

Mission Possible

By Dorothy Bade

Mission Statement for Habitat for Humanity – Detroit

Habitat for Humanity Detroit (Habitat Detroit) is a non-profit, ecumenical Christian-based, housing ministry that provides low-income, working families the opportunity to purchase modest, affordable housing in which to raise their families.

Too often when the public hears: Habitat for Humanity, they immediately think that new homes are being given away. NOT TRUE – NOT EVEN A LITTLE BIT.

To qualify for a Habitat home there is a criterion that MUST be followed to the letter.

Habitat is not a giveaway program. In addition to a down payment and monthly mortgage payments, homeowners invest hundreds of hours (250 – 400) of their own labor (sweat equity) into building their Habitat house and the houses of other Habitat family partners.

Habitat houses are sold to partner families at no profit and financed with a 0% mortgage that Habitat manages.

The home owners' monthly mortgage payments are used to support building still more Habitat houses.

In addition to being able to 'afford' a home, Family Partners must participate in classroom-based training on financial literacy such as spending within a budget – NOW that is a unique concept. They are taught the importance of timely payment of mortgage, utility, property tax and other bills. They must have 'good' credit or 'Fixable Credit'.

Once a Family Partner becomes a homeowner, their responsibilities include maintenance and minor repairs. Yep! There's an app for that.

After completing an application, applicants are interviewed and selection is based on their level of need, their willingness to become partners in the program and their ability to repay the loan.

I tell all this because: Shortly after our retirements, we sought a Mission Field. At this time in our lives it became 'Paying Back' for the good life we had so far lived. We suggested to God several ideas, HE didn't like them. Then in 2003, we went on an RV-Care A Vanners Habitat for Humanity Build on the west side of Michigan. It was there we met some people who believed in this mission – some remain our friends to this day.

Having been bite by the Habitat Bug, we searched for another opportunity to build. September 2003, we found ourselves 'camping' on the property of Covenant House, Detroit Michigan. In the following week, 'we' built 19 homes and rebuilt a neighborhood. Of those 19 original homes, only 1 has been destroyed due to vandalism and it was rebuilt, in part by us and in all by members of the Wayne County MPRI Program in 2009. Today that home stands beautiful and livable.

September 2003 also afforded my first meeting of Governor Jennifer Granholm. The house that stands in the Tri-Centennial West Side Neighborhood of Detroit is still referred to as: The Governor's House; BUT if you talk to the Governor, she will deny that name. She worked on it – I worked alongside her while she swung the hammer and one day we set hurricane clips together

This year, June 2010, The Governor, the First Gentleman, their children, family and friends, made the choice to DO SOME GOOD FOR SOMEONE ELSE. Together as a family they raised \$15,000.00 of personal funds, had a member of Team Granholm on site everyday working with the family partner, Kaynotta. Team Granholm arranged for feeding the volunteers, and allowed the media to cover their gift of building so as to encourage other families to do the same.

After the home blessing on Friday, June 17th, I was honored to present the Governor with Made in New Baltimore Gifts... one from Moon River Soap Company, non-toxin soaps dressed in the beautiful handmade Dahlia Packaging and one from Stahl's Bakery BELLY BUTTONS & Stahl's Spe-



cial Blend Coffee, of course. What could be more PURE MICHIGAN!

Since the Establishment of HFH Detroit in 1989, 279 homes have been built by volunteers and family partners.

Bill and I have built in Springhill, Webster Parish, Louisiana (before Hurricane Katrina), Covington, Sildel and St. Bernards Parish, Louisiana (after Katrina – Bill only), Mission, Texas and Savannah, Georgia; we have taken part in two Jimmy Carter Projects: Vera Cruz, Mexico and Detroit.

Once God gave us HIS approval – the mission field has been a fun place to be. Not only have we built 'houses'...we have built homes, neighborhoods and friendships.

Our Mission is: **A MISSION POSSIBLE** - to provide: Simple, decent, af-

fordable housing for All God's Children.

If you are interested in additional information regarding Habitat for Humanity Detroit contact the volunteer Coordinator at: (313) 521-6691 or go on line: www.habitatdetroit.org

In the words of John Walsh: Together We Can Make a Difference.

Editor's Note: Bill & Dorothy were awarded the Habitat For Humanity Detroit- Scot Norris Super Hero Award in the year 2008. In 2009 - they were awarded The President's Call To Service Award for the State of Michigan.



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