to his main career, Williford has had several part-time jobs and engaged in volunteer work for many years. He has worked with ambulances and St. Pat's Life Flight and security office, and delivered fire camps for the U.S. Forest Service. About seven years ago, he followed his wife into real estate work and continues that job in "retirement." He has served on the board of the American Red Cross as chair of the Safety Services Committee. He has taught CPR for the Red Cross and the American Heart Association and trained other instructors.

Williford brings his life experience and especially his knowledge regarding real estate issues, such as competitive market analysis, to his current volunteer work as chair of Habitat for Humanity's Site Selection Committee. He started volunteering for Habitat because he wanted "to give something back" to the community that has been "fantastic" for him. He heard ads for the national organization and decided the local affiliate would be a good fit for his interests.

The goal for Williford is to help Habitat "grow as much as it wants and needs to grow" because Missoula has a real need for low-income housing. He wants to help people achieve a dream of owning a home. Chuck considers it an "honor and a privilege to be a part of [Habitat]" and has "a great regard for everyone involved."

- *Laure Pengelly Drake, Board Member*

HOPE was in the air Sunday, April 2, as several families gathered at the office of Missoula Head Start. Hope of what? Hope of the American Dream, of owning a home of their own. Hope that Habitat for Humanity of Missoula could help them achieve this dream.

Children laughed and played nearby as the adults began the Family Selection meeting. Habitat Executive Director Dave Chrismon opened with a short statement describing Habitat for Humanity as “a Christian-based organization...giving a hand up, not a hand out.” Chris Taberna spoke of his family’s home that was recently completed with Habitat for Humanity. As Taberna held close to him a framed photograph of his new home, a photo surrounded by the many signatures of those who helped his family construct it, he observed, “It’s not a fancy house, but it is good quality housing.”

Debbie Wilcox, Family Selection Committee Chair, provided a detailed explanation of the application process for Family Selection. Wilcox described the application as lengthy, with many very personal questions, such as income, which could be uncomfortable for some people to answer. But Wilcox explained that Habitat for Humanity has income requirements; a family’s income must be below a certain level in order to qualify for a house. In great detail and with a slow but steady pace the application was explained. Wilcox observed, “Give us too much information, tell us everything, the more we know about you, the better our decision will be.” After explaining the

family selection



photo by Dave Chrismon

Chris Taberna and his family know what Habitat is all about. From the application process to the dedication of their new home almost two years later they became experts!

application and its due date of April 24, Debbie welcomed all who had gathered to stay and ask questions. Many Habitat for Humanity volunteers were on hand to assist and were happy to do so.

The Family Selection Process begins anew once the application deadline has passed. The committee meets and begins reviewing the applications submitted. Three workshops follow for those families who move to the next step; the final step involves home visits.

- Jennifer Calhoun, UM Marketing student

TRAINING *continued from page 10*

to get into a Habitat home. The others in the class had a variety of backgrounds and skill levels. Quite frankly, it seemed to me that everyone else had a lot more experience than I did. Larry was reassuring and kept insisting that all of us would be ready to accomplish the required tasks when the time came.

Over the course of the next five weeks, I learned about foundations, framing, sheet-rocking, and siding. With each class I felt a bit more prepared to actually get out on a building site with a hammer in hand. We built a little four-foot high structure in the shop and discovered camaraderie through the mistakes that we made. Larry is a positive person and used even our mistakes as teachable moments. No one cut off fingers and each successful accomplishment was cause for celebration. This was a fun time. During our last class we visited the building site amid a downpour of rain. The site will soon be full of volunteers who are all

committed to helping a family realize the joy that comes with home ownership. After a quick tour of the site, a *really* quick wet tour, we gathered at the Habitat office for pizza, pop, and the opportunity to sign up to lead volunteer crews during different stages of the construction process.

The question I had to ask myself was did I feel qualified to be a crew leader for Habitat? Well, sort of. But I signed up as crew leader for several workdays in spite of my doubts, because I knew that someone would be on the site to help me get started, just as someone was in Crew Leader Training Class. I also know that being a part of helping others get into homes of their own is a privilege, not an arduous task. I remember well the sense of humble gratitude that comes with getting a new home of your own, when it looked impossible. That feeling changes people. It makes them look at the world differently. It just might make them sign up for Crew Leader Training Class next Spring.

- Kathy Doolittle, Crew Leader Class of 2006



NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MISSOULA MT
PERMIT NO 569

P.O. Box 7181
Missoula, Montana 59807
(406) 549-8210
e-mail: habmsla@habitatmsla.org



RECYCLE YOUR NEWSLETTER.

Pass it on to a friend and suggest they call Habitat to receive a future newsletter of their own.

If you wish to be taken off our mailing list, please call 549-8210.

Crew Leader Training Class

Three years ago I was able to have a house built for myself. I call it my Lord Built House. This house was such a gift at a time in my life when I thought I would probably have to move into a fixer-upper. Instead, I moved into my dream home. The daily gratitude I feel for God's provision got me interested in Habitat for Humanity. I wanted to share in helping someone else to experience that joy and grace that I had received.

I learned about the Crew Leader Training Class last year at Habitat's monthly General Informational Meeting. Unfortunately, the training classes were on nights I had conflicts, so I decided to do a bit of preparation and sign up the following year. During the past 12 months, a friend and I invaded her husband's shop and learned to use all the power tools. We made deck furniture, cutting boards, and picture frames. Feeling a bit less power-tool-impaired, I enthusiastically signed up this year when the class was offered on nights I could attend.

Larry McKay, the class coordinator, met me in the parking lot the night of our first class. He immediately made me feel like I was a valued member of a team. That first class was an eye-opening experience. I learned about the Missoula Habitat philosophy, the interest-free loans, the sweat-equity hours



photo by Dave Chrismon

All our 2006 Crew Leaders surrounded by their work. Larry McKay is in the center in a white sweater. Kathy Doolittle is in the bottom window on the left.

required of the partner-families, the super good-sense homes Missoula Habitat was building, and the value to the community when families are able to live in homes of their own. There were three partner-families in attendance. These were people who were totally committed to doing whatever it took

TRAINING *continued on page 9*